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/The Mbundu or as they are called by some sources in this file the Ovimbundu, occupy the Benguela Highland of west central Angola (Portuguese West Africa). They are also known in the literature as Nano (Banano, Vakuanan, Vakonano, Vanano or Munano), and Ovimbali (Mbari, Mambari, Mbali). They are Bantu-speakers, the language being called Umbundu--which is also used adjectively to refer to the culture--and is associated with Ambo, Herero and kindred languages. According to Childs the Mbundu are subdivided into thirteen politically independent kingdoms each with their own paramount chief and separate governments, in addition to nine kingdoms which are generally tributory but not integral parts of the kingdom to which they owe allegiance. (McCulloch lumps all of these together and speaks of twenty-two chiefdoms.) The kingdoms/chiefdoms were in turn made up of a number of sub-chiefdoms called atumbu, for example, Bailundu the largest of the kingdoms was divided into about two hundred sub-chiefdoms.

The file consists of six sources, all in English, with sources 1:Childs, 2:McCulloch and 3:Hambly being the primary sources in the file for an over-all view of Mbundu culture and society. 1:Childs, written by a missionary, contains much ethnographic information on the identification of the Mbundu (and their neighbors), their territorial hierarchy and spatial distribution, culture history, and social structure (in terms of child training, education and kinship), but deals superficially with technology and economics. 2:McCulloch, which is basically a synthesis of 1:Childs and 3:Hambly, in conjunction with personal assistance from Childs, C. M. N. White and J. A. Barnes, presents, in somewhat outline form, a concise, critical and accurate account of the Mbundu people. His sections on social organization and political structure are

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especially good since they deal critically with the somewhat contradictory data of the principal sources on the Mbundu and point out problems in analysis still unresolved. 3: Hambly is also a study of the general ethnography of the Mbundu, but since his primary emphasis is on historical reconstruction, several chapters in the work are dedicated to the analysis of cultural trait distribution. His sections on music, literature, the decorative arts, and ethnobotany are especially good, but his data on social structure is superficial. 4:Dorsey deals with the role of the "Ocimbanda" or witch doctor. This source also contains information on the poison ordeal as a means of establishing guilt or innocence in cases where accusations of witchcraft have been made. 5:Hambly discusses the relation between spiritual belief, magical acts and various occupations of the Mbundu. Also contained in this source is information on food, handicrafts, medical and magical practices, children's activities, and division of labor. The last source in the file, 6:Edwards is a cultural-functional analysis of the mechanisms of social continuity and social change observed among the Mbundu from the aboriginal period (as reconstructed by the author) to the present day.

Chiefdoms (kingdoms according to Childs) or sub-chiefdoms, the major political subdivisions of the Mbundu state have been marked for category 634 in 6:Edwards, while in 1:Childs a few comparable and relevant pages were marked for category 635, a seemingly inappropriate discrepancy in marking nearly identical data. In the other sources of the file chiefdoms (kingdoms) were not differentiated in the marking, merely being grouped with other political units within category 631.

The file unit on Mbundu, despite the large amount of ethnographic data which it contains, is probably not a very good one for cross-cultural research chiefly because of the high degree of acculturation and

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social disorganization which has taken place among the group since aboriginal times, thus producing potential if not actual variability of the file sample to such an extent that no clear-cut organization of the society into neat cultural units necessary for cross-cultural research, is possible./

Processed in 1955-1966

1:Childs M-5 (1924-1940)1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

PREFACE

[p. v]

THAT Chief of California Indians who told Dr. Benedict of the /21 power of his people in the old days when they had eaten 'the health of the desert' made a profoundly interesting observation.

> In the beginning, he said, God gave to every people a cup, a cup of clay, and from that cup they drank their life. . . . They all dipped in the water but their cups were different. Our cup is broken now. . . .[1]

The African peoples also have had their cups of clay or wood, or their gourd dippers. They have worked out their intricate and appropriate adaptations to their particular environments, a social structure well suited to their needs, and a remarkably successful system of education.

Now that Africa has come under Western influences, however, the environment has changed. In many cases the changes have been so rapid that the Africans by their own unaided efforts, and within the pattern of their cultures, are no longer able to make the necessary adaptations. The results in social disintegration are well described by the Umbundu proverb:

> Where the pot breaks, there also the potsherds remain.[2]

The broken pot no longer has either utility or beauty—is no more a pot, but only broken and scattered sherds. So it is also with a broken social group—only scattered individuals remain. This proverb refers primarily to a broken family, but thoughtful Ovimbundu are now applying it to their whole social structure.

Since the life of Africa has been thrust thus suddenly into the world's life, 'it becomes a problem of urgent importance, how, while introducing the European system . . . to conserve the very real values of the indigenous African system'.[3] The solution of this problem is a responsibility of Christian missions inasmuch as theirs is the responsibility for the greater part of the education of the Africans.

The Ovimbundu,[4] the people chosen for the present study, are /01

[1] Ruth Benedict, *Patterns of Culture*, p. 21 f. (Boston and N.Y.: Houghton Mifflin, 1934).

[2] *Pa fika ombia, hanja ovipa pa ninia.*

[3] E. W. Smith, *Essays presented to C. G. Seligman*, p. 334, quoted in the *Year Book of Education*, 1938, p. 697 (London: Evans).

[4] For explanation of terms and note on Orthography, p. xi.

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101 a Bantu-speaking group numbering about one and one third
(161) million, whose home is the Benguela Highland of Angola (Portuguese West Africa). Christian missions have worked among them since 1881, the date of founding of the W.C.A.M. of the A.B.C.F.M., with which work the writer has been connected since 1924.

121 *Umbundu mentality.* It is not the purpose of this study to
114 appraise Bantu or Umbundu mentality. Every new description of a Bantu culture gives a new angle or vantage point from which to view the versatile mentality of that interesting group of people. All available objective views unite to show us, as Driberg holds for primitive man in general, 'a being as human as ourselves, affected by the same emotions . . . with thoughts, responses, and actions differing in no essential way from our own'[1]—neither the noble savage of Rousseau nor the subhuman creature of more recent doctrinaires. 'The grouping of savages with children and idiots is but another symptom of an attitude which, when faced with a different type of culture, insists on assuming a lower type of mentality to account for that culture.'[1]

It must be owned that different views of primitive mentality are held, but it would seem that those which hold primitive man to be incapable of reasoning logically, his mentality in some way inferior or 'pre-logical', base their conclusions too largely on theoretical or library material and too little on results of actual field work.[2] It is not the purpose of the present study to examine these theories, but a word of protest must be raised against some who, basing their view of the mentality of Bantu peoples on some such theories as those mentioned above, and with or without sup-

[1] J. H. Driberg, *The Savage as He Really Is*, pp. 2, 3 (London: Routledge, 1929).

[2] Cf., for example, L. Levy-Bruhl, *Les Fonctions Mentales dans les Sociétés Inférieures*, *Le Mentalité Primitive*, &c. The seriousness with which these and similar theoretical studies have been taken is surprising. Cf. e.g., R. Allier, *Mind of the Savage* (London: Bell, 1929); J. W. C. Dougall, *Characteristics of African Thought* (London: International Institute of African Languages and Cultures, 1932); N. S. Booth, *Teaching a Bantu Community* (MS. copy). Dr. Max Gluckman of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute told me that I had wrongly interpreted Levy-Bruhl, and he kindly loaned me a copy of a paper by Evans-Pritchard which sets forth a different interpretation of Levy-Bruhl's thesis with regard to the 'pre-logical' mentality. It is not my intention here to combat the thesis of the 'pre-logical' mentality, but rather a common interpretation of it (Evans-Pritchard, 'Levy-Bruhl's Theory of Primitive Mentality', *Bulletin of the Faculty of Arts of the Egyptian University*, vol. i, pt. ii).

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[p. xi]

NOTE ON ORTHOGRAPHY OF AFRICAN WORDS USED

Ocimbundu (pl.) is the name of the people (sing. *Ocimbundu*). 101
Umbundu is the name of the language, of the culture, and the form of the descriptive adjective.

The orthography used in most particulars follows recommendations of the International African Institute.[1] The sounds of Umbundu are relatively simple. Each vowel has a single value—for practical purposes the same as in Spanish. The tilde over a vowel indicates nazalization; with *ñ* it indicates the velar *n*, i.e. the value of the English (or German) *ng* in 'singer'. The sound of the English *ch* in 'church' is represented by *c*. The consonants *g* and *j* are always hard; these two and also *d* appear always and only preceded by *n*,—*nd*, *ng*, and *nj*. Likewise *b* never appears alone but preceded by *m*,—*mb*. The other consonants have approximately the same values as in English; *w* and *y* are only used as consonants; *r*, *x* are not found except in foreign words. 104

I have retained the prefixes Oci-mbundu, Ovi-mbundu, and U-mbundu in accordance with the correct Umbundu usage and because it seems that in no other way can confusion with regard to the identity of this people be avoided. When the truncated form of 'Mbundu' is used even great scholars are led to confuse the Ovimbundu with the 'Kimbundu' of the Lunda hinterland.[2] These two peoples must not be confused: they are entirely distinct and even belong to different linguistic zones. An Umbundu Grammar by Dr. Merlin W. Ennis is to be published shortly by the University of Witwatersrand Press. [101]

[1] *A Practical Orthography of African Languages* (London: International Institute of African Languages and Cultures, 1927); *Short Guide to the Recording of African Languages* (London: Ibid., 1933).

[2] See, for example, *Bantu Studies*, 1937, p. 373; E. W. Smith, 'Africa: what do we know of it?' *J.R.A.I.*, 1935, p. 71; D. W. Westermann, 'Study of African Languages', *Africa*, 1935, p. 80.

[p. xii is blank]

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Much of the soil has been greatly im-
134 poverished both by use and by the action of the weather. The most productive soil areas consist of alluvial deposits, but the precipitate nature of much of the region precludes the formation of such deposits. The bulk of the soil is rather poor, but still it is of better quality, on the whole, than in adjoining regions to the north, east, and south.[1]

133 In common with several of the African plateaux the Benguela Highland rises very precipitately from the sea. This is one of the most striking features of African geography. The steepness of the [48] ascent forces the Benguela Railway to use a cog-line for a short distance. The village of Ngendo, described in the section dealing with the social structure, has an elevation of about 1,650 metres (5,400 feet) but is situated at only about 60 miles from the ocean.[2] That part of the intermediate zone which adjoins the Highland on the west consists of river valleys between mountain ridges and is well watered, but between that and the sea the country is very arid. This arid region is in reality a northern extension of the Kalahari, Omaheke, and Namieb deserts. Much of this arid stretch is exceedingly rough mountainous country. All along the African coast there is a coastal plain, but in the region under consideration it is very narrow. Plain and mountain are equally arid and this desert country generally has an elevation of less than 1,000 metres (about 3,280 feet). This intermediate zone is well known to the Ovimbundu and played an important role in the history of their commercial developments since they were obliged to cross it to reach the European stations on the coast.

Other adjoining regions have also been of importance to the
101 Ovimbundu. It was from the region to the north between the Highland and the Kuanza River that some of the principal ruling families came. Across this same region the Ovimbundu had their [177] first European contacts—with the Portuguese establishments on the Kuanza River. In the regions to the south live cattle-raising people whence the Ovimbundu got cattle, whether by raiding or
133 by trading. East of the Kuanza River valley the elevation drops
167 gradually toward the basins of the Congo and the Zambezi. When the slave- and rubber-trades led the Ovimbundu into this region

[1] i.e. of all adjoining regions only on the north-west are there valleys of superior soil. No complete survey of the soils of Angola has been made. Most books overrate the qualities of the soils of the colony.

[2] See *infra*, Chap. II.

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241 The Highland is evidently well suited to the particular type of
221 agriculture which the Ovimbundu carry on with upland fields for the principal crops of maize and beans growing in the rainy season and with river gardens for secondary cultures in the dry season. The purpose of the latter is to piece out between the principal harvests. The situation of the Highland across principal watersheds and therefore on convenient trade routes has been noted. This is doubtless one factor in commercial development among the
231 Ovimbundu. Cattle-keeping with them seems to be largely a commercial development. While cattle may live on the Highland, they thrive better in the less well-watered lands to the west and the south where the neighbouring peoples are cattle-keepers.

Neighbouring peoples

101 The cattle-keeping peoples who live just west and south of the
197 Ovimbundu are the Nganda, the Ndombe, the Hanya, the Cilenge, the Cipungu, the Muila, the Nyaneka, the Mulondo, and the Khumbi.[1] These peoples all seem to be related to each other and in some way to some, at least, of the Ovimbundu.[2] Still further south beyond these peoples are the Ambo and the Herero, also cattle-keepers. All these, together with the Ovimbundu, have been classified linguistically as making up the 'Western Province' of the Southern Bantu.[3] There are also a few Bushmen on the southern borders.

The peoples to the east and south-east of the Umbundu country are probably Lunda emigrants and so belong to the Congo group (Cokue and Songo) and to the Zambezi or Central group (Luimbi, Lucazi, Nyemba, Ngonzelo, &c.).[4] These people are lumped together by the Ovimbundu under the somewhat deprecatory term of *va Ngangela*.

The northern neighbours belong to the Western or Angola 'cluster' of the Congo group (Esela, Cipala, Lupolo, Ndongo or

[1] See C. Estermann, 'Notas Etnográficas sôbre os povos indígenas do Distrito da Huíla' (*Boletim Geral das Colónias*, Fev. 1935, pp. 41–69). He groups some of these people together under the name 'Bangala' or 'Ovambangala'.

[2] Information from Nganda, Mulondo, Cilenge, and Ovimbundu individuals.

[3] See R. A. Dart, 'Racial Origins', p. 23, in Schapera, op. cit., 1937; C. M. Doke, *Bantu Linguistic Terminology* (London: Longmans, 1935); Sir H. H. Johnston, *Comparative Vocabulary of the Bantu and Semi-Bantu Languages*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1919, 1922).

[4] Johnston, op. cit.

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'Kimbundu', Imbangala, &c.). The Esele and the Mbuï, on the north-west, may belong to the Western Province but they have not yet been surely classified.[1]

These neighbouring peoples have been listed only as background for studying the Ovimbundu. Linguistically the Ovimbundu belong to South Africa even as their country geographically is a part of it. 'In respect of climate and vegetation Angola is essentially a borderland and may be regarded as the area of mergence of several distinct zones which attain their fullest development outside the Colony.'[2] Since the Benguela Highland comprises the north-western ridges of the South African sub-continental plateau, it is not surprising that its inhabitants should be the northernmost of the Southern Bantu.[3]

European Administration, Communications, Missions

A 631

As a Portuguese colony, Angola is governed under the Ministry of Colonies in Lisbon by a Governor-General whose residence is Luanda, the capital of the colony since 1576. For administrative purposes the colony is divided into five provinces, each with a governor in charge. These are divided into thirteen districts which in turn are divided into circumscriptions and these again into administrative areas. The country of the Ovimbundu is divided between the provinces of Benguela, Bié, and Huila in the districts of Benguela, Huambo, Cuanza-Sul, Bié, and Huila. 'Direct rule' is the method of administration and native political

A M 631

[1] Ibid.

[2] Walter Fitzgerald, *Africa, a Social, Economic and Political Geography of its Major Regions* (London: Methuen, 1934).

A M 162

[3] The general census of 1940 (*vide supra*, p. 7, note 2) showed the population as follows:

Whites	44,083
Mixed	28,035
Blacks	3,665,829
Others	63
	3,738,010 (op. cit., vol. i, p. 78 f.)

Of the various tribal divisions, the Ovimbundu ('Mbundo') are listed with 1,331,087 (op. cit., vol. ix, p. 23). Owing to the mistaken inclusion of several small tribal groups, this number should probably be reduced by at least 150,000, but on the other hand there are without doubt more Ovimbundu than this last number who have emigrated to neighbouring colonies and to the Union of South Africa.

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175 565 Evidently royal persons could then be easily distinguished from the commoners.

565 178 The question naturally arises how far may a similar distinction be observed at the present time. The genealogical tables presented may answer the question. It may be seen that intermarriage of commoners and royalty has proceeded to such a degree that the differences have been greatly dimmed, if not quite erased. Furthermore, the loss of the political power which the royal families formerly held has levelled down distinctions until they have largely lost their meaning. This loss again has hastened the process of intermarriage with commoners. While there are some distinctive practices which persist, they may now pertain to or be practised by certain members of a family only, or in some instances, and not in others. These refer especially to inheritance and to the naming of children.

121 By 'social structure' is meant the more or less permanent framework of relationships between members of a community which manifests itself in an ordered group-life, with reciprocal rights and duties, privileges and obligations, of members, determining behaviour-patterns . . . and moulding the feelings, thoughts, and conduct of members according to these patterns, so that it is only in and through them that the individual can achieve his personal self-realization and participate in the satisfactions offered by the life of his community.

This framework of social organization, or social structure, is permanent compared with the stream of human lives that, in the succession of the generations, flows through it. Each new generation finds it there, as an inheritance from untold generations of his predecessors. Yet the framework of social structure is not absolutely rigid or fixed for all time, but is itself a thing of growth, capable of variation in detail, sometimes giving birth to new developments, at other times undergoing disintegration and decay.[1]

101 [601] The genealogical tables which I have collected are fairly representative of the major divisions or 'tribes' of the Ovimbundu. The only 'tribes' not represented are those of the border regions of Namba, Sanga, Cikomba, and Kalukembe, none of which save the last are numerically important. These border groups themselves offer an interesting field of study and particularly in that they may provide cultural and linguistic bridges between the Ovimbundu and their neighbors.

[1] A. W. Hoernlé in Schapera, *The Bantu-Speaking Tribes of South Africa* (London: Routledge, 1937), p. 67 f.

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PART THREE

CHAPTER XII

HISTORICAL

000 'HEUREUX les peuples qui n'ont pas d'histoire', quotes Father Van Wing in introducing his *Études Bakongo*, and having noted that the Kongo people 'had entered into history' in 1482 with the discovery of the River Congo.[1] It is very doubtful whether there are any people, however primitive, or however remote or inaccessible their dwelling, who could qualify for that blessed state. If this characterization means entering upon the stage of continuous contact with Europe and Europeans, it may mark a definite stage in the life of this people.

175 101 The Ovimbundu have not in this sense as old a 'history' as have the Kongo people. Their first contacts with Europeans probably took place in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries before their formation as a people—before they were Ovimbundu; but it was from the second or third quarter of the eighteenth century that they began to have regular and constant contacts which have continued with increasing frequency down to the present day.

Pre-History

172 The pre-history of the Umbundu country awaits competent investigation and should prove a fruitful field. Dr. Merlin W. Ennis has collected stone artifacts from several sites, but chiefly from Elende (twelve miles north of the railway station of Cuma), some of which have been placed in the Peabody Museum of Harvard University, some in the Logan Museum of Beloit College (Wisconsin), and some in the National Museum of Bulawayo, Southern Rhodesia. These artifacts have been classified as similar to those of the Chellean culture.[2] The strata from which they

[1] R.P. Van Wing, S.J., *Études Bakongo* (Bruxelles: Goemaere, 1921), p. 1.

[2] For a description, see J. J. Williams, S.J., *Africa's God* (Boston College, 1937), V. Congo and Angola, p. 96; also W. D. Hambly, *The Ovimbundu of Angola* (Field Museum, 1934), p. 207. Several Portuguese and Belgian writers have described stone artifacts found near the northern borders of Angola, comparing them with examples discovered at various sites in the Congo. See *Trabalhos do I° Congresso Nacional de Antropologia Colonial*, Pôrto, 1934: J. R. Santos, Jr., 'Rui de Serpa Pinto e a arqueologia de Angola', pp. 433–51;

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172 fied towns of the natives as *quipacas*, a word adapted from the Umbundu word *ocimbaka*, meaning a wall. The word for the palisade with which their villages are now enclosed is *olumbo*. Until evidence is adduced to the contrary, it seems that we must conclude that the stone-walled ruins found throughout the Umbundu country were built by Ovimbundu or by their immediate (Bantu) predecessors. As the ruins of Rhodesia and Mozambique seem to have been built by Bantu under Arab or Malay influences, so the Ovimbundu may have modelled their fortifications on the Portuguese forts which they had seen at Caconda, at the coast, along the Kuanza River, or even the walls with which individual traders fortified their establishments. These various forts were first built between 1575 and 1603, and it is probable that individual Ovimbundu themselves took part in some of the building operations.

Tribal Divisions of the Ovimbundu

631 101 Before going on with Umbundu history let us fix in mind the principal kingdoms, tribes, or divisions of the Ovimbundu and their present location with reference to one another and to their other neighbours. This may most easily be seen with the aid of the accompanying map.[1] Their mutual relations prior to effective Portuguese occupation, whether of dependence or independence, are also shown. These are the divisions the Ovimbundu were found to have at the beginning of the present century, and these are the divisions still recognized by them, although they no longer retain their former political significance. It is of interest to find that according to Ladislau Magyar, who lived in and travelled through the Umbundu country from 1849 until 1857,[2] essentially these same divisions were then in existence. Under date of 1 August 1799 the Governor of Benguela reported on the 'provinces' and people in the hinterland.[3] It is significant to find that the divisions of the Ovimbundu were then essentially the same as they are

[1] Facing p. 164.

[2] Ladislau Magyar, *Reisen in Süd-Afrika* (tr. Hunfalvy), Pesth, 1859. Magyar made 'Quipeyo' (Cipeyo) a part of Bailundu and Sumbu a sort of tributary. 'Quibule' (Civula), he said, paid tribute to 'Quiyaka' (Ciyaka).

[3] See *Annaes Maritimos e Coloniaes*, 4a Ser., pp. 147–61 (*parte não official*). This report made 'Quipeyo' tributary to Huambo, 'Ondure' (Ndulu) to Bailundu. Several kingdoms, later tributaries of Ciyaka, were listed as independent.

1: Childs M-5. (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

101 to-day.[1] The principal Umbundu-speaking groups may be listed
631 as follows:

I. *Independent kingdoms* (in approximate order of their present population):

Mbailundu (*Bailundo*).
Viye (*Bie* or *Bihe*).
Wambu (*Huambo*, *Huamba*, or even *Hambo*).
Ciyaka (*Quiyaca* or *Quiaca*).
Ngalangi (*Galangue*).
Civula[2] (*Quibula*).
Ndulu[2] (*Andulo*, *Ondulo* or even *Ondura*).
Cingolo (*Quingolo*).
Kalukembe (*Caluquembe*, *Caluguembe*, or even *Caluqueme*).
Sambu[2] (*Sambo* or *Sambos*).
Ekekete (*Quiquete*).
Kakonda or Cilombo-coñoma (*Caconda* or *Quilombo*).
Citata (*Quitata*).

[636] II. *Kingdoms generally tributary but not integral parts of the kingdoms to which they owed allegiance*:

Kasongi (*Cassongue*)—generally a tributary of Bailundu.
Ngalanga (*Galanga*)—generally a tributary of Bailundu.
Civanda (*Quibanda*)—generally a tributary of Bailundu.
Namba—generally a tributary of Bailundu.
Sanga—generally a tributary of Bailundu.
Cenge (*Chiengue*)—generally a tributary of Bailundu.
Cipeyo (*Quipeyo*)—a tributary of Bailundu or Wambu.
Mbongo (*Bongo*)—generally a tributary of Wambu.
Elende (*Lende*)—generally a tributary of Ciyaka.

167 Nearly all of these groups are listed in the report of 1799 to
174 which we have referred, and many of them may be identified on the map of 1776. How long before that had they lived in these their present homes? Since it is already well established that none of the Southern Bantu are autochthonous, we shall not stop to ask

[1] Neither of these accounts mentioned Kasongi, which, according to genealogical evidence, is probably one of the most recently formed of the Umbundu-speaking groups. Both accounts made the non-Umbundu-speaking regions of 'Quibala' (Cipala), Mussende, and Cella tributaries of Bailundu. This was the state of affairs as late as 1893.

[2] See *supra*, p. 167, n. 2.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

197 and Mossamedes. The region of Catumbela, and perhaps of Benguela, seems to have been subjected to migrations of Ovimbundu, or of proto-Ovimbundu, between the sixteenth and the nineteenth centuries, and it is probable that some of these groups early established themselves there permanently.[1] At the present time peoples of many tribes make up the population of these towns and of the surrounding regions, but Umbundu is already the dominant speech, and in Lobito and Catumbela almost no other Bantu language is heard. Certain other areas on the fringe of the Umbundu lands now seem to be in process of 'Umbundu-ization', at least as regards language. This does not seem to have taken place in Musende, in Cipala (Quibala), or in Sela, in spite of the long time during which they owned the king of Bailundu as their overlord. Just now, however, such a process seems to be taking place in Mbuiva (Amboiva), in Cisanji (area of Bocoio), in Nganda, and in Cikomba (Chicomba, south of Caconda).

173 Some of the neighbouring peoples have traditions of migrations
●101 which corroborate the traditions of the Ovimbundu. The Nganda
174 say that they formerly lived in the region of Wambu, around the
167 rocks of Nganda-la-Kawe, and that they moved down-country for two reasons: (1) to escape Wambu-Kalunga and his penchant for eating their children; (2) to be by themselves to practise the rite of circumcision. When they migrated to their present home, the kingdom of Ciyaka, they say, was not yet established.

Traditions of the Herero and Ambo peoples may have bearing on the problem of the migrations of the Ovimbundu. Dr. Vedder concludes from tradition and genealogical evidence that the Herero must have crossed the Kunene 'about the year 1700'.[2] Some of the tribes of Angola with which the Njimba-Herero claim relationship[3] may easily be identified as belonging to the 'Bangala' group, as, for example, the Ovangambue, the Ovangumbi, and the Ovatjerenge, which are plainly the va Ngambue, the va Khumbi (or Nkhumbi), and the va Cilengi, respectively. Other names in the list are very much like some place-names in the Umbundu country.

Traditions of the Songo and Lunda people have already been

[1] According to a Ciyaka tradition. Also see A. Bastos, *Monographia de Catumbella*, pp. 6, 7; L. Cordeiro (ed.), *Benguella e seu sertão*, 1617–22; Ravenstein (ed.), op. cit., p. 19 f.

[2] Hahn *et al.*, op. cit., p. 157.

[3] Loc. cit.

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mentioned. H. A. Dias de Carvalho collected the traditional 174
history of the people of Lunda, which attempted to show that the 101
Imbangala, the Songo, and the Cokue, or rather their reigning 173
families, were descended from the royal house of the Bongo people 167
of Lunda.[1] Through Ilunga, father of the first Muata Yanvo, this author connects these people, or at least all of them except the Imbangala, with the Luba.[2] Torday offers the hypothesis that Ilunga (or Ihunga) may have been a Bushongo prince.[3] I have heard the hypothesis offered that the Songo were in effect an offshoot of the Bushongo people, but it seems that such knowledge as we have of the Songo cannot be said to substantiate this theory. Should these theories prove to accord with the facts, we could claim a long traditional descent for the people of our study in consideration of the careful work done by Torday in tracing the genesis of the Bushongo.[4]

Historical Evidence. Turning from tribal traditions to the solid 175
ground of historical evidence, regarding the migrations in question, 167
it is immediately evident that there is no lack of witnesses. The regions with which we are dealing have been known to Europe since 1482, when the expedition under Diogo Cão first sailed up the Congo River and sent ambassadors representing King John II of Portugal to the king of Kongo. Diogo Cão returned in 1485–6, and then in 1491 there came a great expedition with a specially appointed embassy and a mission of ten Franciscan friars.[5] From this time on the Kongo was not without European observers. The earliest record which we have of native migrations in what is now Angola was the invasion of the kingdom of Kongo in 1568,[6] when it was overrun by hordes of terrible 'Jagas',[7] from the east. The reigning king, Dom Alvaro I (Nenemi-a-lukeni-luambemba), and his forces were so utterly routed that his only resource was to

[1] Dias de Carvalho, op. cit., p. 76 f.

[2] Op. cit., p. 65.

[3] E. Torday, *On the Trail of the Bushongo*, pp. 170, 281.

[4] Ibid., chap. xiii.

[5] See João de Barros, *Decadas* I, liv. 3; Ruy de Pina, *Chronica*, p. 174 f.; Garcia de Resende, *Chronica*, pp. 155 ff.; Fr. Luiz de Sousa, *História de S. Domingos*, pt. ii, liv. vi, c. 8.

[6] There has been considerable disagreement over this date, which has been variously reported as 1558, 1568, and 1570; 1568 seems the most likely date, see Ravenstein (ed.), *The Strange Adventures of Andrew Battell*, p. 119 f.

[7] There are many spellings of this name, according to the language, or even the caprice, of the observer. The commoner forms are: Jagas, Jakas, Iagges, Giaghi, Giaki, and Ayaka. This last is probably the more nearly correct.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

with that which has already been reviewed, might make it possible 103
to determine the demography of the Benguela Highland prior to 167
the formation of the Umbundu kingdoms. It is also further evidence as to the demographic make-up of the Ovimbundu. Some of these recurring place-names evidently represent elements which now constitute separate entities outside the Umbundu kingdoms, although they probably made contributions to the formation of those kingdoms. Others represent elements which probably moved away from the earlier invasions from the north but stayed in their new sites to amalgamate with later arrivals. Some may represent successive splittings-off from a stock which thus settled at various places. Many recurrent place-names could be shown both in this region and outside the language-grouping.

Attitudes toward Other Tribes. Attitudes of the Ovimbundu 619
towards the various neighbouring tribes are instructive. Mention 186
has already been made of the attitude of the southern 'Bangala' 101
people in their inclusion of the Ovimbundu of Kalukembe within their own system of exogamy. The Ovimbundu recognize a common humanity with the peoples who are their neighbours both on the south and on the north. They are all *omanu*,[1] people, or even *vakuetu*, comrades. Similar recognition is not extended to the eastern and south-eastern neighbours who are lumped together under the derogatory term of 'va Ngangela' or *ovingangela*.[2] This eastern region as far as the Great Lakes was the happy hunting-ground of the slave-traders from Viye and from Bailundu. There is a term *olongoya* which is applied to the northern neighbours, but without the derogatory connotation of 'Ngangela'. *Olongoya* has a linguistic connotation as did *barbaroi* in the Greek, and refers to the fact that these neighbours speak what is to the Ovimbundu an unintelligible language. How much of rationalization there may be in these attitudes and prejudices one cannot say, but it seems that in them there is some recognition of tribal origins and relationships, of the fact that across the Benguela Highland migrations have swept from north to south.

Conclusion. In consideration of the above evidence, it is now 174
possible to draw conclusions concerning the origin of the Ovi- 167

[1] *Omanu* is the Umbundu equivalent for the Nguni *abantu*, which has come to be applied to the whole language family.

[2] This Umbundu attitude is best illustrated by the proverb 'As a grass hut is not a house, so an *ocingangela* (singular) is not a person (*omunu*).'

a	b
c	f
e	d

Chart of positions of sections of End Map.

THE OVIMBUNDU OF ANGOLA

GROUPING AND DEMOGRAPHY

NOMENCLATURE

101 The name *Ovimbundu*, which possibly derives from the same root as *muntu*, seems to have been adopted as a tribal name in fairly recent times, the various groups being formerly known separately as Bailundu, Ciyaka, Viye etc. Correct rendering in native usage is *Ovimbundu* (singular *Ocimbundu*).[1] variations include *mbundo*, *m'bundo*, *vimbundo*, *quimbundo*, *kimbunda*[2] etc. *Umbundu* is correctly used adjectivally and to refer to the language.[3] In referring to the tribe the prefixes *Ovi-* and *Oci-* are usually retained today to avoid confusion with the *Kimbundu* (also called *Ambundu*, *Ngola* or *Ndongo*) tribe, located north of the Ovimbundu in Luanda, and related linguistically to the peoples of the Kongo group.[4]

The terms *Vakunano* (*Vakonano*, *Vanano*, or *Munano*) and *Ovimbali* (*Mbari*, *Mambari*, *Mbali*) are sometimes used in the literature as alternative names for the Ovimbundu. *Nano* means "up-country", *Vakunano* "people of the north".[5] Both van Bulck[6] and Guthrie[7] give it as an alternative name for the Ovimbundu as a whole, while earlier writers restrict its application to one or other group within the tribe. Thus Serpa Pinto[8] and Capello and Ivens[9] use it for the inhabitants of the southern part of the plateau, between Caconda and Cilenge country.[10] Magyar, on the other hand, uses it as an alternative name for the Bailundu group, who "because of their bravery, are celebrated far and wide, under the feared name *Munano*".[11]

Mbali, or more correctly *Ovimbali*, is correctly an Umbundu term for those who imitate Europeans, or who live near European towns, which are collectively called *lupali*.[12] It is frequently used by early writers for example, by Livingstone,[13] to refer to the Ovimbundu of the trading caravans.

GROUPING

101 The Ovimbundu do not have a centralised political organisation, but
631 are divided into a number of chiefdoms, each traditionally under the control of a paramount chief. The following list of chiefdoms is quoted

(1) Childs, 1949, p.xi.
(2) Magyar uses *kimbunda* for the Ovimbundu, but he does not confuse them, as Jaspert does, with the *Kimbundu* people.
(3) Childs, loc.cit.
(4) Ibid. Capello and Ivens, 1882 (vol.I, p.15) use *n'bundo* for the language of the Ovimbundu, to distinguish it from the *n'bundo* of Luanda. They give *quimbundo* as an alternative for *n'bundo*, and state that it is a dialect of the *lu-nano* language.
(5) Childs, personal communication.
(6) 1949, p.179. (7) 1948.
(8) 1881, vol.I, pp.96, 219. (9) 1882, vol.I, p.37.
(10) See also Chatelain, 1894, p.6 and Marquardsen 1930, map.
(11) 1859, p.385.
(12) Childs, 1949, p.19. (13) 1857, pp.91, 271, 386 etc. See also White, 1949.

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from Childs's monograph,[1] alternative spellings which occur in the literature being given in brackets. These divisions closely resemble those described in 1799 by the Governor of Benguella,[2] and by Magyar, who lived in and travelled through Ovimbundu country from 1840 to 1857. Ovimbundu today still think of themselves as belonging to one or other of these groups, although owing to the decay of the power of the chiefs, the divisions have largely lost their political significance.[3] Of the twenty-two Ovimbundu chiefdoms, about half were generally tributary to one or other of the larger and more powerful groups, prior to effective Portuguese occupation.[4]

I. *Independent chiefdoms (in approximate order according to the size of their present populations).*

Mbailundu	(Bailundu, bellundo, Balundo, Balbundo)
Viye	(Ovi Ye, Bie, Bihe, Bieno, Biheno)
Ewulu	(Huambu, Huambo, Hambo)
Ciyaka	(Quiyaca, Quieca)
Ngalangi	(Galangue, Galange, Galangi, Ngalangi)
Civula	(Quibula)
Ndulu	(Andulo, Ondulo, Ondura)
Cingolo	(Quingolo)
Kalukembe	(Caluquembe, Calugembe, Caluquene)
Sambu	(Sambo, Sambos)
Ekelete	(Quiquela)
Kakonda or Cilombo-conene	(Caconda or Quilombo)
Citata	(Quitata)

II. *Chiefdoms generally tributary but not integral parts of the chiefdoms to which they owed allegiance.*

Kasongi[5]	(Cassongue).	Generally	tributary	to	Bailundu.
Ngalanga	(Galanga)	"	"	"	"
Civundo	(Quibundo)	"	"	"	"
Nambo		"	"	"	"
Sanga		"	"	"	"
Conge	(Chiengue)	"	"	"	"
Ciperyo	(Quipeyo)	"	"	"	"
		or Wambu.			
Bicongo	(Bengo).	Generally	tributary	to	Wambu.
Elende	(Lende).	"	"	"	Ciyaka.

LOCATION

The homeland of the Ovimbundu is the Benguella Highland in west central Angola. Strictly speaking, the Highland comprises those regions which have

(1) 1949, p. 168.
(2) Annaes Maritimos e Coloniaes, 4a. Ser., pp.167-181. (Quoted by Childs)
(3) Childs, personal communication.
(4) i.e. prior to about 1900.
(5) Kasongi is not mentioned by Magyar, and Childs believes it to be one of the most recently-formed groups of Ovimbundu.

3

an elevation of 4,000 feet or more, and the boundaries of Ovimbundu territory closely correspond with this area.[1] Ovimbundu are found also in regions adjoining the Highland, and Umbundu-speaking groups stretch as far as the Atlantic coast-line, between the towns of Loanda and Benguella. Ovimbundu country is divided between the Administrative Provinces of Bie, Benguella, and Huila, in the Districts of Benguella, Huambo, Cuanza Sul, Bie and Huila.

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NEIGHBOURING TRIBES

To the east and south-east of the Ovimbundu are the Luimbe, Luchaze, Mbundu, Mbwela, etc., for all of whom the Ovimbundu use the derogatory term *Ngangela*, or *Ganguella* in the Portuguese version.[2] The Ovimbundu attitude towards these people is illustrated in the proverb "as a grass hut is not a house, so an ocingangela is not a person".[3] This eastern region was a favourite hunting-ground for slave-traders from Viye and Bailundu.

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[18C]

To the north-east are the Chokwe, Bangala and Songo peoples, who are related to the Lunda group.[4]

To the west and south of the Ovimbundu are cattle-keeping peoples - the Nyanda, Ndombe, Hanya, Cilenge, Cipungu, Muila, Nyaneka, Mulondo and Khumbi. These form a fairly homogeneous cultural group, and are in certain respects similar to the southern Ovimbundu.[5] Childs, following Estermann,[6] uses the collective name "Bangala" in referring to them, but in order to avoid confusion with the Bangala tribe to the north-east, this usage is not adopted here. Still further south are the Ambo and Herero, also cattle-keepers.

The tribes to the north of the Ovimbundu - Esela, Cipala, Lupolo, Ndongo or Kimbundu etc. - belong to the western or Angola 'cluster' of the Congo people.[7] The Esele (Vesele) and Mbui (Ambojn) may also belong to this group, but have not yet been surely classified.[8] The northern tribes are sometimes collectively called by the Ovimbundu *Olongoya*, a term which implies that they speak a language unintelligible to the Ovimbundu, but which has not the derogatory sense of "*Ngangela*".[9] Unlike the eastern peoples, the peoples to the south and north of the Ovimbundu are recognised as ocanu (people), or even vakwetu (comrades).[10]

[18C]

DEMOGRAPHY

The 1940 Angola Census[11] estimates the number of Ovimbundu (Mbundu) as 1,331,087, of whom 694,504 are females, 636,583 males. Childs[12] points out that this number should be decreased by at least 150,000 owing to the erroneous inclusion of several small non-Ovimbundu tribal groups.

161

(1) See map.
(2) See McCulloch, 1951, p.32.
(3) The term used for "person" in the proverb is ocanu, a "potential" person - a word used for adolescents. See pp. below.
(4) The Bangala are sometimes held to be related to the Congo rather than the Lunda group.
(5) See below, E.
(6) 1935, pp.45-69.
(7) Childs, 1949, p.8.
(8) Ibid.
(9) Ibid., p.189.
(10) Ibid. p.x.
(11) Quoted in Mendes Correia, 1942, p.423, and Bermudes, 1948.
(12) 1949, p.9.

The coastal strip

131 was at times traversed by the Ovimbundu who know of the sea and
484 call it *kalunga*. Bihéan caravans crossed to the coast with slaves, as history shows, but the nature of the coastal strip marks it as a western barrier limiting the expansion of the Ovimbundu in that direction. The coast line itself is of the greatest moment in the consideration of historical factors. From Loanda, Benguela, and
[177] Mossamedes on the coast, the Portuguese penetrated the interior, so making contacts with the Ovimbundu to the encouragement of caravan trade. The importance of this European contact will be seen in subsequent chapters.

The south and southwest parts of Angola are of particular importance in studying the contacts of the Ovimbundu, but to give here the details of the wealthy cattle-keeping culture of these regions, which were accessible through peaceful proximity, trade, and occasional raiding, would be an anticipation of chapter X, "Culture Contacts."
[123] One topographical point is of primary importance; namely, the ease with which the Ovimbundu could descend from their strongholds to the low-lying land of the west and south, whereas the reverse journey is much more difficult for a people unaccustomed to manoeuvring and finding their way among hills.

• 101 Having described the northern, central, western, and southern areas, there remains only the eastern section to consider; this presents several features of peculiar geographical and ethnological interest.
[133] The eastern section of Angola is either slightly undulating or flat, the general characteristic is dryness, and vegetation is somewhat
[136] sparse though sufficient to shelter many kinds of antelope.

The major population is the Vachokue, a warlike, hunting people, who follow agricultural pursuits but slightly, and do not keep cattle. Examination of the literature describing early exploration indicates
[126] the truculent nature of these eastern people with whom caravans of Ovimbundu were in frequent conflict. Umbundu caravans crossed this country when making their way to Rhodesia, culture contacts with which are discussed in chapter X.

The results of contact of Ovimbundu and Vachokue tribes, so far as physical miscegenation is concerned, are mentioned in chapter "Physical Appearance"; while the social effects of slavery resulting from hostilities are described in chapter VI, "Social Life."

174 Rhodesia is a cattle-raising country, but the hostility of the
231 Vachokue, the great distance from central Angola to Rhodesia, and the general dryness of the country to be crossed, discourage the idea that the Ovimbundu obtained their cattle from Rhodesia. If it is

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III. HISTORICAL SOURCES

175 The object of this chapter is the presentation of a summary of
173 literature relating to Angola from A.D. 1500 down to the present
167 day. In this literature there may be accounts of the movements of tribes which will throw some light on the origin of the Ovimbundu, and the date of their migration into the Benguela Highlands. Present-day tradition of the Ovimbundu is unanimous in declaring that the tribe came from the northeast of its present locality, but some historical justification of this belief is desirable. The word Ovimbundu ("people of the fog") may refer to the heavy morning mists of highland regions, and there is the possibility that the Ovimbundu adopted this name when they settled on the high plateau.

[101]

121 If there is historical evidence in favor of the traditional home of the Ovimbundu being the region of the north and northeast of Angola, what was the ethnological background of these areas at the time when the Ovimbundu became detached from a matrix of northern Angolan tribes? In other words, what cultural factors are the Ovimbundu likely to have brought with them into the Benguela Highlands? The ultimate origin of these factors is a point which has not been neglected (chapter XI, "Wider Culture Contacts"), but for the moment the primary concern is the historical background of the Ovimbundu, with special reference to tribal movements and cultural traits.

As part of this historical inquiry, contacts of the Portuguese and the Ovimbundu are of importance. When and where did the Portuguese come into contact with the Ovimbundu and with what results to the indigenous culture?

127 Chapters IV–IX deal exclusively with my field work among the Ovimbundu in 1929. Therefore it is pertinent to ask to what extent the ethnological observations of travelers and early explorers will corroborate the information recorded in my own notes. Will there be contradiction or confirmation of personal observations? Possibly the ethnological notes obtained from historical sources will serve, not merely to corroborate my field work, but actually to extend the area of occurrence of important cultural traits which I noted in 1929.

The literature describing Angolan history and customs is here presented in the form of a chronological bibliography, which is annotated so as to emphasize points bearing on the purpose of this historical analysis. That there should be a fragmentary presentation of data is an inevitable consequence of the nature of the literature.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

The kernel of the migratory problem of the Ovimbundu is reached 101
when Torday traces out the history of the Kimbundu, for the Kimbundu are present-day neighbors of the Ovimbundu, to whom they are closely allied in language and culture (*ovi* is a Bantu plural prefix, which was perhaps used to express the inclusion of Kimbundu and Babunda under the general name Ovimbundu).

Torday's sifting of the historical evidence results in the conclusion 174
that the Kimbundu came from the northeast, fighting their way to 167
the Luando. These Kimbundu divided, with civil war as a conse- 101
quence. One section crossed the river Kwanza, south of which they specialized in agriculture after becoming sedentary. Their sub-chief they called the *Kalunga*, which is the present-day word used by the Ovimbundu in greeting their chiefs. Traditions of the Ovimbundu point to the northeast as a center from which they spread at least ten generations ago. The rise of the powerful kingdom of Lunda dates from the seventeenth century, and although the details of this concentration of power in northeast Angola are unknown the general effects are understood. There was a great displacement of tribes in a southerly and southwesterly direction. In connection with the suggestion that the Ovimbundu came from the northeast of Angola, there is the necessity for recording the absence of even a fragment of historical evidence or tribal tradition indicating that the Ovimbundu came from the south or the east of Angola.

Cultural affinities of the Ovimbundu with tribes of the southwest 174
Congo in particular, and with western Bantu culture in general, 171
strongly support the foregoing deductions from historical sources (chapter X).

There is a probability that tribal disturbances resulting from the rise of the Lunda Empire led to a spread of the Vacholue over eastern Angola. Some of the effects of this contact have already been mentioned in chapter II, where contacts of the Ovimbundu and the Vacholue were discussed. The journey brought me into contact with the Vacholue at Cangamba, Katokn, and Ngalangi, of which Cangamba is the most easterly.

Witnessing of initiation ceremonies combined with observation of physique, language, and artifacts, leads me to agree with Torday that Cangamba is probably the ancient center of Vacholue culture. As one proceeds from Cangamba westward this type of culture becomes thinner as the borders of the country occupied by the Ovimbundu are approached. On the border line between the cultures of the Vacholue and the Ovimbundu, notably at Ngongo near Ngalangi,

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174 there is tribal and cultural miscegenation. Both Umbundu and
171 Vachokue languages are spoken; boys of Ngalangi were seen to wear
[181] initiation costumes similar to those worn at Cangamba by the Vachokue, but on proceeding farther westward into territory exclusively occupied by the Ovimbundu, such initiation ceremonies are either absent or attenuated in ritual.

144 Elende, one center of research among the Ovimbundu, repre-
101 sents the purest Umbundu speech and culture observable at the present day. But in chapter IV some physical resemblance of the Ovimbundu to the Vachokue is noted. Warfare commonly resulted in the taking of slaves, a fact which might account for an apparent infusion of Vachokue blood in some of the Ovimbundu.

174 The historical data suggest a northern or northeastern starting
167 point of Umbundu migrations. Therefore an inquiry into the ethnology of these areas will be useful in showing the kind of culture with which the Ovimbundu were in contact before their settlement in the Benguela Highlands. If historical sources disclose the nature of northern Angolan culture from the year A.D. 1500 onward, such evidence can then be considered in relation to cultural traits of the Ovimbundu at the present day.

The establishment of strong cultural resemblances between extant Umbundu culture and older cultural patterns of northern Angola, would tend to strengthen the evidence of history respecting the northern origin of the Ovimbundu.

131 The regions dealt with in the following summary of ethnological
174 facts are the Cabinda Enclave to the north of the Congo estuary, the region of San Salvador, the hinterlands of Loanda and Benguela, and the area of northern Angola between Lat. 7° and 9° S. and Long. 13° to 22° E. This covers the whole area with which the Ovimbundu are likely to have been in contact before entering their present home.

175 My survey begins with the observations of Andrew Battell in
101 1596. His account deals mainly with the northwestern part of Angola, a country bordering on and actually including territory now occupied by the Ovimbundu, who in all probability came in contact with the Jaggas, whose habits of life are described by Battell.

Torday and Joyce identify the Jaggas with the present-day Bayaka, whose cultural resemblances to the Ovimbundu are examined later. In my opinion, the Jaggas correspond well with the Bihéan section of the Ovimbundu, an itinerant and exceedingly warlike people.

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The foregoing facts, when compared with field work among the Ovimbundu, indicate that the old culture of the Congo and northern Angola bears a strong resemblance to Umbundu culture at the present day. A more detailed analysis of this resemblance is made in chapter X. 174

The following notes dealing with exploration in Angola (1800–1930) are adduced for critical comparison with my own observations among the Ovimbundu. 175 171

The work of Sir R. F. Burton describing the exploration of Lacerda and other Portuguese pioneers, is more useful for geographical than for ethnological information. Lacerda's journey to Czambe, south of Lake Moero, was performed in 1798. A mention of veneration for the dead and consultation of the deceased on all occasions of war or of good fortune, is made (p. 127). These are important points in the present tribal life of the Ovimbundu. [114] [769]

Bowditch (1824) writes from information given to him by Almeida and Saldanha. There are valuable references to the Vacilenge, a people adjacent to the Ovimbundu, who refused to kill their cattle, "rather than do which they will endure famine to extremity." This note was made about Long. 15° E. and Lat. 15° S. (p. 34). The cattle were milked, and cattle-raiding by the Ovimbundu was common at this time. Many present-day Ovimbundu do not milk their cattle, but the Vacilenge still follow their milking custom observed before 1824. 175 101 234

Livingstone's journey through northeast and northern Angola in 1853 contains references to the Vacholue who seemed bent on plunder (I, p. 370). Livingstone noted cotton spinning, which I recorded as an occupation of males of the Ovimbundu at Elende. Livingstone, like other early travelers, encountered caravans of Bihéans (Ovimbundu) bearing elephants' tusks and beeswax, commodities, which, along with slaves, formed the chief merchandise of these caravans from the Benguela Highlands (p. 466). Livingstone notes and sketches (Plate XIII, Fig. 10) the double-handled hoe (p. 442) which is still used. 175 171 [439] [412]

J. J. Monteiro (I, p. 61) saw the poison ordeal administered. The poison itself was prepared from the thick hard bark of a large tree (*Erythrophleum guineense*). The place of observation was Mongue Grande, just south of the Congo estuary, and again Monteiro was present when the poison cup was given to two women at Ambrizette. Of this ordeal there is more to be said when discussing the culture contacts of the Ovimbundu, because the ordeal is a basic factor of [695] [824]

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He draws the crescentic arrowhead (p. 123) still common among the Ovimbundu and Vachikue; the double iron gong (p. 122); and the musical bow, which he calls a viola (p. 121). 175 114 [534]

Sogaur states that iron-working had an advanced technique at Dindo, more than half a century ago. According to Sogaur, the blacksmith was using scrap iron from European sources (II, p. 14). 175 326

Perhaps the most valuable of Chatelain's books is "Fifty Folk Tales of Angola." The stories are accompanied by translations and ethnological notes, the most important of which are references to the carrying of a corpse on a pole; the building of a cairn of stones over the corpse of a hunter; matrilineal descent and the power of the maternal uncle over the persons of his nieces and nephews (sisters' children). My observations included some details respecting the pawning of a sister's children to redeem the debts of their mother's brother. Chatelain adds that sisters' children are successors to private property and chieftainship (pp. 8–10). My notes agree that property is inherited by children of a deceased man's sister, but my informants said that a new chieftain is normally the eldest son of the principal wife of the dead chief. Chatelain's folklore stories, fifty in number, relate chiefly to animals; this was the only kind of story told to me, but W. C. Bell has recorded a few tales of another type. 173 [114] [764] [611] [604] [429] [538]

Marquardsen (1928) devotes only one-fourth of his book to the ethnology of Angola, which he treats in a very general way; there is no section dealing specifically with any particular tribe. The author calls attention to Chapman's observation of rock paintings of South African Bushman type, between Cuma and Luimbale in northwest Angola. I have elsewhere remarked on the occasional occurrence of physical types which show a strain of Bushman blood. Today Bushmen penetrate southern Angola from the Kalahari (Plate LXIX, Figs. 1, 2), but their presence in times past or present does not affect the course of history or the data of ethnology to an appreciable extent. 114 177 [531] [144]

Marquardsen gives some notes of a general kind on Vaheneca, Mahuila and other tribes of southwest Angola. The suggestion is feasible that the Umbundu name Suku, for a supreme being, is the same as the Nzambi of Lunda and the Congo. Marquardsen refers to the importance of the maternal uncle in Umbundu society, to the poison ordeal, and to the burial of an Umbundu chief in oxhide, all of which points were recorded in my observations at Elende. 114 101

Ferreira Diniz's book is unobtainable, but, judging from the summary given in *Anthropos* (XX, 1925, pp. 321–331), the information was collected by a questionnaire widely distributed among adminis-

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FF13 Mbundu FP13

114 trative posts. I agree that people between Caconda and Huila
101 represent a racial mixture of the Ovimbundu and the Ovambo. The record speaks of painting-houses for girls at Cabinda, an item which agrees with reports from other sources. The jottings concerning tribes from Cabinda to the far south of Angola are too vague to be used in ethnological work with confidence.

There are many points on which the work of A. Schachtzabel should be consulted for the purpose of making comparisons with my
[621] own observations. The chief of these are a note and photograph on
[289] village construction (p. 130); the musical bow (p. 32); the loom
[175] (plate VI); transmigration of the soul of a chief into an animal (p. 51);
[524] and the game of mancala (p. 52). My observations of initiation at
[841] Katoko, Ngalangi, and Cangamba agree well with that of Schachtzabel at Katoko, but I was able to obtain more detail and more
[292] numerous photographs of the ritual of initiation. The spinning of cotton (p. 143) is exactly the process so frequently witnessed now at Elende. Iron-working (p. 111) appears to be comparable with the technique at Elende, but Schachtzabel seems to have missed the ritual. I was not so fortunate as this author in finding the old type of iron-smelting furnace in use.

114 The work of Statham is devoted primarily to hunting and descrip-
136 tions of plant and animal life. The chapter given to a casual description of people among whom he passed is not useful as ethnology; but the book is of service in providing a background of natural history. Information on the tsetse fly in Angola (p. 294) assists ethnological work by showing the determining effect of this biological factor.
[231] Presence of the fly is prohibitive to cattle-keeping, therefore cattle are not kept along the river courses which are infested with this pest.

114 Alexander Barns made no pretence of writing more than a travel book; nevertheless he publishes photographs of ethnological value, gives useful historical summaries, and deals with economic problems of production and transportation.

114 Tucker's book "Drums in the Darkness," though written to
175 interest the American public in mission work, contains many ethnological statements. The chief of these relate to the structure of the compound (p. 37); the dress of women (p. 69); naming of twins and triplets; and other items which agree well with data from the district in which I worked. There are notes on drum signals (p. 74) and
[292] cannibalism (p. 77). Apparently drum signals were in use at Bihé half a century ago. Forty years ago a slave was killed and eaten
[264] at the installation ceremonies for a new king, a point that was noted

IV. PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

142 Among the Ovimbundu there are two main physical types. One of these is of brown skin color and slender build. In this type the calves and thighs are poorly developed, and the chest girth is slender in keeping with the general development. In general the physical 144 characteristics are distinctly different from those of a typical West African Negro as represented by the Kru and the Ibo tribes.

The Ovimbundu are Bantu Negroes who possibly result from a crossing of Hamites and true Negroes, a hypothesis which would account for both the light-colored slim type and the shorter, darker, more sturdy type. But E. Torday (Herbert Spencer, Descriptive [114] Sociology of African Races, London, 1930, Preface, p. iii) thinks that differences of physique among Sudanic and Bantu Negroes are sufficiently accounted for by isolations and environmental differences. Torday denies the need for postulating an infusion of Hamitic blood, but his opinion is opposed to that which has found general acceptance.

The darker Ovimbundu with more facial hair may represent an infusion of Vachokue blood because there was warfare between the Ovimbundu and the Vachokue of eastern Angola with the result that some of the latter were taken as slaves. Types of the Ovimbundu are shown (Plates LII–LIV).

101 The Vasele, an Umbundu-speaking people of west-central Angola, 142 form a linguistic and cultural pocket because of their isolation in rugged country. Their physique shows no pronounced differences [304] from that of the Ovimbundu, but the methods of scarification, tooth mutilation, and personal ornament are in distinct contrast with those of the Ovimbundu. The Ovimbundu have only a V-shaped notch in the two upper central incisors, whereas the Vasele chip all their teeth to points (Plate LXXVI, Figs. 1, 2).

[302] The Luvando of southwest Angola resemble the Ovimbundu in general physique, though the great difference in hairdressing and personal ornament is likely to give a contrary impression (Plate LIX, Figs. 1, 2).

The Vahemba are particularly well developed (Plate LXII, Figs. 1, 2). Not until Mongua is reached does one find a people who are distinctly different from the Ovimbundu in all respects. The Vakuanyama of Mongua are noticeably tall and slim, much taller and slimmer than the Ovimbundu, while their physiognomy is more refined (Plates LXIII; LXVIII, Fig. 2). The Vakuanyama are a pastoral tribe whereas the Ovimbundu are principally agricultural.

3: Hambly 2-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

The picture of types gathered at 'Ngalangi (Plate LXXXIX, Fig. 3) shows, reading from left to right along the back row, then along the front row in the same direction: an Ocimbundu; an Ocivokine; a man of the Vangangella; an Uluchazi woman; a Lunda man; and two types of the Vangangella. 142 101

The M'Bunda man and woman photographed at Cangamba display characteristic deformation of the upper central incisors (Plate XCI, Figs. 1, 2). Photographs of a Mussarongo man and two women, taken about a hundred miles east of Malange, show no great difference from the Ovimbundu except in their shorter stature (Plates LXX, Figs. 1, 2; LXXI, Figs. 1, 2). The Bushman (Plate LXIX, Figs. 1, 2) shows a type found wandering in small bands in the south of Angola. These photographs were taken at Caeliggi. [304]

The dress and personal ornaments of the tribes dwelling to the south of the Ovimbundu (Plates LIX–LXVIII) are entirely different from the clothing and decorative styles observed in the areas occupied by the Ovimbundu. This statement is true with regard to bodily covering, ornaments, tooth mutilation, use of pigment, scarification, and hairdressing. 171 301 304

In respect of all these factors, males and females of the Ovimbundu have distinctive patterns which do not appear to have influenced, or to have been influenced by the styles around them. [177]

In working southward from Elende I passed through typical Umbundu cultures until the vicinity of Kipungo was reached. At this place the change in physical appearance, ornaments, and hairdressing was remarkable both for its abruptness and distinctiveness. But the change from agricultural to pastoral pursuits is gradual.

A comparison of photographs indicates at once the truth of this statement, which can be further illustrated by a detailed description of the ornaments observed from Kipungo to Mongua.

By far the most important of these is the circular ombo shell made from the basal part of a gastropod shell of the genus *Conus* Linn; and allied forms. These are highly prized, not because of any intrinsic worth, but on account of strong sentiment arising from their bequest, which is usually in the female line. I have, however, seen a few males of the Vakwanyama wearing these shells. For the old ombo shells monetary offers equal to the earnings of a woman for a period of six months were made, but without success. One woman wavered somewhat, but finally decided that she dared not return to her home without her ombo shells. From a Portuguese trader I bought, for a small sum, ombo shells showing stages in manufacture. 301 321 [825] [562]

4:Dorsey E-4,5 (no date)1899 FP13 Mbundu FP13

THE OCIMBANDA, OR WITCH-DOCTOR OF THE OVIMBUNDU OF PORTUGUESE SOUTHWEST AFRICA.

114 In July of last year the Anthropological Department of the Field Columbian Museum secured an ethnological collection from the Ovimbundu of the Portuguese African province of Angola. The collection was made by Rev. T. W. Woodside, a missionary for seven years among the Ovimbundu, and, on account of its completeness and the full data which accompanied the objects, is of unusual importance and value. Perhaps of chief interest among the series [121] of objects illustrating the various phases of native life in this region is the complete "medicine chest" of a witch-doctor. This I shall describe, making free use of the extensive notes furnished by Mr. Woodside, supplemented by several conversations during which the objects themselves were discussed, and much information furnished concerning the Ovimbundu in general. The collection under consideration was obtained from a single individual, and has seen long use.

101 The Ovimbundu are a southern division of an extensive group of people known as the Bundas, who, in turn, belong to the group of Bantu populations. They occupy the territory of the Bailundu and Bihe plateaus, from Benguella to the Quanza River, a table-land 4000 to upwards of 6000 feet high, and in south latitude about twelve 142 degrees. The Ovimbundu are described by Mr. Woodside as a dark-skinned people, varying from coffee-brown to quite black, with thick curly hair. They are entirely uncivilized, but are a peaceable, 105 kindly people. Their food is chiefly vegetal, although they possess cattle, sheep, goats, pigs, and chickens. They practise polygamy, and the women prepare the food and do nearly all the field work. The men are famous as traders, and journey to the interior for rubber, wax, ivory, and slaves; the latter they secure by purchase from the country of the Lubas. The principal medium of exchange is a cheap cotton cloth which is obtained from white travellers.

791 Among the Ovimbundu, as in nearly all parts of Africa, the 759 witch-doctor is an important personage. He is feared by all classes, and often has more influence and power than the chief himself. Whenever anything is lost or stolen, they apply to the witch-doctor to find out where the object is, or who is the thief. As no one is [761] supposed to die a natural death, the doctor is called in to discover the witch who caused the death. To him they go for all kinds of charms to protect themselves against all evils, or to cast a spell on some one whom they wish to injure; to him they also go for help in

5: Hambly E-5 (1929-30) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

OCCUPATIONAL RITUAL, BELIEF, AND CUSTOM AMONG THE OVIMBUNDU

By WILFRID DYSON HAMBLY

[114] WHEN leader of the Frederick H. Rawson-Field Museum Expedition of 1929–30 one of my chief objects was the assembling of a representative collection of the arts and handicrafts of Angola, and particularly of the Ovimbundu who occupy the Benguela highlands.

121

[177] The Ovimbundu have been in contact with Europeans for three centuries at least, therefore I was interested to know to what extent daily avocations had become secularized. That a close connection has existed between the sacred and the profane in Negro tribes is well known, and the influence of spiritual beliefs and magical acts in every department of economic life, including agriculture, hunting, fishing, and handicrafts, has been established. But how durable is this dependence of economic life on magical acts and ancestral benediction? How soon does primitive economic life become commercialized on a European pattern?

Other observations of academic interest and practical value relate to division of labor between the sexes, specialization by age and natural aptitude; also the possibility of some callings being of an hereditary nature.

[101] My observations, which were made chiefly in the regions of Bailundu, Elende near Cuma, and Ngalangi, are conveniently classified under the headings of food supply, handicrafts, medicine-men, and education.

FOOD SUPPLY

824 At the foundation of economic life is nature lore, which among the male
825 population of the Ovimbundu is so detailed and extensive that the knowledge has given rise to a large vocabulary. The highly specialized acquaintance with trees, plants, birds, mammals, and reptiles on the part of most of the men was a surprise to me. Such information was commonly shared by males, and was in no way peculiar to the professional hunter.

I was easily able to collect a list of fifty birds which are readily distinguished by boys (who shoot them with blunt wooden arrows), and all men seemed familiar with forty species of trees, whose timbers, barks, and fruits were distinguished and named. Boys were exceptionally well acquainted with small mammals; including several kinds of rats and mice, which are trapped, boiled, and eaten. For Field Museum I made a collection of snakes and lizards; a task which again showed the native power of observation and adequacy of vocabulary. Some reptiles, whose re-

5: Hambly E-5 (1929-30)1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

containing the head and attaching it to a pole by which it was supported on the shoulders of two bearers. Then followed a series of questions from the village chief (sekulu), and answers were supposed to be given through forward or backward swinging of the pole. A forward swing was affirmative, and a backward swing was negative. I have seen this procedure followed with a coffin supported as described, and the questions related to the cause of death. 439 787

The head of a king would be asked, "Do you want an ox for sacrifice? We will give you one." "Do you want a new skin for your head? We will give you one." Such was the ceremony for bringing spiritual aid to what was otherwise a commercial undertaking.

A wooden figure of a female decorated with black feathers was an indispensable part of the equipment of a medicine-man who accompanied a caravan. When in doubt with regard to the path he knelt at the parting of the ways and consulted the figure. Replies came in a falsetto voice attained by plugging his nostrils. Horns containing a mixture of fat, charcoal, and other substances were carried so that they might be planted near a camping ground to drive away thieves and leopards. These horns are still used and are obtainable.

At the present day a belated Ovimbundu, who fears the sun may set before he reaches the next village, will take some earth from an ant hill. This earth he places in the fork of a tree saying, "O sun wait for me a little while." 789

Examination of the culture of the Ovimbundu, combined with observations on the Umbundu language and somatic traits, indicate that the Ovimbundu are a part of the Bantu peoples of southwest Africa. They have, however, taken advantage of the open Benguela highlands to develop their system of agriculture far beyond that which is usually carried on by Negroes in forest clearings. 101 241

In agricultural work a clear division of labor is observed. Men clear timber and burn the bush, after which hoe cultivation is in the hands of women, though men assist with the harvest. Unmarried girls help in the fields and each has a piece of ground whose products are the cultivator's personal property. This gives unmarried girls a measure of economic independence. Usually a girl spends the proceeds of her work in buying trinkets and palm-oil for personal decoration. Under their system of polygyny each wife has her own field, utensils, and a separate hut with its fire and cooking arrangements. The husband visits each hut for four consecutive nights, though in some districts there is a seven night cycle. Men always take evening meals in the men' council house (onjango) in the center (to notice the tombs of hunters, which consist of cairns of stones enclosing a) 241 562 595 562 1

1 [Printer's error: This sentence refers to p. 159. -- Analyst]

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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INTRODUCTION

The Ovimbundu[1] of central Angola appear under various 101
names[2] in narratives by nineteenth and early twentieth century travellers in West Central Africa. In the present century three 121
anthropological studies have been written about them by Childs,[3] Hambly,[4] and Hastings,[5] as well as two shorter studies by Bastos[6] and Santos Brandao,[7] and a large number of articles.[8] Despite the large amount of documentation available there existed a considerable number of gaps, especially as [114]
regards the political system and the kinship system.[9] In proposing to work among the Ovimbundu, I hoped to be able to fill in these gaps, and in particular to provide a study of what appeared to be a double-descent kinship system. I also hoped to study the reactions of an African society to Portuguese rule.

I arrived at Nova Lisboa in roughly the centre of Umbundu 114
country in October 1955. Here, as in Lisbon, I was told that it 121
would be very difficult to find an area where the traditional 114
social life of the Ovimbundu as described in the literature

[1] A plural from the singular Otjimbundu. The adjective and the name of the language is Umbundu. The Ovimbundu people are entirely distinct from the Kimbundu people of northern Angola and the two languages are not mutually intelligible. However, the confusion between the two has gone so far that both Europeans and Africans speak of the Ovimbundu people and language as Kimbundu and of the true Kimbundu as Kasundengo.

[2] Mambari, Nano, Ovimbali, and so on.

[3] G. M. Childs, *Umbundu Kinship and Character*, Oxford, 1949.

[4] W. D. Hambly, *The Ovimbundu of Angola*, Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago, 1934.

[5] *Ovimbundu Customs and Practices* (unpublished thesis) 1953, D. A. Hastings.

[6] Traços Gerais sobre a Etnografia do Distrito de Benguella in *Boletim da Sociedade de Geografia de Lisboa*, 1908, pp. 3–13, 44–56, 81–95, 133–40, 169–76, 197–207.

[7] Articles in *Mensário Administrativo* (Luanda) March–April, July–August 1950, and Sept.–Oct., Nov.–Dec. 1952.

[8] See Bibliography.

[9] For an examination of the ethnographic material as it then was, see Merran McCulloch, *The Ovimbundu of Angola*, Ethnographic Survey of Africa. International African Institute, London, 1952.

[p. xiv is blank – Analyst]

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114 could be observed. Eventually I decided to work in the Bimbe
121 area, in the extreme north-western corner of Umbundu country.
184 The census[10] indicated that Bimbe had a smaller white popula-
[162] tion than any comparable area of Umbundu country, and people who knew it considered that it was one of the areas most likely to retain a relatively conservative social life.

114 In Bimbe I settled in the village of Epalanga in the chiefdom
121 of Gumba. The advantage of Gumba lay in the conservatism
184 for which its people were noted in other chiefdoms; its dis-
101 advantage lay in its proximity to the northern boundary of Umbundu speech and culture, which led me to collect some items of ethnographic information not typical of Umbundu country.[11] On the whole, I am satisfied that the people of Gumba were in the past as in the present Ovimbundu in both speech and way of life.[12]

121 Many of my discoveries were at first negative ones. I could not find any evidence that there was a double system of kinship groups actually in existence; the villages were not composed of agnatic kin; the chief seemed lacking in power. Nor was it easy to obtain detailed information about the past even from old
181 men. There is little interest nowadays in history, nor are the old social institutions regarded, even by those who once participated in them, as being necessarily better than those of the present day. The reason for this attitude seems to lie in Umbundu social psychology with its readiness to accept European authority and
121 values. Interesting as the motivations behind this attitude are, this 'cultural amnesia' caused me much disappointment. I found it much easier to get texts on the caravan trade, and on ceremonial practices and proverbs, than on the political and kinship systems. The inadequacies of the information I received on the political system may be explained by the fact that Gumba is on the fringe of the area tributary to the old kingdom of

[10] Of 1950.

[162] [11] The payment of fines by a man to his dead wife's kin had been formerly practised in Gumba, and still is further north. It does not seem to have been known in living memory elsewhere in Umbundu country.

[12] The northern limit of Umbundu speech is now somewhere to the north of the administrative post of Cela. As there has not been substantial migration from the south, it is reasonable to assume that it is many years since the Gumba–Cela boundary was also the language boundary.

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175 century gives a broadly similar account,[8] among other information giving us the titles of some of the Umbundu ministers, thus Mani-Curio resembles Mwekalia, and Tendala Tjandala.[9] In the same period the Jagas appear in what is now southern Umbundu country.[10] According to Baumann[11] and Estermann[12] they raided and conquered some of the south-western people of the Nyaneka-Humbi group. At the end of the eighteenth century the Jagas and the Ovimbundu still formed distinctive [101] groups, and in the nineteenth century the word Jaga was still used to refer to the Umbundu rulers.[13]

Ethnologists have shown much interest in the question of the origin and subsequent travels of the Jagas.[14] Battell tells us that in a Jaga camp of several thousand persons there would be only twelve or fourteen persons who were of original Jaga stock, the rest recruited *en marche*.[15] There is some evidence to show that the core of some at least of the Jaga hordes were Lunda from the kingdom of Mwata Yamvo. Thus the Imbangala people of Cassange[16] claim to have originated from the migrants from the Northern Lunda kingdom. Both Battell at the beginning of the seventeenth century and Pinheiro de Lacerda at the end of the eighteenth tell us that the Jaga called themselves Imbangala.[17] The Hungarian explorer L. Magyar collected in the

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[8] J. B. Labat, *Relation historique de l'Etiopie occidentale*. Paris 1732. (Translated from the Italian original of Cavazzi.) For the Jagas see Vol. II, pp. 88–303. On infanticide see pp. 114–15, which states that all children born inside a camp and male children born outside a camp were put to death. Presumably female children born outside a camp were spared. Cadornega states that a woman was forbidden under pain of death to give birth in a camp. Is this simply a purification taboo which Battell mistook for a rule of general infanticide? Battell seems fairly reliable, and it is possible that there had been a change of custom between Battell's contacts in about 1600, when the Jagas were simply nomadic raiders, and Cadornega's contacts of about 1670–80, when they were ruling settled states. There is some evidence for such a change in Cavazzi-Labat, who dates it around 1648.

[9] Childs, p. 187.

[10] Ibid. p. 195.

[11] H. Baumann, *Paideuma*, April 1936, pp. 118–51.

[12] C. Estermann, *Etnografia do Sudoeste de Angola* Vol. II (Lisbon 1957), pp. 26–29.

[13] Childs, p. 188 and sources cited there.

[14] Ravenstein, Introduction; Childs, pp. 181–90.

[15] Ravenstein, p. 33.

[16] F. Travassos Valdez. *Six Years of a Traveller's Life in Western Africa*, London, 1861. Vol. II, Chapter V.

[17] Ravenstein, p. 84; P. M. de Lacerda in *Annaes Maritimos e Coloniaes* 3a serie, p. 486 ff.

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175 and the European population greatly increased.[28] In some areas
648 at this time a confused situation arose, in which 'robber barons', white and black, tyrannized over chiefs and villagers
[567] and engaged in the still vigorous slave trade, which now had acquired a few disguises on the coast.[29]

In 1911 the rubber trade ended, and about the same time slavery and the slave trade were effectively suppressed.[30] From this time onwards, too, civil administration began to be effective
[496] and the Benguela Railway became the most important link between the coast and the interior.[31] The trade disappeared, powers of the chiefs declined. The missions, both Catholic and
[297] Protestant, which had relatively little influence during the rubber trade period, gained more and more converts.[32]

101 2. *Ethnography*

Between the Ovimbundu and the sea lie the Hanya, the Nganda, and the Tjisanji tribes of whom little is known except that the Hanya and Nganda seem to be culturally related to the Ovimbundu.[33] To the south are the Nyaneka-Humbi group, cattle-keeping peoples who are culturally and linguistically related to the Ovimbundu, but who did not participate in the
[177] trade.[34] To the east lie the Ngangela[35], the Luimbi, and the

[28] Childs, pp. 210–11.

[29] For an account of Umbundu country at this time see H. W. Nevison, *A Modern Slavery*, New York, 1906. In Gumba I was told that Mutu-ya-Kevela the leader of the 1902–3 revolt had raided villages for slaves but that Samakaka whom Childs (p. 22) describes as a robber baron was spoken of favourably.

[30] Slavery had been legally suppressed from 1878. The slaves were called by other names but no effective change was made till 1910. See A. Bastos, *Monografia de Catumbella* in *Bol. Soc. Geog. Lisboa*, 1910 (pp. 74–81, 105–9, 141–55, 180–5, 225–8, 251–5, 279–5).

[31] Childs, p. 228.

[32] Ibid., pp. 220–23. Personal information.

[33] Ibid., p. 8.

[34] On these peoples see Estermann, *Etnografia do Sudoeste de Angola*, Vol. II.

[35] A tribe using this word as the root of the tribal name is to be found to the south-east of Umbundu country in the area round Vila Artur de Paiva. Padre A. Van Horrik, formerly of the Missão Católica de Cubango, tells me that the map contained in M. McCulloch, *The Southern Lunda and Related Peoples*, (London, 1951) should show the Ngangela as occupying much of the area actually assigned to the Mbwela and the south-eastern Ovimbundu. Mbwela does not seem to be the name any tribe uses for itself (Private information, Estermann and Van Horrik).

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Chokwe.[36] These people are culturally and linguistically different from the Ovimbundu, whom, however, they have influenced, especially in the fields of ritual; the initiation rituals typical of these people have spread into southern and eastern Umbundu territory.[37] The Ngangela call the Ovimbundu 'Ovimbali', a name used in Angola for Africans who live with or imitate whites.[38] I have heard an Otjimbundu use it for the Kimbundu of northern Angola. The south-western peoples call the Ovimbundu 'Va-Nano—they of the north',[39] but also regard the Ovimbundu as being 'civilized'. Very little is known about the peoples to the north of the Ovimbundu, who are also different in language and culture and who are said to have more rituals than the Ovimbundu. These are known collectively by the Ovimbundu as Olongoya, a term with a rather offensive meaning. Historically they are important for the Ovimbundu since it was here that Andrew Battell knew the Jaga hordes, and Umbundu tradition links a number of the chiefly lines to these northern peoples. The Umbundu language seems to be gaining ground in this area.[40]

All the neighbouring peoples seem to be matrilineal, as regards descent, inheritance, and succession, with the exception of the Hanya and the Nganda, who have (Dr. Childs suggests) a double-descent kinship system, as traditionally the Ovimbundu had. All seem, as far as is known, to have had chiefs,[41] though there were no kingdoms to equal the power of Bie and Bailundo in the nineteenth century. Culturally the Ovimbundu seem to have been ready to take over traits from neighbouring tribes, and the Portuguese, and this particularly in the sphere of ritual.[42]

[36] For the Luimbi, see C. W. Scott. 'A Note on the Luimbi of Central Angola', *Africa*, October 1955. For the Chokwe see M. McCulloch, op. cit.

[37] Childs, pp. 115–16.

[38] A trader said that Otjimbali means a domesticated black. Estermann is preparing a study of a Mbali group of southern Angola descended from Kimbundu slaves.

[39] The Nyaneka-Humbi tribes use it for the southern Ovimbundu, the southern Ovimbundu use it for the northern Ovimbundu.

[40] Childs, pp. 186–7; Baumann, op. cit.

[41] Baumann, op. cit. For the installation of chiefs in the Amboim area, see Antonio de Silva Maia, 'Ritos e Ceremonias para a Entronização' in *Mensário Administrativo*, July–August 1953.

[42] Childs, p. 220.

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[1874-1911]

THE OVIMBUNDU UNDER TWO SOVEREIGNTIES

178 The great distinguishing mark of the Ovimbundu was their participation in the caravan trade. Some of the neighbouring people also engaged in trading journeys (e.g. the Chokwe) but in central Angola the dominant traders were the Ovimbundu by reason of their control of the routes to Benguela and Catumbela, a control which as Livingstone's narrative shows they tried for a while to turn into a monopoly.[43] With this must be linked
177 the greater readiness of the Ovimbundu to adopt European ways, marked by the general adoption of cloths for wear by at latest the mid-nineteenth century.[44]

3. *Economics and Social Structure*

101 This section will describe the economic life and social structure which marked the period of the rubber trade (1874–1911).
436 A genuine currency existed in the form of cloth, and fortunes
439 could be made in it. Serpa Pinto tells us of one Otjimbundu who made £3,500 by trading in the interior and that he had met many men who 'turned over capital of a thousand to twelve hundred pounds sterling',[45] presumably in trade goods since Portuguese currency did not circulate among the Ovim-
361 bundu. At the capitals of the kingdoms genuine towns grew up. Magyar in the middle of the nineteenth century estimated that
[162] 5,000 people lived at Bailundo[46] and the British explorer Cameron who had crossed Africa from Zanzibar says of Ekovongo, the capital of Bie, 'the town of Kagnombe, the largest I came across during my whole journey, being more than three miles in circumference. On arrival I was met by the
644 Kagnombe's secretary, chamberlain, and captain of the guard who wore red waistcoats as a sign of their dignity. The secretary was more ornamental than useful, being unable to write, but a subordinate, a black man and native of Dondo, was better educated and conducted the trade of Kagnombe with the coast'.[47]

[43] Ibid., p. 205.
[44] Ibid., p. 206, referring to Magyar as evidence.
[45] Serpa Pinto, pp. 161–2.
[46] Magyar, p. 391.
[47] V. L. Cameron, *Across Africa*, London, 1877. Vol. II, pp. 206–7.

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CHAPTER II

THE CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

In modern Angola, an Overseas Province of Portugal,[1] the Ovimbundu form the most numerous of the African peoples, with their million and a half of population,[2] and have also the reputation of being industrious—especially the Ovimbundu of Bailundo.[3] Their homeland, the Benguela Highland, has also been of importance in the modern economic development of Angola.

On the narrow strip of coastal plain stand three cities[4]—Lobito, Catumbela, and Benguela. Both Benguela and Catumbela knew the rubber trade; Lobito was founded in the early part of this century as the coastal terminal of the Benguela Railway which runs through Umbundu country and beyond the Congo frontier and thence to Elisabethville. The Benguela Railway is the economic backbone of the Highland. On it are the cities of Nova Lisboa and Silva Porto and a string of smaller trading towns. Traders from the Bimbe area drove regularly down to Vila Nova, one such trading town on the line, a distance of a hundred and thirty miles or so to sell maize, and buy trade goods and African villagers knew that along the railway maize sold for better prices and clothes were much cheaper.

[1] This term was used for nearly a hundred years up to 1933 when the term Colony was adopted. In 1951 'colony' was dropped in favour of the old term.

[2] Estimate made in 1955 by Mr. Theodore Tucker then of the Missão Evangelica de Dondi.

[3] Galvão and Selvagem, op. cit., pp. 384-5.

[4] A city receives its title through official recognition. The 1950 census gives Nova Lisboa as having a higher 'civilised' population (7,382 of whom 4,738 were white) than any city except Luanda. The total population has been estimated at 60,000 (Egerton, p. 199). Estimates given me in 1955-6 suggested that Nova Lisboa has some 6,000 'civilised' persons and 20,000-30,000 natives. Lobito has fewer civilised persons but may have a larger native population of perhaps 30,000.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13
Angola FP1

A 797 198 switching to Umbundu or Portuguese for addressing an African, whereas Portuguese is the language used at the Catholic missions even between non-Portuguese.

A M 797 The African Catholic priests then have approximate equality and identity of status with their white confreres within the hierarchic framework of the diocese of Nova Lisboa; the Ovimbundu pastors lack this equality and identity but instead possess greater independence and opportunities for leadership within the Umbundu Native Church, which functions as a partly autonomous body.[19] The difference in functions of the priests and pastors is related to the ultimate aims of missionary action; for the Catholic missions the establishment of a local clergy is part of the complete incorporation of Ovimbundu into the universal Church; for the Protestants the establishment of a local clergy is part of the building up of a totally independent local church.

M 121 I attempt later in this work to show what roles the missions play in social life among the Ovimbundu and in the relations between the 'civilized' and native population. Here it should A M 797 563 be noted that it is the missions rather than commerce or the Government which have opened status-giving positions to the Ovimbundu. The clergy have higher statuses in the total Angolan society than do any other of the *assimilados*. They combine this high status *vis-à-vis* the Europeans with leadership in groupings which include the ordinary villagers, unlike the various welfare societies in which the *assimilados* associate.

000 So much then for the general pattern of cities, communications, and trains, of administration, missionaries, and traders. M 101 175 I now turn to the particular features of the neighbourhood where I lived. Bimbe is said to derive from the name of a princess (Mbimbi) who ruled as a vassal of the king of Ballundo.[20] Here at the beginning of this century Samakaka, a

[19] The missions provide supervision and specialist services including agricultural instruction, community development, education, and health. Village work and actual pastoral activity is the responsibility of the Native Church. For an account of such specialist services see M. F. Cushmann, *Missionary Doctor in Africa*, New York, 1944 and A. Strangeways in *African Women* (June 1956).

[20] Information obtained locally from 'civilized' people. Princesses were very rare among the Ovimbundu, though Childs notes that Sambos (Sambu) had a woman ruler early in its history (p. 176). M [562]

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

'robber-baron', established himself[21] and in 1904 there was a minor rising against the Portuguese[22] (not to be confused with the very extensive Bailundo war of 1902–3). In 1908 the government post was founded for Bimbe, and in 1928 the Catholic Mission was established at the point where the Bailundo Mission had the furthest flung catechetical school in that direction. In 1927 the first trader had settled at Chicunda.[23] The areas under the mission and the post do not coincide, but it may be said that Bimbe is the territory bounded on the west by the River Cuvo or Keve and on the east by the main road from Bailundo to Gabela. The southern boundary of the post ran roughly on a line between the post and the Ponte Salazar (which bridges the Cuvo (or Keve) and takes the road into Cassongue), and the northern boundary is formed by a parallel line drawn from the road some way to the south of Cela to the river. In 1956 the post of Bimbe was divided; much of the western part including the Mission was placed under a new post Luvemba.

Chicunda is twenty kilometres beyond the mission, and seven kilometres beyond Chicunda a turning from the main track brings one to the village of Epalanga. Keeping on the track, a further bifurcation, say two and a half kilometres on, gives a track to the left which leads to a small leper colony, and a track leading straight on and sharply upwards to the village of the chief of Gumba.

This village lies at the summit of a sharp ridge which rises up from the ordinary level and then drops abruptly to a neighbourhood inaccessible to motor transport, which forms the greater part of the Gumba chiefdom. The boundary on the other side is a river across which lies Cela.

Such is the lay-out of the area studied. It is up in the north-western corner of the Umbundu country, indeed down by the Mission, people said that the people of Gumba were not Ovimbundu really but 'Olongoya', as the peoples to the north are termed. Many of the people in Gumba had come from

[21] Childs, p. 22.

[22] Information obtained locally. I did not see official records.

[23] Information obtained locally.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

was a man of fifty or more, who lived in Portuguese style making money from coffee and other crops. He claimed to be an *assimilado* (African with the status of a Portuguese citizen) but in actual fact he was not one. He had employed a man called Kusumula, who lived in Epalanga and was the brother of Kapapelo's wife.

To appreciate the point of Justino's complaint, it is necessary to explain the significance of certain terms indicative of ethnic and social status. Otjimbundu is the singular of Ovimbundu, a people defined by the use of the Umbundu language. It is also used to refer to any black person (thus I was often asked whether there were Ovimbundu [i.e. Africans] in England), and is therefore equivalent to the Portuguese *preto* (black), which when used of a person has a rather pejorative sense like 'native' in other parts of Africa. Livingstone, writing a hundred years ago, remarks of one area in Angola; 'The people under him (the chief) are divided into a number of classes. . . . They are also divided into gentlemen and little gentlemen, and, though quite black, speak of themselves as white men and of the others, who may not wear shoes, as "blacks".'[1] Justino's complaint was that Sapapula had referred to him as a *preto qualquer* or in Umbundu (Sapapula did not speak Portuguese), *otjimbundu tjange*, a mere black.

Justino delivered a speech when the people from Epalanga had settled on the veranda of his house in which he declared with much force that he was not an Otjimbundu '*Ame ngimbundulu*.' This accusation was based on information given him by Kusumula, who alleged that Sapapula had said to government headmen that Kusumula could be recruited for road work, as he worked not for a white (a term applied also to *assimilado*) but for a mere black.

I give the main lines of the ensuing argument. Sapapula denied that he had called Justino a black. Kusumula claimed that Sapapula was always picking on him. Sapapula declared that he had founded the village, and that Kusumula wanted to break it up. Kapapelo said that he had at one time given medicine to a girl and Sapapula had told Jaime to kill him because he might have seduced her. Kutenga Lussae, the chief

[1] Livingstone, *Missionary Travels and Researches*, p. 411.

1: Childs M-S (1884-1940) 1948 FF13 Mbundu FF13

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HABITAT OF THE OVIMBUNDU

AND THEIR POSITION WITH REGARD TO THEIR NEIGHBOURS

Heavy continuous line indicates elevation of 1,500 metres (4,500 ft.).

Broken line indicates limits of Umbundu territory.

○ Leading capital villages (abandoned). ■ Portuguese possession.

[facing p. 1]

1: Chile M-6 (1934-1940) 1940 FF 13 Libreado FF 13

102
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[Facing p. 8]

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

102
631
131

TRIBAL DIVISIONS AND HISTORY OF THE OVIMBUNDU

Heavy continuous line indicates elevation of 1,500 metres (4,500 ft.).

Broken lines indicate Umbundu political boundaries.

⊙ Principal capital towns (olombala) numbered 1 to 14.

1a, 1b, 1c, 1d, 1e, 1f, 1g, 1h, tributaries of Bailundu; 2a, tributaries (Ngangala) of Viye; 3a, tributaries of Ngalangi; 3a, tributary of Civaka; 4a, tributary of Wambu.

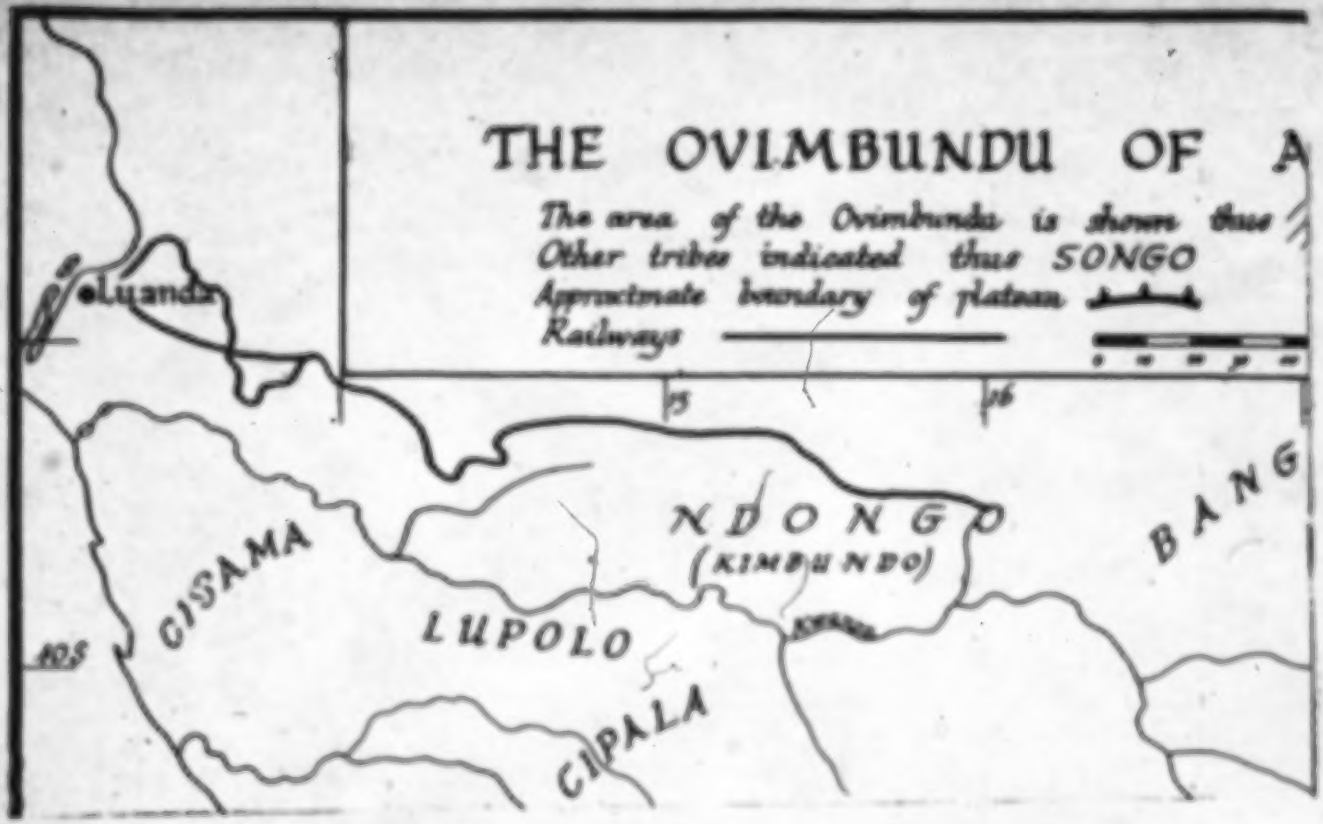
Portuguese presídios with dates of founding (numbered I—XIV).

[Facing p. 167]

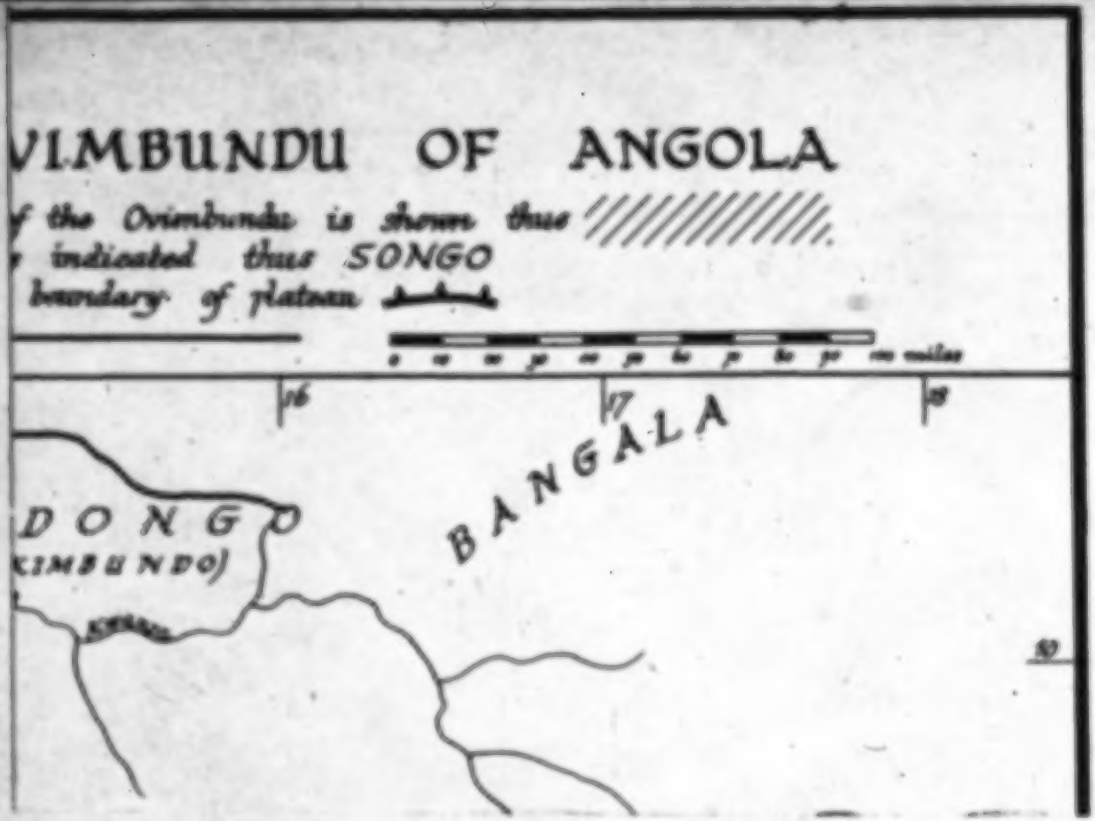
2:McCulloch E-4(1945-51)1952 FP13 Mbundu FP13

102

End Map


THE OVIMBUNDU OF A
The area of the Ovimbundu is shown thus
Other tribes indicated thus SONGO
Approximate boundary of plateau
Railways
Luanda
15
16
NDONGO
(KIMBUNDO)
BANG
CISAMA
LUPOLO
CIPALA
10S

End Map (a)


VIMBUNDU OF ANGOLA
of the Ovimbundu is shown thus
indicated thus SONGO
boundary of plateau
BANGALA
DONGO
(KIMBUNDO)

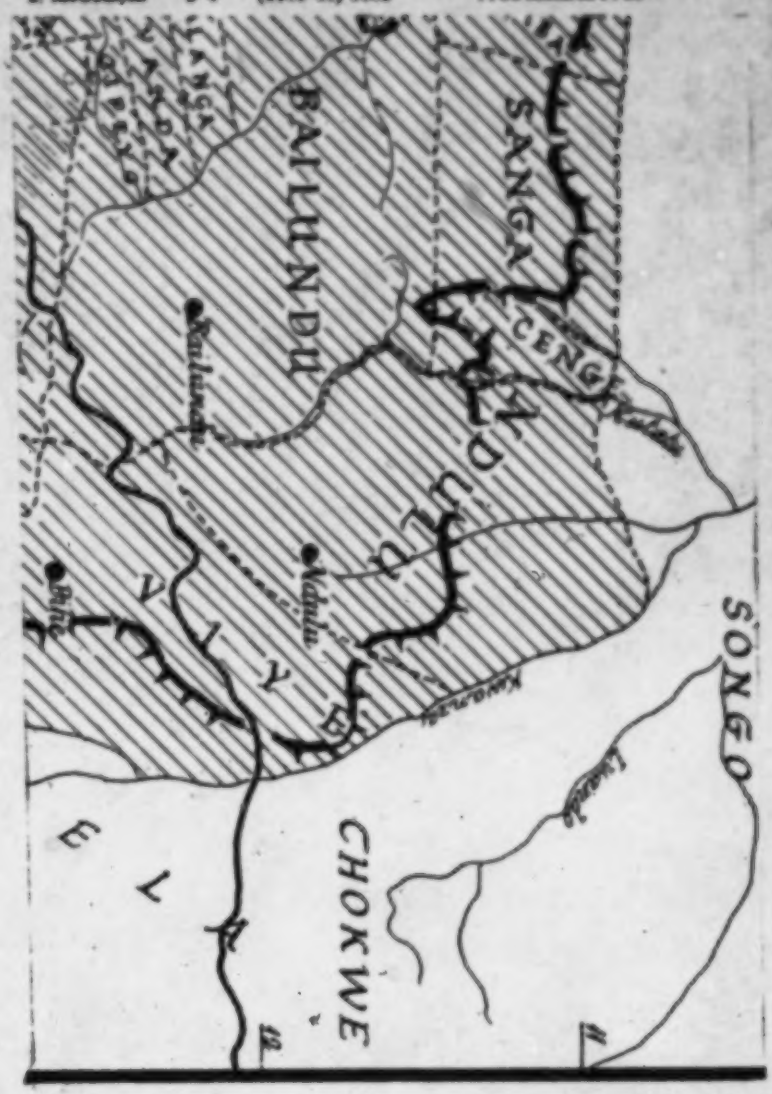
End map (b)

● 107

ATLANTIC OCEAN
Lobito
Benguela
Catumbela
CISANJI
ESELE
Novo Redondo
MBUI
ESELA
NAMBA
SANGA
CENG
BAILUNDU
NGALANGA
ANDA
OTEKO
Kuito
Kuito
UGANDA

End Map (c)

D. McCulloch E-4 (1948-52) 1952 FF13 Mbundu FF13

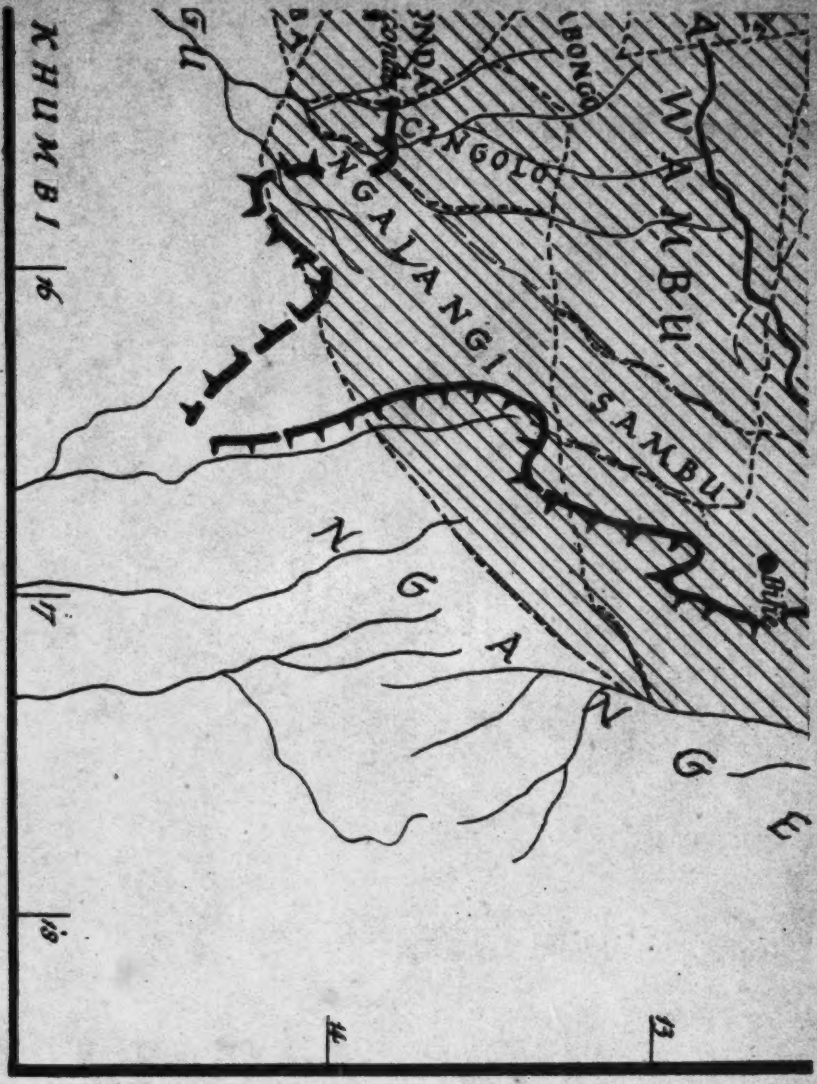

SONGO
CHOKWE
LUNDA
BALUNDU
SANGA
CENG
LANGA
LASOA
LOBEVO
Kasanje
Mona Quimbundo
Mona Kimbundo
Lombe
Kwango
Kasai
Lulua
Lubilanji
Kwa
Nzadi
Kwilu
Nzadi
Kwilu
Bulu
Kwilu
Kwilu
Kwil

End Map (e)

2: McCulloch E-4 (1945-51) 1952 FP13 Mbundu FP13

2: McCulloch E-4 (1945-51) 1952 FP13 Mbundu FP13

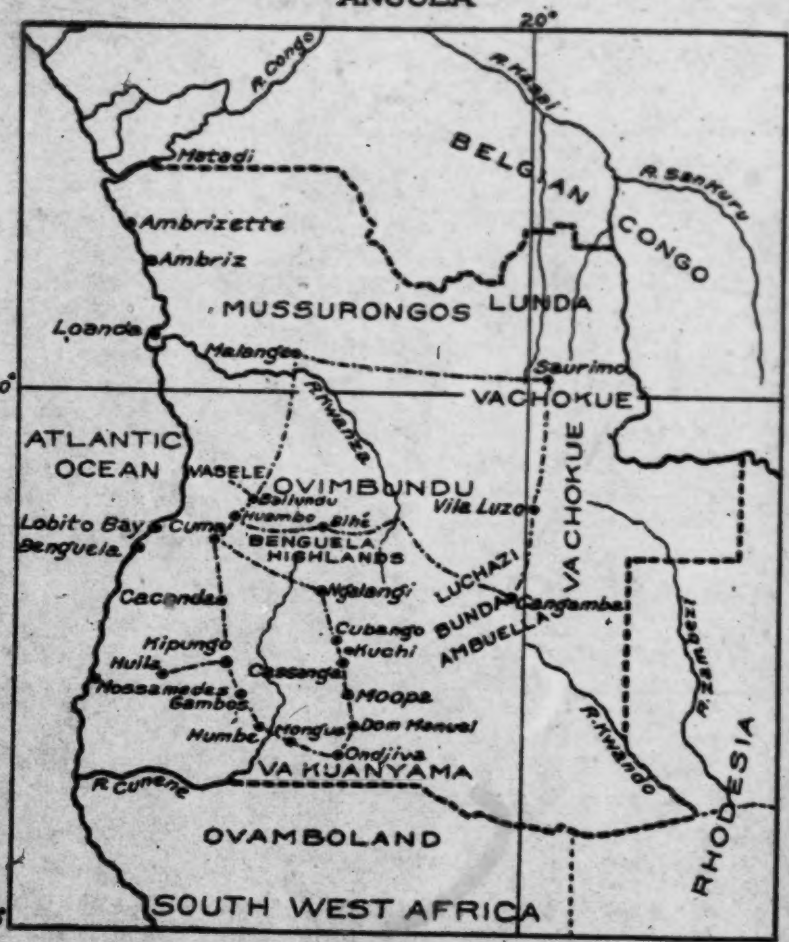
● 102



End Map (d)

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

102
131



MAP SHOWING ROUTE OF EXPEDITION

Scale: 1 inch = 220 miles; —— Indicates route

[Facing p. 87]

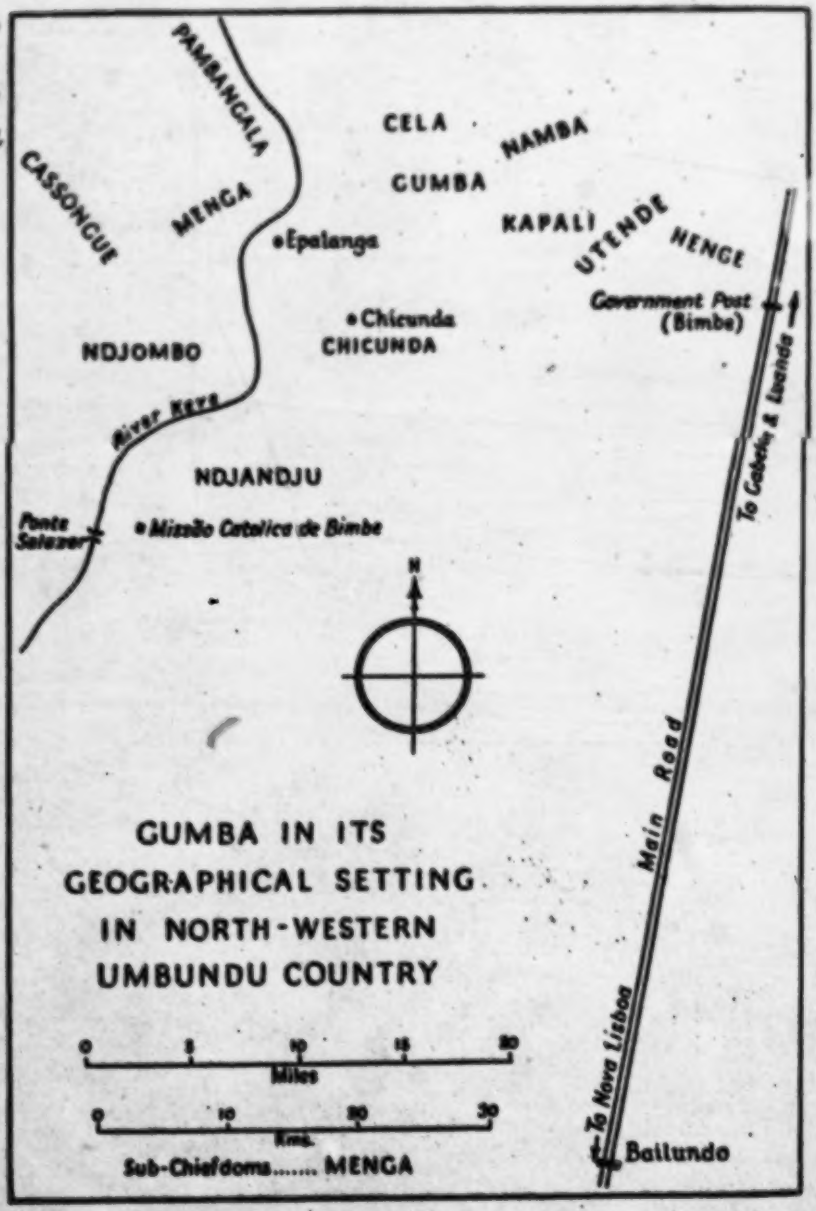
6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

102
131
631

Adapted from the map facing page 167 in Childs' *Umbundu Kinship and Character.*

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

102
131
361
634



GUMBA IN ITS GEOGRAPHICAL SETTING IN NORTH-WESTERN UMBUNDU COUNTRY

1: Childs M-S (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

175 which the 'Jagas' had, although they soon adopted the language of
197 the people whom they conquered. As recently as fifty years ago the mother of the king of Bailundu spoke Umbundu brokenly, since she came from Cipala, and her sons were sent to complete their education with her people where later they were often called to rule.[1]

173 Recognition by the Ciyaka people that their forefathers came
114 from the region where the Imbangala now live has been noted.
167 It may have been a similar tradition heard in Viye which started Magyar to find out the tradition of 'Kinguri'. Such a tradition was mentioned in Viye as late as 1898.[2] This relation between the Umbundu ruling families and either the 'Jagas' or the Imbangala has been noted by several of the Portuguese writers. Lopes de Lima, in his History of the Discovery of the Congo, adds a footnote on the 'Jagas' as follows: 'The Jagas are almost nomadic peoples . . . coming from the interior of Africa, . . . there are some on the frontiers of the Congo, Angola, and Benguella, where some have fixed their habitations (as those of Cassange, and Bailundo).'[3] Writing in 1797 a certain Col. Pinheiro de Lacerda said of the inhabitants of Ngalangi, Kakonda, Wambu, Bailundu, &c.: 'These are they of the uplands, who are divided into two groups, those of one are called "Quinbundos",[4] (these do not eat human flesh); the others are called "Quimbangalas", who eat it, and when they make their sacrifice, which all attend, all eat the "Macongo".'[5] At that period the diversity of these two component parts of the Ovimbundu people was so apparent that they were even spoken of as separate and distinct peoples.

103 *Place-names.* Before leaving the subject of migratory move-
167 ments a word should be said on the evidence of place-names. There is nothing to prove, except in a few instances where traditions have been collected, that the recurrence of identical or similar names at different places indicates the actual lines of migration followed by the several tribal groups represented. It may be said, however, that this line of evidence, taken together

[1] See *Missionary Herald*, 1888, p. 70.
[2] *Missionary Herald*, 1898, p. 108.
[3] *Annaes Mar. Col.*, 1845, p. 93.
[4] Taken from the singular form *ocinbundo*. As already explained, the change of *chi* to *qui* is a commonly met mutilation of the Bantu forms.
[5] *Annaes Mar. Col.*, 1845, p. 488. There follows a circumstantial account of the ceremony of *Olu lia Ekongo*, to which reference has already been made.

1: Childs M-S (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

with that which has already been reviewed, might make it possible to determine the demography of the Benguela Highland prior to the formation of the Umbundu kingdoms. It is also further evidence as to the demographic make-up of the Ovimbundu. Some of these recurring place-names evidently represent elements which now constitute separate entities outside the Umbundu kingdoms, although they probably made contributions to the formation of those kingdoms. Others represent elements which probably moved away from the earlier invasions from the north but stayed in their new sites to amalgamate with later arrivals. Some may represent successive splittings-off from a stock which thus settled at various places. Many recurrent place-names could be shown both in this region and outside the language-grouping.

Attitudes toward Other Tribes. Attitudes of the Ovimbundu towards the various neighbouring tribes are instructive. Mention has already been made of the attitude of the southern 'Bangala' people in their inclusion of the Ovimbundu of Kalukembe within their own system of exogamy. The Ovimbundu recognize a common humanity with the peoples who are their neighbours both on the south and on the north. They are all *omanu*,[1] people, or even *takuetu*, comrades. Similar recognition is not extended to the eastern and south-eastern neighbours who are lumped together under the derogatory term of 'va Ngangela' or *ovingangela*.[2] This eastern region as far as the Great Lakes was the happy hunting-ground of the slave-traders from Viye and from Bailundu. There is a term *olongoya* which is applied to the northern neighbours, but without the derogatory connotation of 'Ngangela'. *Olongoya* has a linguistic connotation as did *barbaroi* in the Greek, and refers to the fact that these neighbours speak what is to the Ovimbundu an unintelligible language. How much of rationalization there may be in these attitudes and prejudices one cannot say, but it seems that in them there is some recognition of tribal origins and relationships, of the fact that across the Benguela Highland migrations have swept from north to south.

Conclusion. In consideration of the above evidence, it is now possible to draw conclusions concerning the origin of the Ovi-

[1] *Omanu* is the Umbundu equivalent for the Nguni *abantu*, which has come to be applied to the whole language family.

[2] This Umbundu attitude is best illustrated by the proverb 'As a grass hut is not a house, so an *ovingangela* (singular) is not a person (*omanu*).'

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

[p. xi]

NOTE ON ORTHOGRAPHY OF AFRICAN WORDS USED

Ovimbundu (pl.) is the name of the people (sing. *Ocimbundu*). 101
Umbundu is the name of the language, of the culture, and the form of the descriptive adjective.

The orthography used in most particulars follows recommendations of the International African Institute.[1] The sounds of Umbundu are relatively simple. Each vowel has a single value—for practical purposes the same as in Spanish. The tilde over a vowel indicates nazalization; with *ñ* it indicates the velar *n*, i.e. the value of the English (or German) *ng* in 'singer'. The sound of the English *ch* in 'church' is represented by *c*. The consonants *g* and *j* are always hard; these two and also *d* appear always and only preceded by *n*,—*nd*, *ng*, and *nj*. Likewise *b* never appears alone but preceded by *m*,—*mb*. The other consonants have approximately the same values as in English; *w* and *y* are only used as consonants; *r*, *x* are not found except in foreign words. 104

I have retained the prefixes Oci-mbundu, Ovi-mbundu, and U-mbundu in accordance with the correct Umbundu usage and because it seems that in no other way can confusion with regard to the identity of this people be avoided. When the truncated form of 'Mbundu' is used even great scholars are led to confuse the Ovimbundu with the 'Kimbundu' of the Luanda hinterland.[2] [101] These two peoples must not be confused: they are entirely distinct and even belong to different linguistic zones. An Umbundu Grammar by Dr. Merlin W. Ennis is to be published shortly by the University of Witwatersrand Press.

[1] *A Practical Orthography of African Languages* (London: International Institute of African Languages and Cultures, 1927); *Short Guide to the Recording of African Languages* (London: ibid., 1933).

[2] See, for example, *Bantu Studies*, 1937, p. 375; E. W. Smith, 'Africa: what do we know of it?' *J.R.A.I.*, 1935, p. 71; D. W. Westermann, 'Study of African Languages', *Africa*, 19[illegible], p. 20.

[p. xii is blank]

1: Childs M-S (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

621 they recognise Sekulu Sikillili, the elder of the largest unit, as the village headman. Only in his village is there a dancing floor
[345] (*octili*),[1] which is the centre of village life, social, legal, and recreational. As the name indicates, it is first and foremost a place for recreation, but here also religious functions are held since they involve so much dancing and drinking, and here formal cases are tried. The *octili* is the heart of the village.

345 *The Men's Club-House.* Ngendo does not have that other important Umbundu institution, the Men's Club House (*onjango*).[2] The *onjango* is, or was, hardly less important than the *octili*. Perhaps before it fell to its present state of disuse, its place was of even greater importance, for in the *onjango* all the men, youths,
[262] and boys gathered day by day for the evening meal. From all the kitchens came baskets of stiff corn porridge (*ipata*), and dishes of relish (*ombelela*)[3] which all shared, from the most honoured guest or the villlage elders, down to the naked, ash-whitened little boys just old enough (say from seven or eight years) to leave the kitchens
[574] to their mothers and sisters. In the *onjango* guests were entertained, judicial cases of lesser import were settled, the day's work and gossip diiscussed, and youth was educated by precept and example in nearly everything from traditional history to etiquette. The *onjango* was dining-room, living-room, court, school, hotel, and club, all in one. For some of the Ovimbundu it continues to function.. Upon inquiry I found that in all Kasonge there were hardly ten villages where the *onjango* existed and retained its
[466] former functions. The reasons which my informants assigned are that the demands for road work (in the immediate region), for contract labour (involving absences of from six months to two years), and the difficulty of securing tax-money, did not leave the leisure required for the common meal in the *onjango*. When I
345 made wider inquiries as to localities where the *onjango* now exists
178 and retaiins its former functions, it seems that this institution is widely diecadent. According to my information, the regions where it continues to function are chiefly in Ngalangi, in Viye, and

104 [1] *Octili* comes from the verb *oku ctili*, to dance.

[2] *Onjango* has been traced to the verb *oku ungula*, to converse, but I am doubtful of this derivation. It has been called 'The Palaver House', but this is an evident misnomer, for the *onjango* is much more than that.

[3] *Ombelela* is a word to cover any dish which may be eaten with the porridge staple. It may be meat, beans, mushrooms, or greens, and is preferred with gravy into which pieces of the stiff porridge may be dipped (*oku ovika*).

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

121 Geographical study is valuable in showing that physical factors such as position, topography, soil, and climate have had not only a permissive but a stimulating effect on the development of certain cultural traits.

127 Historical documents dating from the year A.D. 1500 present valuable evidence for tribal movements, the effect of early European contacts, and the existence of certain beliefs and ceremonies. The facts adduced in chapter III are used in chapters X–XII in discussing culture contacts and cultural processes.

197 Inquiry respecting relationships of the Ovimbundu to other African tribes is aided by a study of the Umbundu language, which is shown to be of pure Bantu structure and vocabulary (chapter VIII). The characteristic features of the Umbundu language are those which form the basic elements of Bantu speech in general. These characteristics are alliterative concord (that is, repetition of the prefix before every word in agreement with the noun); absence of grammatical gender; and a position of the genitive in which the name of the thing possessed comes before the possessor. Umbundu, though structurally assignable to the Bantu group, has its own vocabulary, whose degree of relationship to that of surrounding peoples may to some extent be judged by the vocabularies of F. and W. Jaspert (Die Völkerstämme Mittel Angolas, Frankfort, 1930, pp. 144–150). The fact that the language of the Ovimbundu has become the lingua franca of Angola, still further testifies to the thoroughness of the contacts, which from historical sources are known to have been made in the period 1500–1900.

104 The spelling of proper names leaves a wide margin for individual preference. The Umbundu language requires "M" before "B," yet custom has sanctioned the form Bailundu. Nevertheless I have retained "N" in Ngalangi despite the form Galangi on several maps. Maps show great diversity of spelling, but I have adhered throughout to Kipungo (Quipungo) and Kwanza (Quanza). Among tribal names I prefer Vakuanyama to OvaKwanyama and Vacholue to BaKioko or BaDjokue; in making the choice I have tried to imitate the sounds I heard from the natives themselves. In referring to the papers of E. Torday, who knew the southwest Congo well and spoke several Congo languages fluently, I note that he sometimes prefers to recognize the prefix as in BaMbala and BaYaka, but he also writes Badjokue and Bayaka. J. H. Weeks writes Bangala (BaNgala). C. H. L. Hahn uses the form Ovambo (OvaMbo). Ovimbundu I have preferred throughout; the accent is on the

B. Hambly 8-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FF13 Mbundu FF13

penultimate syllable as is usual with Bantu words. The alternative form would be OviMbundu. Some writers hyphenate after a prefix. *Lu* is the plural prefix in the tribal names Luchazi, Luvando, Luena and Lulunda. Ocivukue, Ocimbundu and Uluchazi are singulars. The word Umbundu is used adjectivally as well as for the name of the language. 104

Observations relating to the physical appearance of the Ovimbundu (chapter IV) deal with physique, dress, tooth mutilation, hair-dressing, scarification, and personal ornaments. The object of this chapter is to estimate the results of contacts so far as these affect the traits just mentioned. 121

Of great importance in an inquiry into the growth of Umbundu culture is the inferential testimony to be derived from ethnological study of surrounding tribes. This subject is considered in chapter X, "Culture Contacts," with special reference to the Congo basin, Rhodesia, and South West Africa, concerning which there exists an adequate and reliable literature.

In chapter XII, "Cultural Processes," ethnological facts derived from field work and historical sources have been combined with data relating to geography, physique, and language. This has been done in such a way as to present a hypothesis of cultural growth which is consonant with direct evidence and inferential testimony.

Finally, personal acquaintance with the daily life of the Ovimbundu is made the corner stone for behavioristic study. This is intended to explain the operation of social forces and controls in welding the tribal traits whose origin and assembly have been previously discussed.

Should my colleagues of the functional school contend that my approach is too static in its historical and anatomical method, I would reply that my research does at least lay a sure ethnological foundation for those psychological and sociological studies which are today rightly regarded as essential for the adjustment of relationships between Africans and their European administrators. The correlation of all aspects of tribal life, including culture contacts, cannot be too strongly stressed. The headings chosen for chapters are adopted merely for convenience of presentation. But an endeavor has been made throughout the book, and particularly in the final chapter, to emphasize the coordination of economics, social organization, education, language, and religion.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

NOTE ON ORTHOGRAPHY

The orthography for Umbundu words used here is that adopted in the *Dicionário Etimológico Bundo-Português* of Padre Albino Alves. Generally speaking, I have used this for names of villages and of individuals (apart from Christian names). Towns, European settlements, and chiefdoms have been spelt according to the accepted Portuguese orthography. Dr. Childs has given all place names of Umbundu origin in his Umbundu orthography. Hence, my Cassongue is his Kasongi.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

Cattle-keepers of southern Angola make butter in calabash churns which are gently swung on a pole. The Ovimbundu have taken cattle from the south and west, but have not adopted dairy products. The cattle of the Ovimbundu are valued as a standard of wealth; have great purchasing power; are used to pay taxes and fines; and, in addition to these social and economic values, are the most important sacrificial animals. This is an instance of the arbitrary selection of some traits of a culture complex, while other factors, even those of economic importance, are ignored.

Cultural losses, and failures to utilize factors which were accessible are, according to the foregoing examples, due to change of habitat from northern Angola to the Benguela Highlands; European contacts; long-established agricultural habit; and conservatism, which to some extent is a characteristic of tribes at all cultural levels.

INTEGRATION OF TRAITS

A study which is concerned with growth of culture, demands more than a historical, geographical, and mechanistic interpretation. Morphological and historical research assists in tracing origins and in forming hypotheses respecting the order in which the traits were brought together. But such inquiries are static rather than dynamic, and they are a necessary prelude to anthropological work rather than an ultimate aim.

To the methods of research already followed there should be added a psychological approach with the object of showing the way in which various elements of culture are blended and are made to function.

The following pages illustrate the way in which a field investigation is brought into contact with the welding of cultural elements, and the examples chosen call attention to principles that are responsible for the process of integration. This assimilation of cultural elements renders the study of an isolated trait impossible, as the following instances indicate. These illustrations are chosen from field notes, and are grouped in such a way as to emphasize the pivotal elements of Umbundu culture around which minor traits revolve.

Some of the examples given are intended to illustrate a relationship between language (which includes folklore, proverbs, and riddles) and nature knowledge. The latter is closely connected with hunting, food-gathering, and the selection of materials for handwork.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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The inquiry then turns to occupations which indicate that sex dichotomy of labor is a fundamental principle of tribal life. In connection with the details of food supply and occupation, ritual acts are prominent, and in association with these the functions of the medicine-man are important.

Cultural liaisons are again illustrated when studying domestic animals, for this inquiry leads to a consideration of the social and economic importance of cattle, which are used in ritual connected with the death and burial of kings.

These are but a few instances indicating the way in which lines of investigation converge, though they may appear to be distinct. In fact the very division of a monograph into chapters is misleading in its suggestion of distinct divisions of tribal life, whose parts are actually a psychological unity.

When accompanying boys and men during their food-collecting and hunting expeditions a wealth of nature lore and a richness of vocabulary were discovered, and a vocabulary of one hundred and thirty words comprising names of birds, reptiles, mammals, and plants was prepared. Species are carefully distinguished, to such a degree that discussions respecting the correct native names for similar species tend to be prolonged and humorous.

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When I realized the closeness with which the native observes the habits of animals, there was no difficulty in understanding why folklore stories of animals are so popular and so amusing in their descriptions of animal behavior. In addition to its associations with nature study, folklore reveals standards of conduct and processes of rationalization.

In collecting names of birds and their cries, and while recording hunting customs, I was informed of the bird Onjimbi which flies at night to give the sound of death to those who will not see the morning. Then there is a nocturnal bird called Esuvi which is able to catch spirits of the dead who are active at night. A spirit so caught dies a second death, but what this means I could not immediately discover. Later a man said he was sick because Esuvi had caught the spirit of his grandfather. This implies the belief that an ancestral spirit is a guardian whose function ends when a second death is experienced.

Study of natural history sometimes leads to a point of importance in social procedure. There is a bird Onduva whose feathers are used for decorating the head of a dead king and for embellishing the person of a medicine-man; the feathers may not be used in any other

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

way. Such instances as these came to light when my primary intention was a study of the use of wooden arrows for killing birds. 105 182 825

An inquiry about the names of trees and the use of timbers led to the topic of making and using wooden figures for magical purposes. Woodcraft, wood-carving, and religion are associated.

There is no fallacy so great as that of supposing that data may be collected and retained in mutually exclusive divisions. For example, a study of proverbs leads to native ideas concerning government, succession to office, and standards of conduct. The Ovimbundu say, "A turtle cannot climb on a tree stump, some one has to place it there." What is the meaning of this proverb? There are some men who occupy positions for which they have no ability; such men have been chosen through influence. The normal successor to chieftainship and kingship is the eldest son of the deceased man's principal wife, but if this rightful successor is stupid, some other son will be chosen. Yet the foolish youth may have friends who see their own advantage in having a weak ruler; they therefore combine to place him in office. The turtle has been placed on the tree stump, since it could not climb there.

In addition, folklore shows projection of the mentality of human beings into the lives of animals. Bird cries, with their supposed calls and answers, indicate that the birds have their family relationships involving strife, love, jealousy, and generosity. To the Ovimbundu, birds are a feathered human community.

Proverbs reveal a philosophy which is expressed by the German *Weltanschauung*. "If you are full of food, do not climb on a leopard's back; the leopard may be hungry." This means that one should not be foolishly exalted through good fortune. "You cannot tie a buck's head in a cloth; the horns will stick out," expresses the idea that crime cannot be concealed. "Hot water does not burn a house, and cold water does not make mush," is a sarcastic reply to one who boasts of things he cannot do. A riddle may express a philosophical train of thought. "What is it that lives while it dies and dies while it lives?" This is the log of wood the end of which is from time to time pushed farther into the fire. Like a human life, the log is being slowly consumed while yet living. Such examples as these call attention to a welding of thought, language, nature lore, and ideas that regulate conduct. 538 829 182

In considering food supply and occupations, division of labor on a sex basis is clear. Social sanctions have determined the appro- 183 462 105

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priateness of certain tasks for males and females respectively, and individuals reflect these attitudes in their ideas and conduct.

My interpreter and others who were questioned laughed at the idea that men and women might interchange their occupations in the course of house-building. A woman collects wood for fuel, but not for house-building. Structural work is in the hands of men who dig the foundations, erect the poles, tie the crosspieces and add the roof. Women carry water for mixing the clay which is puddled by children; men, women, and children apply wet clay to the wattle walls. "Suppose a man should carry water?" I asked. "He would be laughed at and people would say that he was a he-woman," came the ready answer.

Women invariably make pottery among the Ovimbundu, but this is not always so in Negro tribes. Women of the Ovimbundu are likewise basket-makers, but they do not make mats, for this occupation is considered suitable for men only. Only women pound corn; before daybreak the heavy wooden pestles are at work and until sunset the rocks reserved for this operation are the centers of female activity, which includes singing and gossip. Only men herd cattle and only males are hunters. Women and children are the collectors of wild fruits and caterpillars, but only men take honey from the hives.

Agriculture and the preparation of food are entirely in the hands of the women. Men never eat with women; the latter have to carry the prepared food to the men's communal house in the middle of the village. Both men and women catch fish, but there are methods appropriate for each sex. There is a sex-division of labor without any implication of the inferiority of women.

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Occupations cannot be studied merely in a formal way, for, although the tasks are performed every day, a ceremonial element is involved. A clay pit is consecrated by the killing of a fowl; so also is the rock which is used as a base for pounding grain. The young blacksmith is initiated after two years of apprenticeship. On this occasion a dog is killed with the hammer which the master made for his pupil and the blood of the sacrificed animal is sprinkled on the tools. The remainder of the ritual and belief has been described in connection with occupations of the Ovimbundu. Study of the blacksmith's work was begun as research in technology; but failure to purchase the large hammer, even for a tempting sum, led to the discovery of considerable ritual.

Abstention from sexual relationships is enjoined on men and women who are going fishing. That copulation would induce the

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fish to stay together at the bottom of the river, is the reason alleged for this taboo. A young hunter is ceremonially initiated. Throughout his life he has to make sacrifice to the ancestral spirits of hunters who are in the house where bows of famous hunters are kept; these ceremonies must be performed before a hunter leaves for the chase. A caravan is a commercial undertaking, but, before setting out, the head of a dead chief is asked for a guarantee of success; meanwhile a sacrifice is made by a medicine-man. A wooden image, when consulted by the medicine-man, indicates the correct caravan route. These instances illustrate a blending of the sacred and the profane in occupations.

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Sexual relationships among the Ovimbundu form a basis of social life, as they do in all communities, but the sexual aspect is not all-pervading and completely dominant.

In early years children separate during play. Boys play games of hunting and warfare, enter into competition with bows and arrows, or amuse themselves with wood-carving. Girls find amusement in imitating their mothers in the occupations of making pottery and baskets, and in cultivating the fields. The small sums of money which a girl derives from the sale of produce from her own corn patch are personal property which she usually spends on trinkets and palm oil. This measure of economic independence, combined with considerable freedom of choice in marriage, indicates an individuality that has not been generally recognized.

I have mentioned among the Ovimbundu a system of friendship between boys and girls of from twelve to sixteen years, which permits the children to sleep together in the home of one of the girls in whose house the early evening has been spent. Cohabitation is forbidden, and pregnancy would be a disgrace. The practice is not unlike that of night visits by a lover in certain European countries during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (W. Goodsell, A History of the Family as a Social and Educational Institution, p. 365). Clearly sex is a factor that plays its part as a formative influence from infancy onward, until final emphasis of sex dichotomy is made by tribal initiations.

The social position of woman may be considered by selecting a few points from the data relating to courtship, marriage, and divorce. Marriages are sometimes arranged during infancy, but this does not invalidate the previous statement that considerable freedom of choice is allowed; a girl is not compelled to follow arrangements made during her childhood. A bride has to make contributions toward the

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domestic equipment. Ritual enters into the introduction of the bride to her home, as was shown by explaining the functions of three elderly women, who erect the fireplace, bring new fire from the chief's house, and assist the bride in a ceremonial way. If a husband has reason to doubt the virginity of his bride, he bores a hole in her cloth with a firebrand, and makes her carry the cloth to her parents. But the marriage is not necessarily invalidated, since the husband is reconciled by a return of some portion of his gifts to the parents.

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Some light is thrown on the ethics of family life by considering the meeting which takes place in the men's council house (*onjango*) before the bride goes to her new home. Here in the presence of relatives from both families the father of the bride says, "We are taking these things for our daughter, we hope she will not shame us." He turns to his daughter, enjoining her to be hospitable, never forgetting to feed her husband's people when they call.

Minor incidents help in a study of the psychology of family life. When husband and wife have quarreled, the latter goes away for a few hours into the bush and arranges that a number of burrs shall be clinging to her dress when she returns. If her husband silently and spontaneously picks these from her cloth, amicable feeling is restored.

Analysis of the grounds for divorce shows that women have their rights, though the male is in the more favorable position. In Rome the legal rights of a matron were slender, but in actual practice she held an important and honorable position. Similarly the status of an Ocimbundu woman is higher than the divorce laws imply.

The human side of family differences was well brought out by studying the interference and indirect influence of relatives on the relationship of husband and wife. Details have been given indicating that divorce is not entirely a matter of adjustment between families; the village chief may be called upon to act as arbiter. The final ceremony of repudiation, at which the husband slaps his wife's back saying, "It is finished," is a public rite. There is here a close connection between family consent and public ratification.

Although a woman may return to her parents under certain conditions which justify the divorce of the husband, parents are not anxious to encourage this practice. Marriage tokens would have to be returned to the husband of their daughter; moreover there might be a difficulty in securing another husband. In this instance a conflict occurs between parental obligations and cupidity. This is again shown by the argument which always arises respecting

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

the custody of a widow. The father, the brother, or the maternal uncle of the widow may take her. In the words of my interpreter, each says, "It is better that you should take her," and at last someone says, "I will take her." 105 593

A chief of Ngalangi revealed the most important aspect of polygyny when he apologized for the fact that only five of his eleven wives were present. The chief was anxious to emphasize the fact that he had eleven wives, though six were at work in the fields. 595

When one considers the prestige of village chiefs, and further reflects on the desirability of maintaining this power within family groups, the institution of polygyny becomes more understandable. In addition there is the necessity of having women to cultivate the fields. A polygynous system does not necessarily cause domestic conflict, because each wife has her own hut, fireplace, and utensils. Custom obliges a chief to spend four nights in each hut in regular sequence.

A first and principal wife is not offended by the introduction of other wives, for these reduce her own labor and announce the fact that she is the principal wife of a wealthy man. When photographing the king of Ngalangi with his wives, I observed that he sent the principal wife from the group in order to adorn herself with a piece of cloth whose value was greater than that of the clothing worn by any of the others. Among the Vakuanyama it was noticeable that the principal wife wore a head-dress of clay with five horns; and in addition to this she had costly necklaces of ostrich-eggshell beads, also more of the coveted *omba* shells than were allowed to other wives. In this way the prestige of the first or great wife is preserved.

The persistence of custom, the force of education through suggestion in early years, and the power of social attitudes, are well illustrated by the survival of kinship terms and the classificatory system of relationships, with its marriage prohibitions and sanctions of an arbitrary kind. The strength of the mores and the fundamental nature of this system of relationship in determining marriage, descent, succession, and inheritance, are indicated by the fact that the system is unaltered after three centuries of contact with Europeans. 602

The rights of a mother's brother extend so far as a sale of his sister's children to redeem his own debts; and reciprocally he is responsible for the conduct of his sister's children, even to the extent of paying fines for the thefts they may commit. This prerogative and responsibility of the maternal uncle is fundamental, and around the trait cluster points of law and legal procedure.

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Ethnologists have often emphasized the supposed subjection of the individuals to the group. Initiation rites do tend to uniformity of conduct and group control; yet among the Ovimbundu there are renowned leaders of caravans, chiefs who are respected because of their justice and intelligence, also medicine-men, craftsmen, and musicians who display great individuality. Their self-expression in tribal life results from special aptitude and natural force of character, which qualities are made evident by daily actions, or through loquacity in the council house. In several localities live chiefs, who, by personality and tact, make possible a social adjustment between the indigenous culture and foreign intruders.

In former times kings were at the head of the legal and military systems, and in this capacity they acted when appeals were made from the jurisdiction of village chiefs. Prosperity of the country is today thought to center in kings both living and dead, and the extant ritual associated with the obsequies of a king is an illustration of this dependence. The importance of the medicine-man as a diviner, physician, and rain-maker is little diminished even at the present day.

The operation of village communism and the manner in which this centers about persons of importance is seen during the preparation of a new site for a village. A description has been given relating to the selection of the site, employment of communal labor, the creation and distribution of new fire, and the function of the medicine-man on this occasion.

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Direct questioning concerning spiritual beliefs and the nature of a supreme being elicits little information, and that of a contradictory kind. As usual, actions are more important than statements. At a funeral, women dance, clap hands, and sing, "God has cheated us of a life." The inference seems to be that Suku gives and determines life. Beliefs respecting the good and bad spirits (*Olosande* and *Olondele*) are deeply ingrained in the lives of the Ovimbundu, who are confident of the need for placation of spirits by sacrifice, the use of wooden figurines, and the aid of the medicine-man. A study of the contents of a diviner's basket gives a clear idea of the powers and the activities of spirits; and the function of a spirit, which is able to hear and answer the living, is understood after observing the questioning of the corpse at a funeral. Without doubt, a belief in spirits and a reliance on the power of medicine-men are two of the fundamental ideas which permeate every thought and activity of the Ovimbundu, for by these agencies mundane matters are raised to a spiritual level.

9: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

I cannot find in the life of the Ovimbundu anything to support the opinion of W. C. Willoughby. This writer sees in the soul of every race an instinct for god that tells upon behavior, an upward urge that makes for betterment, due to the unwearied play of the spirit of god on the souls of man. The views of E. Torday and R. J. van Wing (Dualism in Western Bantu Religion and Social Organization, *J.R.A.I.*, XLVIII, p. 225) seem to be more applicable to the spiritual beliefs of the Ovimbundu. 105 114 771

The Ovimbundu have standards of conduct, codes of laws, crimes, and punishments. In addition to the *ekandu* (antisocial acts) already noted, *ohembi* is a liar, *okusapa* means to be greedy, and such actions are deprecated; but there is no deistic injunction toward the virtues of truthfulness, hospitality, and fair dealing. 577 105

Standards of conduct and social values are preserved by the educational forces previously mentioned (chapter VII), and in addition to these there are such controls as trial by ordeal, and divination to detect guilt. The satirical song is also a form of correction, though its application may be antisocial, for instance in taunting the sexually impotent.

Music and dancing are adjuncts for the preservation of social customs and the stimulation of collective emotions on which cooperation depends. Music and dancing are also aids to magical practices. For example, a friction drum is played while a medicine-man carries out his divination with the basket, and vigorous drumming takes place during treatment of the sick. Music and dancing were again seen to be of importance at a funeral ceremony. 532 105

These instances, which are chosen from many of like kind reported in the foregoing chapters, serve to indicate an interrelationship among the main aspects of tribal life. I have endeavored to choose from personal experience those facts and incidents which illustrate the mutual dependence of language, folklore, proverbs, nature lore, food supply, and occupations. 182 105

The sexual division of labor, the connection of ceremonial with occupation, the relationship of the sexes, and the position of woman, have all been brought forward as examples of social controls.

The persistence of belief and custom despite foreign influences; the nature of government, including the psychology of prestige and leadership; spiritual beliefs; the training of children; and the value of music and dancing, have likewise been emphasized as coordinating

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principles among the religious, social, and economic aspects of tribal life.

In searching for some monism which integrates tribal thought and conduct, I would emphasize the relationship between the sacred and profane. The former is derived from the latter by ritual acts which are frequently, but not exclusively, connected with the medicine-man and spirits of the dead. These departed spirits do not sever their connection with the living. On the contrary, they are concerned with the affairs of men, which they handle benevolently or malevolently according to caprice.

Attention has been called to the importance of fire when ceremonially kindled and distributed; this is but a single instance of the sacred use of an everyday commodity. A woman's belt is an ordinary item of clothing, but it may be something more important. A woman who is the mother of girls only, exchanges belts with the mother of boys only, and in future the mother of female children will give birth to boys, and conversely. This is the simplest instance of transfer from a secular to a magical use without resort to an intermediary person such as the medicine-man.

Bows, mats, and staffs are articles of everyday use until their owners are dead and the articles are deposited in the house of bows. Such a house is then sacred, because the ancestral spirits can be induced to enter it to grant favors after sacrifice has been made. Cowrie shells were normally a medium of exchange, but they may become a charm in order to induce conception. A snake's backbone acquires power when threaded by the medicine-man and placed round the neck of a patient who suffers from rheumatism. A cooking pot of clay is entirely secular until it becomes the property of a hunter, after which no other person may use it. A piece of an ant hill is merely earth. But if the belated traveler takes such a piece from the top of the hill and places it in the fork of a branch there will be an extension of daylight. A ritual element enters in the spell, "O sun, wait for me a little while."

The unifying and binding effect of magical rites, simple or complex, private and public, is the warp of the fabric by which the weft threads of the social pattern are bound together. To vary the metaphor, tribal life is a sphere of action, a universe having principal units around which others revolve. Each unit of the structure has a course and movements peculiar to itself, but there is no actual isolation from the influences of other bodies.

4:Dorsey E-4, 5 (no date)1899 FP13 Mbundu FP13

THE OCIMBANDA, OR WITCH-DOCTOR OF THE OVIMBUNDU OF PORTUGUESE SOUTHWEST AFRICA.

114 In July of last year the Anthropological Department of the Field Columbian Museum secured an ethnological collection from the Ovimbundu of the Portuguese African province of Angola. The collection was made by Rev. T. W. Woodside, a missionary for seven years among the Ovimbundu, and, on account of its completeness and the full data which accompanied the objects, is of unusual [121] importance and value. Perhaps of chief interest among the series of objects illustrating the various phases of native life in this region is the complete "medicine chest" of a witch-doctor. This I shall describe, making free use of the extensive notes furnished by Mr. Woodside, supplemented by several conversations during which the objects themselves were discussed, and much information furnished concerning the Ovimbundu in general. The collection under consideration was obtained from a single individual, and has seen long use.

101 The Ovimbundu are a southern division of an extensive group of people known as the Bundas, who, in turn, belong to the group of Bantu populations. They occupy the territory of the Bailundu and Bihe plateaus, from Bengualla to the Quanza River, a table-land 4000 to upwards of 6000 feet high, and in south latitude about twelve 142 degrees. The Ovimbundu are described by Mr. Woodside as a dark-skinned people, varying from coffee-brown to quite black, with thick curly hair. They are entirely uncivilized, but are a peaceable, 105 kindly people. Their food is chiefly vegetal, although they possess cattle, sheep, goats, pigs, and chickens. They practise polygamy, and the women prepare the food and do nearly all the field work. The men are famous as traders, and journey to the interior for rubber, wax, ivory, and slaves; the latter they secure by purchase from the country of the Lubas. The principal medium of exchange is a cheap cotton cloth which is obtained from white travellers.

791 Among the Ovimbundu, as in nearly all parts of Africa, the 759 witch-doctor is an important personage. He is feared by all classes, and often has more influence and power than the chief himself. Whenever anything is lost or stolen, they apply to the witch-doctor to find out where the object is, or who is the thief. As no one is [761] supposed to die a natural death, the doctor is called in to discover the witch who caused the death. To him they go for all kinds of charms to protect themselves against all evils, or to cast a spell on some one whom they wish to injure; to him they also go for help in

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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CONCLUSIONS

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The phrase 'A Study of Social Control and Social Change among the Ovimbundu' implies an analysis of the working of the social maintenance mechanism in a period of social change. The concept appears almost paradoxical since it seems that effective maintenance machinery[1] would prevent social change, and rapid social change is often associated by anthropologists with a situation of individual and social demoralization and disintegration.[2] At the present time the Ovimbundu of the area where fieldwork was done have undergone very [178] rapid social change and have a reasonably effective system of social control, which, however, differs considerably from the traditional system. To confirm these statements, I briefly summarize the material provided in previous chapters.

In the time of the rubber trade (1874–1911) there existed 105 a number of Umbundu kingdoms. The king, assisted and 175 checked, as elsewhere in Africa by titled ministers, was responsible for external relations, undertook certain rituals, and provided a supreme court of appeal where trials were conducted by set rules of procedure. The real unit of law, as regards Gumba at least, seems to have been the sub-chiefdom, with its few thousand inhabitants, governed by a chief who like the king had to administer justice together with his councillors.

This body of councillors included the village headmen who were the heads of bodies of agnatic kin. They had general legal and political responsibility for the village. While the disputes arising in village relations were kept within the patrilineal kin group, the problems arising from the inheritance of movable goods and particularly from the highly important caravan trade were dealt with in the matrilineal group. Owing to the dispersed nature of this group and to its commercial preoccupations the sanctions operating within it must have differed somewhat from those found at the chief's court or village men's

[1] For this term see S. F. Nadel, *Theory of Social Structure*, London, 1957, p. 35.
[2] e.g. G. and M. Wilson, *Analysis of Social Change*, Cambridge, 1945.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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105 175 house. Wealthy members who did not assist their kin were liable to be accused of sorcery. A mother's brother had the right to sell his sister's son as punishment for the latter's misconduct or to pay his own debts, a sanction counterbalancing the rights of the poorer matrilineal kin to receive loans without the obligation of repayment. As the matrilineal groups existed apparently across sub-chiefdom boundaries they formed a means of social control in those trading activities which provided the major focus of Umbundu interests and which flowed over the boundaries of the political groupings whose smallest unit was the patrilineally based village.

105 178 The disappearance of the matrilineal kin groups must be associated with the collapse of the old economy, and to judge from my difficulty in getting information about them their disintegration must have come about fairly rapidly after the end of the trade. Authority within the sub-chiefdom and village remained at a level fairly near the traditional norm till about 1935. After that social change has rapidly dissolved most of the traditional institutions.

The existing system of social control depends on political, local, and kinship systems very different from those previously operative. Cases are very often taken to the post without being previously taken to the chief. The latter's position is a combination of executive of the orders of the post (a role he shares with the government headman) with the surviving prestige represented by the skulls of his predecessors and the ministerial titles allocated to his kinsmen and associates. While the chief and government headmen may settle minor cases, they do not operate any system of courts by which disputes can be regularly and satisfactorily settled.

Judicial power has been effectively transferred from the indigenous society to the 'civilized' community and for a dispute to be brought to a settlement a decision must be obtained from some 'civilized' person or a negotiated arrangement may be made under threat of referring the matter to the post. Considerable importance therefore attaches to the mobilization of ties with some 'civilized' person who may be an employer but is most frequently the mission, which to some degree acts as a patron for all natives. Hence the local

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representatives of the mission, the catechist and elder of the school, tend to become the guardians of the public interest against arrogance on the part of the chief and government headmen.

In the conflict between the local representatives of the post and of the mission the latter are likely, if they have a good case, to win since they have a closer link with the mission than the chief and government headmen have with the post. While the policy of the administration of dissolving the indigenous political system has been highly successful it has not created new bureaucratic institutions at the local level, and the chief and government headmen have just sufficient power to do what the post tells them to do. The traditional headmen, while they still act as focuses of kin ties in a village have prestige rather than power; a prestige, however, sufficient to rally considerable support for them in a dispute. The catechetical school and its officials, represent the village to the outside world and provide what is nowadays the only institutional grouping on a village basis.

The role of the missions in social control is threefold; the establishment of new social groupings and forms of leadership at village level, the decision of disputes and the influencing of the *chefs's* decisions, and the giving of a feeling of approximation to the 'civilized' population. It is the missions rather than the chiefs and headmen who provide the main social bridges between the 'civilized' and native populations, since both groups participate in their institutions and values.[a]

The kinship system, whose operation must form an important part of any system of social control, has also undergone very great changes. The old kinship groups have disappeared, and the system is now cognatic, with little distinction between patrilateral and matrilateral kin although there is a certain matrilineal pull in choice of residence. Kinship norms have

[a] This does not deny the importance of the administration and the economy in linking the 'civilised' and natives together; yet this administrative and economic integration does not provide the sense of community which to a limited degree is given through the missions, which also provide the only opportunity for individual natives to have influence in a social sphere beyond the range of kin and neighbours; in the Catholic missions by the provision of an influential patron, in the Protestant Native Church by participation in Church councils and courts.

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become confused and vague; the existence of a kinship tie provides an opportunity to build a social relation rather than a jural obligation to fulfil certain duties. With the disappearance of the commensality which marked the patrilineal kin, and the economic co-operation characteristic of the matrilineal groups, the elementary family has emerged as the primary domestic and economic grouping.

In this rather amorphous system, coherence is given by the marriage tie. The very high rate of preferential marriages creates a great number of affinal (and subsequently kinship) ties within a limited area, and it seems to be from this that the neighbourhood community derives its cohesion. At the level of the individual marriage (as opposed to that of the total structure) the relation between husband and wife is a very close one, with, conversely, the relation between a man and his wife's lover being the archetype of hostility.

It is now necessary to see how the description of the two systems of social control relate to the problems of the social changes which have intervened to turn into the other. Obviously social change has been very great. It is not perhaps possible to point to any one factor responsible for the speed of the process. The old political system would not have disintegrated if the administration had used it as the intermediary between it and the natives. However, the hostility of the administration to the chiefs has not succeeded in all parts of Angola in breaking down traditional authority.[4]

Economic change has certainly affected very considerably the social structure. In other parts of Africa a cash economy gained by selling crops and working for wages has replaced a subsistence economy where exchanges were made by barter and gift exchanges. The Ovimbundu were experienced traders used to a currency and with a business-like, rather grasping outlook.[5] Through the matrilineal groups this commercial activity was fitted into the kinship system. The disappearance of the trade brought a sharp fall in the Umbundu standard of living and destroyed the need for developed credit facilities. Instead of the

[4] Among the Ngangela of the area round Vila Artur de Paiva the chiefs retain their authority.

[5] See Serpa Pinto, pp. 169-71 and F. S. Arnot, *Garenganze*, London, 1889, p. 118.

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gaining of wealth by means involving extensive economic co-operation among the Ovimbundu themselves, money was earned in an individual relation to a particular European whether planter or trader. 105 178

It must be recognized that the relation between economic change and the continuation or disintegration of kinship groups is a yet unsolved problem of anthropology,[6] particularly as it is seldom possible to isolate the economic pressure. I emphasize the readiness of the Ovimbundu for change, their willing acceptance of the role of clients to the whites.[7] It may be suggested that this attitude was established in the period of the trade when the Ovimbundu were ultimately dependent on the whites for trade goods and that this attitude of imitation and receptivity lies behind the disappearance of so much of the old social structure and the lack of any myth of, or even interest in, the past.[8] [121]

I have claimed that the present system of social control is effective.[9] This may be granted empirically for the reasons already given, the absence of serious crime or prolonged conflict involving the whole community, the effective checks on the functionaries of the post, and the failure of squabbles to tear the network of kin and affinal ties. If a working social system is a proof of an integrated society, then contemporary Umbundu society qualifies for this description. This is not the only possible way of looking at it. It may be claimed that under present circumstances the Ovimbundu are no longer integrated by their tribal system but are held together by the Angolan 105 182

[6] For various comments on this problem see A. I. Richards, in *African Systems of Kinship and Marriage*, p. 251, M. Fortes, 'Structure of Unilineal Descent Groups', in *American Anthropologist*, Feb. 1953, M. Douglas (review of Mitchell's *The Yao Village*) in *Africa*, July 1957.

[7] Cf. the Ngangela name for the Ovimbundu, the Ovimbali, a term traditionally applied to Africans living in close contact with the whites. The Ovimbundu accept this stereotype.

[8] 'A lack of history is correlated with the amorphous character of the society.' E. Colson in Colson and Gluckman (ed.) *Seven Tribes of British Central Africa*, Oxford, 1951, p. 100.

[9] Other quarrels of which I heard while in Epalanga: a messenger from the mission sent to intervene in a marriage dispute was attacked; the chief of Chicunda summoned to the mission for a telling-off after beating up one of his people; a man from Gumba refusing to go to a funeral in Cassongue of a man whose death he was thought to have caused by sorcery.

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105 182 Government,[10] which has deprived them of all legal and political autonomy. The present Umbundu social system deprived of any form of public life ticks over, as a man who has been paralysed may continue to live. The cultural barriers and structural gulf between the post, the basic unit of the administration, and the people, are to a certain extent bridged by the mission. This task throws a considerable strain on the organizations set up by the missions, to which they are far from equal.[11] The common values shared by 'civilized' and native, whose introduction was ascribed to the missions, give the Ovimbundu psychological compensation rather than a genuine participation in the culture of the ruling group. The stability which marks social relations in the area is passivity rather than integration.

105 178 182 The most truthful approach would seem to be a synthesis of the two arguments. The disintegration of the old legal and political institutions and the attitude of dependence and passivity towards Europeans cohere with a stability provided by the pattern of kin and affinal ties and the continuity of local relations. It has been argued that the range of marriages (and hence the range of kinship ties) has not noticeably expanded in recent years, and that the links which orient Gumba to the north and west rather than to the south and east date back to the nineteenth century. Such other factors as the poor local communications, the limited economic development of the area, and the absence of resident whites in Gumba may also have helped to preserve the continuity and security of the 'private' life of individuals.[12] In other areas of Umbundu country, especially near the railway line, where communications are easy, Europeans and *assimilados* are numerous, and there are more marked differences of wealth, this 'coherence' of change and continuity may have very much less empirical efficiency.

In one part of Umbundu country in 1955, a contra-acculturá-

[10] Putting it another way; there is no Umbundu political system, and hence the nearest approach to Umbundu politics are the squabbles of Chapter IX.

[11] The missionaries complain of the poor calibre of many catechists, and the catechists complain of the lack of obedience of their people.

[12] The relations between two individuals may remain friendly, even though the form of their relations changes.

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In one part of Umbundu country in 1955, a contra-
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[164]

tive movement arose which combined features found in cargo-cults and anti-witchcraft campaigns,[18] social activities usually regarded as products of a malaise in the relations between Europeans and an indigenous society.[19] The Ovimbundu whom I knew were not ready to take the initiative in their dealings with the 'civilized' population; but it would be wrong to regard the system of social control that I have tried to describe as being true for much more than a very small area of Umbundu country and a very limited extent of time.

[18] The movement began at Bela Vista on the railway line and spread over south-eastern Umbundu country into the Ngangela area. Its leaders were men and women who called themselves saints and claimed to have died and come to life again. They announced that all sorcery would cease, and those who continued it would die in an unusual way. They forbade the wearing of black clothes and ordered the killing of black livestock (fowls and pigs). They also forbade the growing of maize for sale. It was stated that rain would come from heaven to kill the whites (according to some accounts only the bad whites) and the blacks would then have their goods. This movement was spread through the catechetical schools. It was eventually repressed by administrative action. Private information. Also article in *O Ateneiade*, Luanda, Oct. 27, 1958.

[19] See A. I. Richards, 'A Modern Movement of Witchfinders', *Africa*, Oct. 1933.

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Identification

The Mbundu (Mambari, Mbali, Mbari, Munano, Ovimbali, Ovimbundu, Vakonano, Vakuanano, Vanano, Bimbundu, Banano, Nano), who are sometimes confused with the quite different Kimbundu (q. v.), are a Bantu nation of the Benguella highlands in central Angola. They number about 1,300,000 (1940). They are culturally and linguistically akin to the Ndombe, Ngumbi, and Nyaneka tribes to the south. The European conquest was not completed until 1902. The component sub-tribes with independent states, whose dialects differ exceedingly little, are the following, in approximate order of population:

a. Bailundu (Mbailundu). Tributary states: Cenge (Chilenge), Cipeyo (Quipeyo), Kasongi (Cassongue), Namba, Ngalanga (Galanga), Sange.
b. Viye (Bie, Bihe).
c. Wambu (Huambo). Tributary state: Mbongo (Bongo).
d. Ciyaka (Quiaca). Tributary state: Elende (Lende).
e. Ngalangi (Galangue).
f. Civula (Quibula).
g. Ndulu (Andulo, Ondura).
h. Cingolo (Quingolo).
i. Kalukembe (Caluquembe).
j. Sambu (Sambo).
k. Eketete (Quiquete).
l. Kakonda (Caconda, Cilombo, Quilombo).
m. Citata (Quitata).

Basic Economy

Primarily agricultural, with very important subsidiary animal husbandry and some hunting and fishing. Brand-tillage, hoe cultivation, and a little irrigation are practiced. The staple crops are maize and beans. Subsidiary crops include sorghum, millet ("Kafir corn"), emmer wheat, manioc (important), peanuts, sweet potatoes, squash, bananas, garden vegetables, cotton, and a little rice. Considerable numbers of cattle, sheep, goats, pigs, dogs, chickens, and bees are kept. Goats are not milked, nor are cattle as a rule. The caravan trade was formerly very important.

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Sex Division of Labor

Men hunt, tend all domestic animals except chickens, fish (though women also fish with nets), and do the heavy work of land clearance. Women gather and do most (but not quite all) the agricultural work. Men help with harvest; women, in game drives.

Property

Livestock, especially cattle, are the chief measure of wealth. Land is owned by patri-sibs, whose male members enjoy hereditary usufruct rights.

Land and livestock are inherited by males only--by different rules. The inheritance of land is patrilineal--from Fa to So or from ElBr to YoBr. Livestock and other movables, however, are matrilineally inherited--by SiSo or other male matrilineal kinsman.

Social Stratification

There is a royal class and a hereditary aristocracy (members of the royal sib). Slavery is prevalent, and the slave trade was formerly important. Slaves are acquired through capture in war or through debt (the debtor pawns a SiCh). The children of slaves (perhaps not debt slaves) are slaves, even when the offspring of a slave wife by her master. Smiths, like professional hunters and diviners, constitute a sacred (not a despised) craft.

Marriage

Marriage is effected by payment of a bride-price to the bride's MoBr (today increasingly her Fa). It consisted formerly of cattle and other goods, today of a smaller amount in pigs, cloth, etc. There is a rite of symbolic capture.

Polygyny is permitted, but only in the non-sororal form. In one genealogical study 25% of the married men were found to be polygynous. The first wife is chief wife, but each wife has her own hut. Secondary marriages are favored with BrWi, allowed with MoBrWi. The Hu rotates, spending 4-7 nights with each wife.

Family

An independent nuclear or polygynous family, with slaves and dependent relatives, occupies a compound, separated from others by

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a palisade or fence. There is no extended family organization.

Residence

Patrilocal residence is the norm--in a separate compound on the land and in the village of the groom's father. There are isolated instances of matrilocal residence and fairly frequent cases of avunculocal residence. Children at the age of 6 or 7 are commonly sent to live with a MoBr for a year or two, and they commonly join him on the death or divorce of their parents. At adolescence a boy moves into an independent hut, where he will later bring his bride.

Kin Groups and Exogamy

Local agamy is reported by Evambi and Hambly, and appears probable from McCulloch, though Childs indicates that local exogamy is the norm and Gibson accepts local exogamy.

Marriage is forbidden (also sex relations) with any primary relative and with a grandparent or grandchild. It is allowed, however, with FaSi, SiDa, and cross-cousins, the preferred union being with MoBrDa.

Double descent prevails. There are both localized patri-sibs (oluse) and non-localized matri-sibs (oluina), each with ritual leaders. Sibs of both types are divided into a "male side" and a "female side"; though the nature of this division is not clear, Barnes believes that the "male side" of a patri-sib includes its male members only, the "female side" its female members and also their children of both sexes, whereas the "female side" of a matri-sib includes its female members only and the "male side" its male members and their offspring. A child thus belongs to its father's patri-sib (boys to the male and girls to the female side), to its mother's matri-sib (boys to its male and girls to its female side), to its father's matri-sib (male side only), and to its mother's patri-sib (female side only). Since marriage is preferred into the male side of one's own patri-sib and the female side of one's own matri-sib, especially the latter, neither type of kin group is exogamous. Patri-sibs are apparently divided into lineages, localized in wards. There is a royal sib. Witchcraft is inherited exclusively in the female line.

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Kinship Terminology

Fa--tate. Mo--mai. Ch--omola. Hu--veya. Wi--ukai. Avuncular and nepotic terms are strictly of bifurcate merging type. Cousin terms are of Iroquois type.

Settlement Pattern

The Mbundu live in palisaded villages including from 5 to 500 households (but population rarely reaches 3,000). On the plains the villages are usually a circle of household compounds around a man's house and dancing place; in the mountains the dwellings are commonly arranged on parallel ledges. Villages are normally divided into wards, and these into family compounds. The dwellings are usually round, occasionally rectangular, with wattle-and-daub walls and conical thatched roofs.

Community Organization

A village is normally a patrilocal clan-community or localized patri-sib; a ward appears to be a clan-barrio or localized patri-lineage. Circumcision and clitoridectomy are practiced in S, not elsewhere. In the S and SE there are initiation camps associated with the formation of apparently incipient age-grades.

Local Government

Each village has a headman, the head of the local patri-clan. He is village priest as well as chief, having charge of the spirit-hut of the village guardian spirit, tending a sacred fire, and officiating at agricultural and other festivals. Succession is patrilineal--by ElSo or next younger Br. Each ward also has a head, and the ward heads apparently act as a village council of elders.

State

The Mbundu are organized into 13 independent petty states and 9 dependent states tributary to the former. Each is headed by a paramount chief, who lives in a [illegible]ital village, near which, but separated, is a smaller compound occupied by the war leader. The ruler is judge, high priest, and supreme military leader. His chief wife is always of slave origin. He is assisted by councillors, who assist him at court trials and have the power to depose him. Each state is

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administered, and taxes collected, through district chiefs and local headmen under them. Some district chiefs are hereditary; others are appointed by the paramount chief and normally include his chief wife, members of the royal family, and prominent court officials. Succession is patrilineal, the council selecting a successor from among the sons, brothers, or fraternal nephews of the ruler. A new fire ceremony is held at the installation of a new paramount chief. There are numerous titled nobles, including the district chiefs and such court officials as household guardian, steward, and bodyguard. The councillors or elders were perhaps heads of matrilineal kin groups; the chief councillor was succeeded by his SiSo.

Warfare

The Bailundu and Viye groups raided the Luimbe, Ngonyelu, and other eastern neighbors for slaves. There is incidental mention of human sacrifice and ceremonial cannibalism.

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Pp. xviii. 245; 16 plates, 3 maps.

Yale: Nkd83.Ov.4. 949c

/This volume, as stated in the subtitle, is a "description of the social structure and individual development of the Ovimbundu of Angola, with observations concerning the bearing on the enterprise of Christian missions of certain phases of the life and culture described." It contains ample sections on the identification of the Ovimbundu and their neighbors, their territorial heirarchy and spatial distribution, Particularly useful is the synchronous historical and traditional chart of the Ovimbundu from the time of earliest Portuguese contact until the present (pp. 224-231). The emphasis in the treatment of social structure is upon child training and education and kinship, especially insofar as they may be adapted to future missionary policy. Technology and economics are only briefly discussed. Detailed bibliographies are appended after each chapter. The measure of the author's objectivity may be tested by consulting Mc Culloch's critical summary (2: Mc Colloch). --Analyst/

Field date: 1924-1940
Analyst: Richard Schaedel

Evaluation: Missionary--5
Processed in 1955

2: McCulloch, Merran. The Ovimbundu of Angola. Ethnographic Survey of Africa. West Central Africa. Part 11, International African Institute, London. 1952.

Pp. 50; 1 map.

Yale: Nkd 74. Et3. II. 2

/This survey presents a concise, critical and accurate account of our present knowledge of the Mbundu peoples. It is based upon previously published sources, principally 1: Childs and 3: Hambly, as well as personal assistance of Childs, C. M. N. White and J. A. Barnes. The sections on social organization and political structure are particularly recommended, since they deal critically with the somewhat contradictory data of the principal sources and point up problems in analysis which remain unresolved. The bibliography, while not exhaustive, is reasonably complete. --Analyst/

Field date: 1945-51
Analyst: Richard Schaedel

Evaluation: Ethnologist-4
Processed in 1955

3: Hambly, Wilfrid D. The Ovimbundu of Angola. Anthropological Series, Vol. 21, No. 2, pp. 87-362. Chicago: Field Museum of Natural History, 1934.

Pp. 320; 84 plates; 1 map; bibliography; index.

[This monograph is based upon one year's field research in Angola and Nigeria as well as a comprehensive bibliographical study on the Ovimbundu and their neighbors. In this pioneer ethnographic study of the Mbundu the coverage is reasonably complete, considering the magnitude of the task. Primary emphasis is on historical reconstruction with the result that several chapters are dedicated to analyzing the distribution of culture traits of the Ovimbundu and other African tribes. While social structure is only superficially treated, the following sections are well-documented: music, literature, the decorative arts and ethnobotany (particularly pp. 138-140). The plates which follow the text have been paginated pp. 363-406. --Analyst]

Field date: 1929-1930 Evaluation: Ethnologist--5
Analyst: Richard Schaedel Processed in 1955

4: Dorsey, George A. The Ocimbanda, or Witch-Doctor of the Ovimbundu of Portuguese Southwest Africa. Journal of American Folk-Lore, XII, pp. 183-188. Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin & Co., 1899.

Yale: Nkg10. J82. v. 11-12.

[This source deals with the role of the Ocimbanda, the "witch-doctor," a combination diviner, magician and medical practitioner, among the Ovimbundu of Angola. The data presented are based on an ethnological collection obtained by a Rev. T. W. Woodside and secured by the Field Columbian Museum. The author discusses the training, garb, and ritual paraphernalia of the Ocimbanda; his role as medical and magical therapist and as diviner. Data are presented regarding the administration of poison ordeals in establishing guilt or innocence in connection with accusations of witchcraft. - Analyst]

Field date: none
Analyst: Eugene Lerner

Evaluation: Ethnologist-4, 5
Processed in 1956

5: Hambly, Wilfrid Dyson. Occupational Ritual, Belief, and Custom among the Ovimbundu. American Anthropologist, n.s., Vol. XXXVI, pp. 157-167. Menasha, Wis.: American Anthropological Association, 1934.

Yale: Nk10. Am 37. II. 36.

[This source deals with the relation between spiritual beliefs and magical acts and the various economic occupations of the Ovimbundu of Angola, with particular reference to the regions of Bailundu, Elende near Cuma, and Ngalangi. The data are classified by the author under food supply (including data on ethno-botany and -zoology), handicrafts, medical and magical practices and practitioners, and children's activities. Incidental data on division of labor along sex and age lines are included. The text includes two plates which have been reproduced. --Analyst]

Field date: 1929-30
Analyst: Eugene Lerner

Evaluation: Ethnologist-5
Processed in 1956

6: Edwards, Adrian C. The Ovimbundu under Two Sovereignties: A Study of Social Control and Social Change among a People of Angola. London: Published for the International African Institute by the Oxford University Press, 1962.

Pp. xvii, 169; 1 map.

Yale: Nkd83 Ov4 962E.

/Mr. Edwards' aim in this monograph was to study the mechanisms of social continuity that function in a rapidly changing African society. The first part of the book is devoted to a reconstruction of the Mbundu social structure as it existed aboriginally especially at the height of the rubber trade era, i.e., 1874-1911. The second part focuses on various aspects of the present social structure, namely, the roles and functions of traditional and government-appointed chiefs, the network and significance of kinship and marriage ties and the economic activities of the natives, all in a setting of Portuguese colonial rule and intensive missionary activity.

6: Edwards, Adrian C.

The third part offers a detailed discussion of social control in terms of examining a number of disputes within the community and the means of their settlement.

The author concludes that the disintegration of the old political and legal institutions and the attitude of dependence and passivity towards Europeans (both government and missions) cohere with a stability which is provided by a pattern of kin and affinal ties and the continuity of social relations on the community level. /

Field date: 1955-1956
Analyst: A. Vinogradov

Evaluation: Social Anthropologist-5
Processed in 1965-1966

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

Widespread use of Umbundu

While the home of the Ovimbundu is in the Benguela Highland, 197 the use of their language is now more widespread. The va Nganda and the va Hanya are increasingly using Umbundu. The mixed populations at the coast towns of Lobito, Catumbela, and Benguela use it almost exclusively. It is also used in Novo Redondo, in Mossamedes, and along the Benguela Railway to the interior. There is a considerable *diaspora* of Ovimbundu at widely separated points owing to very recent movements.

For more extensive treatment of the various aspects of the problems touched upon in this introductory chapter, works listed in the bibliography may be consulted. A complete description of the habitat has not been attempted but only sufficient to provide the necessary background for the study as a whole.

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000 The least that can happen will be a centrifugal throwing off of groups of *diaspora*—a process actually taking place from among the Ovimbundu. These uprooted groups, *déracinés*, *ovimbali*,[1] whether they settle in the towns or move to other territories, are far less promising material from every standpoint than they were when in their former cultural and social state. In view of the many and important adaptations which the Ovimbundu have made in the past, their ability to adapt themselves to yet greater innovations may be confidently affirmed, if only the movement is not 'excessively speeded up'. Plainly, it is the duty of everyone who is interested in the social welfare of this great people to do what may be in his power to arrest the process of disintegration, and to strengthen existing social bonds lest the latter state be worse than the former.

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be neglected at the expense of the other. May not the union of these two functions of education in a single system, and the leadership of both in the person of the village teacher, help to preserve the unity of Umbundu life?

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175 171 [412] O. Dapper (Description de l'Afrique, 1732, p. 369) shows a scene in which an ax, such as Fobtained from the Vasele country, is being used for beheading a slave.

Cavazzi (Istorica descrizione, etc., Bologna, 1687) describes the three kingdoms of Congo, Matamba, and northern Angola. The [325] poison ordeal, the scapegoat, the blacksmith's bellows (pp. 101, 170) [534] are all traits known to the Ovimbundu. The musical instrument made from a large gourd, which has a ridged board attached for rubbing with a stick, is the type I collected. Cavazzi pictures the double iron gong and the long drum held between the knees. He [782] also shows a rain-maker (p. 214) and the sacrifice of two hundred victims at the accession of a king (p. 210).

174 243 Consideration of the history of maize in Africa is of importance in connection with these early writings, as this grain is the staple agricultural product of the Ovimbundu. I am indebted to Dr. [113] Berthold Laufer for access to his unpublished research on this subject. From the following facts one may assume that, in all probability, the maize culture of the Ovimbundu was derived from the Congo region before their migration into the Benguela Highlands.

175 243 Father Jerome Merolla remarks that maize was growing in the neighborhood of San Salvador (1683–92). The native names were *mampunni* and *massambuta;* from this corn an alcoholic beverage was prepared. According to Cavazzi (Ehrmann, Geschichte der merkwürdigsten Reisen, XIII, 1794) maize was not intensively cultivated by the Negroes of lower Guinea, though it thrives well and may be harvested twice or thrice a year. The natives said that the grain [177] was brought by the Portuguese, but they did not esteem it highly, and were accustomed to use it as food for pigs.

Bosman (p. 312) records that prior to the arrival of the Portuguese, Negroes were entirely ignorant of *milho* ("maize"). The account of Duarte Lopez preserved by Filippo Pigafetta states that the Negroes consider maize the vilest of all grains, so that it is given to swine. This contempt and lack of knowledge of the food value, combined with ignorance of methods of preparation, suggest a recent introduction (Pigafetta, translation by M. Hutchinson, 1881, p. 40). Dapper (Description de l'Afrique, 1732, p. 345) also mentions the cultivation of maize. Battell lived as prisoner in northern Angola about the year 1600, consequently his records of the use of the great Guinea wheat (maize), which the natives call *mas-importo*, give early evidence for the use of this grain (Hakluyt Soc., 1901, pp. 9, 11, 67).

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322 The tools used by the wood-carver are the saw, ax, adze, and knife.
532 The products of this craft may be conveniently divided into the following groups:

(1) Figurines of human form (Plate XXI, Figs. 1–6).

(2) Animal forms, chiefly snakes, tortoises, birds, and lizards. The dog is sometimes represented (Plates XIX, Figs. 1–5; XLI, Fig. 1).

[534] (3) Parts of musical instruments, such as drums and the base-boards of *sansas*. The latter often have the metal keys mounted on boards decorated with elaborately incised patterns (Plates XLI, Fig. 2; XXII, Fig. 5).

[415] (4) Domestic implements and utensils, chief of which are heavy wooden beaters for flattening mud floors of houses, grain pounders, stools, cups, platters, bowls, and a heavy pestle and mortar (Plates XIII, Fig. 3; XVIII, Figs. 1, 2).

[581] (5) Carved sticks and clubs; these often show elaborate incised decorations of geometrical patterns. Frequently the head of the stick is carved to represent a human head or a full-length figure.
[293] The ornamented stick or club is carried as part of the personal dress and artistic equipment. The throwing club is usually a straight stick with an undecorated knob at the end (Plate XX, Figs. 1–10).

(6) Carved wooden posts representing the human form. These are set up at the wayside. One has been obtained from a grave near Bailundu.

(7) Tobacco-pipes and snuff boxes (Plate XV, Figs. 2, 4).

177 Figurines of human form require special consideration, because
532 they have claims other than that of aesthetic expression. The figures representing Europeans, or natives using some article of foreign introduction, illustrate the grafting of foreign ideas on older methods of work.

113 The art of the African Negro has of late years been accorded a place of honor in critical circles of Europe and America (P. Guillaume and T. Munro, Primitive Negro Sculpture, New York, 1926). Usually, however, the formal technique of lines, curves, and the general aesthetic effect have been discussed to the exclusion of the ethnological background which determines style and function.

532 By far the best example of carved human figures collected in Angola was the one from Cangamba (Plate XXI, Fig. 4). This female figure, 60 cm high, is carved from hard, dark, red wood in such a way as to achieve a graceful result by the employment of a few

361 At the present time one type of village is surrounded by stout stakes ten or more feet high set in a roughly circular plan. The arrangement of alleyways within the village is complicated without following any symmetrical plan. A visitor sees only a labyrinth of passages between high poles, with here and there a rectangular wooden 417 gate at intervals along the passages. The door itself is made from 335 four stout heavy planks which are roughly hewn and as a rule undecorated, but occasionally I have seen the panels of a door carved with [531] designs representing the breasts of a woman; or there may have been simple geometrical patterns. The top ends of the door panels are massive spheres of wood bored through with holes. Through the holes in the tops of these panels a pintle is passed in such a way that the door is suspended from above. During the daytime the lower ends of the panels are raised to the level of the lintel. They are there supported on a Y-shaped upright which is erected in front of the doorway. At night the planks are removed from this support and allowed to hang downward in the doorway. There is a sliding cross-piece to push over the lower ends. The same arrangement is sometimes used to make a door for a hut. This old type of village doorway, common twenty years ago, is becoming increasingly rare.

342 The house of a king or a chief is larger than that of a commoner. 644 The enclosure which contains a king's house and the other buildings 621 is named *elombe*, while *epandavailo* is the word used to describe the entrance to this compound. The *elombe* is built by men and women who receive no payment. There is a ceremony when the compound is opened. The house of the chief, Kandimba Sanjahulu, near Bailundu, is rectangular, with mud walls raised on a platform of earth and stones. Whitewash has been applied to the outside of the walls and some ornament is given in the form of painted blue crosses. Complete study of structural types and the planning of internal [113] divisions has been made by F. and W. Jaspert, of the Städtisches Völkermuseum, Frankfort.

644 At a village near Cuma the house of the chief differed from the dwellings of commoners in being somewhat larger. The house had been abandoned, not because the chief died there, but because the chieftainship had been transferred to an adjacent village. The tomb, which will be described in connection with funeral rites, was a few yards from the house. This mausoleum was surrounded by a high wooden palisade, to a stake of which were attached the horns of an ox killed at the funeral feast, while the jawbone lay in the enclosure

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576 *konyimo oko* are spoken. The literal interpretation of these words is "back there." Ngonga says the words actually mean "excuse my back."

827 576 Spitting in the vicinity of the house of the king or of the chief is not allowed. "If you did that in the old days, you would have to pay something." Some people spit near the hearth in their own houses. A man who spits in the road is expected to cover the spittle. No person would spit in the presence of the chief or of the king. A hand should be placed in front of the mouth by a person who is coughing or sneezing.

576 [851] Shortly after the birth of a boy or girl all who are on good terms with the parents greet them by saying *kalunga*. The word is repeated four times with clapping of the palms. When words have been imperfectly heard and the listener desires repetition it is customary to say *kuku* in an interrogative tone.

[264] No particular etiquette is observed when eating. Two or three children eat from one platter, helping themselves with their fingers to the mush or sweet potatoes.

Rules forbidding the preparation of food by menstruating women, likewise prohibitions relating to stepping over a person, are mentioned in discussing taboos and omens.

EDUCATIONAL VALUE OF PLAY, MUSIC, AND DANCING

524 182 533 The educational value of play lies in its imitation of the pursuits of adult life. Though there are specialists in music, dancing, and singing, these exercises are indulged in by everyone. Music, singing, and dancing are more than amusements, they are fundamental as coordinating forces in tribal life at all levels of culture (W. D. Hambly, Tribal Dancing and Social Development, London, 1926). [113]

Among the Ovimbundu *Cimbamba Co Lia* is a popular game for girls, who form a circle, join hands, and sing:

PART I

524 [535] *Omola una, ndo sile vekango, Cimbamba co lia* ("That little child was left in the desert, the nighthawk ate it"). At the word *Cimbamba* they begin to dance, facing from side to side in such a manner that they meet and bow. Some sing, *Cimbamba co lia* ("The nighthawk ate him"), and others respond, *Kalikiai* ("'tis the goblins"), as many times as they wish. Finally a return is made to the first words which are sung again. All musical transcriptions have been made by Dr. G. Herzog from my phonographic records.

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The compound in which the initiates had been confined for three months was a circular enclosure made of light branches and leafy boughs, at the narrow embrasure of which stood a guardian of the boys, who permitted entrance. In the middle of the large enclosure were seven small cages, each of which was just large enough to allow one boy to lie on his back, and I was informed that the boys lie thus for two weeks after circumcision (Plate LXXX, Fig. 2). 981 304 171

The ages of the boys appeared to be from ten to seventeen years (Plate LXXX, Fig. 1), an observation which agrees well with that made at Katoko and Ngongo. The disparity of age among the novices at each center where initiation was observed bears out the statement that initiation ceremonies are held at irregular intervals, but not more frequently than once in four years.

During confinement in the large enclosure the novices had made masks and costumes (Plate LXXIX, Fig. 1), and when they were pulling on the coarse netting suits, which fit tightly, I observed that circumcision had been performed thoroughly, evidently some weeks ago, for the wounds were healed. Masks were obtained, and these the instructors of the boys were careful to wrap in bark cloth, at the same time requesting me not to show the objects to women.

A few days later these boys returned to their village to dance while wearing the costumes which had been made in the enclosure. At Cangamba the final ceremony lasted twelve hours amid great excitement, including ceaseless drumming and dancing. One boy, who wore a skirt on his fiber costume, lifted this to display an artificial penis of great size (Plate LXXIX, Fig. 2). This organ he grasped in his hand while chasing the women and girls, who ran away screaming and laughing. [522]

At this ceremony there appeared stilt-walkers (Plate LXXXI, Fig. 1) and a medicine-man, a member of the Luchazi tribe (Plate LXXXI, Fig. 2).

Circumcision among the Bdjok (Vachokue) has been witnessed by C. P. Holdredge and described by Kimball Young (*Amer. Anthr.*, XXIX, pp. 661–669). This ceremony took place in the far northeast of Angola. The man described as the *magish* of whom women are afraid, but who is known to the initiates, corresponds to the Uluchazi medicine-man seen in the final ceremony at Cangamba. Of this grotesquely dressed person the men and boys took no notice, neither did he pay attention to them. On the contrary he chased women who ran away screaming. Kimball Young's description of the enclosure where boys are confined, and his account of the [113] [756]

VIII. LANGUAGE

Affinities of Umbundu

197 The Umbundu language is widely understood in Angola owing to the journeys of the Ovimbundu as raiders and traders in large caravans. Umbundu is as important for communication in Angola as Hausa is for Nigeria, or Swahili for the east coast of Africa.

Notwithstanding this use of Umbundu as a lingua franca it is necessary to note that tribes surrounding the Ovimbundu have their own distinctive Bantu languages; moreover, the Umbundu language itself has several dialects.

For example, the Vasele tribe living in rugged country in the hinterland of Novo Redondo have a dialect of Umbundu (Usele) so distinctive that a competent Ocimbundu interpreter has difficulty in making himself understood, or interpreting what is said. Isolation of the Vasele from the Ovimbundu has led to the formation of a cultural pocket in which linguistic developments have shared in [184] a specialization of culture. The differences between the Umbundu of Elende and that of the Ambundu tribes may be noted by comparing this brief outline of Umbundu, recorded at Elende, with the records of Amandus Johnson, whose research relates to the language spoken in the hinterland of Loanda. The present chapter will deal only with notes on vocabulary, phonetics, an outline of grammar, sign language, folklore and proverbs, all of which are briefly treated. In the field phonographic records of the Umbundu language were taken, and for the analysis of tonal values and other aspects of phonetics I am indebted to Dr. M. H. Watkins, a student of Professor E. Sapir, formerly of the University of Chicago, now at Yale.

The section on Umbundu grammar conclusively shows Umbundu to be a representative language of the Bantu family of languages. Umbundu possesses all the fundamental characteristics of Bantu [113] speech. The truth of this may be seen by comparing this outline of Umbundu with the analysis of Bantu languages given by A. Werner (Language Families of Africa, London, 1925). Moreover, Carl Meinhof (Grundzüge einer vergleichenden Grammatik der Bantu Sprachen, Berlin, 1906, pp. 112–115, and translation by A. Werner and N. J. von Warmelo, London, 1932) indicates the degree of relationship of Umbundu to other Bantu tongues by giving comparisons of the stems of personal and possessive pronouns, along with other comparative data.

Ongonja. Large round gourd.
Ongoma. Net in which gourd is carried.
Okuqi. Bow.
Uvanga. Arrow.
Okandoi (plural *okandoi*). Bark rope.
Ombolombolo. Musical bow.
Ohoma. Drum.
Okalipa. Throwing stick.
Okanyanga. Drill for boring wood.
Ongonda. Basket used in divination.
Ekanga. Water jar.
Ongonga. Jar for palm oil.
Ombalanga. Skin-covered box carried to war by a king.
Omanda (diminutive, *okandinda*). Flour-sifter.
Ongui. Tobacco-pipe.
Embungombunga. Bull-roarer.
Okanonga (singular, *okanonga*). Rattles for tying on the legs when dancing.
Okandonda. Wooden flute.
Ongonda or ombumanda. Wooden hair-comb.
Ombala. Long needle used in making mats.
Omanda. Wooden pigeon and dove.
Omda. Head-dress worn by kings, warriors, medicine-men and hunters. Small brush used by medicine-man.
Ombumanda. Wooden image of human figure.
Ongonda. Rat trap of cane.
Ombulana. Snuff box.

192

The names for colors are restricted to a few words; but in all other respects the Umbundu vocabulary is extensive.

My interpreter said, "When I was learning colors, the women at the school told me many names, but I could see no difference at all." Ngonga contended that there was no difference between the color of a dark blue book and the black box on which it was resting. [151]

The following colors have names. Black is *tekiwa*. White is *pola*. Yellow is *ondanga*. Red is *kanakit*. Greens and blues are not well distinguished linguistically, but green is *ovikambote*. The word *tekiwisa* is used to indicate that a color is not distinctly green or blue. The word *pokisa* is used to describe gray, and all dark reds. *Wambula* is the term which describes a greenish-blue shade.

A further study of vocabulary was made by asking Ngonga to speak into the dictaphone. In doing so he gave lists of words including nouns in their singular and plural forms, together with many examples of other parts of speech and illustrations of syntax. These records have been transcribed by Dr. M. H. Watkins. (This section was prepared with use of phonetic symbols that were easily available. For the most recent system, see "Practical Phonetics for Students of African Languages," by D. Westermann and I. C. Ward, London, 1933.) 194 113

PHONETICS

VOWELS

194

The vowels are *a*, *e*, *i*, *o*, *u*, and perhaps *ə*. They seem to be somewhat lower than the cardinal vowels. There was only one word in which the vowel *ə* was heard, *ɔpatəlóñá* (leather pouch for a belt). This word, however, appears in the field notes as *opatalońa* (*opata-*

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FF13 Mbundu FF13

concordial agreement as stated above, divide the nouns into several classes or class genders. We need not enter upon a general discussion of concord, which in the Bantu languages is a method of expressing grammatical relations that are of fundamental importance. Concord need not always appear in the form of perfect alliteration, although it frequently does so, for the essential fact is that all nouns of the same class are recognizable as such, and other elements of speech when brought into syntactic agreement with these nouns must carry similar distinctions. 193

Students of Bantu have suggested that the various noun classes probably represent a proto-Bantu classification which formerly betokened a grouping based on common characteristics (A. Werner, Some Bantu Linguistic Problems, *Jour. Afr. Soc.*, XXVIII, 1928-29, pp. 155-165). The nouns listed here under Class 1 may accordingly be recognized as belonging to the so-called personal class, and the prefixes of Class 8 indicate a diminutive class. [113]

CLASS 1

SINGULAR PREFIX: *omu-*, *omo-*	RELATIVE: *u-*
PLURAL PREFIX: *oma-*	RELATIVE: *a-*
ɔmánú, person	*ɔmɔ́lɔ*, child
ɔmánú, people	*ɔmɔ́lɔ*, children

Illustrations of concordial agreement with these nouns:

ɔmánú útíto, small person	*ɔmɔ́lɔ́ útíto*, small child
ɔmánú vátíto, small people	*ɔmɔ́lɔ́ vátíto*, small children

CLASS 1A

SINGULAR PREFIX: *u-*	RELATIVE: *u-*
PLURAL PREFIX: *a-*, *oma-*	RELATIVE: *a-*
ulume, man	*ufeko*, girl
alume, men	*afeko*, girls
ɔváume, men	*ɔváfeko*, girls
ukqi, woman	*umalehe*, lad
akqi, women	*amalehe*, lads
ɔvákqi, women	

The following forms show the concordial agreement for Class 1A:

ulume útíto, small man	*akqi vátíto*, small women
alume vátíto, small men	*ɔvákqi vátíto*, small women
ɔváume vátíto, small men	*afeko vene* (*va-ene*), your (pl.) girls
ukqi útíto, small woman	*amalehe vávó*, their lads

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

539 mother leopard returned, the jerboa brought out the only cub four times. On the fourth day the jerboa ate the last of the cubs.

When the mother leopard came home the jerboa was terrified, so said, "The cubs are not very well, you must go in the room to feed them; I cannot bring them out." When the leopard had gone into the sleeping room the jerboa ran quickly into his hole in the ground.

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538 These tales from my records were all told to me by Ngonga. It is true that some of the stories appear in the Umbundu reader [113] "Olosapo Vioku Likisa Oku Tanga" (Kamundongo, 1914). But when this book was printed Ngonga was already well acquainted with all the stories therein, and many more. Most of the tales were, and are today, an integral part of the Umbundu language.

My own inquiries had the same result as those of Chatelain in revealing a preponderance of stories of animals. Yet W. C. Bell [113] was able to collect several tales relating entirely to the adventures of human beings (*Jour. Amer. Folk-Lore*, XXXV, pp. 116–150). At times there is a didactic theme running through a tale, which emphasizes the value of courage, presence of mind, and perseverance. A sense of humor is shown in the conversations of animals and the tricks which the smaller creatures use to the discomfort of the larger animals.

538 171 Comparative study of stories told by the Ovimbundu with those from other parts of Africa opens up a field of research, especially in view of the long caravan journeys of the Ovimbundu. Chatelain narrates the Angolan story of the frog who boasted that he could ride the elephant, and contrived to do so by a clever ruse (*Jour.* [113] *Amer. Folk-Lore*, VII, p. 62). The Nigerian story of the tortoise who fulfilled the same boast is told by A. B. Ellis (Yoruba-speaking Peoples of the Slave Coast, London, 1894, p. 265).

The Ovimbundu have the story of the tortoise who made a wager with the antelope respecting a race which they agreed to run. The tortoise won the wager by placing one of his brothers at the winning post. The Umbundu version is given in "Olosapo" (p. 53), and there is a Cameroon version.

The tug-of-war story which tells of a trick played against the hippopotamus and the elephant is known to the Ovimbundu. The story has a wide distribution with local variations. Sometimes the elephant and the hippopotamus are unwittingly made to pull

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538 171 [113]

against one another by some small clever animal such as the monkey or the hare. In the version given by H. S. Stannus (Harvard African Studies, vol. III, p. 329) the hare perpetrates this ruse. The version given by Smith and Dale (The Ila-speaking Peoples of Rhodesia, vol. II, p. 377) makes the contestants a hippopotamus and a rhinoceros, but the hare again arranges the tug-of-war. E. Dayrell (Folklore Stories from Southern Nigeria, London, 1910, p. 104) gives another variant of the tug-of-war story, which states that one end of the rope was made fast to a palm tree. The hippopotamus was under water so he could not see the object against which he was pulling. He thought he was tugging against the tortoise as arranged.

Umbundu stories are humorous and didactic, while some indicate a process of rationalizing. An example of the latter kind is found in the story explaining why the bat flies at night. Dayrell (pp. 36, 51) gives two different versions of this rationalizing tale.

These folklore stories of the Ovimbundu give information respecting vocabulary, structure of the language, powers of observation, customs, and ideas of conduct.

I have found no stories which illustrate the grafting of elements from two different cultures. In some parts of Africa tales may be heard which contain blended elements from a Negro and a Semitic culture, as in Nigeria. But assimilation of features which were foreign to the story at its cultural origin does not occur in the tales given here, with the exception of the European story of the greedy dog, which is an importation.

The Ovimbundu were noted for their long caravan journeys, which were undertaken in territory occupied by tribes of the same linguistic family (Bantu), a fact which may account for the similarity of Umbundu and other Bantu versions of the same tales.

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101 a Bantu-speaking group numbering about one and one third
(161) million, whose home is the Benguela Highland of Angola (Portuguese West Africa). Christian missions have worked among them since 1881, the date of founding of the W.C.A.M. of the A.B.C.F.M., with which work the writer has been connected since 1924.

121 *Umbundu mentality.* It is not the purpose of this study to
114 appraise Bantu or Umbundu mentality. Every new description of a Bantu culture gives a new angle or vantage point from which to view the versatile mentality of that interesting group of people. All available objective views unite to show us, as Driberg holds for primitive man in general, 'a being as human as ourselves, affected by the same emotions . . . with thoughts, responses, and actions differing in no essential way from our own'[1]—neither the noble savage of Rousseau nor the subhuman creature of more recent doctrinaires. 'The grouping of savages with children and idiots is but another symptom of an attitude which, when faced with a different type of culture, insists on assuming a lower type of mentality to account for that culture.'[1]

It must be owned that different views of primitive mentality are held, but it would seem that those which hold primitive man to be incapable of reasoning logically, his mentality in some way inferior or 'pre-logical', base their conclusions too largely on theoretical or library material and too little on results of actual field work.[2] It is not the purpose of the present study to examine these theories, but a word of protest must be raised against some who, basing their view of the mentality of Bantu peoples on some such theories as those mentioned above, and with or without sup-

[1] J. H. Driberg, *The Savage as He Really Is*, pp. 2, 3 (London: Routledge, 1929).

[2] Cf., for example, L. Levy-Bruhl, *Les Fonctions Mentales dans les Sociétés Inférieures, La Mentalité Primitive*, &c. The seriousness with which these and similar theoretical studies have been taken is surprising. Cf. e.g., R. Allier, *Mind of the Savage* (London: Bell, 1929); J. W. C. Dougall, *Characteristics of African Thought* (London: International Institute of African Languages and Cultures, 1932); N. S. Booth, *Teaching a Bantu Community* (MS. copy). Dr. Max Gluckman of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute told me that I had wrongly interpreted Levy-Bruhl, and he kindly loaned me a copy of a paper by Evans-Pritchard which sets forth a different interpretation of Levy-Bruhl's thesis with regard to the 'pre-logical' mentality. It is not my intention here to combat the thesis of the 'pre-logical' mentality, but rather a common interpretation of it (Evans-Pritchard, 'Levy-Bruhl's Theory of Primitive Mentality', *Bulletin of the Faculty of Arts of the Egyptian University*, vol. i, pt. ii).

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port from intelligence tests of doubtful suitability, have called in question the 'educability' of some Bantu groups.[1] 114 121

I shall not examine these theories but rather leave to descriptions of Umbundu culture given in the main part of the study, the task of showing that the mental capacity of the Ovimbundu is sufficient to enable them to assimilate the education placed at their disposal. Educators who really believe otherwise would hardly waste their time in attempting to educate a people who, after all, may be incapable of education.

> If we do not believe in the logic of the savage and in the identity of his processes of thought with our own, then we should be proved illogical ourselves in attempting to develop along logical lines peoples of an alien mentality, and in attempting to transmit our civilization to peoples mentally incapable of assimilating it.[2]

The capacity of the Ovimbundu and their 'educability' are assumed.

The Approach. All the various types of approach to African education have been classed under one of the two aims: Assimilation, which has represented Latin colonial policy; and Adaptation, which has been more representative of the British and Belgian point of view. *Assimilation* would make African Frenchmen, African Portuguese, &c., of the natives. *Adaptation* would take what is best in both the African and the European cultures in order to produce a better African civilization'.[3] 121 177

Within the aim of *assimilation* there may be distinguished at least two policies. One ignores indigenous culture, presents the European culture quite without reference to it, and treats the African as though he had no cultural background—as though he were a *tabula rasa.* The other may study the indigenous culture, but only in order to be able to uproot it the more thoroughly and efficiently.

Within the aim of *adaptation* at least three distinct policies may

[1] See discussion in Malherbe (ed.), *Educational Adaptations*, Chap. XVIII (*N.E.F. Conference Report*, Cape Town, 1937); also P. A. W. Cook, *The Education of a South African Tribe* (Cape Town, 1934).

[2] Driberg, op. cit., p. 4.

[3] There is an interesting discussion of these two policies by H. Dubois, 'Assimilation ou Adaptation?' in *Africa*, 1929, pp. 1 ff. See also the discussion in the Preface of *Western Civilization and the Natives of South Africa*, by I. Schapera (London, 1934). There are other policies for dealing with the Africans such as repression, exploitation, &c., but since they cannot be classed as educational theories I have not included them in this analysis.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

137 of the lower zones between the plateau and the coast is the baobab (*Adansonia digitata*). Where these lower zones are well watered, especially along the streams, dense tropical forests are the rule.

The Highland proper until quite recent times was well covered with a good variety of trees. This gave a pleasing aspect not lost upon travellers. Commander Cameron, who crossed from Zanzibar [114] to Benguela in 1875, was greatly impressed by the rustic beauty of the country-side:

> As we went forward the scenery increased in beauty, and at last I was constrained to halt and surrender myself to the enjoyment of the view which lay before me.
>
> I will content myself with asserting that nothing could be more lovely than this entrancing scene, this glimpse of Paradise. To describe it would be impossible. Neither poet, . . . nor painter . . . could by pen or pencil do full justice to the country of Bailundu.
>
> In the foreground were glades in the woodland, varied with knolls crowned by groves of large, English-looking trees, sheltering villages with yellow thatched roofs; . . . plantations with the fresh green of young crops and the bright red of newly hoed ground in vivid contrast, and running streams flashing in the sunlight; while in the far distance were mountains of endless and pleasing variety of form, gradually fading away until they blended with the blue of the sky. . . .
>
> That evening we camped in a wood, a clear space having literally to be cut out of the masses of sweet-scented creepers which festooned the trees.[1]

Some of this natural beauty still remains in Bailundu and other parts of the country, but much of it has gone, as grasslands have taken the place of forest and woodland. Native agriculture and the annual fires have caused much deforestation and much has [375] also come about from the demands of European settlement and the needs of the railway, which up to the present time uses only wood for fuel. The question as to whether the rainfall has yet been much affected is often discussed.

164 The Benguela Highland is within the tropics and therefore subject to many tropical diseases. Malaria is prevalent owing to the presence of the *Anopheles* mosquito, one of the two essential hosts in the life-cycle of the malaria germ, man being the other. Infant mortality owing to malaria seems to be high among the Ovimbundu. It seems probable, however, that many of the

[1] V. L. Cameron, *Across Africa* (New York: Harpers, 1877), p. 410 f.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

Oluse	*Oluina*
RELIGIOUS	
Regular village worship including agricultural festivals; village headman is also priest.	Family observances including occasional propitiations in case of illness, death, or other misfortunes; for desired economic advantages; mortuary rites. Family head is also priest.

613 782 793

602 114

Classificatory System of Relationship. The relationships of the wider kinship groups are quite largely extensions of those of the household, but the Ovimbundu, in common with all people who have a classificatory system, extend these relationships not only further but in quite different ways than do those who have the European (Roman) system. One who would understand the Ovimbundu must understand the Umbundu family from the inside—not as from motives of mere intellectual curiosity but as an Ocimbundu understands it. In order to demonstrate this family structure it will be necessary to present tables and diagrams. Hambly did a very creditable piece of work toward demonstrating the structure of the Umbundu family.[1] I doubt that anyone staying among them an equally short period of time, not knowing their language, could have done better in this respect unless he had come to the task with very exceptional preparation. It is only just to state this and I feel that it is necessary because so far as I am aware, in the five years since it was published, the book has received no adequate appraisal or review.[2] It must be said, however, that Hambly made some noticeable errors in his use of kinship terms owing to the fact that he did not learn the Umbundu language, and that he evidently failed to understand certain points with regard to the social structure.

For greater clarity and precision I am presenting in separate tables the terms which refer to blood relationship and those which refer to relationship by marriage.

[1] W. D. Hambly, op. cit., pp. 189–99.

[2] This book was reviewed in *Africa*, 1935, pp. 391–3, but the reviewer had no first-hand knowledge of the people or their language, which was perhaps his reason for taking up three-fourths of the space at his disposal with questions of orthography. E. W. Smith has taken note of the book (*Africa: What Do We Know of It?*, p. 71), but only to say that it 'is chiefly useful for its description of the material culture'.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

CHAPTER IV

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE

000 THE first and most important factor to be considered with reference to a programme of education or culture change is the social structure of the people among whom the programme is to be set up and carried out. Few writers on missions among the Bantu have considered the significance for the work of the social structure itself. Perhaps the particular social structure and its possible reference to the programme described have been considered too obvious to merit careful consideration. I am reminded of an observation of the late Mr. Justice Holmes that the 'vindication of the obvious is often more important than the elucidation of the obscure'.[1] But formerly it was not considered at all obvious that a mission programme should take into consideration a people's social structure. So great a missionary and anthropologist as the Reverend H. A. Junod concluded with all complacency: 'Bantu collectivism is dying out. In its stead Christianity will promote a healthy and progressive individualism. . . . I see no other way in which it (the race) can escape destruction.'[2] That was written before 1929, since when advocates of individualism have been few, and fewer the students of African life who would wish to 'promote' individualism there.

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114

000 The majority of missionary writers who have urged the adaptation or adoption of Bantu cultural elements have concerned themselves largely with beliefs, practices, and rites. If they so much as touch upon the social structure of the people under consideration, it is only to lay a basis for description of these other elements.[3] Although a number of writers have urged the desirability of conserving good elements believed to exist in 'Bantu communalism', 'African collectivism', and so on, few have offered concrete suggestions concerning the social structure, as designed to be of immediate or practical value. The one missionary who has

[1] Quoted in mimeographed suggestions concerning the use of *Essentials of Civilisation*, by Thomas Jesse Jones (New York, 1929).

[2] Junod, op. cit., 2nd ed., vol. ii, p. 633; 1st ed. (1913), vol. ii, p. 544.

[3] The most recent work of this type which has come to my attention is *The Church and Primitive People* (The Religious Institutions and Beliefs of the Southern Bantu and their Bearing on the Problems of the Christian Missionary), by D. W. T. Shropshire (London: S.P.C.K., 1938).

[p. 63]

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

pattern 'singled out in the institutions of his culture'.[1] I agree with 861
Fortes on the Tallensi that 'The total pattern is not built up brick 153
by brick like a house, but evolves'.[2] I am not convinced, however, [114]
of the necessity for postulating 'embryonic forms' or *schemas* of the total patterns supposed to be present in the child from the beginning.[3] Whether the *schemas* are supposed to be a part of the child's innate equipment, Fortes does not make clear, but I see no necessity for any such hypothesis. The method by which and the situation in which the Ocimbundu child learns, are ample explanation for the early and thorough development of the pattern of his culture.

Neither is it necessary to postulate either 'faculties' or 'instinctive drives' to explain Umbundu education.[4] Rather this study takes a view of 'human nature . . . as consisting essentially of specific situations'.[5] Instances in support of this view could be cited from the descriptive part of this chapter but that would be outside the scope of this study. The most important fact with regard to Umbundu education is its identification with life: the absence of cleavage as between 'school' and society, as between the social sphere of the child and the adult. The most important educational method in use is actual participation in the social and cultural or 'real life' situation. The educational 'content' is the whole Umbundu culture, consisting of attitudes (psychological and social), social usages, skills, observances, and traditional 'literature'. By far the most important are the social attitudes and usages. I turn therefore to the problems of

Social Adjustment

The education of the Ocimbundu child in the traditional social 867
setting is far more social than is the case with us. The child learns

[1] Ruth Benedict, *Patterns of Culture* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1934), p. 254.

[2] M. Fortes, op. cit., p. 42.

[3] Ibid., pp. 42 ff. Fortes attributes the concept of *schemas* to F. C. Bartlett (*Remembering*).

[4] In his discussion of education among the Tallensi, quoted above, Fortes does not specifically mention either of these hypotheses and he rightly remarks that some writers have 'attributed an almost mystical significance to imitation' as the principal method by which a child learns. He then proceeds, however, to classify the learning processes under *Mimesis*, *Identification*, *Co-operation*, and *Play*. Except for the first, these activities are of much importance in Umbundu education.

[5] Hugh Hartshorne, *Character in Human Relations*, p. 195 (New York: Scribner's, 1932); see also Allport, op. cit., p. 81.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

that question concerning the Ovimbundu. Rather, whence did they come and when? Can the lines of their migrations now be ascertained? Can their racial origins be determined with even approximate certainty? 167 174

The available evidence regarding origins and migrations of the Ovimbundu is mainly of five sorts: (1) linguistic; (2) legendary, whether of the several groups of the Ovimbundu or of the tribes from which they seem to have sprung; (3) historical; (4) evidence from place-names; and (5) evidence of comparative attitudes and culture-traits as between the Ovimbundu and their neighbours. In addition, we might list evidence of physical measurements and blood-group tests, but such evidence is not yet available for the Ovimbundu.

Tribal Origins

Language Affinities. As I pointed out in the introductory chapter, by linguistic classification the Ovimbundu belong to the western 'province' or group of the Southern Bantu. Linguistically, the Ovimbundu belong with their southern neighbours, the so-called 'Bangala'[1] and with the Ambo and Herero. The northern and eastern neighbours all belong to other language groups. This is a fact that must not be lost sight of, especially since Umbundu has been so often confused with the so-called 'Kimbundu' of the Ndongo or Angola kingdom. We are not surprised to find an author of 1846 declare that 'From the Congo to Cabo Negro (Alexander Bay) these black natives all speak the same language (*bunda*) with small changes of dialect';[2] but when this confusion is compounded in works laying claim to considerable value as linguistic and ethnological studies, as, for example, one which was published by a well-known museum in 1930,[3] a protest is in order. 197 114

[1] The Ndombe, Nganda, Cilengi, Cipungo, Muila, Mulondo, Humbi, Gambue, &c. I do not know that the term 'Bangala' may be applied with correctness to these people. I only use it for convenience. See 'Notas Etnográficas sôbre os povos indígenas do Distrito da Huila', *Boletim Geral das Colónias*, fev. 1935, p. 41.

[2] Lopes de Lima, *Ensaios sôbre a Statistica d'Angola e Benguella*, part i, p. 196.

[3] See F. u. W. Jaspert, *Die Völkerstämme Mittel-Angolas* (Frankfort, 1930). It is reported that the spurious nature of the works of these writers has been exposed by Baumann and others, but although I have searched, apart from a rather ambiguous footnote in Baumann's *Lunda*, I have found no such references, and am unable to say whether this has been done. The origin of the erroneous concept of a Bunda language (also called Bundu, or Mbundu), has been traced, and correctly I think on the whole, by Max Buchner, 'Die Ambakisten' (in

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

197 Sir Harry Johnston made this classification abundantly clear in his
114 monumental work published in 1919,[1] and the recent translation and revision of Carl Meinhof's important work on Bantu phonology[2] has used Umbundu extensively for illustrative material. It should now be abundantly clear to all that Umbundu is the northernmost of the Southern Bantu languages, and that in their language the Ovimbundu have elements in common with their southern neighbours.

167 *Traditional Histories.* Each of the principal groups among the
173 Ovimbundu has legends with regard to the migrations of their forefathers and the country from which they came. For the most part these legends refer to ancestors of the respective royal families, but some references are also made to the people whom these new-comers found in the country which they came to occupy. All of these legends point to countries of origin in the north or north-east. Several writers have noted this as a fact,[3] but it is necessary to take more explicit notice of each of several legends.

Ndulu has not received as much notice as have some of the other Umbundu kingdoms, but I have come to the conclusion that it is perhaps one of the oldest. The tradition runs that the progenitor of the dynasty, Katekula-Mengo, was an elephant-hunter and that he came with his wife, Ukungu (also called Mbala) from the region of the confluence of the Luandu and the Kuanza rivers. Following elephant-herds down the course of the Kuanza they passed the famous rocks of Pungu-a-Ndongo and in them left the imprints of Katekula-Mengo's bow and of Ukungu's basket, which, it is said, may be seen to this day; for in that early day the rocks had not yet hardened but were like fresh concrete. This couple

Zeitschr. f. Ethnol., 1915, pp. 398 ff.). This writer also interestingly and properly shows how the name Kimbundu came to be mistakenly applied to the Ngola or Ndongo language. The error, however, still continues to be propagated (e.g. *vide* A. Miranda Magalhães, 'Os Ambundus de Angola', &c., in *Trabalhos do I° Congresso Nacional de Antropologia Colonial*, Pôrto, 1934, vol. ii, pp. 536–53). This article contains so little of value that a systematic refutation would not be worth while. The writer's notions on the Bantu migrations seem especially fantastic.

[1] *A Comparative Vocabulary of Bantu and Semi-Bantu Languages*, vol. i.

[2] Meinhof, *An Introduction to the Phonology of the Bantu Languages*, translated, revised, and enlarged (Berlin and London, 1932).

[3] J. T. Tucker, *Drums in the Darkness*, p. 34 f. W. D. Hambly (*The Ovimbundu of Angola*) notes this fact at the beginning of his otherwise rather confused chapter on 'Historical Sources'.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

has it that the people then in the country, apart from the Songo, were 'Ngangela'[1] tribes. Magyar[2] has given different tradition with regard to the origin of the kingdom of Viye. He says that the forefathers came from the land of 'Moropu'[3] about three hundred years previously under the two chiefs 'Kinguri and Schakambundi', and, having conquered 'Masongo', settled on the Luandu River, engaging in agriculture between raids. They had the custom of eating their prisoners, and when there were not enough prisoners they lapsed into internecine warfare and ate each other. Certain leaders began to fear tribal suicide and formed a secret society of buffalo-hunters ('*empakasserros*'), pledged to give up cannibalism by substituting the flesh of the buffalo. When the tribal elder (the 'Jaga') suspected the innovation and objected strenuously, rather than fight the buffalo-hunters moved away and settled on the Kuanza River. After a further subdivision of the tribe, one party, 'under a certain Bihe', went south to the Kukema River, where 'Ganguella' were living, and founded the kingdom of 'Bihe'. Later on, continues Magyar, the people of the 'Jaga' mixed with neighbouring tribes, took on milder manners, and finally found themselves in the land of Kassanji 'near the Kingdom of the well-known Jaga of Kassanji'. This tradition related by Magyar cannot be completely harmonized with the familiar legend of Viye and Kahanda. I have given that tradition as Viye elders told it to me, and have noted that it had already been recorded before. Since these two traditions are at variance, since the version gotten by Serpa Pinto in 1878 is the same one and the only one which is current to-day, and since it is unlikely that in only twenty-one years, between 1857 (when Magyar was in Viye) and 1878, a tradition as interesting as that of the buffalo-hunters should have been forgotten, I am inclined to hypothecate that the source (whether immediate or remote) of the tradition given by Magyar was *not* Viye, but perhaps Songo or even Lunda, both of which regions were visited by Magyar. This report probably contains

where, near Chinguar, is the place called Saviye (Father of Viye); and later, in Ngalangi, whence, according to Ngalangi tradition, came Viye (cf. *infra*).

[1] 'Ngangela' is a deprecatory term by which the Ovimbundu designate the Luimbi, Cimbandi, Lucazi, Nyemba, Ngonzelo, Cokue, and other tribes who live to the east.

[2] Op. cit., p. 266 f.

[3] Dias de Carvalho (*Ethnographia e História Tradicional dos povos da Lunda*, p. 66) explains that this was a term which *os nossos antigos viajantes* applied to Lunda.

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175 which the 'Jagas' had, although they soon adopted the language of the people whom they conquered. As recently as fifty years ago the 197 mother of the king of Bailundu spoke Umbundu brokenly, since she came from Cipala, and her sons were sent to complete their education with her people where later they were often called to rule.[1]

173 Recognition by the Ciyaka people that their forefathers came from the region where the Imbangala now live has been noted. 114 It may have been a similar tradition heard in Viye which started 167 Magyar to find out the tradition of 'Kinguri'. Such a tradition was mentioned in Viye as late as 1898.[2] This relation between the Umbundu ruling families and either the 'Jagas' or the Imbangala has been noted by several of the Portuguese writers. Lopes de Lima, in his History of the Discovery of the Congo, adds a footnote on the 'Jagas' as follows: 'The Jagas are almost nomadic peoples . . . coming from the interior of Africa, . . . there are some on the frontiers of the Congo, Angola, and Benguella, where some have fixed their habitations (as those of Cassange, and Bailundo).'[3] Writing in 1797 a certain Col. Pinheiro de Lacerda said of the inhabitants of Ngalangi, Kakonda, Wambu, Bailundu, &c.: 'These are they of the uplands, who are divided into two groups, those of one are called "Quinbundos",[4] (these do not eat human flesh); the others are called "Quimbangalas", who eat it, and when they make their sacrifice, which all attend, all eat the "Macongo".'[5] At that period the diversity of these two component parts of the Ovimbundu people was so apparent that they were even spoken of as separate and distinct peoples.

103 *Place-names.* Before leaving the subject of migratory move- 167 ments a word should be said on the evidence of place-names. There is nothing to prove, except in a few instances where traditions have been collected, that the recurrence of identical or similar names at different places indicates the actual lines of migration followed by the several tribal groups represented. It may be said, however, that this line of evidence, taken together

[1] See *Missionary Herald*, 1888, p. 70.

[2] *Missionary Herald*, 1898, p. 108.

[3] *Annaes Mar. Col.*, 1845, p. 93.

[4] Taken from the singular form *ocimbundu*. As already explained, the change of *chi* to *qui* is a commonly met mutilation of the Bantu forms.

[5] *Annaes Mar. Col.*, 1845, p. 488. There follows a circumstantial account of the ceremony of *Oku lia Ekango*, to which reference has already been made.

there was a great metal industry in Viye, where hoes were made for trade with the interior; later the wholesale manufacture of hoes was taken over by Ndulu, where there are the best and most easily accessible deposits of iron. In exchange for hoes they received palm-oil or cattle from other regions, or salt, rum, or goods from the coast. Other regional specialisations were :- Kasongi and the Sele country for palm-oil, Cikuma for beeswax, cattle from Ngalangi, Kalukembe, and, further south, corn-meal from Ciyaka, Civula and Bailundu.[1] 438 [316]

SOCIAL ORGANISATION AND POLITICAL STRUCTURE

KINSHIP AND DESCENT

The Ovimbundu appear to have a system of double descent which has not yet been fully reported and analysed, and whose nature is not very clear from existing accounts. The following outline is based on information given by Childs,[2] who unfortunately details the functions but not the composition of the kin groups concerned. In a review[3] of Childs' book, Barnes has formulated a descent system which would be congruent with Childs' description, and his suggestions are outlined here. 611 114

The epata

Childs translates *epata* as "blood relatives", and his use of the term suggests that it may have either a general or a limited sense. Thus he writes (p.42): "Nearly all of the villagers belong to the same *epata* or extended family, which includes both lines of descent. Most of them belong to the father's family *(olusa)*, and the mother's family *(olusina)* may also be represented." And, in another context, (p.44): "When an Ovimbundu speaks of his *epata* (family) in the sense of a large and widespread organization with a recognized head....it is generally his *olusina* [mother's family] to which he refers." 596

The olusa and the olusina

Every Ovimbundu belongs in the first instance to two distinct kin groupings: the *olusa*, to whom he is related through his father, and the *olusina* to whom he is related through his mother. Uterine brothers and sisters belong to the same *olusa* and *olusina*, but to the male and female side respectively, according to sex. (see below.) A difficulty has arisen because both Hambly[4] and Childs appear to regard both groups as bilateral. Hambly states explicitly that the *olusa*, or *epata lia tate* (family of my father) includes *all* relatives on the father's side, and the *olusina* or *epata lia nai* (family of my mother) *all* relatives on the mother's side. Childs writes (p.45) "Bearing in mind *their bilateral nature* ..... the functions of [the *olusa* and the *olusina*] may be summarised...". But from his summary it is obvious that the *olusa* and the *olusina* cannot be bilateral groups, neither can they have parallel descent systems of any kind. Marriage is patrilocal, and the *olusa* forms a local unit while the *olusina* is 611 613 [591]

(1) Childs, 1949, p.[illegible]. (2) 1949, pp.42-6.
(3) Man, September 1950, p.127. (4) Op.cit., pp.191-2.

621 The total number of households is 44, or 48 including those of the four
592 section heads. It should be noted that there is a discrepancy in Childs's
114 figures (apart from an obvious misprint):[1] in another context he writes that section B contains only 12 houses (not even *households*), while from this table it would appear that section B has 15 household heads, including that of the section head; and section C is said to have 6 households, while only 4 (again counting the section head) are accounted for in this table.

591 Childs states[2] that the incidence of patrilocal marriage in Ngendo
114 is fairly typical of Umbundu country, but unfortunately gives little information regarding the relationship of the various spouses to each other or concerning the location of the villages from which they came. Matrilocal marriage is recognised as a possibility: of the three relatives by marriage listed above, one was a husband of a daughter of the headman, another the widow of a younger brother of the headman, who should have been inherited by a younger brother (?) or a mother's brother of the deceased, or, failing that, could have returned to her father's village. Of those listed above as sisters' children, two were widows who had come to live in the village with their mother's brothers.[3]

POLITICAL STRUCTURE

The village headman[4]

622 The village headman *(sekulu yimbo)* is also the head of the *oluse*
793 which forms the nucleus of the village group, and is related agnatically to most of the householders. He alone may speak of the village as *imbo*
782 *liange* (my village); the heads of sections, who are also called *sekulu*[5] may speak possessively only of their own sections *(ocitipula cange)*, and other villagers speak only of "our village" *(imbo lietu)*.[6] The headman functions as both priest and legal head of the village. As priest he has in his compound the *etambo* (spirit hut), in which the insignia of office are kept, and in which he prays to the ancestral spirits. Upon occasion he may sleep there, usually offering a prayer to the spirits when he wakes during the night. The *etambo* may also be
[341] used as a lodging place for respected guests, or as a store-house for possessions not used every day. Childs states that he officiates at regular village worship, including agricultural festivals; Hambly adds that he may lead the people in offering sacrifices when epidemics of
613 sickness break out in the village. It has been noted above[7] that it is the function of the *oluine* head to lead such rituals when illness occurs within the *oluine*. In general the village head is responsible for
[622] matters - particularly agriculture and public health - which affect the whole village; individuals, both for protection and for help and other

(1) Childs, op.cit., p.28, line 27, where "twenty-four" should read "forty-four".
(2) On the basis of the 192 genealogies and 74 marriage-schedules which he collected. He does not, unfortunately, give examples or show how the comparison was made.
(3) Based on Childs, op.cit., pp.25-31.
(4) This section is based on Childs, op.cit., pp.36-7.
(5) It has been noted above that *sekulu* is used for all men (and some women) of the grandfather's generation.
(6) op.cit., p.38. (7) p.18.

683 One of the commonest forms of punishment for sorcery was, and still is, banishment. Only the chief could pronounce the death penalty. Charges of sorcery are sometimes brought today to civil courts and to church courts under the guise of "poisoning".(1)

781 There are obvious gaps in the information on Umbundu religion and magic e.g. on spirits other than those of ancestors; on ritual connected
776 with the ancestors; on productive and protective magic; on the work of the medicine-man as distinct from the diviner, and on the functions of
171 the two separate offices of family priest. From existing accounts, however, Umbundu magico-religious concepts would appear to have much in common with those of the peoples to the east of the Plateau, and many of the words used for these concepts (*ngombo, ohomba, wonga, nganga* e.g.) are in fact the same. These peoples have been described in another section of the Survey.(2)

THE LIFE CYCLE

852 Childs' chapters on infancy, childhood, and adolescence form the
114 main part of his book, and his treatment of the subject is much more detailed and on a deeper level than information offered by other writers,(3) and should be consulted.

BIRTH

844 A woman remains in her husband's village for the birth of her children. During the first birth, she is generally assisted by older women of the village, usually relatives of the husband. No man is present unless delayed labour entails the presence of a medical practitioner, or a
[845] diviner. Difficult delivery is said to be caused by broken taboos, adultery on the part of the mother, sorcery, or the woman's own refusal to give birth. There is little ceremony connected with childbirth, and a woman may give birth to her second and later children alone when she is
[846] in the fields. There is a customary lying-in period until the cord falls from the navel, but this is frequently ignored today.

845 *Twins* are welcomed but are considered prodigies whose birth requires the administrations of an *ocimbanda*.(4) Soon after the birth, and every month while the children are growing, the whole village takes part in a ceremony to preserve their lives. In the case of triplets, one is given to the paramount chief.(5)

553 *Naming* usually takes place, in the case of a first-born, on the day of its birth. Childs notes several factors:

(a) The name (*onduko*) should have been borne by a relative, whether livin or dead, whose character and state of well-being are satisfactory; sometimes the child may be considered the re-incarnation of the deceased relative after whom he is named.[1]

(1) Childs, personal communication. (2) McCulloch, 1951, pp.72-83.
(3) Hambly, (2) 1934, pp.212-33, and Cashmore, 1944.
(4) Ennis, 1945. (5) Childs, 1949, p.83.

[1] [Childs, op. cit., p. 87.]

175 that the Church participated actively (T. Lewis, The Old Kingdom of Kongo, *Geog. Journ.*, 1908, pp. 598–600).

Political influence of the Portuguese, working often through the agency of Jesuit priests, led to factions within the Congo Empire, and the resulting disturbances caused movements of peoples that affected the whole of northern Angola and the population of the Benguela Highlands.

Portuguese penetration of the hinterland of Angola, especially from Loanda to Bihé, was concerned with attempts to subjugate native tribes, the establishment of trading posts, and the encouragement of the slave trade (S. Marquardsen, Angola, 1928, pp. 6–10).

439 721 The value of the Portuguese as allies of Umbundu caravans from Bihé lay in their ability to supply guns and powder to their native henchmen, who gave something more than military service in return. In response to Portuguese demand for slaves and ivory, Umbundu caravans made long journeys into the Congo basin, Rhodesia, south and southwest Angola, and possibly across Africa to lakes Tanganyika and Nyasa. The arms supplied in exchange for ivory and slaves must have helped the Ovimbundu in all their predatory excursions.

648 Thus the Ovimbundu were, in the early centuries of contact with the Portuguese, invaders encouraged in the building up of their tribal life and resources. Never were the Portuguese strong enough completely to subjugate northern Angola. Relationships with natives, especially the Bihéan section of the Ovimbundu, were directed toward alliances on a commercial basis. The political result of this was a combination of the Portuguese and the stronger tribes for the exploitation of the weaker.

167 177 The historical ethnology of the southwest Congo is so complex that the elements are difficult to disentangle. The number of tribes concerned is great, and their movements are not easy to follow; but a gradual extension of people from the Congo in a southwesterly direction through Lunda to the Benguela Highlands (1600–1800) seems to be the summation of all the conflict. I regard the Ovimbundu as the most southerly branch of these mass movements, during which they received a discipline that enabled them to make their home in central Angola, despite opposition from the Portuguese and earlier arrivals.

114 For these conclusions reliance has been placed on the extensive field work and historical analyses of E. Torday and T. A. Joyce, whose "Notes on the Ethnography of the Bambala" (*J.R.A.I.*, XXXV, pp. 398–426) have proved of particular value in this connection.

As early as 1600 there were cattle as far north as Benguela, and the Jaggas regarded these as a most valuable part of their plunder. Palms are a characteristic part of the vegetation of Angola north of the Benguela Highlands. Evidently the Jaggas moved extensively in northern Angola because they cut down palms for making wine (Battell, p. 30). The usual method is to tap the top of a standing tree, but the Jaggas were an itinerant people who did not cultivate palms. 175 171 [824]

Sprinkling the blood of sacrificed animals on a newly kindled fire I have mentioned in connection with Umbundu rites celebrating the founding of a new village. The Jaggas carried out this ceremony before a raiding expedition, when cows and other animals were sacrificed (Battell, p. 33). Battell mentions the use of red *tukula* wood for personal decoration. This wood (*Pterocarpus tinctorius*) is used in many parts of Angola at the present time. [824]

Reference to Battell confirms the information given to me in relation to an old iron gong obtained at Ngalangi. He says (p. 20), "The general did strike his gong, which is an instrument of war that soundeth like a bell, and presently made an oration with a loud voice." [534]

Battell reported that the Jaggas wore beads of ostrich eggshell. Ravenstein, the editor of this volume in the Hakluyt Series, seems to doubt this statement, saying, "There are no ostriches in Angola, and as to beads made of ostrich eggs I can give no explanation." I noted the presence of captive ostriches in southern Angola as far north as Gambos. The Vakuanyama women greatly value their long necklaces of ostrich-eggshell beads. Necklaces made in the north of Angola are traded to the south and conversely, each kind of necklace having a high value due to remoteness of origin. This instance, like many other points, confirms the reliability of Battell's observations in Angola. [237] [114]

Father Jerome Merolla (1682) describes the poison ordeal which was used from the Congo estuary to San Salvador (Churchills' Voyages, II, p. 675). "The aforesaid oath is administered to the supposed traitor by a sort of wizard, who, making a certain composition out of the juices of herbs, serpent's flesh, pulp of fruits, and divers other things, gives it to the supposed delinquent to drink. If guilty (as they tell you) he will immediately fall down in a swoon or trembling to the ground." The marimba was used, and a double iron gong was carried before a chief and struck by an attendant. [695]

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The foregoing facts, when compared with field work among the Ovimbundu, indicate that the old culture of the Congo and northern Angola bears a strong resemblance to Umbundu culture at the present day. A more detailed analysis of this resemblance is made in chapter X. 174

The following notes dealing with exploration in Angola (1800–1930) are adduced for critical comparison with my own observations among the Ovimbundu. 175 171

The work of Sir R. F. Burton describing the exploration of Lacerda and other Portuguese pioneers, is more useful for geographical than for ethnological information. Lacerda's journey to Czambe, south of Lake Moero, was performed in 1798. A mention of veneration for the dead and consultation of the deceased on all occasions of war or of good fortune, is made (p. 127). These are important points in the present tribal life of the Ovimbundu. [114] [769]

Bowditch (1824) writes from information given to him by Almeida and Saldanha. There are valuable references to the Vacilenge, a people adjacent to the Ovimbundu, who refused to kill their cattle, "rather than do which they will endure famine to extremity." This note was made about Long. 15° E. and Lat. 15° S. (p. 34). The cattle were milked, and cattle-raiding by the Ovimbundu was common at this time. Many present-day Ovimbundu do not milk their cattle, but the Vacilenge still follow their milking custom observed before 1824. 175 101 234

Livingstone's journey through northeast and northern Angola in 1853 contains references to the Vachokue who seemed bent on plunder (I, p. 370). Livingstone noted cotton spinning, which I recorded as an occupation of males of the Ovimbundu at Elende. Livingstone, like other early travelers, encountered caravans of Bihéans (Ovimbundu) bearing elephants' tusks and beeswax, commodities, which, along with slaves, formed the chief merchandise of these caravans from the Benguela Highlands (p. 466). Livingstone notes and sketches (Plate XIII, Fig. 10) the double-handled hoe (p. 442) which is still used. 175 171 [283] [439] [412]

J. J. Monteiro (I, p. 61) saw the poison ordeal administered. The poison itself was prepared from the thick hard bark of a large tree (*Erythrophlaeum guineense*). The place of observation was Mongue Grande, just south of the Congo estuary, and again Monteiro was present when the poison cup was given to two women at Ambrizette. Of this ordeal there is more to be said when discussing the culture contacts of the Ovimbundu, because the ordeal is a basic factor of [695] [824]

3; Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

171 wide distribution in Africa (C. Wiedemann, 1909) and the ceremony
175 still survives among the Ovimbundu in modified form.

[114] Though an informative writer, Monteiró is sometimes vague; he says (I, p. 278) that circumcision is a universal custom among the blacks of Angola. In view of the extent of Angola, the diversity of tribes, and the fact that Monteiro traveled over only a small part of the country, this information is misleading.

Monteiro is the only writer in whose works I have found a reference to the Vasele tribe; probably no part of Angola has been so neglected as the Esele country in the hinterland of Novo Redondo. At the present day the Vasele have a reputation for cannibalism. [266] Monteiro saw human flesh eaten at Cuacra, while the skulls of the victims were placed on adjacent trees. Monteiro states (II, p. 167) that on the death of a king the Mucelis (Vasele) put out all the fires in the kingdom; these were relighted by the succeeding king who [321] used fire produced by rubbing two sticks together. The flat beads of shell called *dongos*, made from *Achatina monetaria* (II, p. 168), are made today and traded to the far south of Angola, where their novelty assures them a value far beyond their intrinsic worth. I was fortunate in obtaining an example of the old beheading ax mentioned by Monteiro (II, p. 157) and sketched by Cavazzi (p. 210). Par- [262] boiled and roasted rats were offered to me as food; Monteiro mentions the offering of a roasted rat on a skewer (I, p. 99).

The account of Commander V. L. Cameron, who left Zanzibar for his journey across Africa in 1873, mentions several points of anthropological importance in relation to the Angolan section of his [756] journey. Cameron saw a net-covered medicine-man of the Kibokue (Vachokue) wearing a mask and a kilt of grass (p. 384). The function [524] of this man was to frighten devils from the woods. The contest in which boys discharge their arrows at a rolling root was seen by Cameron near Kagnombe (Cangamba?). Skulls of victims killed in [797] war were spiked on poles (p. 399). The diviner was followed by attendants who struck iron gongs, while the diviner himself shook a rattle made of basket-work in the form of a dumb-bell (p. 404). Cameron gives an accurate description of the divination basket and its use without going into details. These I have been able to supply [482] (chapter IX). The explorer met caravans of Bihéans, renowned carriers then as they are today. They were usually drunk and abusive; in some instances they attempted to rob the stragglers. ooo The use of caterpillars as food is noted (p. 416): "A man cut open

The use of caterpillars as food is noted (p.416): "A man cut open [262]
a large cocoon, extracted the contents, and smacked his lips with 171
great gusto." My field notes mention the use of caterpillars as food. 175

Capello and Ivens (1877–80) remark on the burial places of [766]
hunters which are distinguishable by the skulls of antelopes, buffalo, and hippopotamuses, stuck on upright poles, mixed with skulls of oxen killed in honor of the defunct. The writers noted that a heap of stones protected the body. I photographed two types of cairn in the regions of Ganda and Luimbale respectively. Capello and Ivens are not precise in their locality, but I judge it to have been Long. 17° E. and Lat. 13° S., a considerable distance from my own observations (Plates XXXII, Fig. 1; LXXIV, Fig. 1).

I photographed the stilt-walkers at the final stages of the initiation [481]
ceremonies at Cangamba. These men had no costumes; on the [292]
contrary they were almost naked but were covered with white clay. Capello and Ivens (p. 295), saw a stilt-walker with a feathered mask and a netting costume. Such attire I saw on an Uluchazi medicine-man, but not on the stilt-walkers (Plate LXXXI, Figs. 1, 2).

I was unable to obtain information about the stilt-walkers, but 693
Capello states that they castigated misdemeanants, punished shameless women, and accused criminals. Capello and Ivens were 187 miles to the northwest of my area of observation. The Uluchazi medicine-man, who appeared with the stilt-walkers during my visits, was said to make bad magic for women. The men ignored him but women gathered round in a derisive way; they quickly scattered when he pursued them.

Serpa Pinto, who made his journey across Angola in 1878, has 175
so many references to customs and objects still extant, that I propose 114
to tabulate his observations because of their value in showing the preservation of indigenous traits in spite of Portuguese contacts.

The body of a chief is buried with a covering of oxhide. Many 175
oxen are sacrificed at the death of a king. The heir to the deceased 766
is bound to sacrifice his whole herd in order to regale his people and give peace to the departed (S. Pinto, I, p. 63). The Ovimbundu conform at the present time to similar methods of burial and sacrifice.

Near Huambo, Serpa Pinto saw in every village a kind of "temple 175
for conversation." This is the *onjango*, that I have described and [345]
photographed (Plate XLVIII, Fig. 1). It is the house in which all males foregather for the evening meal, which is brought by their women (I, p. 96).

The gathering and eating of caterpillars is described. This con- [262]
tinues today (I, p. 120).

175 [316] [325] Serpa Pinto saw shafts for the working of iron ore in the neighborhood of Cubango. The ore was mixed with charcoal and smelted in shallow pits. It is stated that the iron was sometimes tempered with ox-grease and salt. The bellows are of the type made at Elende (I, p. 128). Of the tempering process I have no confirmation.

175 787 [764] Somewhere near Bihé Serpa Pinto saw the ceremony of questioning a corpse which was made to sway to and fro, the people believing all the while that it does so without human intervention. The diviner declared that the soul of a dead person will tell who caused the death (I, p. 130). I observed and photographed this ceremony (Plate XLV, Fig. 1).

[695] The ordeal of the poison cup is described; blood-letting, and divination by shaking articles in a basket are also mentioned. Pinto says that in the articles that appear uppermost the diviner reads what his hearers are desirous of learning of the past, present, or future. Sorcery and rain-making are likewise briefly mentioned (I, p. 132). The divination basket, the poison ordeal, and rain-making, are Umbundu cultural traits today.

171 224 Here Pinto illustrates the existing practice of mounting the skulls of animals killed by a hunter on a pole in the village. There is a further reference to this custom among the Ambuellas (I, p. 333). These instances, combined with those personally noted, give a wide distribution for the practice (I, p. 177).

175 [304] Pinto saw the operation of tooth mutilation among the Luimba. The operation was performed with a knife which was struck by repeated light blows (I, p. 209).

[411] Pinto illustrates arrowheads in use in 1879 (I, pp. 277, 346). These are exactly the same as those made and used in 1929 (Plate XVII, Figs. 1–9).

[412] Axes used by the Luchazi are sketched with a detail that shows the old forms to persist without alteration (II, p. 36).

[321] Water-pipes made from horns and gourds by the Luina of eastern Angola are of the forms now used in that region, also by the Ovimbundu of the present day (II, pp. 33, 37).

175 114 For use in checking and supplementing my observations Serpa Pinto's book was found to be of the greatest service, though the precise locality was sometimes difficult to identify. This explorer, in common with others, scattered his ethnological observations among descriptions of the route and botanical, zoological, and other notes.

Lux traveled from Loanda due east, following the Kwanza on the northern bank between 9° and 10° S. Lat., and so into Lunda.

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He draws the crescentic arrowhead (p. 123) still common among the Ovimbundu and Vachokue; the double iron gong (p. 122); and the musical bow, which he calls a viola (p. 121). 175 114 [534]

Sogaur states that iron-working had an advanced technique at Dindo, more than half a century ago. According to Sogaur, the blacksmith was using scrap iron from European sources (II, p. 14). 175 326

Perhaps the most valuable of Chatelain's books is "Fifty Folk Tales of Angola." The stories are accompanied by translations and ethnological notes, the most important of which are references to the carrying of a corpse on a pole; the building of a cairn of stones over the corpse of a hunter; matrilineal descent and the power of the maternal uncle over the persons of his nieces and nephews (sisters' children). My observations included some details respecting the pawning of a sister's children to redeem the debts of their mother's brother. Chatelain adds that sisters' children are successors to private property and chieftainship (pp. 8–10). My notes agree that property is inherited by children of a deceased man's sister, but my informants said that a new chieftain is normally the eldest son of the principal wife of the dead chief. Chatelain's folklore stories, fifty in number, relate chiefly to animals; this was the only kind of story told to me, but W. C. Bell has recorded a few tales of another type. 173 [114] [764] [611] [604] [428] [538]

Marquardsen (1928) devotes only one-fourth of his book to the ethnology of Angola, which he treats in a very general way; there is no section dealing specifically with any particular tribe. The author calls attention to Chapman's observation of rock paintings of South African Bushman type, between Cuma and Luimbale in northwest Angola. I have elsewhere remarked on the occasional occurrence of physical types which show a strain of Bushman blood. Today Bushmen penetrate southern Angola from the Kalahari (Plate LXIX, Figs. 1, 2), but their presence in times past or present does not affect the course of history or the data of ethnology to an appreciable extent. 114 177 [531] [144]

Marquardsen gives some notes of a general kind on Vaheneca, Mahuila and other tribes of southwest Angola. The suggestion is feasible that the Umbundu name Suku, for a supreme being, is the same as the Nzambi of Lunda and the Congo. Marquardsen refers to the importance of the maternal uncle in Umbundu society, to the poison ordeal, and to the burial of an Umbundu chief in oxhide, all of which points were recorded in my observations at Elende. 114 101

Ferreira Diniz's book is unobtainable, but, judging from the summary given in *Anthropos* (XX, 1925, pp. 321–331), the information was collected by a questionnaire widely distributed among adminis-

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114 101 trative posts. I agree that people between Caconda and Huila represent a racial mixture of the Ovimbundu and the Ovambo. The record speaks of painting-houses for girls at Cabinda, an item which agrees with reports from other sources. The jottings concerning tribes from Cabinda to the far south of Angola are too vague to be used in ethnological work with confidence.

There are many points on which the work of A. Schachtzabel should be consulted for the purpose of making comparisons with my [621] own observations. The chief of these are a note and photograph on [281] village construction (p. 130); the musical bow (p. 32); the loom [175] (plate VI); transmigration of the soul of a chief into an animal (p. 51); [524] and the game of mancala (p. 52). My observations of initiation at Katoko, Ngalangi, and Cangamba agree well with that of Schacht- [881] zabel at Katoko, but I was able to obtain more detail and more [283] numerous photographs of the ritual of initiation. The spinning of cotton (p. 143) is exactly the process so frequently witnessed now at Elende. Iron-working (p. 111) appears to be comparable with the technique at Elende, but Schachtzabel seems to have missed the ritual. I was not so fortunate as this author in finding the old type of iron-smelting furnace in use.

114 136 The work of Statham is devoted primarily to hunting and descriptions of plant and animal life. The chapter given to a casual description of people among whom he passed is not useful as ethnology; but the book is of service in providing a background of natural history. Information on the tsetse fly in Angola (p. 294) assists ethnological work by showing the determining effect of this biological factor. [231] Presence of the fly is prohibitive to cattle-keeping, therefore cattle are not kept along the river courses which are infested with this pest.

114 Alexander Barns made no pretence of writing more than a travel book; nevertheless he publishes photographs of ethnological value, gives useful historical summaries, and deals with economic problems of production and transportation.

114 175 Tucker's book "Drums in the Darkness," though written to interest the American public in mission work, contains many ethnological statements. The chief of these relate to the structure of the compound (p. 37); the dress of women (p. 39); naming of twins and triplets; and other items which agree well with data from the district in which I worked. There are notes on drum signals (p. 74) and [202] cannibalism (p. 77). Apparently drum signals were in use at Bihé half a century ago. Forty years ago a slave was killed and eaten [266] at the installation ceremonies for a new king, a point that was noted

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in the works of Battell, Cavazzi, and other early writers. A description of the whipping of boys at initiation (p. 99) agrees with my own records, but details of the period and place are not given by Tucker. Questioning a corpse (p. 102) is a ceremony I have witnessed and described, but the instance referred to by Tucker relates to the interrogation of the corpse of a chief with regard to his choice of a successor; there are laws of succession, but these may be waived. The ceremony described in my monograph was conducted to discover the cause of death and not to determine succession. If Tucker has any detailed information with regard to puberty ceremonies for girls his reticence is regrettable (p. 142). Tucker says that suicide among women is common (p. 143). A mention of *ocisunji*, a feast for spirits at which meat is offered to idols, is interesting (p. 168) but details are lacking, and the use of the word idols is ambiguous. The information respecting use of charms is corroborative of my own observations in two other centers, Elende and Ngalangi.

114 175 [881] [643] [762] [778]

The most recent publication on the ethnology of Angola is that of F. and W. Jaspert of the Städtisches Völkermuseum, Frankfort, 1930. Their journey was undertaken primarily to make collections for a museum, but linguistic and ethnological information was recorded among several tribes, notably the Kimbundu, Vachokue, Luchazi, Luimba, and Kusongo. The farthest point attained in a southerly direction was just north of Kipungo, and the general line of march was from Benguela to the northeast, into Lunda. There is very little overlapping in the work of the Jasperts and myself. My itinerary took me to the extreme south into the Vakuanyama country, and to the far east of Moxico among the Vachokue.

114

My work is presented as a monograph on the Ovimbundu only, and of their culture I treat exclusively, with some reference to the culture contacts observed on all sides of them. The Jasperts do not give an entire section to any one tribe; but combine their information respecting the tribes in a concurrent way, under such subjects as technology, language, and art.

If the sections relating to history and languages are excluded there remain a hundred pages, only one-sixth of which refer to the Ovimbundu; but there is a difficulty in reading through the book without being confused as to the tribe and exact locality under discussion.

The pages devoted to a comparative vocabulary form an important part of the work, and one which I barely touched, though I prepared an outline of Umbundu grammar and made dictaphone records of the

114 126

114 Umbundu language. The illustrations in photogravure are excellent,
126 but the small-scale map is difficult to follow.

114 As might be expected in a work covering an enormous tract of
241 country, the information is of a very general kind; I have nowhere
224 been able to check in any detail on my own observations. F. and W. Jaspert recognize that Umbundu culture is primarily based on agriculture, maize being the most important crop, but they do not admit the importance of hunting (p. 16).

I saw many successful parties of Umbundu hunters, tested their precision with the bow and arrow, and was able to record the ritual connected with the initiation of a professional hunter. There is also a ceremony before the hunter sets out. It would be more accurate to say that, although Umbundu culture is based primarily on agriculture, hunting still retains some of its earlier importance.

114 The diagrams of houses in different parts of Angola are a useful feature of the work. I made many photographs but did not record details of planning.

114 The masks I obtained are exactly like those pictured, but my
881 observations were carried out a long way to the southeast of the point where the Jasperts touched the Vachokue culture. I do not understand from their description whether the writers saw an initiation ceremony. They state that boys are circumcised and girls are excised when very young, even at the age of five or six years. I observed initiation camps and dances at three centers, Ngalangi, Katoko, and Cangamba; the last named is the main center of Vachokue culture. The male novices varied in age from twelve to sixteen years hence they were older than the novices mentioned by the Jasperts. I was informed that there were no excision operations for girls, though at Ngalangi, Vanyemba girls were secluded in the bush during initiation rites lasting for a month.

Bibliographical references to the research of H. Baumann will be found useful for comparative study. His detailed record of initiation among the Vachokue is valuable as a check on my observation, as we worked independently in areas separated by several hundred miles.

Consultation of historical sources gives the following answers to questions which were asked as an introduction to this chapter.

174 On the grounds of tribal tradition, historical evidence, and cultural affinities, the original home of the Ovimbundu was likely to have been in the southwest Congo. The Ovimbundu undoubtedly possess important cultural traits that have been characteristic of the southern Congo region from the earliest time for which a record exists.

IV. PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

142 Among the Ovimbundu there are two main physical types. One of these is of brown skin color and slender build. In this type the calves and thighs are poorly developed, and the chest girth is slender in keeping with the general development. In general the physical 144 characteristics are distinctly different from those of a typical West African Negro as represented by the Kru and the Ibo tribes.

The Ovimbundu are Bantu Negroes who possibly result from a crossing of Hamites and true Negroes, a hypothesis which would account for both the light-colored slim type and the shorter, darker, more sturdy type. But E. Torday (Herbert Spencer, Descriptive [114] Sociology of African Races, London, 1930, Preface, p. iii) thinks that differences of physique among Sudanic and Bantu Negroes are sufficiently accounted for by isolations and environmental differences. Torday denies the need for postulating an infusion of Hamitic blood, but his opinion is opposed to that which has found general acceptance.

The darker Ovimbundu with more facial hair may represent an infusion of Vachokue blood because there was warfare between the Ovimbundu and the Vachokue of eastern Angola with the result that some of the latter were taken as slaves. Types of the Ovimbundu are shown (Plates LII–LIV).

The Vasele, an Umbundu-speaking people of west-central Angola, 101 form a linguistic and cultural pocket because of their isolation in 142 rugged country. Their physique shows no pronounced differences [304] from that of the Ovimbundu, but the methods of scarification, tooth mutilation, and personal ornament are in distinct contrast with those of the Ovimbundu. The Ovimbundu have only a V-shaped notch in the two upper central incisors, whereas the Vasele chip all their teeth to points (Plate LXXVI, Figs. 1, 2).

[302] The Luvando of southwest Angola resemble the Ovimbundu in general physique, though the great difference in hairdressing and personal ornament is likely to give a contrary impression (Plate LIX, Figs. 1, 2).

The Vaheneca are particularly well developed (Plate LXII, Figs. 1, 2). Not until Mongua is reached does one find a people who are distinctly different from the Ovimbundu in all respects. The Vakuanyama of Mongua are noticeably tall and slim, much taller and slimmer than the Ovimbundu, while their physiognomy is more refined (Plates LXIII; LXVIII, Fig. 2). The Vakuanyama are a pastoral tribe whereas the Ovimbundu are principally agricultural.

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The foregoing description applies to all bows collected in Elende, an Umbundu center; neither is there any appreciable difference between these bows and those of the Vachokue of the area from Cangamba to Saurimo in Lunda. The bows collected in the Vachokue region are on the average 10 cm longer than those collected at Elende, a structural difference probably connected with the heavier arrowheads used by the Vachokue (Plate XVII, Figs. 1–9). 411 171

The Vakuanyama of southern Angola make and use a bow which bears very little resemblance to those already described. The arrows, too, are entirely different from those used by the Ovimbundu and Vachokue.

The lengths of three bows collected at Mongua, a typical Kuanyama center, are 111, 123, and 123 cm. The bow stave, which is made from a monocotyledonous wood, is 5 cm broad in the widest part, while the cross section is a flattened ellipse. The bowstring is of twisted leather, looped at each end for slipping over the ends of the bow shaft (Plate XVII, Fig. 8).

According to L. S. B. Leakey (A New Classification of the Bow and Arrow in Africa, *J.R.A.I.*, LVI, 1926, pp. 259–294), the bows and arrows of Angola have not been studied. I am inclined to place the bows of the Ovimbundu and Vachokue with Leakey's "knotted string bows" (pp. 266–269). [114]

Leakey states that the technique employed in stabilizing flight forms the best basis of classification of arrows, but so far as Angola is concerned, the shapes of arrowheads form a basis of classification according to locality. Ovimbundu, Vachokue, Vakuanyama, and Vasele, have distinctive patterns. Naturally there is borrowing of patterns where Ovimbundu and Vachokue intermingle, but, even so, there are distinguishing signs of Vachokue workmanship. The information respecting bows and arrows of Angola is best presented in paragraph form, and comparison of types is facilitated by reference to Plate XVII, Figs. 1–9.

The following arrows are used for killing birds: 411

(1) Elende. Ovimbundu boys use a wooden arrow with a heavy blunt head which is carved into five nodules (Plate XVII, Fig. 3). The head is tanged into a reed shaft and bound there with fine fiber covered with wax. The feathers are whole, bent over, and tied. The number of feathers varies considerably in different examples. 223

(2) Kipungo. The Vakipungo have a wooden-headed arrow with nine well-carved barbs (Plate XVII, Fig. 7). The head is socketed

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tribes, for everywhere these rites aim at securing ideas of unity, coop- 867
eration, conformity to tribal law, and admission to adult tribal life. 881

The methods used to achieve these aims are seclusion, circumcision, physical suffering, direct tuition, dancing, hunting, a change of name, and finally a ceremonial return to the tribe with adult status and the right to marry.

The following notes give details of ceremonies witnessed at 114
three centers; namely, Katoko, Ngalangi, and Cangamba. For 171
comparison of these rites with others performed in eastern Angola 881
reference should be made to the books of A. Schachtzabel, and to the papers of H. Baumann (III), and F. and W. Jaspert, whose observations were made independently of each other and of my own investigation.

The dances of the novices at Katoko, where there is a mixed 881
population of Ovimbundu, Vangangella, and Vachokue tribes, are part of the final ceremonies following circumcision and seclusion. The social group formed by this collective circumcision, seclusion, and dancing, is called *ovinganji*, which is the name of the initiatory rites themselves. A boy who has been initiated is not allowed to become friendly with one who has not suffered the ceremony, and all boys who were circumcised at the same time preserve a sense of unity by dancing in a company and moving about together for twelve weeks after their return to the village from which they came.

Circumcision, which is prohibited by the Portuguese govern- 881
ment, is still practised secretly in some regions. When circumcision 304
is carried out by primitive methods serious infection may result from the lack of clean instruments, for the knife is, of course, unsterilized.

After the operation the patients are subjected to harsh treatment during the period of cure that follows. The circumcised are secluded in a wooded area. Food provided by the parents is placed on the bank of a river near which the initiation camp is built, and after the parents have gone away the boys bring their rations from the river to the camp. Before eating, the boys are obliged to give profuse thanks to the men who are acting as tutors. In some regions there is no food ration for the boys, and the rule is that each boy must subsist on what he is able to catch and collect with his hands.

Each boy has a male guardian who takes care of him after the operation. Those who have been operated upon are not permitted to wear clothes, nor are they allowed to warm themselves until quite healed. Any infraction of the rules results in a severe whipping.

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881 171 304 [114] short fiber skirts worn within this enclosure by the novices, are in agreement with the observations made at Cangamba. There is also a close resemblance between the independent accounts of H. Baumann and F. and W. Jaspert for the Vachokue, also P. A. Delille and E. de Jonghe for the southwest Congo.

The question of initiation rites, past and present, among people of pure Umbundu culture is important. The matter is more fully dealt with later in discussing cultural contacts and cultural losses, but there are a few points which should not be omitted here.

At Caconda, an Umbundu center of western Angola, Père R. P. Laagel stated that only two years ago he had visited an initiation camp of Ovimbundu boys in the hope of persuading them to return to his mission school at Caconda. My informant stated that the boys were circumcised, beaten, and confined to an enclosure for several weeks. Those who cried out when flogged received a double portion of blows. Poisoning is the fate of a boy who reveals the secrets of the initiation camp to women or uninitiated boys. This is the most direct testimony I have received concerning initiation rites among unmixed Ovimbundu.

881 292 171 From Bailundu and Elende I have obtained slight evidence of initiation rites. At the former place, which, like Elende, is a center of the Ovimbundu tribe, fiber costumes were obtained. The mask from Elende is unlike those used at Cangamba, Katoko, and Ngongo. The fiber suits are, however, no different from costumes used at these places. Initiation ceremonies are not held at Elende today, and beyond Dr. Ennis's statement that circumcision rites have been revived in the past fifteen years of his long residence in the neighborhood of Elende, I have no evidence of ritual.

881 177 The data relating to initiation of boys in Angola suggest loss of the initiatory rites from Umbundu culture, until only a few old masks and costumes, along with attenuated ritual, remain sporadically. On the contrary, in eastern Angola and particularly among the Vachokue, who are farther than the Ovimbundu from coastal influence, initiation ceremonies flourish. At present there is occurring a penetration of initiation rites from the Vachokue area into east-central Angola, which is a region of cultural admixture.

867 The foregoing pages have described certain institutions and social forces which collectively bring individuals into conformity with tribal standards of conduct. The influences at work in this direction may be direct or indirect.

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H. H. Johnston (A Comparative Study of the Bantu and Semi-Bantu Languages, Oxford, 1919, vol. I, p. 350) places Umbundu in his Group X; that is, the southwestern group of Bantu languages. Johnston's map indicates that throughout Angola there is a gradual transition from the southwestern Bantu group to that of the southwest Congo, which is exactly what might be expected from a consideration of the geographical position of Angola. Johnston's grouping is based on root forms and vocabulary. 197 114

This difficulty of making a comparison of the affinities of Umbundu does not preclude the possibility of recording some preliminary observations, especially with regard to vocabulary.

F. and W. Jaspert have prepared a comparative vocabulary of 250 words in the languages of the Ovimbundu, the Luena, the Basongo, the Luchazi, the Luimbi, and the Vachokue tribes. Inspection of the columns indicates a close connection of Songo, Luchazi, and Luimbi; in fact, the vocabularies of the two latter are almost identical. The vocabularies of the Vachokue and the Luena have much in common with those mentioned, but the Umbundu vocabulary has only a minor agreement with the vocabularies of these eastern and northeastern tribes. There are, however, some words which are identical in all these languages mentioned by F. and W. Jaspert. Examples of identity, or very close similarity, are found in the words for "bow," "elephant," "to eat," "firestick," "finger," and a few other forms, but the principal deduction from inspection of the columns is the distinctiveness of the Umbundu vocabulary.

On the contrary, examination of the vocabularies of the Ovimbundu and the Vakuanyama, of the south of Angola, appears to justify Johnston's inclusion of Umbundu with southwestern Bantu in so far as similarity of vocabulary is a criterion. The correspondence is further borne out by P. H. Brincker's "Lehrbuch des Oshikuanyama." In the light of these comparisons the relationship of Umbundu vocabularies is readily seen, for instead of searching for similarities the numerous identities are at once evident. At a glance one sees that the Umbundu and Kuanyama words for "arm," "arrow," "ax," "banana," "beard," "bird," "blood," "bone," "breast," "charcoal," "guinea fowl," "hand," and "hoe," are either identical or closely related. I noted the easy communication of my Ovimbundu interpreter with the Vakuanyama of Mongua.

Some of the following chapters show that the Ovimbundu have an undeniable southwest Congo culture; they have, however, taken 197

lion visits a village an old man talks to it through the palisade. 775
The conversation is carried on in a series of grunts, after which the 787
lion goes away. One of my informants said that "lions and leopards are watchdogs for old men who have died." When one of these animals kills a domestic animal or a person, the assumption is that the predatory animal was sent by a deceased old man who requires a sacrifice. Ngonga of Elende said that "when a lion killed a man it was a sign that there was a bad spirit from the man's family within the lion." There is divination to find who requires a sacrifice, since some ancestor has been neglected. W. C. Bell relates an Umbundu [114] •
tale of a woman who changed herself into a wild animal, but I was not able to ascertain that belief in transformation is held today (*Jour. Amer. Folk-Lore*, XXXV, p. 129).

I am unable to prove that the Ovimbundu have definite ideas of the nature of a future life, but they certainly think of survival after death, and have clear concepts of good and bad spirits who influence the fortunes of the living. There is no idea of punishment or reward, but a bad man has a bad ghost which can do evil things. Spirits will follow their relations on earth; moreover, they will come to the house of bows where their property is preserved.

A man returning from a hunt with trophies, or from the collection of honey, will leave some of these on a grave. There is no idea [774]
of spirits in rivers and trees, but the first tree felled for building the house of a man of importance must not be allowed to fall violently. This may imply a belief in a tree-spirit.

Spirits move at night only and mentioning the dead by name or whistling at night calls spirits. There are many instances of sacrifice [782]
connected with the idea of a spirit who has to be appeased. The medicine-man can induce a spirit to enter an image of wood. Thus [778]
there are wooden images containing spirits useful to the blacksmith. There is an image which can show travelers the right path when the medicine-man consults it (Plate XXI, Figs. 3, 5).

Osande is a good spirit who will "bring good luck and do good things for the people, while *Ondele* is a bad spirit who harms the people," said Ngonga. When a person is sick, mad, or dizzy he has *Ondele*. Only a powerful ocimbunda can cast out *Ondele*. *Ocilulu* is the general name for a disembodied spirit, either good or bad. An *Ekisi* is an *Osande*; apparently the terms are synonymous.

A spirit can die a second time. There is, for instance, an evil 775
bird of the night whose name is *Esuri*. This bird is able to catch a spirit in order to make it die a second death. A living person

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15). Fire is kindled on the grave and tended by a relative for 171
thirty days (p. 38).

When the Masai desire rain, a fire of cordia wood is lighted. Into this a medicine-man throws charms, after which several medicine-men dance round the fire and sing (A. C. Hollis, The Masai, p. 348).

Bösch states that the Banyamwezi have a fire-making rite which is symbolic and religious, "mais avant tout il est magique." The new fire is made annually at the brewing of the first beer. New fire is made when epidemics of sickness occur, also at the inauguration of a new chief. The Ovimbundu make and distribute new fire on each of these occasions. The Banyamwezi strangle their decrepit king but do not announce the death. A report stating that the king is sick is issued (Les Banyamwezi, pp. 229–233).

The usages of the cattle-keeping Ovambo (of whom the Vakuanyama of southern Angola are a section) and the Herero, are of paramount importance in this research because of their proximity to the Ovimbundu.

H. Vedder (III, p. 156) has come to the conclusion that the 174
Herero represent the southern extremity of a racial migration from 114
the region of the Great Lakes, and this is the generally accepted view. Vedder states that the Herero came through the south of Angola, crossed the Cunene River, and entered the Kaokoveld (p. 166). From a study of native traditions, philology, and cultural elements, there is reason for supposing that the Ovambo, including the Vakuanyama, extended farther into Angola than they do today; hence contacts with the Ovimbundu were probably frequent, and possibly continuous for a period.

C. H. L. Hahn has recently made an analysis of the traits of Kuanyama culture. His introductory pages give an account of Kalunga, a supreme being whose name is coupled with the name Nangombe. There is here a philological resemblance to words used by the Ovimbundu. *Kalunga* is an Umbundu word meaning "greetings," "sea," "lord," and "death," the meaning varying with the context and accent. *Ongombe* is the Umbundu word for ox, while *Kongombe* is the name of more than one chief of historical importance. The Herero respect a supreme being whom they call Ndjambi Karunga. *Njambi* is a well-known word in the Congo region, and the Ovimbundu have the word *Njambi*, or *Na-Njambi*, which means "Lord Njambi."

174 114 The Ovambo will not allow the tribal fire of the chief's kraal to burn out because it is the life of the people (Hahn, p. 3). This author writes in the past tense, from which one infers that the customs he describes have declined. Two old men were the keepers of the sacred fire; these guardians were chosen from the circumcised men (p. 17). The fire was never allowed to flare, but only to smolder. No one referred to this fire, nor was anyone allowed to sit near it, cook over it, or warm himself. The whole tribe received the fire from the chief, who originally gave it to the headman for distribution to commoners (p. 18). Hahn remarks that, although these customs are declining, they are still observed by the Vakuanyama, the branch of the Ovambo which is in closest contact with the Ovimbundu.

171 In the same publication (III, p. 68) Vedder says of the Berg Damara that a series of religious ideas centers in the holy fire which burns perpetually on the eastern side of a sacred tree in the middle of each village. At this fire the elders cook their meat, and here the council meeting is held. In order to obtain a seat at the holy fire a young man has to submit to initiation as a hunter on three occasions, at intervals of a year. Children may not play at the holy fire. When hunting becomes unprofitable the Berg Damara move to a new site, and a glowing piece of wood is taken from the sacred fire in order to kindle a new one. This is the practice described in connection with the formation of a new village site by the Ovimbundu. A more detailed account of sacred fire is given by Vedder (II, pp. 23–27).

L. Fourie, another contributor to "Native Tribes of Southwest Africa," shows that the Heikom Bushmen have a sacred fire kindled and owned by the headman, who is the only person who knows how to bring from this fire the properties which induce health and well-being. When making a new settlement the headman kindles the new fire under the sacred tree, and fire from the old camp may not be used. After the headman has dropped herbs into the fire and has lighted his pipe therefrom, his wife takes brands for kindling the fire in her hut. The fire is then distributed from this point among the whole group (p. 87).

The center for religious worship among the Herero is an ash heap in which a weak fire glimmers. This is blown into a blaze only on festive occasions. The fire is always situated between the chief kraal and the house of the principal wife. Round the fire lie horns of cattle which have been slaughtered as an offering (Vedder, III, p. 167). The holy fire is a gift from Mukuru, and extinction of

XI. WIDER CULTURE CONTACTS

171 When dealing with the immediate culture contacts of the Ovimbundu, the traits found in central Angola were considered in relation to the cultural elements of each of three areas, the Congo basin, Rhodesia, and South West Africa. In this chapter attention is given to some traits that are found, not only among the Ovimbundu and adjacent peoples, but among some other African tribes remote from the present-day location of the Ovimbundu. The Graebnerian school has indeed claimed that some of these widely distributed African traits are Melanesian and Indonesian in origin, a theory which is briefly considered in the latter part of this chapter.

114 The present examination of widely distributed traits is facilitated by referring to each of a number of papers not previously mentioned. For example, E. Torday (IV) has dealt in general with religion and social organization among Bantu tribes. H. Baumann (II) has discussed hoe-culture and matriarchal conditions in Bantu Africa. G. Lindblom (I) has brought together a large body of evidence relating to the distribution of hunting devices. H. Balfour (I, II, III) has outlined the distribution of the friction drum. Hence there exist useful summaries of trait distributions with which cultural factors of the Ovimbundu can be compared.

Antiquity of Cultural Traits

171 At the outset we must recognise that the extent of distribution of a trait and its importance in the cultural pattern may be but a treacherous guide to its antiquity. The widespread use and cultivation of tobacco and maize are instances of this kind. The growth and curing of tobacco led to the adoption of this commodity as a medium of exchange which could be conveniently carried by caravans. Exchange of snuff as a form of greeting, also the passing of a communal pipe from hand to hand in the men's house, are instances of social usages which caused a rapid spread of a commodity in a short time (Laufer, Hambly, and Linton, Tobacco and Its Uses in Africa, Field Mus. Nat. Hist., Anthr. Leaflet 29, 1929).

The use of maize, one of the most important factors in the building and preservation of Umbundu culture, has a wide distribution in Africa, but its introduction is dated only from the sixteenth century. The Portuguese carried on a regular traffic in slaves between Angola and Brazil, and in all probability this resulted in the introduction of manioc, peanuts, and sweet potatoes. Possibly

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

171 organization and artifacts have been described in relation to a wide cultural background in Negro Africa. There remains, however, the more difficult problem of a possible introduction of some of these cultural traits from regions outside the continent of Africa itself.

KULTURKREIS THEORY

174 114 Our investigation is able to account for the occurrence of certain widely distributed traits which the Ovimbundu possess, either in their common form or in some specialized aspect. The broader problem of the possible origin of African traits in Melanesia and Indonesia is one that should not be neglected.

The kulturkreis theory as expounded by Graebner (Methode der Ethnologie, Heidelberg, 1911) has been applied to Africa by B. Ankermann (*Zeitsch. Ethn.*, 1905, pp. 62–90). Frobenius has expressed his views in "Der Ursprung der afrikanischen Kulturen," Leipzig, 1894; "Das unbekannte Afrika," Munich, 1923; and the "Atlas afrikanus," Munich, 1922.

An article of Frobenius (Smithsonian Institution Reports, 1898, pp. 638–647) summarizes the Graebnerian thesis so far as Africa is concerned. Frobenius says that the Malayo-Negritan relationship of African culture is established. Certain cultural elements appear together and are equally distributed. Ethnographical objects illustrative of phases of culture may be examined with a view to fixing their descent, just as we examine the limbs and organs of a living being, and the theory is concerned with morphological considerations in particular.

Frobenius states (p. 639), that he is concerned with studying the genealogical tree of culture forms, and as a first example he chooses wooden drums which are found in the Congo basin and lower Guinea; these drums are said to be of Malayo-Negritan origin. The next example chosen is that of the Malayo-Negritan bow. Wooden shields of Africa with reed covering have related forms in New Guinea and the Solomon Islands. Pile dwellings are found in Dahomey and among the Ambuella; also in New Guinea. Chairs and neck rests used by many Negro tribes are of Oceanic form. There is a Malayo-Negritan affinity of bark fabrics of Africa with the well-known tapa cloth of Oceania (p. 644). The "likeness of anatomical origin, coupled with the outlined area of distribution, is evidence not to be gainsaid" (p. 645). The culture of a fishing community is on all sides characterized by mesh work. In New Guinea the net is used as clothing, and in the whole of west Africa we

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

hear of the netted jerseys of the disguised. The matriarchate is 174
possibly to be classed among Malayo-Negritan characteristics, in 114
particular when accompanied by exogamy. So runs the Graebnerian argument.

To these cultural factors from Melanesia Frobenius adds the gora, which he compares with a form from New Pommern. He also mentions the marimba; tobacco-pipes of the Ituri region, which are likened to those of New Guinea; and the scarification of the Bashilange, which has some circular characters said to be like Maori moko. The prows of canoes in Dualla (Cameroon) are compared with those of the Admiralty Islands.

The factors of Asiatic culture which have affected northern Africa are more readily accepted because of known historical contacts of a continuous-kind over geographically contiguous regions. Probably Frobenius is right in attributing the drum with a pottery base, chain armor, quilted armor, the long knife, and the stringed instrument *rubeba*, to Asiatic sources. The round shields of northeast Africa may be accepted as of Asiatic origin. These points, though part of the general theory, do not concern our study of the Ovimbundu, who do not possess these alleged Asiatic traits.

The supposed line of migration of Malayo-Negritan culture up the Zambezi valley, thence along the Sankuru into the Congo basin and so to Cameroon and farther west Africa, presents no great obstacle, but the hypothesis lacks a coordination of cultural elements and a historico-psychological explanation.

In considering several Indonesian factors such as those mentioned by R. Linton as occurring in Madagascar (*Amer. Anth.*, 1928, pp. 372–389), and while regarding the evidence of J. Hornell (*Man*, 1928, No. 1) respecting the similarity of canoes on Lake Victoria Nyanza and along the coast with those from Java, there is no difficulty in admitting impacts from Indonesia. There is, however, only the beginning of a hypothesis in these comparisons.

The construction of a theory purporting to show phylogenetic connection between cultures as remote as those of Sierra Leone and Melanesia still requires elaboration. At the present time there is not sufficient detail available for the filling in of distribution maps purporting to show the line of migration of this postulated Malayo-Negritan culture. But according to Graebnerian views a hiatus merely means that the intrusive culture has disappeared.

The question arises respecting evidence from Angola which may favor or refute the validity of a Malayo-Negritan origin of some

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174 114 culture elements of Negro Africa. Among the cultural traits of the Ovimbundu are a few which the Graebnerians would claim as evidence of the passage of Indonesian cultural waves. Use of the bow is part of the bow culture. Matriarchal conditions and hoe-culture by women would be regarded as a somewhat later wave of culture. Frobenius would ascribe the use of netted clothing during initiation to an Oceanic origin. There is a small area in southeast Angola where pile dwellings are built by the Ambuella tribe. Bark cloth is made in eastern Angola. The marimba and the musical bow are traits of Umbundu and Oceanic culture.

The point at issue seems to be the acceptance or rejection of cultural contacts on the ground of alleged resemblance in forms. Frobenius would doubtless add that the supposed Malayo-Negritan factors in Umbundu culture lie only a little to the southwest of the Zambezi, which is a main line of hypothetical migration of Malayo-Negritan factors.

Each of these elements of Umbundu culture is of a non-specific kind. For example, there is nothing about the bark cloth, except that it is a bark cloth, to link it with similar material in any other part of the world. Stripping the tree, soaking the bark and beating it, are part of the general technique.

The musical bow has a wide distribution, as H. Balfour (I) has shown. He studies the distribution in Africa, North and South America, Asia, India, the Malay Archipelago, Melanesia, and Polynesia. He postulates the derivation from the archers' bow and says (p. 85), "The question whether or no we are to regard the musical bows in India and in Africa as belonging to one family, is one which is difficult to answer." Balfour is impressed with similarity of forms in India and Africa, but feels that the common origin is not demonstrable.

When comparing types of masks and costumes within the African continent itself the work of Frobenius (I) is found to be useful in indicating areas over which certain types of regalia are used in initiation ceremonies. There is undoubtedly a localization of types, and we previously noted that Angolan forms of masks and costumes are definitely like those of the Bakuba and the Baluba in the southwest Congo region. Moreover, the netting costumes used by the Ovimbundu and the Vachokue of Angola closely resemble those used in some parts of the Congo basin, Cameroon, and from that point westward to Sierra Leone. Therefore, so long as comparisons are

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limited to Africa itself, they are instructive in showing cultural traits of Angola against a broader background. 174 114

But if the inquiry is extended with a view to proving that African masks and costumes are derivatives from Oceania, there exists no acceptable evidence of generic relationship. The mere use of fiber skirts, of netting suits, and of bark cloth for masks, is not acceptable evidence for supporting a theory of derivation of African from Oceanic forms.

More important than the study of forms is the psychological background of masks and costumes in Africa and Melanesia. In "Origins of Education" I made a comparison of factors included in the initiation of boys in Africa and Melanesia. The boys are secluded, circumcised, instructed, harshly treated, and after a change of name are reintroduced to their villages at a dance in which masks and costumes are used.

Waiving the question of similarity of masks and costumes, do the psychological factors provide reasonable grounds for assuming generic relationship of initiation customs? Possibly the psychological setting suggests a single origin, but the matter is so largely subjective, that a decision cannot be made without further evidence of the correlation of forms, the details underlying their origin and use, and the establishment of a more definite and unbroken track of distribution. To have an intuition and a vague hypothesis is very different from the demonstration of a theory. Delafosse (Negroes of Africa, p. 3) pictures the peopling of Africa by Negro imparts from Asia on the east coast near Madagascar. If true, this suggestion would support the views of the Graebnerian school, but the theory is highly speculative.

The extent to which an observer may be misled by fortuitous resemblances in form has been demonstrated by a number of American anthropologists. Every investigator who attempts comparative study and classification is prone to unite concepts, customs, and artifacts which have only a superficial and misleading resemblance to one another. This failure to discriminate may be illustrated as follows: R. H. Lowie (Plains Indian Age-Societies, Amer. Mus. Nat. Hist., Anth. Papers, No. 11, pp. 883-951) has shown the fallacy of assuming genuine cultural resemblances between Age-Societies of Plains Indians, the Masai, and the Melanesians, because the phenomena when analyzed prove to have different psychological settings, and they are structurally as distinct as are their geographical areas.

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174 114 W. D. Wallis points out the care that should be exercised in assessing the evidential values of culture traits. These should be weighted according to their simplicity or complexity, and their logical connection with one another (*Amer. Anth.*, XXX, p. 94). The cultural factors of the Malayo-Negritan migration have not been considered in the manner advocated by Wallis.

Lowie examined apparently similar cases of exogamy, but found that these depended on different conditions; for example, exogamy might depend on either clan or locality (The Principle of Convergence in Ethnology, *Jour. Amer. Folk-lore*, XXV, pp. 24–42).

A. A. Goldenweiser shows that totemism has many social and psychological interpretations differing greatly according to locality. In order to include the many forms of totemism a broad definition has to be accepted. Totemism is indeed nothing more than a tendency of social units or individuals to become associated with symbols of emotional value (Totemism an Analytical Study, *Jour. Amer. Folk-lore*, XXIII).

Lowie further emphasizes the distinctive types of totemism, in order to show the fallacy of linking many different concepts under one term, without recognizing the broad significance of the term (*Amer. Anth.*, XIII, p. 189). This research shows Frobenius to be at fault in merely noting the presence of totemism and other traits without defining their forms and examining the psychological background.

An article by A. L. Kroeber and C. Holt (Masks and Moieties as a Culture Complex, *J.R.A.I.*, L, p. 452) has a special bearing on Graebnerian views with regard to the spread of cultures. Kroeber set out to test the validity of the statement that North American culture had been affected by the east Papuan layer of the Graebnerian culture stream, which was supposed to have brought masks and moieties to North America. The Graebnerian method assumes that a culture trait never develops twice; also that instances of geographical isolation of a trait must be ascribed to migration and subsequent loss in intervening areas. The conclusion of Kroeber, based on statistical examination of instances of conjoint occurrence of the two traits, indicates that the union of masks and moieties comes out fortuitously.

R. B. Dixon indicates several factors to which attention should be paid in making comparisons of culture traits (*Science*, XXXV, p. 46). In the first place there is the question of relationship on geographical and historical grounds. It is also important to know

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what degree of complexity there is in the artifacts and beliefs which 174
are under comparison. Reason and form, that is, psychology and 114
morphology, are both important aspects of comparison. The work so far accomplished with regard to the Malayo-Negritan theory of African cultural traits fails to comply with the foregoing essentials of comparative study.

There is consensus of opinion against the Graebnerian hypothesis in its present form. E. S. Hartland reviews Graebner's "Methode der Ethnologie" (*Man*, 1914, No. 70) with the result that he finds Graebner too insistent on the value of forms as a criterion of generic relationship. In fact such a method may degenerate into pure subjectivity. F. Boas (*Science*, XXXIV, No. 884) takes the same point of view in remarking on the exclusion of the psychological field of inquiry; Graebner's method has a too mechanical character.

In view of this criticism, and as a result of personal observation of the culture elements of Angola, I am convinced that the somatological, linguistic, and cultural data for considering the spread of the Malayo-Negritan culture in Africa are not sufficiently understood to lead to a demonstration of any kind. For instance, Portuguese East Africa, the hypothetical starting point of the migration, is by no means well studied in detail, and the problem demands that data relating to the supposed area of introduction should be particularly complete.

The same criticism relates to the farthest point of west Africa reached by the supposed cultural stream from Melanesia. A theory which aims at showing generic relationship between secret societies of west Africa and Oceania cannot successfully rely only on general resemblances of masks and the use of netting costumes. Something more specific than a comparison of forms of artifacts and the occurrence of such ill-defined institutions as age-grades, totemism, and secret societies is essential in order to make the kulturkreis theory acceptable.

The problem of cultural relationships between the Ovimbundu 174
and other African tribes is simplified in several ways. Geographical 177
continuity exists between the African areas discussed, and to a great extent the cultural contacts described are matters of historical fact. Data relating to the Ovimbundu themselves are fairly complete; and what is equally important, there is trustworthy literature bearing on the areas surrounding the Ovimbundu. Therefore, comparisons do not rest on the study of a few simple forms, but on the cultures taken as a whole with regard to cultural traits of all kinds.

XII. CULTURAL PROCESSES

Analysis of African Cultures

The difficulties of making a study of the Ovimbundu in their relation to a general background of African cultures are connected with unsolved problems of archaeology, physical anthropology, linguistic study, and the history of cultural traits. 172

With the exception of data from Algeria, Egypt, Kenya, and south Africa there is a paucity of archaeological information which might determine the antiquity of past cultures, the relation of these to past and present races, and the routes by which races and cultures traveled. In the regions mentioned systematic excavations are in progress, but for the greater part of Africa archaeologists have no knowledge of the relative antiquity of stone implements found on the surface.

African ethnologists are not consistent in the connotations of terms such as Bantu and Hamitic. The word Bantu primarily refers to a linguistic family of Negroes, but a Bantu Negro culture exists with many divisions, and later we shall see that a somatological concept is associated with the word Bantu. The word Hamitic may describe a linguistic family, a series of physical traits differing from those which characterize the Negro, and a type of pastoral culture in which all the activities and beliefs of tribal life center in the keeping of cattle. The adjective Semitic can also be used to denote a well-defined linguistic family, a type of culture, or somatic traits. But the Semitic problem does not concern us since the Ovimbundu have no traits that could be associated with Semitic culture, either Mohammedan or pre-Koranic; with the possible exception of blood brotherhood by exchange of blood, and the use of a scapegoat (Robertson Smith, Lectures on the Religion of the Semites, p. 296; Kinship and Marriage in Early Arabia, pp. 57, 61). [171]

The comparative studies of physical anthropologists are retarded by paucity of skeletal material both ancient and modern, while series of measurements on living subjects, especially women, are inadequate in relation to the great size of Africa and the complexity of the problems which arise from comparative study of anatomical data. 144 114

Darwin's "Descent of Man" recognized the possibility of man's origin in Africa, and the recent excavations of L. S. B. Leakey in Kenya may finally prove that the oldest remains of *Homo sapiens*

114 are within the African continent (Stone Age Cultures of Kenya, 144 Cambridge, England, 1931). H. H. Johnston concludes that the place of origin of the African Negro is unknown. A. C. Haddon (The Wandering of Peoples, p. 54) surmises that "there is reason to believe that all the main races reached Africa from Asia." G. Sergi (The Mediterranean Race, pp. 41–42) regards the Hamites as a single human stock, but disagrees with a theory of Asiatic origin, and postulates the origin of Hamites in northeast Africa.

C. G. Seligman summarizes the views of Sergi and other writers respecting the origin of Hamites (Races of Africa, pp. 96–156). Among the eastern Hamites cranial characteristics, though variable, are generally convergent and are to be regarded as old variations of an original stock. Apart from Negro admixture the face of the Hamite is never prognathous. The nose is straight. The lips are often thick but never everted as in the Negro. The hair is often frizzly, but sometimes wavy or almost straight. The color of the skin varies; it may be yellowish, coppery red-brown, through every shade of brown to black, according to the amount of miscegenation that has taken place. Seligman states "that the Hamitic cradleland is generally agreed to be Asiatic, perhaps southern Arabia, or possibly an area farther east. Be this as it may, there is no doubt that the Hamites and Semites must be regarded as modifications of an original stock" (Some Aspects of the Hamitic Problem in the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, *J.R.A.I.*, XLIII, pp. 593–705).

As a result of research in the north Arabian desert Henry Field states that the stony desert between Transjordania and the Euphrates River was probably well watered and fertile at an unknown period. The locality may have been a focus, first of concentration, then of dispersal. Archaeological evidence arising from a comparative study of stone implements from Arabia and east Africa, together with data of physical anthropology, and the basic unity of Semitic and Hamitic languages support a theory of Hamitic intrusion from Asia (H. Field, The Cradle of Homo Sapiens, *Amer. Jour. Arch.*, XXXVI, No. 4, pp. 426–430; The Antiquity of Man in Southwestern Asia, *Amer. Anth.*, XXXV, pp. 51–62).

144 Although the origin of Hamites and Negroes is obscure it has 142 been possible to give a summary of the chief physical traits of the former, and the same can be done for the latter. Typical Sudanic-speaking Negroes, who are sometimes referred to as "true Negroes," are to be seen in the Ibo and Ijaw tribes of southern Nigeria, and among the Kru of Liberia. The characteristics of the Negro are a

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

heavy torso, disproportionately long arms, a dark skin, prognathous 144
jaws, broad nostrils, thick everted lips, and woolly-hair. But usually 142
a modification of these features occurs in Bantu-speaking Negroes. How did this modification of physique arise?

A. C. Haddon (Wandering of Peoples, p. 54) expresses a generally 144
accepted view when he states that Bantu-speaking Negroes are 114
a mixture of true Negroes with Hamites. Seligman (Races of Africa, p. 181) refers to an infusion of Hamitic blood which has differentiated the Bantu Negroes from true Negroes, and this is a generally accepted hypothesis. But Torday (H. Spencer, Descriptive Sociology of African Races, preface, p. iii) questions whether the physical and linguistic cleavage between Bantu-speaking and Sudanic-speaking Negroes is due to an admixture of Hamitic blood. He attributes the physical differences of the two great linguistic divisions of Negroes to disparity of environmental conditions. But at present no physical anthropologist could say to what extent climatic factors, nutrition, and other environmental conditions can be held responsible for the physical differences of Negroes.

The question of a mingling of Hamite and true Negro to produce a modified type of Negro is not the only difficulty. How does one account for aberrant Negroid types such as the Pygmies of the Ituri forest and the Bushmen? They have a phylogenetic relationship, but what is the racial affinity? Again, will change of environmental conditions account for the Pygmy and Bushman types? Or are we to form a hypothesis of origins by assuming establishment of new species by variation or mutation?

In the absence of certain knowledge science accepts a hypothesis 144
which best explains the known facts. And in this matter of a modified Negro type speaking Bantu languages, the idea of a mingling of the blood of Negroes and Hamites best explains the gradation of physical types from west African, Sudanic-speaking Negroes, through various types of Bantu Negroes, to Hamites, as exemplified by the Somali, Beja, and Hadendoa.

The main characters of linguistic families of Africa are clearly 197
defined by A. Werner (Language Families of Africa, pp. 20–23) who refers to the works of D. Westermann and C. Meinhof. The distinguishing features of Hamitic, Semitic, Bantu, Sudanic, and Bushman speech are known, yet the task of placing a particular language in its appropriate family is not always simple. The classification may depend on the particular facet of the language which is under examination. Hausa (Hamitic), is difficult to classify

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

197 since the language has Sudanic and Hamitic elements with some Semitic roots. The earliest relationships of African linguistic families, for instance Hamitic and Semitic, also Sudanic, Bantu, and Bushman, is a field for further research. To take only one instance of complexity, Bantu is divided into more than two hundred languages and innumerable dialects, whose origin, structure, and evolution have been treated by C. Meinhof (Introduction to the Phonology of the Bantu Languages, London, 1932; a translation, by A. Werner and N. J. von Warmelo, of Meinhof's Grundriss eine Lautlehre der Bantusprachen).

174 114 In conclusion of this summary of the background of African history, there arises the difficulty of ascribing to each of the races those cultural elements for which the race is responsible, either by primary invention within Africa, or by introduction from some source outside Africa. The difficulty may be illustrated by quotations relating to the iron industry of African Negroes. Rival theories claim origin of the craft in Asia, in Egypt, and among African Negroes themselves.

Seligman (Races of Africa, p. 158) states, "We may believe that the Negro, who is now an excellent iron worker, learnt this art from the Hamite." Torday writes (H. Spencer, Descriptive Sociology of African Races, preface, p. iii), "To state that Bantu civilization—or any civilization whatever—is due to the ancestors of such absolutely primitive tribes as the Hadendoa and Beja (identified by some with the enigmatic Hamites) presupposes that these people who were ignorant of agriculture, or the production of iron, and of all arts and crafts denoting a higher culture, who, as we know, have not progressed a step within the past five hundred years and considered all manual labor degrading, had the power to give that which they never possessed."

The complexity of argument relating to the origin of just one cultural trait, iron-working, can be judged by consulting the writings of W. Gowland (The Metals in Antiquity, *J.R.A.I.*, XLII, pp. 235–287), W. M. F. Petrie (The Arts and Crafts of Ancient Egypt), W. Belck (Die Erfinder der Eisentechnik, *Zeitsch. Ethn.*, XXXIX, pp. 335–381; XL, pp. 45–69; XLII, pp. 15–30), and F. Luschan (Eisentechnik in Afrika, *ibid.*, XLI, pp. 23–59).

Even with these reservations and disputed points in mind, it is yet possible to speculate with some accuracy respecting the origin and assembly of traits which, welded together, form the culture of the Ovimbundu.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

I cannot find in the life of the Ovimbundu anything to support the opinion of W. C. Willoughby. This writer sees in the soul of every race an instinct for god that tells upon behavior, an upward urge that makes for betterment, due to the unwearied play of the spirit of god on the souls of man. The views of E. Torday and R. J. van Wing (Dualism in Western Bantu Religion and Social Organization, *J.R.A.I.*, XLVIII, p. 225) seem to be more applicable to the spiritual beliefs of the Ovimbundu.

The Ovimbundu have standards of conduct, codes of laws, crimes, and punishments. In addition to the *ekandu* (antisocial acts) already noted, *ohembi* is a liar, *okusapa* means to be greedy, and such actions are deprecated; but there is no deistic injunction toward the virtues of truthfulness, hospitality, and fair dealing.

Standards of conduct and social values are preserved by the educational forces previously mentioned (chapter VII), and in addition to these there are such controls as trial by ordeal, and divination to detect guilt. The satirical song is also a form of correction, though its application may be antisocial, for instance in taunting the sexually impotent.

Music and dancing are adjuncts for the preservation of social customs and the stimulation of collective emotions on which cooperation depends. Music and dancing are also aids to magical practices. For example, a friction drum is played while a medicine-man carries out his divination with the basket, and vigorous drumming takes place during treatment of the sick. Music and dancing were again seen to be of importance at a funeral ceremony.

These instances, which are chosen from many of like kind reported in the foregoing chapters, serve to indicate an interrelationship among the main aspects of tribal life. I have endeavored to choose from personal experience those facts and incidents which illustrate the mutual dependence of language, folklore, proverbs, nature lore, food supply, and occupations.

The sexual division of labor, the connection of ceremonial with occupation, the relationship of the sexes, and the position of woman, have all been brought forward as examples of social controls.

The persistence of belief and custom despite foreign influences; the nature of government, including the psychology of prestige and leadership; spiritual beliefs; the training of children; and the value of music and dancing, have likewise been emphasized as coordinating

4:Dorsey E-4, 5 (no date)1899 FP13 Mbundu FP13

THE OCIMBANDA, OR WITCH-DOCTOR OF THE OVIMBUNDU OF PORTUGUESE SOUTHWEST AFRICA.

114 In July of last year the Anthropological Department of the Field Columbian Museum secured an ethnological collection from the Ovimbundu of the Portuguese African province of Angola. The collection was made by Rev. T. W. Woodside, a missionary for seven years among the Ovimbundu, and, on account of its completeness and the full data which accompanied the objects, is of unusual [121] importance and value. Perhaps of chief interest among the series of objects illustrating the various phases of native life in this region is the complete "medicine chest" of a witch-doctor. This I shall describe, making free use of the extensive notes furnished by Mr. Woodside, supplemented by several conversations during which the objects themselves were discussed, and much information furnished concerning the Ovimbundu in general. The collection under consideration was obtained from a single individual, and has seen long use.

101 The Ovimbundu are a southern division of an extensive group of people known as the Bundas, who, in turn, belong to the group of Bantu populations. They occupy the territory of the Bailundu and Bihe plateaus, from Bengualla to the Quanza River, a table-land 4000 to upwards of 6000 feet high, and in south latitude about twelve 142 degrees. The Ovimbundu are described by Mr. Woodside as a dark-skinned people, varying from coffee-brown to quite black, with thick curly hair. They are entirely uncivilized, but are a peaceable, 105 kindly people. Their food is chiefly vegetal, although they possess cattle, sheep, goats, pigs, and chickens. They practise polygamy, and the women prepare the food and do nearly all the field work. The men are famous as traders, and journey to the interior for rubber, wax, ivory, and slaves; the latter they secure by purchase from the country of the Lubas. The principal medium of exchange is a cheap cotton cloth which is obtained from white travellers.

791 Among the Ovimbundu, as in nearly all parts of Africa, the 759 witch-doctor is an important personage. He is feared by all classes, and often has more influence and power than the chief himself. Whenever anything is lost or stolen, they apply to the witch-doctor to find out where the object is, or who is the thief. As no one is [761] supposed to die a natural death, the doctor is called in to discover the witch who caused the death. To him they go for all kinds of charms to protect themselves against all evils, or to cast a spell on some one whom they wish to injure; to him they also go for help in

5: Hambly E-5 (1929-30)1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

OCCUPATIONAL RITUAL, BELIEF, AND CUSTOM AMONG THE OVIMBUNDU

By WILFRID DYSON HAMBLY

[114] WHEN leader of the Frederick H. Rawson-Field Museum Expedition of 1929–30 one of my chief objects was the assembling of a representative collection of the arts and handicrafts of Angola, and particularly of the Ovimbundu who occupy the Benguela highlands.

[177] The Ovimbundu have been in contact with Europeans for three centuries at least, therefore I was interested to know to what extent daily avocations had become secularized. That a close connection has existed between the sacred and the profane in Negro tribes is well known, and the influence of spiritual beliefs and magical acts in every department of economic life, including agriculture, hunting, fishing, and handicrafts, has been established. But how durable is this dependence of economic life on magical acts and ancestral benediction? How soon does primitive economic life become commercialized on a European pattern?

Other observations of academic interest and practical value relate to division of labor between the sexes, specialization by age and natural aptitude; also the possibility of some callings being of an hereditary nature.

[101] My observations, which were made chiefly in the regions of Bailundu, Elende near Cuma, and Ngalangi, are conveniently classified under the headings of food supply, handicrafts, medicine-men, and education.

FOOD SUPPLY

824 825 At the foundation of economic life is nature lore, which among the male population of the Ovimbundu is so detailed and extensive that the knowledge has given rise to a large vocabulary. The highly specialized acquaintance with trees, plants, birds, mammals, and reptiles on the part of most of the men was a surprise to me. Such information was commonly shared by males, and was in no way peculiar to the professional hunter.

I was easily able to collect a list of fifty birds which are readily distinguished by boys (who shoot them with blunt wooden arrows), and all men seemed familiar with forty species of trees, whose timbers, barks, and fruits were distinguished and named. Boys were exceptionally well acquainted with small mammals; including several kinds of rats and mice, which are trapped, boiled, and eaten. For Field Museum I made a collection of snakes and lizards; a task which again showed the native power of observation and adequacy of vocabulary. Some reptiles, whose re-

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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INTRODUCTION

The Ovimbundu[1] of central Angola appear under various 101
names[2] in narratives by nineteenth and early twentieth century travellers in West Central Africa. In the present century three 121
anthropological studies have been written about them by Childs,[3] Hambly,[4] and Hastings,[5] as well as two shorter studies by Bastos[6] and Santos Brandao,[7] and a large number of articles.[8] Despite the large amount of documentation available there existed a considerable number of gaps, especially as [114]
regards the political system and the kinship system.[9] In proposing to work among the Ovimbundu, I hoped to be able to fill in these gaps, and in particular to provide a study of what appeared to be a double-descent kinship system. I also hoped to study the reactions of an African society to Portuguese rule.

I arrived at Nova Lisboa in roughly the centre of Umbundu 114
country in October 1955. Here, as in Lisbon, I was told that it 121
would be very difficult to find an area where the traditional 114
social life of the Ovimbundu as described in the literature

[1] A plural from the singular Ovimbundu. The adjective and the name of the language is Umbundu. The Ovimbundu people are entirely distinct from the Kimbundu people of northern Angola and the two languages are not mutually intelligible. However, the confusion between the two has gone so far that both Europeans and Africans speak of the Ovimbundu people and language as Kimbundu and of the true Kimbundu as Kamundongo.

[2] Mambari, Nano, Ovimbali, and so on.

[3] G. M. Childs, *Umbundu Kinship and Character*, Oxford, 1949.

[4] W. D. Hambly, *The Ovimbundu of Angola*, Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago, 1934.

[5] *Ovimbundu Customs and Practices* (unpublished thesis) 1933, D. A. Hastings.

[6] Traços Geraes sobre a Etnografia do Districto de Benguella in *Boletim da Sociedade de Geografia de Lisboa*, 1908, pp. 3–13, 44–58, 81–99, 133–40, 169–76, 197–207.

[7] Articles in *Mensário Administrativo* (Luanda) March–April, July–August 1950, and Sept.–Oct., Nov.–Dec. 1952.

[8] See Bibliography.

[9] For an examination of the ethnographic material as it then was, see Merran McCulloch, *The Ovimbundu of Angola*, Ethnographic Survey of Africa. International African Institute, London, 1952.

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6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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could be observed. Eventually I decided to work in the Bimbe area, in the extreme north-western corner of Umbundu country. The census[19] indicated that Bimbe had a smaller white population than any comparable area of Umbundu country, and people who knew it considered that it was one of the areas most likely to retain a relatively conservative social life.

In Bimbe I settled in the village of Epalanga in the chiefdom of Gumba. The advantage of Gumba lay in the conservatism for which its people were noted in other chiefdoms; its disadvantage lay in its proximity to the northern boundary of Umbundu speech and culture, which led me to collect some items of ethnographic information not typical of Umbundu country.[21] On the whole, I am satisfied that the people of Gumba were in the past as in the present Ovimbundu in both speech and way of life.[18]

Many of my discoveries were at first negative ones. I could not find any evidence that there was a double system of kinship groups actually in existence; the villages were not composed of agnatic kin; the chief seemed lacking in power. Nor was it easy to obtain detailed information about the past even from old men. There is little interest nowadays in history, nor are the old social institutions regarded, even by those who once participated in them, as being necessarily better than those of the present day. The reason for this attitude seems to lie in Umbundu social psychology with its readiness to accept European authority and values. Interesting as the motivations behind this attitude are, this 'cultural amnesia' caused me much disappointment. I found it much easier to get texts on the caravan trade, and on ceremonial practices and proverbs, than on the political and kinship systems. The inadequacies of the information I received on the political system may be explained by the fact that Gumba is on the fringe of the area tributary to the old kingdom of

[19] Of 1950.

[21] The payment of fines by a man to his dead wife's kin had been formerly practised in Gumba, and still is further north. It does not seem to have been known in living memory elsewhere in Umbundu country.

[18] The northern limit of Umbundu speech is now somewhere to the north of the administrative post of Cela. As there has not been substantial migration from the south, it is reasonable to assume that it is many years since the Gumba-Cela boundary was also the language boundary.

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[1874-1911]

rather than any political alliance or opposition, which related the Ovimbundu as a whole to the Portuguese and the other tribes. Informants who remember 'the time of the rubber' talk about it with much more interest and much more detail than about any other aspect of the past, and it is far easier to make an ordered picture out of the narratives of the caravan journeys than to fill in the gaps in the descriptions of the political and kinship systems provided by Childs and Hastings.[57]

Politically the Ovimbundu were divided, as has been said, into several kingdoms. Bailundo, the largest of the kingdoms was divided, according to Childs into about 200 sub-chiefdoms. As it had about half a million inhabitants this would give an average population of about 2,500. While the kingdoms seem to have been more or less stable in number and boundaries from the end of the eighteenth century, the number of sub-chiefdoms seems to have increased. Thus an official Portuguese estimate made in 1799 gives Bailundo as having only 82 sub-chiefdoms, and Galangue, where Childs counted 112 sub-chiefdoms, as having 78. The sub-chiefdom paid tribute to the king, sent men for his armies, and recognized his court as the supreme arbitrator. Some sub-chiefdoms were held by ministers or relatives of the king.[58]

It is, however, not easy on the sparse detail available to decide how much autonomy the sub-chiefdoms really had. Gumba, the area where I worked, was a sub-chiefdom of the Bailundo kingdom, albeit on the north-western frontier, neighbouring Camongue and Cela, where the people did not call themselves Va-Mbailundu, though their rulers acknowledged the suzerainty of the king of Bailundo. Old men told me of raids from Bailundo for slaves, but I cannot say if this was the result of the period of disorder mentioned, or whether sub-chiefdoms on the border of a kingdom gave only nominal submission and received only nominal protection. In the area where I worked,

[57] This is not intended as a personal reflection on Dr. Childs and the late Dr. Hastings, both of whom deserve the highest praise for their work and for their obvious devotion to the Ovimbundu. Hastings devoted far more space to the magico-religious field than to the kinship system. Likewise Childs's description of kinship is much shorter, much less detailed, and much less satisfactory than his account of childhood and adolescence, or the really outstanding historical chapter.

[58] Magyar, pp. 389-90; Childs, pp. 23-24.

[1874-1911]

631 764 funerals (though these burials could be undertaken by the cross-cousins of the deceased). When *sakwatjiseke* came to their partner-chiefdom for a funeral they had the right to steal small live-stock, such as chickens, or pigeons, but not cattle, goats, or pigs. An *sakwatjiseke* could sleep with the wives of his *sakwatjiseke* partners without being sued for damages.[68] [937]

631 The ties of kinship and affinity crossed the boundaries of [602] the sub-chiefdoms and even of the kingdoms.[69] The members of the three spirit-protected professions, blacksmithing, divining, and hunting recognized obligations of hospitality to co-professionals from other parts of the country.[70] Again the caravans were so large that they must have involved people [937] from many sub-chiefdoms, which presupposes a wide range of contacts.

182 It may be said that the picture given here is contradictory and inadequate. How can the existence of large kingdoms be reconciled to the extreme insecurity described by old men? How do the wealthy caravan organizers fit into the political system? What sort of politics were there in the kingdoms? It is not easy to answer these questions owing to the lack of evidence, and, probably, because the kingdoms were already in decline during the latter part of the rubber trade period. Indeed, the impression that accounts of the Ovimbundu in the nineteenth century give is that of adventure, battle, commerce, migration —a vigorous rather than a stable society.[71]

61 The kinship system is perhaps the field of Umbundu society ● 114 which has aroused most interest among anthropologists. Childs and Hastings have written much that is interesting on the old double-descent grouping but as, with the kinship system, the form has been described rather than the functioning and it is

[68] Informants. The account in Childs, pp. 114–15 differs considerably. For this institution elsewhere in Angola see Estermann, 'Class et alliances de class', *Anthropos*, 1952.

[69] Childs, p. 54.

[70] Informants.

[71] Magyar describes the king and his courtiers as being extremely despotic towards the villagers, and states that their despotism depended on their having a standing military force called 'Sons of the Elephant' (pp. 278–80). Later accounts do not mention this, and Childs notes (p. 109) that at the height of the rubber trade it was more difficult for the kings to recruit armies for their wars.

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[0874-1910]

not now possible for field work to supply the gaps in the written material.[73]

The traditional kinship system had neither clans nor segmenting lineages. The patrilineal group (*olusu*) was localized in a village, the group head being at the same time a village headman. Patrilineal ties do not seem to have been recognized between villages.[73] This social independence of the agnatically united village was reflected in the surrounding palisade, in the close clustering of the houses (nowadays much more spread out) and in the village institutions of the dancing-floor and the men's house (*ondjango*). It was here that all the men and boys, from seven or eight up, ate. Hastings writes, 'Each woman, after preparing the meal, takes or sends the portion which is for the male members of her family. This food is common property. As soon as enough has arrived some responsible member among the men will have it divided among the boys. For days a man may never taste of the food which is prepared by his wife.'[74] The men's house was also a club, and a court-room, where minor cases were decided. It was through this localized body of patrikin that an individual claimed land and residence rights and through it that he participated in the political system.[75]

The matrilineal group (the *olusia*) was composed of the descendants of a common great-great-grandmother.[76] According to Childs, it had a head who might also at times be a village headman,[77] and it was presumably the matrilineal group head who settled the disputes over property which Hambly says

[73] For an attempt at reconstructing Umbundu kinship on the basis of Childs's book see J. A. Barnes's review of *Umbundu Kinship and Character* in *Man*, 1950, pp. 126–128. It may be mentioned that the terms 'the side of the bow' and 'the side of the basket' are used simply to mean 'patrilateral kin' and 'matrilateral kin' (Dr. Childs, private information, and my own inquiries).

[73] A rather ambiguous phrase in Childs p. 43 ('The *olusu* consists of a large number of local village groups'), which might be interpreted as meaning that villages were patrilineally grouped into clans, seems really to mean simply that the village is the *olusu* unit.

[74] Hastings, p. 77.

[75] Ibid., p. 18. Childs, pp. 43–44.

[76] Hastings, p. 83, states that the matrilineal group consists of the descendants of a common great-great-great-grandmother (that is, five generations), and on p. 92 says that it consists of a group 'linked by a common great-great-grandmother'.

[77] Childs, p. 44.

Some ten years later he was allowed to return to Gumba but died on the way back. 173 634

His successor was Simbwyikoka, who was a mother's brother's son of Mbati, that is in Umbundu terminology a 'son'. Umbundu rules of succession allow anybody to succeed to a chiefdom who is paternally or maternally related to a previous chief, whether or not this relationship is genealogically traceable.[3]

Simbwyikoka was apparently nominated to act as regent during Mbati's absence, and as he did not complete the full cycle of chiefly rites he did not have quite the same prestige among the people as a chief in his own right who 'had finished', that is, had gone through all the rites. It was he who was the last ruler of Gumba to send the annual tribute in the form of a sack of fish to Bailundo, since it was a little after the time of his accession that Kandimba[4] (or Njahulu), the last of the Bailundo royal house to have any real authority over the kingdom, died. [231]

Simbwyikoka had lived at the hamlet of Kamballa in Gumba. When he took up office he did not settle at Mbati's village of Katembo, but established, or rather re-established, as a previous chief had ruled there, his capital[5] on the top of the narrow ridge which cuts off the greater part of Gumba from access by road. It was not possible for many people to settle on this site. Accordingly Simbwyikoka encouraged people to settle at the foot of the ridge, swelling the population of an already existing village. This was called Mwekalia from the headman, who held the office of Mwekalia[6] another ministerial title associated with the chiefly court. 173 634 100

In 1938 Simbwyikoka was deposed by the *chefe* for shielding his dependents from the operation of 'contract labour' (administrative recruitment of non-voluntary labour). About 1944 [94]

[3] My informants. This means that within (and outside) any sub-chiefdom there are a number of potential heirs who in no way receive any special status or form any kind of corporate group from this fact.

[4] Reigned at Bailundo 1911–35. Childs, p. 109

[5] In Umbundu Ombala, often transcribed in Portuguese as Embala.

[6] For the role of Mwekalia see Hastings, p. 39. His statement that the office is matrilineally inherited was not confirmed by my informants. It seems that it can be inherited either patrilineally or matrilineally. The man who was known as Mwekalia and had been headman of the village of that name did not function as such at the chief's court during my stay. A kinsman of his, Ngombe, acted as Mwekalia at the court of Lunsar. [114]

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[Village of Epalanga]

cluster was much more autonomous *vis-à-vis* Sapapula than were the members of the Mbati-Mwehombo grouping through the more numerous and closer kin ties; yet it would be wrong to regard Ndjoleya's kin as isolated.[4] This greater autonomy was a matter of degree rather than kind. 621

With regard to geographical origin, it is evident that the population had been recruited from over quite a wide area. Of the 36 household heads 7 were born in Cela of whom 6 had come from Cela to Gumba, and 1 had been born in Cela, then come to Gumba, then moved to Menga and then returned to Gumba. 3 household heads had come from Utende to Gumba, and 2 had come from Namba. 12 had come to Epalanga from Cassongue. 7 household heads (including 2 who had subsequently lived in Cassongue) had at one time lived in Katembo (the village associated with Mbati). 1 householder was apparently born in Gumba but had no Katembo link. 2 household heads were from Ndjandju (one having lived in Cassongue after leaving Ndjandju, the other being the catechist) and 1 was from Chicunda. On the origins of 5 household heads I have no information. 186 592

My information on Epalanga suffers from a number of gaps. Some genealogical information collected was lost. Too frequently I neglected to ask if a particular relationship was patrilateral or matrilateral, nor did I enquire sufficiently as to whether particular marriages were between kinsfolk or not. 114

These deficiencies to some extent 'fit' the kinship system. A kinship tie may exist between two people which is significant in the social relations between them, yet they may not be sure as to whether it is patrilateral or matrilateral, or even as to what is the category of kinship involved. Thus a resident of Simbwyikoka's village told me one day that Simbwyikoka was his 'brother', some time later he was a brother-in-law, and after this again said that he was a 'brother'. 602

There is also confusion over pedigrees. The pedigree which Simbwyikoka gave me in December 1955 differed from the one that he gave me in April 1956. Two people who claim to be

[4] Ndjoleya once referred to himself as *Ondulu yinde* (elder of the *inde*) this being a case of *inde* used for a cluster within a village. Ndjoleya's folk recognized Sapapula as being head of the village.

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114 One anthropologist, Mr. W. D. Hambly, and two missionaries

with anthropological knowledge and interests, Dr. Daniel A. Hastings and Dr. Gladwyn Murray Childs, have written on Umbundu kinship.[5] Mr. Hambly's main interest was in material culture and the conditions of his fieldwork were not such as to give him much evidence on the kinship system.[6] Both Dr. Hastings and Dr. Childs recognized the central importance of kinship in Umbundu social life, but have outlined the kinship ties and kinship groups rather than given a detailed analysis.

602 Mr. Hambly states that 'The phrase *Epata Lia Tate* (or *Olase*) means "family of my father" and includes all relatives on the father's side. The words *Epata Lia Mai* (or *Olaisa*) mean "family of my mother".'[7] This could mean that the Umbundu kinship system is bilateral. He states that inheritance is matrilineal and marriage virilocal, a situation consistent with such a matrilineal kinship system as that of the Bakongo.[8]

613 602 Dr. Hastings, whose thesis was completed the year before the publication of Hambly's book, makes it clear that there are two sets of kin groups. 'Over each village is a ruling elder who is the head of the kinship group of that village since all who reside in the village are generally related to him and to each other patrilineally. This elder, greatly revered, is considered the patriarch of that local group. Residence being patrilocal, 579 the office of an elder is hereditary through the male line.'[9] He 613 then goes on to contrast with this, 'the matrilineal sib to which each member is linked, though he may be living in a village away from his sib group.'[9] This group is a clearly defined

[5] Works cited in footnotes to Chapter I. There is a typescript of Hastings's thesis in the library of the International African Institute, London.

[6] Mr. Hambly spent five months in the country, and used as his interpreter and main informant an English-speaking Ovimbundu. He seems simply to have visited villages without living in them. Dr. Childs and Dr. Hastings had both spent several years as 'bush' missionaries. Dr. Childs had actually taken over from Dr. Hastings work in the area to the north-west of Bailundo in the direction of Bimbe, and had subsequently obtained information in Camongue. He later obtained a good deal of material from African pastors, teachers and schoolboys.

[7] Hambly, pp. 191–2.

[8] For the Bakongo see the discussion by A. I. Richards, in Radcliffe-Brown and Forde, pp. 213–21. Anthropologists have more than once suggested to the author that the Umbundu system was not of the 'double-descent' category but some combination of virilocal marriage and matrilineal descent.

[9] Hastings, p. 18.

[9] Ibid.

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602

non-kin, which is not marked in ordinary social life, becomes important. Kinship marriages transform 'distant' kin ties into close affinal ties which will in the next generation become close kinship ties.

It is extremely difficult even to guess how this system operated in the past. Did the high rate of preferential marriages have the same function formerly as now? Or has the institution continued in being, while its function relative to the total society has changed? The testimony of that informant of Dr. Childs who told him that formerly all marriages were kin marriages and that patrilaterally one only married on 'the side of the basket' and matrilaterally only on 'the side of the bow'[4] has led Professor Barnes to suggest[5] that the preferential marriages functioned as links between descent groups. Both Dr. Childs and myself, however, have found that 'the side of the bow' and 'the side of the basket' are simply synonyms for '*olaw*' and '*olaisa*'.[6] Moreover, my informants did not confirm his statement since they denied the right of marriage with a father's sister, and the quantitative information shows that even in the past some marriages were with non-kinswomen, and that others were with categories of kin theoretically forbidden, so that, then as now, the preferential marriages were with distant kinswomen rather than with a specific category of kin.

[114]

If, however, kinship marriages in the past operated as they now do, it is difficult to see their relation to the patrilineal and matrilineal groups. A clue to a solution is surely given by the custom of 'cutting the blood', which destroyed kinship to begin affinity. Marriages were arranged, it may be suggested, with those people who were still just kin, and who probably often were also geographically as well as socially distant so that the number of ties outside the sub-chiefdom might be increased, a matter of importance for long-distance traders. Later, Portuguese rule made travel no longer dependent on such long range contacts. Meanwhile the disintegration of the agnatic residence

[4] The exact words are 'Formerly people never married unless they were related, that is to say unless they touched the blood together. If in the mother's kin (*l'olaisa*) only on the side of the bow (i.e. male line). If in the father's kin (*l'olaw*) only on the side of the basket (i.e. female line)'. See Childs, pp. 55-56.

[5] Review of Childs in *Man*, 1950, pp. 108-8.

[6] Dr. Childs was speaking in the synopsis of Barnes's interpretation.

621 four households with six houses. The school village had been laid
but in rectangular fashion without any palisade and with eucalyptus
[346] trees planted around the sides. The school was at the centre and
the elder's house at the upper corner. These two larger buildings
and one other were built of adobe, while the rest of the twelve
houses were of wattle and daub, identical with those in the other
wards except that all were rectangular. There were a few very
[312] small gardens watered by an irrigation ditch. The people of this
village had river gardens, and their fields were mostly to the south
between the village and the highway. Just to the east of the main
[797] village and beside one of the water-holes, a Roman Catholic
catechist had established himself, but as yet he had neither village
nor school.

The Villagers

602 Turning now to the people living in this village, it was interest-
621 ing to find that all save the households of two former slaves and the
Roman Catholic catechist, were related to each other, either by
blood or by marriage. Sekulu Cipange of Ciyanda summed the
matter up when he said, 'Likuluta Samikanjo (the Protestant elder)
is my younger brother (*manjange*), for in our Umbundu country
(we) people do not build together (i.e. in the same village) unless
we are blood relatives.' In order to determine the exact relation-
ships and other facts regarding the demography of this village,
I took the names of all householders and their wives, and inquired
their relationships to the elders of the respective wards. This
• [115] information was supplied by Njomba, a son of Sekulu Sikiliñe, and
by Sekulu Likuluta Samikanjo. In addition to those of the four
elders, there were twenty-four households. The relationship
of each of the householders to their respective elders may be sum-
marized as follows:

A. *Paternal relatives*

In Sikiliñe's village	21	
" Ciyanda	1	
" Kanjengo's ward	2	
" School village	2	
	—	26

B. *Maternal relatives*

In Ciyanda	1	
" Kanjengo's ward	1	
" School village	4	

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

167 occupied by Siku of the Ndombe people, which site Katutu soon
173 appropriated. This is the present site[1] of the Ciyaka capital.

[115] While reworking some of the material in this paper I had the good fortune to receive help from a member of the royal family of Ciyaka[2] who has more precise data on the succession of that kingdom than I had supposed it possible now to obtain. He not only completed and corrected my list of the kings of Ciyaka, but he also supplied the actual dates for all of them since 1842.[3] Their number would seem to impute to the Ciyaka kingdom a longer history than I have been able to verify for any of the other Umbundu kingdoms, but the absence of historical data from European sources makes confirmation impossible. It would seem, however, that the beginning of the Ciyaka dynasty must date from not later than the first half of the seventeenth century.

Some of the other Umbundu-speaking groups are of considerable importance and interest, but unfortunately there is neither time nor space to give to their origins attention equal to that given to those treated above. The Sambu kingdom has long specialized in the training of medical practitioners and witch-doctors. The tradition is that it was founded by a woman who seems to have come either from Bailundu or from the stock whence came the Bailundu royal family at an even earlier date. From the family of Wambu-Kalunga, in addition to Ciyaka, came those who set up the kingdoms of Elende, which had a woman ruler early in its history; of Cingolo; of Ekekete; and of Cikuma (also called Citata), in whose lands the fort of Caconda a Nova was built in 1769. It was probably after this that the capital of Citata moved across the Katumbela (*Catombela*) River to its present site. Kakonda, the founder of the kingdom generally known by that name, was of Luanda stock but born in Ngalangi,[4] whence he was sold as a slave to Benguela. He ran away with his wife Cilombo[5] and settled in the region near the (present) site of Caconda (a Nova). Kakonda and Cilombo probably settled there only a very short time before the building of the fort, for most of Kakonda's fifteen successors

[1] Called *Quiaca á seca* in the old Portuguese records (see loc. cit.).

[2] Lauriano M. Bahu Ciyaka, a graduate of Currie Institute, teacher of the village of Canja.

[3] *Vide* chronological chart, p. 224 f. *infra*.

[4] It is likely that his ascendants were *pombeiros* (traders) from Luanda and had settled in Ngalangi.

[5] After her, the kingdom was called Cilombo-cuhoma (Camp of the Drum).

PREFACE

As leader of the Frederick H. Rawson-Field Museum Ethnological Expedition to West Africa I undertook research in Angola and Nigeria, from February, 1929, to February, 1930. The present publication is concerned with the ethnology of Angola (Portuguese West Africa), where a study of the Ovimbundu and their culture contacts was made. 122

At the outset I must express thanks to the Portuguese government for permission to carry on this investigation. Owing to the courtesy of the American Vice-Consul, Mr. Arthur F. Tower of Loanda, I received from the Governor General of Angola a letter of introduction which was of inestimable service during my journey in the interior. 000

From Portuguese officials much help was obtained, and sound advice accompanied by practical assistance was always courteously given.

In London I was assisted in the most cordial way by Mr. David Boyle, of the Cunard Steamship Lines, and Colonel B. Follett, D.S.O., of the Tanganyika Concessions Company.

My base camp in Angola was pitched near the Elende Mission Station, where Dr. Merlin W. Ennis kindly provided safe storage for collections and a room for photography. Dr. Ennis was ever ready to discuss and aid my investigation among the Ovimbundu with whom he has spent thirty years. Mrs. Ennis and Miss Rounds aided my studies of handicraft among women. Dr. Hollenbeck gave valuable notes on the ailments of the Ovimbundu; these have been incorporated with my study of medicine-men. 122

Ngonga, my interpreter and chief informant, was secured by Dr. Ennis to assist the investigation, and this he did with the greatest tact and ability. Ngonga speaks English, Portuguese, and Umbundu fluently. These accomplishments were so combined with a deep regard for the customs of his own people, the Ovimbundu, that he made an ideal interpreter. 115

From the base at Elende three journeys were made into the interior. The first of these led to the far south of Angola, among the Vakuanyama; a second journey took me into the Vasele country of northwest Angola; while the third and longest itinerary led as far east as Cangamba, a center of Vachokue culture, thence northward to Saurimo in Lunda. 122

597 belong to the foster parents. When an adopted girl marries, half the presents from the husband are given to the natural parents, and the other half to the foster parents.

845 In a case of triple birth at Ngalangi two infants died at birth; the other succumbed after three months. In another instance a woman bore three children and in the vernacular of my informant "something which was nothing," but all died. In a third case of triple birth a woman had a boy and two girls. The boy died at the age of fifteen [826] years; the girls grew up and bore children. Albinos do not find it easy to obtain wives. I was told that an albino man at Ngalangi could not find a wife until he married a widow who had several children, because unmarried girls of his own age did not want him. One of the charms collected has to be worn by a woman who has triplets. The object is a rattle (*olusengu*), which the woman shakes when she meets any one. If she gave an ordinary greeting the children would die.

115 The greater part of this information was obtained at Ngalangi by interrogating women who were questioned in Umbundu by Mrs. McDowell. At Elende I asked my interpreter Ngonga to interrogate 843 his wife. According to Ngonga a woman must visit a female practitioner in the first month of her pregnancy. The face and the body of the pregnant woman are painted with red, black, and white spots. This means that she will have no difficulty in bearing children, neither will she have any sickness during the nine months of gestation. "When her belly hurts" (i.e., the quickening), the woman goes to the same female *ocimbanda*, who paints lines of white, red, and black across her breast.

757 The *ocimbanda* gives the woman a necklace consisting of a strip of leather to which two cowries are attached. Experience proves that such a necklace is difficult to buy. If the woman has a necklace of this kind which was worn by her grandmother, it is a very powerful aid to conception, a relief in painful menstruation, and a means of securing easy delivery and normal gestation. I could not find any trace of an idea relating to the entry of a soul, ancestral or otherwise, into the foetus.

841 *Ongunda* is the name for a disease of the genitalia; but Ngonga used the word to describe abdominal pain suffered by a woman who has had no children. By this I suppose he means painful menstruation. The curative root which is given is called *kapambua*.

847 Abortion is never secured by mechanical means. The medicine (*ikanda*) is made from the root of a plant that is boiled in water and

601 *Sekulu* includes the father's father, the mother's mother's brother, and the mother's mother's sister's husband. The terms *sekululu* and *kukululu* were used by Ngonga as being synonymous, and therefore they have the same connotation. With regard to the term *maikulu* Ngonga seemed clear, but in reply to questions concerning the reason for having the terms *kukululu* and *sekululu*, he was evidently confused. At last he said, "It does not matter, they are the same people." Ngonga never hesitated in giving the reciprocal for all these terms, which is in every instance *onekulu*. These terms may have been correlated with different functions which have now become obsolete.

604 601 The two most important collateral relatives in the parent's generation are the father's sister (*aphai*) and the mother's brother (*manu*). The term for father's sister means "female father." As such her relations to ego are similar to those of a father, consequently it is not considered right to marry her daughters. The mother's brother, on the other hand, is without doubt ego's most important relative. The two are linked by a series of reciprocal duties and obligations. Marriage of a mother's brother's daughter, or a mother's brother's widow, is a correct procedure. The value of the more important reciprocal duties is indicated in the following sections on law and government.

602 171 There was no possibility of devoting more time to the matter of relationship terms, but there is here sufficient to indicate the remarkable persistence of the kinship system in spite of three centuries of contact with the Portuguese and other Europeans. Moreover, the information gleaned by interrogation of Ngonga and his wife gives the main points for comparison with systems of a similar kind that have been given for Ashanti, Uganda, and Rhodesia, by Rattray, Roscoe, and Smith and Dale respectively. These kinship systems are the same both in general principles and in considerable detail.

601 The foregoing notes and tables were studied by Mr. Zachary Taylor of the University of Chicago, who prepared Tables E and F. Mr. F. Eggan offered useful criticisms. The Arabic numerals on these charts refer to the numbers used to designate terms of relationship on the list on page 199. The ego or speaker is Ngonga, [115] my interpreter, whose direct line of relationships is shown in Table E, while Table F indicates the terms used by Ngonga for his wife's relatives. The levels numbered in Roman numerals on Tables E and F indicate the generation stratification as follows:

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

The part played by Portuguese influence in the formation of the culture of the Ovimbundu has previously been recognized, and in conclusion reference should be made to Portuguese and Ovimbundu relationships at the present day. 177

Native trade and military organization were at one time aided by caravan journeys resulting in the acquisition of slaves and ivory, which were traded for guns and powder. But this caravan trade touching remote parts of central and east Africa is now obsolete. Therefore a breaking down of the economic structure has occurred, but this has to some extent been counteracted by the development of agriculture, which yields large crops of maize and beans.

In the administration of law a new social consciousness has arisen. Portuguese government is of a somewhat direct kind, yet village chiefs and kings have some juridical rights. Appeal to a chief or a king was the old method of securing justice, and at present such appeal may be made by an aggrieved Ocimbundu; but should the appellant be dissatisfied he turns to the Portuguese court.

Portuguese policy aims at making the Ovimbundu a social reflection of the Portuguese themselves. European clothing and manufactures are favored, and Portuguese speech is encouraged, to the detriment of the native Umbundu.

Initiation ceremonies are forbidden, but the bush is wide and protective. To prevent these ceremonies is to take the core from the social system, which has already been weakened by recruiting of labor, so leading to disturbance of family life and village organization. Christian missions have an influence on dress, beliefs, and habits, but these effects appear to be local.

Although this report has been chiefly geographical, ethnological, historical, and analytical, no apology for the method chosen is necessary since this kind of approach is fundamental. I might, in compliance with a modern trend, have made the monograph center in persons, especially Ngonga. By making a close psychological study of his early years, his native environment, and changes in mental attitude arising from contact with Portuguese rule and American missions, an illuminating record of the result of conflicting social forces could be given. 121

In a sense, Ngonga, who speaks English, Portuguese, and Umbundu fluently, has been the focus of study, and care has been taken to recognize his personality in this report. I realize that in Angola work of an intensive psychological and sociological kind remains to be done by means of a penetrating analysis of many [115]

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CHAPTER VIII

MARRIAGE

1. *The Significance of Preferential Marriage*

Informants say that it is permissible to marry a classificatory cross-cousin, are divided as to the permissibility of marriage with a classificatory sister's daughter, and generally disapprove of marriage with other kin categories, or with true kin of these two categories. Indeed, kinsfolk who marry seem usually not to have any traceable common ancestor.[1] Up to recently,[2] a man marrying a kinswoman had to pay an indemnification of, say, 20 escudos to 'cut the blood'. This changed the kin relationship into an affinal one. 582

It has been previously stated that preferential marriages have an important social role to play in keeping kinsfolk together and multiplying the ties of kinship and affinity. If this is to be proved, it is necessary to show what the people themselves think of preferential marriages, what proportion of the marriages are between kinsfolk, whether this proportion has decreased under modern conditions, and how it relates to the contemporary kinship system. [162]

Several reasons may be given for choosing a cross-cousin bride. The bridewealth is likely to be lower, the girl is more likely to stay and not run away, if one cannot find another girl there will always be a cross-cousin to marry, and, old men point out, one will not be fined if a cross-cousin bride dies.

[1] This statement does not depend simply on my own information. Padre Feltin, superior of the Bimbe mission, who knew of the existence of these marriages told me that very few Umbundu marriages were between kin within the degrees of kinship prohibited (a prohibition removable by a dispensation) by the Catholic Church. Marriage with a first cousin is not infrequent both in Portugal itself and among the white Portuguese in Angola. [115]

[2] About 1949.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

[pp. i and ii contain no text]

UMBUNDU KINSHIP & CHARACTER

BEING A DESCRIPTION OF THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE AND INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE OVIMBUNDU OF ANGOLA, WITH OBSERVATIONS CONCERNING THE BEARING ON THE ENTERPRISE OF CHRISTIAN MISSIONS OF CERTAIN PHASES OF THE LIFE AND CULTURE DESCRIBED

By GLADWYN MURRAY CHILDS

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PREFACE

[p. v]

THAT Chief of California Indians who told Dr. Benedict of the /2/ power of his people in the old days when they had eaten 'the health of the desert' made a profoundly interesting observation.

> In the beginning, he said, God gave to every people a cup, a cup of clay, and from that cup they drank their life. . . . They all dipped in the water but their cups were different. Our cup is broken now. . . .[1]

The African peoples also have had their cups of clay or wood, or their gourd dippers. They have worked out their intricate and appropriate adaptations to their particular environments, a social structure well suited to their needs, and a remarkably successful system of education.

Now that Africa has come under Western influences, however, the environment has changed. In many cases the changes have been so rapid that the Africans by their own unaided efforts, and within the pattern of their cultures, are no longer able to make the necessary adaptations. The results in social disintegration are well described by the Umbundu proverb:

> Where the pot breaks, there also the potsherds remain.[2]

The broken pot no longer has either utility or beauty—is no more a pot, but only broken and scattered sherds. So it is also with a broken social group—only scattered individuals remain. This proverb refers primarily to a broken family, but thoughtful Ovimbundu are now applying it to their whole social structure.

Since the life of Africa has been thrust thus suddenly into the world's life, 'it becomes a problem of urgent importance, how, while introducing the European system . . . to conserve the very real values of the indigenous African system'.[3] The solution of this problem is a responsibility of Christian missions inasmuch as theirs is the responsibility for the greater part of the education of the Africans.

'The Ovimbundu,[4] the people chosen for the present study, are /0/

[1] Ruth Benedict, *Patterns of Culture*, p. 21 f. (Boston and N.Y.: Houghton Mifflin, 1934).

[2] *Pa fila ombiz, hanpo ocipa pa siala.*

[3] E. W. Smith, *Essays presented to C. G. Seligman*, p. 334, quoted in the *Year Book of Education, 1938*, p. 697 (London: Evans).

[4] For explanation of terms see note on Orthography, p. xi.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

101 a Bantu-speaking group numbering about one and one third
(161) million, whose home is the Benguela Highland of Angola (Portuguese West Africa). Christian missions have worked among them since 1881, the date of founding of the W.C.A.M. of the A.B.C.F.M., with which work the writer has been connected since 1924.

121 *Umbundu mentality.* It is not the purpose of this study to
114 appraise Bantu or Umbundu mentality. Every new description of a Bantu culture gives a new angle or vantage point from which to view the versatile mentality of that interesting group of people. All available objective views unite to show us, as Driberg holds for primitive man in general, 'a being as human as ourselves, affected by the same emotions . . . with thoughts, responses, and actions differing in no essential way from our own'[1]—neither the noble savage of Rousseau nor the subhuman creature of more recent doctrinaires. 'The grouping of savages with children and idiots is but another symptom of an attitude which, when faced with a different type of culture, insists on assuming a lower type of mentality to account for that culture.'[1]

It must be owned that different views of primitive mentality are held, but it would seem that those which hold primitive man to be incapable of reasoning logically, his mentality in some way inferior or 'pre-logical', base their conclusions too largely on theoretical or library material and too little on results of actual field work.[2] It is not the purpose of the present study to examine these theories, but a word of protest must be raised against some who, basing their view of the mentality of Bantu peoples on some such theories as those mentioned above, and with or without sup-

[1] J. H. Driberg, *The Savage as He Really Is*, pp. 2, 3 (London: Routledge, 1929).

[2] Cf., for example, L. Levy-Bruhl, *Les Fonctions Mentales dans les Sociétés Inférieures*, *La Mentalité Primitive*, &c. The seriousness with which these and similar theoretical studies have been taken is surprising. Cf. e.g., R. Allier, *Mind of the Savage* (London: Bell, 1929); J. W. C. Dougall, *Characteristics of African Thought* (London: International Institute of African Languages and Cultures, 1932); N. S. Booth, *Teaching a Bantu Community* (MS. copy). Dr. Max Gluckman of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute told me that I had wrongly interpreted Levy-Bruhl, and he kindly loaned me a copy of a paper by Evans-Pritchard which sets forth a different interpretation of Levy-Bruhl's thesis with regard to the 'pre-logical' mentality. It is not my intention here to combat the thesis of the 'pre-logical' mentality, but rather a common interpretation of it (Evans-Pritchard, 'Levy-Bruhl's Theory of Primitive Mentality', *Bulletin of the Faculty of Arts of the Egyptian University*, vol. i, pt. ii).

1: Child M-S (1924-1940) 1940 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

port from intelligence tests of doubtful suitability, have called in question the 'educability' of some Bantu groups.[1] 114 12

I shall not examine these theories but rather leave to descriptions of Umbundu culture given in the main part of the study, the task of showing that the mental capacity of the Ovimbundu is sufficient to enable them to assimilate the education placed at their disposal. Educators who really believe otherwise would hardly waste their time in attempting to educate a people who, after all, may be incapable of education.

> If we do not believe in the logic of the savage and in the identity of his processes of thought with our own, then we should be proved illogical ourselves in attempting to develop along logical lines peoples of an alien mentality, and in attempting to transmit our civilization to peoples mentally incapable of assimilating it.[2]

The capacity of the Ovimbundu and their 'educability' are assumed.

The Approach. All the various types of approach to African education have been classed under one of the two aims: Assimilation, which has represented Latin colonial policy; and Adaptation, which has been more representative of the British and Belgian point of view. *Assimilation* would make African Frenchmen, African Portuguese, &c., of the natives. *Adaptation* would take what is best in both the African and the European cultures in order to produce a better African civilization'.[3] 121 177

Within the aim of *assimilation* there may be distinguished at least two policies. One ignores indigenous culture, presents the European culture quite without reference to it, and treats the African as though he had no cultural background—as though he were a *tabula rasa*. The other may study the indigenous culture, but only in order to be able to uproot it the more thoroughly and efficiently.

Within the aim of *adaptation* at least three distinct policies may

[1] See discussion in Malherbe (ed.), *Educational Adaptations*, Chap. XVIII ((*N.E.F. Conference Report*, Cape Town, 1937); also P. A. W. Cook, *The Education of a South African Tribe* (Cape Town, 1934).

[2] Driberg, op. cit., p. 4.

[3] There is an interesting discussion of these two policies by H. Dubois, "Assimilation ou Adaptation?" in *Afrique*, 1929, pp. 1 ff. See also the discussion in the Preface of *Western Civilization and the Natives of South Africa*, by I. Schapera (London, 1934). There are other policies for dealing with the Africans such as repression, exploitation, &c., but since they cannot be classed as educational theories I have not included them in this analysis.

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121 be recognized. *First*, there is a sympathetic but entirely unsyste-
177 matic use of the culture in question which collects folk-lore, customs, or other single items to use them as illustrations, as lesson or sermon material, &c., but without reference to their context in the fabric or pattern of the culture. *Second*, there is an attempt to rebuild those functions or institutions which *a priori* are judged essential and to leave untouched those judged unessential. Still, whatever is done, is done without reference to the pattern of the culture in question and the criteria are predetermined. *The third method* is that advocated by the present study. It begins with a systematic study of the culture in question, especially its characteristic patterns of behaviour, significant attitudes, beliefs and customs; and the effect of its contact with other cultures; in order

To determine and describe the content;

To analyse and evaluate this content with reference to its bearing upon present local needs; and

To make suggestions for tentative procedures which shall build upon indigenous patterns of behaviour, make adjustment to approved attitudes from the outside as easy as possible, and work toward a continuous and self-functioning process of self-adjustment.

The view-point assumed is a composite of practical anthropology, progressive education, and the newer approach to Christian missions. The criteria have been evolved in part through a study of the local situation and its needs.

127 *Sources.* More documentary material has been sifted than the references indicate. The historical account which has finally been incorporated as Chapter XII was written before the main part of this study and served as an important part of its background.

128 The chief sources, however, are original materials descriptive of
124 certain phases of Umbundu life and culture—materials gathered on the field over a period of years, especially between 1933 and 1938. Much of it consists of traditional 'literature' (folk-tales, proverbs, riddles and songs). More of it, however, consists of descriptions of customs, beliefs, institutions and other culture traits secured from personal observation, from descriptions by natives, from schedules collected and written up by trained natives, and Umbundu autobiographical data. Much of this is given in direct translation, certain parts in summary or by reference, while the rest has served as background.

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Limits of time and space have made it necessary to restrict the study to the two major fields of social structure and education. These two phases were chosen because description of them seems to be pre-requisite to treatment of other areas of the culture, and also because of their inherent importance both anthropologically and educationally. In order to provide background and make for better understanding, an introductory chapter on 'Habitat' has been provided. I hope to illustrate the remaining phases of the culture at a later date. 121

It is not possible adequately to thank, nor even to mention by name, all those for whose help I am indebted. It would never have been possible to organize this study had it not been for a generous provision of fellowships and of many facilities by Union Theological Seminary in New York City, and also for the necessary allowance of time during two furloughs by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. For extraordinary facilities put at my disposal, I am grateful to the Missionary Research Library and to its Director, Mr. C. H. Fahs. Among my many teachers at Union Seminary, Teachers' College, and in the Anthropology Department of Columbia University, for whose help I am indebted, I must name Professors I. L. Kandel, D. J. Fleming, A. L. Swift, Jun., Gene Weltfish, George Herzog, and Ralph Linton, who have freely given me much advice, counsel, and encouragement. For an especially high order of help I am very deeply indebted to Dr. Ruth Fulton Benedict and to Professor Harrison S. Elliott. Dr. Benedict not only gave freely of her time and wisdom as teacher and counsellor, but she also gave much encouragement and assistance in the task of arranging publication. For help with the German source material, I am indebted to my wife. To these whom I have named, and to many others, go my sincere thanks. 000

G. M. C.

UNION THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
NEW YORK CITY
May 1939

THE manuscript was revised in Africa in 1940 and the typing, done by J. C. Lasaro, African secretary of Currie Institute (Dondi), was completed in March 1941. It is now nearly six years later that the opportunity for publication has finally been realized. It is not 128

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128 possible to make a new revision at this time nor do I feel this necessary. Many changes have taken place, but I feel that the tendencies here outlined in 1939–40 continue to operate. A few notes have been added, especially with regard to matters on which the 1940 Census of Angola, published 1941–43, has thrown new light. For much original material, and for suggestions and help 000 in revision, I am very grateful to many of my African friends and colleagues, especially the Rev. P. Ngonga Liahuka, Rev. Abraham Ngulu, Rev. R. Kavita Evambi (deceased, 1946), Sr. Pedro Paulo, and Sr. H. Kapiñalã Sukuakueche; and also to Dr. and Mrs. Merlin W. Ennis. I wish to thank Mr. Lewin and Professor Doke of the University of the Witwatersrand, Professor Schapera of the University of Cape Town, and Dr. Max Gluckman of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute (Northern Rhodesia) for their helpful interest. I am grateful, indeed, to the International African Institute and to the University of Witwatersrand Press, under whose auspices this study appears.

G. M. C.

AUBURNDALE, MASSACHUSETTS,

January 1947

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NOTE ON ORTHOGRAPHY OF AFRICAN WORDS USED

Ocimbundu (pl.) is the name of the people (sing. *Ocimbundu*). 101
Umbundu is the name of the language, of the culture, and the form of the descriptive adjective.

The orthography used in most particulars follows recommendations of the International African Institute.[1] The sounds of Umbundu are relatively simple. Each vowel has a single value—for practical purposes the same as in Spanish. The tilde over a vowel indicates nazalization; with *ñ* it indicates the velar *n*, i.e. the value of the English (or German) *ng* in 'singer'. The sound of the English *ch* in 'church' is represented by *c*. The consonants *g* and *j* are always hard; these two and also *d* appear always and only preceded by *n*,—*nd*, *ng*, and *nj*. Likewise *b* never appears alone but preceded by *m*,—*mb*. The other consonants have approximately the same values as in English; *w* and *y* are only used as consonants; *r*, *x* are not found except in foreign words. 104

I have retained the prefixes Oci-mbundu, Ovi-mbundu, and U-mbundu in accordance with the correct Umbundu usage and because it seems that in no other way can confusion with regard to the identity of this people be avoided. When the truncated form of 'Mbundu' is used even great scholars are led to confuse the Ovimbundu with the 'Kimbundu' of the Luanda hinterland.[2] [101] These two peoples must not be confused: they are entirely distinct and even belong to different linguistic zones. An Umbundu Grammar by Dr. Merlin W. Ennis is to be published shortly by the University of Witwatersrand Press.

[1] *A Practical Orthography of African Languages* (London: International Institute of African Languages and Cultures, 1927); *Short Guide to the Recording of African Languages* (London: Ibid., 1933).

[2] See, for example, *Bantu Studies*, 1937, p. 373; E. W. Smith, 'Africa: what do we know of it?' *J.R.A.I.*, 1935, p. 71; D. W. Westermann, 'Study of African Languages', *Africa*, 1939, p. 20.

[p. xii is blank]

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HABITAT OF THE OVIMBUNDU

AND THEIR POSITION WITH REGARD TO THEIR NEIGHBOURS

Heavy continuous line indicates elevation of 1,500 metres (4,920 ft.).

Broken line indicates limits of Umbundu territory.

○ Leading capital villages (olombala). ■ Portuguese presidios.

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INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER I

HABITAT

[p. 1]

Morphology

131 THE homeland of the Ovimbundu is the Benguela Highland in
133 central Angola. Strictly speaking the Highland comprises those regions which have an elevation of 1,500 metres (about 4,920 feet) or more. A glance at the accompanying map will show how closely the territory inhabited by the Ovimbundu corresponds with the extent of the Highland proper. The adjoining regions, in which the Ovimbundu also live, nowhere have an elevation inferior to 1,000 metres (about 3,280 feet). Geographically the region of the Highland is a part of the South African sub-continental plateau. The ridges of the Highland form the plateau's highest north-western portion.

133 Geologically this sub-continental plateau is one of the oldest parts of the earth's surface. The north-western portion, with which this study is concerned, has remained above sea-level from before the time of fossils. The vast slab of primeval crystalline rock which forms the foundation of the plateau often outcrops in the form of isolated rocks of unusual appearance,[1] or in massive peaks, the highest of which, in the western escarpment, reach an elevation of nearly 9,000 feet (2,850 metres).[2] Some of these outcrops remain bare, some are hidden by laterite and some by soil formed from decomposition of rock.

Among the sediments which overlie these primeval rocks there are unfossiliferous sandstones, conglomerates, and others, all of
[316] which are considered to be of Palaeozoic age. Deposits of iron are numerous, many of which were once worked by the Ovimbundu
000 or by their predecessors. Much of the soil has been greatly im-

[1] Several of these rocks have caught the attennon of travellers and writers. *Lassili* (north-west of Bailundu) is perhaps the moct striking of all. Cameron said that the natives called it 'The Devil's Finger', a name I have not been able to verify. *Ngonda* and *Kone* are near the railway between Nova Lisboa and Vila Robert Williams. A journalist recently gave them the name of 'Cleopatra's Breasts'.

[2] One of the peaks of the ridge called *Moko* (The Knife) is the highest, but no complete survey has been made.

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Much of the soil has been greatly im-
134 poverished both by use and by the action of the weather. The most productive soil areas consist of alluvial deposits, but the precipitate nature of much of the region precludes the formation of such deposits. The bulk of the soil is rather poor, but still it is of better quality, on the whole, than in adjoining regions to the north, east, and south.[1]

133 In common with several of the African plateaux the Benguela Highland rises very precipitately from the sea. This is one of the most striking features of African geography. The steepness of the
[48] ascent forces the Benguela Railway to use a cog-line for a short distance. The village of Ngendo, described in the section dealing with the social structure, has an elevation of about 1,650 metres (5,400 feet) but is situated at only about 60 miles from the ocean.[2] That part of the intermediate zone which adjoins the Highland on the west consists of river valleys between mountain ridges and is well watered, but between that and the sea the country is very arid. This arid region is in reality a northern extension of the Kalahari, Omaheke, and Namieb deserts. Much of this arid stretch is exceedingly rough mountainous country. All along the African coast there is a coastal plain, but in the region under consideration it is very narrow. Plain and mountain are equally arid and this desert country generally has an elevation of less than 1,000 metres (about 3,280 feet). This intermediate zone is well known to the Ovimbundu and played an important role in the history of their commercial developments since they were obliged to cross it to reach the European stations on the coast.

Other adjoining regions have also been of importance to the
101 Ovimbundu. It was from the region to the north between the Highland and the Kuanza River that some of the principal ruling families came. Across this same region the Ovimbundu had their
[177] first European contacts—with the Portuguese establishments on the Kuanza River. In the regions to the south live cattle-raising people whence the Ovimbundu got cattle, whether by raiding or
133 by trading. East of the Kuanza River valley the elevation drops
167 gradually toward the basins of the Congo and the Zambezi. When the slave- and rubber-trades led the Ovimbundu into this region

[1] i.e. of all adjoining regions only on the north-west are there valleys of superior soil. No complete survey of the soils of Angola has been made. Most books overrate the qualities of the soils of the colony.

[2] See *infra*, Chap. II.

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they came to call it *ofeka yonjala*, 'The Hungry Country' or better 'The Country of Hunger', since it was without inhabitants and consequently without the possibility of purchasing provisions.[1] Much of the soil in all three of these adjoining regions is very sandy and comparatively unproductive.

Many rivers find in the Benguela Highland a great catchment basin. The two largest are the Kuanza (Kuanja) and the Cunene (Kunene), both flowing into the Atlantic. Between them are the Queve (Keve, also marked 'Cuvo'), the Balombo, and the Catumbela (Katombela), which also reach the ocean. A peculiar stream is the Cubango (Kuvango or Okavango), which rises near the source of the Cunene, and after becoming a great and free-flowing river loses itself in the Kalahari desert. Some authorities hold that through the Chobe swamp it maintains a seasonal connexion with the Zambezi. In this event the springs of the Benguela Highland feed the waters of both oceans. The part played by the Mbuluvulu plain in Bié (Viye) has often been noted by travellers and writers, for it drains into the Kuanza and also into the Cubango. As with most of the Southern Bantu,[2] rivers have had little directly to do with building the material culture of the Ovimbundu. Watersheds have furnished trade-routes, and fishing has become a side-line occupation for those who live conveniently near the streams. The rivers themselves, however, have always been of the greatest importance to the mass of the people who are dependent upon them for water, whether it comes in the form of rainfall or is taken more directly from the streams.

Climate

The regions under consideration in this study belong to the South Central African zone of summer rains. Coming on the monsoon from the Indian Ocean, the rains are precipitated by cold winds from the south-western antarctic current.[3] The Benguela Highland constitutes a distinct climatic zone, as the fact of the altitude would lead one to infer. The adjoining and coastal regions

[1] Cf. H. W. Nevinson, *A Modern Slavery*, chap. vi (New York: Harpers, 1906); also M. Burr, *A Fossicker in Angola* (London: Adelphi, 1933).

[2] A. J. H. Goodwin, 'Habitat', p. 34, in Schapera, *The Bantu-Speaking Tribes of South Africa* (London: Routledge, 1937).

[3] See C. E. P. Brooks and S. T. A. Mirrlees, *A Study of the Atmospheric Circulation over Tropical Africa*. Meteorological Office. Geophysical memoirs no. 55 (London: H.M.S.O., 1932).

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

132 are divided into several sub-zones. A glance at the map[1] reproduced herewith will give a fairly good idea of the climatic regions. This map, apparently based entirely upon temperature averages and relative humidity in the localities for which such data are to be had,[1] is useful for an approximation of the principal zones and sub-zones. The names given to the several zones and sub-zones, however, are somewhat misleading, and the data on which the map is based are insufficient to assure accuracy.

The mean annual rainfall varies from 1,000 mm. (40 inches) to 1,500 mm. (60 inches) according to region[2] and locality. In the Highland the rains begin with a few showers during September and usually set in heavily during October. During November they increase in intensity and then suffer a break of from two to four weeks in December, January, or February. Then they continue until the end of April with sometimes a few showers in May. The heaviest fall is often in November or December, but sometimes in March. There seems to be some sort of cycle of morning, afternoon, and night rains, but I know of no study on this subject. Afternoon and evening rains are more common. Night rains seem to be more common towards the end of the season. Morning rains 512 are least frequent. A day in which rain begins near (or before) 132 daybreak and continues well into the day is called in Umbundu *ulembi*. On such a day agricultural work and travel are suspended. There is a custom that on such a day the first, after greeting, to [431] speak the word *ulembi* can claim a gift from the one to whom he says it. The number of days in which work or travel may be suspended on account of rain is relatively not large. The working day is customarily from early morning until mid-afternoon. Men often continue field-work later in the day than do women. The connexion of the working day with weather conditions is readily seen. 132 Whether the heavier rainfall occurs in November–December or in February–March, it is in March and April that transportation is most likely to be interfered with. That is the time of swollen

[1] See Dr. José de Oliveira Ferreira Diniz, 'As características climatológicas de Angola' (*Boletim Geral das Colónias*, 1930, no. 62, 63, pp. 3–15).

[2] See maps and charts of rainfall in H. F. Shantz and C. F. Marbut, *The Vegetation and Soils of Africa* (New York, 1923); also some figures on rainfall and temperature in J. C. B. Statham, *Through Angola, a Coming Colony* (London, 1922) and in O. Letcher, *South Central Africa*, chap. xiii (Johannesburg, 1932). More detailed treatment of the whole subject is given by Marquardsen u. Stahl, *Angola*, chap. v (Berlin, 1928).

1[Facing p. 8.—Analyst]

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

streams and washed-out bridges. Electrical discharges in connexion with storms are very common and often cause property and personal damage. In connexion with mean annual rainfall figures, the cycle of rainy and dry seasons is of importance. An annual rainfall of 50 or 60 inches may not seem unduly heavy save when it is realized that practically all of it falls during seven or even six months. It is this heavy seasonal rainfall which has made much of the Highland into what is known in South Africa as 'sour veld'—a type of pasturage relatively ill-suited for cattle raising. 132

The Benguela Highland is well within the tropics (between 11° and 14° 30′ South), but the altitude and the effect of the antarctic current combine to produce a decidedly moderate climate. The variations of temperature, however, are quite unlike those found in most regions having a 'temperate' climate. The régime of the rains, tropical position, altitude, and other factors combine to produce a peculiar set of temperature variations. The annual variation of temperature is relatively slight, a day's maximum is seldom above 90° F., it may be as low as 60°, but the more usual maximum is around 80°. The minimum of 32° or even 30° is sometimes reached in the winter (about 20 May–20 July),[1] but it seldom goes quite so low. A day's minimum has been registered as high as 63°, more usually the minimum goes to about 40° or 45° in winter and between 50° and 55° during the rest of the year. Daily variations are important. Greatest variations occur in winter with differences of as much as 42° often registered. During the rest of the year there is a considerable range of daily variation—sometimes as much as 40° and sometimes as little as 7° with usual variation of from 20° to 30°.[2] On the days when it rains or remains cloudy all day the slightest variations are registered. Such days are cold and disagreeable and a grate fire is almost a necessity.[3]

Environmental Factors

Differences of characteristic vegetation as between the Highland and the lower zones are striking. The most characteristic feature 137

[1] Ice forms nearly every winter—at least in small pools along the streams, and sometimes more generally. There are Umbundu words for hoar-frost (*ocikokoto*) and for hail (*ocive*), but not for ice nor, of course, for snow.

[2] Figures compiled from records of the weather station of Currie Institute, Ndondi—elevation 1,800 metres (5,900 feet).

[3] Grate fires are agreeable mornings and evenings during ten to eleven months of the year. In the winter they are a real necessity.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

137 of the lower zones between the plateau and the coast is the baobab (*Adansonia digitata*). Where these lower zones are well watered, especially along the streams, dense tropical forests are the rule.

The Highland proper until quite recent times was well covered with a good variety of trees. This gave a pleasing aspect not lost upon travellers. Commander Cameron, who crossed from Zanzibar [114] to Benguela in 1875, was greatly impressed by the rustic beauty of the country-side:

> As we went forward the scenery increased in beauty, and at last I was constrained to halt and surrender myself to the enjoyment of the view which lay before me.
>
> I will content myself with asserting that nothing could be more lovely than this entrancing scene, this glimpse of Paradise. To describe it would be impossible. Neither poet, . . . nor painter . . . could by pen or pencil do full justice to the country of Bailundu.
>
> In the foreground were glades in the woodland, varied with knolls crowned by groves of large, English-looking trees, sheltering villages with yellow thatched roofs; . . . plantations with the fresh green of young crops and the bright red of newly hoed ground in vivid contrast, and running streams flashing in the sunlight; while in the far distance were mountains of endless and pleasing variety of form, gradually fading away until they blended with the blue of the sky. . . .
>
> That evening we camped in a wood, a clear space having literally to be cut out of the masses of sweet-scented creepers which festooned the trees.[1]

Some of this natural beauty still remains in Bailundu and other parts of the country, but much of it has gone, as grasslands have taken the place of forest and woodland. Native agriculture and the annual fires have caused much deforestation and much has [375] also come about from the demands of European settlement and the needs of the railway, which up to the present time uses only wood for fuel. The question as to whether the rainfall has yet been much affected is often discussed.

164 The Benguela Highland is within the tropics and therefore subject to many tropical diseases. Malaria is prevalent owing to the presence of the *Anopheles* mosquito, one of the two essential hosts in the life-cycle of the malaria germ, man being the other. Infant mortality owing to malaria seems to be high among the Ovimbundu. It seems probable, however, that many of the

[1] V. L. Cameron, *Across Africa* (New York: Harpers, 1877), p. 410 f.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

survivors acquire at least a limited immunity. Many observers have noted the comparative rarity among African natives of that chronic complication of malaria known as black-water fever, although it frequently attacks Europeans. Another disease, which has been found largely among Africans, and was at one time considered as a possible malarial complication, is now classified by most observers as a variety of scurvy. This disease is known to medical science by the Umbundu name of *onyalãi*.[1] Among other common diseases are yaws, tick fever, tropical ulcers, common sores, infections, intestinal parasites, and pneumonia. Others, such as bilharzia and leprosy, are less common but well known. The comparatively recent introduction and spread of pulmonary tuberculosis and the venereal diseases give cause for alarm.[2] Neither sleeping-sickness nor the cattle nagana are found. There are a number of cattle diseases, such as scab, carbuncle, quarter evil, pleuro-pneumonia, and gall-sickness.

Termites are a tropical pest present in large numbers. Their depredations require the periodical replacement of woodwork, unless made of the very few species of hard wood which they seem unable to attack. In common with all of South Africa, locusts are always to be found and they increase greatly at irregular intervals.

The *fauna* of the country under consideration includes nearly all of the commoner south and central African species. Some of the rarer and more localized species are not present, but on the other hand this is the home of certain rare species, as, for example, the giant sable.[3] The elephant, the rhinoceros, and other large species are no longer to be found in the Highland proper, but only in adjoining comparatively unpopulated regions to the west, south, and south-east. All game is comparatively scarce, which is not surprising considering that the Ovimbundu have possessed firearms for about 250 years, and considering also the extent of European settlement during the past fifty years.

[1] First reported by Dr. F. C. Wellman, a missionary physician who worked among the Ovimbundu.

[2] No figures on the incidence of any disease with reference to the population of the colony are available. Nor are population movements known, for previous to the first general census, which was taken in 1940, such figures on population as there were, were hardly more than guess-work. Results of this first census were published in 10 volumes, 1941–3. (Colónia de Angola, Repartição de Estatística Geral: *Censo Geral da População*. Luanda: Imprensa Nacional.)

[3] *Hippotragus niger varianii.*

1: Childs M-5 (1936-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

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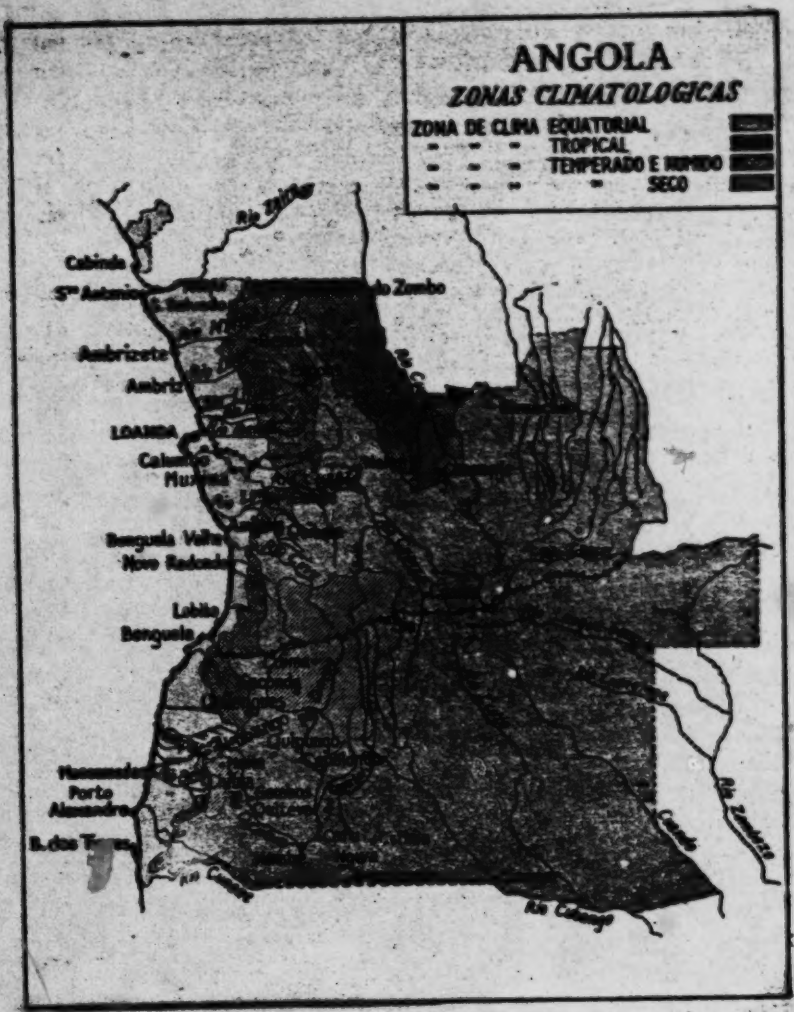

[Facing p. 8]

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

241 The Highland is evidently well suited to the particular type of
221 agriculture which the Ovimbundu carry on with upland fields for the principal crops of maize and beans growing in the rainy season and with river gardens for secondary cultures in the dry season. The purpose of the latter is to piece out between the principal harvests. The situation of the Highland across principal watersheds and therefore on convenient trade routes has been noted. This is doubtless one factor in commercial development among the
231 Ovimbundu. Cattle-keeping with them seems to be largely a commercial development. While cattle may live on the Highland, they thrive better in the less well-watered lands to the west and the south where the neighbouring peoples are cattle-keepers.

Neighbouring peoples

101 The cattle-keeping peoples who live just west and south of the
197 Ovimbundu are the Nganda, the Ndombe, the Hanya, the Cilenge, the Cipungu, the Muila, the Nyaneka, the Mulondo, and the Khumbi.[1] These peoples all seem to be related to each other and in some way to some, at least, of the Ovimbundu.[2] Still further south beyond these peoples are the Ambo and the Herero, also cattle-keepers. All these, together with the Ovimbundu, have been classified linguistically as making up the 'Western Province' of the Southern Bantu.[3] There are also a few Bushmen on the southern borders.

The peoples to the east and south-east of the Umbundu country are probably Lunda emigrants and so belong to the Congo group (Cokue and Songo) and to the Zambezi or Central group (Luimbi, Lucazi, Nyemba, Ngonzelo, &c.).[4] These people are lumped together by the Ovimbundu under the somewhat deprecatory term of *va Ngangela*.

The northern neighbours belong to the Western or Angola 'cluster' of the Congo group (Esela, Cipala, Lupolo, Ndongo or

[1] See C. Estermann, 'Notas Etnográficas sôbre os povos indígenas do Distrito da Huila' (*Boletim Geral das Colónias*, Fev. 1935, pp. 41–69). He groups some of these people together under the name 'Bangala' or 'Ovambangala'.

[2] Information from Nganda, Mulondo, Cilenge, and Ovimbundu individuals.

[3] See R. A. Dart, 'Racial Origins', p. 23, in Schapera, op. cit., 1937; C. M. Doke, *Bantu Linguistic Terminology* (London: Longmans, 1935); Sir H. H. Johnston, *Comparative Vocabulary of the Bantu and Semi-Bantu Languages*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1919, 1922).

[4] Johnston, op. cit.

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M 101 197

'Kimbundu', Imbangala, &c.). The Esele and the Mbuí, on the north-west, may belong to the Western Province but they have not yet been surely classified.[1]

These neighbouring peoples have been listed only as background for studying the Ovimbundu. Linguistically the Ovimbundu belong to South Africa even as their country geographically is a part of it. 'In respect of climate and vegetation Angola is essentially a borderland and may be regarded as the area of mergence of several distinct zones which attain their fullest development outside the Colony.'[2] Since the Benguela Highland comprises the north-western ridges of the South African sub-continental plateau, it is not surprising that its inhabitants should be the northernmost of the Southern Bantu.[3]

European Administration, Communications, Missions

A 631

As a Portuguese colony, Angola is governed under the Ministry of Colonies in Lisbon by a Governor-General whose residence is Luanda, the capital of the colony since 1576. For administrative purposes the colony is divided into five provinces, each with a governor in charge. These are divided into thirteen districts which in turn are divided into circumscriptions and these again into administrative areas. The country of the Ovimbundu is divided between the provinces of Benguela, Bié, and Huila in the districts of Benguela, Huambo, Cuanza-Sul, Bié, and Huila. 'Direct rule' is the method of administration and native political

A M 631

[1] Ibid.

[2] Walter Fitzgerald, *Africa, a Social, Economic and Political Geography of its Major Regions* (London: Methuen, 1934).

A M 162

[3] The general census of 1940 (*vide supra*, p. 7, note 2) showed the population as follows:

Whites . .	44,083
Mixed . .	28,035
Blacks . .	3,665,829
Others . .	63
	3,738,010 (op. cit., vol. i, p. 78 f.)

Of the various tribal divisions, the Ovimbundu ('Mbundo') are listed with 1,331,087 (op. cit., vol. ix, p. 23). Owing to the mistaken inclusion of several small tribal groups, this number should probably be reduced by at least 150,000, but on the other hand there are without doubt more Ovimbundu than this last number who have emigrated to neighbouring colonies and to the Union of South Africa.

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A 162

institutions or divisions have had little consideration in drawing administrative boundaries.

A 496

Systems of communications have been developed during the last forty years. The Benguela Railway, built by Sir Robert Williams and the Tanganyika Concessions, Ltd., was completed in 1931 from Lobito to Elisabethville in the Katanga region, where direct connexion is made with the South, Central, and East African systems of rail and water transport. This railway serves as the most direct outlet for the mines of the Congo and Northern Rhodesia. The great majority of native employees of the railway are Ovimbundu and it has also brought this people their first contact with the mines and with industrialized South Africa. Regular steamship connexion between Lobito and Europe includes Portuguese, Belgian, German, and British lines with occasional calls from American, Japanese, and Scandinavian ships.[1] Recent years have seen considerable extensions of telegraphic and radio service throughout the colony. Motor roads have been built extensively, especially on the plateau and along the watersheds. In addition there are many wagon-tracks for ox-wagons which were introduced by the voortrekkers almost seventy years ago. In many cases the routes followed are those first used by native caravans.

M 496 177 A 506 M A 206 987 494

M 797

There are eleven missionary societies at work among the Ovimbundu: five Protestant and six Roman Catholic.[2] There is only one fully organized Umbundu Church. It includes the work of three Protestant societies. It is the work of this Church and of the Missions of the A.B.C.F.M.[3] and of the United Church of Canada with which the evaluations of this study are concerned. The Mission of the A.B.C.F.M. was founded in 1880, as the first Christian work undertaken among the Ovimbundu.[4]

[1] This was the situation in 1939. During the period of the war the Portuguese services were maintained, although with less regularity than before. The U.S. Maritime Commission maintained a cargo service. There were occasional calls by cargo vessels of various nationalities. The Belgian line is reopening its service (1946) and the Portuguese lines have acquired additional vessels.

[2] Pères du Saint-Esprit began work among the Ovimbundu in 1890; the Padres Seculares have been working in the towns; the Benedictines and several orders of nuns also have stations.

[3] American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions.

[4] The two missions mentioned conduct their work in most respects as a single mission. The other Protestant societies do not have very extensive work among the Ovimbundu.

Widespread use of Umbundu

While the home of the Ovimbundu is in the Benguela Highland, 197
the use of their language is now more widespread. The va Nganda and the va Hanya are increasingly using Umbundu. The mixed populations at the coast towns of Lobito, Catumbela, and Benguela use it almost exclusively. It is also used in Novo Redondo, in Mossamedes, and along the Benguela Railway to the interior. There is a considerable *diaspora* of Ovimbundu at widely separated points owing to very recent movements.

For more extensive treatment of the various aspects of the problems touched upon in this introductory chapter, works listed in the bibliography may be consulted. A complete description of the habitat has not been attempted but only sufficient to provide the necessary background for the study as a whole.

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Photo. R. S. Webb

a. Rock outcrop beside the Keve River

Photo. M. W. Bonds

b. Rapids of the Kuvale River (Katombela system)

[facing p. 16]

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PLATE II

643

Photo. D. G. Rideout

a. Court procedure: the King and his counsellors (Bailundu)

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b Mortuary rites at Ngendo

[facing p. 17]

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PART ONE [p.17]

SOCIAL STRUCTURE

121 *The object of Part One is* (1) *to describe the present social structure of the Ovimbundu, and* (2) *to suggest significant elements that this social structure has or may have for the programme of Christian missions among this people.*

CHAPTER II

POLITICAL AND SOCIAL LIFE

127 122 HAD my historical survey revealed a detailed description of Umbundu social structure made at some former time, it would also be useful to make comparisons with the present state of affairs. Since there is no such witness out of the past, it is only possible to describe and analyse that which at present exists. For this purpose some excerpts from Umbundu narratives are presented and references made to certain folk-tales and proverbs. The basis of the analysis and description rests more especially, however, upon notes and impressions gathered in field-work over a period of years and upon a considerable number of genealogical tables and schedules of marriage arrangements.[1] These latter are referred to here only to a certain extent. I hope to treat these more fully later. The subject of marriage properly belongs to the field of social structure, but because of its importance I hope to devote a chapter to it. Only certain of the genealogical tables are presented fully and in their several aspects, while the others have served as basis and background for the whole of this part of the study.

565 175 The most significant historical allusion to the social structure of the Ovimbundu which I have found was an observation of Pinheiro de Lacerda about 1790. 'These are they of the Highlands who are made up of two "systems" the one call themselves [266] "Quimbundos" (i.e. Ovimbundu), (these do not eat human flesh): the others are called "Quimbangalas" (i.e. the royal households of [782] Imbangala stock), who eat it, and when they make their sacrifice, at which all together attend, then all eat the "Makongo".'[2]

[1] I have 192 of the former and 75 of the latter.
[2] *Annaes Maritimos & Coloniaes*, 5a Ser., p. 488.

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175 565 Evidently royal persons could then be easily distinguished from the commoners.

565 178 The question naturally arises how far may a similar distinction be observed at the present time. The genealogical tables presented may answer the question. It may be seen that intermarriage of commoners and royalty has proceeded to such a degree that the differences have been greatly dimmed, if not quite erased. Furthermore, the loss of the political power which the royal families formerly held has levelled down distinctions until they have largely lost their meaning. This loss again has hastened the process of intermarriage with commoners. While there are some distinctive practices which persist, they may now pertain to or be practised by certain members of a family only, or in some instances, and not in others. These refer especially to inheritance and to the naming of children.

121 By 'social structure' is meant the more or less permanent framework of relationships between members of a community which manifests itself in an ordered group-life, with reciprocal rights and duties, privileges and obligations, of members, determining behaviour-patterns . . . and moulding the feelings, thoughts, and conduct of members according to these patterns, so that it is only in and through them that the individual can achieve his personal self-realization and participate in the satisfactions offered by the life of his community.

This framework of social organization, or social structure, is permanent compared with the stream of human lives that, in the succession of the generations, flows through it. Each new generation finds it there, as an inheritance from untold generations of his predecessors. Yet the framework of social structure is not absolutely rigid or fixed for all time, but is itself a thing of growth, capable of variation in detail, sometimes giving birth to new developments, at other times undergoing disintegration and decay.[1]

101 [601] The genealogical tables which I have collected are fairly representative of the major divisions or "tribes' of the Ovimbundu. The only 'tribes' not represented are those of the border regions of Namba, Sanga, Cikomba, and Kalukembe, none of which save the last are numerically important. These border groups themselves offer an interesting field of study and particularly in that they may provide cultural and linguistic bridges between the Ovimbundu and their neighbors.

[1] A. W. Hoernlé in Schapera, *The Bantu-Speaking Tribes of South Africa* (London: Routledge, 1937), p. 67 f.

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Ovimbundu and their neighbours. I have no tables representative of the Umbundu-speaking *diaspora* at the coast and in other outlying regions. There is an interesting and significant article in *Africa*[1] on those of these *diaspora* which are settled in the Mossamedes–Lubango area. The author has done all that could be expected within the limits of an article necessarily short, and it is to be hoped that subsequent writings may clear up matters left in doubt, especially with regard to the present social structure of the groups described.[2]

The social structure described in this chapter is that of the main body of the Ovimbundu. I may say that from observations and from a study of the genealogical tables collected, I have concluded that the structure of kinship and of social life is fairly homogeneous throughout the several tribes.

The Tribe

A complete enumeration of the Umbundu-speaking tribes or kingdoms with descriptions of their reciprocal relations is included in Chapter XII. Almost half of the twenty-two kingdoms were generally tributaries of one of the larger or more powerful kings, so that for practical purposes the Ovimbundu may be divided into eight or ten tribal groups. Although more than half of the Umbundu kingdoms may be said to be feudatories of the larger ones, it is nevertheless true that each of them had its own separate

[1] C. Estermann, 'Coutumes des Mbali du Sud d'Angola', *Africa*, Jan. 1939, pp. 74–86. The author states that their language is Kimbundu (of Luanda-Malange), but the examples which he gives show that although there are words borrowed from Kimbundu, from Portuguese, and from other sources, the structure both of verbs and of nouns and the method of 'Bantuization' of Portuguese words belong to Umbundu. These people may declare their language to be 'Kimbundu' in imitation of the European usage. So did the native 'Mohongo' taken to Paris by the Mission Rohan-Chabot (*Angola et Rhodesie*, Paris, 1914). I have personally ascertained that Umbundu is commonly spoken in Mossamedes and may also say that the samples of the language given in this article show it to be much the same as that spoken in the cities of Benguela, Lobito, &c. It would be better if an orthography more nearly like that recommended by the International African Institute were used. The term 'Mbali' (va Mbali, Mambari, Ovimbali) is an Umbundu term used for nearly one hundred years to designate those who imitate the Europeans or who live at or near the European towns which are collectively designated by the cognate term—*Lupali*. (For 'Mambari', &c., *vide* Livingstone, *Missionary Travels and Researches in South Africa*, pp. 91 f., 271, 384, &c.)

[2] e.g., who is the '*tante* de la jeune mariée ou la "marraine" des noces'? (op. cit., p. 78).

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

631 life and each could be taken as a unit complete in itself. Individual studies and comparisons of one with another would provide much valuable material. Familiarity with individuals and groups belong-
184] ing to all the major tribal groups, and study of their folk-lore and customs has led me to conclude that as in language, so in social structure and in culture, the differences are of small account. In offering illustrative material, I shall give its tribal source.

The King

643 To describe the royal office and functions it would be necessary
177 to use the past tense. That reason, along with others, leads me to exclude this subject from the present study. Effective European occupation of the country and government by direct rule[1] have atrophied the royal office among the Ovimbundu until to-day kings survive as hardly more than living museum pieces. This being the case, I shall only enumerate the royal functions, very briefly characterize them, and pass on to describe other and living parts of the Umbundu social organism.

643 The principal functions of the royal office were:

776 1. *Religious.* The spirits of the king's ancestors were the principal national deities. The king was not only high priest but also the visible vice-regent and incarnation of the spirits. The
[778] sacrifices at the royal shrine, *kakokoto* (literally, at the skulls), the place of the royal skulls, were for the nation in order:

643 (*a*) *To control the elements*, i.e. to ensure a sufficient supply of
372 rain and avoid the dangers caused by hail, by lightning, &c. Also to control fire by providing a new fire properly (ceremonially)
789 kindled from which everyone took his fire. A king's reign was spoken of as 'during the Water of Lord So-and-so' (*Kovava a Ñalã Ngandi*), or 'during the Fire of Lord So-and-so' (*Kondalu ya Ñalã Ngandi*).

241 (*b*) *To ensure fertility*, toward which desideratum the royal
644 marriage had great influence. The queen's special province was agriculture and her kitchen was sanctified by human sacrifice to
[782] guarantee the national food supply. Ceremonially treated seed was distributed to be mixed with the seed of each granary.

[1] 'Direct rule' is applied in most parts of Africa where European settlement is the predominant consideration and also where centralized government is the ideal. 'Indirect rule' is best illustrated in the Gold Coast, Nigeria, Uganda, and Tanganyika Territory.

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(*c*) *In hunting*, deities other than the king's ancestors were 776
invoked, especially *Hũvĩ*, the hunters' god, and *Kuanja*, a goddess, 224
both of which had their own shrines and priests. These may have 643
been connected with the country or with its earlier inhabitants (the kings being recognized as late comers). At the inaugural hunt the offices were assigned. The king's character was supposedly [787]
revealed by the sex of the animal killed at this hunt: 'If the duiker[1] is a female, then it is good indeed, but if a male, then the king is a real person but he habitually will become angry to excess' (*Nda ombambi yaco omange ciwa muẽlẽ, puaĩ nda ulume, Soma omunu puaĩ o tema tema enene*).

2. *To represent the nation in its external relations*, i.e. (*a*) *To make* 643
agreements with other kings to promote trade, and (*b*) *To make war* 648
on other peoples in order to provide his court with tribute and his 701
warriors with plunder. The war leader (*Kesongo*) had his own residence and establishment entirely separate from that of the king, whom he must not meet face to face except on certain state occasions. In Bailundu he, with certain other officials, was of the stock of the slaves of the state (*ovinduli viosoma*) who came from Luandu in the Songo country. Each king must inaugurate his [721]
reign with a war, during or after which he must ceremonially 'eat [266]
the old one' (*oku·lia ekongo*)—a feast consisting of the flesh of a specially fattened slave cooked with the flesh of the principal animals commonly eaten.

3. *To dispense justice*. In point of time consumed, this question 643
was very important, for it occupied much of the time of both 692
rulers and ruled. Good evidence of this is in the number of proverbs used at court, second only in number to those used for the education of the young. The king's court (*olusenje*) was the supreme court of the nation where cases were continually heard and 'fines eaten' (*oku lia ovimbu*). Cases might be settled either [695]
by ordeal or by decision of the king, and there was therefore room for appeal and re-trial. The king's word, however, was final, as the proverb has it: *O popia onganji, o mãlãpo osoma*. (The advocate speaks, the king finishes [decides].) The king was not generally arbitrary in his decisions but was bound not only by the customs of his people, but also by the desires of his councillors. Among the legitimate kings of the Ovimbundu there were comparatively few of the revolting and wholesale punishments which were so

[1] The duiker, *ombambi* (*Silvicapra grimmii leucoprosopus*).

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643 common at African courts. A few Umbundu rulers carried on
692 such practices, and especially certain self-constituted robber-barons such as Samakaka, who left Viye after the military occupation and established himself first in Bimbe (Mbimbi), later in Huambo (Wambu), and then at Elende, until taken by the Portuguese authorities in 1903.

643 4. In order to protect himself and the nation, *the king had resort*
754 *to magical means*, some of which would be accounted witchcraft or murder if practised without authority. Such were the ritual murders of *Katõkõlã* (The Strangler), *Oku ipa ukaĩ watimba avali* (killing the woman of two bodies, i.e. pregnant), of the children whose lives were required for building and furnishing the queen's kitchen, &c.

791 5. In order properly to carry out the functions of his office, *the*
643 *king made much use of divination*, for which purpose he had his own diviner (*Citue cosoma*), who was of the blood royal. He also called in or consulted diviners of many regions and of many types, one of the commonest of which was the 'Diviner of the Basket' (*Ocimbanda congombo*).[1]

643 The king was a divine representative and a divine incarnation,
642 but the mode of his succession reveals that he was also a democratically chosen leader. Note has been made of the fact that the royal succession is in the male line, sometimes from father to son, but more often from elder to younger brother, to brother's son, or to one even more distantly related. The election is made by the councillors whose duty it is, ordinarily before the old king's death is announced, but these same councillors may depose an unpopular
[669] king. There have been many revolutions and *coups d'état*. This fact was noted by several early observers, among whom I cite one who wrote in 1837:

> The government of 'Bailundo' is democratic. These heathen mix with the infamous humiliations of the orientals, the unbridled coarseness of the English people at election times in England. The kings defer to and flatter their counsellors; these are they who elevate a king to the throne and also who cast him down.[2]

[1] A rather cursory description of divination as practised by this type of diviner was given by Hambly, op. cit., pp. 274–6. For a fuller treatment, *vide* L. S. Tucker, 'The Divining Basket of the Ovimbundu', *J.R.A.I.* (London), 1940, vol. lxx, pp. 171–201.

[2] C. de Almeida Sandoval in *Annaes do Com. Ultr.*, Ser. I, p. 519. The reference to English elections reminds one of Dickens. See also P. M. Pinheiro de

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This so-called democratic streak is also abundantly attested by 643
folk-tales which give incidental and intimate pictures of petty 174
details in the life of kings. There is one in which a king gives instructions for caring for his field while he is absent on a war party; another which tells of a fine levied on a man who while hiding up a tree accidentally urinated on a king; another, of a king who in a time of hunger himself climbed a tree for the *epōlē* fruit and nearly starved when the prop by which he had climbed was taken away. Recent arrivals in Africa upon meeting some king just coming up from work in his fields may at first conclude, as did I, that this extreme of 'democracy' is due to the low estate to which royalty has fallen in these latter days, but these historical and legendary references show that this 'democracy', such as it is, is not a degeneration but an essential part of the picture.

With this I shall have to leave royalty. I trust that enough of the picture has been given, and enough also to show what inherent interest would lie in a study of such a Divine King who is at the same time a sort of 'democratic' leader. Should 'indirect rule' ever come to this part of Africa, a resurrection of the royal office would be the order of the day as has been the case in Tanganyika Territory and in the Belgian Congo. For this additional reason an early and a thorough treatment of the subject is to be desired.

Sub-Tribes

Each of the kings of the Ovimbundu was an overlord, for the 631
tribe was made up of a number of sub-tribes called *atumbu* 635
(plural), a word derived from the verb *oku tumbulula*, to transplant.
Some of these princes, whether of the blood-royal or not, them- [643]
selves established dynasties, while others were newly appointed and promoted from time to time. Some of the *atumbu* were ruled by court officials not of royal birth, while others belonged to separate dynasties some of which were natives of the respective regions, at least more anciently native than was the paramount royal family. The kingdom of Bailundu had about 200 *atumbu*, each of which had from 3 to 300 villages or more, and a number of the larger *atumbu* were themselves made up of several smaller

Lacerda in *Annaes Mar. e Col.*, 5 Ser., p. 488 f.; L. Magyar, *Reisen in Süd-Afrika* (tr. Hunfalvy, Pesth, 1859), p. 278.

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631 ones. This situation was reported by Magyar, when he wrote,
635 'Quibanda (should be Civanda) to the east has 500 villages. The Chief has great power. He sends tribute every year to the king of Bailundu but is himself fully independent.'[1] Magyar described about 15 *atumbu* or '*ovikandscho*',[2] as he called them, of Bailundu.
[161] He estimated the population of Bailundu at 450,000, and for all the kingdoms of the Ovimbundu 1,200,000,[3] figures which are
[175] probably not very different from present-day facts. The report and description of the 'Capitania de Benguella' in 1799 said that the king of Bailundu dominated 2,056 villages; the king of Viye, 886; and the king of Ngalangi, 900; and listed their 'feudos' respectively as 82, 54, and 78.[4] My list of the Ngalangi *atumbu* shows 112. In Bailundu about 20 *atumbu* were ruled by members of the royal family, including heirs apparent or expectant, and the queen (*Inakulu*), who also had her own establishment.[5] About 20 were ruled by other court officials.

621 Most of these *atumbu* are still recognized as such or as *olombala*.[6]
622 Their decay has not been as great as that of the *ombala*[6] of their
177 liege lord, for they still fulfil certain functions in native life. They have also been given new functions by the administrative authorities.
[651] The minor chiefs as well as village headmen are all required to assist in assessing and collecting the native tax, and also in recruiting labour for government works and for contracts. In some areas they receive in return the remission of their own taxes. In some areas they are required to wear uniforms. On the dancing floors
[692] of most of these minor *olombala* courts are still held, justice determined, and (to a limited extent) fines 'eaten'. Such judgements are not officially recognized or allowed by the European authorities. The African, however, often finds that European courts do not meet his needs or accord with his concepts of justice.

[1] Magyar, op. cit., p. 389.

[2] Umbundu *ovikanjo* (plural), 'branches', a term which through commercial or European influence is applied to the *atumbu*.

[3] For these figures and for descriptions of the several kingdoms, see Magyar, op. cit., chap. ix.

[4] *Annaes Mar. e Col.*, 4a Ser., pp. 155 ff.

[5] Magyar, op. cit., p. 390.

[6] *Olombala*, plural of *ombala*, a capital village or chief's residence.

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The Village

Among the Ovimbundu the outstanding social and political unit 621
at the present time is the village (*imbo*, plural *ovaimbo*). The village 622
may consist of from 5 to 500 households,[1] the heads of which are in the great majority of cases related to each other in the male line. Each village has a headman or elder (*sekulu*, literally 'grandfather' or 'elder father') who is literally, according to Umbundu kinship usage, the patriarch of the villagers. He was formerly responsible for his village to the sub-chief, and through him to the king. At the present time, the administrative authorities hold the village headmen responsible for matters relating to taxes, labour recruiting, &c. The present decay of this office and of village life varies very greatly from region to region. Nearly everywhere matters of purely local concern are not directly interfered with, and the headman continues his patriarchal government, assisted by a council of all (male) householders.

Ngendo, a typical village. The village of Ngendo lies at about 621
14° 40′ east, 11° 40′ south, about thirty-five miles south-west of the [131]
Keve, where that river crosses the fifteenth parallel, and about sixty miles in a direct line from the Atlantic Ocean. Its altitude is about 1,650 metres, and the ground on which it is built slopes down to a small stream of the Keve system. Directly across the [712]
stream to the north rises the granite outcrop on which may be seen the ruined fortress of Usengo. Ngendo belongs to the tribe of Kasongi, *etumbu* of Ekongo. It is about fifteen miles north-west of the administrative post of Cassongue and about two miles from the motor road which connects that post and points farther inland with the district capital and port of Novo Redondo.

The most striking feature of this village is the fact that it consists of four smaller units or wards (*ovitawila*, plural), each of which appears to be quite self-contained. The four together make up the village (*imbo*), which name is also applied to either of the two larger units by themselves. Each unit has its own elder, but

[1] Most, but not all, of the larger villages are *olombala* (q.v., *supra*), but even these are not as large now as they formerly were. In 1850 the *ombala* of Bailundu was said to have 5,000 inhabitants (Magyar, op. cit.). At the present time there is probably no village with more than 3,000 inhabitants, and few of that size. The tendency seems to be toward smaller villages, and there is even some movement toward isolated households and farmsteads after the fashion of so many of the Southern Bantu.

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621 they recognize Sekulu Sikīlīlē, the elder of the largest unit, as the village headman. Only in his village is there a dancing floor [345] (*ocīlã*),[1] which is the centre of village life, social, legal, and recreational. As the name indicates, it is first and foremost a place for recreation, but here also religious functions are held since they involve so much dancing and drinking, and here formal cases are tried. The *ocīlã* is the heart of the village.

345 *The Men's Club-House.* Ngendo does not have that other important Umbundu institution, the Men's Club House (*onjango*).[2] The *onjango* is, or was, hardly less important than the *ocīlã*. Perhaps before it fell to its present state of disuse, its place was of even greater importance, for in the *onjango* all the men, youths, [262] and boys gathered day by day for the evening meal. From all the kitchens came baskets of stiff corn porridge (*iputa*), and dishes of relish (*ombelela*)[3] which all shared, from the most honoured guest or the village elders, down to the naked, ash-whitened little boys just old enough (say from seven or eight years) to leave the kitchens [574] to their mothers and sisters. In the *onjango* guests were entertained, judicial cases of lesser import were settled, the day's work and gossip discussed, and youth was educated by precept and example in nearly everything from traditional history to etiquette. The *onjango* was dining-room, living-room, court, school, hotel, and club, all in one. For some of the Ovimbundu it continues to function. Upon inquiry I found that in all Kasonge there were hardly ten villages where the *onjango* existed and retained its [466] former functions. The reasons which my informants assigned are that the demands for road work (in the immediate region), for contract labour (involving absences of from six months to two years), and the difficulty of securing tax-money, did not leave the leisure required for the common meal in the *onjango*. When I 345 made wider inquiries as to localities where the *onjango* now exists 178 and retains its former functions, it seems that this institution is widely decadent. According to my information, the regions where it continues to function are chiefly in Ngalangi, in Viye, and

104 [1] *Ocīlã* comes from the verb *oku cīlã*, to dance.

[2] *Onjango* has been traced to the verb *oku vangula*, to converse, but I am doubtful of this derivation. It has been called 'The Palaver House', but this is an evident misnomer, for the *onjango* is much more than that.

[3] *Ombelela* is a word to cover any dish which may be eaten with the porridge staple. It may be meat, beans, mushrooms, or greens, and is preferred with gravy into which pieces of the stiff porridge may be dipped (*oku mīã*).

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perhaps in Ndulu. In Ngendo the Men's Club had taken over the 345
rocks just behind the headman's household for its meeting-place, 178
but the meetings were only occasional and there was no common meal.

The Village Plan

To speak of the plan of an Umbundu village may seem a con- 361
tradiction in terms, so haphazard seems the relation of houses,
gardens, &c., to each other. Some houses are circular, but the [342]
majority are more nearly rectangular in shape. There is a palisade
of hardwood sticks surrounding all the village except that side of [417]
the headman's household which is adjacent to the rocks used
for a club-house. The headman had not bothered to keep up his
own part of the fence since his only garden was a small tobacco
plot fenced in by itself. The village is itself divided up by the 621
palisades which shut off one compound from another, each com- 343
pound containing the houses of from one to three households.
Between the palisades are paths which lead on to the dancing floor [363]
and out of the village. In the village of Sekulu Sikiliĕ there were
twenty-five households with thirty-two houses in all. Each house
(*onjo*) had its own granary (*osila*), and small chicken-coop built
on stilts, and of all the houses only six had separate kitchens
(*ociwo*). Nearly every household had separate pens for the pigs,
goats, and sheep for the night. At one side of the headman's
compound there was a common corral for the nine cattle which
the villagers owned. Only the headman had a spirit-hut (*etambo*), [346]
used also for a storehouse, for entertaining a guest, and for his own
bedroom should he sleep apart from his wives. Within the several 621
compounds were small gardens of tobacco and of maize and beans, 244
and just outside the village were two separate tobacco gardens.
Just a few paces to the west was a small patch of wheat belonging
to a man in the smallest ward. There was one household of two
houses quite outside the palisades appropriately belonging to a
man named *Kulika* (meaning 'Being-alone'). The water-holes [312]
and pounding rocks where meal was ground were between the [252]
several units of the village and were used in common. The
fields were off to the east at from thirty minutes' to an hour's [241]
walk. The two smaller wards of Ciyanda and Kanjengo were so
small that they were like two or three compounds by themselves. 621
The former had six households with eight houses, and the latter

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621 four households with six houses. The school village had been laid
but in rectangular fashion without any palisade and with eucalyptus
[346] trees planted around the sides. The school was at the centre and
the elder's house at the upper corner. These two larger buildings
and one other were built of adobe, while the rest of the twelve
houses were of wattle and daub, identical with those in the other
wards except that all were rectangular. There were a few very
[312] small gardens watered by an irrigation ditch. The people of this
village had river gardens, and their fields were mostly to the south
between the village and the highway. Just to the east of the main
[797] village and beside one of the water-holes, a Roman Catholic
catechist had established himself, but as yet he had neither village
nor school.

The Villagers

602 Turning now to the people living in this village, it was interest-
621 ing to find that all save the households of two former slaves and the
Roman Catholic catechist, were related to each other, either by
blood or by marriage. Sekulu Cipange of Ciyanda summed the
matter up when he said, 'Likuluta Samikanjo (the Protestant elder)
is my younger brother (*manjange*), for in our Umbundu country
(we) people do not build together (i.e. in the same village) unless
we are blood relatives.' In order to determine the exact relation-
ships and other facts regarding the demography of this village,
I took the names of all householders and their wives, and inquired
their relationships to the elders of the respective wards. This
[115] information was supplied by Njomba, a son of Sekulu Sikīlīlē, and
by Sekulu Likuluta Samikanjo. In addition to those of the four
elders, there were twenty-four households. The relationship
of each of the householders to their respective elders may be sum-
marized as follows:

A. *Paternal relatives*		
In Sikīlīlē's village	21	
„ Ciyanda	1	
„ Kanjengo's ward	2	
„ School village	2	
	—	26
B. *Maternal relatives*		
In Ciyanda	1	
„ Kanjengo's ward	1	
„ School village	4	
	—	6

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C. *Sister's sons (or daughters)*[1]		
In Ciyanda	1	
,, School village	4	
	—	5
D. *Relatives by marriage*		
In Sikīlīlē's	2	
,, School village	1	
	—	3
E. *Relationship not exactly determined*[2]		
In School village	2	
	—	2
F. *Former slaves*		
In Sikīlīlē's	1	
,, School village	1	
	—	2
Total of householders		44

621
602

The above figures show more precisely than would several pages of explanation the family nature of the Umbundu village. That the Ovimbundu are patrilocal was noted by Hambly.[3] Whether the proportions which the above figures indicate would hold for all the Ovimbundu could only be determined by gathering similar data over widely representative areas. The same approximate distribution holds for the families represented by 192 genealogies and 74 marriage-schedules which I have collected. Matrilocal residence or residence in the wife's village has always been recognized by the Ovimbundu as a possibility, although less desirable than the ideal of patrilocal marriage and residence. Of the two householders in Sekulu Sikīlīlē's village who were related to him by marriage, one was the husband of a daughter and the other a [768] widow of a younger brother, who should have been inherited by a younger brother or a mother's brother of the deceased. Failing that, she might have returned to her father's people, but her having settled in the village of her husband's elder brother is no cause for surprise. My experience leads me to believe that Ngendo is an approximately fair sample of the present strength of patrilocal residence among the Ovimbundu. That the Protestant school village is a real part of this kinship unit is an important fact, the significance of which will be discussed later.

[1] The two daughters were widows who had come to live with their mother's brothers.

[2] In these two cases relationship was declared to exist, but I failed to find its nature.

[3] Hambly, op. cit., p. 191.

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621 Going on to the marital status of the villagers, I found that the
592 forty-eight households were to be classified as follows:

Monogynous	27 (including 7 at the school)
Widowers (all formerly monogynous)	3 („ 1 „)
Widows	7 („ 4 „)
Young (unmarried) man . . .	1 (at the school)
Polygynous	10
Total	48

Whether a similar proportion of monogynous to polygynous households would also be found more widely among the Ovimbundu is a question which could only be settled by extensive
595 demographic studies.[1] My impression is that the proportion of
592 polygynous to monogynous households is higher in the region of Kasonge than in other Umbundu areas for the following reasons:

1. The proximity of Kasonge to the Esele country which has long been a source of supply for concubines (slaves). (Five of the ten polygynous householders in Ngendo included at least one Esele concubine.)
2. The comparatively low bride-price in Kasonge as compared to other areas.

The South African Census for 1921 showed that at that time only one man in eight was polygynous.[2] My impression is that the proportion among the Ovimbundu is no greater and that economic factors will soon do away with any considerable polygyny.

In each of the ten polygynous households in Ngendo save one, there were only two wives or concubines. The one exception was

162 [1] The census of 1940 gives more reliable figures and more details than were previously available, but it does not provide a basis for studies of this order. The number or proportion of polygamous unions among the 'uncivilized population' was not recorded. For the whole colony, the division of the native population by sex is given as follows: males, 1,733,328, females, 1,932,501 (op. cit., vol. i, p. 78 f.); and for the Ovimbundu (*Mbundo*), as follows: males, 636,583, females, 694,504 (op. cit., vol. ix, p. 22 f.). Owing to the migration of labourers, and especially to the system known as 'contract labour', certain areas (of recruitment) show a large excess of females over males (as much as 4 to 1 in the 20–29 age-groups of certain areas), while certain (receiving) areas show a corresponding excess of males over females (4 to 1 in several areas and even 22 to 1 in one area, for the same age-groups) (op. cit., vol. iii, *passim*). On this subject, *vide* R. R. Kuczynski, *Colonial Population* (London, 1937), and *Population Movements* (ibid., 1936); both summarized in the *Rhodes-Livingstone Journal*, no. 2.

[2] Quoted by P. A. W. Cook, *The Education of a South African Tribe* (Cape Town; Juta, 1934), p. 3.

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the household of the headman Sikīlīlē, who had had four wives and 595
one young Esele concubine. At the time of my last visit (1936), 592
however, there were only two wives and the concubine, one wife having died, and another having gone to her people.

To complete the picture of the villagers, their numbers were as 621
follows:

Village	Men	Women	Children Male	Children Female	Total
In Sikīlīlē's village . .	24	35	31	37	127
In Ciyanda . . .	5	8	2	4	19
In Kanjengo . . .	3	6	3	1	13
At the School . . .	10	11	10	6	37
Total . . .	42	60	46	48	
	Adults: 102		Children: 94[1]		196

In Sikīlīlē's village there were domestic animals as follows: 621
9 head of cattle, 13 goats, 20 sheep, 100 pigs, and about 100 463
chickens. There was practically no professional specialization; [231]
there were almost no specialists living in the village: no blacksmith or carpenter, no mat-maker, but only one 'hunter of meat', and three 'hunters of (bee-) hives'. As to the women, all could make baskets, and there were several who had made pottery, but were not doing so at the time.

Pigs, chickens, and dogs roamed the village, functioning as a 364
D.S.C. and a sewer system combined. Were it not for these scavengers the villages of the Ovimbundu would present an even more untidy spectacle than is the case. There is no other regular [514]
disposal of refuse, nor are there any latrines or privies.[2]

It will be seen that there is practically no division of labour as 621
between households: each is practically a self-contained unit. The 476

[1] It was reported that in addition to the children then living, these same households had lost 57 by death (29 males and 28 females).

[2] At Ngendo the school village had two or three enclosed pit privies. The Umbundu euphemism for defecate, 'go to the bush' (*oku enda kusenge*), is revealing. Even more revealing is a proverb which advises one not to burn his bridges behind him, but literally it runs as follows:

Nda ua lisinga luti, Si endi honyima onjo,
Nda o ha sikīlī pi?

If you forswear yourself saying, I shall not go behind the house,
Then will you go (to) urinate where?

There is a more shocking version which, however, may not be really authentic. 538

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PLATE III

764

Photo. R. S. Webb

a. The inquest at a funeral

b. On the women's side of the dancing floor during the celebration of funerary rites at Ngundo

[facing p. 32]

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621 common meal was formerly a great bond of village unity. Mutual
476 help within the village and the family group is practised on many occasions. There are a number of folk-tales designed to show the evil consequences of refusing to lend, whether beer-pots or more valued assistance. Many proverbs enjoin the necessity of prompt and effectual mutual helpfulness and co-operation, as e.g.

U o popela ukuavo ongandu ka lula.

[538] (He who saves another (from) a crocodile does not undress.)

476 The mechanism of co-operation, the round of daily life in village and field, together with the cycles of food and of work, are properly subjects of further study. Here the purpose is to show the definitely family nature of the village and of its life. To the [181] casual observer the Ovimbundu appear as severe individualists. Indeed, they are individualistic to a degree, but they have worked out mechanisms of mutual helpfulness and co-operation which functioned both on political lines under the aegis of the king and within the kinship units.

Social Life of the Village

517 The two foci of the village life are the Men's Club and the
521 Dancing Floor. Even though no *onjango* may have been built, the
562 Men's Club will find a place in which to carry on, at least when there may be fine weather. Leisure may be limited, but time for conversation will be found. Europeans often express wonder at the amount of conversation which goes on between Africans, for they cannot understand what people of apparently such limited opportunities and with what seems like so narrow an outlook may have to discuss at such great length. As for the Ovimbundu, there is nothing which is a greater hardship than lack of opportunity for conversation with their fellows. Under primitive conditions this is more especially true of the men, who, in their villages, are always surrounded by members of their own family group. Owing to their peculiar position in the village and their household pre-occupations, the women's social propensities may find less outlet in these public gatherings. When the villagers gather on the dancing floor and the gourds of beer go round, they always separate according to sex. Whether the occasion be formal or informal, I have seen the discussion carried to great lengths, with the pipe passed between the men, while the women sat silently by,

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PLATE IV

341

a. A new village (*itula*) near Elende

343

Photo. M. W. Ennis

b. A granary (*osila*), also used as a guest house

[facing p. 33]

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

517 521 562 some pulling on their stubby little pipes and watching the men. As the men smoke, they may pass the pipe from mouth to mouth, but not so the women.

577 276 Tobacco (*akaya*) is a great vehicle for sociability whether in the pipe or in the form of snuff. 'Snuffing is held to clear the head, to clarify the thought, to enlighten the eyes, to sharpen the hearing, and comfort the heart.'[1] 'Taking a pinch of snuff, between the forefinger and the thumb, is unknown . . . and would be considered . . . very unsatisfactory. . . . They pour about a teaspoonful into the palm of the hand, and burying their . . . nostrils in the peppery mixture snort it up loudly, aided by a rotary motion of the half-closed hand.'[2]

273 Beer (*ocimbombo*) is of even greater importance. Its place has long been threatened by such drinks as the stronger beer made from emmer wheat (*ekundi*), mead (*ingunãu* and *ocasa*), and [177] imported rum. Within the past thirty or forty years the Ovimbundu have themselves learned to distil rum (*okacipembe*) from sweet potatoes, sugar-cane, pumpkins, &c., and although the industry is illegal, it has grown to great proportions and nothing now seems able to stop it. It is the widespread use of this strong drink, with its concomitant evils, which is to-day the greatest enemy of the social life.

535 The dance is probably the most important element in the social life of the village. The Ovimbundu have many different dances and they dance on every occasion and on the slightest provocation. I have collected thirty songs to accompany dances. About three-fourths of them are sometimes used at funerals or at other ceremonial occasions, some of them are for more frivolous purposes, and most of those which are used for ceremonies are used at other times also. It is not for nothing that an Umbundu equivalent of (535) the proverb 'Strike while the iron is hot', runs as follows:

Nda wa mõlã oñoma, piluka:
When you see a drum, dance:
Oñoma ka yi muĩwã luwali.
A drum may not be seen twice.

During one of my visits to Ngendo there was an important funeral with much dancing at Ndumba, just across the valley. At

[1] Tucker, *Drums in the Darkness* (Toronto and New York; Doran, 1927), p. 38.
[2] Monteiro, *Angola and the River Congo*, 2 vols. (London: Macmillan, 1875), vol. ii, p. 271.

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535 that time I got several of the accompanying songs, the texts of which I hope may be published later. At this time I wish only to point out the important place in the social life of the village which the dance occupies, with reference both to ceremonial and to [821] recreation. Whenever 'the moon makes a basket' (*osaī yi tunga ohumba*),[1] there is apt to be a great urge for rhythmic expression. [533] The drums begin to throb, the leader's voice is heard in invitation:

> *We-lele, we-lele wiya,*
> Oh light ones, oh light ones, come,
> *Usiki woñoma Kaluyua.*
> The beater of the drum (is) Kaluyua.

Then the dancers reply with the same words as a refrain:

> *We-lele, we-lele wiya,*
> *Usiki woñoma Kaluyua.*

The invitation is not given in vain. More and more feet join the shuffling, stamping rhythm, more voices join the chorused invitation; the throbbing mounts as perhaps another drummer or two join in, and soon other songs supersede the invitation now no longer necessary. Dance follows dance, each with its appropriate song, running the gamut of the emotions from ribaldry to pathos, according to the dancers' moods. The dancing will continue nearly all the night and may be resumed on the three or four [527] subsequent nights. After the harvest is gathered and there are no immediate agricultural labours, and if there happens to be little or no government work required at the time or in the region, dances may begin of an afternoon and last through two or three days and nights.

524 There are a number of games involving either agility or quick wits, or both, which are also played on moonlight nights, both by children and by adolescents. The adults do not join in except in some games which involve dancing. A simple one called *Ka limbua limbua* (Not forgotten) is played by either a large or small group. The children have many games. One which is played either by day or by night, called either *Cimbamba co lia* (The night hawk ate him) or *Mai* (Mother) *Cisangu*, has been fully described by Hambly,[2] with the transcription of its songs arranged by Dr. Herzog.

[1] When the moon is full it 'makes a basket', i.e. is large and round like a field-basket.

[2] Hambly, op. cit., p. 216 f.

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On nights when there is little or no moonlight, the evening 562
gatherings in the village sometimes, although not always, follow 517
the sex division, with the men and boys in the *onjango*, and the women and girls at one or more of the kitchens. Discussion of affairs, with youth listening to age, is the usual order, but the time is often passed in the recital of folk-tales or in propounding riddles.

Riddles are more especially a field of youth but age also enjoys 524
hearing the answers given. A favourite occupation of the men, 171
especially by day, is *ocela*, a game known all over Africa and in other parts of the world as well.[1] Junod calls it 'the national game of Africa'.[2]

The Ovimbundu have brought recreation to the service of their 461
work. Europeans are often irritated by the amount of conversation which Ovimbundu carry on during working hours, but on consideration it may be found that were it not for the conversation and other psychological aids, the work might be quite unendurable. This is especially the case with regard to road work and many types of contract labour. Road songs and work songs are of real [533]
help in keeping up morale and in prolonging endurance. Most of them seem to have been developed in the days of the caravan trade, but they have not been forgotten and are now used on many occasions.

A word about ceremonial occasions before leaving the social 764
life of the village. Some rites and ceremonies are celebrated so quietly that they are not even social occasions. Most of them, however, are very social. This is especially true of funerals and post-mortuary rites. During visits to Ngendo I was able to witness two post-mortuary rites and the funeral of an important person of a near-by village. Other ceremonial occasions, such as weddings [585]
and a return from a trading expedition, also call for much sociability, but funerals and post-mortuary rites are the social occasions which occupy the most time and attention and make for the greatest conviviality.

[1] Known under the name *Mancala*, which is evidently a Bantu word, or taken from one; cf. the Umbundu *oku mangala*, to play. Hambly mentions *ocela*, op. cit., p. 219. See also Nevinson, op. cit., p. 91. The *New Standard Dictionary* (Funk and Wagnalls) attributes to Arabian origin both the game and the word *Manhalah*.

[2] H. A. Junod, *The Life of a South African Tribe*, 2nd ed., vol. i, p. 345 f.

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The Village Headman

622 The village headman (*Sekulu yimbo*) is in a very real sense the father of the villagers. Considering their relationship to him as shown by the survey of Ngendo, it is no surprise to find that to nearly all of the householders the headman is quite literally either 'father' (*tate*) or 'elder brother' (*kota*). The headman is literally the patriarch. He is also therefore the village priest. His com-
[769] pound is the only one in the village which has a spirit hut (*etambo*). In this hut the elder prays to ancestral spirits and holds communion (*oku felevela*) with them. In case of need, he may spend an entire night or more so occupied, but he will often offer a prayer when he awakens during the night. This hut is also used as a store-room for possessions not used every day and here are kept the insignia of office. The elder may sleep in this hut at any time when he is not sleeping with one of his wives, and here also he may lodge respected guests.

622 The headman functions as a Justice of the Peace for the village.
692 The graver and more difficult cases are heard before the whole village on the dance-floor, while the simpler ones which require the attendance only of those concerned, together with their respective elders, are taken up either in the *onjango* or in the headman's own courtyard. Through all and in spite of all political and administrative changes, the village court of justice continues and will continue to function.

622 It is evident from the above that a headman may have much or
554 little to do in attending to the affairs of his village, depending on several factors, such as the number of the villagers, their attitudes and disposition toward each other, relations with neighbouring villages, the demands made upon the village by the authorities, &c. However numerous may be his 'official duties', he will still find some time to attend to his own affairs, whether he be a farmer, a hunter, or a trader. In former times and before he became village headman, Sikīlīlē was a trader and caravan leader (*ofumbelo*, Portuguese: *pombeiro*), and made many trips to the regions of Ngangela. As a headman he returned to farming and although he seemed to be quite old at the time of my visits, he had a creditable little plot of tobacco. It may be of interest to note that only the headman may speak of the village as 'my village' (*imbo liange*). The heads of the little wards may speak thus possessively only of

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their own wards, 'my ward' (*ocitawila cange*). The other villagers will speak only of 'our village' (*imbo lietu*). 622 554

There are, in general, two quite different and distinct types of Umbundu village according to the terrain on which they are built. The villages of the plains have room to spread out and tend toward a circular shape, with the dancing floor and men's club house near the centre. The wards may appear as quarters of a single whole or they may be added on in haphazard fashion. The villages of the mountains must conform to the possibilities of the terrain. Formerly, many villages were built on mountains for defence, and capital villages of this type may still be seen.with the houses built on ledges and rocks almost one on top of the other. In this type of village, there is often not sufficient or sufficiently good soil for even small garden plots within the palisades. Occasionally one of these mountain villages may be found which has not even room within it for the dancing floor, which will in this case be found outside the palisade. If the site is not too severely confined, the wards of the mountain village tend either to string themselves out horizontally along the mountain-side, or to find successive ledges. The village of Ngendo is of an intermediate type, built as it is, on a slope. Sikilile's village was first built as near the stream as possible. The wards later added themselves on, each a little higher than the one before. The school village, which was built last, got the highest and most hygienic site. 361

Moving a Village

Villages may be moved for any one of several reasons. When fields are worn out and others are not available[1] near by, a village may be moved to a site more conveniently located. More often, however, the reason assigned is that there has been much illness or death, that the old site is polluted, that its 'air is bad', which to the Ovimbundu means that some action displeasing to the spirits has been committed which has brought on these misfortunes. This will generally have been determined by divination, as will also the spirits' consent to the proposed new site. A site which has long been occupied is of course fertile soil. Since old sites are generally cultivated to good advantage this fact should not be overlooked as a possible additional reason for moving. 361 166 [768] [787]

[1] Nowadays European settlement often pre-empts such lands. [177]

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

361 A few words from the childhood recollections of Paulino
166 Ngonga Liahuka[1] bring out the facts.

787 One day we noticed that Sekulu Upalandanda[2] and my father went to the mountain of Kalilonge saying, 'We go to look around (and find out) whether the spirits (*olosande*) have agreed to our moving there.' Then another day we saw that the fathers were coming out of the spirit huts (*atambo*, plural), with the sacred chests (*ovimbangu*, plural), saying, 'We go to start a new village.' When they had arrived under the mountain of Kalilonge, they said, 'The spirits have agreed.' Then when everyone had moved, the elder, whose name had been Upalandanda at Muenesi, now changed his name, declaring, 'I am *Cilembo-camunda* (Shadow of Mountain). From that time the place was called Cilembo.

621 On seeking a new site the headman's fire in the old village is put out and the procession starts: a girl carries the sacred chest
[778] (*ocimbangu*) containing the relics (*ociye*) and the balls of iguana skin, and a boy the sacred bows.[3] They lead the way to the site
[346] selected where they cut a pole[4] suitable for a house-wall (*ekoso*), and tie a leaf of the *upu*[5] tree to it, dig a hole into which they put mud made by rain-water (*onata yondombo*),[6] and then together they lift the stick and let it fall into the hole. This is the beginning of the spirit hut (*etambo*), the first house to be built on the new site. The boy and the girl must take part ceremonially in each operation
[372] of building the hut. After that they together ignite (*oku tiafula*)[7] the new fire. A hen and a cock are killed, cooked on the new fire, and eaten inside the *etambo* by all who have taken part in the building. The headman and his wife cannot return to the old village but must camp at the new site (*itula*) and keep the new fire alight.
342 In building their houses, the villagers may commute (*oku usala*)
621 from the old site, but often the distance is too great to do this, and

[1] Of Ciyaka, ordained pastor of Elende Church in 1930. He was Hambly's chief informant.

[2] Sekulu Upalandanda was the younger brother of Ngonga's father's father, and therefore grandfather to Ngonga.

[776] [3] The bow (*ohonji*) of each ascendant who is now a guardian spirit (*osande*) of the family.

[4] When this first pole is cut, the axe should first be pointed toward the cardinal directions.

[824] [5] A leaf of the *upu* tree is used in the divorce ceremony. Its use here is a sign of divorce from the old site.

[6] Literally, 'mud of the rainy season'.

[7] This was formerly done with a fire drill (*vide* Hambly, op. cit., Plate XXXV), but not for a number of years now. When I showed the above picture to a group of 150 young men of 17 to 25 years of age, not one of them even knew what it was.

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therefore the usual procedure is to erect temporary grass-covered huts (*olosingi*, plural) on the new site, in which they will live while building their houses. Each hearth-fire must be ignited from the headman's fire.

The houses are built by the occupants themselves. The men's club house is built by the communal labour of all men and boys with a simple ritual designed to promote concord within, and to ensure that the spirits (*olosande*) may find it a congenial abode. The spirits regularly attend the discussions in the *onjango*, and there receive their daily portions. There also they are believed to sleep.

At the first opportunity a hunt will be held and the meat brought to the spirit-hut. The girl who carried the sacred chest receives the heart and the boy the head. At this time, while a pot of sour beer (non-alcoholic) (*ocisangua*) is being brewed, the girl sits quietly in communion (*oku felevela*) with the spirits. With these physical and spiritual preparations the village community makes ready its home, a home which may seem poor and meagre to the eyes of outsiders, but to a member of the community it is home indeed and evokes in him, when absent, a feeling of great home-sickness (*ongeva*). As the Umbundu version of 'Home, Sweet Home' puts it:

Koliene, koliene, nda ku li ombaulot ha yota
To your own, to your own, if there is cold you can warm yourself,

nda ku li onjala ha panga.
if there is hunger you can arrange.

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CHAPTER III

KINSHIP

The Household

592 THE basis of the village and of the whole Umbundu kinship structure is the household consisting of a man, his wife or wives and their children, together with such other related or unrelated dependants as may be attached and live together in a single compound. The Umbundu word for the household is *ocikumba*, which includes domestic animals and possessions as well as the persons who make up the group, but nowadays this word is rarely, if ever, heard. The word *onjo*, which means 'house', is also used in the sense of household and to include the one or more 'houses' which a man has established by marriage. The housing arrangements of the household and its relation to the other households and to the headman of the village have been noted. The chief facts to remember are that each wife has her own hut, granary, chickens, and fields for her children and herself; and that the husband has no house of his own save a spirit hut (*etambo*), in case he is village headman or a family elder. There is not the same [595] relation between the rank of the wives and the position of their houses with relation to the cattle kraal, which is found among the cattle-raising Southern Bantu, nor are there the same distinctions of precedence. The eldest child (*nuñulũ*) of his father, of whatever wife or concubine, takes precedence over all who are born later. It is nevertheless true among commoners that the first wife legally married is the chief wife. The number of persons belonging to a single household may vary greatly. Magyar stated that his father-in-law Kayaya Kayangula (king of Viye *c.* 1847–50) had seventeen sons and forty-four daughters.[1] Some recent kings have had as many as twelve wives and concubines, but I do not know of any having had even half as many children as Kayangula had. The only large household in the village of Ngendo was that of the headman, Sikīlīlē, with five wives and concubines, and fifteen children (most of whom were already grown at the time of my visits). The largest of the other households in that village had

[1] Magyar, op. cit., p. 260.

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only five children living, and the largest polygynous household 592
had only four, but many children had died in infancy.

The attitudes within the household are much like those found 593
universally between members of the same 'family'. Children respect and love both parents. Perhaps there is a little more respect for the father and a little more love for the mother, but this distinction is not carried to the extent which seems to be the case in more strongly patrilineal societies. The respect which a child has for his parents is plainly shown in his refusal under ordinary circumstances to speak their names. 'Even a child on being asked to tell the name of his father or his mother, will reply saying, "*Tate* (my father) indeed is his name." And if one asks again, saying, "Your mother, what is her name?" the child will reply saying, "*Mai* (my mother) indeed is her name." '[1] The sex 857
division of Umbundu life begins within the household when very early in life the boys begin to be trained by their elder brothers, fathers, and other male relatives, while the girls remain or go about with their mothers, elder sisters, and other female relatives. Only the very small boys and girls (say under six or eight) play together. The age distinctions of Umbundu society are learned with the child's first attempts at language. Either his elder brother or sister he calls *huvange*, and he soon learns that the brother or sister younger than himself is *manjange*. Brothers and sisters, siblings or children of the same parents, 'are replicas of one another in social relationship, and . . . socially identical'[2] for practical purposes. Among Ovimbundu the principal differences are due to the two factors of age and sex. The influence of age is funda- 593
mental and is easily demonstrated by the fact that there is no word 561
for 'brother' but instead for 'elder brother' or 'younger brother'. Within the household the factor of sex is ever present, but there is not the invidious distinction found among some of the more strongly patrilineal societies such as the Zulu[2] which reserves the more respectful term for the brother. Umbundu applies the terms *huva* and *manja*[3] to brothers and sisters without distinction of sex. There are the additional terms *kota* (elder brother), *mbuale* (sister), and the reciprocal terms *mume* (brother, spoken

[1] R. Kavita Evambi, from an Umbundu manuscript.
[2] E. J. Krige, *The Social System of the Zulus* (London: Longmans, 1936), p. 24.
[3] These are the root terms without the possessive suffixes.

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593 only by a sister), and *mukãi* (sister, spoken only by a brother). In
[561] a polygynous household each of the wives is mother to all the children and each of the children is *huva* or *manja*[1] to all the others.
848 Illegitimate children are not stigmatized but since they belong to
567 the mother they have a distinct designation.[2] Slaves or former slaves have a status within the household and village which to the ordinary observer does not differ from that of the children: they are treated much as the children and they may carry on in all matters social and economic much as though they were members of the family. I have noticed, however, that when there is a call for labour, the lot falls oftener to one of these 'children-born-by-day'[3] whether he was a war-captive or a pawn.

567 Both slavery and the polygynous household, two institutions
595 manifestly and intimately inter-related, are still a part of the
178 Umbundu social structure, but neither the one nor the other now has the importance which it formerly had. Neither of these institutions is part of the present and personal experience of the great majority of Umbundu households.

Kinship

596 *Blood Relatives* (*Epata*). The relationships of the wider kinship
602 groups are for the most part extensions of those of the household.
621 The child learns them very early in life owing to the fact that the village community into which he is born is only a part of this larger kinship group. Nearly all of the villagers belong to the same *epata* or extended family, which includes both lines of descent. Most of them belong to the father's family (*olusa*), and the mother's family (*oluina*) may also be represented. The fact is that most of the adults of the village are father or mother to nearly every child and most of the children are brothers or sisters. Those of his coevals who do not bear this relation to him are otherwise related and are also potential spouses or potential relatives-in-law.

[1] This distinction *yesepakal* (lit. 'of the jealousy of women') may be made but it is not applied in ordinary speech.

[2] *Omãlã a ngenda-la-ina* (lit. 'child of goes-with-mother').

[3] *Omãlã-vo-citima-lutanya*. Cf. 'child of my calves', Luganda expression and attitudes, L. P. Mair, *An African People in the Twentieth Century* (London, 1934), p. 32 f.

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Kinship groupings: *oluse* and *oluina*.[1] Every Ocimbundu belongs to an *oluse*, i.e. his father's kin, and to an *oluina*, i.e. his mother's kin. Each of these family groupings is divided into male and female lines (*onēlē yohonji*, 'the side of the bow'; *onēlē yohumba*, 'the side of the basket'). Uterine brothers and sisters belong to the same *oluse* and *oluina*, and to the male or female 'side' respectively, according to sex. It is of great importance to get a clear idea of this bilateral nature of these kinship groupings. Every student of ethnology will note the similarity of this division to the Herero *oruzo* and *eanda*.[2] Considering the affinities between the Herero and Umbundu languages, I think that these conceptions are probably related. Further study of other peoples of this Western Bantu zone may reveal cultural and racial as well as linguistic affinities.[3] The *oluse* and *oluina* of the Ovimbundu follow their own pattern.

The *oluse* consists of a large number of local village groups, some of which recognize mutual relationships, but with no recognized headship save in the case of the several royal families. The only suggestion of any totemic relation or origin is with the royal families which have in common several taboos with regard to certain animals the flesh of which may not be eaten, nor the skins used, &c. Chief of these animals are the *ongulungu* (bushbuck, *Tragelaphus scriptus*), the *ocisema*[4] (the waterbuck, *Cobus defessa*

[1] *Olu-se*, perhaps 'the place of father', the root *se* being equivalent to the forms *sa*, *so*, *isia*; *olu-ina*, perhaps 'the place of mother'.

[2] See Vedder, pp. 185 ff. (in *The Native Tribes of South West Africa*): 'The Herero nation is divided into a large family groups . . . the Herero belongs to the *oruzo* of his father and also to the *eanda* of his mother.' J. Irle, *Die Herero* (Gutersloh, 1906), pp. 87–93.

[3] An interesting study of the VaNyaneka, one of the cattle-rearing people living between Ambo and Umbundu territory, was recently published: A. Lang et C. Tastevin, *La Tribu des Va-Nyaneka* (Mission Rohan-Chabot, Tome V), Corbeil: Impr. Créto. This volume was not available in England or the U.S.A. until 1940, and could not therefore have been used in the present study. I may now say, however, that the authors' treatment of the social structure is not such that it would help to solve the problem in question. The clans are described only from the standpoint of totemism. The maternal line of descent (*e-anda*) is briefly mentioned (p. 45), but not the corresponding paternal line. The authors' evident lack of familiarity with other Bantu material is a great drawback. The system used for the transcription of the vernacular is most confusing, owing to an evident lack of understanding of the Bantu phonetic and grammatical genius with consequent procrustean attempts to force it into foreign forms.

[4] The king's sons may not eat flesh of the *ocisema* lest they should *sema sema*, 'have an impediment of speech'. This may be simply a taboo on grounds of *similia similibus* (or the obverse).

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613 825 621 *penricei*), and *ovinyama viakasa* (animals having paws, from the lion down). No other *oluse* has any such rules. The chief function of the *oluse* is as a local residence group. Within the *oluse* there is no inheritance of property but only succession to office, which from the king to the village headman is from father to son, or from elder to younger brother, with only as much recognition of primogeniture as belongs to the general idea of the hierarchy of age. Succession to office is further affected by the democratic tendencies already noted with regard to the kingly succession.[1] The character of the *oluse* as a series of local groups is further borne out by the character of its priesthood, which lies wholly with the village headmen.

613 The *oluina* is not a local group, since its members for the most part live in the villages of their several lines of paternal descent—each with his *oluse*. When an Ocimbundu speaks of his family (*epata*) in the sense of a large and widespread organization with a recognized head in some elder, it is generally his *oluina* to which he refers. This family elder (*ukulu wepata*) is generally both the legal and spiritual head of the family. He is the family high-priest in charge of the spirit-hut (*etambo*) of the family guardian spirit (*osande*)[2] of whom there may be more than one and of whom he may become one after death. This family head is generally the eldest in the maternal line. In these days the priestly and the legal functions may be divided considering the advantages of having for legal head one who knows the ways of this world, while the spiritual head needs rather to be acquainted with the spirit-world. [428] Property is inherited through the *oluina* from mother's brother to 613 sister's son.[3] Only the *oluina* is an organization in the wider or 178 more than local sense, and it is to it that the children belong. Formerly the mother's elder brother had great powers over his sister's sons and was even able to pawn them or sell them into slavery to meet his own debts.[4] The patrilocal household is

[1] See *supra*, p. 22 f.

[2] The head of an *oluina* may or may not be a village headman. In case he is, he will be priest of two lines and have two spirit-huts. There may be more than one spirit-hut in a single village.

[3] This fact was noted by A. Bastos, *Traços Geraes sôbre a Ethnografia do Districto de Benguella* (Lisboa, 1909), p. 33 (par. 39°).

[4] This has been noted by a number of writers. Bastos, op. cit., p. 29 (par. 26°) adds that once a father has redeemed his son, the maternal uncle can never sell him again. Cf. *ovumali potestas* among the Ba-Ila, E. W. Smith and A. M. Dale, *The Ila-Speaking Peoples* (London, 1920), vol. i, p. 320.

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responsible for the children, especially during their early years, 613
but they are frequently sent 'to the *oluina*', i.e. to the mother's 178
brother for at least a part of their education. Herein has arisen a [578]
conflict between the claims of the paternal household and the maternal kinship group. Economic and other forces seem to have favoured the former so that 'During these days in which we stand, things have changed somewhat so that as between children and their parents, they work for their fathers for they say, "A child is strong with his *oluse* and less so with his *oluina*." Nowadays a man teaches a child work and also looks out for his education that he may advance properly. His mother's brothers (*va inanu*) have no longer much power as of old.'[1]

Bearing in mind their bilateral nature and the fact that every Ocimbundu belongs at the same time to his paternal (*oluse*) and to his maternal (*oluina*) groups, the functions of these kinship groups may be summarized as follows:

Oluse	*Oluina*	613
SOCIAL		611
Consists of local residence units; succession of village and tribal offices from father to son, or elder to younger brother.	Extended family organization; office of family head descends from mother's brother to sister's son; children belong.	
Marriage allowed between cross-cousins and other relatives of non-parallel descent; couple lives at groom's father's village.	*Marriage preferred* between cross-cousins and other relatives of non-parallel descent; children belong to mother's *oluina*.	[582]
EDUCATIONAL		
Responsibility for education of young children, especially in social usage.	Responsibility sometimes assumed in later childhood, especially for technical phases.	[871]
ECONOMIC		
Ownership and inheritance of land. (Passed from father to son or elder to younger brother.)	Ownership and inheritance of more largely negotiable and movable property, as e.g. trade goods, cattle, &c. (passed from mother's brother to sister's son).	423 422

[1] Raul Kavita Evambi, op. cit.

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Oluse	*Olutna*
RELIGIOUS	
Regular village worship including agricultural festivals; village headman is also priest.	Family observances including occasional propitiations in case of illness, death, or other misfortunes; for desired economic advantages; mortuary rites. Family head is also priest.

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782
793

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Classificatory System of Relationship. The relationships of the wider kinship groups are quite largely extensions of those of the household, but the Ovimbundu, in common with all people who have a classificatory system, extend these relationships not only further but in quite different ways than do those who have the European (Roman) system. One who would understand the Ovimbundu must understand the Umbundu family from the inside—not as from motives of mere intellectual curiosity but as an Ocimbundu understands it. In order to demonstrate this family structure it will be necessary to present tables and diagrams. Hambly did a very creditable piece of work toward demonstrating the structure of the Umbundu family.[1] I doubt that anyone staying among them an equally short period of time, not knowing their language, could have done better in this respect unless he had come to the task with very exceptional preparation. It is only just to state this and I feel that it is necessary because so far as I am aware, in the five years since it was published, the book has received no adequate appraisal or review.[2] It must be said, however, that Hambly made some noticeable errors in his use of kinship terms owing to the fact that he did not learn the Umbundu language, and that he evidently failed to understand certain points with regard to the social structure.

For greater clarity and precision I am presenting in separate tables the terms which refer to blood relationship and those which refer to relationship by marriage.

[1] W. D. Hambly, op. cit., pp. 189–99.

[2] This book was reviewed in *Africa*, 1935, pp. 391–3, but the reviewer had no first-hand knowledge of the people or their language, which was perhaps his reason for taking up three-fourths of the space at his disposal with questions of orthography. E. W. Smith has taken note of the book (*Africa: What Do We Know of It?*, p. 71), but only to say that it 'is chiefly useful for its descriptions of the material culture'.

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Tables of Umbundu Terms of Blood Relationship

A. *Ego's Own Generation: Man or Woman the Speaker*

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Term	*Relation*	*Reciprocal term*
1. *Huvange*[1]	my elder brother my elder sister mother's sister's child (if older than Ego) father's brother's child (if older than Ego) mother's mother's sister's grandchild (if older than Ego) mother's father's brother's grandchild (if older than Ego) father's father's brother's grandchild (if older than Ego) father's mother's sister's grandchild (if older than Ego)	*manjange*
2. *Kota*[2]	eldest brother (of household or of family)	*manjange*
3. *Manjange*	my younger brother my younger sister all relatives listed under '1.' (if *younger* than Ego)	*huvange* or *kota*
4. *Epalume*[3], *Upalume*[3], *Cepua*[4]	mother's brother's child father's sister's child mother's mother's brother's grandchild mother's father's sister's grandchild father's father's sister's grandchild father's mother's brother's grandchild	*epalume*, *upalume*, or *cepua*

B. *Man the Speaker*

1. *Muhãi*[3]	sister all female relatives listed under 'A. 1, 2, and 3'	*mume*

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[1] *Huvange*, my elder brother; *huvetu*, our elder brother.
Huvove, thy elder brother; *huvene*, your elder brother.
Huvaye, his elder brother; *huvavo*, their elder brother.
In Viye *huva* is not now used commonly and *manja* is used without discrimination for both elder and younger brothers. This may be due to European influences. At any rate the Bantu usage has reasserted itself by appropriating *kota* (q.v. *infra*) in place of *huva*, and by using the political term *epalanga* for the true sense of *manja*.

[2] *Kota* and *epalume* belong to the sixth class of nouns, *epalume liange*, *kota liange*, &c.

[3] *Upalume*, *muhãi*, and *mume* belong to the first class, *upalume wange*, *muhãi wove*, *mume waye*, &c. Use of the three terms for cross-cousins seems to be indiscriminate.

[4] *Cepua* belongs to the fourth class, *cepua cetu*, &c.

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Photo. R. S. Webb

b. Hulling coffee (Bailundu Mission)

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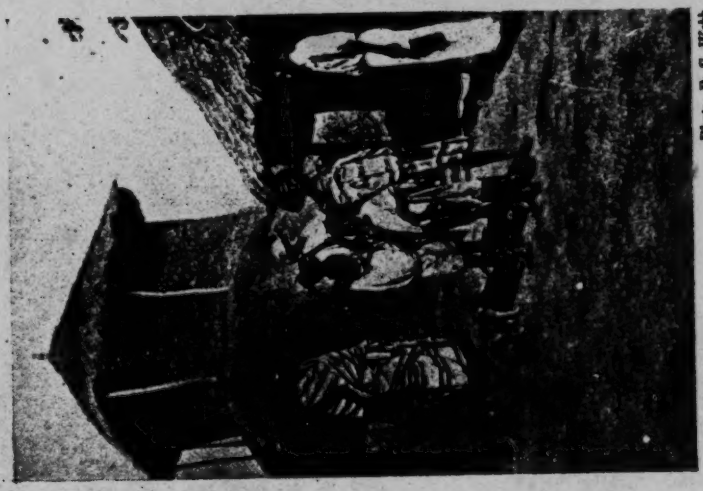

Photo. R. S. Webb

a. An Ecele village

[Facing p. 48]

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C. *Woman the Speaker*

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Term	*Relation*	*Reciprocal term*
1. *Mume*[1]	brother all male relatives listed under 'A. 1, 2, and 3'	*mukāi*
2. *Mbuale*[2]	sister all female relatives listed under 'A. 1, 2, and 3'	*mbuale*

D. *First Ascendant Generation: Either Man or Woman the Speaker*

1. *Maī*[3]	my (uterine) mother (my father's other wives) mother's sister mother's mother's sister's daughter mother's father's brother's daughter father's father's brother's daughter father's mother's sister's daughter	*omolange*
2. *Tate*[4]	my father (any subsequent husbands of my mother) father's brother father's father's brother's son father's mother's sister's son mother's mother's sister's son mother's father's brother's son	*omolange*
3. *Manu*[5]	mother's brother mother's mother's brother's son mother's father's sister's son father's father's sister's son father's mother's brother's son	*ocimumba cange*
4. *Tatekāi*[6]	father's sister father's mother's brother's daughter father's father's sister's daughter mother's father's sister's daughter mother's mother's brother's daughter	*ocimumba cange*

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[1] See note 3, p. 47.

[2] *Mbuale* belongs to the fifth class, *mbuale yange*, &c.

[3] *Maī*, my mother; *inetu*, our mother.
Nyohō, thy mother; *inene*, your mother.
Inaye, his mother; *inavo*, their mother.

[4] *Tate*, my father; *isietu*, our father.
So, thy father; *isiene*, your father.
Isiaye, his father; *isiavo*, their father.

[5] *Manu*, my mother's brother; *manu yetu*, our mother's brother.
Nyohōnu, thy mother's brother; *nyohōnu yene*, your mother's brother.
Inanu, his mother's brother; *inanu yavo*, their mother's brother.

[6] *Tatekāi*, my father's sister.
Sohāi, thy father's sister.
Apahaī, his father's sister.
Plural forms as for *Manu*, &c.

Hambly had only this form for the third person and dropped out a vowel with a resulting form impossible for Umbundu of *Aphai*. *Vide* op. cit., pp. 190, 196, 198, 199.

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PLATE VI

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Photo. R. S. Webb

a. Harvesting peanuts (Bailundu)

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Photo. M. W. Bonin

b. Road workers

[Facing p 49]

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E. *Second Ascendant Generation: Either Man or Woman the Speaker*

Term	*Relation*	*Reciprocal term*
1. *Maikulu*[1] (*Nyokulu*)	grandmother, both maternal and paternal grandmother's sister grandfather's sister	*onekulu yange*
2. *Sekulu*[1] (*Tatekulu*)	grandfather, both maternal and paternal grandfather's brother grandmother's brother	*onekulu yange*

F. *Third Ascendant Generation*

Kuku	all relatives of this generation	*onekuluila* or *omoholole yange*

G. *Fourth Ascendant Generation*

Kukululu	all relatives of this generation	*onene yange*

H. *Fifth Ascendant Generation*

Kukululua	all relatives of this generation	*onei yange*

I. *Sixth Ascendant Generation*

Ku	all relatives of this generation	*oneka yange*

J. *First Descendant Generation*

1. *Omŭlŭnge*	my own child woman's sister's child man's brother's child mother's sister's grandchild father's brother's grandchild	*tate* or *mŭi*
mŭlŭlŭ or *moli*	first-born child	
2. *Ocimamba*	woman's brother's child man's sister's child mother's brother's grandchild father's sister's grandchild	*tatehli* or *mamu*

The kinship terms for further descendant generations will be found in the column of 'reciprocal terms' given above. It does not seem necessary to repeat them.

602 592 The patterns of behaviour between these many blood relatives find their prototypes in the patterns of the household. Love for

[1] *Maikulu* and *Sekulu* are sometimes used interchangeably for persons of either sex. Each has only the two personal forms. The forms in parenthesis are but little used. *Inakulu* is used for the queen.

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602 592 the mother who bore me and the consideration naturally expected from her cannot, in the nature of things, be given or received by *all* of the elder and younger mothers in exactly equal degree, but the type of behaviour is similar. The elder sister who carried her younger brother about on her back when she herself could hardly more than walk, or the elder brother who first taught his younger brother to make and set his little traps, has a warmth of regard which he cannot extend with just the same force to fifty or one hundred younger brothers, but nevertheless the pattern will be of the same sort if and when similar opportunity offers. The same may be said for the younger and the elder fathers, and again for the *tatekãi*, the 'female father'. But here elements other than 605 604 the early household patterns enter as also with *manu*, the mother's brother. Chief of these other elements is the fact that these two classes of relatives, together with the *va cepua*, i.e. cross-cousins (mostly children of the *manu* and *tatekãi* classes), and also the *ovimumba* (plural) (one's own nephews along similar lines of descent), are all potential spouses or potential relatives-in-law.[1] The relations of *ocimumba* (sister's son) and *manu* (mother's brother) in Umbundu society follow a pattern not exactly like any other set of relationships in any society of which I know. Suggestions of this have already been given. The *manu* shares his sister's desire for the advancement of her son, and if the nephew has had a part of his education in the uncle's home or on his trading expeditions, the relationship will have become closer. It may be, however, that the uncle's own difficulties may lead him to exploit his nephew rather than to attend only to his advancement.[2] The 602 178 ties of the paternal group tend to be strengthened at the expense of the maternal family and it seems that the increasing localization of the Umbundu family with the supplanting of trade by agriculture (as a man's full-time occupation) has furthered this process.

It is very important for one who would understand the Ovi- 602 mbundu to look upon the Umbundu kinship structure with the eyes of an Ocimbundu. If one brought up to other ideas and other relationships finds this difficult, that is all the more reason for making the effort. I cannot better summarize the Umbundu

[1] See *infra*, pp. 52 ff.

[2] This is one of several points where the commercial tendencies seem to come into conflict with the patterns of the kinship group.

1; Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

attitude toward one's blood relations than by quoting Mrs. 602
Hoernlé:

> Here, then, is a large body of kin drawn intimately into contact with the lives of each generation. Looking out into the world from his own home, the Bantu child knows where he may seek hospitality and succour of every kind; where, also, he may of right be called upon to render assistance in case of need. The barriers of reserve shutting off human beings from one another are largely down so far as these classes of relatives are concerned, so that for economic assistance, for friendly counsel, in time of sorrow and in time of joy, these are the natural categories of people to turn to, the core of people with whom one is close-knit from birth in a web of reciprocal rights and duties.[1]

The Kin

Relatives by Marriage. Marriage profoundly alters the relation- 581
ship of those who enter into it, that is, the two families. It must be entered into with great care and with due regard for all factors concerned in order that the balance of life may be maintained. It seems that the financial arrangements (*ilombo*) are designed to restore to the bride's family an equivalence for her loss, since marriage is patrilocal. The Ovimbundu consider mutual respect between the two families to be a necessary basis for a successful marriage. Respect (*eumbilo*) is the reason assigned by thoughtful [593]
Ovimbundu for the various avoidances (*oku liyuvuila*) enjoined upon the principals and their respective families. In the first place, the husband and wife must show their respect for each other by avoiding certain actions as, for example, either one speaking the name of the other.

This mutual respect finds its most dramatic symbol in the treat- 606
ment which the husband must accord his mother-in-law, the bride her father-in-law. They must avoid seeing each other, and if it is necessary to converse, it must be done out of sight, or with gaze averted. Both husband and wife must also avoid pronouncing the names of the parents-in-law. By the principle of extended relationships, this behaviour applies to the relations of the husband and the wife with *all* their parents-in-law of the opposite sex. As all the mother's 'sisters' are 'mother', so to the husband they are all *ndatembo* (mother-in-law). Likewise, the father's 'brothers' all

[1] In Schapera, op. cit., 1937, p. 73.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

606 being 'father', to the wife they are *ndatembo* (father-in-law). All relatives whom one considers as 'parents' are parents-in-law to one's spouse, and conversely, all whom one considers as one's 'children' are *ndatembo* (sons-in-law or daughters-in-law) to the spouse. To all these relatives-in-law is due the same pattern of respectful behaviour. Avoidance of seeing each other applies only between the *va ndatembo* of opposite sex. There is the additional prohibition that they may not eat in each other's presence. This avoidance is further extended to include one's *ndatembo* of the same sex, ~~and also~~ one's *nãwã* (relatives-in-law of one's own generation). With the *nãwã*, however, one is otherwise on free and easy terms.[1] The prohibition on eating does not apply to drinking beer or to other such casual refreshment, but only to 'hot food', i.e. to regular meals.

606 788 Avoidance of meeting (*oku liyuvuila kocipala*, lit. 'avoiding each other to the face') is especially difficult for the bride who comes to live in a village of her husband's people, a large proportion of the men of which may be *ndatembo* to her. The prohibition may be lifted by going through a simple ceremony in which each rubs a little oil on the other. The woman rubs oil on the breast, the face, and the right arm of her *ndatembo*, while he in turn rubs oil from the same dish on her breast and on the braids of her forehead. Avoidance of eating in each other's presence may be done away with after some months by sacrificing a chicken and feeding it ceremonially together with maize porridge to the *ndatembo* or *nãwã* (throwing it into her mouth, mouthful by mouthful), with the attendance of the immediate family. It is especially important that these ceremonies be carried through with respect (*esumbilo*).

The avoidance of the name, whether of husband and wife, or of the parents-in-law, must be maintained: the names must not be pronounced. Many euphemisms are resorted to when it becomes 606 551 necessary to speak of or to these relatives-in-law. This is one reason why the parents themselves take the name of their first-born, prefixing *Na*, 'mother of', and *Sa*, 'father of'. Thus the parents of *Kambõtiã* are known as *Nakambõtiã* and *Sakambõtiã*. This name may be pronounced. This is also probably one reason for extend-

[1] See the folk-tale in which the man who knows the speech of the red ants gives away his knowledge by laughing out *while his sister-in-law is braiding his hair.*

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

ing to the wife all the relationships which are the husband's and 606
vice versa. Thus by courtesy the parents-in-law are spoken of not 551
as *ndatembo*, but *Mai* (my mother) and *Tate* (my father). The same extension also applies to all of the kin of the spouse and for all kinship terms both direct and reciprocal. Another reason for this is the mutual respect which is a principal basis of the Umbundu marriage.[1]

There remains one important matter necessary to an under- 582
standing of the Umbundu concept of relationship by marriage. To the Ovimbundu the proper, or at least the most desirable, marriage is a marriage within the circle of kin. 'Formerly people never married unless they were related, that is to say, unless they touched the blood together. If in the mother's kin (*koluina*), only on the side of the bow (i.e. male line). If in the father's kin (*koluse*), only on the side of the basket (i.e. female line).'[2] Upon closer consideration it becomes evident which of the relatives one may marry. It would not be possible to marry any who are classed as brother, sister, father, mother, grandparent, child, or grandchild, for such a union would involve incest (*oku ndõ*). The relatives whom one may marry are, then, those of one's own age-level who belong to classes other than the above-mentioned. An ideal mate of one's own generation is a cross-cousin classed as *Epalume* or *Cepua* (Class A. 4, p. 47). Beside this, a woman may marry one classed as her mother's brother (Class D. 3, p. 48), and a man one classed as his father's sister (Class D. 4, p. 48), if of appropriate age. One may also marry an *ocimumba* (Class J. 2, p. 49). Hambly remarked that 'cross-cousin marriage . . . is the functional form among the Ovimbundu'.[3] This is true, but only in part, for not only are there many relatives other than his cross-cousin whom an Ocimbundu may marry, but the financial arrangements are quite other than those usually associated with the cross-cousin marriage.

[1] While I do not pretend to believe that 'respect' is the only or even the main reason for the observances described, it seems sufficiently important to receive the attention which I have given it.

[2] Verbatim translation of statement by Likuluta Samikanjo, elder of the school village at Ngendo (Kasonge).

[3] Hambly, op. cit., p. 194. In reporting the replies of his informant as to whom he could marry, with regard to the marriage of father's sister's daughter, the reply was that it was possible but not desirable 'because the children will be stupid'. The reason assigned was evidently taken from European ideas, but the reply also indicates a preference for marriage *within* the *oluisa*, which I have also had from many but not from all informants.

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582 Cross-cousin marriage of the type practised by the Sotho[1] or Venda[2] tribes is quite foreign to Umbundu life. It is possible that the Ovimbundu formerly had some such type of cross-cousin marriage, but not for a very long time. Among the seventy-five schedules which I have collected illustrating marriage arrangements there are a few describing marriages which took place about ninety years ago. Magyar also wrote of the financial arrangements made for marriage in Viye about 1850.[3] Both of these sources, together with native tradition, indicate that, at least with regard to the financial arrangements, the cross-cousin type of marriage has not been practised by the Ovimbundu for more than one hundred
582 years. On the other hand, the Ovimbundu know nothing of the
171 exogamous marriage demanded by the Herero,[4] the Zulu,[5] &c. The Umbundu ideal includes marriage with a cross-cousin, but also goes out into the wider kinship group, as does the type of marriage of the Thonga,[6] which in turn is linked with that of the Ndau and the Shona group.[7]

582 The Umbundu principle that only 'those whose blood has
174 touched', or who can 'count' relatives in common, has for a very long time admitted of liberal application. There are cases on record of individuals belonging to regions as widely separated as Ciyaka and Ngalangi contracting marriage *after* having properly 'counted' their common relationship. These cases refer to grandparents of the present generation. It is probable that the diverse racial and cultural elements which have fused to form the Ovimbundu people long ago made imperative the broadening of the cross-cousin type of marriage to the 'ideal' or 'classic' form of (present) Umbundu tradition. An analogous process (with modifications) has continued to operate until to-day this very ideal of marriage within the kinship group is losing its hold in favour of yet more 'liberal' practices.

601 In summary, the Umbundu terminology for the relative by marriage and also the connexion between the ideas of relation by marriage and relation by blood may be seen by the following:

[1] W. M. Eiselen, 'Preferential Marriage: Correlation of the various modes among the Bantu of South Africa', *Africa*, 1928, pp. 413–28.
[2] H. A. Stayt, *The Bavenda* (London, 1931), chaps. xi and xv.
[3] Magyar, op. cit., p. 282 f.
[4] Vedder in Hahn *et al.*, op. cit., p. 187; Irle, op. cit., p. 89.
[5] Krige, op. cit., pp. 34–5.
[6] Junod, op. cit., vol. i, pp. 253–64.
[7] Hoernlé in Shapera, op. cit., p. 93 f.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FF 13 Mbundu FF 13

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II. Table of Umbundu Terms of Relationship by Marriage

A. *Ego's Own Generation: Man Speaking*

Term	*Relationship*	*Reciprocal term*
1. *Uhãi wange*	my wife	*veyange*[1]
2. *Nãwã*	sister-in-law every 'sister' and 'brother' of wife every *epalume* (cross-cousin) of wife in short: every relative of wife of her own generation (see Table I. A, B, p. 47 f.)	*nãwã*[2]

B. *First Ascendant Generation: Either Man or Woman the Speaker*

1. *Ndatembo*	parent-in-law every relative of spouse of this generation (see list in Table I. D, p. 48 f.)	*ndatembo*[2]
2. *Mai*	applied by courtesy to everyone whom spouse so classifies	*omolange*
3. *Tate*	applied by courtesy to everyone whom spouse so classifies	*omolange*
4. *Mamu*	applied by courtesy to everyone whom spouse so classifies	*ocimumba*[3]
5. *Tatehai*	applied by courtesy to everyone whom spouse so classifies	*ocimumba*

C. *Second, Third, and Further Ascendant Generations*

Each spouse applies and receives the terms respectively applied and received by the other, with corresponding sexual differentiations.

D. *Descendant Generations*

Each spouse applies and receives the terms respectively applied and received by the other, with corresponding sexual differentiations.

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[1] *Veyange*, my husband, *veyove*, thy husband, &c.

[2] Affinal terms are applied from the time of the formal betrothal. In marriage of the preferential kinship-type affinal terms replace the consanguineal. After marriage, or, more generally, after the ceremonies for doing away with avoidances, then the courtesy terms are applied.

[3] Hambly in his summary table—op. cit., p. 199—gives the meaning given here as the only meaning for *ocimumba*, but this is only a secondary meaning (see p. 47 f.). He also errs in his use of the following: *Mluale* (used only by females), *Kulu* (not a relationship term), *Kulukulu* (means great-great-grandparent), *Aphai* (should be *Apãhãi* with the two other forms, see p. 48), *Cikuhume* (should be *cikuhume*).

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

601 III. TABLES OF RELATIVES WITH WHOM MARRIAGE IS PREFERRED

A. *Of Ego's Generation: Either Man or Woman*

Term	*Relationship*	*Reciprocal term*
Epalume or *cepua*	cross-cousins of all degrees (see list Table I. A. 4, p. 47)	*epalume* or *cepua*

B. *Of First Ascendant Generation: Man Speaking*

Tatekãi	father's 'sister' (see list Table I. D. 4, p. 48)	*ocimumba*

C. *Of First Ascendant Generation: Woman Speaking*

Manu	mother's 'brothers' (see list Table I. D. 3, p. 48)	*ocimumba*

D. *Of First Descendant Generation: Man or Woman Speaking*

Ocimumba	mother's 'brother's' or father's 'sister's grandchild'	*manu* or *tatekãi*

591 Many writers have noted that, among other purposes, the
592 financial arrangements serve to give the bride a status in the village of her husband. In a system of preferential kinship marriage, this is a desideratum, although for other reasons than those operating in a system where the wife comes as a comparative stranger. In a system such as this of the Ovimbundu, it is evident that many of the relatives by marriage are already blood relatives. This is perhaps one reason why the avoidances with regard to 'in-laws' are less rigidly held to than in a society such as the Zulu, which holds strictly to exogamous marriage.[1]

182 Another factor which makes for stability of marriage is the
601 bilineal kinship system (*epata*). This system offers to the wife an initial security not usually found where descent is unilineal, or even where there has been a one-sided development of one line of descent at the expense of the other. The bilineal system is an important factor in the preservation of social stability. Through it the household and the village are links in the chain which even yet binds the Ovimbundu into a social whole.

Sorcery

182 Umbundu society is subject to various forces which threaten its
754 cohesion and stability both from without and from within. Some of the external forces have been touched upon.[2] Chief of the

[1] Krige, op. cit., p. 29 f.

[2] *Supra*, pp. v, 26.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

internally disruptive forces is sorcery. It is apparently on the 182
increase among the Ovimbundu, a tendency which has also been 754
reported from other parts of Africa.[1] The extent to which sorcery operates within the kinship groups themselves makes its influence even more dangerous to social cohesion.

Any marked success achieved by an individual, especially when 754
such success has been achieved by an individual alone or in 578
partnership, but not in co-operation with a number of persons, often brings on suspicion of sorcery.[2] Should the results of such success be distributed widely and freely within the family or kinship group, suspicion of sorcery is less likely to arise and open accusation may be avoided. Grudges, however, whether newly built up or inherited, often find expression in suspicion or in open accusation of sorcery.[3] An open accusation of sorcery (*oku sunga owanga*) is a very serious matter and will not often be made lightly.

Such accusations are made both within and across kinship lines. Affinal relatives are quite often accused of sorcery, and suspicion frequently rests upon wives whose kinship connexions are in distant regions. Predilection for and skill in the use of sorcery is supposed to be inherited. A reputation for sorcery may be imputed to a family through a number of generations.

Somewhat less overt accusations of sorcery are made at the 764
inquest during a funeral. The corpse in its coffin slung to a pole 754
between two carriers responds to questions as to who 'ate him' by forward (affirmative), or backward (negative) movements. It may also cause its carriers to stop in front of a certain house during the procession through the village, meaning that one of the occupants of the house is thereby accused of having caused the death. Traditionally such accusations during inquests were exceedingly common, perhaps even usually expected.[4] Should the corpse not [787]
give a clear answer, then subsequent divination would often bring out an accusation of sorcery. Accusations such as these, involving responsibility for the death of a person, are usually made *within* the body of blood or affinal kin.

When sorcery is consciously taken up and employed, the pur- 754
pose is usually economic advancement, but it often involves overt

[1] Cf. B. Malinowski, in *Africa*, 1939, p. 39.
[2] *Vide infra*, pp. 107 ff.
[3] *Vide infra*, p. 125.
[4] For an early observation of this (*c.* 1790) *vide Annaes Mar. e Col.*, 5a Ser., p. 489 f.

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754 attacks also upon the persons or possessions of enemies. This type of sorcery in a very common form involves the enslavement of the spirit of another person, often a child of one's own family or kin.[1] The person whose spirit is used may be killed either by violent or by magical means. Sorcery of this type is much feared, but if wealth supposedly gained by this means is used for the benefit of the kin, the sorcerer may be tolerated or even protected in the exercise of his black art. Beneficiaries do not often have qualms concerning the source of the benefits received. One who, by reason of his family connexions or his own power, has secured a strong position may escape interference. Jealousy or grudges, however, often bring out accusations from within the circle of kin. 754 Accusations may also be made by outsiders. With the decline in 682 influence which the tribal courts have suffered, and their inability to inflict capital punishment, sorcery is less frequently punished than formerly. The consequent reductions in the number of innocent victims is a gain. This same cause has operated, how- [177] ever, to increase dealings in, and fear of, sorcery. Most of the cases brought to European courts, and even to the Church, under the name of 'poisoning' are in reality accusations of sorcery.

178 In the foregoing brief note it has not been possible adequately 754 to treat the subject, but it will be seen that sorcery has long been a divisive influence in Umbundu life. It sometimes seriously affects the cohesion of the household and the larger kinship groups. Economic, political, and other forces now seem to be acting to increase the incidence of sorcery, the influence of which is probably a considerable factor in the present rapid disintegration of the Umbundu social structure.

The Hierarchy of Age

561 Passing references have been made to associations of coevals. The Ovimbundu recognize very definitely the hierarchy of age and consider orderly society quite impossible without it. One of the keenest criticisms of the European and his ways is contained in the aphorism:

Kundele ka ku li ukulu.
[538] In 'civilization' there is no senior.

To Umbundu wisdom this is an impossible state of affairs;

[1] The Umbundu term is *oku andeka*; *vide* ref. *infra*, p. 107, n. 1.

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there must be a responsible senior and, hence as a matter of course, 561
the following is accepted:

Ndalu hokuluko la Vava: [538]
Fire is not older than water:

Ciyo wa pindikapo.
Potsherd (or frying-pan) passes between (i.e. keeps the peace).

As potsherd (or frying-pan) keeps water from putting out fire and fire from consuming water, so the elder keeps the peace between the young of relatively equal status.

The hierarchy of age is taken as a matter of course and circumcision camps or other formal 'schools' are not considered necessary 561 881
to reinforce an attitude which no one would dream of disputing. At the present time there is quite a vogue for circumcision camps (*vakuevamba*) in the southern or south-eastern half of the country. Some affirm that these are new-fangled notions coming in from neighbouring tribes. Others declare the institution to be very old. The Ngalangi people say that they have always had both *evamba* for the boys and *uso wakãi* for the girls. Some tribes require *evamba* [643]
of the king before he may rule. Even where the institution is not in vogue, there are associations of coevals (*vakuacisoko*) whose members have definite rights and duties toward each other. These matters are treated more fully in a later chapter. Inasmuch 561
as these age-grade sets are both age and sex divisions, they contain 182
some elements of social cleavage, but their association with the economic and political sides of life makes them a strongly cohesive force for society.

Umbundu Social Structure: Summary

Summarizing the evidence of the present chapter, I wish only to 182
tie in a few of the more important threads so that the pattern of the 621
Umbundu social structure may be seen at a glance.

Although the Ovimbundu no longer maintain the political life which formerly existed, there are elements of cohesion which still give reality to their social organism. These elements all centre in or spring from the kinship group.

With regard to the village, two facts stand out:

1. The Umbundu village is a local kinship unit, with the villagers quite literally the children of the headman-patriarch.
2. Although its political, religious, and social functions may be

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182 621 in a somewhat decadent state, the Umbundu village has up to the present maintained its status as a local kinship unit.

182 592 602 The household is not a solitary unit but a part of the village. Since it is constituted by marriage, it embodies the union of at least two kinship groups. The attitudes and behaviour patterns within the Umbundu household are basically those universally recognized. In common with the households of most Bantu cultures, it differs from the European model in that it extends its attitudes and behaviour patterns to the wider kinship groupings by means of a classificatory system of relationship.

613 182 In the wider kinship groupings (*epata*), the Ovimbundu recognize both the maternal (*oluina*) and the paternal (*oluse*) lines of descent. The functions of the latter have been largely local, residential, social, and religious, with succession (of status) in the male line. The function of the former has been cohesive over a larger territory, with a recognized head in whom has been vested both religious and economic functions. Both his office and the inheritance of property descend in the female line. Much of the power, economic and personal, formerly held by the *oluina*, in the person of the mother's brother, seems to be passing at the present time to the *oluse*, in the person of the father. The bilineal kinship system has been a strongly cohesive social force.

182 [582] The form of marriage practised by the Ovimbundu is of the two-way cross-cousin type in both lines of kin and in three generations. It seems to be an individual type developed in the particular social and economic situation of the Ovimbundu. As a contract between two families and as a new venture, the marriage relation demands that great attention be given to attitudes and behaviour patterns which emphasize mutual respect.

[561] The hierarchy of age is a very real factor in the Umbundu social structure. Age-set 'schools' have not existed generally throughout the tribes, but there are associations of coevals. This is largely a cohesive force.

754 Sorcery is the most important disruptive force at work *within* Umbundu society. Working as it does, within kinship groups, and inasmuch as it seems to be on the increase, sorcery embodies a real danger to social cohesion.

184 178 Homogeneity has never been an attribute of the Ovimbundu as regards their racial or cultural make-up. The slave-trade injected other and more diverse elements, and recent movements and

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contacts still other. As regards social and economic status, the 184
course of Umbundu life has seen great changes: great inequalities 178
produced by trade booms; a severe levelling down by effective European occupation and by the application of direct rule. That the Umbundu social organism through this entire process has maintained elements of cohesion and of life speaks well for its adaptability and for the vitality of its institutions.

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[p. 62]

GENEALOGICAL TABLE

showing the ascendants and descendants of Madaleno Cipa Ukuahamba and his wife Felicia Ngeve

Great-grand-parents Great-great-grand-parents, &c.

VI. Ku — Nanjamba

V. va Kukululua — Kalunga — Waliana; Naindimba — Soma Cikulukepa I

IV. va Kukululu — Nakalunga — Sakalunga; Nacikulukepa — Cikepa; Soma Ndumbu

III. va Kuku — Cilombo — Salombendo; Navoyo — Mbala Kalunga; Helo — Soma Cikulukepa II; Cimuinĕ — Soma Citata

Grand-parents

II. va Sekulu — Lombendo — Moko; Nambimbi — Sehimba; Kandiyo — Kahala

Mothers and fathers

I. va Mai kuenda va Tate — Kusyela — Soma Liwanika; Mbulika — Citata Ukuahamba

6 younger siblings: Cinakutĕlĕ, Cinakulingi, Tutula, Cangendela, Nangusi, Cipulukolo, Katumbu, Kalei, Moko

3 older and 8 younger siblings: Cinakul, Cipondiya, Cokovenda, Cinapanga, Cowisc, Sehimba, Ngalafa, Nanana, Ehimba, Ungunda, Ngeve

Ego's own generation

Ame — Malulu, Kangaso, *Ngeve*, Ndondi, Kapombo, Cipondiya, Notolo, Kanganjo, Lumingu, Sapalalo, Kaita, Vitimbonga, Capeseka; Malesu †††† *Cipa*, Mbundu †

Children, Grandchildren, Great-grand-children, &c.

Njinga, Citata, Ross, Daniel, Kahala, Nambenga, Kusyela, Lombendo

I. Omălĕ
II. Olonekulu
III. Olonekuila
IV. Olonefie
V. Olonef
VI. Oloneka

Names joined by the dash are spouses: to the left, the wife; to the right, the husband.
Soma Cikulukepa I and II, and Soma Liwanika ruled the Kingdom of Elende.
Soma Ndumbu and Soma Citata ruled the Kingdom of Cikuma, the *ombala* of which is named Ndumbu.

† indicates a sibling deceased, older or younger according to position.

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CHAPTER IV

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE

000 THE first and most important factor to be considered with reference to a programme of education or culture change is the social structure of the people among whom the programme is to be set up and carried out. Few writers on missions among the Bantu have considered the significance for the work of the social structure itself. Perhaps the particular social structure and its possible reference to the programme described have been considered too obvious to merit careful consideration. I am reminded of an observation of the late Mr. Justice Holmes that the 'vindication of the obvious is often more important than the elucidation of the obscure'.[1] But formerly it was not considered at all obvious that a mission programme should take into consideration a people's social structure. So great a missionary and anthropologist as the Reverend H. A. Junod concluded with all complacency: 'Bantu collectivism is dying out. In its stead Christianity will promote a healthy and progressive individualism. . . . I see no other way in which it (the race) can escape destruction.'[2] That was written before 1929, since when advocates of individualism have been few, and fewer the students of African life who would wish to 'promote' individualism there.

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000 The majority of missionary writers who have urged the adaptation or adoption of Bantu cultural elements have concerned themselves largely with beliefs, practices, and rites. If they so much as touch upon the social structure of the people under consideration, it is only to lay a basis for description of these other elements.[3] Although a number of writers have urged the desirability of conserving good elements believed to exist in 'Bantu communalism', 'African collectivism', and so on, few have offered concrete suggestions concerning the social structure, as designed to be of immediate or practical value. The one missionary who has

[1] Quoted in mimeographed suggestions concerning the use of *Essentials of Civilization*, by Thomas Jesse Jones (New York, 1929).

[2] Junod, op. cit., 2nd ed., vol. ii, p. 633; 1st ed. (1913), vol. ii, p. 544.

[3] The most recent work of this type which has come to my attention is *The Church and Primitive People* (The Religious Institutions and Beliefs of the Southern Bantu and their Bearing on the Problems of the Christian Missionary), by D. W. T. Shropshire (London: S.P.C.K., 1938).

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Photo. M. W. Ennis

a. Communal fishing party (Talange River, Elende)

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Photo. R. S. Webb

b. Women grinding meal (Bailundu)

[Facing p. 64]

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addressed the burden of his writings toward saving or regenerating the social structure of the people is Bruno Gutmann, who has worked for many years among the Chagga on the slopes of Kilimanjaro. Dr. Gutmann holds that our task should be to 'help the Africans to preserve and strengthen their indigenous bonds and their ties of kinship and of the common occupation of the soil of their fathers, since without this solid structure the native tribal spirit has no home'.[1] He holds that the traditional tribal culture of the Chagga (or of any other people) is the manifestation of an inner spirit (*Volksseele*) which is ordained by God,[2] and from this he lays down four fundamental principles,[3] and proceeds to build a programme for the Chagga which might also be adapted for other people. I am not concerned here with Dr. Gutmann's theoretical, philosophical, or theological concepts, nor even with his concrete application of them to his own work, since the cultures of the Chagga and of the Ovimbundu are quite different. His emphasis on the fundamental importance of kinship ties, however, is of great interest, and the more especially since some of his practical conclusions are in fundamental agreement with those reached by certain South African anthropologists faced with similar problems. Gutmann's proposals are worthy of serious study by all African missionaries.[4]

The problem of building a new social structure upon a solid foundation of the structure already in existence has been faced with all seriousness by some British African administrative officers. Expression of this attitude is found in the policy of 'indirect rule', which, according to Sir Donald Cameron, tries 'while we endeavour to purge the native system of its abuses, to graft our higher civilization upon the soundly rooted native stock'.[5]

Not alone among South African anthropologists, (Mrs.) A. W. Hoernlé has urged upon educational authorities and Missions the necessity for respecting 'the principle of kinship, which is the basis

[1] *Das Recht der Dschagga*, p. 25 (quoted by G. Wagner, *I.R.M.*, 1937, p. 511).

[2] Wagner, op. cit., p. 509.

[3] See B. Gutmann, 'Aufgaben der Gemeinschaftsbildung in Afrika', *Africa*, 1928, p. 436 f.

[4] See Bibliography for most important books and articles. It is to be hoped that at least two or three of Gutmann's books may be made available for English readers by translation. His German is said to be very difficult even for German readers.

[5] Quoted by J. H. Oldham in *Africa*, 1934, p. 53.

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PLATE VIII

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Photo. R. S. Webb

a. Umbundu pots (before firing), baskets, and hoes

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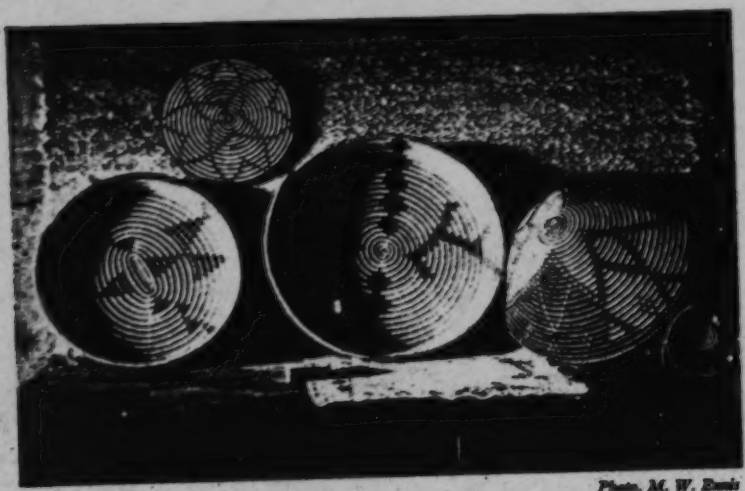

Photo. M. W. Ennis

b. Umbundu basketry with native-woven tapestry

[Facing p. 65]

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on which the social cohesion of African peoples rests'.[1] In the article here quoted, and more recently at the New Education Fellowship Conference, she summarizes her conclusions regarding 'Positive Values in the African Social Organization', with special reference to the Sotho-Tswana and Zulu-Xhosa groups of the South African Bantu.[2]

Nor have American educational authorities failed to recognize the crucial importance to educational and missionary efforts of a primitive people's social structure. Were it necessary, numerous quotations might be given. Two of the four 'Essentials of Primitive Society' listed by Dr. Thomas Jesse Jones, have to do with the social structure:

II. Power of integration with the environment, material and human:

III. A proper regard for the home and the household.[3]

Even more explicit are the counsels to be found in *The Educational Yearbook* for 1931 and 1933:

> . . . we often find that the organization of the family and the relationships between its members are as good as, and in some cases superior to, those which are found among western peoples. . . .
>
> When it comes to other matters of social relationships, such as the communal system and the practice of sharing . . . it is little less than disastrous that the western educator, brought up in a system of individualism, seems to wish to make it necessary for the indigenous peoples to go back to a social organization from which his own world is attempting to move.[4]
>
> Social forms have got to change. But whatever changes may take place, . . . the vital thing is that the sense of mutual obligation and responsibility which is found in existing relations should be conserved and express itself in the new conditions.[5]

The village is the key to an educational or mission approach to the Ovimbundu. This fact has long been recognized by the missions. The Deputation of the American Board of Com-

[1] M. Stauffer, ed., *Thinking with Africa* (New York, 1927), p. 86 (article by Mrs. Hoernlé), also quoted by C. T. Loram in *The Educational Yearbook, 1933* (Dr. Kandel, ed.), p. 280.

[2] See E. G. Malherbe, ed., *Educational Adaptations in a Changing Society* (N.E.F. Conference Report, Cape Town, 1937), pp. 405–7.

[3] T. J. Jones, *Essentials of Civilization* (New York, 1929), pp. 7 ff.

[4] C. T. Loram in *The Educational Yearbook, 1931*, I. Kandel, ed. (New York, 1931), pp. 10, 12.

[5] J. W. C. Dougall in op. cit., 1933, p. 159.

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missioners for Foreign Missions which visited the Umbundu area in 1911 found some difficult problems from the great numbers of converts who had flocked to live on the mission stations. That, however, was a situation from which the missionaries had already been trying to recede for some time since 1897[1] when outstations were first undertaken by Abrão Ngulu and José Katito who went back to their own kin; and even more definitely since 1905 when Elende Station was opened with the idea that the only natives to reside there would be a small number of teachers and other leaders and boarding-school pupils who would afterwards return to their own families to form new centres of work.[2] That the village is a kinship unit has also been recognized and the description of the village of Ngendo showed that outstation work is being carried on *within* the kinship pattern of the village, and without doing violence to the Umbundu concept of social structure. The church elder and his villagers are accepted by the other villagers as kinsmen.[3] While it is evident that the way of life of the people of the school village differed from that of the elder's village, and the extent to which they mutually fulfilled kinship obligations toward each other may be questioned, nevertheless, the very fact that they mutually recognized ties of kinship and that they live side by side in harmony is of significance. It is also significant that the outstation leadership had come from within the kinship group. Likuluta Samikanjo, the elder, had attended boarding-school on a mission station, but only for a short time, and he did not pretend to be a teacher. In the beginning of the work an elder and also a teacher had been sent out from Elende Mission Station, but they had stayed only until the local people were able to carry on. The teacher at the time of my visits was Vitorino Mbambi. He belonged to the household of Likuluta's sister's son. The situation of the outstation of Ngendo is not unusual and could be duplicated many times by examples taken from various parts of the Umbundu country. It has been quite the thing for those individual Christians among the Ovimbundu who have become church elders to seek to establish villages or 'wards' of their own among their own kinsmen. Some teachers have also followed a similar bent, but if they were too young to receive the respect due to an elder of the Ovi-

[1] *Missionary Herald*, 1898, p. 108.
[2] A.B.C.F.M., *Report of the Deputation to the W.C.A. Mission*, 1911, p. 66.
[3] See *supra*, p. 29 f.

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mbundu, they have not, independent of some related elder, generally been very successful within the kinship group.

There is another factor in the situation of the Ngendo out-station which has tended to preserve the ties of kinship between the villagers of the two groups. The support of the two leaders is very largely found locally. Neither teacher nor elder has ever received more than a very occasional bonus from either the native church or the mission. They carry on by the help of the local people and through their own efforts. Dr. Gutmann holds that it is the schools which are most disruptive in their influence on African social structure because of their organization and the way in which they are carried on. A school, he says, should reflect the organic connexions of native society and enter into reciprocal relations with the folk group. Instead, he points out, this is being made impossible in East Africa by raising the salaries of the teachers until they are removed from the ordinary life of the rest of the people.[1] This cleavage between educated individuals who should be leaders and the masses of the people seems to have reached an even more markedly advanced stage in South Africa, according to Mrs. Hoernlé, Eiselen, and others who also seek remedies in strengthening or renewing the natural social bonds.[2] What I wish to emphasize is that the more important point is not how much salary a teacher or an elder may receive, but whether his appointment and the remuneration he receives tend to weaken the organic bonds of native society and to make difficult his relations with the folk group. Do the conditions of his position *ipso facto* place him or keep him outside the local group?

In seeking to lay among the Ovimbundu sure foundations for a truly indigenous Church, the importance of ties of kinship have probably been recognized by more than one missionary. The importance of stimulating local self-support both for its influence on building up the Church and on the development of indigenous leadership has long been stressed in mission circles, although it must be recognized that the principle has often been honoured rather in the breach than in the observance. While recognizing the value of these principles as long-term objectives, impatient of meagre immediate and visible 'results' or failing to realize how

[1] Gutmann, *Africa*, 1928, p. 443 f.

[2] e.g., see Eiselen in Schapera (ed.), *Western Civilization and the Natives of South Africa* (London, 1934), p. 81.

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binding on future policy 'temporary' expedients may be, missionaries have pursued policies which may bring numbers into school and Church, but which have certainly tended to disrupt natural social bonds which ought to be conserved. The sending of young half-trained teachers into areas where they have no natural ties and where they are nearly as foreign to their prospective pupils as is the white missionary is not a policy calculated to develop either indigenous institutions or indigenous leadership. The example of or similarity with a commercial enterprise in starting branches or sending out salesmen is particularly dangerous among the Ovimbundu with their trading experience. If native workers are sent out on what may appear to them to be commercial basis, similar to that of a 'branch store', we should not be surprised if subsequently they act the part. Neither is the political heritage of the Ovimbundu a good example or pattern for the Church. A Church organized on what to the natives may appear like political lines is not likely to develop along soundly social or spiritual lines. The more fortunate pattern for Church and school is that of the household, the kinship village, and the wider kinship group.

It is fortunate that kinship still retains much of its cohesive power for the Ovimbundu and that they yet live in their kinship villages. It will be a great thing if this force can be widely utilized by the Church until a new order can be built upon the firm foundations of the old. It is fortunate that so much of the village work of the Church has already grown up within the kinship structure. The village organization of the Ovimbundu and its very plan are in favour of outstation development. It is to be hoped that the Church may make constructive use of its opportunity in the villages of the Ovimbundu. Should the Church *not* seize this opportunity and should the present disruptive forces continue to operate, the outlook for this great people must be dark indeed.

Objections will perhaps be urged against seeking to work within the kinship structure because of the influence of unprogressive elders, or inconveniences due to proximity to their villages, the prevalence of witchcraft accusations within the kinship group, &c. This last problem must be dealt with. An increased incidence of witchcraft accusations in many parts of Africa has been noted by leading authorities. These authorities agree that such increases seem to be due to insecurity.[1] Insecurity itself must certainly

[1] See statement by B. Malinowski in *Africa*, 1939, p. 38 f.

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increase with disruption of the social structure, and an increase in social security should be a factor tending ultimately to loosen the hold of witchcraft. Working within the kinship group may have disadvantages, but the greater disadvantage must come in attempting to ignore, or in working against, such natural bonds.

No one would question the necessity for utilizing the attitudes of goodwill and love found within the household, between parent and child, between children of the same parents, for that is within 'the family circle' as understood by those of European culture. What missionary has not explained the love and fatherhood of God by the human parent-child relation? This is almost a commonplace of experience, but the fact which has been more generally neglected is that the Ovimbundu, in common with all the Bantu, extend the range of these attitudes beyond the household to include a great number of relatives also classified as brother, sister, father, and mother. Even though the African may not actually apply, or may but partially apply, to the larger circle of relatives the attitudes implied by the terms of relationship, is it not of potential value that the possibility exists? And if there is the possibility of extending these intimate attitudes to the wider group of kin, is there not also the possibility of extending them still further? In my opinion a classificatory system of kinship offers a splendid opportunity to the religious educator.[1] Much has been written about the new 'Tribe of God' which the Church is calling into being in Africa. My observation is, however, that unless the new tribe is rooted firmly in the soil of its own social heritage, it will not grow into a tribe at all, but rather will fall apart into its components of *deracinés*, literally uprooted individuals. Those individuals, moreover, are likely to be twofold more sons of individualism than the individualist who compassed sea and land to convert them.[2] If the 'Tribe of God' or the Kingdom of God is going to *live* among the Ovimbundu, I feel that it must find its life first in terms of the life of the household, the kinship village, the kin by blood and by marriage, until it becomes *the great fact* because it is rooted deep in the lives of the people.

[1] Some elements of the type of approach which I have in mind are illustrated for a boarding-school community by Mabel Shaw in her delightful book, *God's Candlelights* (New York: Friendship Press, 1935).

[2] The increase of denominational sectarianism by almost geometric progression among the natives of South Africa is a fact which seems to have significance in this regard. Ethiopianism is a logical outcome of religious individualism.

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With regard to the larger kinship groupings, much more exact study is necessary to determine the present reciprocal relations of the two lines of descent. To what extent is the balance of *oluse* and *oluina* still maintained? Meanwhile all missionaries should seek to understand and avoid anything which might tend to disturb whatever balance may now exist. Inheritance through the maternal line has been hard for missionaries to understand, and to converts largely outside the kinship structure this type of inheritance often brings real hardship.

Marriage is to be taken up later when I shall combine all evaluations that I have to offer on the subject.

Leadership has already been mentioned with reference to the village community. It is clear that those leaders require training in schools advanced beyond the grade of the village, where they may be exposed to disruptive influences so justly feared by Dr. Gutmann, the results of which are evident from one end of Africa to the other.

> Even to-day the educated people among the Bantu do not seem to be under any sense of obligation towards their sibs or their tribes. Still, it is never too late to mend, and education . . . of intelligent natives for leadership must be undertaken on a larger scale than has yet been done. The great principle involved here, common both to Christian teaching and to Bantu religion, is that man can not be truly good and truly happy unless he uses his individual gifts in the service of the community as a whole. The Christian Bantu and the educated Bantu must both have experienced the great joy which man derives from unselfish work for his fellow beings, before the Bantu people as a whole can make real progress.[1]

I am confident that the right types of leadership can be produced and that the spirit of service can be instilled. Dr. Gutmann's suggestions for retaining the kinship principle in school life are worth considering.[2] It is worth something to have the pupils definitely sent to school by their kinship groups and received back for service under the aegis of those groups once the course is finished. The problem of mediocre pupils who are members of prominent or important kinship groups is a real one, and there are many other problems which should not be glossed over. If the future leaders are to be *real* leaders, their connexion with their own

[1] Eiselen in Schapera, 1934, loc. cit.
[2] Gutmann, in *Africa*, 1928, pp. 437, 443 f.

folk groups must be maintained. Children of uprooted households will rarely make acceptable leaders unless some real integration or reintegration with a kinship group can be achieved.[1] The problem of the course itself is very important but too long and detailed for treatment here. Whatever else the course may have, let it include a study of the people's own culture,[2] not forgetting the social structure. Concerning the organization of the school life itself, an interesting experiment was begun at Malangali in Tanganyika.[3] It is too bad that that experiment could not have gone on. The organization of the girl's school described by Mabel Shaw also shows some very interesting features.[4] It must be said, however, that this type of organization is not unique and that such schools are going on even if they may have been but inadequately reported.

These advanced schools involve at least a limited number of communities organized on an other-than-kinship basis, for even if all the teachers of a school *could* be taken from a single group of kin, no one would attempt it. Students of Bantu society recognize the desirability of maintaining a balance between kinship groups. Villages composed of such groups of teachers and leaders if carefully constituted might offer a convenient point of departure away from the kinship system, for I do not suppose that that system can be considered as eternal. Let it not be abandoned, however, for frivolous reasons; nor until a better one has come to take its place; nor yet again until it has yielded up to its successors all that it contains of lasting worth. There are few of the Ovimbundu who are yet able permanently to reside quite out of touch with groups of their own kin, and still maintain ideals of service and a truly social morality. Close contact with and continuous employment by Europeans seems to have especially disturbing effects. It seems advisable, therefore, in most cases, to employ teachers and other leaders at

[1] It should be realized that many of those individuals who moved to the mission stations in the early days quite cut themselves off from their own kin: they became *deracinés*. Unless a subsequent reintegration was achieved, they passed that status on to their descendants who, by that fact, may be quite unsuitable as leaders.

[2] This emphasis is necessary because of the disrepute of Umbundu culture which westernized schooling has produced. The culture should, of course, not be taught by westerners, but rather by those of the students who know it, by native teachers and by elders brought in for special topics.

[3] W. B. Mumford, 'Education and Social Adjustment of Primitive Peoples of Africa', *Africa*, 1929, pp. 138–61.

[4] Mabel Shaw, op. cit.

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000 the mission stations for limited periods of time, after which they may return to serve those of their own kin. Such rotation of employment increases the difficulty of carrying on institutions with a strictly limited European personnel, but it has the additional advantage of spreading further the advanced training as well as the desirable jobs.

In summary, the following suggestions are offered as a basis for discussion and action:

1. *The need for a sympathetic understanding of the social structure of the people cannot be stressed too much or too often.* For those co-operating with the Church in the village work, such an understanding is a first essential. It is of even greater importance to one who would make a significant contribution to the training of leaders.

2. *For the village work:*

(*a*) It is taken for granted that all village work will be undertaken by and through the native church in order that division of approach, of leadership, and of policy may be avoided. This applies to all lines of endeavour whether agricultural, educational, medical, or religious. This suggestion claims no originality: it has been made before.

(*b*) Local self-support is very much to be desired. Before outside funds are used, it should be determined that their use will not disturb the social balance, nor be a divisive force—as, for example, by setting the leader apart from those to be led, or by making the recipient dependent on the missionary and so above the discipline of those who should be responsible for him. Pauperization of the local group is also a very real danger.

(*c*) In opening new work, let every effort be made to keep it within or closely allied to present forms of the constituted social structure. For outstations this will mean proximity to and relations with a village of kin.

(*d*) For the outstations now constituted a kinship census could be taken in order that the present situation may be known. Data could be collected little by little, but efforts should be organized and results co-ordinated. The religious education department of the central training institute could assist in such a project.

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(*e*) In everything pertaining to the native church and the village work let its bearing upon the social structure be weighed, and let Umbundu kinship principles be taken into consideration.

3. *In constructing programmes of religious education* and in the actual teaching let us seek to utilize the attitudes of the household and the principle of their extension to the wider groups of kin through the classificatory kinship system.

4. *In the selection and training of leaders* may we:

(*a*) Endeavour to use those who would be natural leaders by arranging their selection by and within the kinship groups.

(*b*) Other things being equal, avoid the use of *déracinés* and of partially uprooted persons. They will rarely be able to lead, for those whom they try to lead are unlikely to accept them. This doubt also applies to persons from other tribes and other language areas unless they have been regularly integrated in their place of service.

(*c*) In the organization of courses and the administration of schools for training leaders, the constitution of the social structure and of its component kinship groupings should be given major consideration.

(*d*) The above also applies to constitution and conduct of mission villages.

Cultural disintegration and possible reintegration with reference to mission work has received penetrating analysis at the hands of Archibald G. Baker.[1] He points out that a period of disintegration is the opportunity of the reformer, but warns 'that any movement of disintegration, excessively speeded up by high pressure tactics of government or of reformer, produces a state of social anarchy, cultural chaos, and personal disintegration, which in the long run postpones the day of permanent reform . . . '.[2] What such 'social anarchy, cultural chaos, and personal disintegration' may mean for an African tribe needs no demonstration. It may mean annihilation, as has been or is becoming the case with various groups such as the 'Strandloopers' and Bushmen (of Cape Colony and the South-west), the Mpongue, and other Bantu tribes of the French Congo.

[1] A. G. Baker, *Christian Missions and a New World Culture* (Chicago: Willet, Clark & Co., 1934).

[2] Ibid., p. 215.

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000 The least that can happen will be a centrifugal throwing off of groups of *diaspora*—a process actually taking place from among the Ovimbundu. These uprooted groups, *déracinés*, *ovimbali*,[1] whether they settle in the towns or move to other territories, are far less promising material from every standpoint than they were when in their former cultural and social state. In view of the many and important adaptations which the Ovimbundu have made in the past, their ability to adapt themselves to yet greater innovations may be confidently affirmed, if only the movement is not 'excessively speeded up'. Plainly, it is the duty of everyone who is interested in the social welfare of this great people to do what may be in his power to arrest the process of disintegration, and to strengthen existing social bonds lest the latter state be worse than the former.

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[1] *Ovimbali* (or *vambali*), see *supra*, p. 19.

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PART TWO

INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION

121 *The purpose of Part Two is (1) to describe the life-cycle or development of the individual Ocimbundu from birth until adulthood, (2) to analyse the Umbundu educational process, and (3) to indicate and evaluate elements in this process that are or may be significant for the educational work of Christian missions among the Ovimbundu.*

Chapters V, VI, and VII describe the Umbundu life-cycle and consist largely of Umbundu narrative given in direct translation. The principal source is a composite manuscript compiled for classroom use from the contributions of a number of Ovimbundu.[1] *Comments and other Umbundu material are interpolated from time to time into this principal source.*

In Chapter VIII there is an analysis of Umbundu development. The evaluations are in Chapters IX, X, and XI.

CHAPTER V

THE UMBUNDU BABY

Birth

844 WHEN birth occurs in the house, it is supposed to take place on the grinding-stone (*olumbambo*). That this was so is indicated by the folk-tales and proverbs which refer to the place of birth as *polumbambo*, or *kewe lioku cita* (on the stone of giving birth).[2] In this case, and especially if a woman is giving birth for the first time, she may be assisted by older women of the village. These, in the case of widows, may be relatives of the husband, or in the case of wives of householders, they will be his relatives by marriage. A woman's own mother may assist, but when she lives in a different village she is unlikely to attend. It would not be proper for the

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[1] This source is given in quotation but without further reference. The chief contributors were R. Kavita Evambi, of Ciyaka; Abrão Ngulu and A. Sãku Nunda, both of Bailundu; R. Kalupeteka of Ngalangi; I. Kayalo of Viye; Ndondi students of the normal classes and several women there. It was compiled and edited (in Umbundu) by Pedro Paulo of the Currie Institute staff.

[2] Cf. the 'birth-stool' of the Hebrews (or Egyptians), *vide* Exod. i. 16.

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844 husband's mother (whether uterine or classificatory) to attend the labour of her daughter-in-law. The husband does not attend. As Mr. Hambly's informant phrased it, 'The child would be ashamed to be born.'[1] It seems that the husband's non-attendance may be
845 connected with the danger to him of the blood.[2] No other man will be present unless delayed labour entails the intervention of a medical practitioner, especially a diviner. Resort will not be had to outside aid until it seems impossible otherwise for the child to be born, and nowadays even where modern medical aid is available, often it will only be resorted to after the woman has been in labour for more than twenty-four hours[3]—sometimes much more, and then when it is already too late. Difficult delivery may be caused by:

(*a*) *Broken taboos*, as, for example, theft, either by the mother or the father. Only after confession can someone go out and steal something, after which the child 'consents' to be born.

(*b*) *Adultery* on the part of the mother, which must be confessed before the child will 'consent' to be born. The father's adultery may also cause trouble at this time, but this is more often believed to be the cause of a disease in his offspring known as *onjamba*. Failing confession of the above faults, a diviner may be called, but his diagnosis may more often indicate

(*c*) *Sorcery*, to which difficult labour, along with many other ills of life, may be attributed.[4]

(*d*) It is also believed that in some cases a woman may herself refuse to give birth and may extend her pregnancy far beyond the nine months' period, the limits of which, and its method of reckoning, are not understood. Such cases as

[1] Hambly, op. cit., p. 185.

[2] Among church-members the husband often attends the birth and is sometimes the only attendant.

[3] A labour of twelve or fourteen hours is considered quite usual, and a shorter one as light.

754 [4] Sorcery, together with ill will and anger recognized as its principal roots, are great dangers to a woman giving birth. Anyone who dislikes the woman in labour, or even one who has ever shown ill will against her, will stay strictly away from the birth. While a woman is in labour all women of the village are expected to stay at home and refrain from ordinary activities—to commune with the spirits. As one of many peoverbs has it: *Ukuenu ndu o cita, vu salela: oku cita kakuenu, oku cita kuove*; 'Your fellow, if she gives birth, you stay in: childbirth of your fellow, is childbirth of yours.'

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have come to my notice, finally turned out to be fibroid tumours, but it is held that there are women who have extended their periods of pregnancy to two years and then had normal deliveries. I failed to learn what was gained or intended by this procedure. 845

It is not to be inferred that difficult deliveries or prolonged labour are the rule, for while they do occur, they are rather the exception. In 1857 Magyar observed that 'women . . . are . . . very fecund and except in few cases bear happily the pains of childbirth'.[1] Such a statement would now have to be classed as a bit optimistic, but it has its point, speaking comparatively with our own society in mind. During labour the woman usually kneels, but in some regions she stands holding on to a post which the husband has put into the floor of the hut for this purpose.[2] 'With the breaking of the foetal bag the baby, which has been in the warmth, feels the air and begins to cry, *Ña, ña, ña.*'[3] From this cry is derived the word for baby, *oñaña*. 844

Hereupon I turn to the general narrative:

'When the mother recognizes that her time for giving birth has come, if this is her first,[4] she tells her husband to call the elder women who are skilled in causing to give birth. When the baby is born they arrange to cut (the cord of) the navel. First they tie it up with a piece of rag just picked up in the house or from the refuse heap, then they pick up a porridge-stick or a piece of firewood over which they stretch the cord and cut it with a knife[5] (which has not been boiled, for they do not arrange beforehand the cloths of the navel nor the knives for cutting as do Europeans). Everything they look for after the baby has already come. The knife and the porridge-stick they tie up to the roof of the house and

[1] Magyar, *Reisen in Süd-Afrika*, p. 283 (foot of page).

[2] e.g. in Civula. The Umbundu hut, whether round or rectangular, has no central pole. Does this custom indicate that in former times there was a central pole?

[3] From a statement of an old woman at Ndondi, other parts of which have been incorporated in the general narrative. She also stated that ordinarily a baby was not 'received', but was born on to the floor of the hut. From other informants and from the observations of my wife, I think this is the case only when a woman is alone and has no attendants (q.v. *infra*).

[4] Lit., if she is *omuma*, i.e. one who has not yet given birth.

[5] Hambly's note that a hoe is used to cut a girl's cord and an arrow to cut a boy's is 'theoretically' or symbolically correct, but nowadays people do not bother to follow the symbolism unless convenient (Hambly, op. cit., p. 284).

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844 never use them again. The placenta they put in a broken gourd and bury it at the corner of the house or under the threshold: in the case of a boy outside the house, and in the case of a girl within.

'After this then they wash[1] the baby and anoint it with oil, and they tie a girdle of rag around its little loins. When all is ready, then some step outside and begin to shout for joy (*oku ulula*) saying, *Ulú! Ulú! Ulú!*[2] There has come a great big man here. Or if the baby is a girl they say, *Ulú! Ulú! Ulú!* There has come a girl here! A girl for the pounding-rock, *we-e-e! Ulú! Ulú! Ulú!* We are very grateful that she has increased our number.

'When the people hear the shouting, they hasten with joy to greet the parents and to congratulate them. Some seize the hand of the male parent and greet him saying, You have done well, you have begotten[3] for us a youth for the road, and a gatherer of firewood for the club-house. In the case of a girl, they say, A girl for the pounding-rock, the grinding stone is dirty.[4]

'In case the woman had already borne before, it is usual for her just to do it all alone by herself. She herself cuts the (cord of the) navel and buries the placenta. Many prefer to give birth in the field. Should a child have been born in the field (the cord of) his navel may be cut with a blade of corn in case there is no knife at hand. To tie up the cord she may just tear a bit of rag from her own cloth. When she comes to the village, the people will notice that she carries her basket on her head and the child in her hand, and straightway they greet her.'

846 It will be seen from this that childbirth is nothing if not simple among the Ovimbundu. Immediately after giving birth the mother purifies herself by washing in a running stream. She is accompanied only by her mentor. There is a lying-in period (until the cord falls from the navel) to be observed by the child *and* the mother, but it seems that in these days it is often observed in the [539] breach. In the folk-tale of 'Baby and his Elder Sister' (*Ñaña la Kota liaye*), the mother did not observe her part of the taboo but left the house to Elder Sister, and it was perhaps for that reason that Baby took vengeance by eating up the beans left cooking on the fire, while no one was looking.

[1] The water is warmed by being taken into the mouth and then squirted on to the baby.

[2] The sound made by plucking at the lips while shouting.

[3] The verb *oku cita*, to bear or to beget, is used of males and of females without distinction.

[4] i.e. needs attention.

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the fire, while no one was looking. Before going on to that period, 846
the narrative will tell a little about the birth of

Twins (*Olonjamba*).[1] 'If twins are born, when they have finished 845
cutting (the cords of) the navels they bury their placentas out of doors at a cross-road. After washing and anointing them with oil, they shout saying, *Ulú! Ulú! Ulú!* There have come here a man and a woman. When the people come, they begin while yet outside (the hut), to curse[2] (and continue) until they enter, cursing the parents. It is called *Ongombo*, The Diviner's Basket. In that way such children are followed about by all, that none of them may die. And all the time that such children are growing, it is done month by month. The parent comes out and begins to curse the people who are in the village, and then all come from their houses and follow cursing her.'

In the case of triplets, when they are weaned, one is given to the king.[3]

As soon as the midwives have finished their task, the father may 844
come in and take up the child, but men do not 'like' to hold a child which is still 'red' (i.e. not yet black) and whose 'neck is not yet strong'. Should a woman abort (*pulumuisa*), or should the [847]
child be stillborn or die at birth, the loss is accepted philosophically, 845
quoting the proverb: 538

Cinene ombenje akolovi hacimueko.
The main thing (is) the gourd jug, the shavings (are) nothing.

Should the mother also die, then they quote:

Olūsī ka kuatele, ocimunga ca enda lovava.
A fish (he) did not catch, the bracelet went with water.

Should a young woman complain that her baby is too small, the [856]
others may remind her:

Etaila olio osanji.
The egg that (is) the chicken.

Should she complain that her baby does not grow properly, they will say:

Ka ci kuli omōlā ombia, omōlā omunu o kula
It does not grow the child of (a) pot, (the) child of (a) person grows.

[1] Lit., Elephants. The reference is to the names given to twins: *Njamba* (Elephant), *Hosi* (Lion), or *Ngeve* (Hippopotamus).
[2] *Tukālā*, which literally means to call *hard* names.
[3] I knew of one such case in Civaka.

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553 *Naming* (*oku luka*). The Ovimbundu name their children with great care. It is important to name a first-born (*uveli*) on the day of its birth, but if the child is evidently weak and not likely to live, they wait a few days. Names are in a sense family property and given over and over again. In naming the baby several factors may be taken into consideration:

1. The name (*onduko*) should have been borne by an ancestor, whether living or dead, whose character and state of well-being are satisfactory.

2. Ordinarily the baby is named by the father from his family unless there should be some reason for not doing so, in which case the name is given by the mother from her family, but if either family has a bad record for deaths or other misfortunes, that may prevent the parents following the custom, for

3. The name must not prejudice but rather assist the child's chance of survival. Thus a child born after the death of several siblings may be given an insignificant name, intended to cause the spirits to overlook it or to consider it as less than human, as, for example, *Kaṭekāvā*, Little-black-thing; *Cīvī*, Bad; *Mbili*, I-do-not-know-it; *Kacinyama*, Little animal; *Kalūsuī*, Nit; *Cilūlū*, Ghost; *Vimbuandu*, Filth; or even *Kaniña*, Little excrement. A child may be given a name never used in the family if extreme measures to prevent its recognition by the spirits are thought necessary.

4. Events or persons prominent at the time of birth may influence the choice. A namesake, whether intentional or not, is known as *Sando* (from the Portuguese *santo* (saint), and the Roman Catholic custom of naming after the saints). Events of the time of birth or its calendric period may be summed up in a proverb or a sentence, a keyword of which is used as the name.[1]

[424] 5. While names remain in a family, some names may belong to several families. Certain names belong to families predominantly agricultural, others to trading or wealthy families, others to kings' families, &c. Kings' families were especially jealous of their names and commoners were not allowed to use them.

As already explained, parents take the name of their first-born. Should the child die young, the name will not be retained. During illness a person may change his name, taking one calcu-

[1] *Vide* E. L. Ennis, 'Women's names among the Ovimbundu', *African Studies* (Johannesburg), March 1945.

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lated either to cause the spirits to pass him by or to facilitate his 553
cure. In adolescence young people discard the names with which they were born and name themselves (*oku lisapa*) according to their own choice. I have collected the explanations for about two hundred names.

The names of children are used, and that is one reason for 553
choosing them with care, for the name will be heard often by the 775
spirits. It is his superiors and those with whom he has respect-relationships whose names one may not pronounce. A child's name may be affected by whether there are recently deceased siblings, but he is not the reincarnation of such a one. Rather, he may reincarnate an ancestor. This is doubtless one reason for naming him after an ancestor. This, however, is a subject for treatment elsewhere.

The Period of Lying-in (Ocitete)[1]

'During lying-in the work of the mother is to cause the cord to 846
fall from the navel of her child. On the navel she rubs castor-bean charcoal mixed with palm oil, or palm oil mixed with ashes, or with the soot from burning a sleeping-mat of reeds. A chicken feather is required from a wing or the tail, to dip it in the soot. That is done day by day until the navel is freed.' It must be noted that although a large percentage of the babies get infected navels, this does not seem to be as serious among the Ovimbundu as with us. 'For the bed of mother and baby are spread leaves that it may be soft, if possible leaves of the *ongonguila* tree. Over the leaves [824]
are spread a sleeping-mat (*esisa*) and some little cloths. During that time the mother does not sleep in the dark. The father must bring firewood and firelogs that it may be warm and light in the house, so that if the baby defecates in the night, it may be wiped properly.' No cloths or diapers are used for babies either at this period or later. An additional reason given for having a good fire in the hut is that the baby is supposed to be very much afraid of the dark.

'During those first days the women come to entertain[2] the mother and to hold the baby. Some bring meal and meat, some meal and beans, some porridge and relish, some sour beer and

[1] *Ocitete* seems to be derived from *oku teta*, to cut, in reference to the cutting of the cord.

[2] *Oku poka*, to provide for and entertain, as for a guest.

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846 firewood. When they bring something, the mother thanks them saying, You have provided very well. She who brought supplies sits down and takes the baby and asks whether it is doing well. Conversing with the mother, she advises her how to attend to the baby, and then she returns the baby to its mother and bids her good-bye, saying, May you rest well. The mother replies *E-e-e*. Then she goes out and goes away. All who come do that. During all that time the mother cannot go out until the navel has healed. Then some day when another gives birth, she will do likewise, she will prepare food to go and greet the parent.'

853 *The Baby's Food, Drink, and Medicine.* 'From the time the baby is born they set its gruel (*ekela*) (on the fire), and when it is done they begin to feed (it to him). It is difficult to feed a baby because he struggles greatly, and so when they feed him they hold his little arms and legs and put the food in his mouth when he cries. The mother takes the gruel from the pot and first puts it in her own mouth to cool it with her saliva, then she takes it out and, with the crook of her finger, puts it into the baby's mouth. If the baby's mouth fills up and runs over, she wipes it up and throws it back again. When she sees that sleep has taken him away, she sucks the gruel from the child's mouth and spits it out on the floor. Then she wipes his face clean with a little water. This gruel is stirred up with unfermented beer (*ocisangua*) in place of water that it may be tasty.

757 'Likewise from the time of his birth they set aside for the baby
853 a little gourd or pot of beer (*ocisangua*), which is tasty, very tasty. Into that beer they throw some sweet-smelling medicine, as for instance *ocisangu*, *olukata*, *ocilombo*, and *okakonga*. That medicine helps that the stomach may not ache and that worms may not come. *Olukata* is useful for stopping diarrhoea. Should he not eat well, they put in *okakonga*. In giving him to drink they use a little piece of gourd. As with feeding him likewise, although he struggles they hold his little arms and legs and make him drink.' The chief purpose of the beer and the sweet-smelling medicines is to tempt the baby to eat and drink, for it is believed that a baby
[127] is born with its senses of taste and smell fully developed. In case of more serious, or supposedly more serious, trouble, these simple remedies do not suffice and the diviner (*ocimbanda*) will be consulted.

'Should the baby be sick in the belly, making a noise *cililili*,

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cŏlŏlŏ, they will say, They have bewitched him with *oloseta*.[1] 757
In going to the diviner they take a cock for the cure. They 853
kill their cock, the diviner eats it, they (go) to the threshing-floor for the cure. That threshing-floor is holy and no one may pass over it unless in passing he spits out a little saliva and says, There may it stay, there. Only so may they pass on, even though they may be many, each person does just that.' The 'many' who go to the diviner are representatives of the family, for their presence is necessary not only for proper diagnosis but also to show their concern and good faith.

Babyhood Proper

(*From the second week until about the seventh month*)

The period of lying-in is terminated when the cord falls and the navel heals, but the second period only begins when the baby turns dark. This period begins with 'Breaking the pot' (*Oku ipaya ombia*). The reference is to the gourd or pot in which the beer and medicine have been kept. 'Breaking the pot', says one informant, 'means dividing the dark from the light.' [858]

'When a child is first born he is perfectly pink and it is not possible to say whether he will be light or dark. When six or eight [145] days have passed he begins to change and to get the skin with which he will grow. At that time they recognize whether the child will be light or dark. Then is the time when those who do not like to hold a pink baby will begin to take him up, for also it is then that his neck begins to be strong. Then too the baby begins to cause people to laugh. Should he be a boy, those who take him 854 will say, Ah my husband are you well? Ha, how is the man? Then the parent will rejoice and say, Shucks, this man doesn't give any cloth at all. Should she be a girl, they will also say, How is my girl? The parent replies, She is quite well. The man then says, Where is a beer-jug for a man? The parent says, Shucks, your girl can't brew at all, she's no good, they've just put her out of her house; they've just divorced her because she can't keep house properly.'

This period from about the eighth day until about the end of the sixth month is the period of babyhood proper. At night the baby sleeps with his mother and by day he is carried in a cloth on her back (*oku velekua*). When it is not raining his head may be seen

[1] *Oloseta* (plural) are a wild fruit, hard and about the size of hazel-nuts, used for playing *ocela*.

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854 protruding from the cloth and he seems to spend most of his time sleeping. Whenever he cries the mother will slide him around under her arm and give him the breast.[1] The only exception to absolute irregularity in suckling is that when the mother reaches the field for her morning work, she will offer the breast lest the baby may soon demand it and hinder her after she has begun her work. If she has no helper, she will do her field work with her baby on her back. Theoretically, the baby is almost never left alone.[2] There is a folk-tale telling how a woman put her baby down while cultivating and then accidentally beheaded him with her hoe.[3] If there is a young relative or if baby has an elder sibling, Then she (the mother) will give him to her to hold and to make him laugh under a tree where also has been placed his little jug of beer (non-alcoholic, *ocisangua*) and his little basket of gruel. There he will stay with his elder sibling while their mother does her work whether of cultivating or of breaking ground. Should he cry, the mother will sit down to nurse him and to feed him his gruel meanwhile looking to see whether there are lice in his head. She will say, Won't you nurse little father? Then shall we cultivate your little field?[4] A man doesn't cry, *he*? Then shan't we go to the village to stir up your gruel? Then the child will answer while nursing, *um*, *um*, *um*. When he finishes nursing she gives him back to his elder sibling and returns to her work. The elder sibling goes off with him in a hurry, lest being near his mother he may cry. She carries him on her back (*veleka*), and walking around the field she may talk to him saying, Ha! The ox is coming! *Haka*,[5] the hyena! Don't you see the bugaboo (*nono* or *nonono*) is coming to bite you if you cry again! Don't cry now. Shall we go to papa? Hasn't papa gone and caught a rat for you? When the mother lays off work, they go to the village. Passing through the woods on

[1] Hambly, op. cit., Plates L and LI for positions of nursing and carrying, respectively.

[2] Baby is sometimes left alone in the hut for a short time and then it may happen that he rolls into the fire. *Vide* also, reference to the folk-tale of 'Baby and his Elder Sister', *supra*, p. 84.

[3] One version of this tale may be found in the *Journal of the American Folk-lore Society*, 1922, vol. 35, p. 126.

[4] The reference is to the custom of cultivating a new field for each child at his birth. This field may become the child's own responsibility when he is able to assume it.

[5] *Haka*, an expletive which may express surprise, fear, disgust, pain, &c., according to context and tone.

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the way they gather firewood (*tiaña olõhuí*) and dig beer-root (*ombundi*) for the child's beer. When they come to the village they stir up his gruel and feed him.' 854

In the afternoon and evening the baby's father may hold him, but he is not likely to do so with any regularity until a little later. The European clothing worn by the men is harsh to the baby's tender skin as compared with the soft warmth of his mother's body. His elder sibling or cross-cousin holds and carries him, but whenever he cries his mother will take him up and nurse him. Indeed European or American mothers are considered very cruel to let their babies cry so endlessly. It goes almost without saying that feeding schedules would be considered as quite needless complications. It seems that feeding baby when he cries is more than a mere pacifier. He is credited with *knowing* when he wants to suckle, in spite of the fact that he will only take other food and drink if forced to.

'As to recognition of people, there are two sorts: first the child recognizes only the *smell* of his father and his mother since they sleep with him. But when six months have passed, then he begins to recognize his father and his mother "by heart".[1] He will very soon recognize his elder sibling (*huvaye*) or the cross-cousin (*epalume*), his young nurse (*naveleka*, lit. mother of carrying), and before long the others of the village will be known to him. But during this period only his mother is of real importance to him.' Only in case of her death would other women nurse him.[2] Even when there is a young nurse it is the mother who 'must care for him a great deal and since he has not as yet any sense, she must prevent him from doing everything which he wishes to do'. 856

At some time between six and twelve months, according to the child's development or the inclination of the parents, in order 'to accustom the child to sit, the parent digs a little hole in the ground just the size of his buttocks that he may not fall over. There they always place him and if he starts to fall over, they set him up again, until finally he sits up properly by himself and does not fall over. At that time he snatches at everything to play with it or to put it in his mouth.'

[827]

[1] *Utima*, the heart, is considered the seat of the intelligence.

[2] It is a curious fact that older women, although at the time without children themselves, may again produce liquid in the mammary glands if they take a baby to nurse. I do not believe that a test of such liquid has ever been made.

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The Sitting Baby or Toddler (*Ocisembe*)

856 When a child can sit alone there begins a new period in his life. He is no longer a baby (*oñaña*) but an *ocisembe*. In comparison with the period just passed his development is now rapid, although in comparison with American children it seems slow, for an Ocimbundu child is held and carried so much that walking comes late, rarely or never before twenty-four months. In other respects, however, his physical development is not behind that of other children. His talking may come even *more* rapidly than with many.

Crawling (*oku yaila*). 'Crawling begins with reaching for what he sees: he moves little by little until he gets it. There are two kinds of crawling: some children in order to crawl hold the ground with their hands and doubling up one leg they drag themselves along. That sort of crawling is called *ocela*,[1] or crawling like a lion (*oku yaila ndohoni*). In the second, some children plant all their feet and hands on the ground while their buttocks go up and they move, but not like an animal. That crawling is described saying, He goes as an ox (*enda ngombe*).'[2]

Teething (*Oku tunda ovayo*). 'When a child has seven months then his teeth begin to come out. First when his gums swell the child has a little fever and diarrhoea and he squirts much saliva from the mouth. They call it the squirting of saliva (*oku pamba ovate*). Then a little tooth begins to show in the lower gum, then another, and so it goes on until in his mouth they come together.' The appearance of teeth in the upper gum first is a bad omen and is much feared.

Speech. 'When a child begins to speak, at first he only scolds and nothing is understood. Then he begins to say, *Ta-ta*, *ta-ta* until he calls, *Tate* (my father). Afterwards he will say, *Mai* (my mother). It is much more difficult for a child to say *Mai* than *Tate*. Thus they say that if a child begins with *Mai*, he will become a fool and be unable to speak any more. When he can say these names well, he begins to pronounce the names of the people

[1] From the game *ocela* in which the counters are moved from one hole to another.

[2] The reference is especially to the stiff walk of the unbending hind legs, but also to the deliberate gait of the ox. It is believed that the way in which a child crawls is some indication of what his character will be. The deliberation and openness of the ox are contrasted with the cunning and slyness of the lion.

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in the household and then the names of all kinds of little objects 856
until his speech is perfected.'

Weaning (*Oku sumũhã* or *oku nyamũhã*). Every day the child 862
goes to the fields with his mother. As he grows and gets fatter and heavier he becomes quite a burden for her or for his young nurse. Until he has passed twelve months, however, there is no alternative, and more often his daily excursions continue well past his second birthday. When he is able to walk a little, then his mother may begin to leave him in the village with his young nurse while she goes to her field-work. 'So in the morning at daybreak his mother will give him his food on a little dish and the toddler (*ocisembe*) will eat until he is full. Then his mother will speak to him saying, Suckle (*Nyama*) for I am going to the veld; so he will suckle and his mother will go.' He will not suckle again until she returns at from 2 to 4 in the afternoon. Thus he begins to be weaned quite unconsciously, but that does not mean that the process will be finished quickly; it may continue for even more than two years yet, unless a younger brother or sister intervenes.

'Some children, however, do not stop suckling quickly and if that is the case, his mother will frighten him when he wants to suckle, for she will say, Look out, here is a bugaboo; for perhaps she will have put an ugly worm on her breast, or perhaps she will have rubbed on pepper and the child nursing will burn his mouth and begin to cry. But some children are shrewd so that when they taste the bitterness they will fetch water and wash the breast and it is very hard to wean them. The parent will try many different things until the child is weaned. Some children are only weaned after they are four years old or even older, but that is not common.'

As the preceding paragraph suggests, children of this age may 861
be tyrants to their mothers and all the more since the Ovimbundu punish their children with reluctance. But field-work presses inexorably and much more can be accomplished without a child to hinder one. His mother may promise that if he doesn't cry she will bring him a rat or a bird. Then if he still does not *consent* to stay she may, with reluctance, apply the sterner measures of a slap or a proverb said in exasperation:[1]

Ove oku ku pãkila ku kuta. [638]
You, making for you mush, you do not fill.

[1] The serious regard for the spoken word must be kept in mind.

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861 *Oku longa ku yevi, vumõlã hẽ?*
[538] Teaching you do not hear, are you child?

One who fails properly to absorb both mush and teaching can hardly be a proper human being. The implication of the question is that if he is not a child he may be some unearthly creature. There may be a similar implication in this other proverb which may also be used on similar occasions:

Ku ka ñavise ame konjembo si endi love.
Do not tire me I to hades shall not go with you.

U lonjila yaye, u lonjila yaye.
Each with path his (own), each with path his (own).

With the aid of elder sister mother usually wins out. Picking up her hoe and basket she gives the children their injunctions for the day. 'Stay then and I'll come right back, but don't play with the neighbour's chickens, don't beat each other, don't play with bows lest you put out the eye of another, and don't steal from the cooking pot, there now!'

857 With children of all ages left alone in the village, these injunc-
861 tions are a minimum of necessity. The mother might also go on to detail the consequences of disobedience, how one who put out another's eye would be sold into slavery, nor was the mother exaggerating. If the Ovimbundu punish their children with reluctance, they have no reticence in instilling in them what they consider to be a healthy fear, whether of persons, animals, things, their own actions, or quite imaginary dangers. Older children likewise work on the younger. Nor are occasions for further instilling fear lacking. 'Always when they stay in the village, they go to the dancing-floor (*ocĩlã*) to play with the other children. During that time should something come to frighten them and make them run away, those who haven't younger siblings to carry are glad to get away quickly. But those who have younger siblings to carry see much hardship. They tire themselves terribly trying to carry their heavy young siblings and being unable to continue, they drag them, both of them crying and crying.' Nowadays, in case of need or simply tiring of their play, children may start off for the fields in search of mother, but formerly children were not allowed to venture unaccompanied outside the safety of the village palisades. The danger of kidnappers and of raiding parties was very real. One of the most vivid memories of the Rev. Paulino Ngonga's early child-

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hood was a day when he and an elder brother set off for the fields 857
and almost ran into a party of raiders. The scolding which they 861
received was not forgotten.

The practice of leaving the *ocisembe* in the village by day makes his elder sibling responsible for much of his education. This is the beginning of a close bond which lasts through life. She herself may not be more than six or seven years old and consequently cannot be expected to 'educate' her little charge very thoroughly. She interests herself in his walking and talking and he will imitate her in many things, but the rest of 'conscious education' must be attended to by the parents.

Cleanliness. Instruction in cleanliness begins at this age, but I fear 863
that it is lacking either in intensity or in persistence for its effect seems to be rather long-delayed. Small babies are not washed very often but their bodies and heads are anointed with palm-oil against infestation with the various parasites of the tropics. Anointing the body continues to be a part of the toilet of the Ocimbundu through life. When palm-oil is scarce, such afflictions as common itch are more prevalent. Nowadays, in the well-appointed household, the *ocisembe* has his hands and face washed before breakfast. If such a connexion between washing and eating were always and everywhere maintained, habits of personal cleanliness might be more widespread. Brushing the teeth may be begun in imitation of mother. Sphincter training is begun very early, for the mother feels every muscular movement made or attempted by the baby on her back. Hence she is apt to know when it is necessary to take him down for defecation. If and when this procedure is followed through with regularity and persistence early sphincter control may be established, but too often this is not the case. Establishment of bladder control is apt to come even more uncertainly as a favourite proverb concerning the weather indicates:

Ilu lia soka ndetako lioñaña. [538]

The sky is like the bottom of a baby.

The Ovimbundu do not associate these bodily functions with shame to the extent which is the case in our culture, but euphemisms are used in place of the exact terminology.[1] If an

[1] There are prohibitions regarding these functions during visits to relatives- 606
in-law with whom one has respect-relations, also to the bride during the wedding 514
ceremonies. (See Folk-tales nos. 12 and 13 of the sheet collection in the *Journal*

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863 *ocitembe* defecates on the bed he will be slapped that he may not repeat, but less flagrant breaches do not seem to call for punishment.

868 *Language.* The progress of toddlers in language mastery is rapid. Some mispronunciations are allowed. Some children pronounce correctly more rapidly than do others. Correct use of the language including mastery of the complicated grammatical structure, however, is mastered much earlier than is the case with English-speaking children. One could almost say as does Father Van Wing of the Kongo child: 'À quatre ans il parle mieux sa belle langue Kikongo, qu'un Européen de douze ans ne parle la sienne.'[1] The baby's earliest babblings, as well as his later evident imitations of his elders, are all recognized as his attempts at self-expression which as a matter of course will straighten themselves out in due time.[2] Parents speak to their children in a tone distinctly different from that employed in ordinary adult conversation, but they rarely if ever use the baby's own mispronunciations or 'baby-talk' as do Europeans and Americans. This, and the fact that young children have much more practice than have our children, owing to the constant companionship of their elders, seems to be the secret of their rapid progress. Whether the nature of the language itself has any effect would be an interesting subject for investigation.

867 *Manners* are also taken on quickly during this time. Toddlers are not expected to practise any very wide range of the social niceties, but what they do, they do correctly. They give and receive with both hands. They both give and answer greetings with proper terms of respect. An outsider, however, can rarely observe such behaviour naturally in the young child. He has been so

606 514 *of the American Folk-Lore Society*, vol. xxxv, pp. 129 ff.) The terms used are as follows:

Exact terms	*Euphemisms*
To urinate, *oku sūsā*	*oku talamēlāho*, lit. 'to stand to something'.
(urine, *ovāsū*)	*oku litapela*, lit. 'to water oneself' (said of a child when it wets itself or its bed).
To defecate, *oku nia*	*oku enda husenge*, lit. 'to go to the bush'.
(faeces, *eniña*)	*oku enda hafeka*, lit. 'to go to the country'.

The verb *oku nia* is used as a strong or profane expletive or interjectory phrase, especially in the first person with *etaili* (to-day), as *Etaili nda nia.* The verb is customarily left off.

Études Bakongo, p. 262.

Cf. the proverb: *Wa sema, wa imba: wa tumbuka, wa popia*, 'He mispronounces, he sings: he babbles, he speaks.'

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thoroughly drilled in fear of the stranger that he can rarely act naturally in the presence of one. 867

Physical development. From the time that the child is weaned his physical development proceeds more slowly on the whole than is the case with the children of European peoples. This slow development continues to be noticeable through childhood and adolescence. In early childhood there also seems to take place an increase in the rate of mortality. These facts may be due, at least in part, to specific deficiencies of diet. As has been noted, the customary diet of the Ovimbundu is lacking in fats, in calcium, and in certain vitamins, elements which are very necessary for the growing child, and which, before weaning, the mother's milk had supplied. The difference in physical well-being as between babies and children after weaning is marked among the Ovimbundu. 145

CHAPTER VI

[p. 98]

CHILDHOOD

The Child (*onefie* or *omõlã*[1])

857 (*From the achievement of physical independence until about nine years*)

866 'If a toddling child (*omõlã ocisembe*) has finished learning to walk and expects a younger sibling, he is not carried any more and even though his mother should go to (visit) another village, he will stay behind perfectly well without crying. Now he has changed a great deal: that which he formerly did, he now no longer does.' This statement is perhaps a little optimistic, but it may be taken as sufficiently realistic and representative for practical purposes.

The child continues to see the same adults and to play with the same children as before, i.e. those of his own home village, but with two differences which the narratives will bring out. *First*, he is not now dependent to such an extent upon the elder sibling or cousin, and this independence brings the beginning of his life-long association with his age-mates. *Second*, the sex division of society begins for him at this time. From about eight years of age boys and girls will play in sex groups, and boys will begin to eat in the *onjango* with their fathers, girls continuing in the kitchen with mother and the younger siblings. The child does not go beyond the sheltering friendliness of the village except in the company of adults until toward the middle of this period of childhood. With mother or father he may often go to the fields or on excursions to neighbouring villages or to the chief's village.

861 The conscious education of the child is very much intensified from the time he achieves independence, but parents rarely realize the importance of the years from about four until about eight when little boys begin eating in the *onjango*. Theoretically the balance between the male and female sides of the house, characteristic of Umbundu social structure, is maintained in the training and education of the children. Actually what generally happens is that, until about eight, the mother and the older sibling or cross-cousin are very largely responsible for whatever is given and after that the father becomes responsible for the boys while the mother continues with the girls. This arrangement is modified somewhat by

[1] *Omõlã* is the term generally used but its primary meaning is *son* or *daughter*.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

the father's taking children of either sex with him on trips and by their being sent to stay for periods with the mother's family (*olusina*). 861

During this early period the child's education is comprised largely under three heads: (1) psychological, chiefly fear of real and imaginary dangers; (2) social, chiefly usages of etiquette and acquaintance with the kinship structure and its requirements; and (3) practical, or the beginning of skills. The first is imparted by mother, elder siblings, and perhaps by a grandmother. The second is taught both consciously and unconsciously by every older relative with whom the child comes into contact. The third is undertaken by elder siblings or cousins of the same sex. After illustrating the process of each of these three, I shall try to summarize the Umbundu theory of personality and then pass on to the activities of later childhood.

1. *Psychological.* 'Children have no fear of ghosts unless there is someone who has told them of ghosts, or tried to imitate their cries or to make them see one. If after dark a child teases and cries, his mother may say, If you cry like that a ghost (*ocilūlū*) will come and eat you. Since it is dark the child is startled, thinking there are ghosts, and he becomes quiet. Sometimes she tells him, Look out for the oxen, *mu, mu*, or perhaps it will be a leopard. Since the child does not see it, he may disbelieve his mother and think that what she says is untrue. Then again she may name a person, but since the child knows what a person is, but sees none, he will not stop (crying). Often if a child does not go to sleep quickly, his mother may say, Look out, the little old woman will come and pour live coals on your head and you will burn up. Hurry up and go to sleep. Then the child may leave the fireplace in a hurry and fall right into bed trembling. Sometimes a mother may send an elder sibling outside to the threshing-floor, to cry like a hyena, *ī . . . . ī . . . . ī*, while she herself stays in to mock the child, saying, He is crying and coming to eat you up. In the house the child hears the noise and shrieks, Don't come, don't come, I shan't cry any more, I'm going to sleep. It is from such things as these that children's fears come, from long ago until to-day. Children hear these things in their own houses from their parents, from their cross-cousins (*apalume*), from their elder siblings, or from their grandmothers. These same children, however, when they become adults, again begin to emphasize belief in ghosts with their little 869

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869 children, even though they may not have seen them themselves. Sometimes at night when it is desired to send a child saying, Go and fetch such-and-such a thing (*ongandi*), then he will begin to tremble, for since it is as black as sin . . . he thinks to himself saying, Everything is full of ghosts, maybe they'll catch me if I go outside. . . . The male parent does not like to teach the children such great fear of ghosts, and he may say, He has great fear of ghosts, and that is a sorcerer which also kills people. There, there, my child, go and get what they've sent you for; fear is not good, go on, my child.'

There is a good deal of realism in ascribing most of the teaching of fear to the 'side of the basket', but it should be remembered, however, that the narrative was composed by men. Fear is also instilled through folk-tales telling of punishments inflicted by the spirits and by various mythical monsters. The fact of their being told at night also adds to their effectiveness.

867 2. *Social Usage*. 'Children are generally ignorant until they have been taught by their relatives with whom they live. First the parents, or an elder sibling, may ask the child saying, Who is this? He answers, Mother (*Mai*) or Father (*Tate*) (as the case may be). If the child is the first-born, his cross-cousins (*apalume*) may try him out, saying, Revile your Mother, and (if) he reviles her, they will remember that he has no fear of his mother or his father and they will say, *Avoyo*,[1] the child has no sense (*olondunge*) yet.

'When the child has grown a little so that he appears as one who should distinguish those who are worthy of respect, they try him again, saying, Revile[2] your elder sibling (*huvove*), and he reviles him; Revile your mother (*nyõhõ*), and he does, Revile your father (*so*), but he refuses. Then they recognize that the child now has sense (*olondunge*) and so they switch him with switches. From that time the child ceases (to revile) and begins to respect all people. He does not again err in thinking that only Father is worthy of respect, but rather all people whoever they may be.[3] Children are verbally

[1] *Avoye*, an expletive expressive of surprise, disgust, &c., according to context and tone used.

[2] *Tuka*, to revile, to speak evil. The child may say, so-and-so is bad (*huka*), or so-and-so stinks (*lihã*), or so-and-so is 'crazy' (*tupa*), or he may simply say I revile him (*Ndu tuka*). *Tuka* comes from the same root as *tukula*, to call by name.

[3] i.e. those older than the child. Only those of one's age set or older may merit respect.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

warned against that which is taboo (*eci ci kola*)—anger, theft, and doing evil to people. Should a child hear bad words from children with whom he stays when his parents go to the fields, he will imitate them and if elders hear him they will report. When parents go off to the fields they warn their child saying, When you stay here in the village, do not wound your playmate or put out his eye, lest it bring trouble (*ovimbu*, lit. 'fines') on your family. Or again, As to stealing eggs or snatching from the pot cooking on the fire, don't do it. Should your playmate say, Let's go and steal such-and-such a thing, you run away; and don't greet a person you don't know lest you may find trouble (*ovimbu*). Then the child will remain with that fear.

'From his infancy a child is bashful about coming in where elders are, but a little later he likes to be among them to hear what they are saying and to become accustomed to the points of their talk. In order to catch them (the points), he is quiet. He notices how they greet people, whether in the morning or during the day, or again how they greet guests coming from afar; for there are great differences between the various greetings. Even a small child may be taught to greet people until he is accustomed to it and remembers that people are to be greeted. But if a child grows up without learning to greet people (i.e. properly), they will say of him, His parents taught him badly, the child is a fool for when he meets people he does not greet them, not even guests. His parents will hear it said that their child has not been taught, that he is an indecent fellow, and that even among those who make shame, he does even that which ties up with shame. Among people he speaks standing up instead of bowing over or kneeling and snapping his fingers (i.e. for permission to speak).

'His parents must teach him to direct his glance properly that his eyes remain properly in his head.[1] Likewise his mouth, if while he is speaking he should twist it to one side, then if his parents or his grandmother should see it, they will warn him saying, Your mouth, you must not twist it to the side while you speak, lest people should think, He ridicules (us). The child is taught that while speaking with a person he must neither eat, nor

[1] I.e. he must not look his interlocutor in the eye. It is proper to remain with downcast look or to look away at something else. Europeans not understanding this demeanour take it to indicate inattention. One of our pupils failed in his official school examination for this reason, in January 1938.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

867 spit, nor toy with anything in his hand. Should his knees knock together, *puaki puaki*,[1] when he runs, they will warn him (against it), saying, Lest when you are grown you may retain the habit and may not be able to walk properly as everyone walks. When a visitor comes into the hut to visit with his parents, while they talk, the well-taught child does not interrupt but is strictly silent, for it is taboo. Otherwise, it would be said, Their child has been taught as by a widow,[2] interrupting when people converse. But if he is spoken to, he must reply with care and with respect to the person speaking, saying, Yes sir (*nã oco*); Yes, thank you (*ã kuku*, lit. yes, great-grandfather!); Yes indeed, thank you (*oco muẽlã a kuku*); Sir Lion (*nã Hoi*); Ah, Sir Lord (*Nã a Ñalã*); Ah, Master of the Paws (*nã a Cime-cakasa*).[3]

'Should the elders send him (somewhere), he will obey quickly. He will also imitate the elders in everything. Then they may say of him, This boy now begins to have the habits of adults. They may begin to liken him to someone who died a long time ago. Those who have known his family may say, This child completes so-and-so (*Ngandi*), surely he is likely to be the inheritor of so-and-so (*Kapiñalã ka Ngandi*), perhaps it is his great-grandfather.[4]

'These then are the habits which belong to being grown-up and should a person omit them, people's words will have no meaning for him, and he will have lost his chance.'

From the foregoing it will be seen that a child of about eight is supposed to know his social status and all the etiquette which pertains to it. Where the *onjango* (men's club) still functions as an institution, there the boys learn much of the Umbundu way of life, for there they eat daily in company with all the men and boys of the village. Children are supposed to learn 'table-manners' by watching and imitating their elders. In the *onjango* the hierarchy of age is observed, honoured guests and old men being served first, and so on down the line. Guests are provided with individual (574) servings, but it is hardly proper for one to finish up everything. Any one of the boys will count it a privilege to do that for him. The greater the guest, the greater the honour to finish his plate. A guest of special category, as, for example, the king, who is unable

[1] *Puaki, puaki*, imitation of the sound made by knees knocking together.

[2] It is proverbial that a widow (alone) is unable to bring up her child. Cf. the proverb: *Ocimbundu ka ci longi omõlã*. 'A widow does not educate a child.'

[3] The last three are addressed only to a king or a chief; the others to any older person of either sex.

[4] The reference is to reincarnation.

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to eat in public, will be served by himself in the *etambo* (spirit-hut). 867
With the decline of the *onjango* as an institution, there has been a great decline in the teaching of etiquette and social usage. As might be expected, this has affected boys more directly than girls. Girls and young women of the present generation and of the generation now coming on are, on the whole, more given to customary usage and forms of civility than are boys and young men. It is probable that contacts with Europeans, which have been going on for more than 150 years, have produced a number of [177] individuals and families who have paid less heed to correct usage and have neglected to teach children properly, but never has there been the wholesale disregard which is now encountered. If the analogy of the South African Bantu peoples is any criterion, a reaction back to things Umbundu may soon be expected. Some observers feel that it is already under way.

Little direct sex teaching is attempted, but the very fact of the 864
sex division of society is a considerable factor.

'A mother will teach her daughter saying, A girl does not play with boys, for boys are sharp ones.[1] Don't play with them. This advice is because of sex, although the child may not understand it at the time. But when the boys call her, she will remember the advice of her mother and may quickly reply, saying, My mother says, Don't play with boys: they'll hurt you. Thus she has taken to heart what her mother has told her and may go ahead in the same way. But as she grows up and separates from her parents,[2] then she may separate herself from their teaching.' Young children acquire incidentally a good deal of knowledge about sex both from other children and from adults. Although adults observe considerable reticence in speaking of sexual matters in the presence of children, living as they do with their parents in one-room homes, it is inevitable that sexual intercourse should sometimes be observed by children.[3] Although euphemisms of speech are employed in the presence of children, all the true terms are known by them. Hetero-sexual play is not in vogue.

[1] *Jundilli*, lit. sharpened stakes such as those used at the bottom of a pit-fall to trap game.

[2] i.e. at adolescence, when she leaves her mother to stay with other girls of her age.

[3] Cf. Father Van Wing on the Congo child: 'A six ans . . . il en emporte une connaissance de la vie qui ferait rougir de bons jeunes gens d'Europe' (op. cit., p. 262).

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

291 The practice and teaching of modesty seem to have been chang-
554 ing considerably for a long time. The influence of Europeans has doubtless had its effect, but more fundamental, it seems, has been the effect of increasingly generalized use of clothing, a process which began perhaps 200 years ago, but is yet far from complete. The time when boy or girl may begin to wear clothing is determined less by age than by the economic status of his family. There seems to be no shame (on the part of the child) connected with late wearing of clothes, but once a child has begun to wear a cloth, he or she is taught that it is shameful to take it off in the presence of those who are older. That this attitude is not of recent origin is attested by its appearance in a biographical narrative which goes back sixty years or more.[1] A large proportion of the women have only enough cloth for workaday wear for a short skirt, so that they leave the torso bare, but once one becomes accustomed to covering the torso always, she would be ashamed not to. This feeling belongs more to the field of economic status than to that of modesty. This shows up clearly in the strong objection to being ragged (*epèlè*), which has nothing to do with modesty but rather with economic status. The narrative concludes the teaching of social usage with this observation: 'From the time that children first enter into the school of understanding (*olondunge*), parents recognize that it is proper to respect them, rather than to revile them or tell them that which is evil.'

868 3. *Training in skills.* Before the age of eight or nine, children acquire few definite skills. Many of their games, however, are in imitation of adult activities, and adults recognize their preparatory nature and value. The little girl in caring for her younger sibling acquires certain skills, but with little or no definite adult guidance. Little boys begin early to make and set traps and snares under the tuition of an elder sibling or cousin. The first rat or bird caught belongs to the tutor. Games of many sorts are played: games with sides, round games, games with an 'It', imaginative games, and competitive games; games demanding skill, especially with dances of some intricacy. Games in imitation of animals are favourites, including 'birdcalls', in which very ingenious words are set to the bird songs.

604 4. The Ovimbundu have a custom somewhat comparable to
867 what Vedder calls '*child insurance*' among the Herero,[2] i.e., the

[1] From a manuscript by Daniel Kalei of Bailundu.
[2] In Hahn *et al.*, op. cit., p. 177.

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sending of children to stay with relatives or friends. The Ovimbundu consider it definitely an educational device. From the age of six or seven years children are sent singly or in pairs to spend as much as one or two years in the home of the mother's brother. If conditions are favourable they may also be sent to stay with the father's sister or brother, and girls (other than the first-born) may be sent to the mother's mother. Formerly, prominent families arranged for their sons to stay in the king's capital. These periods spent away from home may continue well into adolescence. Not only relatives but also friends, blood-brothers, and *vakuacisoko* (members of a certain communal order)[1] exchange children for certain periods in this way. This custom is by no means dead. It is now being carried on even within the Christian community. Its educational purpose is obvious.

604 867 [608]

Later Childhood

(*From about nine years until puberty*)

There is no definite time which marks the transition from early to later childhood, but there are marked differences between the two periods. The chief criterion is one of physical development for as soon as the child is physically able, he will begin to assume a definite role in the work of the adult community. This rarely comes before nine years of age and may be somewhat delayed. Soon after a child gets the permanent teeth, a notch in the form of an inverted V (Λ) is chipped between the two upper front incisors.[2] This is a sort of national mark which many people omit to give their children at present. The line of observance is not sharply drawn as between Christians and non-Christians, as with the Herero.[3]

858 [304]

Formerly, the beginning of the period was well marked for the boy by his first trip with a trading caravan. Most of the present older generation have had this experience and nearly every man of the present middle-aged generation as well. Nowadays the boy of this age may begin to work in the fields with his father, he may begin to learn a trade, or he may be sent to school. Few Ovimbundu put their children in school before this age, and they evidently do not believe that younger children would profit by the instruction

868

[1] See *infra*, p. 114 f.
[2] See Hambly, op. cit., Plates XLIX and LIV.
[3] Vedder in Hahn *et al.*, op. cit., p. 177 f.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

868 offered.[1] Boys may also help with younger siblings and fetch wood and water especially if there is no girl in the family, but it is my impression that at this age boys find much more time for play than do girls.

The girl of this age has already been performing useful tasks for several years in helping to care for the younger siblings or younger cousins, but the eagerness with which a girl takes up the care of a younger child makes it evident that she considers that activity rather in the nature of play. If there is no baby for whom she is expected to be responsible, she may borrow one from a neighbour. It seems almost more natural for her to carry a baby than to carry a doll (made of an ear of maize). This she will do only if she lacks a baby. Field-work and housework, chiefly the cultivation and preparation of food, are the adult activities which she must learn and which she regards as work.

861 The Ovimbundu consider that a child's socio-psychological education should be completed during early childhood. It is felt that after this time direct instruction should not be necessary, but reproof may be given should a child omit a usage or commit a fault. Should a child have plainly failed to attain the customary standards, a fatalistic attitude is often assumed as illustrated by this proverb:

[538] *Omõlã wa linga Cipupuhungunju;*
The child has become a worthless thing.
Nda longele, Nda hava.
I have done with educating, I am tired.

868 *Acquiring skills.* Later childhood is the time *par excellence* for technical education. That is the time recognized for beginning to learn a profession (*ocipinduko*), and a boy is expected to try that in which either his father or his mother's brother is expert. After that, should he wish to learn some other profession and can find a master, he may apprentice himself. All children, both boys and girls, are expected to learn to cultivate, but that is not counted as a profession as the following clearly shows:

'As to cultivating (*oku lima*), formerly the purpose was only for food, that one may not be hungry, whether during the dry season (*okuenye*), or during the rains (*ondombo*), that a person and his

[1] Considering the type of formal education available, the Ovimbundu are probably right: young children need far more activity than the formal school offers or allows.

children may have enough food. Therefore while parents have 868
their children with them, they teach them, saying, Let us work that we may have much food, for if a person lacks food he will die of hunger, or perhaps he may steal from another's field and get into trouble. Children must be diligent in working.

'But should a parent have a child who does not want to work, the parent may beat that child to teach him sense lest he may be a sluggard (*ocinili*). Parents have a proverb saying, [538]

U wa ku vetela[1] *hepia,*
He who you beat in the field
ka ku vetele,
did not you punish
wa ku longisa olondunge.
he you taught sense.

'Before beginning, parents always encourage their children to 461
work. Cultivation, however, is not counted as a profession 241
(*ocipinduko*). Should a person cultivate a great deal so that from his field he has very much food, then people will take notice and say, So-and-so has enslaved a spirit[2] to the seeds, he has spirits (*ihili*) and they are helping him. That causes great fear, for people fear (those who) have spirits.[3] Thus, even though a person should purpose to teach another how to cultivate in order to have much food, the other will only apparently agree[4] because of his fear. Therefore the work of cultivation is not sought after as a profession by children, for they say, Being a farmer (*ongunja*)[5] is the work of sorcerers (*olongunga*) and not of ordinary people.'[6]

[1] *Vetela* is the relative mood (or form) of the verb *ulu vete*. There is a pun in its use here since it is also used with *epia* in the sense of breaking ground for a new field.

[2] The verb used here—*ulu undeka, undekula*—means securing the services of a person's spirit by killing the person (whether by witchcraft or by actual violence). The person is often a child and often of one's own family. In some cases parts of the body are said to have been kept for subsequent ritual use, e.g. bones and flesh dried and ground for 'fertilizer', or the skull for a drinking-cup. It will be seen that this is sorcery. The reflexive form of this verb, *ulu kundeka*, means to form a blood-brotherhood, but it is a sorcerer's pact involving the sacrifice of a third person. 754

[3] The expression used means either to have or to have the reputation for having.

[4] He agrees with *ocenya*, a term commonly translated as 'irony' or 'contempt'.

[5] This is the term which we commonly use for 'farmer'. Its connotation should be understood.

[6] This section is translated from a manuscript by Raul Kavita Ewandi of Ciyuka.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

556 The attitude toward success in agriculture indicated by the
578 foregoing is held in some measure toward marked success in other
472 professions, but in lesser degree, except perhaps where trading is taken up individually or by two persons in partnership. One of the earliest observers, Pinheiro de Lacerda (*c.* 1790), noted that accusations of witchcraft were most often levelled at the wealthier members of the community.[1] This fear of success has continued down to the present day, but while trading was an open group enterprise in which many individuals acquired wealth, success in that field came to be accepted more quickly than in the more individualistic work of farming. At the present time, commercial activities are carried on largely by individuals alone or in a limited partnership, and the practice, or at least the suspicion, of witchcraft in connexion with them seems to be on the increase. Some may feel that similar attitudes with regard to successful results from cultivation of the soil are now held less strongly than formerly, but
[754] I know of no evidence to support such a feeling. One of the commonest traditional patterns for witchcraft is that of a partnership of a senior and a junior member—of parent and child, or of mother's brother and sister's son. That is one reason why urgent suggestions by an older person concerning choice of a profession by a younger are looked upon with disfavour among the Ovimbundu.

868 A child should be taught enough diligence and application in
562 cultivating that he or she may not lack the necessities in later adult life. Every boy will take to trading and bargaining almost as naturally as eating, drinking, breathing, and sleeping. Commerce still retains so much of its former glamour that every boy will take it up if and when opportunity offers. The care of younger children comes even more naturally to the girl, and she must also learn the housekeeper's art. Many folk-tales and songs indicate a reluctance on the part of girls to dedicate themselves with diligence to cultivation. In the days of the rubber trade, when girls could also join caravans for the coast and to the interior as porters, there may have been some real basis for this, but at the present time girls are convinced and enthusiastic cultivators, almost 100 per cent.[2] The

[1] *Annaes Maritimos e Coloniaes*, 5e Ser., p. 489 f.

[2] Women coming to live in the coast towns or in other European settlements where they have no fields or gardens find adjustment to life without agricultural labours very difficult.

1: Childh M-S (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

heavy tasks and the close and constant routine of housework, on the other hand, sometimes require more than casual urging by the mother. Biographical evidence agrees with observation on this point, but nevertheless few girls reach puberty without attaining proficiency in the various household tasks. The decline of polygyny has probably hastened the girl's education in the household arts. When there is only one wife in the household, not only must she have more regular help from her daughters, but also it is more likely that the daughters will have to take on full responsibility at those times when the mother is unable for ritual reasons to take part in the preparation of her husband's food.[1] Biographical sources indicate that this tendency was already operating at least fifty or sixty years ago.

Every Ocimbundu assumes that his sustenance will come from cultivation of the soil. The 'professions' which a child may learn are therefore in the nature of side-lines. Although the Ovimbundu are not a true cattle-rearing people, they possess many domestic animals, especially dogs, pigs, sheep, goats, and chickens. Chickens are owned and looked after by both men and women, but the other animals only by the men. Boys may have small stock of their own, and a boy's economic independence most frequently begins with owning a chicken. Herding has been a function of the sister's son and even now there is reluctance on the part of boys to herd for their fathers. Animal husbandry is largely a commercial enterprise, save in the extreme southern tribes of Kalukembe, Ngalangi, &c.

The principal side-line 'professions' (*ovipindulo*) may be listed as follows:

For Girls

Basket-making, which is practised by all to a limited extent, but excelled in by relatively few.

Pottery-making.

Medical-practice and Divination (for conditions, see *infra*).

For Boys

Mat-making, which includes the making of four distinct types of mats each of which has its specialist; the making of trays and large baskets for granaries.

[1] i.e. at the times of her menstrual periods, after the birth of a ch

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

463 *Wood-working*, including the *following specializations:*
462 Doors, windows, and their frames; coffins.
[322] Beds, tables, chairs, &c.
Mortars, pestles, grinding-handles, and handles for various iron implements.
Stools, household utensils, carved images, staves, knobkerries, &c.
Drums and other musical instruments.
Canoes (dug-outs and coracles).
Rope-making, nets, and rudimentary weaving.
Thatching has its specialists although all men can thatch.
Fishing.
Bee-hunting, including the making of hives.
224 *Hunting*.
326 *Iron-smelting and smithing*.
791 *Medical-practice and Divination*.

The last three professions of the list are sacred and are entered under special conditions. They are often passed on by inheritance, but not always. All of them require sacrifice at certain stages, and when the enslavement of a spirit (*olu andeka*) is required, it is socially allowable. This seems to be the case with these offices as with those of the king and his ministers, both because of benefits accruing to the community in their exercise and also because of inherent danger to the individuals who exercise these functions.

177 The advent of European commerce, industry, and government
463 has created a number of types of employment for boys and young men, some of which entail prolonged absence from the village and a loosening or severing of kinship ties. Church and mission have
[791] also offered employment and have opened new opportunities for advance in place and in position.

861 Later childhood, then, is the period of technical training during which it is expected that a large amount of economic responsibility will be assumed. A child begins to own property even before this, and from the beginning of later childhood will be accounted legally responsible for his actions. It is recognized, however, that he should not be set tasks beyond the experience or ability of his age and that the full responsibility of adulthood will only come with marriage.

[538] *Umãlihi ha tonyõlõ ongulu yunala;*
A youth does not scrape the pig for the wedding feast;
pekunjo pa siala (ovunya).
on the hoof there remain (bristles).

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

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CHAPTER VII

ADOLESCENCE

From Puberty until Marriage

The Youth (*Ukuneje* or *umálihi*); The Girl (*Ufeko*)

THE onset of puberty is generally late among the Ovimbundu both 146
for boys and for girls.[1] The number of individuals who have exact records of their birth is not yet large, and for other reasons it is difficult to collect a large mass of exact data on this subject. From exact data in a few cases, biographical and genealogical data in more, and observation of a great many, I have concluded that, in general, puberty comes for girls at about fourteen to sixteen and for boys at about fifteen to seventeen. I have the impression that this may be due to faulty diet and other poor conditions of living. A careful study of this problem might yield interesting and significant results.

Soon after puberty young people generally stop sleeping in the 881
parents' house. The girls congregate in kitchens and each boy 342
builds himself a house. 'When he builds he does not wait for anyone to act as his teacher at all: he just goes ahead. A boy's father will show him saying, Begin there your house; stand a pole here, another there, and in the ground between, run a trench straight through. Then he will begin to cut poles and after that to build (the house) and thatch it. On the day of plastering it, they will show him how to mix the mud and throw it on, right up to the eaves.'[2] This is the boy's own house in which he will live through adolescence and young manhood, and to which he will bring his bride.

Before his marriage can take place, there must be a great deal of 883
preparation, most of which must be undertaken by the young man himself, just as he has himself built the house. Umbundu adolescent development involves growth and progress on those lines already begun in childhood, but it takes on a conscious urge and direction, for it is now preparation for the responsibilities of adult life,

[1] This is in contradiction to the opinion given by Magyar (op. cit., p. 283). Might it be that dietary and other conditions of life have changed enough in eighty years to produce this result? I think it more likely that Magyar's observations were faulty.

[2] R. Kavita Evambi: manuscript cited.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1960) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

883 chiefly for marriage. Indeed, marriage is the beginning of adulthood; no Ocimbundu is considered fully an adult until married.

841 Where the initiation camps have not taken hold, i.e. among the great majority of the people, it is the father's sister (*epahli*) whose duty it is, at least in theory, to tell her brother's daughter how she should take care of herself during the times of menstrual flow. Actually a girl generally learns such things from observation and from girls of the immediately superior age-group, her sisters and cousins. She will not need to be told that during those times a girl or woman must not even touch anything belonging to a man and especially she must have nothing to do with preparing his food. This period is known as 'sitting on the ground' (*oku tumãlã posi*) since that is what a woman is supposed to do at that time. Modern usage has also taken that phrase to mean 'unemployment'.[1]

582 In the house which the boy or young man has built for himself, one of the most characteristic customs of adolescence among the Ovimbundu takes place: the trial marriage. There are several Umbundu names for this custom, as *oku tumisa* (lit. to cause to send), referring to the fact that the young man sends a male friend or relative both to ask permission of the girl's mother and also to bring the girl each night to his hut. Names for the correlative but all-inclusive custom are *uponji*, the girl being called *eponji*; and *uvuini*, the girl being called *ombuini*. A young man may first *tumisa* at about seventeen to eighteen years of age, but he must have acquired enough to make small presents to the girl and to her parents and he must have or have in prospect money or goods sufficient to make the betrothal payment.[2] This payment is known as *itambelo*, 'enticements', or *oku lupula ikuelume*, 'chasing away jealousies'. This indicates that the custom of *uvuini* is definitely regarded as a prelude to marriage. For this reason, the term 'trial [886] marriage' is preferred to that of 'premarital sexual intercourse'. The nature of the intercourse, moreover, is carefully circumscribed. 'When the respective parents have agreed, then those of the girl will warn her saying, Should that boy be bad, and want to play with your cloth, even though it be late at night, run away.'[3] In such a case the boy's parents would take him to task and require that for the time being he sleep in their kitchen and so under

[1] For early notice of this cf. Magyar, op. cit., p. 284.
[2] From 10,00 to 50,00 *Angolares* according to locality, family, status, &c.
[3] From a manuscript dictated by R. Kalupetekia of Ngalangi.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

observation, and not in his own house. During that time he will not be allowed to *tumisa*. Or again, 'the girl's parents may warn her saying, Should the boy try *to sting*[1] you, do not let him: do not stay, but run away.'[2] All informants stress the point that the chief purpose of the custom is that the two young people may come to know each other as well as possible with marriage in view. There are severe sanctions against premarital pregnancy; fines to be paid by the young man or his family, lessened desirability for the girl in marriage, and a distinction in the ceremony between brides who are virgin and those who are not. Proofs of virginity are required on the marriage morning. Those families and regions which have girls' initiation camps include in the procedure a test of virginity.[3] There are not the periodic tests of virginity which are found among the Zulus, Mpondos, &c.,[4] but the Ovimbundu do not expect that the contact will be as close as these other tribes evidently do.[5] The closest parallel which I know is with the (American) colonial custom of 'bundling'.

It is said that the custom of *uponji* has been in a decadent state for a long time. This is not only because of its having been misunderstood and forbidden by the church or the missions.[6] Although this is partly the case, the chief difficulty came from the time of the rubber trade (1874–1900) when young men began without ceremony to go to the kitchens to sleep with girls instead of properly arranging matters. Whether their affluence made them reckless (i.e. of expected fines, &c.), or whether they were apeing Europeans or the customs of other tribes, is not known. At any rate, it is said that for large numbers of people this put an end to propriety. Numbers of Europeans began to settle in the country from 1891 (Viye) and 1903 (Bailundu and elsewhere), and from then until now casual relations have very greatly increased year by year.[7] That the Ovimbundu have held to their traditional forms

[1] *Lumuna*, euphemism for insemination.

[2] From a statement by R. Kavita Evambi of Ciyaka.

[3] A pullet's egg is used for the test (manuscript by R. Kavita Evambi).

[4] Krige in Schapera, 1937, op. cit., p. 110 f.

[5] Among the songs which I have collected are two sung by girls to tease the young men and with references to nights spent in *uponji*.

[6] *Ussisi* has been used in translations for 'fornication' or 'adultery' and used so persistently that it has now nearly come to have those meanings. The *Umbundu-English Vocabulary* (1911) gave a correct definition for *eponji* but not for *uponji*; its references to *ombaisi* and *usuisi* are likewise in error, while *tumisa* is not listed.

[7] Information from R. Kahupeteka and others.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

178 of marriage through all these changes, whether with or without
936 the trial marriage, is a testimony to the vitality of their culture.

Young people of the same age-groups are thrown constantly
883 more closely together during adolescence in all their activities and in all aspects of their life. Strengthening of the age-groups is therefore to be expected. New names are taken at this time and the names received at birth discarded so far as possible. Boys used to go off together on hunts, on trading expeditions, &c. The girls work more individually in the fields, but are together in such communal labours as harvests. The preparation of food allows them more sociability and they have the additional advantage of congregating in kitchens not only for meals, but for the night as well. Ceremonial and social occasions are always opportunities for those of the same age-groups to get together. There is a limited amount of fagging of the immediately inferior age-group, but it is not institutionalized save where initiation camps have entered the picture.

883 Folk-lore, music, and the dance have very important roles in the
535 education of the young. The Bantu are probably among the most
533 naturally musical of all peoples and the Ovimbundu are perhaps excelled by few other Bantu. Their vocal ability is certainly superior to that of several of their immediate neighbours. Many of their songs are sung in connexion with dances. Other musical forms are road and work songs. Dancing is much enjoyed during adolescence but by no means only at that time, for it is learned in early childhood, very soon after walking, and continued on through life as long as the man or woman can get about unaided. It is a great sight to see toddlers, hardly more than able to walk, climb down off their mothers' backs and try a few steps at dancing; or again, to see a wizened and white-haired old man or woman step out and execute a *pas seul* on some ceremonial occasion. The adolescents, however, enjoy their dancing most, and they are the originators of most of the new steps and new dances which appear from time to time. The dance is of great importance to Umbundu life: social, educational, and ceremonial.

It remains to speak briefly of two institutions, neither of which is practised extensively throughout the country, nor does either seem to be a typical or integral part of Umbundu culture. These are the institutions of initiation at puberty, and the communistic order of the *vakuacisoko* (lit. 'those of the set').

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The extent to which the order of the *vakuacisoko* exists at present or has existed among the Ovimbundu would be a very interesting subject of inquiry. It is certain that the institution does not exist throughout the territory but only in certain families which belong to the order and pass on membership in it by heredity. Whether there are certain regions where it is or was in the past more strongly held to is not known. It seems to be or to have been more strongly entrenched among the cattle-rearing people to the south, but it is also said to have been practised in Lupolo (Libolo) and even in the region of Luanda.[1] Among the Ovimbundu it seems to have been stronger in the past than at present. Few if any practising members of the set are now known. All 'coevals' or members of the set were in duty bound to render mutual assistance. All had mutual rights to the property of the others without complaint or remedy. These mutual rights seem to have been extended to the extreme limit of having intercourse with each other's wives, nor did the injury or even the death of one brought about by another allow the injured family to seek revenge or legal redress. It was the duty of *vakuacisoko* to bury their fellows, themselves digging the grave and attending to all expenses not already supplied by the family. Theirs was also the duty of burying strangers without family who would not be buried by others fearing defilement or responsibility for their debts. Bastos gives a tradition ascribing the origin of this institution to a wager laid between two chiefs.[2] It seems more probable, however, that it is connected with circumcision and tribal initiation. An analogous set of rights and duties is said to have existed among the Herero between 'coevals' circumcised at the same time.[3]

Tribal initiation for both boys (*oku lisevi:a evamba*) and girls (*uso wakãi*) is carried on in camps or 'schools' in the southern and south-eastern tribes of the Ovimbundu. These camps are regularly held in Kalukembe, Kakonda, and Ngalangi. Sporadic instances of individual camps have also occurred recently in Viye, Bailundu, Sambu, Wambu, Cingolo, and Cikuma. Even in those regions where camps are regularly held, only the children of certain families enter. It seems that there has been some passing on of the custom by heredity and, in general, there is intermarriage only between families and individuals who adhere to the initiation rites.

[1] Bastos, 1909, op. cit., pp. 67–70.
[2] Ibid., p. 69 f.
[3] Vedder in Hahn *et al.*, op. cit., p. 178.

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881 rites. It seems, however, that it is largely by imitation that the
171 camps have spread from Kalukembe, Kakonda, and Ngalangi into adjoining regions. The girls' camps have been less often imitated
881 in these other regions than have those for boys. Whether these
174 rites may have been taken over by the Ovimbundu from the practice of neighbouring peoples, or whether they may have survived from the customs of a culture previously prevalent in the region, is a question. In favour of the latter hypothesis is the fact that nearly all the neighbouring peoples seem to have or to have had these rites in one form or another and also that certain of the Umbundu kings are required to be circumcised before they can assume office. On the other hand, if the camps were held at all in former times, they must have been exceedingly inconspicuous to have escaped the notice of all the older writers. Bastos (1909) stated 'The Ovimbundu proper do not practise it (circumcision).'[1] Neither Silva Porto (1840–90), nor Magyar (1849–57), nor Pinheiro de Lacerda (*c.* 1790) makes any reference to initiation rites. The missionaries who came to the country in 1880 seem first to have encountered these camps on the Luimbi borders about 1900 but elsewhere hardly before 1915. The conclusion seems to be that it was toward the end of the rubber trade (1911) that the initiation camps were either revived or taken over from the neighbouring cultures to the south and east.[2] Whether initiation rites may spread further among the Ovimbundu or not remains to be seen. Their main emphasis seems to be quite contrary to the more typical trend of Umbundu education. The initiation camps of Ngalangi and Kakonda with their definite break from, and contrast to, the routine of life not only differ from the regular method of instruction but are quite contrary to it. In their methods of educating the young, the Ovimbundu certainly may be characterized as casual. The special times and occasions of education are the regular cycles of the social and economic life and special discipline to enforce specific teaching is used but rarely. The

[1] Bastos, op. cit., p. 50.

[2] Differences in these rites as practised by the various neighbouring tribes would form an interesting study. The majority initiate both boys and girls at or near puberty but some practise infant circumcision or circumcision at weaning or at the appearance of the permanent teeth. The Ambo are said to have let boys' initiation lapse but to attach much importance to rites for girls (Hahn *et al.*, op. cit., pp. 27–31). I do not know of any nearby tribes which have for girls either any excision or elongation of the labia. Various tests of virginity are used.

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hardship and the cruelty of the initiation camps have their parallel 881
in the trading and slave-raiding expeditions of the past, but this 174
is practically the only recognizable likeness. May it not be that initiation camps were adopted or revived to fill the lacuna that came about when trading expeditions ceased? As an 'educational institution' they do not seem to fit into the culture.

Whether with or without initiation rites, adolescence is largely 882
preparation for marriage and full adult life. Traditionally, adolescence is not a time of conflict or of stress. Young people who as children had already assumed in considerable degree the responsibilities of life met the onset of puberty and made the transition to adult life without fuss or flourish. On the whole there was relatively small chance for conflict between the generations, since the place of each is recognized as mutually complementary. Nor was there competition between the sexes. This ordered and well-balanced society began to change with the rubber trade, and with the beginning of the present century changes have come rapidly. Contract and *corvée* labour have brought profound changes, especially for the young men. As for the girls, a few have gone to the towns; relatively few however, other than those who attend a boarding-school, lead a life essentially different from that which has been traditionally theirs. Conflict between the generations, adolescence as a period of stress, delinquence, hysteria, and other problems, some of them characteristic of our own culture, are beginning to appear among the young people of the mission schools. I feel that these manifestations are quite uncharacteristic of Umbundu culture.

As for adult life, there are no recognized divisions or separate 885
periods. Adulthood comes with marriage and marriage is only 581
recognized as fully complete with the birth of a child. The early years of marriage and family rearing are years of much hard work with less time for leisure or enjoyment than either before or after. It is not postponed, however, on that account. If the young man marries relatively late, it is largely because of the very considerable economic burdens involved. Singleness is coveted by no one. The Umbundu ideal is mature life when one may have acquired competence, but at any rate is assured of descendants and care in old age. There is not, however, any ceremonial status such as the fixing of the wax ring among the Thonga,[1] nor does the mature Ocimbundu cease to do manual labour. There may be some

[1] Junod, op. cit., 1927, vol. i, p. 129 f.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

885 preference for a polygynous household at this age, but no definite
581 tradition which urges one 'to become lord and master of a complete circular village'.[1] Women are happiest while carrying a baby on the back.

[538] *Onyima yiwa ka yi mõlĩ omõlã,*
Back good (yet) it does not see a child,

888 wails a childless woman. No grandmother is satisfied without herself caring for at least one grandchild. Old age is subject to its own burden of the years but among the Ovimbundu the aged are treated with much respect and deference.

SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS V–VII

561 THE periods in the life of an Ocimbundu may be summarized as follows:

1. The 'Marginal' Period of the First Week (*ocitete*) until the funicle drops.
2. The Baby Proper (second week until about seventh month) (*oñaña*) (from turning black until sitting alone).
3. The Sitting-baby or Toddler (*ocisembe*) (from sitting alone until mastery of walking and completion of weaning).
4. Early Childhood (from weaning until about 9 years) (*oneñe*). Period of socio-psychological education.
5. Later Childhood (from about 9 until puberty) (*omõlã*). Period of technical training and assumption of economic responsibility.
6. Adolescence (from puberty until marriage). Period of preparation for marriage and full adulthood.
7. First Year of Marriage, during which the bride completes her training under her mother-in-law's guidance.
8. Full Adulthood (from birth of first child).

[1] Junod, op. cit., 1927, vol. i, p. 127.

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[p.119]

CHAPTER VIII

ANALYSIS OF UMBUNDU DEVELOPMENT

THE question as to whether there is a Native African education is discussed by Mr. H. S. Scott in the *Year Book of Education 1938*.[1] He notes that anthropologists have insufficiently described the educational processes of the various African peoples and that educationists have been at fault in disregarding indigenous methods. It is to be hoped that the foregoing description of individual development has shown clearly that there is an Umbundu education, the function of which is the integration of the individual in the on-going process of society—the 'moulding of individuals to the social norm'.[2] /21

In order better to understand this process and to determine in what way it may be adapted to meet present needs, it is now necessary to analyse Umbundu educational concepts and methods.

The theory of personality upon which the Ovimbundu act does not seem to be entirely consistent. First, they act as though they believed that the child is born quite without character and that desirable traits have to be consciously formed. 'Children are generally ignorant until they have been taught by their relatives with whom they live.'[3] On this premiss, they proceed to instil psychological attitudes in the young child and to teach him social usages. With the social psychologist they seem to 'regard childhood . . . as an opportunity which must be used in *learning* useful behaviour through social contact'.[4] It is abundantly evident that they regard education as clearly a *social* process. 828

A baby is born pink and it is only when he turns dark at the sixth or eighth day that he shows the first indication of becoming a person (*omunu*). He shows further promise in that direction with his first show of sense, but all through childhood he is, in a

[1] *The Year Book of Education 1938* (Univ. of London, Inst. of Education, London: Evans Bros.), part x, pp. 639 ff.

[2] A. W. Hoernlé, 'An Outline of the Native Conception of Education in Africa', *Africa*, 1931, p. 147. This is quite close to Dewey's conception of education as 'transmission through communication'; cf. *Democracy and Education* (New York: Macmillan, 1916), chap. i.

[3] *Supra*, p. 100.

[4] F. H. Allport, *Social Psychology* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1924), p. 80.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

828 sense, only a *potential* person. The permanency or stability of his personality (*unu*)[1] is only proven when he enters the state of adulthood at marriage. Then it is that he achieves true integration with society. Thus personality appears as a natural process of social integration.

828 On the other hand, the Umbundu belief in reincarnation[2] throws
775 responsibility for determination of personality back upon the ancestral spirits (*olosuku*, *olosande*) or upon the Spirit World or Fate (*Kalunga*). Clearly this belief cuts across the assumption that children are born without definite character whereby the responsibility belongs to the parents. Practically the seeming contradiction seems to be resolved as follows: *potentially* a child's character may be pre-determined by the spirits, but actually or at least until the potentialities become manifest, education may play an important role by providing the spiritual forces with suitable vessels. At about eight or nine years of age the character of the reincarnation, if any, becomes manifest, but the social and psychological education is supposed to be well along by that time. Provision of the vessels and their moulding is, therefore, at the same time an active and a passive function.

The psychological and social education of early childhood and also the imparting of skills all have to do with this active moulding function as the manuscripts quoted have shown. Many folk-tales and proverbs could also be quoted to show the Umbundu ideas with regard to personality.[3]

The more passive function of providing suitable vessels for the indwelling of the spiritual forces is no less important. Even among those who have discarded or are seeking to discard the beliefs of their fathers, this side of educational theory is still important. It
858 has greatly conditioned the outlook of the people. All observers
828 have remarked on the considerate treatment of children by the
775 Ovimbundu, on their recognition of personality in children and respect for it. In the narrative quoted this was seen in the mother's addressing her baby boy as 'little father'[4] and in the first visitors

[1] *Unu* lit. the quality of being a person (*omunu*). The word is used for one's dominant bent, or his character.

[2] See *supra*, p. 102, n. 4.

[3] I have identified about 100 Umbundu proverbs used in or having reference to education. About two-thirds of them deal with the period of early childhood. Their interest is about equally divided between the practical and the more philosophical aspects of life and education.

[4] See *supra*, p. 90.

1: Childs M-S (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

giving the baby the respectful terms of 'my wife' or 'my husband';[1] also in the comment of the narrator that 'parents recognize that it is proper to respect them (children)'[2] and in parents' reluctance to punish. It seems that this respectful treatment of children stems from belief in reincarnation, whereby a child is potentially an ancestor to be respected, deferred to, and even worshipped.

It is doubtful whether at present many children could be found who have really gone through the ceremonial for becoming media for guardian spirits of the family (*olosande*). The drift away from those observances has become a flood. Nevertheless respectful treatment of children remains, perhaps even undiminished, for it still has the force of customary behaviour if not the supernatural sanction. Indulgence on the part of the parents rarely if ever goes to the length of pampering. Belief that the child's character ultimately, or to a large extent, depends upon spiritual forces may lead parents to adopt a sort of fatalism, but that is hardly more serious than the effects of belief in the influence of heredity popularly held in the West. The Ovimbundu do not believe, as do the Zulus, for example, that a child is tainted at birth, needing radical treatment against the subsequent appearance of the taint.[3] With the Ovimbundu the development of personality is a process which may involve spiritual forces, but at all events requires careful human attention.

Education and Society

What then are the means by which the Ovimbundu develop the personalities of their children or mould them to the social norm? Their success indicates that they along with other 'so-called backward races have proved to be educationists . . . of no mean order'.[4] What, then, are their methods?

The educational process is the whole process of life and culture. School is society and society is school; there is no division between adult and child life. Education and life are one. This has been recognized as true for many African and other primitive societies.[5]

[1] *Supra*, p. 89.
[2] *Supra*, p. 104.
[3] See Krige, op. cit., p. 67.
[4] W. D. Hambly, *Origins of Education among Primitive Peoples* (London: Macmillan, 1926), p. 421.
[5] See the interesting analysis of M. Fortes, *Social and Psychological Aspects of Education in Taleland*, p. 8 f. (Supplement to *Africa*, Oct. 1938); Margaret

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861 This unity of 'the social sphere of adult and child' is a striking
867 feature of the Umbundu educational process. A child learns by actual participation in adult activities. He participates as soon as he is able and in so far as he is able in all phases of adult life. A child begins early to assume responsibility both for himself and for as much regular 'adult activity' as his knowledge and ability may allow him to take on. This being the case, it is to be expected that all factors—physiological, psychological, social, and cultural—are so closely interrelated in the process of Umbundu education that their unity is almost organic.

Given this unitary social sphere, it is easy to understand that children always want to grow up. They are anxious to undertake full responsibility and full participation as early as they may. It has been pointed out that adults do not, or are expected not to, force the pace: they must not set tasks beyond the ability of the children in the actual stage of their development.[1] Normal development and normal behaviour are expected of children as a matter of course.[2] The possibility of aberrant behaviour[3] does not seem regularly to enter parents' minds, much less their utterances, as is too often the case with us. Adult expectation of normal develop-
[828] ment in children is perhaps best seen in the Umbundu concept of sense or intelligence (*olondunge*), something which every normal person is expected to have in some measure from the time of weaning. It is a relative term when applied to children and the young.[4] Some adults have it in greater measure than others. But every *person* will have it according to the proverb:

[538] *Omuku lovonya, omunu lolondunge.*
A rat with fur, a person with sense.

As every rat has fur, every person has sense.

861 Learning, as he does, in the real social and cultural situation
153 of Umbundu life, the child develops genetically the behaviour

Mead, *Coming of Age in Samoa* (New York: Morrow, 1928). Some writers have claimed this to be true of all the simpler cultures, e.g. Dewey, op. cit., p. 8 f., but cf. Margaret Mead, *Growing up in New Guinea* (New York: Morrow, 1930). Many of the African initiation rites seem to have been introduced from the outside and hence involve a distinct dichotomy, *vide* Stayt, op. cit.

[1] See *supra*, p. 110.

[2] See Fortes' discussion of a similar attitude among the Tallensi, op. cit., pp. 25–8.

[3] For the fatalistic attitude taken on failure to conform, see *supra*, p. 106.

[4] See *supra*, p. 100.

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pattern 'singled out in the institutions of his culture'.[1] I agree with Fortes on the Tallensi that 'The total pattern is not built up brick by brick like a house, but evolves'.[2] I am not convinced, however, of the necessity for postulating 'embryonic forms' or *schemas* of the total patterns supposed to be present in the child from the beginning.[3] Whether the *schemas* are supposed to be a part of the child's innate equipment, Fortes does not make clear, but I see no necessity for any such hypothesis. The method by which and the situation in which the Ocimbundu child learns, are ample explanation for the early and thorough development of the pattern of his culture.

Neither is it necessary to postulate either 'faculties' or 'instinctive drives' to explain Umbundu education.[4] Rather this study takes a view of 'human nature . . . as consisting essentially of specific situations'.[5] Instances in support of this view could be cited from the descriptive part of this chapter but that would be outside the scope of this study. The most important fact with regard to Umbundu education is its identification with life: the absence of cleavage as between 'school' and society, as between the social sphere of the child and the adult. The most important educational method in use is actual participation in the social and cultural or 'real life' situation. The educational 'content' is the whole Umbundu culture, consisting of attitudes (psychological and social), social usages, skills, observances, and traditional 'literature'. By far the most important are the social attitudes and usages. I turn therefore to the problems of

Social Adjustment

The education of the Ocimbundu child in the traditional social setting is far more social than is the case with us. The child learns

[1] Ruth Benedict, *Patterns of Culture* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1934), p. 254.

[2] M. Fortes, op. cit., p. 42.

[3] Ibid., pp. 42 ff. Fortes attributes the concept of *schemas* to F. C. Bartlett (*Remembering*).

[4] In his discussion of education among the Tallensi, quoted above, Fortes does not specifically mention either of these hypotheses and he rightly remarks that some writers have 'attributed an almost mystical significance to imitation' as the principal method by which a child learns. He then proceeds, however, to classify the learning processes under *Mimesis*, *Identification*, *Co-operation*, and *Play*. Except for the first, these activities are of much importance in Umbundu education.

[5] Hugh Hartshorne, *Character in Human Relations*, p. 195 (New York: Scribner's, 1932); see also Allport, op. cit., p. 81.

1: Childs M-5 (1934-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

867 the correct adjustments early, naturally grows into a comparatively well-adjusted life, and so avoids the major conflicts to a much greater degree than is the case in our society. A very large proportion of those in conflict in present-day Umbundu society are de-
154 tribalized or partially de-tribalized individuals, especially those who as children were brought up outside or largely outside the kinship groups. The large proportion of those brought up on the mission stations who are out of adjustment, and often in overt conflict, has been noticed by many observers. The biographies and autobiographies which I have collected witness clearly to the same fact, that most of the ill-adjusted individuals and those in overt conflict were products of an extra-tribal, de-tribalized, or non-traditional situation; while practically all of the well-adjusted persons were educated within the kinship system.

154 The three major conflicts which have been recognized in our
865 society, that is, 'struggle', sex, and 'inferiority',[1] are all present in some form among the Ovimbundu. The adjustments by which they resolve these conflicts are distinctive.

Adjustments in anger by which the 'struggle conflict' is resolved are interesting and important educationally. The child is taught when quite young that the expression of anger is taboo.[2] Tantrums are rare among Ovimbundu children. Anger and ill-will are named by thoughtful Ovimbundu as the chief root-cause of sorcery. The more thoughtful ones also recognize these as an important cause of accusations of sorcery. Expression of anger is traditionally much feared. It is not desired in the character of the king.[3] Nowadays
[177] there are more who give free vent to expressions of anger, but they are for the most part either individuals who imitate Europeans and who seek to discard Umbundu cultural habits and values; or they are those who are considered sorcerers, either by themselves or others. An Ocimbundu who as a child has learned traditional adjustments in anger will rarely allow his anger to break through the resistance and become 'extroverted' except in recognized outlets. These outlets are somewhat analogous to our own rationalizations of anger.[4]

154 The chief 'introverted' reaction of anger which I have noted
578

[1] The psychological analysis follows Allport, op. cit., chap. xiv.
[2] See supra, p. 101.
[3] See supra, p. 21.
[4] Cf. Allport, op. cit., p. 344. The Ovimbundu have not thought up such a high-sounding term as 'moral indignation' as a euphemism for anger.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

among the Ovimbundu is 'grudge-building'. This is probably 154
fairly common and often eventuates either in sorcery or in suspicion 578
of sorcery. There is special danger of this type of reaction between men and women who have an in-law relation to each other. This is probably a principal reason for the avoidance with which these relations are so carefully hedged and the respectful treatment mutually enjoined.[1] Grudges are sometimes inherited through several generations. According to folk-tales, children sometimes bear grudges against their parents for real or fancied ill treatment.[2]

Recognized outlets for anger in frankly 'extroverted' form are found in war and raiding parties, in the hunt, and in lawsuits. War is no longer resorted to but up to the present day anger still finds a recognized expression in actions at law. One of the commonest of such actions is the accusation of sorcery (*oku sunga omanga*) already touched upon above. Church councils and meetings have taken over some functions of the traditional courts of law and this is probably one reason for the decidedly stormy sessions which sometimes occur.

The importance of wit and humour as an outlet for anger has 154
been recognized. 'The ability to turn one's anger into a jest goes 522
with the trait of insight . . . and is sometimes appropriately called 828
"the saving sense of humour".'[3] That the Ovimbundu have this ability and use it often and to good advantage is very much in their favour. May not this be one indication of a considerable degree of insight which many observers have noted in the Umbundu character?[4] I would not claim that the Ovimbundu have made any very remarkable attainments in the social control of anger: their achievements in that direction may be slight when compared to some of the more advanced peoples, as, for example, the Scandinavians, the Hollanders, or the English. What is remarkable, however, is that they have frankly recognized the necessity for such control more clearly than have some supposedly more advanced peoples.

Adjustments in family life are held to be resolutions of what 593
are ultimately sex conflicts.[5] Marital adjustments are of prime

[1] See *supra*, pp. 57 ff.
[2] Cf. *Journal of American Folk-Lore Society*, 1922, vol. 35, no. 6, p. 123 f.
[3] Allport, op. cit., p. 344.
[4] Some writers have attributed to negroes a quality of 'insight' superior to that possessed by whites, cf. article 'Insight, &c.' in the *Atlantic Monthly*, Sept. 1938.
[5] Allport, op. cit., pp. 343–53.

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593 importance, but treatment of that subject must be reserved for
[562] another time. The balance maintained in the Umbundu social system, which has already been noted,[1] together with woman's important position in the economic sphere, give to the women and girls a relatively satisfactory place in Umbundu society. It has also been noted that woman's sphere has suffered less disintegration than has man's. Although the girl may have somewhat less freedom than the boy, her personal prospects are more stable, and in the long run more satisfactory.

Adjustments between parents and children among the Ovimbundu are relatively satisfactory. The fact that there are no specific father–daughter or mother–son avoidances or taboos, beyond the general laws of incest which nearly all cultures maintain, indicates an absence of strain in these relationships. In our own society adult–child fixations, and particularly the parent–child fixations, with the consequent repressions, are very common and are held to be responsible, at least in part, for much trouble including difficulties of adjustment at pubescence.[2] In traditional Umbundu society such fixations occur very infrequently, if at all.[3] In this context we should be reminded of the following factors:

[955] 1. The early and continued close association of the child largely (although not exclusively) with the parent of the same sex.[4]
2. The association of the child with many (classificatory) 'fathers' and 'mothers' which may result in a partial transfer of affection.[5]
3. The absence of fondling, kissing, and other close bodily contact in display of affection.[6]

157 The picture in these respects is not unlike that of the Samoans given by Margaret Mead.[6] In some other respects it is quite different but it is similar in the apparent absence of a period of adolescent *Sturm und Drang*. What actual correlations there may be between parent–child fixations and a period of adolescent stress I do not know. The absence of any such period has been reported

[1] *Vide supra*, p. 43.
[2] Cf. Allport, op. cit., pp. 315 ff.
[3] The proverbial inability of a widow properly to rear a child (*vide supra*, p. 102) may indicate difficulties of this sort.
[4] *Vide supra*, p. 98.
[5] No display of affection whatever is congenial to the Ovimbundu, except to babies and between adolescent age-mates of the same sex.
[6] Op. cit., chap. x.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

from several primitive cultures,[1] and some experimental studies seem to indicate that it is less general in the United States than had previously been supposed.[2] It is recognized that in this country parent–child fixations have produced many pathological cases.[3] With the practical absence of such fixations among the Ovimbundu, no such group of pathological cases exists. This is a clear gain, but there is also probably a loss, in that there seems to be a corresponding scarcity of the more or less introverted idealistic persons, 'the tender-minded class described by William James'.[4]

Ovimbundu parents proverbially love their eldest child (*nuñulũ*) in a special way,[5] but there is not in their family situation as much invidious distinction as that which in ours often produces the domineering eldest child, the inadequate youngest, and others in the sequence with feelings of neglect or 'rejection'. The Umbundu family situation almost inevitably involves less sharpness of distinction, for although the eldest child may be loved in a special way he deals not only with his parents but with other relatives of their generation and with elder (classificatory) siblings and cross-cousins of his own generation. So, also, the last or youngest child of a sequence would hardly sense himself the youngest since there will almost certainly be younger (classificatory) siblings and cross-cousins toward whom he in turn will act as his elders acted toward him.[6] In a normal Umbundu family situation the problem of the 'only child', so acute in America, is almost inconceivable.

Some Ovimbundu, not only as children but also as younger siblings and as secondary wives, do suffer from feelings of neglect and rejection. I have not noted this from biographical or other direct evidence, except from observation of resentment on the part of younger siblings of fagging by their elders. Evidence exists, however, in the frequency of the Cinderella motif in Umbundu folk-tales. Many are the fables in which Little Hare (*Kandimba*), Little Tortoise (*Kambeu*), or Little Weasel (*Kavili*) gets the better of his stupid elders, represented by almost any and all of the larger

[1] Cf. Mead, loc. cit., Fortes, op. cit., p. 9.

[2] Gardner and Lois T. Murphy, *Experimental Social Psychology* (New York: Harpers, 1931), pp. 429–32.

[3] Allport, op. cit., p. 362.

[4] Quoted from Allport, op. cit., p. 362.

[5] Cf. the proverb: *Epungu lisa kenendela; ombilã sole kumuñulũ*, '(Of) corn best the first fruits; (of) children (you) love the first born'.

[6] This seems to be the state of affairs quite generally in societies having a classificatory kinship system. Cf. M. Mead, op. cit., chaps. iii, iv.

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PLATE IX

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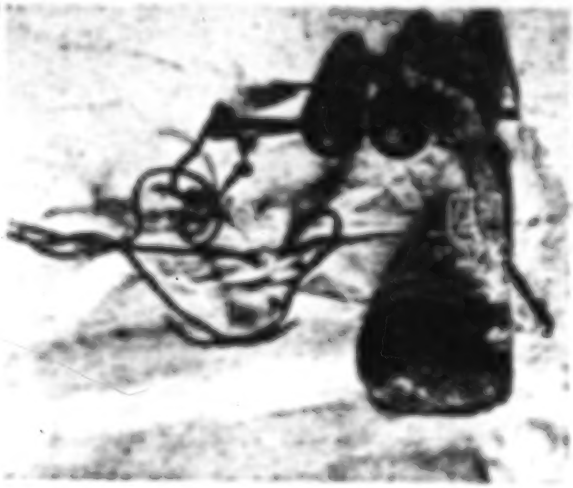

b. Fetish figures and diviner's vessels

Photo. M. W. Hunt

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c. A potter at work (Dondi)

[Facing p 128]

1: Childs M-S (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

157 animals.[1] Other tales with frankly human protagonists portray
538 the same theme,[2] and there are a number of Umbundu adapta-
583 tions and variations of such European versions of this theme as Cinderella, Snow White, &c. In some tales, such as 'Kalitangi', the hero escaped as an infant from an agreement made by his mother before his birth with another expectant mother that they would both destroy their offspring. Does this indicate a resentment of, or a protest against, child-sacrifice in certain Umbundu rites? I mention this as one possible source for the feeling of neglect and 'rejection' which, however, does not seem to be as acute or as widespread as in our own society.[3] The exact situation could only be determined by careful and extensive investigation.

593 Adjustments between siblings among the Ovimbundu on the
152 whole are relatively satisfactory. Resentment on the part of the younger does sometimes occur as indicated above. Overt sibling
[543] conflict has also arisen quite frequently in the royal families because of disputes over the succession. Instances of this latter type of conflict may be found in narratives of the early missionaries,[4] in diaries of Silva Porto,[5] and in other early sources. Conflict from jealousy arising out of the parent-child relationship, however, seems to be relatively rare. In a kinship society regulated by the hierarchy of age, jealousy between siblings does not quite fit into the picture. The two most common terms for jealousy over personal relations refer strictly to sexual jealousy: *esepa*, woman's jealousy; and *ukuelume*, jealousy on the part of a man. The other terms are somewhat more applicable but they belong less to household affairs. The meaning of *onya* is jealousy and envy, while *ocipulalu* is covetousness and so belongs to the economic sphere.

572 Friendship, especially between age-mates or 'coevals', has played
[554] and continues to play an important role in Umbundu social adjustments. Such differences as social station, family, distance of habitation, and even diversity of language and culture are easily bridged by friendship. Many friendships were formed on trading

[1] Cf. *Journal of the American Folk-Lore Society*, 1922, vol. 35, nos. 1 and 18, pp. 116 f., 140 ff.

[2] The tale of *Nafa la hete liaye* (Baby and his older sister) referred to *supra*, p. 84.

[3] Investigations of the 'foster-child phantasy', feelings of neglect, 'rejection', &c., reported by Murphy, op. cit., p. 415 f.; and by Allport, op. cit., p. 364 f.

[4] *Missionary Herald*, 1888, p. 242 f.

[5] In *Boletim da Sociedade de Geografia de Lisboa*, 1883, 1886.

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PLATE X

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Photo. M. W. Smith

a. Wounded bull eland (Maloko)

Photo. R. S. Wolf

b. Head of wart hog (Bukumbi)

[Facing p. 129]

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

572 expeditions. Many blood-brotherhoods were doubtless under-
[118] taken purely from motives of friendship.[1] The *vakuacisoko* is a
[181] friendly institution. The Ovimbundu are a friendly people.

Identification is a strikingly important feature of Umbundu
156 social adjustments and of the whole learning process. Children overtly identify themselves with older siblings, with parents, with other older relatives both living and dead, with friends of their parents, with the village headman, or even the king.[2] This perhaps is the process involved in that which the Ovimbundu name reincarnation. It is largely through identification that character appears to run in families. This is why boys are so keen to learn the professions of their fathers or their mother's brothers. Identification with their seniors in social position and economic activity more closely cements the unity of the child–adult sphere and gives the children yet another urge to enter into adult life and assume complete responsibility as quickly as possible.

'Inferiority Conflict' has probably been present in Umbundu
158 life for a long time, perhaps since the rubber trade (1874), perhaps even longer. When a people's activity is keyed to so high a pitch there will be some individuals who find themselves inadequate. There are a number of proverbs which ridicule the stay-at-homes or those 'too lazy' to undertake the exceedingly arduous trading
[177] expeditions. European domination has set new paces and created new frustrations, with one result, that 'inferiority conflicts' are probably on the increase. Many individual instances could be cited. A particularly striking one of my observation is of a man whose suffering from epileptic seizures had induced attitudes of inferiority. The conflict was exacerbated by his selection as a hospital assistant, in which position the responsibility required was plainly beyond his ability.[3] Individuals suffering from any physical disability find life difficult among such an aggressive people.

If the disability is great the handicapped individual generally
[132] finds the adjustment beyond his powers. I have observed a number of severely crippled individuals brought up in traditional kinship groups, and all of them were suffering from overt inferiority conflicts. All of these individuals had adopted compensatory

[1] Although the rite seems to have connotations of sorcery.

[2] Among the Tallensi, according to Fortes, identification is only with older siblings, with parents, and with 'the clan' (op. cit., pp. 46 ff.).

[3] Epilepsy (*ocisoyo*) is considered by the Ovimbundu as a visitation of the spirits and is much feared.

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159 behaviour of an anti-social nature.[1] The foregoing analysis refers chiefly to those of the Ovimbundu who now live or were reared within their traditional social structure, with but slight reference to other individuals.

The Umbundu Estimate of Character

156 183 The Umbundu concept of personality as being achieved by a process of social integration is of fundamental importance, bearing in mind that society consists of the whole kinship group—including the living and the dead, men and spirits. The process of achieving integration together with reactions to various cultural elements interestingly reveal the types of character appreciated and those disliked by the Ovimbundu.

Almost everything in Umbundu life and culture reveals them to be a strong and aggressive people. Their history, whether of raiding or of trading, is eloquent testimony to this. The early age at which children participate and assume responsibility in social and economic life has doubtless contributed toward the development of aggressive attitudes. The system of marriage which places the balance of responsibility in all particulars upon the bridegroom and not on his elders, but at the same time requires the willing consent of the bride, is evidently a development of a strongly aggressive people. Their economic life witnesses to the same fact, whether one considers their trade or their agriculture. None but an aggressive (or a very stubborn) people could succeed at farming in a region of such poor soil. Basing his observations only on their pillage and robbery of all their neighbours, and on the submission of the latter, Magyar remarked that the Ovimbundu were the greatest people of South Africa.[2]

In view of these facts it is not difficult to understand that the Ovimbundu appreciate character integration which includes a high degree of self-expression. Such 'traits'[3] as drive, extroversion, insight, ascendance, and expansion[4] are desired and appreciated by the Ovimbundu. Introversion and reclusion, on the other hand, are disliked. In the more extreme forms they are feared and

[1] Stealing is one of the commonest types of behaviour in such cases.

[2] L. Magyar, *Reisen in Süd-Afrika*, p. 265.

[3] The term is used merely for convenience to cover types of behaviour. The specificity of the responses which make up character is assumed; cf. Hugh Hartshorne and Mark May, *Studies in the Nature of Character*, 3 vols. (New York: Macmillan, 1928–30).

[4] After Allport, op. cit., chap. v.

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suspected as indications of sorcery. It would of course be impossible to indicate what proportion achieve the ideal. It would seem that their respective manners of life have favoured its development in the men more largely than in the women. May this perhaps be one reason why women seem to be caught more often in the vicious circle of suspicion of sorcery? 156 183

Fearing anger and ill will as a root-cause of sorcery, yet developing a very aggressive type of character, and achieving in their villages and other social groupings such a large measure of socialized life, the adjustments in anger achieved have been, perhaps, a necessary prerequisite. That does not make the achievement any less important. Note has already been made of the ability to use humour as an outlet for anger, which is held to be an indication of true insight.[1]

Statesmanlike ability, good judgement, and dignity were often noted by the early missionaries as qualities of some of the old kings, councillors, and headmen.[2] After 1900 these qualities were less often observed, owing perhaps to the demoralizing effects of the rum trade. These qualities have, however, survived to the present day and may be observed in pastors, elders, teachers, and other leaders of the church. That shrewd behaviour (*oku lunguka*) is appreciated by this great trading people is easily understood, but it is not as universally or unreservedly admired as are some other types. [554]

There is also a tender side to Umbundu character. It might conceivably be supposed that long-continued and intimate participation in such inhumane occupations as the slave-trade might leave a stamp of callous brutality on the character of the Ovimbundu generally.[3] On second thought a similar question might be raised with regard to Americans because of their participation in the same slave-traffic, or their more recent participation in equally ruthless practices under the banner of modern capitalism.

The rarity or absence among kings of the Ovimbundu of resort to 'revolting and wholesale punishments—so common at African courts' has been noted.[4] On the positive side, a most admirable

[1] Cf. Allport, op. cit., pp. 118, 344.

[2] Cf. *Missionary Herald*, 1883, p. 229; 1886, p. 143; 1887, pp. 26, 530, &c.

[3] H. W. Nevinson alleged some such effect. Cf. *A Modern Slavery*, chap. ii. The references are to people of Viye. The effects noted were more probably due to long association with Europeans.

[4] *Supra*, p. 21 f.

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156 tenderness towards and consideration for those weaker than one-
183 self, for women, for children, and for the aged may be seen among Ovimbundu who are quite untouched by Christianity or Christian teachings in any form. This was often noticed and remarked upon by the early missionaries.[1] Umbundu treatment of children, the habitually respectful form of address used in speaking to them, and respect for their personalities[2] is further evidence of this tender side of Umbundu character, as is also their banning of angry behaviour from the relations of the home.[3]

141 Such a combination of aggressive, dignified, and tender behaviour makes for character worthy of admiration. It is a heritage worth conserving and passing on to succeeding generations.

Description and analysis now hands the problem to education.
000 I cannot find a more fitting close for this chapter than the following statement of the problem:

> From the obscurities that for us still hang about African childhood, the fact emerges that Africans do educate their children. It is a genuine education. . . . What the African sets out to do, namely, to prepare the new generation to take its place in the community and carry on the tribal tradition, he accomplishes with a very considerable measure of success. . . . What Mr. Bryant has said of the Zulus may be said of some other African tribes: 'Through the ages, this admirable system of forming character and imparting knowledge continued, until at length was evolved a Zulu race noble of heart, dignified of bearing, refined of manners, and learned in natural science—qualities, alas! rapidly dying out before the destructive and demoralizing advance of European civilization!' The concluding sentence applies to many a tribe. No small part of the demoralization is caused by the disturbance of family life through the prolonged absence of the senior males at work on European mines and plantations and through the flocking of boys to European towns; it is in the family life, as we have seen, that the most

[1] 'We saw a party crossing the Kulili (*Kulĕlĕ*) River on a bridge of the frailest construction. The young men went first, deposited their loads on the bank, and returned for the loads of the old men, who carefully crept over unburdened. Then some of the young men recrossed and took their baskets from the women, and their babies as well. Last of all, two strong youths assisted the women themselves to cross. Nothing could be more tenderly considerate.

'Whatever customs may prevail in other parts of Africa, here it is entirely false to say that women are ill-treated. No one of either sex does any great amount of work, but such as it is is fairly divided. . . . They are certainly as well-treated as the wives of the poorer classes at home, and do infinitely less drudgery.' From a letter of Dr. Nichols in the *Missionary Herald* for 1883, p. 229.

[2] See *supra*, p. 120 f.

[3] See *supra*, p. 124 f.

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vital discipline and instruction are given. It becomes a problem of urgent importance, how, while introducing the European system of schools, to conserve the very real values of the indigenous African system. The problem awaits solution.[1]

[1] Edwin W. Smith, 'Indigenous Education in Africa', p. 333 f. (in *Essays Presented to C. G. Seligman*, London: Kegan Paul, 1934). The sentence quoted is from A. T. Bryant, *Olden Times in Zululand and Natal*, 1929, p. 77 f.

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CHAPTER IX

EDUCATIONAL EVALUATIONS

121 THE conception of African education underlying the present study is frankly one of adaptation of all that is suitable from indigenous culture in order to weave it into the fabric of a new African civilization. This point of view, stated in the Preface and already elaborated with reference to the social structure in Part One, needs no detailed re-statement here.

861 Umbundu education, as described and analysed in the foregoing chapters, obviously has points of contact with a progressive conception of Christian education. If nothing else, at least the degree of success which it achieves should cause us to search out its secret. It is probable that there is no formal system of education which could show as great a percentage of success as can this primitive system. In terms of artistic or scientific achievement or discovery its results may not bulk very large, but in terms of successful adaptation to environment they are remarkable.[1] In terms of personal and social integration achieved the results are yet greater.[2] The success achieved by Umbundu education requires the attention of the educationist seeking to serve this people.

000 Among those elements of Umbundu education which may be built upon by missionary education, I wish to consider three: (1) The Umbundu conception of character, (2) Educational method as actual participation in real life situations, and (3) Educational 'content' as life itself—all of life.

Character

The significance of what the Ovimbundu estimate to be desirable character is evident, and no one would dispute the importance of perpetuating and generalizing the more desirable types of behaviour analysed. Only by grafting into these behaviour patterns, which the Ovimbundu recognize and understand, can

[1] This subject cannot be given adequate treatment in a chapter on education. Cf. J. H. Driberg, *The Savage as He Really Is* (London: Routledge, 1929), chaps. ii, iii.

[2] As with many primitive peoples, delinquents and misfits are relatively rare. In Umbundu society allowance for dissent is usually large.

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desirable character be produced among them. This is the only root into which higher values can successfully be grafted. However much present needs may differ from those of the past, and whatever new and superior standards and ideals may now be desirable, if they are to flower and bear fruit in Umbundu life and character, the only available stock is that which is already present. As educators and as missionaries we should be profoundly grateful that it contains so large a balance of that which is valuable.

The Umbundu concept of character as successful functioning, achievement of personality by a process of social integration, is congenial to progressive character education.[1] The ways in which the Ovimbundu have made and continue to make their social adjustments are of interest, not only from the descriptive and analytical point of view, but also to those who would now be their mentors, responsible for helping them to make new adjustments in new situations. The problem is how to conserve the values of traditional integration while at the same time including the values demanded for successful functioning in the present situation.

Educational Method

Whether in the field of social usages and adjustments, or in that of skills and techniques, the method of education most generally used by the Ovimbundu is the method of actual participation in real-life situations. The children learn usages and make adjustments by *doing* that which they are being taught. Babies learn language by talking and being talked to.[2] Children and adolescents learn their various skills by actually participating in community services. What method could be more real and vital than this? What children ever took part in a joint-activity programme more real than an actual trading expedition? Could nature-lore be learned more naturally than in field and veld? Can belief and ceremony be learned more thoroughly than through real participation in dance and ritual? Attitudes and morals are absorbed all unconsciously from fable, proverb, and song and from observa-

[1] Cf. H. Hartshorne, op. cit., pp. 184 ff., 214 ff.

[2] This is true everywhere except where the counterfeit article of 'baby-talk' is used (cf. *supra*, p. 96). Babies among the Ovimbundu advance more rapidly than most Europeans because, in addition, they are rarely left alone with no older person to talk to. Cf. the observation of Father Van Wing, quoted *supra*, p. 96.

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tion of those older than oneself. Speaking of Africa in general, Dougall writes:

> . . . the training was mostly practical and it was concerned with working in company with other members of the unit for common purposes. This . . . is not unlike the modern discovery of the project as an educational technique. . . . The African method was . . . sound in its emphasis on the social nature of all learning. African boys and girls learnt their lessons through participation in the real tasks and ceremonies of the family and the clan. Here Africans were employing the most effective means of moral training for it makes morality . . . an assumption which is so unconscious that it is unlikely to be questioned and can scarcely be forgotten.[1]

Educational Content

The fact that the content of Umbundu education is coextensive with all of the life and culture is of significance in describing and analysing their development. It is no less significant in programme and curriculum planning. The fact that in Umbundu society the child shares the whole sphere of adult life, has undoubtedly been of great importance in producing the particular individual and social development which has taken place. The simpler the type of life and society the easier it may be to maintain the identity of education with all of life. With a culture as complex as is ours, some degree of dichotomy seems inevitable. It is remarkable that the Ovimbundu with their far-flung and complicated trading operations should have avoided a split between the life of the child and the adult. The life of the adult Ocimbundu of the present time is projected upon a somewhat simpler scale than it was at the time of the great trading operations. The factor of European culture has come in to produce a different sort of split between the school and the life of the adult community, but that should not be allowed to prevent the formation of a programme and a policy as close to realities, answering as nearly to the need of the people, and educationally as sound as was the traditional programme. The traditional system of Umbundu education unites with modern educational philosophy in demanding the 'experience-centred' or 'life-situation' programme.[2]

[1] James W. C. Dougall, 'The Development of the Education of the African in Relation to Western Contact', *Africa*, 1938, p. 322.

[2] Cf. G. A. Coe, *What is Christian Education?* (New York: Scribner's, 1929,

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Instrumentalities

For an experience-centred programme, a great many instru- 000
mentalities may be employed. Once education decides that no experience of the people is alien to its sphere, it cannot confine itself within four walls and a time schedule. Umbundu life is relatively simple, decidedly poor, almost infinitely less complex than ours. Nevertheless, many instrumentalities can be made to contribute to education. For the most part, however, they can be made to present their contribution through three institutions: Family, Church, and School. The family was considered in Chapter IV and also the relation of the Church to the Family and to Umbundu life. It remains to consider Family, Church, and School as educational institutions. No one of these, nor yet any other programme such as medical or agricultural, should be allowed to develop in separation from the others lest the unity of life be violated and compartmentalization after our Western fashion set in. The school, then, is to be definitely a church school, and the church itself grows *within* the family and the kinship pattern of the Umbundu social structure. This principle should be taken as fundamental for an experience-centred Umbundu educational programme. Close co-operation between family, church, and school is a recognized necessity everywhere.[1] Once this principle is made basic in the Umbundu programme, the resources of each made available for all, the values of each recognized and utilized by all, then the sound and healthy reorganization of Umbundu life will take on great impetus.

Educational Policy

The first essential is to determine upon an educational policy. I have assumed the necessity for an experience-centred approach not merely because that is 'new' or 'progressive' but because I believe with John Dewey that 'the fundamental issue is not of new versus old education nor of progressive against traditional education, but a question of what anything whatever must be to be worthy of the name *education* . . . what we want and need is

1935), pp. 190–8; Kilpatrick, *Education for a Changing Civilization* (New York: Macmillan, 1926), pp. 123–8; John Dewey, *Experience and Education* (New York: Macmillan, 1938), chaps. vii, viii.

[1] Cf. T. J. Jones, *Essentials of Civilization*, pp. 8 f., 21 ff., 184 ff., &c.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

education pure and simple'.[1] If the Ovimbundu are to be educated in any sense worthy of the term a clear-cut and well-defined policy must be formulated without any further delay. Almost eight years ago this was urged by Dr. Oldham and Miss Gibson:

'. . . If Christian missions are to achieve their distinctive purpose, and at the same time to co-operate, as they must do, with government in education, they must know clearly what they want. If they have not a clear policy of their own, they will either have to accept one dictated by government or withdraw from the educational field altogether. . . . In each territory in Africa there must be formulated a missionary educational policy adapted to the circumstances in that area. This next step can only be taken by those on the spot. . . .'[2]

Christian missionaries would agree that the missions can best 'achieve their distinctive purpose' through a truly Christian educational system. Necessity compels them in all areas 'to co-operate . . . with government'. This study assumes the necessity for education centred about present Umbundu experience. How can the claims of each of these three criteria be satisfied? The problem may be difficult but is, I believe, possible of solution. Christian education at its best *is* centred in the social experience of the pupils.[3] In meeting the educational requirements of government, Christian education must shape its own policy and purpose with great care lest it fail to retain its creative Christian character, without which it cannot achieve its 'distinctive purpose'.

The opportunity is great, for it is still possible to build a creative Christian educational system among the Ovimbundu. The government has shown little inclination to enter directly the field of mass education of the natives.[4] The missions are the only agency in the

[1] John Dewey, *Experience and Education* (New York: Macmillan, 1938), p. 115 f.

[2] J. H. Oldham and B. D. Gibson, *The Remaking of Man in Africa* (London, O.U.P., 1931), p. 16.

[3] Cf. George A. Coe, *What is Christian Education?* Prof. Coe has answered this question better than any writer of whom I know. See chap. viii: '. . . The personality-principle calls for self-organization, for the integration of selves in society, and for a kind of interrelation between persons that can hold through time. . . . Two maxims will sum up the matter: Approach all persons in the spirit of respect or ethical love; approach all facts in the spirit of science. These are two aspects of one principle. . . . For, since the scientific method, as we have seen, is a necessary expression of personality, ethical love, which seeks the self-realization of persons, will directly evoke scientific attitudes and practices in both the lover and the loved' (p. 178).

[4] The government participates through the work of the Roman Catholic missions which it subsidizes heavily.

1: Childs M-S (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

field. It is their evident duty to work out a clear policy, before they 'have to accept one dictated by government'.

It may be objected, and with reason, that the Protestant missions possess insufficient financial resources adequately to undergird an entire educational system. The missions cannot expect appropriations sufficient to underwrite schools for all the children and youth among the 140,000 who are adherents at the present time, not to mention the very considerable accessions of each successive year. Provision for some but not for all would naturally appear to the Africans as unfair discrimination.

For a long time the missions have endeavoured to educate the necessary leaders. All authorities on African education agree in differentiating between the functions of mass education and education of leaders. As long ago as 1930 a definite division of responsibility was urged upon the missions: that the missions concentrate upon education of leaders while the Umbundu Church takes over complete responsibility for educating the masses.[1] Long before that, mission leaders had felt that the village work, education as well as evangelism, should belong to the sphere of the Umbundu Church in order that this work might be carried on without division of authority and approach or compartmentalization. In some regions this method has been adopted, but it cannot become a success unless it is made a matter of policy and applied in the entire field. If the Umbundu Church is given opportunity to take part in shaping policy, I feel sure that it will respond in a manner worthy of all confidence. Its membership is very poor, perhaps few churches anywhere subsist on the average of such a low income-level of membership. However, where the village work is organized on a kinship basis the necessary leaders will be maintained by their own people. The missions, then, should concentrate on the problem of providing the specific types of education needed by the leaders. In addition the missions must supply leadership and vision in its broader phases. For where there is no vision the people perish.

Problems of organization and of the relationship of school and community need not detain us at length at this point. In Chapter IV the advantages of organizing church and school within the kinship system and the natural social structure were shown. The close

[1] See Frank K. Sanders, *Report to the Prudential Committee of the A.B.C.F.M. concerning the W. Cent. Af. Mission* (A.B.C.F.M.: Boston, 1930. mimeog.), p. 8.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

000 connexion between the kinship groups and character has been demonstrated in the description and analysis of Chapters V–VIII. The desirability of conserving the fundamental social attitudes will not be questioned. The tragic results of discarding those outgoing social attitudes are already all too visible both in social relations and in individual character—especially among the detribalized or partially de-tribalized. Given the Umbundu conception of character as achieved in social functioning, no other result could be expected when social ties break down.

Values have been discovered in the social attitudes and in certain types of social behaviour, but it is vain to expect the Church or school to 'use' these or build upon them unless the kinship structure is conserved to become the basis for organization of Church and school. Only on such a basis can these fundamental attitudes be conserved, given standing and prestige, and eventually widened in scope and application. Along with and as a part of the above, encouragement can be given to retain such items as the traditional kinship system of nomenclature, and forms of courtesy and etiquette which would help in the retention of respect, true courtesy, and other worth-while types of behaviour.

In a territory where native political life has been abolished, education and the Church have a much heavier responsibility than where native political life still functions through indirect rule. In the former, only education and the Church remain to 'strengthen the feeling of responsibility to the tribal community'.[1] Fundamental to the formation of sound policy and more basic than the adaptation of Umbundu method or content in education is organization within the kinship system and the natural social structure.

[1] Advisory Committee on Native Education in the British Tropical African Dependencies, *Education Policy in British Tropical Africa* (London: H.M.S.O., 1925), p. 4.

[p.141]

CHAPTER X

PARTICULAR FIELDS OF EDUCATION

Method and Content

'THE belief that all genuine education comes about through experience does not mean that all experiences are genuinely or equally educative. Experience and education cannot be directly equated to each other. For some experiences are mis-educative.'[1] In the book quoted, Dewey develops the thesis that educative experience is that which promotes further significant experiences, i.e. growth toward maturity. The alternatives now confronting the school 'if it is not to drift aimlessly', are either a 'return to the intellectual methods and ideals that arose centuries before scientific method was developed', or 'systematic utilization of the scientific method as the pattern and ideal of . . . the potentialities inherent in experience'.[2]

The scientific organization of an experiential curriculum for Umbundu education is an inescapable necessity. In this study it is only possible to touch upon a few of the most urgent problems and point out the basis for organization.

Social behaviour has the central place in Umbundu education, a fact which is said to be true of African education in general, with 'the particular occasion . . . the medium of the lesson'.[3] The undoubtedly greater effectiveness of that traditional training over the accomplishments of formal western schooling in manners, morals, or 'civics' should lead us to investigate the possibility of making use of the traditional method. Social behaviour can only be effectively taught in real-life situations. For the Ocimbundu child the only real world is the world of his own family and village. His manners and morals must first be those of his own family and village. Without that sure foundation, he can never build a larger structure. Sound technique for training in social behaviour can only be attained when the school has a vital connexion with the family, the village, and the living social structure of the people. When the Church and its schools have established their work within that structure, when these schools are entrusted to African

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[1] John Dewey, *Experience and Education*, p. 13.
[2] Ibid., p. 108.
[3] J. W. C. Dougall, op. cit., *Africa*, 1938, p. 321.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

teachers who have themselves had traditional training and have maintained their own kinship ties, then we can work out with them sound social methods.

Language teaching is of great importance in the field under consideration. The mission schools have produced remarkable results in their teaching of the Portuguese language, results probably unequalled by schools similarly situated and conditioned elsewhere. Regulations prohibiting the vernacular except in religious instruction, and requiring the use of Portuguese in all schools from the start,[1] have created great difficulties. No responsible person in touch with the situation questions the utility of teaching the language of the European colonial power, but the educational soundness of attempting to use, as a medium from the start, a language which is not used in the home is open to serious question. It is obvious that such a policy must seriously curtail the effectiveness of the school. The vernacular is still allowed for 'religious instruction' but beyond this, almost nothing but instruction in the Portuguese language can be accomplished. This policy compartmentalizes the school work to an unfortunate degree and places such emphasis on the mere acquiring of a language that the whole programme is warped. It is even inefficient as regards the teaching of the language itself, for pupils who have first had systematic instruction in their mother tongue are by that fact better equipped to acquire a European language.[2]

The French colonial authorities, who first applied language regulations of this sort in Africa, have come to realize the necessity for some modifications in practice. Gouverneur-Général Brévié, of Afrique Occidentale Française, in December 1931 stated:

> . . . In order that this system of education may produce the best results immediately, we must not hesitate to have recourse to the local

[1] Enforced since 1922 under the provisions of Decree 77 of 9 Dec., 1921 (*Boletim Oficial* No. 50, 1921). The text with an English translation may be found in *Treaties, Acts, and Regulations relating to Missionary Freedom* (London: International Missionary Council, 1923). A law of April 1938 lays down still more difficult regulations regarding the teaching of Portuguese and includes certain provisions which frankly discriminate between Protestant and Roman Catholic mission schools.

[2] 'in Achimota (Gold Coast) : . . by means of convincing tests it has been established that a child educated in his mother tongue in one year obtains a knowledge of English which otherwise would take him six years to acquire' (Gouverneur-Général Olivier, *Six Ans de Politique Sociale à Madagascar*, chap. v, quoted by Paul Crouzet in the *Educational Yearbook 1931*, p. 472).

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1940 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

idiom to express ideas which the natives could not otherwise understand. Shall we wait until they know French sufficiently to divulge the secret to them that the anopheles carries malaria and the louse carries epidemics of typhus? Shall we demand of the African a diploma or a certificate of studies of fertilizers . . . ? The need of practical education is beyond all question. Let the local idiom be used where French fails to apply.

M. Crouzet goes on to comment:

The latest information from West Africa indicates that in future the native language will not be wholly disregarded as a means of carrying on instruction in the elementary school.[1]

In adult education the vernacular is to be used even more widely in French West Africa where, according to Prof. Labouret, the authorities have come to recognize the necessity of this step if mass education is not to be indefinitely delayed.[2]

As long as the official educational regulations in force in Angola seem not to envisage any real system of mass education, may it not be uneconomic for the Church to continue a widespread system of schools teaching the Portuguese language? In the Cameroun, where similar although less stringent language regulations are in force, the missions carry on only *écoles de catéchisme* in the vernacular in the villages, and concentrate their teaching of French where officially recognized teachers are available.[3] A similar policy might be worked out to advantage for the schools of the Umbundu Church.

I feel that this is desirable not only for reasons of economy, but also in order to improve the quality of language teaching. If the teaching of Portuguese were restricted to those schools taught by properly qualified teachers, that fact alone would improve the quality of the output. In that case, it would also be easier to follow the method of direct and exclusively oral instruction at the beginning, a method which those in touch with the local situation

[1] Ibid., p. 473 f.

[2] H. Labouret, 'L'Éducation des Masses en A. O. F.' (*Africa*, 1935), pp. 98 ff.: 'L'orientation est avant tout rurale. . . . Elle (l'école) est destinée à créer une mentalité paysanne, à rattacher la classe à la vie du groupement humain . . . . Dans une autre circulaire, le Gouverneur Général précise ses intentions: "Ce rôle . . . sera soutenu et continué quand il se pourra, par l'institution de cours pratiques d'adultes, *où l'on emploiera au besoin les langues indigènes*. . . . Le cours pratique d'adultes en langue indigène me paraît un excellent moyen en vue de cette action éducatrice de la masse" ' (p. 100).

[3] W. R. Wheeler, *The Words of God in an African Forest* (New York: Revell, 1931), chap. ix; J. H. Oldham and B. D. Gibson, op. cit., p. 130.

1: Childs M-5 (1934-1940) 1940 FP 13 Mbunda FP 13

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Photo. 'Minerva'

a. Musicians of Lunda with xylophone

Photo. M. P. Childs

b. Musicians with flutes

[Facing p. 144]

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

have for several years agreed to be the most effective. This is the method whereby babies learn their own language, a method which competent African teachers can easily understand and have adapted with good results.

Physical education and recreation would seem to be a simple matter among a people which spends so large a proportion of its time in out-of-doors occupations and one which, again, has almost universally good posture, and a large proportion of which is of good physique. Comparing the Ovimbundu with their neighbours to the north, the Ovimbundu are greatly superior both in physique and in posture. Umbundu forms of physical education are responsible at least in part. Carrying loads on the head, which is done by all ages and both sexes, has also had undoubted influence. Most important of all is the dance. The dance is very good physical exercise but it is much more than that. It is more than mere recreation. 'The dance is in most primitive societies an important factor in maintaining group solidarity.'[1] This is certainly true of the Ovimbundu. There is nothing which can take its place. It is doubtful whether the solidarity of any group of Ovimbundu can be firmly established or long maintained without the dance. They do adopt various foreign forms of recreation, but the dance meets a deeper need. Whatever new exercises and games may be introduced the physical educator cannot afford to neglect indigenous forms.

Music is of great importance to the Ovimbundu. The Church and mission schools have made much use of this musical ability and bent. The great choirs which give such pleasing renditions of European classical and sacred music would do credit to schools or colleges in any part of the world.[2] Less use has been made of native music but it is still sung, and some teachers have taken real interest in it. Not having described the Umbundu musical forms it is not possible to extend this evaluation. However, it must be noted that European music has been supplied with Umbundu words, and very successfully in some instances. Contrary to the predictions of several authorities, the result, most emphatically, is not 'a kind of musical pidgin'.[3]

[1] Krige, 1936, op. cit., p. 336.

[2] See article by Elizabeth Scattergood Chalmers, 'The Music at the Jubilee', *Missionary Herald*, 1930, pp. 335–8.

[3] See E. M. von Hornbostel, 'African Negro Music', *Africa*, 1928, pp. 30–62. He offers some interesting suggestions on the use of drums. His conclusions on

1: Childs M-S (1924-1940) 1949 FF13 Mbundu FF13

PLATE XII

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Photo. D. G. Bidwell

a. A baby clinic (Dondi)

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Photo. R. S. Wild

b. Bringing a patient in a hammock (*mwenda*) (Bailundu)

[Facing p. 145]

1: Child M-S (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

Other fields of education, e.g. agriculture, industries, hygiene, and science, are of much importance. It is not for lack of appreciation that treatment of them is omitted here but rather because the necessary basis for their relation to Umbundu education has not yet been laid by description of economic life, magic, Umbundu outlook on life, &c. At any rate, this study does not pretend to deal with the entire educational field.[1] One other field, the very important one of religious education, remains to be treated.

Christian Education

Christian education, if truly creative,[2] should find a great opportunity in a system built within the Umbundu social structure, the prime concern of which is the personal and social integration of its individual members, i.e. their personal and social relationships. This must be so, because the essential meaning of Christianity and the fundamental task of Christian education are to be found, according to the view assumed by this study, in relations between persons.[3] Evidently Umbundu methods of educating the young and teaching social behaviour through real-life situations offer a splendid opportunity to the Christian educator. Since method is of much importance in religious education, it is indeed fortunate that sound educational method and the social experience of the people to be educated agree at this point.

The content as well as the method of religious education should be rooted in Umbundu behaviour and attitudes. The desirability of utilizing 'the attitudes of the household and the principle of their extension' has already been pointed out.[4] Further description of these attitudes and types of behaviour, together with their synthesis in character, as shown in the description and analysis of Chapters V–VIII, reveal a wealth of sound stock into which Christian character may be grafted. These outgoing and other-

the adaptation of European music seem to be drawn on theoretical grounds and insufficient evidence.

[1] Some interesting attempts toward the construction of African curricula and curricular material will be found listed in the bibliography.

[2] See *supra*, p. 138, note 3.

[3] This view is held in common by authorities such as G. A. Coe and J. H. Oldham who in some matters differ widely. For Dr. Oldham's summary see Oldham and Gibson, op. cit., chap. iv. Prof. Coe's statement of the problem has already been referred to (p. 138). See also his summary, op. cit., p. 296.

[4] *Supra*, pp. 69, 72.

1: Childs M-S (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

regarding attitudes and types of behaviour offer the soil in which Christian life for individuals and for the whole people can take root. Unless the Kingdom of God is so rooted I fail to see how it can ever come.

In view of the tendency of the African Church toward a somewhat excessively legalistic type of life it is especially necessary to take over as much of *positive* value as may be found in indigenous behaviour. There are, however, elements of value in some of the Umbundu prohibitions. Aversion to expression of anger has been dealt with at length.[1] Whatever its psychological basis, the result of this attitude in personal relations is definitely good. When the incidence of angry behaviour within intimate circles is definitely less frequent than among many Americans and Europeans, may not the Ovimbundu be nearer in this respect both to the teaching of Jesus[2] and to sound educational practice?[3] This is only one of many moral restraints of which good use may be made, and upon which sound morality may be built.[4]

The Bible has been and will continue to be the greatest of source books for African religious education. An experience-centred curriculum for a primitive people will find much in the Book which records the experience of another people in an only slightly less primitive stage of development.

Ethnological and intellectual points of contact between the ancient Hebrews and the Bantu have been noted by many writers. It is indisputable that culturally these peoples have more in common than, for example, have the ancient Hebrews and modern peoples. Educated Africans often reveal a superior understanding of biblical narratives. When sound historical and cultural methods are used, biblical narratives often take on a wealth of meaning. Africans sometimes discover meanings which Westerners had not found. It should not be forgotten that it was from questions of his Zulu assistants that Bishop Colenso was led to investigate the historical sources of the Pentateuch.[5]

[1] *Supra*, pp. 21; 101 ff.

[2] See Matt. v. 21–4.

[3] See Allport, op. cit., p. 343: 'The proper control . . . of anger is an important pedagogical problem.'

[4] Among South African writers on Bantu moral ideas, see Junod, op. cit., vol. ii, pp. 579–84; also his article in *I.R.M.*, 1927, pp. 85–90.

[5] See J. W. Colenso, *The Pentateuch and the Book of Joshua Critically Examined*, pp. 8, 15 f., 26 ff. Bishop Colenso plainly stated that the questions of his assistants in translation *drove him* to undertake his critical and historical

1: Child M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

Although the above illustrations refer more especially to the Old Testament, what has been written is largely true of the whole Bible. It goes without saying that a frankly Christian programme will go to Jesus for its chief inspiration. A programme which seeks the social integration of persons and is based on respect for persons, of necessity seeks guidance from 'Jesus' assumption that persons are of infinite worth'[1] and from his showing forth of 'God, the Great Valuer of Persons'.[2]

Use of the New Testament narratives is presupposed. For their proper understanding, as also for understanding the Old Testament, historical treatment and approach are a *sine qua non*. No other method will bring out the 'ethnological and intellectual points of contact'. By no other method can the Ovimbundu truly 'see Jesus'.

Does it not go without saying that the type of religious education presupposed by the foregoing could never be satisfied merely with 'the inclusion of a religious lesson in the curriculum'?[3] Rather it demands a central place in a system dominated throughout by its own valuation of persons. 'Religion would not be an appendage of academic interests, or even a guest or companion, . . . for the whole enterprise, suffused with a sense of the worthfulness of the personal, would be inherently and aggressively religious.'[4]

Treatment of other Umbundu Material

Much of the Umbundu traditional literature—proverbs, riddles, songs, and folk-tales—is well worth using at some place in the educational programme. References have been made to a few items in this chapter and in the previous one, and it is hoped that

studies. While his was not the first such study, it was probably the first undertaken by a churchman engaged in active pastoral work and who was led to the study by the questions of those under his pastoral care.

[1] G. A. Coe, op. cit., p. 296. [2] G. A. Coe, op. cit., p. 296.

[3] 'The inclusion of a religious lesson in the curriculum may not only contribute nothing to the advancement of true Christianity; it may exert a bad influence. If the lesson is badly taught, it may produce in the mind of the pupil a feeling of boredom which begets a distaste for religion. . . . Above all, if there is a contradiction between what is taught in the classroom and what is practised in the life of the school, it is inevitable that the pupils should come to think that religion has nothing to do with life; that it consists in doctrines which one is supposed to believe, but which have little relation to daily existence' (Oldham and Gibson, op. cit., p. 31).

[4] G. A. Coe, op. cit., p. 293.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

a fuller treatment may be given at a later time. All of this traditional literature is of great value to students of the culture and merits serious study. One seeking to work with a people, seeking to educate them and attempting to help them to lay the basis for a new culture, needs to study every side of their culture. He must seek to understand them as fully as possible. It is necessary to understand the *whole culture*: those elements which a modern programme can use and those which may eventually be discarded. This holds for teacher and learner alike; African education must needs be a co-operative enterprise. As nearly as possible, the whole process should be brought out in the open: all cards laid on the table. If the missionary deems a given custom or institution objectionable, let him first seek to understand it in an objective spirit. If, after getting as complete an understanding as possible, the cultural element still seems objectionable then let native opinion and advice be sought. It often happens that a direct attack upon a given practice only results in driving it underground and in its being practised secretly or in a disguised form. This happens with religious beliefs, with magico-medical practices, with forms of witchcraft or sorcery, and with other elements which have been attacked. When it becomes necessary completely to uproot a given element or practice, a substitute which is at least equally useful and attractive must be provided. Elimination by substitution will probably have a better chance of success if the emphasis is placed not on attacking the undesirable practice but rather upon the desirable substitute. A fairly simple example of substitution which might well be sought is in the objects which parents and elder siblings teach babies to fear. In place of being conditioned to fear spirits, the bugaboo, imaginary animals, and strangers, children could be taught to fear those things which are really dangerous to them.

Initiation camps offer a more complicated example of a substitution which in my opinion it seems desirable to attempt. I have shown that initiation camps probably did not belong to the traditional Umbundu culture but began to be taken over from neighbouring cultures at about the time when the stopping of the rubber trade left men and boys less actively occupied. I have also remarked that in the matter of educational method, initiation rites are contrary to the spirit prevailing in Umbundu education, which uses almost exclusively the real situations of the normal life of the

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

community.[1] Initiation camps appeal to Umbundu youth largely for lack of something better. They have as yet been taken up only by a very small minority.

Can the missions offer a substitute which will meet the very evident need of youth and so forestall the wholesale adoption of initiation camps? Quite recently the missions have initiated a movement which, if properly developed, may be able in large measure to do just that. The movement is that of vacation camps for children and adolescents. It has had a good beginning in several regions and if carefully and persistently directed and developed it may fill a real need in the life of youth. Since initiation rites are not now a recognized part of Umbundu life I do not feel that it would be either wise or necessary to attempt to 'take them over' as has been attempted in other areas. In those few regions where initiation rites have already established a hold, it may be desirable, in connexion with boys' camps, to arrange for the proper surgical circumcision of those who desire it. This has already been done by some of the mission medical officers, but not in connexion with camps.

Fagging is a subject which needs careful consideration. It is my feeling that the method of dealing with it which offers the best chance of success, whether in school or in camp, is to get the boys or girls, through their recognized leaders, to agree upon its institutionalization on a carefully considered and closely restricted basis. Otherwise it is likely to continue or to recur sporadically, secretly or underground, and to perpetrate most unfortunate excesses. This has been the experience in the past.

It would be well to work out camp programmes which may utilize as many indigenous cultural elements as possible, rather than to attempt to translate a purely Western programme. In Umbundu social, educational, and economic life, and in the traditional literature, are many elements of worth which such a Youth Movement could easily utilize, inasmuch as it is not bound by the requirements of the formal school.

[1] Dougall holds this to be true of African education generally. 'Initiation rites serve as the exception which prove the rule' (*Africa*, 1938, p. 322).

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CHAPTER XI

EDUCATION AND LIFE

Can Umbundu Knowledge and Practice yet be adapted?

000 In the article of the *Year Book of Education 1938*, already quoted,[1] Mr. H. S. Scott poses the question as to whether it may not now be too late to rescue African educational knowledge and practice from oblivion and disrepute. The educated African to-day, he says, only recognizes education in Western garb.[2] This is hardly less true for the Ovimbundu than for other Africans. Nevertheless I am convinced that if action along the lines herein suggested is taken without delay, it has a good chance of success. I have good proof of this from experience, especially with pupils and teachers of the Normal and Religious Education Departments of Currie Institute. In 1936–7 much of the material used in the descriptive part of Chapters V–VII was gathered by pupils and teachers, largely as a class project. The enthusiasm with which they undertook and carried on the project, the interest with which they turned to other phases of their culture, and the reports received afterwards from those who had finished school and returned to their villages, were eloquent proofs of the prestige which their own culture still has for educated Ovimbundu. Adaptation is yet possible, if it is undertaken without too much delay.

What should be Central for the Umbundu Curriculum?

Assuming that 'the organic connexion between education and personal experience'[3] demands 'systematic utilization of the scientific method as the pattern and ideal of the potentialities inherent in experience',[4] we have found that such utilization will only be possible for the Ovimbundu if interpreted to them through that which is central to their own experience. Umbundu education should be organized around those experiences which are central to Umbundu life.

The Latin colonial Powers, proponents of the ideal of assimilation, in order to promote that ideal, have tried to make the national culture central. Because the African pupils knew nothing of the

[1] See *supra*, p. 119.
[2] *Year Book of Education 1938*, p. 697 f.
[3] Dewey, *Experience and Education*, p. 12.
[4] Ibid., p. 108.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

national language, greater efforts were made to teach it to them, and in effect the teaching of the national language has become the central core of the curriculum round which all else revolves and to which all else is made to contribute. This has often meant that really nothing but the language is taught, and at times even that is not taught very well.[1] Clearly, this is a *reductio ad absurdum*, and cannot, must not, continue to be normative. French colonial authorities have come to recognize their mistake and have been moving to modify their policy.

It is in British territory chiefly that African educational progress has been made. Modern British authorities have for the most part advocated one of two 'central cores' around which to organize the curriculum of the African school. One group envisages closer control of education by the state and with Julian Huxley claims that 'biology and geography make the best central core for the academic side of native education'.[2] The other group, acting on the assumption that the bulk of the schools will continue to be in the hands of the missions, and following the lead given in 1925 by the Advisory Committee on Native Education,[3] holds that 'the curriculum must be related to the Christian purpose of a school' while at the same time teaching 'the best science, as scientists understand it, the best history, the best art'.[4] There is a third group, some members of which may agree with the advocates of biology and some with the advocates of religion, but whose distinction is to put forward the need for first finding out the nature of the African's own education.[5]

The present study, assuming this last-named approach, has found social behaviour central to traditional Umbundu education. It would therefore be logical to advocate a curriculum centred around the social studies, or, in other words, around the present

[1] In many outschools manned by African teachers the prestige of the European language bulks so large that, although they may go through the motions of teaching other, especially Bible, lessons, in effect, however, they accomplish little beyond a smattering of language teaching. I know a large mission school (outside the Umbundu area) which follows the government programme for European pupils without any religious or other lessons suitable for African pupils.

[2] Julian Huxley, *Africa View* (New York: Harpers, 1931), p. 322 f.

[3] See p. 140, n. 1.

[4] Oldham and Gibson, op. cit., p. 47. See also J. W. C. Dougall, *Religious Education in Africa* (London and New York: International Missionary Council, n.d.).

[5] e.g. H. S. Scott, op. cit.; E. W. Smith, op. cit.

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000 social experience of the pupils. A social science course somewhat on the pattern of the course of Rugg and Kruger[1] but constructed from the standpoint of the Umbundu village, the kinship system, and creative Christian education would be a very good curricular basis. On such a basis the claims of all three groups mentioned above could be harmonized.

'Systematic utilization of the scientific method'[2] requires that the education of the Ovimbundu be organized around their own social experience. Only on that basis can a generalization of the scientific method be expected. Only through their own experience can the masses of the Ovimbundu come to understand truly the sciences, i.e. utilize in their lives the results of science and of the scientific method. 'Since the scientific method . . . is a necessary expression of personality'[3] creative Christian education also requires both 'systematic utilization of the scientific method' and the centrality of the social experience of the learners.

In a curriculum so based and so centred the teaching of the European language and culture would take its rightful place. It would necessarily abandon the dog-in-the-manger position which it has been allowed to take in many schools. In compensation the European language, instead of being poorly taught in many schools, would be well taught in fewer schools with ultimately far better results.

The social, religious, and scientific course advocated should be a single course, simple at first and gradually increasing in complexity as the learners advance in experience. Since everything must have a name, let it be called religious or Christian education. Its first cycle would naturally form the curriculum of the so-called 'catechetical' or village schools.[4]

This is a practical solution for a difficult problem. It harmonizes the claims of practical anthropology, of sound education, and of real religion.

Community Education

No consideration of a truly experience-centred system of education should close with the school curriculum. Any education which is truly experience-centred and, therefore, according to

[1] For this and other social science courses see bibliography.
[2] Dewey, loc. cit.
[3] Coe, loc. cit.
[4] See *supra*, p. 142 f.

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Professor Dewey, 'anything . . . worthy of the name education',[1] must include in its purview the whole community. If education is a process which may not be confined within four walls of a school, neither may it be confined to the school curriculum, nor to the children who are enrolled as pupils. The aim of such education must be a better life for the whole community.

For an African educational system rooted in, and in living contact with, the kinship system and the natural social structure of the people, these facts are self-evident and of fundamental importance. No real progress can be achieved or expected if education holds in its purview less than the whole community. The relative failure, in terms of social integration or social progress, of those boarding-schools which have removed children from their communities, is too well known to require review. Especially flagrant examples could be cited from among primitive peoples.[2] Parents must be influenced along with their children. If a community is to go forward, that whole community must be educated.

African adults want education. When they think that it will mean advancement or advantage for themselves, they are eager to secure it. Reading, writing, and a European language have acquired such prestige that nearly everyone is anxious to acquire these tools believed to be badges of civilization and a superior culture. As recently as thirty years ago many Ovimbundu, perhaps a majority, believed that reading and writing could only be acquired by means of magic or even sorcery.[3] Now, however, such beliefs are held by few, if any, and learning is immensely popular. For a long time adults in infants' classes have been a common sight in village schools. It would be commoner yet were it not for lack of leisure time. Other types of education will be no less popular with adult Ovimbundu, once their effectiveness and practical value have been demonstrated in terms which they can understand.

Examples of successful community movements which might be of value for the Umbundu village may be had from several parts of the world to-day. The work of the United States Federal and State Departments of Agriculture in rural regions by means of

[1] See *supra*, p. 137.

[2] Cf. experience of boarding-schools among Indians in the United States.

[3] Rev. Paulino Ngonga Liahuka, as a youth, was accused of causing the death (by sorcery) of an elder sister in order to 'use her eyes' to master the arts of reading and writing (*Missionary Herald*, 1930, p. 63).

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PLATE XIII

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Photo. D. G. Ridout

a. Baptismal service by the Rev. J. H. Cilūlū

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b. Umbundu wedding, new-style Ellende church in the background

[Facing p. 154]

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000 farm and home demonstrators and public-health nurses is well known, as is also the work of 'visiting teachers' of the Jeanes Fund in negro communities of the Southern States of America.[1] These agencies have encouraged and accomplished the organization of parents and teachers, of associations for Village or Farm Improvement, and of Mutual Aid and Co-operative Societies. They have brought healthful recreation and a sense of community life to places which seemed to be without help and without hope.[2] The work of rural schools and cultural missions in Mexico deserves all the attention which educational authorities have given it during the past fifteen years.[3]

Community improvement has long been a practical objective of some African missions. Formerly much depended upon the background of the missionaries. Those coming from rural areas have often been more apt to see community needs and to attempt something practical. It is reported that almost one hundred years ago missionaries of the American Board imported ploughs into South Africa. The Phelps-Stokes Fund, which in 1921 and again in 1924 sent educational commissions to Africa, found some missions and many individual mission stations undertaking very practical projects of community improvement.[4] Then and now many mission stations might with justice be given Dr. Butterfield's term of 'Rural Reconstruction Units'.[5] The influence of the educational commissions of the Phelps-Stokes Fund on the work of the missions in Africa has been very great. It has been especially direct in British Africa where the Carnegie Corporation has given funds for the extension of the work of the 'Jeanes Visiting

[1] See C. G. Woodson, *The Rural Negro* (Washington, 1930); also L. G. E. Jones, *Negro Schools in the Southern States* (Oxford, 1928), chaps. vii and x.

[2] See A. D. Wright, *The Negro Rural School Fund, Inc.* (Washington, 1933); and for a convenient summary, J. Davis, *The Jeanes Visiting Teachers* (New York: Carnegie Corporation, 1936).

[3] See *Las Misiones Culturales en 1927* (México, D.F., Secretaría de Educación Pública, 1928); K. M. Cook, *The House of the People* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1932), pp. 3–32; C. D. Ebaugh, *The National System of Education in Mexico* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1931), chap. iii.

[4] T. J. Jones, *Education in Africa* (Phelps-Stokes Fund, 1922); id., *Education in East Africa* (Phelps-Stokes Fund, 1925). The Commission of 1921 visited the Mission under consideration in this study and rated it favourably from the standpoint of orderly community development.

[5] K. L. Butterfield, *The Christian Mission in Rural India* (New York: International Missionary Council, 1930); *Rural Conditions and Sociological Problems in South Africa* (New York, 1929).

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PLATE XIV

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Photo. M. W. Ewds.

b. Old age

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Photo. R. S. Webb

a. Woman (educated) carrying baby (*oku veleka*)

[Facing p. 155]

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Teachers'. In many African villages this work, which has been so successful in the Southern States of America, is being tried out. Such adaptations to African village conditions of this valuable and practical idea should provide convenient and useful lessons for the rural work of all African missions.[1]

The key to this community function of education is the training of teachers. The 'visiting teachers' are considered most necessary while untrained or ill-trained teachers are used in village schools. It is felt that such specialists as farm and home demonstrators and public-health nurses may always be needed for these more technical aspects of communal education, but that ideally the local teacher should himself have 'Jeanes training'.[2] The village teacher himself will best be able to lead in the transformation of his community and should be chosen and prepared with that end in view.

These broader functions of community leadership demand, no less than do those of teacher of the young, that the person who exercises them should be a natural leader of his people. He should belong to the group which he seeks to lead. The principles already discovered regarding the desirability of the teacher's maintaining his kinship ties apply no less surely to the teacher in his broader communal functions. The importance of the kinship principle and of working within the natural social structure of the people again becomes evident.[3]

The Umbundu conception of education as integration of the individual in the ongoing processes of society and the congeniality of such a conception to progressive character education have been noted.[4] The broader communal aspects of education now considered remind us that education also has a function in transforming society. These two functions of education are not antagonistic but complementary. Neither can be neglected if Umbundu life is to have a part in the Kingdom of God. The question as to whether education *can* transform or attempt to transform society is often raised. An education which calls itself Christian cannot escape this responsibility. Christian education cannot attempt to accept only one of these functions; it must take them both. Neither can

[1] The best account of this work is found in Carnegie Corporation of New York: *Village Education in Africa* (Lovedale, South Africa, 1936). See also articles in *Oversea Education*, ii. 32; iii. 34, 191; iv. 183; v. 130; vi. 126, 161.

[2] Cf. *Oversea Education*, vii. 183.

[3] Cf. *supra*, pp. 65 f., 70 f.

[4] See *supra*, pp. 119, 134 f.

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000 be neglected at the expense of the other. May not the union of these two functions of education in a single system, and the leadership of both in the person of the village teacher, help to preserve the unity of Umbundu life?

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PART THREE

CHAPTER XII

HISTORICAL

000 'HEUREUX les peuples qui n'ont pas d'histoire', quotes Father Van Wing in introducing his *Études Bakongo*, and having noted that the Kongo people 'had entered into history' in 1482 with the discovery of the River Congo.[1] It is very doubtful whether there are any people, however primitive, or however remote or inaccessible their dwelling, who could qualify for that blessed state. If this characterization means entering upon the stage of continuous contact with Europe and Europeans, it may mark a definite stage in the life of this people.

175 101 The Ovimbundu have not in this sense as old a 'history' as have the Kongo people. Their first contacts with Europeans probably took place in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries before their formation as a people—before they were Ovimbundu; but it was from the second or third quarter of the eighteenth century that they began to have regular and constant contacts which have continued with increasing frequency down to the present day.

Pre-History

172 The pre-history of the Umbundu country awaits competent investigation and should prove a fruitful field. Dr. Merlin W. Ennis has collected stone artifacts from several sites, but chiefly from Elende (twelve miles north of the railway station of Cuma), some of which have been placed in the Peabody Museum of Harvard University, some in the Logan Museum of Beloit College (Wisconsin), and some in the National Museum of Bulawayo, Southern Rhodesia. These artifacts have been classified as similar to those of the Chellean culture.[2] The strata from which they

[1] R.P. Van Wing, S.J., *Études Bakongo* (Bruxelles: Goemaere, 1921), p. 1.

[2] For a description, see J. J. Williams, S.J., *Africa's God* (Boston College, 1937), V. Congo and Angola, p. 96; also W. D. Hambly, *The Ovimbundu of Angola* (Field Museum, 1934), p. 207. Several Portuguese and Belgian writers have described stone artifacts found near the northern borders of Angola, comparing them with examples discovered at various sites in the Congo. See *Trabalhos do I° Congresso Nacional de Antropologia Colonial*, Pôrto, 1934: J. R. Santos, Jr., 'Rui de Serpa Pinto e a arqueologia de Angola', pp. 433–51;

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were taken yielded no pottery. Polished stone implements have not been found. Rock paintings or reliefs have not been observed.[1] This region has as yet yielded up no pre-historic skeletal remains. Whether any are present only competent and intensive study may reveal. The geological structure must be borne in mind: that this is one of the oldest parts of the earth's surface, having been exposed since primeval times, and without having had the great earth movements which took place in the eastern part of the continent. 172

The presence of stone ruins has been mentioned by several writers.[2] I have evidence for the existence of ruins at fifteen sites so widely scattered over Umbundu territory that practically every region of major importance is represented. I feel sure that if a careful survey were made, at least twice this number would be found. All those which have been reported thus far are of similar construction—of natural unworked stone, loosely placed, without any attempt to use mud or mortar; all were evidently built for defence, and all the sites were obviously chosen because of the natural advantages of the terrain, as, for example, on an eminence or at the confluence of streams. Some seem to have had earthworks in addition to the walls of stone.[3] Considering the materials used most of them were evidently well built and well adapted to the specific purpose for which they were intended. Some are now in a better state of preservation than others. Major Artur de Paiva reported that in October 1890 the *Ombala* (capital village) of Sambu, then occupied, had formerly been strongly fortified, as evidenced by the remains of 'walls of loose stone and others of earthworks in front of the present palisades'.[4] In one of the Elende forts may be seen evidence of important iron workings.

In May 1936, while on a field trip in the region of Kasongi (Cassongue), I visited a site called Usengo which had been

and J. da Silveira and J. R. dos Santos, Jr., 'Instrumento pre-historico de quartzo, etc.', pp. 532–5; also J. Janmart, *Subsídios para a História, Arqueologia, e Etnografia dos povos da Lunda* (Lisboa, 1946).

[1] Marquardsen–Stahl (*Angola*) mention a 'rock painting', but on investigation it was found to be quite recent.

[2] Hambly, loc. cit.; E. W. Smith, *Africa, What Do We Know of It?* (1935), p. 64 f.; Serpa Pinto, *How I Crossed Africa*, i. 86; Major Artur de Paiva in *Boletim Soc. Geog. Lisboa*, Serie 14, p. 14; Nevinson, *A Modern Slavery*, p. 81; Cameron, *Across Africa*, p. 405.

[3] Paiva, p. 18; also *Annaes do Cons. Ultr.*, Serie I, p. 520.

[4] Paiva, loc. cit. He also reported the stone ruins at a site in Cingolo (*Quingolo*), which I am inclined to believe was the same site previously reported by Major Serpa Pinto in 1877 (loc. cit.).

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172 fortified with loose stone walls built upon a great rock out-crop, projecting portions of which greatly reinforced the wall and made it unnecessary to build a complete circuit. The wall reached a height of nearly six feet in places. Inside the fortress, under an overhanging ledge of rock, I picked up fragments of pottery evidently of Umbundu make, and also pieces of wine jug of the type used by the Portuguese for *vinho verde*. The dry season had just begun and the growth of grass in the ruin was very rank so that it was not possible to make a systematic search for other vestiges of former occupation. Across the valley, at the village of Ndumba, I found an old man seeming to be about sixty-five or seventy years of age, who declared that he had himself helped to build the walls of Usengo in his youth 'before he had married'. He said that they had fortified the place against the exactions of Soma[1] Saviti of Kasongi; that three chiefs had ruled in it,[2] and that the reason for moving was lack of nearby supplies of water and of earth to daub the walls of the huts, the village site being solid rock. This, he said, was all during the reign of Saviti and before the end of the rubber trade, which fixes it approximately between the dates 1890 and 1910. The largest of the three ruins on the slopes of Elende, mentioned by Hambly and by E. W. Smith,[3] is the subject of a legend recounted by Elende villagers which ascribes its building to Ovimbundu or their immediate prede-
[175] cessors. The most detailed and circumstantial report of the building and occupancy of one of these ruins is found in an account of the campaign of 1774–6, in which Portuguese troops and native allies fought the kings of Bailundu (*Baylundo*) and Cingolo (*Quingolo*), and their allies.[4] The map of this campaign,[5] drawn in 1776, contains an inset representing a plan of the fortification alluded to, which, according to the report,[6] was too strong to be taken and was beseiged until the defenders fled by night, when it was entered, sacked, and thrown down, which last operation occupied nearly two months. Further evidence that the Ovimbundu were using stone-walled fortresses during the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries is found in the fact that the Portuguese reports of these periods generally allude to the forti-

[1] King or Chief.
[2] (1) Ekulika, the builder; (2) Ukelengenje; and (3) Satutu, who moved out.
[3] See *supra*, p. 165, n. 2.
[4] *Annaes do Cons. Ultr.*, loc. cit.
[5] Op. cit., facing p. 518.
[6] Op. cit., p. 520 f.; and especially *Catalogo dos Governadores*, pp. 423 ff.

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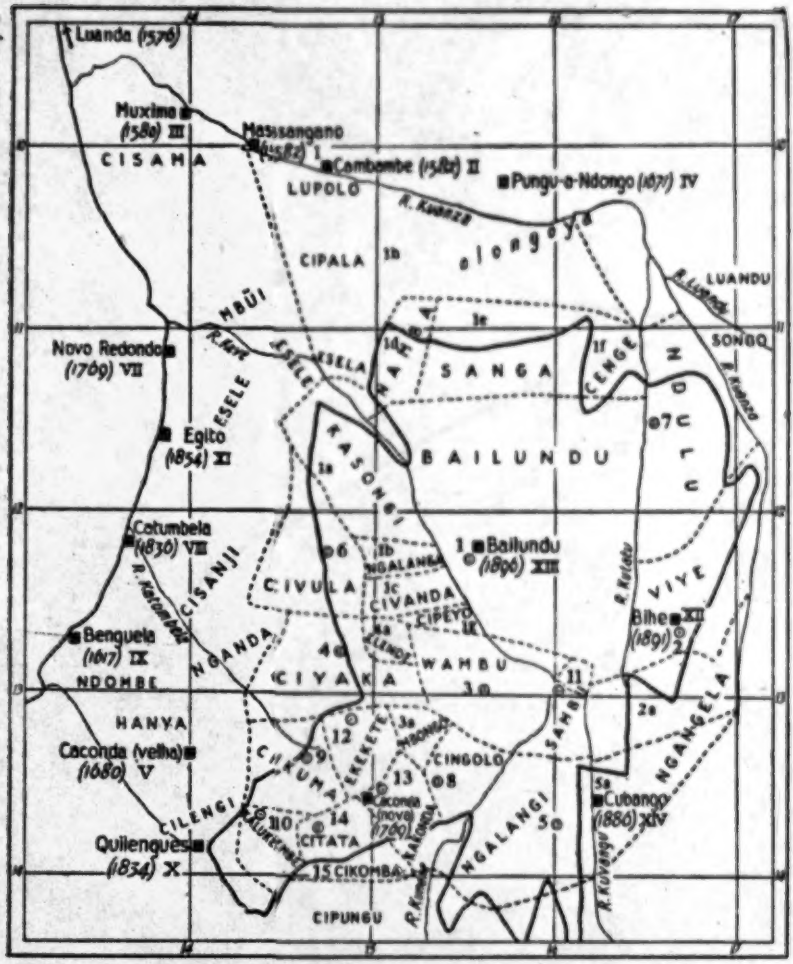

TRIBAL DIVISIONS AND HISTORY OF THE OVIMBUNDU

Heavy continuous line indicates elevation of 1,500 metres (4,920 ft.).

Broken lines indicate Umbundu political boundaries.

⊙ Principal capital towns (*olombala*) numbered 1 to 14.

1a, 1b, 1c, 1d, 1e, 1f, 1g, 1h, tributaries of Bailundu; 2a, tributaries (Ngangela) of Viye; 5a, tributaries of Ngalangi; 3a, tributary of Civaka; 4a, tributary of Wambu.

Portuguese presidios with dates of founding (numbered I—XIV).

[Facing p. 167]

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172 fied towns of the natives as *quipacas*, a word adapted from the Umbundu word *ocimbaka*, meaning a wall. The word for the palisade with which their villages are now enclosed is *olumbo*. Until evidence is adduced to the contrary, it seems that we must conclude that the stone-walled ruins found throughout the Umbundu country were built by Ovimbundu or by their immediate (Bantu) predecessors. As the ruins of Rhodesia and Mozambique seem to have been built by Bantu under Arab or Malay influences, so the Ovimbundu may have modelled their fortifications on the Portuguese forts which they had seen at Caconda, at the coast, along the Kuanza River, or even the walls with which individual traders fortified their establishments. These various forts were first built between 1575 and 1603, and it is probable that individual Ovimbundu themselves took part in some of the building operations.

Tribal Divisions of the Ovimbundu

631 Before going on with Umbundu history let us fix in mind the
101 principal kingdoms, tribes, or divisions of the Ovimbundu and their present location with reference to one another and to their other neighbours. This may most easily be seen with the aid of the accompanying map.[1] Their mutual relations prior to effective Portuguese occupation, whether of dependence or independence, are also shown. These are the divisions the Ovimbundu were found to have at the beginning of the present century, and these are the divisions still recognized by them, although they no longer retain their former political significance. It is of interest to find that according to Ladislau Magyar, who lived in and travelled through the Umbundu country from 1849 until 1857,[2] essentially these same divisions were then in existence. Under date of 1 August 1799 the Governor of Benguela reported on the 'provinces' and people in the hinterland.[3] It is significant to find that the divisions of the Ovimbundu were then essentially the same as they are

[1] Facing p. 164.

[2] Ladislau Magyar, *Reisen in Süd-Afrika* (tr. Hunfalvy), Pesth, 1859. Magyar made 'Quipeyo' (Cipeyo) a part of Bailundu and Sambu a sort of tributary. 'Quibula' (Civula), he said, paid tribute to 'Quiyaka' (Ciyaka).

[3] See *Annaes Maritimos e Coloniaes*, 4a Ser., pp. 147–61 (*parte não official*). This report made 'Quipeyo' tributary to Huambo, 'Ondura' (Ndulu) to Bailundu. Several kingdoms, later tributaries of Ciyaka, were listed as independent.

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101 to-day.[1] The principal Umbundu-speaking groups may be listed
631 as follows:

I. *Independent kingdoms* (in approximate order of their present population):

Mbailundu (*Bailundo*).
Viye (*Bie* or *Bihe*).
Wambu (*Huambo*, *Huamba*, or even *Hambo*).
Ciyaka (*Quiyaca* or *Quiaca*).
Ngalangi (*Galangue*).
Civula[2] (*Quibula*).
Ndulu[2] (*Andulo*, *Ondulo* or even *Ondura*).
Cingolo (*Quingolo*).
Kalukembe (*Caluquembe*, *Caluguembe*, or even *Caluqueme*).
Sambu[2] (*Sambo* or *Sambos*).
Ekekete (*Quiquete*).
Kakonda or Cilombo-coñoma (*Caconda* or *Quilombo*).
Citata (*Quitata*).

[636] II. *Kingdoms generally tributary but not integral parts of the kingdoms to which they owed allegiance*:

Kasongi (*Cassongue*)—generally a tributary of Bailundu.
Ngalanga (*Galanga*)—generally a tributary of Bailundu.
Civanda (*Quibanda*)—generally a tributary of Bailundu.
Namba—generally a tributary of Bailundu.
Sanga—generally a tributary of Bailundu.
Cenge (*Chiengue*)—generally a tributary of Bailundu.
Cipeyo (*Quipeyo*)—a tributary of Bailundu or Wambu.
Mbongo (*Bongo*)—generally a tributary of Wambu.
Elende (*Lende*)—generally a tributary of Ciyaka.

167 Nearly all of these groups are listed in the report of 1799 to
174 which we have referred, and many of them may be identified on the map of 1776. How long before that had they lived in these their present homes? Since it is already well established that none of the Southern Bantu are autochthonous, we shall not stop to ask

[1] Neither of these accounts mentioned Kasongi, which, according to genealogical evidence, is probably one of the most recently formed of the Umbundu-speaking groups. Both accounts made the non-Umbundu-speaking regions of 'Quibala' (Cipala), Mussende, and Cella tributaries of Bailundu. This was the state of affairs as late as 1893.

[2] See *supra*, p. 167, n. 2.

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that question concerning the Ovimbundu. Rather, whence did they come and when? Can the lines of their migrations now be ascertained? Can their racial origins be determined with even approximate certainty? 167 174

The available evidence regarding origins and migrations of the Ovimbundu is mainly of five sorts: (1) linguistic; (2) legendary, whether of the several groups of the Ovimbundu or of the tribes from which they seem to have sprung; (3) historical; (4) evidence from place-names; and (5) evidence of comparative attitudes and culture-traits as between the Ovimbundu and their neighbours. In addition, we might list evidence of physical measurements and blood-group tests, but such evidence is not yet available for the Ovimbundu.

Tribal Origins

Language Affinities. As I pointed out in the introductory chapter, by linguistic classification the Ovimbundu belong to the western 'province' or group of the Southern Bantu. Linguistically, the Ovimbundu belong with their southern neighbours, the so-called 'Bangala'[1] and with the Ambo and Herero. The northern and eastern neighbours all belong to other language groups. This is a fact that must not be lost sight of, especially since Umbundu has been so often confused with the so-called 'Kimbundu' of the Ndongo or Angola kingdom. We are not surprised to find an author of 1846 declare that 'From the Congo to Cabo Negro (Alexander Bay) these black natives all speak the same language (*bunda*) with small changes of dialect';[2] but when this confusion is compounded in works laying claim to considerable value as linguistic and ethnological studies, as, for example, one which was published by a well-known museum in 1930,[3] a protest is in order. 197 114

[1] The Ndombe, Nganda, Cilengi, Cipungo, Muila, Mulondo, Humbi, Gambue, &c. I do not know that the term 'Bangala' may be applied with correctness to these people. I only use it for convenience. See 'Notas Etnográficas sôbre os povos indígenas do Distrito da Huila', *Boletim Geral das Colónias*, fev. 1935, p. 41.

[2] Lopes de Lima, *Ensaios sôbre a Statistica d'Angola e Benguella*, part i, p. 196.

[3] See F. u. W. Jaspert, *Die Völkerstämme Mittel-Angolas* (Frankfort, 1930). It is reported that the spurious nature of the works of these writers has been exposed by Baumann and others, but although I have searched, apart from a rather ambiguous footnote in Baumann's *Lunda*, I have found no such references, and am unable to say whether this has been done. The origin of the erroneous concept of a Bunda language (also called Bundu, or Mbundu), has been traced, and correctly I think on the whole, by Max Buchner, 'Die Ambakisten' (in

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197 Sir Harry Johnston made this classification abundantly clear in his
114 monumental work published in 1919,[1] and the recent translation and revision of Carl Meinhof's important work on Bantu phonology[2] has used Umbundu extensively for illustrative material. It should now be abundantly clear to all that Umbundu is the northernmost of the Southern Bantu languages, and that in their language the Ovimbundu have elements in common with their southern neighbours.

167 *Traditional Histories.* Each of the principal groups among the
173 Ovimbundu has legends with regard to the migrations of their forefathers and the country from which they came. For the most part these legends refer to ancestors of the respective royal families, but some references are also made to the people whom these new-comers found in the country which they came to occupy. All of these legends point to countries of origin in the north or north-east. Several writers have noted this as a fact,[3] but it is necessary to take more explicit notice of each of several legends.

Ndulu has not received as much notice as have some of the other Umbundu kingdoms, but I have come to the conclusion that it is perhaps one of the oldest. The tradition runs that the progenitor of the dynasty, Katekula-Mengo, was an elephant-hunter and that he came with his wife, Ukungu (also called Mbala) from the region of the confluence of the Luandu and the Kuanza rivers. Following elephant-herds down the course of the Kuanza they passed the famous rocks of Pungu-a-Ndongo and in them left the imprints of Katekula-Mengo's bow and of Ukungu's basket, which, it is said, may be seen to this day; for in that early day the rocks had not yet hardened but were like fresh concrete. This couple

Zeitschr. f. Ethnol., 1915, pp. 398 ff.). This writer also interestingly and properly shows how the name Kimbundu came to be mistakenly applied to the Ngola or Ndongo language. The error, however, still continues to be propagated (e.g. *vide* A. Mirande Magalhães, 'Os Ambundus de Angola', &c., in *Trabalhos do I° Congresso Nacional de Antropologia Colonial*, Pôrto, 1934, vol. ii, pp. 536–55). This article contains so little of value that a systematic refutation would not be worth while. The writer's notions on the Bantu migrations seem especially fantastic.

[1] *A Comparative Vocabulary of Bantu and Semi-Bantu Languages*, vol. i.

[2] Meinhof, *An Introduction to the Phonology of the Bantu Languages*, translated, revised, and enlarged (Berlin and London, 1932).

[3] J. T. Tucker, *Dawn in the Darkness*, p. 34 f. W. D. Hambly (*The Ovimbundu of Angola*) notes this fact at the beginning of his otherwise rather confused chapter on 'Historical Sources'.

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came to the region of Ndulu and wished to settle but could not (i.e. without permission), since they were strangers and newcomers. Thereupon a certain elder of the country, Kakoko by name, caused them to build, first at Ngumba and later at Ndulu-yolosima. Their two sons fought for the succession: Cikolongonjo won and set about to consolidate his position by conquering the va Luimbi, who then left the country. He also won over the region of Kapeyo (*Capeio*), although not by force of arms but through trickery,[1] or superior knowledge. The sixth in the succession and a great-grandson of Katekula-Mengo was Kakulukusu, who, it is said, was a nephew[2] of Cingi I of Bailundu, and was also taken to Luanda when the latter was imprisoned. Historical records show that this was at the end of the campaign of 1774–6.[3] It is chiefly this historical connexion which leads me to place the beginning of Cikolongonjo's rule at about 1680. With regard to the migration of Katekula-Mengo and Ukungu, it seems reasonable to advance the hypothesis that its immediate cause may have been the prolonged wars between the Portuguese and the kingdom of Angola, which ended in 1671 with the taking of the royal residence in the rocks of Pungu-a-Ndongo and its conversion into a presidio. The highland country of Ndulu offered a remote and peaceful refuge.

The Bailundu tradition states that when Katiavala came from Cipala (*Quibala*), he settled in Mbonga and came to visit Mbulu whose village on the capital hill had at first been built only as a hunter's camp, but, largely by reason of its strategical location, had become, or was becoming, the capital of Bailundu. Mbulu gave Katiavala his daughter to wife, which indicates that Mbulu had also come from the same northern stock. There was a good opportunity when Mbulu and his people were away on a hunt, and Katiavala with his followers occupied the capital, while Mbulu

[1] Kapeyo was ruling over the region now called after him. When Cikolongonjo demanded that he submit, Kapeyo agreed only if he should lose in the *elembe* test, which is used in the dry season by putting out cloths by night to find which will be wet in the morning. In this case they left the *alembe* (pl.) out while they went on a hunt, but on returning Cikolongonjo's *elembe*, which was a kerchief, was wet with the spiritual blessing, whereas Kapeyo's, which was paper (since he evidently had not known the difference) was quite destroyed. Kapeyo, having lost, left the country and settled in Viye. It is significant to find articles of European manufacture mentioned in this tradition, which is one of the oldest of Umbundu records; also to note that the invaders from the north were already familiar with such things while the local inhabitants were not.

[2] Cingi was *inamu* (mother's brother) to Kakulukusu.

[3] See historical chart *infra*, p. 224 f.

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167 took refuge near the Keve River and called his village Eyula,[1] but
173 it was afterwards called Cimbulu after the founder. The dynasty of Katiavala has ruled Bailundu ever since and has also maintained its connexion with Cipala, which was subject to Bailundu until the end of the last century, at the time of effective European occupation. From Cipala has come the queen, the king's principal wife. Katiavala's son Cingi was the third in succession. As has already been noted,[2] he was captured by the Portuguese in 1776 and died in the fortress of São Miguel in Luanda.[3] This date enables us to place the beginning of Katiavala's dynasty at not earlier than about 1700.

The Viye legend has been told by Dr. J. T. Tucker,[4] and before that was given by Major Serpa Pinto.[5] A recent publication of excerpts from the diaries and notes of A. F. Silva Porto gives a slightly different version of the same legend, together with a few notes on the traditional history of Viye (Bie) until the year 1867.[6] Some of these latter are very valuable and enable us to fix more surely the actual or approximate dates of a number of the kings of Viye. Where Silva Porto's data on the earliest days of Viye conflict with those traditionally current, which latter have also been accepted by Serpa Pinto (1878) and by Tucker (1927), I feel that the former must be taken with considerable reserve. Viye, an elephant-hunter of the Humbi people, was tracking his game down the valley of the Kuanza River when he visited the village of Etalala for a beer-drink. There he saw and loved Kahanda, a princess of the Songo people, and they were married. When Viye died he was buried at Kahoko and his spirit is still expected to furnish the country with rain. The younger son, Kahoko, built up the kingdom of that name, which remained subject to Ekovongo, the new capital, built by the older son Ulundu.[7] It is interesting to note the union of the two tribal groups in this legend: the Songo of the north-east and the Humbi who now live in the south.[8] This legend also

[1] From *Yula*, the root of the verb 'to be overcome'.
[2] See *supra*, p. 171.
[3] See historical chart *infra*, p. 224.
[4] Op. cit., p. 34 f.
[5] Major A. A. da Rocha de Serpa Pinto, *How I crossed Africa*, vol. i, p. 156 f.
[6] A. A. F. da Silva Porto, *Viagens e apontamentos de um portuense em África* (Excerptos do seu Diário) (Lisboa: Agência Geral das Colónias, 1942), pp. 165–71.
[7] This name came from Viye's people—cf. the Mulondo, a tribe related to the Humbi.
[8] They had previously lived farther north, however, in the region of Ndondi

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has it that the people then in the country, apart from the Songo, 167
were 'Ngangela'[1] tribes. Magyar[2] has given different tradition 173
with regard to the origin of the kingdom of Viye. He says that the forefathers came from the land of 'Moropu'[3] about three hundred years previously under the two chiefs 'Kinguri and Schakambundi', and, having conquered 'Masongo', settled on the Luandu River, engaging in agriculture between raids. They had the custom of eating their prisoners, and when there were not enough prisoners they lapsed into internecine warfare and ate each other. Certain leaders began to fear tribal suicide and formed a secret society of buffalo-hunters ('*empakasserros*'), pledged to give up cannibalism by substituting the flesh of the buffalo. When the tribal elder (the 'Jaga') suspected the innovation and objected strenuously, rather than fight the buffalo-hunters moved away and settled on the Kuanza River. After a further subdivision of the tribe, one party, 'under a certain Bihe', went south to the Kukema River, where 'Ganguella' were living, and founded the kingdom of 'Bihe'. Later on, continues Magyar, the people of the 'Jaga' mixed with neighbouring tribes, took on milder manners, and finally found themselves in the land of Kassanji 'near the Kingdom of the well-known Jaga of Kassanji'. This tradition related by Magyar [114]
cannot be completely harmonized with the familiar legend of Viye and Kahanda. I have given that tradition as Viye elders told it to me, and have noted that it had already been recorded before. Since these two traditions are at variance, since the version gotten by Serpa Pinto in 1878 is the same one and the only one which is current to-day, and since it is unlikely that in only twenty-one years, between 1857 (when Magyar was in Viye) and 1878, a tradition as interesting as that of the buffalo-hunters should have been forgotten, I am inclined to hypothecate that the source (whether immediate or remote) of the tradition given by Magyar was *not* Viye, but perhaps Songo or even Lunda, both of which regions were visited by Magyar. This report probably contains

where, near Chinguar, is the place called Saviye (Father of Viye); and later, in Ngalangi, whence, according to Ngalangi tradition, came Viye (cf. *infra*).

[1] 'Ngangela' is a deprecatory term by which the Ovimbundu designate the Luimbi, Cimbandi, Lucazi, Nyemba, Ngonzelo, Cokue, and other tribes who live to the east.

[2] Op. cit., p. 266 f.

[3] Dias de Carvalho (*Ethnographia e História Tradicional dos povos da Lunda*, p. 66) explains that this was a term which *os nossos antigos viajantes* applied to Lunda.

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167 173 traditional elements of truth and value, especially since it agrees with the other traditions in tracing descent to Songo, and since its connecting of Songo with the people of Lunda is substantiated by the traditional histories given by Dias de Carvalho,[1] and by Ferreira Diniz.[2] The tradition of Viye, the elephant-hunter of Humbi, is of further interest through the definite connexion which it gives with the people of the south.

Serpa Pinto's version of the Viye traditional history[3] is interesting for its substantial agreement with the tradition current to-day. He gives a genealogical table containing the same number of kings as the table which I got in 1938,[4] and with only two or three differences which might, even so, be resolved. Serpa Pinto was interested in determining dates, which he might easily have done had he bothered to look up the records. Kangombe, the fourth king who 'mounted the stool' in Ekovongo and grandson of Ulundu, the founder, had been sold to Luanda as a slave by his brother Njilahulu for adultery with one of Njilahulu's wives. In Luanda he became a favourite of the governor, was sponsored by him for baptism, and then took the name of his sponsor, Dom Antonio de Lancastre.[5] Returning to Viye, he took with him some very material help in arms and a few warriors. Dom Antonio de Lancastre held the office of governor from 1772 to 1779. Since there was war in Bailundu, &c., between 1773 and 1776, Kangombe's return was probably toward the end of Dom Antonio's term of office—say, 1778. This being the case, the founding of Viye was probably about 1750.

The Ngalangi tradition also tells of this connexion in another way, but it is of especial interest because it is the only one which attempts to relate the beginning of things. Feti it was, say the Ngalangi elders, who began, that is to say, he came down from above, and whence he came is not known. Inasmuch as he had no wives, he went to a certain lagoon of the Kunene River and there he caught his wives as they came up out of the reeds. To this day, it is said, there may be seen in the rocks by that lagoon the imprints of Feti's foot and of the foot of his dog. Feti's wives were Tembo

[1] Op. cit., p. 94 f.
[2] Ferreira Diniz, *Populações indigenas de Angola* (Coimbra, 1918).
[3] Op. cit., p. 156 f.
[4] Op. cit., p. 160.
[5] The story was related by Silva Porto more than once. *Vide* op. cit., p. 167; also *Boletim Soc. Geog. Lisboa*, 5a Ser., p. 27.

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and Coya and Cīvi.[1] Now Coya's child was ill and she begged Cīvi to help by blowing the breath of life back into him. Cīvi refused because of jealousy: the child died, and ever since then death has clung to us. That, then, is the beginning of Feti. Very soon Feti parted with his son Ngola who went to Luanda to rule; while another child of his, Viye, went to found the kingdom of Viye.[2] When Feti died he left his place to his son Ndumba-Visoso with his wife Katia. Ndumba-Visoso underwent circumcision, since when all Ngalangi kings have submitted to the rite. They founded first one village and then another, and they were hunters, shooting roan antelopes and elephants, for at that time there were many animals in the land. At the instigation of Ngalangi, the younger brother of Ndumba-Visoso, they attacked and drove out the 'va Ngangela', who then occupied what is now the *ombala* (capital or king's residence) of Ngalangi. Taking it for their own, they brought their loads of food: beans, emmer wheat, kaffir-corn, mandioc, and maize;[3] and where they rested their loads the load sticks took root and became the sycamore figs which to this day encircle the capital village. After that the wives of Feti departed: Tembo married in Humbi (or according to another account, in Cilengi or Kalukembe); Coya in Ndulu; and Cīvi in Ngalangi.[4] There follows an account of an attack on the village by the 'va Ngangela' while the men were away in another country. With only the women at home Katia saved the day with a powerful

[1] The name Feti, it is said, comes from the word *fetika* (the verb *oku fetika*, to begin); while Coya is traced to *oya* (the verb *oku oya*, to finish). Thus it is said, *Feti wa fetika, Coya woyapo* (Feti began, Coya finished).

[2] This tradition connecting Ngalangi, Viye, and Ngola (Ndongo) is interesting and perhaps contains elements of truth, whether from tribal recollections or other sources, but it cannot be reconciled with the strictly historical facts since the kingdom of Ngola (Ndongo) was founded before 1550, and when Paulo Diaz de Novaes first came in 1560 he found that Ngola-Mbandi had inherited the kingdom from his father Ngola-Njinga the previous year. The country then came to be called A-Ngola. (See summary in the Introduction to Lopes de Lima, *Ensaios*.) As I have shown, Viye was founded about two hundred years later.

[3] The order is that of the Ngalangi narrator and is probably a recognition of the more recent importation of the last two named. On another occasion he said that his grandmother had told him that in the olden days when people always carried some seed about in pouches on their persons for fear of sudden raids, maize was not known and emmer wheat was the staple food.

[4] This further attempt to establish connexion with neighbouring tribes is significant. The Humbi and the Cilengi belong to the 'Bangala' group of people, while the Kalukembe are Ovimbundu, but seemingly more nearly related to these 'Bangala' than are the other Ovimbundu.

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PLATE XV

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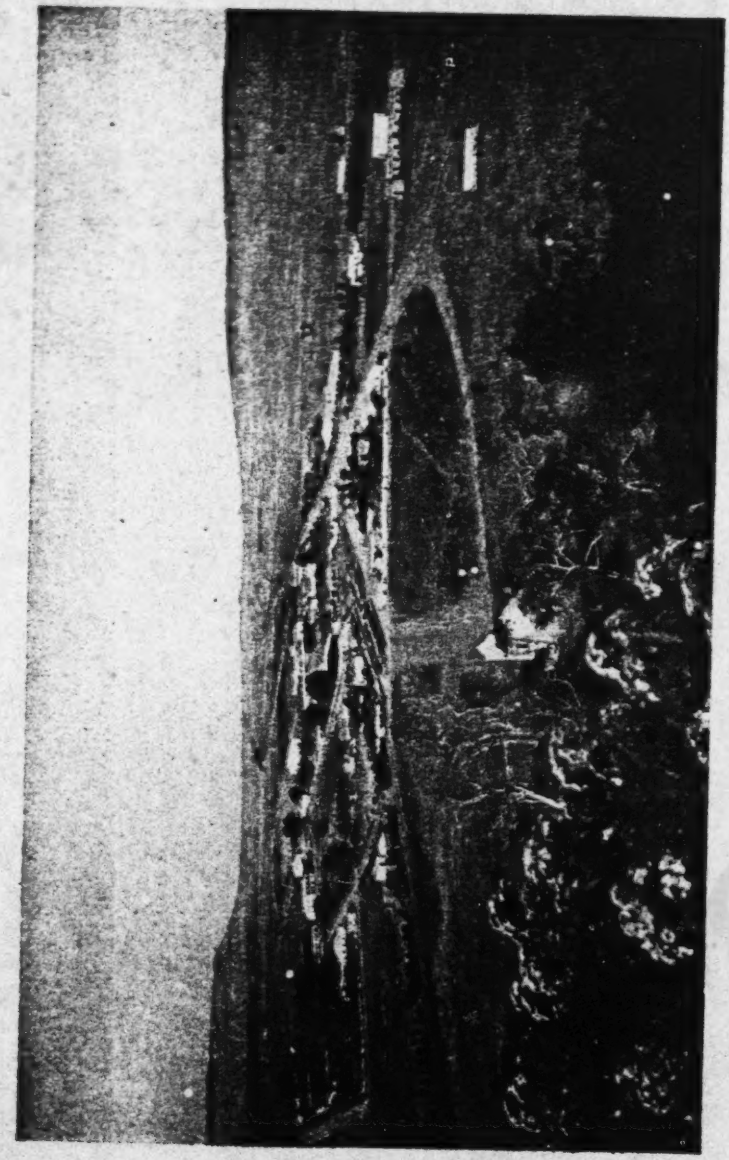

Bailundu: town of Teixeira da Silva

[Facing p. 176]

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173 167 charm which caused the bullets of the enemy to fall to the ground immediately upon leaving the muzzles of their muskets, so that they did no harm, whereupon the women went out and beheaded the enemy with their hoes.[1] When Katia died her husband sent to his brother Ngola to have a figure of her made. Soon after Ndumba-Visoso died and left his place to his sons, first Mulunda and then Kambuenge.

I have given this Ngalangi tradition at length because of its inherent interest and because of the attempts which it makes to show a relationship between the peoples.

The tradition of Wambu is that the first king, Wambu-Kalunga, came from the north from Sela, which is just to the north-west of Bailundu. He came with his cross-cousins Cihamba, Katutu, and Sunguandumbo.[2] The Nganda[3] were then living in Wambu. Wambu-Kalunga was a great warrior and raider. He had a special penchant for human flesh and would catch and eat the children left in the village when their parents went to their fields. He would also dig up and eat recently buried corpses. The elders were greatly disturbed over this custom and sought to kill King Wambu-Kalunga. They managed to get a live man into a rock tomb who speared Wambu-Kalunga when he came at night to get the supposed corpse. His capital was at the rocks of Nganda-la-Kawe (near the present town and railway station at Caála), and to this day his tomb is shown.

Ciyaka tradition names as the founder of its royal family, Cihamba, son or cousin of Wambu-Kalunga. Cihamba was a great hunter and brought back so much game that Wambu-Kalunga gave him one of his concubines and permission to seek a kingdom for himself. His younger brother Katutu accompanied him and each built his village in the mountainous country of Ciyaka, where at that time the Ndombe[4] people were living with their chief Siku. Katutu's village was raided by a party from Wambu. Cihamba

[1] The appearance of fire-arms so early in the tradition is interesting, but not surprising, as we shall see when we examine historical accounts.

[2] Another account makes Cihamba and Katutu sons of Wambu-Kalunga, while Sunguandumbo (or Songombanda) is their cross-cousin (*epalume*).

[3] The Nganda belong to the 'Bangala' group and now live just west of the Umbundu country.

[4] The Ndombe are also one of the 'Bangala' people. They are now confined to the Benguela coast-lands, where some of them were already living when the Portuguese first came about 1580. (See *Benguella e seu sertão*, p. 18 f.; *Andrew Battell*, pp. 16 ff.)

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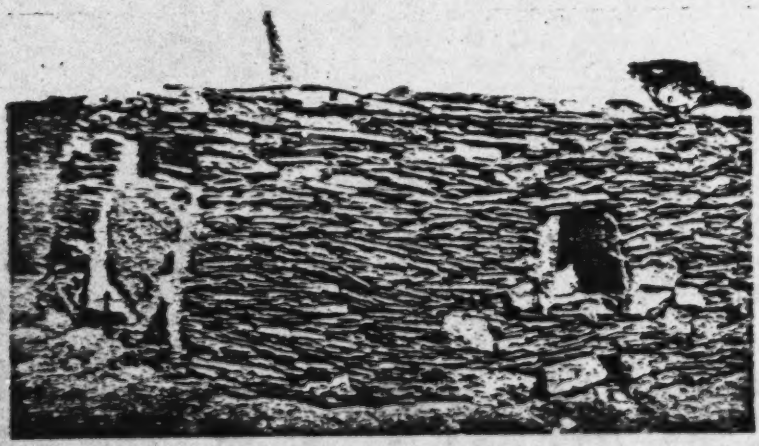
PLATE XVI

a. Ruins at Usengo: section of wall between stone outcrops



b. Rock tomb of the va Sela (Kasongi)

[Facing p. 177]

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167 173 came with his five famous hunting dogs and with their aid caught up with the raiders and finished them off. After the battle he collected five baskets of heads and set off for Wambu to present them and find out whether Wambu-Kalunga had sent the raiders. When the bereaved relatives recognized the heads, Wambu-Kalunga had to admit having sent the raid.[1] He also admitted the uncanny ability of Cihamba, to whom he now gave a new name, saying, 'Henceforth, you are Cilũlũ (Ghost), because your anger is altogether too great.' He also gave him the royal insignia[2] for which he should build a spirit-hut (*etambo*) and sent him away to rule, saying, 'From now on you are the war-leader of Wambu.'

Then Cilũlũ and Katutu returned to Ciyaka and to their hunting. One day when Cilũlũ returned from a hunt (on which he had gone without his dogs), only four dogs came out to meet him: Ndumbu was missing. When he found that his own sons had eaten the favourite dog which had hunted and fought for him, his sorrow and anger knew no bounds: his heart was black. Straightway he sent for his brother Katutu and insisted that he take the royal insignia and rule in his stead. 'I, Cilũlũ,' he said, 'am Cihamba; from to-day I shall beget no more sons to be kings; to-day I have cursed them and none of them shall rule any more.[3] To-day, oh Katutu, build the spirit-hut, the kitchen, and the chief's hut.'[4]

Later Katutu built the *ombala* of Kawa,[5] and Cihamba came to live with him. One day the queen was gathering firewood on a mountain and found a much better mountain-top site, then

[1] Wambu-Kalunga's alleged reason for having sent the raid was that Cihamba had impregnated the concubine given to him, whereas the intention was that relations should have been those of the trial-marriage in which partners occupy the same bed but explicitly avoid conception.

[2] i.e. the small mat, the double-headed ceremonial axe, the bell, and the chalk (to mark the face in ceremony and ritual).

[3] One reason for this particular phase of the tradition was perhaps to explain why the king's brother often inherits rather than a son. There is an Elende tradition designed to explain why the royal succession is in the paternal line rather than in the maternal, as is the case with inheritance among commoners, and also with the royal families of the related people to the south.

[4] *Etambo, ociwo, eyemba*, the three royal buildings. A commoner may have a spirit-hut (*etambo*), he may have a kitchen (*ociwo*) for each of his wives, but a house of his own he may not have, only a house for each wife.

[5] This appears in the old Portuguese records as *Quiaca a velha* (see Report of Governor of Benguela for 1799 in *Annaes Mar. e Col.*, 1844, p. 154).

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167 occupied by Siku of the Ndombe people, which site Katutu soon
173 appropriated. This is the present site[1] of the Ciyaka capital.

While reworking some of the material in this paper I had the
[115] good fortune to receive help from a member of the royal family of Ciyaka[2] who has more precise data on the succession of that kingdom than I had supposed it possible now to obtain. He not only completed and corrected my list of the kings of Ciyaka, but he also supplied the actual dates for all of them since 1842.[3] Their number would seem to impute to the Ciyaka kingdom a longer history than I have been able to verify for any of the other Umbundu kingdoms, but the absence of historical data from European sources makes confirmation impossible. It would seem, however, that the beginning of the Ciyaka dynasty must date from not later than the first half of the seventeenth century.

Some of the other Umbundu-speaking groups are of considerable importance and interest, but unfortunately there is neither time nor space to give to their origins attention equal to that given to those treated above. The Sambu kingdom has long specialized in the training of medical practitioners and witch-doctors. The tradition is that it was founded by a woman who seems to have come either from Bailundu or from the stock whence came the Bailundu royal family at an even earlier date. From the family of Wambu-Kalunga, in addition to Ciyaka, came those who set up the kingdoms of Elende, which had a woman ruler early in its history; of Cingolo; of Ekekete; and of Cikuma (also called Citata), in whose lands the fort of Caconda a Nova was built in 1769. It was probably after this that the capital of Citata moved across the Katumbela (*Catombela*) River to its present site. Kakonda, the founder of the kingdom generally known by that name, was of Luanda stock but born in Ngalangi,[4] whence he was sold as a slave to Benguela. He ran away with his wife Cilombo[5] and settled in the region near the (present) site of Caconda (a Nova). Kakonda and Cilombo probably settled there only a very short time before the building of the fort, for most of Kakonda's fifteen successors

[1] Called *Quiaca a nova* in the old Portuguese records (see loc. cit.).

[2] Lauriano M. Bahu Ciyaka, a graduate of Currie Institute, teacher of the village of Canja.

[3] *Vide* chronological chart, p. 224 f. *infra*.

[4] It is likely that his ascendants were *pombeiros* (traders) from Luanda and had settled in Ngalangi.

[5] After her, the kingdom was called Cilombo-coñoma (Camp of the Drum).

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had Portuguese names, and tradition speaks of a great accession 167
of mulatto stock, which also is confirmed by observation. 173

The Umbundu-speaking border groups are interesting. Ngamba 174
was formerly occupied by the Songo and has been peopled by 173
Ovimbundu coming from near the capital of Viye only within 167
the past forty years. Cengi, Sanga, Namba, and Kasongi on the northern flank of Bailundu have probably all only recently become Umbundu-speaking groups. Kasongi is one of the largest groups which paid tribute to Bailundu, and has had a line of Umbundu-speaking kings for more than a hundred years; but judging from genealogical evidence the bulk of the people have not been Ovimbundu that long. Civula is another large group and its uncertain feudal status has been noted. Perhaps the most interesting of the border groups, at least from a linguistic standpoint, is Kalukembe. The royal house seems to have come from Ciyaka and it has been [643]
claimed that in Kalukembe the kingship is inherited by the mother's brother's son. This is not supported by the only local traditional history which I have been able to secure and requires further investigation. At any rate it is through the maternal line that the commoners of all the Umbundu-speaking groups inherit, and it is noteworthy that this is also true of the kingship among the 'Bangala' and the Ambo tribes.[1] The 'Bangala' people have clan [582]
organizations and are exogamous, so that they may marry in any of the related 'Bangala' groups, and for this purpose they include the Kalukembe but not others of the Ovimbundu.[2] Finally, the variations with which Umbundu is spoken in Kalukembe[3] point to closer connexions with the language-group of the 'Bangala'. There are certain areas which at the present day seem to be under- 197
going a linguistic 'Umbundu-ization'. This is most evident in the coast towns such as Novo Redondo, Lobito, Catumbela, Benguela,

[1] See Estermann, 'Notas Etnográficas sôbre os povos do Distrito da Huila' in *Boletim Geral das Colónias*, fev. 1935, p. 63; Hahn, *et al.*, *The Native Tribes of South West Africa*, p. 8.

[2] This last item was learned from Mulondo people. The above-cited article deals only with the people of the District of Huila, while 'Bangala' people live also in other adjoining districts.

[3] Compare Umbundu language work of H. Chatelain and others of the 'Mission Philafricaine' in Kalukembe, as versus illustrations of Umbundu used by Johnston, Meinhof, *et al.* Evidently the native 'Mohongo' taken to Paris by Homburger of the Mission Rohan-Chabot, was a native of Kalukembe, for the 'Bailoundou' vocabulary taken from him is of the Kalukembe variation. (See *Mission Rohan-Chabot*, t. III, f. 1.)

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197 and Mossamedes. The region of Catumbela, and perhaps of Benguela, seems to have been subjected to migrations of Ovimbundu, or of proto-Ovimbundu, between the sixteenth and the nineteenth centuries, and it is probable that some of these groups early established themselves there permanently.[1] At the present time peoples of many tribes make up the population of these towns and of the surrounding regions, but Umbundu is already the dominant speech, and in Lobito and Catumbela almost no other Bantu language is heard. Certain other areas on the fringe of the Umbundu lands now seem to be in process of 'Umbunduization', at least as regards language. This does not seem to have taken place in Musende, in Cipala (Quibala), or in Sela, in spite of the long time during which they owned the king of Bailundu as their overlord. Just now, however, such a process seems to be taking place in Mbuiva (Amboiva), in Cisanji (area of Bocoio), in Nganda, and in Cikomba (Chicomba, south of Caconda).

173 Some of the neighbouring peoples have traditions of migrations
101 which corroborate the traditions of the Ovimbundu. The Nganda
174 say that they formerly lived in the region of Wambu, around the
167 rocks of Nganda-la-Kawe, and that they moved down-country for two reasons: (1) to escape Wambu-Kalunga and his penchant for eating their children; (2) to be by themselves to practise the rite of circumcision. When they migrated to their present home, the kingdom of Ciyaka, they say, was not yet established.

Traditions of the Herero and Ambo peoples may have bearing on the problem of the migrations of the Ovimbundu. Dr. Vedder concludes from tradition and genealogical evidence that the Herero must have crossed the Kunene 'about the year 1700'.[2] Some of the tribes of Angola with which the Njimba-Herero claim relationship[3] may easily be identified as belonging to the 'Bangala' group, as, for example, the Ovangambue, the Ovangumbi, and the Ovatjerenge, which are plainly the va Ngambue, the va Khumbi (or Nkhumbi), and the va Cilengi, respectively. Other names in the list are very much like some place-names in the Umbundu country.

Traditions of the Songo and Lunda people have already been

[1] According to a Ciyaka tradition. Also see A. Bastos, *Monographia de Catumbella*, pp. 6, 7; L. Cordeiro (ed.), *Benguella e seu sertão*, 1617–22; Ravenstein (ed.), op. cit., p. 19 f.

[2] Hahn *et al.*, op. cit., p. 157.

[3] Loc. cit.

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mentioned. H. A. Dias de Carvalho collected the traditional 174
history of the people of Lunda, which attempted to show that the 101
Imbangala, the Songo, and the Cokue, or rather their reigning 173
families, were descended from the royal house of the Bongo people 167
of Lunda.[1] Through Ilunga, father of the first Muata Yanvo, this author connects these people, or at least all of them except the Imbangala, with the Luba.[2] Torday offers the hypothesis that Ilunga (or Ihunga) may have been a Bushongo prince.[3] I have heard the hypothesis offered that the Songo were in effect an offshoot of the Bushongo people, but it seems that such knowledge as we have of the Songo cannot be said to substantiate this theory. Should these theories prove to accord with the facts, we could claim a long traditional descent for the people of our study in consideration of the careful work done by Torday in tracing the genesis of the Bushongo.[4]

Historical Evidence. Turning from tribal traditions to the solid 175 ×
ground of historical evidence, regarding the migrations in question, 167
it is immediately evident that there is no lack of witnesses. The regions with which we are dealing have been known to Europe since 1482, when the expedition under Diogo Cão first sailed up the Congo River and sent ambassadors representing King John II of Portugal to the king of Kongo. Diogo Cão returned in 1485–6, and then in 1491 there came a great expedition with a specially appointed embassy and a mission of ten Franciscan friars.[5] From this time on the Kongo was not without European observers. The earliest record which we have of native migrations in what is now Angola was the invasion of the kingdom of Kongo in 1568,[6] when it was overrun by hordes of terrible 'Jagas',[7] from the east. The reigning king, Dom Alvaro I (Nenemi-a-lukeni-luambemba), and his forces were so utterly routed that his only resource was to

[1] Dias de Carvalho, op. cit., p. 76 f.

[2] Op. cit., p. 65.

[3] E. Torday, *On the Trail of the Bushongo*, pp. 170, 281.

[4] Ibid., chap. xiii.

[5] See João de Barros, *Decadas* I, liv. 3; Ruy de Pina, *Chronica*, p. 174 f.; Garcia de Resende, *Chronica*, pp. 155 ff.; Fr. Luiz de Sousa, *História de S. Domingos*, pt. ii, liv. vi, c. 8.

[6] There has been considerable disagreement over this date, which has been variously reported as 1558, 1568, and 1570; 1568 seems the most likely date, see Ravenstein (ed.), *The Strange Adventures of Andrew Battell*, p. 119 f.

[7] There are many spellings of this name, according to the language, or even the caprice, of the observer. The commoner forms are: Jagas, Jakas, Iagges, Giaghi, Giaki, and Ayaka. This last is probably the more nearly correct.

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175 167 take refuge on an island in the lower Congo and send to Lisbon begging aid. In 1570 Dom Sebastião sent out Francisco de Gouveia with six hundred men who, after a year and a half of fighting, expelled the barbarian hordes and reinstated Dom Alvaro in possession of his kingdom, but as a vassal of the king of Portugal.[1] Warriors called 'Jagas' are next mentioned in 1590 as allies of the armies of Ndongo (Ngola) and Matamba, helping to defeat the Portuguese and their native allies under Luiz Serrão at 'Anguolome-aquitambo'.[2] Migrating hordes called 'Jagas' are next mentioned as having been met (about 1600–1)[3] by Andrew Battell, when on a trading expedition on behalf of the Governor of Angola, at Benguela Velha.[4] I quote Battell's own description of this encounter:

In our second voyage, turning up along the coast, we came to the Morro, or cliff of Benguele, which standeth in twelve degrees of southerly latitude. Here we saw a mighty camp on the south side of the river Cova.[5] And being desirous to know what they were, we went on shore with our boat; and presently there came a troop of five hundred men to the waterside. We asked them who they were. Then they told us they were the Gagas, or Gindes, that came from Sierra de lion,[6] and passed through the city of Congo, and so travelled to the eastward of the great city of Angola, which is called Dongo.[7] The great Gaga, which is their general, came down to the waterside to see us, for he had never seen white men before. He asked wherefore we came. We told him that we came to trade upon the coast. Then he bade us welcome, and called us on shore with our commodities. We laded our ship with slaves in seven days, and bought them so cheap that many did not cost one real, which were worth in the city (of Loanda) twelve milreis.

[In a marginal note Purchas adds: 'He, in discourse with me, called them Iagges, and their chief the great Iagge. I think he writ them Gagas for Giagas, by false spelling.']

[1] Domingos d'Abreu de Brito (1592), quoted by Paiva Manso, *História do Kongo*, p. 138; J. J. Lopes de Lima, in *Annaes Mar. e Col.*, 1845, pp. 93 ff.; Cavazzi, *Descrizione de' Tre Regni*, pp. 183 ff.; Ravenstein, op. cit., p. 119 f.; A. de Lemos, *História de Angola*, p. 98; Duarte Lopes, *A Report of the Kingdom of Kongo*, pp. 96 ff.

[2] Ravenstein, op. cit., p. 148.

[3] Ravenstein, op. cit., p. xiv. Andrew Battell was one of Purchas's Pilgrims.

[4] Now called 'Porto Amboim'.

[5] i.e. the Keve, which generally appears on maps as the 'Cuvo'.

[6] This does not necessarily mean the region of Sierra Leone. There are many places called Lion Mountain in Africa.

[7] Ndongo is the name of the kingdom of Ngola (Angola). Its capital was at Pungu-a-Ndongo, a remarkable group of rocks.

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Being ready to depart, the great Giaga staid us, and desired our boat to pass his men over the river Cova, for he determined to overrun the realm of Benguele, which was on the north side of the river Cova. So we went with him to his camp, which was very orderly, intrenched with piles of wood; we had houses provided for us that night, and many burthens (loads) of palm-wine, cows, goats, and flour. 175x 167

In the morning before day, the general did strike his *gongo*, which is an instrument of war that soundeth like a bell, and presently made an oration with a loud voice, that all the camp might hear, that he would destroy the Benguelas, with such courageous and vehement speeches as were not to be looked for among the heathen people. And presently they were all in arms, and marched to the river side, where he had provided Gingados.[1] And being ready with our boat and Gingados, the general was fain to beat them back because of the credit who should be first. We carried over eighty men at once, and with our muskets we beat the enemy off, and landed, but many of them were slain. By twelve of the clock all the Gagas were over. [726]

Then the general commanded all his drums, *tavales*, *petes*, *pongos*, and all his instruments of warlike music to strike up, and gave the onset, which was a bloody day for the Benguelas. These Benguelas presently broke, and turned their backs, and a very great number of them were slain, and were taken captives, man, woman and child. The prince, Hombiangymbe, was slain, which was ruler of this country, and more than one hundred of his chief lords, and their heads presented and thrown at the feet of the great Gaga. The men, women and children that were brought in captive alive, and the dead corpses that were brought to be eaten, were strange to behold. For these Gagas are the greatest cannibals and man-eaters that be in the world, for they feed chiefly upon man's flesh (notwithstanding of their) having all the cattle of that country. [727] [266]

They settled themselves in this country and took the spoil of it. We had great trade with these Gagas, five months, and gained greatly by them. . . .

In these five months' space we made three voyages to the city of San Paul, and coming the fourth time we found them not.[2]

On a subsequent voyage Battell was left by 'the Portugals and Mulattos' as a hostage among the 'Benguelas', whence he escaped to 'the Great Gaga', living in his camp and helping to fight his battles during twenty-one months. His description of the life and customs of which he was a daily witness are of great interest, and

[1] 'Gingado', elsewhere spelt 'Iergado', is evidently a misprint for *Jangada*, Portuguese for 'raft'.

[2] Ravenstein, op. cit., pp. 19 ff.

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175 seem to bear the stamp of truth in contrast to the evident fabrications of some and the well-meaning confusion of others.

167 'Jagas' are next reported during the conquest of Benguela[1] in 1617–22 by Manuel Cerveira Pereira. The second and fifth of the five battles described in a contemporary document[2] were with 'Jagas', the latter of which had been an ally of the Portuguese for a time. About this time 'Jagas' were also commonly reported as allies of the Portuguese forces in the conquest of Ndongo and Matamba. References to this state of affairs could be given from many sources, but more significant is the testimony of an eye-witness, one of the conquistadores, who, in a petition to King Philip, dated 16 January 1620, inserted the following:

[648] that the *Jagas* who aid us and are ferocious, who are with us, who are of great effect to overawe the heathen that they may not rise, that Your Majesty should make them a favour of wine, for they desire nothing else, to send them three hogsheads a year at the three principal feasts, for it is necessary to have them for friends, and the said *jagas*, Your Majesty ordering to give them this, they will always give in slaves[3] the value and much more.[4]

Another of the conquistadores also wrote:

The Iacas are stranger folk and who live by robbery and war.

This people came many years ago to these kingdoms and have overrun all the hinterland even to Mozambique. . . .

From them came some to our protection and service, fleeing from their captains. . . .

These people themselves are cruel and great thieves, and were more so after we made use of them: they go about robbing unjustly [*sic*] and captivating the miserable heathen; but, however, the fault is not of the *iaca*, but rather of the governors and captains who command them, and so they should be kept for friends and used well, during the necessary time.[5]

Other contemporary writers could be cited,[6] but enough evidence

[1] The present city of Benguela and its surroundings.

[2] L. Cordeiro (ed.), 1617–22, *Benguella e seu sertão por um Anonymo*, pp. 10, 13; J. J. Lopes de Lima, *Ensaios*, pt. ii, pp. 30 ff.

[3] Lit. 'pieces', a somewhat deprecatory euphemism used in the old Portuguese works.

[4] L. Cordeiro (ed.), 1574–1620, *Da Mina ao Cabo Negro segundo Garcia Mendes Castello Branco*, p. 16 f.

[5] L. Cordeiro (ed.), 1593–1631, *Terras e minas africanas segundo Balthazar Rebello de Aragão*, p. 16 f.

[6] Compare Cavazzi, op. cit., pp. 630 ff.; Duarte Lopes, op. cit., p. 156 f.; Dapper; *Description de l'Afrique*, p. 357 f.

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has been cited to prove conclusively that the 'Jagas' were not one horde but many, and that they multiplied by splitting into other and smaller groups as they went from pillage to pillage. Battell recounts that they killed their own offspring,[1] and this is further attested by other contemporary writers.[2] They ensured their increase by taking the young of their enemies who, as Purchas noted, were trained up as a sort of Janisaries. Battell said that of 16,000 in the camp 'there were but twelve natural Gagas that were their captains, and fourteen or fifteen women'.[3] Purchas added to the first edition of *Purchas, His Pilgrimage* (1613) a note which is helpful in determining, if not their ultimate, at least their proximate, origin, and also their final place of settling. He wrote:

175x 167 [847]

> He (i.e., Battell) saith they are called Iagges by the Portugals, by themselves Imbangolas . . . and come from Sierra Liona. . . .
>
> Elembe, the great Iagge, brought with him twelve thousand of these cruel monsters from Sierra Liona, and after much mischief and spoil settled himself in Benguele, twelve degrees from the Zone southwards, and there breedeth and groweth into a nation. But Kelandula, sometime his page, proceeds in that beastly life before mentioned, and the people of Elembe, by great troops, run to him and follow his camp in hope of spoil.[4]

According to this, we may take it that the designation of Iagges, Jaga, Jaka, or Ayaka came from the Portuguese, which means that it came from one or more of the Bantu languages—that it was originally a description given to these hordes or to their leaders by the African people whom they fought and conquered, or even by the African traders[5] who went to the 'Jaga' camps to buy slaves in exchange for cloth, beads, rum, and muskets. The word evidently comes from the verb to fight, *oku yaka*; they fight, *a yaka*,[6] or *va yaka*. Father Van Wing[7] and Emil Torday[8] both hold that there is some real relationship between the tribe of the Bayaka of the middle Kuango and the 'Jaga' hordes, and make that

[1] Ravenstein, op. cit., pp. 32, 84 f. Could this have been an (extreme) instance of the well-known fear of menstrual-blood found among many people, including the Ovimbundu?

[2] Ravenstein, op. cit., p. 32, note 4.

[3] Ravenstein, op. cit., p. 33.

[4] Ravenstein, op. cit., pp. 84, 85.

[5] *Pombeiros descalços*, barefoot traders.

[6] The Portuguese transcription of this form is *a iaca*, or *a iacca*, with the hard *c* mistakenly changed to *g*, and *i* taken for *j* as was formerly often done.

[7] Van Wing, op. cit., p. 106.

[8] Torday, op. cit., see map facing p. 282.

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175x the origin of this tribal name. It is no less reasonable to suppose
that the name has also been preserved in the name of a section of
167 the Ovimbundu—the va Ciyaka,[1] which is an augmentative noun from the same verbal stem.

'He saith they are called . . . by themselves Imbangolas.' This statement has given rise to a great deal of speculation from the time of Purchas to our own. The *Imbangala*, better known as 'the people of Jaga Cassange' or Bangalas, are generally recognized to have been one of the marauding hordes which troubled Angola in the seventeenth century, and it has already been noted that their own traditional history, as given by Dias de Carvalho and by Ferreira Diniz, fits in with this theory. It seems reasonable, therefore, to make this further identification of the 'Jagas' of Battell with the Imbangala of Cassange. There is one more
[173] traditional link to add, and that is that the Ovimbundu of Ciyaka recognize the region of Cassange as the location of the oldest ancestral tombs of which they have any tradition. Once when there was a particularly severe drought, tribal elders were sent from Ciyaka to Cassange to worship at these ancient tombs, to anoint the skulls, and to plead for rain.

When Purchas noted in 1613 that 'Elembe settled himself in Benguele', he meant the hinterland of Benguela Velha,[2] i.e. in the regions of Mbũi (*Amboim*), Cipala (*Quibala*), or Sela (*Cela*). As I have shown, tradition connects the kingdom of Wambu with Sela, and the kingdom of Bailundu with Cipala. Although 'Kelandula, sometime his page, proceeds in that beastly life before mentioned'. we may be reasonably sure that eventually he also, or his followers, settled in the same general region. Both Elembe and Kalandula are common Umbundu names and the latter is found twice among the kings of Bailundu.

175x There is further evidence in the similarity of customs as be-
266 tween the 'Jagas' and the royal families of the Ovimbundu, for
566 both Battell and Cavazzi have given fairly full accounts. To show these similarities fully it would be necessary to re-edit Battell, and therefore I shall speak of only a few outstanding points. The cannibalism of the 'Jagas' was perhaps their most striking custom.

[1] The Portuguese transcription of this form would be 'Gisca', but this has become changed to 'Quisca', as also with many similar names.

[2] See p. 122, n. 4 *supra*. It was only in 1617 that the settlement on the *Baia das Vaccas* was made, and (wrongly) given the name of Benguela.

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The Ovimbundu are not ordinary cannibals, if indeed that term may be applied to any people in Africa, nor do the commoners of the Ovimbundu ever eat human flesh on their own account, but no king may ever reign or be considered as regularly enthroned until he has 'eaten Ekongo'.[1] The cannibalism traditionally ascribed to Wambu-Kalunga is also a case in point.[2] Other human sacrifices practised by the 'Jagas' and described by Battell also have their counterparts in the practices of the Umbundu kingdoms.[3] The mode of the burial of the dead described by Battell[4] is essentially that which has been used, at least until the last few years, for the kings and the other 'holy'[5] men of the Ovimbundu, except that where rock caves are available the use of them has been adopted and in Kasongi cairns were used. The sitting posture and the sacrifice of wives or slaves and cattle (or of substitutes) are the important points, and these have everywhere been used for the classes mentioned, until quite recently.

The custom of keeping boys captured from the enemy and training them to be fearless warriors amid the terrors of the country has a parallel in the Umbundu custom of the king's slaves,[6] who came from another land[7] and would therefore do the king's bidding without fear, favour, or consideration of family feeling. They often reached high position and certain of the king's ministers always came from among them. There seem to be many recollections of the 'Jagas' in the customs of the kings' sons.[8] Names of certain of the officials seem to have survived, as, for example, Mani (*muĕlĕ*) Lumbo, Mani-Curio (*Muĕkalia*), Golambolo (*Ngalamboli*), Tendala (*Candala*), Ukuetambo,[9] &c. Careful linguistic studies would doubtless reveal many remains of the speech

[1] *Oku lia Ekongo*—lit. 'to eat the Old One'. This is a ritual feast in which the flesh of a specially fattened slave is eaten mixed with the flesh of various animals. See Ravenstein, op. cit., p. 33, note 3. Magyar described this custom, calling it '*Ouri-Kongo*', op. cit., pp. 275 ff.

[2] See *supra*, p. 176.

[3] Compare Ravenstein, op. cit.

[4] Op. cit., p. 34 f.

[5] 'Holy' in the sense of spirit possessed—the king, the hunter, the medical practitioner, and the smith.

[6] *Ocinduli cosoma*, singular. May there be some recollection of 'Kinguri' (= Cinguli) in this word?

[7] In Bailundu the *ovinduli viosoma* (plural) came mostly from Luandu, i.e. the Songo country across the Kuanza—further evidence of connexion with Lunda emigrants.

[8] *Omĕlĕ volosoma*, used collectively of all the royal families of the Ovimbundu.

[9] Cavazzi, op. cit., pp. 206 f., 211.

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175 which the 'Jagas' had, although they soon adopted the language of
197 the people whom they conquered. As recently as fifty years ago the mother of the king of Bailundu spoke Umbundu brokenly, since she came from Cipala, and her sons were sent to complete their education with her people where later they were often called to rule.[1]

173 Recognition by the Ciyaka people that their forefathers came
114 from the region where the Imbangala now live has been noted.
167 It may have been a similar tradition heard in Viye which started Magyar to find out the tradition of 'Kinguri'. Such a tradition was mentioned in Viye as late as 1898.[2] This relation between the Umbundu ruling families and either the 'Jagas' or the Imbangala has been noted by several of the Portuguese writers. Lopes de Lima, in his History of the Discovery of the Congo, adds a footnote on the 'Jagas' as follows: 'The Jagas are almost nomadic peoples . . . coming from the interior of Africa, . . . there are some on the frontiers of the Congo, Angola, and Benguella, where some have fixed their habitations (as those of Cassange, and Bailundo).'[3] Writing in 1797 a certain Col. Pinheiro de Lacerda said of the inhabitants of Ngalangi, Kakonda, Wambu, Bailundu, &c.: 'These are they of the uplands, who are divided into two groups, those of one are called "Quinbundos",[4] (these do not eat human flesh); the others are called "Quimbangalas", who eat it, and when they make their sacrifice, which all attend, all eat the "Macongo".'[5] At that period the diversity of these two component parts of the Ovimbundu people was so apparent that they were even spoken of as separate and distinct peoples.

103 *Place-names.* Before leaving the subject of migratory move-
167 ments a word should be said on the evidence of place-names. There is nothing to prove, except in a few instances where traditions have been collected, that the recurrence of identical or similar names at different places indicates the actual lines of migration followed by the several tribal groups represented. It may be said, however, that this line of evidence, taken together

[1] See *Missionary Herald*, 1888, p. 70.

[2] *Missionary Herald*, 1898, p. 108.

[3] *Annaes Mar. Col.*, 1845, p. 93.

[4] Taken from the singular form *ocimbundu*. As already explained, the change of *chi* to *qui* is a commonly met mutilation of the Bantu forms.

[5] *Annaes Mar. Col.*, 1845, p. 488. There follows a circumstantial account of the ceremony of *Oku lia Ehongo*, to which reference has already been made.

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with that which has already been reviewed, might make it possible 103
to determine the demography of the Benguela Highland prior to 167
the formation of the Umbundu kingdoms. It is also further evidence as to the demographic make-up of the Ovimbundu. Some of these recurring place-names evidently represent elements which now constitute separate entities outside the Umbundu kingdoms, although they probably made contributions to the formation of those kingdoms. Others represent elements which probably moved away from the earlier invasions from the north but stayed in their new sites to amalgamate with later arrivals. Some may represent successive splittings-off from a stock which thus settled at various places. Many recurrent place-names could be shown both in this region and outside the language-grouping.

Attitudes toward Other Tribes. Attitudes of the Ovimbundu 619
towards the various neighbouring tribes are instructive. Mention 186
has already been made of the attitude of the southern 'Bangala' 101
people in their inclusion of the Ovimbundu of Kalukembe within their own system of exogamy. The Ovimbundu recognize a common humanity with the peoples who are their neighbours both on the south and on the north. They are all *omanu*,[1] people, or even *vakuetu*, comrades. Similar recognition is not extended to the eastern and south-eastern neighbours who are lumped together under the derogatory term of 'va Ngangela' or *ovingangela*.[2] This eastern region as far as the Great Lakes was the happy hunting-ground of the slave-traders from Viye and from Bailundu. There is a term *olongoya* which is applied to the northern neighbours, but without the derogatory connotation of 'Ngangela'. *Olongoya* has a linguistic connotation as did *barbaroi* in the Greek, and refers to the fact that these neighbours speak what is to the Ovimbundu an unintelligible language. How much of rationalization there may be in these attitudes and prejudices one cannot say, but it seems that in them there is some recognition of tribal origins and relationships, of the fact that across the Benguela Highland migrations have swept from north to south.

Conclusion. In consideration of the above evidence, it is now 174
possible to draw conclusions concerning the origin of the Ovi- 167

[1] *Omanu* is the Umbundu equivalent for the Nguni *abantu*, which has come to be applied to the whole language family.

[2] This Umbundu attitude is best illustrated by the proverb 'As a grass hut is not a house, so an *ocingangela* (singular) is not a person (*omunu*).'

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174 mbundu. They are the result of a fusion of diverse stocks, chiefly of
167 the Southern Bantu and of the Congo or Central Bantu peoples. The ruling families probably were Lunda emigrants for the most part,[1] at least in their origin. It was probably during the seventeenth century that these people entered the Benguela Highland and began to found their respective dynasties. The people whom they encountered in these lands were mostly of Southern Bantu stock, with some 'Ngangela' people in Ndulu, Viye, and Ngalangi. The upper strata of these local populations seem to have moved on with their cattle to join related stocks in the border regions, while the masses seem to have stayed behind to form the nucleus of the Ovimbundu. Especially does this appear to have been the case with the original Southern Bantu stock, for many who were cattle-owners seem to have fled to the drier and more suitable lands in the south and west, while those who stayed must have lost to the invaders such cattle as they had. Only in the south-west (especially Kalukembe) was the Southern Bantu influence of sufficient strength to preserve any semblance of the cattle-culture complex, together with a recognition of kinship from their southern neigh-
[197] bours. Everywhere, it seems, the Southern Bantu nucleus was of sufficient strength to exert a dominant linguistic influence. It is certainly noteworthy that over the whole region a single language has developed with only small dialectic differences[2]—and that without benefit of political union. Commercial intercourse has probably largely supplied the place of the latter.

Historical Development

175 *Dominant Tendency*. The origins of the principal groups of the Ovimbundu have been traced in outline from both native and European sources. It now remains to sketch the main lines of

[1] But Viye and Ngalangi traditions *in re* the origin of their ruling families must be borne in mind—traditions also supported by other evidence.

[2] Retention of peculiarities of the parent stock by Kalukembe has been noted. There are certain noticeable differences as between 'up-country' and 'down-country'—roughly divided by the Keve and Kunene Rivers. Each of the outlying regions has its own peculiarities due to local foreign influences. In Kasongi, in Ngalangi, and in Viye these are quite noticeable but can hardly be called separate dialects. Regions of older European occupation—Kakonda and Viye—have taken more from the Portuguese. In consideration of these facts and the further fact that the Viye racial stock had a larger 'Ngangela' element than had other regions, the recent linguistic influence of Viye has been out of all proportion to reality and may be explained by the relatively larger number of missions and missionaries working in that region.

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their historical development. The traditional history and separate European contacts of each of the several Umbundu kingdoms would occupy far more time and space than the limits of this study permit. I propose, therefore, to give in outline the broader trends of European contacts from the earliest days, filling in such items of traditional history as may be necessary for complete understanding, and to summarize this with a chronological chart in which the dynastic successions of the principal Umbundu kingdoms are included. 175x

There are many books about Angola and several histories of Angola, so-called, but the History of Angola, in the proper sense of the term, remains to be written. None of the books written thus far has taken sufficient cognizance of the economic factors involved, whereas a history of Angola is no history at all if not an economic history. This is particularly true of this territory where two of the greater traders of the continent have met.

The Portuguese are the most tenacious traders of all the Europeans who have gone to Africa. Proof of this is the fact that the Hausa, Indian, Syrian, Armenian, or Greek traders, who almost monopolize the petty trade of most African colonies, in Angola have no footing whatever. From the first, the Portuguese traders began to utilize in their trade the services of natives of the old kingdom of Angola. Early in the nineteenth century the Ovimbundu began to be noticed as traders and soon came to be known[1] as the greatest traders of Bantu Africa, after the Zanzibar Arabs.[2] These latter they met in the Great Lakes region, and they (the Arabs) subsequently began to come down to Benguela or Luanda themselves.[3] In the middle of the nineteenth century the Yankees in their clipper ships played a large part in the trade of the Angola coast. More recently the British have made considerable investments in trade and in industrial developments. After the war of 1914–18 Germans played an important part in the commercial life of the colony. Any history of Angola, then, that makes sense must be an economic history. This is no less true of the history of the Ovimbundu and their European contacts. 175* 439 177

[1] Under various names, as, for example, Mambari, Bihesna, Ballundos, Kimbundus, Mbundus, &c.

[2] Cf. comparisons drawn by Serpa Pinto, op. cit., p. 163.

[3] The Umbundu name for the Zanzibaris is 'va Lungusna'; compare the medieval (1228) name for Zanzibar, Langujah (C. M. Doke in *Bantu Studies*, 1938, p. 135 f.).

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175x 177 439 *European Influences 1600–1770.* The first European contact of the Ovimbundu or of the 'proto-Ovimbundu' was without doubt for purposes of trade. The first record which we have of any such contact is in *Andrew Battell in Guinea.* About 1600 the governor, as the chief trader,[1] sent his prisoner Battell on trading expeditions along the Benguela coast. At the Bahia das Vaccas, the Ndombe, a cattle-keeping people, were met. They supplied the Europeans with produce,[2] including cattle and 'the famous sheep which have five quarters',[3] but *not* with the principal article of commerce, for as another of the conquistadores noted, 'In this kingdom there is [567] no slave trade, for it is not their custom to sell each other.'[4] This lack was soon supplied by 'proto-Ovimbundu' when, on the next voyage, Battell with the 'Portugals and Mulattos' found the encampment of 'Jagas' at the mouth of the Keve River, from Battell's account of which we have already quoted.[5] Although hardly recognized as such at the time, this, it seems, was the beginning of a long commercial partnership. As long as the 'Jagas' continued 'to take the spoil of the land', they supplied many slaves[6] for the trade, and after they settled they became traders both in direct European employ and on their own account.

439 567 797 175x The early European settlements in Africa were made with the hope of finding gold, but although that metal was not found in the Congo or Angola, black gold—human gold—soon proved to be equally profitable. There was a religious motive in the Portuguese discoveries, for from the time of Prince Henry the Navigator, his captains were bidden to 'plant the Cross on some new headland'. With every ship priests went out to convert the heathen. Some priests doubtless did good work but more of them, both individually and as members of the various orders, early came to the conclusion that the best way to convert the heathen was to sell

[1] The governors continued to engage in trade openly, until forbidden by the law of 17 Sept. 1721, and then, says Lopes de Lima, some complied, while others did not (*Ensaios*, part i, p. 84).

[2] A. Battell, p. 16.

[3] L. Cordeiro (ed.), 1574–1620, *Da Mina ao Cabo Negro segundo Garcia Mendes Castello Branco*, p. 34. The reference is to the fat-tailed sheep of the Hottentots and their neighbours. This is perhaps the first reference to it on the west coast.

[4] Ibid., 1593–1631, *Terras e minas africanas segundo Balthazar Rebello de Aragão*, p. 15.

[5] *Supra*, p. 182 f.

[6] Battell, pp. 20, 28; L. Cordeiro (ed.), 1574–1620, *Da Mina ao Cabo Negro segundo Garcia Mendes Castello Branco*, p. 17.

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him off where he would have the double benefit of regular work and Christian doctrine. In 1560 the Bishop of São Thomé wrote that 'he doubted that the people of the kingdom of Angola could be made Catholics unless the King would allow Trade'.[1] The slaves were baptized by the bishop by the boatload—rowed along the wharf of Luanda. The Jesuits profited greatly by the slave-trade, employing continuously three of their own ships. The religious motive was thus early swallowed up by the commercial and profit motive. Commerce was almost entirely taken up with the slave-trade. Four-fifths of the value of all exports were slaves.[2]

During the first hundred years of the Colony of Angola a million slaves were exported,[3] and three million would probably be a very conservative estimate of the total. As long as the over-sea slave traffic remained legal, little effort seems to have been made to develop other exports. In spite of protests and until 1832, ivory remained a monopoly of the royal treasury with regulations which discouraged its export. Such products as gum copal and orchilia only began to be exported in 1832–8. The only product of any importance which had also been exported in the time of the slave-trade was bees-wax. The slave-trade was first questioned in 1831, it was formally prohibited in 1836, but for many years enforcement was not accomplished. During the 250 years of the oversea slave-trade, Angola was in reality a dependency of Brazil.[4] When Brazil became independent, there was a movement in Benguela for union with that country.[5] So complete was the commercial domination of Brazil that Lisbon merchants had hardly anything to do with the Angolan trade. Lopes de Lima points out that the colony was also spiritually dominated by Brazil, and attributes the noteworthy religious decadence not only to the preoccupation of the clergy with the slave-trade, but also to the fact that from 1677 until 1845 the diocese of Angola and Congo was a part of the Metropolitan archdiocese of Bahia. The one great fact with regard to Angola of the sixteenth, seventeenth,

[1] It had been a royal monopoly and allowed only through Kongo. This letter is from the National Archives of the Torre do Tombo and quoted by Lopes de Lima, *Ensaios*, p. ix.

[2] Statistics given by Lopes de Lima, *Ensaios*, part i, p. 69 f.

[3] Cadornega, *História Geral das Guerras Angolanas* (1680–1), vol. iii, p. 234 (also quoted by Paiva Manso).

[4] Lopes de Lima, *Ensaios*, part i, p. 74; J. P. Oliveira Martins, *O Brasil e as Colónias Portuguesas*, p. 18.

[5] Lopes de Lima, op. cit., p. 127.

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175* eighteenth, and much of the nineteenth century, then, was the
439 slave-trade.

567 Most of the historical treatises on Angola are little more than
648 chronological lists of battles and expeditions. The relation of these events to the main facts, i.e. to the economic facts, has rarely been made. Two or three presídios were founded with the hope of controlling nearby mineral deposits,[1] whether real or supposed, but all the rest were intended as spearheads for trade or to protect existing trade. Many of the military expeditions were raids with an obvious end in view; others were rearguard actions to protect a more or less successful raid of the same sort; others were retaliations for reprisals or vice versa. Practically all of the soldiers who were free men, from the captain-general down, were also traders, and some who were not free were traders on account of others. There may have been a few expeditions which had less immediate connexion with trade, for there were genuine explorers in those
*175 early days, even as more recently.

726 There would be little interest or profit in cataloguing the military
648 expeditions which had, or seem to have had, contact with the Ovimbundu or with their predecessors in the land during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. There were only a very few of real significance. During the seventeenth century many raids were made from Massangano across Libolo to the edge of or into the Benguela Highland, and likewise there were many actions between the garrisons of Benguela and Caconda and the inhabitants of the plateau. In 1607 Balthazar Rebello de Aragão set out to cross Africa and had to turn back after going eighty leagues, but his own report was so scanty that even the direction he took cannot be determined.[2] In 1645, while the Dutch controlled Luanda and the coast, there was a raid which was said to have reached Bailundu.[3] The very scanty references to this raid give no description of the inhabitants, but since there seems to be no Bailundu tradition with regard to it, I conclude that the present dynasty (beyond the establishment of which tradition hardly goes) must have been founded since that date. About 1650 there was a raid across Libolo as far as the Keve River which found a cattle-rearing

[1] e.g. Benguela Velha and Cambambe.

[2] L. Cordeiro (ed.), 1593–1620, *Terras e minas africanas segundo Balthazar Rebello de Aragão*, p. 15.

[3] *Catálogo dos Governadores*, p. 374; Lopes de Lima, *Ensaios*, part i, p. 99.

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people living there,[1] which also leads me to conclude that the Ovimbundu as we now know them were not there at that date. 175x 726

About 1661 there was an expedition from Benguela in order to restore a native ally, the 'Iaga Caconda', against an 'intruding Iaga' who used fire-arms.[2] This is the first record of fire-arms in native hands in the hinterland of Benguela. Muskets and powder were sold from the time of Luanda's founding (1576),[3] but not all tribes took to them quickly.[4] If fire-arms were already in use by natives in the Benguela hinterland in 1661, it is most probable that the founders of the present Umbundu dynasties had them when they came to the country. The first presídio of Caconda was built in 1680, destroyed soon after, and rebuilt nearby in 1685. This was at four or five days' journey from Benguela but not on the Plateau nor within the present Umbundu area. The third presídio, known as Caconda-Nova, was built at its present site in 1769. Most writers have supposed this fort to have been built at its present site in 1685, overlooking the fact that there were not two sites but three.[5]

648 [411] [177]

175+ 648

European Influences 1770–1840. The governor who effected the final moving of Caconda on to the Plateau, D. Francisco de Souza Coutinho, also undertook many other reforms designed to better the economic state of the colony. He brought something of the intentions of the great Marquez de Pombal to this rémote tropical dependency. He seems to have been the first governor of Angola to realize the immense superiority of the Benguela Highland,

[1] Cadornega, op. cit., vol. ii, pp. 42–6.

[2] Cadornega, op. cit., p. 176 f. It is of interest that according to this author (1680) this expedition passed the Bay then known as 'Catumbella of Salt Water' or 'Catumbella of the Oysters'. Jaspert made the error of stating that this Bay (Lobito) was 'discovered by the English' about 1900!

[3] Garcia Mendes Castello Branco (1620) protested against allowing this traffic (*Da Mina ao Cabo Negro*, p. 25).

[4] In 1790 the Ovimbundu used fire-arms very well, but the 'Ganguellas' had not then adopted their use (*Annaes Mar. e Col.*, *5a Ser.*, p. 489).

[5] Lopes de Lima (*Ensaios*) made this error (or omission), and more recent writers have perhaps erred by following him. The correct accounts are given in the *Catálogo dos Governadores*, pp. 396 ff., 416 ff. (also to be found in *Arquivos de Angola*, vol. iii, pp. 507 f., 528). The facts are most clearly brought out by the governor of the District of Benguela in reporting a visit made to Caconda. He gives a short history of the presídio and tells of having seen the ruins of the earlier forts (*Districto de Benguella 1892*, Lisboa, 1894). The report to the Ministry in Lisbon of the governor, D. Francisco Inocencio de Souza Coutinho, explaining (among other things) the moving of this presídio, and dated 18 Oct. 1769, has been published in *Arquivos de Angola*, vol. i, no. 1 (Oct. 1933).

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175* 648 from the point of view of climate, situation, and resources, over the rest of the West African lands with which the Portuguese had relations. He stated in his report[1] that until that time most of the Europeans who entered the Highland were escaped convicts or deserters. He attempted to provide for a more orderly commercial development in these regions not only by building the forts of Caconda-Nova and Novo Redondo,[2] but also by bringing the traders of the interior together at determined places where they could have judges appointed from among themselves, and even parish priests.[3] If the office of 'captain-major and exterior judge'[4] did not originate at this time, at least it was Souza Coutinho who revived it in his appointments and made it a useful instrument for the commercial penetration of the Benguela Highland and of the regions beyond.

Among the regions for which he created such an office was 'Gallangue grande'[5] (Ngalangi). This captaincy-major and the parish of 'S. João Nepomuceno de Gallangue' are mentioned subsequently but only to note the vacancy of both posts. Souza *175 Coutinho was remembered for his many accomplishments, and for 648 his realistic attitudes. He recognized that the law of 1620 pro- 439 hibiting the entry of traders into the hinterlands[6] was largely a dead letter, and that in so far as it was observed, it only favoured the

[1] Dated 18 Oct. 1769, loc. cit.

[2] The chief reason for building the latter was to put an end to the contraband trade of the English (see reports of the same governor of 12 Jan. and of 16 May 1769 in op. cit., vol. i, nos. 5 and 6 (Mar. 1936).

[3] Order of 23 Sept. 1768, and report of 12 Jan. 1769 in ibid.; report of 18 Oct. 1769; also *Catálogo dos Governadores*, p. 416 f. (*Arquivos de Angola*, vol. iii, p. 528).

[4] The *capitão mor e juiz de fora* was appointed to represent the government in a region not subject to it nor within the range of military occupation. His chief duty was to keep the peace among the Portuguese subjects of his jurisdiction and to attend to legal and orderly inheritance of their goods when they died. He also was supposed to secure for them as much extra-territorial treatment as the native kings and courts would concede. Compare explanation by Francisco de Salles Ferreira in *Annaes Mar. e Col.*, 1846, p. 118. Long lists of these appointments for the various regions of the interior, together with many contemporary documents, are given by Ralph Delgado, *Ao Sul do Cuanza*.

[5] He gave it the name 'Linhares' after a Portuguese town, but neither this name nor that of 'Contina' for Caconda was kept.

[6] The purpose of this law was not, as Livingstone supposed (*Missionary Travels and Researches*, p. 369), directly humanitarian, but more especially to preserve the trade for residents of the towns and to avoid the necessity for punitive expeditions which the traders' presence in the hinterland had so often motivated.

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foreign buccaneers and other contraband trade in the unoccupied ports of the Congo, Loango, &c. He therefore removed the prohibition[1] and counted on the appointment of captains-major to keep the peace. From this time the hinterlands were legally open to traders—to all Portuguese subjects whether white, black, or brown.

Though the hinterlands were now legally open to all traders, life was not thereby made any easier for them than it had been previously for the 'barefoot traders'[2] who had carried on most of the trade hitherto. Once they went beyond the range of the guns of a presídio, they entered what were practically foreign countries which recognized no European principles of law or of conduct. Those who could afford it built themselves small fortresses and manned them with their slaves. Even so, they had to become vassals and feudatories of some native king and pay tribute according to his good pleasure. Those traders who could not afford such an establishment led a very precarious existence, nor could they long maintain a status above that of the natives of the region. Many of these early traders and their descendants were subsequently incorporated into the Umbundu stock, and in some instances whole communities of them.[3] For one reason or another this increased commercial contact led to further wars with the natives. The war of this period which made the greatest impression upon the Ovimbundu was the campaign of 1774–6, to which allusion has already been made.[4] Memories of this war and of the capture of their respective kings have been preserved in the traditions of Bailundu and of Ndulu,[5] and it also seems that these two peoples learned, for a time at least, that it was safer and more profitable to trade with the Europeans than to raid their establishments. Ciyaka and the neighbouring groups do not seem to have followed suit, for they continued to raid the forts of Caconda, Quilengues, and Huila until fairly recent times; nor do Europeans seem to have penetrated Ciyaka for residence until almost the turn of the present century. But in all the Umbundu kingdoms life

[1] Report of 9 May 1765 in *Arquivos de Angola*, vol. i, nos. 5 and 6.

[2] i.e. native African trading agents.

[3] I have genealogical tables and family histories of some of the present-day descendants. The mixed origin of communities in Kakonda has been noted by several writers. A noteworthy example in Viye is the region called Kamundongo—an old Ndongo (Angola) settlement.

[4] *Supra*, pp. 166, 171, 174.

[5] *Supra*, pp. 170, 171.

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175x 726 648 continued to be difficult for the traders, subject as they were to the conditions of primitive custom and belief.[1]

648 439 175 About the time of the above-mentioned military campaign, events took a turn which in the end greatly advanced commercial life in Viye. I refer to the restoration of Kangombe to his 'stool' with the help of the governor, Dom Antonio de Lancastre.[2] This alliance with the Portuguese government was maintained by Kangombe's successors until 1890. In 1782, and perhaps even in 1770, there were so many Portuguese residents that a 'Captain-major and exterior judge of Bihe' was appointed,[3] a post which seems to have been maintained until Silva Porto's suicide in 1890.

Reference has already been made to an account by Paulo Martins Pinheiro de Lacerda, who evidently lived in Ngalangi and in Wambu about 1790,[4] but although this man wrote a good deal about native life, he had little to say about trade, although it was perhaps his own livelihood. I have accounts of two trading expeditions from Benguela to the country of 'Lovar' or 'Lovale' at the head-waters of the Zambezi in 1794 and 1795, undertaken by Alexandre de Silva Teixeira and Jozé da Silva Costa at the instigation of a slave originally from that region.[5] They passed through Bailundu and Viye, but mentioned these regions only to [487] say that the road was already well known to all backwoodsmen (traders). All available evidence seems to indicate that before the close of the eighteenth century the Ovimbundu were becoming, if they had not already become, traders. If trade had not yet taken first place over raiding and warfare, at least it was well-established in their habits of life. Bailundu tradition says that the first traders to offer cloth and beads and fire-arms for slaves and ivory were the Ndongo, the 'barefoot traders' (*pombeiros descalços*). This was doubtless during the very early days of the eighteenth century, or

[1] Silva Porto's diaries, although referring to a later time, give a good description of difficulties faced (op. cit.). *Soc. Geog. Lisboa, 5a Ser.*

[2] Governor and captain-general, 1772–9. He was the immediate successor of D. Francisco de Souza Coutinho.

[3] For this appointment, which may not have been the first, and the duties of the office, see *Annaes Mar. e Col., 6a Ser.*, p. 118. I have the names of subsequent appointees, and for four of them the following dates of appointment, respectively—1791, 1819, 1838, 1885; also of one previous appointee in 1770 or 1771.

[4] *Supra*, p. 188.

[5] *Arquivos de Angola*, vol. i, no. 4 (Nov. 1935); *Annaes Mar. e Col., 4a Ser.* (1844), p. 159 f.

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even earlier. Long before that the forerunners of the Ovimbundu kings, the 'Jagas', had sold their prisoners to the *pombeiros*. The other side of the national lineage had probably bought salt from Cisama[1] even before the white men came to the land.

Dominant Tendencies 1840–74. The next period in which there was great commercial development among the Ovimbundu began with the fourth decade of the nineteenth century, following upon the abolition of the monopoly in ivory and the development of new products as substitutes for the slave-trade, formally prohibited in 1836. This period saw a considerable increase in the number of traders resident in the region. The new régime at the coast may have caused some to go inland.[2] In Bailundu, and especially in Viye, they were well received by kings and by people who saw in the coming of more Europeans to live among them increased commercial opportunities.[3] For various reasons most of these traders established themselves in Viye,[4] and from this time Viye took first place in trade with the interior and with the coast. But since the caravan road to Benguela must pass either through

[1] Lopes de Lima, *Ensaios*, part ii, p. 55.

[2] Some statistics on these older periods are available, but since they are themselves in disagreement and none of them seem to be very reliable I do not include them here. The Report of the Governor of Benguela for 1799 gives the rather optimistic figure of 78 *whites* (including 5 women) resident in the several interior districts (*Annaes Mar. e Col.*, 1844, p. 161), with correspondingly larger numbers for persons of mixed race and (civilized) blacks. In 1838, according to Lopes de Lima (*Ensaios*, part i, p. 4 f.), the number of *whites* in the same districts was only 14, with no women, and the number of 'brown inhabitants' correspondingly small except in Cacondа, for which he gives the number of 2,992—more than in all the rest of the colony! J. R. Graça gave a list of 101 names of inhabitants of Viye alone, 'Portuguese or descendants of Portuguese . . . including 6 *Europeans*'. This was probably near the truth for 1846. Magyar (1849–57) gave very interesting calculations of the population and area of the several Umbundu kingdoms, but no figures on European residents.

[3] A very interesting glimpse of Bailundu in 1837 was given by a political exile, Carlos de Almeida Sandoval (*Annaes do Cons. Ultr.*, *Ia Ser.*, p. 519 f.). Very full accounts of life in Viye have been given by Silva Porto, who first reached Viye in 1840, coming from Luanda (see some of his diaries in *Annaes do Cons. Ultr.*, Ser. I; *Boletim Soc. Geog. Lisboa*, Ser. 5, 6. A small volume of excerpts from Silva Porto's diaries was published in 1942 by the Agência Geral das Colónias under the title *Viagens e apontamentos de um portuense em África*.)

[4] The early continuous connexion of the dynasty with the Luanda government has been mentioned, as also the continuous appointment of a *capitão mor*. The incumbent at the time (appointed 1838) was Francisco José Coimbra, of mixed race from Cacondа (*Annaes Mar. e Col.*, 1846, p. 118; *Annaes do Cons. Ultr.*, *Ia Ser.*, p. 112 f.). Both Cameron and the early missionaries mention dealings with his sons. Some of his grandsons and great-grandsons, now reincorporated with the Ovimbundu, still tell of their descent.

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175 178 439 [643] Bailundu (and its dependent states), or through Wambu and Ciyaka, while the road to Luanda lay either through Ndulu or Bailundu, these other kingdoms were not slow in following along the path of commercial success. In Ngalangi the king himself took a very active interest in trade and annually sent a royal caravan to Benguela, taking care to get a pass from the captain of the fort at Caconda. Other kings also adopted the practice of the royal caravan,[1] but the kings of the principal kingdoms were slow to give up raiding, plunder, and warfare as a manner of life[2]—a custom which became distasteful to their subjects in proportion as trade became more profitable and attractive.

In addition to those already named, there were other historical events and policies which contributed toward the development of trade during this period. The abolition in 1834 of the monopoly [561] in ivory,[3] which the royal treasury had held since the beginning, was of great importance, and this, in turn, abetted in perpetuating the slave-trade, now a contraband, for ivory always had been brought from the interior on the backs of slaves, and it must not be supposed that this would suddenly be stopped, especially since ivory had just become much more valuable. According to Bastos,[4] slaves for this contraband trade continued to be cheap and plentiful until the eighties, which was probably due in part to the large supply offered. Another reason was perhaps that the contraband oversea trade was largely in the hands of foreigners—Brazilians, Spaniards, and Americans, who were not always reliable in the matter of paying for their cargoes.[5]

[1] *Omaha*, which had special routines and prerogatives. Other types of caravans were named from the products which they carried or conducted.

[2] See Lopes de Lima, *Ensaios*, part ii, p. 54: 'Bailundo . . . a warlike people, of the race of "Jagas", whose chief is always on a campaign'; Magyar, *Reisen*, many references, but especially pp. 290 ff., 383–420; Silva Porto, op. cit., p. 82 f., 160; *Missionary Herald*, 1883, p. 339; 1884, pp. 145 f., 504 f.; 1885, pp. 279, 375 f.; 1886, p. 228 f.; 1887, p. 106; 1889, pp. 67, 535; 1890, p. 292, &c.

[3] From 1618 (B. Rebello de Aragão, p. 14) until 1834 (Saldanha da Gama, p. 86), all critics agreed that this monopoly even defeated its own purpose, i.e. revenue; for, they said, the conditions and regulations were so onerous that the natives could not afford to bring ivory to the coast. Available statistics show that there was very little export of ivory until 1835 (Lopes de Lima, *Ensaios*).

[4] A. Bastos, *Monographia de Catumbella*, pp. 18, 25. He gives prices varying from 5$000 to 18$000 or even 20$000, and remarks that slaves were later designated as servants, redeemed ones, contracted labourers, &c. The milreis (1$000) was then worth about $1.10. Monteiro (*vide infra*) says that in the sixties 'a little nigger' could be had for 5$.

[5] J. J. Monteiro, *Angola and the River Congo*, pp. 181–4. Monteiro attributes

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The town of Catumbela (founded 1836) played an important part in the trade of the Ovimbundu. The first trade of Bailundu, Ndulu, and Viye had been with Luanda and with the presídios on the north bank of the Kuanza, while the rest of the tribe had traded with Caconda and with Benguela. Some trade went to Egito from Bailundu, Kasongi, &c. Catumbela was first built on the left bank of the river of that name, about four miles from its mouth, at the point where caravans from Viye, Bailundu, and from nearer regions to the north of the river crossed to go to Benguela. Immediately some began to stay in Catumbela rather than go on to Benguela, some fifteen miles farther. The nearness of Catumbela to Lobito Bay, a favourite hide-out for slavers and other contrabandists, was another advantage.[1] In 1856 the commercial houses of Catumbela completed a move to the right bank of the river, and after that the caravans from the interior had no further need for going on to Benguela. Just previously, in 1852, Silva Porto had 'broken a new trail' from Viye to Catumbela by way of Bailundu, Civula, and Cisanji, thus avoiding entirely the regions of Ciyaka and Ganda where the caravans were 'continually assaulted, robbed, and at times cut to pieces by the highwaymen of those regions'.[2]

The old road in its descent from the plateau followed more nearly (although not entirely) a natural watershed, but even though the new one had to cross some large and turbulent streams, it was much superior because of the greater safety which it offered. Silva Porto's road was 'new' in that part where it took its final rise to the Highland and in most of the section that crossed the Umbundu country, but not in the section crossing the Cisanji country, nor in the final descent to the coast. In these latter sections it followed the same old slave caravan road, long rutted by the passage of endless loads of human misery.[3] The descent of

unreliability to the receivers in Cuba, &c., and not to the ships' masters. There are interesting incidents of American and other contrabandists in the *Boletim Official da Provincia de Angola*, for the years 1850–69.

[1] A. Bastos, op. cit., p. 85. In this bay ships could anchor very close in-shore, and there was a great overgrown mangrove-swamp which hid them from view to seaward.

[2] A. Bastos, op. cit., p. 9. For the date of opening of the 'new road', see *Boletim Soc. Geog. Lisboa, 5a Ser.*, p. 6; op. cit., p. 19 f. (Silva Porto's diary). I have autobiographical notes from old men in Ciyaka which give a very realistic picture of the activities of the robber-barons and their followers.

[3] Bastos, who is almost everywhere very careful of his facts and who gives

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175 439 487 this trail along the face of the cliffs behind Catumbela may still be seen to-day.

I have noted how largely Brazil had absorbed the commerce of 648 the colony. This was due in large part, of course, to the slave-439 trade, but it was also due to the fact that all foreign, i.e. non-Portuguese, ships were prohibited from having any part in the colony's trade, or even from entering its ports. This was an effort to keep all colonial trade for the motherland, and was quite in line with early colonial theory and practice. In this instance it served to enrich Brazil at the expense not only of Angola but also of Portugal itself, and it is rather strange that this ruinous policy should have persisted even after the separation of Brazil. In 1844 the two ports of Luanda and Benguela were opened to ships of all the world. Lopes de Lima remarks[1] that not only did foreign commerce flow in, but Portuguese commerce with the colony also increased greatly. It must not be supposed that Angola at once became a great example of Free Trade, for customs duties remained high. Only the first bars in the fence of monopoly were 175 let down, but for that day it was a great step and it attracted trade. 314 In 1869 the first experimental export of raw rubber was made: 439 a very small beginning of a very important movement.[2] The imminent importance of this export was not realized by 'the man on the spot'. In 1870 Silva Porto, tired of accusations of witchcraft by his Ovimbundu neighbours and of the increasing demands

a very truthful and realistic picture of conditions, of events, and of trends, errs in supposing that it was only with the opening of this 'new road' by Silva Porto that caravans from the interior began to come to Catumbela. Magyar, who went inland from Benguela in 1849, took the usual road via Catumbela. Even in 1795, when there was no town at Catumbela, but only a few vegetable farms, Teixeira and Mello started for the interior from there (*Annaes Mar. e Col.*, 1844, p. 159). Their itinerary in detail from Catumbela to Viye is not given, but only distances to Cissanji, to Civula, to Bailundu, and to Viye. Since their route was via Civula and Bailundu, rather than via Ciyaka and Wambu (Huambo), and therefore the route of Silva Porto's 'new' road, I am inclined to believe that the latter was probably a return to a route formerly used. Magyar gives a good description of the route via Ciyaka. The route via Bailundu has been described by scores of writers from Silva Porto through Cameron, the early missionaries (of the A.B.C.F.M.), Nevinson, *et al.*, down to 1910, when the road was abandoned for the Benguela Railway. There are now three motor roads from the Highland to the coast, but none of them follows the old slavers' route except in certain short sections.

[1] *Ensaios*, part i, pp. 78, 135.

[2] Bastos, op. cit., p. 24; *Boletim Official*, 1870 (Exports for 1869); *Benguella, Relatório do Districto de*, 1891, p. 29.

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for tribute and other exactions of King Konya Cilemo, successor to the stool of Viye, decided to leave his place at Belmonte (Viye) for Benguela,[1] where he remained for ten years. A year later Guilherme Gonçalves left to his sons his flourishing settlement near Kamundongo (Viye), and sailed for Lisbon, intending to stay indefinitely.[2] These two men were the leading traders established in the Highland, but little idea had they that the small trickle of rubber exports begun in 1869 would so soon inaugurate a new era in Central African trade. It was only in 1882 that rubber took even second place in the exports (after bees-wax),[3] but already in 1872[4] its importance was becoming evident, and by 1877 individual Ovimbundu of Viye had already turned over considerable fortunes in the trade.[5] Bastos seems to be correct in taking 1874 as the beginning of this new era in the trade of the region.[6] For the Ovimbundu, the preceding decades, indeed the preceding century or even centuries, had been a period of preparation for the trade which was now beginning. For them the rubber trade, from 1874 until its close in 1916, was the classical period of commercial activity.

The time of preparation had necessarily developed in the Ovimbundu the intellectual acumen, venturesomeness, a technique of co-operation both within their own social groupings and with outsiders, a knowledge of people, places, and things of their Central African world, together with the other qualities which enabled them to carry on their far-flung trading activities. These qualities merit a fuller description (q.v. *infra*, p. 206 f.). During this earlier period, since many of their travels were naturally exploratory, the Ovimbundu probably travelled more widely than during the time of the rubber trade. There were hardly any territories within the bounds of the Congo River, the Lakes, and the Kalahari Desert which they had not penetrated.[7] Some Ovimbundu went even farther afield as employees of European traders or on their own account. A ready example is Domingos Cakahanga and his companions who, in the employ of Silva Porto during the years

[1] *Boletim Soc. Geog. Lisboa*, 5a *Ser.*, p. 20.
[2] See Cameron, op. cit., p. 400.
[3] *Benguella*, op. cit., 1887, pp. 24 ff.
[4] *Benguella*, op. cit., 1892, p. 29.
[5] Serpa Pinto, op. cit., p. 161 f.
[6] Bastos, op. cit., p. 24.
[7] Serpa Pinto, op. cit., p. 164; L. Magyar, op. cit., pp. 298, 299. The best proof, however, is the fact of the geographical and tribal names found in the Umbundu language.

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175 1853–4, crossed Africa from Benguela to the mouth of the Rovuma.[1]

484 Nor was this the only transcontinental journey effected by
439 Ovimbundu traders.[2] Such long-distance expeditions were not always the most profitable, and certainly the relatively shorter journeys of the time of the rubber trade must have been much more lucrative. Indeed, the judgement of Magyar was that the Ovimbundu generally got more enjoyment and excitement than
175 monetary gain from their expeditions.[3]

439 Mention has been made that the several Umbundu kingdoms
648 fell in line with the trading activities of Bailundu and Viye. By the beginning of the period of great activity this had eventuated in a loose system of alliances or mutual understandings to the effect that the traders and caravans of each would be tolerated in, and allowed passage through, the territory of the other. At times their 'trade-agreements' seem to have embraced all the Umbundu-speaking peoples, but violations were frequent,[4] and complaints of violations seem to have been almost the regular state of affairs
326 as between Viye and the Ciyaka-Cingolo-Citata group. There also
438 developed regional industrial and commercial specializations. In Magyar's time there was a great metal industry at Ekovongo, the
175 capital of Viye, making hoes for trade with the interior,[5] but by 1875 this work seems to have ceased,[6] for although hoes were still

[1] Cakahanga kept a diary which was edited by Silva Porto and published under the title 'Third Voyage' in the *Boletim Official* of Angola, 1856–7, and later in the *Annaes do Cons. Ultr. Ia Ser.* A summary of this diary appeared in the *Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society* of London, 1860, pp. 136–49, but the translator and editor mistakenly believed that Silva Porto had himself crossed Africa, and added to the confusion by calling the Ovimbundu 'Arabs from Zanzibar'. Silva Porto himself only went as far as Naliele, and it seems that there were 'Arabs' or Swahili in the party, but how far they accompanied it is not clear. That the diary was kept by Cakahanga is evident, for the 'Arabs' could write no language known to Silva Porto.

[2] See Magyar, op. cit., p. 297.

[3] Ibid., p. 299. This referred only to Magyar's time, 1849–57, but I feel it to be a judgement capable of wider extension. Serpa Pinto says that in 1878 he met many who 'turned over capital of a thousand to twelve hundred pounds sterling and some even more; one indeed . . . arrived during my sojourn . . . from the interior where he had traded on his own account to the extent of . . . about £3,500!' (op. cit., p. 161 f.). However, there were also losses and often, so that Magyar's dictum is worth remembering.

[4] e.g. see account of dispute between Ekuikui (Bailundu) and Njamboyamina (Viye) in *Missionary Herald*, 1886, pp. 228 f., 452, 508; 1887, p. 463.

[5] L. Magyar, op. cit., p. 297.

[6] See negative testimony of Cameron, of Serpa Pinto, and of early missionaries.

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made, there as elsewhere throughout the Umbundu-speaking 175x
territory, their wholesale manufacture was only carried on in 326
Ndulu. This was a natural specialization, for the best and most 438
easily accessible deposits of iron ore are in the Ndulu country,[1]
whose smiths have become justly famous. In exchange for hoes
they received palm-oil or cattle from other regions, or salt, rum, 175x
or goods from the coast. Other regional specializations were— 438
Kasongi and the Sele country for palm-oil, Cikuma for bees-wax [314]
(also obtained from the interior), cattle from Ngalangi, Kalu-
kembe, Cilengi, and farther south. Ciyaka, Civula, and Bailundu [243]
took much corn-meal to the coast in those early days. 'Trade-
agreements' were also made beyond the Umbundu-speaking area. 175x
At first these were strictly one-way affairs, allowing the Ovi- 648
mbundu traders to operate in many lands, near and far, since this
was to the advantage of the rulers of those lands. At the same
time, the men from Bailundu and Viye did and said everything
possible to discourage the interior peoples from venturing out on
their own account.[2] Later, when the trade, as well as knowledge
of the whites and their trade, spread, arrangements were made
between the king of Viye and various interior chiefs allowing them
to send their own caravans through to the coast, and gifts were [431]
exchanged periodically.[3]

Their very early introducton to articles of European use and 177
manufacture has undoubtedy had great influence upon the 175x
development of the Ovimbundu. Their early and thorough
familiarity with fire-arms cerainly played a decisive role in their
national formation and subsequent history. The introduction
of domestic plants and animals from abroad is an important
subject, but too broad for treatment at this time. The early
introduction of European-manufactured goods has had profound
influences.

[1] See article on smelting and smithing in Ndulu by F. W. Read in *Journal of the African Society*, 1902, pp. 44–9.

[2] Livingstone tells of the displeasure of the Ovimbundu ('Mambari') at meeting the Makololo near Lunda. The Ovimbundu tried to frighten them from trading with the whites with tal tales, making the whites out as impossibly clever magicians and wizards (op. cit., p. 384). Cameron and his east-coast carriers experienced the displeasure of Viye people owing to jealousy of the same sort, but no longer so openly expressed (op. cit., p. 406).

[3] The Muata-Yanvo of Lunda was one of those who had such a 'trade-agreement' with Viye. Silva Porto notes in his diary on 14 Jan. 1880 that an embassy from the Muata-Yanvo had arrived with a tusk of ivory for Cilemo (*Boletim Soc. Geog. Lisboa*, 3a Ser., p. 148).

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175* influences. The stock to which the common people belong were
177 wearers of skins, which is true of many of them to the present time. The people from whom the ruling houses came have a highly developed weaving industry. The 'Ngangela' neighbours, who
[565] have also contributed elements to the racial make-up of the Ovi-
[287] mbundu, make and use bark-cloth. The Ovimbundu evidently gave up the use of skins for clothing more than a hundred years ago.[1] This fact, and the additional one that they never developed weaving or bark-cloth industries, was probably due to their early and widespread use of trade-cloth. Rum came with the slave-trade
177 from Brazil. They were almost inseparable. The ships which
273 fetched the slaves came laden with rum distilled in Brazil. The
567 rum was used in buying the slaves, and much more of it was con-
439 sumed by Ovimbundu—traders, chiefs, and retainers—than by
175* the interior people. Thus, while the slave-trade had such a disruptive influence in the life of the interior tribes, rum did much to corrupt the Ovimbundu. Native tradition[2] and the accounts of early travellers agree on this point. Rum continued to come from Brazil and from other countries or oversea colonies all through this early period, but import was partly supplanted by distillation at the coast, and this process was soon learned by the Ovimbundu themselves.

439 The part which the Umbundu trade had in spreading the goods and uses of the outside world is a fascinating subject and one which
567 would repay study. Ethnographical and historical knowledge of
175* Central Africa is not yet so extensive or precise that the dates and places of these movements can be plotted with certainty. Professor C. M. Doke records that Nkumine, who ruled the Lamba sometime before 1840, sold many of his people 'as slaves to the Mbundu traders from the West Coast for calico, guns, and powder'.[3] It is important to remember that throughout this period the Ovimbundu were for all this part of Africa the chief intermediaries in the slave-trade. These activities affected the ultimate

[1] See Magyar, *passim*.

[2] A Ngalangi tradition says that from the time of King Ndumba II (*c.* 1840) rum was so plentiful that it was poured into troughs, whence it was lapped up by all—men, women, and children. A constant difficulty encountered by the early missionaries was the objection of chiefs and their counsellors to the missionaries' refusal to give liberal presents of rum, as did all the traders.

[3] C. M. Doke, *The Lambas of Northern Rhodesia* (London: Harrap, 1931), pp. 36, 37.

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physical composition of the Ovimbundu themselves, and also their 175x character and accepted attitudes. Livingstone told of the begin- 439 ning of their trade with the Makololo in 1850, and how they had 567 visited the Barotse 'in ancient times'.[1] These items fit into the picture of that early period of trading activities which is had from studying Umbundu traditional history in the light of documents such as Silva Porto's diaries, Magyar's account,[2] the historical monograph of Augusto Bastos, the comments of travellers,[3] and of the early missionaries.

Period of the Rubber Trade, 1874–1911. Turning now to the 439 rubber trade, that time may conveniently be divided into three 314 periods: from 1874 until 1886, during which only 'first-class' 175x rubber (from the plants themselves)[4] was exported; from 1886, when the discovery of 'second-class' or 'red rubber' (from a root)[5] caused a great boom which lasted until 1900; and, finally, the period of decline until the rubber export stopped in 1916, though for the Ovimbundu it had already practically stopped several years earlier.

Of the older exports only bees-wax and ivory survived along 237 with rubber. The former of these was somewhat neglected, while 439 the importance of the latter continued in Benguela only until 175x about 1893 when the frontier of the Congo was closed. Bastos remarks that after 1900 not a single tusk appeared.[6] Already in 1880 Silva Porto had to go beyond Lunda to the middle Kasai before he found ivory.[7] At that time most of the ivory trade was in the hands of Viye traders. Between 2 November 1879, when Silva Porto left Catumbela, and 26 November when he reached Belmonte (Viye), there passed him about forty caravans on their way to the coast. Of these, ten carried ivory, practically all of which

[1] D. Livingstone, op. cit., p. 91 f. The business-like methods of the Ovimbundu were commented upon later, see op. cit., p. 271.

[2] The picture which Magyar (*Reisen in Süd-Afrika*) gives of Umbundu life in that early period is very good, but for an understanding of many terms used a knowledge of Portuguese and Umbundu is quite necessary. His truthfulness with regard to the slave-trade must be questioned when confronted by evidence from Valdez, Monteiro, and especially from Bastos.

[3] Valdez, op. cit.; Monteiro, op. cit.; Graça, op. cit.; Serpa Pinto, op. cit.; Capello and Ivens, *From Benguella to the Territory of Yacca.*

[4] Principally *Landolphia*, which are big woody climbers; also the tall and stately *Funtumia elastica.* [5] Especially the *Carpodinus chylorrhiza.*

[6] Bastos, op. cit., p. 39. From this time until 1913 Angola continued to export ivory in ever-decreasing quantities, but from the port of Mossamedes and therefore not from the Umbundu country.

[7] *Boletim Soc. Geog. Lisboa*, 6a *Ser.*, pp. 189 f., 256.

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175x were from Viye,[1] since Viye was nearest to what was then the
237 source of supply—Luva, Katanga, Barotze, &c. Caravans from
439 other regions could and did pass through Viye, but they found it more economical and advantageous to go to other regions for other commodities. Bees-wax was to be found in most of the neighbouring regions and was brought to the coast by traders of all the Umbundu
439 kingdoms. The same may be said of the 'first-class' rubber.[2] It
175x was found chiefly in the forest regions of the interior, and the distance and consequent time involved made it a product hardly more profitable than bees-wax. Rubber was then simply one product along with the others, and until 1886 its export had its ups and downs.

Red Rubber, 1886–1900. In 1886 a caravan of Ovimbundu came
314 down to Catumbela with loads of 'red rubber' for the first time.
439 They had gotten it in the sandy country to the east of the Kuanza
[489] River, and a great deal nearer than the region of the 'first-class'
178 rubber. At first, the price paid for this 'red rubber' was lower than
175x for the other, but whereas a caravan could not procure loads of the first in less than eight months, the 'red rubber' could be gotten within three months.[3] Subsequently the red rubber was found to have certain superior qualities so that the higher price came to be paid for it. Immediately the export of rubber from Benguela increased enormously and reached undreamed-of totals.[4] Beeswax

[1] *Boletim Soc. Geog. Lisboa*, 5a Ser., pp. 5, 6, 10, 16.

[2] There are very interesting summaries and descriptions of the commercial activities of the period—both native and European—in the *Relatorios do Districto de Benguella*, 1887, 1891 (Ministerio da Marinha e Ultramar, Lisboa, 1888, 1894).

[3] See a note in *Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society*, 1888, p. 450 f.

[4] The values of the three leading products exported from Benguela from 1886 to 1891 were as follows (from *Relatorios do Districto de Benguella*, 1887, 1891):

Product	*1886*	*1887*	*1888*
Rubber . .	65,210 $153	286,937 $018	664,786 $970
Wax . . .	187,483 $964	158,945 $996	109,734 $140
Ivory . . .	37,692 $536	36,923 $042	29,997 $968

Product	*1889*	*1890*	*1891*
Rubber . .	665,746 $552	781,057 $860	1,042,112 $070
Wax . . .	133,436 $344	93,680 $580	123,645 $876
Ivory . . .	31,701 $133	11,298 $782	45,392 $534

For further statistical reports of this period, see also *Portugal, Ministerio da Marinha e Ultramar, Relatório, Propostas de Lei*, &c. (Lisboa, 1899), p. 266 f.

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dropped off; of ivory there was no more. From 1893 on, says Bastos, rubber was practically the sole export of the District of Benguela and of its hinterland.[1] In 1891 more than one million milreis' worth of rubber was exported from Benguela, sixteen times as much as was exported only five years before, and three and one-half times the value of the *three* leading exports in 1886. Until 1891 this increase was not at the expense of other exports, but rather in addition to them.

All of this rubber, and the other exports as well, came to the coast in caravans of the Ovimbundu or their neighbours. In its inception and its great development it was an enterprise of the Ovimbundu. Everyone who was able to carry a load joined a caravan. It had always been the custom to take boys on trading expeditions, as young as they could go—say, from their tenth year—as a part of their education. Now girls were also taken and hardly any but the women stayed at home to raise the crops and provide rations for the caravans. European residents experienced great difficulty in securing necessary porters,[2] and this was one reason for finally putting through the wagon-road from Benguela to Caconda.[3] It was extended to Viye during the military campaign of 1890. The fever of the rubber trade reached into all the villages of the land and took in everyone able to travel. Mission schools had been established since 1881, but they had but few pupils until 1900. There were also other reasons for this, but a principal one was the attractiveness of the rubber trade.[4] Even the kings found it more difficult to gather armies for their wars: trade had become more attractive than the possibility of plunder.

Of all the kings who ruled the various Umbundu kingdoms during this time, the one who is best remembered is Ekuikui (II) of Bailundu (1876–93). Tradition has begun to ascribe to him and to his reign some things which properly belong to earlier

[1] Bastos, op. cit., p. 34. He does not include *serviçaes* in the exports, since they all went to the mainland or island plantations, but he remarks that at this time the price rose to even 90$000 (p. 33). The rise in price was perhaps due to the smaller supply owing to the preoccupation of the Ovimbundu with the rubber trade.

[2] See *Missionary Herald*, 1889, p. 350.

[3] *Benguella*, 1891, op. cit., p. 10.

[4] The reports of the governor of Benguela, to which reference has been made, also mentioned this fact, saying that although the American missions were intelligently directed, their results were small, since parents would not send their children to learn while they could pick up loads of rubber (1887, p. 19; 1891, p. 20).

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times, which is a sure sign of his greatness in Umbundu estimation. Ekuikui's reign marked the end of an era and the beginning of another, not only for the people of Bailundu, but for all the Ovimbundu. The rubber trade had begun just before he came to the stool and his reign saw its intensive development. Tradition is probably right in placing the beginning of intensive agricultural pursuits during Ekuikui's time, for the great development of trade, need for rations for the long journeys, and a market for foodstuffs at the coast provided the necessary stimulus to cultivate beyond immediate seasonal need. Ekuikui carried on the tradition of warfare[1] which was so large a part of his ancestral heritage, but he had the good sense to attempt no large-scale operations either against his relatively powerful Ovimbundu confrères, or against European establishments. There was plenty of provocation[2] and no lack of warlike counsel, but he probably realized that the tenor of the times was against such operations. Had his contemporaries of Viye and his own successors been possessed of equal good sense, the Ovimbundu might have been saved some very difficult times and not a little bloodshed. The military occupation of Viye came about in 1890, after a disastrous war brought on by foolishly high-handed treatment on the part of King Ndunduma[3] and his counsellors of a little expedition bound for the interior under Captain Paiva Couceiro, and of Silva Porto,[4] resulting in the suicide of the latter. The ruler and people of Viye relied on a largely magical defence against Boer sharpshooters and Portuguese field artillery with Krupp guns. When finally Ndunduma came in and gave himself up[5] he was exiled to São Tiago in the Cape Verde Islands,

[1] For King Ekuikui's wars see *Missionary Herald*, 1882, p. 225; 1883, p. 339; 1884, pp. 145 f., 504; 1885, pp. 279, 355, 375; 1889, p. 67; 1890, p. 292.

[2] See op. cit., 1886, pp. 228 f., 452, 508.

[3] *Ndunduma* (Thunderer) was the name assumed by Cikunyu when he took office after a *coup d'état* in 1888 (see *Missionary Herald*, 1889, p. 242 f.).

[4] Antonio Francisco Ferreira da Silva Porto, appointed 'Captain-major and exterior judge' of Bihe in 1885. He had authority only over the European residents, but he knew the country and people well and had tried to bring about a peaceful occupation of the country; neither the Government in Benguela nor the native authorities, however, would take his advice. His suicide brought the importance of the Umbundu country to the fore, and he became a Portuguese national hero.

[5] It was the Rev. W. H. Sanders, in charge of Kamundongo Mission Station, who sought Ndunduma and got him to surrender in order to avoid further slaughter. For a report of this 'war' see *Relatorio do Districto de Benguella*, 1891, pp. 12–14; also *Missionary Herald*, 1891, pp. 47, 63 f., 88, 108 f.; Dr. J. Johnston, *Romance versus Reality in South Central Africa*, pp. 59–63. F. S. Arnot (*Bihe*

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and the country settled down to the rule of 'the Fort' with Ndunduma's successor named by the captain-major. The occupation of Bailundu was effected at that same time,[1] while Ekuikui yet ruled, but for several years only a nominal force was employed.[2] In 1896 Ekuikui's successor, Numa II, attacked the fort, and the captain-major burned the *ombala*[3] in retaliation. From 1890 European traders settled in both Viye and Bailundu in ever-increasing numbers.[4] Then came the 'Bailundu War' of 1902,[5] after which the occupation of the whole Umbundu country was quickly completed. 175x 648 726

The operations of 1890 had only interrupted the ivory trade. The campaign of 1902 completely paralysed trade in and with the interior, and greatly aggravated a depression which the District of Benguela was feeling because of a fall from the high prices which rubber had enjoyed in 1898–9.[6] After the war it seemed that trade would soon regain its former levels, and the export statistics show that for a time it did so, but closer inspection and a consideration of other factors which entered into the situation show that this was the beginning of the end. The price of rubber never regained its former level, so that the high value of exports reported represents an even larger quantity than before. The increased quantity largely represented a greatly debased product, for the native traders and producers understood nothing 175x 439 178 727 175x 439 314

and Garenganze, pp. 19–23) also wrote of these incidents but with more of the personal element and perhaps less accuracy.

[1] *Relatorio, Benguella*, 1892, p. 13 f.

[2] In 1892 there were 2 soldiers in Bailundu, 135 in Viye, 21 in Caconda (*Benguella*, op. cit., 1891, p. 15). Bailundu tradition says that (native) soldiers were first brought in disguised as porters with loads of goods.

[3] *Ombala*, capital village.

[4] A. Bastos, op. cit., pp. 36, 43.

[5] This war was named in Umbundu after the Bailundu war leader, *Mutu ya Kevela*. He is named among the kings, but it was only during the war that he assumed power. The immediate causes were excesses on the part of European residents against the natives, especially in connexion with 'the recruiting of contract labour'. The best work on the subject is in the nature of a report written by the man who was then governor, Cabral Moncada, *A Campanha do Bailundo* (Luanda 1903). General ideas may be had from *Missionary Herald*, 1902, pp. 353, 400, 452 f., 520 f.; 1903, pp. 22 f., 69 f., 122, 211 f.; H. W. Nevinson, op. cit., p. 157 f.; and J. T. Tucker, *Drums in the Darkness*, p. 122 f. The account given by Keiling (*Quarenta Anos de Africa*) is of interest for certain details of this war, but its statements are inaccurate and its judgements unreliable. The missionaries sought to dissuade the natives from taking up arms, and once the fighting had begun they provided medical services for both sides and sent food-supplies to the garrison of the beleaguered Portuguese fort.

[6] A. Bastos, op. cit., p. 39 f.

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175 439 314 of price fluctuations and sought by every means to maintain the former level of returns. The European traders aided and abetted this process in order to bolster up their credit, for from 1887, when the boom began, most of them were operating on shoe-strings. The result was almost immediate. Benguela rubber was classified as 'third-class' at a price one-fourth the former rate.[1] This was the end of the rubber trade. With the establishment of plantations in the East Indies, in South America, and on the African west coast, which produced a uniformly high quality, the native-produced wild rubber of Angola ceased to have any quotation whatever.[2]

Export statistics show that the totals in quantity and value of rubber exported were nearly as large in 1916 as in 1888, and that in 1918 and 1919 they fell to almost nothing,[3] but for the Ovimbundu the rubber trade ended in 1911—'the year of the great hunger in the Ngangela country'. They remember that many caravans which went out at the beginning of that year's dry season never did return, or that only a few of their stronger members returned—mere skeletons and shadows. *Ngandi*[4] tried to eat wax and died; *Ngandi* killed and ate his younger brother, saying, 'It is better that one of us should live to return, rather than both die.' The caravans usually carried actual rations for only a few days of the outward journey (to last through the 'Hungry Country'), and relied on buying the food needed for the rest of the time. This experience put an end to a trade which was already passing out of the hands of the Ovimbundu—owing to the multiplication of European trading establishments, not only throughout the Umbundu country but even in the 'Ngangela' regions, and the building of the Benguela Railway, which finally put an end to porterage and the trading caravans of former days.[5]

[1] A. Bastos, op. cit., pp. 40 ff.

[2] In 1942, after the capture of Malaya and the Dutch East Indies by the Japanese and the consequent acute shortage of rubber, the gathering of wild rubber in eastern Angola was resumed, most of the product going to Britain. Some, however, has gone to the national factories at Luanda and in Portugal, and consequently there is a stimulus to maintain the production of wild rubber in the colony, but unless more humane methods are used with the native producers the present limited supply is bound to fall off.

[3] Statistics of export and import are given by F. Trancoso, op. cit. The figures for rubber from 1888 to 1919 are on p. 36.

[4] *Ngandi*, the Umbundu equivalent for 'John Doe' or 'So-and-so'.

[5] The Benguela Railway (*Caminho de Ferro de Benguela*) began construction in 1904; in 1910 it reached Cuma (198 miles) in Ciyaka, well up on the Plateau

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It must not be supposed that trade has been abandoned. Every sale or exchange of field or garden produce is a serious trading operation. Produce will often be carried a very long way for a very small advantage, or even for no apparent gain. The successively lower economic levels to which the colony, and especially the natives, have fallen since the close of the rubber trade is a factor. Individual trading, involving journeys into even such distant regions as Ovamboland, is a latter-day development since European rule has made for greater personal security. 175* 438

Another factor which operated to end all large-scale trading operations of the Ovimbundu was the disappearance of the traffic in human beings. It has been shown that even before they ruled over the Ovimbundu the 'Jagas' were leading intermediaries in this traffic, and the Ovimbundu have continued in this role right down to the period under review. Whatever name or form it bore at the coast, in the interior the traffic was the same. At the height of the rubber boom this traffic, along with other activities, suffered a decline, being somewhat less profitable than rubber. At that time came the peak of the rum trade and the demoralization which it brought turned the point of the 'contract labour' traffic in upon the Ovimbundu themselves. Such Umbundu customs as getting into debt, the pawning of relatives, and also such factors as times of food scarcity, quickly taken advantage of by the traders, served to exacerbate the hardships, and the result was the native uprising of 1902 known as the 'Bailundu Campaign', but extending beyond the limits of Bailundu. The effects of this uprising upon trade have already been noted. Pending investigation of its causes, the export of 'contract labourers' was stopped,[1] but the practice was soon resumed. The scandalous conditions then obtaining in the neighbouring 'Congo Free State' almost from its founding until 1908 greatly aided and abetted the slave-traffic, however much this new frontier may have interfered with trade in ivory and rubber. Trade with the *revoltés* was particularly lucrative to Ovimbundu and other traders of Angola. Powder and arms were an especially important item in this trade. 567 439 [669] 648 439 567

and just under the rim of the Highland. In 1916 construction stopped at Chinguar (312 miles and on the edge of Viye) until after World War I. It was completed to the Angola frontier in 1929 and the Belgian section finished in 1931, with transcontinental connexion at Elizabethville.

[1] Cabral Moncada, op. cit.; Massano de Amorim, *Relatorio sôbre os acontecimentos do Bailundo* (Loanda, 1903); *Missionary Herald*, 1903, p. 69.

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175 It was only with the beginning of World War I that trade in powder
567 and fire-arms was stopped. For more than a century Portuguese
648 patriots and thinkers had been insisting upon the necessity for ending the export of man-power, so evidently impoverishing in its effects on the life of the colony.[1] Law succeeded law, and regulation followed regulation, but there was little real change.[2] With the Republic,[3] however, real changes began. Conditions were
175 investigated,[4] and although complete and immediate reform could
567 hardly have been expected, changes did begin. Provisions for
166 manumission upon presentation to authority were made and carried out. Repatriation from island and mainland plantations began to be undertaken. This was the origin of small communities of Cokue and other 'Ngangela' people now living at various points in the Umbundu country. From the plantations they were repatriated to 'their places of origin', which were, however, not their own homes but the places whence they had been sold into servitude.
464 Under various regulatory practices, contract labour has been
467 continued down to the present day. The depression which came
157 to Central Africa in 1930 reduced the demand to a minimum, and for a few years it did not represent a serious problem in the life of the Ovimbundu. There was a time of great activity in road building (approximately 1915–32) when the demands for labour were a serious problem to Umbundu life. Soon after the opening of World War II a strong demand for colonial products revived the industries of Angola and stimulated the creation of new ones. The consequent demand for labour and the means used to supply it have come to constitute the most severe trial which has yet come to the Ovimbundu. Their docility has made this service bear more hardly on them than on some other people of the colony. Their

[1] e.g. Saldanha da Gama, *Memoria*, 1814; Sá da Bandeira, 1839; Lopes de Lima, *Ensaios* (1846), pp. xxxviii, 6 f., 44 f.; Casmiro, *Africa Nostra*, p. 60 f.

[2] The principal laws were promulgated as follows: 1836 (Formal abolition of the traffic); 1839 (Authorizing co-operation with the international naval squadron); 1840, 1841, 1845 (Supplementary ordinances); 1875 (Law of Liberation and regulation of contract labour); 1878, 1889 (Further regulations); 1899 (Dealing with 'corrective labour'); 1902, 1903 (Further regulation of recruitment).

[3] Proclaimed in Portugal, 5 Oct., 1910.

[4] A Commission came from Lisbon that same year and took testimony throughout the colony. For conditions just previous to the Republic, see Nevinson, op. cit.; C. A. Swan, *The Slavery of To-day* (1909); H. R. F. Bourne, *Slave Traffic in Portuguese Africa* (1908); W. A. Cadbury, *Labour in Portuguese West Africa* (2nd ed. 1910); C. Harding, *In Remotest Barotseland* (1905).

geographic position in the centre of the colony has also made it harder for them to evade it. Nevertheless, many have emigrated. In 1941 and again in 1944, when the writer visited South Africa, he found thousands of Ovimbundu on the Rand and many more in the Rhodesias and the Congo. Many are also known to have gone to the South-West Territory and to Bechuanaland, and some even to such distant points as Natal's north coast and French Equatorial Africa.[1]

175 464 467 [167]

Recent Developments

Currency, in the sense of money, is quite a recent introduction to the Ovimbundu. To the end of their trading activities, cloth ('trade goods') was the standard of exchange. Although dependence upon world markets caused prices to fluctuate with the course of the rubber trade, as we have seen, there was not, however, the great range which follows the fluctuations of the money market through a course of inflation and deflation. The Ovimbundu had had some dealings in money before the time of World War I, when there was a silver coinage, so that the depreciation which set in about 1921 was all the more confusing to them. This is not the place to discuss the finances and banking of Angola, but it must be noted that the conversion of the 'Escudo' into the 'Angolar' in 1928 at the rate of Ag. 0,80 to Esc. 1 $00 greatly increased the sense of confusion among the natives. This was only to be expected when the native tax remained at Ag. 80,00 where it was Esc. 80,00 before, whereas daily wages to contract labourers became Ag. 0,80 where before they were Esc. 1 $00. The confusion was considerable.[2]

436 [457] [651] [465]

Taxes began to be levied soon after military occupation, but for some years they were very small, especially in relation to opportunities for earning. When the head-tax reached Esc. 80,00 it remained at that figure for some years. In 1935 a 'work tax' and

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[1] This state of affairs is frequently and quite freely commented upon in the Angola papers. For a recent notice see local correspondence entitled 'Notícias do Cuma' in the *Voz do Planalto* (Nova Lisboa) for 17 Aug. 1946. One of the most serious recent indictments is contained in an article in *O Farolim*, Luanda, 5 Nov. 1945, by Padre J. Alves Correia. This distinguished writer asserts that the present labour policy is 'killing the goose which lays the golden egg'.

[2] For finance, currency, banking, and economic conditions in general, see Department of Overseas Trade, *Economic Conditions in Angola*, H.M.S.O., 1929. There are also reports for 1923 and 1925, but the one for 1929 covers the previous decade.

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651 another small amount were added, so that it is now Ag. 91,00.[1] This is not high in comparison with the figures for the Union of South Africa and some other African territories, but opportunities for earning in Angola are small. Wages and prices of produce are 465 low indeed. These problems of labour and of taxation are much the same in many South and Central African territories. Their present-day poverty bears very hardly upon the Ovimbundu who saw much more prosperous times in the days of their large-scale trading.

423 *Land.* The ownership and occupation of land by natives does not present the acute problem in Angola which it does in several 648 African territories. Natives have not been herded on to reserves, for rigid segregation is not the Portuguese idea, nor has there yet been occupation of land by European settlers on a scale sufficient to encroach upon the land needed by natives, save in a few localities. A large proportion of the concessions provisionally taken out by Europeans in 1919–25 have reverted to the State for failure to meet requirements, as, for example, to bring a stated proportion under cultivation. Many schemes for European colonization in the Benguela Highland have been projected from time to time. The Portuguese law protects the native in his holdings, but since European settlers often find ways to circumvent the intent of the law, and since an increasing European colonization is apt to be a threat to native holdings, a simplification of the machinery whereby the natives may secure sure title to communal or to individual holdings is highly desirable.[2]

423 Whatever else may be said, however, it is good to be able to report that at the present time the Ovimbundu have their land. This fact has been a very important factor in their transition from

[1] About $4.00 at present exchange. In 1937 the economic year was changed to the calendar year, and in most districts payment of an extra half-year's tax was required. About 1941 the tax was again raised, to Ag. 108,00, and in 1945 it was again put up, to 120,00. These figures are for most of the districts inhabited by the Ovimbundu. In some areas, especially frontier areas, the amounts levied are considerably lower.

[2] For the present official status of the questions of administration, land, labour, &c., see Comte J. de Penha-Garcia, *Organisation politique et administrative de l'empire colonial portugais*, Inst. Col. Int'n'l (1936); ibid. (ed.), *Les Colonies portugaises* (1931); a useful summary of the same will be found in Lord Hailey, *An African Survey* (London: 1938), pp. 213–16, 796 f. There is a discussion of these problems in J. T. Tucker, *Angola, Land of the Blacksmith Prince* (1933), chap. 8. See also Valdez dos Santos, *Angola, Coração do Império* (Lisboa: Agência Geral das Colónias, 1945).

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the occupations of warfare and of trade to the more settled agricultural life. And it is the possession and cultivation of land which provides a minimum basis for those who are also able to engage in any sort of trade, either commercial or one of the handicrafts. 423

Health. A sanitary history, or the course of health among the Ovimbundu throughout their national existence, would be of interest if it could be made known. Legend tells of a time in the distant past when sickness was rare and death came hardly ever, if at all. It is said that hasty burials were not permitted because there had been cases of the supposed corpse returning to life. Some have taken this to mean that the tribe came from a more healthful region than the one which it now occupies, but it seems rather to be a traditional recognition of the fact that many of the diseases and bodily ills which at present afflict the Ovimbundu are of comparatively recent date. The time of arrival of some of these unwelcome guests can be estimated. Some are the subject of traditional tales as, for example, the jigger[1] (*pulex penetrans*), which a Ngalangi tradition says came to them from Bailundu, and Bailundu tradition says was first recognized in the time of Ekongo-liohombo (*c.* 1875) or Ekuikui II (*c.* 1876–93). Now the jigger is well known in Africa as an importation from South America, and the time of its first appearance could probably be determined. This parasite is widely present in tropical Africa, but there are some regions which it has not (yet) reached.[2] Its coming to Angola is probably, therefore, of recent date. Silva Porto, writing in 1879, said, 'This evil is of recent date on the coast . . . (*pulex penetrans*).'[3] The first notice of this pest which reached the pages of the *Boletim Official* of Angola was in 1875. If this date really represents the time when the jigger first appeared in Angola, it seems strange that it should have been so late, in view of the slave-ships ferrying back and forth from Brazil for the previous three hundred years. 164 173 177 [136] 164 177

Small-pox[4] might also be thought of as a recent arrival for, according to a note in the *Boletim Official*, it first appeared in Novo Redondo in June 1864, having been brought from Luanda by ships' crews.[5] Its first appearance on the Plateau, however,

[1] *Ewundu* or *ocindiundiu* is the Umbundu name, from *oku wunda*, to hide (the hidden one).

[2] e.g. Amboland, according to Umbundu testimony.

[3] *Boletim Soc. Geog. Lisboa*, 5a Ser., p. 10.

[4] *Ocingongo* is the Umbundu name.

[5] *Boletim Official da Provincia de Angola*, 1865, no. 5.

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164 177 was prior to this, for it was mentioned by Magyar.[1] Among the imported diseases are grippe, pneumonia, tuberculosis, and other complaints of the lungs and bronchia; the venereal diseases (especially syphilis); several so-called 'children's diseases' such as measles, scarlet fever, mumps, &c.[2] Typhoid fever is only beginning to appear, although it has long been known at the coast, at Malange (to the north), &c.[3] Diseases of other regions, as tropical ulcers, sleeping sickness, &c., are found only in patients coming from regions affected with those ills.

146 177 In comparison with the diet of other non-cattle-keeping tribes of West and Central Africa, the diet of the Ovimbundu is fairly satisfactory. Certain it is that the articles imported by the Portuguese from America and elsewhere have done much to enrich the diet of this people. Only the mention of maize,[4] their staple and mainstay, makes this evident. Their early and close contact with the Portuguese gave them the advantage of many plants[5] brought by those rural-minded conquistadores,[6] which found their way inland only much later. (Mrs.) Alice K. Strangway has made an interesting study of Umbundu diet and has come to the conclusion that its principal deficiencies are fats and calcium. The Ovimbundu need to learn to make better use of the resources which are already theirs or at their command, as, for example, peanuts and soy-beans. Other improvements such as a more general use of milk and other animal foods can only come with education and an improved economic situation.

164 Magyar's account (1849–57) of the Ovimbundu gives the impression of a people in better health, suffering from fewer ills, and

[1] L. Magyar, op. cit., p. 290.

[2] There are Umbundu names for all the foregoing, with several names or euphemisms for some, except for the lung and bronchial complaints which are spoken of simply as *vomulo* (in the chest), and scarlet fever which is called *osalambu* (from the Portuguese *sarampo*).

[3] In 1936 there was an epidemic of typhoid at Bela Vista among Europeans and natives. Infection was traced to Catumbela (at the coast).

[4] Maize has a true Umbundu name, *epungu*, as is the case with most of the early importations which the Ovimbundu adopted, save tomatoes (*àmatia*).

[5] There is a good discussion of the American plants introduced into Africa in Ficalho, *Plantas úteis da Africa Portugueza*, pp. 32 ff. In *Benguella e seu sertão*, 1617–22, p. 17, the anonymous writer states that 'all kinds of vegetables of our Portugal do very well . . . such as: large corn (i.e. *mayz*), beans of various kinds, pumpkins . . . and melons'.

[6] Cá da Mosto tells of trying to grow wheat in Senegal (João de Barros, quoted by Ficalho, op. cit., p. 29 f.).

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generally more resistant than those whom we know to-day. Some 164
of the imported diseases have probably been with the Ovimbundu [177]
since they first encountered Europeans, others are more recent, but all seem to be more deadly to Africans than to Europeans. This is especially true of the lung complaints, against which the Ovimbundu have little resistance, and the manner of their life makes tuberculosis very difficult to check.

Diseases native to the region also constitute a great problem, notably malaria in its several forms, leprosy, bilharzia, yaws, goitre, nutritional diseases, &c. The medical staffs of the government services and of the missions are well aware of the magnitude [757]
of the problem. The resources at their command, however, are terribly inadequate. It is urgently necessary that resources be found and made available.

Religious Development. Before bringing this historical survey to 771
a close it is necessary to take note of certain developments with 177
regard to religion. It was noted in passing that representatives of the ruling families had, on occasion, returned to the lands of their exodus to worship their ancestors at the ancient shrines. From this it is evident that the ancestors of the ruling families became the gods of the kingdoms over which they ruled. The commoners kept their own ancestral deities, family by family. Special cults of various sorts have grown up. From the texts of a hundred to a hundred and fifty years ago it is evident that many of the religious practices of the Ovimbundu were then similar to those which are observed at the present time. Some practices described in those texts, on the other hand, seem to have ceased or to have been altered beyond recognition. The very presence of the Europeans must have affected the rites and their observance, for their attitudes, whether of approval or of disapproval, registered over so long a period, must have produced some effect.[1] Degrees of intensity of this European contact, varying from region to region, must have had their influence in the development of regional differences. Some such differences have been noted.[2]

[1] Battell records that the 'Jagas' would not let him witness certain rites. Pinheiro de Lacerda, writing in 1797, says that he burned more than one hundred *oratorios* called *chacapombo* (*Annaes Mar. e. Col.*, 1845, p. 491).

[2] W. H. Sanders put down to their closer contact with Europeans the fact that the king's councillors of Viye were not 'a very dignified set. . . . They seemed to have none of that decorum which prevails among the head men of Bailundu' (*Missionary Herald*, 1886, p. 143).

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The field of Umbundu reactions to cultural influences is a wide and an important one. Whatever contact the Ovimbundu or their progenitors may have had with the early Roman Catholic missions, little impress seems to have been made. The cross has been adopted as an object used in divination. Certain rites *seem* superficially to resemble the procession with the Host, but there is no indication of the assimilation of any ethical or conceptual element from Christianity during the early or formative period.[1]

Christianity first came to the Ovimbundu with the arrival of three missionaries at Bailundu in March 1881.[2] This was during the reign of Ekuikui and proved to be not the least important event of that reign. It is not within the scope of this study to give a history of the work of this Mission.[3] Its inception was planned as carefully as the times permitted, and although its subsequent development did not always proceed according to plan, its progress on the whole has been of an orderly nature, and it has produced noteworthy results which have been evaluated by deputations, by commissions, and by other visitors from time to time.[4]

The amount of interdenominational co-operation achieved in this field is worthy of note. There are the missions of the

[1] There were missions of the Jesuits, Capuchins, Carmelites, &c., in Angola from 1575 until about 1800, and there were priests as chaplains of the various presídios visited by the Ovimbundu during most of their history. Major Artur de Paiva, writing in 1890 (see *Boletim Soc. Geog. Lisboa*, 1895, p. 15 f.), describes the ruins of a Roman Catholic mission which he found in Cingolo (*Quingolo*) and which he judged to have dated from the end of the eighteenth century. I have found no reference in any historical work to the founding or operation of such a mission. It may have been built about 1770 when Governor Souza Coutinho ordained a number of towns in the Benguela hinterland, but the absence of specific reference to it seems to indicate that its existence was short.

[2] Messrs. Bagster, Sanders, and Miller sent out by the A.B.C.F.M. (Boston) to inaugurate a mission in Bihe, for that region was well known from the reputation of its traders, while Bailundu and other Umbundu regions had scarcely been heard of.

[3] For a brief summary of the early years see Strong, *The Story of the American Board*, pp. 336 ff.; also two articles in vol. 126 (1930) of the *Missionary Herald*, pp. 424–9; J. T. Tucker, *Drums in the Darkness*, gives a historical treatment of the work of this mission.

[4] There have been two 'deputations' sent to the West Central Africa Mission, in 1911 and in 1930, reports of which were issued by the A.B.C.F.M. Secretaries have visited the mission in 1924, '28, '30, '34, '38, and '46, and have given their impressions either in the *Missionary Herald* or in the *United Church Record and Missionary Review*. The report of the African Education Commission dealt with the work of this mission (T. J. Jones, *Education in Africa*, pp. 40, 239 f., 245 ff.). Among visitors who have written of this work see Nevinson, op. cit., chap. 7; J. Johnston, op. cit., chaps. 2, 3, and 4.

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A.B.C.F.M. (Congregational) and of the United Church of Canada, which for practical purposes work as one mission. This mission co-operates with several smaller organizations and with the Angola Evangelical Alliance. This prevailing spirit of co-operation has been noticed by travellers.[1] Another characteristic has been 'regard for plan, order, and "cultivation of the field" ', according to the African Education Commission.[2] Of yet greater significance has been the extent to which this mission has been able to seize upon and develop indigenous initiative. This showed in the early organization of the Church, which was encouraged to develop its own life from the start. The utilization of indigenous forms, especially of social organization, has been a source of real strength.

Further development in this direction is greatly to be desired. For such further development, and indeed for all orderly growth, more knowledge of Umbundu life and attitudes, and an orderly synthesis of knowledge already in hand is a *sine qua non*. It is hoped that the present writer's study may help to supply the lacunae. A recent Roman Catholic handbook for missionaries in Africa has urged that for each ethnic and linguistic region a mission should have specialists in each field of research.[3] Although this advice may be considered 'for the present a counsel of perfection', it is the direction toward which missions are working,[4] an ideal which they must realize in the not too distant future. If Protestant missions in Africa are to maintain the place of leadership which, because of their evangelistic zeal they have had, they cannot neglect this zeal for knowledge which is demanded to-day.

The Roman Catholic Diocese of Huambo (*Pères du Saint-Esprit*), which embraces most of the Umbundu territory, seems to have had no specialists of the type named above who have devoted themselves to a study of the Ovimbundu. Père Ernest Lecomte

[1] Compare Nevinson, op. cit., p. 140, 'there are two . . . notable orders at work in Angola—the American mission (Congregationalist) under the "American Board", and the English mission (Plymouth Brethren) under divine direction only. . . . Of all the sects that I have known, these are the only two that I have ever heard pray for each other, and that without condemnation.'

[2] Dr. T. J. Jones, op. cit., p. 40. Recommendations for further developments according to carefully considered plans were made by Dr. F. K. Sanders in his *Report of Deputation*, 1930 (A.B.C.F.M.).

[3] H. Dubois, *Le Répertoire Africain* (Rome, 1932), pp. 157 ff.

[4] See article by J. H. Oldham, 'The Educational Work of Missionary Societies', in *Africa*, Jan. 1934, p. 47 f.

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produced an Umbundu grammar,[1] but does not seem to have published material of an ethnological nature. Père Keiling (who died in 1937) and Père Batteix were both listed in *Le Répertoire Africain* as specializing in the 'Ganguella' language.[2] The Umbundu missions of this Diocese date from 1890 (Caconda), 1896 (Bailundo), 1912 (Cuando), and later. From early days this mission has had quite evident political aspects—from 1889 when a military expedition was sent against the 'Ganguella Soba[3] Tchiuaco' to re-establish Père Lecomte and the Cubango mission station which had been attacked and expelled,[4] up to the recent government charters and mission statutes, which heavily subsidize the religious work of the Roman Catholic missions in Angola. The constitution of the Portuguese Republic decrees the separation of Church and State and full religious liberty. The large subsidies and other special privileges given to the Roman Catholic Church in Angola, however, create difficulties beyond the mere allocation of tax-money. In other parts of Africa the Roman Catholic missions co-operate with the Protestant in many spheres of action. It is to be regretted that such co-operation seems not to be desired in Angola. Is it a sort of monopolistic political aim which keeps the Roman Catholic missionaries of Angola aloof? The rare instances in which a more friendly spirit has been manifested only add point to the question. The appreciative and co-operative spirit shown by Padre J. Alves Correia[5] may be cited.

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Roman Catholics and Protestants have both been very successful from a numerical standpoint.[6] Success in building a truly indigenous Church, or in providing it with suitable and capable leadership from its own ranks, is another question hardly to be judged from statistics. More elusive still is the question whether,

[1] *Boletim Soc. Geog. Lisboa*, 1897. This grammar has gone through several editions and is still in use. The orthography is evidently intended to facilitate the use of the language by one whose native tongue is French and rather complicates matters for an African, and, indeed, for anyone whose language is other than French.

[2] H. Dubois, op. cit., p. 340.

[3] *Soba*, a native chief (from *Soma*).

[4] *Benguella*, op. cit., 1891, pp. 10 ff.

[5] See his books, *A Largueza do Reino de Deus* (Lisboa, 1932); *A Vida Mais Alta, &c.*

[6] Roman Catholics have about 280,000 and Protestants about 140,000 adherents among the Ovimbundu, according to the census taken in 1940 (Colónia de Angola, *Censo Geral da População*, vol. ix; Luanda, Imprensa Nacional, 1943).

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or how far, Umbundu life may have been actually penetrated by a Christian spirit in matters of faith and morals. It is not surprising that after less than seventy years, or very much less in most regions, belief in witchcraft should still have a strong hold upon the minds of the Ovimbundu. Somewhat disturbing, however, is the fact that according to the latest observations, belief in and the hold of witchcraft seem at the present time to be increasing. These observations tally with what seems to be taking place in other parts of Africa.[1] According to observers in Africa and in other parts of the world the hold of witchcraft upon a people seems to increase with a decrease of security, whether relating to the economic basis of life, to health and disease, or to life's religious undergirding. In such a case, it is clearly the duty of all agencies concerned to co-operate for the removal of the cause of insecurity. Here the chief agencies are government, commerce, and missions. It is to be hoped that for the good of the Ovimbundu they may be brought together.

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[1] See *Africa*, vol. viii, no. 4, which number is devoted to studies of witchcraft. See especially the article, 'A Modern Movement of Witch Finders', by A. I. Richards, pp. 418 ff.

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SYNCHRONIZED CHART OF THE PORTUGUESE HISTORY OF

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DATES	EVENTS RECORDED
1482	Diogo Cão discovers the Congo.
1485-6	Diogo Cão's second voyage.
1490-1	Embassy to King of Kongo and Franciscan Mission.
1560	First expedition to Kingdom of Angola under Dias de Novaes.
1568	'Jagas' overrun Kingdom of Kongo.
1575	Luanda founded by Dias de Novaes and Jesuits.
1590	'Jagas' allied with Angola and Matamba defeat Portuguese.
From 1600	Some 'Jagas' allies of Portuguese, others met south of Kuanza and on Benguela Coast.
1617	Benguela founded.
1620	Hinterland forbidden to traders save *pombeiros descalços*.
1640-8	Dutch hold Luanda, Benguela, &c.; Portuguese hold Massangano.
From 1645	Raids from Massangano across Libolo to and across Keve River and to Bailundu.
From 1660	Raids inland from Benguela find some natives using fire-arms.
1671	End of Kingdom of Angola; presídio at Pungu-a-Ndongo.
1680	One million slaves exported since 1576 (Cadornega). First Caconda Fort founded in Hanha.
1685	Second Caconda Fort rebuilt nearby; many attacks on this fort and on nearby natives by native kings from interior.
1718	Further attacks on Caconda and its neighbours; king of 'Gallangue' captured and exiled; his successor said to have become vassal of Portugal. (Delgado.)
1760	Expulsion of Jesuits.
1769	Third Caconda fort built, on present site; presídio of Novo Redondo founded; various 'towns' ordered established in Benguela hinterland and Captains-major named. Formal prohibition of hinterland to traders removed.
1770-1	J. J. Rodrigues (first) Captain-major of Bihe.
1774	Great military campaign from Luanda and from Benguela against Bailundu, Cingolo, Ciyaka, &c.
1776	Return of military forces; king of Bailundu and two nephews captured.
1778	Kangombe baptized as 'Antonio de Vasconcellos' in Luanda and restored to stool of Viye with Governor's help.
1782	J. Gregorio de Freitas, Captain-major of Bihe.

OCCUPATION AND OF THE TRADITIONAL THE OVIMBUNDU

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NATIVE TRADITIONAL HISTORY AND THE UMBUNDU ROYAL SUCCESSIONS

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'Kinguri' leaves Lunda to seek new home; his subsequent wanderings (Magyar).

Traditional origins of the Imbangala, of the Songo; in 'Libolo', in 'Quilombo', &c. (Dias de Carvalho; Ferreira Diniz, &c.).

Ngalangi tradition of Feti the First, who found his wives in the reeds, and how they became the mothers of many peoples.

Wambu-Kalunga, the cannibal chief, founder of Wambu, progenitor of Ciyaka, Cingolo, Citata, Kalukembe, &c.

Ndulu tradition of Katekula-Mango, elephant-hunter, who left inspirers in the rocks of Pungo-a-Ndongo.

Katiavala from the north, comes to Balunda.

Viye and Kalanda.

UMBUNDU ROYAL SUCCESSIONS

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	Ciyaka	Ndulu	Balunda	Ngalangi	Viye
1650	Citi I (Ohumbu)[1] Kapango				
		Ukolongonjo			
	Atunda I				
	Ukolongonjo I	Kavalavala	Mbulu (Ciliu)[2]		
1700	Ndumbu I (Kanya-ya-Ciyaka)[3]				
		Etunda	Katiavala I Njalula		
	Lunjongombo I	Ciluaya	Sumandala	(Kasanje)[2]	Viye
	Mukuku	Cingi		(Ciluango)[2]	(Civava)[2]
1750	Citi II				(Ndulu)[2]
	Handa I	(Ndulu)[1]	Cingi I[1] c. 1760-76	Ndumbu Viawo	Ulundu
	Ngalangi				
	Katuta I	Kalukembe[1]			
					Byambi Njilakulu
1775	Ndumbu II				
			(Ciliu)[2]		
	Kanutumulua				Kangombe[1] 1776-c.1795
	Kamala			Mulunda	
	Ukolongonjo II	Lumanyula			

For notes see page 231.

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EVENTS RECORDED

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1795	Mello and Teixeira, third journey to 'Loval' via Bailundu and Viye.
1808–15	First recorded crossing of Africa (via Lunda, not Viye) by two *pombeiros*.
1817	Native wars in Benguela hinterland.
1819	João Nepomuceno Correia, Captain-major of Bihe.
1823–5	'Golden Age of Slave Trade'—average annual export 11,457 (Lopes de Lima).
1832–8	First export of new products: gum copal and orchilla.
1834	Abolition of royal monopoly in ivory.
1836	Formal abolition of slave trade, but enforcement held up for many years, owing to feeling in the colony.
1837	Lt. Sandoval in Balundu, whence he describes native life.
1838	F. J. Coimbra, Captain-major of Bihe.
1840	Silva Porto reaches Bihe, coming from Luanda.
1844	Ports of Luanda and Benguela opened to foreign shipping; Prize Court in Luanda to implement suppression of slave trade.
1845	Presídio of Huila founded.
1846	Expedition of J. R. Graça to Lunda, passes through Viye.
1849–57	Ladislau Magyar in Viye.
1852	Silva Porto opens 'new road' from Viye to coast via Bailundu and Balombu (Civula).
1853	'Arabs' in Benguela, coming overland from Zanzibar. Livingstone meets Silva Porto and parties of 'Mambari' (Ovimbundu) at Naliele on the Zambezi.
1854	Livingstone meets 'Mambari' near Golungo Alto, visits Luanda, and returns to Zambesi valley and east coast.
1856–7	Attacks on southern presídios. Great attack on Huila by Ciyaka, Cingolo, Kalukembe, &c.
1865	Slaves now called freedmen (*libertos*) and apprenticed to their masters.
1869	First (experimental) export of rubber.
1870	Silva Porto leaves Viye for Benguela because of exactions of King Cilemo. Export of slaves to Americas now stopped; many sent to local plantations (Bastos).
1875	Lt. Cameron passes through Viye, Bailundu, &c., and reaches coast.
1878	Serpa Pinto, Capello, and Ivens in Caconda and in Viye. Great trading activity in Bailundu and in Viye.
1879–81	Trek Boers who left Transvaal in 1876 settle at Humpata.
1879	Silva Porto returns to Viye and goes on to 'Moyo'.
1880	Bagster, Sanders, and Miller land at Benguela (November), reach Bailundu following March to open W.C.A. Mission of A.B.C.F.M.
1882	Rubber takes second place in exports (after wax).

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UMBUNDU ROYAL SUCCESSIONS

	Ciyaka	*Ndala*	*Bailundu*	*Ngalangi*	*Viye*
1795	Ateende II				Kawawa
	Cikuko I	Cindele	Ekuikui I Numa I Hundungulu	Kambungu	Mona (*Vanovava*)[3]
	Kavumbo-inene				
	Ndumbu III	Mbundi	Cisende I Njonjolo	Ndumba II (*Cikongo*)[3]	
			Ngungi		
1835	Hande II (*Katiyumbe*)[3]		Civukuvuku[3]		Mbundu[3] 1833–9
			Utondosi		Kakombumbu[3] (*Hundungulu*)[3] 1839–42
1842	Njimbi[4] 1842–50	Siakalombe	Mkongo[3] 1842–61	Ndumba III[3] (*Epepe Katyumbumbo*) c. 1844–c. 1860	Liambula[3] 1842–7
					Kayangula[3] 1847–50 (Mukinda[3]) 1850–7[6]
1850	Cenja I[4] (*Lumejongumbe III*)[3] 1850–70				
1857		Lutaie		Etumbu Lutaie	Nguvenga[3] 1857–9 Konya Cilemo[3] 1860–83
1861			Cisende II[3] 1861–9 Vasovava[3] 1869–72		
1870	Njundo[4] 1870–98	Elundu Civava[4] c. 1870–c. 1890			
			Ekongo-liohombo[3] 1872–6		
1875			Ekuikui II[3] 1876–93	Ndumbu[3]	
1880					Ciponge[3] (*Njambayamina*)[3] 1883–6

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EVENTS RECORDED

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1884 Sanders opens Kamundongo station in Viye; Mission expelled from Bailundu by King Ekuikui upon a trader's misrepresentation; Mission appeals to Gov.-Gen. at Luanda; Arnot's arrival at Bailundu influences Ekuikui; Mission invited to return.

1885 Silva Porto, Captain-major of Bihe.

1886 Ovimbundu traders discover new source of rubber—more easily available and more abundant: great boom begins.

1887 Rubber takes first place in exports.

1888 Occupation of Congo by 'Free State' stops ivory trade. Currie opens Canadian Congregational station at Chissamba.

1890 King Ndunduma orders Paiva Couceiro's expedition out of Viye; suicide of Silva Porto. Punitive expedition under Artur de Paiva occupies Viye and receives surrender of king. Roman Catholic mission opened at Caconda. Plymouth Brethren begin work at Kuanjulula (Viye).

1891 Teixeira da Silva begins military occupation of Bailundu. Many traders arrive for settlement in Bailundu and in Viye.

1892 R.C. 'Mission of Bihe' opened at Kacingi (outside Umbundu area).

1895 R.C. Mission station of Bailundu opened.

1896 King Numa attacks Bailundu Fort.

1897 Mission Philafricaine (Swiss) opens station in Kalukembe.

1899 Peak of rubber trade.

1900 Slump in rubber trade; no more ivory (A. Bastos).

1902–3 Revolt in Bailundu put down and remaining Umbundu regions soon occupied.

1904 Benguela Railway begins construction at Lobito. Rubber slump aggravated by debasing product. W.C.A. Mission opens Cilesso (Ndulu) Station.

1906 W.C.A. Mission opens Elende (Ciyaka) Station.

1908 R.C. Mission station of Huambo (Wambu) opened.

1910 The Republic proclaimed in Portugal; worst abuses of contract labour abolished; civil administration begins to replace military in interior. Benguela Ry. reaches Cuma; porterage to coast gradually ends.

1912 Gen. Norton de Matos, Governor-General.

1914 W.C.A. Mission opens Currie Institute, normal and training school for young men.

1915 German forces take Portuguese forts on southern border; Portugal enters war against Germany. Benguela Ry. reaches Chinguar (edge of Viye) and suspends construction.

1916 W.C.A. Mission opens Means School for training of young women.

1917 Bailundu troops used to quell Sele revolt.

1919 Gen. Norton de Matos, High Commissioner; period of many public works and of much road-building activity (until about 1930).

1921 Decree 77 severely limits teaching and use of vernaculars. Beginning of currency devaluation with great fluctuations.

1922 Benguela Ry. resumes construction. Galangue (Ngalangi) mission station opened by representatives of coloured Congregational churches of the U.S.

1924 Seventh Day Adventists open work in Mbongo.

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	Ciyaka	*Ndulu*	*Bailundu*	*Ngalangi*	*Viye*
1885					Ciyoka[3] 1886–8 Cikunyu[3] (*Ndundima*)[3] 1888–90
1890		Civange		Ekumbi	Kalufeie
			Katiavala II[3] 1893–5		
1895			Numa II[3] 1895–6	Cihonga II	Kaninguluka
		Cipati	Hundungulu Kalakata	Ciyo	
	Cilölö III[4] 1898–1904				
1900		Cisululu Kasuanje	Kalandula		
					Ciyuka[4] 1901–3
		Siakanjimba	(Mutu-ya Kevela) [3, 7] 1903		Kavova[4] 1903–15
1904	Handa III[4] 1904–11	Ndingilinya	Cisende III[3] 1904–11		
		Sihinga Congolola		Cipala	
1910	Atende III[4] 1911–15		Njahölö[4] 1911–35		
1915	Cikuko[4] 1915–18				Ngungu[4] 1915–28
		Cisokokua		Kangombe	
1920	Cilölö IV[4] 1920–5			Ngungwa	
				Cuvika	

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DATES	EVENTS RECORDED
175 173 1926	'Corporative Régime' gains power in Portugal, May 28; Roman Catholics given large government subsidies and many advantages; they open many new mission stations from this time on.
1927	United Church of Canada takes over part of work of W.C.A.M. Umbundu Church of Christ organized to include work of three Protestant Missions.
1928	Currency conversion with 25 per cent. devaluation. Angola Boers return to Damaraland. Mission Philafricaine opens Evanga (Ganda) station.
1929	Completion of Benguela Ry. to frontier.
1929–30	First ordinations in Umbundu Church of Christ.
1930	W.C.A. Mission celebrates Jubilee with attendance of 12,000 Africans, many Europeans, and deputations from abroad.
1931	Completion of Katanga Ry., making connexion across Africa; opening of through traffic. Portuguese Baptists open small work at Nova Lisboa.
1935	Provincial Exposition at Nova Lisboa.
1938	H.E. President Carmona of Portugal visits Colony.
1939	World War II, Portugal neutral.
From 1941	Rapid rise of prices, rise in wages less marked.
1945–6	Visit of Minister of Colonies includes Protestant Missions.
1946	West Central Africa Regional Conference, Léopoldville, Congo Belge: African and European delegates from French, Belgian, and Portuguese colonies.

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UMBUNDU ROYAL SUCCESSIONS

	Ciyaka	*Ndulu*	*Bailundu*	*Ngalangi*	*Viye*
1925				Cikuetekole	
	Handa IV[4] (*Kalumbombo*)[8] 1926–8	Cihopio[4] d. 1935			
				Mbumba-Kambuakatepa	
					Ciyuka[4, 6] 1928–40
	Sakulanda[4] (*Luanjangombe IV*)[8] 1929–39				
1930				Cingelesi[4] 1931–3	
				Ndumbu II[4] 1933–5	
1935		(Sangombe Esita)[7] 1935–	Musita[4] 1935–8	Congolola[4] 1935–	
			Cinendele[4] 1938–		
	Cilulu V[4] 1939–40				
1940	Tomasi[4] 1940–				

173
175
643

NOTES

[1] Dates fixed by agreement of native tradition with historical reference.

[2] These names mentioned by European writers; native tradition with reference to them not known.

[3] Dates fixed from historical reference.

[4] Dates from native sources.

[5] Tradition mentions a solar eclipse during this reign, which would be 1886 or 1889.

[6] This is the same king as the one listed for 1901–3: he reigned twice.

[7] The names in parentheses are of men not of royal lines and not regularly enthroned, but usurpers, war leaders, or 'guarders of the stool'.

[8] The italicised names in parentheses after the names of certain kings are appelatives which they took on assuming office.

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ETHNOGRAPHIC SURVEY OF AFRICA

edited by

DARYLL FORDE

WEST CENTRAL AFRICA

Part II

THE OVIMBUNDU OF ANGOLA

by

MERRAN McCULLOCH

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This study is one part of the Ethnographic Survey of Africa which the International African Institute is preparing with the aid of a grant made by the Secretary of State under the Colonial Development and Welfare Acts, on the recommendation of the Colonial Social Science Research Council

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ETHNOGRAPHIC SURVEY OF AFRICA

FOREWORD

The preparation of a comprehensive survey of the tribal societies of Africa was discussed by the Executive Council of the Institute as far back as 1937, but the interruption and restricting of its activities caused by the war resulted in the postponement of the project. Events and developments during recent years, however, have led to a wider recognition of the need for collating and making more generally available the wealth of existing but uncoordinated material on the ethnic groupings and social conditions of African peoples, particularly in connection with plans for economic and social development. Moreover, it appeared that the International African Institute, as an international body which has received support from and performed services for the different Colonial governments, was in a very favourable situation for undertaking such a task. 121

The Institute, therefore, in 1944, applied to the recently established British Colonial Social Science Research Council for a grant from the Colonial Development and Welfare Fund to finance the preparation of an Ethnographic Survey of Africa, and a grant was allocated for a period of five years from 1945, and was subsequently extended for a further period of three years. A committee, under the Chairmanship of Professor Radcliffe-Brown, was appointed to consider the scope and form of the survey, and collaboration was established with research institutions in South Africa, Rhodesia, East Africa, French West Africa, Belgium and the Belgian Congo. 122

The aim of the Ethnographic Survey is to present a concise, critical, and accurate account of our present knowledge of the tribal groupings, distribution, physical environment, social conditions, political and economic structure, religious beliefs and cult practices, technology and art of the African peoples. The material is presented as briefly and on as consistent a plan as possible, and the texts are supplemented by maps and comprehensive bibliographies. 121

The Ethnographic Survey is being published as a series of separate, self-contained studies, each devoted to one particular people or cluster of peoples. It is hoped that publication in this form will make the results more quickly and readily available to those interested in specific areas or groups. A list of the sections which have already appeared is given on the cover of this volume.

Since the unequal value and the generally unsystematic nature of the available information constituted a chief reason for undertaking this survey, it will be obvious that the material here presented can make no claim to be complete or definitive. Every effort has been made, however, to scrutinise all available literature and to check it by reference to unpublished sources and to workers actually in the field; thus it is intended to present a clear picture of our existing knowledge and to point out the directions in which the need for further studies is most pressing. Any assistance from those who are in a position to remedy deficiencies and correct inaccuracies by providing supplementary material will be 000

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greatly appreciated.

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DARYLL FORDE,
Director.

R: McCulloch E-4 (1945-51) 1952 FP13 Mbundu FP13

[p. v]

THE OVIMBUNDU OF ANGOLA

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THE OVIMBUNDU OF ANGOLA

GROUPING AND DEMOGRAPHY

NOMENCLATURE

101 The name Ovimbundu, which possibly derives from the same root as mutu, seems to have been adopted as a tribal name in fairly recent times, the various groups being formerly known separately as Bailundu, Ciyaka, Viye etc. Correct rendering in native usage is Ovimbundu (singular Ovimbundu);[1] variations include mbundu, u'bundu, vimbundu, quimbundu, kimbundu[2] etc. Umbundu is correctly used adjectivally and to refer to the language.[3] In referring to the tribe the prefixes Ovi- and Ovi- are usually retained today to avoid confusion with the Kimbundu (also called Ambundu, Ngola or Ndongo) tribe, located north of the Ovimbundu in Lunda, and related linguistically to the peoples of the Kongo group.[4]

The terms Vakununo (Vakonuno, Vanuno, or Mununo) and Ovimboli (Mbori, Mambori, Mboli) are sometimes used in the literature as alternative names for the Ovimbundu. Nuno means "up-country", Vakununo "people of the north".[5] Both van Bulck[6] and Guthrie[7] give it as an alternative name for the Ovimbundu as a whole, while earlier writers restrict its application to one or other group within the tribe. Thus Serpa Pinto[8] and Capello and Ivens[9] use it for the inhabitants of the southern part of the plateau, between Cacunda and Cilenge country.[10] Wagner, on the other hand, uses it as an alternative name for the Bailundu group, who "because of their bravery, are celebrated far and wide, under the feared name Mununo".[11]

Mboli, or more correctly Ovimboli, is correctly an Umbundu term for those who imitate Europeans, or who live near European towns, which are collectively called lupoli.[12] It is frequently used by early writers for example, by Livingstone,[13] to refer to the Ovimbundu of the trading caravans.

GROUPING

101 The Ovimbundu do not have a centralised political organisation, but
(3) are divided into a number of chiefdoms, each traditionally under the control of a paramount chief. The following list of chiefdoms is quoted

(1) Childs, 1949, p.vi.
(2) Wagner uses kimbundu for the Ovimbundu, but he does not confuse them, as Junqueiro does, with the Kimbundu people.
(3) Childs, loc.cit.
(4) Ibid. Capello and Ivens, 1882 (vol.I, p.15) use u'bundu for the language of the Ovimbundu, to distinguish it from the u'bundu of Lunda. They give quimbundu as an alternative for u'bundu, and state that it is a dialect of the lu-nano language.
(5) Childs, personal communication.
(6) 1949, p.179. (7) 1948.
(8) 1881, vol.I, pp.94, 219. (9) 1882, vol.I, p.37.
(10) See also Chatelain, 1894, p.6 and Marquardsen 1939, map.
(11) 1890, p.382.
(12) Childs, 1949, p.19. (13) 1857, pp.91, 271, 384 etc. See also White, 1949.

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from Child's monograph,[1] alternative spellings which occur in the literature being given in brackets. These divisions closely resemble those described in 1799 by the Governor of Benguella,[2] and by Magyar, who lived in and travelled through Ovimbundu country from 1840 to 1857. Ovimbundu today still think of themselves as belonging to one or other of these groups, although owing to the decay of the power of the chiefs, the divisions have largely lost their political significance.[3] Of the twenty-two Ovimbundu chiefdoms, about half were generally tributary to one or other of the larger and more powerful groups, prior to effective Portuguese occupation.[4]

I. *Independent chiefdoms (in approximate order according to the size of their present populations).*

Mbailundu	(Bailundu, bailundo, Balundo, Balhundo)
Viye	(Ovi Ye, Bie, Bihe, Biene, Biheno)
Wambu	(Huambu, Huambo, Hambo)
Ciyaka	(Quiyaca, Quieca)
Ngalangi	(Galangue, Galange, Galangi, Ngalangi)
Civula	(Quibula)
Ndulu	(Andulo, Ondulo, Ondura)
Cingolo	(Quingolo)
Kalukembe	(Caluquembe, Caluguembe, Caluquene)
Sambu	(Sambo, Sambos)
Ekelete	(Quiquete)
Kakonda or Ciloabo-ronana	(Caconda or Quilombo)
Citata	(Quitata)

II. *Chiefdoms generally tributary but not integral parts of the chiefdoms to which they owed allegiance.*

Kasongi[5]	(Cassongue).	Generally tributary to Bailundu.
Ngalanga	(Galanga)	" " " "
Civanda	(Quibanda)	" " " "
Nambu		" " " "
Sanga		" " " "
Cenga	(Chinga)	" " " "
Cipeyo	(Quipeyo)	" " " "
		or Wambu.
Mbango	(Bango).	Generally tributary to Wambu.
Elendo	(Lendo).	" " " Ciyaka.

LOCATION

The homeland of the Ovimbundu is the Benguella Highland in west central Angola. Strictly speaking, the Highland comprises those regions which have

(1) 1949, p. 168.
(2) Annaes Maritimos e Coloniaes, 4a. Ser., pp.147-161. (Quoted by Childs)
(3) Childs, personal communication.
(4) i.e. prior to about 1900.
(5) Kasongi is not mentioned by Magyar, and Childs believes it to be one of the most recently-formed groups of Ovimbundu.

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an elevation of 4,000 feet or more, and the boundaries of Ovimbundu territory closely correspond with this area.[1] Ovimbundu are found also in regions adjoining the Highland, and Umbundu-speaking groups stretch as far as the Atlantic coast-line, between the towns of Loanda and Benguella. Ovimbundu country is divided between the Administrative Provinces of Bie, Benguella, and Huila, in the Districts of Benguella, Huambo, Cuanza Sul, Bie and Huila. 101 631

NEIGHBOURING TRIBES

To the east and south-east of the Ovimbundu are the Luimbe, Luchaze, Mbunda, Mbwela, etc., for all of whom the Ovimbundu use the derogatory term *Ngangela*, or *Ganguella* in the Portuguese version.[2] The Ovimbundu attitude towards these people is illustrated in the proverb "as a grass hut is not a house, so an *ocingangela* is not a person".[3] This eastern region was a favourite hunting-ground for slave-traders from Viye and Bailundu. 101 [186]

To the north-east are the Chokwe, Bangala and Songo peoples, who are related to the Lunda group.[4]

To the west and south of the Ovimbundu are cattle-keeping peoples - the Nganda, Ndombe, Henya, Cilenge, Cipungu, Huila, Nyaneka, Mulondo and Khumbi. These form a fairly homogeneous cultural group, and are in certain respects similar to the southern Ovimbundu.[5] Childs, following Estermann,[6] uses the collective name "*Bangela*" in referring to them, but in order to avoid confusion with the Bangala tribe to the north-east, this usage is not adopted here. Still further south are the Ambo and Herero, also cattle-keepers.

The tribes to the north of the Ovimbundu - Esela, Cipala, Lupolo, Ndongo or Kimbundu etc. - belong to the western or Angola 'cluster' of the Congo people.[7] The Esele (Vesele) and Mbui (Ambojn) may also belong to this group, but have not yet been surely classified.[8] The northern tribes are sometimes collectively called by the Ovimbundu *Olongoya*, a term which implies that they speak a language unintelligible to the Ovimbundu, but which has not the derogatory sense of "*Ngangela*".[9] Unlike the eastern peoples, the peoples to the south and north of the Ovimbundu are recognised as *ossoma* (people), or even *vakueta* (comrades).[10] [186]

DEMOGRAPHY

The 1940 Angola Census[11] estimates the number of Ovimbundu (Mbundo) as 1,331,087, of whom 694,504 are females, 636,583 males. Childs[12] points out that this number should be decreased by at least 150,000 owing to the erroneous inclusion of several small non-Ovimbundu tribal groups. 161

(1) See map.
(2) See McCulloch, 1951, p.32.
(3) The term used for "person" in the proverb is *ossoma*, a "potential" person - a word used for adolescents. See pp. below.
(4) The Bangala are sometimes held to be related to the Congo rather than the Lunda group.
(5) See below, p.
(6) 1935, pp.45-49.
(7) Childs, 1949, p.8.
(8) Ibid.
(9) Ibid., p.189.
(10) Ibid., p.x.
(11) Quoted by Boletim Cultural, 1948, p.421, and Sarmento, 1948.
(12) 1949, p.6.

161 But this number is probably made up by Ovimbundu emigrants to other colonies and to the Union of South Africa.[1]

162 There are no recent estimates of the populations of the various groups of Ovimbundu. Magyar in 1859 however gave figures which are of some interest.[2] He estimated the total Ovimbundu ("Kimbunda") population at 1,880,000, but points out that this number includes 300,000 from tribes which, though culturally resembling the Ovimbundu, are not linguistically related to them (Kissama, Mupinda, Musumbe, Lusseke, Munyemba and Massongo). Another 300,000 are from tribes which Magyar includes as "Kimbunda" speaking, but which are not generally reckoned as Ovimbundu today. (Nganda, Esele, Humbi, Lupolo, Hako and Kakingi.) This would leave 1,280,000, a figure remarkably near to the present estimate. The following are his figures for the separate groups:-

	Area in sq.m.	Population
Viye (Bie)	800	120,000
Bailundu	2,000	450,000
Wambo (Hambo)	?	120,000
Ciyaka (Kiaka)	?	75,000
Ngalangi (Galangue)	1,000	250,000
Civula (Kibala)	200	35,000
Ndulu (Andulo)	160	40,000
Sambu (Sambos)	120	30,000
Kakonda (Caconda)	300	100,000
	Total	1,220,000

There are no recent estimates of tribal density. The 1940 Census[3] gives density in the Provinces as :-

Bie Province[4]	1.5 per sq. km.
Benguella	8.5 per sq. km.
Huila	2.0 per sq. km.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT[5]

TOPOGRAPHY

133 The homeland of the Ovimbundu corresponds closely with the highest part of the Benguella Highland, i.e. the area lying between 11° and 15° South Latitude, and meridians 14° and 18° E. Altitude in this region is everywhere over 4,000 feet, and the western ridges rise as high as 9,000 feet, forming the highest north-western portion of the ancient South African sub-continental plateau. To the east, elevation drops gradually from the Kwanza valley towards the Kasai and Zambesi rivers. To the west, descent is irregular - in places almost precipitous - to the coastal plain. This plain and the stretch of higher country (below 3,200 feet) which separates it from the Highland proper, form an arid and sparsely-populated region which is a northerly extension of the Kalahari, Namib and Gnaboba deserts.

(1) Childs, op.cit., p.9. (2) Magyar, 1859, pp.125, 239, 361 etc.
(3) Quoted by Serrano, 1948.
(4) This figure is of little significance since Bie Province includes large sparsely-inhabited non-Ovimbundu areas in south-east Angola.
(5) Childs 1949, chap.I. Fitzgerald 1948, pp.278f. Hambly 1934, pp.108f.

The two largest rivers flowing from the Highland are the Kwanza and the Kunene, both of which flow into the Atlantic Ocean. Between them are the Keve, the Balombo and the Katumbela. The Kubango rises near the source of the Kunene and flows southwards towards the Kalahari Desert. 133

SOILS AND VEGETATION

The foundation of the plateau is a vast slab of primeval crystalline rock, which frequently outcrops in the form of isolated rocks or of massive peaks. Some of these outcrops remain bare, while others are hidden by laterite and soil formed by rock decomposition. Sediments overlying the rocks include unfossiliferous sandstones and conglomerates, considered to be of Palaeozoic age. Much of the soil is poor, in many areas impoverished by use and by erosion; there are however a few alluvial deposits, and on the whole the soil is of better quality than in the adjoining regions to the east, north and south. 134 133

Differences in vegetation between the Highland and the lower zone towards the coast are striking. Characteristic feature of the coastal area is the baobab *(Adansonia digitata)* and in the better-watered areas tropical forests occur. The Highland proper was until recently well-covered with a variety of trees; today, however, except in isolated areas in Bailundu and other regions, grasslands have taken the place of forest and woodland. Native methods of agriculture and annual fires have caused much deforestation, and this has been accentuated by the demands of European settlement and of the Railway, which up to the present time uses principally wood for fuel. 137

CLIMATE

The Highland is well within the Tropical Zone, but altitude and the effect of the south-western Antarctic current combine to produce a moderate climate. The annual variation of temperature is relatively slight; a day's maximum is seldom above 90°F, and may be as low as 60°, but the usual maximum is around 80°. The minimum of 32° or even 30° is sometimes reached in the winter (about May 20th - July 20th), but more usually the minimum is 40° to 50° in the winter, and 50° to 55° for the rest of the year. There is considerably daily variation, especially in the winter, when differences of 42° are often registered. 132

Mean annual rainfall varies from 40 to 60 inches, according to region. In the Highland the rains begin with a few showers during September, increase during October and November, have a break of two to four weeks in December, January or February, and continue until the end of April. The heaviest falls are usually in November and December, occasionally in March.

TRADITIONS OF ORIGIN AND HISTORY(1)

The Ovimbundu people represent a fusion of diverse stocks, chiefly of the Southern Bantu and of the Congo or Central Bantu peoples. The ruling 174 167

(1) This section is a summary of the detailed account given by Childs 1949, pp. 144-151.

174 167 families, probably for the most part of Lunda origin, entered the Benguella Highlands during the seventeenth century and began to found their respective kingdoms. The tribes whom they encountered appear to have belonged to the cattle-keeping Ndombe-Nganda or to the Ngangela group.[1] Childs suggests that the upper strata of these local populations must have moved on southwards with their cattle to join related stocks in the border regions, while the masses stayed behind to form the nucleus of the Ovimbundu. The cultural influence of these early inhabitants on the Ovimbundu seems to have been slight, except in the south-west, particularly in Kalukembe, where a semblance of the cattle-culture complex remains, together with a recognition of kinship ties with southern neighbours (see below). The linguistic [197] influence of the Southern Bantu (Ndombe-Nganda) group in the south and west has however been considerable. It is noteworthy that over the whole Ovimbundu region a single language has developed with only small dialectal differences, and that although commercial contact has assisted this development, it has not been fostered by political union between the various segments of the Ovimbundu.

TRADITIONS

173 166 Each of the principal groups listed above (page 2) has separate legends of origin. Usually these traditions refer to the birthplace and adventures of the ancestors of the chiefly families, and only mention the indigenous inhabitants. Childs has made a careful and lucid summary of the traditions of the various groups;[2] these are therefore only very briefly outlined below.

Ndulu. There is evidence that Ndulu may be one of the oldest Ovimbundu kingdoms. The progenitor of the ruling dynasty is said to have come from the region near the confluence of the Kwanza and Lumbo rivers, and to have conquered and expelled the Luimbe, who live today to the east of Ndulu. This migration may have been a result of the prolonged wars between the Portuguese and the Kingdom of Angola,[3] which ended in 1671.

Bailundu. The Bailundu dynasty is said to have its origin in Cipala, a region which remained subject to Bailundu until the end of the nineteenth century, and from which, according to tradition, the king's principal wife comes. Childs estimates the date of the foundation of the dynasty at not earlier than about 1700. The Sumbu ruling family is said to descend either from a woman of Bailundu stock or from common stock with the Bailundu.

Viye. Versions of the Viye legend are recorded by Tucker,[4] Serpa Pinto,[5] Silva Porto,[6] and Magyar,[7] and these do not all agree. According to the most widely-known version today, Viye, an elephant-hunter of the Humbi people, tracking game down the Kwanza valley, met and married a princess of the Songo people; their son, Ulundu, founded the Viye chiefdom. From documentary evidence Childs estimates that this must have been in about 1750. This version also suggests that the original inhabitants were of the Ngangela group of tribes.

(1) See above, p.3.
(2) Op.cit., pp.170-81.
(3) To the north of the present Ovimbundu country.
(4) 1927, pp.34f.
(5) 1881, vol.I, pp.156f.
(6) 1942, pp.145-71.
(7) 1859, pp.264f.

7

Magyar's account of the Viye legend is of interest since it suggests a direct link between the movements of the Ovimbundu ancestors and contemporary migrations of the Lunda in the Congo basin and western Angola.(1) 173 166

Magyar relates that the forefathers of the Viye came from the land of the Mexupa (or Lunda(2)) under the two chiefs Kinguri and Schakambindi, conquered the Songo, and settled on the Lunda river, engaging in agriculture between raids. The tribe subsequently sub-divided, one group going southwards to the Kukema river, where Ngangela were living, to found the chiefdom of Viye.

Ngalangi tradition is the only one which attempts a creation myth. Feti, the first chief of Ngalangi, is said to have "come down from above"; having no wives, he went to a lagoon of the Kunene river and caught them as they came out of the reeds. Sons of Feti drove out the Ngangela from what is now Ngalangi country, and founded their principal village.(3) Childs estimates that this must have taken place in about 1750. The village was later attacked unsuccessfully by Ngangela, and this is one of the very few traditions which mention resistance met by the invaders.

Wambu. The first chief, Wambu Kalunga, is said to have come from Sela country, north-west of Bailundu. The Nganda, who now live south-west of Umbundu country and are of Southern Bantu stock, were previously living in Wambu country. The founder of the *Ciyaka* royal family is said to have been a relative of Wambu Kalunga, and to have driven out the *Nkonde* (also of Southern Bantu stock) from Ciyaka country, probably during the first half of the seventeenth century. Wambu Kalunga is said to have been also the progenitor of the dynasties of *Cingolo*, *Citeta* or *Cikuma*, *Kalukembe*, *Elende* and *Ekotete*.(4)

Kakonda, the founder of the Kakonda kingdom, was of northern stock, but born in Ngalangi, whence he was sold as a slave to Benguella. He escaped with his wife, Cilombo, and set up the present kingdom in about 1760.

Congi, *Sengo*, *Nambo* and *Kasongi* on the northern flank of Bailundu have only recently become Umbundu-speaking. *Kasongi*, one of the largest Bailundu tributaries, has however had a line of Umbundu-speaking chiefs for more than 100 years. *Civula* was listed by Magyar as tributary to Ciyaka. *Kalukembe* is of interest in that it is more clearly linked than other sections of the Ovimbundu with the Nganda-Ambo group. Factors which point to this closer link include: the similarities in language between the two groups; the inheritance of the Kalukembe kingship in the maternal line, as among the Nganda-Ambo group, and not in the paternal line, as among other Ovimbundu;(5) and the fact that the Nganda-Ambo, who have an exogamous clan organisation, may marry in any of the related Nganda-Ambo groups, and for this purpose include Kalukembe but not other Ovimbundu.(6) 174 631 [643] [582]

(1) McCulloch 1951, pp.97f., 220f., 272f.
(2) Dias de Carvalho 1890, p.66.
(3) According to the same legend, where the Ngalangi created their lands of food and household goods, sticks took root and became the sycomore figs which to this day encircle the capital village. This circle of trees is a characteristic of the older Ngangela villages.
(4) Childs op.cit., pp.178, 225.
(5) Although descent among Ovimbundu commoners is in the maternal line.
(6) Childs, op.cit., p.178.

EARLY HISTORY

175 The earliest records of native migration in what is now Angola concern the warrior hordes of Jagas (Jaggas, Jakas, Jaggas, Giaghis, Giaki, Ayaka etc.), who from about 1560 onwards were reported in north-western Angola and the adjacent Kingdom of Congo.(1) Various attempts have been made to identify the Jagas. Van Wing(2) and Torday(3) hold that the name is derived from the Bayaka tribe on the middle Kwango; Battell's account would seem to identify them with the Bangala (Imbangala) of Jaga Cassange, who are known to have been invading western Angola at this time. Childs points to suggestive links of the Jagas with Ovimbundu dynasties: e.g. the Ciyaka group of Ovimbundu, who recognise the region of Cassange as the location of their earliest ancestral tombs. He also shows that certain Jaga customs as described by the earlier writers resemble those connected with Ovimbundu kingship. Childs suggests that the name Jaga (which seems to derive from the verb "to fight" -oku yaka; "they fight" = a yaka or vayaka) was originally a name given to these hordes or to their leaders by the African peoples whom they fought and conquered.(4)

175 European contacts with the people of the Benguella Highland took place in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, before the migrations
177 had settled down. Dutch and Portuguese raids took place in 1645, 1650 and 1661, and since fire-arms appear to have been used at that time by the Africans, it seems likely that Umbundu dynasties had them when they came into the region.(5) In 1760 the throwing open of the hinterland to Euro-
[521] pean traders(6) led to greatly increased commercial contact, and this in turn gave rise to wars between the native rulers and the Portuguese. In 1774-6 a war was fought between the Portuguese and their native allies and the kings of Bailundu and Cingolo. Ciyaka and neighbouring kingdoms continued to raid the European garrisons until recent times, and Europeans appear not to have penetrated Ciyaka until almost the turn of the present century.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF OVIMBUNDU TRADE

175 There are indications that before the end of the eighteenth century the Ovimbundu were becoming, or had become, traders. The slave-trade was
4139 formally prohibited in 1836,(7) and subsequently European traders began to move inland in greater numbers in search of ivory, settling especially in Bailundu and Viye. This began a period of great commercial development among the Ovimbundu, the principal commodities being ivory, beeswax, and, in the third quarter of the century, rubber.(8) Trading caravans of the Ovimbundu (under the names *Numbari*, *Eihema*, *Bailundus*, or *Mbundus*) became

(1) See especially Battell, pp.191. (2) 1921, p.104.
(3) 1925, map facing p.282.
(4) Childs, op.cit., pp.185-6. (5) Ibid., p.195.
(6) Entry of European traders to the hinterland had been forbidden by law in 1629, although the law had become largely a dead letter.
(7) Although contraband slave-trade continued until late in the nineteenth century, the slaves being used for the transport of ivory and other goods from the hinterland to the coast.
(8) These were at first one-way agreements, allowing Ovimbundu to trade in many lands, since it was to the advantage of the rulers of these countries. The Ovimbundu are said in fact to have discouraged the tribes to the east from venturing out on their own account. See Livingstone 1857, p.304, Cameron 1877, p.474.

known throughout the territory bounded by the Congo river, the Great Lakes, and the Kalahari desert. Most other Ovimbundu kingdoms fell into line with the trading activities of Bailundu and Viye. By the middle of the century this had resulted in a loose system of alliances and mutual understandings to the effect that the traders and caravans of each kingdom would be permitted to enter or travel through the others. At time these "trade-agreements" seem to have embraced all the Umbundu-speaking peoples, but violations were frequent, especially between Viye and the Ciyaka-Cingola-Citata group. Trade-agreements were also made beyond the Umbundu-speaking area, e.g. with the Mwata Yamvo of the Lunda.(1) 175 439 [484]

From roughly the turn of the twentieth century the large-scale trading activities of the Ovimbundu declined. Military occupation of Viye and Bailundu took place in 1890, and from that date European traders began to settle in Viye and Bailundu in ever-increasing numbers. In 1902 the Bailundu war occurred, after which the occupation of the whole of Umbundu country was quickly completed. This campaign paralysed trade, which was already suffering because of a great fall in rubber prices. Other factors which hastened the decline of Ovimbundu trading activities(2) include the famine in Ngangela country in 1911, the disappearance of illicit slave-traffic, and, finally, the building of the Benguella Railway (commenced in 1904), which put an end to the porterage and trading caravans of former days.(3) [721] [456]

LANGUAGE

"Umbundu is usually(4) associated with Ambo, Herero and kindred languages. It would however seem that more comparative study is required to show how real this apparent relationship is: it appears to be especially based on the fact that Umbundu uses prefixial o- with many of its noun classes. In general structure, however, Umbundu shows remarkable similarity in grammar and vocabulary to Luena, Luchazi and other languages of the Ganguella [Ngangela] group. 197

Features of Umbundu which are worthy of note are:-

i. Presence of nasal vowels before and after 'l', 'h', 'v' and 'w'.

ii. In certain nasal compounds, subtraction occurs, involving the second consonant, but not the nasal, e.g. *muntu* is realised as *omunu*.

iii. Compared with the Lunda-Luena languages Umbundu exhibits an unusually large number of defective verbs.

iv. A vowel system of five vowels.

(1) These were at first one-way agreements, allowing Ovimbundu to trade in many lands, since it was to the advantage of the rulers of these countries. The Ovimbundu are said in fact to have discouraged the tribes to the east from venturing out on their own account. See Livingstone 1857, p.394, Cameron 1877, p.404.
(2) For much greater detail concerning the rise and fall of Ovimbundu trade see Childs op.cit., pp.191-215.
(3) Ibid.
(4) Duke 1945, p.101; Guthrie 1948, p.64; Childs 1949, p.8.

197 v. Two significant tones on radicals; no tonal alternance on nominal suffixes. In this Umbundu resembles the Lunda-Luena languages."[1]

Childs[2] classifies Umbundu with the Ambo-Herero group as belonging to the Western Province of Southern Bantu. He suggests[3] that the similarity of Umbundu to the Ngangela languages is due to the dominating influence of the Umbundu spoken in Viye (where the racial stock had a greater Ngangela element) over that spoken in other regions. This dominating influence may be explained by the relatively large number of missions in the Viye region, and presumably also by the activities of Viye traders.[4]

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177

Dialectal differences in Umbundu speech are very small. There are certain noticeable differences between "up-country" and "down-country", roughly divided by the Keve and Kunene rivers. Each of the outlying regions has its own peculiarities, often due to foreign influences.[5]

It has been mentioned above that while the homeland of the Ovimbundu is in the Benguella Highland, the use of the Umbundu language is now more widespread. The Nganda and the Hanya tribes are increasingly using it, and the mixed populations of the coastal towns of Lobito, Katumbela and Benguella use it almost exclusively. It is also spoken in Nova Redondo, in Mossamedes, and along the Benguella Railway. This process of "Umbundu-ization" does not seem however to be taking place in Cipala, Sela, or Musende, in spite of the long period during which they owned the king of Bailundu as their overlord.[6]

PHYSICAL APPEARANCE AND DRESS

142 Among the Ovimbundu two main physical types are distinguished by some writers:[7] one is of brown skin colour and slender build, the other a shorter, darker type with more facial hair. No correlation of these types with chiefly families on the one hand and commoners on the other has been recorded. Hambly[8] gives several good illustrations of physical types among the Ovimbundu, and contrasts them with those found among neighbouring tribes.

301 The Ovimbundu retain distinctive styles of dress, ornament, tooth
304 mutilation (a V-shaped notch in the upper incisors), scarification and
291 hair-dressing. Women are dressed in trade cloth: unmarried girls wear one piece of cloth which hangs from the armpits to the knees, while a married woman drapes herself with two pieces of cloth, a skirt hanging from her girdle, and an upper piece so folded as to hold her baby tightly on her back. Certain cloth designs are considered appropriate for girls, others only for older women. Men now dress usually in European fashion.

(1) This linguistic note has been written by C.M.N. White.
(2) Op.cit., p.169. (3) p.190, fn.2.
(4) See above, pp.8-9.
(5) Childs op.cit., p.190, fn.2. See also Kalukembe, p.7 above.
(6) Childs, op.cit., pp.11, 179-80.
(7) See Hambly 1934, p.128; Cashmore 1944, p.36.
(8) Op.cit., plates XLIX-LIV.

2: McCulloch E-4 (1945-51)1952 FP13 Mbundu FP13

Ovimbundu women braid their hair neatly in strands across their foreheads, and decorate the braids with small blue and white trade beads.[1] 302

MAIN FEATURES OF ECONOMY

AGRICULTURE[2]

Main crops are maize and several kinds of beans. Subsidiary crops include: sorghum, kaffir corn, emmer wheat, manioc, peanuts, squash, sweet potatoes, garden vegetables, a little rice, cotton, sugar-cane and tobacco. Fruit-trees such as the papaya, banana, loquat, tangerine, lemon, peach and apple, are increasingly cultivated, and, to some extent, coffee. Upland fields for the principal crops of maize and beans are cultivated during the rainy season, and, to piece out the harvest, river gardens for secondary crops are used in the dry season. 241

The principal corn-gardens.

Traditionally men work with their wives in the heavier labour of clearing new fields, but today the demands of contract labour are such that few are able to help.[3] Before the rains begin in early September, women prepare the fields for planting. If a new plot is to be used, it is first cleared with a small hatchet. Tree stumps are left two or three feet high; after the field has been cultivated for a year or two and the tree-stumps have dried and rotted, they are burned off and cleared away. When the rainy season has set in and the ground is thoroughly wet, the main corn-fields are planted. The ground is dug with a hoe and ridged slightly, the ridges following the contour of the land, so that the rain will not wash away the soil, and so that the moisture will be held. Occasionally irrigation is used, small channels being led from hillside streams to the gardens. Maize is dropped by hand on the ridges, and the seeds covered with the foot. Beans and squash are planted with the corn. In January there is usually a break in the rains, and this is the time when the bean crop ripens. (This is a critical period, since if the dry spell lasts too long the corn crop is blighted, but if it is too short the beans will not ripen.) The vines are pulled up and put in the field hut to dry. Later the beans are beaten out of the pods and stored. 241 [462] [312]

In each field there is a grass hut, which is used as a shelter from showers, as a place for drying beans or corn, and as living quarters when the corn is sprouting. (When a woman decides that it would be more convenient to live by her field, which requires constant guarding against birds, she may live in her field hut with her children for several weeks.) 241 343

As the dry season commences, the corn crop ripens. When it is ripe, it is plucked, dried and shelled, and stored in the *osila*, a granary on posts, for future use. One *osila* is used for each household. When required, the corn is hulled and pounded into the meal which forms the staple food.[4] [257] [252]

(1) Hambly pp.129-32, and illustrations; Childs, personal communication.
(2) Cochrane, 1944, pp.73-8; Hambly, (2) 1934, pp.146-8, and Childs, personal communication.
(3) Childs, personal communication.
(4) For a good description of the preparation of corn-meal, see Cochrane, pp.77-8.

242 When a field is wearing out, the corn growing shorter and bearing
244 fewer ears to the stalk,[1] the woman makes a final planting of corn, sticking cuttings of manioc between the rows. Most of these cuttings take root and grow. It takes two or three years for the tubers of this plant to mature in an old field, but in some parts of the country where manioc is set in new land it matures within a year. The leaves of the plant are used as a vegetable with corn-meal, and manioc meal is used as a basic substitute when corn is short.

The onaka or river-garden

241 In August a woman plants her *onaka*, near a stream in the alluvial soil, or in some river bed. Here she plants corn which will be ready for eating during the January period of food shortage, as well as cabbage and other vegetables.

Organisation of labour

[462] Formerly men did the heavier work of clearing new fields, although, as has been noted above, since the introduction of wage labour much of the work is left to the women. Men may also have their own fields, the produce of which is sold to provide ready cash to clothe the family, pay taxes etc. The women's fields are intended to feed the family. Children help their parents in the fields, but also have their own plots. Gardens are made by each household, i.e. by each wife where there are a number of wives. Neighbours often co-operate during the harvesting
[476] period, after which beer is supplied by the owner of the field which has been harvested.[2]

HUNTING[3]

796 Most men and boys hunt, and women and children may help in burning the grass and driving the game during the annual communal fire-hunts.
224 But the professional hunter or *ukongo* is a recognised specialist, qualified by specific training and dependent on his knowledge of hunting magic
[463] and ritual for his success. A boy becomes a *ukongo* by an apprenticeship
[868] of about two years to an older hunter. This period culminates in a ceremony of inauguration, which may be attended by all the villagers but at which only the professional hunters dance. Several *ukongo* provide game, which is cooked for the feast; the dancing commences but the novice remains still and silent until he feels the "spirit of the head"; he then rises and distributes game to the villagers. Blood from the animals killed is sprinkled over his weapons, which have been made by the *ukongo* who has trained him. From now on his daily life is subject to certain ritual prohibitions: he must not sleep with his wife on the night before going on a hunt, special food and cooking-pots must be used for him, etc.

609 A professional hunter usually works alone, using bows and arrows,

(1) There is no information concerning the length of the farming-cycle.
(2) Childs, personal communication.
(3) See Hambly, *Bantu Studies*, 1934, and *Ovimbundu*, 1934, pp.140-5; Cushman, 1944, pp.113-20.

A professional hunter usually works alone, using bows and arrows, 224
clubs, spears, and several kinds of trap.(1) Nets and poison are not used. 411
Every hunter makes his own arrow-shafts and feathers; the points are made by a blacksmith. On the night before leaving for a hunt, the *ukongo* calls in his fellow hunters to share a ceremony which includes dancing and the re-anointing of the weapons with beer and palm-oil.

Communal hunts usually take place in June-July, in the middle of the 224
dry season, when large tracts of land are covered with grass ten or more feet high. The day for the hunt is set by the village headman; spears and arrows are prepared and, when the word is given, a party of about 30 men and boys move off to the assigned area of tall grass. A ring is formed round about two square miles of land, the hunters standing just within sight of each other. The grass is trodden down, fires started, and the animals killed as they rush from the flames. Antelope of many kinds, snakes, foxes, wolves, hyenas, mice and rabbits and occasionally leopards are killed in this way.

FISHING

In the Kunene and some of the other larger rivers fish are large and 226
plentiful, and men go on communal fishing expeditions, and return with 462
fish to sell.(2) Men usually fish with bark lines, women use basket-traps(3) and poisons. Poison is used, usually in the dry season, when the rivers are shallow. Both men and women use nets, and sometimes a fish-weir or *olunja* may be employed; this has an opening in the middle, in the lower side of which is placed a basket-trap. At the coast and along the Kwanza river dug-out canoes, about 20-30 feet long, are sometimes used for fishing.(4) [501]

DOMESTIC ANIMALS

The principal domestic animals are the cow *(onjindi)*, ox (*ongombe*, 231
which is also the generic name for cattle), bull *(onui)*, sheep *(omene)*, goat *(ohombo)*, pig *(ongulu)*, dog *(ombua)*, and chicken *(osanji)*.(5) The only transport animal is the ox, used both for riding and for drawing carts.(6) [492]

Cattle are a measure of wealth, but few families own large herds. 231
Childs lists the domestic animals in a typical village of 196 inhabitants 436
as: 9 head of cattle, 13 goats, 20 sheep, 100 pigs, and about 100 chickens. Cattle are used for paying fines and debts, for funeral feasts, and for marriage payments. Cows are not usually milked, and cattle are killed for food only when they are aged or injured, or occasionally during the June-July period of food shortage. Treated hides are used to cover stools, and for making pouches and corn-bags.(7) [282]

The cattle herd obtains most of its food by grazing, but in the dry 000

(1) Some hunters have guns, but the use of gunpowder is restricted by the Portuguese.
(2) Cushman, op.cit., p.143.
(3) See Cushman, loc.cit. for a brief description of the basket-trap.
(4) Hambly, (2) 1934, p.145.
(5) Ibid., pp.152-6.
(6) Childs, personal communication. Cf. Hambly, op.cit., p.152.
(7) Hambly, op.cit., p.153.

233 The cattle herd obtains most of its food by grazing, but in the dry season the grass withers. Childs states[1] that "Herding has been a [609] function of the sister's son, and even now there is a reluctance on the part of the boys to herd for their fathers."

235 462 [844] Chickens are owned and looked after by both men and women, but other animals only by men. Boys may have small stock of their own, and a boy's economic independence most frequently begins with his owning a chicken.

231 Hambly states that goats are more common than any other animal, and that every family has one or more. These animals are not fed or watered, but are allowed to wander to find their own sustenance. Goats are not milked. Young males are castrated. The goat is frequently used in sacrifices. Sheep also are allowed to find their own food; the males are not castrated. Pigs are cared for comparatively carefully, receiving water and a daily supply of sweet potatoes and their leaves, together with some corn. Male pigs are castrated.[2]

APICULTURE[3]

[439] Beeswax was an important item of trade in the caravan days, and is still sold to Portuguese traders' stores, where it is massed into large rectangular cakes for export. Honey is eaten alone or with manioc, and [262] a fermented beer called *ochasa* is made by adding honey to corn-beer. [273] Fibre strainers are used for cleaning the wax, and large shallow baskets [252] are employed for drying the honey in the sun.

Large cylindrical hives, which are private property, are placed high in the trees. These are made by removing a cylinder of bark and lashing the halves together with strands of bark, forming a hive which has a diameter of one foot.

In Elende honey is removed from the hives during the months of August and December. One man ascends the tree in order to lower the hive with a long rope of bark or plaited fibre, while beneath the tree men are prepared to take the hive, which is opened over a smoky fire.

ARTS AND CRAFTS

326 782 *Smithing.* The profession of blacksmith or *ocivinda* is an important one, and, like hunting and divining, is sacred and is entered with special ritual. Often, but not always, these three professions are passed on by inheritance. For smithing two years' apprenticeship to a member of the profession is necessary, and is usually entered upon at the age of eighteen. At the end of this period the master examines his pupil, and makes tools for him, especially the heavy hammer or *onjundo* which is regarded as symbolic of his craft. For the inauguration ceremony the boy provides four chickens (2 male, 2 female), a dog, and a goat; the blood of these animals is sprinkled on his tools, and their flesh is eaten at a feast [553] attended by the villagers. Throughout the procedure the boy remains standing on the small anvil. Finally he is asked to choose his professional name; he then steps down from the anvil a qualified blacksmith.

(1) Childs, 1949, p.109. (2) Hambly, op.cit., p.154.
(3) Hambly, (4) 1934.

Formerly it was believed that a smith owed his skill to the help of the spirit of a person whom he had killed, and wooden effigies of this person were kept by the smith.(1) 326 782

The principal products of a blacksmith's forge are axe-heads, hoe blades,(2) tools for mat-making, arrowheads, knives, and brass bracelets. Iron, which is fairly plentiful, was formerly smelted over charcoal fires.(3) Today smiths use scrap iron. 325 412

Pottery

Pot-making is a part of women's work among the Ovimbundu. A wheel is not used. Clay is mixed with a silicate, usually gravel, rolled out in long ropes, and the pot built by the coiling process.(4) Pots are ornamented when wet by making deep incisions with a piece of gourd; they are then sun-dried, and fired in a kiln of dry grass. Pots are used as water-containers, as cooking vessels and as vessels for storing corn and beans, and, when made in a very large size, for brewing beer.(5) 323 [462]

No ritual attaches to pot-making, except at the opening of a new clay-pit, when, in the presence of both men and women from the village, the medicine-man sacrifices a chicken over the open pit.(6) [782]

Weaving and Spinning

Looms have not been used among the Ovimbundu since they have been a people, although progenitors of the kingly families who came from the Bangala or Congo groups may have done weaving. Trade cloth has been known and used by the Ovimbundu for nearly 300 years.(7) Skins have been used in remote areas; Hambly when he mentions bark-cloth as being worn by the Ovimbundu is probably referring to the Ngangela. Spun cotton, however, is used for repairs, and there is a cotton plant in most gardens. Spinning is done always by men.(8) 286 439 [281] [287] [283] 462

Basketry

All girls learn to make baskets, although some become more proficient than others. Knowledge of basket-making implies also an understanding of dyeing, since coloured strands of grass are interwoven to make geometric patterns.(9) Baskets, and also basket-trays, are usually made by the coiling process.(10) 285 462 [382]

(1) Hambly, (2) 1934, pp.158-60. The ceremony was described from Njongolo village in Elende.
(2) See Cushman, 1944, pp.140-1.
(3) For details of the blacksmith's forge and tools, see Hambly, op.cit., pp.160-1; Cushman, 1944, pp.139, 140, 145-6.
(4) See Hambly, op.cit. Plates XXXIII and XXXIV, and Childs, 1949, Plate VIII.
(5) Hambly, op.cit., p.168; Cushman, op.cit., pp.144-5.
(6) Hambly, op.cit., p.169.
(7) Childs, personal communication. See also Childs, 1949, p.171, note 1.
(8) See Hambly, p.177, and Cushman, 1944, p.136.
(9) Red, yellow, black, and brown dyes are used. For a description of the process, see Hambly, op.cit., pp.170-1.
(10) See Hambly, op.cit., p.171, and Cushman, op.cit., pp.141-2 for details of basket-making. Also for illustrations Hambly, op.cit. and Childs, 1949.

Mat-making

462 285 [412] The making of mats is a specialised craft for men. Generally elderly men are the mat-makers. Two tools are used, a borer and a needle, both products of the blacksmith's forge. Hambly[1] describes the making of reed sleeping mats, large mats used for partitions, and string bags. There are four distinct types of mats, each of which has its specialist.[2]

Leather-work

282 Leather pouches worn on a broad leather belt are part of the essential equipment of the hunter. The pouch is square, rectangular, or semi-cylindrical in shape, and may be decorated with cross-shaped patterns, or brass-headed nails used for decorative effect. Hide is also used for the seats of four-legged wooden stools. Hides are crudely dressed: they are soaked, the inner surface rubbed with ashes, the hair scraped away, and the hide pegged out.[3]

Wood-carving

323 [463] Wood-carving, which is men's work, includes the following specialisations: doors, windows and their frames; coffins; beds, tables and chairs; mortars, pestles, grinding-handles, and handles for various iron implements; stools, household utensils, carved images etc.; drums and other musical instruments; canoes (dug-outs and coracles).[4] Illustrations are given by Hambly.[5]

TRADE

438 484 791 [482] Caravan trade is now confined to short journeys when corn, beans and beeswax are carried by men and women porters to the traders' stores. Formerly however it was an important feature of tribal life. Each caravan had its professional leader, and was accompanied by a diviner or medicine-man. Before a caravan started out, a ceremony was performed at which the principal performers were the village headman and the medicine-man. The head of the former headman was brought from its box, sewn in oxhide; blood from a sacrificed animal was sprinkled on the head, and invocation was made to the deceased by the village headman, asking for good fortune for the journey.[6]

438 436 Today the Ovimbundu exchange products among themselves both by barter and the use of Portuguese money,[7] but there are no large markets except in the towns.

[439] 438 The "trade-agreements" between the Ovimbundu kingdoms and between the Ovimbundu and other tribes have been mentioned above.[8] Accompanying these, regional industrial and commercial specialisations within Ovimbundu country developed. Thus in the middle of the last century

(1) Hambly, op.cit., pp.169-70.
(2) Childs, 1949, p.109.
(3) Hambly, op.cit., p.176.
(4) Childs, op.cit., p.110.
(5) Op.cit., Plates XIII to XXII.
(6) Hambly, op.cit., p.156.
(7) For details of Ovimbundu units of measurement see Hambly, op.cit., p.157.
(8) p.9.

there was a great metal industry in Viye, where hoes were made for trade with the interior; later the wholesale manufacture of hoes was taken over by Ndulu, where there are the best and most easily accessible deposits of iron. In exchange for hoes they received palm-oil or cattle from other regions, or salt, rum, or goods from the coast. Other regional specialisations were :- Kasongi and the Sele country for palm-oil, Cikuma for beeswax, cattle from Ngalangi, Kalukembe, and, further south, corn-meal from Ciyaka, Civula and Bailundu.(1) 438 [316]

SOCIAL ORGANISATION AND POLITICAL STRUCTURE

KINSHIP AND DESCENT

The Ovimbundu appear to have a system of double descent which has not yet been fully reported and analysed, and whose nature is not very clear from existing accounts. The following outline is based on information given by Childs,(2) who unfortunately details the functions but not the composition of the kin groups concerned. In a review(3) of Childs' book, Barnes has formulated a descent system which would be congruent with Childs' description, and his suggestions are outlined here. 611 114

The epata

Childs translates *epata* as "blood relatives", and his use of the term suggests that it may have either a general or a limited sense. Thus he writes (p.42): "Nearly all of the villagers belong to the same *epata* or extended family, which includes both lines of descent. Most of them belong to the father's family *(oluse)*, and the mother's family *(oluina)* may also be represented." And, in another context, (p.44): "When an Ocimbundu speaks of his *epata* (family) in the sense of a large and widespread organization with a recognized head....it is generally his *oluina* [mother's family] to which he refers." 596

The oluse and the oluina

Every Ocimbundu belongs in the first instance to two distinct kin groupings: the *oluse*, to whom he is related through his father, and the *oluina* to whom he is related through his mother. Uterine brothers and sisters belong to the same *oluse* and *oluina*, but to the male and female side respectively, according to sex. (see below.) A difficulty has arisen because both Hambly(4) and Childs appear to regard *both groups* as bilateral. Hambly states explicitly that the *oluse*, or *epata lia tate* (family of my father) includes *all* relatives on the father's side, and the *oluina* or *epata lia mai* (family of my mother) *all* relatives on the mother's side. Childs writes (p.45) "Bearing in mind *their bilateral nature* ..... the functions of [the *oluse* and the *oluina*] may be summarised...". But from his summary it is obvious that the *oluse* and the *oluina* cannot be bilateral groups, neither can they have parallel descent systems of any kind. Marriage is patrilocal, and the *oluse* forms a local unit while the *oluina* is 611 613 [591]

(1) Childs, 1949, p.205.
(2) 1949, pp.42-6.
(3) Man, September 1950, p.127.
(4) Op.cit., pp.191-2.

611 dispersed. Both groups have ritual leaders, whose offices are quite dis-
613 tinct. Barnes' suggestion[1] is that the two groups must be father's patrilineage and mother's matrilineage, with the qualification mentioned below.

613 The *oluse* consists of a large number of village groups, some of which
622 recognise mutual relationship,[2] but with no recognised head (other than the village headmen) except in the case of the royal families. Land is
[428] owned by the *oluse* and passed on within it from father to son, or from elder to younger brother. Succession to village or tribal office, from village headman to king, descends in the same way.[3] Ritual leadership
[346] within the *oluse* lies with the village headman, who is in charge of the spirit-hut *(etambo)* of the guardian spirit of the village (or of the nuclear *oluse* within the village), and who officiates at regular village worship, including agricultural festivals.

613 The *oluina*, on the other hand, is a dispersed and apparently larger
428 group, whose members live with their various paternal lines of descent. The size of the *oluina* is unknown; Childs merely refers to it as a "large
604 and widespread organization, with a recognized head". The office of head of the *oluina (ukulu wepata)* descends from mother's brother to sister's son. Negotiable and moveable property, including cattle and trade goods, is owned by the *oluina* and inherited by the sister's son. Formerly the mother's elder brother had great powers over his sister's sons, and was even able to pawn them or sell them into slavery, to meet his own debts.
[592] The patrilocal household is usually responsible for training children, especially during their early years, but they are frequently sent to the *oluina* (i.e. to the mother's brother) for at least a part of their educa-
[586] tion. At death or divorce of parents, children go to the *oluina*.

613 The head *(ukulu wepata)* of the *oluina* is usually both the legal and spiritual head of the group, although today the two functions are often
782 divided. He is in charge of the spirit hut *(etambo)* of the guardian spirit of the *oluina* (of whom there may be more than one, and of whom he becomes one after death). He leads the *oluina* in propitiatory rituals carried out in case of illness, death, or other misfortunes within the group, or in prayers made for desired economic advantages. (Apparently no regular rituals are carried out by the *oluina*.) The *ukulu wepata* may or may not be at the same time a village headman; if he is, he will be priest of two lines and have charge of two spirit huts; if he is not, there may be two (or more) priests in the village, each in charge of the spirit-hut of his *oluse* or *oluina*.

The onĩlĩ yohonji and the onĩlĩ yohumba

613 The *oluse* and the *oluina* are both divided into male and female
602 "sides": the *onĩlĩ yohonji* (the side of the bow) and the *onĩlĩ yohumba* (the side of the basket). It has been noted above that uterine brothers
582 and sisters belong to the same *oluse* and *oluina*, but to the male or female side in each, according to sex. The composition of these "sides" is

(1) Loc.cit.
(2) If some villages within the *oluse* cannot trace mutual relationship, the *oluse* should perhaps be called a patri-clan rather than a patrilineage.
(3) But see below, p.29.

however not at all clear. They seem to group simply all the male members and all the female members of the *olusa* and of the *olutna*; but this conflicts with the information given on marriage.[1] A man may marry into the male side of his mother's kin or into the female side of his father's kin. Hence there must be some women in the male side, and, presumably, some men in the female side. A man cannot marry a parallel cousin, but he may marry: 613 602 582

(a) a father's sister. She presumably belongs to the female side of the *olusa*, which presents no difficulty.

(b) a sister's daughter. She appears to belong to the female side of ego's mother's kin, while a man should marry into the male side of his mother's kin.

(c) a female cross-cousin. If the *olusa* and the *olutna* were merely father's patrilineage and mother's matrilineage, as has been suggested, cross-cousins are excluded from both groups. In a footnote,[2] however, Childs seems to imply that mother's brother's daughter belongs to ego's mother's kin. Barnes therefore suggests that children of men of the matrilineage may be included in the *olutna*, falling into the male side irrespective of sex, and similarly the *olusa* may include in the female side all the children of women of the patrilineage. By this hypothesis:

(a) a sister's daughter would fall into the female side of ego's *olusa*.

(b) a mother's brother's daughter would fall into the male side of ego's *olutna*.

(c) a father's sister's daughter would fall into the female side of the *olusa*.

The descent system: summary 602

The descent system suggested may then be summarised thus: 613 611

(1) *olusa* (father's kin)

(a) *ondlê yohonji* (male side): all men in the patrilineage.

(b) *ondlê yohumbo* (female side): all women in the patrilineage, and all sons and daughters of women in the patrilineage.

(2) *olutna* (mother's kin)

(a) *ondlê yohumbo* (female side): all women in the matrilineage.

(b) *ondlê yohonji* (male side): all men in matrilineage, and all sons and daughters of all men in the matrilineage.

According to this hypothesis every person belongs to four distinct groups. A man must belong not only to the male side of the two groups centred in the father's patrilineage and the mother's matrilineage, but also to the male side of his father's matrilineal group and to the female side of his mother's patrilineal group. There are still only two systems

(1) Childs, op.cit., p.51. (2) P.53, fn.3.

611 of groups, but a man belongs to two groups within each system. Similar
613 membership is required for a woman. A man shares with all his children his membership of the male side of his mother's matrilineal group, and
602 shares with his sons membership of the male side of his father's patrilineal group. His daughters belong to his father's patrilineal group but to its female side. He does not transmit to his children membership of his father's matrilineal group or his mother's patrilineal group.[1] This is illustrated by the diagram on page 21.

601 *Kinship terminology*

Patterns of behaviour between all blood relatives find their prototypes in the household. The following list of kinship terms is selected from the more detailed list given by Childs.[2]

Term		*Reciprocal*
mai	mother, mother's sister, etc.	*omolange*
tate	father, father's brother, etc.	*omolange*
tatekai	("female father") father's sister	*ocimumbo cange*
mamu	mother's brother	*ocimumbo cange*
hwenge	elder brother or sister, and male or female parallel cousin, if older than ego	*nanjange*
kota	eldest brother (of family or household)	*nanjange*
(epalume *(upalume* *(cepum*	male or female cross-cousin	*epalume, upalume,* or *cepum*
nuhai	sister or female parallel cousin (M.S.)[3]	*nume*
nhuale	" " " " (W.S.)	*nhuale*
nenkulu	grandmother, grandparents' sister	*onekulu yange*
sekulu	grandfather, grandparents' brother	*onekulu yange*

Note: (a) There is no word used exclusively for "brother" by a man, although a woman may use *nume* in this sense. *Hwenge* and *nanjange* are used by either men or women for elder or younger brothers or sisters.

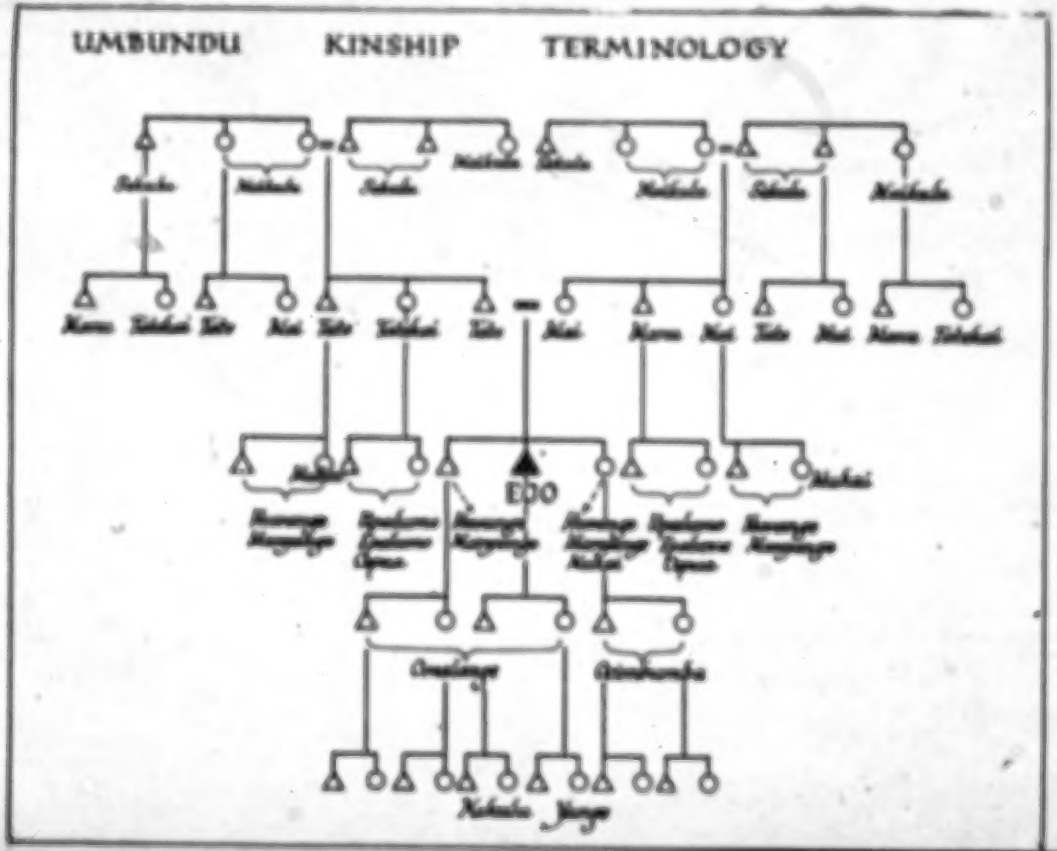
(b) *nenkulu* and *sekulu* are sometimes used interchangeably for persons of either sex.

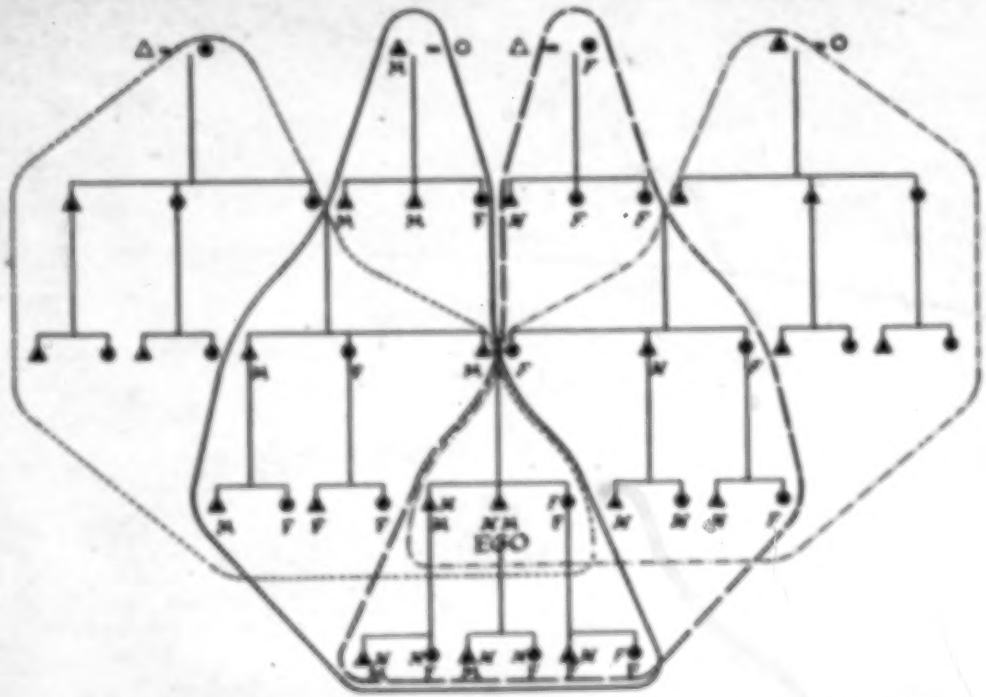
MARRIAGE

582 *Marriage within the kin group*

The most desirable marriage is marriage within the circle of kin, i.e. (as noted above) into the male line of the *olume* or the female line of the *olume*. (There appears to be a preference for marriage within the *olume*.[4]) One may not marry one classed as brother, sister, father, mother, grandparent, child or grandchild, for such a union would involve

(1) This paragraph is largely quoted from Barnes, loc.cit.
(2) pp.47-9.
(3) M.S. = man speaking, W.S. = woman speaking.
(4) Childs, op.cit., p.58, note 3.


UMBUNDU KINSHIP TERMINOLOGY
EGO



EGOS 4 KIN GROUPS. 1.—— - Obuse, M - Male side. F - female side.
2.—— - Obaasan, M - Male side, F - Female side. 3 — — Mother's paternal kin. 4 - - - father's maternal kin. (Male and female sides for 3 & 4 not shown.)

incest *(oku ndo)*. But one may marry relatives of one's own age-level who
582 belong to classes other than those mentioned, i.e. cross-cousins and, on other age-levels, father's sister or sister's daughter. It is said that formerly marriage never took place except between persons who could trace relationship in this way. Today this principle is very liberal in its application.(1) (It would be interesting to have estimates of the number of men who do marry first degree cross-cousins, father's sisters, or sister's daughters, as distinct from classificatory relatives of these classes, and the number who marry outside the *olume* or *olumu*.)

583 Marriage was formerly arranged by the mother's brother (i.e. by the *olumu*), but today there is a tendency for fathers to arrange their daughters' marriages and to receive their marriage payment. (And also, occasionally, to assist their sons in providing marriage payment.)(2) *Ilombo*, or marriage payment, was formerly paid in cattle, blankets etc.(3) Today it is usually paid in cash, the amount being determined by the status of the bride.(4)

Polygyny

621 In the sample village (Ngendo, Kasongi chiefdom) described by Childs,
585 of a total of 48 households,

(a) 10 households were polygynous; of these 9 contained only 2 wives or concubines, and the tenth, that of the headman, contained four wives and one concubine,

(b) 27 households were monogynous, and 3 more were occupied by widowers, all formerly monogynous. (The remaining households were occupied by 7 widows and one young unmarried man.)

Childs notes that the proportion of polygynous households in Kasongi chiefdom is probably higher than in other parts of Ovimbundu country for two reasons: the comparatively low marriage-payment in Kasongi as compared with other areas, and the proximity of Kasongi to Esele country, which has long been a source of supply for slave concubines. (Of the 10 polygynous households in Ngendo 5 contained at least 1 Esele concubine.)(5)

Avoidance between in-laws

602 Mutual respect *(ombilo)* between the two kin groups involved is considered a necessary basis for a successful marriage, and is the reason given for the various avoidances *(oku liyuutilo)* enjoined upon the principals and their respective relatives. These avoidances may be summarised:-

593 (a) A husband and wife must avoid using each other's names.

602 (b) The term *ndatombo* is used for parents-in-law of either sex, and reciprocally for sons-in-law or daughters-in-law. The term is extended to all those whom one's spouse calls "mother", "father" or "child" (Childs, p.52) and apparently also to those whom one's spouse calls *sanu*, *tetekoi* or

(1) Childs, p.34.
(2) Panin, 1945.
(3) Cashmore, 1944, p.45.
(4) Childs, personal communication.
(5) Childs, page 30.

608 ocumbo (since Childe states (p.55) that it includes every relative of the generation of the spouse's parents.) Sokombo must avoid: (i) speaking each other's names. This may be accomplished by using the names compounded from those of children (thus Nakombotio and Sakombotio are the father and mother of Kambonia) or by using the terms which one's spouse uses, i.e. nai, tatu, nana etc. (ii) seeing each other, if they are of opposite sex; if it is necessary to converse, it must be done out of sight, or with face averted. (iii) eating with each other. (This applies only to regular meals and not to casual refreshment.)

607 (c) The term nawa is used reciprocally for all the spouse's relatives of one's own generation, including those classed as "sister", "brother" and "cross-cousin". Between the nawa the only avoidance enjoined is that they may not eat regular meals in each other's presence; otherwise they are on "free and easy" terms".

"Avoidance of meeting ... is especially difficult for the bride who comes to live in a village of her husband's people, a large proportion of the men of which may be sokombo to her. The prohibition may be lifted by .. a simple ceremony, in which each rubs a little oil on the other ... Avoidance of eating in each other's presence may be done away with after some months by sacrificing a chicken and feeding it ceremonially .. to the sokombo or nawa ... It is especially important that the ceremonies be carried through with respect (*ocumbilo*)."(1)

A note on the kinship system

613 421 178 There is a tendency today for the claims of the clans, the land-owning group, to supplant those of the property-owning clans; one important reason for this is the change from trade to agriculture as the most important economic activity. With European influence also conflicts have arisen over rights to children. Childe states(2) that the bilineal kinship system has been a factor leading to social stability, especially stability of marriage, but he does not elaborate this statement.

LOCAL GROUPS(3)

572 585 The "household", consisting of a man, his wife or wives and children, and such other related or unrelated dependants as may be attached to this basic group, is the basic of the village. The word *onjo* (house) may be used for this group, i.e. to include the various houses which a man may have established by marriage, or it may be used for the house of any one of his wives. Each wife has her own hut, granary, chickens, and fields for her children and herself, and the husband has no house of his own unless he is village headman or the head of an olonu, in which case he has a spirit-hut (*etambo*) in which he may sometimes pass the night. Sons [591] when they marry form their own households, usually in their father's village. The size of the household varies greatly according to wealth and [554] status. Some recent kings have had as many as 12 wives. But it has been noted above that, in Childe' typical village, out of 48 households only 10

(1) Childe, p.52.
(2) Ibid., p.56; see also (ibid. pp.73, 83, 90 etc).
(3) This section is based on Childe, Ibid, pp.35-41.

were polygynous and only one of these contain more than two wives.[1]

The village or ishe (plural ovoshe) may consist of from 5 to 500 such households, the heads of which are usually related agnatically to each other. Most, but not all, of the larger villages are olombole (villages of chiefs or sub-chiefs). These are said to have had formerly as many as 5,000 inhabitants,[2] but today few have as many as 3,000, and there is a general tendency towards smaller villages and even isolated households.[3] There are in general two quite different types of Umbundu village according to the terrain on which they are built. Those on the plains, where there is room to spread out, tend towards a circular shape, with the ocile and ongango (see below) near the centre. The various sections of the village may appear as quarters of a single whole, or they may be spread out haphazardly. Mountain villages[4] may have houses built on ledges almost one on top of the other. Here there is often no room or no suitable soil within the palisades for gardens or for the dancing-floor (ocile), which are found outside the palisade. Different sections of the village tend to string themselves out horizontally along the mountain-side, or to find successive ledges.

The typical village of Ngundu described by Childs, in Kasongi chiefdom, ovambo (sub-chiefdom) of Ekango, is of an intermediate type, built on a slope. Ngundu has 196 inhabitants, of whom 42 are men, 60 are women, and 94 children. The village is divided into four smaller sections or wards (ovitwetile pl.), of which the largest, that of the village headman (sekulu) has 127 inhabitants, while the other three have 19, 13 and 37 inhabitants respectively. The word ishe (village) may also be used for either of the two larger sections by themselves. Each section has its own elder, but the dancing-floor (ocile), which is the centre of village life, is in the headman's section. The ocile is primarily a place for recreation, but religious functions also are held in it, and formal cases tried. Formerly most villages had a second communal building, the ongango or "Men's Club House"[5] whose importance was almost as great as that of the ocile. Here all the men, youths and boys gathered for the evening meal, and here guests were entertained, lesser judicial cases settled, and the day's work and gossip discussed, while young boys, sitting in the background, gained much of their knowledge of tribal history and custom.[6] Today the ongango exists and maintains its former function chiefly in parts of Ngulangi, Viye and possibly Ndulo. It does not exist in Childs' typical village, where the "Men's Club" holds only occasional meetings on the rocks behind the headman's house, and where the common evening meal no longer takes place. The reason suggested for the disappearance of the ongango is lack of leisure owing to demands for road work (in the immediate vicinity of Ngundu), for contract labour, involving absences of from six months to a year,[7] and the difficulty of securing tax-money.

(1) And polygyny is thought to be more frequent here than in other areas. See above, p.22.
(2) According to Wagner, 1951.
(3) Childs, op.cit., p.22, fn.1. Childs does not suggest any reason for this tendency.
(4) Formerly many villages were built on mountains for defence, and capital villages of this type they still by ours.
(5) The "Men's Club" seems to be simply a gathering of all the adult men (and possibly also the juveniles) of the village.
(6) Childs, op.cit.; Chatelain, 1944; Bagster, (2) 1974.
(7) Most of the labour on the Benguella Railway is Umbundu, and many Ovimbundu travel to the Union of South Africa for work. (Childs, op.cit., p.18, ref.1.)

121 Ngundu is surrounded by a stick palisade except on that side of the headman's household which is adjacent to the rocks used as a club-house. The village itself (and each section) is divided up into compounds, each of which contains one to three houses,[1] and palisades divide one compound
[343] from the next; between are paths leading to the ocila and out of the village. Small gardens for tobacco, maize and beans are within the compounds, and the larger fields lie outside the village at from thirty minutes' to an hour's walk. In the headman's section of Ngundu there are 25 households containing 32 houses in all. Each house has its own granary
[343] *(ocila)* and a small chicken-coop built on stilts, and of all the houses only six have separate kitchens *(ocina)*. Most households had separate pens for pigs, goats and sheep for the night,[2] and at one side of the headman's compound there is a common corral for the nine cattle owned by
[122] the section. Only the headman had a spirit-hut *(etanda)*, used also as a storehouse, for entertaining his guests, and for his own use should he wish to sleep apart from his wives.

121 Chiefs' villages or olombolo (singular ombolo) are often surrounded by
341 a belt of tall trees.[3] The chief's compound (the *ilombe*) is larger than
643 those of other villagers, and, according to Hambly,[4] usually contains: the chief's house, which always has a separate sleeping-room; a house and a kitchen for each of his wives; a tomb for the burial of the chief and his wives; a house of meditation for the chief, and pens for pigs and chickens.

342 Umbundu houses are usually circular, but sometimes rectangular, and made of wattle and daub, with thatched roofs. Sometimes huts are divided
[343] by matting into a living-room and a sleeping-room. Cooking is often done in the house itself, but sometimes a separate hut is built as a kitchen.[5]

345 The *ovyanga* (the Men's Club House) consists of a cone-shaped roof set on stout hardwood poles instead of a wall, and left open so that those for whom there may be no place inside may still see and hear what takes place within.[6]

341 Villages are moved when fields are exhausted and others are not available nearby[7] or, more often, when there has been illness or death in the
[768] village, which implies that some action displeasing to the spirits has been committed. (No information is available concerning the usual length of life of a village.) When the new site is chosen, the headman's fire
776 in the old village is extinguished, and a procession starts, led by a boy
777 carrying the sacred horn *(ohanji)* of each succeeded who is now a guardian
776 spirit of the family (i.e. the oluno), and a girl carrying the sacred chest *(ocitebanga)* containing the relics *(ocitye)* and the balls of iguana skin.[8] On arriving at the site the boy and girl cut and plant the

(1) In this section there were 15 goats, 20 sheep, 100 pigs and about 200 chickens. (Childs, op.cit. p.31) (2) Ibid.
(3) Hambly, (2) 1934, p.208 et.al. It was a custom of the Ngangela peoples to plant trees round the village and dedicate them to deceased chiefs. (See McCulloch 1952, p.68.) There is no evidence that the trees surrounding Umbundu villages have any ritual significance, although the custom may have been taken over from the conquered Ngangela peoples.
(4) Op.cit., p.208. (5) Ibid., p.20
(6) Childs, personal communication.
(7) Due often to European settlement. (8) See below, p.47.

Conversing at the side the boy and girl cut and plant the

first pole, which is to be a part of the new etambo (spirit hut). The boy 776
and girl must take part ceremonially in each operation of building the hut, 346
and when it is built they ignite the new fire. A hen and a cock are
killed, cooked on the new fire, and eaten inside the etambo by all who have
taken part in building it. The headman and his wife must remain on the
new site to keep the fire alight; other villagers may commute from the old 361
village or erect temporary grass shelters on the new site. Houses are 342
built by the occupants themselves, although men may give each other mutual 344
help, for which there is a gift of food and beer. The ongango is usually [476]
built by the communal labour of all boys and men, and on its completion a
simple ritual is performed to promote harmony within and to welcome the
spirits, who are believed to sleep in the ongango and to take part in all [782]
discussions within it.[1]

The village group: composition

Childs describes the relationship of the villagers of Ngundu to each 621
other as typical of Umbundu country. Most of the heads of households are 611
related agnatically to their respective section-heads (who are presumably
also related agnatically to each other, since the village is based on the
clans group); Childs does not however discuss the relation of section
heads to each other or to the village headman. He gives a table in which
the householders are divided into six categories according to their rela-
tionship to their various section-heads:

621
601

1. Patrilineal relatives of section head:	Section A (headman's)	21
	" B	4
	" C	1
	" D	2
		28
2. Matrilineal relatives of section head:	Section B	4
	" C	1
	" D	1
		6
3. Sisters' sons (or daughters)[2]	Section B	4
	" C	1
		5
4. Relatives by marriage	Section A	2
	" B	1
		3
5. Relationship not definitely known	Section B	2
6. Former slaves	Section A	1
	" B	1
		2

(1) This section is based on Childs, 1949, pp.27-9.
(2) They could, of course, have been included as matrilineal relatives and patrilineal relatives, since they belong both to the clans and to the clans.

621 The total number of households is 44, or 48 including those of the four
592 section heads. It should be noted that there is a discrepancy in Child's
114 figures (apart from an obvious misprint):[1] in another context he writes that section B contains only 12 houses (not even *households*), while from this table it would appear that section B has 15 household heads, including that of the section head; and section C is said to have 6 households, while only 4 (again counting the section head) are accounted for in this table.

591 Childs states[2] that the incidence of patrilocal marriage in Ngendo
114 is fairly typical of Umbundu country, but unfortunately gives little information regarding the relationship of the various spouses to each other or concerning the location of the villages from which they came. Matrilocal marriage is recognised as a possibility: of the three relatives by marriage listed above, one was a husband of a daughter of the headman, another the widow of a younger brother of the headman, who should have been inherited by a younger brother (?) or a mother's brother of the deceased, or, failing that, could have returned to her father's village. Of those listed above as sisters' children, two were widows who had come to live in the village with their mother's brothers.[3]

POLITICAL STRUCTURE

The village headman[4]

622 The village headman *(sekulu yimbo)* is also the head of the *olume*
793 which forms the nucleus of the village group, and is related agnatically to most of the householders. He alone may speak of the village as *imbo*
782 *liange* (my village); the heads of sections, who are also called *sekulu*[5] may speak possessively only of their own sections *(ocitiuila cange)*, and other villagers speak only of "our village" *(imbo lietu)*.[6] The headman functions as both priest and legal head of the village. As priest he has in his compound the *etambo* (spirit hut), in which the insignia of office are kept, and in which he prays to the ancestral spirits. Upon occasion he may sleep there, usually offering a prayer to the spirits when he wakes during the night. The *etambo* may also be
[34L] used as a lodging place for respected guests, or as a store-house for possessions not used every day. Childs states that he officiates at regular village worship, including agricultural festivals; Hambly adds that he may lead the people in offering sacrifices when epidemics of
613 sickness break out in the village. It has been noted above[7] that it is the function of the olume head to lead such rituals when illness occurs within the olume. In general the village head is responsible for
[622] matters - particularly agriculture and public health - which affect the whole village; individuals, both for protection and for help and other

(1) Childs, op.cit., p.28, line 27, where "twenty-four" should read "forty-four".
(2) On the basis of the 192 genealogies and 74 marriage-schedules which he collected. He does not, unfortunately, give examples or show how the comparison was made.
(3) Based on Childs, op.cit., pp.25-31.
(4) This section is based on Childs, op.cit., pp.36-7.
(5) It has been noted above that *sekulu* is used for all men (and some women) of the grandfather's generation.
(6) op.cit., p.38. (7) p.18.

29

advancement, will go to the head of their olutsa to ask for his intercession with the spirits.[1] 613

As legal head of the village, the sekulu yimbo presides over both the more serious cases, which are held before the whole village on the dance-floor, and the simpler ones, which require the attendance only of those concerned, together with their respective elders, and may be taken up either in the onjango or in the headman's own courtyard. Hambly seems to suggest that all the section-heads act with the village headman as a kind of council, but does not give details. He states also that the olosekulu (sing. sekulu) of the village formerly had charge of trials for murder, theft, adultery, and arguments over land,[2] and points out that they were more active in the legal system than the chiefs.[3] This is even more true today, when the village court of justice continues to function in spite of political and administrative changes, although the offices of chiefs and to some extent of sub-chiefs have largely decayed. 622 623 691 [177]

Other functions of the village headman include: the distribution of land to the various families when new village sites are opened;[4] the direction of the communal fire-hunts;[5] and, today, the collecting of taxes from the villagers and the direction and organisation of labour to work on the roads.[6] But however numerous the headman's official duties, he usually finds some time to attend to his own affairs, whether he is a farmer, hunter, or trader.[7] 622 423 651 466 [463]

Succession to headmanship is usually from father to son or from elder to younger brother, "with only as much recognition of primogeniture as belongs to the general ... hierarchy of age."[8] Succession is, however, affected by the "democratic" tendencies in succession to chieftainship.[9] 622 693

The Chief (osoma or sova)[10]

The Ovimbundu are grouped in 22 chiefdoms, of which half were in the past generally tributary to the more powerful chiefs.[11] At the same time each chiefdom had its separate government and could be considered as a unit in itself. Effective European occupation and direct rule have atrophied the chiefly office among the Ovimbundu, until today chiefs survive as little more than "living museum pieces".[12] Childs[13] enumerates the functions of the chiefly office as follows: 631 643 [177]

(a) *Religious.* The chief's ancestral spirits were the principal chiefdom deities, and the king was high-priest as well as the visible "vice-regent and incarnation" of the spirits. 643 793 769

(1) Childs, personal communication.
(2) The maternal uncle is responsible for settling disputes over property which occur within the olutsa. (Hambly op.cit., p.200).
(3) Ibid.
(4) Ibid.
(5) Cashmore, op.cit., p.115.
(6) Ibid., p.121.
(7) Childs, op.cit., p.36.
(8) Ibid., p.44.
(9) Ibid.
(10) Osoma means chief or king. Sova is the personalized form used with the name. This the Portuguese writers have corrupted into ovo or solo. (Childs, personal communication)
(11) See above, p.2.
(12) Childs, op.cit., p.30.
(13) Ibid.

770 643 969 782 regent and incarnation" of the spirits. Sacrifices were made at the royal shrine or *kokokoto* ("at the skulls"), where the skulls of past chiefs were kept, in order to:-

[372] (i) control the elements i.e. to ensure a sufficient supply of rain and avoid the dangers caused by storm; also to control fire by providing a new fire ceremonially kindled[1] from which everyone took his fire.

[342] [241] (ii) to ensure fertility, towards which the royal marriage had great influence. The queen's special province was agriculture and her kitchen was sanctified by human sacrifice to guarantee the national food supply. Ceremonially treated seed was distributed to be mixed with the seed of each granary.

643 648 726 [701] 266 (b) *To represent the country in its external relations*, principally to make trade agreements with other chiefs, or to make war on other peoples in order to get tribute and plunder. The war leader *(Kesongo)* has his own residence entirely separate from that of the king, whom he must not meet face to face except on certain ceremonial occasions.[2] Each king must inaugurate his reign with a war, during which or after which he must ceremonially "eat the old one" *(oku lia ekongo)* - who was usually a specially fattened slave cooked with the flesh of the principal animals commonly eaten.[3]

643 692 (c) *To dispense justice.* The chief's court or *olusenje* was the supreme court of the chiefdom. The chief had the final word in any case, but most chiefs acted according to custom.

644 [882] (d) *To protect himself and the chiefdom*, the chief could use "magic" (?) which might have been accounted witchcraft or murder if practised without authority: e.g. the ritual murder of a pregnant woman, or of the children whose lives were required for building and furnishing the queen's kitchen.

643 791 (e) The chief made much use of divination in order to carry out his office. For this purpose he had his own diviner *(citua cosoma)*, who was of the blood royal; but he also consulted diviners of other regions and types.

643 Succession to chiefship is in the male line,[4] from father to son, elder brother to younger brother or brother's son, or sometimes to one more distantly related. The election is made by the councillors whose duty it is (?), ordinarily before the old chief's death is announced. These same councillors may depose an unpopular chief, and there have been many such depositions. This "democratic" tendency of the Ovimbundu has been noted [692] by most writers. Childs points out that it is attested by the fact that a chief (formerly as well as today) works in his own fields, and by folk-tales which give incidental and intimate pictures of petty details in the lives of the chiefs.†

(1) See above, p.26.
(2) In Bailundu he, with certain other officials, was of the stock of slaves of the state *(ovindili viososo)*.
(3) Childs, p.21. Many early writers refer to the cannibalism of the "Jagas" or "Jakangalas" who are thought to have been the Ovimbundu chiefs. (See above, p.8, and also Lacerda and Revenstein, quoted by Childs, pp.17ff.)
(4) But inheritance is said to follow a different line among chiefs from among commoners; possibly inheritance is also in the paternal line. See Childs p.18.

† See footnote 1, p. 31

lives of chiefs.[1]

The chief's council and court 642

It has been noted that there is a chiefdom council responsible for electing the chief or deposing him, and for sitting with him in law cases. The composition of this council has not been clearly described.[2]

The Sub-chief

The chiefdom[3] was made up of a number of sub-chiefdoms called *otumbu* (sing. *etumbu*); Bailundu had about 200 *otumbu*, each of which had from 3 to more than 300 villages, while a number of the larger *otumbu* were themselves made up of smaller ones. About 20 *otumbu* were ruled by members of the chiefly family, including heirs apparent or expectant, and the chief's wife (*inokulu*) had also her own sub-chiefdom.[4] Others were ruled by court officials not of royal birth, who sometimes themselves established dynasties, others again by dynasties native to the respective regions, or at least dynasties longer resident in the area than the chiefly family. Villages of sub-chiefs, like those of chiefs, are known as *olombala*. Most of the *otumbu* are still recognised, and the sub-chiefs have retained more of their old functions than have the chiefs, and have in addition been given new functions. They as well as village headmen are required to assist in assessing and collecting native tax,[5] and also in recruiting labour for government work and for contracts. In some areas they receive in return the remission of their own taxes. On the dancing floor of most of their *olombala* cases are still heard, judgments given and fines received, although such judgments are not officially recognised or allowed by the European authorities.[6]

643 631 [177] [651] [692]

LAW

Courts

Very little information is available. We are told that certain disputes, e.g. concerning inheritance, are settled within the *oluiaa*;[7] that in the village cases are tried by a council which apparently consists of the section-heads under the leadership of the village headman;[8] and that these village courts continue to function; that certain cases (unspecified) are still unofficially heard in the courts of the sub-chiefs; and that prior to European occupation the paramount chief's decision was final.

691 693

(1) Ibid., p.23. But chiefs were treated with respect; Hambly (1934, p.214) notes that the ancient custom was for commoners to fall on their knees when greeting a chief, and today this still applies to women and children although less often to men. (2) See Serpa Pinto, 1881, p.167.
(3) Most writers use "kingdom" and "king"; "chief" when used here without qualification refers always to the paramount chief of one of the 22 chiefdoms.
(4) Magyar, 1851, pp.389f, also quoted by Childs, op.cit., p.24.
(5) The amount of the tax levied on all males from 16 years is now Ags. 200,000 annually. As noted by Childs (p.215-6), it has been steadily increasing. Opportunities for earning are comparatively small in Angola, not now for lack of work, but because of "contract labour" required of all males in addition to taxes. Payment for "contract labour" is considerably below current wages, and it is a great hindrance to productive agricultural activities. (Childs, personal communication) (6) Childs, op.cit., pp.24-5.
(7) Hambly, (2) 1934, p.200. (8) See above, p.29.

692 Hambly and Childs seem to suggest that any case might be referred to the
567 chief for his decision: "Even a slave used to have rights of appeal to the king if he were starved or beaten without cause".(1) Neither describes the composition of the courts or the mechanism of appeal.

Legal procedure

695 Childs writes rather obscurely "Cases might be settled by ordeal or by decision of the king, and there was therefore room for appeal and retrial".(2)

One kind of ordeal, the *ombulungu* or poison ordeal, is described by Hambly:(3) It was used (only?) when the accused was thought to have committed murder by poison or sorcery. (If weapons were used, the accuser, usually a relative of the deceased, had the right to kill the murderer with the same kind of weapon.) If a woman were accused in this way, her son or brother would take her place in the poison ordeal.

The complainant in a suit is called *ombile*, the defendant *ovilue*, and the witness *uvangi*. Cushman states that no evidence is ever ruled out of court, and that each witness is required to give a complete account of all his dealings with the persons concerned in the case, so that the court may know on which side he is likely to be prejudiced.(4) Hambly(5) adds that formerly a witness had to make recompense to the man about whom he had told a lie, and probably received a beating as well. According to Cushman an Umbundu court may find that both parties are to blame in a case, and may fine or penalise both according to the degree of guilt. "If the chief is not satisfied, he simply gets up and leaves the court circle. This indicates that the evidence has not been satisfactory and more must be presented."(6)

672 In the absence of the delinquent, responsibility for crime was formerly transferred to a relative. If a thief escaped, responsibility would rest with a brother, a father, or a son. The mother's brother was often held responsible for the misdeeds of his sister's children, and would be expected to pay their debts.(7)

Punishments

685 A thief was punished by a beating and a fine paid to the persons from whom he had stolen.(8) An habitual thief was sold into slavery. He might be redeemed, but only if the authorities considered his reformation complete.(9) Murder was punishable by death, although this penalty might
682 be avoided by a heavy fine paid to the relatives, usually the mother,
684 mother's brother, or sister's son of the deceased. If the victim were of the royal family, the murderer might be put to death after the payment of the fine. The punishment for women murderers was the same as for men.(10) In adultery the woman was not punished, but a man was punished in the same way as a murderer, i.e. by death or a heavy fine. (Hambly gives the fine

(1) Hambly, op.cit., p.201.
(2) 1949, p.21.
(3) op.cit., p.203.
(4) 1944, pp.38-9.
(5) op.cit., p.201.
(6) 1944, p.39.
(7) Hambly, op.cit., p.201.
(8) Ibid., p.202.
(9) Cushman, 1944, p.39.
(10) Hambly, op.cit., pp.202-3.

for murder as two oxen and two slaves; for adultery, two oxen, a pig, and a slave.) Today a man who has committed adultery sometimes takes the woman and all children under three years of age, but this is for the husband to decide. An adulterer with one of the chief's wives was castrated but not killed, and the castration might be compounded for a high fine, while he, his sisters, and the sons of his sisters would become slaves of the chief.(1) Hambly states finally that "Criminal law did not distinguish between responsibility for intentional and unintentional offences."(2) 682 684 671

There is no information regarding the kinds of cases tried or the punishments given in the courts of village headmen or sub-chiefs today.

INHERITANCE

It has been noted above that moveable property is inherited in the maternal line, land in the paternal line.(3) The eldest brother of the deceased's mother has the first claim and is responsible for settling disputes. He may distribute the property to the mother of the deceased, the maternal grandfather, or to a brother of the deceased, but is not compelled to do this. Women never inherit cattle or land, although the sisters of a deceased woman usually receive most of her household utensils (the rest belong to her husband). A widow goes to the house of (? marries) the eldest brother of the deceased or her own maternal uncle, or she may return to her father's village. Apparently her children accompany her, although one would expect them to go to her brother.(4) 428 768

DIVORCE

Divorce appears to be infrequent; grounds for divorce are many, but difficulties are often overcome by a compromise between the two kin groups concerned. Causes for dissatisfaction on the part of a husband include his wife's incompetence, dishonesty, physical weakness, or infidelity (in the last case today a fine from the adulterer is usually accepted and the marriage continues). Barrenness is not a ground for divorce; usually the husband takes a second wife, but the first maintains her position as head wife. Sterility in the male is sometimes suspected, in which case the husband may try another girl, with his wife's consent, or the woman another man. A woman may divorce a man if he is impotent (not sterile), or if he ill-treats her, but not because he is unfaithful. If for any of these reasons the woman returns to her family, the latter are expected to return the marriage payment, although they may wait until another suitor appears who will pay the deserted husband. Whether the initiative in divorce is taken by the woman or the man, the marriage is not annulled until a renunciatory ceremony has been carried out by the husband, the wife, and the wife's father, in the presence of the village headman. The husband receives from his wife's father a roll of tobacco and a pig, and then places leaves(5) and palm oil on his wife's back; he then slaps his wife's back saying "It is finished". 586 [842]

(1) Hambly, op.cit., p.203. (2) Loc.cit.
(3) See above, p.18, and Childs, 1949, p.44.
(4) Hambly, (2) 1934, p.199.
(5) The leaf used is of the *apu* tree; the same leaf is tied to the pole of the *etambo* of a new village, as a sign of divorce from the old site. (Childs, 1949, p.38; this is the only context in which Childs mentions divorce.)

586 When a woman divorces her husband to marry another man, she takes to her home all children under three years of age; other children go to the home of her parents.(1) There is no information concerning the fate of children when the man divorces his wife.

[691] Divorce cases are apparently brought before the court of the village headman only where the return of the marriage payment to the husband is long delayed or in some way unsatisfactory.(2)

LAND TENURE

423 There is virtually no information on Umbundu land usage. Childs states that land is inherited in the paternal line, i.e. by brother or son. Hambly suggests that "The right to land depends on its use and allotment by a chief (?) at the time of founding a village," and that "Rights seem to have been well defined and there was always enough room for a stranger". The meaning of neither of these statements is very clear.(3)

DOMESTIC SLAVERY

567 [672] Slaves were formerly taken in war, and, until very recently, as a result of a person's inability to pay his debts. In such a case not the debtor, but the debtor's sister's children were taken as slaves by the creditor. If the debt was paid later, the children were set free.(4) Today children instead of being sold into slavery may be expected to work for the creditor to pay off the debts of the mother's brother.(5) Childs writes "Slaves or former slaves have a status within the household or village which to the ordinary observer does not differ from that of the children: they are treated much as the children and they may carry on in all matters social and economic as though they were members of the family". He adds however that when there is a call for labour, the lot falls more often to a slave or a pawn.(6) Hambly, however, notes that formerly the master had rights of punishment including the death sentence, although an ill-treated slave might appeal to the village headman. Slave women were frequently taken as concubines, but were not lent out as prostitutes. A slave woman who married a free man would revert to her master along with her children when her husband died. All children of slaves became slaves of the master, who could dispose of the girls in marriage. If he himself married a slave girl, she would, at his death, become the property of his eldest brother and her children would go with her, although in some instances the woman and children might go to the mother's brother's son.

[727] It seems likely (although it is nowhere stated) that there was a clear distinction between slaves captured in war and slaves taken as a result of a debt; possibly the information quoted above from Hambly refers mainly to war captives.

(1) Hambly, op.cit., pp.182-3. (2) Ibid., p.183.
(3) Hambly, op.cit., p.201. Hambly states here that the system of land distribution is described in a later section of his book, but this section merely refers back to these remarks.
(4) Bastos (1909, p.33) adds that if a father redeemed his children, the maternal uncle lost his right to sell them into slavery.
(5) Hambly, op.cit., p.205. (6) 1949, p.42.

A man slave might become a blacksmith or a hunter, although his work was always for his master. He was also required to fight for his master in case of war.(1) 567

RELIGION AND MAGIC

Information on Umbundu religion and magic is very slight, being practically confined to a few items collected by Hambly from his Umbundu interpreter,(2) and a more coherent article by Tucker, primarily on divination.(3) 771

THE SUPREME BEING

Suku, the Supreme Being, is thought of as the creator of mountains, rivers, sky and human beings.(4) His attributes have not been described. 776

CONCEPTS OF SPIRIT(5)

The body *(etimba)* is thought of as having *onuenyo* (breath or life), and containing the *ocililemba* (spirit or soul). The *ocililemba* is visible in a person's shadow in the daytime, and during sleep it has adventures of its own, which it reports to the sleeper through dreams *(olonjoi)*. At death it leaves the body, but lingers nearby, accompanying the body to the interment, still in the form of a shadow. It then becomes an *ocilulu* (ghost), and may wander where it pleases. Sometimes it may be seen passing with superhuman swiftness through the village, uttering weird cries or calling pigs or chickens as the person used to do while alive. It chooses one of the households as a home, and indicates its wish to stay there by causing illness among the householders. The victim when he has learned the cause of his illness from the diviner places himself in a favourable condition to receive the spirit by performing a ceremony which includes going into a trance.(6) When this ceremony has been performed the *ocilulu* (ghost) becomes an *ondele*, which appears to be a generic name for ancestral (and other?) spirits. It is not clear from Tucker's description whether the relatives of the deceased always wait for this intimation of the wish of the *ocilulu* for a home, or whether the ceremonies may sometimes be performed immediately after death. Nor does she give any information regarding the relatives with whom the *ocilulu* usually chooses to live. She states that spirits of paternal ancestors are less feared than those of maternal ancestors, for while the former are usually satisfied with a hunt, a beer-drinking and a feast held in their honour, the latter are malignant and may "eat" children and occasionally adults also. 774 775 [787] [769]

The *ohamba* (sing. *ehamba*) "are the peaceful spirits of ancestors of long ago, who have already had the trance ceremony performed for them, and thus have a home and ... standing in the other world". (Tucker does not indicate how much time must pass before a spirit becomes a *ehamba*.(7)) 769

(1) Hambly, 1934, p.206. (2) Op.cit., chap.IX.
(3) 1940. (4) Hambly, op.cit., p.262.
(5) Based on Tucker, op.cit. unless otherwise stated.
(6) Tucker does not describe this ritual.
(7) It may be noted that among the Ngangela peoples to the east, the *ohamba* are the forms taken by ancestral spirits when they wish to harass their descendants. See McCulloch 1951, p.75.

769 They intimate their wishes to their descendants only through slight illness, usually asking for honour to be paid to them by a feast, or by some descendant carrying on their profession.

Osande is the spirit of the much-honoured founder of the family,(1) and is always beneficent, bringing good fortune and warning his descendants of danger. Hambly and Tucker agree that *Ekisi* is the same kind of
776 spirit as *Osande* (although Hambly does not give *Osande* this special meaning). Tucker writes that *Ekisi* is a benevolent spirit who calls the vil-
769 lagers together at night, and gives them advice through a medium (?), whom he enters without the latter's going into the usual trance. *Kandundu* according to Tucker is an *ekisi* who holds the leading position among the ancestral spirits owing to his seniority. Hambly describes a shrine to
[778] *Kandundu* at Bailundu; anyone who sees the contents of the shrine is supposed to become blind. He writes that *Kandundu* is thought of as "the spirit of dreaming who makes swellings on the body", but gives no further explanation. According to Tucker *Kandundu* is an especially powerful *ondele*, and ceremonies performed for him have many distinctive features.

224 *Huvi*, the spirit of the hunt, has his own shrine and priest in the village of the (paramount?) chief. His hut is very large, since all the
776 meat of the hunts is placed in it. In front of it dances are held, and
778 poles are decorated with skulls and other trophies of hunting. Before the door there is a carved figure of *Samemba*, the spirit who chases the game towards the hunter. A man whose ritual name is *Kapila*, and a woman called *Kuanja*(2) are in charge of the spirit-hut of *Huvi*, and make supplication to him for success in hunting. Hunters living elsewhere but in
[553] an *ombala* or head village do not have persons bearing these ritual names, but their dogs are often called *Huvi*, *Samemba*, *Kapila* or *Kuanja*.

775 The most dreaded spirits are the *otulopokopoko*, who may be spirits
754 of still-born babies or foetuses, mental defectives, maltreated slaves, or persons, especially children, killed by sorcery. When a person has been found guilty of killing a child by sorcery or witchcraft, he is sentenced to "restore life" to it, which he does by substituting for it a child from his own family: if the deceased child is a girl, he must give an ox as well. The child is treated with great respect by his new family. If however the parents do not ask the sorcerer or witch for restitution, the child becomes an *okalupokopoko*, and may return to "eat" other children, at the command of the sorcerer who has killed it.

RITUAL

793 It has been noted that the village headman acts as priest for the *oluse*, the group of paternally-related persons who form the basis of the
613 village group, while the head of the *oluina* acts as priest for his dispersed, maternally-related group.(3) There is little detailed information on the religious duties of these priests. Cushman(4) describes the village headman as making public prayers each morning to Suku. Childs however points out(5) that it is more usual for the headman to spend a

(1) i.e. of either the *oluse* or the *oluina*. (Childs, personal communication)
(2) According to Childs, (1949, p.21) *Kuanja* is a hunting goddess.
(3) See above, p.28.
(4) 1944, p.51.
(5) Personal communication.

night in the *etombo* praying to or communing with ancestral spirits, when the occasion arises; Suku is regarded as too remote to receive prayers. 693 613

While cooking, a woman may spill a little meal on the ground for the spirits; at a meal, a person may spill a little food or beer for the same purpose. A portion of the meat at a feast may likewise be sacrificed, but it is often a less desirable portion, such as the intestines.[1] 782

Agricultural rituals were held before planting, at which time the headman and his wife had intercourse in their field and sacred seed from the chief's granary was distributed, a few grains to be mixed with the seed to be planted on each plot. When the maize began to ripen a few ears were sent to the chief before any were eaten.[2] 241 789

DIVINERS[3]

The word *ocimbanda* is used both for a diviner and for a maker of medicines. To distinguish the two, the diviner may be called *ocimbanda congombo* ("of the basket"), the herbalist *ocimbanda coviti* ("of trees or sticks"). Some practitioners are both diviner and herbalist. A female diviner is called *cambula*.[4] An *ocimbanda* frequently specialises in a certain kind of case;[5] and among the members of the profession there are many degrees of proficiency. One may work only in his own village, another may be consulted on matters of concern to the whole district or chiefdom; others go on professional journeys carrying their baskets, and accumulate profits in animals and cloth. The greater the reputation of the diviner, the greater the charges he makes for his services. 791 759

The tasks of the *ocimbanda* are:-

(a) To discover the cause of sickness, death, or any evil which has befallen the individual or the community. Sickness and death are always believed to be due either to the workings of spirits who are demanding sacrifices, or to living enemies who have malicious spirits under their control or who have bought potent charms. The diviner, after consulting the spirit who speaks in and through his basket, names the spirit who is causing the trouble and tells the victim what its demands are, or, if the enemy is a living person, indicates in a general manner from whence the trouble comes, e.g. to a woman "Your baskets are too well made; you are hated because of them", or, to a man, "This illness was found on a journey taken to collect a debt". If requested, the diviner makes a counter-charm to offset that which has caused the ill. 787 753

(b) To interpret omens and dreams.

(c) To give advice on personal problems.

(d) To dispense medicines and charms.

(e) To bring or withhold rain, or to see who is guilty of withholding it. [789]

(1) Ibid., see also Cashman, loc.cit.
(2) Childs, personal communication.
(3) Based on Tucker, 1960.
(4) Hambly, (3) 1934.
(5) Ibid.

787 A detailed description of the procedure of divining is given by Tucker. In brief, the basket (*ongombo*), which contains a wide variety of objects, is ritually prepared, and the diviner goes into a kind of trance which calls the spirit of the basket to him. As he starts shaking the basket, he asks it first why the clients have come to him (since they may not ask him directly), and when he has ascertained this, questions the spirit about the cause of the trouble. The chanted replies of the audience (consisting, apparently, of outsiders as well as the clients) assist him in making the divination. The divination is finally given from the juxtaposition of the objects which settle on top of the pile in the basket.(1)

Especial care is taken of the divining basket when not in use. Some diviners build a special *ombo* or spirit-hut for the basket; others keep it hidden in their own house, where it may be seen only by the wife of the diviner, and only when she is not menstruating. Tucker gives a long description of the contents of the divining basket and illustrations of some of the objects.

[841]

791 At the death of a diviner, his son inherits the *ongombo*, but only if he can master the secrets of the basket and pass the tests which are given during his initiation into the profession. In addition, he must be "called" by some omen or illness which a diviner interprets as the wish of an ancestral spirit that he should become a diviner.(2) If he does not have these qualifications, the basket goes to someone who does, and the son receives no recompense. In either case, two years of training are usual for the would-be diviner, during which he is apprenticed to an established member of the profession. In this period he may learn *ovihemba* (medicines); their preparation and their uses to cure or kill. In order to provide the female counterpart to the spirit of the divining basket, he might formerly invite a girl to spend the night with him. In the morning, he gave her a magically treated cloth which caused her illness and death; her spirit would then be able to assist the one he already had.

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The *olosambo* or "servants of the basket" are youths who carry the accoutrements of the *ocimbanda* and wait on him; they also provide their master with such information about the community, and during divination closely observe the clients and assist the *ocimbanda* by shouting loudly when he has made the right answer. They are also believed to have mystic powers, e.g. to see and reveal what is going on at a distance, or to go into a trance during which the spirit of the basket may speak through their lips instead of through the basket. Tucker gives no information concerning the identity of these boys; possibly they are the diviner's apprentices, although she does not suggest this.

787 "The Ovimbundu refer all communications from the spirit world, whether by omen, portent or illness, to an *ocimbanda*....The requisite behaviour is determined according to the answer given by the combination of pieces in the *ongombo* [divining basket], which is thus the key to the

(1) The contents of the basket and the ritual which surround it appear to be almost identical with the practice of the eastern neighbours of the Ovimbundu described in another section of the Survey. (McCulloch, 1951, pp.81-2)
(2) It is not very clear whether the spirit of the basket is that of its former owner, or whether it is some non-ancestral spirit.

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whole supernatural world... The divining basket is the concrete medium through which the spirits reveal their will to their descendants on earth, and warn them of dangers, human or supernatural".(1)

SORCERERS AND WITCHES

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Sorcerers and witches are not clearly distinguished. Both are called olongonga, and have powers over one or more malignant spirits whom they can send anywhere to kill, steal, or torment. These "familiar spirits" are sometimes called otulo ndumba, and are held responsible for all mysterious disappearances of swine, beans and other possessions, as well as for many illnesses and deaths. Some sorcerers are said to own small images which they send out at night. Others are said to dance naked at night at the door of the intended victim's house. When sorcery involves killing by physical means, portions of the victim's body may be used to make "medicine" or charms.(2)

754 683

A person may be a sorcerer without knowing it, and may deny it when accused by the diviner. If he does so, he and his accuser undergo the cabulanga (poison test),(3) to discover who is in the right.(4) Concerning accusation of sorcery, Childs writes "Any marked success ... by an individual, especially when such success has been achieved by an individual alone or in partnership, but not in co-operation with a number of persons, often brings on suspicion of sorcery. Should the results of such success be distributed widely....suspicion is less likely to arise....An open accusation of sorcery (*oku sunga ovanga*) is a very serious matter and will [578] not often be made lightly. Such accusations are made both within and across kinship lines. Affinal relatives are quite often accused of sorcery, and suspicion frequently rests upon wives whose kinship connexions are in distant regions...".(5)

754 [829]

The tendency or aptitude for sorcery is supposed to be inherited by a daughter, or a son, or a nephew from the mother, uterine or classificatory, from the mother's brother etc. It is said that older relatives take younger ones as apprentices and partners.(6) The aim of a person who consciously takes up sorcery is said usually to be economic advancement. A very common form involves the enslavement of the spirit of another person, often a child of one's own family or kin group; the victim may be killed by either physical or magical means. Childs points out that sorcery is one of the greatest internally disruptive forces within the kin group and social system of the Ovimbundu. He notes that jealousy and grudges often bring accusations from within the circle of kin, but does not describe what happens when the charges have been made and verified. Especially in view of his statement that economic, political and other forces now seem to be acting to increase the incidence of sorcery,(7) it would be interesting to have information concerning its possible connection with segmentation of lineages or village groups, or its relation to tensions between the paternal and maternal groups of relatives.

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(1) Tucker, op.cit., p.201.
(2) Childs, personal communication.
(3) The cabulanga is administered by the medicine-man, and causes sickness but not death. See Tucker, op.cit., and Hambly, (2) 1934, p.203.
(4) Tucker, op.cit.
(5) Childs, 1949, p.57.
(6) Childs, personal communication.
(7) Childs, 1949, p.58.

683 One of the commonest forms of punishment for sorcery was, and still is, banishment. Only the chief could pronounce the death penalty. Charges of sorcery are sometimes brought today to civil courts and to church courts under the guise of "poisoning".[1]

781 There are obvious gaps in the information on Umbundu religion and magic e.g. on spirits other than those of ancestors; on ritual connected
776 with the ancestors; on productive and protective magic; on the work of the medicine-man as distinct from the diviner, and on the functions of
171 the two separate offices of family priest. From existing accounts, however, Umbundu-magico-religious concepts would appear to have much in common with those of the peoples to the east of the Plateau, and many of the words used for these concepts (*ngombo*, *ohombo*, *wanga*, *ngunga* e.g.) are in fact the same. These peoples have been described in another section of the Survey.[2]

THE LIFE CYCLE

852 Childs' chapters on infancy, childhood, and adolescence form the
114 main part of his book, and his treatment of the subject is much more detailed and on a deeper level than information offered by other writers,[3] and should be consulted.

BIRTH

849 A woman remains in her husband's village for the birth of her children. During the first birth, she is generally assisted by older women of the village, usually relatives of the husband. No man is present unless delayed labour entails the presence of a medical practitioner, or a
[845] diviner. Difficult delivery is said to be caused by broken taboos, adultery on the part of the mother, sorcery, or the woman's own refusal to give birth. There is little ceremony connected with childbirth, and a woman may give birth to her second and later children alone when she is
[846] in the fields. There is a customary lying-in period until the cord falls from the navel, but this is frequently ignored today.

845 *Twins* are welcomed but are considered prodigies whose birth requires the administrations of an *ocisonde*.[4] Soon after the birth, and every month while the children are growing, the whole village takes part in a ceremony to preserve their lives. In the case of triplets, one is given to the paramount chief.[5]

553 Naming usually takes place, in the case of a first-born, on the day of its birth. Childs notes several factors:

(a) The name (*ondulo*) should have been borne by a relative, whether living or dead, whose character and state of well-being are satisfactory; sometimes the child may be considered the re-incarnation of the deceased relative after whom he is named.[1]

(1) Childs, personal communication. (2) McCulloch, 1951, pp.73-82.
(3) Bently, (2) 1934, pp.232-33, and Cameron, 1944.
(4) Smith, 1945. (5) Childs, 1949, p.85.

[1] [Childs, op. cit., p. 87.]

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relative after whom he is named.[1]

(b) Ordinarily the baby is named by the father from his family. According to Ennis,[2] the first male child is usually named after the paternal grandfather, the first female child after the paternal grandmother; the next two or three children are named after paternal uncles and aunts, and then the mother may choose a name. Childs writes that the name may be given by the mother if the father's family has a bad record of deaths and illnesses. 553

(c) The name must not prejudice but assist the child's chance of survival; thus a child born after the death of several siblings may be given an insignificant name, intended to cause the spirits to overlook it, or to consider it less than human.

(d) Events or persons prominent at the birth may influence the choice. A nanzuko, whether intentional or not, is known as Sando (from the Portuguese word for saint). Events at the time of birth may be summed up in a proverb, of which the key word is the name. Ennis gives numerous examples of such names.[3]

(e) The same names may belong to several families of a type, e.g. trading or farming families, or the families of paramount chiefs, who were jealous of their names and did not permit their use by commoners. 551

Parents take the name of their first-born: thus "Nanjanko" is "the mother of Njanko". During illness a person may change his name to draw away the attention of the spirits. Adolescents discard their birth names and choose new ones.[4]

Infancy

During the first six months the child sleeps with his mother and during the day is carried in a cloth on her back, and fed whenever he demands milk. If the mother has no helper, she works in the fields with the baby on her back. An older sister or other young relative may play with the infant within hearing distance of the mother. 853

Between six and twelve months the child is taught to sit; when he can do this he is no longer a baby *(ovana)* but an ocisenbe (toddler). A child rarely walks before the age of 24 months, since he is carried and held so much. 851

Weaning: a child goes every day with his mother to the fields; each month he becomes fatter and heavier, but he usually continues like this until after the second birthday. When he can walk, he may be left during the day with his young nurse (older sister, cross-cousin or other relative) and not fed until the mother returns during the afternoon. The process of weaning begins then at this stage but is usually not completed till a year or two later, unless another baby intervenes. Those who take longer than usual in weaning may, however, be frightened away from the breast.[5] 862

(1) Childs, op.cit., p.87.
(2) Ibid.
(3) op.cit.
(4) Childs, loc.cit.
(5) Childs, op.cit., p.88.

862 "The practice of leaving the orisambe in the village by day makes his elder sibling[1] responsible for much of his education....She herself may not be more than six or seven years old and consequently cannot be expected to 'educate' her charge very thoroughly. She interests herself in his walking and talking and he will imitate her in many things."[2]

863 General instruction in cleanliness begins at this age, although sphincter control may have begun much earlier, since the mother feels every movement made by the baby on her back.

195 After weaning the physical development of the child proceeds more slowly than that of European peoples, and Childs believes that this may be due to deficiencies in diet.[3]

CHILDHOOD AND EDUCATION

857 From the time a child is able to walk until he is about nine years
861 old he continues seeing the same people as before, but he becomes less dependent upon the elder sister or cousin who helped him, and begins his life-long association with his age-mates. The sex-division of society starts for him at this stage: from about eight years boys begin to eat in the *onjango* with their fathers, girls continuing in the kitchen with their mothers. After about eight years the father becomes largely responsible for the education of boys, the mother for that of girls. During this period the child's education may be summarised under three heads:

869 (a) *Psychological*, chiefly fear of real or imaginary dangers. This is imparted by mother, elder siblings, and perhaps by a grandmother; there is a tendency for the teaching of fear to be done by women.[4]

867 (b) *Social*, chiefly usages of etiquette and acquaintance with the kinship structure and its requirements. A child of about eight is supposed to know his social status and all the etiquette that pertains to it. In the *onjango* the hierarchy of age is observed, honoured guests and old men being served first, and so on all down the line. With the decline of the *onjango*, there has been a great decline in the teaching of etiquette and social usage, and this naturally affects boys rather than girls.

864 Little direct sex teaching is attempted, and adults are reticent in speaking of sexual matters in the presence of children. But since children live with their parents in one-roomed houses, it is inevitable that children should sometimes observe intercourse.

868 (c) *Training in skills*: Children are taught few definite skills before the age of eight or nine, but many of their games are in imitation of adult activities.

604
857 From the age of six or seven years children are usually sent to spend one or two years with the mother's brother. They may also be sent to the father's sister or brother for a period, and, in the case of girls, to the mother's mother. Formerly prominent families sent their children for a

(1) Either a brother or sister may act as nurse.
(2) Childs, op.cit., p.95. (3) Ibid., p.97.
(4) Childs actually writes - 'the side of the basket' (p.100), but seems to be referring simply to female relatives.

time to the village of the paramount chief. These periods spent away from home continue into adolescence. Not only relatives, but also friends, blood-brothers and ukuncisoko (see below) exchange children in this way. 604 857

Later childhood

No definite time marks the transition from early to later childhood, but there are marked differences between the two stages. As soon as the child is physically able, he begins to assume a definite role in the community. Soon after a child gets his permanent teeth, a notch in the form of an inverted V is chipped between the two upper front incisors. Formerly the beginning of the period was marked for the boy by his first trip with a trading caravan; today a boy of this age may begin to work in the fields with his father, or begin to learn a trade, or be sent to school. A girl starts to learn field-work and housework. 852 858

Professions

A boy is expected to learn the profession or ocipinduko in which his father or his mother's brother is expert, and after that, should he wish to learn some other side-line profession, he may apprentice himself. All children, both boys and girls, are expected to learn to cultivate, but that is not counted as a profession. The principal ocipinduko (professions) listed by Childs are: for girls, basket-making, pottery-making, medical practice and divination; for boys, mat-making, wood-working, rope-making, thatching, fishing, apiculture, hunting, smithing, and medical practice and divination. The last three, as has been mentioned above, are "sacred" and entered under special conditions. 462 868 [463]

"Later childhood, then, is the period of technical training during which it is expected that a large amount of economic responsibility will be assumed. A child begins to own property even before this, and from the beginning of childhood will be accounted legally responsible for his actions. It is recognised, however, that he should not be set tasks beyond the experience or ability of his age and that the full responsibility of adulthood will come only with marriage."(1) 866 [672]

The coming of European commerce, industry, and government has created new types of employment for boys and men, some of which cause a prolonged absence from the village and a loosening or severing of kinship ties. There are no estimates of the number of persons employed by Europeans, or the average length of their absence from home. 178 466

ADOLESCENCE(2)

Childs found that the onset of puberty was late among the Ovimbundu, coming between fourteen and sixteen years for girls and between fifteen and seventeen years for boys. Soon after puberty young people generally stop sleeping in the parents' house. The girls congregate in kitchens and each boy builds himself a house, in which he will live through adolescence 882

(1) Childs, op.cit., p.120.
(2) Based on Childs, op.cit., pp.58-9 and 111-18.

and young manhood, and to which he will bring his wife. In this house a kind of trial marriage *(eponji)* takes place. The young man will *oku tumise* ("cause to send") a male friend to ask permission of a girl's mother and also to bring her to his house each night. The girl is called *eponji*. (The custom may also be called *uwisi*, the girl *ombisi*.) A young man may first tumise at about seventeen or eighteen years, if he has sufficient money or goods to make the "betrothal" payment (*itumbelo* - "enticements" or *oku lupulo ikuelume* - "chasing away jealousies"). The amount of the payment (which is made to the girl's parents) varies with locality, wealth and status, but is usually about one tenth of the amount of the marriage payment proper. The amounts of both payments are increasing rapidly.[1] The nature of the intercourse is carefully circumscribed, and the girl is warned by her mother not to let intromission take place. Proofs of virginity are required on the marriage morning, and there are severe sanctions against premarital pregnancy. Childs' informants stressed that the chief purpose of the custom is that the two young people should get to know each other as well as possible with marriage in view. Ennis however[2] states that *uwisi* does not necessarily lead to marriage and may be entered upon without the intention of marriage; the girl may leave the man if she does not like him, and if the *uwisi* is broken off both may marry other persons without any difficulties.

INITIATION[3]

Tribal initiation for boys *(oku lisevise evamba)* and girls *(uso wokei)* is carried on in camps or "schools" in the southern and south-eastern Umbundu chiefdoms, especially in Kalukembe, Kakonda, and Ngalangi. Sporadic instances of individual camps have also occurred recently in Viye, Bailundu, Sambu, Wambu, Cingolo and Cikuma. Even in regions where camps are regularly held, only the children of certain families enter. There appears to have been some passing on of the custom by heredity, and, in general, there is intermarriage only between families and individuals who adhere to the initiation rites. It is not known whether the rites have been taken over by the Ovimbundu from neighbouring peoples, or whether they represent a custom formerly widespread in Umbundu country. Initiation camps are not mentioned by the earlier writers.

Childs gives little information about what goes on in initiation camps, apart from pointing out that in making a definite break from the routine of life they contrast with other aspects of Umbundu education, and that "the hardship and cruelty of initiation camps have their parallel in the trading and slave-raiding expeditions of the past." His statement that "as an 'educational institution' [the initiation camps] do not seem to fit into the culture" is not very clear. From the few details given by Hambly[4] Umbundu camps appear to be identical with those of the tribes to the east, and here one of the most important aspects of the camps is their ritually-emphasised contrast with regular life.[5]

(1) Childs, personal communication.
(2) 1945.
(3) Childs, op.cit., pp.115-7.
(4) (2) 1934, pp.226f.
(5) See McCulloch, 1951, pp.85-91.

Vakuncinko (lit. "those of the set")[1]

561
572

Childs considers that the custom of vacuncinko is probably connected with circumcision and initiation. It does not exist throughout the territory but only in certain families who belong to the order and are said to pass it on by heredity. It seems to have been stronger in the past, but few practising members of the set are now known. All 'covele' or members of the set were in duty bound to render mutual assistance, and all had mutual rights to the property of the others without complaint or remedy. These rights seem to have included that of having intercourse with each other's wives. Injury or even death of one member brought about by another did not allow the injured family to seek revenge or legal redress. It was the duty of the vacuncinko to bury their fellows, themselves digging the grave and attending to all the expenses ordinarily supplied by the family of the deceased. They also had the duty of burying strangers without family who would not be buried by others for fear of defilement or responsibility for their debts.[2] Childs describes the vacuncinko association as "age-grade sets",[3] but gives no further explanation.

683
177

"With or without initiation rites, adolescence is largely preparation for marriage and full adult life. Traditionally, adolescence is not a time of conflict or stress....Contract and *corvée* labour have brought profound changes, especially for the young men. As for the girls, a few have gone into the towns; relatively few, however, other than those who attend a boarding-school, lead a life essentially different from that which has been traditionally theirs."[4]

MARRIAGE

582

Available information concerning degrees of relationship in which marriage is permitted, marriage-payment, polygyny and divorce has been given above.[5] Evanki[6] and Humbly[7] describe some of the customs and ceremonies connected with marriage.

585

For three nights after the commencement of the marriage ceremony the girl sleeps with her own parents, while the married women and six unmarried girls whom she has chosen as her attendants sleep in the house of her husband. On the fourth day she moves to the man's house, bringing her cooking utensils. For the first month, according to Humbly, or, according to Evanki, the first year, i.e. until the grain is ripe in her new fields, she lives with her husband's mother or aunt; in whose kitchen she cooks her food each night to send to her husband in the *ongango*. When her first child is two or three months old, a present of a pig passes from the girl's mother to her husband.

[606]

Childs[8] adds that adulthood comes with marriage, and marriage is only recognised as complete when the first child has been born. A child or an adolescent is only a "potential" person *(omwa)* and the permanency

885

(1) Childs, op.cit., p.115.
(2) Those who buried a man were considered responsible for his debts. Some corpses were often placed in trees.
(3) Childs, op.cit., p.59.
(4) Ibid., p.117.
(5) Pp.582.
(6) 1938.
(7) 1934, pp 1002.
(8) Op.cit., pp.129-30.

885 and stability of his personality (ueu - lit. the quality of being a person) is only proved when he enters the state of adulthood at marriage.

DEATH

361 764 Each village has its own burial ground about a mile or so away. The grave is usually dug by the children of the father's/sister.[1] The corpse of a commoner is bound in a supine position and placed in a box before interment. It is usual during the funeral to find out the cause of death, i.e. whether it is the work of spirits or of some living enemy. Accusations of sorcery are frequently made. The corpse in its coffin, slung to a pole between two carriers, responds to questions as to who 'ate him' by forward (affirmative) or backward (negative) movements.[2] In the case described by Hambly,[3] the questions were put by the father's sister. The corpse may also cause its bearers to stop in front of a certain house during the procession through the village, thereby indicating that one of the occupants has caused its death.[4] Should the corpse not give a clear answer, the diviner might be called in to discover the cause of the death. Accusations of sorcery, as has been noted above, are often made within the circle of kin.[5]

Special cases

766 For *children* the same ceremony was carried out if they were old enough to walk and talk. Otherwise the diviner's services were called upon by the parents. At the death of twins, the mother has to shake a rattle or blow a horn instead of giving the usual greetings to passers-by, as she had to do also while the children were alive.[6]

766 791 At the death of *diviners* and *medicine-men* other members of the profession take charge of the ceremonies. The corpse is tied in a sitting posture and kept thus for three days before burial. No coffin is used. The questioning ceremony is carried out as for a commoner. After the interment the other medicine-men dance "because they have spirit in their heads", and during the dance each eats a living chicken that he carries in his hand. At the side of the grave a dog, a chicken and a goat are killed, and eaten by the mourners. The *ocitabundi's* power is apparently thought to linger round the grave, which the chief or village-headman may visit to ask for rain and other favours.[7]

227 766 *Hunters* at death are buried in rock tombs *(ombilia* or *ocunje)*, which are usually placed in commanding positions. The skulls of animals which the hunter has killed are piled on top of the tomb. The bows of the deceased hunter are kept in his successor's "house of bows".

766 683 *Chiefs*, and possibly also *village headmen*, are buried in specially-constructed enclosures in the villages over which they ruled. The tomb is a small hut with a substantial wooden door, which is surrounded by a strongly-built wooden fence, or it may be a cave. The wives of the chief are buried in the same enclosure. The head of a specially selected

(1) Hambly, (2) 1934, p.268.
(2) Childs, 1949, p.57.
(3) Childs, loc.cit.
(4) Hambly, op.cit., p.268.
(5) Op.cit., p.266.
(6) Ibid.
(7) Ibid., p.270.

The head of a specially selected [767]
family has the duty of twisting off the head of the chief, and not until 643
this is done is the chief officially dead. The head is buried for a year, 765
then dug up and transferred to a box, which is also kept in the tomb. The
head is questioned at times of stress (such as a drought) in the same way
that questions are put to the corpse of a commoner. If the head swings [767]
forward, a sacrifice may be necessary to remove the drought. The house
of a chief is not burnt at his death (but those of commoners are?); 768
neither may it be repaired in any way, but the succeeding chief must live
in it until the structure collapses.(1)

Mourning for a chief lasts seven days, during which his children and 765
wives wear strips of cuhide on their left wrists.

Widows (of chiefs or commoners) must leave their hair loose and wear cloths which conceal them from head to toe. For three days a widow must sleep close to the corpse of her husband, with only a stick between them. During this time she has no food, and her wailing is expected to be almost continuous day and night. When the corpse is tied and prepared for burial relatives support the corpse and make it move towards her so that she may bid it farewell. She does not attend the funeral. At the end of a month of mourning she must lie for one night in the place where her husband lay the night before burial. At the beer-drinking which marks the end of the period of mourning an orisbondo guides her hand as she distributes the beer.(2)

(1) Bumbly, (2) 1954, p.272.
(2) Bumbly, op.cit., p.369. Bumbly states that mourning for a chief lasts only seven days, while from this information it appears that commoners are mourned for a whole month.

9: McCulloch B-4 (1945-51) 1952 FF13 Mbundu FF13
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a	b
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Chart of positions of sections
of End Map

Z: McCulloch E-4(1945-51)1952 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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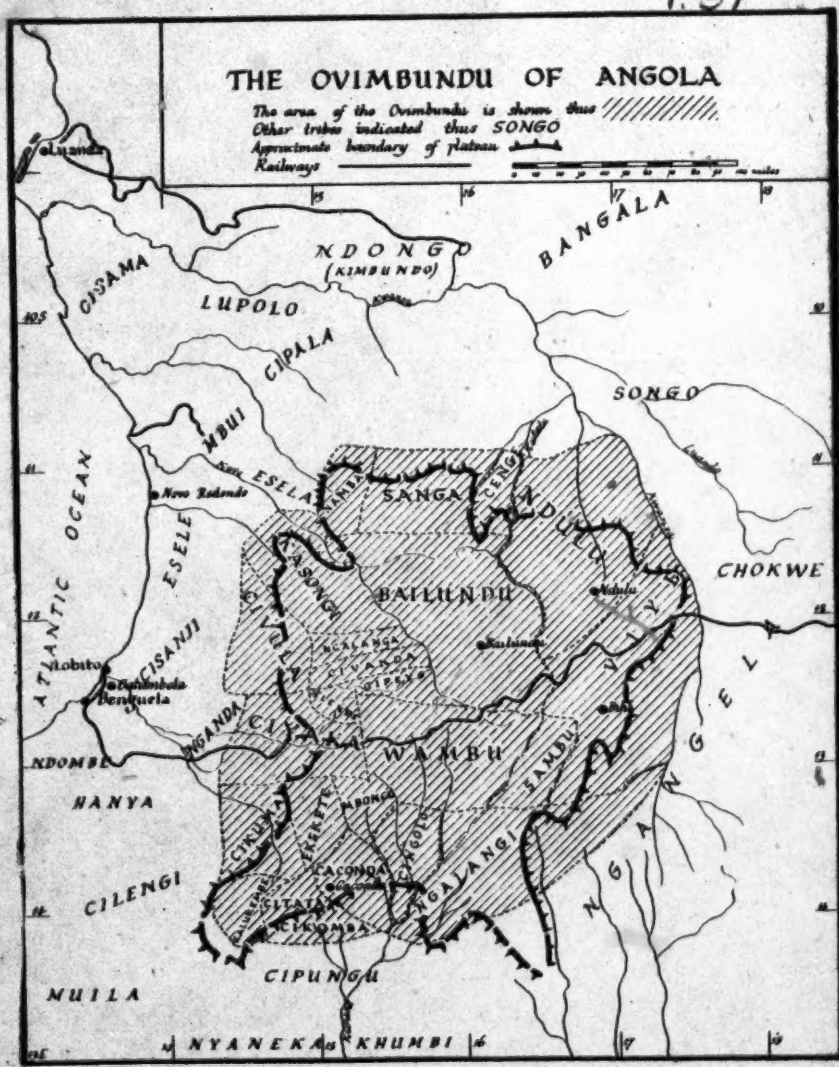

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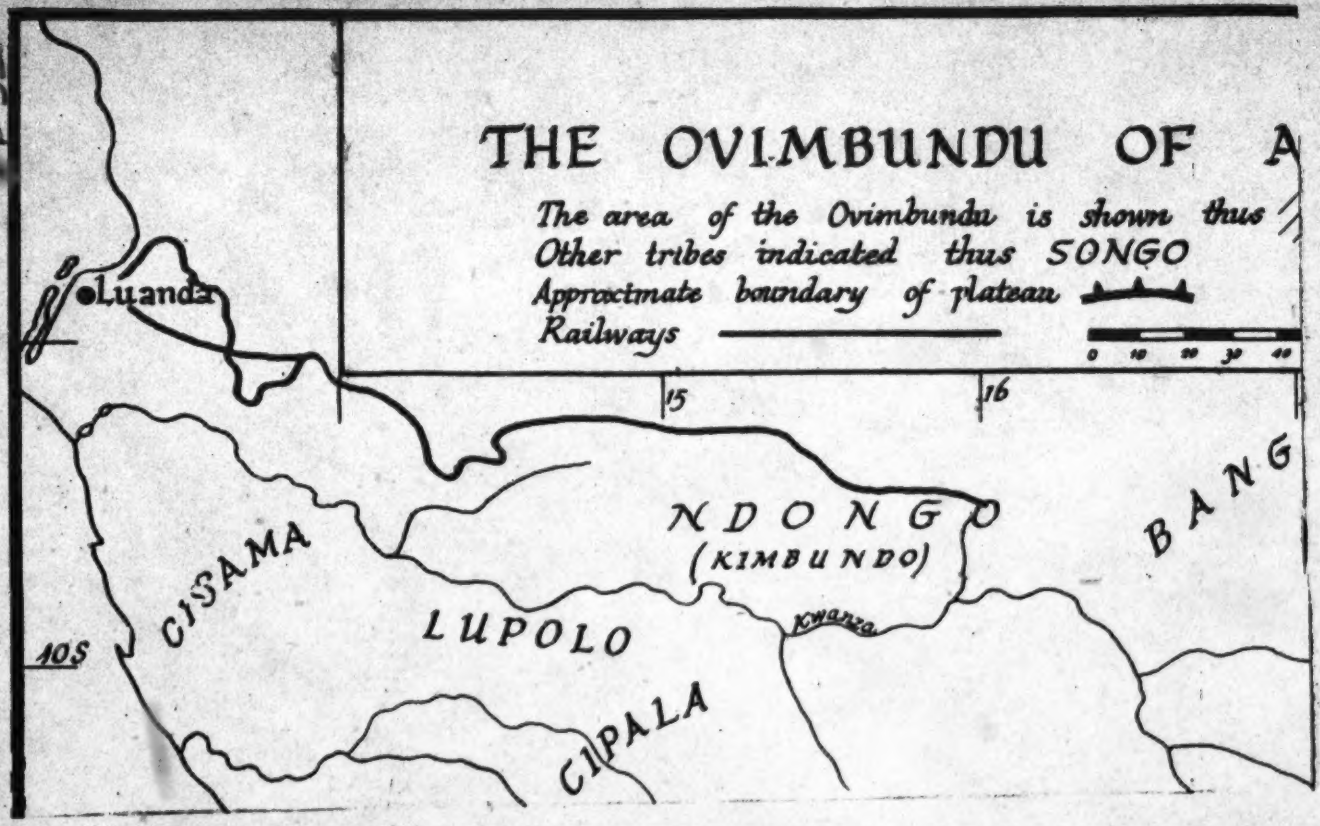

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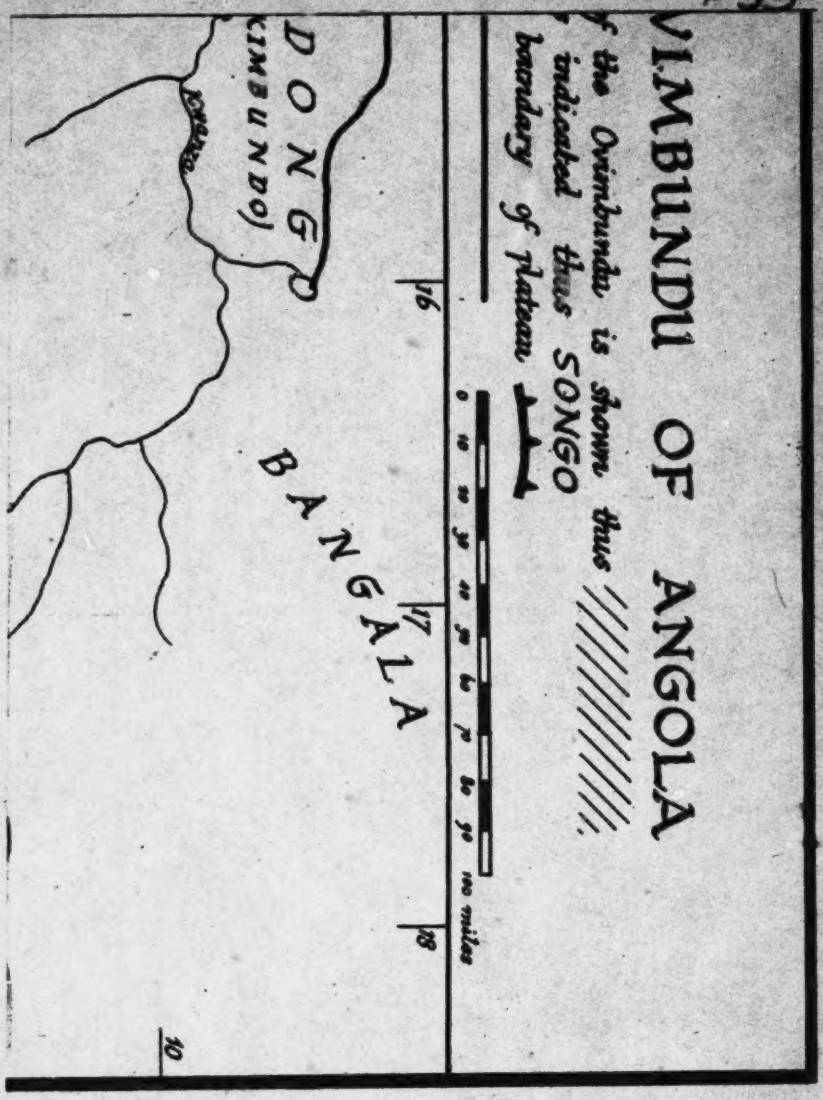

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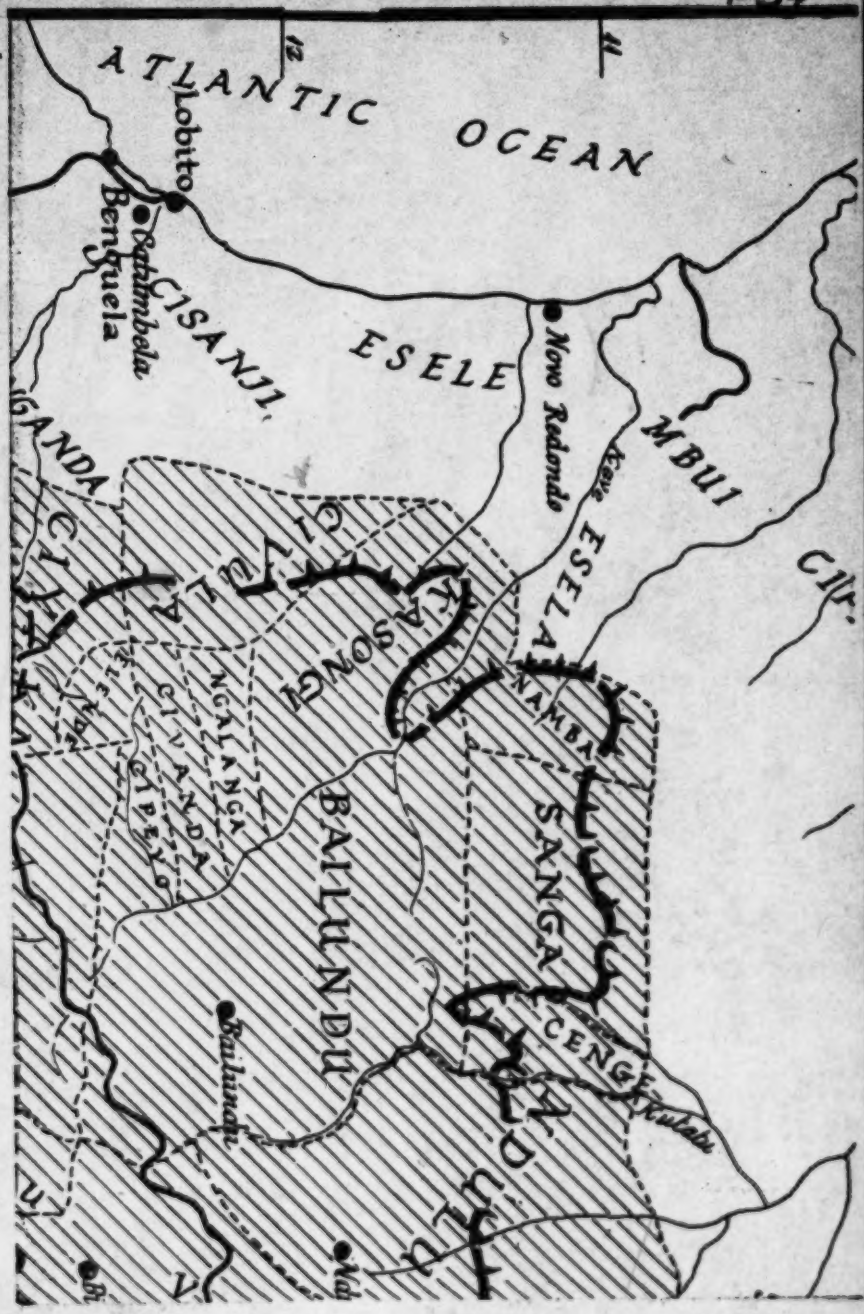
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Rio Cuanza
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SANGA
CENGE
Kulabu
BAILUNDU
Bailundu
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NGALANGA
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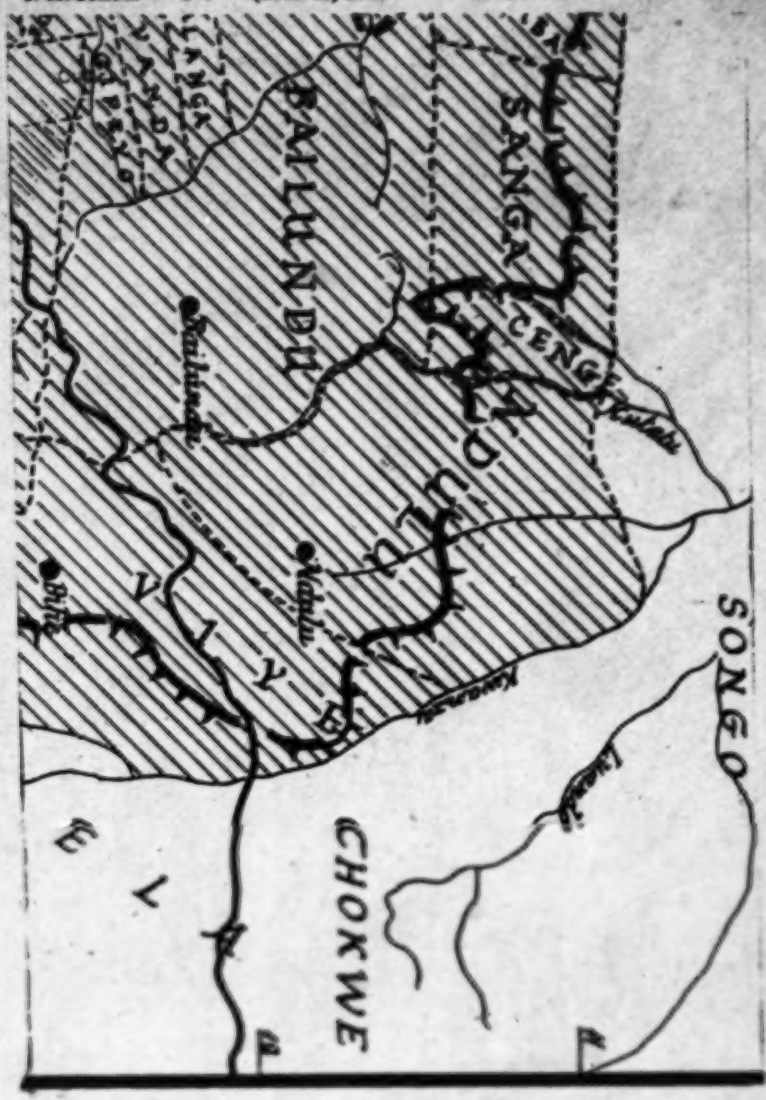

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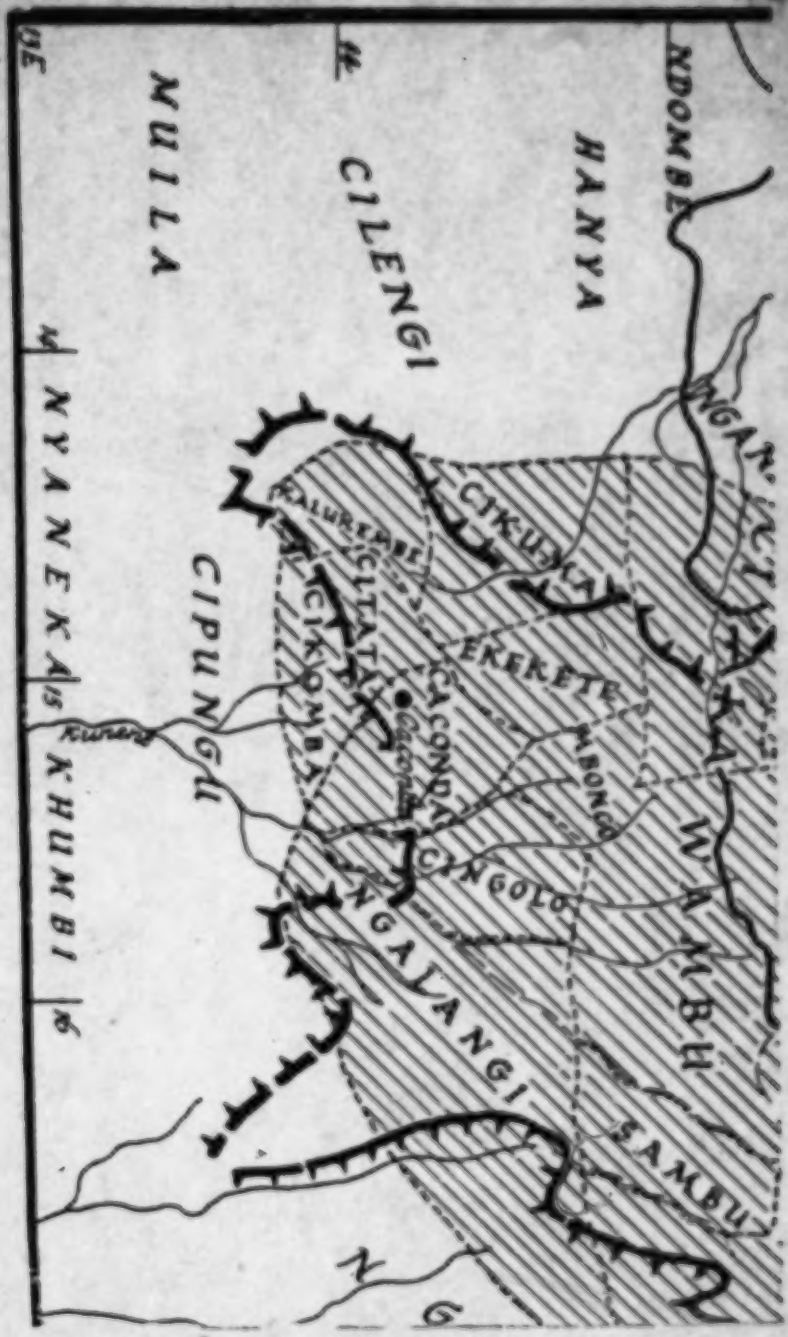

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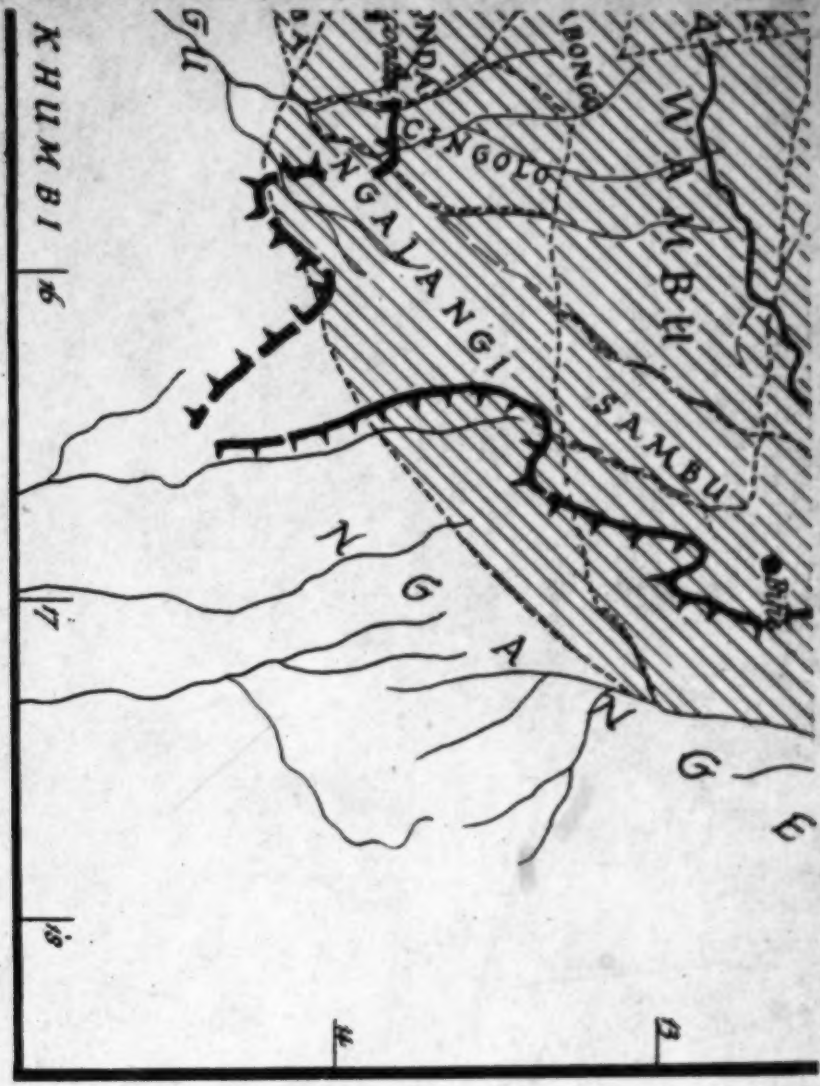
R: McCulloch E-4 (1945-51) 1952 FP13 Mbundu FP13 P. 57



End Map (f)

2: McCulloch
622, 643

FP13 Mbundu FP13

/For ceremonial activities of the village headman and chief see 793. /

2: McCulloch
632

FP13 Mbundu FP13

/The large village, which might legitimately be considered a town, is listed under category 621./

2: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Minnds FP13

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THE OVIMBUNDU OF ANGOLA

BY
WILFRID D. HAMBLY
ASSISTANT CURATOR OF AFRICAN ETHNOLOGY

FREDERICK H. RAWSON-FIELD MUSEUM ETHNOLOGICAL EXPEDITION
TO WEST AFRICA, 1929-30

84 Plates in Photogravure and 1 Map

BERTHOLD LAUFER
CURATOR, DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY

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3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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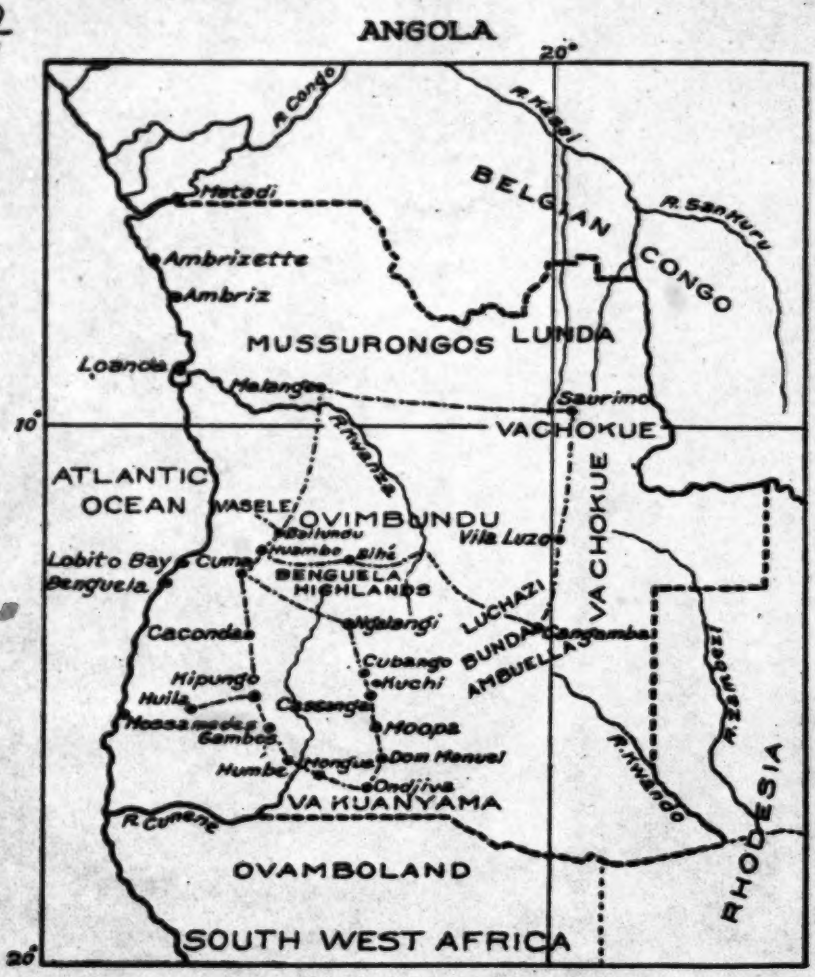

MAP SHOWING ROUTE OF EXPEDITION

Scale: 1 inch = 220 miles; ——— Indicates route

[Facing p. 87]

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PREFACE

As leader of the Frederick H. Rawson–Field Museum Ethnological Expedition to West Africa I undertook research in Angola and Nigeria, from February, 1929, to February, 1930. The present publication is concerned with the ethnology of Angola (Portuguese West Africa), where a study of the Ovimbundu and their culture contacts was made. 122

At the outset I must express thanks to the Portuguese government for permission to carry on this investigation. Owing to the courtesy of the American Vice-Consul, Mr. Arthur F. Tower of Loanda, I received from the Governor General of Angola a letter of introduction which was of inestimable service during my journey in the interior. 000

From Portuguese officials much help was obtained, and sound advice accompanied by practical assistance was always courteously given.

In London I was assisted in the most cordial way by Mr. David Boyle, of the Cunard Steamship Lines, and Colonel B. Follett, D.S.O., of the Tanganyika Concessions Company.

My base camp in Angola was pitched near the Elende Mission Station, where Dr. Merlin W. Ennis kindly provided safe storage for collections and a room for photography. Dr. Ennis was ever ready to discuss and aid my investigation among the Ovimbundu with whom he has spent thirty years. Mrs. Ennis and Miss Rounds aided my studies of handicraft among women. Dr. Hollenbeck gave valuable notes on the ailments of the Ovimbundu; these have been incorporated with my study of medicine-men. 122

Ngonga, my interpreter and chief informant, was secured by Dr. Ennis to assist the investigation, and this he did with the greatest tact and ability. Ngonga speaks English, Portuguese, and Umbundu fluently. These accomplishments were so combined with a deep regard for the customs of his own people, the Ovimbundu, that he made an ideal interpreter. 115

From the base at Elende three journeys were made into the interior. The first of these led to the far south of Angola, among the Vakuanyama; a second journey took me into the Vaseie country of northwest Angola; while the third and longest itinerary led as far east as Cangamba, a center of Vacholue culture, thence northward to Saurimo in Lunda. 122

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122 At the end of each of these journeys, which totaled 5,000 miles, I returned to the base camp, developed photographs, shipped collections, and continued my studies among the Ovimbundu.

In the interior I received help from Mr. and Mrs. H. C. McDowell of Ngalangi, both of whom gave considerable aid in investigating initiation ceremonies for boys and girls, and in securing three medicine-men and a rain-maker to explain their vocations. At Bailundu Mr. G. M. Childs obtained many valuable objects relating to the medicine-man's work, and the worth of these was greatly enhanced by full descriptions, and translations of the Umbundu language in which the explanations were given.

126 Owing to the interest of Professor Edward Sapir, formerly of the University of Chicago, now at Yale, assistance in transcribing phonographic records of the Umbundu language was obtained. The phonetic transcriptions were made by Dr. M. H. Watkins and Mr. R. T. Clarke, whose expert aid was greatly appreciated. Records of drum music were transcribed by Dr. G. Herzog of the University of Chicago. Drawings of objects collected have been prepared by Mr. Carl F. Gronemann, Staff Illustrator of Field Museum.

This recognition of cooperation would be incomplete without gratefully remembering my servants, who shared the fatigue and hazards of the journey. Abilio Esteves proved to be a thoroughly competent guide and adviser. The servants aided in locating ceremonies, acquiring objects, and dealing with the tribes among whom the expedition passed.

WILFRID DYSON HAMBLY

THE OVIMBUNDU OF ANGOLA

I. INTRODUCTION

Research work among the Ovimbundu of Angola indicates the /121/ presence of numerous cultural traits revealing what are probably distinct stratifications of culture. These diverse elements have been welded together into a pattern, the examination of which constitutes the present problem.

The object of this study is an analysis of these traits with a view to showing the sequence in which they have been received, from whence they came, and the processes which have been responsible for coordinating them so as to form the present social system.

My presentation passes from geographical and historical considerations to an ethnological approach, locally applied in the first place for complete analysis of the culture of the Ovimbundu and surrounding peoples. The traits have to be considered singly and in combination. Then follows an examination of some of these traits which are widely distributed outside Angola. We next seek to ascertain the geographical origin of traits, their history, and the psychology of their combinations and assimilation into an aggregate. What elements have been acquired through adoption? And what has been the historical process? Which traits have arisen through independent invention? What factors have been discarded, and why? To what extent have the Ovimbundu utilized opportunities for enriching their culture, and what possibilities have been neglected?

What are the classes of evidence which might be expected to assist an inquiry into the growth of Umbundu culture?

Field work was of primary importance for obtaining a first hand knowledge of the tribal life of the Ovimbundu as it exists today, and in order to estimate the effects of cultural contacts extensive journeys were made to the north, east, and south of the central territory occupied by the Ovimbundu. The results of personal investigation are given in chapters IV–IX, dealing with the economic, social, and religious life of the Ovimbundu. These facts have been kept free from the observations of other investigators whose reports are summarized in chapter III, "Historical Sources."

Unfortunately there are no archaeological data which can assist /172/ a study of historical processes, for archaeology has not yet been approached in Angola.

121 Geographical study is valuable in showing that physical factors such as position, topography, soil, and climate have had not only a permissive but a stimulating effect on the development of certain cultural traits.

127 Historical documents dating from the year A.D. 1500 present valuable evidence for tribal movements, the effect of early European contacts, and the existence of certain beliefs and ceremonies. The facts adduced in chapter III are used in chapters X–XII in discussing culture contacts and cultural processes.

197 Inquiry respecting relationships of the Ovimbundu to other African tribes is aided by a study of the Umbundu language, which is shown to be of pure Bantu structure and vocabulary (chapter VIII). The characteristic features of the Umbundu language are those which form the basic elements of Bantu speech in general. These characteristics are alliterative concord (that is, repetition of the prefix before every word in agreement with the noun); absence of grammatical gender; and a position of the genitive in which the name of the thing possessed comes before the possessor. Umbundu, though structurally assignable to the Bantu group, has its own vocabulary, whose degree of relationship to that of surrounding peoples may to some extent be judged by the vocabularies of F. and W. Jaspert (Die Völkerstämme Mittel Angolas, Frankfort, 1930, pp. 144–150). The fact that the language of the Ovimbundu has become the lingua franca of Angola, still further testifies to the thoroughness of the contacts, which from historical sources are known to have been made in the period 1500–1900.

104 The spelling of proper names leaves a wide margin for individual preference. The Umbundu language requires "M" before "B," yet custom has sanctioned the form Bailundu. Nevertheless I have retained "N" in Ngalangi despite the form Galangi on several maps. Maps show great diversity of spelling, but I have adhered throughout to Kipungo (Quipungo) and Kwanza (Quanza). Among tribal names I prefer Vakuanyama to OvaKwanyama and Vachokue to BaKioko or BaDjokue; in making the choice I have tried to imitate the sounds I heard from the natives themselves. In referring to the papers of E. Torday, who knew the southwest Congo well and spoke several Congo languages fluently, I note that he sometimes prefers to recognize the prefix as in BaMbala and BaYaka, but he also writes Badjokue and Bayaka. J. H. Weeks writes Bangala (BaNgala). C. H. L. Hahn uses the form Ovambo (OvaMbo). Ovimbundu I have preferred throughout; the accent is on the

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penultimate syllable as is usual with Bantu words. The alternative form would be OviMbundu. Some writers hyphenate after a prefix. *Lu* is the plural prefix in the tribal names Luchazi, Luvando, Luena and Luimba. Ocivokue, Ocimbundu and Uluchazi are singulars. The word Umbundu is used adjectivally as well as for the name of the language. 104

Observations relating to the physical appearance of the Ovimbundu (chapter IV) deal with physique, dress, tooth mutilation, hairdressing, scarification, and personal ornaments. The object of this chapter is to estimate the results of contacts so far as these affect the traits just mentioned. 121

Of great importance in an inquiry into the growth of Umbundu culture is the inferential testimony to be derived from ethnological study of surrounding tribes. This subject is considered in chapter X, "Culture Contacts," with special reference to the Congo basin, Rhodesia, and South West Africa, concerning which there exists an adequate and reliable literature.

In chapter XII, "Cultural Processes," ethnological facts derived from field work and historical sources have been combined with data relating to geography, physique, and language. This has been done in such a way as to present a hypothesis of cultural growth which is consonant with direct evidence and inferential testimony.

Finally, personal acquaintance with the daily life of the Ovimbundu is made the corner stone for behavioristic study. This is intended to explain the operation of social forces and controls in welding the tribal traits whose origin and assembly have been previously discussed.

Should my colleagues of the functional school contend that my approach is too static in its historical and anatomical method, I would reply that my research does at least lay a sure ethnological foundation for those psychological and sociological studies which are today rightly regarded as essential for the adjustment of relationships between Africans and their European administrators. The correlation of all aspects of tribal life, including culture contacts, cannot be too strongly stressed. The headings chosen for chapters are adopted merely for convenience of presentation. But an endeavor has been made throughout the book, and particularly in the final chapter, to emphasize the coordination of economics, social organization, education, language, and religion.

II. GEOGRAPHICAL FACTORS

121 This chapter is intended to give an outline of the geographical conditions of Angola and to point out the way in which these have influenced the growth of Umbundu culture in all its aspects.

A presentation of geographical data is of primary importance here, and the actual relationship between the facts of geography and culture is a matter for gradual evaluation in the following chapters. The extent to which geographic determinism has entered into the cultural growth of the Ovimbundu is particularly well seen in chapter V, "Economic Life," which deals with industries, agriculture, domestic animals, fishing, and transport.

The area of Angola is a factor of importance, for the greater the extent of any country the more diversified will be the products and the cultural differences. This is particularly true if there are considerable differences in the elevation, because altitude modifies temperature and affects the distribution of rainfall.

131 Angola has an area of almost 500,000 square miles. The greatest length is a distance of about 900 miles from the river Congo in the north to the region of South West Africa. The greatest breadth is about 700 miles from the Atlantic Ocean on the west to the borders of the Rhodesian plateau in the east. This range over twelve degrees of latitude, from 5° S. to 17° S., in association with differences in altitude, have produced ecological regions which are described in the following paragraphs.

132 311 167 The northern part of Angola is ecologically a part of the Congo basin, with conditions of heat and moisture giving rise to a dense tropical flora. *Owing to the presence of tsetse fly, the great heat,* and the lack of open grasslands, such country is unsuited for the rearing of cattle, while agriculture, including cultivation of maize, is restricted to forest clearings. Manioc, palm trees, peanuts, and sweet potatoes are the chief products serviceable to man. This region was, according to the historical evidence of chapter III, the area in which the Ovimbundu moved before they entered the Benguela Highlands of central Angola. Parts of chapters III and X ("Historical Sources" and "Culture Contacts," respectively) are devoted to an analysis of the cultural factors of the Congo area from the year A.D. 1500 to the present day.

131 The central portion of Angola is the area most important in this research because it is the home of the Ovimbundu, whose cultural

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growth is under examination. This central plateau, the Benguela 131
Highlands, rises in places to a height of 6,000 feet, an altitude which [133]
reduces the heat of the tropics and so modifies the flora, discouraging
some types of vegetation and encouraging others. Hostility of the
highlands to palm trees and the banana is appropriately discussed [241]
when dealing with cultural losses; while the fostering effect of reduced
temperature and the presence of wide expanses of open country on
the growth of maize and the keeping of cattle is a cultural gain.

The prevailing rains of Angola are from the northeast to the 132
southwest; consequently the high plateau intercepts rain clouds which
give an annual fall of sixty inches. This adequate rainfall is another
factor which has affected economic life, density of population, com-
munal welfare, and powers of expansion.

The villages of the Ovimbundu are built on hillsides having a 361
commanding view of the surrounding country. There is in the
nature of the land a natural protection from enemies. In addition
to this the Benguela Highlands are an admirable base from which
expeditions both predatory and commercial might, and actually did
set out eastward to the interior of Africa, and southwest to the
cattle-keeping country.

It is important to note that this central plateau is the watershed 133
for four large river systems; the Kwanza to the northwest; the Cunene
to the southwest; the tributaries of the Kasai to the northeast; and
the Zambezi and its affluents to the southeast. Fishing, with attend- [226]
ant beliefs of a ritualistic kind, is of local importance; so also is the
making of canoes. Moreover, the river valleys have marked out a
natural means of communication in several directions.

In connection with the river system the biological factor of the 136
tsetse fly is important, because the presence of the fly locally dis- 231
courages human habitation and prevents the keeping of cattle. The
exact distribution of the fly is imperfectly known, but *Glossinia* [164]
palpalis, the cause of sleeping sickness in human beings, also *Glos-*
sinia morsitans, which carries disease to cattle, are both present along
the Kwanza and parts of the other rivers (J. C. B. Statham, Through
Angola, p. 294).

The western coastal strip is a region of great aridity which has in 132
some years no rainfall whatever, because the northeasterly rains have 137
expended themselves on the high plateau. This region displays
vegetation of the semi-desert type; namely, baobab trees, prickly
acacias, euphorbias, and aloes. Population in this area is sparse, [162]
always nomadic, and in some places non-existent. The coastal strip

The coastal strip

131 was at times traversed by the Ovimbundu who know of the sea and
484 call it *kalunga*. Bihéan caravans crossed to the coast with slaves, as history shows, but the nature of the coastal strip marks it as a western barrier limiting the expansion of the Ovimbundu in that direction. The coast line itself is of the greatest moment in the consideration of historical factors. From Loanda, Benguela, and
[177] Mossamedes on the coast, the Portuguese penetrated the interior, so making contacts with the Ovimbundu to the encouragement of caravan trade. The importance of this European contact will be seen in subsequent chapters.

The south and southwest parts of Angola are of particular importance in studying the contacts of the Ovimbundu, but to give here the details of the wealthy cattle-keeping culture of these regions, which were accessible through peaceful proximity, trade, and occasional raiding, would be an anticipation of chapter X, "Culture Contacts."
[723] One topographical point is of primary importance; namely, the ease with which the Ovimbundu could descend from their strongholds to the low-lying land of the west and south, whereas the reverse journey is much more difficult for a people unaccustomed to manoeuvring and finding their way among hills.

101 Having described the northern, central, western, and southern areas, there remains only the eastern section to consider; this presents several features of peculiar geographical and ethnological interest.
[133] The eastern section of Angola is either slightly undulating or flat, the general characteristic is dryness, and vegetation is somewhat
[136] sparse though sufficient to shelter many kinds of antelope.

The major population is the Vachokue, a warlike, hunting people, who follow agricultural pursuits but slightly, and do not keep cattle. Examination of the literature describing early exploration indicates
[726] the truculent nature of these eastern people with whom caravans of Ovimbundu were in frequent conflict. Umbundu caravans crossed this country when making their way to Rhodesia, culture contacts with which are discussed in chapter X.

The results of contact of Ovimbundu and Vachokue tribes, so far as physical miscegenation is concerned, are mentioned in chapter "Physical Appearance"; while the social effects of slavery resulting from hostilities are described in chapter VI, "Social Life."

174 Rhodesia is a cattle-raising country, but the hostility of the
231 Vachokue, the great distance from central Angola to Rhodesia, and the general dryness of the country to be crossed, discourage the idea that the Ovimbundu obtained their cattle from Rhodesia. If it is

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argued that the cattle might have been brought along the course of the Zambezi and Kwando there is the objection that there are here several tsetse fly belts. On the contrary, cattle-producing country in the southwest and south of Angola is far more accessible than the Rhodesian plateau. 174 231

In the south there is the cultural habit of digging wells, especially among the Vakuanyama; but the Vachokue have not developed this trait. The substrata underlying the sand of southern Angola hold water which serves through the dry season, a fact which is advantageously employed by the cattle-keepers. The Vachokue lack this well-digging habit, and, even if subsurface water were present, the transient Ovimbundu would have lacked opportunity to dig for it when passing through hostile country. 312 171

The acquisition of cattle by the Ovimbundu is of great importance, because it is concerned with the grafting of a series of pastoral traits on a culture in no way originally associated with pastoral pursuits. The truth of this will later be made clear by examination of historical and ethnological evidence. 233

Geographical considerations give a picture of the Ovimbundu situated in naturally fortified country from which they had access to four surrounding areas, whose cultural characters agree well with the determinism of topography and climate. The natural advantages of the central highlands, and the results of contact with each of the adjacent areas, are points which will be developed in appropriate sections throughout the ensuing chapters. 133

III. HISTORICAL SOURCES

175 The object of this chapter is the presentation of a summary of
173 literature relating to Angola from A.D. 1500 down to the present
167 day. In this literature there may be accounts of the movements of tribes which will throw some light on the origin of the Ovimbundu, and the date of their migration into the Benguela Highlands. Present-day tradition of the Ovimbundu is unanimous in declaring that the tribe came from the northeast of its present locality, but some
[101] historical justification of this belief is desirable. The word Ovimbundu ("people of the fog") may refer to the heavy morning mists of highland regions, and there is the possibility that the Ovimbundu adopted this name when they settled on the high plateau.

121 If there is historical evidence in favor of the traditional home of the Ovimbundu being the region of the north and northeast of Angola, what was the ethnological background of these areas at the time when the Ovimbundu became detached from a matrix of northern Angolan tribes? In other words, what cultural factors are the Ovimbundu likely to have brought with them into the Benguela Highlands? The ultimate origin of these factors is a point which has not been neglected (chapter XI, "Wider Culture Contacts"), but for the moment the primary concern is the historical background of the Ovimbundu, with special reference to tribal movements and cultural traits.

As part of this historical inquiry, contacts of the Portuguese and the Ovimbundu are of importance. When and where did the Portuguese come into contact with the Ovimbundu and with what results to the indigenous culture?

127 Chapters IV–IX deal exclusively with my field work among the Ovimbundu in 1929. Therefore it is pertinent to ask to what extent the ethnological observations of travelers and early explorers will corroborate the information recorded in my own notes. Will there be contradiction or confirmation of personal observations? Possibly the ethnological notes obtained from historical sources will serve, not merely to corroborate my field work, but actually to extend the area of occurrence of important cultural traits which I noted in 1929.

The literature describing Angolan history and customs is here presented in the form of a chronological bibliography, which is annotated so as to emphasize points bearing on the purpose of this historical analysis. That there should be a fragmentary presentation of data is an inevitable consequence of the nature of the literature

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itself. Observations have been made, not in a well-ordered time sequence, but at irregular intervals. Moreover, the writings of the majority of observers have not been undertaken with any specific ethnological purpose in view. Early explorers in particular were prone to intersperse historical and ethnological notes among a mass of descriptive material relating to incidents of travel, animal life, and meteorological observations. 127

At the conclusion of this chapter an effort is made to remedy the disjointed nature of the historical evidence. This object is achieved by summarizing the points which provide an answer to the queries brought forward in the opening paragraphs of this chapter respecting the origin and cultural background of the Ovimbundu.

The Portuguese entered the Congo in 1482 under the leadership of Diego Cão (E. G. Ravenstein, The Voyages of Diego Cão, *Geog. Journ.*, 1900, pp. 625–649) and from that time onward Portuguese influence of a political and religious kind was exerted along the course of the Congo. Gradually the Portuguese established themselves on the coast of Angola. Paolo Diaz founded Loanda in 1576, and about eleven years later built the fort of Benguela. 175

The year 1590 saw the Portuguese making war in the interior of Angola against the Jaggas, a northern tribe among whom Andrew Battell was held in honorable captivity as a leader against the Portuguese and all natives of northern Angola, who were exploited by the Jaggas. In 1645 another Portuguese punitive expedition penetrated the interior as far as Bailundu, the center from which the strongest caravans of Umbundu traders and slavers set out for central Africa.

Caconda in the southwest of Angola was founded in 1682, and a century later the coastal town of Moesamedes became a starting point from which early exploration penetrated the interior in search of the sources of the Cunene River. (For the details of Portuguese penetration of Angola see Bibliography: T. E. Bowditch; R. F. Burton; E. G. Ravenstein; T. Lewis.)

When the Portuguese landed at the mouth of the Congo at the close of the fifteenth century they came into contact with the kingdom of Congo, ruled with great pomp and ceremony at Ambassa, about 150 miles inland, and identical with the San Salvador of the Portuguese. The old kingdom of Congo was made up of six strong clans of whose rivalry the Portuguese took advantage to strengthen their own commercial and political position. The slave trade was considered to be as respectable as it was lucrative, and there is no doubt

175 that the Church participated actively (T. Lewis, The Old Kingdom of Kongo, *Geog. Journ.*, 1908, pp. 598–600).

Political influence of the Portuguese, working often through the agency of Jesuit priests, led to factions within the Congo Empire, and the resulting disturbances caused movements of peoples that affected the whole of northern Angola and the population of the Benguela Highlands.

Portuguese penetration of the hinterland of Angola, especially from Loanda to Bihé, was concerned with attempts to subjugate native tribes, the establishment of trading posts, and the encouragement of the slave trade (S. Marquardsen, Angola, 1928, pp. 6–10).

439 721 The value of the Portuguese as allies of Umbundu caravans from Bihé lay in their ability to supply guns and powder to their native henchmen, who gave something more than military service in return. In response to Portuguese demand for slaves and ivory, Umbundu caravans made long journeys into the Congo basin, Rhodesia, south and southwest Angola, and possibly across Africa to lakes Tanganyika and Nyasa. The arms supplied in exchange for ivory and slaves must have helped the Ovimbundu in all their predatory excursions.

648 Thus the Ovimbundu were, ~~in~~ the early centuries of contact with the Portuguese, invaders encouraged in the building up of their tribal life and resources. Never were the Portuguese strong enough completely to subjugate northern Angola. Relationships with natives, especially the Bihéan section of the Ovimbundu, were directed toward alliances on a commercial basis. The political result of this was a combination of the Portuguese and the stronger tribes for the exploitation of the weaker.

167 177 The historical ethnology of the southwest Congo is so complex that the elements are difficult to disentangle. The number of tribes concerned is great, and their movements are not easy to follow; but a gradual extension of people from the Congo in a southwesterly direction through Lunda to the Benguela Highlands (1600–1800) seems to be the summation of all the conflict. I regard the Ovimbundu as the most southerly branch of these mass movements, during which they received a discipline that enabled them to make their home in central Angola, despite opposition from the Portuguese and earlier arrivals.

114 For these conclusions reliance has been placed on the extensive field work and historical analyses of E. Torday and T. A. Joyce, whose "Notes on the Ethnography of the Bambala" (*J.R.A.I.*, XXXV, pp. 398–426) have proved of particular value in this connection.

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The kernel of the migratory problem of the Ovimbundu is reached 101
when Torday traces out the history of the Kimbundu, for the Kimbundu are present-day neighbors of the Ovimbundu, to whom they are closely allied in language and culture (*ovi* is a Bantu plural prefix, which was perhaps used to express the inclusion of Kimbundu and Babunda under the general name Ovimbundu).

Torday's sifting of the historical evidence results in the conclusion 174
that the Kimbundu came from the northeast, fighting their way to 167
the Luando. These Kimbundu divided, with civil war as a conse- 101
quence. One section crossed the river Kwanza, south of which they specialized in agriculture after becoming sedentary. Their sub-chief they called the *Kalunga*, which is the present-day word used by the Ovimbundu in greeting their chiefs. Traditions of the Ovimbundu point to the northeast as a center from which they spread at least ten generations ago. The rise of the powerful kingdom of Lunda dates from the seventeenth century, and although the details of this concentration of power in northeast Angola are unknown the general effects are understood. There was a great displacement of tribes in a southerly and southwesterly direction. In connection with the suggestion that the Ovimbundu came from the northeast of Angola, there is the necessity for recording the absence of even a fragment of historical evidence or tribal tradition indicating that the Ovimbundu came from the south or the east of Angola.

Cultural affinities of the Ovimbundu with tribes of the southwest 174
Congo in particular, and with western Bantu culture in general, 171
strongly support the foregoing deductions from historical sources (chapter X).

There is a probability that tribal disturbances resulting from the rise of the Lunda Empire led to a spread of the Vachokue over eastern Angola. Some of the effects of this contact have already been mentioned in chapter II, where contacts of the Ovimbundu and the Vachokue were discussed. The journey brought me into contact with the Vachokue at Cangamba, Katoko, and Ngalangi, of which Cangamba is the most easterly.

Witnessing of initiation ceremonies combined with observation of physique, language, and artifacts, leads me to agree with Torday that Cangamba is probably the ancient center of Vachokue culture. As one proceeds from Cangamba westward this type of culture becomes thinner as the borders of the country occupied by the Ovimbundu are approached. On the border line between the cultures of the Vachokue and the Ovimbundu, notably at Ngongo near Ngalangi,

174 there is tribal and cultural miscegenation. Both Umbundu and
171 Vachokue languages are spoken; boys of Ngalangi were seen to wear
[881] initiation costumes similar to those worn at Cangamba by the Vachokue, but on proceeding farther westward into territory exclusively occupied by the Ovimbundu, such initiation ceremonies are either absent or attenuated in ritual.

144 Elende, one center of research among the Ovimbundu, repre-
101 sents the purest Umbundu speech and culture observable at the present day. But in chapter IV some physical resemblance of the Ovimbundu to the Vachokue is noted. Warfare commonly resulted in the taking of slaves, a fact which might account for an apparent infusion of Vachokue blood in some of the Ovimbundu.

174 The historical data suggest a northern or northeastern starting
167 point of Umbundu migrations. Therefore an inquiry into the ethnology of these areas will be useful in showing the kind of culture with which the Ovimbundu were in contact before their settlement in the Benguela Highlands. If historical sources disclose the nature of northern Angolan culture from the year A.D. 1500 onward, such evidence can then be considered in relation to cultural traits of the Ovimbundu at the present day.

The establishment of strong cultural resemblances between extant Umbundu culture and older cultural patterns of northern Angola, would tend to strengthen the evidence of history respecting the northern origin of the Ovimbundu.

131 The regions dealt with in the following summary of ethnological
174 facts are the Cabinda Enclave to the north of the Congo estuary, the region of San Salvador, the hinterlands of Loanda and Benguela, and the area of northern Angola between Lat. 7° and 9° S. and Long. 13° to 22° E. This covers the whole area with which the Ovimbundu are likely to have been in contact before entering their present home.

175 My survey begins with the observations of Andrew Battell in
101 1596. His account deals mainly with the northwestern part of Angola, a country bordering on and actually including territory now occupied by the Ovimbundu, who in all probability came in contact with the Jaggas, whose habits of life are described by Battell.

Torday and Joyce identify the Jaggas with the present-day Bayaka, whose cultural resemblances to the Ovimbundu are examined later. In my opinion, the Jaggas correspond well with the Bihéan section of the Ovimbundu, an itinerant and exceedingly warlike people.

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As early as 1600 there were cattle as far north as Benguela, and the Jaggas regarded these as a most valuable part of their plunder. Palms are a characteristic part of the vegetation of Angola north of the Benguela Highlands. Evidently the Jaggas moved extensively in northern Angola because they cut down palms for making wine (Battell, p. 30). The usual method is to tap the top of a standing tree, but the Jaggas were an itinerant people who did not cultivate palms. 175 171 [824]

Sprinkling the blood of sacrificed animals on a newly kindled fire I have mentioned in connection with Umbundu rites celebrating the founding of a new village. The Jaggas carried out this ceremony before a raiding expedition, when cows and other animals were sacrificed (Battell, p. 33). Battell mentions the use of red *tukula* wood for personal decoration. This wood (*Pterocarpus tinctorius*) is used in many parts of Angola at the present time. [824]

Reference to Battell confirms the information given to me in relation to an old iron gong obtained at Ngalangi. He says (p. 20), "The general did strike his gong, which is an instrument of war that soundeth like a bell, and presently made an oration with a loud voice." [534]

Battell reported that the Jaggas wore beads of ostrich eggshell. Ravenstein, the editor of this volume in the Hakluyt Series, seems to doubt this statement, saying, "There are no ostriches in Angola, and as to beads made of ostrich eggs I can give no explanation." I noted the presence of captive ostriches in southern Angola as far north as Gamboa. The Vakuanyama women greatly value their long necklaces of ostrich-eggshell beads. Necklaces made in the north of Angola are traded to the south and conversely, each kind of necklace having a high value due to remoteness of origin. This instance, like many other points, confirms the reliability of Battell's observations in Angola. [237] [114]

Father Jerome Merolla (1682) describes the poison ordeal which was used from the Congo estuary to San Salvador (Churchills' Voyages, II, p. 675). "The aforesaid oath is administered to the supposed traitor by a sort of wizard, who, making a certain composition out of the juices of herbs, serpent's flesh, pulp of fruits, and divers other things, gives it to the supposed delinquent to drink. If guilty (as they tell you) he will immediately fall down in a swoon or trembling to the ground." The marimba was used, and a double iron gong was carried before a chief and struck by an attendant. [695]

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175 171 [412] O. Dapper (Description de l'Afrique, 1732, p. 369) shows a scene in which an ax, such as I obtained from the Vasele country, is being used for beheading a slave.

Cavazzi (Istorica descrizione, etc., Bologna, 1687) describes the three kingdoms of Congo, Matamba, and northern Angola. The [325] poison ordeal, the scapegoat, the blacksmith's bellows (pp. 101, 170) [534] are all traits known to the Ovimbundu. The musical instrument made from a large gourd, which has a ridged board attached for rubbing with a stick, is the type I collected. Cavazzi pictures the double iron gong and the long drum held between the knees. He [782] also shows a rain-maker (p. 214) and the sacrifice of two hundred victims at the accession of a king (p. 210).

174 243 Consideration of the history of maize in Africa is of importance in connection with these early writings, as this grain is the staple agricultural product of the Ovimbundu. I am indebted to Dr. [113] Berthold Laufer for access to his unpublished research on this subject. From the following facts one may assume that, in all probability, the maize culture of the Ovimbundu was derived from the Congo region before their migration into the Benguela Highlands.

175 243 Father Jerome Merolla remarks that maize was growing in the neighborhood of San Salvador (1683–92). The native names were *mampunni* and *massambuta;* from this corn an alcoholic beverage was prepared. According to Cavazzi (Ehrmann, Geschichte der merkwürdigsten Reisen, XIII, 1794) maize was not intensively cultivated by the Negroes of lower Guinea, though it thrives well and may be harvested twice or thrice a year. The natives said that the grain [177] was brought by the Portuguese, but they did not esteem it highly, and were accustomed to use it as food for pigs.

Bosman (p. 312) records that prior to the arrival of the Portuguese, Negroes were entirely ignorant of *milho* ("maize"). The account of Duarte Lopez preserved by Filippo Pigafetta states that the Negroes consider maize the vilest of all grains, so that it is given to swine. This contempt and lack of knowledge of the food value, combined with ignorance of methods of preparation, suggest a recent introduction (Pigafetta, translation by M. Hutchinson, 1881, p. 40). Dapper (Description de l'Afrique, 1732, p. 345) also mentions the cultivation of maize. Battell lived as prisoner in northern Angola about the year 1600, consequently his records of the use of the great Guinea wheat (maize), which the natives call *mas-importo*, give early evidence for the use of this grain (Hakluyt Soc., 1901, pp. 9, 11, 67).

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The foregoing facts, when compared with field work among the Ovimbundu, indicate that the old culture of the Congo and northern Angola bears a strong resemblance to Umbundu culture at the present day. A more detailed analysis of this resemblance is made in chapter X. 174

The following notes dealing with exploration in Angola (1800–1930) are adduced for critical comparison with my own observations among the Ovimbundu. 175 171

The work of Sir R. F. Burton describing the exploration of Lacerda and other Portuguese pioneers, is more useful for geographical than for ethnological information. Lacerda's journey to Czambe, south of Lake Moero, was performed in 1798. A mention of veneration for the dead and consultation of the deceased on all occasions of war or of good fortune, is made (p. 127). These are important points in the present tribal life of the Ovimbundu. [114] [769]

Bowditch (1824) writes from information given to him by Almeida and Saldanha. There are valuable references to the Vacilenge, a people adjacent to the Ovimbundu, who refused to kill their cattle, "rather than do which they will endure famine to extremity." This note was made about Long. 15° E. and Lat. 15° S. (p. 34). The cattle were milked, and cattle-raiding by the Ovimbundu was common at this time. Many present-day Ovimbundu do not milk their cattle, but the Vacilenge still follow their milking custom observed before 1824. 175 101 234

Livingstone's journey through northeast and northern Angola in 1853 contains references to the Vachokue who seemed bent on plunder (I, p. 370). Livingstone noted cotton spinning, which I recorded as an occupation of males of the Ovimbundu at Elende. Livingstone, like other early travelers, encountered caravans of Bihéans (Ovimbundu) bearing elephants' tusks and beeswax, commodities, which, along with slaves, formed the chief merchandise of these caravans from the Benguela Highlands (p. 466). Livingstone notes and sketches (Plate XIII, Fig. 10) the double-handled hoe (p. 442) which is still used. 175 171 [383] [439] [412]

J. J. Monteiro (I, p. 61) saw the poison ordeal administered. The poison itself was prepared from the thick hard bark of a large tree (*Erythrophlaeum guineense*). The place of observation was Mongue Grande, just south of the Congo estuary, and again Monteiro was present when the poison cup was given to two women at Ambrizette. Of this ordeal there is more to be said when discussing the culture contacts of the Ovimbundu, because the ordeal is a basic factor of [695] [824]

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171 wide distribution in Africa (C. Wiedemann, 1909) and the ceremony
175 still survives among the Ovimbundu in modified form.

[114] Though an informative writer, Monteiro is sometimes vague; he says (I, p. 278) that circumcision is a universal custom among the blacks of Angola. In view of the extent of Angola, the diversity of tribes, and the fact that Monteiro traveled over only a small part of the country, this information is misleading.

Monteiro is the only writer in whose works I have found a reference to the Vasele tribe; probably no part of Angola has been so neglected as the Esele country in the hinterland of Novo Redondo. At the present day the Vasele have a reputation for cannibalism. [266] Monteiro saw human flesh eaten at Cuacra, while the skulls of the victims were placed on adjacent trees. Monteiro states (II, p. 167) that on the death of a king the Mucelis (Vasele) put out all the fires in the kingdom; these were relighted by the succeeding king who [321] used fire produced by rubbing two sticks together. The flat beads of shell called *dongos*, made from *Achatina monetaria* (II, p. 168), are made today and traded to the far south of Angola, where their novelty assures them a value far beyond their intrinsic worth. I was fortunate in obtaining an example of the old beheading ax mentioned by Monteiro (II, p. 157) and sketched by Cavazzi (p. 210). Par- [262] boiled and roasted rats were offered to me as food; Monteiro mentions the offering of a roasted rat on a skewer (I, p. 99).

The account of Commander V. L. Cameron, who left Zanzibar for his journey across Africa in 1873, mentions several points of anthropological importance in relation to the Angolan section of his [756] journey. Cameron saw a net-covered medicine-man of the Kibokue (Vacholkue) wearing a mask and a kilt of grass (p. 384). The function [324] of this man was to frighten devils from the woods. The contest in which boys discharge their arrows at a rolling root was seen by Cameron near Kagnombe (Cangamba?). Skulls of victims killed in [787] war were spiked on poles (p. 399). The diviner was followed by attendants who struck iron gongs, while the diviner himself shook a rattle made of basket-work in the form of a dumb-bell (p. 404). Cameron gives an accurate description of the divination basket and its use without going into details. These I have been able to supply [482] (chapter IX). The explorer met caravans of Bihéans, renowned carriers then as they are today. They were usually drunk and abusive; in some instances they attempted to rob the stragglers. 000 The use of caterpillars as food is noted (p. 416): "A man cut open

The use of caterpillars as food is noted (p.416): "A man cut open [262]
a large cocoon, extracted the contents, and smacked his lips with 171
great gusto." My field notes mention the use of caterpillars as food. 175

Capello and Ivens (1877–80) remark on the burial places of [766]
hunters which are distinguishable by the skulls of antelopes, buffalo, and hippopotamuses, stuck on upright poles, mixed with skulls of oxen killed in honor of the defunct. The writers noted that a heap of stones protected the body. I photographed two types of cairn in the regions of Ganda and Luimbale respectively. Capello and Ivens are not precise in their locality, but I judge it to have been Long. 17° E. and Lat. 13° S., a considerable distance from my own observations (Plates XXXII, Fig. 1; LXXIV, Fig. 1).

I photographed the stilt-walkers at the final stages of the initiation [481]
ceremonies at Cangamba. These men had no costumes; on the [292]
contrary they were almost naked but were covered with white clay. Capello and Ivens (p. 295), saw a stilt-walker with a feathered mask and a netting costume. Such attire I saw on an Uluchazi medicine-man, but not on the stilt-walkers (Plate LXXXI, Figs. 1, 2).

I was unable to obtain information about the stilt-walkers, but 693
Capello states that they castigated misdemeanants, punished shameless women, and accused criminals. Capello and Ivens were 187 miles to the northwest of my area of observation. The Uluchazi medicine-man, who appeared with the stilt-walkers during my visits, was said to make bad magic for women. The men ignored him but women gathered round in a derisive way; they quickly scattered when he pursued them.

Serpa Pinto, who made his journey across Angola in 1878, has 175
so many references to customs and objects still extant, that I propose 114
to tabulate his observations because of their value in showing the preservation of indigenous traits in spite of Portuguese contacts.

The body of a chief is buried with a covering of oxhide. Many 175
oxen are sacrificed at the death of a king. The heir to the deceased 766
is bound to sacrifice his whole herd in order to regale his people and give peace to the departed (S. Pinto, I, p. 63). The Ovimbundu conform at the present time to similar methods of burial and sacrifice.

Near Huambo, Serpa Pinto saw in every village a kind of "temple 175
for conversation." This is the *onjango*, that I have described and [345]
photographed (Plate XLVIII, Fig. 1). It is the house in which all males foregather for the evening meal, which is brought by their women (I, p. 96).

The gathering and eating of caterpillars is described. This con- [262]
tinues today (I, p. 120).

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

175 [316] [325] Serpa Pinto saw shafts for the working of iron ore in the neighborhood of Cubango. The ore was mixed with charcoal and smelted in shallow pits. It is stated that the iron was sometimes tempered with ox-grease and salt. The bellows are of the type made at Elende (I, p. 128). Of the tempering process I have no confirmation.

175 787 [764] Somewhere near Bihé Serpa Pinto saw the ceremony of questioning a corpse which was made to sway to and fro, the people believing all the while that it does so without human intervention. The diviner declared that the soul of a dead person will tell who caused the death (I, p. 130). I observed and photographed this ceremony (Plate XLV, Fig. 1).

[695] The ordeal of the poison cup is described; blood-letting, and divination by shaking articles in a basket are also mentioned. Pinto says that in the articles that appear uppermost the diviner reads what his hearers are desirous of learning of the past, present, or future. Sorcery and rain-making are likewise briefly mentioned (I, p. 132). The divination basket, the poison ordeal, and rain-making, are Umbundu cultural traits today.

171 224 Here Pinto illustrates the existing practice of mounting the skulls of animals killed by a hunter on a pole in the village. There is a further reference to this custom among the Ambuellas (I, p. 333). These instances, combined with those personally noted, give a wide distribution for the practice (I, p. 177).

175 [304] Pinto saw the operation of tooth mutilation among the Luimba. The operation was performed with a knife which was struck by repeated light blows (I, p. 209).

[711] Pinto illustrates arrowheads in use in 1879 (I, pp. 277, 346). These are exactly the same as those made and used in 1929 (Plate XVII, Figs. 1–9).

[412] Axes used by the Luchazi are sketched with a detail that shows the old forms to persist without alteration (II, p. 36).

[321] Water-pipes made from horns and gourds by the Luina of eastern Angola are of the forms now used in that region, also by the Ovimbundu of the present day (II, pp. 33, 37).

175 114 For use in checking and supplementing my observations Serpa Pinto's book was found to be of the greatest service, though the precise locality was sometimes difficult to identify. This explorer, in common with others, scattered his ethnological observations among descriptions of the route and botanical, zoological, and other notes.

Lux traveled from Loanda due east, following the Kwanza on the northern bank between 9° and 10° S. Lat., and so into Lunda.

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He draws the crescentic arrowhead (p. 123) still common among the Ovimbundu and Vachokue; the double iron gong (p. 122); and the musical bow, which he calls a viola (p. 121). 175 114 [534]

Sogaur states that iron-working had an advanced technique at Dindo, more than half a century ago. According to Sogaur, the blacksmith was using scrap iron from European sources (II, p. 14). 175 326

Perhaps the most valuable of Chatelain's books is "Fifty Folk Tales of Angola." The stories are accompanied by translations and ethnological notes, the most important of which are references to the carrying of a corpse on a pole; the building of a cairn of stones over the corpse of a hunter; matrilineal descent and the power of the maternal uncle over the persons of his nieces and nephews (sisters' children). My observations included some details respecting the pawning of a sister's children to redeem the debts of their mother's brother. Chatelain adds that sisters' children are successors to private property and chieftainship (pp. 8–10). My notes agree that property is inherited by children of a deceased man's sister, but my informants said that a new chieftain is normally the eldest son of the principal wife of the dead chief. Chatelain's folklore stories, fifty in number, relate chiefly to animals; this was the only kind of story told to me, but W. C. Bell has recorded a few tales of another type. 173 [114] [764] [611] [604] [428] [538]

Marquardsen (1928) devotes only one-fourth of his book to the ethnology of Angola, which he treats in a very general way; there is no section dealing specifically with any particular tribe. The author calls attention to Chapman's observation of rock paintings of South African Bushman type, between Cuma and Luimbale in northwest Angola. I have elsewhere remarked on the occasional occurrence of physical types which show a strain of Bushman blood. Today Bushmen penetrate southern Angola from the Kalahari (Plate LXIX, Figs. 1, 2), but their presence in times past or present does not affect the course of history or the data of ethnology to an appreciable extent. 114 177 [531] [144]

Marquardsen gives some notes of a general kind on Vaheneca, Mahuila and other tribes of southwest Angola. The suggestion is feasible that the Umbundu name Suku, for a supreme being, is the same as the Nzambi of Lunda and the Congo. Marquardsen refers to the importance of the maternal uncle in Umbundu society, to the poison ordeal, and to the burial of an Umbundu chief in oxhide, all of which points were recorded in my observations at Elende. 114 101

Ferreira Diniz's book is unobtainable, but, judging from the summary given in *Anthropos* (XX, 1925, pp. 321–331), the information was collected by a questionnaire widely distributed among adminis-

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114 trative posts. I agree that people between Caconda and Huila
101 represent a racial mixture of the Ovimbundu and the Ovambo. The record speaks of painting-houses for girls at Cabinda, an item which agrees with reports from other sources. The jottings concerning tribes from Cabinda to the far south of Angola are too vague to be used in ethnological work with confidence.

There are many points on which the work of A. Schachtzabel should be consulted for the purpose of making comparisons with my
[621] own observations. The chief of these are a note and photograph on
[281] village construction (p. 130); the musical bow (p. 32); the loom
[175] (plate VI); transmigration of the soul of a chief into an animal (p. 51);
[524] and the game of mancala (p. 52). My observations of initiation at
[881] Katoko, Ngalangi, and Cangamba agree well with that of Schachtzabel at Katoko, but I was able to obtain more detail and more
[283] numerous photographs of the ritual of initiation. The spinning of cotton (p. 143) is exactly the process so frequently witnessed now at Elende. Iron-working (p. 111) appears to be comparable with the technique at Elende, but Schachtzabel seems to have missed the ritual. I was not so fortunate as this author in finding the old type of iron-smelting furnace in use.

114 The work of Statham is devoted primarily to hunting and descrip-
136 tions of plant and animal life. The chapter given to a casual description of people among whom he passed is not useful as ethnology; but the book is of service in providing a background of natural history. Information on the tsetse fly in Angola (p. 294) assists ethnological work by showing the determining effect of this biological factor.
[231] Presence of the fly is prohibitive to cattle-keeping, therefore cattle are not kept along the river courses which are infested with this pest.

114 Alexander Barns made no pretence of writing more than a travel book; nevertheless he publishes photographs of ethnological value, gives useful historical summaries, and deals with economic problems of production and transportation.

114 Tucker's book "Drums in the Darkness," though written to
175 interest the American public in mission work, contains many ethnological statements. The chief of these relate to the structure of the compound (p. 37); the dress of women (p. 39); naming of twins and triplets; and other items which agree well with data from the district in which I worked. There are notes on drum signals (p. 74) and
[202] cannibalism (p. 77). Apparently drum signals were in use at Bihé half a century ago. Forty years ago a slave was killed and eaten
[266] at the installation ceremonies for a new king, a point that was noted

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in the works of Battell, Cavazzi, and other early writers. A description of the whipping of boys at initiation (p. 99) agrees with my own records, but details of the period and place are not given by Tucker. Questioning a corpse (p. 102) is a ceremony I have witnessed and described, but the instance referred to by Tucker relates to the interrogation of the corpse of a chief with regard to his choice of a successor; there are laws of succession, but these may be waived. The ceremony described in my monograph was conducted to discover the cause of death and not to determine succession. If Tucker has any detailed information with regard to puberty ceremonies for girls his reticence is regrettable (p. 142). Tucker says that suicide among women is common (p. 143). A mention of *ocisunji*, a feast for spirits at which meat is offered to idols, is interesting (p. 168) but details are lacking, and the use of the word idols is ambiguous. The information respecting use of charms is corroborative of my own observations in two other centers, Elende and Ngalangi.

The most recent publication on the ethnology of Angola is that of F. and W. Jaspert of the Städtisches Völkermuseum, Frankfort, 1930. Their journey was undertaken primarily to make collections for a museum, but linguistic and ethnological information was recorded among several tribes, notably the Kimbundu, Vachokue, Luchazi, Luimba, and Kusongo. The farthest point attained in a southerly direction was just north of Kipungo, and the general line of march was from Benguela to the northeast, into Lunda. There is very little overlapping in the work of the Jasperts and myself. My itinerary took me to the extreme south into the Vakuanyama country, and to the far east of Moxico among the Vachokue.

My work is presented as a monograph on the Ovimbundu only, and of their culture I treat exclusively, with some reference to the culture contacts observed on all sides of them. The Jasperts do not give an entire section to any one tribe; but combine their information respecting the tribes in a concurrent way, under such subjects as technology, language, and art.

If the sections relating to history and languages are excluded there remain a hundred pages, only one-sixth of which refer to the Ovimbundu; but there is a difficulty in reading through the book without being confused as to the tribe and exact locality under discussion.

The pages devoted to a comparative vocabulary form an important part of the work, and one which I barely touched, though I prepared an outline of Umbundu grammar and made dictaphone records of the

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

114 Umbundu language. The illustrations in photogravure are excellent,
126 but the small-scale map is difficult to follow.

114 As might be expected in a work covering an enormous tract of
241 country, the information is of a very general kind; I have nowhere
224 been able to check in any detail on my own observations. F. and W. Jaspert recognize that Umbundu culture is primarily based on agriculture, maize being the most important crop, but they do not admit the importance of hunting (p. 16).

I saw many successful parties of Umbundu hunters, tested their precision with the bow and arrow, and was able to record the ritual connected with the initiation of a professional hunter. There is also a ceremony before the hunter sets out. It would be more accurate to say that, although Umbundu culture is based primarily on agriculture, hunting still retains some of its earlier importance.

114 The diagrams of houses in different parts of Angola are a useful feature of the work. I made many photographs but did not record details of planning.

114 The masks I obtained are exactly like those pictured, but my
881 observations were carried out a long way to the southeast of the point where the Jasperts touched the Vachokue culture. I do not understand from their description whether the writers saw an initiation ceremony. They state that boys are circumcised and girls are excised when very young, even at the age of five or six years. I observed initiation camps and dances at three centers, Ngalangi, Katoko, and Cangamba; the last named is the main center of Vachokue culture. The male novices varied in age from twelve to sixteen years hence they were older than the novices mentioned by the Jasperts. I was informed that there were no excision operations for girls, though at Ngalangi, Vanyemba girls were secluded in the bush during initiation rites lasting for a month.

Bibliographical references to the research of H. Baumann will be found useful for comparative study. His detailed record of initiation among the Vachokue is valuable as a check on my observation, as we worked independently in areas separated by several hundred miles.

Consultation of historical sources gives the following answers to questions which were asked as an introduction to this chapter.

174 On the grounds of tribal tradition, historical evidence, and cultural affinities, the original home of the Ovimbundu was likely to have been in the southwest Congo. The Ovimbundu undoubtedly possess important cultural traits that have been characteristic of the southern Congo region from the earliest time for which a record exists.

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In northern Angola the Ovimbundu could not have had other than 174
a warlike existence, which trained them in military tactics and the 178
building up of an aggressive confederacy. In this they were aided by contact with the Portuguese, who supplied guns and powder in exchange for slaves and ivory from the interior. This accumulated wealth further stimulated the building up of Umbundu tribal life.

Introduction of maize by the Portuguese gave the Ovimbundu a 177
knowledge of this grain, which later became their staple wealth and food supply.

The cultural pattern of the northern Congo was the same in the 174
year 1600 as it is today, and consideration of the ethnology of the Congo region reveals numerous similarities with Umbundu culture of the present time.

Writings of explorers in Angola from A.D. 1800 to the present day bring out many points which are in agreement with my field observations. There are no discrepancies which would make me question the validity of information given by my informants.

In early records, Battell's observation of cattle in the hinterland [231]
of Benguela (1600), is important in showing that at such an early date the Ovimbundu had access to cattle when raiding from their home in the Benguela Highlands.

From these fundamentals of geography and history the inquiry turns to a detailed account of my observations among the Ovimbundu and surrounding tribes.

IV. PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

142 Among the Ovimbundu there are two main physical types. One of these is of brown skin color and slender build. In this type the calves and thighs are poorly developed, and the chest girth is slender in keeping with the general development. In general the physical 144 characteristics are distinctly different from those of a typical West African Negro as represented by the Kru and the Ibo tribes.

The Ovimbundu are Bantu Negroes who possibly result from a crossing of Hamites and true Negroes, a hypothesis which would account for both the light-colored slim type and the shorter, darker, more sturdy type. But E. Torday (Herbert Spencer, Descriptive [114] Sociology of African Races, London, 1930, Preface, p. iii) thinks that differences of physique among Sudanic and Bantu Negroes are sufficiently accounted for by isolations and environmental differences. Torday denies the need for postulating an infusion of Hamitic blood, but his opinion is opposed to that which has found general acceptance.

The darker Ovimbundu with more facial hair may represent an infusion of Vachokue blood because there was warfare between the Ovimbundu and the Vachokue of eastern Angola with the result that some of the latter were taken as slaves. Types of the Ovimbundu are shown (Plates LII–LIV).

101 The Vasele, an Umbundu-speaking people of west-central Angola, form a linguistic and cultural pocket because of their isolation in 142 rugged country. Their physique shows no pronounced differences [304] from that of the Ovimbundu, but the methods of scarification, tooth mutilation, and personal ornament are in distinct contrast with those of the Ovimbundu. The Ovimbundu have only a V-shaped notch in the two upper central incisors, whereas the Vasele chip all their teeth to points (Plate LXXVI, Figs. 1, 2).

[302] The Luvando of southwest Angola resemble the Ovimbundu in general physique, though the great difference in hairdressing and personal ornament is likely to give a contrary impression (Plate LIX, Figs. 1, 2).

The Vaheneca are particularly well developed (Plate LXII, Figs. 1, 2). Not until Mongua is reached does one find a people who are distinctly different from the Ovimbundu in all respects. The Vakuanyama of Mongua are noticeably tall and slim, much taller and slimmer than the Ovimbundu, while their physiognomy is more refined (Plates LXIII; LXVIII, Fig. 2). The Vakuanyama are a pastoral tribe whereas the Ovimbundu are principally agricultural.

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The picture of types gathered at Ngalangi (Plate LXXXIX, Fig. 3) shows, reading from left to right along the back row, then along the front row in the same direction: an Ocimbundu; an Ocivokue; a man of the Vangangella; an Uluchazi woman; a Lunda man; and two types of the Vangangella. 142 101

The M'Bunda man and woman photographed at Cangamba display characteristic deformation of the upper central incisors (Plate XCI, Figs. 1, 2). Photographs of a Mussurongo man and two women, taken about a hundred miles east of Malange, show no great difference from the Ovimbundu except in their shorter stature (Plates LXX, Figs. 1, 2; LXXI, Figs. 1, 2). The Bushman (Plate LXIX, Figs. 1, 2) shows a type found wandering in small bands in the south of Angola. These photographs were taken at Cassanga. [304]

The dress and personal ornaments of the tribes dwelling to the south of the Ovimbundu (Plates LIX–LXVIII) are entirely different from the clothing and decorative styles observed in the areas occupied by the Ovimbundu. This statement is true with regard to bodily covering, ornaments, tooth mutilation, use of pigment, scarification, and hairdressing. 171 301 304

In respect of all these factors, males and females of the Ovimbundu have distinctive patterns which do not appear to have influenced, or to have been influenced by the styles around them. [177]

In working southward from Elende I passed through typical Umbundu cultures until the vicinity of Kipungo was reached. At this place the change in physical appearance, ornaments, and hairdressing was remarkable both for its abruptness and distinctiveness. But the change from agricultural to pastoral pursuits is gradual.

A comparison of photographs indicates at once the truth of this statement, which can be further illustrated by a detailed description of the ornaments observed from Kipungo to Mongua.

By far the most important of these is the circular *ombo* shell made from the basal part of a gastropod shell of the genus *Conus* Linn; and allied forms. These are highly prized, not because of any intrinsic worth, but on account of strong sentiment arising from their bequest, which is usually in the female line. I have, however, seen a few males of the Vakuanyama wearing these shells. For the old *ombo* shells monetary offers equal to the earnings of a woman for a period of six months were made, but without success. One woman wavered somewhat, but finally decided that she dared not return to her home without her *ombo* shells. From a Portuguese trader I bought, for a small sum, *ombo* shells showing stages in manufacture. 301 321 [825] [562]

301 The new ornaments had acquired no sentimental value, therefore
321 their price was moderate.

[171] *Omba* shells are to be seen in use from Kipungo southward through Huila, among the Luvando, and among the Vakuanyama of southern Angola. In the places mentioned one may judge the social status
[554] of a woman by the number of *omba* shells she wears. A principal wife is usually well supplied with these ornaments.

302 In this southern journey it was noticeable that there was an
171 increasing use of red pigment which is lavishly employed for smearing
[294] every kind of ornament, the body, and the hair. Leather belts and skirts of Vakuanyama women are thickly coated with red pigment which is invariably mixed with grease. The red powder is prepared
[824] by desiccating a red wood called *tukula* by the Vakuanyama, a name which is used through Angola and the southern Congo area.

412 From Kipungo southward through the Vakuanyama country
171 there is a notable absence of decorative wooden hair combs. On the contrary, delicately carved combs are used by both men and women of the Ovimbundu. The Vasele make such combs, but by far the best
[532] examples are made and used by the Vachokue tribe of eastern Angola. Here the decorative design usually includes a well-carved human figure at the top of the comb.

301 Among the Vakuanyama, necklaces of disks made from ostrich
[237] eggshell are worn by the women only. A woman of importance has
[559] a dozen loops of such necklaces, each loop being about 125 cm long. These necklaces are so greatly esteemed that only after much persuasion can a woman be induced to part with a single link. Perhaps, as is the case with *omba* shell, there is more than the intrinsic value to be considered. One point is constantly noticed in considering social status and ornament. All the wives of a wealthy man, especially among the Vakuanyama, are made to advertise their husband's position by the profusion of their ornaments and the quality of their leather skirts and belts.

[321] There is, in additon to the necklaces of ostrich-eggshell beads, a highly prized necklace made from small perforated disks of shell having a diameter of about a centimeter. The Vakuanyama women smear a necklace of this kind with grease and *tukula* powder; the
[435] value of a necklace 125 cm long is equivalent to that of an ox. In describing these necklaces there is interest in noting that they are traded to the south of Angola from places six hundred miles to the
[439] north; therefore their value is to some extent dependent on rarity and distant origin.

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Young unmarried girls of the Luvando tribe wear a large number 301
of leg-bands which extend from the ankles to the knees as a sign that 124
puberty has not been reached. These leg-bands are somewhat roughly [881]
twisted from fibrous roots and twigs from which the cortex has been removed. Collars of tough, elastic, cane-like substance are worn by Luvando women, and so numerous are these that the neck is entirely covered. These cane neck-bands are ornamented with burned, [531]
incised, geometrical patterns, and, in keeping with other ornaments, are thickly smeared with grease and red powder from *tukula* wood (Plate LIX, Figs. 1, 2).

Women of the Vakipungo and Vakuanyama wear heavy coils of 171
brass or copper wire on their forearms. In southern Angola women 301
wear bracelets of twisted wire which are identical with those worn 439
by Zulu women. Bracelets of beaten trade brass, ornamented with [531]
incised geometrical designs, are worn by women of the Ovimbundu, Vakuanyama, Luvando, and Vakipungo tribes. Ovimbundu women now depend largely on trade goods for personal ornament.

Ovimbundu men and women are dressed in trade cloth. Unmar- 291
ried girls wear one piece of cloth which hangs from the armpits to the 171
knees. A married woman drapes herself with two pieces of cloth, a skirt hanging from her girdle, and an upper piece so folded as to hold her baby tightly to her back. Men wear a single piece of cloth as a skirt; the upper part of the body is bare (Plates XLIX–LI). From the region of Kipungo to the southern border, clothing is of leather. The Vachokue wear trade cloth or bark cloth.

Hairdressing is of many styles. Ovimbundu women braid their hair 302
neatly in strands across their foreheads, and small blue and white 171
trade beads are used to decorate the braids. The hairdressing of the Ovimbundu women is different from that in any other part of Angola. At an early age the hair is trained into two long loops at the back of the head. Then these are covered with black cloth which is bound tightly. The two loops are afterwards studded with brass-headed tacks obtained from a store (Plate XL, Fig. 3).

Luvando women in the region of Kipungo dress the hair to form a large triangular projection from the back of the head. Girls of the Vaheneca tribe near Huila mass the hair with clay to form large "cock's combs." Women of Gambos pass each small plait of hair through hollow reeds. Humbe women do not redden or grease their hair which is massed into three high ridges on the top, while at the sides there are hornlike projections. Vakuanyama women dress their hair with grease and *tukula* powder. A principal wife builds up her

A principal wife builds up her
302 hair into five high cones. Vachokue women mass their hair into
[595] separate balls shaped and held by clay and red coloring matter.
171 I know of no hairdressing for Vachokue men, but ornamental wooden combs are sometimes used.

304 In only one place have I seen a nose pin worn, namely, the Esele country of Vila Nova de Selles. The fashion is out of date, but women of only twenty-five years of age have the septum of the nose bored; evidently the custom has not been obsolete for a long period (Plate LXXV, Fig. 1).

177 The most popular European importations are blue cloth with
439 white spots, metal hair combs, beads, and bright metal crosses
301 bearing a figure of the Virgin Mary with the infant Jesus. This ornament has penetrated to districts far away from Christian missions, and its wide dispersal shows that a newly introduced and attractive ornament from a foreign source may readily be accepted by tribes of different cultures.

517 There are interesting points of psychology in the attitude of the
301 Ovimbundu toward European importations. Only a few patterns of cloth are favored, and there is no sale for any other design. Some designs are thought to be appropriate for young girls while others are favored by older women. The same may be said of colored beads, for whereas both blue and white beads are the usual decoration for young women and immature girls, red beads are worn chiefly by the elderly women.

178 A consideration of personal ornament establishes the general truth that in scarification, hairdressing, tooth mutilation, the use of red powder and grease, the anointing of the hair with palm oil, and the wearing of trade cloth, leather, or bark cloth, there is little exchange of styles. There are diffusions in language and other cultural traits, but decorative elements which have for a long period been regarded as distinctive of tribal life are rigidly preserved.

V. ECONOMIC LIFE

The words "economic life" are here used with a wide connotation 182
including nature lore, food supply, trade, transport, and industries; all these are combined to form a foundation for every aspect of the social life of the tribe.

The truth of this is realized if one pays attention to the rites 788
connected with occupations. For the hunter there is special training, 782
ritual, and a peculiar mode of burial. Final ceremonies in the initiation of a young blacksmith are associated with sacred acts such as sacrifice of animals and the sprinkling of the tools with their blood. Even the simple occupation of pounding corn requires that the rock shall be dedicated to this purpose by sprinkling the blood of a chicken on the surface. Similarly, a clay pit has to be consecrated before the raw material may be taken for making pottery. A caravan [787]
journey is not merely a commercial undertaking; the accompanying medicine-man carries a wooden figure which he consults with regard to the route (Plate XXI, Fig. 5).

Division of labor according to sex is one of the most important 462
principles involved in the economic life, more particularly in occupational groupings, which are strictly observed. Moreover, within any one activity, such as house-building, there are tasks for men only, while other parts of the work are performed exclusively by women or children.

The study of industries is of great importance when a comparison 322
of Umbundu and adjacent cultures is being made. This is particu- 177
larly true in the instance of wood-carving, an occupation yielding highly specialized products some of which are connected with religious [778]
belief and ritual. All artifacts are valuable as criteria of cultural contacts, though their reliability as evidence of trait diffusion naturally varies with their degree of complexity. Study of native industries in relation to European contacts illustrates a cultural process which may result in acceptance, rejection, or ingenious adaptation of new ideas.

That a study of the economic life of a tribe is not merely a record- 182
ing of material processes and artifacts, is illustrated by observation 231
of the treatment of cattle. This pastoral pursuit naturally falls under a heading "Domestic Animals," but the ideas associated with cattle, including funeral feasts, use of horns on graves, and the wrapping of the royal corpse in cowhide, lead directly into important matters of belief and ritual.

825 824 Nature lore of the Ovimbundu rightly forms an introduction to other aspects of economic life, because there is no better introduction to ethnological research in the field than that of associating with the people in daily occupations connected with the food supply and industries. In this way a field worker realizes that observation on the part of hunters and food gatherers is fundamental, not merely to economic and social life, but to the growth of language and folklore.

Observation and experiment have led to the selection of many kinds of timber, each having one or more specific uses. Collection of plants is connected with the making of dyes for baskets, a varnish for pots, and a pharmacopoeia for the medicine-man. Minute observation of the habits of animals, primarily carried out to ensure successful hunting, is clearly reflected in the growth of vocabulary, and likewise in the realism and humor of folk tales and proverbs (chapter VIII). [538]

This chapter is concerned chiefly with a presentation of factual material whose psychological and cultural bearing is more fully dealt with in chapters X–XII.

NATURE LORE

825 The Ovimbundu are keen observers whose knowledge of the natural history of plants and animals is comprehensive. Almost any boy of twelve years of age is able to give the information detailed here. Some of the birds have been identified by Mr. Rudyerd Boulton, Department of Zoology, Field Museum.

Ombo. Ostrich. The knowledge of this bird must come from the south of Angola. In traveling south I first saw ostriches at Humbe. These were domesticated birds.

Epanda. Wattled Crane (*Bugeranus carunculatus*). The informant said, "*Epanda* is a big bird which has long legs and a long neck."

Epumumu. This is the Ground Hornbill (*Bucorvus cafer*) whose black wings are tipped with white. I have observed them from Ganda to Vakuanyama country. They take to flight slowly after hopping heavily for a few paces.

Ocomukongo. From the Umbundu word *ukongo*, a hunter. This bird lives on small buck and rabbits.

Etokaila. This is the smaller bustard called by the Boers knorhaan.

Ohanga. The Guinea Fowl (*Numida meleagris*).

Onjana. Spur-winged Goose (*Plectropterus gambensis*).

Ongonga. An eagle. The word is used generally for a large bird of prey.

Okokokoko. The Bateleur Eagle (*Terathopius ecaudatus*). The bird is almost without a tail. This bird is not predatory. It kills snakes but does not take chickens or other small animals.

Ocisiele. A kite, well known because it preys on chickens.

Etalahanga. A hawk which waits in the trees then volplanes on its prey.

Okapamba. A small hawk which preys on chickens.

Enpamahuti. A hawk.

Ocikumanga. The White-breasted Crow (*Corvus albus*).

Ongualí (*wa-wa*). This is the Red-necked Partridge (*Pternistis afer*).

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825

Ekalanga. A species of francolin without red coloring on the legs.

Esusi. This is a bird which comes out at night. It can catch spirits and make them die a second death.

Onjimbi. This nocturnal owl (*Bubo maculosus*) is thought to be very dangerous. People who hear the cry of this bird are frightened because the noise is the sound of death.

Kacukucuku. The Barn Owl (*Tyto alba affinis*).

Ongongayulombo. An eagle which eats small buck, pigs, and rabbits.

Ekuti. Is a Red-eyed Dove (*Streptopelia semitorquata*) which says "oo—oo—oo" very sharply all day.

Onende. A dove (*Streptopelia capicola*) which makes the same noise as *ekuti* but on a higher note.

Onduva. This bird is of great importance to the Ovimbundu, because the feathers are used for decorating the head of a dead king. A medicine-man sometimes uses them for decoration when he is performing.

Ondonga. Is a little bird, which, like *onduva*, belongs to the royal family of birds.

Ukuku. A water bird.

Ocisandombunji. This is a bird which feeds on white ants.

Epandacokocoko. This is a bird (*Geocichla litsipsirupa*) whose cry tells the people of a village to make the guest house ready as strangers are coming.

Ocilonga. Is a beautiful yellow bird, an oriole (*Oriolus monarchus angolensis*).

Etua, singular; *ovatua*, plural. A species of bustard.

Etioko. A small bird of the plains (*Anthus leucophrys*).

Okakeleksis. This is the Spur-wing Plover (*Hoplopterus armatus*), a large bird which lives on flat land near rivers.

Ocikandi. An unidentified bird. My informant said, "*Ocikandi* can cry in the same way as any other bird."

Okakongongala. This is a bird somewhat like a pigeon but larger. It has long legs and is able to run well.

Undolo. A small spotted bird which always looks in the direction of the sun.

Omiapia. This is a swallow.

Ocikangumiapia. My informant said, "This bird is like *omiapia* but larger."

Omuipui. "He has a crest on his head and when he sings rain is coming."

Ezungaguluse. This bird has a long beak. It lays eggs on the ground. The bird is as big as a man's fist.

Omanula. A woodpecker (family Picidae).

Okangongo. Has a white breast spotted with black; the head is blue.

Ocinjonjo. This is a little bird having a long beak which is used to probe into flowers.

Kosseleksis. A little black bird which makes a small fine nest.

Ocituku. A river bird. These birds go about in flocks.

Ongombo. A small yellow bird.

Epilili. A yellow bird rather larger than *ongombo*. This bird is kept in cages very cleverly made of reeds by small boys. The birds are caught by smearing a sticky substance on the branches of trees.

Ocikenge. *Agapornis rosicollis.* A small green parrot.

Okalusondonjovo. Is to be seen at the time of *onjovo* (spring). These birds fly in flocks.

A description of bird-calls illustrates a method of reasoning by analogy. This results in a transference of human thoughts and emotions to animals, a process which gives animal fables their strong 538 825

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538 825 appeal. For example, the pigeon says, *Tu kolela oku iva* ("We believe in stealing"), and the following are further instances of the same kind.

Ocinganja is a bird which has several calls. Early in the year the female says as she looks at the newly hatched brood, "This year I have borne white children." Later the little birds grow black feathers. Then the mother cries, "Each year disappointment." Sometimes the female says to the cock bird, "A stick has stuck in my eye. I wonder whether it will make a growth there." The bird is probably the Black Flycatcher (*Melaenornis pammelaina*).

Epandacokocoko says, "Where will the guests stay? Where? Where? Where?" This is an unfailing intimation that strangers will visit the village.

Omanula. This is another bird which announces the approach of strangers by saying, "*Akombe! Akombe! Akombe!*" ("Guests! Guests! Guests!") Two birds are supposed to carry on a dialogue.

Sankanjuele says, "He who has eaten should leave the rest for the important ones," meaning himself.

Ondonga answers, "Do you mean me? The way you scold hurts me to my heart."

Ungolombia. The male and female birds *ungolombia* are about to cross a stream. The female says, "I am wearing four yards of cloth," meaning that she will get wet. The husband says, three times, "If you are wearing four yards of cloth, why do you not cross at the source of the river?"

Omboso says, "When I lay my eggs on the ground, the white ants destroy them." The call continues, "When I lay them up high, *kalupamba* steals them." *Omboso* cries, "Such hardship, goodness gracious me!" The exclamation is, "*A mai we,*" literally, "O my mother!"

Kocukuku the Barn Owl (*Typo alba*) and his mate speak together. The female says, "*Cimuku,* do you eat rats?" He answers, "I do not eat them, they have tails."

Ungungu says, "No big animal lays eggs, so the crocodile must be a bird, too."

Ocimbamba (night hawk) may be heard on moonlight nights saying, "O lion, here are the people."

Ekuti says, "My child is gone to *Koputu.*" *Koputu,* in Umbundu, means a far off place. Possibly *Koputu* is a corruption of Oporto. This bird makes a monotonous and continuous cry from sunrise to sunset.

Epumumu (hornbills) are large black birds. The female says, "I'm going, I'm going, I'm going to our village." The male replies, "Don't go, don't go, the rain has come; let us plant."

Katendipanga. This bird is quiet until September, the month in which rain begins to fall. Then the bird says, "Save! Save! Save!" He means this as a warning to people who eat their corn instead of saving some for seed. The seed should be sown in October when the rains have begun. The derivation of the name of this bird is important. *Okutenda,* to count; *ovipanga,* the rows of corn in a field.

Kalusundanjovo. The female bird says, "Let's throw away the big drum." The male answers, "When we have thrown it away, what shall we do for dances?"

821 Observations of the weather are of importance in fixing dates for sowing and reaping; such dates are the base of time reckoning. Rainfall is important where cattle are kept, and a knowledge of the stars is of service to hunters and caravan leaders when following unfamiliar routes.

[789] The weather is thought to be controlled to some extent by the *ocimbanda* ("medicine-man") and his performances. The rain-

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maker's dance seen at Ngongo, a village of Ngalangi in east-central Angola, will be described in dealing with the *ocimbanda* (chapter IX). 821

No man thinks that the course of the sun can be altered, but there seems to be a hope that the setting of the sun may be delayed. A man who is likely to be overtaken by darkness breaks a piece from an ant hill. This fragment is placed in the forked branch of a tree while the supplicant says, "Sun, wait a little while for me." [786]

Months are reckoned by observation of the moon. The new moon is *osai* ("moon") *yokaliye* ("new"). There is no word for half moon. The phrase for full moon is *osai ya tunga ohumba*. *Ohumba* means "basket"; therefore the idea appears to be that the full moon is round like the big basket used for field work.

A star is called *olumbungululu*. To describe a shooting star, the word *luenda* ("it goes") is added. The large bright morning star is *tanda*. Another bright star is *tielele*. Three bright stars in a line are the hunter, the dog, and the quarry. The three stars are *ukongo* ("hunter"), *lombua* ("the dog"), *locinyama* ("the animal").

An eclipse of the sun is *uteke vutanya*. The former word means "night," the latter word means "daylight." Hence the meaning is "night in daylight."

Small mammals are captured in cane traps or stunned with blunt wooden arrows. The pursuit of such animals is a pastime for boys who thereby receive their early training in hunting. Rats are used as food after being boiled and roasted. This fact accounts for interest in the following small mammals. 224 825 [262]

Umbili. This is a big black river rat, the largest of the water rats.

Ocifelefele. A big gray water rat (*Cricetomys?*), not so large as *umbili*.

Kaleñe. A river rat something like the preceding one in appearance. *Kaleñe* can stay in the water for a longer period than that endured by *ocifelefele*.

Epeke. This is a bush rat which is light gray in color.

Ekolonqonjo. This rat stays in the bush. It builds a nest in an ant hill from which it comes out only at night. The color is gray.

Elima (*Epomophorus*). This is the name given to the fruit bat. The word *elima* means "not one thing and not another." Thus *elima* is the word applied to a mulatto; he is not a Negro, not a white man.

Osili (*Rhabdomys*). This is a large light brown mouse having white stripes on his back.

Ongenge. A mouse.

Epengue. A black rat.

Ocipili. A mouse with a long thin nose; probably a shrew.

Osinge. This is a very fat mouse.

Nakalongaka. This very small mouse makes a hole around which he piles grass to conceal the entrance.

Onjomboloka (*Lemniscomys*). A mouse with a stripe on his back.

Kandoti (*Dendromus*). A very little mouse something like *nakalongaka*.

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825 Observation of reptiles is a necessary self-protection as there are many poisonous snakes. The flesh of the python is eaten. Snake-
[524] skin and lizard-skin are occasionally used; for example, in covering a round, hard fruit in order to make a ball for playing a game.

When collecting lizards and snakes I found that each kind had a well-known name, though there was occasional disagreement among the men consulted.

Ocisangoko is a lizard (*Agama planiceps*) about ten inches long whose tail is covered with sharp spines. This reptile has colors of bright blue, red, and orange. *Osangu* is a large spinous gray lizard (*Agama atricoll*). *Ekangala* (*Gerrhosaurus nigrolineatus*) is a brilliantly colored lizard which burrows deeply into the ground.

Olutanjila is a long slender green snake which hides in trees to capture birds. *Ombandanjila* is a long gray-backed snake with a light green belly. The generic name for snake is *onyoha*. The python is *omoma*. The chameleon (*eloñailo*) seems to be feared, as the men and boys refuse to touch a dead one but always move it with sticks. There is a proverb to the effect that the chameleon though slow always gets there. The refusal to touch even dead reptiles is due to an exaggerated fear of being bitten. I could find no other reason.

824 Trees are of importance in connection with building houses and
313 wood-carving. The qualities of different timbers are well known to the Ovimbundu. For the main part, the collection of medicinal plants and their uses will be described in connection with the medicine-man. The following are the most common trees which are of economic importance.

Usia (pronounced *oosha*). This tree has an edible fruit the size of a walnut. The kernel is valued as a food.

Ombula. This tree provides wood which burns readily. The small skin-covered stools to be found in every hut are often made from this wood.

Ukengo. The fruit has a hard rind.

[757] *Owindo*. This tree has a small acid fruit from which a medicine is made for the cure of painful menstruation.

Usilosilo. The leaf is compound and palmate. The fruit is black.

Usiambiambia. Bears a little red, oval fruit.

Usole. Has a large red fruit.

Usombo. Grows near streams. It has a fruit like that of *olulakula*, but smaller.

[223] *Ukulixnga*. Has a fruit like the berry of a coffee plant. The fruit is used for making mucilage which is used for capturing small birds.

Omonda. When this tree is small, the wood is springy, and is therefore useful for making bows. The wood of the older trees is burned for preparing charcoal which is used in the blacksmith's fire.

Onunda. This is an erect tree having no branches on the lower part. The wood is extensively used in building native huts.

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Omua. A large tree having clusters of small white flowers which are visited by bees on account of their content of honey. The tree yields a hard wood from which charcoal is prepared. The bark and leaves yield a pigment which is used for dyeing cloth a yellowish brown. 824 313

Ovui is valuable because it gives a hard wood used for the corner posts of houses. White ants do not attack this wood, which is therefore useful for making the uprights on which granaries are erected.

Olupelongale. A tree from which planks of hard red wood are obtained. These are used for making doors in village fences.

Omua or *ekenge* or *uacumbu.* These trees have small compound leaves which are very similar. The bark of the latter two is used as rope for binding the uprights and the crosspieces in the framework of native houses. *Ekenge* and *uacumbu* also yield a bark which is beaten into bark cloth in the Ngalangi district.

Ocipako. The bark is used for binding posts, also for the fabrication of bark cloth.

Ungola. The roots of this tree yield a dye for cloth. The leaves are said to have a value for curing sore eyes. The mother of a child afflicted with sore eyes chews the leaves, then spits into the child's eyes. [757]

Ongaya. Yields a wood used for making pestles and pounding sticks.

Omuiko ("iron wood"). This tree has a hard wood which is used for the same purpose.

Onjanga. Gives a wood used in the making of houses, doors, and beehives.

Omowe. A large tree which gives planks for building purposes.

Uvanje. Yields a useful red timber.

Ulondangonda. A tree with very rough bark. The word *ongonda* means a crocodile. This is the tree which even a crocodile can climb. [75]

Ongunja. A tree which yields a fruit having a value as a purgative. The antelope is said to be fond of the fruits of this tree.

Ocikumbeolemba. Gives a resinous fluid which is used in the preparation of lime for snaring birds. [223]

Ulembe. This word is derived from the word *ulembe*, meaning shade. The *ovimbala* (native capital) of Ngalangi is surrounded by such trees.

Omia. A tree which produces yellow flowers in September. The fruit is not edible but oil is made from it.

Okulua. A tree having fragrant flowers like those of honeysuckle. The thick bark is used in making mats.

Ocuve. A soft wood which is easily whittled with a knife. The figures from Bailundu (Plate XXI, Fig. 5) are often carved from this wood.

Umbolombolo. A soft wood which is not very strong.

Uvibasquiunda. A small tree which produces bright red fruits. These are used by women for the manufacture of bead necklaces.

Ocilasi. The wood is used for the heads of arrows for shooting birds. This timber is used in the building of pigpens. The branches have projections which are said to guard (*okulasa*, to guard) the occupants of the pen.

Itota. From the roots of this tree a medicine for pulmonary complaints is made.

Ulusa. This is the baobab, whose habitat is the dry regions. Some of the trees have enormous girth. They are leafless for a great part of the year. The long fruits make gourds. The seeds in the fruits are bitter.

Ulusetue (pronounced *ocuwtiwi*). From the wood the Ovimbundu make wooden platters and spoons used for serving mush from the large cooking pot.

Onfilitti. This tree yields a hard red wood which takes a lustrous polish. For this reason the wood is employed for making ornamental sticks and clubs.

Upondonjamba. This small tree has roots which girls use for making anklebands.

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824 Otolilalaka. This tree has leaves which are used in treating a skin disease
813 Uesadempulase. This small tree, only three feet in height, gives straigh twigs which are used in making arrow shafts.

FOOD SUPPLY

COLLECTING AND HUNTING

222 Collecting of natural products which serve as food substances i
462 chiefly in the hands of women and children, though an exception ha to be made in the instance of honey, which is gathered by men and boys.

Boys diligently search for nests, noting their location so as to b able to visit them again when the fledglings are large enough t serve as food. Large numbers of women and children may be seen
252 gathering caterpillars in gourds. The insides of the caterpillars ar
222 squeezed into boiling water to make soup.

When a cloud of locusts appears, as in 1925, the creatures ar gathered. They are sometimes fried, or they may be boiled in water dried, and preserved with salt in earthenware pots.

A number of miscellaneous items of the food supply were men tioned in connection with names of trees whose fruits are gathered.

223 Boys engaged in food-gathering usually carry small bows an
[411] blunt wooden arrows (ocilasi). One type of bird arrow is fixed t the bowstring. The forward end of the arrow is split so that i may contain small stones that are ejected when the string is released From the wild fig tree mucilage is obtained and this is boiled unti it forms a thick paste which is smeared on the boughs of trees
[231] Some of the small birds captured in this way are eaten, others ar kept in wicker cages made by children.

343 In all parts of Angola large cylindrical beehives may be seen
171 fixed high in the trees (Plate XC, Fig. 2). Two types of hive hav been noted in particular. In the Elende district a hive is made b opposing two half cylinders of wood each about three feet long, a forming a hive which has a diameter of one foot. The ends ar covered, with the exception of a small round hole. The whole struc ture is bound round with grass which is kept in position by lashing of bark. In the neighborhood of Cassanga a difference in the structur of the hives was noticed. This type of hive is made from a cylinde of strong reddish bark, the edges of which are fastened togethe with stout wooden pegs. The dimensions are the same as for the hive used in Elende, but the hive of bark is uncovered.

231 In the Elende district honey of wild bees is removed from the hives in the months of August and December. One man ascends
[see pp. 138-140, category 116]

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the tree in order to lower the hive with a long rope of bark or plaited 231
fiber, while beneath the tree men are prepared to take the hive, which is opened over a smoky fire. The men wear no protection, consequently they are badly stung. Boys are encouraged to help, and those who run away receive no honey. Honey may be eaten 263
alone or with manioc. No drink is made from honey only, but 273
ochaua is the name given to beer with honey in it. *Ovingundu* is a drink made from pounded corn which has been soaked in water to which a little honey has been added. The drink is allowed to remain untouched over night; thus it becomes sweet and is mildly intoxicating.

Wax is a very important item of trade. In the remote places 439
natives bring to small trading posts balls of wax which are about 257
two pounds in weight. These in former days were a standard of [436]
exchange in terms of which other values could be measured. These balls of wax are made into large cakes for foreign export. In the Esele country a fiber strainer is used for cleaning the wax. Honey is sometimes dried in very large baskets which are three feet in diameter and two inches deep. These baskets were not observed among the Ovimbundu, but they are used in the region of Cassanga in southern Angola. The honey of wild bees when eaten in the comb is palatable; it would be more so if one could disregard the presence of numerous dead bees.

The bow is the chief weapon of the hunter. The release of the 411
arrow is made with the index and middle fingers (Plate XXXIX, 171
Fig. 1). I have observed this method among the Ovimbundu of 224
the Benguela Highlands, in the region of Kipungo, in the far south among the Valuanyama, and among the Vasele of the Novo Redondo hinterland. Arrows differ considerably in pattern as the illustrations show (Plate XVII, Figs. 1-9); the Ovimbundu have arrow-points of excellent workmanship. The manufacture of these arrow-points is [326]
one of the most skilled occupations of the blacksmith. Each man makes his own shafts and feathers them. The arrows of the Vasele have leaf-shaped iron points; so also have those used by the Valuanyama.

Among the Ovimbundu are specialists who make bows from [463]
elastic woods called *usia* and *osambia*. The bow itself is *ohonji* and the arrow is *usongo*. At the third shot I saw a young Ocimbundu boy split a cane which was placed upright at a distance of thirty-three feet. The throwing club (*ohunya*) is used for killing small game such as hares.

411 [237] The only spear (*unga*) that I have seen is made entirely of iron. The shaft is covered with the tail of an ox to which the tuft of hair remains attached. This is the spear formerly used in warfare. The distribution is wide. Such spears were purchased from the Ovimbundu of Elende and Bailundu and also from the Vakuanyama living in the far south of Angola, but I do not think that the Ovimbundu make these spears, which are probably traded from the south. [439]

224 [411] A hunter is considered exceptionally fortunate if he possesses an old muzzle-loading gun (*uta*). I have seen only two hunters who owned such a weapon. In one instance the barrel was bound to the stock with hide thongs, while the woodwork was decorated with brass tacks. Powder and fragments of metal are carried in a leather pouch which is attached to a broad, leather waist belt (Plate XIII, Fig. 6). There is certainly a feeling among hunters that the sale of a well-tried weapon will be followed by bad luck. The gun is sometimes fixed to form a trap in such a way that an antelope may tread on the string and so discharge the gun. Sometimes a piece of meat is attached to a string which is fastened to the trigger. A heavy beam of wood into which an iron spike is fastened was used in districts where the hippopotamus and elephant were hunted. Such a trap was fixed over a path known to be frequented by these animals. Big game of this type is now rare.

In the Esele country the following traps are in use: (1) A deep, narrow, grass-covered pit from the bottom of which sharp stakes project upward; this trap is known as *okueve*. (2) A simple trap consisting of four long sharp stakes which are fixed in the ground so that they incline toward a gap through which a buck is likely to jump (Plate LXXIII, Fig. 2). (3) The trap (*ocisonga*) for lions and leopards. This is a heavily built structure provided with a panel-like door which slides down when the entering animal releases a cord fastened to the bait (Plate XCII, Fig. 2). (4) A heavy trap triangular in form. This trap is not an enclosure, but a covering under which the animal has to go in order to reach the bait. In addition to the foregoing examples there is a trap (*onjanjo*) which is used for snaring antelope. The essential of the device is a loop which is bound to the end of a supple branch lightly fastened to the ground. This, however, did not come under my observation.

Long, cone-shaped, cane structures are placed in the grass, which is then fired. Animals disturbed and frightened by the fire rush into the wide end of the trap, then make their way to the narrow end (Plate XV, Fig. 5). One such trap is modified to form a snare with

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a noose which hangs over the entrance. From Ngalangi I obtained 224
a trap formed by suspending a heavy block of wood inside a box. The animal enters a small circular hole, passes under the heavy block and begins to nibble the grain which is strewn on the bottom of the box. Presently he releases a fine string which brings down the block in such a way that he is pinned underneath. I am informed that this trap is used at Elende, but I have not seen it there.

Some hunters note the feeding and drinking places of their quarry, which is shot from a hiding place in a tree. Young animals may be run down by a hunter in open chase. Screens are not carried in front of a hunter, but he does sometimes dress in the skins of animals. His disguise is completed by wearing a tuft of the animal's hair on his head.

Dogs are used for tiring out young animals in the chase, and also for catching hares. There is a tendency at the present time to improve the breed of native dog by crossing with a large hunting [232] dog from South Africa. In the Esele country I have seen, high on a granite rock, a small cairn of stones which covered the skull of a famous hunting dog. Dogs are used most commonly when the hunt is communal (Plate XXIII, Fig. 1), but the best hunters work alone without the aid of dogs. In the general hunt women and children may take part in driving the game; often a fire is started in the grass, which is very dry in the months of June and July. A hunter who works alone may excite the curiosity of an animal by blowing through a horn of an antelope. Spider's web covers the wide end of the horn.

I have observed a general hunt in which thirty men and boys participated, each carrying a bow and arrows. The party was accompanied by many dogs. The antelope which had been killed was carried on a pole slung on the shoulders of two men. There was intense excitement as the troop advanced toward their village, shouting and jumping. In another hunt of this kind muzzle-loading guns were carried. The Ovimbundu do not use nets in hunting, neither do they poison animals. Decoy animals are not used, but in the large wooden trap (*ocisonga*) a living goat or pig is placed.

It is necessary to distinguish between hunting as a general pas- [463]
time, in which all males, and even women and children join to a certain extent, and the hunting of animals by a professional hunter. The professional hunter is usually called *ukongo* (less frequently *enyanga*); but there is no name for the non-professional hunter. A 874
boy who wishes to become a professional hunter has to serve for a 224
time with an *ukongo* before he himself receives this title. There is

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224 874 an initiation feast when the training is ended. At the feast all people of the village may be present but they do not dance; only the professional hunters may do so. The boy who is to be initiated must not speak or move until he "feels the spirit on his head"; then he gives meat to the people. After hunters have captured game for the feast, the blood from these animals is used to smear over the bow, arrows, and spear which have been made for the novice by his tutor. [326] This is analogous to the initiation of the young blacksmith who receives blood-sprinkled tools made by the master blacksmith.

224 788 There is in connection with the life and death of the professional hunter a certain amount of ritual and precaution. The night before setting out to hunt is a time of dancing and renewal of the implements of the chase, which are kept in a house specially prepared for them. A hunter who is on the eve of departure calls in other professional hunters to share the ceremony, which includes the rubbing of the bows and other implements with palm oil. A libation of beer is poured on the bows, spears, and arrows, but no medicine-man is present. Some of the bows are never used, because they are merely the symbols of the personality and prowess of dead hunters whose names they have taken. The food and cooking pots of a hunter must never be associated with those of ordinary household use. If a hunter is following the tracks of an animal he must not point with his finger as this action will drive the animal away. The correct way to point is by use of the feathered end of an arrow. The hunter [834] must not sleep with his wife the night before setting out in quest of game.

224 782 I have frequently seen in front of the hut of a hunter a number of skulls of antelope and other animals mounted on poles arranged in circular formation (Plate XXXII, Fig. 2). These skulls seem to be trophies, which are invariably taken away by the hunter if he finds a new home. There is no reason to doubt the statement that these skulls are an offering to the spirits who give good luck in hunting, because such a belief would be in harmony with the general respect for ancestral ghosts, which are thought to influence the affairs of the living.

764 224 On several occasions, notably near Ganda and in the Cassonge country, I have seen the tombs of hunters. These are large structures built of slabs of granite laid with some symmetry. The rock tomb is invariably placed on the top of a commanding eminence of granite. The skulls of animals which the hunter has killed are piled on the top of the cairn, but I do not know whether these are the trophies

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which are fixed on poles in front of the hunter's home during his lifetime (Plate XXXII, Figs. 1, 2). 764 224

There are at the funeral of a hunter special observances which will be mentioned under the heading of funeral rites.

FISHING

In the region of Elende there is fishing with both basket and line; 226 a method of poisoning fish is also practised. Usually a male fishes 462 with a bark line. Women catch fish by the poisoning method, and in addition to this they generally follow the procedure in which baskets are held or weighted in the stream. If the water flows swiftly men may take charge of the fishing operations. At times both men and women fish with nets. Husband and wife may not sleep together the night before fishing, as this is believed to make [534] the male and female fish stay together at the bottom of the river.

The fishing line consists of tough green bark which is cut into [283] strips whose length depends on the height of the river's bank. A hole is bored through the body of a grasshopper, a worm, or a grub taken from under the bark of a tree. Through this hole is passed a short stiff piece of grass about half an inch long, to which the line is attached. The fish is caught when the crosspiece of sharp grass becomes fast in its throat.

When the fisher throws the line he sings: "O fish, come and take your good thing. Do not send the little fish to spoil the good thing. Better you come and take the good thing with all your strength."

In order to make fish poison the tuberous roots of a plant are taken and soaked in water until a scum rises to the top. The solid part of the poison is not given, because it would sink and the fish which ate it would remain at the bottom of the river. Therefore only the scum of this poisonous infusion is thrown in the water. The stupefied, gasping fish remain at the surface, whereupon they are seized by women who transfer them to gourds or baskets worn around their necks. Usually poison is used only in the dry season when the rivers are shallow.

Sometimes there is fishing by means of a weir (*olunja*) which has an opening in the middle. On the lower side of this gap a basket trap is placed.

There is no fishing by torchlight. At the coast, and along the river Kwanza I have seen heavy dugout canoes in use; these were about twenty to thirty feet long and hollowed from single trees [501] (Plate LXXII, Figs. 1, 2). At Ambrizette I noted the use of a fishing

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226 462 spear eight feet long, the end of which consisted of ten sharp prongs of palm stem (Plate LXXIII, Fig. 1).

Near Cangamba in eastern Angola, fishing in the Kwando River [171] occupied numerous men and women of the mixed tribes in the district, namely, Vachokue, Luchazi, and Babunda. Men paddled into midstream in small bark canoes from which fishing operations were directed. The fishermen carried small conical string nets, which were attached to stakes in such a way that the openings of the nets faced upstream. Vachokue women, working in pairs, dragged baskets against the current (Plate LXXXV, Figs. 1, 2).

AGRICULTURE AND COOKING

343 243 *Osila* is the Umbundu word for the granary which stands on wooden supports (Plate XLIV, Fig. 1); this *osila* is for the restricted family, and there is one *osila* for every house. The Ovimbundu store their corn in bulk, but in the Esele country I noted that the cobs themselves were carefully packed. Each Ocimbundu girl cultivates a small patch of ground, the produce of which she is at liberty [432] to sell in order to buy brass ornaments, beads, and palm oil.

In addition to maize, barley, oats, and wheat, with here and 241 there a little rye, are occasionally grown. There are three colors of beans, red, white, and black. There is no attempt to keep the varieties [651] separate, so they cross-fertilize freely. The Ovimbundu try to [438] cultivate a surplus of beans and maize which they use to pay their taxes to the Portuguese, likewise to sell at the stores of traders.

252 512 Corn is pounded on the rock which has been used for generations after it has been consecrated by sprinkling the blood of a chicken. Pounding begins as early as five o'clock in the morning, before sunrise, and from that time to sunset the pounding-rock is in use. The [521] rock is evidently regarded as a meeting place for social intercourse; it is undoubtedly the center of village gossip so far as the women are concerned (Plate XXXVI, Fig. 2).

As corn alone is considered a poor food, it is sprinkled on boiling water to which beans are added. Cooking goes on from early morning to sunset over a slow fire. Children sometimes receive as their evening meal a thick plastic cake of mushed corn to which green leaves of a squash are added.

252 There are five kinds of manioc resembling one another in general appearance, but the Ovimbundu distinguish the plants, and reserve for each what they consider to be appropriate preparation. The method varies for sweet and bitter varieties of manioc.

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Olungunga is not a sweet manioc, so is not eaten raw. The roots are placed to soak in a stream for three or four days before they are roasted on a fire, after which they may be eaten with impunity. As an alternative the roots may be dried in the sun; they are then pounded into meal which is scattered into boiling water so that a mush is formed. The Umbundu name for this preparation is *iputa viutombo*, meaning "mush of manioc." The leaves of *olungunga* are not soaked in water; on the contrary, they may be cooked as soon as they are gathered, but they must not be eaten when warm. There is no danger in eating them after they have been boiled and have been allowed to become cold. The leaves are served with salt or fat. 252 [263]

All the manioc, with the exception of *olungunga*, is sweet. *Kandona* has roots which may be eaten uncooked, but both leaves and roots are sometimes cooked in water. Other varieties of manioc known as *otetu*, *elemba*, and *esela* are eaten in the same way as *kandona*. Manioc is in use all the year, but the greatest quantity is consumed in November and December, a period when the growing corn is not ripe and the storage supplies have dwindled. [221]

Sweet potatoes are plentiful all the year with the exception of the months of November and December. They are placed in the pot, without removal of the skin, and boiled for a period of twenty or thirty minutes. They are taken out, peeled, and eaten. European potatoes are sometimes peeled and made into a mush. The variety of garden produce naturally depends on proximity to a trading post, a mission, or some other European settlement. [177]

In propagating manioc a stem is cut off from the parent plant which is about three feet high; but probably two or three years pass before the tubers are considered large enough for use. Sweet potatoes are planted in January, but there is very little of this food available in February and March. Toward the end of March or early in April a few potatoes may be ready for consumption. 244 [221]

Peanuts (*Arachis hypogaea*, Leguminosae) are planted in October by women who prepare patches of ground which are drilled with holes one inch deep and eight inches apart. One nut is placed in each hole after the shell has been removed. Above the ground small leaves appear. After the flower-stalk withers it has the peculiarity of elongating and bending down. In this way the young pod is forced underground, and the seeds mature a little way below the surface.

Some natives employ irrigation by leading small channels of water from a hillside stream to a garden containing maize and 312

312 bananas, but one could not say that irrigation is generally practised, even when circumstances permit.

245 The papaya and the banana are increasingly cultivated, but they are by no means generally distributed. Here and there I [249] have seen a little sugar-cane cultivated by natives for their own use. Near the main railway natives may be seen selling their [244] products, which include cabbages and tomatoes. Some natives are today planting the guava tree which yields sweet palatable fruits. The fruits *olosia* are collected from the *usia* tree. When ripe, the fruit is yellow, round, and about two inches in diameter. These fruits are gathered in September, and the kernels, which are about the size of walnuts, are eaten uncooked. No fruits are collected for storage. *Olombula* fruits ripen in October, when they are eaten raw.

264 Each wife sends the food which she has cooked in her own kitchen to the *onjango* ("council house"). After carrying the food to this house of assembly, where the men meet each evening, the women return to their houses to eat alone, or with the young children.

343 When there is a plurality of wives each has her own house and 252 kitchen. Ngonga states that separate kitchens built outside the [595] living houses are becoming more rare. The poor have their kitchens in the living room because they cannot provide separate structures for living and cooking.

264 The first meal is taken between five and six o'clock in the morning, 262 the most usual food being meal sprinkled on boiling water to form 252 a paste which is eaten with sweet potatoes. A mush of beans is eaten at night; generally there is no meal at midday. Three pounds of cooked beans are eaten by a person for one meal. Over the cooking pots leaves are placed to keep in the steam, especially when the pot contains sweet potatoes. I have made a meal from the sticky, gluey paste which results from sprinkling meal on boiling water. The chief objection to this food is the unpleasant quantity of grit in the meal, owing to the fact that it is pounded on the rocks. Manioc and sugar-cane are chewed at irregular intervals of the day.

262 The amount of meat consumed by the Ovimbundu is small in comparison with the quantity of vegetable food used. This adoption of diet of a particular kind is largely a matter of habit, and there is no good reason why meat should not form a larger proportion of the food supply. The Ovimbundu do not kill their cattle for food though they will eat the meat of oxen which have died from natural causes.

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The flesh of goats, sheep, and pigs might be more frequently used if these animals were bred and cared for under some system of animal husbandry. The Ovimbundu are familiar with the preservation of meat by smoking and drying it, because flesh of animals killed in the chase is sometimes preserved in this way by hunters, yet the method is not widely and constantly applied in order to assure a regular supply of meat. 262 [232] 251

Failure to utilize the milk of cattle and goats is another example of the neglect of useful commodities. The Vacilenge, who are near neighbors of the Ovimbundu, milk their cows as do the Ovimbundu themselves in some districts, though the practice is by no means general. Even where cows are milked, butter and cheese are not made, though the Ovimbundu know of the process, which is practised by the Vakuanyama of southern Angola. 234 171

There are three kinds of beer. *Ocisangua* is a sweet beer which even children may drink because it is not intoxicating. Water is heated slowly in the pot but not boiled; meanwhile meal of Kafir corn or maize is added. Pounded sweet potato is strained in such a way that the liquid part goes into the beer pot; the residual mush is given to pigs. After the beer has cooled out of doors, it is transferred to a large gourd and allowed to stand over night. Next day it is considered a fit drink to consume or to offer to visitors (Plate XXIII, Fig. 3). 272

The making of an intoxicating beer *ekundi* proceeds as for *ocisangua*, but instead of adding strained liquid from sweet potatoes a root called *ombundi* is included in the brew. The large pot containing this beer is covered tightly and allowed to stand untouched for twenty-four hours, at the end of which time it is a potent drink. It is important to note that the corn is allowed to sprout in the ground before it is made into the infusion to which the root *ombundi* is added. 273

Ocimbombo is a strongly intoxicating drink. In order to prepare this brew, corn is soaked for a week; then it is left in the ground for the same length of time until it has germinated. It is then pounded on the rocks and placed in large pots filled with water to which sweet meal of corn is added. Simmering over the fire is continued for two days with constant stirring. This brew differs from *ekundi* in the longer germination of the corn and the longer period of simmering. On the fourth day after the simmering is completed the drink is said to be ready for consumption. If the people have honey, they add some to the brew on the third day of standing. My inform-

273 ant said, "Sometimes a man who has drunk this beer will sleep on the ground all day and say nothing."

263 438 Salt is a welcome gift in all parts of Angola. Native tribes appreciate its culinary value but show no eagerness to barter for the commodity. At the present time salt is sold in every trader's store, but in earlier times the substance had to be obtained along caravan routes from the coast and was therefore more highly prized than it is today. 317 [231] The Ovimbundu realize the value of salt in the diet of cattle; therefore the animals are occasionally driven to a salt lick in the hills. The Ovimbundu do not use this salt for their own diet, possibly because the salt enjoyed by the cattle is some form of potash and not sodium chloride.

[171] The Vachokue extract salt from the leaves of a river plant by burning it to ashes which are soaked and strained. This is a common African method, but I did not hear of it among the Ovimbundu. The probability is that the Ovimbundu have always obtained salt from the coast.

372 In connection with cooking and brewing beer, methods of making fire are of importance.

Matches are coming into use among the Ovimbundu, but the necessity for them is not great as the hearth fire is not extinguished. [354] In the center of each hut is a fireplace made of three hearth-stones over which logs of wood are placed with their ends in the fire which is kept alight by pushing the logs forward from time to time. A blaze is made by breaking off bark from the logs, placing it on the center of the fire and blowing. Fire is carried from one place to another by conveying a smoldering log. In the Esele country boys may be seen setting off at dawn to scare birds in the corn field, each carrying fire with him.

Usually the children or some other members of the family sleep on mats close to the fire, which requires no attention other than a pushing forward of the logs.

372 171 The Vasele make fire by the twirling method, and at Ngalangi the same procedure was witnessed. In the twirling method two different kinds of wood are used, soft wood for the base and hard wood for the twirling stick. The twirler used at Ngalangi was a piece of cane into the end of which a piece of hard white wood was secured by binding. Ngonga, my interpreter and informant, thinks that any man of the Ovimbundu could make fire by the twirling method if the necessity arose, but the performance witnessed at Ngalangi led me to doubt the truth of this statement. The operator

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undoubtedly knew the apparatus and the method, but he appeared 372
to have lost the dexterity which is necessary for a rapid moving of the 171
hands from the bottom of the twirler to the top. There was consequently a long period of smoldering before the flame appeared.

Among the Vacholue a little wooden box of tinder, a piece of quartz, and an iron blade are carried for fire-making. From an Esele man a bag containing tinder and quartz was obtained.

The making of fire ceremonially in connection with ritual and sacrifice is described among the functions of the medicine-man, because the sacred and profane uses of fire are quite distinct.

Tobacco is a very important item of trade. The cultivation is a 249
domestic industry followed usually by women but to some extent by 462
men. In former days when the Ovimbundu traded extensively in Africa every man had a field of tobacco which he himself cultivated. At the present time each man is likely to have a mound of tobacco plants in the middle of a corn field (Plate XXIX, Fig. 1). Women do sometimes cultivate tobacco near their huts, but in this case the little plantation must be strongly fenced. Goats are numerous, and they eat the leaves of the tobacco plant with avidity.

Toward the end of September, when the rains begin, tobacco seed is sown on a patch of ground a yard square to raise seedlings which are planted out in October. A few flowers only are left to produce seed. As a further effort to improve the quality of the tobacco many of the lower leaves are removed. The cutting of leaves intended for use as tobacco is done by men in the months of February and March; women and children assist if the field is large.

After the midrib has been removed from each leaf, the leaves are suspended from the roof in a bundle. At the end of five days, when the leaves have turned brown, they are twisted into a long straight roll which is hung in the sun for three days. At intervals the roll is twisted in another direction. This gradually exposes all parts of the leaves, so that the drying is thorough. There are three methods of making up the rolls: *ombola* is an oval roll; *ongalo* is the round coil; *ocine* is the name given to tobacco which has been dried and twisted 276
round a stick. Tobacco-pipes are varied in size and design (Plate XV, Figs. 1–3); those for men are larger than those used by women. A mixture of tobacco and hemp is smoked in a water-pipe made from the horn of a cow. Details of structure and ornament are given under "Wood-carving."

In order to make snuff a piece of dried tobacco is slowly baked near the fire on the end of a pointed stick which is turned frequently.

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276 The snuff is pounded and placed in a small wooden box of cylindrical
[531] shape. Usually the box is ornamented with incised, burned patterns. The Ovimbundu of Bihé add ashes of wood to their snuff, so producing a mixture called *ulelemo*. The Ovimbundu of Elende usually use the
[509] snuff without adulteration. Two main species of tobacco plants are grown.

Women smoke in all parts of Angola. The Ovimbundu do not chew tobacco, neither have I seen it so used elsewhere in Angola. Boys and girls are not allowed to smoke before the age of thirteen years.

576 In the *ombala* of the Vangangella near Ngalangi, I asked a girl
[834] for her pipe which I desired for my collection. The interpreter took the pipe when she proffered it, explaining that, according to local custom, I had asked for the girl. If I took the proffered pipe *from her hand* I accepted her. Another social custom associated with tobacco is the passing of the communal pipe from hand to hand in the men's council house.

276 Ngonga, my interpreter, says that he has never seen an Ocimbundu
171 woman smoke hemp, but he has seen a woman of the Vangangella (people to the east of the Ovimbundu) smoking hemp. Hemp (*epangue*) is cultivated only by the Ovimbundu men who smoke it. Pure hemp is smoked in the water-pipe which is not passed from hand to hand. Only tobacco is used in communal smoking. Smoking of hemp or tobacco consists of a few deep inhalations; there is not usually a prolonged placid smoking. When hemp is placed in the bowl of the water-pipe it is covered with large grains of sand or a piece of tin. This intervening substance prevents the hot coals from coming into contact with the hemp. The object is to secure slow ignition.

DOMESTIC ANIMALS

231 The principal domestic animals are cow (*onjindi*), ox (*ongombe*, which is also the generic name for cattle), bull (*onui*), sheep (*omeme*), goat (*ohombo*), pig (*ongulu*), dog (*ombua*), chicken (*osanji*) (Plates LV, LVI, LVII).

492 The transport animals, donkey, horse, and mule, are not used by the Ovimbundu of Elende and not to any extent by Ovimbundu of other parts; but in the south of Angola the Vakuanyama have sturdy ponies and well-kept mules. The ox when ridden by Portuguese is provided with a leather saddle which is very comfortable if covered with a blanket. The brass stirrups are broad and massive. Through the septum of the bullock's nostrils there is a short brass rod to the ends of which the reins are attached (Plate XXX, Fig. 1).

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I have seen an Ocimbundu male riding an ox without saddle. A 492
cord was passed through the animal's nose to serve as reins.

The Portuguese name for horse is *cavalo*, a word which the Ovim- 192
bundu use in the form *okavalu*, though there is an Umbundu word *ocingongovala*, which means "going with his neck up." The Umbundu words for donkey and mule are *ocimbulu* and *omula*, respectively.

Generally speaking, the ears of animals are not clipped, neither 231
are cattle branded or otherwise marked to indicate ownership, but sometimes the ears of pigs and goats are cut to aid identification. When asked why the tips of the ears of dogs are mutilated an Ocimbundu will say that a dog with uncut ears does not hear when called (Plate LVI, Fig. 2).

Not many families own large herds of cattle among the Ovim- 233
bundu, and I did not see a big kraal until I was in southwest Angola. 556
Cattle, which are a measure of wealth, are used for paying fines, making funeral feasts, paying debts, and securing wives. The cattle throughout Angola are well-developed, handsome animals (Plate LVII, Fig. 1). The bull remains with the herd the entire year; there is therefore no particular season for the birth of calves. Usually cows are not milked by the Ovimbundu, consequently these people have no milk, butter, or cheese. The Vakuanyama of the south milk their [171]
cows and churn butter in calabashes slung on a pole.

The Ovimbundu say that milking the cow makes the calf thin, 234
but where the idea of milking the cow is borrowed from the Portu- [177]
guese the Ovimbundu have a procedure which is as follows: The calf is allowed to suck for a few minutes in order to deceive the cow; then the milker begins his work. At intervals of a few minutes the calf is allowed to suck in order to continue the deception.

Cattle are killed at the funeral feasts of the rich, and the horns [765]
of the slaughtered animals are generally mounted on a pole in the vicinity of the grave (Plate XLVI, Fig. 2).

The horns of the cow may be used for making water-pipes in 237
which tobacco is smoked, or they may be employed as magical horns when filled with medicine. The hide is pegged out in the sunlight 281
for one day after it has been scraped; it is then rolled and kept until required. When about to be used, the skin is soaked in water for one day. The hide is used to cover the tops of stools, to make pouches and to manufacture bags for carrying corn. In bygone days each king had a wooden box covered with hide, which contained his powder and metal when he went to war. The cow's tail is used

The cow's tail is used
237 as a sheath for covering the iron shafts of assagais, and it is sometimes made into a switch which the rain-maker uses during his performances.

233 Bulls are castrated when two years old. The wound is rubbed
[232] with ashes, salt, soot, and palm oil. Bullocks are used for riding, also
[492] for pull-carts introduced by the Boers. The herd obtains most of its food by grazing. In the dry season grass withers, with the result that the animals become thin and stall-feeding is necessary. In former days cattle-raiding was a practice of the Ovimbundu, who
233 robbed the Vacilenge. It is certain that the Ovimbundu did not own
174 cattle when they entered Angola. If the general tradition is correct the Ovimbundu came into Angola from a northeasterly direction, from the borders of the Belgian Congo as it is called today; this is not a cattle-raising region.

The Ovimbundu of Elende have a joke against the people of Bailundu, because the latter on first seeing a cow offered the animal some food on a wooden platter. This story suggests that the Bailundu people, who are of the Ovimbundu confederacy, did not know the animal and its habits as early as did the Ovimbundu themselves.

233 Although the Ovimbundu do not usually kill their cattle they may do so in the months of June and July, because at this time pasture is withered and food is scarce. Animals which are diseased, aged, or injured, are killed and eaten.

231 The native pig is distinguishable from European breeds by its long thin snout and slender development. This breed is said by the Director of Animal Husbandry, Humpata, to be the Keltic breed (Plate LV). There is, he says, no evidence to prove that the
[176] Ovimbundu have at any time domesticated pigs from the wild hogs which are to be found in Angola. There is no family which does not own a pig, and on the whole the pig fares much better than the sheep or the goat. The pig receives water and a daily ration of food, which is usually sweet potatoes and their leaves, together with some
232 corn. Male pigs are castrated at any time between the ages of six
[463] months and one year by an operator who is a paid specialist. The fee for castrating a bull is four yards of cloth, but a small gift is considered sufficient reward for performing the operation on a pig.
[282] If a pig is thin, the leather is said to be of good quality and therefore
252 suitable for making sheaths for knives. Usually the flesh of the pig is eaten shortly after the animal has been killed, but the meat of the bullock, on the contrary, is sometimes dried over a fire and preserved. But this is not a general practice as the animals are too valuable to be slaughtered.

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Goats are more common than any other animal; there are few, 231
if any, families which do not own one or more goats. These animals are not fed or watered. Goats are able to exist on almost any kind of vegetation; consequently these animals are, almost without exception, well nourished. Goats are not milked. Kids are born at any time of the year, and the young males are castrated. The hides are used for making bags. The goat has the misfortune to be the most [782]
desirable sacrificial animal. This is not entirely due to the fact that it is cheap and easily obtainable. The sheep is said to be unsuitable as a sacrifice, because it does not make a noise when killed. The [237]
hair of the goat is used for making an ornament named *osala*, which is worn by medicine-men.

Sheep are of the long-tailed Syrian breed. Like the goats, the sheep are not cared for in any way; they find their own pasture and water, and in doing so may wander for a considerable distance, though they always return to the village at sunset. The males are not castrated. Sheep are not so frequently kept as are goats and pigs. The skin is used for making bags. Twin births of calves, kids, or lambs are not regarded with awe; on the contrary, such births are welcome.

Almost every man keeps one or more dogs, and I have rarely seen a hut in which there were no dogs. Usually young puppies are near the fire, and on the whole dogs are well treated because they are valuable in hunting. They also give warning of the approach of hyenas, lions, and leopards. I have frequently seen a person run into the road to pick up a dog when an automobile is approaching. A tendency to improve the breed of dogs by crossing the lean native animal with a breed of large dogs from South Africa has been mentioned. In contrast with the generally considerate treatment of dogs by the Ovimbundu one has to note the very emaciated and diseased condition of dogs in the Esele country. Among the Ovimbundu dogs [262]
are regarded as desirable food.

Sacrifice of a dog at the inauguration of a blacksmith will presently be described. A medicine-man who is about to perform a ceremony for curing the sick has to make a meal of dog's flesh, but otherwise the flesh of the dog is taboo to him. These points of ceremony, taken in conjunction with the food value of the animal, and its use in hunting, show that the dog is highly esteemed.

Poultry are of very mixed breeds. The standards of size and 235
weight are higher than is usual in African chickens, a fact which is perhaps attributable to contact of the Ovimbundu with the Portu-

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235 guese for a long period. The chicken is highly esteemed as a sacrificial
[262] animal, but it could not be said that the flesh is in common use. This failure to develop and utilize to the full, again raises the point of social custom and economic habit. Chickens are cared for, as may be seen in the way they are cooped at night. Sometimes a hen may be seen sitting on her clutch of eggs in a dark corner of a hut, unmolested by people and dogs; yet it is certain that there is no concentration on the rearing of poultry.

Eggs are laid, and chickens are hatched throughout the year, except in the months of November and December when corn supplies
[262] are at their lowest ebb. Eggs are boiled, or fried on a fragment of
[264] pottery, but they are not sucked.

231 The domestic cat is not raised by the Ovimbundu. Wild cats are common, but there is no evidence of their domestication. Small birds and monkeys are sometimes kept as pets.

TRADE AND TRANSPORT

438 Caravan trade, which was at one time an important factor of tribal life, is now confined to short journeys for transporting corn, beans, and beeswax to traders' stores. But in spite of present-day
439 decline of transportation the memory of more prosperous times still exists.

Names of distant places survive in the Umbundu language; thus Tanganyika is called Nakandundu, while the name for far eastern Angola is Muacimbundu, the name of a one-time important chief. The Umbundu language is understood in all parts of Angola, far away from typical Umbundu centers of culture.

484 In the old days there were professional leaders of caravans, and a
788 ceremony was conducted before starting. The medicine-man and the
778 village chief were the principal performers in a rite which consisted
787 of bringing from its box the head of a former chief, sewn in oxhide. An animal was sacrificed so that the blood could be used for sprinkling on the chief's head, and on some occasions of this kind the head was sewn up in a new piece of oxhide. Direct appeal was made to the preserved head by the reigning chief, who asked for good fortune on the journey.

The medicine-man who accompanied a caravan carried with him a female wooden figure decorated with feathers (Plate XXI, Fig. 5). When a branching of the paths gave rise to doubts concerning the correct way the wooden figure was consulted by the medicine-man.

At the present time a day's march is twenty-five miles, during which a man carries sixty pounds, while the load for a woman is half that weight. The gait of the Ovimbundu includes a limp at every step, so suggesting that the carrier is lame or tired. This appears to be a method consciously adopted as a protection against fatigue, because all muscles are momentarily relaxed. Loads are carried on the head in a long forked stick to which they are lashed. When the carrier rests, the load is not placed on the ground, but is held upright on the stick (Plate XXX, Fig. 2). Such a method avoids the strain of lifting the load from the ground after each rest pause. 481 [482]

Although the Ovimbundu have an exchange of products among themselves by both barter and the use of Portuguese money, there are no large markets, with the exception of those at the coastal towns of Loanda, Lobito, and Benguela. There is absolutely nothing in Angola which can be compared with the great markets in Nigeria. 438 [436]

Despite the absence of a system of exchange on a large scale, the Ovimbundu have many terms describing units of measurement. There are native standards of length, area, and capacity, but no measures of weight which are undeniably of Umbundu origin. 804

The unit of length (*epaluma*) is the distance from the tip of the thumb to the tip of the middle finger when the hand is outstretched. The term for two of these units is *apaluma avali*. These words are the plural of *epaluma; avali* means two. These units are used to measure tobacco before it has been coiled.

Cloth is measured by stretching the arms to their full extent in line with the shoulders; the distance between the tips of the middle fingers is *epeka*. The stride for measuring land is *elianga*.

Onjimba is an area about twenty-five feet square. *Etemo* ("hoe") is an area of land two hundred yards long and thirty feet broad. A large field covers two or three *atemo*.

Measures of capacity are provided by various types of baskets. The large conical basket (*ohumba*) has an interwoven mark which indicates a measure for corn, meal, and beans. *Ocitenge* is a coarsely made basket used as a unit of capacity. *Uhamba* is a basket two feet long and one foot deep. The basket on a rectangular base is also *uhamba*, but at the present day cans are taking the place of all these old measures. Palm oil is measured in a gourd (*ocitau* or *ombangi*) of definite size. This little gourd is also used for measuring a viscous substance from trees. The word *ekokoto* is used to describe this mucilage. [285] [314]

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436 804 Balls of wax and tobacco were, and are now, definite standar of trade. To some extent rubber as a medium of exchange has bee used through contact with eastern Angola. The Umbundu wor *ocilila* expresses a weight of about thirty kilos.

805 221 There is no measure for minutes or hours. I have seen a ma of the Luchazi tribe keep account of the number of days taken on journey by cutting notches on a stick. Ngonga says that the Ovim bundu reckon by cutting notches, also by knotting a piece of string Three days would be expressed by the words *akumbi atatu* ("thre suns"). The word day or sun is used in fixing a time. There is n word for week. A month is *osai*, which is the word for moon. Whe the corn is ripe the people say, "We are in a new year." Anothe yearly time mark is the arrival of the first rains, probably in th middle of September.

The words *oku lima* ("to cultivate") yield the word *ulima*, which designates the period between the beginnings of two rainy seasons Corn is planted about the time of the first heavy rains, which occu in late September or early October. Naturally, this important occa sion forms a somewhat uncertain time base; nevertheless it is th one used to express the lapse of years up to five in number. After such a period the estimation of time is unreliable.

INDUSTRIES

IRON-WORK

326 Among occupations of primary importance is that of the black-smith (*ocirinda*). Owing to the increasing importation of hoe blades and other iron goods, together with the facilities for collecting scrap iron, the winning and smelting of iron is increasingly rare. There are probably very few places where the old type of conical clay furnace now exists. Almost any fragments of iron are melted at the forge where a box is kept to hold nails, hoop iron from packing cases, and other fragments resulting from proximity to a European culture.

Nothing is mixed with the iron, neither is there any casting in molds. The only process is the forging of red-hot iron. The Ovimbundu do not draw iron wire, although they know of the process which is practised by the Vachokue.

The work of the blacksmith was studied at the village of Njongolo in Elende. The men were for a time reticent respecting the nature of their training and the ceremony of initiation, but the chief of the village helped considerably by persuading the men to speak freely.

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Any boy who wishes to become a blacksmith may be trained for the work. It is not necessary that his father should have been a blacksmith. When the youth begins his training he must be eighteen years of age and physically robust. His first duties are the beating of hot iron on the anvil; he is also required to collect and soften fragments of iron. He works very hard but is never allowed to finish anything; the master has to complete the work. 326 874

At the end of two years the youth asks the master blacksmith to examine him. What is more important still, the master is asked to make the heavy hammer (*onjundo*), which is used for beating hot iron on the largest anvil (Plate XXXVIII, Fig. 1). There is no doubt as to the sacredness of this hammer, which is a symbol of the completion of apprenticeship. There is also the idea of the master handing on his skill to the pupil by personally making and presenting the tools. I made repeated efforts before being able to purchase one of these hammers; finally it was procurable only at a high price. The value is due to ritualistic associations, the large quantity of iron used in the making, and the labor required to weld the head to the shaft.

On the day of his inception the boy has to purchase four chickens, two male and two female, one pup, and a goat. The master blacksmith makes all the tools for the apprentice, but ritual centers chiefly in the fabrication of the big hammer (*onjundo*). While the master is making this the boy stands on the small anvil which is close to the ground, between the forge and the large anvil under the tree. 326 796

When the hammer (*onjundo*) is made, and while it is still red-hot, the handle is pushed into the belly of the dog. The goat and the four chickens are then killed. All the tools are brought together so that blood from the slaughtered animals may be sprinkled over them. The flesh of these animals is eaten with corn and beans. "The blacksmith calls many people to help him, and they like to eat the food," concluded my interpreter. [782]

During the entire ceremony, also throughout the feast, the boy stands on the anvil. There he remains until the master says, "You may speak and tell us what name you want." Perhaps the boy says, "I am Ndumbu." The people in the crowd clap hands and make a trilling with their fingers in their open mouths. The boy steps from the anvil; he is a blacksmith. My interpreter continued, "He must work hard and people must pay him. He used to work hard, but the master took the money."

There was an ancient belief that a blacksmith owed his skill to the help of the spirit of a person he had killed. Wooden effigies 326 778

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

326 778 of the murdered man were placed near the large anvil (p. 163), or they might be kept in the home of the blacksmith. Such figures are still used (Plate XXI, Fig. 3) but the killing of a victim is not now possible. Blacksmiths are free to marry without restrictions other than those imposed by the classificatory system of relationships.

325 348 The blacksmith's forge is a thatched house about twelve feet square with low eaves that almost reach the ground. The height from the floor to the point of the dome is fifteen feet. In the middle of the floor is a pit ten inches deep in which there is a quantity of charcoal brought from the charcoal burner's fire about half a mile away. At the sides of the pit are three stone seats for the workers. Two of these seats are occupied by men, each of whom works a pair of bellows. The two-chambered bellows is hewn from a block of wood in such a way as to give two circular air chambers from which wooden tubes lead to the fire. These wooden tubes are continued by clay tubes which project into the fire. Over the two round wooden chambers a piece of hide is stretched and tied over the woodwork. Two slender upright sticks, which the operator works up and down, are attached to the hide. In one corner of the hut there is a heap of charcoal, and in another corner lies the scrap iron. An iron rake with a wooden handle is used for stirring the charcoal in the fire. Plates XVI, XXXVII, and XXXVIII illustrate tools and processes.

413 The principal tools are:

(1) A flat stone anvil resting on rocks under a tree. The anvil is at such a height that the striker stands upright. At this anvil the metal is beaten with the heavy hammer *onjundo*.

(2) *Onjundo*, the most sacred of the tools, is 12.5 cm long. Its value is about that of an ox.

(3) There are tongs which can be clamped by a sliding metal ring. The larger tongs are 63 cm long and the smaller ones are 35 cm.

(4) The cutter is boat-shaped and triangular in cross section. The back, which is grasped in the hand, is 0.5 cm thick, tapering to a fine cutting edge.

(5) An iron holder for an axhead during the heating and hammering is 23 cm long. It is octagonal, hollow, and fits like a sheath over the shaft of the axhead.

(6) For heating the iron on the small anvil, after it has been roughly pounded to shape with the hammer (*onjundo*) on the large anvil, there is a smaller hammer (*usonjolo*) of which there are three varieties. These differ only in size.

The principal products of the forge are axheads, which can be 326
reversed in the shaft so as to form adzes. Hoe blades, tools for mat-making, brass bracelets, knives, and implements for gouging out the pith of gourds or hollowing out a drum, are also made. Arrowheads are likewise an important manufacture.

The blacksmith makes a saw blade, 47 cm in length, from hoop iron. The teeth of the saw are turned alternately to the right and left and the serrated blade is roughly hafted in wood (Plate XVI, Fig. 4). Another product of the forge is an iron tool hafted in wood. The pointed blade, which is round in cross section, tapers to a point used for boring holes in wood, after the tool has been made red-hot. Small axes, many of which are used ceremonially in dances, have remarkably well-fashioned blades decorated with punched designs in the form of geometrical patterns.

WOOD-CARVING

A glance over the list of trees named and used by the Ovimbundu 314
indicates a complete knowledge of woodcraft which is in the hands of specialists. To name only a few; there is the *omanda* tree, also the *omue*, which yield charcoal for the smithy. *Ombula* wood is used for stools, while the elastic timber from the *omanda* tree is suitable for bows. The *ekenge*, *usamba*, and *ociyeko* trees supply bark for binding crosspieces to the upright poles when making the framework of a house; the same bark is used by Ovimbundu and Vachokue of eastern Angola for making bark cloth. In addition to the use of bark for these purposes it is made into large cylindrical receptacles for maize, while its use for beehives is general throughout Angola. Beehives are often made by professional hunters. A traveler notices the mutilation of trees from which complete cylinders of bark have been removed (Plate XL, Fig. 2); half of the cylinder makes a receptacle for carrying on the shoulder.

When a small pig is to be transported, four holes are bored in the 482
bark container. Through these holes the legs of the animal are placed and tied together on the under side (Plate XXXI, Fig. 1). This is a more humane transportation than that of tying the feet of the animal to a pole which is supported on the shoulders of the two men who are carriers.

In the neighborhood of Cangamba fishermen make and use canoes 501
of bark about fifteen feet in length (Plate LXXXV, Fig. 2). This illustration shows a man taking his nets into midstream where they will be pegged to the river bed.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

322 The tools used by the wood-carver are the saw, ax, adze, and knife.
532 The products of this craft may be conveniently divided into the following groups:

(1) Figurines of human form (Plate XXI, Figs. 1–6).

(2) Animal forms, chiefly snakes, tortoises, birds, and lizards. The dog is sometimes represented (Plates XIX, Figs. 1–5; XLI, Fig. 1).

[534] (3) Parts of musical instruments, such as drums and the base-boards of *sansas*. The latter often have the metal keys mounted on boards decorated with elaborately incised patterns (Plates XLI, Fig. 2; XXII, Fig. 5).

[415] (4) Domestic implements and utensils, chief of which are heavy wooden beaters for flattening mud floors of houses, grain pounders, stools, cups, platters, bowls, and a heavy pestle and mortar (Plates XIII, Fig. 3; XVIII, Figs. 1, 2).

[531] (5) Carved sticks and clubs; these often show elaborate incised decorations of geometrical patterns. Frequently the head of the stick is carved to represent a human head or a full-length figure. [293] The ornamented stick or club is carried as part of the personal dress and artistic equipment. The throwing club is usually a straight stick with an undecorated knob at the end (Plate XX, Figs. 1–10).

(6) Carved wooden posts representing the human form. These are set up at the wayside. One has been obtained from a grave near Bailundu.

(7) Tobacco-pipes and snuff boxes (Plate XV, Figs. 2, 4).

177 Figurines of human form require special consideration, because
532 they have claims other than that of aesthetic expression. The figures representing Europeans, or natives using some article of foreign introduction, illustrate the grafting of foreign ideas on older methods of work.

113 The art of the African Negro has of late years been accorded a place of honor in critical circles of Europe and America (P. Guillaume and T. Munro, Primitive Negro Sculpture, New York, 1926). Usually, however, the formal technique of lines, curves, and the general aesthetic effect have been discussed to the exclusion of the ethnological background which determines style and function.

532 By far the best example of carved human figures collected in Angola was the one from Cangamba (Plate XXI, Fig. 4). This female figure, 60 cm high, is carved from hard, dark, red wood in such a way as to achieve a graceful result by the employment of a few

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

straight lines. The legs show the usual flexion of the knees and a 532
shortening which is out of proportion to the body length. The lower limbs of most Angolan figures have these characteristics. The body of this figure is hollow and the head detachable. The incised head-dress is imitative of the coiffure of Vachokue women.

Cangamba, a village in eastern Angola, is a confluence of tribal 171
elements, namely, Vambuella, Luchazi, Babunda, and Vachokue, whose physical appearance, hairdressing, tooth mutilation, and tribal marks differ considerably. The man who sold the figurine brought it furtively. He was an Ocimbundu, but the work is of Chokue origin. The figure, I am informed, was filled with medicine, [755] then placed near a patient who was undergoing curative treatment.

The figurine (*ngeve*) of a woman having a number of dark feathers 484
attached to her back has only one use. A caravan setting out for a 778
long journey is accompanied by a medicine-man whose outfit includes 787
such a figurine. Should the caravan leader be in doubt when choosing between two paths, the medicine-man sets up the image at the parting of the ways. He kneels before it and asks questions, then plugs his nostrils in order to make replies in a falsetto voice supposed to come from the figurine. Thus advised respecting the route to follow, the caravan continues its journey (Plate XXI, Fig. 5; p. 156).

The wooden figure (Plate XXI, Fig. 3) is of exceptional interest 326
because of its connection with the blacksmith's craft, which is asso- 775
ciated with introductory rites for apprentices. In former days a newly initiated blacksmith was expected to disappear for a period during which he killed a man. On returning to the work of his forge the blacksmith made a wooden figure of which this example, one of five obtained, is typical. The spirit of the murdered man took up its abode in the effigy and in this way helped with the work. The figure, which is of the usual dimensions, namely, 36 cm high, has the greater part of its surface covered with reddened earth (pp. 159–160).

Two figurines (Plate XXI, Figs. 1, 6) were obtained from 171
women of the Vachokue tribe in the village of Ngongo, Ngalangi. 842
Here the Vachokue and the Ovimbundu mingle to such an extent that customs are no doubt transferred from one culture to the other. These wooden images are used by childless women, or by women whose infants have died. The woman who sold these figures pressed them to her breasts to show the manner of use. People standing around smiled and nodded their approval. A wooden figure of this [845] kind is substituted for a dead twin.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

787 532 A common type of small figurine, some of which are female, others asexual, is represented by an illustration (Plate XXI, Fig. 2). Such little carvings are a normal part of the miscellaneous contents of a divination basket described in chapter IX. These figures have been obtained from Elende, Bailundu, and Caconda, all of which are centers of Umbundu culture.

322 532 756 In addition to the figurines described, the collection contains many more whose use may be conjectured. The interrogation of Ovimbundu people indicates clearly that there are specific uses of wooden figures which are consulted by the medicine-man. The foregoing explanations illustrate the nature of the beliefs associated with carved wooden figures, but it is not always possible to elicit a clear account of the specific use of each one.

171 532 Consideration of this aspect of the wood-carver's art has an important bearing on the culture contacts of the Ovimbundu. In studying this question I have instituted comparisons between these figures from the Ovimbundu of Angola and similar figures from the Kassi area of the Congo region (chapter X). The publications of the Musée Congo Belge provide illustrations for comparison with the figures in Field Museum's collection.

The carving of animal forms (Plate XIX, Figs. 1–5) is no more than a means of aesthetic expression resulting from accurate observations of animal life as recorded under "Nature Lore." Inquiry failed to show that figures of animals are, or were at any time, used in rites and ceremonies.

[643] The carrying of a carved stick is essential when a chief is visiting, attending a council in his own village, or receiving visitors. The ornamental paddle (Plate XX, Fig. 8) was owned by the chief of the capital village (*ombala*) of the Vangangella, near Ngalangi.

[765] At the death of a chief his staff of office, with his tobacco-pipe and sleeping mat, are placed in a small house where such relics of deceased chiefs are kept permanently (Plate XLVI, Fig. 1). Plate XX, Fig. 6, shows a staff of this kind which was preserved in a sacred house in the capital village of Ngalangi, and on the same plate are drawn short ornamental clubs which French ethnologists call *batons de promenade*, an appropriate name because of their use as part of the full dress equipment.

[276] The Ovimbundu have specialized in the carving of small objects, for, in addition to clubs and staffs, tobacco-pipes and snuff boxes are often elaborately carved (Plate XV, Figs. 2, 4).

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The water-pipe of the Ovimbundu consists of the horn of a cow 276
into the side of which a short hollow pipe stem is introduced; at the top of the stem is a clay bowl for the reception of tobacco, or a mixture of tobacco and hemp. The wide end of the horn is plugged with clay, while a hole is made at the tip in order to provide a mouthpiece. A gourd water-pipe, similar to that used by the Vachokue, is also found among the Ovimbundu.

Cylindrical snuff boxes are ornamented with incised, burned, 276
geometrical patterns. The lid is usually attached to the box by a 531
leather thong. One large snuff box is ornamented with three well-carved female figures. The smoker's equipment is sometimes carried in a leather pouch fastened on a waist belt, or the container may be a hollow cylinder of ivory with a leather cap at each end.

To this information respecting the smoking and snuff-taking outfit 276
of the Ovimbundu, some observations on the pipes and snuff boxes 171
of other tribes should be added. When making a journey from Cangamba to Saurimo I seldom met an Ocivokue man who was not carrying a gourd water-pipe for the smoking of tobacco and hemp. Such pipes are usually ornamented with brass nails and are finely bound with thin brass wire (Plate XV, Fig. 3). One long pipe from Ngalangi has a pair of metal tongs attached for taking charcoal from the fire in order to ignite the tobacco (Plate XV, Fig. 1). A pipe with two bowls, closely resembling some Zulu patterns, was smoked by an Ocimbundu woman at Ngalangi. The Vachokue make snuff boxes from a yellow wood, which they ornament by burning portions of the surface in such a way that the yellow color is here and there visible.

Both men and women of the Vakipungo and Vakunanyama tribes carry snuff boxes of conical shape on their leather waist belts. At the top and bottom such snuff boxes are neatly bound with brass or copper wire.

DOMESTIC IMPLEMENTS

At an early age girls become accustomed to the use of the V-shaped 412
pounder which is made from hard heavy wood (Plate XXXVI, Fig. 2). The small end of the shaft is a convenient thickness for grasping in such a way that the knuckles are on the under side of the shaft. This is the very reverse of what appears to be the natural grip. Women use the pounder with an easy, circular swing so that the flat round surface comes into contact with the grain on the rock. Endurance in this work is remarkable, and there is no doubt that

412 fatigue is avoided by the method of holding and swinging so that the work of crushing is done by the weight of the implement.

412 252 Two less usual methods of pulverizing grain are by use of a long pestle, which is worked up and down in a heavy wooden mortar as shown by Plate LXXXIV, Fig. 1, in which Vachokue women are so employed, and the crushing of grain with a cylindrical stone which is rolled on a flat slab. This latter method I judge to be very old, for on a pre-Umbundu site encircled by stone walls I have seen flat slabs of stone and cylindrical rollers. Some of the flat slabs were worn extremely thin in the middle and a few were perforated by the friction.

It is noteworthy that there are rocks especially reserved for the pounding of grain with the wooden mallet. Such rocks are to be [782] found close to every village, and the dedication of a new rock for this purpose requires the killing of a chicken whose blood is sprinkled on the rock.

252 [512] Work of this kind is begun before daybreak. From that time to sunset the pounding of the wooden mallets, accompanied by the singsong of the women, marks the progress of the day's work. At intervals the pounded grain is sifted through the hands and spread out on a basket-work tray, which is shaken to separate the fine meal. The unbroken and partly broken grain is replaced on the rock for further pounding. A small brush of grass is used for bringing together the grain which is dispersed by the blows.

412 171 [862] The sole implement used in agriculture, which is entirely in the hands of women, is the hoe. Of this implement there are several variations according to locality. The Ovimbundu and others of Ngalangi employ the form illustrated in Plate XIII, Fig. 10. The long handles measuring 85 cm no doubt reduce fatigue by minimizing bending. Both hands are used, and, furthermore, the increased length of the handles must give a greater leverage. The smaller hoe used by Ovimbundu women of Elende has short handles only 51 cm (Plate XIII, Fig. 9), while that from the Esele country is distinguished by a broader blade and still shorter handles only 36 cm in length.

412 Included in the outfit of every Umbundu home is the heavy wooden floor beater. This implement, which is fashioned from a single piece of wood, consists of a narrow handle, round in cross section, and a flat portion for beating the moist, newly made, mud floor of the hut. The total length is about 83 cm.

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Not only the carpenter, but almost every Ocimbundu man possesses an implement which may be readily adapted as ax or adze (Plate XIII, Fig. 2). The wooden shaft, from 50 to 70 cm in length, terminates in a narrow grip at one end, while the other end expands into a large oval knob into which a circular hole is bored. The strong iron blade, one of the main products of the local forge, can be removed. If the round tang of the blade is inserted so that the cutting edge is in the same plane as the shaft, the implement is an ax. On the contrary, insertion so that the cutting edge is at right angles to the shaft converts the implement into an adze. When placed over the shoulder this implement is used for carrying utensils in a fiber bag (Plate XXVIII, Fig. 1). 418 [482]

Gourds are of three main kinds, which may be found growing on the ground or resting on the roofs of houses at the ends of the climbing stems that bear them. *Ombenge* is a gourd which is narrow in the middle. It is often converted into a dipper for ladling liquids. The narrow neck is the handle, while a round hole is cut in the larger part so that the dipper can be filled with liquid. *Onganja* is round, or perhaps oval in form. There is a size used as a measure of capacity. *Onganja* can be used as a ladle by fixing it at the end of a stick. *Olukuembo* has a round body and a narrow hook-shaped neck; like the gourd *ombenge*, it is used as a ladle. 415 [244]

Gourds are elaborately decorated with incised and burned designs (Plate XII, Figs. 1–6). Usually these patterns are geometrical, but human figures and animals are sometimes included. Decorated gourds from Bailundu, used for containing beer at a wedding, are among the best examples of their kind (Plate XII, Fig. 6). The owner of a decorated gourd takes great pains to repair a crack with rattan, which is threaded through holes bored in the edges of the fracture. A large gourd is sometimes carried in a native-made net of vegetable fiber. 531 415

POTTERY

A large and varied collection of pottery has been acquired from the Ovimbundu, the Vachokue, and the Vasele. The shapes and styles are best indicated by the illustrations in Plate XIV, Figs. 1–5. 323 171

Among the Ovimbundu, only women make pots, which are inferior in workmanship to those of the Vachokue and the Vasele. At Elende, among the Ovimbundu, I was surprised to find a man making pottery. Further inquiry showed that he had learned his craft when young in the Vachokue country of eastern Angola. This man, whose work was not copied at all by Ovimbundu women, was regarded as a specialist whose products were in great demand. [462]

323 specialist whose products were in great demand. Instead of making
171 crude patterns with a piece of gourd, as do the Ovimbundu women,
(531) he presses a brass bracelet round the rims of the pots. The bracelet is deeply indented with geometrical patterns which appear on the clay (Plate XIV, Fig. 5). This man selects a very fine clay for his work, his products are symmetrical, and a polish is given with a smooth pebble after baking. Like all other potters of Angola, this artisan has no knowledge of the potter's wheel.

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531 The vessels made by Vasele women, among whom the trade is confined to female specialists, are unlike the products from any other part of Angola. The chevron design is characteristic, so also is the ornamenting of the pot by laying on strips of clay below the rim. This is appliqué work which may consist of only a few bands of clay, or the strips may pass repeatedly round the pot until one-half or two-thirds of the surface has been covered (Plate XIV, Fig. 2).

323 At Elende two Ovimbundu women were observed during the pot-making processes (Plates XXXIII, XXXIV). Woman *A* built up the pot in a basket lined with wet leaves. Woman *B* pounded the clay on a stone with the heavy wooden pounder used for pounding corn on the rocks. Between the two women was a gourd of water in which *A* moistened her fingers. Operator *B* poured water on the clay which she was pounding. *A* made a cup of clay five inches in diameter and four inches deep which served as a base on which the pot was built up by the coiling process. This cup was placed in the basket containing moist leaves.

The rim of the cup was built in height and breadth by the addition of rolls of clay supplied by woman *B*. As the rolls of clay were laid on the edges of the pot, the inside was smoothed with a piece of gourd. Meanwhile the outside of the pot was supported with one hand. Shaping of the pot proceeded by applying smaller and smaller rolls of clay as the neck of the pot was approached. Gently smoothing pressure forced out the greatest breadth of the pot just below the base of the neck. A pause was made to allow a partial drying before the neck was built up. Ornamentation consisted of making deep incisions with a piece of gourd while the pot was still wet. During these processes there was constant wetting of the hands.

The pots were sun dried, then fired several at a time by placing them in a kiln of dry grass. Polish was given to a pot while it was still hot by covering the surface with liquid made from a tuberous root, during which process the pot was quickly turned on a stick.

When the clay was being mixed an old pot was broken and pulverized so that some of the powder might be added to the new pot. There may be the underlying idea of continuity in the potter's art. The potters said, *Sanga yi pita* ("Lest it leak"). There may be no purpose other than the imparting of stability to the new clay. 323

I was unable to find any trace of ritual except with reference to the opening of a new clay pit. When a pit is first opened both men and women attend. The head of a chicken is twisted off by a medicine-man, then the bird is held over the pit by either a man or a woman. There is no law or ceremony to determine who shall take the first clay from the pit. The art of making pots is in the hands of female specialists so far as the Ovimbundu are concerned. Observation makes clear that women will go for a long distance to obtain clay from the pit which has been opened in a ceremonial manner. On their way to such a pit they pass clay which would serve their purpose well, but they do not use it. Children sometimes amuse themselves by making animals of clay. [462] [782] [857]

The pottery of the Ovimbundu includes cooking vessels of many sizes, water containers, and very large pots for brewing beer (*olombia vi okukela*). [415]

MATS AND BASKETS

This occupation illustrates division of labor on a sex basis. Baskets are made by women, while mat-making is an occupation for males. As with other trades there is specialization. The majority of women are able to make baskets though the skill of individuals varies. All women who have a knowledge of basketry understand the manufacture of dyes. Only a few men make mats; my informant thought that perhaps one man in ten would have the necessary skill. Such specialization is continued into other occupations; for example, only a few men spin cotton thread, while the majority of people buy pottery from expert female potters. 462 285 [463]

The mat-maker, generally an elderly male, uses two tools, a borer and a needle, both products of the native forge. The borer (*utomo*) for piercing the reeds, consists of a long thin blade in a wooden grip. The needle (*osinja*) is threaded with bark fiber and passed through the holes made by the *utomo*. The bark thread is *ombanja* (plural *olombanja*). 285

The sleeping mat (*esisa*) is made of reeds which are gathered in the early morning by a man who wets and binds his material into bundles, each of which contains reeds of the same length. The length of the reeds varies, of course, with the size of mat he intends to make.

285 The name *esisa* is given to the raw material as well as to the mat. The worker begins by laying out the reeds on the ground, side by side; then the slender tool *utomo* is passed through the reeds near their ends. This position is made permanent by sewing, and the process is repeated at intervals along the length of the reeds (Plate XLII, Figs. 1, 2).

Evinda is a large mat, about 120 cm long and 20 cm wide, while each strip of coarse elephant grass is about 3 cm wide. Ability to make the rush mat (*esisa*) is fairly common, but skill in making *evinda* is less usual. The mat *evinda* has several uses; it may be stretched on the floor or bed as a sleeping mat, or possibly it is rolled so that the ends can be fastened together; so treated it forms a cylinder which may be filled with grain when stood upright on the ground. A number of these mats is sometimes used to form a temporary storage place or shelter. The technique is of the twilled variety in which each weft passes over and under two warps.

Ocala is a coarse mat made from long stalks which are called "elephant grass" by the Boers; the agricultural term is "Napier's fodder." The long rods are white and glazed, so forming an artistic contrast to the crossbinding, which is of black bark. The technique is known as check, a term used to describe a structure in which warp and weft pass over and under each other singly.

The large mat (*ocikanga*) which is of soft texture shows neatly woven, diamond-shaped patterns of dark brown grass. The technique of this mat is of the twilled variety in which each weft passes over and then under two warps.

283 String bags, which are used for suspending gourds or hanging them over the shoulder, are made by men only. The root *ombundi*, mentioned in connection with brewing beer, is used for making string bags. Two fibers that have been teased out from the root are rolled tightly together by rubbing them between the palm and the thigh. [462] Strong rope is sometimes made by plaiting coarse grass; this occupation is in the hands of males.

386 In basket-making the preparation of dyes is of great importance because colored strands of grass are inwoven to make named geometrical patterns (Plates IX; X). The Umbundu expression for dyeing [531] is *oku lisa olosovo*.

Red coloring is produced by taking leaves of a plant named *evaro* and cooking them in water along with the bark of the tree *ukondo*. [515] *Ukondo* is the "tooth brush" tree because small pieces of its wood are chewed and used for cleaning the teeth. After the grass has

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simmered in this infusion of *evava* leaves and *ukondo* bark, it is buried 386
in a heap of ashes and earth. These processes produce the red coloring.

Yellow dye is made from the roots of a wild rhubarb (*ocilunguluila*) which has sagittate leaves. The roots are pounded and mixed with cold water, after which the grass is placed in the mixture. A pot containing the mixture is put on the fire and the contents are boiled for half an hour; at the end of this time the grass is an amber-yellow in color.

In order to dye grass black the leaves of *evava*, the plant used for making red dye, are mixed with an iron solution obtained from the mud of stagnant pools. If the grass which has been cooked in this mixture is not sufficiently dark it is reboiled in the *evava*-iron mixture to which the pounded leaves of *ungalo* are added. Brown coloring is made by mixing the red dye with the yellow.

Baskets made by the coiling process are the most common type 285
manufactured by Ovimbundu women (Plate XV, Fig. 6). The large basket *ohumba* is a woman's field basket in which she carries corn, sweet potatoes, and manioc, along with her hoe and pounder (Plate XXVIII, Fig. 2). Each coil consists of a large number of strands of fine grass which are tightly bound. The coils of the better baskets are wrapped with the grass called *osoka;* this wrapping fastens each coil to the preceding coil. Coarser baskets have the coils wrapped with strips from the leaf of the screw pine (*emañalālo*). There is a sewing process in which the coils are bound to one another with the bark *olondovi*, which is kept damp during the process. I have seen a needle, threaded with bast, used for sewing coils together; the needle was rethreaded every time it passed through a coil. Success in basket-making depends largely on the ability of the worker to keep the coils of uniform thickness. There is constant inspection and plucking out of a strand of grass here and there (Plate XXXIX, Fig. 2).

In making basket trays (*ongalo*), the same coiling process is followed, but the work is kept flat. These trays are used for winnowing corn. Wicker-work is used for making conical traps for small game such as hares and rats. Conical fish traps are made of wicker-work. Names of patterns, which are of a simple geometrical kind, [531]
are well known to basket-makers. Sometimes a pattern is woven round the basket at a certain height to indicate a generally accepted standard for measurement of capacity.

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285 171 Among the Ovimbundu are to be found baskets which they themselves seldom copy. These examples are from the Vachokue country of eastern Angola. The Vachokue specialize in making winnowing trays and rectangular baskets which are twilled by passing each weft over two or more warps.

By this technique, combined with the use of brown and black weft and warp, a great variety of geometrical patterns is produced. Trays of this kind vary in diameter from 50 to 200 cm. The Vachokue also make large strong trays in which honey is exposed to dry.

In the neighborhood of Cassanga wicker-work baskets are made. The warps or stakes are rigid while the more flexible wefts bend in and out. At this place there are both Ovimbundu and Vachokue inhabitants.

Women of the Vakuanyama in southern Angola make exceptionally neat little conical baskets by lashing coils very tightly. The lashing is done in such a way as to leave the outer surface covered with small chevron-shaped designs.

177 285 There is an intrusion of European influence which tends to mar the work of the Ovimbundu and other native craftswomen. Soft dyes produced by methods described are sometimes replaced by brightly colored, imported dyes; old ribbons from typewriters are soaked in order to extract coloring. The Ovimbundu are imitating European forms of basketry in a few centers, though the native method of coiling is still used.

WEAPONS

411 The bow of the Ovimbundu is made of hard red wood which takes a high polish after use. It is round in cross section and tapers considerably toward the ends. The length is usually 150 cm, not an inconvenient size in view of the fairly open bush through which the hunter has to make his way. The bowstring is made of a thin strip of twisted hide, which is looped over each end of the bow by a slip knot made of two half-hitches. A shoulder at each end of the bow shaft prevents the slip knot from passing down the shaft. In some examples only one end of the bow stave is notched. Usually, after completing the slip knot, the hunter leaves a surplus of bowstring which is wound round the shaft. One bow which is not notched has rattan wound round the stave to prevent the loops from slipping.

The bow for shooting bird arrows is small and is used only by boys; the string is of twisted vegetable fiber.

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The foregoing description applies to all bows collected in Elende, an Umbundu center; neither is there any appreciable difference between these bows and those of the Vachokue of the area from Cangamba to Saurimo in Lunda. The bows collected in the Vachokue region are on the average 10 cm longer than those collected at Elende, a structural difference probably connected with the heavier arrowheads used by the Vachokue (Plate XVII, Figs. 1–9). 411 171

The Vakuanyama of southern Angola make and use a bow which bears very little resemblance to those already described. The arrows, too, are entirely different from those used by the Ovimbundu and Vachokue.

The lengths of three bows collected at Mongua, a typical Kuanyama center, are 111, 123, and 123 cm. The bow stave, which is made from a monocotyledonous wood, is 5 cm broad in the widest part, while the cross section is a flattened ellipse. The bowstring is of twisted leather, looped at each end for slipping over the ends of the bow shaft (Plate XVII, Fig. 8).

According to L. S. B. Leakey (A New Classification of the Bow and Arrow in Africa, *J.R.A.I.*, LVI, 1926, pp. 259–294), the bows and arrows of Angola have not been studied. I am inclined to place the bows of the Ovimbundu and Vachokue with Leakey's "knotted string bows" (pp. 266–269). [114]

Leakey states that the technique employed in stabilizing flight forms the best basis of classification of arrows, but so far as Angola is concerned, the shapes of arrowheads form a basis of classification according to locality. Ovimbundu, Vachokue, Vakuanyama, and Vasele, have distinctive patterns. Naturally there is borrowing of patterns where Ovimbundu and Vachokue intermingle, but, even so, there are distinguishing signs of Vachokue workmanship. The information respecting bows and arrows of Angola is best presented in paragraph form, and comparison of types is facilitated by reference to Plate XVII, Figs. 1–9.

The following arrows are used for killing birds: 411

(1) Elende. Ovimbundu boys use a wooden arrow with a heavy blunt head which is carved into five nodules (Plate XVII, Fig. 3). The head is tanged into a reed shaft and bound there with fine fiber covered with wax. The feathers are whole, bent over, and tied. The number of feathers varies considerably in different examples. 223

(2) Kipungo. The Vakipungo have a wooden-headed arrow with nine well-carved barbs (Plate XVII, Fig. 7). The head is socketed

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223 fairly tightly into a reed shaft bound at the junction to prevent
411 further splitting of the shaft. There are four whole, untrimmed feathers at the butt; these feathers are bent over and bound.

(3) Vakuanyama. Wooden arrows having eleven sets of barbs are in use. The head is bound into a reed shaft with strong gut. Another type of wooden arrow has three sets of barbs with three barbs in each set. There are four whole feathers at the butt.

(4) Vasele. The Vasele use an arrow, pointed with fine pieces of sharp bamboo, for shooting lizards (Plate XVII, Fig. 9).

411 The foregoing information (1–4) relates only to wooden arrows
171 which are used by boys when hunting birds. The following paragraphs summarize the structural details of arrows used by men, and the data are arranged to call attention to differences in the patterns of arrows used by several principal tribes of Angola.

The Vasele make the arrow shafts of hollow reeds, and into these the narrow, ovate, iron heads are tanged and bound in position with fine bark which is not waxed. Three unsplit feathers are bent and tied to the shaft with fine bark fiber. The nock at the butt of the arrow is rectangular in shape and 0.3 cm deep. No quiver was observed.

The Ovimbundu form arrow shafts from hollow reeds, the average length of which is 76 cm. All arrowheads of iron are tanged and the tangs are inserted in the hollow reeds. A binding of fine bark fiber is given, and this is covered with wax. From five to ten feathers are used for each arrow. The feathers may be split or they may be left in the natural state. The trimming of the feathers is roughly executed. The depth of the rectangular nocks is 0.5 cm, and splitting of the shaft is prevented by binding the nock with fine bark. No quiver was observed.

The Vacholue of Cangamba, and thence northward to Saurimo, make arrow shafts of hollow reeds whose average length (79 cm) is a little in excess of those made by the Ovimbundu. The shapes of the iron heads are shown in comparison with those of the Ovimbundu (Plate XVII, Fig. 1). All arrowheads are tanged and bound into the hollow shaft with bark fiber which is then waxed. The feathers are split and bent with a neatness much greater than that shown in examples of Umbundu arrows. The rectangular nocks are 1 cm deep. No quiver was observed.

The Vakuanyama make solid wooden arrow shafts having an average length of 65 cm. The arrowheads of iron are socketed.

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Three prevailing shapes of arrowhead are conical, narrow ovate, and V-shaped. The quills are split, bent over, and tied. The usual number of feathers used for each arrow is eight. The workmanship is neat and symmetrical. The rectangular nock is 0.5 cm deep. A quiver of hide is used.

In addition to the assagai (Plates XIII, Fig. 8; LXVIII, Fig. 2) commonly used by the Vakuanyama and adopted to a very limited extent by the Ovimbundu, there are spearheads which originate in eastern Angola among the Vachokue, whose blacksmiths are expert.

Typical spearheads were collected at Munyangi where Ovimbundu and Vachokue cultures meet. The leaf-shaped blade and tang have a length of 30 cm and an average breadth of 4 cm across the blade (Plate XVI, Fig. 1). The upper part of the tang, made for insertion into a wooden shaft, is round in cross section while the lower part is square. The blade, which has a keen edge, is well graded from a central, raised midrib to the margin.

I did not observe many spears among the Ovimbundu and Vachokue. The former value highly a type of assagai which is owned by every man of the Vakuanyama. At Elende and Bailundu I obtained from Ovimbundu men assagais identical with those collected in the Vakuanyama country. The assagai is made entirely of iron; it has a narrow, leaf-shaped iron blade which is socketed to the iron shaft. The butt is sharply pointed. The shaft passes through a cow's tail on which the tuft of hair remains. Consequently the iron shaft is encased in hide for part of its length.

At Elende I obtained from Ovimbundu men two spears said to be a product of the local forge. The flat, narrow, leaf-shaped blades were tanged into very rough wooden shafts. Wax was thickly smeared over the junction. The workmanship, which followed the tanged method of hafting arrowheads, was extremely crude.

By far the most distinctive knives made in Angola are those manufactured and used by the Vakuanyama of the extreme south (Plate XVI, Fig. 10). I have never found this knife in use elsewhere in Angola, and similar types are to be found only among the Ovambo to the south of the Vakuanyama.

These knives vary in length from 48 cm to 78 cm, with a breadth of 5 cm to 7 cm across the scabbard. The general outline is a well-balanced ellipse. The wood used is hard in texture and dark red in color. On one side the scabbard is left open in such a way as to display the blade, which is long, keen, and tapering. A leather thong attached to the back of the scabbard provides means of attach-

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411 171 ment either to the arm or to the belt of the wearer. The crescent-shaped expansion at the tip of the scabbard is sometimes held between the toes while the blade is withdrawn.

A small knife obtained from an Ocivokue man near Saurimo in the province of Lunda, northeast Angola, has a black wooden haft neatly bound with fine brass wire (Plate XVI, Fig. 2). The steel blade of Vachokue workmanship is eminently suitable for the purpose for which it is employed, namely, that of carving pipe bowls and snuff boxes, which are sometimes elaborately incised. The knife has a distribution from Saurimo to Cangamba, an area of intermittent Vachokue culture, but I have never observed it in the possession of an Ocimbundu. Men of the Ovimbundu have knives of somewhat poor quality. The roughly made wooden haft is attached to a blade which is protected by a sheath of lizard skin. More frequently than not, an Ocimbundu does not carry a knife; neither does he appear to have borrowed knives or the art of making them from the expert Vakuanyama or Vachokue, who are reluctant to part with their tools and weapons.

A knife used by Vasele men in the region of Vila Nova de Selles, in the hinterland of Novo Redondo, resembles one used by the Bangala of the Congo (Plate XIII, Fig. 1). The distribution of the implement, which is used for cutting branches from trees, is local in the Esele country. I have never seen such a knife in use among the Ovimbundu or in any other part of Angola. The preservation of this peculiar form, in common with other specialized traits of Esele culture, is due to isolation of the Vasele among hills difficult of access.

LEATHER WORK

282 Leather pouches worn on a broad leather belt are part of the essential equipment of a hunter. The pouch usually contains scrap [411] metal and powder for muzzle-loading guns. This type of firearm is, under present Portuguese regulations, difficult to obtain and still more difficult to furnish with powder, which is forbidden to the native. Consequently such a pouch may contain only a pipe and tobacco.

The pouch itself is either square, rectangular, or semi-cylindrical in shape (Plate XIII, Fig. 6). The hair may or may not have been removed from the hide. Some examples show signs of careful workmanship in stamping cross-shaped patterns. Brass-headed nails are used for decorative effect on these pouches among the Ovimbundu of Elende and as far south as Huila.

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In addition to pouches, hide is used by the Ovimbundu for the 282
seats of four-legged wooden stools. Before stretching the hide over the wooden frame the edge of the leather is cut into strips which are interlaced on the under side of the stool (Plate XVIII, Fig. 1). There are few evidences of the hide having been dressed; usually the hair is attached. The Ovimbundu understand the dressing of hides in a crude way. The hide is soaked, after which the inner surface is rubbed with ashes. The hair is scraped away and the hide is tightly pegged out. Hide was formerly used for covering wooden boxes in which a king carried his powder and possessions to war. Scraped [534]
hide is used to form the tympanum in tubular wooden drums.

In only one part of Angola, notably in the south among the 171
Vakuanyama, is leather used as clothing. Women wear pleated 282
skirts of hide and several broad leather belts, while the men have [291]
small leather aprons in front and behind. Men only are the leather 462
workers. The hide is soaked and trampled under foot for many hours in order to soften it and make it pliable; the hair is not removed. Before leather clothing is worn it is thickly greased with a mixture of fat and red powder from *tukula* wood (Plates LXV, Figs. 1–3; LXVII, Fig. 1).

SPINNING AND WEAVING

My interpreter Ngonga remembers the use of a heavy upright 286
loom about twenty years ago, but this loom is not used at the present 177
time among the Ovimbundu. The Ovimbundu have been in contact with Europeans for three centuries. This has not been a close and permanent contact, but it has been sufficient to account for the disappearance of a one-time essential art. There are in Elende some 287
very fine raffia palm trees, but no use is made of the leaf fiber for 171
manufacturing clothes. Bark cloth is not made by the Ovimbundu of Elende, but I have seen the Vangangella and Ovimbundu of Ngalangi engaged in stripping, beating, and preparing bark for use as clothing, which is formed of one piece wound round the body. The bark cloth is not dyed or decorated with patterns.

Frequently at Elende men are seen engaged in spinning cotton 283
which is used for repairs, and not for fabricating garments. The 824
cotton is obtained from a shrub which has reddish leaves and yellow flowers. The cotton may be seen protruding from the calyx in the months of June and July. The man who is winding holds high in his left hand a slender stick which is wrapped for a length of two feet with fluffy cotton. All work of pressing and twisting the cotton into a thread is done by the thumb and index finger of the right hand.

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283 In the beginning a thread from the fluffy mass on the stick is fastened to a corncob or to a potato, the weight of which keeps the thread taut (Plate XXXVI, Fig. 1).

[462] I have never seen a woman spinning and am informed that in former days the working of the loom was a task for men only.

463 In presenting facts bearing on the economic life of the Ovimbundu attention has been paid to the importance of ritual, specialization 791 in industry, and division of labor on a sex basis. Clearly, the economic life is one of the fundamentals of social structure, while at many points it is a field in which the magician works.

132 Topography and climate have fixed certain conditions which, so far as the Benguela Highlands are concerned, favor agriculture on 241 an extensive scale, also the keeping of cattle. In the Benguela Highlands a moderate temperature, combined with sufficient rainfall, has produced a type of vegetation which provides timbers serviceable to the craftsman, together with bush that affords shelter for game.

128 The bearing of these economic facts on the probable origins of traits, and their assembly to form the tribal life of the Ovimbundu, is reserved for discussion in chapters dealing with culture contacts and cultural processes. In chapters X–XII the factual material presented here under "Economic Life" is correlated with what is known of similar activities in cultures surrounding that of the Ovimbundu.

VI. SOCIAL LIFE

Sexual Relations

COURTSHIP

There is a certain humor and quaintness of language used by Ngonga in describing sexual relations of the Ovimbundu. So far as possible the interpreter's style of expression has been preserved because of its value in revealing the native attitude. 584 836

When a man begins to like a girl, he looks at her for several days. Perhaps the boy will talk to the girl who will tell him to go to her father and mother. The boy must ask the parents for a friendship, which may last for one or two years. During this time the boy must not do anything to the girl, and if he tries she ought to tell her parents. If a baby were born to them in this time it would be a shameful thing. After the boy has told the parents that he wishes to marry the girl he must find something to give to them. The girl must have agreed to marriage before the boy asks the parents. The first token may be no more than a ball of wax or a present of salt. This token says, "The girl is mine," and no other boy will ask for her because it is understood that she is promised to somebody. In former days there were restrictions against marriage with other tribes, but in eastern Angola at the present day the Ovimbundu occasionally marry with the Vachokue. [582

Soon the boy will start building a house on his father's plot, because he intends to bring the girl to his father's land. The boy must at this stage make a further present to the parents of the girl. In the old days he would take about five kilos of salt; but now he will take a bottle of Portuguese wine, two or three blankets, or a piece of cloth. The people who carry the present must be the brother, father, or a male cousin of the suitor. These relatives will say, "This is the day we have come for our boy's wife." Then the parents will examine the things. Perhaps they will say, "You must bring a better blanket." The father or the girl's mother's brother must call the relatives of the girl to a council (*ovjonga*) where the relatives of the boy and girl are gathered. 584 481

The parents say, "We are taking these things for our daughter; we hope she will be a good girl and not shame us. She is a good girl to us and we hope she will be a good girl in your house." The girl's parents turn to her and say, "We should like to hear that you are hospitable; give food to your husband's relatives when they visit you." 584 577

584 you." There is no infant betrothal. There is not and never was any
[567] compulsion of a girl in marriage, but slave girls were disposed of in marriage by their masters.

832 A girl is not allowed to do anything to show that she loves a boy, for it would be a great shame for her to tell the boy that she loves him. Often a girl who prefers a boy will pretend that she does not like him. The Ovimbundu have a story which states that a man said, "I will
[539] bring my cow to the green grass"; he did so, but the cow would not eat. This expresses the idea that a boy would not like a girl who confessed a preference for him.

MARRIAGE

585 The prospective bride chooses one married woman and six unmarried girls to accompany her to the house prepared by her husband. Here a feast consisting of a pig and some chickens is provided by the husband for the relatives of both families. For three nights the girl returns to the house of her parents while the boy sleeps at his home. The married woman and six girls sleep at the house prepared by the bridegroom. During these days beer is provided by the boy's parents. The prospective husband is ironically addressed as *sandombua*. *Ndombua* means bridegroom, as is an abbreviation of *isia* meaning father. The term "father bridegroom" refers to the fact that the youth is a potential husband only; the marriage has not been consummated.

On the fourth day the bride brings her supply of domestic utensils. These are the cooking pots (*olombia*); the wooden spoons (*ovita*); the brush of grass for sweeping (*olusepo*); some meal; also the pounder (*upi*). For the first month the wife is not allowed to cook in her own home; she cooks food in the home of her husband's parents and sends
[264] it to the council house (*onjango*) where her husband takes his meals with other men according to Umbundu custom. At the end of the first month of married life the mother of the husband invites any three old women who have been happily married to lay the hearth
[781] stones in the new home. Each of the old women brings a stone for the hearth. A chicken is killed and its blood is sprinkled on the hearth stones. While the young wife is preparing food at the new hearth, she is helped by the old women. If the girl is stirring with the big wooden spoon, one of the old women places her own hands over those of the girl. There is this kind of guidance in every action.

I understand that at the present day virginity in a bride is not so highly valued as in former days. The old custom was an examination

of the girl by her husband, and if she were not a virgin he took a hot 585
stick from the fire and burned a hole through her loin cloth. "The girl began to cry, but she had to take the burned cloth to her mother." In such an instance there does not seem to be an idea of guilt. The husband had accepted something that was damaged, and the payment of a pig by the girl's parents reunited the two young people. In former days, also at present, there are boy and girl companions who sleep together, supposedly without having sexual connections, [836] although they may be seventeen years of age. The girl calls the boy *ombuisi*, and he calls her by the same name. The Ovimbundu [842] understand something of the physiology of conception; the woman is, however, regarded as only a receiving vessel. "The man puts something into her which grows."

Husband and wife do not sleep in the same bed during the wife's 841
menstrual period; the wife sleeps on a mat at the side of her husband's bed. A woman who is menstruating never cooks food, but women give mutual aid in this matter. A man with more than one wife 595
sleeps either four nights or seven nights with each; the four-night cycle is more usual than the seven-night cycle among the Ovimbundu. Each wife has a separate hut and kitchen. There is no wife lending, 837
but a visitor may be provided with a widow or even with an unmarried girl. Then the man would have to pay the woman. [574]

Ngonga was able to give information with regard to homosexual- 838
ity. "There are men who want men, and women who want women." Ngonga says he has heard people talk about it, and "they think this very bad." A woman has been known to make an artificial penis for use with another woman. The medicine-man will sometimes dress as a woman. Ngonga, who has seen a man dress as a woman, stated that the man arranged his cloth like that of a woman, put palm oil on his hair, and joined the women to pound corn on the rocks. "The other people laughed and spoke bad words to him. His brother, father, and uncle beat him," but without producing reformation.

DIVORCE

There are many grounds on which a man may secure a divorce, 586
but it does not follow that divorce is frequent. On the contrary the evidence indicates that the majority of difficulties are overcome by a compromise between the relations of the husband and those of the wife. The main causes of dissatisfaction with a wife are want of ability in cultivating her garden, physical weakness, a habit of thieving from the gardens of other women, incompetence in cooking,

586 bad temper, too much talking, some physical defect arising from childbirth, and infidelity. But the husband usually accepts payment from the adulterer, and in that event divorce is not sought.

595 586 If a mother has no milk, there is a likelihood that her children will die in infancy; this is a cause for divorce. Barrenness gives great dissatisfaction, but is not necessarily a cause for divorce. Usually the husband marries another girl, while the first wife retains her position as head-wife. With regard to frigidity my informant said [833] that sometimes "a married woman does not want her husband to do those things which husbands like to do, or she may want him very seldom." The husband is so angry that he may go away hunting for a long time. The husband may tell some old people, who talk to the girl. If his wife is a good cook, the husband may keep her and secure another girl as a second wife. Sometimes the husband ties the hands of the girl if she resists him. If a wife is returned to her parents on the grounds of her frigidity her husband does not receive compensatory payment, but he hopes that another man will take the girl and pay him for her.

842 Sterility of the male is sometimes suspected, in which case the husband tries another girl, possibly with his wife's consent. The wife may be allowed to have relations with another man in the hope of producing children. The evidence shows that there is definite experiment to test barrenness of the woman and sterility of the male.

In case of impotence (not sterility of the male sperm) the wife leaves her husband. In event of barrenness the woman visits a medicine-man, who gives her a charm consisting of two cowrie shells on a strip of leather which she wears round her neck; a potion also will be given her. If the barren condition is due to malevolence of spirits, the face of the woman is painted with streaks of red and white. Such a woman is said to gain *ocitwebo*. *Twebo* means "a swell," "a rise."

586 A woman may divorce her husband if he does not treat her well. [837] If he beats her or refuses to give her cloth and palm oil, she will leave him; but she will not leave him if he is merely unfaithful. If a woman is unhappy with her husband, she will tell her people about the trouble. Her father and mother may say, "Go and try again."

After a year the woman may still be unhappy, in which case she goes to her parents. The husband visits his wife's parents to ask why she has left him. The parents give reasons and offer to return the token he presented for the girl. The return of the husband's tokens is usually long delayed because the parents of the girl are

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hoping that another man will ask for their daughter; this new suitor 586
will have to make payment to the deserted husband. The chief of the village is not consulted unless the return of the husband's presents is long delayed or is in some way unsatisfactory. A woman who [564] claims even remote relationship with the royal family is treated well, because her husband is afraid of the influence which may be used against him. A woman who returns to her parents takes with her the articles she contributed to the home; these are pottery, corn baskets, a wooden pounder, and wooden spoons. If a wife returns to her parents without telling her husband that she intends going, he will beat her if he finds her packing up her utensils.

The procedure of divorce contains a very human element. When a man has fully decided that he would like to divorce his wife, he will first of all inform his parents of his intention. The parents may advise their son to try the girl for a longer time.

On the contrary, the parents of the man may be mischief-makers. Sometimes the parents will say to the husband, "Do you know that your wife is doing these things? It is better you should send her away." If the man is fond of his wife, he will take her to another [587] place where his parents cannot watch her. When a woman divorces her husband to marry another man, she takes to her new home all children under three years of age. Older children go to the home of her parents.

The chief of the village has to witness the final ceremony of divorcing a woman; but the husband and wife, also the wife's father, are the principal people concerned in the divorce ceremony. The husband receives from his wife's father a roll of tobacco and a pig, then he places leaves and palm oil on the back of his wife. He slaps her back saying, "It is finished," after which the woman goes to her father or to another man.

When a woman takes the initiative and has declared her intention of divorcing her husband, she returns to her parents as described; but the divorce cannot be completed until the husband has been persuaded to perform this ceremony of slapping her back and making a ceremonial renunciation in public.

PREGNANCY AND CHILDBIRTH

When a woman finds that she is pregnant, she makes and drinks 843
an infusion prepared from bark fiber. This is to insure the removal of all stringy matter at delivery. Formerly a husband was not

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843 supposed to have intercourse with his wife during her pregnancy, but this custom of continence is declining.

A pregnant woman in particular must not steal. If she does so, her child will refuse to be born until some one present at the confinement goes out and steals something.

Eating the flesh of a hare during pregnancy will give the baby a split lip. If the flesh of the owl is eaten, the baby will have large round eyes.

The expectant mother must not sit on a mortar, a pestle, or a piece of rock; if she does so, labor will be prolonged.

[261] A pregnant woman takes earth from just outside her door. She drinks this in water so that the placenta will be delivered whole.

A pregnant woman is not supposed to carry anything in her cloth. If she does so, the child will have a long head.

A pregnant woman is a potential corpse. A man ought not to quarrel with his pregnant wife and if she says angry things to him he should not reply. He would not speak to a corpse in anger; on the contrary, he would respect a corpse; he must, therefore, respect a pregnant woman. It is a bad omen to see a pregnant woman up in a tree. A man who sees such a woman is expected to shoot her.

[593] If a pregnant woman has scolded her husband and is sorry, she goes out to the fields. There she gets her cloth covered with burrs then returns home. If her husband begins to pick off the burrs there is reconciliation.

842 There are several arrangements whereby a woman who has borne only girls may secure male births, provided she can find a woman who has borne only boys and is anxious to have a girl. The simplest way of reversing the births is for the women to exchange belts. The belt is a string, or possibly a plaited fiber girdle an inch in width which is worn next to the body. From this string depends the woman's lower garment. A second way of reversing the births is for the women to make an exchange of food through a hole in the wall of a hut. The food is handed in on a basket tray. The woman inside the hut receives the food while standing with her back to the hole; she then places the food under the bed. The tray is handed back through the hole by the recipient who still keeps her back to the aperture. There is a third method whereby a woman who has borne boys may be made to bear girls, and *vice versa*. The woman who has borne only boys gives to the woman who has borne only girls, an arrow, a knife, a bow, and an ax. The articles given in return are a pounding stick, a broom, a tray and a basket. The value

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of this symbolism relating to occupations of males and females 842
respectively, is obvious.

Many women bear children when they are away in the fields, but 844
help at home is often given. The mothers of the wife and of the husband may not be present at the confinement. No childless woman may be near during the confinement or convalescence. The father may not be present or "the child would be ashamed to be born." Before and during her pregnancy a woman feeds her husband with a prickly plant which is mixed in his food; this makes him faithful [784]
to her.

The abdomen is bound after delivery in order to keep the uterus in position. There is a very small amount of bleeding after childbirth; in fact the flow of blood is quite finished in two or three days. The nearer the diet comes to that of the white man the greater the bleeding at delivery. A pregnant woman may not beat a drum, or she will bear a drum. A woman who sees the blood from circumcision of a male will not have any children.

When a female child is born, the umbilical cord is cut with a hoe to ensure that the female will be a good worker in the field. The cord of a male is cut with an arrow to insure good hunting. A newly born child receives a drink of beer, and a cord is tied round its waist. This is not for support; it is the string from which, much later, the lower garment hangs. Girls do not menstruate until they are fifteen 841
or even seventeen years of age. During the months after first menstruation a girl advances rapidly from childhood to womanhood.

The medicines that women take to secure abortions are bitter. 847
A woman will refuse quinine because she thinks it will cause abortion. It is certain that twins are welcome among the Ovimbundu, but there are special observances connected with their birth and death. A twin 845
birth is not thought to imply dual fatherhood. Twins are called Njamba ("elephant") and Hosi ("lion"). Although twins are of opposite sexes each receives one of the two names. Njamba is the first born, and Hosi is the second to be delivered. The medicine-man holds a ceremony to cure the mother of twins. The afterbirth of twins is placed in two gourds and carried outside the village for burial by two midwives. The mother of twins must wear round her neck the horn of an antelope given by the medicine-man. She has to blow this when crossing a river, meeting a crowd of people, or seeing a hawk overhead. People laugh at her and in fun say that she is a pig or a bitch. "The woman says the same kind of words to them." Children may be adopted, but they never really 597

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597 belong to the foster parents. When an adopted girl marries, half the presents from the husband are given to the natural parents, and the other half to the foster parents.

845 In a case of triple birth at Ngalangi two infants died at birth; the other succumbed after three months. In another instance a woman bore three children and in the vernacular of my informant "something which was nothing," but all died. In a third case of triple birth a woman had a boy and two girls. The boy died at the age of fifteen [826] years; the girls grew up and bore children. Albinos do not find it easy to obtain wives. I was told that an albino man at Ngalangi could not find a wife until he married a widow who had several children, because unmarried girls of his own age did not want him. One of the charms collected has to be worn by a woman who has triplets. The object is a rattle (*olusanga*), which the woman shakes when she meets any one. If she gave an ordinary greeting the children would die.

115 The greater part of this information was obtained at Ngalangi by interrogating women who were questioned in Umbundu by Mrs. McDowell. At Elende I asked my interpreter Ngonga to interrogate 843 his wife. According to Ngonga a woman must visit a female practitioner in the first month of her pregnancy. The face and the body of the pregnant woman are painted with red, black, and white spots. This means that she will have no difficulty in bearing children, neither will she have any sickness during the nine months of gestation. "When her belly hurts" (i.e., the quickening), the woman goes to the same female *ocimbanda*, who paints lines of white, red, and black across her breast.

751 The *ocimbanda* gives the woman a necklace consisting of a strip of leather to which two cowries are attached. Experience proves that such a necklace is difficult to buy. If the woman has a necklace of this kind which was worn by her grandmother, it is a very powerful aid to conception, a relief in painful menstruation, and a means of securing easy delivery and normal gestation. I could not find any trace of an idea relating to the entry of a soul, ancestral or otherwise, into the foetus.

841 *Ongunda* is the name for a disease of the genitalia; but Ngonga used the word to describe abdominal pain suffered by a woman who has had no children. By this I suppose he means painful menstruation. The curative root which is given is called *kapembua*.

847 Abortion is never secured by mechanical means. The medicine (*ikemba*) is made from the root of a plant that is boiled in water and

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drunk. The concoction is described in Umbundu as *ihemba vioku* 847
tundiaspo iso ("medicine to take away belly").

When the monthly period begins too early in life, the medicine- 841
man recommends that the young girl should wear the cowrie necklace worn by her mother's mother.

A deformed child is destroyed, but not if it has been allowed to 847
survive the first day.

If male triplets are born, two stay permanently with the mother. 851
At the age of five years one child goes to the king, whose child he becomes.

When a woman has had relationships with more than one man, 837
she will die in childbirth unless the medicine-man is called to cure her.

In a Vachokue village of eastern Angola I bought a female wooden 532
figure. It was explained that this would be nursed by a woman, one 845
of whose twins was dead, in order to induce another conception. 842
Moreover, the nursing of the figure prevents the death of the second twin. The Ovimbundu also use these wooden figurines for replacing dead twins (p. 163).

Children are suckled for a long time; even those of three years and 853
older come to the breast. There are instances in which milk is present but lacking the nutritive qualities; then the baby is likely to die. The matter is simpler when a mother gives no milk at all because the baby is given to another woman, but not necessarily to a woman who is suckling a child. A baby whose mother has no milk may be given to a woman who has not borne a child for many years, and the sucking of the child quickly induces a milk supply. This is agreed upon by informants at Ngalangi and Elende who have seen a child nursed by a woman with withered breasts. Protection is given to the fontanelle by covering it with a vegetable gum which hardens.

Near the chief village of the Vangangella at Ngalangi there is a 842
mound decorated with feathers and painted wooden posts (Plate 789
XCII, Fig. 1). Childless women are placed on the mound which is near a river. They are covered with mud, after which the medicine-man sings songs and administers potions. The women go home and are made to sit on mounds in their kitchens. These mounds, which are made in rows, like earth heaped up after hoeing a trench, may be a symbol of successful agriculture and human fertility.

On looking into the subject of blood brotherhood I found that an 608
exchange of blood between two males who swore mutual fidelity was at one time common. At the present day an exchange of blood is

608 sometimes made between husband and wife, at night and in secret. People say that those who exchange blood will die at the same time.

NAMING

553
551 In addition to the words chosen to describe twins, there are some points of importance in connection with the naming of children. The father and mother change their names when the first child, male or female, is born, but there is no change of name at the birth of subsequent children. In a certain family the name of the first child, a girl, was Vitundo. The name of her father, which was Cingandu, was abandoned; he became Savitundo, "the father of Vitundo." The mother's name of Visolela was changed to Navitundo, "the mother of Vitundo."

If the first child dies, the parents dislike their names; they therefore revert to their original names. When another baby is born, the parents again change their names in the way described. A posthumous child is called Lusati. A child born after twins is Kasinda, which means "to push." Twins are called the Lion and the Elephant, or the Elephant and the Hippopotamus. There are no secret names. The names of the dead must not be mentioned; the deceased is referred to as "the one who has gone." Children may change their own names at the age of about sixteen years, and actually do so if their names are distasteful to them. Ngonga's friend, named Katito ("little"), changed his name to Mukayita (meaning not known). Ngonga's sister, named Ndumbila (meaning not known), changed her name to Cilingohenda, which means "It is a pity." I met a chief near Bailundu who was called Kandimba, meaning "the Little Hare."

There may be a change of name during sickness. A man now named Katahali suffered sickness in addition to other misfortunes. His sickness recurred, so he changed his name from Kopiongo to Katahali. The meaning of the former name is not known. The new name, Ka tala ohali, means "He who has seen trouble"; Katahali is an abbreviation. Another instance of change of name, also in the village of Cilembo, was that of a man who changed his name from Lumingu to Kaibemba, which means "the one who lives by medicine"; because without medicine he would have died. A sick child may receive a bad name, for instance, the name Pig. If one or more children have died a subsequent child receives an ugly name with a bad meaning. There is no totemism, but children may be named after animals. A girl is sometimes named Kambundu ("a little frog"). Other names for females are Esenje ("the rock where corn

is pounded") and Cisengu ("a small bird with a long tail"). A boy may be Kangwe ("the little leopard"). 553 551

Names sometimes give an indication of descent. Ngonga's full name is Ngonga Kalei Liahuka, Ngonga ("eagle"), Kalei ("one who works for the king"), Liahuka (the father's surname). Ngonga's sister is Cinyañala ("the old basket"). This was the name of her father's father's sister. As the father of Cinyañala is Liahuka, the daughter is surnamed Yaliahuka (*ya*, "of"). The father chooses the names of the three first children whether boys or girls. The mother chooses the name of the fourth child whether male or female. If the child is a boy, the mother probably chooses the name of her brother or of her father's brother. When a first son is born, the father usually gives the name of his father; for example, Ngonga's father's father was Ngonga. If the first baby is a girl the father chooses the name of his sister. Ages are not known, but reckoning of age goes back five years by counting the number of times maize has been sown; maize is planted each October. The period from sowing to sowing is *ulima*.

If a man has a child by a woman who is not a wife or a concubine, the woman keeps the child for eight or ten years. The man must give the mother a cloth in which to carry her illegitimate baby, also oil for her hair. Sometimes the girl will go to the father of her child to be his concubine, but her parents will not let her do so if he has a bad reputation. To bear a child out of wedlock is a disgrace. 849

TERMS OF RELATIONSHIP

In preparing the following tables Ngonga was the ego, or, male speaker, and each term is given in relation to himself, with its reciprocal. The tables give firstly Ngonga's own generation, then his ascendants, and finally some of his descendants. Tables E and F are diagrammatic forms of tables A–D. 601

TABLE A

(See Table E III)

NGONGA'S OWN GENERATION

Terms in italics are Umbundu names either for persons or for kindred classes. Reciprocals are placed in brackets; W.S. means, "woman speaking."

Ukai wange is my wife; *ukeka*, which means "spouse," is a modern form of address for husbands and wives when speaking to each other (*wepange*, my husband).

Kola or *kaso* is my elder brother (*mame wange* or *manja*, younger brother).

Kola or *kasonge* is my elder sister. An elder brother speaking to his sister calls her by name, or he uses the term *ukeka*. When speaking of her he says *mahai wange* (*mame wange* or *manfonge*, younger brother). The same terms are used in the same way to apply to my father's brother's son, and my

601 father's brother's daughter. Similarly the terms *manja* or *kota* are applied to my mother's sister's son. The former is used if this relative is younger than myself; the latter term is employed if the relative is older than myself. *Mukai* is the term for my mother's sister's daughter (reciprocal, *manja*, *kota*, or *kuse*, means mother's sister's son). *Manjanga* is a general name for a mother's sister's child, male or female.

Upalume describes my father's sister's son (*upalume*, mother's brother's son). The word is also applied to my father's sister's daughter. Marriage with a father's sister's daughter is permissible, but it is not favored since the offspring of such a union may be stupid. *Upalume* also designates my mother's brother's daughter, who, according to custom, is regarded as the most suitable spouse for me.

Cepua ceape. This term is applied to any child of my mother's brother and to any child of my father's sister (reciprocal, *cepua ceape*).

Nawa. The term is used as follows: for my older brother's wife; (W.S.) my husband's younger brother; my younger brother's wife; (W.S.) my husband's elder brother; my elder sister's husband; my wife's younger brother; my younger sister's husband; my wife's elder brother; my father's brother's son's wife; (W.S.) my husband's father's brother's son; my father's brother's daughter's husband; my wife's father's brother's son; my father's sister's son's wife; (W.S.) my husband's mother's brother's son; my father's sister's daughter's husband; my wife's mother's brother's son; my mother's brother's son's wife; (W.S.) my husband's father's sister's son; my mother's brother's daughter's husband; my wife's father's sister's son; my mother's sister's son's wife; (W.S.) my husband's mother's sister's son, my mother's sister's daughter's husband, my wife's mother's sister's son.

This completes the terms of relationship for Ngonga's own generation.

TABLE B

(See Table E II and IV, also Table F II)

FIRST GENERATION OF NGONGA'S ASCENDANTS

Tate. The term is applied to my father; my father's brother; and my mother's sister's husband (the word *omolanga*, my child, is the Umbundu reciprocal for the English reciprocal terms, son, brother's son, wife's sister's son).

Mai. The word is applied to my uterine mother, my mother's sister, and my father's brother's wife (again the Umbundu *omolanga* is the reciprocal for the English reciprocals, son, sister's son, and [W.S.] husband's brother's son).

Apkai means my father's sister, and the term is said to designate a "female father." My mother's brother's wife is also *apkai* (the Umbundu reciprocal for either male or female is *ocimumba ceape*, which is the equivalent of the English reciprocals, brother's son and husband's sister's son).

Mona or *kona* is my mother's brother (reciprocal is *ocimumba ceape*, which means sister's son).

Cikulume. The term is applied to my father's sister's husband (the reciprocal, *ocimumba ceape*, means wife's brother's son).

This completes the first generation of Ngonga's ascendants.

TABLE C

(See Table E I and F I)

SECOND GENERATION OF NGONGA'S ASCENDANTS

Sekula ceape. The term is applied to my father's father, and literally means my older father (the reciprocal is *ocekula ceape*, meaning son's son).

Sekula. The word designates my mother's mother's brother, and my mother's mother's sister's husband (the reciprocal, *ocekula*, means sister's daughter's son, and wife's sister's daughter's son).

Kukululu or *sekululu*. These terms are applicable to my father's father's brother, my father's father's brother's wife; my father's father's sister's husband; and my mother's father (the reciprocal *onekulu* describes the reciprocals, brother's son's son; husband's brother's son's son; wife's brother's son's son; daughter's son). 601

Moikulu. This designation, which is derived from *moi*, meaning mother, and *kulu*, an old person, is applied to my father's mother (reciprocal, *onekulu ganga*, son's son). *Moikulu* also means my father's father's sister; my mother's mother; my mother's mother's brother's wife; and my mother's mother's sister (the reciprocal is *onekulu* which equals the English reciprocals brother's son's son; daughter's son; husband's daughter's child; and sister's daughter's child).

This completes the second generation of ascendants.

NOTE: Ngonga's wife uses the names *moikulu* and *kukululu* for those relatives of her husband to whom Ngonga himself applies those terms. These relatives call Ngonga's wife *onekulu*.

TABLE D

(*See Table E IV and V, also Table F II, IV and V*)

SOME OF NGONGA'S DESCENDANTS

Nawulu or *uweli* is my first-born son. Other sons are *omola*, meaning child. *Omola alume* means a male child. *Omola akai* is a female child. *Uweli* also means a first daughter (the reciprocal for these terms is *tate*, meaning father).

Omolange means my child. I apply the word, not only to my own children, but to my elder brother's son (reciprocal, *tate*, father's younger brother); to my elder brother's daughter; and to my younger brother's son.

Ndatembo. The word is applied to my son's wife; my daughter's husband; my elder brother's son's wife; my elder brother's daughter's husband; and my younger brother's son's wife (the same word *ndatembo* is used for the reciprocals of these terms; namely, husband's father; wife's father; husband's father's younger brother; wife's father's younger brother; and husband's father's elder brother).

The foregoing classificatory system of relationship is not peculiar to the Ovimbundu, but is a cultural trait of many Bantu-speaking and some Sudanic-speaking Negroes. The similarity of the Umbundu system to those of surrounding peoples in Rhodesia and the Congo will be pointed out in chapters dealing with culture contacts. 601 171

When describing marriage rites reference was made to the fact that a wife goes to live near her husband's relatives; the system is therefore patrilocal. The limited family consists of husband and wife (or wives) with their children. The greatest number of wives observed in the family of a commoner was four, and in the family of a king eleven. A household sometimes contains adopted children, also domestic slaves (pawns) who are working to pay off debts for their maternal uncles. An extended family may include a grandfather and his wife, his sons, their wives and children, and his unmarried daughters, with classes and nomenclatures mentioned in the foregoing tables. 591 592 [595] [597] [567] 596

The phrase *epata lia tate* (or *alusa*) means "family of my father" and includes all relatives on the father's side. The words *epata lia* 613

613 *mai* (or *oluina*) mean "family of my mother." These terms seem to indicate a bilateral rather than a unilateral lineage. Inquiry did not show that there were totems for the mother's or the father's people, or that marriage into any particular local group was com-
631 manded or enjoined. A village is a unit under the administration of a chief (*sekulu*) and as such is part of a large group of villages forming a kingdom ruled by a king (*osoma*), but such village units are concerned with government and warfare, not with exogamy.

613 In tracing descent an Ocimbundu gives the names of relatives of
565 both the father and mother, but commoners are unlikely to know the names of their relatives beyond the grandparent class. The children of a king were at one time able to recite many generations
[582] of ancestors along both parental lines. But if the king had married a commoner, as he was allowed to do after choosing his first wife from the royal line, the children knew only the genealogy of their father. This is obvious since the commoner mother would not be likely to know her line of descent. The son of a village chief (*sekulu*) may marry a commoner, but, according to Ngonga, the *sekulu*, his father, "would have a very good look at her."

582 Ngonga had not heard of the marriage of brothers and sisters,
565 not even in the royal family; the idea of such a union was new and repulsive to him. In Umbundu society there would be no necessity for such a marriage as that of brother and sister or other close relative, because members of a royal family of one part of the country could intermarry with members of a royal family in some area far away. There might, for example, be marriages between the royal families of Bailundu and Ngalangi, which are two principal kingships of the Ovimbundu confederacy.

835 When asked what would be the fate of a man who committed
684 incest with his blood daughter or uterine sister, Ngonga said he would be killed by his brother or by his mother's brother. If he escaped he would have to go far away so that his people could never see him again. If a fine were accepted for incest, the culprit would have to pay his own kin "because he had shamed them."

601 Table A, Ngonga's Own Generation, calls attention to a plurality of terms for brother and sister according to the relative ages of the speaker and the person addressed. Moreover, there is a term for direct address and another which is used when speaking of a brother or sister.

Ngonga was questioned with regard to forms of address for his brothers and sisters other than the children of his uterine mother.

Ngonga actually has a brother by his father's first wife, and for this male he uses the same terms as for his uterine brothers. The same terms are used for uterine sisters and sisters begotten by his father through wives other than his uterine mother. Ngonga said, "If people ask you which sister or which brother you can explain it in words." 601

A wife of Ngonga's father, other than Ngonga's uterine mother, is called *mai yesepakai;* that is, "the mother who is jealous of my mother." *Mai* means "mother," and the remainder of the term is a derivative from the word *esepa*, meaning "woman's jealousy." If two women *A* and *B* desire to marry the same man and only *A* is successful, *B* calls *A sepakai*. Under similar circumstances a man would call his successful rival *cikuelume cove*.

There is a distinct word for man's jealousy. In explaining this Ngonga said, "When I see my wife look at another man, I have *ukuelume* ["man's jealousy"] in my heart."

If on the death of Ngonga's father, his mother married again this male would be called by Ngonga *tate yesepakai* ("the father who is jealous").

A wife calls the children of the family, who are not her own, *omala vesepakai;* that is, "the children who are jealous of the other children." A mother-in-law taboo operates. Conversation between mother-in-law and son-in-law must always be carried on while the speakers stand back to back. 606

The foregoing note on a mother-in-law taboo has been supplemented by a letter from Dr. Merlin W. Ennis of Elende, Angola (August, 1931). "Mother-in-law and father-in-law taboos seem to be directed against seeing each other. The persons involved may not see each other. If they meet on the path, one steps aside and turns the back while the other passes on. The one passing by goes through the motions of seeing no one. If it is necessary to converse on some subject, they sit looking in different directions, or one sits out of doors and the other within, around the corner of the door. This holds equally for a man and his son's wife, and for a woman and her daughter's husband. A man may see and talk with his daughter's husband, and a woman may see and speak to her son's wife, but no son-in-law may eat with a father-in-law, likewise daughters-in-law and mothers-in-law may not eat together. Brothers-in-law may not eat together unless they have gone through a certain ceremony; this also holds for sisters-in-law."

601 Table A indicates a wide use of the word *nawa* for "in laws" of the speaker's generation. Thus Ngonga calls the wives and husbands of his brothers and sisters *nawa* without distinguishing them in any way. The term *nawa* has a still wider connotation for it includes Ngonga's father's brother's son's wife, and his father's sister's daughter's husband. Ngonga's wife said that she uses the word *nawa* for all the brothers and sisters of her husband, for all the children of her husband's father's brother, her husband's father's sister's children, her husband's mother's brother's children, and her husband's mother's sister's children. Reciprocally, all these people call Ngonga's wife *nawa*.

605 582 Table A introduces the question of cross-cousin marriage, which is the functional form among the Ovimbundu. My informant said that he calls his mother's sister's children brothers and sisters, therefore he could not marry the girls. Neither are his father's brother's daughters eligible for marriage with him. The table shows the truth of this, for Ngonga calls his father's brother's daughter *mukai*, meaning "sister"; she addresses him as *kota* or *huwa* ("brother"). Ngonga also addresses his father's brother's son by the term *manjange* ("younger brother") or *huwange* ("older brother") according to the relative ages of the speaker and the person addressed.

When Ngonga was asked whether he could marry a daughter of his mother's brother, he replied, "I could marry her very well indeed." A marriage of Ngonga with his father's sister's daughter would be permissible but Ngonga said the marriage is not regarded as a good one "because the children will be stupid." Ngonga could marry his mother's brother's daughter's daughter, or his mother's brother's son's daughter. It would also be permissible for Ngonga to marry his father's sister's daughter's daughter, or his father's sister's son's daughter.

604 601 Ngonga said, "My father's brother is my father, and my mother's sister is my mother." When questioned further my informant said that a marriage with daughters of these relatives would make him *ocinyama*, which means "an animal." Relatives would say, "You have shamed the family." It will be noted from Table B, First Generation of Ngonga's Ascendants, that Ngonga's father's brother calls him *omolange*, meaning "my child," for which the reciprocal is *tate* ("father"). Ngonga's father's brother's wife is *mai* ("mother") and she calls him *omolange* ("my child"). Ngonga distinguishes between his mother's oldest sister (*mai yukulu*), and his mother's

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youngest sister (*mai yumalele*). Ngonga's father's oldest brother is *tate yukulu*. 604 601

Thus far Ngonga was clear about his eligibility for marriage, and in addition to this he was sure that he could not marry a sister of his wife while his wife was alive, but he could marry his wife's sister, after the death of his wife. The wives of a deceased elder brother are divided among his younger brothers, or a man may inherit the wife of his mother's brother. Ngonga always laughed heartily at the idea of marrying a woman much older than himself. He did not know whether he could marry certain older people of the *ndatembo* and *maikulu* class but thought the idea amusing because of their age. 587

In discussing law, inheritance, and slavery, the importance of the mother's brother will be indicated, and for this relative there is the term *manu* (or *inanu*). The *manu* calls Ngonga *ocimumba cange*, but he calls Ngonga's wife *ndatembo*. Ngonga's mother's brother's wife, also Ngonga's father's sister, are *ophai*, which my informant interpreted as a "female father." 604

The use of the word *nawa* has been explained in such a way as to show that Ngonga's wife uses this term for a large class of relatives by marriage who are of the same generation as her husband, while these people reciprocally use the word *nawa*. Ngonga uses the word *nawa* in exactly the same way for corresponding relatives of his wife. 601

This term *nawa* is not to be confused with the term *ndatembo* whose connotation is indicated by the following examples. The wife of Ngonga applies the term *ndatembo* to certain of her husband's relations who are not of his generation. Thus she calls Ngonga's mother *ndatembo* when speaking of her, but she addresses her mother-in-law as *mai* ("mother"), while *ndatembo* describes the relationship between Ngonga's wife and his father. Moreover, Ngonga's wife uses *ndatembo* to describe her husband's father's brother's wife, and Ngonga's wife is called *ndatembo* by her husband's father's sister, her husband's father's sister's husband, and her husband's mother's brother. These are relatives by marriage but they are not of the same generation as her husband.

Table C, Second Generation of Ngonga's Ascendants, gives no particular difficulty. *Maikulu* includes the paternal grandmother, the father's father's sister (great aunt), the maternal grandmother, the mother's mother's brother's wife, and the mother's mother's sister. Therefore *maikulu* is a class name for the second generation of female ascendants.

601

TABLE E

MALE SPEAKER'S DIRECT LINE OF RELATIONSHIPS

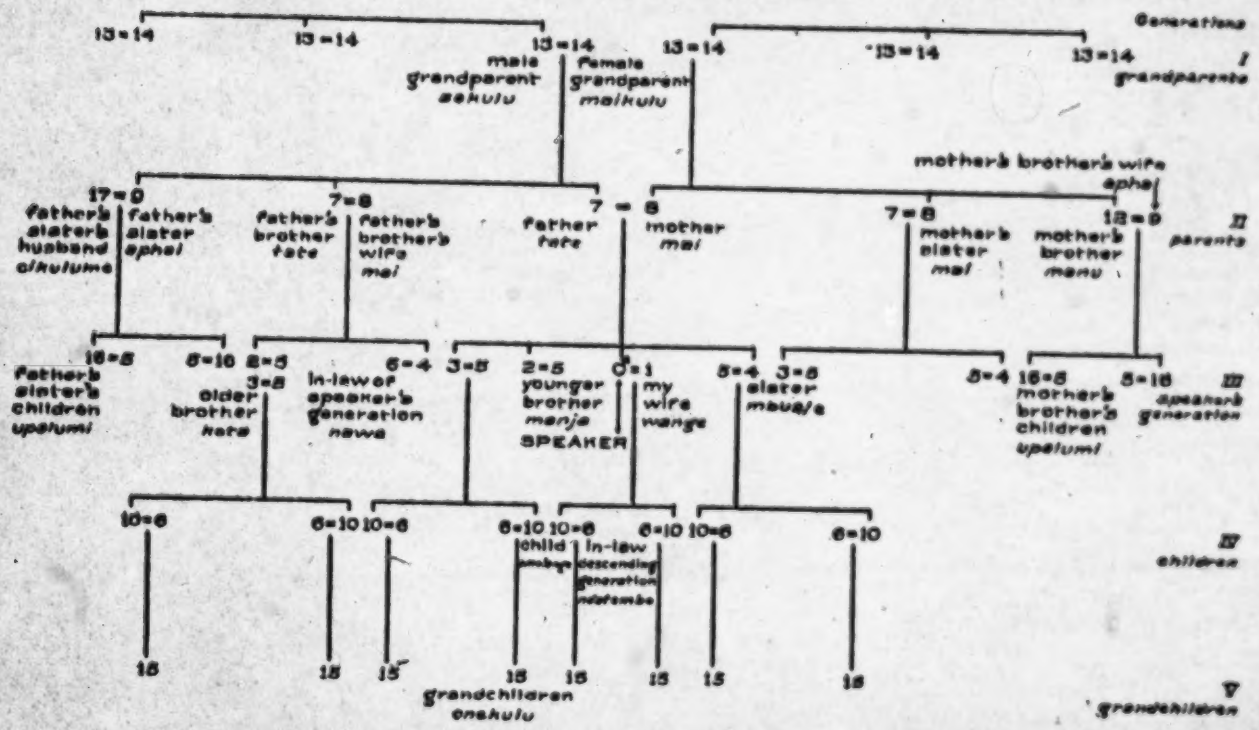
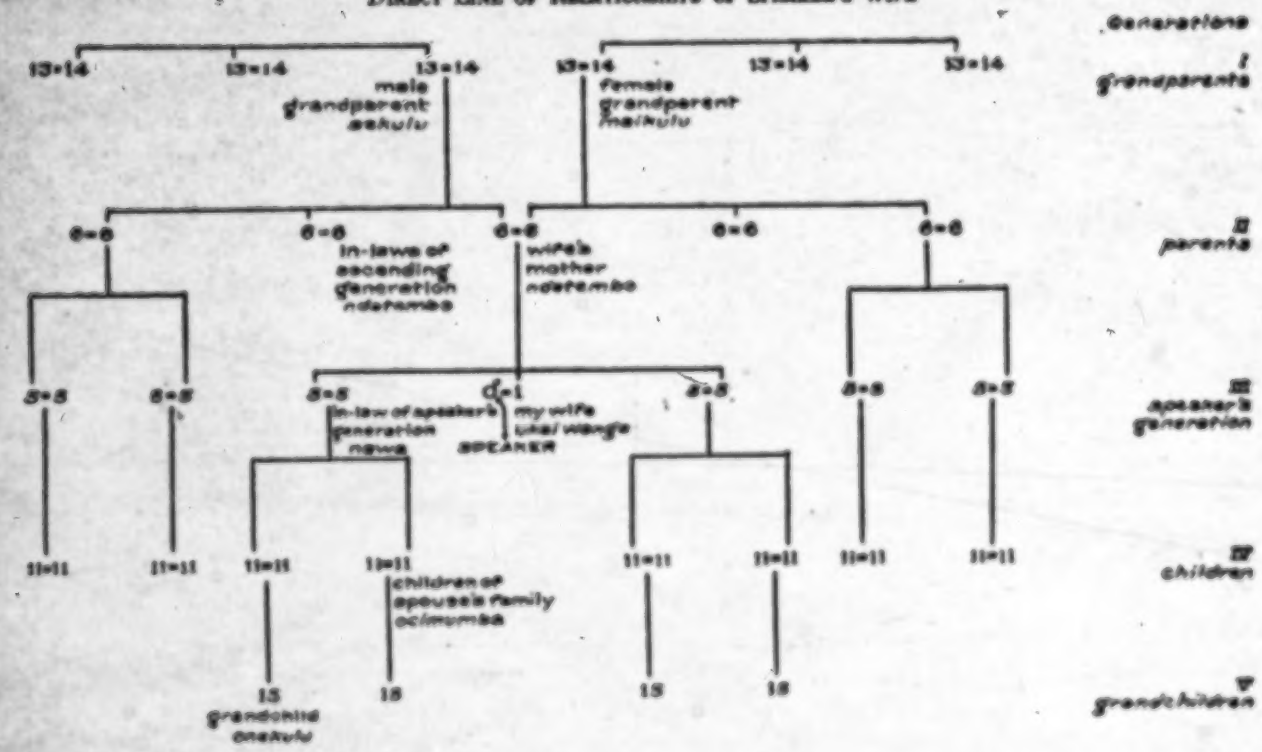


TABLE F

DIRECT LINE OF RELATIONSHIPS OF SPEAKER'S WIFE



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601 *Sekulu* includes the father's father, the mother's mother's brother, and the mother's mother's sister's husband. The terms *sekululu* and *kukululu* were used by Ngonga as being synonymous, and therefore they have the same connotation. With regard to the term *usukulu* Ngonga seemed clear, but in reply to questions concerning the reason for having the terms *kukulu's* and *sekululu*, he was evidently confused. At last he said, "It does not matter, they are the same people." Ngonga never hesitated in giving the reciprocal for all these terms, which is in every instance *osekulu*. These terms may have been correlated with different functions which have now become obsolete.

604 601 The two most important collateral relatives in the parent's generation are the father's sister (*apkai*) and the mother's brother (*mana*). The term for father's sister means "female father." As such her relations to ego are similar to those of a father, consequently it is not considered right to marry her daughters. The mother's brother, on the other hand, is without doubt ego's most important relative. The two are linked by a series of reciprocal duties and obligations. Marriage of a mother's brother's daughter, or a mother's brother's widow, is a correct procedure. The value of the more important reciprocal duties is indicated in the following sections on law and government.

602 171 There was no possibility of devoting more time to the matter of relationship terms, but there is here sufficient to indicate the remarkable persistance of the kinship system in spite of three centuries of contact with the Portuguese and other Europeans. Moreover, the information gleaned by interrogation of Ngonga and his wife gives the main points for comparison with systems of a similar kind that have been given for Ashanti, Uganda, and Rhodesia, by Rattray, Roscoe, and Smith and Dale respectively. These kinship systems are the same both in general principles and in considerable detail.

601 The foregoing notes and tables were studied by Mr. Zachary Taylor of the University of Chicago, who prepared Tables E and F. Mr. F. Eggan offered useful criticisms. The Arabic numerals on these charts refer to the numbers used to designate terms of relationship on the list on page 199. The ego or speaker is Ngonga, my interpreter, whose direct line of relationships is shown in Table E, while Table F indicates the terms used by Ngonga for his wife's relatives. The levels numbered in Roman numerals on Tables E and F indicate the generation stratification as follows:

I. Grandparents.
II. Parents.
III. Speaker's generation.
IV. Children.
V. Grandchildren.

601

Numbers on the left of the sign (–) refer to males, those on the right, to females.

The terms of relationship used in Tables E and F are as follows:

1. *Uhai wange.* My wife (vocative). Ngonga's wife calls him *wengange*, my husband.
2. *M'wana, mwajo, mwajwange.* Younger brother.
3. *Kolo, kowe.* Older brother.
4. *M'kwale.* Sister (vocative). *M'uhai wange.* Sister (nonvocative).
5. *Nzaza.* In-laws of speaker's generation.
6. *Ndakwale.* In-laws of ascending or descending generation.
7. *Tata.* Father.
8. *M'ai.* Mother.
9. *Apbai.* Father's sister (female father).
10. *Omolonge.* Child, used for speaker's family only.
11. *Ozimwale.* Children of spouse's family.
12. *Mzaw, ówaw.* Mother's brother (direct ascendant).
13. *Kolo.* An old person in grandparent's and grandchild's generation.
    Sokolo, bokolole. Male grandparents.
14. *Mokolole.* Female grandparents.
15. *Omokolo.* Grandchild of either sex.
16. *Ozolomo.* Mother's brother's or father's sister's children.
17. *Ozhalomo.* Father's sister's husband.

NOTE: Age distinctions are made chiefly in the speaker's own generation.

LAW AND GOVERNMENT

In dealing with marriage rites it was stated that a woman had to contribute certain articles to the home; these are the utensils that she uses in her daily work. The baskets, pottery, pounders, and brushes may seem insignificant, but nevertheless there are rules regulating their disposal at death. Her husband will retain some of the articles; the remainder will be shared among the deceased woman's sisters. 421 422

The disposal of a widow is a matter for discussion among the relatives. The husband makes no bequest to his widow and children, though the children may receive a small gift of a pig or some corn. The property of a man is bequeathed to his mother's brother or to his sister's sons. The eldest brother of the deceased or the maternal uncle of the widow takes her to his house along with her children. If her father is alive he may take her. Ngonga says that each responsible relative says, "It is better that you should take her"; at last some one says, "I will take her." 768

When explaining the system of inheritance Ngonga was clear on two points. In the first place wives and children of the deceased are 428

428 not entitled to inheritance of land, cattle, or anything else belonging to the dead man. The greater part of the property would be bequeathed to the eldest brother of the deceased's mother.

428 604 768 There appears to be discussion as to the distribution of property, but the maternal uncle is responsible for settling disputes. He himself has the first claim, and in Ngonga's words, "If there are quarrels about the cattle, land, and other things, the mother's eldest brother will settle them."

The mother's brother has rights over his sister's children even to the extent of pawning them to pay his own debts. On the other hand the maternal uncle is responsible for the conduct of his sister's children. He would have to pay fines incurred by thefts they committed, and he provides for his sister's son a wife who is either his daughter or his widow.

Ngonga stated that the maternal uncle does not invariably take all the property of a deceased nephew for himself. He may give something to the deceased's mother, the deceased's maternal grandfather, or to a brother of the deceased. Such gifts appear to be the outcome of good will on the part of the dead man's maternal uncle; there is no compulsion. Women never inherit cattle or rights to the use of land. [421]

423 692 622 The king is the head of the legal system, though his activities as such are not so great as those of the village headman (*sekulu*). The *olosekulu* (there are usually more than one) of a village witness the final act in a divorce ceremony. They used to have charge of trials for theft, murder, adultery, likewise the right of settling arguments concerning the ownership of land. It was the *sekulu* who distributed the land to the extended families when a new village site was opened. The maternal uncles settled the minor divisions among the limited families.

643 There are many kings among the Ovimbundu, but I thought that there was a tendency to confuse the titles of *ocoma* ("king") and *sekulu* ("headman" or "chief" of a village). The jurisdiction of a king is so well known that any person is able to say under which king he lives. Ngonga said definitely that a man of the Ovimbundu who was under the jurisdiction of a certain king would have to obey the commands of a visiting king, provided they were not in any way disapproved of by the king to whom first allegiance was due.

643 [468] A chief may demand labor for the building of his house or the cultivation of his land. He does not pay for this but usually gives beer to the workers; sometimes he secures the labor and gives nothing in return.

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in return. Even a slave used to have rights of appeal to the king 000 643
if he were starved and beaten without cause. The king was the prime 177
mover in warfare. The whole legal system is at this time directly under Portuguese administration though the kings and chiefs have minor powers. Ngonga says that complainants who are dissatisfied with the decision of their own chief go to the Fort, meaning of course the Portuguese military post, or office of the Administrador.

There is no doubt that in former days the responsibility for crime 672
and debt was transferred to a relative in the absence of the delinquent. 604
If a thief escaped, responsibility would rest with a brother, a father or a son. The mother's brother was often held to be responsible for the misdeeds and debts of his sister's children. The mother's brother has rights that extend to the sale of his sister's children to pay his debts. For this reason Ngonga says, "If I have done wrong and they cannot catch me it is right that he (mother's brother) should pay for me."

I supposed the case of Ngonga having stolen a cow; he has been caught but escapes. Ngonga said that the man from whom he had stolen the animal would go to his (Ngonga's) mother's brother in order to name the price required for the cow, or any other possession which had been stolen. If the mother's brother thought the price reasonable he would pay. On the contrary, if the price claimed were [692]
too high the mother's brother would appeal, first to the village chief, then if necessary to the king.

Ownership of land does not appear to have been a source of dis- 423
pute. Apparently land was distributed by the chief as explained in dealing with village organization. Rights seem to have been well defined and there was always enough land for a stranger. When a [426]
man was going away on a trading journey he might lend his land to another who would agree to cultivate it and take the produce for a year. I was unable to satisfy myself that land is now, or was in time past held to be the property of dead ancestors. The right to land depends on its use and allotment by a chief at the time of [437]
founding a village. A man who intended to be absent would make a payment so that he might leave his goods at the house of another. The chief would settle any disputes arising from these arrangements.

The complainant in a suit is called *osibila*, the defendant is *osilua*. 695
The name for a witness is *wengi*. In the old days a false witness had to make recompense to the man about whom he had told a lie; he would probably have a beating as well. A master was in every 672
way responsible for the actions of a slave. The degree of responsi-

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672 bility of women is mentioned in describing the penalties for adultery and theft.

562 681 The penalties for offences against the king were undoubtedly more severe than those imposed for the same offences against a commoner. Ngonga says that the punishments for crimes against a chief or medicine-man were, and are now, the same as the penalties for offences against any other person. It seems, however, that if the chief were a very powerful man, he could claim penalties which would have been appropriate for offences against a king.

685 A thief was punished by beating, in addition to which he would have to pay a fine to the people from whom he had stolen, but he rarely escaped without the beating. The thief would be beaten just as much for stealing one animal as he would for stealing many. If a woman stole from her neighbor's garden, those who caught her would tie her and take her to her husband, who would pay compensation and then beat her. A child caught stealing would be taken to the maternal uncle or to his own father. If a woman stole from relations she would probably have no punishment other than a beating. Her husband would have to compensate the relations. Stealing honey from hives is an offence that is punished according to the general laws relating to theft.

696 If a man was sentenced to a death penalty, or to a beating, there was an official appointed by the king or by the chief to see the sentence carried out. This representative was called *ukuenje welombe* which means "the servant, or minister, of the court."

682 Ngonga described the penalty for murder saying, "It was a terrible thing they did to the murderer. A tight triangle of wood was fastened on to his neck by a peg and to this a cord was attached so that he was suspended to the roof with his feet barely touching the ground. In some instances his head was placed through a hole in the door of his house while his body was inside the hut. He had very little food or water and people threw things at him. He was kept tied up for a month to see whether he could pay something. Suppose he could not pay, and nobody would pay for him, he was taken outside the village where his head was cut off. If he had many possessions, he said on the first day, 'If you will take this thing off my neck I will pay two cows and two slaves.' The payment would be made, not to the wife or children of the murdered man, but to the brother of the mother of the murdered man, or to the mother of the murdered man, or to the son of a sister of the victim. If the murderer agreed to make the payment the people kept him tied up until the

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fines were in their hands. If he murdered one of the royal family 682
he was killed after he had paid the fine." The punishment of a woman [562]
who has committed a murder is the same as that for a man.

Ombulungu is the name given to trial by poison ordeal. The 695
medicine-man holds out both his hands, in each of which there is a potato, only one of which is poisoned. The accused man says, "If I have done this thing, this potato will be poison for me. If I have not done this thing, this potato will be food for me." The complainant says, "If this is not the man who poisoned my brother, this potato will be poison for me." They sit in front of the medicine-man, and each must take the potato in the hand opposite to him. The poison makes a man very sick. His mouth swells so that he cannot speak.

When a woman was accused of murder her son or her brother [562]
would take her place in the poison ordeal. A boy of fifteen years of age would have the same treatment as a man. "I don't think a girl would kill anybody. I never heard about it," said Ngonga. It appears that resort was made to a medicine-man when the accused was thought to have committed murder by poison or magic. If the murderer used weapons, the accuser, who was usually a relative, was entitled to kill him with the kind of weapon used for the crime.

The penalties for adultery were the same as those for murder. 684
The woman appears to have escaped punishment, except that "her husband would not have her any more." The male adulterer had to pay the husband; if he could not pay or escape, the husband had the right to kill him. In the old days the price for adultery was two oxen, a pig, and a slave. At the present day a man who has committed adultery and made payment, possibly takes the woman and all children under three years of age. The husband has the right to decide whether the adulterer has the privilege of taking the woman and her children. An adulterer with one of the king's wives was castrated but not killed. He might, instead of mutilation, pay a very [567]
high price, while he himself along with his sisters and the sons of his sisters, would become slaves of the king. If a man could not pay, he might be sold as a slave in order to provide money for the fine.
Criminal law did not distinguish between responsibility for inten- [671]
tional and unintentional offences.

It is very difficult to say how much of the old law survives. One 681
feels that underneath the ostensible Portuguese rule there is an active 177
native life that is resisting subjugation.

Only two years ago Ngonga paid an ox to prevent one of his female 686
relatives from being pawned. Within the past ten years Ngonga has

686 actually paid to redeem his brother and sister who were sold to pay the debts of his maternal uncle. Officialdom is one thing and actual [177] practice is another. Ngonga is right when he says that people appeal to the native law as laid down by the chief or king. If they are not satisfied they pretend a great respect for Portuguese law and therefore go to the Administrador.

WARFARE AND SLAVERY

648 726 The Ovimbundu have been for centuries an organized people possessed of a well-developed language, a legal system, and complex social organization. In trade and travel too, the Ovimbundu have been in the vanguard of African tribes. These reasons, in conjunction with the fact of numerical superiority and early contact with the Portuguese, would account for the success of the Ovimbundu in warfare. The defensive federations existing between the ten or twelve main political units, whereby they did not habitually war on each other, helped to assure success. Should the eldest son of a king's [693] principal wife be thought unsuitable as successor, a competent son of the deceased king was elected by a council of village chiefs.

411 There is no evidence that the Ovimbundu poisoned their weapons, neither do they do so today. The Ovimbundu do not use a shield at the present time, neither is it certain that they had shields in former times. A skin-covered powder-box was carried in the king's train when on the warpath.

718 Signaling-drums were about two feet long. They were made from a cylinder of wood over the ends of which skin was stretched. Signaling, which was accomplished by drumming with the palms of the hands, was the task of boys who resided in the king's compound, except when they accompanied him to war or on a trading journey. There was no system of smoke signaling. The iron war gong was named *ongonga*, but the instrument is nowadays tapped by the assistant of a medicine-man during his performance. In former times the gong was struck in the night to give assurance that the enemy was not in sight.

726 In war the oldest son of a king or of a chief went ahead of the war party accompanied by a few men who wore red leaves on their foreheads.

721 Intertribal jealousies, raiding for cattle and slaves, also reprisals for interference with caravan trade, were the chief causes of conflict with surrounding peoples. There was undoubtedly some internal warfare within the confederacy. The Ovimbundu of Elende, Bail-

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undu, and Ngalangi are said to have had conflicts. In time past, as at the present day, a king reigned over territory which was extensive but definitely delimited for purposes of administration. Encroachment of one king on the rights of taxation and administration of another led to raids and reprisals. Village chiefs collected taxes in the form of agricultural produce and gave these to the king, who personally visited a village from which payments had not been made. A folklore story begins, "The people had not paid taxes so the king came to the village and told them a parable."

A king, if young, accompanied his people on the warpath. There was, however, a permanent leader named *kasongo*, a derivative from *songola* ("to lead"). The declaration of war, likewise the tactics, were discussed by a council of *olosekula* ("village chiefs") in the *ombala* ("capital") where the king had, and still has, a royal compound. If war had been conducted among sections of the Ovimbundu, the defeated people had to pay taxes and tribute; moreover, their women and cattle were taken. In event of a successful war against the Vachokue there was plundering of cattle and women, but it was not found practicable to exact periodical payments from the enemy.

The subject of warfare is intimately related to that of slavery. There was until very recent times a domestic slavery which followed from the inability of a person to pay his debts. In connection with this reduction of free persons to a condition of slavery there are several points of exceptional interest. The debtor himself is not taken as a slave, neither are his wife or children. The correct procedure is a sale of his sister's children; but more frequently the children themselves are taken by the creditor. "The debtor's sister will say nothing because this is the law of the Ovimbundu." If payment of the debt is made later, the children are set free. Usually the word pawning is used by ethnologists to describe this proceeding.

Further consideration of Ngonga's payment to his mother's brother clarifies the facts of domestic slavery. "I paid for them, I took their place," said my interpreter. The payment for the return of these two children was two oxen. The girl, who was ten years of age when she was taken to pay the debt, was returned to her people when she was a woman with three children. Ngonga's brother was not actually taken from his home. He was made to pay his mother's brother's debt by working for the creditor. In general, these domestic slaves were not ill treated, though their rights were limited. The position of slaves taken from a hostile

567 people, especially if they were from outside the Ovimbundu, was one of absolute and abject servitude.

The master had rights of punishment including a death sentence; but Ngonga says that a slave could appeal to the headman of the village if he were starved and cruelly treated. All children of a slave became slaves of the master. As the slave had no property he could not pay a fine; the master would pay the fine then relieve his feelings by beating the slave. Instead of paying the fine the master might sell the slave.

Slaves were not branded or marked in any way. Ngonga has seen runaway slaves hunted with dogs. A slave was not allowed to buy his own freedom. A master could dispose of his slave girls in marriage; for instance, a young girl might be sold to an old man. The condition of the slave is well expressed in Ngonga's own words: "The slave worked hard at everything, then the master said he had done nothing."

Slaves used to go to war to fight with their masters against an enemy. A slave might become a blacksmith or a hunter, two very esteemed occupations, but all his work would be for the master. Ngonga says there was no slave market belonging to the Ovimbundu, but every man knew where he could buy a slave. Slaves could act as witnesses in a trial. Slave women were not lent out for prostitu-
[585] tion. A slave owner did not have promiscuous intercourse with his
[768] slave women, but he chose two or three girls as concubines. A slave girl who was married to a free man would revert to her master along with her children when her husband died. If a master had married his own slave woman she would, at his death, become the property of his eldest brother and her children would go with her. In some instances the slave woman and her children would be given to the son of her master's brother.

VILLAGE ORGANIZATION

361 When choosing a site for a new village, a preference is shown for a hillside, though woods or valleys are at times selected. The foot of cliffs is a favorite site. In addition to the shade afforded by the cliff there was in time past the advantage of being hidden from the view of enemies. Further shelter was afforded by the planting of wild fig trees. Sometimes an *ombala* ("capital") was rendered picturesque by the planting of trees which grow to a great size; such a plan was followed at the *ombala* of Ngalangi.

Caves in the wall of a cliff, likewise rugged hillsides, gave a place of retreat for women and children during an attack. Usually there

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are small streams of pure water falling down the cliffs and hillsides. 361
Near Bailundu and Ngalangi, villages still retain their defences which consist of high poles set in a trench.

Judging from sites visited at Elende there was a pre-Ovimbundu 172
stone-building culture. One of the sites has such a commanding 712
view over extensive plains and valleys that the position would be almost impregnable. At the present day the line of fortifications is well marked by stone walls three feet high. These are composed of boulders to which the builders had ready access on adjacent hillsides. Large stones were no doubt rolled from the slopes to the small plateau chosen as a building site. This small plain lies midway between the hill crest and the valley.

At present this old site, which is enclosed by lichen-covered walls, is overgrown by tall grass and trees attaining twenty feet in height. Photography would be uninstructive unless a preliminary clearance were made—a formidable task owing to the density of vegetation.

In the center of the enclosure is a group of transported boulders possibly marking the site of a place of assembly. A search among the long grass reveals stone slabs and cylindrical crushers which were used for grinding grain over a very long period, as may be seen by the wear on the base stone; some thick stones are so worn as to be almost perforated. Weather-worn stones that were probably used as scrapers, are to be found. Surface potsherds are of the material of which present-day Ovimbundu women make their cooking pots. These sherds mark the places now used by small nomadic bands, hence the surface pottery may have no connection with a pre-Umbundu culture.

In the vicinity of this walled stone village are hillside cairns marking the sites of graves. These have been robbed by medicine-men in search of material for their charms.

The Ovimbundu have no traditions regarding the site, neither is there legendary or other evidence to show that the Ovimbundu ever made their villages of stone. The raising of a cairn of stones over [64]
the body of a hunter is, however, a present-day practice near Ganda and in the Esele country.

If a site cannot be systematically worked, it is better left alone until scientific investigation is possible. The preliminary clearance of grass and timber would be a long process. The archaeological material recovered from such a site would be of a uniform and simple kind. There is no evidence of anything beyond an elementary stone age culture.

361 At the present time one type of village is surrounded by stout stakes ten or more feet high set in a roughly circular plan. The arrangement of alleyways within the village is complicated without following any symmetrical plan. A visitor sees only a labyrinth of passages between high poles, with here and there a rectangular wooden
417 gate at intervals along the passages. The door itself is made from
335 four stout heavy planks which are roughly hewn and as a rule undecorated, but occasionally I have seen the panels of a door carved with
[531] designs representing the breasts of a woman; or there may have been simple geometrical patterns. The top ends of the door panels are massive spheres of wood bored through with holes. Through the holes in the tops of these panels a pintle is passed in such a way that the door is suspended from above. During the daytime the lower ends of the panels are raised to the level of the lintel. They are there supported on a Y-shaped upright which is erected in front of the doorway. At night the planks are removed from this support and allowed to hang downward in the doorway. There is a sliding crosspiece to push over the lower ends. The same arrangement is sometimes used to make a door for a hut. This old type of village doorway, common twenty years ago, is becoming increasingly rare.

342 The house of a king or a chief is larger than that of a commoner.
644 The enclosure which contains a king's house and the other buildings
621 is named *olombe*, while *epundasuilo* is the word used to describe the entrance to this compound. The *olombe* is built by men and women who receive no payment. There is a ceremony when the compound is opened. The house of the chief, Kandimba Sanjahulu, near Bailundu, is rectangular, with mud walls raised on a platform of earth and stones. Whitewash has been applied to the outside of the walls and some ornament is given in the form of painted blue crosses.
[113] Complete study of structural types and the planning of internal divisions has been made by F. and W. Jaspert, of the Städtisches Völkermuseum, Frankfort.

644 At a village near Cuma the house of the chief differed from the dwellings of commoners in being somewhat larger. The house had been abandoned, not because the chief died there, but because the chieftainship had been transferred to an adjacent village. The tomb, which will be described in connection with funeral rites, was a few yards from the house. This mausoleum was surrounded by a high wooden palisade, to a stake of which were attached the horns of an ox killed at the funeral feast, while the jawbone lay in the enclosure

(Plate XLV, Fig. 2). The house of bows for holding sacred relics 644
will be described in connection with religion (Plate XLVI, Fig. 1).

In former days there used to be a hard mud floor for dancing, 261 155
centrally placed in the village.

In the center of the village is the communal house where all men, 344
and boys over four years of age, gather to eat their food, which is sent by the women. This *ongango* is the place of assembly for discussion of village affairs. A house of this kind at Bailundu is circular in form with a diameter of seventeen feet (Plate XLVIII, Fig. 1). In the middle of the *ongango* are stones forming a fireplace. In another such house there were jawbones of oxen. These were [681]
suspended from the walls as tokens of the payment of fines. There is no communal house for females. In some villages there is a [417]
common kraal for cattle.

The king's compound usually contains: 644

(1) The king's house, which invariably has a separate sleeping room.

(2) A house and kitchen for each of his wives.

(3) A tomb for the burial of kings and their wives.

(4) The house of bows for staffs, bows, mats, and tobacco-pipes of dead chiefs.

(5) A house of meditation for the king (Plate LXXXIX, Fig. 1).

(6) Pens for pigs and chickens.

The guest houses (Plate XLVIII, Fig. 2) that I have seen were [485]
not in the king's compound. Granaries, which are conspicuous in 343
every village, have been mentioned in connection with food supply (Plate XLIV, Fig. 1). Each house has its own granary. I have 364
noticed garbage pits containing corn husks and refuse from sweet potatoes, but there is as a rule no organized scheme for disposing of refuse; dogs and pigs are the scavengers. There is no particular place for defecation; people use the bush.

Every man has a knowledge of house-building. Women do not 462 476
actually build, but, along with the children, they pour water into [338]
the clay pit and carry clay to the men who are plastering the walls. Ngonga says, "People would be surprised to see a woman building a house. They would call her a he-woman." Men help one another in house-building by giving reciprocal service for which there is a gift of food and beer.

A deep rectangular clay pit is made as close to the house as possi- 338
ble, and the children thoroughly enjoy puddling the clay with their

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

338 feet. A trench about eighteen inches deep is dug for the poles (*akoso*), which form the framework. The wattle work is tied to the uprights with strong strips of red bark before the plastering is begun.
341 The old type of Umbundu house was round, but most of the houses
171 now show a transition to square or rectangular forms (Plate XLIV, Fig. 2).

[531] Exterior wall-painting is found only in the northern districts of Angola (Plate LXXXIX, Fig. 2). Between Saurimo and Malange in the north, rectangular, painted houses are frequently seen. Wall-painting is a cultural trait from the Congo region where that form of decoration is common.

796 The method of forming a village site and the right of the chief to
621 allot land have been described. The house of the chief is the first to be erected. There is drinking of beer to celebrate the completion of the village, and the pots of beer have to be stirred with the claws of chickens; these have been killed to provide blood for sprinkling the walls of the new houses. Village chiefs go through the process of stirring and drinking. The medicine-man drinks first, then he offers the cup to the chief.

344 The communal house is built by the united efforts of all men of
476 the village. Ngonga says, "The king never helps with any of the
[485] building, but he talks very much." The guest house is also built
644 by communal labor. The king of the *ombala* of Ngalangi told me that a king always uses the house of his predecessor, which must not be pulled down. No repairs are permitted and the house is used until it is absolutely untenable.

359 The interior of a commoner's house has three hearth stones in the
342 middle of the floor, which is of hard mud beaten down with a heavy wooden implement called *ocikandulo*. The ceremonial placing of the stones has been described in discussing marriage. There is no chimney, consequently the walls and roof are blackened with smoke. The junction of roof and walls provides pockets for the reception of small articles. On the floor near the walls may be several large beer pots. The dark smoky interior is almost intolerable. The sleeping
352 room is sometimes separated from the living room by matting. The bed is made from a cross-work of sticks supported on four Y-shaped posts, one at each corner. On the bed are coarse sleeping mats and possibly a modern blanket.

356 The miscellaneous contents of the hut are gourds, dippers, cooking
252 pots of several sizes, pounders, and baskets. In many of the huts I found cooking going on in the general room, but frequently a sepa-

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

rate hut is provided as a kitchen. In some dark corner of the hut 356
there is likely to be a sitting hen or a bitch with pups. Goats and 252
pigs intrude from time to time. Lean dogs scavenge round the
doorway. Naked little children whitened with dust play on the
floor. A woman crouches over the cooking pot stirring the glutinous 512
mass of corn meal. About sunset men are gathering in the council
house to which their meals are sent.

They push forward the logs into the fire, throw their blankets around them and chatter until the women and children arrive with the evening meal. In the vicinity of the village, boys are wandering about with blunt wooden arrows fitted to their bowstrings, to be ready for the homeward flight of birds. Other boys are driving cattle to the kraal.

As darkness falls the long tubular drums are brought out. These [535
are held between the legs and played in compound rhythm (Plate XXVII, Fig. 1). A shuffling dance begins, slowly at first, then with increasing vigor, to be continued far into the night.

VII. EDUCATION

Industrial Training and Division of Labor

871 Usually there is no formality connected with the industrial and occupational training of Ovimbundu children. The section dealing with play shows that boys and girls learn by spontaneous imitation of their elders.

874 There are, however, exceptions to this general truth. Special rites connected with the training and inauguration of blacksmiths and hunters have been described. The training of medicine-men and women will be dealt with in chapter IX, "Religion."

462 463 In describing economic life in chapter V, division of labor on a sex basis; also specialization in industry because of peculiar tastes and aptitudes, were noted. There is clearly a twofold division in industrial life. In the first place sex determines occupation, and within this primary grouping there is a secondary grouping depending [467] on personal preference and individual ability. I have found no instance of exclusive hereditary right to any occupation or industry.

462 The net result of the Umbundu system of division of labor is indicated by the following summary:

[342] When building houses, men dig the rectangular trench, cut the poles for the framework, lash the crosspieces, cut grass and lay the thatch, then place clay over the wattle walls. Women carry water for mixing the clay and convey the moist clay to the plasterers. [224] Children puddle the clay with their feet. Males are hunters both professional and general. During a communal hunt women and children assist in driving game, which is frightened by the firing of [857] grass. Boys organize games in which they imitate these activities. [226] Men fish with a line and bait, whereas women use baskets and [231] narcotic poison. Men and boys take care of cattle and have charge of dogs. Women and girls give what slight attention is afforded to other domestic animals. Male specialists castrate bulls and goats.

[241] During agricultural operations men clear the ground and burn the bush. Women carry on hoe cultivation without assistance from [482] men. Men are the chief carriers in caravans, but women and children may sometimes be seen carrying loads. They march in line with the men but have smaller burdens. Males are employed in blacksmith's work, wood-carving, making weapons and tools, weaving mats, dressing hides, spinning cotton, and formerly in weaving on an upright loom. Men are exclusively the makers of

Men are exclusively the makers of 462

musical instruments, and males are the musicians. Men are the [534 only persons engaged in warfare and administration, and the *onjango* or council house is used exclusively by males. Men follow the [756] occupation of medicine-man, in which there is considerable specialization. Female practitioners deal with pregnancy and women's ailments. In addition to the tasks for women mentioned above, the following are staple occupations: collecting firewood, drawing water, caring for infants, making pottery, weaving baskets, dancing, and singing. Young girls share these activities with older women.

The foregoing categories explain division on the grounds of sex. 463 Degrees of specialization are not so easy to formulate, but in general a man follows some one occupation, for example wood-carving. Then within this occupation there is specialization in the making of drums, domestic utensils, or figurines.

Almost any woman could make pottery or baskets, but the difference in skill leads naturally to concentration in the hands of expert potters and basket-weavers respectively. These sell their [432 wares to those who either do not make such articles or are inept at the process.

STANDARDS OF CONDUCT, MANNERS, AND SALUTATIONS

The parents of a child, also his maternal uncle, assume respon- 861 sibility for training in the precepts and standards given here. The 867 maternal uncle, who is the mother's oldest brother, is particularly interested because he has to pay fines should his sister's children commit thefts. The evidence indicates that the home and restricted family have formative influences over the conduct of children.

Children are beaten if they tell lies, answer old people rudely, or steal food. Ngonga says that his "stealing hand" was once placed in the hot leaves of the cooking pot. If a child steals an egg which is cooking, the hot egg is held between the culprit's hands.

One cannot fail to notice the quiet and unobtrusive way in which children sit in the presence of their elders both in the home and in the council house. Children do not speak when their elders are in [858] conversation, unless addressed.

A child, likewise an adult, receives a gift with both hands. The [576] implied idea is that reception with one hand is a depreciation of the gift. If a child holds out one hand, the hand is slapped. When receiving, an Ocimbundu says "*kuku*," literally grandfather or elder. Colloquially the word is used to mean greeting, "I thank you," or "I beg your pardon."

577 Lying is strongly disapproved and the liar is called *ohembi*. The Ovimbundu appreciate hospitality (*unu*) which also means generosity. A man who is hospitable is said to be *ongavi*. Greediness, which is disliked, is described by the word *oku sapa* ("to be greedy"). There are standards of honesty in sales and exchanges. A deceiver in trade is *ohembi*.

836 With regard to the relation of the sexes in early years it may be said that, in spite of boy and girl friendships, and the communal sleeping of boys and girls at the home of one of the girls, a man expects to marry a virgin, a point which has been dealt with in describing marriage ceremonies.

Naturally there is a difficulty in obtaining precise information respecting the details of these nocturnal gatherings of boys and girls. Ngonga said that girls inform their parents concerning the house where the night is to be spent, and there is a point of etiquette requiring that girls must not go to a house where boys are staying together.

864 Standards of conduct already described under courtship are a result of direct teaching by parents. Marriage rules and a classificatory system of relationships, with its prohibitive decrees, are taught in the home, in the men's council house, and at initiation ceremonies where such exist. In addition to these sources of instruction there is no doubt an unconscious absorption of ideas and standards. The power of suggestion is always at work through everyday examples.

831 Apart from demands made by tribal custom and direct instruction there are variable personal standards of modesty. Ngonga states [562] that many lascivious stories are told among men, and when the men are drunk, they tell these to women. "Sometimes the women laugh, but the good women do not like to hear these tales."

576 A male commoner when meeting the king bows low, extends his 643 arms, claps his palms and says, "*ohosi* ["lion"] *akuku* ["grandfather"]." 565 Only the old people follow the ancient custom of falling on their knees when greeting the king. The Ovimbundu never were in the habit of doing more profound obeisance, but the Vangangella, when greeting one of their kings, rub their chins on the ground and place dust on their chests. Even at the present day a woman or child of the Ovimbundu is expected to kneel when greeting a king, but such an acknowledgment is not now usual in greetings given by a male commoner. The reply of the king to the commoner is "*kalunga*." This word enters into greetings of all kinds. The literal meaning of the word is "the sea," "king," "god," or "death," but the interpretation

of the word depends upon the syllable accented and the context, as further explained in the chapter on the Umbundu language. 576 643

A man or woman of the royal family greets the king with the words *na kuku; na* means "lord," and *kuku* is a term used for any old man to whom the speaker intends to show respect. *Kuku* is also applied to a man who stands in the relationship of grandfather. The king is expected to reply to a greeting given by one of the royal family by placing his right hand on his chest and saying twice, "*kalunga*." There may then follow from the king a question relating to welfare in general. Possibly the king will inquire the object of his subject's journey. A *sekulu* ("chief of a village") greets a king in the same manner as does a commoner, and the king replies as he would to a commoner. 565

Commoners greet a *sekulu* with the words *na kalunga* ("lord, greeting"). One *sekulu* greets another of the same rank with the one word *kalunga*, accompanied by clapping of the palms. Male commoners clap hands on meeting; this action is accompanied by the word *kalunga*, from each of them. Two female commoners use the word *kalunga* as a greeting, but as a rule they do not clap hands. They do, however, clap their palms when greeting a woman of the royal house.

Boys and girls must greet their fathers, maternal uncles, grandfathers, and other old men with either of the terms *na kuku* or *na kalunga*, the latter being more usual. *Na kuku* would be the appropriate term of respect for any elderly man. Children use the same words (*na kuku*) when addressing any elderly woman, including a grandmother. A usual greeting of a child to the mother, likewise to the mother's sister, would be *kalunga mai* ("greetings, mother"). 561 576

There is no prescribed form of address to the medicine-man. Greetings between a commoner and a medicine-man follow the usage noted for two commoners. Ngonga says, "They will treat him (the medicine-man) like a village chief if he is an old man and good. Perhaps they will say *na kalunga* as if talking to a chief." 576 [654] [756]

In the early morning people pass the greeting *oku lipasula*. This means "we have been like dead, we are awake." The appropriate early morning greeting of a commoner to the king or to a chief is *oku lipasula a kuku*. A usual afternoon greeting is *oku lañisa*. The evening greeting is *oku lisuñinya*. [643]

One who desires to pass across a room usually walks in front of other people, but while passing the attitude must not be erect. The thumb and middle finger should be snapped together, while the words

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

576 *konyimo oko* are spoken. The literal interpretation of these words is "back there." Ngonga says the words actually mean "excuse my back."

827 576 Spitting in the vicinity of the house of the king or of the chief is not allowed. "If you did that in the old days, you would have to pay something." Some people spit near the hearth in their own houses. A man who spits in the road is expected to cover the spittle. No person would spit in the presence of the chief or of the king. A hand should be placed in front of the mouth by a person who is coughing or sneezing.

576 [851] Shortly after the birth of a boy or girl all who are on good terms with the parents greet them by saying *kalunga*. The word is repeated four times with clapping of the palms. When words have been imperfectly heard and the listener desires repetition it is customary to say *kuku* in an interrogative tone.

[264] No particular etiquette is observed when eating. Two or three children eat from one platter, helping themselves with their fingers to the mush or sweet potatoes.

Rules forbidding the preparation of food by menstruating women, likewise prohibitions relating to stepping over a person, are mentioned in discussing taboos and omens.

EDUCATIONAL VALUE OF PLAY, MUSIC, AND DANCING

524 182 533 The educational value of play lies in its imitation of the pursuits of adult life. Though there are specialists in music, dancing, and singing, these exercises are indulged in by everyone. Music, singing, and dancing are more than amusements, they are fundamental as coordinating forces in tribal life at all levels of culture (W. D. Hambly, Tribal Dancing and Social Development, London, 1926). [113]

Among the Ovimbundu *Cimbamba Co Lia* is a popular game for girls, who form a circle, join hands, and sing:

PART I

524 [535] *Omola una, ndo sile vekango, Cimbamba co lia* ("That little child was left in the desert, the nighthawk ate it"). At the word *Cimbamba* they begin to dance, facing from side to side in such a manner that they meet and bow. Some sing, *Cimbamba co lia* ("The nighthawk ate him"), and others respond, *Kalikisi* ("'tis the goblins"), as many times as they wish. Finally a return is made to the first words which are sung again. All musical transcriptions have been made by Dr. G. Herzog from my phonographic records.

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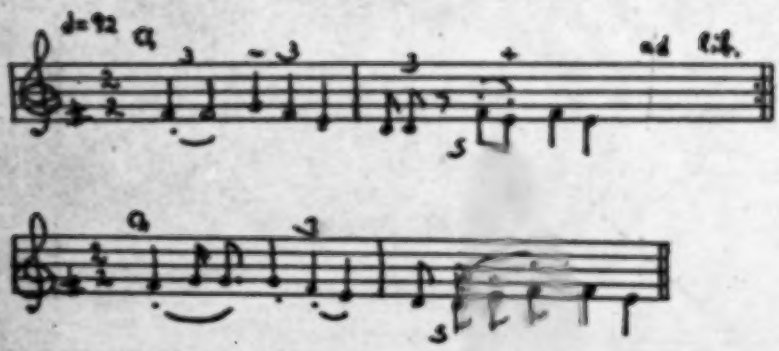
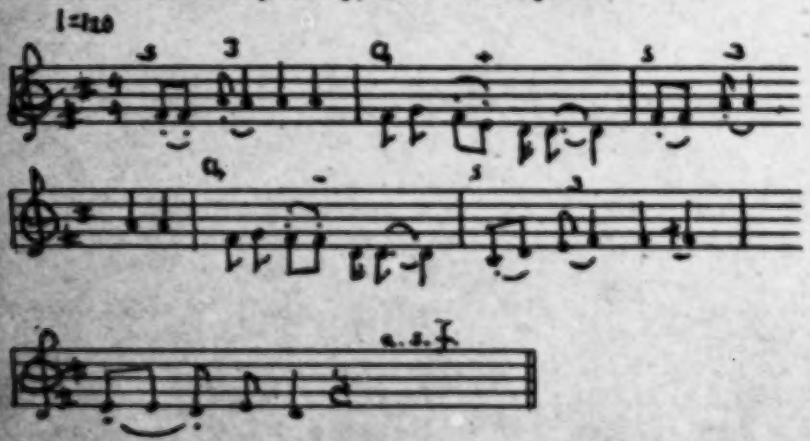
[533]



PART II

The children then form in a line holding each other. The leader is the mother and all the others are her children, except one who is the leopard. The last child in the line calls, *A mai, ongue yi ndia* ("Mother, the leopard will eat me"). Mother, *Ka yi ku li,* ("It will not eat you"). Child, *Yi lia utapi wosaa* ("It is eating the water carrier"). Mother, *Ka yi ku li.* Child, *Yi lia utiañi wolohui.* Mother, *Ka yi ku li.* The one who represents the leopard now attempts to pass the outstretched arms of the mother in order to catch the child. Every time the leopard is foiled in his attempt to catch the child they all cry, *Ah-ah-ah Ka yi ku li.*

[533]



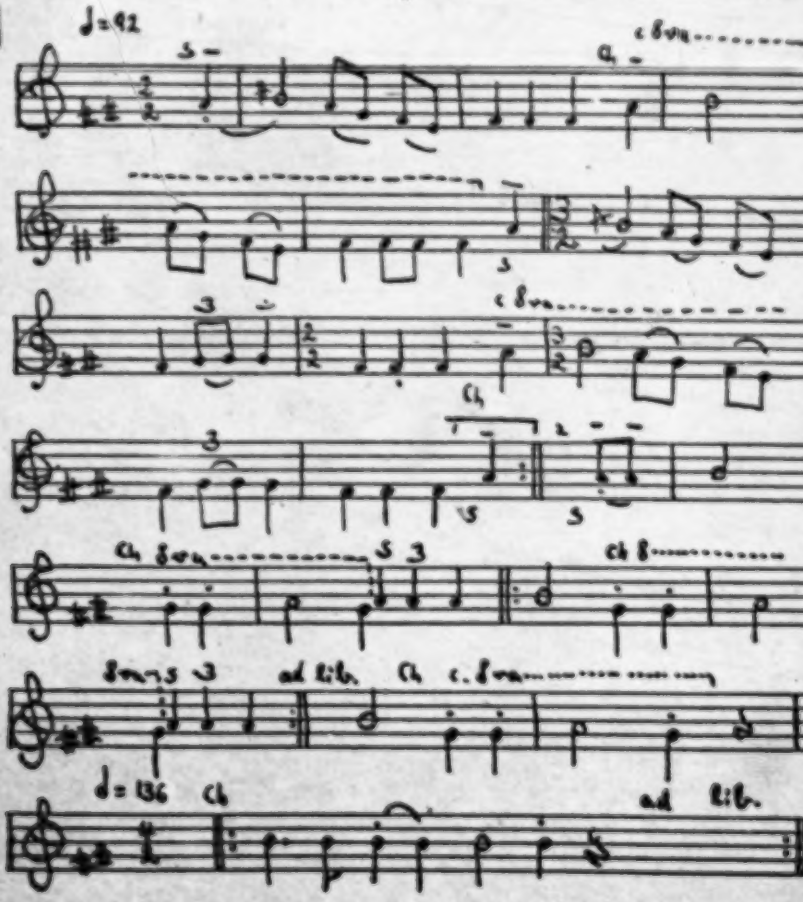
Eventually the leopard gets the last child and deposits it on the ground where it immediately begins to imitate the pounding of meal and to sing, *Fule, fule, fule, fule, kolohanda ko Luwa* ("Pound, pound, pound, pound on the rocks of Luwa"). This ditty, which is sung by women during their daily occupation of pounding maize on the

524 rocks, is repeated until all the children have been captured. Lastly the mother is caught and taken by the leopard to the bushes, where he hides her.

[533]

The leopard goes back and picks up a handful of sand which is an imitation of meal. Each of the children pretends to pick up a handful of sand before going in search of the mother. The leopard

[533]



3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FF13 Mbundu FF13

says, "Here's your mother." The children look and sing, "She's not 524
there." They throw sand in that direction. The leopard repeatedly leads to places where the mother is not hidden, while each time the same words are repeated and sand is thrown. Finally the leopard leads the children to the place where the mother is hidden. Then the mourning song is changed to a glad dance. The children clap hands and sing, *Moi Cisangu weya. Moi Cisangu weya* ("Mother Cisangu has come").

After transcribing the music of this song Dr. Herzog reported, 533
"The melodies are rather simple, moving within a restricted range, with a plain rhythm, the same short unassuming melodic fragment being repeated as long as the game may require it, or changed slightly to suit the words. It should be kept in mind that these are children's songs; other songs of the Ovimbundu are probably much more elaborate. The manner of singing songs by a solo and a responding choir is highly characteristic of African singing. Thirds as seen in the transcriptions on page 218 are often used in the music of west Africa.

"In the musical notations, *S* stands for Solo, *Ch* for the Choir. *A* as a sign above a note indicates that the tone is sung approximately a quartertone higher than noted. It indicates a short transitional tone of slight rhythmic or melodic significance and of uncertain pitch."

There is but one example of children's dolls in Field Museum's 524
collection. This was obtained from a little Ocimbundu girl of Elende. The doll is made from a corncob which is draped in blue cloth of European origin such as women wear. My interpreter said that the dressing of dolls made from corncobs is a general custom at the time of cutting the corn. In view of the frequent occurrence of [241]
agricultural rites among Bantu Negroes, the use of dolls led me to inquire into the possibility of there being some kind of fertility cult associated with a corn-mother concept, but my inquiries met with negative results.

There is an Umbundu word for game (*omapolo*; plural, *olomapolo*) which is used for games in general. The verb *olu popola* means "to play." As a rule, male adults do not play games, but they have the game of mancala which is called *ocela*. This is difficult because it involves quick counting. Mancala has a wide distribution as [171]
shown by the fact that it occurs in Africa, Syria, the Malay Archipelago, South America, and the West Indies. At Dom Manuel in the southeast of Angola I saw an arrangement of holes in the ground which was used for this game. There were four rows of fourteen holes in each row. The counters were nuts from an oil palm.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

524 In the compound of the king at Ngalangi there was an ocel board consisting of an oval piece of wood on a short base. Thi board had holes arranged in four rows of seven, twenty-eight hole [525] in all. The king refused to sell the board. He said that it wa highly valued and that the gambling stakes were high.

Up to the age of sixteen years boys play the game of ocitiñu Each side has a number of bulbs from a figwort, which are rolle along between two lines of boys who shoot at them with arrows The winners are those who have shot the greater number of thei opponents' bulbs. The party *A* rolls bulbs while the opponents *B* do the shooting. Then the positions are reversed. A game with whipping tops is ongilili which is said to be of Umbundu origin not a derivative from a Portuguese game. There is no evidenc that games are seasonal; any game may be played at any time.

Games of mimicry naturally form a diversion, and boys imitate the occupations of their elders. The chief activities of adult male are warfare, hunting, and carrying, all of which used to play a very important part in the communal life up to a few years ago. When boys play at making war they have two sides, the attack and the defense. The attacking party runs about the village taking prisoners, who are tied with bark rope. Girls sometimes play this and other games with the boys, but usually boys and girls play separately.

Sometimes strong boys are selected for hunters whose dogs are the little boys. Boys who pretend to be the antelopes or other game go to the tall grass to hide. Toy bows and arrows are made, but sometimes the hunters go through only the movements of shooting. The boys who are pretending to be the game roll over and gasp when shot. The "dead game" has to cling to the pole on which it is borne to the village on the shoulders of the hunters. The little boys go along on all fours barking like dogs.

The Ovimbundu were, and still are, renowned carriers whose prowess is imitated in boys' games. Boys make up loads in the correct way; that is, lashed in the fork of two long sticks which can be rested on the ground. These they carry along, singing as they go. There is some wrestling, also stone throwing to test distance and accuracy. Rubber is made into a ball which is bounced rapidly and repeatedly with the open palm. Men and boys sometimes form a ring around which the ball is thrown from one person to another.

The Ovimbundu have no game played with string wound around the fingers, and I have been unable to find any evidence for the past or present formation of string figures. I have seen boys making bird

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

cages and wooden animals to use as playthings. Girls mold small 524
animals from clay. The bull-roarer is in use as a plaything at Elende.

There is a game of hide and seek for boys. A knife is hidden; then a boy who has been absent for a time enters the ring marked off for the game. His proximity to the knife is indicated by playing on a musical bow. There are taps on the instrument which mean that the knife is far away. On the contrary, when the searcher approaches the hidden knife, the boy with the bow plays a distinctive note, yelala, yelala, meaning "pick it up, pick it up."

Boys readily make a simple apparatus for playing a game of lassoing a hoop. A pliable branch is bent so as to form a circle, then the ends are lashed together with bark strips. The lasso is a piece of rattan or bark having at each end a corncob or a small stick three inches long. One boy bowls the hoop so that it passes in front of, and a few feet away from his opponent, who stands twenty-five feet distant. As the hoop passes in front of him, the boy throws his lasso in such a way that it twines round the hoop and brings it to the ground.

There are dances of many kinds, but Ngonga says that he would 535
not know from the steps only what particular purpose the dance served. Several dances have been described, each in its appropriate section. There are no dances specially arranged to celebrate weddings or births. The funeral dance is described along with other ceremonies relating to interment. The medicine-man dances in connection [789]
with making rain or curing the sick. In order to say why the dance was being performed, it would be necessary to listen to the words of the songs; these are usually chanted in accompaniment to shuffling movements and the rhythm of drums.

Some of the older men and women perform dances and sing songs 535
that are unknown to the younger generation. Dancing is in favor 527
during the months of May and June because there are supplies of maize for making beer. As the dry season advances the maize formerly available for making beer is consumed as food, hence dancing is not so usual. Ngonga says that the old people know a dance which should be performed at new moon "so that there will be no sickness during this moon." Older men dance in commemoration of events [727]
during past wars, while women are spectators, and on these occasions there are beer-drinking and the slaughter of an ox. A group of men keeps up a shuffling dance while an old man relates a war story in a singsong voice. The oldest man is the first to cut the meat, after which each man helps himself.

535 Almost every evening one may hear the tapping of drums an the songs of dancers, because in addition to dances for a funeral o other special occasion there are ordinary dances of amusement i which lines of men and women advance and retreat, or men an women circle round the drums making arm movements accom panied by a swaying rhythm.

[243] The dance *ongaco*, performed in June when the corn is ripe, ma have an ancient history and special significance as part of an agri cultural rite. When corn is being stored the people sing, "There i grain in the house, may it never be cut." There is no dance i [226] connection with fishing.

224 There is mimicry of animals in the hunting game played by boys The frog, the leopard, and other animals are imitated in certai games, but I have no evidence of the performance of mimetic dance in relation to any cult for increasing the supply of animal life.

535 The use of the small ball *ombunje* illustrates the way in which [534] an apparent toy can be used in rites of a religious kind. *Ombunje* consists of a hard spherical fruit about six centimeters in diameter in which several hard seeds rattle. The sphere is covered with a layer of cloth over which lizard skin is stretched and sewn.

[769] When the people wish to commemorate the death of a king, or [789] when the king is sick, the medicine-man (*ocimbanda*) says that there must be *ocaka* dancing. A strong man dances for many hours while holding this little ball in his outstretched hand. Other men who are dancing use their fists to hit the muscles of the outstretched arm in an attempt to make the holder drop the ball (*ombunje*). If he does so another man will promptly take hold of it. The precise nature of the endurance test is unexplained, but there is possibly the idea of giving strength to a sick king by this tension and endurance. My interpreter thought this was so, but could not explain why the dance should be performed to commemorate the death of a king. It would seem natural, however, to transfer the *ombunje* rite to a commemorative festival, if in the first place it was part of the last rites of a dying king.

534 There are among the Ovimbundu specialists in dancing, singing, 463 and the playing of musical instruments. *Onjimbi* is the word for a singer of merit who starts the choruses. *Ocili* is a dancer of more than ordinary skill. When a man is required to play a drum or other instrument I have noticed that it is thought necessary to bring a specialist. There is no doubt that drumming requires special aptitude and practice. The man who plays the long drum is *usiki*, the drum

itself is osoma. The flat wooden drum without membrane is *ocingufu*, 534
the player of this drum is *usiki wocingufu* (Plate XXVII, Fig. 2). 463
The long tubular drums vary in length from 50 to 103 cm. At a funeral, four of these tubular drums, which are usually held between the legs or placed upright, are played in compound rhythm. A performer always warms the skin of the drum at a fire, and sometimes the pitch is altered by sticking a lump of wax on the membrane of a long drum, or on the sides of a wooden drum.

Dr. Herzog reports as follows, after transcribing several cylinders 533
of phonographic records of rhythms played on the long drum, and after examining motion pictures which were synchronized with the drumming (Plates XXV, XXVI).

"These motion pictures indicate the position of the performer's hands, and suggest that the sharply accented tones are produced by impacts from the phalanges. The higher notes so produced have been marked by notes above the line. A mark placed between notes indicates a very short rest.

"No. 1 (dictaphone record 3) represents the drumming of a young player, who is apparently still an apprentice, since his rhythm is very simple. The three forms of his playing given below were used interchangeably, and he shifted from one to the other without stopping. In the second form, the order of the sharp and of the plain beat is reversed. Otherwise, the sharp beat occurs, in the playing of all drummers, on the off beat. The rhythm of No. 2 (dictaphone record 15) is a little more varied because the player was changed. The drummer of No. 3 (dictaphone record 30) was the best performer in the neighborhood, according to Mr. Hambly; and his playing is the most interesting. The drum records consist of a small number of rhythms which are freely interchanged; the two predominating rhythms are given below. The moving pictures were made from this player's performance.

"The notations found here do not convey to the reader the bewildering complexity of African rhythm, for this appears only when a performance includes the use of several drums and musical instruments in conjunction with dancing."

From Ngalangi a large friction drum 120 cm long and 47 cm in 534
diameter was obtained. This instrument, which was the property [422]
of the village, was played only on public occasions. Apparently the drum had been hollowed from a log of wood, one end of which was left open while the other was covered with hide. To the inner side of this hide a long cane was attached. On the side of the drum

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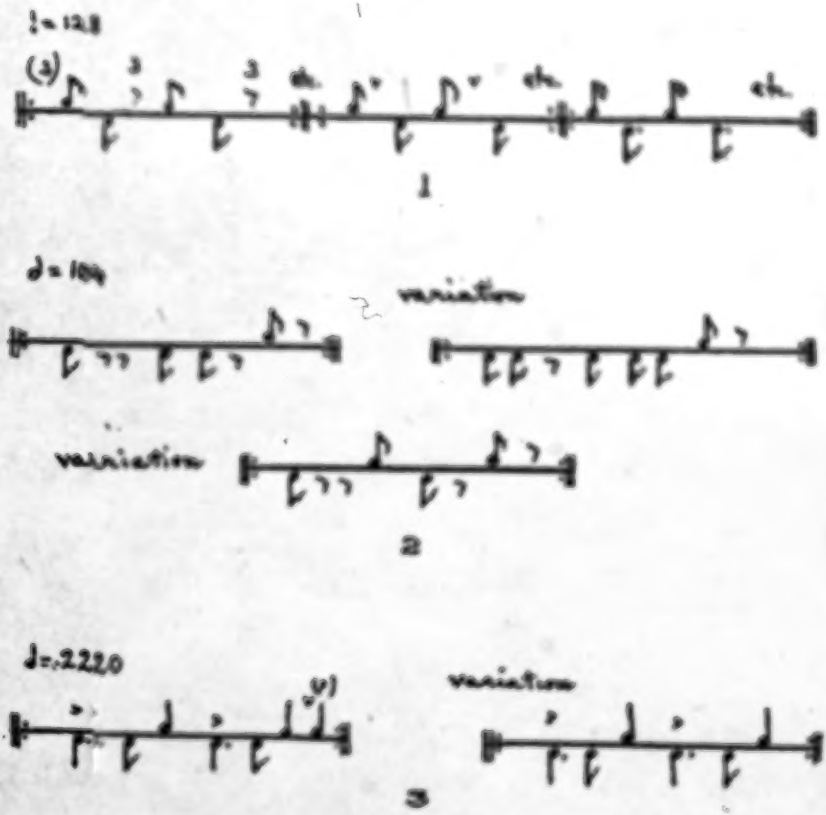

534 and in the middle was an oval aperture. The performer laid the drum on the ground and took his seat astride it. He dipped his right hand in a gourd of water, then rubbed his wet palm up and down the cane rod, which he could reach through the oval aperture. The sound of the rubbing on the rod was communicated to the membrane.

A short friction drum made at Elende measures 21 by 42 cm. One end of the drum is covered with hide kept taut by pegs of wood while the other end is open for the insertion of the player's hand. A cane rod is attached to the inside of the membrane. The [156] assistant of a medicine-man holds this instrument under his arm and plays during divination. The medicine-man sits on a stool shaking his divination basket (Plate XXIII, Fig. 2).

Rattles are of three kinds, and of these the more common are a small, long-necked gourd containing hard seeds, and a compound

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rattle made by fixing seed pods on a stick. Rattles of the latter type are sometimes tied to the ankles during dancing and they usually form a part of the medicine-man's outfit (Plate XXII, Fig. 4). From Cangamba a basket rattle of dumb-bell form was obtained; the basket-work receptacles at each end of the connecting rod contain hard seeds (Plate XXII, Fig. 1). 534

At Bailundu three Ovimbundu flute players met a party of visitors whom they accompanied around the native village under the leadership of a chief. The men played the flutes continuously except when the chief was speaking. The wooden flutes varied in length from 20 to 50 cm. The instruments were end-played, and the smallest of them had seven stop-holes. The visitors were conducted from the village by this small orchestra which is a permanent guard of honor for the chief (Plate XL, Fig. 1). 533 534 533

At Cangamba the Vachokue have an instrument consisting of eight slats of wood which vary in length and thickness. These sounding boards are attached to two parallel cords which are kept tight by two assistants. The performer taps the wooden slats with two sticks terminating in balls of wax. This is the well-known marimba, but the gourds which are usually fastened under the slats of wood were absent in this instance. 534 171

The instrument *ociasanji* is played well by only a few men. It consists of a wooden board, often well carved, on which there are from eight to nineteen thin keys of metal. These can be pushed backward and forward in their bridge so as to alter the vibrating length and pitch of the note. The pitch may also be varied by placing small balls of wax on the under side of the keys. When the instrument is held between the palms the player's thumbs are in position for stroking the keys. Sometimes *ociasanji* is played inside a wide gourd (Plate XXII, Fig. 5). 534

The musical bow is called *ombumbumbu*. The bridge, which is a small stone, or a piece of wood placed at one end of the bow, keeps the string taut. The gourd is tightly fastened to the bowstring with a loop of string. One end of the bow is sometimes placed in the player's mouth. The left hand holds the bow and presses the gourd to the body, then releases it a little from time to time in order to assist tone and resonance. The player holds in his right hand a reed which is tapped lightly on the bowstring, while the thumb and forefinger of the left hand are used occasionally in pressing on the string to alter its vibrating length (Plate XXII, Fig. 6).

534 Another musical bow named *ekolosa* is of simple construction, consisting of a strip of cane from 54 to 70 cm long and 2 cm wide. At each end of the cane is a projection. A string, when tightly stretched between these projections, pulls the cane into the form of a bow. The performer, placing one end of the bow in his mouth, plucks the string with his thumb and forefinger (Plate XXII, Fig. 7).

Two rubbing instruments are used by the Ovimbundu. *Opolanda* is a large gourd with a slit in the top along which there is a board cut into sixteen notches. The rubbing of a short stick along these notches produces a sound which is greatly amplified by the gourd resonator. The second instrument of this type is in the form of a wooden bow having its thickest part notched for rubbing with a stick (Plate XXII, Figs. 3, 8).

533 Only specialists are skilled in composing songs, and both men and women are composers. The younger people sometimes go to the old people to learn songs which were popular a generation ago. There are no professional itinerant story-tellers.

There is a chant for funerals which has been quoted in the appropriate section, but no special wedding songs are used. The Ovimbundu have satirical songs humorously describing individual [626] foibles and peculiarities, and as usual in Negro communities a satirical song is feared by thieves, adulterers, or other offenders.

[726] In former days when men were on the warpath they sang, *Okoimbo ketu katito eteke tu lisanumbula tu tandako.* ("Our village is little today, we attack, we extend.") Another war song is *Ocisonde ci likoka ove o kasi vonjila tumdamo.* ("Red ant that creeps along, you who are in the way, get out.")

[484] When men on the march came to a camping ground occupied by another caravan, they sang as a challenge, *Cinene nye? Cinene onjamba kakuli okachama kavela ukuaro.* ("What is the largest? There is no animal largest. The largest is the elephant.")

During hauling and carrying, men sing, *Yende, yende chale, ocimboto lomala saco.* ("Let it go, let it go, the crab, the frog, with its children.")

482 Lifting loads is always accompanied by noises which suggest that someone is injured. Part of the men make deep grunts to which their companions answer with prolonged groans.

INITIATION

867 Evidence bearing on initiatory rites in Angola shows that the 881 ceremonies are arranged as a process of incorporation into the

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tribes, for everywhere these rites aim at securing ideas of unity, coop- 867
eration, conformity to tribal law, and admission to adult tribal life. 881

The methods used to achieve these aims are seclusion, circumcision, physical suffering, direct tuition, dancing, hunting, a change of name, and finally a ceremonial return to the tribe with adult status and the right to marry.

The following notes give details of ceremonies witnessed at 114
three centers; namely, Katoko, Ngalangi, and Cangamba. For 171
comparison of these rites with others performed in eastern Angola 881
reference should be made to the books of A. Schachtzabel, and to the papers of H. Baumann (III), and F. and W. Jaspert, whose observations were made independently of each other and of my own investigation.

The dances of the novices at Katoko, where there is a mixed 881
population of Ovimbundu, Vangangella, and Vachokue tribes, are part of the final ceremonies following circumcision and seclusion. The social group formed by this collective circumcision, seclusion, and dancing, is called *ceinganji*, which is the name of the initiatory rites themselves. A boy who has been initiated is not allowed to become friendly with one who has not suffered the ceremony, and all boys who were circumcised at the same time preserve a sense of unity by dancing in a company and moving about together for twelve weeks after their return to the village from which they came.

Circumcision, which is prohibited by the Portuguese govern- 881
ment, is still practised secretly in some regions. When circumcision 304
is carried out by primitive methods serious infection may result from the lack of clean instruments, for the knife is, of course, unsterilized.

After the operation the patients are subjected to harsh treatment during the period of cure that follows. The circumcised are secluded in a wooded area. Food provided by the parents is placed on the bank of a river near which the initiation camp is built, and after the parents have gone away the boys bring their rations from the river to the camp. Before eating, the boys are obliged to give profuse thanks to the men who are acting as tutors. In some regions there is no food ration for the boys, and the rule is that each boy must subsist on what he is able to catch and collect with his hands.

Each boy has a male guardian who takes care of him after the operation. Those who have been operated upon are not permitted to wear clothes, nor are they allowed to warm themselves until quite healed. Any infraction of the rules results in a severe whipping.

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881 292 During the period of isolation costumes for the dance are made. These consist of clothing of tightly fitting, coarse netting, masks, and girdles which are for the use of only those boys who have been circumcised. The feasts and dances celebrating the conclusion of initiatory rites are of great importance. Women are not supposed to know that the operation of circumcision is taking place, and they are taught that *ovinganji* are supernatural beings who have sprung up from the earth; therefore every effort is made to conceal masks and costumes from the sight of women and the uninitiated. No female is allowed to go near the enclosure where novices are confined.

881 A few days after observing the costumes and dances of the newly initiated boys at Katoko I was in the Ngalangi region at the village of Ngongo, about a hundred miles to the north of Katoko. At Ngalangi two boys of the Ovimbundu were questioned with regard to their experiences in the initiation camp.

It is certain that initiation ceremonies are held at irregular intervals and not more frequently than once in four years. The name given to the ceremonies for boys in the Ngalangi area is *ocinganji* (*oci*, "big"; *nganji*, "judge," or a masked person). When there is a number of boys who have not been circumcised, these approach the oldest men to ask for a circumcision ceremony. The old men visit the *sekulu* ("headman") of the village to request that arrangements shall be made. An *ocimbanda* ("medicine-man"), assisted by other men, prepares a camp in a wooded area. Usually the father of each boy has to arrange that a tutor shall accompany his son to the camp, but sometimes as many as three boys have the same guardian. The guardian receives a small fee, possibly nothing more valuable than a chicken.

The camp is made on the side of a stream remote from the village. Each boy takes a chicken to the camp for the purpose of making a special meal, which is given at the name-changing ceremony which follows initiation. The chicken is eaten soon after the boy has been circumcised. The boy changes his own name for a new one which is announced in the village from which he came. While circumcision is in progress the enclosure is surrounded by male drummers and men who shout, so that any noise made by the boys during circumcision will not be heard.

[553]

The period spent in camp is uncertain, probably from three to six months. The rule is that camp is not disbanded until every boy is healed; which means that the confinement may be greatly

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prolonged if even one boy fails to recover. One of the two youths 881
interrogated said that in his camp there were seventy-eight boys, three of whom died. My other informant said that in his camp there were sixty-eight boys, only one of whom died. The informants agreed that the deaths were due to an epidemic of influenza and not to privations or septic conditions arising from the operation.

During the period of seclusion the boys are taught songs and dances used at the ceremony that celebrates the conclusion of their initiation. By privation the boys are taught the value of food and fire. Novices are beaten if they show any disrespect for their guardians, and trifling offences are severely punished. Every boy has to take from the fire a burning stick, which he holds in his hand while running between two lines of men who beat him, and if he drops the stick he has to start his run once more. The boys swear allegiance to one another. A novice thinks that he will die if he gives information to a woman or to a man who has not been initiated.

From his mother, each boy receives food in a gourd which he 763
deposits on the bank of a river near the novices' camp. If a boy 881
dies, a hole is bored in the gourd so that when the mother receives this she will not send more food. Each guardian has a stick which is sent to the mother of his pupil when the ceremony of initiation and seclusion is ended. If the boy has died, bark is cut from both ends of the stick before this symbol of death is sent to his parents.

When the boys come out from their camp at the conclusion of 881
the rites one man and one woman stand on the bank of the river, and the boys pass under the legs of both the man and the woman. When the boys arrive at the village the whole population comes out to welcome them. There is a feast and beer-drinking bout on the day of return.

During seclusion no water is allowed for washing, and the informants laughed as they spoke of the order "wash hands," whereupon the boys merely rubbed their hands together. When the order, "wash dishes," was given the boys rubbed their platters with their hands. On the day of leaving camp the novices bathe in the river. Ablution consists of three dips, after each of which the boy stands on the bank until he is dry. [515]

For two months the boys wear strips of bark cloth. During this [292]
period all the novices must move together, but there is no objection to their leaving the village provided they do so all in one company. While wearing bark cloth the boys have each day to attend a cere-

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881 mony at which the older initiates dance while the novices clap their hands.

I witnessed the dance of initiated boys at Ngongo, where the [292] costumes resembled those I had seen at Katoko. At night a youth brought for me a set of initiation costumes (Plate LXXVIII, Fig. 1), which resembled those worn during the dance; this he did with great secrecy.

While at Ngalangi, the initiation of girls was investigated. After several days of negotiation with a village headman three female guardians of the girls came from the bush. The illustrations (Plate LXXVII, Figs. 1, 2) show the attitudes of these women and their decoration. There were three male drummers in the orchestra and several women, who sang and clapped their hands. On emerging from the bush the females moved toward the orchestra with their backs toward the players. As there were about two hundred yards to cover, this slow backward movement occupied a long time, since the three women did not take more than a few inches at each step. The dance [535] itself was a slow, shuffling, swaying movement, made while the bodies of the performers remained inclined forward and their heads were bent so that it was almost impossible to see their faces. The women wore no clothing except loin cloths. Each female was [302] plastered from head to foot with alternate bands of red and white clay smeared thickly. These three females are the women who act [864] as instructors for the girls during isolation in the bush where they receive sexual and domestic instruction.

881 The seclusion of girls covers a period of one month. During 304 this time the novices suffer no harsh treatment though an operation is performed, possibly excision of the clitoris, but I am not certain on this point. It was also stated that a corncob is introduced into the vagina. The tribe practising this ceremony for girls was the [171] Vanyemba, living close to the Ovimbundu at Ngongo near Ngalangi in central Angola.

881 In order to corroborate further the two accounts of initiation 171 ceremonies for boys I journeyed to Cangamba in Moxico, eastern 304 Angola. The position of the two first centers visited (Katoko and Ngongo) is on the border line where Ovimbundu and Vacholue mingle, and although there is a mixture of these and other tribes at Cangamba, the culture, language, and physique of the Vacholue predominate. A description of the circumcision ceremonies witnessed at Cangamba is given below for comparison with the accounts resulting from visits to Katoko and Ngongo.

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The compound in which the initiates had been confined for three months was a circular enclosure made of light branches and leafy boughs, at the narrow embrasure of which stood a guardian of the boys, who permitted entrance. In the middle of the large enclosure were seven small cages, each of which was just large enough to allow one boy to lie on his back, and I was informed that the boys lie thus for two weeks after circumcision (Plate LXXX, Fig. 2). 881 304 171

The ages of the boys appeared to be from ten to seventeen years (Plate LXXX, Fig. 1), an observation which agrees well with that made at Katoko and Ngongo. The disparity of age among the novices at each center where initiation was observed bears out the statement that initiation ceremonies are held at irregular intervals, but not more frequently than once in four years.

During confinement in the large enclosure the novices had made masks and costumes (Plate LXXIX, Fig. 1), and when they were pulling on the coarse netting suits, which fit tightly, I observed that circumcision had been performed thoroughly, evidently some weeks ago, for the wounds were healed. Masks were obtained, and these the instructors of the boys were careful to wrap in bark cloth, at the same time requesting me not to show the objects to women.

A few days later these boys returned to their village to dance while wearing the costumes which had been made in the enclosure. At Cangamba the final ceremony lasted twelve hours amid great excitement, including ceaseless drumming and dancing. One boy, who wore a skirt on his fiber costume, lifted this to display an artificial penis of great size (Plate LXXIX, Fig. 2). This organ he grasped in his hand while chasing the women and girls, who ran away screaming and laughing. [522]

At this ceremony there appeared stilt-walkers (Plate LXXXI, Fig. 1) and a medicine-man, a member of the Luchazi tribe (Plate LXXXI, Fig. 2).

Circumcision among the Bdjok (Vachokue) has been witnessed by C. P. Holdredge and described by Kimball Young (*Amer. Anthr.*, XXIX, pp. 661–669). This ceremony took place in the far northeast of Angola. The man described as the *magish* of whom women are afraid, but who is known to the initiates, corresponds to the Uluchazi medicine-man seen in the final ceremony at Cangamba. Of this grotesquely dressed person the men and boys took no notice, neither did he pay attention to them. On the contrary he chased women, who ran away screaming. Kimball Young's description of the enclosure where boys are confined, and his account of the [113] [756]

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881 short fiber skirts worn within this enclosure by the novices, are in
171 agreement with the observations made at Cangamba. There is
304 also a close resemblance between the independent accounts of
[114] H. Baumann and F. and W. Jaspert for the Vachokue, also P. A. Delille and E. de Jonghe for the southwest Congo.

The question of initiation rites, past and present, among people of pure Umbundu culture is important. The matter is more fully dealt with later in discussing cultural contacts and cultural losses, but there are a few points which should not be omitted here.

At Caconda, an Umbundu center of western Angola, Père R. P. Laagel stated that only two years ago he had visited an initiation camp of Ovimbundu boys in the hope of persuading them to return to his mission school at Caconda. My informant stated that the boys were circumcised, beaten, and confined to an enclosure for several weeks. Those who cried out when flogged received a double portion of blows. Poisoning is the fate of a boy who reveals the secrets of the initiation camp to women or uninitiated boys. This is the most direct testimony I have received concerning initiation rites among unmixed Ovimbundu.

881 From Bailundu and Elende I have obtained slight evidence of
292 initiation rites. At the former place, which, like Elende, is a center
171 of the Ovimbundu tribe, fiber costumes were obtained. The mask from Elende is unlike those used at Cangamba, Katoko, and Ngongo. The fiber suits are, however, no different from costumes used at these places. Initiation ceremonies are not held at Elende today, and beyond Dr. Ennis's statement that circumcision rites have been revived in the past fifteen years of his long residence in the neighborhood of Elende, I have no evidence of ritual.

881 The data relating to initiation of boys in Angola suggest loss
177 of the initiatory rites from Umbundu culture, until only a few old masks and costumes, along with attenuated ritual, remain sporadically. On the contrary, in eastern Angola and particularly among the Vachokue, who are farther than the Ovimbundu from coastal influence, initiation ceremonies flourish. At present there is occurring a penetration of initiation rites from the Vachokue area into east-central Angola, which is a region of cultural admixture.

867 The foregoing pages have described certain institutions and social forces which collectively bring individuals into conformity with tribal standards of conduct. The influences at work in this direction may be direct or indirect.

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Among direct educational forces are the home training given by parents and the mutual responsibility of children and their mother's brother, whose reciprocal obligations have been explained. Family life is undeniably an important institution whose power is by no means suppressed by the strength of the village community and tribal organization. 867

Initiation, which may or may not coincide with puberty, is perhaps the most potent direct influence in formation of character and the inculcation of principles tending to tribal solidarity. Formerly warfare and hunting were more important than they are today, consequently initiation rites imposing hardship and emphasizing the importance of concerted action, had a greater social value than they have at present. 867 881

Formal instruction in industries such as iron-working, or professional hunting, indicates one aspect of occupational training. In these instances there are apprenticeship and an initiatory rite. All children are, however, subject to an indirect industrial education through the agency of play, while a few, according to desire and aptitude, become experts in some particular occupation. 874 [868]

At all times the force of suggestion is at work in the home, in the men's council house, and through everyday observation of the conduct of elders. Probably folklore stories also have an indirect educational value, because some of the fables show the desirability of courage, honesty, and foresight, at the same time deprecating cowardice, stupidity, and low cunning. 869

In chapter IX religious beliefs are discussed, and, in connection with these, standards of conduct are outlined. Although the Ovimbundu have a belief in a supreme being and creator (Suku), and although they believe in survival after death, there is no evidence to show that conduct and education are influenced by theological beliefs. Suku, who is vaguely conceived, is far away and uninterested. He issues no commands. Neither is there a belief in punishments and rewards after death. The standards of conduct are based on utilitarian principles which secure harmony and unity. 771 869 [776]

The efficiency of the direct and indirect educational forces of the Ovimbundu is attested by the history of the tribe. The indigenous system of education, supported by favorable environment, consolidated these people so that they became the dominating power in Angola. Moreover, their cohesion has been such that three centuries of European contacts have failed to eliminate all the basic elements of their tribal life. 177

VIII. LANGUAGE

Affinities of Umbundu

197 The Umbundu language is widely understood in Angola owing to the journeys of the Ovimbundu as raiders and traders in large caravans. Umbundu is as important for communication in Angola as Hausa is for Nigeria, or Swahili for the east coast of Africa.

Notwithstanding this use of Umbundu as a lingua franca it is necessary to note that tribes surrounding the Ovimbundu have their own distinctive Bantu languages; moreover, the Umbundu language itself has several dialects.

For example, the Vasele tribe living in rugged country in the hinterland of Novo Redondo have a dialect of Umbundu (Usele) so distinctive that a competent Ocimbundu interpreter has difficulty in making himself understood, or interpreting what is said. Isolation of the Vasele from the Ovimbundu has led to the formation of a cultural pocket in which linguistic developments have shared in [184] a specialization of culture. The differences between the Umbundu of Elende and that of the Ambundu tribes may be noted by comparing this brief outline of Umbundu, recorded at Elende, with the records of Amandus Johnson, whose research relates to the language spoken in the hinterland of Loanda. The present chapter will deal only with notes on vocabulary, phonetics, an outline of grammar, sign language, folklore and proverbs, all of which are briefly treated. In the field phonographic records of the Umbundu language were taken, and for the analysis of tonal values and other aspects of phonetics I am indebted to Dr. M. H. Watkins, a student of Professor E. Sapir, formerly of the University of Chicago, now at Yale.

The section on Umbundu grammar conclusively shows Umbundu to be a representative language of the Bantu family of languages. Umbundu possesses all the fundamental characteristics of Bantu [V13] speech. The truth of this may be seen by comparing this outline of Umbundu with the analysis of Bantu languages given by A. Werner (Language Families of Africa, London, 1925). Moreover, Carl Meinhof (Grundzüge einer vergleichenden Grammatik der Bantu Sprachen, Berlin, 1906, pp. 112–115, and translation by A. Werner and N. J. von Warmelo, London, 1932) indicates the degree of relationship of Umbundu to other Bantu tongues by giving comparisons of the stems of personal and possessive pronouns, along with other comparative data.

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H. H. Johnston (A Comparative Study of the Bantu and Semi-Bantu Languages, Oxford, 1919, vol. I, p. 350) places Umbundu in his Group X; that is, the southwestern group of Bantu languages. Johnston's map indicates that throughout Angola there is a gradual transition from the southwestern Bantu group to that of the southwest Congo, which is exactly what might be expected from a consideration of the geographical position of Angola. Johnston's grouping is based on root forms and vocabulary. 197 114

This difficulty of making a comparison of the affinities of Umbundu does not preclude the possibility of recording some preliminary observations, especially with regard to vocabulary.

F. and W. Jaspert have prepared a comparative vocabulary of 250 words in the languages of the Ovimbundu, the Luena, the Basongo, the Luchazi, the Luimbi, and the Vachokue tribes. Inspection of the columns indicates a close connection of Songo, Luchazi, and Luimbi; in fact, the vocabularies of the two latter are almost identical. The vocabularies of the Vachokue and the Luena have much in common with those mentioned, but the Umbundu vocabulary has only a minor agreement with the vocabularies of these eastern and northeastern tribes. There are, however, some words which are identical in all these languages mentioned by F. and W. Jaspert. Examples of identity, or very close similarity, are found in the words for "bow," "elephant," "to eat," "firestick," "finger," and a few other forms, but the principal deduction from inspection of the columns is the distinctiveness of the Umbundu vocabulary.

On the contrary, examination of the vocabularies of the Ovimbundu and the Vakuanyama, of the south of Angola, appears to justify Johnston's inclusion of Umbundu with southwestern Bantu in so far as similarity of vocabulary is a criterion. The correspondence is further borne out by P. H. Brincker's "Lehrbuch des Oshikuanyama." In the light of these comparisons the relationship of Umbundu vocabularies is readily seen, for instead of searching for similarities the numerous identities are at once evident. At a glance one sees that the Umbundu and Kuanyama words for "arm," "arrow," "ax," "banana," "beard," "bird," "blood," "bone," "breast," "charcoal," "guinea fowl," "hand," and "hoe," are either identical or closely related. I noted the easy communication of my Ocimbundu interpreter with the Vakuanyama of Mongua.

Some of the following chapters show that the Ovimbundu have an undeniable southwest Congo culture; they have, however, taken 197

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197 cattle and a few other traits from the Vakuanyama of southern Angola, and there seems to be no doubt that the vocabularies of the Ovimbundu and the Vakuanyama have been influenced by these southern contacts. Yet structure will prove the final arbiter in deciding linguistic relationships, for the Ovimbundu as extensive travelers have widely distributed their vocabulary.

Caution is necessary in making comparisons of Umbundu with surrounding languages; for, although Kuanyama has received careful attention, and the researches of Meinhof have given a reliable background for Ovambo and Herero speech, the language of the Vachokue of eastern Angola and the speech of the Mussurongo of northern Angola, call for a comprehensive work. Moreover, there yet remains the task of providing a standard Umbundu dictionary and grammar, and pending the collation of this linguistic material there are no means of determining the exact syntactical, phonetic, and other relationships of Umbundu.

VOCABULARY

192 Apart from a broad question of the linguistic evidence of culture contacts, there are points of interest connected with the recording of vocabularies in a restricted area. Under the heading "Nature Lore" attention was called to an extensive Umbundu vocabulary connected with those activities which underlie the economic structure. The vocabulary showed that the Ovimbundu are keen observers whose activities have resulted in the formation of a large vocabulary arising from trades and occupations. In nature study many fine distinctions are made; thus, there are words to distinguish not only trees and plants of economic importance, but varieties of snakes and lizards which are of no great economic interest.

[868] In order to test further mental activity and the acquisition of vocabulary, an Ocimbundu girl of about twelve years of age was asked to name some of the objects in my collection. Without hesitation she made the following list. The object was indicated, then the child gave the name. This information was checked by an adult interpreter who found that the child was correct in every instance, although the objects do not specially appeal to the interests of a young girl.

The objects named by this girl are as follows:

Ocimanda. Wooden dish.
Omatope. Tobacco-pipe made from a horn.
Etenge. Pipe for smoking hemp.
Ocinunga. Brass bracelet.
Ukinda. Switch made from the tail of an ox.
Opaialonga. Leather pouch for belt.
Upi. Pounding stick.
Ombanja. Gourd with a long neck.

Onganja. Large round gourd.
Onguusa. Net in which gourd is carried.
Ohonji. Bow.
Usongo. Arrow.
Olundosi (plural *olondosi*). Bark rope.
Ombulumbumba. Musical bow.
Ohoma. Drum.
Ohuñpu. Throwing stick.
Ohanpanga. Drill for boring wood.
Ongombo. Basket used in divination.
Esanga. Water jar.
Ocipupu. Jar for palm oil.
Ocimbangu. Skin-covered box carried to war by a king.
Omusaka (diminutive, *okamisaka*). Flour-sifter.
Opesi. Tobacco-pipe.
Embungumbungu. Bull-roarer. 192
Olosangu (singular, *olusangu*). Rattles for tying on the legs when dancing.
Olumbendo. Wooden flute.
Opendu or ocifuamulo. Wooden hair-comb.
Osinja. Long needle used in making mats.
Onende. Wooden pigeon and dove.
Osala. Head-dress worn by kings, warriors, medicine-men and hunters. Small brush used by medicine-man.
Ociñumañuma. Wooden image of human figure.
Olupunda. Rat trap of cane.
Ombulesa. Snuff box.

The names for colors are restricted to a few words; but in all other respects the Umbundu vocabulary is extensive.

My interpreter said, "When I was learning colors, the women at the school told me many names, but I could see no difference at all." Ngonga contended that there was no difference between the color of a dark blue book and the black box on which it was resting. [151]

The following colors have names. Black is *tekāva.* White is *yela.* Yellow is *ondunga.* Red is *kusukā.* Greens and blues are not well distinguished linguistically, but green is *aniñamboto.* The word *tekāvisa* is used to indicate that a color is not distinctly green or blue. The word *yelisa* is used to describe gray, and all dark reds. *Wumbula* is the term which describes a greenish-blue shade.

A further study of vocabulary was made by asking Ngonga to speak into the dictaphone. In doing so he gave lists of words including nouns in their singular and plural forms, together with many examples of other parts of speech and illustrations of syntax. These records have been transcribed by Dr. M. H. Watkins. (This section was prepared with use of phonetic symbols that were easily available. For the most recent system, see "Practical Phonetics for Students of African Languages," by D. Westermann and I. C. Ward, London, 1933.) 194 113

PHONETICS

VOWELS

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The vowels are *a, e, i, o, u,* and perhaps *ə.* They seem to be somewhat lower than the cardinal vowels. There was only one word in which the vowel *ə* was heard, *ɔpdtəlóñd* (leather pouch for a belt). This word, however, appears in the field notes as *opataloña* (*opata-*

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

194 *lonya*) and the obscure vowel heard might have been a result of imperfection in the record. These vowels are fairly close to the European vowels, their nearest equivalents in the European languages being approximately as represented below:

a, as in German *Masse*.
e, as in French *été*.
i, as in English *machine*.
o, as French *eau*.
u, as in German *Buch*.
ə, as *e* in German *Klasse*, and *a* in *about*.

The nasal vowel ɑ̨ appears in a fairly large number of words, and the nasal ɔ̨ is occasionally heard. Before another vowel, *u* takes the sound of *w*: *ɔ̀lwéyò* (*olu-eyo*), "broom"; *ɔ̀tumɑ̨́lɑ́ twáŋgè* (*tu-aŋge*), "my little children."

The rising diphthongs *ia*, *ie*, *iu*, and *io* and the falling diphthong *ai* appear in the material, but every combination of two vowels does not make a diphthong. In several instances, when a word terminating in a vowel was followed by another word, the initial letter of which was also a vowel, the final vowel was elided. Final vowels on the low tone tend to vanish; that is, they are only slightly voiced, as in *ɔ̀sáŋgɔ̀kálúŋgì* (*ɔ̀sáŋgà ɔ̀kálúŋgì*), "he found (a) little hole"; *ⁿdávélénénè* (*ⁿdávélà ènénè*), "I am big sick." (I am very sick.)

CONSONANTS

The table of consonants is as follows:

		Bilabial	Dentilabial	Alveolar	Prepalatal	Palatal	Glottal
Stops	Voiced	*b*		*d*, *ⁿd*		*g*	
	Voiceless	*p*		*t*		*k*	
Spirants	Voiced		*v*				
	Voiceless		*f*	*s*			*h*
Affricatives	Voiced			*dj*, *ⁿdj*			
	Voiceless			*tc*			
Nasals		*m*		*n*	*ñ*	*ŋ*	
Lateral				*l*			
Semivowels		*w* and *y*					

The symbols *ⁿd* and *ⁿdj* indicate "nasal attack" consonants, i.e., the fully pronounced consonants *d*, *dj*, and *g* are preceded by their homo-organic nasals not completely formed. It is as if one prepared to make the sound of *n* but before its completion changed to *d* or *dj*; likewise the change is made from *ŋ* to *g*. Letter *c* is *ch* as in *church*.

TONE AND STRESS

Apparently there are three tones in this language, but one cannot be quite sure, since under the somewhat unusual condition of attempting to record his voice on the dictaphone the informant might have distorted the pitch of certain syllables. That three tones can be distinguished when listening to the records, and that these tones tend to follow a definite pattern, for example, in the singular and plural forms of the same word, can be asserted with satisfaction; but there is less assurance in trying to understand all the nuances of these tones and in assigning them, without reservation, a definite place in the phonetics of the language. Nothing short of field work aided by delicate instruments can afford any satisfactory conclusions on this point. 194

The data did not present any clear instance in which tone had semantic value. That is, there were no examples of two or more words, which, otherwise identical, differed only in tone and meaning.

The field notes state that the difference between cardinal and ordinal numbers is one of tone only, and this was partially verified from the phonographic records, but the words were not clear enough for transcription.

The following words have tones of semantic value, but the phonographic record was not clear. *Kalunga*, according to tone, can mean "god," "sea," "death," or "greeting." *Ombambi* can mean a "fever" (low tone) or a "bush buck" (high tone). *Onjila* means "bird" or "path." *Ombundi* means "gateway" or the root which is commonly used in brewing beer. *Ongongo* means "earth" (middle tone), or "hardship" (high tone).

In this chapter tones are indicated by placing a grave accent (à) to indicate a low tone, and an acute accent (á) to show the occurrence of a high tone. The middle tone is left unmarked.

The tones are not fixed, and they will be shown to shift in context. For example, a high tone on the penultimate syllable tends to be carried along to the last syllable also. This shifting of tone is especially noticeable when a noun is brought into concord with its qualifying adjective or relative, or when a noun is the subject of a verb. The following are instances in which tones do not maintain their original positions as found in isolated words: *úti*, "tree," *úti ùnénè*, "large tree"; *ɔlwɛ́yɔ̀*, "broom," *ɔlwɛ́yɔ́ lùwa*, "good broom"; *ɔmúnù*, "person," *ɔmúnú ùtìto*, "small person."

This kind of tonal behavior was clearly indicated in five records of single words, and expressions of two words. But in the transcrip-

194 tions of folklore texts tonal behavior will be seen to be less consistent. Discrepancies in the incidence of tones may be due to different speeds at which words are spoken. The placing of tones is perhaps most reliable when transcriptions are made from free, continuous speech, as in the case of fluent reading, or talking in continuous sentences.

Many words received a definite stress on the last syllable, and in others the penultimate syllable received a light stress. The majority, however, received slight, if any, stress, hence no definite conclusions could be reached on this subject. In several instances it is obvious that the informant was striving to be clear and distinct in pronouncing each syllable; therefore he possibly sacrificed certain characteristics of his intonation.

THE SYLLABLE

Every syllable ends in a vowel, consequently a vowel terminates each word, and consonants are pronounced with the following vowel, or with a consonant plus the vowel. The vowel of the penultimate syllable is long when the word stands alone, and in larger sound-groups the vowel is long in the penultimate syllable of the last word, while in the preceding word, or words, the corresponding vowel seems to be only half the length.* Vowel length is not indicated in these transcriptions.

GRAMMAR

THE CLASS SYSTEM

193 The data available were sufficient to establish the following classes of nouns, on the basis of their prefixes in the singular and plural; the formation of the adjectival or relative concords was likewise noted. There is no assurance that this list is exhaustive.

Class	Prefix		Relative	
	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
1.	omu-, omo-	oma-	u-	va-
1a.	u-	a-, ova-	u-	va-
2.	u-, oku-	ovo-	u- (ku-)	a-
3.	u*	ovi-, i-	u-	vi-
4.	o-	elo-	yi-	vi-
5.	olu-	elo-, a-	lu-	vi-, a-
6.	otci-	ovi-, i-	tci-	vi-
7.	a-	a-, ova-	li-	a-
7a.	-, i-	ova-	li-	a-
8.	oku-	otu-	ku-	tu-

According to the principle of concord, the noun prefix is the governing element which determines the concordial agreement of parts of speech when these are brought into relationship with the noun. The prefixes also indicate number and, together with the

concordial agreement as stated above, divide the nouns into several classes or class genders. We need not enter upon a general discussion of concord, which in the Bantu languages is a method of expressing grammatical relations that are of fundamental importance. Concord need not always appear in the form of perfect alliteration, although it frequently does so, for the essential fact is that all nouns of the same class are recognizable as such, and other elements of speech when brought into syntactic agreement with these nouns must carry similar distinctions. 193

Students of Bantu have suggested that the various noun classes probably represent a proto-Bantu classification which formerly betokened a grouping based on common characteristics (A. Werner, Some Bantu Linguistic Problems, *Jour. Afr. Soc.*, XXVIII, 1928–29, pp. 155–165). The nouns listed here under Class 1 may accordingly be recognized as belonging to the so-called personal class, and the prefixes of Class 8 indicate a diminutive class. [113]

CLASS 1

SINGULAR PREFIX: *omu-*, *omo-*	RELATIVE: *u-*
PLURAL PREFIX: *oma-*	RELATIVE: *wa-*
ɔmɔ́nɔ̀, person	*ɔmɔ́lɔ*, child
ɔmɔ́nɔ́, people	*ɔmɔ́lɔ*, children

Illustrations of concordial agreement with these nouns:

ɔmɔ́nɔ́ ɔ̀tito, small person	*ɔmɔ́lɔ́ ɔ̀tito*, small child
ɔmɔ́nɔ́ ɔ́tito, small people	*ɔmɔ́lɔ́ ɔ́tito*, small children

CLASS 1A

SINGULAR PREFIX: *u-*	RELATIVE: *u-*
PLURAL PREFIX: *a-*, *ova-*	RELATIVE: *wa-*
uluma, man	*ufako*, girl
aluma, men	*afako*, girls
ɔvɔ́luma, men	*ɔvɔ́fako*, girls
ukɔi, woman	*umalehe*, lad
akɔi, women	*amalehe*, lads
ɔvɔ́kɔi, women	

The following forms show the concordial agreement for Class 1A:

uluma ɔ̀tito, small man	*akɔi ɔ́tito*, small women
aluma ɔ́tito, small men	*ɔvɔ́kɔi ɔ́tito*, small women
ɔvɔ́luma ɔ́tito, small men	*afako vene* (*wa-ene*), your (pl.) girls
ukɔi ɔ̀tito, small woman	*amalehe vɔ́vɔ́*, their lads

CLASS 2

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SINGULAR PREFIX: *u-*, *olu-*	RELATIVE: *u-*, *ku-*
PLURAL PREFIX: *ovo-*	RELATIVE: *o-*
ulá, bed	*ɔkúlù*, leg
ɔvólá, beds	*ɔvólù*, legs
uta, gun	*olukókwó*, arm
ɔvóta, guns	*ovókwó*, arms

Concordial agreement for Class 2:

ulá ùnénè, large bed	*ovótá ɔ̀tìto*, small guns
ovólá ɔnénè, large beds	*ɔkúlá kùtìto*, small leg
uta ùtìto, small gun	*ɔvólá ɔ̀tìto*, small legs

CLASS 3

SINGULAR PREFIX: *u-*	RELATIVE: *u-*
PLURAL PREFIX: *ovi-*, *i-*	RELATIVE: *vi-*
úti, tree	*útima*, heart
oviti, trees	*ɔvitima*, hearts
úpi, handle	*itima*, hearts
ovipi, handles	

Concordial agreement for Class 3:

úti ùnénè, large tree	*útima ùtìto*, small heart
oviti vinénè, large trees	*ɔvitimá vitìto*, small hearts

CLASS 4

SINGULAR PREFIX: *o-*	RELATIVE: *yi-*
PLURAL PREFIX: *olo-*	RELATIVE: *vi-*
ɔndjo, house	*ɔŋgómbè*, ox
olóndjo, houses	*ɔlóŋgómbè*, oxen
ɔmángu, chair	*ɔŋgúlù*, pig
ɔlómángu, chairs	*ɔlóŋgúlù*, pigs

Concordial agreement for Class 4:

ɔndjó yiwa, good house	*ɔlomáŋgú vitìto*, small chairs
olóndjó viwa, good houses	*ɔŋgúlú yinénè*, large pig
ɔmáŋgú yitìto, small chair	*ɔloŋgúlú vinénè*, large pigs

CLASS 5

SINGULAR PREFIX: *olu-*	RELATIVE: *lu-*
PLURAL PREFIX: *olo-*, *a-*	RELATIVE: *vi-*, *a-*
ɔlúñi, fly	*oluví* (*olu-í*), stream
ɔlóñi, flies	*olónduví*, streams
ɔluhéŋgo, wild plum	*ɔluéyò*, broom
ɔlohéŋgo, wild plums	*ɔlónduéyò*, brooms
	ɔluéyò, brooms

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Concordial agreement for Class 5:

ɔlúñí lùtìto, small fly
ɔlóñí vìtìto, small flies
olwí lùnénè, large stream
olónduí vìnénè, large streams
ɔlwéyó lùwa, good broom
ɔlòndwéyó vìwa, good brooms
ɔlwéyó ɔwa, good brooms

CLASS 6

SINGULAR PREFIX: *otci-* RELATIVE: *tci-*
PLURAL PREFIX: *ovi-*, *i-* RELATIVE: *vi-*

ɔtcìmúnù, thief
ɔvìmúnù, thieves
ímúnù, thieves
ɔtcìtúñù, pit
ɔvìtúñù, pits
ítúñù, pits
ɔtcitá, one hundred
ɔvitá, hundreds
ɔtcípɔ́, skin
ɔvípɔ́, skins

Concordial agreement for Class 6:

ɔtcìtúñú tcìnénè, large pit
ɔvìtúñú vìnénè, large pits
ɔtcípá tcìwa, good skin
ɔvípá vìwa, good skins

CLASS 7

SINGULAR PREFIX: *e-* RELATIVE: *li-*
PLURAL PREFIX: *a-*, *ova-* RELATIVE: *a-*

ekɔ́, hand
ɔvɔ́kɔ́, hands
epɔ́, field
ɔvɔ́pɔ́, fields
ewé, stone
ɔvɔwé, stones
ɔpɔ́kɔ́, fruit
ɔvɔpɔ́kɔ́, fruits
ɔpɔ́kɔ́, fruits
ɔkándu, wrong
ɔvɔkándu, wrongs
ɔkándu, wrongs
ɔpúmù, corncob
ɔpúmù, corncobs

Concordial agreement for Class 7:

ekɔ́ ìtìto, small hand
ɔvɔ́kɔ́ ɔtìto, small hands
epɔ́ ìwa, good field
ɔvɔ́pɔ́ ɔwa, good fields

CLASS 7A

SINGULAR PREFIX: -, *i-* RELATIVE: *li-*
PLURAL PREFIX: *ova-* RELATIVE: *a-*

ímbɔ́, belly
ɔvɔ́ímbɔ́, bellies
isó, eye
ɔvɔ́só, eyes

Concordial agreement for Class 7A:

ímbó ìnénè, large belly
ɔvɔ́ímbó ɔnénè, large bellies
isó ìtìto, small eye
ɔvɔ́só ɔtìto, small eyes
ímbó lìɔ̀ngómbè, belly of ox
ɔvɔ́ímbó ɔlɔ̀ngómbè, bellies of oxen

CLASS 8

193 As previously stated, the prefixes of this class signify diminutive forms. In Chewa, one of the languages spoken in Nyasaland Protectorate, these prefixes and the augmentative prefixes when used with the personal nouns convey a somewhat derogatory meaning. In Zulu the diminutive and augmentative suffixes, although not determining classes, are likewise of this nature when employed with nouns of the personal class. The records upon which this brief description of Umbundu is based were not clear on this point, but I note that *-tito* means "small," so that the distinction between *òkalume* ("little man") and *ulume ùtito*, translated in the field notes as "small man," may be of considerable importance. Likewise, *òtcimúnù* ("thief"), Class 6, may be an augmentative-derogatory form in origin, provided that there is an augmentative class and that it coincides with Class 6.

SINGULAR PREFIX: *oka-*	RELATIVE: *ka-*
PLURAL PREFIX: *otu-*	RELATIVE: *tu-*
òkándjo, little house	*òtualume*, little men
òtúndjo, little houses	*òkatcípà*, little skin
òkalume, little man	*òtuvípà*, little skins

Concordial agreement for Class 8:

òkamǫlą kàwa, good little child
òtumąlą tùwa, good little children
òkándjó kòŋgúlù, little house of (the) pig
òtúndjó twòlóŋgúlù, little houses of the pigs

PRONOUNS

The personal pronouns are given below. Those for the third person are obviously Class 1 pronouns. Pronouns for the other classes were not obtained. These forms are of the independent or absolute type.

	Singular	Plural
FIRST PERSON	*ámè*	*étù*
SECOND PERSON	*óvè*	*ónè*
THIRD PERSON, Class 1	*eyé*	*ávà*

The possessive pronominal stems are to a great extent identical with the absolute forms, but follow the nouns which they qualify, and are preceded by the concord of the thing possessed and the qualificative formative (*a*). In some instances this formative is

elided. Again, for the third person we can give only the forms of Class 1. 193

	Singular	Plural
FIRST PERSON	-ŋgè	-etu (ɛ)
SECOND PERSON	-ówè	-ene (ɛ)
THIRD PERSON, Class 1	-àè	-ɛò

(ɛ) Note that the tone differs from that of the "absolute" forms.

Examples of the use of the possessive:

ɔtcìtúñú tcáŋgèì, my pit
ɔtcìtúñú tcóvè, your pit
ɔtcìtúñú tcáhè, his (Class 1) pit
ɔtcìtúñú tcetu, our pit
ɔtcìtúñú tcene, your (pl.) pit
ɔtcìtúñú tcávò, their (Class 1) pit
ɔvìtúñú vjáŋgè, my pits
ɔvìtúñú vjávò, their (Class 1) pits
ɔmúnú wáŋgè, my slave
ɔmúnú wóvè, your slave
ɔmúnú wáhè, his (Class 1) slave
ɔmánú váŋgè, my slaves
ɔmánú vóvè, your slaves
ɔmánú váhè, his (Class 1) slaves
ɔmánú vetu, our slaves
ɔmánú vene, your (pl.) slaves
ɔmánú vávò, their (Class 1) slaves
ukqi wáŋgè, my woman (my wife)
ukqi wóvè, your woman
ukqí wetu, our woman
akqi vetu, our women
útí wóvè, your tree
ovìtí vjene, your (pl.) trees
útí wáhè, his (Class 1) tree
útí wávò, their (Class 1) tree
ovìtí vjávò, their (Class 1) trees
óndjó yetu, our house
óndjó yene, your (pl.) house
óndjó yávò, their (Class 1) house
olóndjó vjetu, our houses
ɔluhéŋgó lwáŋgè, my wild plum
ɔluhéŋgó lwóvè, your wild plum
ɔluhéŋgó lwáhè, his (Class 1) wild plum
ɔkamɔ́lá káŋgè, my little child
ɔkándjó kóvè, your little house
ɔtúndjó twóvè, your little houses

The following examples of syntax were not recorded on the dictaphone, therefore they have not been phonetically analyzed.

The verb stem is seen in the imperative singular:

tuŋga, build (thou)
tuŋga ondjo, build the house
tila, flee (thou)

Example of imperative plural ending with *i*:

tuŋgi, build ye
tili, flee ye

PRINCIPAL TENSES

FUTURE

The following examples suggest that there is no formal distinction between the present and the future:

ndi tuŋga onjo or *nunga onjo*, I shall build the house
o tuŋga onjo, you will build the house

193 *o tuŋga onjo*, he will build the house
tu tuŋga onjo, we shall build the house
ru tuŋga onjo, you will build the house
va tuŋga onjo, they will build the house
omunu o tuŋga,[1] a person builds
omanu va tuŋga, the people build
omiapia yi tuŋga, a swallow builds
olomiapia vi tuŋga, swallows build
eveke li tuŋga, the fool will build
ocimunu ci tuŋga, the thief will build
ocimunu vi tuŋga, the thieves will build
okamola ka tila, the little child will flee
otumala tu tuŋga, the little children will build
olusenge lu tila (monitor lizard), the lizard will flee

PAST

ᵊda tuŋga onjo, I built the house
wa tuŋga onjo, you built the house
wa tuŋga onjo, he built the house
tua tuŋga onjo, we built the house
va tuŋga onjo, they built the house
ocimunu ca tila, the thief fled
ongombe ya tila, the ox fled
eveke lia tila, the fool fled
okamola ka tila, the little child fled
omunu wa tila, the person fled

The pronoun as object comes between the prefix and the verb:

ombua ya ci lumana,[2] the dog bit it
ocimunu co lumana, the thief bit him
cu lumana, it will bite him
olusenge emalanaga lu lilumana, the lizard will bite the cheetah
okamola olunyihi lua ka lumana, the little child, the bee stung him

The perfect tense uses the prefix of the past tense with *-ile* or *-ele* added to the stem of the verb. The perfect is used to indicate an action in some definite past time, or to state a condition which has ceased:

ulume wa solele ukai wahe, the man used to love his wife
helã ombua ya lumanele omunu (*ulume*), yesterday the dog bit a man

[1] The *o* is not a pronoun but is used to preserve concord.

[2] The letter *y* is part of the concord. The letter *y* survives from the personal pronoun *eye* meaning "he." Letter *a* indicates past tense; *ci* means "it" or "thing." Hence the literal meaning is "dog he thing bit."

enyamuale va tuŋgile olonjo, last year they built the houses 193

The causative is expressed by the suffix *-isa:*

va tuŋgisa onjo, they caused the house to be built
o toŋgisa ombinja, he will cause a shirt to be sewed

The suffix *-ila* has the force of a preposition:

ombua ya tilila konjo, the dog fled to the house
olusenge lua fila vocitunyu, the lizard died in the pit

Illustrations of indirect object:

wa tuŋgila ukai onjo, he built the house for the woman
va tu tongela olombinja, they sewed the shirts for us

The prefix *oku* is the sign of the infinitive:

oku tuŋga, to build
oku tila, to flee
oku lia, to eat

The subjunctive is expressed by changing final *a* to *e:*

a tuŋge onjo, let him build the house
va tile, let them flee
va sia epangu okuti oco ovava a pite, they left a hole so that the water might pass

The auxiliary *ka* ("to go") is used with all tenses:

o ka tuŋga kimbo, he will go and build at the village
wa ka tuŋga onjo, he has gone to build a house
wa ka tuŋgile onjo, he has been there and built a house

The negative is expressed in the following words:

si tuŋgi, I shall not build
ku tuŋgi, thou wilt not build
ka tuŋgi, he will not build
ka tu tuŋgi, we will not build
ka va tuŋgi, they will not build
ongombe ka yi tuŋgi, the ox will not build
ocimunu ka ci tuŋgi, the thief will not build
olusenge ka lu tila, the lizard will not flee
okamola ka ka tuŋgi, the little child will not build
ukai ka tuŋgi, the woman will not build

The past negative is expressed as follows:

sa tuŋgile, I did not build
kua tuŋgile, you did not build
ka tuŋgile, he did not build
ka tua tuŋgile, we did not build

193 *ka wa tuŋgili*, you did not build
ka va tuŋgile, they did not build
omanu ka va yongola oku tila, the people do not wish to flee
ocimunu ka ci yongola upange, the thief does not wish work
ha ngombe ko, it is not an ox
ha njoko, it is not a house
ha munuko, it is not a person
ha manuko, they are not people
ha ci munuko, he is not a thief
ha meko, it is not I
he yeko, it is not he
ha veko, it is not you
he tuko, it is not we
he nako, it is not you
ha voko, it is not they
si ci munuko, I am not a thief
ku ci munuko, you are not a thief
ha ci munuko, he is not a thief
ka tui munuko, we are not thieves
ka wi munuko, you are not thieves
ha i munuko, they are not thieves

TRANSCRIPTION OF FOLKLORE STORIES

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Ombwá lolwisó lwáyo[1]
Dog with Greed His

Ombwá kèyaù, okásitu vómèlà. Yi li lókúyókàyoka
Dog on bridge little meat in mouth. It is there to cross

òlwi. Vovává yi letemo ómbwá yekwávò lonumbá
stream. In water it sees dog another with piece

yìnénè yósitù. Ombwá yà lólá okásitu káhè; yà wílà
big of meat. Dog dropped little meat his; it threw itself

vovává hà yi kwátà ósitù yìnénè yikwávò. Omó yà
in water in order to catch meat large other. Thus it

ñelisá òlònúmbá viválì, yikwávò ya káìlè láyò,
lost pieces two, the other it was with him,

yikwávò yi léte pólwi. Yà vi ñelisá momo o kwete
(the) other it saw in stream. It then lost because he had

olúŋgòŋgò. Isó lilmólá mólá ondjámba, òkù lìénda ka li ká
greed. Eye sees (continuously) elephant, in going it is not

veléla ohatù.
increased meat-hunger.

[177] [1]Presumably an adoption of the well-known European fable of the dog and his reflection.

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Sómá Tciyúkà
King Tciyuka

Sómá Tciyúkà ònǫ́lą à djǫ́ǫ́ò wàéndà ku Kaŋgándjì
King Tciyuka son of John went to Kangandji

òkùlìà òvímbù. Váti tambúla tcà sókà. Kòkwéne kulivo
to eat (impose) fines. They said, "Take that which is proper. Among yourselves there are also

òvímbù vìétù. Eyé Tciyúkà hátì, kwa káìle ùkóŋgò
fines of ours." He Tciyuka said, "There was once a hunter

wà ká lile òvímbù, wà tambúla òpǫ́ù. Okwiyá
who went (and) imposed fines; he received (a) stick. Coming

kòndjìla wà yévà ondjuvúŋgo yètátù lomǫ́lą váhè. Eyé
along the path he heard a rustling of iguana with children his. He

wàtílà wà lóndà vútì lúta wáhè. Opǫ́ù yasìala pósì.
fled; he climbed tree with gun his. (The) stick remained down (on the ground).

Nóke ètátù òkwiyá wàmólà òpǫ́ù hátì, "dá lúlà. Ukóŋgò
Afterward iguana coming saw stick; said, 'I have seen.' Hunter

hátì kòtókò òpǫ́ù yáŋgè. Etátù hátì "dátì. "Dá yá káìlè
said, 'Not so stick my.' Iguana said, 'No. If it had been

yóvè "dá wa lóndà láyò. Nòke ètátù wàtàmbúlà, wàétcà
yours then you (would) have climbed with it.' Afterwards iguana took (it), he gave (it)

kòmánù. Ukóŋgò wàpúmbà, wàtùndápò òvókò, wàéndá
to the people. Hunter lost, (he) went away empty handed, (he) went

kímbò ljávò.
to village his.

Nóké wàlàlékà òndjévò votcisúkù, ótcó tcósi
"Afterward he invited a hunt of the tall grass, so that all

tcápìà. Etátù hámò akálà votcisúkù. Hátì òvándjà ókò
was burned. Iguana however was in the tall grass. He said, 'One looks where

a tilila kà kù molèhà. Otcó àsáŋgà òkálúŋgì, hátì
one may flee it does not appear.' Then he found a little hole, he said,

iŋílákò ká swíkò. Etìmbá ljàìyílà, utcílà wàsìálà
'(I will) enter there.' He could not be contained (in it). (The) body entered, the tail was left

539 *pòsámwà.* *Nóké* *ùkóŋgò* *wéyà.* *Hátì* *òvándjà* *utcílà*
outside. Afterwards hunter came. (He) said, 'One sees (the) tail

wètátù *pòsámwà.* *Leye* *hátì,* *ⁿdá lúlà.* *Etátù* *hátì*
of the iguana outside.' And he said, 'I have seen.' Iguana said,

kòtókò *òtcò* *ètímbà* *lìáŋgè.* *Ukóŋgò* *hátì* *kòtókò.*
'Not so that (is) body my.' Hunter said, 'Not so.

ⁿDá *lìàkáìlè* *lìóvè* *ⁿdá* *lìàlŋílà.* *ⁿOké* *ùkóŋgò*
If it had been yours it would have entered.' Afterward hunter

wáñaŋúlà *òmókò* *yáhè,* *wà tétà.* *Otcó* *ètátù* *lìáfà.*
(he) stretched out knife his, he cut. Thus iguana died."

Otçó *Tcìyúkà* *hátì,* *amé* *ⁿdìá* *tcáŋgè.* *Noké*
So Tciyuka said, "I shall eat mine. After

ⁿdá *ŋwètè* *tcénè,* *lámè* *wìyì,* *ù* *lìsáŋgélà.*
if I have yours, with me come, you with it will find yourselves."

Hósi la ⁿGúli
Lion and Hyena

Tcìsukilá *wà tumilá* *kusómá* *Tcìpóŋgè* *hátì,* *a ende*
Tcisukila sent to king Tciponge, said, "Let him go

a *katúle* *ukúlu* *ùnénè* *lòvákwéndje.* *Veye* *va* *leméle*
he that you cause to arise (an) elder great with young men. Let them come they may warn

ofeká *yáŋgè,* *yá* *nómbà.* *Sómá* *Tcìpóŋge* *yu* *wà tela*
country my, which despises me." King Tciponge he told

òlùsápò *hátì,* *kwá kála* *òŋgúlì,* *òmánù* *vósì* *vo leválà*
a proverb, said, "There was hyena, people all from him borrowed

tcáhè. *ⁿGúli* *etci* *wà èndá* *kímbo* *vò háŋga* *lovótà*
his (things). Hyena when (he) went to village they him drove off with guns

lolohóndjì. *ⁿOkè* *tcovála* *kutímà* *hátì,* *ha* *sembiká*
and clubs. Then it him hurt to (the) heart he said, 'I go I engage

ku hósi, *eyé* *ò* [illegible] *oku* *kwátà* *òmánù.* *Etcí* *a* *sáŋgà*
(to) lion he is able to catch people.' When he found

hósi, *hósi* *hátì,* *twendá* *ku* *bùlù* *o* *kwetè* *esúŋgà,* *eyé*
lion, lion said, 'Let us go to jackal he has honesty he

ètcimbanda *tcìnénè.* *Otcó* *hósi* *laⁿgúli* *vá lìkwçì* *oku ènda*
(is) medicine-man great.' So lion and hyena they followed each other to go

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ko bùlù. *Bùlù* *hátì,* *tu* *vándjiliyá* *imbó* *lịovisóndè.* *Otcó*
to jackal. Jackal said, 'We shall search village of driver ants. Thus

amé *ⁿdjimbemó* *utcilá* *wáyngè.* *Ené* *usiálá* *kofékà.*
I thrust in tail my. You remain in country (outside).

Amé *ⁿdjiyilá* *vimbo* *oko* *ñilá* *ovisóndè* *vimbo*
I shall enter in the village there I shall sprinkle driver ants in the village

lịósì. *Ománú* *étcí* *vatundá* *ove* *u hósi* *wendá* *loku kwátà.*
all. People when they come out you O lion go (them) to catch.

Otcó *tca* *soká* *oku* *fetà* *ofuka* *ya ⁿgúli.* *Oká* *sapúlà*
So that shall be enough to pay debt of hyena.'" This one goes tells

ku *Tcìsukílà,* *ⁿdá yátúlá* *ukúlu* *lákwéndjè* *velómbè*
to Tcisukila, "Should I cause to arise (an) elder with young men from the court.

tca sókà *oku sándúlà* *ofékà* *yáhè,* *mómó* *amé*
it (would) be equal to scatter country his, for I

ⁿdumúnù *ònénè.* *Ové a* *Tcìsukílà,* *lemelá* *ofeká* *yóvè*
am (a) person great. You Tcisukila, warn country your

evándò *ótcó* *u kála* *tciwà.*
slowly so you shall be well."

Hósi lá Bindjì
Lion and Wild Dog

Hósi *wa* *túyngá* *kùséyngè.* *Wà kúka.* *Kà* *kwéte* *òyngùsù*
Lion he built in the woods. He was old. He had not strength

yòkù limwísa *òkùlịà.* *Wà sóka* *òkù* *lúyngúkà.* *Yú* *wàèndà*
to provide himself food. He thought to be cunning. He went

kèléva, *wà yáịlà* *kohondo,* *wàlúvikíya* *òkù vélà.*
to cave, he crawled to a corner, he made out to be sick.

Oviñámá *vịósì* *vịéyà vịò* *vándjà,* *ⁿdá* *ò vélà* *òtcílì.*
The animals all came they at him looked, if he is sick indeed.

Etci *vịéyá* *hósi* *ò* *lóku* *vì* *tàkáilà.* *Etci* *òviñama* *vịálwa*
As they came lion he them ate. When animals many

vịá *kwàtiwa* *lá* *hósi,* *bindji* *wéya* *wà lúyngà.* *Eye* *ò tịi*
they were caught by lion, wild dog he came he took warning. He stands

539 *kùvélò* at opening *wèlèvà.* of the cave. *Wà púla* He asked *hósi* lion, *háti,* saying, *wàkólápó.* "Are you well?" *Hósi* Lion *hátì,* said,

ndá "I am *vélà* sick *ènénè.* very." *Wà* He *láleka* invited *bíndji* wild dog *òku ìŋílà* to enter *vèléva* into the cave *òkù* to

vàŋgula talk *láhè.* with him. *Bíndji* Wild dog *wà* he *kúmbúlúlá* replied *hátì,* saying, *nda* "I should have agreed *távà,* *pwàí* but

nda I *límbúka* noticed *àkàsà* tracks *ósì* all *àìmbà* go *òvásò* toward *kèlévà.* the cave. *Kà* There *kúlí* are

àkàsà no tracks *àìmbà* going *òvásò* toward *pòsámwà.* the outside." *Tcà* That which *líŋguá* goes *mbwí* down? (sinks) *tcà* it

lùŋgísá warns *avá* those *và* who *ŋwà.* swim.

SIGN LANGUAGE

201 Various language signs are in use. The action of throwing a mat on the ground and laying the head on the hands indicates sleep. Inquiry about the health of a father may be made by stroking an imaginary beard. If the father is strong and well the reply will be a flection of the forearm to harden the biceps.

There are dumb signs for numbers:

(1) The right hand is used to bend the little finger of the left hand into the left palm.

(2) The little finger and the one next to it on the left hand are turned over into the palm.

(3) Three fingers are turned inward.

(4) Four fingers are turned inward.

(5) Four fingers and the thumb are turned inward. The thumb is then tapped with the index finger of the right hand.

(6) The right hand is extended and the thumb of the left hand is placed on the little finger of the right hand. This action adds one to five.

(7) The right hand is extended, then the thumb of the left hand is placed on the little finger and the one next to it. This adds two to five.

(8) The thumb of the left hand is placed on the extended little finger, middle finger, and third finger of the left hand.

(9) Four fingers of the right hand are placed on the thumb of the extended left hand. 201

(10) The hands are placed together palm to palm.

A very insulting sign is made in this way. The left arm is held up with the fist closed. The left wrist is grasped with the right hand. The left fist is then shaken while the right hand is still grasping the left wrist. "This is done when a man is very angry, and he cannot find words."

A bending forward of the head accompanied by wide opening of the eyes and protrusion of the tongue means "you're a fool."

Shaking the head means "no." If the right hand is shaken in front of the face with the index finger extended, a negative is implied. Nodding the head is an affirmative sign. To indicate absence of anything, or the completion of something, the index finger of the right hand is drawn across the mouth. Rubbing the palms together rapidly has the same significance. In order to call some one the right arm is extended with the palm down. If they summon some one from a distance the arm is lowered, while a scratching movement is made with the fingers. The sign indicating "go away" is a flipping of the hand outwardly, while the arm is extended.

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RIDDLES AND PROVERBS

"There is a red belt round our field. What is it?" The answer is, "red ants." 539

"We have somebody who lies all his life in our field. He always lies on one side." The answer is, "a squash."

"We have a stump in the house that is always burning and always moving." This is a metaphor rather than a riddle. The stump is the log which is pushed forward into the fire. It is always alive yet is gradually dying. The saying is intended to refer to human lives. People are alive but their lives are becoming shorter each day.

"What is it that we eat above and below the ground?" The answer is, "manioc, because the leaves and roots are eaten."

"The turtle cannot climb up on a stump, some one has to put it there." This is said in reference to some person who gains a high position which he could attain only by influence and not through merit. 539

When a person makes threats without being able to fulfil them the following expressions are appropriate: "Hot water does not

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539 burn a house." "Cold water does not make mush." "A sleeping dog does not catch a hare."

If advice is given and disregarded, or if an effort fails and has seemed likely to do so, the people say, "Bark rope comes from a tree; if it does not come, leave it there."

"He who sits by a pot of honey does not soon leave it." This means that a man does not readily leave that which he enjoys.

"When eating honey a man does not put in his finger only once." A good thing is not used in small portions; or, one goes back to a good thing.

When two people have a secret there is a saying, "They uncovered the pot, ate a little honey, and covered it up again."

"If you are full of food, do not climb on a leopard's back." If you yourself are not hungry, this does not imply that the leopard has no appetite. In other words, do not be foolish through good fortune.

"He caught no fish and lost his bracelet." This is said when an object of value is lost while performing a task of small importance. This saying would be applied to an instance of a man who left his work to take up a task for smaller payment.

"If it is not heavy, it is not worth while." That which is desirable is deserving of some effort for attainment.

The fact that something can be accomplished by a number of united people is expressed by the saying, "Where there is a crowd there is a bridge."

"You may throw away what is in the hand, but you cannot throw away what is in the heart." It is difficult to dismiss important matters from mind.

"You cannot tie a buck's head in a cloth. The horns will stick out." This means that a crime cannot be concealed. Murder will out.

"That which destroyed the buck came from its own head." The hunter's whistle is a buck's horn. This means that man is the cause of his own troubles.

"A chicken knows a dangerous thing." The implication is that a man should know.

The English expression, "six of one and half a dozen of the other," is expressed by the Umbundu, "If it is on cattle or on people it is still a louse."

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FOLKLORE STORIES

THE LEOPARD AND THE HARE

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A hare said to a leopard who was about to eat him, "Don't eat me, I will give you something good." Holding out his hand the hare said, "I have a little bit of something good in my hand now, taste it."

This was honey that the hare gave to the leopard, who licked his mouth and said, "This is a good thing that you have given me."

The hare promised to bring some more honey to the leopard. Next morning the hare went to the woods, collected a swarm of bees and placed them in a gourd under a covering of honey. The hare told the leopard to gather his wife and family into a hut, saying, "You will have a good feast of honey, but you must be careful to close the door and fill up all the holes in the walls."

The leopard was told to drop the gourd on the floor of the hut in order to get the honey. He did exactly as he was told. He gathered his family in the house, closed the door, and filled up all the holes in the walls. Then when all was dark he dropped the gourd on the ground to get the honey. The gourd broke and out came a swarm of bees. The hare was listening outside. Presently the cries died down, then the hare went away thinking that the leopard and all his family were dead. The mother and the young leopards died, but the father leopard recovered from the stings of the bees.

The leopard said, "Whenever I find a hare I will kill him."

One day the leopard caught the hare who had given him the swarm of bees. Of course the hare was frightened, so he said, "I made a mistake, I thought that there was nothing but honey in the gourd."

The hare pleaded for his life promising to give the leopard some good oil to make his coat shine. "First of all you must let me drive a wooden peg into your head," said the hare.

The leopard allowed this, and, of course, died immediately.

THE HARE IS PUNISHED

A young leopard and a young hare were tired of obeying their mothers, so they decided to kill them. The hare said, "Let us eat your mother first of all."

They did so. The hare pretended that he had killed his mother and buried her in the woods, but the truth was that the hare had

539 hidden his mother, hoping that the leopard would forget about the agreement they had made. The leopard was suspicious, so he searched the woods and at last found the hare and his mother in hiding. The leopard ate both of them.

THE BIRD AND THE BAT

The bird Choko met a rat with a long snout. The rat, whose name is Enganga, said, "Run from the drill," meaning his snout. The bird was afraid, so flew up into the branches of a tree.

One day the bird saw that the rat was asleep, so summoned courage to fly down and tap his nose with a stick. The bird saw that the nose was soft, so flew back to the tree calling out, "Brother rat said, 'Run from the drill, run from the drill,' but I smashed it and found that it was meat."

The bird's cry is expressed in Umbundu by the call "*Kota Enganga wa ndinga hati, tila eseka, tila eseka.*"

THE QUAIL AND THE ROOSTER

The quail found a large fat white grub under the bark of a tree. He said to the rooster, "You live with people who have fire, so go and cook this for me."

The rooster carried the grub to the village in his mouth. The people of the village liked these grubs, so they caught the rooster and took the grub from his beak.

The quail waited for a long time, then called, "Rooster, rooster, bring the grub."

The rooster replied, "The fools have eaten it."

THE STORY OF THE CRICKET

The cricket was very quiet; he did not talk too much or quarrel with other people. One day he invited people to dig in his field, and promised that he would give them some beer. The first helper to arrive was the rooster, who drank a pot of beer. While drinking the beer, the rooster looked out and saw the wild cat coming toward the cricket's home. The rooster was very much afraid of the wild cat, so hid under the bed. Presently the wild cat entered the house and received a pot of beer. But looking out he saw the dog coming that way, so hid under the bed.

The dog said to the cricket, "Did I see somebody as I came along the path?"

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The cricket said that nobody had called. While the dog was drinking the gourd of beer he saw the hyena coming, and he was so afraid that he hid under the bed. Soon after the hyena had settled comfortably in the hut, a man carrying a gun approached the cricket's home. The hyena felt sure that the hunter would kill him so hid under the bed. All the animals were now crowded under the bed not daring to fight among themselves, because they were all afraid of the man.

For a long time the hunter sat drinking beer and talking to the cricket. The animals under the bed were quite safe because they kept quiet. Suddenly a cockroach fell from the roof to the floor of the hut. The rooster was so excited that he forgot that he was hiding. He dashed out from under the bed and gobbled up the cockroach. The wild cat then became excited and dashed out after the rooster. The dog followed the cat, and the hyena attacked the dog. There was a terrible noise as the animals fought in the middle of the floor. The cat killed the rooster. The dog killed the cat. The hyena killed the dog. The hunter shot the hyena, then went away. Presently a tortoise arrived. He was frightened when he saw the dead bodies of all these animals, so sent for the little hare. The hare dug up the cricket from the hole where he was hiding. The tortoise and the hare killed the cricket, because they said he had caused the death of all the other animals.

THE WATTLED CRANE (EPANDA) AND THE SPUR-WING GOOSE (ONJAVA)

These two birds agreed to lay their eggs together in one nest. Onjava is a clean bird who washes her eggs, but Epanda is a dirty bird whose eggs are never clean. The little ones of Epanda hatched out looking dirty and ugly, while the little ones of Onjava were pretty and clean.

One day the two birds went in different directions to find food for their young. Epanda watched Onjava out of sight, then returned to the nest and stole the pretty young ones. When Onjava returned with worms to feed her chicks she found only the young of Epanda, so began to cry, "Epanda, Epanda, Epanda, with your long neck and long beak, you have stolen my young ones."

Onjava set out to follow Epanda. The little ugly chicks of Epanda kept up with Onjava for a time then died because they were so tired. When, at last, Epanda was overtaken, she said to

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539 Onjava, "You have killed my chicks by making them walk so far, I shall keep your children."

Then the great hornbill was called in as judge. He said that the chicks were to stay with Epanda. For a time the little birds did as the judge had said, but soon they returned to their mother, Onjava, because they were clean birds and Epanda was a dirty bird.

THE HARE (NDIMBA) AND THE LEMUR (EVOVO)

Evovo (the Great Galago) is somewhat like a lemur. It has gray bushy fur and a long fluffy tail.

One day Evovo addressed the hare, saying, "O comrade, what is the noise I am always hearing from the place where you have your house."

Ndimba answered, "My friend, have you never seen the people carry me in a hammock while they sing?"

"No, I never saw anything like that," responded Evovo.

Ndimba invited Evovo to the plains where they hid themselves, Ndimba in one place, Evovo in another. Presently the two hidden animals heard the sound of people singing, "We know where Ndimba is hidden."

Then the barking of dogs was heard, and the people called their dogs, shouting, "Haow! Haow!"

Ndimba said, "I hear them coming with my hammock."

Evovo replied excitedly, "Yes, yes, I can hear."

The dogs chased the two animals. Ndimba knew the paths across the plain and so escaped, but Evovo knew of no hiding place, so was killed.

THE FRUIT BAT AND THE SUN

The child of the sun was sick. The bat was a good *ocimbanda* (medicine-man), so the sun sent for him to cure his child. The bat arrived without delay, performed the cure, and returned home. The sun was very grateful at the time, but soon forgot the kindness of the bat. By and by the son of the bat fell ill with a sickness for which the sun was a clever *ocimbanda*.

The messengers from the bat arrived after the sun had risen above the horizon. The sun told them that he could not come to cure any one after he had started across the sky on his journey for the day.

"Come very early tomorrow," he said. Next morning the messengers were sent away again, because they were too late.

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Sadly these messengers returned to the bat with their disappointing news, only to find that the young bat was dead. 539

The bat said, "I hate the sun and I will never look at him again." The bat made a vow that he would never again go out into the sunlight to find food.

This is the reason why the bat never flies by day. He hangs head downward in a dark place all day, so that he will not see the sun.

THE DOG AND THE LIZARD

The dog and the lizard met on the pounding rocks where a woman had left a little meal when she finished pounding her corn. When the dog began to lick up the meal the lizard said, "You ought to be ashamed to eat this. All the corn on the rocks belongs to me because you have people in the village who give you food."

The dog said that this was not true. "Come to the village with me and I will show you how the people treat me," continued the dog.

The two animals went to the village together, and the dog found a hiding place for the lizard in a fence near his home. When the dog entered the hut a woman picked up a stick and drove him out. Then the dog cried as he came running from the hut, "*Tala! tala! sa ci popele,*" meaning "See! see! Didn't I say so?"

Ever since that the lizard and the dog have been great friends who may be seen on the pounding rocks eating together.

THE JERBOA AND THE LEOPARD

This story which is told at Ngalangi is essentially the same as one related at Elende, but in the latter version the dog and the hyena are the actors.

The leopard hired the jerboa to act as nurse to her cubs. While the mother leopard was absent hunting for food, the jerboa decided to eat one of these fat little leopards.

Presently the mother leopard returned and said, "Bring out the children, I will feed them."

The jerboa brought out the cubs one by one, taking care to bring out the first one twice over. Next day when the mother leopard was away the jerboa ate another cub. Again the leopard asked for her little ones. The jerboa had been placed in charge of four cubs. As two were eaten, the jerboa had to bring out each of the two remaining cubs twice over in order to satisfy the mother leopard. On the third day the jerboa ate another little leopard. When the

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539 mother leopard returned, the jerboa brought out the only cub four times. On the fourth day the jerboa ate the last of the cubs.

When the mother leopard came home the jerboa was terrified, so said, "The cubs are not very well, you must go in the room to feed them; I cannot bring them out." When the leopard had gone into the sleeping room the jerboa ran quickly into his hole in the ground.

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538 These tales from my records were all told to me by Ngonga. It is true that some of the stories appear in the Umbundu reader [113] "Olosapo Vioku Likisa Oku Tanga" (Kamundongo, 1914). But when this book was printed Ngonga was already well acquainted with all the stories therein, and many more. Most of the tales were, and are today, an integral part of the Umbundu language.

My own inquiries had the same result as those of Chatelain in revealing a preponderance of stories of animals. Yet W. C. Bell [113] was able to collect several tales relating entirely to the adventures of human beings (*Jour. Amer. Folk-Lore*, XXXV, pp. 116–150). At times there is a didactic theme running through a tale, which emphasizes the value of courage, presence of mind, and perseverance. A sense of humor is shown in the conversations of animals and the tricks which the smaller creatures use to the discomfort of the larger animals.

538 171 Comparative study of stories told by the Ovimbundu with those from other parts of Africa opens up a field of research, especially in view of the long caravan journeys of the Ovimbundu. Chatelain narrates the Angolan story of the frog who boasted that he could ride the elephant, and contrived to do so by a clever ruse (*Jour.* [113] *Amer. Folk-Lore*, VII, p. 62). The Nigerian story of the tortoise who fulfilled the same boast is told by A. B. Ellis (Yoruba-speaking Peoples of the Slave Coast, London, 1894, p. 265).

The Ovimbundu have the story of the tortoise who made a wager with the antelope respecting a race which they agreed to run. The tortoise won the wager by placing one of his brothers at the winning post. The Umbundu version is given in "Olosapo" (p. 53), and there is a Cameroon version.

The tug-of-war story which tells of a trick played against the hippopotamus and the elephant is known to the Ovimbundu. The story has a wide distribution with local variations. Sometimes the elephant and the hippopotamus are unwittingly made to pull

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against one another by some small clever animal such as the monkey or the hare. In the version given by H. S. Stannus (Harvard African Studies, vol. III, p. 329) the hare perpetrates this ruse. The version given by Smith and Dale (The Ila-speaking Peoples of Rhodesia, vol. II, p. 377) makes the contestants a hippopotamus and a rhinoceros, but the hare again arranges the tug-of-war. E. Dayrell (Folklore Stories from Southern Nigeria, London, 1910, p. 104) gives another variant of the tug-of-war story, which states that one end of the rope was made fast to a palm tree. The hippopotamus was under water so he could not see the object against which he was pulling. He thought he was tugging against the tortoise as arranged. 538 171 [113]

Umbundu stories are humorous and didactic, while some indicate a process of rationalizing. An example of the latter kind is found in the story explaining why the bat flies at night. Dayrell (pp. 36, 51) gives two different versions of this rationalizing tale.

These folklore stories of the Ovimbundu give information respecting vocabulary, structure of the language, powers of observation, customs, and ideas of conduct.

I have found no stories which illustrate the grafting of elements from two different cultures. In some parts of Africa tales may be heard which contain blended elements from a Negro and a Semitic culture, as in Nigeria. But assimilation of features which were foreign to the story at its cultural origin does not occur in the tales given here, with the exception of the European story of the greedy dog, which is an importation.

The Ovimbundu were noted for their long caravan journeys, which were undertaken in territory occupied by tribes of the same linguistic family (Bantu), a fact which may account for the similarity of Umbundu and other Bantu versions of the same tales.

IX. RELIGION

Supreme Being

776 Suku is the name of the most important dead person mentioned by the Ovimbundu. Ngonga says that Suku made mountains, rivers, sky, and people. The name Suku is known all over the great territory inhabited by the Ovimbundu. I have seen at the *ombala* of Ngalangi a small house of meditation where the king retires accompanied by an old woman. This retirement for communion with spirits of the dead takes place in time of drought, and a gourd filled with water is always kept in the house. In another village of the Ngalangi region I photographed a house of meditation for the king who retires for communion with spirits whenever he is troubled (Plate LXXXIX, Fig. 1). The painted marks on the door are said to be an indication to spirits that this is the king's house of meditation, but there is no reason for saying that the king communes with Suku.

The evidence regarding Suku was supplemented at Ngalangi by two Ovimbundu boys who agreed that Suku was very important. They associated Suku with rain; but the word *suku* does not mean rain, water, or food; these are expressed by *ombela*, *ovava*, and *okulia*, respectively. I know of no meaning of the word *suku* which might assist in explaining the attributes of this respected spirit. Names of medicine-men are remembered and used but they are not associated with the name Suku. My informants at Ngalangi said that names of kings are sometimes coupled with the name Suku.

773 At Ngalangi an informant stated that in the beginning everything was water. A man dropped from above, caused land to appear, and began hunting. At the side of a stream he saw an animal that disappeared beneath the water. He was about to shoot when he saw that the animal was a person something like himself, yet different. He took the animal home, mated with it, and reared a family. This story is told also at Cileso, about two hundred miles from Ngalangi. At Ngalangi I was informed that the first being was a calf with human attributes, who walked about on the rocks leaving mixed tracks of an animal and human kind, which may be seen to this day.

Survival after Death

775 787 There are ideas of reincarnation. Two Bailundu boys said that the lion was considered to be a powerful old man. If a lion is found dead divination is practised to discover the cause of death. If a

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP15

lion visits a village an old man talks to it through the palisade. 775
The conversation is carried on in a series of grunts, after which the 787
lion goes away. One of my informants said that "lions and leopards are watchdogs for old men who have died." When one of these animals kills a domestic animal or a person, the assumption is that the predatory animal was sent by a deceased old man who requires a sacrifice. Ngonga of Elende said that "when a lion killed a man it was a sign that there was a bad spirit from the man's family within the lion." There is divination to find who requires a sacrifice, since some ancestor has been neglected. W. C. Bell relates an Umbundu [114]
tale of a woman who changed herself into a wild animal, but I was not able to ascertain that belief in transformation is held today (*Jour. Amer. Folk-Lore*, XXXV, p. 129).

I am unable to prove that the Ovimbundu have definite ideas of the nature of a future life, but they certainly think of survival after death, and have clear concepts of good and bad spirits who influence the fortunes of the living. There is no idea of punishment or reward, but a bad man has a bad ghost which can do evil things. Spirits will follow their relations on earth; moreover, they will come to the house of bows where their property is preserved.

A man returning from a hunt with trophies, or from the collection of honey, will leave some of these on a grave. There is no idea [774]
of spirits in rivers and trees, but the first tree felled for building the house of a man of importance must not be allowed to fall violently. This may imply a belief in a tree-spirit.

Spirits move at night only and mentioning the dead by name or whistling at night calls spirits. There are many instances of sacrifice [782]
connected with the idea of a spirit who has to be appeased. The medicine-man can induce a spirit to enter an image of wood. Thus there are wooden images containing spirits useful to the blacksmith. [778]
There is an image which can show travelers the right path when the medicine-man consults it (Plate XXI, Figs. 3, 5).

Osande is a good spirit who will "bring good luck and do good things for the people, while *Ondele* is a bad spirit who harms the people," said Ngonga. When a person is sick, mad, or dizzy he has *Ondele*. Only a powerful *ocimbanda* can cast out *Ondele*. *Ocilulu* is the general name for a disembodied spirit, either good or bad. An *Ekisi* is an *Osande;* apparently the terms are synonymous.

A spirit can die a second time. There is, for instance, an evil 775
bird of the night whose name is *Esuvi*. This bird is able to catch a spirit in order to make it die a second death. A living person

775 suffers sickness or misfortune if an ancestral spirit dies a second death. A person who has bad health says, "The spirit of my grandfather has been caught by *Esuvi*." The name of the good spirit *Osande* is used by a person who is suffering. Such a one says, "I have no more *Osande*." These instances clearly reveal a belief in the dependence of human welfare on the interest of benevolent ancestral spirits.

775 791 753 After a lapse of three months I asked Ngonga again about *Osande* and *Ondele*. He confirmed what he had previously said, but spoke in the plural of these spirits; good spirits are called *Olosande*, bad spirits are called *Olondele*. The medicine-man will visit a hut to foretell the future, and while there he puts a concoction in an image to which he addresses questions. He plugs his nostrils, then in a falsetto voice feigns answers from the image. The father of a family, or possibly the mother's brother, may kill an animal in front of the hut on this occasion. He then says to *Olosande*, "We hope when [761] we kill this there will be no more sickness." The Ovimbundu are afraid of death, and they therefore sacrifice to *Olosande*, asking that there shall be no death in the family.

775 I do not know whether the Ovimbundu distinguish multiple souls as some Negro tribes do. The part of a man which does not die is sometimes called *utima*, which is the word for heart. Dr. M. W. Ennis says that the *utima* and the *omuenyo* are both names of the spirit existing in a living body. Ngonga seems certain that every person irrespective of age, rank, and sex has a spirit, but I could find no evidence that the Ovimbundu visualize a separation of ranks or sexes after death. 762 When a man kills himself he is buried near a river so that his spirit will go to the sea, and for the same 775 reason a murdered man is buried near a river. At Ngalangi I inquired from other Ovimbundu people concerning suicide. Women who commit suicide generally do so by hanging or drowning. Men stab themselves in the heart or use a flintlock gun, the trigger of which they pull with their toes. It is feared that the spirit of a suicide will return to induce another suicide in the family, therefore there is anxiety to rid the community of these spirits.

RELIGIOUS BELIEFS AND CONDUCT

771 688 The Ovimbundu have many high standards of conduct, some of which have been mentioned in dealing with the education of children. There is, however, no idea of sin. That is to say, there are no commands laid down by some authority which is more than human.

Nevertheless, the idea of crime is well developed, and there are many actions which are punishable because they contravene the laws of the tribe. Adultery is a crime on a par with theft; but adultery is not a sin. Suku, the supreme being, issues no commands. Ancestral spirits are concerned only with sacrifice and homage to themselves. There is no theory of punishment or reward in a future life according to conduct on earth. 771 688

Perhaps *ekandu* is the only word which could express sin. An Ocimbundu would say that murder is the chief *ekandu*. "*Ekandu* is to make anything have a bad time." To send a stranger along the wrong path is *ekandu*. It would be *ekandu* to throw an animal on the fire. It is *ekandu* if a man is guilty of fornication with his wife's sister. Such an act is said to be *ekandu* only if the wife's sister is visiting the house of the culprit. The male defaulter is regarded as blameless, but the people of the village from which the wife's sister came would be expected to pay the wronged wife. Sexual offences against young children are very serious. In fact the death penalty or banishment would be inflicted, and such offences are given by the Ovimbundu as examples of *ekandu*. 681 [684]

This subject of moral responsibility leads naturally into the question of laws and penalties. There are among the Ovimbundu well-defined moral codes and clearly formulated tribal laws which have been described in chapter VI. 671

FUNERAL RITES

COMMONERS

In the village of Cilema in the district of Elende I witnessed the funeral rites of a boy aged twelve years. When a few hundred yards from the village, I heard sounds of drumming coming from a secluded place in the tall grass. On reaching the clearing four drummers were seen, each of whom held a tubular drum between his legs; these drums were of different lengths. The man on the left of the drumming squad played with an up and down movement of his left hand only, to provide the bass tone. Other drummers played with the palms and fingers of both hands. Thirty feet from the drummers stood a group of women who always started the rhythm for the drums by clapping their hands, and the hand-clapping continued as an accompaniment for the drums. 764

Near-by, men were seated on the ground, while a large number of women walked about or sat on the ground chatting and smoking their pipes. The general impression was not one of solemnity.

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764 The interpretation of the chanting is "God has cheated me of a life." That is, God gave a life and he has taken it.

My interpreter, who was a relative of the deceased boy, explained to the people that I was seriously interested. This was necessary, as they were afraid of ridicule and hostile opinion. I sat down by the father of the dead boy and talked with him through my interpreter. In the meantime I observed that the corpse was in a cloth-covered box slung on a pole, which was supported on the shoulders of two men who stood very close to the drummers. The bearers remained immovable except for the occasional changing of the coffin pole from one shoulder to another. At intervals women came out from the group to dance near the coffin, one, two, or three at a time. One boy was particularly energetic in leaping in front of the corpse. When the performers had danced they returned to the crowd from which other persons immediately advanced. These detached and spontaneous performances each lasted about two minutes.

(123)

After two hours the bearers of the coffin moved away, followed on one side by some of the men, on the other side by a few women. A large number of men and women remained behind with the drummers. The music and the solo dancing continued. The corpse was removed to a place about a hundred yards from the spot where the initial ceremonies had been performed. The bearers still held the coffin on their shoulders, while men and women seated themselves on each side of the bier. This part of the proceeding was solemn and there was little conversation, though tobacco-smoking continued among both men and women (Plate XLV, Fig. 1).

A woman about forty-five years of age held a plate of corn meal in her hand while she stood close to the corpse and in line with the bier. She addressed the corpse very earnestly and paused intermittently for a reply. While speaking, the woman looked intently at the foremost of the bearers, who both stood immovable with their heads inclined forward and eyes directed to the ground.

764 602 My interpreter (Ngonga) said that the woman addressing the corpse was the oldest sister of the father of the dead boy, and that she was asking the spirit of the dead boy why he died. Here Ngonga threw a side light on family relationships.

The father of the dead boy was the son of Ngonga's mother's brother. The dead boy used to call Ngonga *tate* ("my father"); Ngonga called him *omolānge* ("my child"). When the woman had addressed the corpse an old man took her place. He held up the

plate of meal and earnestly asked questions. Lukuma was the name of the father of the dead boy. The old man who addressed the corpse was the brother of Lukuma's mother. Ngonga explained that the woman addresses the corpse, "to give him sense so that he will not be ashamed to tell all about it"; that is, about the manner of his death. The old man said to the corpse, "*Etali* ["today"] *omolãngè* ["my boy"] *tu yongola* ["we want"] *oku* ["you"] *tu* ["us"] *sanjuisa* ["make glad"] *o tu* ["to us"] *sapuila* ["tell"] *muele* ["indeed"] *cosi* ["all"] *ca* ["that"] *ku upa* ["you take"] *kilu lieve* ["from earth"]. 764 602

The pause which followed a question was intended to give the corpse time to reply. It is supposed that if the answer is in the negative the spirit causes the pole to swing slightly backward. An affirmative answer is given if the spirit makes the pole swing forward. The old man demanded, "Is it witchcraft that hates us and killed you? If it is witchcraft, come to the front." I could see no swing of the corpse on the pole, but Ngonga said that he could see the coffin swing backward to indicate a negative answer. I suspected that the interrogator of the corpse gave a signal to the bearers, indicating that the coffin was to be made to swing, but I could see no signal or movement of the coffin. While the corpse was interrogated, males among the spectators spoke to the old man who was asking the questions. Ngonga explained that these men were suggesting questions which might be asked respecting the cause of death. A witness in the crowd would say, "You have forgotten this," or "You have forgotten that." 764 787

The next question was one that calls for a detailed explanation. *Sambulu* is a bad spirit which is able to cause death when crying women and children offend him by their wailing. The mother of the dead boy was a slave whose husband was absent from the village for a time. During this period the master of the woman threatened to sell her; consequently she went to a Christian mission with her children, one of whom was the boy now deceased. The woman and children were crying, hence the possibility that the evil *Sambulu* had at that time entered the person of the boy whose funeral rites were now in progress. The woman had visited the mission a year ago, but this lapse of time apparently made no difference to the possibility that *Sambulu* had entered one of the children. The spirit made a negative answer to this ingenious suggestion and eventually indicated that death was due to a "bad belly." If no answer is returned affirmatively, recourse is made to the medicine-man, who carries out divination. The details of this method are described [776] [797]

764 later in explaining the meaning of the articles which are contained
787 in the divination basket.

764 I interrogated my interpreter respecting funeral customs, and from these inquiries elicited the following information. Burial of the corpse takes place a mile or more from the village in a grave dug by the father's sister's children. The depth of the grave is about
(361) six feet. Each village has its own burial ground. The woman who questioned the corpse carried a sleeping mat which would be used to spread on the bottom of the grave, though sometimes the mat is placed outside the grave on the mound of earth. Midway between Cuma and Caconda I photographed graves of the Ovimbundu (Plate XLVII, Figs. 1, 2). The articles on the graves were the poles used for carrying the coffin, a basket, broken gourds, and in one instance the horns of a bullock which was killed at the funeral feast. The horns were mounted at the top of an upright pole (Plate XLVI, Fig. 2). Ngonga said that the belongings of a well-to-do person would usually be broken and placed on the grave; the breaking is necessary in order to prevent theft. I could find no trace of the idea that property is broken so that its spirit will accompany the man to a world of spirits.

The corpse was in a wooden box covered with a thin piece of blue and white chequered cloth tightly wound about the coffin. Ngonga explained that the body was prepared in the following manner before it was placed in the coffin. The corpse was extended in a supine position with the thumbs tied, the palms together, and the hands on the pubes. The great toes were tied together and the upper arms were bound to the torso with bands of bark or cloth. The use of bark no doubt represents the older method.

764 At the funeral of a baby one of the grandmothers carries the
787 dead child to the grave on her back. The ceremony of questioning the corpse is carried out if the child is old enough to walk and talk. Ngonga said, "If the dead child was old enough to talk they think he will say something." If the child was unable to talk, the parents, accompanied by their brothers and sisters, would visit the medicine-man to inquire the cause of death.

766 There are a few special observances connected with the burial of twins. When the children were alive the mother had to shake a rattle or to blow a small horn instead of giving the usual greetings to a passer-by, and this she has to do at the funeral of one or both of her twins.

A mourning widow must leave her hair loose and undressed, and she has to wear a cloth which conceals her from crown to sole. For three days she is obliged to sleep close to the corpse of her husband with only a stick between them. The stick, which is about the length of the bed, is laid between the widow and the corpse. During this time she has no food, and her wailing is expected to be almost continuous day and night. When the corpse is tied and prepared for burial the widow says farewell to it. Relatives support the corpse and make it advance toward her, while she herself is held in the position of a bound corpse, and is supported by relatives who make her confront the dead body of her husband. The widow does not go to the funeral. 765

Mourning continues after the funeral, with fasting and periodical wailing at three o'clock in the afternoon, and again twelve hours later. At the end of a month of mourning the widow lies for one night in the place where the corpse of her husband lay the night before burial. At the beer-drinking which marks the end of the period of mourning a medicine-man guides the hand of the widow as she dips a ladle into the beer pot and distributes the beverage.

The widow may stay with her mother's brother or she may return to her parents, but she must not become the wife of another man until a year has elapsed. The second husband will make a present to the widow's parents or others who have taken her, but this gift will not be as valuable as if the groom were taking a virgin. 768 587

Tree burial I have not seen, but heard of it near Ngalangi, and it has recently taken place at Cileso. Tree burial is the method for disposing of the corpse of a person who has died in debt. Any one who gives interment to a corpse assumes responsibility for the debts; hence tree burial is the most convenient way of disposal. 766 672

An Ocimbundu from Bailundu said that in that district the child is taken from the womb of a woman who has died pregnant. Food is placed on the lips of the removed foetus so that it will not induce the death of other pregnant women. Near Ngalangi a pregnant woman would be buried with the point of a long stick on her abdomen, and after the grave had been filled a blow would be given to the top of the stick. 766

The foregoing are the principal points of importance in the funeral rites of commoners. Ceremonies connected with the death and burial of medicine-men, kings, chiefs, and hunters require separate consideration. [565]

MEDICINE-MEN

756 When a medicine-man dies the people call in another medicine-
766 man to take charge of the ceremonies. The corpse is tied in a sitting posture, which is the attitude for burial. His charms are attached to his body and in this position they remain in the grave. The head ornament *osala*, which may be feathers, quills of the porcupine, or hair from a goat's beard, is placed upright on the head and fastened by a band under the chin (Plate XXIII, Fig. 2). The corpse is kept in a seated position lashed to a stool for three days. There is no coffin.

The corpse is carried in the posture described to the grave which is dug at a cross-path. The corpse of a medicine-man is questioned in the same manner as that employed in interrogating the corpse of a commoner. When the corpse is placed in its grave the medicine-men, some of them from a distance, dance because they have "spirit in their heads." The medicine-men shake their heads while dancing, and without pausing each eats a living chicken that he carries in his hand. At the side of the grave, a dog, a chicken, and a goat are killed. No part of the flesh is buried; it is consumed by those present at the funeral.

A sleeping mat is placed in the grave, and on the mound of earth are placed horns filled with medicine, and skins which used to hang from the waist of the medicine-man when he was performing. The rain-making charms are not buried in the grave, because their interment would cause the rainfall to diminish; the charms may, however, be placed on the outside of the grave. No food is placed in or on the grave. The mound of earth is painted with a human male figure. When a new medicine-man is making medicine or performing ceremonies he uses the name of a deceased medicine-man.

756 It is thought that the dead medicine-man has spirits which he is able to send to earth. No images of the medicine-man are made. Medicine-men visit the grave at night in order to take parts of the corpse to include in their medicine. At Caconda in western Angola I obtained the outfit of a medicine-man who included in his equipment two small hoe blades which he used for disinterring the dead. There was a portion of human tibia in the basket and a round stone pounder for pulverizing bone along with other ingredients.

[769] The funeral rites of a medicine-woman are the same as those of a medicine-man except that medicine-women carry the corpse. An *osoma* ("king") or a *sekulu* ("chief") will visit the grave of a medicine-man to ask for rain or other favors.

KINGS AND CHIEFS

A chief (village headman) is buried in a specially constructed enclosure in the village over which he ruled (Plate XLV, Fig. 2). The mausoleum is a small hut with a substantial wooden door which is surrounded by a strongly built wooden fence ten feet high. 766 643

I was taken inside a tomb in the capital of Ngalangi, where the king showed the interior of his burial place of kings. There were four mounds of earth, each of which covered the body of a king, and a little distance away were the graves of the principal wives. The hut contained pottery and gourds; also a small fire, which is replenished by an attendant who must not allow it to be extinguished.

Ngonga says that the burial chamber at Elende contains the head of the chief in a box. After one year from the time of burial the box containing the head is opened in order that a libation of beer may be poured over it. Sometimes the head is anointed with palm oil and a new band of cloth is added. These attentions are paid to the head in time of sickness and drought. If the head shows signs of desiccation an ox is killed in order to provide a new piece of skin in which the head is sewn. The tomb is visited by men who come to ask for good fortune when they are departing for a journey to the interior, and these supplicants are led to the tomb by the ruling chief. Near the burial place of the *sekulu* ("village headman") at Elende there was the house of bows (Plate XLVI, Fig. 1), which is typical of several seen in different parts of Angola. These repositories always contain staffs, bows, arrows, sleeping mats, and possibly other articles which belonged to the dead. 769 643 769

The corpse of a king is suspended from the top of the burial hut by a rope which is tightly fastened round his neck. That the king has died is not admitted and the announcement states that "the king has a cold in his head." The head of a specially selected family twists the rope until the head is severed. The twisting is carried out gradually, a little each day, so that a week or more is required for severance. In former times the head was detached by twisting only, but at present a knife is used to hasten the friction of the rope. When the body of the king has fallen into the basket placed underneath to receive it, the people may say that the king is dead and mourning begins. 766 [763] 643

Judging by the arrangement seen at the *ombala* of Ngalangi the bodies are buried in a hut constructed as a burial place for kings, but Ngonga states that the older method was cave burial. The body

766 643 of a dead king would in former times be taken at night by chiefs and interred in one of the caves which are numerous in the rugged hills of the Benguela Highlands. The burial posture for a king is the same as that described for a medicine-man. The severed head is eventually kept in a box, but primarily both head and body are buried, though in separate places. At the end of a year the head is dug up and transferred to its casket.

765 643 Mourning for a king lasts for seven days, during which his children and wives wear strips of oxhide on their left wrists. The village chiefs gather to choose a king from the "blood of kings," though "sometimes a bad man will make himself king without waiting to be chosen." The choice should be in favor of the oldest son of the chief wife, "but if she has stupid sons, a son of another wife of the king will be chosen."

769 643 Sometimes during drought chiefs and their wives go to the grave of a chief where they say, "If you are angry tell us what you want. If you want an ox we will kill one." If they visit the tomb of a king, the king's corpse is asked, "Do you want a new box for your head? We will make one." The oldest chief takes from the tomb the box which contains the head. This is slung on a pole supported on the shoulders of two boys. The head is then questioned in the way described for the funeral of a commoner. The oldest chief offers a sacrifice, if such procedure is demanded by a forward swing of the pole which supports the casket containing the king's head.

768 643 The house is not burned after a death has occurred within, but it is still customary to take down the surrounding fence and to build a new one. The house in which death took place is then used as before. I was informed at the capital of Ngalangi, and by the king himself, that he must continue to use the house of former kings until the structure collapses. No repair work may be done; consequently the house was in a dilapidated condition. Some months after receiving this account at Elende I was in Moxico, several hundred miles away, and learned that at Cangamba the custom of severing the head of a king by suspension and friction prevails in the manner described above.

HUNTERS

224 766 While traveling in the district of Ganda, likewise in the Vasele country in the hinterland of Novó Redondo, one cannot fail to notice the presence of rock tombs (*ombilia* or *osonje*) which are mausoleums of hunters. These are invariably placed in commanding

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

positions on domes of rock. The first tomb examined was in Ganda 224
(Plate LXXIV, Fig. 1). This tomb is carefully built up from pieces 766
of granite detached from the rocks which serve as a base. Horns of animals are placed on the cairn which is further decorated by a stick bearing the tail of an animal. Plate XXXII, Fig. 1, shows a tomb of similar structure in the country of the Vasele. From one such tomb it was possible to detach a slab so that the interior could be seen. There were two male skeletons; one lay supine while the bones of the other were in disorder.

In a hunter's house of bows there are implements of deceased hunters, whose ceremonies centering in these relics have been described under the heading of hunting.

TRAINING OF MEDICINE-MEN

Training for the position of male or female magician (*ocimbanda*) 756
is not carried out with formality ending in initiatory rites, neither is the position hereditary; but the boy or girl who wishes to become an *ocimbanda* must have "spirit in the head." This choice of children of peculiar neurotic temperament for the positions of medicine-men and medicine-women is widely distributed, as I have shown in some detail (Origins of Education, 1926, pp. 256–259).

Among the Ovimbundu there does not appear to be an intensifying of natural psychoses by seclusion, starvation, or beating. [158]
When a boy is sick, the medicine-man says, "You have a spirit who wants you to be *ocimbanda*." The medicine-man kills a dog, a goat, and four chickens, then the boy has to accompany his master, carrying his apparatus and obeying him in every way. The medicine-man says, "Your father was an *ocimbanda* and the spirit wants you." The female *ocimbanda* is called *cambula* by other women, and her [845]
services are preferred to those of the male *ocimbanda* in cases of difficult childbirth.

In Ngalangi I was informed that the Ovimbundu have great faith in the medicine-men of the Vangangella, a name vaguely applied by the Ovimbundu to several tribes of east-central Angola. An Ocimbundu will make a journey of several days in order to visit a distant medicine-man of another tribe.

FUNCTIONS OF MEDICINE-MEN

Magical practices are of two kinds, social and anti-social. The man who carries out divination, rain-making, healing the sick, and [791]
many other functions is *ocimbanda*, while the secret worker of evil, the witch or wizard, is *onganga*. In one village there may be several

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

756 men and women each of whom receives the name *ocimbanda*, and specialization in some particular form of magical practice is the [554] rule. Some practitioners are more highly esteemed than others. For example, an *ocimbanda* who has the reputation for curing dizziness, madness, and *onyalai* (p. 281) is one of great repute; so also is the man who can cure a case of blood in the urine (*biliosa*). [164] This is the Portuguese term commonly applied to blackwater fever.

DIVINATION

787 An examination of objects collected gives the best indication of the equipment of the *ocimbanda*, and among these no item is more important than the small divination basket containing a heterogeneous collection of objects.

A diviner receives the distinguishing title of *ocimbanda congomba*, and a description of his methods explains his belief in the activities of spirits. He shakes the basket while his assistant plays a small friction drum; then he inspects the objects lying at the top.

A figure with beads on its neck indicates that trouble is due to the ghost of a dead baby whose spirit wishes to come back.

A piece of gourd with a round orifice means that some one has been talking too much. The orifice represents a human mouth.

Two figures, male and female, whispering together, indicate that a husband and wife are making a plan to poison somebody.

The figure of a female with a large abdomen indicates that the spirit of a deceased pregnant woman is causing sickness in the village.

The horn with shells on it indicates that the woman who is consulting the diviner will not bear children.

There is a little figure with a black tuft on its head, whose [177] arrival at the top of the basket indicates that misfortune among the natives is caused by Europeans. When talking to this figure the medicine-man tries to speak like a white man by adopting a falsetto voice and mimicking the intonation of Europeans.

The figure with a little crest on its head is an indication of sickness or other trouble arising from a spirit which likes to drink blood. When this figure comes to the top of the basket, the medicine-man induces the blood-drinking spirit to enter a man, because the evil must first be localized before it can be exorcised. This possessed person dances with a small ax or a hair switch in his hand. When dancing has induced a frenzy, the dancer kills a pig and drinks the fresh blood. The blood-drinking spirit is in this way exorcised from the community.

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787

If the figure with united legs comes to the top of the basket the meaning is that a medicine-man used to be in the family of the consultant. The spirit of this medicine-man wishes some member of the family to become a medicine-man.

The little wooden snake signifies cords and binding. Dreaming of a snake indicates that the dreamer will be tied and sold into slavery. When the wooden snake comes to the top of the basket, the significance is that a spirit has tied the sick person who is consulting the diviner.

If the wooden figure of a girl appears at the top of the basket, the inference is that the spirit causing trouble is that of a girl.

The appearance of a thin wooden figure at the top of the basket means that the troublesome spirit is that of a person who died when away on a long and fatiguing journey. The afflicted person who is consulting *ocimbanda* has to make an offering to one of the wooden human figures which are to be found along trade routes.

The piece of iron in the basket may come to the top when the contents are shaken. When this happens it is assumed that a death will take place. The death is attributed to something, for example, alcohol, which has come from white people.

The piece of horn from the hoof of an ox indicates that a troublesome spirit desires an ox to be sacrificed. If a sick man is consulting the diviner, he is told to take a drink containing parings from the hoof of an ox.

The bone from a chicken's leg indicates that sickness has come from the road, that is, from a journey. The Ovimbundu have been famous for their long journeys across Africa, hence the implication seems to be that a disease of an infectious kind has been brought from a distance.

A corncob indicates that trouble has arisen from a spirit which can affect the growth of corn if not appeased by sacrifice.

A coin indicates that the sick or deceased person was too fond of money; misfortune has come from the spirit who gives wealth and good luck, because it has been offended in some way.

There is in the basket a white bone which means that there will be laughter in the village.

The small cocoon of sticks, which I think belongs to a caddis fly, means that some one has stolen a bale of cloth.

Small round shells indicate that everything is well.

A small wooden boat indicates that some one will be drowned.

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787 The handle of a hoe is the symbol of cultivation. The appearance of the miniature handle at the top of the basket implies that the spirit of a woman who was rich in corn is troubling the community.

Two united, human figures of wood indicate that a twin will die. The Ovimbundu welcome twins; when one is dead the mother has a wooden figure (Plate XXI, Fig. 1) made to take its place; this is nursed to induce another conception and to comfort the remaining child.

The little gourd means that a deceased person was secretly poisoned in revenge because of his thefts from a field.

The seed of the oil palm means that a large gourd of palm oil has been stolen.

The description of funeral rites gave an account of the questioning of the spirit of the deceased. If no answer is given, divination is made to learn the cause of death.

There is no divination by examination of entrails. Bones are thrown in playing a game, but this is not connected with divination.

EQUIPMENT AND MISCELLANEOUS DUTIES

755 [842] The basket of an Ocimbundu medicine-man at Caconda contained, in addition to the human bone, pounder, and hoe blades already mentioned, two carved wooden female figures whose specific use is unknown. It is known, however, that such figures may be nursed and held to the breast of a woman who wishes to conceive. There was a cowrie shell on a cord which forms a charm to be worn round the neck of a woman who desires children. A small tin box containing a coin and some stones was used for shaking. The kind of sound produced, also any arrested movement of the objects in the box, are indications of the guilt of a person whose name was mentioned just as the objects ceased to move.

A large antelope horn, filled with a mixture of goat's fat and charcoal from the bones of a goat, was intended for use in curing the sick. The contents of the horn become liquid when heated; then they can be dropped on the heads of the people who come for treatment. It was explained that a number of sick people sat around the medicine-man who walked to each person and poured out a small quantity of medicine on the patient's head.

[534] The only musical instruments used by a medicine-man are a small friction drum and a rattle. At Ngalangi I saw a medicine-man give a dance during which he slashed about him with a small ax, which was evidently a ceremonial object, since the construction

was too light to make it effective as a tool or weapon (Plate XIII, Fig. 4). At Bailundu I was informed that an ax of this kind is used in a medicine-man's dance which is intended to cure a man who is sick because a spirit has entered into him. The sickness may have occurred because the man has broken a promise. 755

The medicine-man, or sometimes the patient himself, dances violently, meanwhile cutting about him with the ax (*omutaka*), which is finally used for killing a little pig whose blood is drunk by the sick man. This is the ritual that was previously mentioned in describing divination.

The following are important ceremonial objects: The ax *ekusa* (Plate XIII, Fig. 5) was the one used for killing slaves who were eaten at the death of a king. This object was secured in the Vasele country near Vila Nova de Sellos. It is of handsome appearance, having a copper circle inlaid into the iron blade. A spear from Bailundu is likewise important because of its use in ritual (Plate XIII, Fig. 8). Before war and hunting this spear was thrust first into an ox then into a slave. The human and animal flesh were cooked together and eaten from the same pot. The female figure used by the medicine-man for consultation with regard to the correct path for a caravan has been described. A carved wooden post obtained from Bailundu was set up at cross-paths so that it might be visited by a sick person or his representative who would make sacrifice there. 411 [266] 782

Without parallel among ceremonial objects used by the Ovimbundu is a small wooden cloth-covered box from Bailundu. This contains a piece of root of cylindrical form tightly bound with cloth having at one end a cowrie shell. The box is the shrine of *Kandundu*, for whom a small hut is built in order to contain the box. Any one who sees the contents of the shrine is said to become blind. *Kandundu* is believed to be the "spirit of dreaming who makes swellings come on the body." 778

Antelope horns are in general use as containers of magical potions. One horn from Bailundu is used for holding sweet beer which is drunk by a person afflicted by bad dreams. A large horn with a piece of fur attached, also from Bailundu, is named *ocindiko*. The horn contains a mixture of fat and charcoal which is heated near camp after sunset, when men are on the march. The spreading fumes keep away lions and thieves. It was said that a thief is deterred because the fumes make him cough. 789 237

778 The charm *osonge* or *ombuiyu* is in the form of small neckbands of plaited fiber to which two or three cowrie shells are fastened. It is worn by women who wish to induce conception. A neckband of this kind which was worn by the maternal grandmother is thought to be specially effective. Sometimes a small rattle, formed from seed pods attached to a stick, is tied to the neckband. The rattle is shaken when the mother of twins meets a friend to whom she is not allowed to give the ordinary greeting.

751 A tortoise shell containing fat and charcoal is worn by the mother of a child who is afflicted by the spirit of *Kandundu*, which may cause the baby to have skin eruptions or a very small amount of hair. In order to cure her child, the mother must eat small quantities of the contents of the shell from time to time. In some sympathetic way the medicinal benefits are transferred to the infant.

756 When dancing, the medicine-man usually wears a goat's beard attached to a circular piece of basketry. This *osala* is sometimes fastened on the top of his head. In place of the ax already mentioned he may flourish a small ceremonial hoe or whisk, or a wooden baton with a tuft of hair at the end.

[766] Among the varied duties of the medicine-man is that of washing the body of a king (*osoma*) or a chief (*sekulu*). To water in a pot, the medicine-man adds some of the blood of a freshly killed chicken. Then in a hut specially reserved for the purpose he performs the ceremonial ablution.

At Cangamba an Ocivokue performed a ceremony which was supposed to make a thief return to the village for trial. The medicine-man sat on his haunches, holding in one hand a small rattle and in the other a slender stick on which the decorated carapace of a tortoise was poised (Plate LXXXII, Fig. 1). Very earnestly the man talked, shook his head, and gazed at the tortoise shell which began to twist on its pivot. As the medicine-man muttered and shook his rattle, the movement of the shell grew faster. Presently the rotation of the tortoise shell was reversed, but so adroitly that I could not follow the movement or imitate it when allowed to try. The reversed movement of the carapace on its pivot represents the culprit turning back to his village.

CURING THE SICK

755 At Cangamba a female *ocimbanda* was seen painting marks of red and white on the face of a sick woman. The ceremony was called *ovihamba* and its object was said to be the relief of rheumatism,

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of which there are several named varieties. Painting of women has 755
previously been mentioned in describing ceremonies associated with pregnancy.

Several distinct performances for curing the sick were observed at Cangamba, which is a center of the Vachokue tribe, though a few people of the Ovimbundu and many Luchazi and Babunda mingle at this place.

In the first instance the sick woman knelt in front of a hut two feet high which contained a clay leopard marked with white spots. The medicine-man dipped a bunch of leaves in water and stroked this along the patient's spine from the neck to the sacrum.

The second performance was more elaborate, and detailed preparations were made outside the hut of the medicine-man (Plate LXXXIII, Fig. 2). A screen of posts and boughs was erected, and on one side of this two male drummers stood, each with a long tubular drum before him. On the other side of the fence were three wooden posts, each two feet high, circular in cross section, and painted, as indicated in the illustration. Near the posts was a basket, so closely woven that it contained water in which green twigs and leaves were soaking. The drums began to beat and a group of women clapped hands in rhythm.

The patient knelt before the small painted wooden posts close to the basket of water, into which she dipped her face from time to time. While the drum music and hand-clapping continued, the medicine-man took wet twigs from the basket. He drew these very slowly along the spine of the patient from neck to sacrum, as if painting with a brush. The patient occasionally shivered from head to foot; then remained still, except for the dipping of her face in the water, until the next paroxysm shook her. This routine continued for ten minutes. The medicine-man then knelt by the woman, dug a small hole in the ground, and pulled up one of the painted wooden posts which he placed in the patient's hands. The medicine-man kept his hands over those of the patient while she transferred the painted post to the new hole that he had prepared. Finally the basket containing the water and leaves was buried thirty feet from the scene of operations.

A similar ceremony was witnessed near this site. In this instance, however, the water was obtained from a boat-shaped receptacle mounted on two Y-shaped posts, at a height of three feet from the ground (Plate LXXXIII, Fig. 1). Outside the hut of the medicine-

755 man, and fastened to the wall, was a strip of bark cloth painted with white circles. These recorded the number of times the patient came for treatment.

278 757 At Ngalangi there was no difficulty in obtaining information respecting plants used medicinally. Each of three medicine-men returned with a number of roots and stems which they readily described. *Okakamba* and *okapelangalo* are roots that cure "big head." This disease, which is rare in white people, begins with blood blisters in the mouth; these may spread to the intestines and cause death. *Okayenje* is a root that induces vomiting; it is also a purgative to free a patient from worms. *Olutikitiki* is given to a woman soon after her baby is born. *Kalungdumona* is a plant having a purple flower. If the root is pounded and drunk in water it acts as an aperient. *Okumbiasoko,* when pounded and placed on the fire, restores a person after fainting; the head of the patient is held in the smoke. To a violent maniac the root *usonge* is given, pounded in water and mixed with maize beer. At Ngalangi a man who had been subject to homicidal mania was sitting on the ground quietly with his hands tied behind his back. I was informed that *usonge* was making him better. *Ocinyeni* is a bark that is chewed to remedy stomachache. *Kosamba* is a plant used to cure people who fall into the fire; it is also a remedy for toothache. The action of this drug *kosamba* causes vomiting and evacuation.

Cilendaluka is pounded in water and smeared on the patient's body as a treatment following the internal application of *kosamba*. *Mbundakataka* is a root that is pounded and applied externally to cure sores on the lips.

278 In addition to the plants just mentioned the following are important:

Ocimbinga. This plant, whose name means "the big horn," is probably *Strophanthus.* It is used in the treatment of worms and chest colds.

Ocipumbulu. This is a trailing herb whose leaves when pulverized are said to be a cure for bad sores.

Ocindiambala and *oluasasa.* These are used to give to women who are suffering in difficult delivery. *Ongolo* sometimes takes the place of these drugs. The bark of *ongolo* is pounded in boiling water which is contained in a basin over which the woman sits. Use of the bark in this way is a protection against injuries resulting from childbirth.

Omondolua. This is good for headaches and whooping cough. The roots are boiled and mixed with sweet beer.

Okalolula-lokala. This is said to be used in cases of dysentery. At Elende it is used for curing skin diseases.

Okalle. This is used in cases of snake bite, swellings, and stings.

164 In connection with the foregoing study of the native pharmacopoeia it will be of interest to consider some maladies to which the Ovim-

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bundu are subject. Information relating to these points was given 164
by Dr. Hollenbeck of the Mission Station at Elende.

Of intestinal worms there are many kinds. Hookworm is of somewhat common occurrence. Ascaris, an intestinal worm several inches long, is extremely common. Infection may arise from the soil, also from the use of dirty cooking utensils. The disease trichinosis, which arises from the activities of the parasite trichina, is rare. Tapeworm is frequent because much of the pork and beef is infected. Oxyuris, a small round worm about half an inch long, is common. Bilharzia is fairly prevalent.

Malaria is so usual that almost every one suffers at some period. Every baby has malaria within the first two years of its life. Malaria is not followed by blackwater fever, but possibly by *onyalai*, which is known at Elende. The symptoms are the appearance of blood-blisters on the tongue. These spread to the throat and intestines, possibly with fatal results. This disease, which does not attack white people, is local.

There is no sleeping sickness at Elende, but the disease occurs at Katombela, at some points on the Kwanza, also near the mouth of the Congo. There are at Elende cases of elephantiasis due to the activities of a filaria which affects the lymphatic glands. Infantile paralysis occurs.

Leprosy is fairly common; the nervous form is more usual than the nodular. There are instances of yaws, a disease somewhat resembling syphilis inasmuch as the disease is communicated by a spirochaete, but yaws is not communicated by sexual infection. Venereal disease is not common at Elende.

The pulmonary form of tuberculosis occurs, but is not usual at Elende. There are places in the Benguela Highlands where the disease is increasing. Both whooping cough and measles are well known, but there is no scarlet fever or diphtheria. Chickenpox and smallpox are both known to occur, the latter in epidemic form from time to time. There is occasional dysentery, but no typhoid.

Hernia in its inguinal form is common. Umbilical hernia, due to lack of skilled attention at birth, is frequent, but with advancing age this defect is often rectified, or at least greatly modified. There are cases of injury to women at childbirth; for example, vesical-vaginal fistula. Blindness is fairly common as a result of the neglect of inflammation of the conjunctiva. Babies suffer from corneal ulcers, which sometimes result in total blindness. Cataract is fairly common in both its senile and juvenile forms.

164 Deformities resulting from burns are frequent. Cooking pots
[732] are unstably placed on logs which form the fire, and, in addition to this, people sleep very near the fire. There is no cerebro-spinal fever. Pneumonia is very common; the result is often fatal. Weakness of the heart is only occasional. Varicose veins are rare. There is no appendicitis.

One cannot fail to notice the prevalence of tropical ulcers among the Ovimbundu. These occur most frequently on the tibia. The
[757] big sloughing ulcer makes a large hole which the native fills with clay and a pulp of leaves. Sometimes a bark is pounded to a pulp and used in this way. These ulcers are very obstinate even under skilled treatment. Often after the wound has been healed it will break out again when irritated by the slightest injury. Medical
[732] opinion is divided as to the cause of these ulcers. Jiggers are a cause of deformation of the toes, which sometimes fall off or have to be amputated. Cancer is not usual in people under sixty years of age. Superficial cancer is the most common form.

515 Water, even when procurable, is sparingly used by the Ovimbundu. The hands and face may receive a perfunctory wash each day, but the entire body seldom receives this attention.

757 Cupping was observed on two occasions, but I think the operations were performed by the mothers of the children concerned, and not by a medicine-man. The method of using the horns or gourds is illustrated (Plate LXXXVI, Fig. 1). After incisions had been made the cups were applied. The operator sucked the pointed end of the cup, so creating a vacuum, which was maintained by pushing forward with the tip of the tongue a small ball of wax. This wax filled the hole at the pointed end of the cupping horn. The people shown in the photograph are Vacholue, but the method is the same among the Ovimbundu.

At Elende there was a sweat bath in the form of a hole in the ground containing a heap of stones. The stones are heated in a fire, then cold water is thrown over them so that steam arises to the patient, who crouches above the hole covered with a blanket.

In the Vasele country, also among the Ovimbundu at Elende, I examined corporeal incisions other than tribal marks. The explanation was to the effect that the making of cuts cured pain (Plates XXIV, Fig. 3; LXXVI, Fig. 2).

RAIN-MAKING

791 The rain-maker (*upuli*) is a medicine-man who has specialized in this function. The *upuli*, who was an Ocivokue of Ngongo, and

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not an Ocimbundu, was dressed in only a skirt of cloth, and his equipment consisted of a reed whistle and a hair switch made from a cow's tail. 791

The dance was a slow revolution without any violent leaping. The man held his arms upward, fully extended, and went through the motions of drawing rain from above; then he made slow arm movements suggestive of spreading the rain all around. At times he stood quite still and gave a shrill whistle. The hair switch was constantly twirled and flourished.

POISON ORDEAL

Evidence presented in chapters VI and VII will show that the poison ordeal is a widely spread Negro trait, and that administration of the ordeal is connected with legal proceedings during which the poison cup is usually given to the suspects or litigants by a medicine-man. 695 791

This ordeal as practised among the Ovimbundu and other people of Angola is in conformity with the general Negro procedure. Ngonga thinks that the poison ordeal of the old type is still practised secretly. According to the old law the poison cup affected an innocent man by making him vomit, while the guilty person succumbed.

Ngonga states that a form of poison ordeal which exists today is as follows: The medicine-man holds out two potatoes, one of which is poisoned while the other is innocuous. The poisoned man does not die but he becomes so ill that he confesses his guilt. This use of potatoes has been fully described in connection with legal procedure (chapter VI).

The guilt or innocence of suspects is tested by giving poison to chickens brought to the medicine-man by the accused men. He whose chicken dies is the guilty person.

CEREMONIAL FIRE

New fire is made during epidemic sickness, at the accession of a king, and at the building of a new village. On such occasions the twirling method is employed. The fire made is called *ondalu*, which is the ordinary word for fire. 372 791 796

When an epidemic of sickness occurs the chief of the village takes a present of eight yards of cloth to the medicine-man and asks the cause of the visitation. The medicine-man replies, "Your fire is dirty and worn out, you must have new fire."

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372 The village chief takes this news to the people, saying, "Tomorrow
791 we must find a goat, a chicken, and a pig, so that we may kill them.
796 Then we must make a new fire." The chief pays for these animals.

Next day the medicine-man starts a fire by the twirling method, and as soon as the fire has been kindled he kills a fowl whose blood is allowed to drop on the fire and the wood near-by. The sacrificial goat and pig are treated in the same way. Sometimes a boy who is learning to be a medicine-man kills these animals. Meat from each of the animals so sacrificed is cooked on this newly made fire, care being taken that each kind of meat is kept in a separate pot. There is no special pottery for this cooking. When the meat is cooked it is tasted by a girl from twelve to fourteen years of age who hands a portion to the chief, who distributes the meat among the village elders (*olosekulu*). The meat from the chicken, which must be fat, is the first to be distributed. A cock or a hen may be chosen, but if the latter is selected it must be *utenda;* that is to say, it must not have arrived at the egg-laying age.

Finally there is a distribution of meat among the villagers who have been present throughout the ceremony. The chief speaks, saying, "We wish good fortune to the new fire." Each person has to take the responsibility for quenching his own fire before the new one is ceremonially made. After the feast each father of a "restricted" family takes away a portion of the newly kindled fire.

796 There is sometimes a ceremonial purification of the village water
364 supply. Water is carried in a block of wood from the nearest stream, and to this water a few drops of blood from the sacrificed animals are added. The idea involved throughout is the renewal of health by the furnishing of new, unadulterated supplies of fire and water.

796 At the inaugural ceremony of a new king a similar proceeding
643 is followed. A chicken is killed for the purpose of supplying blood to sprinkle the new fire and on this occasion there is a ceremonial hunt. The king may or may not join the males of the hunting party; sometimes he sends a substitute.

A girl follows the king or his substitute carrying a basket (*ongalo*) in which round fruits from the tree *olosangu* are contained. Each of the fruits is wrapped round with the skin of the large lizard (*etatu*). The object of the hunt is to kill a male antelope, the duiker (*ombambi*), and a hare (*ondimba*) which may be male or female. The hare is not called *ondimba* on this occasion, but receives the name for elephant (*onjamba*).

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The hare is not carried over the shoulder, but has a ceremonial conveyance slung on poles (*owanda*) which are supported on the shoulders of two or even four men. 796 643

Laying the evil of a village on a goat, which is then driven out to die, is an Umbundu custom. The scapegoat ceremony has a cleansing function similar in purpose to the rekindling of fire for the community. Cavazzi pictured and described the scapegoat ceremony in the seventeenth century, and Ngonga informed me that he saw the rite twenty years ago. 783

PROHIBITIONS AND OMENS

There is a taboo against killing *oka kuhu*, which is the yellow-backed duiker. When Ngonga was sick he was forbidden to eat the flesh of the duiker (*ombambi*); neither is this flesh to be eaten by people who suffer from dizziness. In former days women were not allowed to eat eggs. The flesh of sheep and goats is said to be indigestible for children between the ages of three and six years. The flesh of the lion, leopard, and hyena is forbidden as food for the king, but other people may eat it. The king is in fact forbidden to eat the flesh of any animal which has paws; neither may he eat flesh of the bush buck. A medicine-man must not eat flesh of a dog except before a ceremony for curing the sick. The taboo against dog's flesh applies also to the diet of a king. 262 [643]

A woman must not step over the legs of a male, neither must a man step over the legs of a woman; for to do so causes weakness of the knees. A man or woman may step over the legs of a child. 784

Omens are numerous. It is unfortunate to see a snake holding a frog, and the person who observes this should go to the medicine-man at once. When going to a village to be tried by the chief it is bad to meet some one who is carrying a bark rope, as this indicates binding and punishment. If a person who is setting out from home meets a woman carrying corn meal or any other white substance, he or she must take a little of the meal, whiten the face, and all will be well. A fly in the mouth is a good sign, because the fly knows where meat is to be obtained and is trying to lead the way. 787

A stranger visiting a village is pleased when a dog is the first animal to enter the guest house. Dogs are fed, so the entry of a dog is a sign that the visitor will receive food. On the contrary, the appearance of a goat is a bad omen, because goats are not fed; they pick up a frugal living as best they can. Other prohibitions and omens have been mentioned in discussing the pregnancy of women. [574]

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X. CULTURE CONTACTS

174 The foregoing chapters have presented the main outlines of the tribal life of the Ovimbundu, with a brief reference to some factors in the cultures of Angolan tribes with whom the Ovimbundu are in close contact. But hitherto no attempt has been made to analyze the cultural contacts of the Ovimbundu outside Angola.

The data recorded indicate that the tribal life of the Ovimbundu is not an independent growth in the Benguela Highlands. We have, therefore, a problem involving a detailed study of surrounding cultures. The most important of these are located in the Congo basin, Rhodesia, and South West Africa, and for this reason the present chapter is divided into three sections, each of which deals with one of these areas which are all contiguous to Angola.

[121] In analyzing these surrounding cultures for comparison with the tribal life of the Ovimbundu, the social patterns as a whole are considered, and no attempt is made to construct a theory of derivations based on what might be a few fortuitous resemblances arising through convergence. Our study is aided by a knowledge of historical contacts and geographical contiguity of the areas compared. Therefore the method is not open to the objections that have been made justly against an assumption of cultural relationships between two widely separated regions, in which only a few artifacts or institutions have an alleged resemblance.

Chapters X and XI are concerned with discussing the probable cultural relationships of the Ovimbundu, and a final chapter, "Cultural Processes," indicates the way in which historical events and geographical factors have contributed to the selection and welding of traits whose aggregate now constitutes the tribal life of the Ovimbundu.

Congo Basin

An examination of the cultural traits of the Congo basin is of particular importance, because of the known historical connection of the Ovimbundu with Congo tribes, before the former entered the Benguela Highlands. Such a survey is conveniently made by examining the culture of the Congo basin from the estuary along the course of the main river, then southward along the Kasai and its tributaries into the northeast of Angola.

Despite minor differences the Congo area may be regarded as a region of considerable uniformity with regard to environment and

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cultural factors. The transitions from the Congo basin to the Benguela Highlands are of a gradual kind with respect to climatic conditions, physical features, and culture. Therefore, there are no compelling conditions which caused the Ovimbundu suddenly to abandon traits already acquired before their southern migration. 174

Nevertheless, several traits of Congo culture which must have been known to the Ovimbundu have disappeared from their tribal life, while other factors have been emphasized in importance because of a change in locality. The disappearance of traits and the welding of others is discussed in chapter XII. The present section is concerned with summarizing the points of resemblance and difference between the Congo culture and that of the Ovimbundu.

The books of J. J. Monteiro mention several traits which are a link between cultures of the Congo and the Ovimbundu culture of the Benguela Highlands. The Mushicongos chip all their teeth to fine points (vol. I, p. 262), a practice which resembles that of the Umbundu-speaking Vasele. Monteiro describes the musical bow, the friction drum, and the rubbing of a grooved piece of wood with a stick (vol. I, pp. 139–141). All these musical devices are used today by the Ovimbundu far to the south of the areas described by this writer. When describing the Esele country which forms a cultural pocket of the Ovimbundu people, I have previously referred to Monteiro's mention of the extinguishing of old fires and the ceremonial creation of new ones at the death of a king (vol. II, p. 167); also the functioning of the poison ordeal with use of the bark of *Erythrophlaeum guineense* (vol. I, p. 61). The former of these customs is carefully observed by the Ovimbundu at the present time, while the latter is practised furtively. 171

A part of Angola that is frequently omitted is the Cabinda Enclave to the north of the Congo estuary. Overbergh describes this territory in "Les Mayombe"; the Mayombe are a forest people living near Boma. They use red *tukula* wood for bodily ornament. There are special names for the first- and second-born of twins (p. 217). Circumcision is practised (p. 233). The poison ordeal is used with the drug Kasa. There is a classificatory system of relationships (p. 259), but without sufficient detail for comparison with that of the Ovimbundu. The most artistic figurines, which are carved in wood or ivory, are sometimes filled with a mixture of clay and blood as "medicine" (p. 219). The Mayombe believe in the existence of a supreme being named Ngambi but they have no cult for him; there is, however, a very active belief in a world

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171 of invisible spirits who work through apparitions, cries, and displacement of objects (p. 307). All these traits are features of Umbundu culture (see also "Etudes Bakongo," by R. P. J. van Wing).

J. H. Weeks (V) describes a number of traits which are typical of Ovimbundu culture. Mat-making by sewing long reeds together is pictured (p. 88) in such a way as to identify the method with that of the Ovimbundu. The Bakongo use a stick for making sounds by rubbing on notched bamboo (p. 179). The Bakongo have the dumb-bell basket-work rattle (p. 250), and the bull-roarer as a plaything (p. 126). The friction drum is used (p. 131). There are circumcision lodges for boys, also bachelors' clubs near San Salvador. The function of the bachelors' club corresponds with that of the *onjango*, the council house of the Ovimbundu. The graves of hunters are specially cared for (p. 181). The poison ordeal *nkasa* is carried out with an infusion made from the bark of a tree; vomiting indicates innocence. Nzambi, as among the Ovimbundu, is a vaguely conceived, powerful spirit who receives little attention; there are no prayers and no sacrifices in his honor (p. 276). Descent is reckoned on the mother's side. There is a kinship system of classified relationships; thus *ntekolo* means son's son, son's daughter, daughter's son, and daughter's daughter. *Nkaka* means mother's father, mother's mother, etc., in such a way as to show a parallel between *nkaka* and the *kukululu* class of the Ovimbundu.

R. E. Dennett has mentioned several ethnoiogical points which serve further to connect the Congo culture with that of the Ovimbundu. Dennett's account deals with the Bavili, a branch of the Fjort of the Loango region to the north of the Congo estuary. The father and his brothers are *tata*, the grandchild class is *batekulu* (Umbundu *onekulu*); descent is matrilineal. A man must not marry the daughter of his father's brother or of his mother's sister, because such children are his brothers and sisters (p. 36). Girls are secluded at puberty in the "paint house," and the red coloring is beaten from them with switches (p. 38). The women I saw at Ngongo giving a demonstration of the decoration and dances of a secret society were elaborately painted from head to foot with alternate bands of red and white. The mother's brother may sell his sister's children to pay his debts (p. 41). Inheritance of property is in the female line, to the sons of the deceased man's sister. The heir to chieftainship is the eldest brother of the deceased, and the next in line of succession is a sister's son. The wife and children of the deceased are not entitled to any property (p. 46). The poison ordeal is given

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with powdered bark administered by the medicine-man, and vomiting /7/ is a sign of innocence (p. 25). Nzambi, who is the supreme being from whom everything originated, corresponds to Suku and Kalunga of the Ovimbundu, for like these high beings he is remote and otiose.

When inquiring into the ethnology of the Kasai valley, situated to the northeast of the Benguela Highlands, a large body of literature is available. Each book or article confirms cultural resemblances between the social pattern of the Ovimbundu and that of the Congo basin, but not all points of comparison are to be found together in the works of one writer.

In an article on the "Ethnology of the South West Congo Free State" E. Torday and T. A. Joyce describe the use of manioc by the Bayanzi who scatter the flour on water, so making a paste. To eliminate the poisonous principle, bitter manioc is soaked in water for three days, after which it is peeled, dried, and pounded in wooden mortars (p. 138). *Tukula* wood, which is well known and widely used in Angola, yields a red powder that is employed for corporeal decoration by the Bapindi and the Bakuba (p. 147). The Vakuanyama of southern Angola use the powder mixed with fat as an unguent for their bodies and a dressing for leather clothing.

The evidence of Torday and Joyce shows that children of the Bakwese owe obedience to their maternal uncle; for example, boys who wished to accompany Torday had to ask permission from this relative (p. 150). The practice of cupping, use of friction drums and the marimba, are found among the Bakwese, who test the guilt of an accused person by giving a poisonous concoction prepared from the bark of *Erythrophlaeum guineense;* innocence is proved by vomiting.

Torday and Joyce (I) call attention to several traits which are common to the cultures of the Bambala and the Ovimbundu. Skin puncturing and the introducing of decayed rubber into the cuts are practised (p. 401); this is a common usage among Ovimbundu women. The poison ordeal is practised. Water-pipes for smoking tobacco are made from gourds. During agricultural operations hoe culture by women follows clearance of the ground by men. Women use a short iron-bladed hoe, and the result of their labor is the production of manioc, bananas, sweet potatoes, haricot beans, and peanuts (p. 405).

Rats are shot with blunt wooden arrows. There are great communal hunts for large game. The grass is fired, and at the conclusion

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171 of the hunt horns and skulls are presented to the village fetish, a practice which is comparable to the mounting of skulls and horns outside the hut of an Umbundu hunter whose grave is later decorated with similar trophies.

Among the Bambala a hunter's bow is *buta* (Umbundu *uta*, "a weapon"). Exchange of blood seals an alliance between chiefs. Kinship is reckoned chiefly in the female line and children belong to the eldest maternal uncle. Widows never inherit property; this passes to the eldest son of the eldest sister. The word for father is *tata*. Personal names may be changed at puberty or later at the pleasure of the owner (pp. 410–412). Poison for the ordeal is made from the bark of a tree imported from the mouth of the Kwilu River (p. 416). The name for the soul is *mityima* ("the heart," Umbundu *utima*). In all these points the Ovimbundu resemble the Bambala.

Torday and Joyce have reported on the culture of the Bayaka (II). This tribe has the friction drum, but in a form rather different from that of Angola. The poison ordeal with the use of *Erythrophlaeum guineense* is employed. Straw shelters are built over graves which are covered with broken pots. Ovimbundu graves of this kind were photographed near Caconda (Plate XLVII, Figs. 1, 2).

The Basonge live near the Baluba close to the Lualaba River, and the report of C. van Overbergh has been consulted for information which shows cultural resemblances between the Basonge and the Ovimbundu. The Basonge use short ornamental clubs called by van Overbergh *batons de promenade*. Such clubs as these are one of the most artistic features in the wood-carving industry of the Ovimbundu. The clubs are too ornamental for use as missiles, and the name given by van Overbergh (plate I, fig. 13) is an appropriate description.

Hoe blades and the method of hafting are the same for the Basonge and the Ovimbundu. The wooden stools and gourd tobacco-pipes of the Basonge have forms well known to Umbundu wood-carvers. Manioc is the principal food of the Basonge (p. 125). Fire is made by twirling the point of a stick on a baseboard. Only rich chiefs have a few cattle, and the word for ox is *ngombe* (Umbundu *ongombe*).

I have examined the evidence of J. H. Weeks (III, IV) with regard to the Bangala (Im Bangala) of the southwest Congo region. The Bangala use the word *nganga* for "medicine-man," but for the Ovimbundu *nganga* is a witch, while *ocimbanda* is the legitimate

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practitioner of healing and divination. If sickness visits a house /7/
of the Bangala the fire is extinguished and a new one is kindled. Women who have prepared a corpse for burial are purified by sitting in a circle of fires (p. 114).

Manioc, of which there are several varieties, is the principal food, and the methods of agriculture agree well with those followed by the Ovimbundu, since beans, yams, maize, and peanuts are cultivated. Caterpillars are used as food. Milk is tabooed by all Bangala, who regard it with great abhorrence, though no reason is given. The best hunters among the Bangala are specialists who are prepared for the hunt by the medicine-man (p. 123).

Fish are stupefied by poison of a vegetable kind which is scattered on the surface of the water (p. 127). The Bangala have the poison ordeal (p. 434). I have reported the use of the word *ekandu* by the Ovimbundu, who employ the term to denote any evil action which causes pain to others. If there is sickness in the family, the Baloki say, "There is an *ekandu* in the family" (Weeks, IV, p. 390), and the witch doctor removes this *ekandu* ceremonially.

The Baloki use painted wooden posts which are placed near the houses of the sick so that the spirits of sickness may be driven into them; the spirits are then appeased with offerings of food and drink. From Bailundu I obtained a carved wooden post in the form of a human figure; this was set on a path near a village so that offerings might be made to the spirit within the post if an epidemic attacked the village (cf. Weeks, p. 390).

The Umbundu game of shooting at a tuber has been described; apparently this amusement is like that of the Baloki game as described by Weeks (p. 405). Baloki youths cut the root of a plantain into the form of a wheel, and the players are then divided into two competing parties as among the Ovimbundu; but Baloki boys throw bamboo splinters at the wheel, they do not shoot arrows as do the Ovimbundu. Mancala is played (p. 414) as it is among the Ovimbundu, who call the game *ocela;* but I am not informed concerning the details of the game among the Baloki and Ovimbundu respectively.

H. von Weissmann (II) indicates that his route lay up the Congo to the junction with the Kasai. He then turned up the Kasai and traveled through the country of the Bambala, the Bassongo, and the Bakuba; thence along the valley of the Sankuru. He gives his impressions of the Bihéan (Ovimbundu) caravans from Bihé in

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[7] the Benguela Highlands (p. 145). "They carry on the most shameful trade imaginable and undertake longer journeys than any other Negroes of the west coast. They exchange their prisoners for ivory among the Bakuba tribes." Weissmann journeyed among the Wawemba of northern Rhodesia where he noted the poison ordeal. He states that it was customary to settle a dispute between two persons by drinking a poisonous draft made from a bark, and the one who vomits is cleared of suspicion. Weissmann's accounts emphasize the importance of Umbundu contacts through the caravan trade.

M. W. Hilton-Simpson, who accompanied Torday for a period, has noted several points of importance in the establishment of cultural resemblances between the Ovimbundu and tribes of the Kasai (pp. 225, 257, 259, 282). The Bambala play end-blown wooden flutes like those from Bailundu, but there is no evidence to show that the Ovimbundu play a nose flute as do the Bambala. The eating of dogs by the Bapende is a widely distributed cultural trait of the Congo, and the Ovimbundu follow this practice. Initiation masks pictured by Hilton-Simpson bear a resemblance to those of eastern Angola. The Batatela smoke hemp in a gourd water-pipe as do the Vacholue and some of the Ovimbundu. The short friction drum used by the Batatela is held under the arm. In the form of the drum and the method of holding there is resemblance to the Umbundu custom. The Batatela have the flat drum called *ocingufu* by the Ovimbundu (p. 52). Painting the exterior surfaces of walls of houses is a southern Congo custom followed by the Batatela. This practice has extended into Angola as far south as the Malange-Saurimo line, and even to the Bailundu-Huambo area, but south of the halfway line across Angola I do not recollect seeing houses with painted walls.

In dealing with the evidence of culture contacts indicated by the text and illustrations of the "Annales Musée du Congo Belge," a condensed statement will call attention to the many identities between artifacts of the Ovimbundu and those of the southwest Congo. The following details, which are well illustrated in the "Annales Musée du Congo Belge," should be compared with Plates IX–XXII, showing similar objects made by the Ovimbundu.

Series III, II, fasc. 1: Carved wooden staffs for chiefs closely resemble those used by chiefs among the Ovimbundu (p. 70).

Carved wooden hair-combs are like those used by the Ovimbundu and the Vacholue (p. 82).

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Initiation of boys who are isolated in the bush where there is ceremonial bathing and circumcision is a practice of eastern Angola (p. 81). 171

The oval wooden masks worn by initiates are similar to those of eastern Angola (p. 84).

The mancala board with twenty-eight holes, arranged four by seven, is of the form used at Ngalangi, central Angola (p. 86).

The Babende use the friction drum (p. 87).

Bashilele arrowheads are of Umbundu pattern (p. 98).

Use of red *tukula* wood is common among the Bushongo (p. 165).

The wood-carving of the Bakongo and the Bashilele resembles that of the Ovimbundu. Faces are oval or triangular, and eyes are represented by narrow oval slits so as to conform in style and balance with the general outline of the face (p. 200).

Series III, II, fasc. 2, plates XXII, XXXI show reed mats made near Leopoldville. Such mats are made by Umbundu males, who call them *esaisa*.

The flat drum (*ocingufu* of the Ovimbundu) is played by the Batatela. The Bahuana use the long narrow-necked flour sifter which is in common use among the Vachokue, though not among the Ovimbundu (plate VIII).

Series III, I, fasc. 2, plate XLVIII, figs. 586–587; plate LIII, fig. 619; and III, plate XXXIII, fig. 470: The general style and pose of the figurines on these plates is exactly like the work of the Ovimbundu. Legs are short, knees are flexed, hands are clasped on the abdomen, and necks are elongated, while hair and cicatrization are clearly shown. All these figures are the same in form and function as those used by the Ovimbundu. Plate XXII, figs. 342, 354, 357, describes horns of antelope, also tortoise shells which are filled with medicine. The latter are provided with cords for suspension round the neck. Batatela war clubs are of the form used by the Ovimbundu (p. 65). These resemblances between work of the Ovimbundu and tribes of the southwest Congo is further shown by reference to illustrations by H. Clouzot and A. Level (L'art nègre, Paris, 1919).

Series III, I, fasc. 1: Mural decorations on houses resemble the designs on houses of northern Angola (p. 6).

The basket-work dumb-bell rattle is of the form used in eastern Angola (plate II, figs. 36–38).

Plate VI, figs. 123 A and B, indicates that the flat drum of the Ovimbundu is of the exact form used in the Kasai and Sankuru

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171 region. Plate XVI, fig. 284, shows long wooden flutes like those of Umbundu pattern at Bailundu. Plate XIX, figs. 124 and 313, indicates that the musical bow with its gourd resonator is of the form used by the Ovimbundu.

The ethnographical catalogue of the Rijks Museum of Leiden shows many objects of the southwest Congo which are identical with those used by the Ovimbundu. Plate 193 pictures the sansa and the marimba which are common to both regions. Plates 224, fig. 1, and 225, fig. 1, show tobacco-pipes and a mancala board of Ngalangi pattern. The mancala board from the Sankuru region has twenty-eight holes arranged seven by four. Plates 75, fig. 10, and 236, fig. 4, indicate that curved knives used by the Bangala are like those used by the Vasele of northeast Angola. Plate 227, fig. 2, shows that head-dresses for initiates closely resemble those worn by Vachokue boys at Cangamba, eastern Angola.

174 This examination of the traits of Congo culture calls attention to numerous resemblances between the cultural pattern of the Congo region and that of the Ovimbundu of the present day. I think there is reason to accept the following factors of Umbundu life as a part of the Congo culture before the separation of the Umbundu-speaking peoples. The historical and geographical facts when considered in relation to the number of cultural identities fully support the thesis that the Ovimbundu are of the central African matrix of cultures.

On the material side resemblances are close, as the following summary will show. The Ovimbundu cultivate maize from which beer is made; they have manioc, peanuts, yams, sweet potatoes, and beans. Methods of agriculture and preparation of foods are similar. The animals common to both regions are the sheep, goat, chicken, and dog. The difference is the rearing of cattle by the Ovimbundu, who have also concentrated on the cultivation of maize to an extent not possible in the more densely wooded areas of the Congo basin. The use of dogs' flesh as food is common in both areas.

The musical instruments of the Ovimbundu are in keeping with Congo patterns in every way. Indeed, there exist few and only minor differences. Forms common to both areas are the *ocisanji*, a flat board with two rows of metal keys; dumb-bell basket rattles and gourd rattles; the friction drum; the marimba; wooden flutes; the flat drum *ocingufu;* the double iron gong; and the long tubular drum which is held between the performer's legs. Resemblances

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of a definite kind are found in the game with rolling tubers; the use of red *tukula* wood for decorating the body; the insertion of burned rubber into scarifications; the gourd water-pipe for smoking tobacco and hemp; the dugout canoe; conical fishing baskets; and the use of narcotic poisons for fish. The wood-carving of the Ovimbundu is related not only in general style but in detail to that of the south-west Congo.

Close resemblances in points of social organization and religious belief exist, but some of these identities are common not merely to tribes of the Congo basin and the Benguela Highlands; they form traits of a wider cultural basis, as will be shown.

These resemblances have great weight in establishing relationship between a parent culture and the offshoot, because we are dealing with a large number of allied factors that have been welded into cultural patterns; the comparison does not depend on a few isolated resemblances of form. A point of identity in spiritual belief is the recognition of a supreme being, Suku, Nzambi, or Kalunga, a creator who is too far away to be concerned with the affairs of men. To him no sacrifice or appeal is made, since all attention is reserved for the ancestral spirits whose cult is connected with the use of wooden figurines, which are of similar pattern in the Congo basin and the Benguela Highlands.

The soul is said to reside in the heart, and the words used for soul are almost the same. There are houses for sacred objects once the property of men of importance. Distinction is usually made between the *nganga*, a practitioner of witchcraft of an antisocial kind, and the legitimate medicine-man. Both cultures have the rain-maker. *Ekandu* is a word describing any action contrary to the moral standards.

As a social factor there is the men's house where only males congregate for the evening meal brought by their women, and here the communal pipe is passed round. Government is the same, by kings of great power who delegate local affairs to village chiefs. The social structure of the Ovimbundu rested formerly on a system of alliances, warfare, and slavery similar to that of the Congo. A classificatory system of relationships and descent of property, not to a wife and children but to the maternal uncle or to children of the deceased man's sister, is similar for tribes of the Congo and the Ovimbundu.

The prenuptial relationship of boys and girls, freedom of choice in marriage, and the giving of marriage tokens are of the same

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174 pattern. In principle, the puberty rites for boys and girls of eastern Angola are the same as those of the Congo region, and masks of eastern Angola resemble those used by the Bapindi of the southwest Congo. Cannibalism was a factor common to the Congo basin and the territory occupied by the Ovimbundu, who have practised ceremonial cannibalism within the memory of persons still alive.

The foregoing summary, supported by preceding details, makes clear that a substantial part of Umbundu culture is definitely like that of the Congo basin. There can be no objection to the evidence as a possibly fortuitous series of vague resemblances, since the entire backgrounds are of the same pattern. The Ovimbundu have a tribal life which is demonstrably a part of the matrix from which, on historical grounds, it is thought to have been derived. The loss of elements, the stressing of others, and the welding of traits from different sources, are matters for discussion in a final chapter dealing with the processes of cultural growth.

RHODESIA

439 177 A constant factor in the economic and cultural development of the Ovimbundu has been the caravan trade from Bihé and Bailundu northeastward across Africa to the Great Lakes, and southward across Moxico into the Zambezi valley and Rhodesia. Every traveler from Battell (1600) onward mentions these caravans which returned to the Benguela Highlands with slaves and ivory. The traditions of journeys still live. Umbundu words are used to describe the Great Lakes, and I have mentioned a wooden figure used for consultation by the medicine-man at a division of routes. There are even today a few large caravans.

The first regular slave traders into northern Rhodesia were the Mbundus from Angola. The Lambas say they were peaceful traders who brought calico, guns, and beads to trade for ivory and slaves. The Mbundu traders were often treated treacherously by both the Lambas and the Lenjes. In some cases they were robbed by the Lamba chiefs. It is said that the Lenjes used to bring their own children to the Mbundu traders in order to buy calico and powder. In the evening the Lenjes used the newly acquired guns to attack the Mbundu traders so that they might recover the children who had been traded (C. M. Doke, p. 79).

The account of F. S. Arnot is a valuable record of a journey which brought him into touch with these traders' caravans, whose route he followed into Garenganze, a country to the southwest of

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Lake Moero, close to the territory occupied by the Barotse. With his Bihéan carriers Arnot passed along the valley of the Kwando (Livingstone's Chobe). He notes the use of bark cloth (p. 101) and gives an excellent description of the divination basket. "For divining they have a basket filled with bones, teeth, finger nails, seeds, stones, and such articles which are rattled by the diviner till the spirit comes and speaks to him by the movement of these things" (pp. 106, 116). The *onganga* or witch doctor is described on page 115; he is a person not to be confused with the *ocimbanda* or legitimate medicine-man. 439 177

Arnot saw a corpse tied to a pole supported on the shoulders of several men. "The witch-doctors demanded of the dead man the cause of his death, whether by poison or by witchcraft, and if by the latter, who was the witch? The jerking of the bier is taken as the dead man's answer." This is the ceremony I described at Elende about three hundred miles from the place mentioned by Arnot. "When a chief dies they say he is sick or asleep [p. 117], and an oxhide from a beast killed at the funeral should be buried with the chief's remains." Arnot was not quite correct; the body of the chief is sewn in the hide. "The people of Bihé say that there is a great spirit Suku over and above all, but they do not know him—I cannot say they believe him to be a universal god" (p. 119).

These instances recorded half a century ago are particularly interesting because of their agreement with present-day procedure. Arnot's description of the Vachokue country and the preparation of beeswax, also the method of extracting honey from hives lodged in trees (p. 146), would serve as a present-day record.

Arnot's information concerns the Garenganze country bordering on Katanga, a copper-producing region near the Lualaba River. Here traders from Uganda, Unyamwezi, the Luba country, the basin of the Zambezi, Bihé, Nyasa, and Zanzibar, gathered to carry on their trade in copper, salt, ivory, slaves, flintlock guns, powder, cloth, and beads. Apart from the evidence of any other writer, that of Arnot alone would suffice to prove the importance of cultural contacts of the Ovimbundu through caravan trade.

One would be mistaken in supposing that the Bihéans made occasional contacts only. For three centuries there has been this to-and-fro movement between the Benguela Highlands and central Africa. In Garenganze, about eight hundred miles from the centers of my research, Arnot noted several points that have been recorded in my notes. The word for medicine-man is *ocimbanda* (p. 242).

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439 The vertebrae of serpents strung together as a girdle are a cure for
177 rheumatism (p. 237). A necklace of pythons' vertebrae was obtained from a chief of Ngalangi who wore the bones to cure that affliction. In Garenganze twins were introduced to the chief at a ceremony conducted by a female *ocimbanda*. The Ovimbundu welcome twins and one of triplets is given to the king.

171 E. Holub (II) mentions important traits of culture among the Marutse, a Rhodesian people who keep cattle. The Marutse have an aptitude for working in iron, horn, wood, bone, and leather. The masked dance at which performers wore tightly fitting jackets of netted fiber, with close-fitting sleeves, gloves, and stockings of the same material, would serve as a description of the costumes worn in the ceremonies observed at Cangamba in eastern Angola. Holub notes the use of the double iron gong at these dances (vol. II, pp. 168–170). The bark receptacle (p. 308) is the one commonly used in eastern Angola, and along the line from Saurimo to Malange.

The Marutse have the poison ordeal in which vomiting is a sign of innocence, the witness being the god Nyambe (p. 322). Gourd decorations of the Marutse and Babunda tribes show a technique comparable with work of this kind done by the Ovimbundu (pp. 305, 335). The practice of cupping is described by Holub (p. 325); so also is the custom of wearing wooden hair-combs (p. 349). These are cultural traits of the Vachokue and the Ovimbundu.

In his "Eine Kulturskizze des Marutse-Mambunda Reiches" Holub gives a few additional points which connect the Marutse culture with that of eastern and central Angola. The main instances are the technique in gourds (p. 81); the form and hafting of axes (p. 116); blacksmith's bellows and tongs (p. 129); the musical bow (p. 139); the board with metal keys (p. 138); the small friction drum, identical in pattern with my specimen from Elende (p. 140, fig. 70); a musical instrument consisting of a notched board which is rubbed with a stick (p. 142); tobacco-pipes made from the horns of animals and from gourds (p. 147); cylindrical snuff boxes and sticks for pounding snuff (p. 150, fig. 83); wooden hair-combs (p. 155, fig. 87); and wooden stools (p. 163, fig. 92).

All these articles, which are pictured by Holub as being representative of the work of the Marutse of Rhodesia, have their exact parallels in Field Museum collections from the Ovimbundu.

Perusal of "The New Africa" by Schulz and Hammar was not ethnologically fruitful except for a series of outline drawings

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(p. 110) showing forms of arrowheads used along the course of the Chobe River, near the southeast border of Angola. One of the heads is of the form most common among the Ovimbundu, while the remainder are those in use among the Vachokue. Gourds are of the same shapes and decorations as those obtained from Bailundu by Field Museum expedition. 171

F. H. Melland describes the culture of the Bakonde of northern Rhodesia. He is particularly concerned with the Kasempa district bordering on eastern Angola, Katanga, and the Barotse country. The poison ordeal (p. 222) is in use; vomiting implies innocence. The small ceremonial ax is used by the Bakonde in divination rites such as I have described for the Ovimbundu at Bailundu and Ngalangi (p. 227). The Lunda people wear masks in connection with initiation ceremonies (p. 232). Medicines are mixed in the horns of the duiker and the bush buck (p. 232). The four-legged, skin-topped stool is the same as that made by the Ovimbundu (p. 280).

Melland's description (p. 235) of a rite performed by a belated Konde traveler in order to retard the setting of the sun, should be mentioned. The top of a small ant heap is stuck into the fork of a tree; this is the custom which prevails among the Ovimbundu of Elende, and it is also a Lamba practice (C. M. Doke, p. 288). The idea is unusual and I suggest that the Rhodesian rite may have been derived from the practice of Umbundu carriers. Yet, on the contrary, men of the Bihéan caravans may have imitated a Rhodesian custom; but the act is so peculiar that independent origin seems improbable.

H. S. Stannus mentions points which aid the working out of a scheme of culture contacts. Stannus describes the Wayao and other tribes near Lake Nyasa, which was an area familiar to caravans from the Benguela Highlands. The carving of wooden animals (p. 348) of no known significance is a favorite pastime in which the Ovimbundu are skilled. Gourd vessels ornamented with lines and triangles (p. 349) have a technique similar to that used by the Ovimbundu. The shooting of arrows having blunt wooden heads; preparing staked pits; use of mucilage for catching birds; poisoning fish; and making noose traps (p. 355), are all everyday usages among the Ovimbundu, as they are among the Wayao.

Eastern and east-central Angola are the regions where bark cloth is made and worn. The Angolan industry forms an extension of the craft as practised in Rhodesia and the southwest Congo basin. Stages of stripping bark from the tree and soaking and beating it

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171 with a wooden mallet are the same over a large area, but there are no painted patterns or other fine points of technique which aid the study of possible diffusions (Stannus, p. 343).

The following traits mentioned by Stannus have been recorded among the Ovimbundu. There exists the custom of opening graves to obtain portions of human remains for use as charms (p. 293); the poison ordeal is applied to human beings or to fowls (p. 296); the use of horns stuffed with medicine is common (p. 304); and divination by means of the small objects contained in a gourd resembles the method of the Umbundu diviner (p. 302). Stannus states that the gourd contains a number of small articles, each of which is named. In the divination gourd are small pieces of white earthenware which denote innocence, also bits of fiber from a sleeping mat to denote sickness. The Ovimbundu use a divination basket, not a gourd, for these symbolic objects, but otherwise the methods are the same.

The bark canoe and the dugout are used. Maize, cassava, beans, and peanuts are the principal crops (p. 346). There is ancestor worship combined with great fear of ghosts. The head of a family petitions a deceased relative, and the headman of a village intercedes with his predecessor's ghost. I have mentioned that a headman of the Ovimbundu brings out the head of a dead chief wrapped in oxhide, makes sacrifice, and asks favors. Stannus notes the seclusion and circumcision of boys at puberty, also the ceremonial use of bark cloth in these rites (p. 256). These observations from Nyasaland agree with notes made at Cangamba in eastern Angola. A menstruating woman sleeps on a mat away from her husband, and she is not allowed to prepare food (p. 234). These were noted as prohibitions for women of the Ovimbundu.

The classificatory system of relationship outlined by Stannus for the Nyasa region is the same as that of the Ovimbundu of Angola. A man may not marry a daughter of his mother's sister, but marriage with a daughter of his father's brother is a normal union (p. 236). The statement of Stannus (p. 239) with regard to the burial of a pregnant woman recalls the custom which prevailed until recent times at Ngalangi, where a sharp stake projecting from the surface soil rested on the abdomen of the dead woman. After the grave had been filled the stake was driven downward. Stannus says that before filling in the earth one of the gravediggers descends into the pit, and, after cutting the abdomen, he inserts the lower end of a bamboo, while the upper end is made to project above the surface of the grave. In Nyasaland and eastern Angola the alleged reason

for this procedure is the prevention of death among other pregnant women. Twins are welcome and well treated (p. 239). /7/

A corpse is tied to a pole with its limbs bound, and in this manner it is carried to the grave, accompanied by drummers. A widow watches by the corpse of her husband. At the conclusion of funeral rites fires are extinguished, and a new fire is kindled with the fire drill in the chief's house, from which distribution of the new fire is made. The ashes of the old fires, with the stones supporting the cooking pots, are taken to cross-paths and destroyed.

Cupping is practised (p. 289), and the vapor bath is used (p. 290). The patient, covered with a blanket, squats over a pot of water into which herbs have been dropped. Hot stones are added to the water until it boils and gives off clouds of steam. Wayao boys have the whipping top (p. 359); so also have the Ovimbundu. The Wayao warm their drums and add wax to alter the tone (p. 365). The conical rat trap of plaited cane, used for placing in grass which is fired, is that in use by the Ovimbundu (Stannus, plate XX).

When describing the Wayao culture, C. H. Stigand confirms many of the points mentioned by Stannus. Stigand describes the making of bark cloth (p. 119); the sewing of reed mats with a long needle (p. 120); and the importance of the maternal uncle, whose consent to the marriage of his sister's children is necessary (p. 122).

C. Gouldsbury and H. Sheane describe the poison ordeal (p. 61). The Wawemba make their poison from the bark of *Erythrophlaeum guineense*, the tree mentioned so frequently in my summary of the Congo culture, in which this trait of the poison ordeal is common. A chief of the Wawemba goes to the bush accompanied by a medicine-man who is stripped of all clothing, and an offering of white beads is made to the tree from which the bark is taken. The bark is then given into the hands of a young child, who is carried to the village so that his feet may not touch the ground. As usual in this ordeal, vomiting is a sign of innocence.

The Wawemba practise cupping (p. 134). A man may not marry the daughter of his mother's sister because she is his sister (p. 172). The Wawemba carry a corpse on a pole. The king's corpse is wrapped in oxhide, and his bows, arrows, and spears are placed in a hut on the grave. Then an ox is killed to provide hide for binding the rafters of this tomb. Wives and slaves were formerly sacrificed at the death of a king. These customs are similar to those described for the funeral rites of a king of the Ovimbundu.

171 E. W. Smith and A. M. Dale describe tribes which claim that they are an offshoot from the eastern Bantu. This ancestry no doubt accounts for the presence of many traits which are characteristic of the culture pattern of the cattle-keeping areas of east Africa. The writing of Smith and Dale is important because it deals with a region in contact with the Congo, east Africa, and the Ovimbundu. The Wawemba and other tribes described by these authors are in contact with the Baluba and the Bambala, who have been in touch with the Ovimbundu from the earliest times for which any record exists.

According to Smith and Dale the tribes grouped as Ila-speaking peoples extinguish all fires after a funeral, while ashes from mourners' fires are collected and thrown away (vol. II, p. 142). This regard for ceremonial fire accompanies factors of the cattle culture wherever that occurs in east, south, southwest Africa, and the Benguela Highlands. The Ila-speaking people grow maize and beans (vol. I, p. 137); they smoke hemp through the calabash water-pipe (vol. I, p. 152); a conical basket fish-trap of Umbundu pattern is used (vol. I, p. 163); they peg out hides and scrape them; they also make twine by rolling fiber on the inner side of the thigh (vol. I, p. 185). Coiled basketry in which the coils are made of many strands of fine grass, also shallow winnowing trays, are like those used by the Ovimbundu (vol. I, p. 187).

Pottery is made by the coiling method (vol. I, p. 192). The method of carving stools bears a distinct resemblance to that of the Ovimbundu. The bases of milk vessels and stools show supports of peculiar shape which are triangular in cross section (vol. I, pp. 199–202). The Ila-speaking people have a classificatory system of relationships consisting of groups of grandparents, fathers, and mothers. Terms of address vary according to the relative ages of the speaker and the person addressed. *Wangu* ("older") is the term used by the Ovimbundu; so also is *tata* ("father"). Children of the father's brothers, and children of the mother's sisters, that is, ortho-cousins, are real brothers and sisters. The mother's eldest brother is the most important relative. The word *tata* is applied to all the brothers of the speaker's father. This is the system of the Ovimbundu in principle and considerable detail.

The Ba-ila play mancala (*chisolo*) with holes in the ground (vol. II, p. 238). They have the musical bow (vol. II, p. 263) and the metal-keyed musical instrument (Umbundu *ocisanji*) which is played in a gourd (vol. II, p. 265). The Ba-ila use the friction drum

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(vol. II, p. 265), which is an instrument of the Ovimbundu and several tribes of the southwest Congo. The marimba, made from eight slats of wood with gourds underneath, is well known in the north and east of Angola. /171/

There is real similarity both in form and function between the culture of Rhodesia and that of the Ovimbundu. This assertion does not rest on consideration of a few factors of a general kind. In addition to the weight of evidence afforded by the long list of similar factors detailed in this section, one must bear in mind the geographical proximity and the known historical connection of the areas under discussion. The following points are of primary importance in accounting for the similarity of culture patterns in Rhodesia and the highlands of Angola occupied by the Ovimbundu. /174

(1) Central Angola and Rhodesia have so many traits in common with each other and with the southwest Congo culture that together the three form a cultural harmony.

(2) Central Angola and Rhodesia have both derived factors from the cattle culture of east Africa, though by different routes.

(3) Rhodesia and central Angola have had prolonged direct contacts through caravan trade carried on by the Ovimbundu.

(4) In addition to diffusion there has been a convergence of cultures in Rhodesia and central Angola because of similarity of geographical conditions. Both are high plateau regions having a degree of heat and a rainfall suitable for the growth of maize and the rearing of cattle. Therefore these occupations have developed in both regions because in each locality there has been a need, favorable conditions, and a like response to physical conditions.

SOUTH WEST AFRICA

The principal tribes of this area are the Ovambo, Herero, Berg Damara, Nama Hottentots, and Bushmen. The most important tribes to consider from the cultural point of view are the Ovambo and the Herero. Wandering bands of Bushmen occur in Angola, and here and there may be seen among the Ovimbundu individuals who appear to have a trace of Bushman blood; but comparison of collections and notes relating to the Ovimbundu with literature on Bushman tribes does not reveal any similarities. There has undeniably been some contact of Bushmen with the inhabitants of Angola, but Bushman influence has probably been very slight from a cultural and physical point of view (D. Bleek; S. Marquardsen, p. 109). /177

177 [197] The Ovambo include eight kindred tribes, all of whom are branches of the Bantu linguistic family to which the Ovimbundu belong. The Vakuanyama, who inhabit large tracts of southern Angola, are a numerous, warlike, pastoral branch of the Ovambo. The Vakuanyama are the only section of the cattle-keeping peoples of the southwest of Africa with whom I have made personal contact; but their culture is generally representative of that of the Ovambo and the Herero.

171 233 When making a journey southward from the country of the Ovimbundu in central Angola, there is a noticeable increase in the size of the kraals as the journey is continued. The first large kraal was observed near Kipungo, and when as far south as Mongua the wealthy cattle-keeping Vakuanyama were by far the most numerous people. Their total strength is probably about 55,000. I journeyed through the Kuanyama country in July, halfway through the dry season, but found that cattle were watered at deep wells from which men and women were constantly drawing water for the herds. Near Ondjiva, only a few miles from British South West Africa, the ruler of the Vakuanyama owned at that time 14,000 head of cattle.

After examining 1,200 objects collected in Angola, I feel sure that cultural contact between the Ovimbundu and the Vakuanyama is unimportant, so far as artifacts are concerned; but, if the inquiry turns to other aspects of culture, there is a more fruitful line of investigation.

Many beliefs and customs center in the keeping of cattle in east and south Africa. The typical cattle-keeping area begins with the Bahima in the vicinity of Lake Victoria Nyanza. The region extends down the eastern side of the continent, through the south and southwest into Damaraland. The Vakuanyama of southern Angola should be included in this area, which has homologies in respect to certain laws, ceremonies, economic customs, and religious beliefs.

The true pastoral area of the south of Angola extends at least as far north as Huila, where there is sufficient rainfall to produce good pasture in open country which is well adapted for raising stock. All the traditions of the Ovimbundu, along with the writings of Battell, suggest this southwest part of Angola as the line of entry for cattle. The Congo basin is not a pastoral country, and transportation of cattle from Rhodesia would necessitate the crossing of hundreds of miles of arid country in Moxico, eastern Angola. There remains, therefore, the cattle-keeping area of south and southwest

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Angola as the source of supply for the Ovimbundu, who both traded and made warfare with the south.

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Therefore, reasonable ground exists for believing that the cultural traits that the Ovimbundu associate with the keeping of cattle have been taken over with the cattle themselves. The traits agree in principle and detail with the factors of the African cattle-keeping areas. The characteristics of this pastoral culture have been outlined by M. J. Herskovits (The Cattle Complex in East Africa, *Amer. Anth.*, XXVIII, 1926, pp. 270–272; 424–528; 630–664). I wish, however, to give prominence to the factor of sacred fire which is fundamental in the cattle-keeping culture. The importance of sacred fire in the ritual of the Ovimbundu has been demonstrated, and this trait is a most important link between the typically Negro culture of the Ovimbundu and the Hamitic pastoral culture of east Africa.

A brief summary of the salient facts of the cattle-keeping culture, such as is found in east and south Africa, will be given. This will be followed by a statement of the cultural traits associated with the keeping of cattle among the Ovimbundu in order to demonstrate similarities of custom.

In describing cattle-keeping people of the Lakes region J. Roscoe (VI) outlines a pre-pastoral condition characterized by agricultural pursuits which still survive near Ruwenzori and Elgon. Of the pastoral people the most conservative are the Banyankole of Ankole, among whom all social customs fall into line with the keeping of cattle. Milk is the principal food, and strong purgatives are taken after eating vegetable food, which is regarded as unclean. Agriculturists are a serf class who are not allowed to have milk. A woman of the pastoral class would not accept a husband from the agricultural people, because they are social inferiors. In such a community one finds a strict preservation of customs centering in cattle. Bulls are killed beside the grave of a chief, while cows are dedicated to the dead chief at whose shrine their milk is offered daily (p. 21).

Roscoe's account of the worship of the dead in Uganda (III) further explains customs that are characteristic of pastoral communities in which the connection between cattle-keeping and kingship is important. The death of the king is not announced and the fact of death is kept secret for several days until preparations for the succession have been made. "The fire is extinct" is a euphemism which refers to the death of the king. The king is buried in a hut surrounded by a fence. This hut is later visited by the new king

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233 who cleans and decorates the jawbone of his predecessor, then
174 preserves it in a case of lion skin. Among the Basoga the skull of the king is cleaned and stitched in cowhide. It is then placed in a temple where a medium lives in order to converse with the ghost of the king (p. 43). The Bunyoro line the grave of a king with cowhide, and the slaughtered cows are said to serve the dead king with milk in a spirit world.

Roscoe (I, p. 101) states that the Bahima wrap the body of a king in the skin of a freshly killed cow; the deities are not often invoked, but attention is paid to ancestral ghosts (p. 109). There is a Bahima custom of making blood brotherhood by drinking blood mixed with milk (p. 117). The Banyankole (Roscoe, V, p. 32), institute a blood brotherhood by rubbing each other with blood drawn from their navels by an arrow. The body of a king is sewn in cowhide (p. 58). A cow is killed and eaten at the grave of a chief (p. 146).

171 A further examination of Roscoe's observations (IV) adds corroborative information. The Bakitara have rain-makers for each district (p. 28). There is a ritual for establishing blood brotherhood (p. 46). At the king's death all fires in the royal enclosure are extinguished; so also are the fires in each royal cow kraal. Fresh fires are made by friction in the new royal enclosure from which fire is distributed to the kraals (p. 47). The Bakitara test two litigants or accused persons by asking each to provide chickens which are made to take poison (p. 70). The death of the king is not announced for some days; he is said to be asleep. A young bull is killed to provide a shroud for the king's body (p. 121). The king's spear and walking stick are kept in the tomb (p. 126). At the death of a king of the Baganda the guardian of the king's sacred fire is strangled. A war leader rubs himself with ashes from the sacred fire in order to increase his strength and courage (Roscoe, II, pp. 103, 349).

The concept of the sacred fire has spread, not only down the east side of Africa and into Angola, but northeastward to the Lotuko-speaking peoples. Here a new fire has to be kindled at the initiation of a member of the drum-house. At puberal initiation ceremonies for boys, the rain-maker creates new fire with twirling sticks, which are never again used, though they are preserved. All fires in the village are extinguished before the new fires are made. The freshly ignited fire is distributed first to drum-houses then to the homes (C. G. and B. Z. Seligman, Sudan Notes and Records, VIII, pp. 12,

15). Fire is kindled on the grave and tended by a relative for thirty days (p. 38). 171

When the Masai desire rain, a fire of cordia wood is lighted. Into this a medicine-man throws charms, after which several medicine-men dance round the fire and sing (A. C. Hollis, The Masai, p. 348).

Bösch states that the Banyamwezi have a fire-making rite which is symbolic and religious, "mais avant tout il est magique." The new fire is made annually at the brewing of the first beer. New fire is made when epidemics of sickness occur, also at the inauguration of a new chief. The Ovimbundu make and distribute new fire on each of these occasions. The Banyamwezi strangle their decrepit king but do not announce the death. A report stating that the king is sick is issued (Les Banyamwezi, pp. 229–233).

The usages of the cattle-keeping Ovambo (of whom the Vakuanyama of southern Angola are a section) and the Herero, are of paramount importance in this research because of their proximity to the Ovimbundu.

H. Vedder (III, p. 156) has come to the conclusion that the Herero represent the southern extremity of a racial migration from the region of the Great Lakes, and this is the generally accepted view. Vedder states that the Herero came through the south of Angola, crossed the Cunene River, and entered the Kaokoveld (p. 166). From a study of native traditions, philology, and cultural elements, there is reason for supposing that the Ovambo, including the Vakuanyama, extended farther into Angola than they do today; hence contacts with the Ovimbundu were probably frequent, and possibly continuous for a period. 174 114

C. H. L. Hahn has recently made an analysis of the traits of Kuanyama culture. His introductory pages give an account of Kalunga, a supreme being whose name is coupled with the name Nangombe. There is here a philological resemblance to words used by the Ovimbundu. *Kalunga* is an Umbundu word meaning "greetings," "sea," "lord," and "death," the meaning varying with the context and accent. *Ongombe* is the Umbundu word for ox, while *Kangombe* is the name of more than one chief of historical importance. The Herero respect a supreme being whom they call Ndjambi Karunga. *Nyambi* is a well-known word in the Congo region, and the Ovimbundu have the word *Njambi*, or *Na-Njambi*, which means "Lord Njambi."

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174 114 The Ovambo will not allow the tribal fire of the chief's kraal to burn out because it is the life of the people (Hahn, p. 3). This author writes in the past tense, from which one infers that the customs he describes have declined. Two old men were the keepers of the sacred fire; these guardians were chosen from the circumcised men (p. 17). The fire was never allowed to flare, but only to smolder. No one referred to this fire, nor was anyone allowed to sit near it, cook over it, or warm himself. The whole tribe received the fire from the chief, who originally gave it to the headman for distribution to commoners (p. 18). Hahn remarks that, although these customs are declining, they are still observed by the Vakuanyama, the branch of the Ovambo which is in closest contact with the Ovimbundu.

171 In the same publication (III, p. 68) Vedder says of the Berg Damara that a series of religious ideas centers in the holy fire which burns perpetually on the eastern side of a sacred tree in the middle of each village. At this fire the elders cook their meat, and here the council meeting is held. In order to obtain a seat at the holy fire a young man has to submit to initiation as a hunter on three occasions, at intervals of a year. Children may not play at the holy fire. When hunting becomes unprofitable the Berg Damara move to a new site, and a glowing piece of wood is taken from the sacred fire in order to kindle a new one. This is the practice described in connection with the formation of a new village site by the Ovimbundu. A more detailed account of sacred fire is given by Vedder (II, pp. 23–27).

L. Fourie, another contributor to "Native Tribes of Southwest Africa," shows that the Heikom Bushmen have a sacred fire kindled and owned by the headman, who is the only person who knows how to bring from this fire the properties which induce health and well-being. When making a new settlement the headman kindles the new fire under the sacred tree, and fire from the old camp may not be used. After the headman has dropped herbs into the fire and has lighted his pipe therefrom, his wife takes brands for kindling the fire in her hut. The fire is then distributed from this point among the whole group (p. 87).

The center for religious worship among the Herero is an ash heap in which a weak fire glimmers. This is blown into a blaze only on festive occasions. The fire is always situated between the chief kraal and the house of the principal wife. Round the fire lie horns of cattle which have been slaughtered as an offering (Vedder, III, p. 167). The holy fire is a gift from Mukuru, and extinction of

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the fire means disaster for the tribe. If the fire should die out, only the priest as living representative of Mukuru may rekindle it. The relighting is done by means of fire-sticks, which are said to be male and female. A traveler makes sure of the blessing of his ancestors by taking a firebrand from the holy fire with him. When laying the foundation of a new house the builder must obtain a firebrand from the fire of a recognized priest-chief. 171

To corroborate the information given by Vedder, one may turn to the work of J. Irle (II, pp. 337, 342, 346). The soul, which is not corporeal, is identified with the heart as among the Ovimbundu and in the southwest Congo. The Herero use sandals which they bury with the dead. Probably the Ovimbundu have borrowed the idea of sandals from this southern culture, since there are no sandal-wearing people found on any other side of them. The Herero speak of Ndjambi, and Irle asks, "Who is Ndjambi, with whom they so frequently associated the name Karunga?" They say that Karunga is Ndjambi who sends rain, thunder, and lightning. The Herero say, "Karunga dwells in heaven. He does us only good, therefore we do not fear him and do not sacrifice to him." Holy fire, which is never allowed to go out, is made with fire-sticks in the ancestor house.

A. W. Hoernlé has commented on the use of sacred fire by the Hottentots. *Nau* is a mystic force; for example, an animal killed by lightning is *nau*. As soon as a person becomes *nau*, the fire in his hut is *nau* and must no longer be used for cooking. A fire kindled with the fire-sticks is used for the purification ceremony of a girl who menstruates for the first time. After the ceremony she may resume her milking duties. The Hottentots use the sweat bath as a means of purifying mourners. An article entitled "The Sacred Fire of the Bapedi of the Transvaal," by W. M. Eiselen, adds important data to the notes given here.

All this evidence from east and southwest Africa is in close agreement with personal observations among the Ovimbundu. The contacts of the Ovimbundu with southern Angola are established facts, hence history and geography render the hypothesis of a derivation of culture probable. The Ovimbundu regard cattle as an estimate of weath and social standing. Usually the animals are not killed or milked, but they are used to pay fines, and to make purchases. 174

In dealing with kingship among the Ovimbundu I note a strong resemblance to customs prevailing near Victoria Nyanza, the

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174 principal focus of the cattle-keeping areas. The king's death is not announced by the Ovimbundu. There is a special hut for burial, and part of the head is later removed for decoration and separate interment. This part of the royal corpse is subsequently brought out for worship and supplication. The Ovimbundu never admit the death of a king until a successor has been chosen. The king's body is buried in oxhide, but the head is severed by suspending the corpse with a rope round the neck, then twisting the body. The head is sewn in oxhide and kept in a box. In time of drought or before a journey a chief or medicine-man visits the head to make a sacrifice and ask for help. Oxen are killed at funeral feasts of the wealthy and the horns are mounted over the grave. Mourners for the king wear strips of oxhide round their wrists.

There can be no doubt that the Ovimbundu received the above traits, also their knowledge and use of the sacred fire, from the cattle-keeping area. The use of sacred fire has been shown to be a primary trait associated with the keeping of cattle. Reference to field work among the Ovimbundu indicates that the usages connected with sacred fire agree in detail with those of the pastoral area. The Ovimbundu keep the sacred fire burning in the burial place of kings; for instance at Ngalangi, as described. The Ovimbundu create new fire by twirling when a new village site is opened, and the fire is distributed from the chief's home. Lustration after an epidemic of sickness is always ceremonially carried out by creation of new fire on which the blood of sacrificed animals is sprinkled. Therefore, in general outline and considerable detail the factors associated with cattle-keeping among the Ovimbundu are those of the pastoral areas of east, south, and southwest Africa.

In summarizing we may say that contacts of the Ovimbundu with southwest Africa have arisen from occupation of contiguous territory, along with trading and raiding. The acquisitions made by the Ovimbundu from pastoral tribes include several artifacts such as sandals, the assagai, and the throwing club. More important than the diffusion of these objects into Umbundu culture has been the reception of the cattle themselves, along with the social values, usages, and religious beliefs which are the usual concomitants of the African pastoral culture.

174 181 A study of the culture contacts of the Ovimbundu conclusively shows that they are not an isolated people whose artifacts, religious beliefs, and social life stand out distinctively from the culture patterns around them. On the contrary the Ovimbundu have,

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through trade and warfare, been an absorbent people, reaching out in all directions and assimilating all cultural traits which were of service. 174 181

Up to this point, only the immediate culture contacts of the Ovimbundu have been considered. Yet it is evident that some of the cultural traits which have been discussed are widely diffused in Africa. Consequently, some further inquiry is needed if the tribal life of the Ovimbundu is to be considered against a broad ethnological background of African culture.

XI. WIDER CULTURE CONTACTS

171 121 When dealing with the immediate culture contacts of the Ovimbundu, the traits found in central Angola were considered in relation to the cultural elements of each of three areas, the Congo basin, Rhodesia, and South West Africa. In this chapter attention is given to some traits that are found, not only among the Ovimbundu and adjacent peoples, but among some other African tribes remote from the present-day location of the Ovimbundu. The Graebnerian school has indeed claimed that some of these widely distributed African traits are Melanesian and Indonesian in origin, a theory which is briefly considered in the latter part of this chapter.

114 The present examination of widely distributed traits is facilitated by referring to each of a number of papers not previously mentioned. For example, E. Torday (IV) has dealt in general with religion and social organization among Bantu tribes. H. Baumann (II) has discussed hoe-culture and matriarchal conditions in Bantu Africa. G. Lindblom (I) has brought together a large body of evidence relating to the distribution of hunting devices. H. Balfour (I, II, III) has outlined the distribution of the friction drum. Hence there exist useful summaries of trait distributions with which cultural factors of the Ovimbundu can be compared.

Antiquity of Cultural Traits

171 At the outset we must recognize that the extent of distribution of a trait and its importance in the cultural pattern may be but a treacherous guide to its antiquity. The widespread use and cultivation of tobacco and maize are instances of this kind. The growth and curing of tobacco led to the adoption of this commodity as a medium of exchange which could be conveniently carried by caravans. Exchange of snuff as a form of greeting, also the passing of a communal pipe from hand to hand in the men's house, are instances of social usages which caused a rapid spread of a commodity in a short time (Laufer, Hambly, and Linton, Tobacco and Its Uses in Africa, Field Mus. Nat. Hist., Anthr. Leaflet 29, 1929).

The use of maize, one of the most important factors in the building and preservation of Umbundu culture, has a wide distribution in Africa, but its introduction is dated only from the sixteenth century. The Portuguese carried on a regular traffic in slaves between Angola and Brazil, and in all probability this resulted in the introduction of manioc, peanuts, and sweet potatoes. Possibly

the yam also was introduced. All these food plants spread with great rapidity, hence the extent of their distribution is not a guide to their antiquity. 171

THE BLACKSMITH'S CRAFT IN AFRICA

The antiquity of the blacksmith's occupation is not easy to determine, though the usefulness of the craft, and the accessibility of surface-ore in many parts of Africa, might incline one to favor a theory of rapid diffusion. There is an extensive literature dealing with the origin of the blacksmith's craft, which is variously attributed to the Negro, the ancient Egyptians, or to Hamitic invaders. 326 171

Diffusion of the craft, and not independent invention in many parts of Africa, is suggested by the continuity of like forms of apparatus; taboos of the same kind connected with the blacksmith; treatment of smiths as a special caste; also their employment of ritual in making furnaces, training apprentices, and consecrating their tools.

Iron objects requiring considerable skill in their manufacture are described by the earliest writers who came in contact with northern Angola, and early observations relating to iron gongs and axes have already been given. This evidence therefore suggests that the Ovimbundu must have had a knowledge of the working of iron when they entered the Benguela Hiighlands.

The following data from many parts of Africa are adduced to show the relation of the blacksmith's craft among the Ovimbundu to a wider background, of which Umbundu customs form a part. The Ovimbundu have developed ritual aspects of the blacksmith's craft which have already been described, and along with these the following instances should be considered.

Naturally, special local developmentts occur, but the general attitude of the Ovimbundu toward blacksmiths is in accord with a widely distributed body of African beliefs affecting Bantu, semi-Bantu, Sudanic, and Hamitic-speaking tribes, from which a few instances may be noted.

Among the Kpelle of Liberia a blacksmith receives no pay for work done for a chief, but he is free from military service. The blacksmith is a confidential person for the whole village, and he is conversant with many family secrets (D. Westermann, Die Kpelle, p. 170). Blacksmiths of the Ibo of Niggeria form a strong union which resents intrusion into the secrets of the craft. Blacksmiths are to be found only in certain towns which form halting places on

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171 their itinerary (G. T. Basden, Among the Ibos of Nigeria, p. 176).
326 At Ife in a sacred grove I saw objects which were described as the hammer and the anvil of the first blacksmith. Over the anvil stone were the remains of a recently sacrificed dog. Such an offering is made twice a year to Ogun, the patron god of blacksmiths. Among the Masai, blacksmiths are said to be unlucky with cattle, and are therefore not allowed to own them. Smiths have their own language which is not well understood by other people of the tribe (A. C. Hollis, The Masai, p. 331). The Suk say that no woman may see a blacksmith at work because his tools would become heavy in his hand, then he would go mad and die. There is chanting by the blacksmiths during forging and molding (M. W. H. Beech, The Suk, p. 18).

Working in iron is accompanied by many special rites among the Bakitara; in fact, taboos are observed from the time of preparing the charcoal. Smiths belong to the serf class. Among the omens, sneezing is a warning from a ghost indicating that there is danger near and work is therefore discontinued. Offerings are made to the spirit of the hill where ore is dug in order to prevent burial of the diggers (J. Roscoe, IV, p. 218). When a Banyankole smith is making a new hammer he gives a feast at which six goats are killed. This sacredness of the large hammer was emphasized among the Ovimbundu.

Southwest of Lake Bangweolo a small shrine is erected near the smelting furnace, and here a prayer is offered to spirits of former smelters (H. B. Barnes, *J.R.A.I.*, LVI, p. 191). The Ila-speaking people of Rhodesia have a principal blacksmith who is named *munganga wa butale* ("the iron doctor"). Secrets of the craft are preserved by transmission from father to son only. The *munganga* takes charge of the preparation of iron and directs the ceremonies (E. W. Smith and A. M. Dale, I, pp. 203–207). E. Torday records that the Bambala have a T-shaped hammer with a pointed handle. "It is practically impossible to obtain a specimen of these hammers since death is the portion of a smith who parts with his tools." (I, p. 406.)

These examples do not reveal the origin of the blacksmith's craft and its ritual, but they explain Umbundu customs as part of a system of ideas which affects the whole continent of Africa south of the Sahara.

BANTU RELIGION AND SOCIAL SYSTEM

171 The spiritual beliefs of the Ovimbundu have already been shown to agree with those of the Congo basin and southwest Africa.

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E. Torday's paper, "Dualism in Western Bantu Religion and Social Organization," is an admirable summary of a wide background of Bantu beliefs with which those of the Ovimbundu agree in detail. Torday (VI) has also given a summary of Bantu sexual relations. His summary of prenuptial relationships of boys and girls, the system of polygyny, and domestic arrangements in general, indicates that records made among the Ovimbundu are but a sample of an extensive and homogeneous series of Bantu sex customs. 171

With regard to the classificatory system of relationships and cross-cousin marriage, sufficient quotations have been given to indicate that the system of the Ovimbundu is one which is paralleled in Rhodesia, the Congo basin, and still more remote regions. To the instances given should be added corroborative examples from J. Roscoe (The Baganda, p. 109), R. S. Rattray (Ashanti, p. 29), and H. A. Stayt (The Bavenda, pp. 172–184). L. H. Buxton and R. S. Rattray have offered a theory to explain the kinship system and cross-cousin marriage in Ashanti (*Jour. African Soc.*, XXIV, p. 83; Religion and Art in Ashanti, p. 318). 171 601

In Africa a classificatory system of relationships is particularly characteristic of the Bantu area. The system is Semitic and Hamitic. It is not reported among the Bushmen, but is in vogue among the Nama Hottentots. The wide distribution of a classificatory system, with variations, and its importance in tribal life, suggest antiquity (see Hoernlé, II, and B. Z. Seligman, III).

H. Baumann (I) has prepared maps showing the distribution of customs affecting descent of property in Africa. Investigation among the Ovimbundu proves that their scheme of inheritance of property is part of a more widely distributed system. Baumann (pp. 66, 127) states that in the Kasai valley and the Cabinda Enclave the rights of the mother's brother are expressed in his control of his sister's children. The power of the maternal uncle in Ovimbundu families was reported, and it was stated that he has the right to sell his sister's children for redemption of his debts. Baumann's map further indicates an area in which property descends, not to a wife or children, but to a mother's brother, or to the sons of the deceased man's oldest sister. The social system of the Ovimbundu is definitely a part of this cultural matrix, which extends to the north and northeast of the Ovimbundu but, according to Baumann's record, not to the south of Angola. In the south of Angola among pastoral people a system of succession and inheritance in the male line prevails, and 171 428

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171 428 this method is characteristic of many pastoral tribes of south and east Africa.

171 611 The Ovimbundu are situated between two systems of reckoning descent, succession, and inheritance; namely, the Negro system of the Congo region, and that of the eastern and southern cattle-keeping people. In view of the culture contacts described in Chapter X, the mixed system of the Ovimbundu is intelligible.

On the one hand the Ovimbundu emphasize the rights of the mother's brother while denying inheritance to a wife and her children, but in royal families the eldest son of the principal wife succeeds to kingship. Among commoners descent is reckoned through both the father and the mother. Therefore the inference is that the [174] Ovimbundu have, by virtue of their position and contacts, made a blending of two distinct social systems, one of which gives succession to office in the male line, while the other gives inheritance in the female line. In their system of burial rites for kings the Ovimbundu follow the usages of the pastoral area.

171 608 Exchange of blood is an Umbundu custom resembling that which occurs widely in Negro Africa. This exchange of blood is the typical Negro form of the blood brotherhood. Another rite is the Hamitic custom of drinking a mixture of blood and milk; this the Ovimbundu do not practise.

171 241 The hoe-cultivation practised by Ovimbundu women is in agreement with Baumann's association of hoe-culture and matriarchal conditions, the latter being indicated by the importance of the mother's brother. These concomitant factors are shown by Baumann (II, p. 292) to be characteristic of a wide area in the Congo basin. To this area may be added the whole of central Angola.

171 567 The factors of slavery among the Ovimbundu are in agreement with all that is known of the treatment of slaves in the Congo area and farther west Africa. Slaves of the Ovimbundu taken in warfare were treated with less consideration than those who passed into slavery to redeem a debt. There was also discrimination in favor of slaves taken in local quarrels among the Ovimbundu themselves. The killing and eating of slaves in north Angola is a custom whose early occurrence has already been noted.

AFRICAN PUBERTY RITES

171 881 Initiation ceremonies for boys and girls are at present well preserved among the Vachokue of eastern Angola; for a period such ceremonies declined among the Ovimbundu, but there is now a

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recrudescence. Masks of eastern Angola most closely resemble those of the Bapindi of the southwest Congo, but the general background of these puberty rites is comparable in Angola, parts of the Congo, and in several parts of the forest belt of west Africa from Sierra Leone to Cameroon. 171 881

Usually there is seclusion, hardship, training in dances and tribal customs, with ceremonial reappearance and change of name. Evidently the Ovimbundu share the material traits and the psychological background of initiatory rites with a very large number of tribes, which occupy the forest zones of west and central Africa.

G. Lindblom's publication, "The Use of Stilts in Africa and America," helps to explain the occurrence of stilt-walking at the final ceremonies of initiation witnessed at Cangamba. Since stilt-walking in Angola occurs chiefly in the eastern section, perhaps one should link the trait with the stilt-walking in Nyasaland, because there has been continuous communication from Angola to Nyasaland along the Zambezi valley. The stilt-walking of eastern Angola may, however, be a cultural offshoot from the southwest Congo, for according to Lindblom the stilt-walking trait occurs there, and the contacts of eastern Angola with the southwest Congo have been important.

In turning from these factors of social life to traits of a more material kind, there are points of importance to be noted in connection with food supply and industries. A possibility exists that such traits as hunting, use of certain types of musical instruments, basketry, and pottery, will indicate that the Ovimbundu, before their separation, drew some of their fundamental traits from a widely distributed matrix. 174

HUNTING APPLIANCES OF AFRICA

L. S. B. Leakey (A New Classification of the Bow and Arrow in Africa, *J.R.A.I.*, LVI, pp. 259–294) has dealt with the distribution of bows and arrows. Leakey states that, owing to lack of evidence, he was unable to describe the bows and arrows of Angola. I have therefore illustrated these in detail (Plate XVII, Figs. 1–9). 171 411

Some of the arrowheads used by the Ovimbundu resemble those of the Bashilele in the southwest Congo, but on the whole arrowheads used in Angola are of distinctive patterns, and presumably they represent a special local development. The round bow of the Ovimbundu and the Vacholue is like that of the southern Congo, and it is absolutely distinct from the short flat bow used in southern Angola among the Vakuanyama.

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171 411 The question of arrow release is important in this connection. R. B. Dixon (The Building of Cultures, p. 131), while discussing evidence from Wissler, Kroeber, and Morse, has plotted a map showing the distribution of types of arrow release in all parts of the world. The Ovimbundu (Plate XXXIX, Fig. 1) use the Mediterranean release, which is shown by Kroeber (Univ. Calif. Pub., XXIII, p. 286) to occur in the southwest Congo region along with the tertiary release. My illustration and Kroeber's description of the Mediterranean release show that the thumb is kept entirely out of the way. The string is engaged by the inner surfaces of the tips of the index and middle fingers. The engaging finger-ends are at right angles to the string.

Young boys often use the primary release when shooting blunt wooden arrows at birds. In this release the butt of the arrow is clasped between the end of the thumb and the middle knuckle of the index finger. Kroeber remarks that the primary release is almost invariably attempted by children and uninstructed novices, which accords with my observations made in Angola. Presumably boys of the Ovimbundu change their method of release from the primary to the Mediterranean when they handle a man's bow and arrows. The Mediterranean release was observed throughout Angola, with the exception of the primary release employed by boys.

G. Lindblom (I, Part I) assists in comparing hunting apparatus of the Ovimbundu with a large number of African forms.

The throwing clubs of the Ovimbundu are definitely like those of the Hottentots, Barotse, and Bushmen (pp. 120–126).

224 171 In Part II of his leaflet Lindblom discusses many kinds of traps. The trap built of heavy poles, which is used for catching lions, leopards, and hyenas, is used all over Negro Africa; there is nothing distinctive in the form and use of the Umbundu pattern. The cane rat trap of conical form is described and its distribution is plotted (pp. 52, 53, 56). Lindblom's map shows a clustering round the mouth of the Congo, also again at Long. 30° E. and Lat. 10° S. The blank for Angola can now be filled. These traps are used in many parts of Angola, notably among the Vasele of the northwest, at Elende, Ngalangi, and Cangamba. The use of this trap in Angola explains its presence among the Vakuanyama. On Lindblom's map the occurrence of the trap in south Angola is isolated from the general African distribution, but use of the trap is really continuous from the Congo estuary through Angola to the Vakuanyama.

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The use of bird-arrows with blunt, wooden knobs was common at Elende, and I collected sharp, barbed, wooden arrows from the Vasele, also from the areas of Kipungo and Mongua. This will assist in extending the information given by Lindblom (pp. 94–98). Lindblom's map (p. 99) indicates that bird-arrows are used round Lake Victoria Nyanza, at the junction of the Kasai and the Congo, and likewise among the Bushongo and the Bayaka. My observation of the distribution of wooden arrows in Angola links up these regions shown by Lindblom with the south of Angola. Perhaps a transcontinental diffusion in a southwesterly direction from Victoria Nyanza may be assumed, for it is unlikely that the diffusion would go counter to the generally accepted line of tribal migration which has been from northeast to southwest. 171 411

AFRICAN POTTERY, BASKETS, AND MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

171

There is no reason to connect the pottery of the Ovimbundu with that of any particular region. The coiling method is far too widespread and generic to afford evidence of contacts. The Ovimbundu have evolved their own peculiar designs and forms. [323]

In coiled basketry also the Ovimbundu have made special developments from a generic trait known in Egypt before 2000 B.C. Designs and dyes appear to be of local origin. My observation of African basketry does not suggest any particular parent form; moreover, resemblances of design may be misleading, for the nature of the material controls the shapes of the designs to a great extent in coiled basketry. [285]

Wood-carving, on the contrary, links the culture of the Ovimbundu very definitely with that of the southwest Congo. Perhaps the work of Angola is most closely allied with that of the Bakuba, who excel in the carving of figurines, cups, and staffs. [532]

H. Balfour's article (III) on the distribution of the friction drum helps to identify the form used by the Ovimbundu with types of this instrument from other African areas. The type from Elende is like that of Barotseland with which the Ovimbundu caravans were frequently in contact, while the large friction drum from Ngalangi is of the Bayaka pattern. The friction drum is widely used in the southwest Congo among the Bakwese, the Bambala, and the Baluba. [534]

Thus far research has been able to show a large number of cultural traits of the Ovimbundu in relation to immediate culture contacts of the Congo basin, Rhodesia, and South West Africa (chapter X). In addition to this, many traits connected with social

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171 organization and artifacts have been described in relation to a wide cultural background in Negro Africa. There remains, however, the more difficult problem of a possible introduction of some of these cultural traits from regions outside the continent of Africa itself.

KULTURKREIS THEORY

174 114 Our investigation is able to account for the occurrence of certain widely distributed traits which the Ovimbundu possess, either in their common form or in some specialized aspect. The broader problem of the possible origin of African traits in Melanesia and Indonesia is one that should not be neglected.

The kulturkreis theory as expounded by Graebner (Methode der Ethnologie, Heidelberg, 1911) has been applied to Africa by B. Ankermann (*Zeitsch. Ethn.*, 1905, pp. 62–90). Frobenius has expressed his views in "Der Ursprung der afrikanischen Kulturen," Leipzig, 1894; "Das unbekannte Afrika," Munich, 1923; and the "Atlas afrikanus," Munich, 1922.

An article of Frobenius (Smithsonian Institution Reports, 1898, pp. 638–647) summarizes the Graebnerian thesis so far as Africa is concerned. Frobenius says that the Malayo-Negritan relationship of African culture is established. Certain cultural elements appear together and are equally distributed. Ethnographical objects illustrative of phases of culture may be examined with a view to fixing their descent, just as we examine the limbs and organs of a living being, and the theory is concerned with morphological considerations in particular.

Frobenius states (p. 639), that he is concerned with studying the genealogical tree of culture forms, and as a first example he chooses wooden drums which are found in the Congo basin and lower Guinea; these drums are said to be of Malayo-Negritan origin. The next example chosen is that of the Malayo-Negritan bow. Wooden shields of Africa with reed covering have related forms in New Guinea and the Solomon Islands. Pile dwellings are found in Dahomey and among the Ambuella; also in New Guinea. Chairs and neck rests used by many Negro tribes are of Oceanic form. There is a Malayo-Negritan affinity of bark fabrics of Africa with the well-known tapa cloth of Oceania (p. 644). The "likeness of anatomical origin, coupled with the outlined area of distribution, is evidence not to be gainsaid" (p. 645). The culture of a fishing community is on all sides characterized by mesh work. In New Guinea the net is used as clothing, and in the whole of west Africa we

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hear of the netted jerseys of the disguised. The matriarchate is possibly to be classed among Malayo-Negritan characteristics, in particular when accompanied by exogamy. So runs the Graebnerian argument. 174 114

To these cultural factors from Melanesia Frobenius adds the gora, which he compares with a form from New Pommern. He also mentions the marimba; tobacco-pipes of the Ituri region, which are likened to those of New Guinea; and the scarification of the Bashilange, which has some circular characters said to be like Maori moko. The prows of canoes in Dualla (Cameroon) are compared with those of the Admiralty Islands.

The factors of Asiatic culture which have affected northern Africa are more readily accepted because of known historical contacts of a continuous kind over geographically contiguous regions. Probably Frobenius is right in attributing the drum with a pottery base, chain armor, quilted armor, the long knife, and the stringed instrument *rababa*, to Asiatic sources. The round shields of northeast Africa may be accepted as of Asiatic origin. These points, though part of the general theory, do not concern our study of the Ovimbundu, who do not possess these alleged Asiatic traits.

The supposed line of migration of Malayo-Negritan culture up the Zambezi valley, thence along the Sankuru into the Congo basin and so to Cameroon and farther west Africa, presents no great obstacle, but the hypothesis lacks a coordination of cultural elements and a historico-psychological explanation.

In considering several Indonesian factors such as those mentioned by R. Linton as occurring in Madagascar (*Amer. Anth.*, 1928, pp. 372–389), and while regarding the evidence of J. Hornell (*Man*, 1928, No. 1) respecting the similarity of canoes on Lake Victoria Nyanza and along the coast with those from Java, there is no difficulty in admitting impacts from Indonesia. There is, however, only the beginning of a hypothesis in these comparisons.

The construction of a theory purporting to show phylogenetic connection between cultures as remote as those of Sierra Leone and Melanesia still requires elaboration. At the present time there is not sufficient detail available for the filling in of distribution maps purporting to show the line of migration of this postulated Malayo-Negritan culture. But according to Graebnerian views a hiatus merely means that the intrusive culture has disappeared.

The question arises respecting evidence from Angola which may favor or refute the validity of a Malayo-Negritan origin of some

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174 114 culture elements of Negro Africa. Among the cultural traits of the Ovimbundu are a few which the Graebnerians would claim as evidence of the passage of Indonesian cultural waves. Use of the bow is part of the bow culture. Matriarchal conditions and hoe-culture by women would be regarded as a somewhat later wave of culture. Frobenius would ascribe the use of netted clothing during initiation to an Oceanic origin. There is a small area in southeast Angola where pile dwellings are built by the Ambuella tribe. Bark cloth is made in eastern Angola. The marimba and the musical bow are traits of Umbundu and Oceanic culture.

The point at issue seems to be the acceptance or rejection of cultural contacts on the ground of alleged resemblance in forms. Frobenius would doubtless add that the supposed Malayo-Negritan factors in Umbundu culture lie only a little to the southwest of the Zambezi, which is a main line of hypothetical migration of Malayo-Negritan factors.

Each of these elements of Umbundu culture is of a non-specific kind. For example, there is nothing about the bark cloth, except that it is a bark cloth, to link it with similar material in any other part of the world. Stripping the tree, soaking the bark and beating it, are part of the general technique.

The musical bow has a wide distribution, as H. Balfour (I) has shown. He studies the distribution in Africa, North and South America, Asia, India, the Malay Archipelago, Melanesia, and Polynesia. He postulates the derivation from the archers' bow and says (p. 85), "The question whether or no we are to regard the musical bows in India and in Africa as belonging to one family, is one which is difficult to answer." Balfour is impressed with similarity of forms in India and Africa, but feels that the common origin is not demonstrable.

When comparing types of masks and costumes within the African continent itself the work of Frobenius (I) is found to be useful in indicating areas over which certain types of regalia are used in initiation ceremonies. There is undoubtedly a localization of types, and we previously noted that Angolan forms of masks and costumes are definitely like those of the Bakuba and the Baluba in the southwest Congo region. Moreover, the netting costumes used by the Ovimbundu and the Vachokue of Angola closely resemble those used in some parts of the Congo basin, Cameroon, and from that point westward to Sierra Leone. Therefore, so long as comparisons are

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limited to Africa itself, they are instructive in showing cultural traits of Angola against a broader background. 174 114

But if the inquiry is extended with a view to proving that African masks and costumes are derivatives from Oceania, there exists no acceptable evidence of generic relationship. The mere use of fiber skirts, of netting suits, and of bark cloth for masks, is not acceptable evidence for supporting a theory of derivation of African from Oceanic forms.

More important than the study of forms is the psychological background of masks and costumes in Africa and Melanesia. In "Origins of Education" I made a comparison of factors included in the initiation of boys in Africa and Melanesia. The boys are secluded, circumcised, instructed, harshly treated, and after a change of name are reintroduced to their villages at a dance in which masks and costumes are used.

Waiving the question of similarity of masks and costumes, do the psychological factors provide reasonable grounds for assuming generic relationship of initiation customs? Possibly the psychological setting suggests a single origin, but the matter is so largely subjective, that a decision cannot be made without further evidence of the correlation of forms, the details underlying their origin and use, and the establishment of a more definite and unbroken track of distribution. To have an intuition and a vague hypothesis is very different from the demonstration of a theory. Delafosse (Negroes of Africa, p. 3) pictures the peopling of Africa by Negro impacts from Asia on the east coast near Madagascar. If true, this suggestion would support the views of the Graebnerian school, but the theory is highly speculative.

The extent to which an observer may be misled by fortuitous resemblances in form has been demonstrated by a number of American anthropologists. Every investigator who attempts comparative study and classification is prone to unite concepts, customs, and artifacts which have only a superficial and misleading resemblance to one another. This failure to discriminate may be illustrated as follows: R. H. Lowie (Plains Indian Age-Societies, Amer. Mus. Nat. Hist., Anth. Papers, No. 11, pp. 883–951) has shown the fallacy of assuming genuine cultural resemblances between Age-Societies of Plains Indians, the Masai, and the Melanesians, because the phenomena when analyzed prove to have different psychological settings, and they are structurally as distinct as are their geographical areas.

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174 114 W. D. Wallis points out the care that should be exercised in assessing the evidential values of culture traits. These should be weighted according to their simplicity or complexity, and their logical connection with one another (*Amer. Anth.*, XXX, p. 94). The cultural factors of the Malayo-Negritan migration have not been considered in the manner advocated by Wallis.

Lowie examined apparently similar cases of exogamy, but found that these depended on different conditions; for example, exogamy might depend on either clan or locality (The Principle of Convergence in Ethnology, *Jour. Amer. Folk-lore*, XXV, pp. 24–42).

A. A. Goldenweiser shows that totemism has many social and psychological interpretations differing greatly according to locality. In order to include the many forms of totemism a broad definition has to be accepted. Totemism is indeed nothing more than a tendency of social units or individuals to become associated with symbols of emotional value (Totemism an Analytical Study, *Jour. Amer. Folk-lore*, XXIII).

Lowie further emphasizes the distinctive types of totemism, in order to show the fallacy of linking many different concepts under one term, without recognizing the broad significance of the term (*Amer. Anth.*, XIII, p. 189). This research shows Frobenius to be at fault in merely noting the presence of totemism and other traits without defining their forms and examining the psychological background.

An article by A. L. Kroeber and C. Holt (Masks and Moieties as a Culture Complex, *J.R.A.I.*, L, p. 452) has a special bearing on Graebnerian views with regard to the spread of cultures. Kroeber set out to test the validity of the statement that North American culture had been affected by the east Papuan layer of the Graebnerian culture stream, which was supposed to have brought masks and moieties to North America. The Graebnerian method assumes that a culture trait never develops twice; also that instances of geographical isolation of a trait must be ascribed to migration and subsequent loss in intervening areas. The conclusion of Kroeber, based on statistical examination of instances of conjoint occurrence of the two traits, indicates that the union of masks and moieties comes out fortuitously.

R. B. Dixon indicates several factors to which attention should be paid in making comparisons of culture traits (*Science*, XXXV, p. 46). In the first place there is the question of relationship on geographical and historical grounds. It is also important to know

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what degree of complexity there is in the artifacts and beliefs which 174
are under comparison. Reason and form, that is, psychology and 114
morphology, are both important aspects of comparison. The work so far accomplished with regard to the Malayo-Negritan theory of African cultural traits fails to comply with the foregoing essentials of comparative study.

There is consensus of opinion against the Graebnerian hypothesis in its present form. E. S. Hartland reviews Graebner's "Methode der Ethnologie" (*Man*, 1914, No. 70) with the result that he finds Graebner too insistent on the value of forms as a criterion of generic relationship. In fact such a method may degenerate into pure subjectivity. F. Boas (*Science*, XXXIV, No. 884) takes the same point of view in remarking on the exclusion of the psychological field of inquiry; Graebner's method has a too mechanical character.

In view of this criticism, and as a result of personal observation of the culture elements of Angola, I am convinced that the somatological, linguistic, and cultural data for considering the spread of the Malayo-Negritan culture in Africa are not sufficiently understood to lead to a demonstration of any kind. For instance, Portuguese East Africa, the hypothetical starting point of the migration, is by no means well studied in detail, and the problem demands that data relating to the supposed area of introduction should be particularly complete.

The same criticism relates to the farthest point of west Africa reached by the supposed cultural stream from Melanesia. A theory which aims at showing generic relationship between secret societies of west Africa and Oceania cannot successfully rely only on general resemblances of masks and the use of netting costumes. Something more specific than a comparison of forms of artifacts and the occurrence of such ill-defined institutions as age-grades, totemism, and secret societies is essential in order to make the kulturkreis theory acceptable.

The problem of cultural relationships between the Ovimbundu 174
and other African tribes is simplified in several ways. Geographical 177
continuity exists between the African areas discussed, and to a great extent the cultural contacts described are matters of historical fact. Data relating to the Ovimbundu themselves are fairly complete; and what is equally important, there is trustworthy literature bearing on the areas surrounding the Ovimbundu. Therefore, comparisons do not rest on the study of a few simple forms, but on the cultures taken as a whole with regard to cultural traits of all kinds.

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174 177 Evidence adduced up to the present has indicated the relationship of cultural elements of the Ovimbundu to those of tribes immediately surrounding them (chapter X).

In addition to this, the ethnological facts of the present chapter have made it clear that the tribal life of the Ovimbundu cannot be explained by confining the inquiry to immediate culture contacts. The Ovimbundu have without doubt drawn very widely on African cultural streams during the growth of their present social pattern. The truth of this statement has just been illustrated by reference to ritual connected with blacksmiths, Bantu religious beliefs, the Bantu social system, African puberty rites, hunting appliances, musical instruments, and other cultural elements.

A consideration of the kulturkreis theory indicated that a search for the origins of Umbundu culture cannot profitably be extended to Indonesia and Melanesia. Therefore the final chapter is confined to a summary of types of African culture, with a view to showing the relationship of Umbundu culture to each of the main racial, linguistic, and cultural patterns that are known to have affected the African continent.

XII. CULTURAL PROCESSES

Analysis of African Cultures

The difficulties of making a study of the Ovimbundu in their relation to a general background of African cultures are connected with unsolved problems of archaeology, physical anthropology, linguistic study, and the history of cultural traits. 172

With the exception of data from Algeria, Egypt, Kenya, and south Africa there is a paucity of archaeological information which might determine the antiquity of past cultures, the relation of these to past and present races, and the routes by which races and cultures traveled. In the regions mentioned systematic excavations are in progress, but for the greater part of Africa archaeologists have no knowledge of the relative antiquity of stone implements found on the surface.

African ethnologists are not consistent in the connotations of terms such as Bantu and Hamitic. The word Bantu primarily refers to a linguistic family of Negroes, but a Bantu Negro culture exists with many divisions, and later we shall see that a somatological concept is associated with the word Bantu. The word Hamitic may describe a linguistic family, a series of physical traits differing from those which characterize the Negro, and a type of pastoral culture in which all the activities and beliefs of tribal life center in the keeping of cattle. The adjective Semitic can also be used to denote a well-defined linguistic family, a type of culture, or somatic traits. But the Semitic problem does not concern us since the Ovimbundu have no traits that could be associated with Semitic culture, either Mohammedan or pre-Koranic; with the possible exception of blood brotherhood by exchange of blood, and the use of a scapegoat (Robertson Smith, Lectures on the Religion of the Semites, p. 296; Kinship and Marriage in Early Arabia, pp. 57, 61). [171]

The comparative studies of physical anthropologists are retarded by paucity of skeletal material both ancient and modern, while series of measurements on living subjects, especially women, are inadequate in relation to the great size of Africa and the complexity of the problems which arise from comparative study of anatomical data. 144 114

Darwin's "Descent of Man" recognized the possibility of man's origin in Africa, and the recent excavations of L. S. B. Leakey in Kenya may finally prove that the oldest remains of *Homo sapiens*

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are within the African continent (Stone Age Cultures of Kenya, Cambridge, England, 1931). H. H. Johnston concludes that the place of origin of the African Negro is unknown. A. C. Haddon (The Wandering of Peoples, p. 54) surmises that "there is reason to believe that all the main races reached Africa from Asia." G. Sergi (The Mediterranean Race, pp. 41–42) regards the Hamites as a single human stock, but disagrees with a theory of Asiatic origin, and postulates the origin of Hamites in northeast Africa.

C. G. Seligman summarizes the views of Sergi and other writers respecting the origin of Hamites (Races of Africa, pp. 96–156). Among the eastern Hamites cranial characteristics, though variable, are generally convergent and are to be regarded as old variations of an original stock. Apart from Negro admixture the face of the Hamite is never prognathous. The nose is straight. The lips are often thick but never everted as in the Negro. The hair is often frizzly, but sometimes wavy or almost straight. The color of the skin varies; it may be yellowish, coppery red-brown, through every shade of brown to black, according to the amount of miscegenation that has taken place. Seligman states "that the Hamitic cradleland is generally agreed to be Asiatic, perhaps southern Arabia, or possibly an area farther east. Be this as it may, there is no doubt that the Hamites and Semites must be regarded as modifications of an original stock" (Some Aspects of the Hamitic Problem in the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, *J.R.A.I.*, XLIII, pp. 593–705).

As a result of research in the north Arabian desert Henry Field states that the stony desert between Transjordania and the Euphrates River was probably well watered and fertile at an unknown period. The locality may have been a focus, first of concentration, then of dispersal. Archaeological evidence arising from a comparative study of stone implements from Arabia and east Africa, together with data of physical anthropology, and the basic unity of Semitic and Hamitic languages support a theory of Hamitic intrusion from Asia (H. Field, The Cradle of Homo Sapiens, *Amer. Jour. Arch.*, XXXVI, No. 4, pp. 426–430; The Antiquity of Man in Southwestern Asia, *Amer. Anth.*, XXXV, pp. 51–62).

Although the origin of Hamites and Negroes is obscure it has been possible to give a summary of the chief physical traits of the former, and the same can be done for the latter. Typical Sudanic-speaking Negroes, who are sometimes referred to as "true Negroes," are to be seen in the Ibo and Ijaw tribes of southern Nigeria, and among the Kru of Liberia. The characteristics of the Negro are a

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heavy torso, disproportionately long arms, a dark skin, prognathous 144
jaws, broad nostrils, thick everted lips, and woolly hair. But usually 142
a modification of these features occurs in Bantu-speaking Negroes. How did this modification of physique arise?

A. C. Haddon (Wandering of Peoples, p. 54) expresses a generally 144
accepted view when he states that Bantu-speaking Negroes are 114
a mixture of true Negroes with Hamites. Seligman (Races of Africa, p. 181) refers to an infusion of Hamitic blood which has differentiated the Bantu Negroes from true Negroes, and this is a generally accepted hypothesis. But Torday (H. Spencer, Descriptive Sociology of African Races, preface, p. iii) questions whether the physical and linguistic cleavage between Bantu-speaking and Sudanic-speaking Negroes is due to an admixture of Hamitic blood. He attributes the physical differences of the two great linguistic divisions of Negroes to disparity of environmental conditions. But at present no physical anthropologist could say to what extent climatic factors, nutrition, and other environmental conditions can be held responsible for the physical differences of Negroes.

The question of a mingling of Hamite and true Negro to produce a modified type of Negro is not the only difficulty. How does one account for aberrant Negroid types such as the Pygmies of the Ituri forest and the Bushmen? They have a phylogenetic relationship, but what is the racial affinity? Again, will change of environmental conditions account for the Pygmy and Bushman types? Or are we to form a hypothesis of origins by assuming establishment of new species by variation or mutation?

In the absence of certain knowledge science accepts a hypothesis 144
which best explains the known facts. And in this matter of a modified Negro type speaking Bantu languages, the idea of a mingling of the blood of Negroes and Hamites best explains the gradation of physical types from west African, Sudanic-speaking Negroes, through various types of Bantu Negroes, to Hamites, as exemplified by the Somali, Beja, and Hadendoa.

The main characters of linguistic families of Africa are clearly 197
defined by A. Werner (Language Families of Africa, pp. 20–23) who refers to the works of D. Westermann and C. Meinhof. The distinguishing features of Hamitic, Semitic, Bantu, Sudanic, and Bushman speech are known, yet the task of placing a particular language in its appropriate family is not always simple. The classification may depend on the particular facet of the language which is under examination. Hausa (Hamitic), is difficult to classify

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since the language has Sudanic and Hamitic elements with some Semitic roots. The earliest relationships of African linguistic families, for instance Hamitic and Semitic, also Sudanic, Bantu, and Bushman, is a field for further research. To take only one instance of complexity, Bantu is divided into more than two hundred languages and innumerable dialects, whose origin, structure, and evolution have been treated by C. Meinhof (Introduction to the Phonology of the Bantu Languages, London, 1932; a translation, by A. Werner and N. J. von Warmelo, of Meinhof's Grundriss eine Lautlehre der Bantusprachen).

In conclusion of this summary of the background of African history, there arises the difficulty of ascribing to each of the races those cultural elements for which the race is responsible, either by primary invention within Africa, or by introduction from some source outside Africa. The difficulty may be illustrated by quotations relating to the iron industry of African Negroes. Rival theories claim origin of the craft in Asia, in Egypt, and among African Negroes themselves.

Seligman (Races of Africa, p. 158) states, "We may believe that the Negro, who is now an excellent iron worker, learnt this art from the Hamite." Torday writes (H. Spencer, Descriptive Sociology of African Races, preface, p. iii), "To state that Bantu civilization—or any civilization whatever—is due to the ancestors of such absolutely primitive tribes as the Hadendoa and Beja (identified by some with the enigmatic Hamites) presupposes that these people who were ignorant of agriculture, or the production of iron, and of all arts and crafts denoting a higher culture, who, as we know, have not progressed a step within the past five hundred years and considered all manual labor degrading, had the power to give that which they never possessed."

The complexity of argument relating to the origin of just one cultural trait, iron-working, can be judged by consulting the writings of W. Gowland (The Metals in Antiquity, *J.R.A.I.*, XLII, pp. 235–287), W. M. F. Petrie (The Arts and Crafts of Ancient Egypt), W. Belck (Die Erfinder der Eisentechnik, *Zeitsch. Ethn.*, XXXIX, pp. 335–381; XL, pp. 45–69; XLII, pp. 15–30), and F. Luschan (Eisentechnik in Afrika, *ibid.*, XLI, pp. 23–59).

Even with these reservations and disputed points in mind, it is yet possible to speculate with some accuracy respecting the origin and assembly of traits which, welded together, form the culture of the Ovimbundu.

ASSEMBLING OF TRAITS

The data which have been assembled in relation to the Ovimbundu, if considered in conjunction with the analysis of African cultures made in the foregoing chapter, lead to the following historical reconstruction. 174

When somatic traits of the Ovimbundu are considered it is clear that the general type is removed from that of true Negroes. Among the Ovimbundu are persons of a slender, brown-skinned type, with some refinement of lips and nasal width; while other persons possess the opposites of these features, but in no instance as intensely as do true Negroes. I accept the view of physical admixture of Hamites with true Negroes and believe that types like the Ovimbundu and the Vakuanyama have resulted from infusion of Hamitic blood which has modified Negro somatic traits in the way mentioned. [142]

Linguistically the Ovimbundu have a pure form of Bantu speech. The Umbundu language is tonal, but there are few semantic words whose meaning depends on a high, middle, or low tone. Probably Umbundu should be classified with the southwestern Bantu languages, but further research may show that on structural grounds Umbundu has to be accorded an intermediate position between the southwestern and the central Bantu languages. Study of vocabulary definitely links Umbundu with the Ukuanyama language of the southwestern Bantu group, but conclusions based on comparison of vocabularies are hazardous because of the dissemination of Umbundu words by extensive caravan trade of the Ovimbundu. We may therefore be dealing with loan words and not with bifurcation from the same matrix. 174 197

When comparing the social pattern of the Ovimbundu with that of other African tribes the following elements of culture should be borne in mind. 174

(1) Traits associated with an archaic hunting culture.

(2) Factors typical of the culture of Negroes, both Bantu and Sudanic.

(3) Cultural traits from pastoral tribes of south and southwest Angola. These tribes speak Bantu languages but have somatic traits which are Hamitic, while their culture exhibits some main features of the Hamitic pastoral pattern.

Among the earliest elements of Umbundu culture would probably be the traits of hunting and food-gathering. The antiquity of hunting has been indicated by considering the wide distribution of appliances

174 of like kind. Furthermore, the details of ritual connected with the hunter's occupation, and the survival of these to the present day, tend to show that hunting was not a trait of late introduction. A people who adopted hunting when in an advanced state of their cultural history would not invent an elaborate ritual which is still connected with the initiation of young hunters, ancestor worship, and special modes of burial. Moreover, the Ovimbundu are primarily an agricultural people; therefore it is unlikely that at a late date in their cultural development they would take over hunting and its ritual as a means of augmenting their food supply. I conclude, therefore, that the elements of a hunting culture are ancient and fundamental.

To the archaic elements of hunting and food-gathering should perhaps be added the use of the musical bow, the bull-roarer, and the making of fire by twirling. The bull-roarer is an object associated with important ceremonies among many African and other tribes of the present day, though among the Ovimbundu the instrument is used only as a toy. This is probably a degradation of function associated with the known disappearance of initiation ceremonies. Making of fire by twirling is now of importance only as a ceremonial method of creating new fire at the time of building a village, during epidemics, and after the death of a king. But formerly the twirling method was the only means of ignition.

The most important cultural traits of the Ovimbundu are those which they possess in common with Negroes who speak Bantu languages. Most of the traits mentioned here as characteristic of the Bantu are also to be found among the Sudanic Negroes of west Africa.

Negro cultural traits which are or were prominent in the tribal life of the Ovimbundu are as follows:

Tooth mutilation and scarification of the body.

Blood brotherhood by exchange of blood.

Hoe cultivation by women.

Classificatory system of kinship terms and cross-cousin marriage.

A system of succession, inheritance, and family government in which the maternal uncle plays an important part.

Tribal government under a well-coordinated political system in which kings and village chiefs are of paramount importance.

Slavery as an economic institution.

Ritualistic slaughter and eating of slaves at the death of a king.

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Tribal initiation for boys with use of masks, netting costumes, seclusion, circumcision, harsh treatment, change of name, and re-introduction into society. 174

The poison ordeal of general Negro type.

Religious ideas of a supreme being, Suku, Nzambi, or Kalunga, who is thought of as a creator. He is, however, far removed from all tribal affairs, and there is no sacrifice or appeal to him.

An active ancestor worship with good and bad spirits who require sacrifice and recognition by supplication through the agency of a medicine-man. Use of wooden figures in connection with this appeal to spirits. Great importance of the spirits of kings as arbiters in matters of tribal welfare.

Importance of medicine-men in conducting trial by ordeal, making rain, healing the sick, and consulting ancestral spirits by divination and the use of wooden images in which "medicine" is placed.

Methods of fishing with poisons and conical fish traps.

The technique and ritual of the blacksmith's craft.

Wood-carving which particularly resembles that of the southwest Congo region.

Making of bark cloth.

Types of musical instruments, including the friction drum, the marimba, tubular drums, flat drums, metal-keyed instruments, and many other forms which are typical of Negro culture, particularly that of the southwest Congo.

Weaving on a loom of central African type (now obsolete).

Coiled basketry and pottery.

The foregoing elements are associated to form the cultural pattern of the Ovimbundu. All these traits are characteristic of Bantu and Sudanic Negro culture in general. Therefore the Ovimbundu are most closely allied with Negroes, from the cultural point of view.

The elements taken by the Ovimbundu from pastoral tribes, whose culture has invaded east and south Africa, are: 174 177

Cattle and the social values attached to these, together with ceremonial rites which are characteristic of pastoral cultures. Such rites include burial of kings in oxhide, and the killing of oxen at the funeral feast; also the mounting of horns over the grave, and use of sacred fire.

Ideas of succession in the male line, whereby kingship passes to the eldest son of the principal wife, are more characteristic of pastoral than Negro systems.

174 From the pastoral tribes of southern Angola the Ovimbundu
177 have adopted a peculiar type of assagai, a throwing club, and sandals.

Primarily the culture of the Ovimbundu is that of African Negroes with persistence of traits that have survived, possibly from a pre-Negro culture, which depended entirely upon food-gathering and hunting. Grafted on these traits are important elements from a pastoral culture which is generally conceded to be Hamitic.

European contacts led to the introduction of maize, manioc, sweet potatoes, and peanuts, so stimulating the indigenous hoe culture. This agricultural life was further encouraged by settlement in the Benguela Highlands, where temperature, rainfall, and open spaces favored a great expansion of agricultural pursuits, especially the growth of maize and beans.

Early contact with the Portuguese led to an encouragement of trade. Guns and powder, together with other European goods, were received in exchange for ivory and slaves. An increase in the supply of slaves led to changes in the social life, whereby the Ovimbundu gained more time and opportunity for extensive raiding and trading, by which means their wealth was further increased.

As time progressed, the nature of the contact with the Portuguese changed. Instead of alliances made on a commercial basis, the Portuguese gradually assumed control, the results of which are now distinctly felt in the disintegration of Umbundu tribal life.

The data supplied by personal field work, supported by a perusal of ethnological literature, suggest the foregoing summary as the briefest possible outline of the history of the Ovimbundu, the growth of their culture, and the nature of traits that have been welded together.

Cultural losses will now be considered, and in the final pages an explanation will be given of the way in which traits derived from various sources are associated to form a workable tribal system.

CULTURAL LOSSES

177 The loom and the conical furnace for smelting iron have disappeared in recent times because of the increasing importation of foreign cloth and the greater facility for obtaining scrap iron. Bark cloth, except in eastern Angola, is no longer made because traders are distributing European goods. For the same reason wooden hair-combs are going out of use. Drum signaling has declined with the disappearance of warfare, and for the same reason the double iron gong is rare.

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The Ovimbundu have lost any ideas that they may have had concerning sentimental relationships between men and animals. I know of no belief in animal helpers, and of no divisions of people with an animal or a plant as their emblem. The only idea of reincarnation was expressed in the instance of a spirit, neglected in sacrifice, prowling near the village in the form of a lion or a leopard. 177

There has been a total absence of the shield for so long that no one was able to describe it. Old men state that the Ovimbundu used to have a shield; probably this information is correct, as the shield is commonly used in the Congo region. The Ovimbundu use the bow, spear, and throwing-club; no doubt a fourth item of equipment was more than a man could conveniently manage. Furthermore, individuals who obtained guns and powder would naturally discard other weapons.

Originally the Ovimbundu were cannibals. The Vasele, a sequestered Umbundu-speaking people, were definitely known to be practising cannibalism in 1865 (Monteiro, vol. II, p. 157). The early writers, Battell, Merolla, and Cavazzi, mention cannibalism in northern Angola; undoubtedly slaves were killed and eaten at the accession of a king until late in the nineteenth century. From Bailundu a spear formerly used for thrusting into the side of a slave, then into the side of an ox, was obtained. The flesh was cooked and eaten before a warlike expedition. Among objects from the Esele country is an ax formerly used for beheading slaves at the accession of a new king. These objects, collected in 1929, and described on page 277, are survivals of defunct traits.

Kingship, warfare, slavery, and cannibalism constitute an allied group of factors which are here mentioned in the order of their importance. European contacts have discouraged all these traits. Portuguese authority has gradually usurped the jurisdiction of native kings, and at the same time has discouraged intertribal warfare. With the decline of warfare the capture of slaves became obsolete. In addition to the discouragement of cannibalism by direct legislation, the decline of slavery has tended to make cannibalism fall into desuetude, because slaves were always the victims for ceremonial cannibal feasts.

The present attenuated distribution and form of puberty rites for Ovimbundu boys may be accounted for as follows: During the period of desultory warfare in northern Angola (1600–1800), ceremonies, which in Africa are usually associated with sedentary life, must have suffered interruption and curtailment. Such ceremonies

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177 are typically allied, so far as Africa is concerned, with a forest culture with its sacred groves and facilities for seclusion during a period of three months or longer. Such a condition was lacking in the Benguela Highlands, which are sparsely wooded in comparison with the more northern tropical areas of Angola.

When the Ovimbundu settled in the highlands, warfare and distant caravan trade were factors that would tend further to disintegrate elaborate ceremonies requiring several months for their completion. As a supplement to these reasons for decline, there is the effect of European disapproval, and in some localities positive prohibition.

In addition to traits that have blended and those that have become obsolete, there arises the question of opportunities which have been neglected in the course of cultural growth.

The Ovimbundu, with local exceptions, do not use the milk or flesh of cattle, neither is the milk of goats utilized; vegetable food forms a large proportion of the diet.

The papaya (papaw) and the banana are not cultivated to any great extent by the natives. The raffia palm grows well in some parts of the Benguela Highlands, but the Ovimbundu do not use the fiber for anything except ropes. They have no raffia weaving such as is found in the Congo region.

Failure to utilize these vegetable products has to some extent a rational basis. The fruit of the papaya could never be more than an addition to the already generous vegetable diet, as it is unsuitable for consumption in large quantities owing to laxative properties; neither has it the food value and the marketable possibility of maize. The banana will grow at a height of 3,000 feet in the Benguela Highlands, but attention is required. Nights are cold, hence some naturally screened site should be selected. During the dry season the roots should be protected against too rapid evaporation, but this careful attention is foreign to native methods of agriculture. Use of raffia is discouraged by the presence of trade cloth and easy access to locally grown cotton, which is made into thread.

To account for the failure to use the milk and flesh of cattle is not easy, neither is the neglect of goat's milk readily explicable. Neglect of these foods is due to prejudice and conservatism, of which there are many examples in Africa. For instance, Hamitic tribes, of whom the Bahima are typical, avoid all vegetable food. Milk is their staple diet, and vegetable foods are regarded as positively unclean.

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Cattle-keepers of southern Angola make butter in calabash churns which are gently swung on a pole. The Ovimbundu have taken cattle from the south and west, but have not adopted dairy products. The cattle of the Ovimbundu are valued as a standard of wealth; have great purchasing power; are used to pay taxes and fines; and, in addition to these social and economic values, are the most important sacrificial animals. This is an instance of the arbitrary selection of some traits of a culture complex, while other factors, even those of economic importance, are ignored. 177

Cultural losses, and failures to utilize factors which were accessible are, according to the foregoing examples, due to change of habitat from northern Angola to the Benguela Highlands; European contacts; long-established agricultural habit; and conservatism, which to some extent is a characteristic of tribes at all cultural levels.

INTEGRATION OF TRAITS

A study which is concerned with growth of culture, demands more than a historical, geographical, and mechanistic interpretation. Morphological and historical research assists in tracing origins and in forming hypotheses respecting the order in which the traits were brought together. But such inquiries are static rather than dynamic, and they are a necessary prelude to anthropological work rather than an ultimate aim. 121

To the methods of research already followed there should be added a psychological approach with the object of showing the way in which various elements of culture are blended and are made to function.

The following pages illustrate the way in which a field investigation is brought into contact with the welding of cultural elements, and the examples chosen call attention to principles that are responsible for the process of integration. This assimilation of cultural elements renders the study of an isolated trait impossible, as the following instances indicate. These illustrations are chosen from field notes, and are grouped in such a way as to emphasize the pivotal elements of Umbundu culture around which minor traits revolve.

Some of the examples given are intended to illustrate a relationship between language (which includes folklore, proverbs, and riddles) and nature knowledge. The latter is closely connected with hunting, food-gathering, and the selection of materials for handwork. 105 182

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The inquiry then turns to occupations which indicate that sex dichotomy of labor is a fundamental principle of tribal life. In connection with the details of food supply and occupation, ritual acts are prominent, and in association with these the functions of the medicine-man are important.

Cultural liaisons are again illustrated when studying domestic animals, for this inquiry leads to a consideration of the social and economic importance of cattle, which are used in ritual connected with the death and burial of kings.

These are but a few instances indicating the way in which lines of investigation converge, though they may appear to be distinct. In fact the very division of a monograph into chapters is misleading in its suggestion of distinct divisions of tribal life, whose parts are actually a psychological unity.

When accompanying boys and men during their food-collecting and hunting expeditions a wealth of nature lore and a richness of vocabulary were discovered, and a vocabulary of one hundred and thirty words comprising names of birds, reptiles, mammals, and plants was prepared. Species are carefully distinguished, to such a degree that discussions respecting the correct native names for similar species tend to be prolonged and humorous.

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When I realized the closeness with which the native observes the habits of animals, there was no difficulty in understanding why folklore stories of animals are so popular and so amusing in their descriptions of animal behavior. In addition to its associations with nature study, folklore reveals standards of conduct and processes of rationalization.

In collecting names of birds and their crics, and while recording hunting customs, I was informed of the bird Onjimbi which flies at night to give the sound of death to those who will not see the morning. Then there is a nocturnal bird called Esuvi which is able to catch spirits of the dead who are active at night. A spirit so caught dies a second death, but what this means I could not immediately discover. Later a man said he was sick because Esuvi had caught the spirit of his grandfather. This implies the belief that an ancestral spirit is a guardian whose function ends when a second death is experienced.

Study of natural history sometimes leads to a point of importance in social procedure. There is a bird Onduva whose feathers are used for decorating the head of a dead king and for embellishing the person of a medicine-man; the feathers may not be used in any other

way. Such instances as these came to light when my primary intention was a study of the use of wooden arrows for killing birds. 105 182 825

An inquiry about the names of trees and the use of timbers led to the topic of making and using wooden figures for magical purposes. Woodcraft, wood-carving, and religion are associated.

There is no fallacy so great as that of supposing that data may be collected and retained in mutually exclusive divisions. For example, a study of proverbs leads to native ideas concerning government, succession to office, and standards of conduct. The Ovimbundu say, "A turtle cannot climb on a tree stump, some one has to place it there." What is the meaning of this proverb? There are some men who occupy positions for which they have no ability; such men have been chosen through influence. The normal successor to chieftainship and kingship is the eldest son of the deceased man's principal wife, but if this rightful successor is stupid, some other son will be chosen. Yet the foolish youth may have friends who see their own advantage in having a weak ruler; they therefore combine to place him in office. The turtle has been placed on the tree stump, since it could not climb there.

In addition, folklore shows projection of the mentality of human beings into the lives of animals. Bird cries, with their supposed calls and answers, indicate that the birds have their family relationships involving strife, love, jealousy, and generosity. To the Ovimbundu, birds are a feathered human community.

Proverbs reveal a philosophy which is expressed by the German *Weltanschauung*. "If you are full of food, do not climb on a leopard's back; the leopard may be hungry." This means that one should not be foolishly exalted through good fortune. "You cannot tie a buck's head in a cloth; the horns will stick out," expresses the idea that crime cannot be concealed. "Hot water does not burn a house, and cold water does not make mush," is a sarcastic reply to one who boasts of things he cannot do. A riddle may express a philosophical train of thought. "What is it that lives while it dies and dies while it lives?" This is the log of wood the end of which is from time to time pushed farther into the fire. Like a human life, the log is being slowly consumed while yet living. Such examples as these call attention to a welding of thought, language, nature lore, and ideas that regulate conduct. 538 829 182

In considering food supply and occupations, division of labor on a sex basis is clear. Social sanctions have determined the appro- 183 462 105

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priateness of certain tasks for males and females respectively, and individuals reflect these attitudes in their ideas and conduct.

My interpreter and others who were questioned laughed at the idea that men and women might interchange their occupations in the course of house-building. A woman collects wood for fuel, but not for house-building. Structural work is in the hands of men who dig the foundations, erect the poles, tie the crosspieces and add the roof. Women carry water for mixing the clay which is puddled by children; men, women, and children apply wet clay to the wattle walls. "Suppose a man should carry water?" I asked. "He would be laughed at and people would say that he was a he-woman," came the ready answer.

Women invariably make pottery among the Ovimbundu, but this is not always so in Negro tribes. Women of the Ovimbundu are likewise basket-makers, but they do not make mats, for this occupation is considered suitable for men only. Only women pound corn; before daybreak the heavy wooden pestles are at work and until sunset the rocks reserved for this operation are the centers of female activity, which includes singing and gossip. Only men herd cattle and only males are hunters. Women and children are the collectors of wild fruits and caterpillars, but only men take honey from the hives.

Agriculture and the preparation of food are entirely in the hands of the women. Men never eat with women; the latter have to carry the prepared food to the men's communal house in the middle of the village. Both men and women catch fish, but there are methods appropriate for each sex. There is a sex-division of labor without any implication of the inferiority of women.

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Occupations cannot be studied merely in a formal way, for, although the tasks are performed every day, a ceremonial element is involved. A clay pit is consecrated by the killing of a fowl; so also is the rock which is used as a base for pounding grain. The young blacksmith is initiated after two years of apprenticeship. On this occasion a dog is killed with the hammer which the master made for his pupil and the blood of the sacrificed animal is sprinkled on the tools. The remainder of the ritual and belief has been described in connection with occupations of the Ovimbundu. Study of the blacksmith's work was begun as research in technology; but failure to purchase the large hammer, even for a tempting sum, led to the discovery of considerable ritual.

Abstention from sexual relationships is enjoined on men and women who are going fishing. That copulation would induce the

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fish to stay together at the bottom of the river, is the reason alleged for this taboo. A young hunter is ceremonially initiated. Throughout his life he has to make sacrifice to the ancestral spirits of hunters who are in the house where bows of famous hunters are kept; these ceremonies must be performed before a hunter leaves for the chase. A caravan is a commercial undertaking, but, before setting out, the head of a dead chief is asked for a guarantee of success; meanwhile a sacrifice is made by a medicine-man. A wooden image, when consulted by the medicine-man, indicates the correct caravan route. These instances illustrate a blending of the sacred and the profane in occupations.

Sexual relationships among the Ovimbundu form a basis of social life, as they do in all communities, but the sexual aspect is not all-pervading and completely dominant.

In early years children separate during play. Boys play games of hunting and warfare, enter into competition with bows and arrows, or amuse themselves with wood-carving. Girls find amusement in imitating their mothers in the occupations of making pottery and baskets, and in cultivating the fields. The small sums of money which a girl derives from the sale of produce from her own corn patch are personal property which she usually spends on trinkets and palm oil. This measure of economic independence, combined with considerable freedom of choice in marriage, indicates an individuality that has not been generally recognized.

I have mentioned among the Ovimbundu a system of friendship between boys and girls of from twelve to sixteen years, which permits the children to sleep together in the home of one of the girls in whose house the early evening has been spent. Cohabitation is forbidden, and pregnancy would be a disgrace. The practice is not unlike that of night visits by a lover in certain European countries during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (W. Goodsell, A History of the Family as a Social and Educational Institution, p. 365). Clearly sex is a factor that plays its part as a formative influence from infancy onward, until final emphasis of sex dichotomy is made by tribal initiations.

The social position of woman may be considered by selecting a few points from the data relating to courtship, marriage, and divorce. Marriages are sometimes arranged during infancy, but this does not invalidate the previous statement that considerable freedom of choice is allowed; a girl is not compelled to follow arrangements made during her childhood. A bride has to make contributions toward the

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domestic equipment. Ritual enters into the introduction of the bride to her home, as was shown by explaining the functions of three elderly women, who erect the fireplace, bring new fire from the chief's house, and assist the bride in a ceremonial way. If a husband has reason to doubt the virginity of his bride, he bores a hole in her cloth with a firebrand, and makes her carry the cloth to her parents. But the marriage is not necessarily invalidated, since the husband is reconciled by a return of some portion of his gifts to the parents.

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Some light is thrown on the ethics of family life by considering the meeting which takes place in the men's council house (*onjango*) before the bride goes to her new home. Here in the presence of relatives from both families the father of the bride says, "We are taking these things for our daughter, we hope she will not shame us." He turns to his daughter, enjoining her to be hospitable, never forgetting to feed her husband's people when they call.

Minor incidents help in a study of the psychology of family life. When husband and wife have quarreled, the latter goes away for a few hours into the bush and arranges that a number of burrs shall be clinging to her dress when she returns. If her husband silently and spontaneously picks these from her cloth, amicable feeling is restored.

Analysis of the grounds for divorce shows that women have their rights, though the male is in the more favorable position. In Rome the legal rights of a matron were slender, but in actual practice she held an important and honorable position. Similarly the status of an Ocimbundu woman is higher than the divorce laws imply.

The human side of family differences was well brought out by studying the interference and indirect influence of relatives on the relationship of husband and wife. Details have been given indicating that divorce is not entirely a matter of adjustment between families; the village chief may be called upon to act as arbiter. The final ceremony of repudiation, at which the husband slaps his wife's back saying, "It is finished," is a public rite. There is here a close connection between family consent and public ratification.

Although a woman may return to her parents under certain conditions which justify the divorce of the husband, parents are not anxious to encourage this practice. Marriage tokens would have to be returned to the husband of their daughter; moreover there might be a difficulty in securing another husband. In this instance a conflict occurs between parental obligations and cupidity. This is again shown by the argument which always arises respecting

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the custody of a widow. The father, the brother, or the maternal uncle of the widow may take her. In the words of my interpreter, each says, "It is better that you should take her," and at last someone says, "I will take her." 105 593

A chief of Ngalangi revealed the most important aspect of polygyny when he apologized for the fact that only five of his eleven wives were present. The chief was anxious to emphasize the fact that he had eleven wives, though six were at work in the fields. 595

When one considers the prestige of village chiefs, and further reflects on the desirability of maintaining this power within family groups, the institution of polygyny becomes more understandable. In addition there is the necessity of having women to cultivate the fields. A polygynous system does not necessarily cause domestic conflict, because each wife has her own hut, fireplace, and utensils. Custom obliges a chief to spend four nights in each hut in regular sequence.

A first and principal wife is not offended by the introduction of other wives, for these reduce her own labor and announce the fact that she is the principal wife of a wealthy man. When photographing the king of Ngalangi with his wives, I observed that he sent the principal wife from the group in order to adorn herself with a piece of cloth whose value was greater than that of the clothing worn by any of the others. Among the Vakuanyama it was noticeable that the principal wife wore a head-dress of clay with five horns; and in addition to this she had costly necklaces of ostrich-eggshell beads, also more of the coveted *omba* shells than were allowed to other wives. In this way the prestige of the first or great wife is preserved.

The persistence of custom, the force of education through suggestion in early years, and the power of social attitudes, are well illustrated by the survival of kinship terms and the classificatory system of relationships, with its marriage prohibitions and sanctions of an arbitrary kind. The strength of the mores and the fundamental nature of this system of relationship in determining marriage, descent, succession, and inheritance, are indicated by the fact that the system is unaltered after three centuries of contact with Europeans. 602

The rights of a mother's brother extend so far as a sale of his sister's children to redeem his own debts; and reciprocally he is responsible for the conduct of his sister's children, even to the extent of paying fines for the thefts they may commit. This prerogative and responsibility of the maternal uncle is fundamental, and around the trait cluster points of law and legal procedure.

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Ethnologists have often emphasized the supposed subjection of the individuals to the group. Initiation rites do tend to uniformity of conduct and group control; yet among the Ovimbundu there are renowned leaders of caravans, chiefs who are respected because of their justice and intelligence, also medicine-men, craftsmen, and musicians who display great individuality. Their self-expression in tribal life results from special aptitude and natural force of character, which qualities are made evident by daily actions, or through loquacity in the council house. In several localities live chiefs, who, by personality and tact, make possible a social adjustment between the indigenous culture and foreign intruders.

In former times kings were at the head of the legal and military systems, and in this capacity they acted when appeals were made from the jurisdiction of village chiefs. Prosperity of the country is today thought to center in kings both living and dead, and the extant ritual associated with the obsequies of a king is an illustration of this dependence. The importance of the medicine-man as a diviner, physician, and rain-maker is little diminished even at the present day.

The operation of village communism and the manner in which this centers about persons of importance is seen during the preparation of a new site for a village. A description has been given relating to the selection of the site, employment of communal labor, the creation and distribution of new fire, and the function of the medicine-man on this occasion.

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Direct questioning concerning spiritual beliefs and the nature of a supreme being elicits little information, and that of a contradictory kind. As usual, actions are more important than statements. At a funeral, women dance, clap hands, and sing, "God has cheated us of a life." The inference seems to be that Suku gives and determines life. Beliefs respecting the good and bad spirits (*Olosande* and *Olondele*) are deeply ingrained in the lives of the Ovimbundu, who are confident of the need for placation of spirits by sacrifice, the use of wooden figurines, and the aid of the medicine-man. A study of the contents of a diviner's basket gives a clear idea of the powers and the activities of spirits; and the function of a spirit, which is able to hear and answer the living, is understood after observing the questioning of the corpse at a funeral. Without doubt, a belief in spirits and a reliance on the power of medicine-men are two of the fundamental ideas which permeate every thought and activity of the Ovimbundu, for by these agencies mundane matters are raised to a spiritual level.

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I cannot find in the life of the Ovimbundu anything to support the opinion of W. C. Willoughby. This writer sees in the soul of every race an instinct for god that tells upon behavior, an upward urge that makes for betterment, due to the unwearied play of the spirit of god on the souls of man. The views of E. Torday and R. J. van Wing (Dualism in Western Bantu Religion and Social Organization, *J.R.A.I.*, XLVIII, p. 225) seem to be more applicable to the spiritual beliefs of the Ovimbundu.

The Ovimbundu have standards of conduct, codes of laws, crimes, and punishments. In addition to the *ekandu* (antisocial acts) already noted, *ohembi* is a liar, *okusapa* means to be greedy, and such actions are deprecated; but there is no deistic injunction toward the virtues of truthfulness, hospitality, and fair dealing.

Standards of conduct and social values are preserved by the educational forces previously mentioned (chapter VII), and in addition to these there are such controls as trial by ordeal, and divination to detect guilt. The satirical song is also a form of correction, though its application may be antisocial, for instance in taunting the sexually impotent.

Music and dancing are adjuncts for the preservation of social customs and the stimulation of collective emotions on which cooperation depends. Music and dancing are also aids to magical practices. For example, a friction drum is played while a medicine-man carries out his divination with the basket, and vigorous drumming takes place during treatment of the sick. Music and dancing were again seen to be of importance at a funeral ceremony.

These instances, which are chosen from many of like kind reported in the foregoing chapters, serve to indicate an interrelationship among the main aspects of tribal life. I have endeavored to choose from personal experience those facts and incidents which illustrate the mutual dependence of language, folklore, proverbs, nature lore, food supply, and occupations.

The sexual division of labor, the connection of ceremonial with occupation, the relationship of the sexes, and the position of woman, have all been brought forward as examples of social controls.

The persistence of belief and custom despite foreign influences; the nature of government, including the psychology of prestige and leadership; spiritual beliefs; the training of children; and the value of music and dancing, have likewise been emphasized as coordinating

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principles among the religious, social, and economic aspects of tribal life.

In searching for some monism which integrates tribal thought and conduct, I would emphasize the relationship between the sacred and profane. The former is derived from the latter by ritual acts which are frequently, but not exclusively, connected with the medicine-man and spirits of the dead. These departed spirits do not sever their connection with the living. On the contrary, they are concerned with the affairs of men, which they handle benevolently or malevolently according to caprice.

Attention has been called to the importance of fire when ceremonially kindled and distributed; this is but a single instance of the sacred use of an everyday commodity. A woman's belt is an ordinary item of clothing, but it may be something more important. A woman who is the mother of girls only, exchanges belts with the mother of boys only, and in future the mother of female children will give birth to boys, and conversely. This is the simplest instance of transfer from a secular to a magical use without resort to an intermediary person such as the medicine-man.

Bows, mats, and staffs are articles of everyday use until their owners are dead and the articles are deposited in the house of bows. Such a house is then sacred, because the ancestral spirits can be induced to enter it to grant favors after sacrifice has been made. Cowrie shells were normally a medium of exchange, but they may become a charm in order to induce conception. A snake's backbone acquires power when threaded by the medicine-man and placed round the neck of a patient who suffers from rheumatism. A cooking pot of clay is entirely secular until it becomes the property of a hunter, after which no other person may use it. A piece of an ant hill is merely earth. But if the belated traveler takes such a piece from the top of the hill and places it in the fork of a branch there will be an extension of daylight. A ritual element enters in the spell, "O sun, wait for me a little while."

The unifying and binding effect of magical rites, simple or complex, private and public, is the warp of the fabric by which the weft threads of the social pattern are bound together. To vary the metaphor, tribal life is a sphere of action, a universe having principal units around which others revolve. Each unit of the structure has a course and movements peculiar to itself, but there is no actual isolation from the influences of other bodies.

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The part played by Portuguese influence in the formation of the culture of the Ovimbundu has previously been recognized, and in conclusion reference should be made to Portuguese and Ovimbundu relationships at the present day. 177

Native trade and military organization were at one time aided by caravan journeys resulting in the acquisition of slaves and ivory, which were traded for guns and powder. But this caravan trade touching remote parts of central and east Africa is now obsolete. Therefore a breaking down of the economic structure has occurred, but this has to some extent been counteracted by the development of agriculture, which yields large crops of maize and beans.

In the administration of law a new social consciousness has arisen. Portuguese government is of a somewhat direct kind, yet village chiefs and kings have some juridical rights. Appeal to a chief or a king was the old method of securing justice, and at present such appeal may be made by an aggrieved Ocimbundu; but should the appellant be dissatisfied he turns to the Portuguese court.

Portuguese policy aims at making the Ovimbundu a social reflection of the Portuguese themselves. European clothing and manufactures are favored, and Portuguese speech is encouraged, to the detriment of the native Umbundu.

Initiation ceremonies are forbidden, but the bush is wide and protective. To prevent these ceremonies is to take the core from the social system, which has already been weakened by recruiting of labor, so leading to disturbance of family life and village organization. Christian missions have an influence on dress, beliefs, and habits, but these effects appear to be local.

Although this report has been chiefly geographical, ethnological, historical, and analytical, no apology for the method chosen is necessary since this kind of approach is fundamental. I might, in compliance with a modern trend, have made the monograph center in persons, especially Ngonga. By making a close psychological study of his early years, his native environment, and changes in mental attitude arising from contact with Portuguese rule and American missions, an illuminating record of the result of conflicting social forces could be given. 121

In a sense, Ngonga, who speaks English, Portuguese, and Umbundu fluently, has been the focus of study, and care has been taken to recognise his personality in this report. I realise that in Angola work of an intensive psychological and sociological kind remains to be done by means of a penetrating analysis of many [115]

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12-1 individual careers. Inquirers should closely observe persons who are yet molded chiefly by their native environment, and these individuals should be compared with those who have left their own culture, either permanently or temporarily, to form part of a European social and economic system.

Ethnologists, educationalists, and administrators are concerned with the effects of conflicting cultures on individual attitudes and the stability of native institutions of all kinds. This type of psychological and sociological study has not been attempted in detail here, and I am not confident that research so closely concerned with administrative methods would be encouraged from a foreigner, though he might be welcomed in Angola as a collector and ethnologist.

During four centuries of foreign contacts the Ovimbundu have continued their resistance to European influence, and field records of 1929 are clear evidence of the tenacity of indigenous culture. But, unfortunately, the decline of indigenous industries, thought processes, institutions, and language has begun. Yet I venture to hope that this monograph will lay a dependable and timely foundation for future studies of behavior, for on research of that kind depends a sympathetic understanding of Negro reaction to European intrusion.

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W. Hambly E-S (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 M'bundu FP13

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BASKET-WORK PATTERNS

[p. 363

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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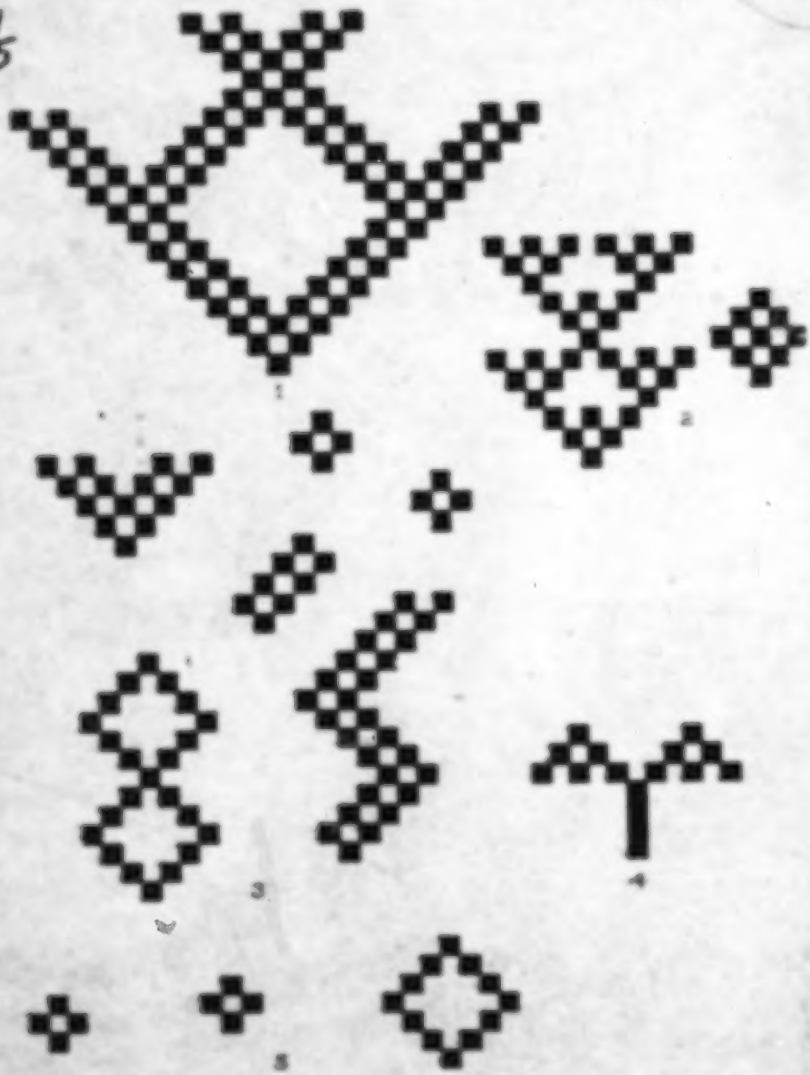

BASKET-WORK PATTERNS

[p. 364]

S: Hambly E-5 (1920-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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INCISED AND BURNED DESIGNS ON A GOURD

[p. 365]

Field Museum of Natural History Anthropology, Vol. XXI, Plate XII

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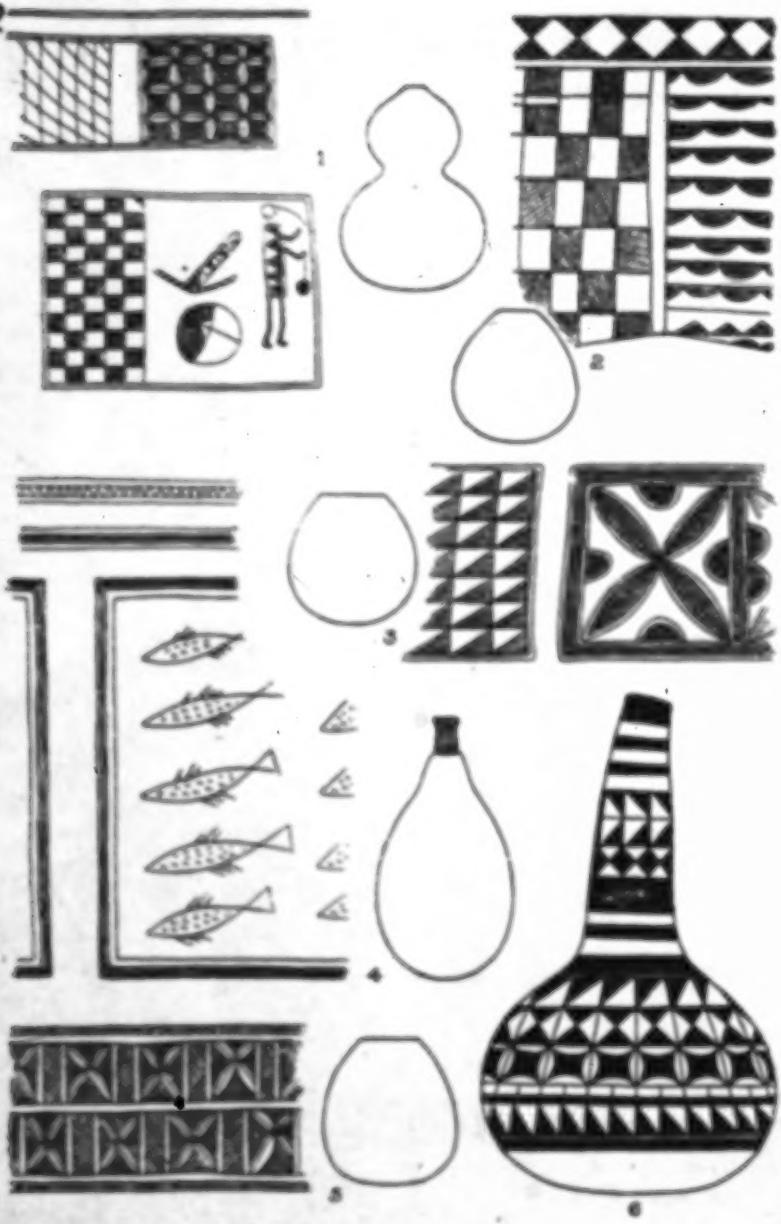

INCISED AND BURNED DECORATIONS ON GOURDS

[p. 366]

S. Hambly E-5 (1929)-1930) 1934 FF13 Mbundu FF13

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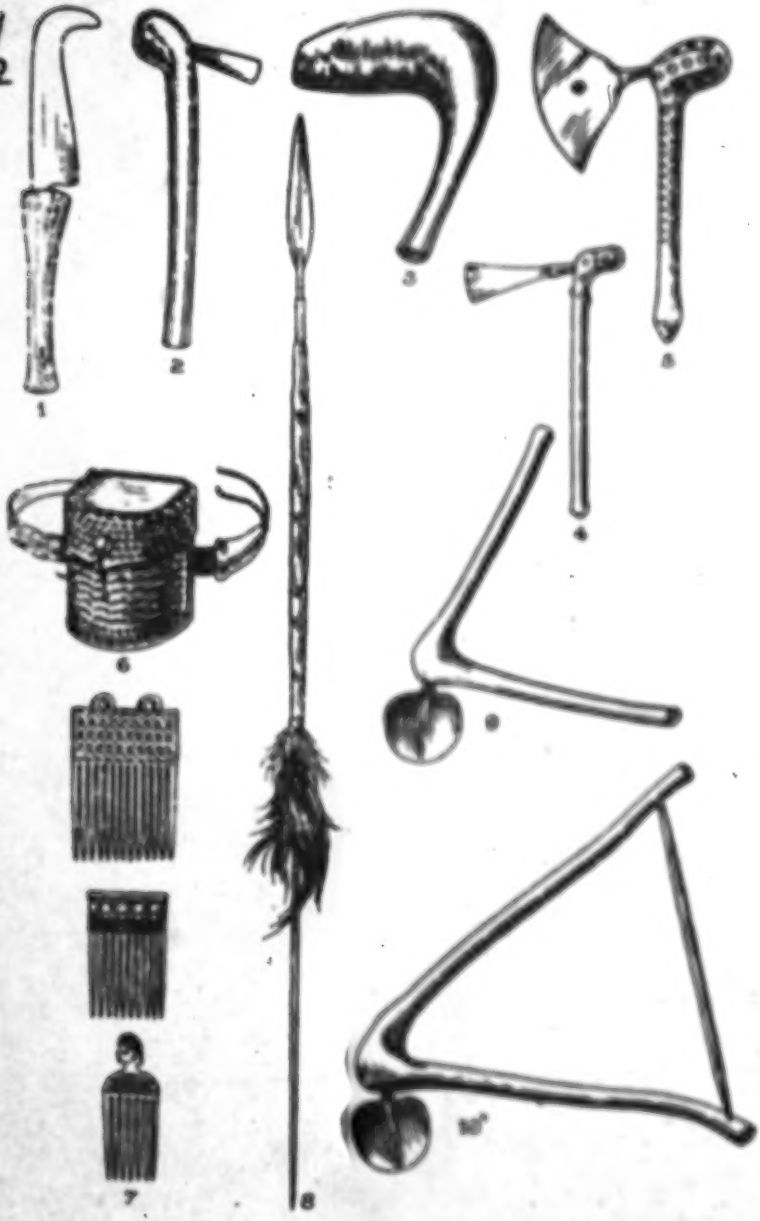

WOODEN COMBS, TOOLS, DOMESTIC IMPLEMENTS, AND WEAPONS

[p. 367]

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POTTERY AND WOODEN UTENSILS

[p 364]

Field Museum of Natural History Anthropology, Vol. XXI, Plate XV

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[285]

TOBACCO-PIPES, SNUFF BOX, RAT TRAP, AND BASKET

[p. 369]

B: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

TOOLS AND WEAPONS

[A 370]

W. Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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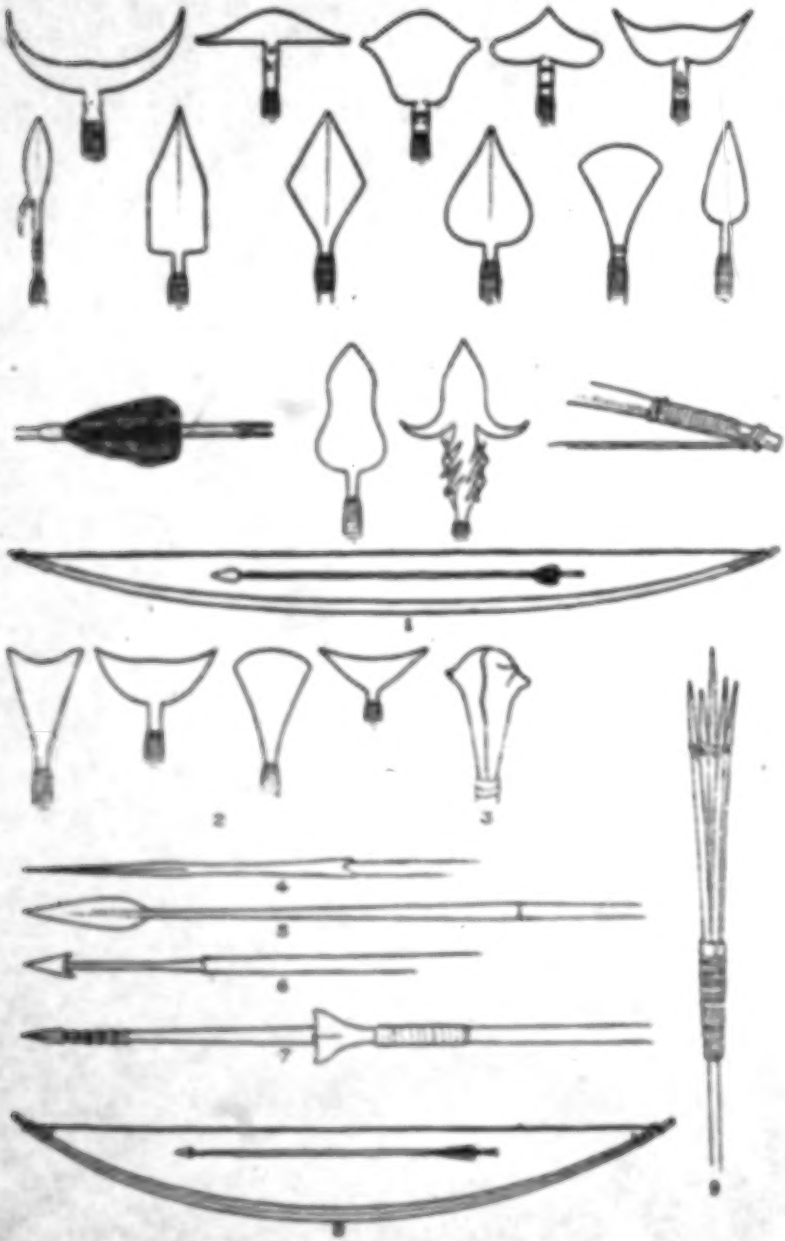

BOWS AND ARROWHEADS

[p.371]

Field Museum of Natural History Anthropology, Vol. XXI, Plate XVIII

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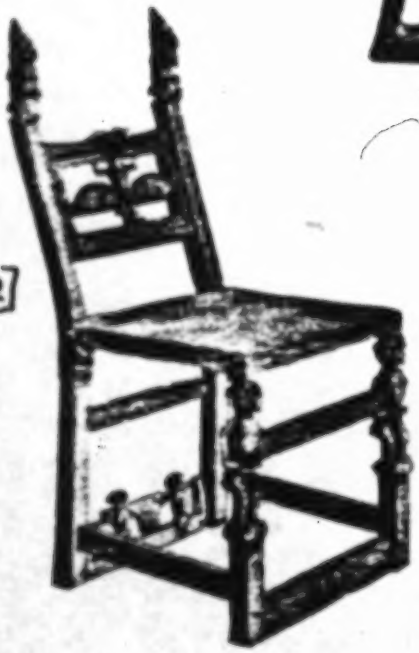
[532]



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HUT FURNITURE AND MASK

[p.372]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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WOOD-CARVING

[p.373]

B: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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STAFFS OF VILLAGE CHIEFS

[p. 374]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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CARVED HUMAN FIGURES

[p. 315]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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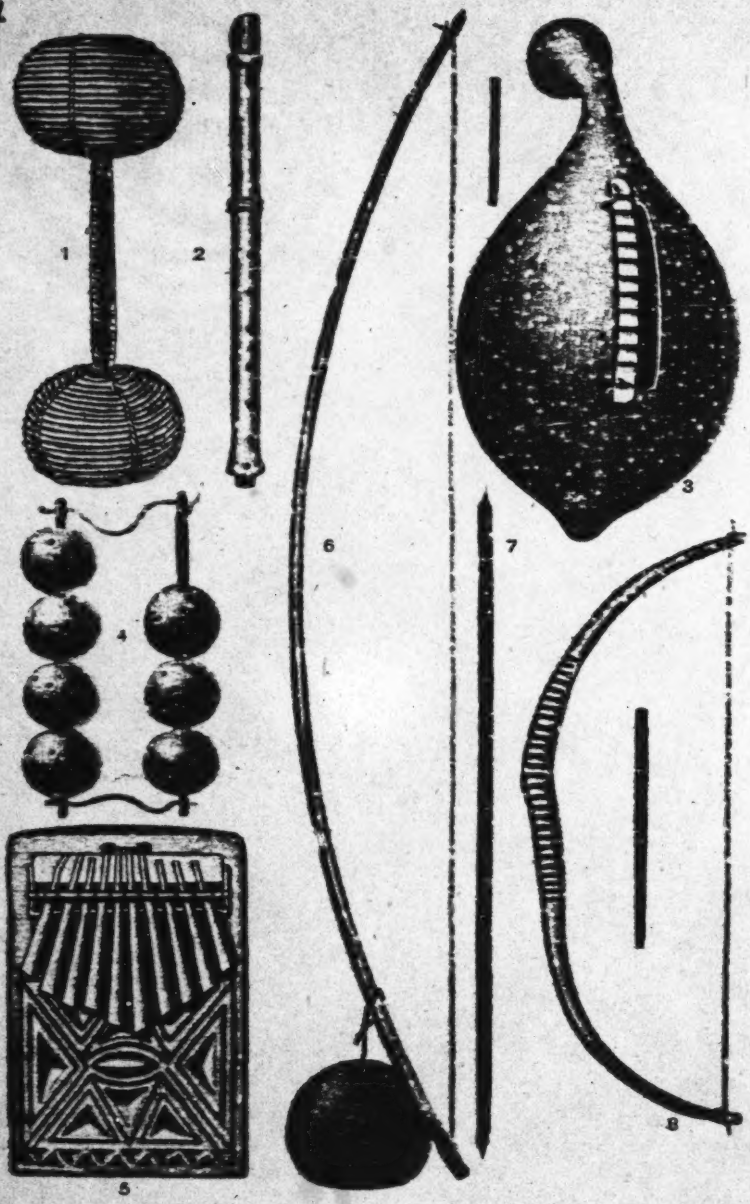

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

[p. 376]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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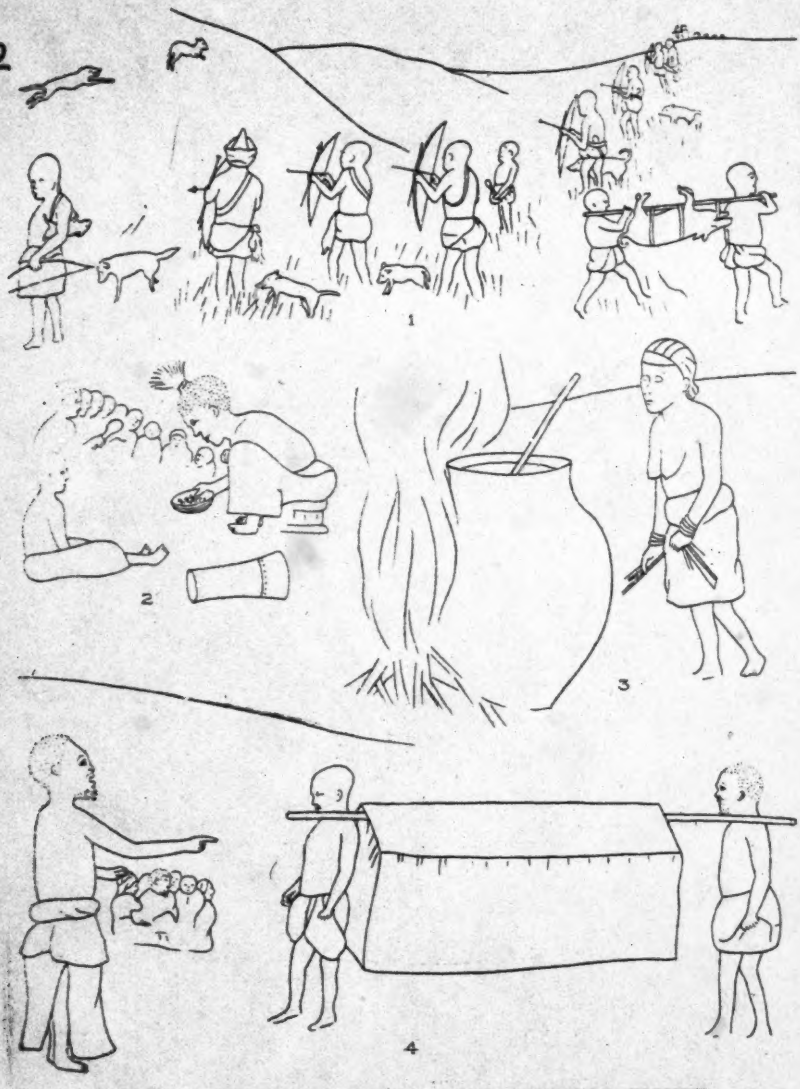

DRAWINGS REPRESENTING LIFE OF OVIMBUNDU, ELENDE

Made by untrained Ocimbundu youth who had lived with Europeans

[p. 377]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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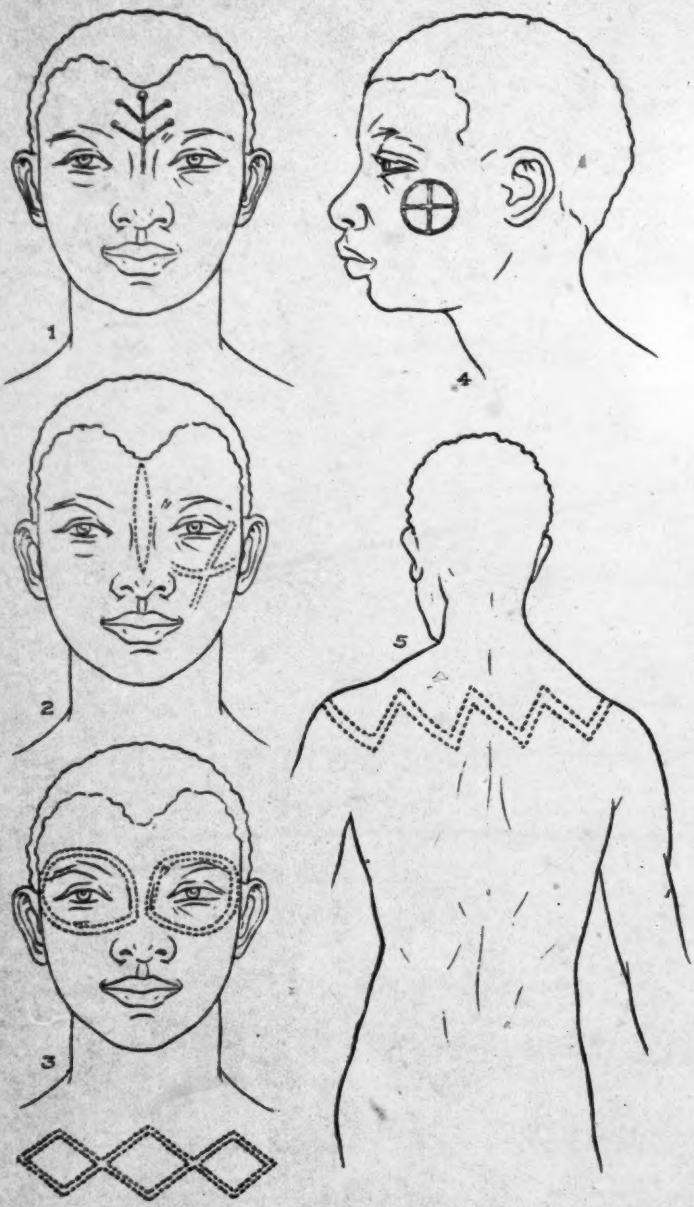

EXAMPLES OF SCARIFICATION

[p. 378]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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POSITIONS OF HANDS IN DRUMMING, OVIMBUNDU, ELENDE

Front view

[p. 379]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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POSITIONS OF HANDS IN DRUMMING, OVIMBUNDU, ELENDE

Side view

[p. 380]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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OVIMBUNDU DRUMMERS, ELENDE

Fig. 1. Long drums. Fig. 2. Flat drum

[p. 381]

B. Handley E-3 (1959-1960) 1956 FF13 Mbundu FF13

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[p. 382]

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OVIMBUNDU, ELENDE

3: Hambly B-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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AGRICULTURE NEAR GANDA

Fig. 1. Tobacco plants on sun hill. Fig. 2. Clearing the bush

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METHODS OF TRANSPORTATION, BLACKS

D. Kanthly 1-8 (1929-1930) 1934 FMS-Anthropology FM3

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METHODS OF TRANSPORTATION, OVIMBUNDU, BLENDE

Fig. 1. Boy carrying pig. Fig. 2. Man bearing sick man in hammock

[p. 385]

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PURCHASE

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[Face p.]

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OTOMIBONDU MAKING POTTERY, ILENDE

Fig. 1. Building pottery vessel. Fig. 2. Molding pot with hands and gourd

[p.381]

B. Hambly E-6 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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OVIMBUNDU MAKING POTTERY, ELENDE

Fig. 1. Molding and smoothing wet pot. Fig. 2. Finished wet pots with incised designs

[p. 388]

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Anthropology, Vol. XXII, Plate XXXV

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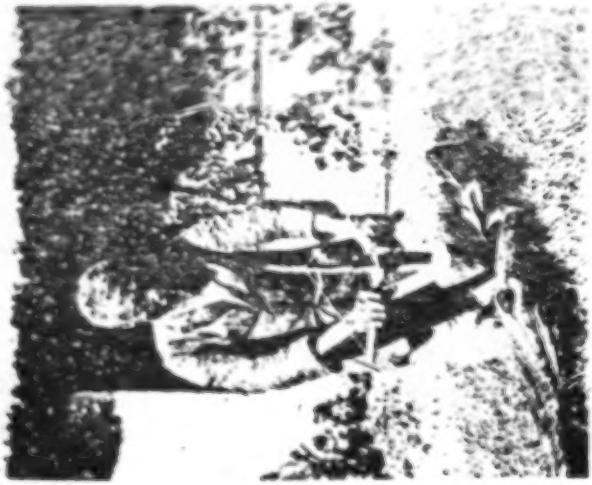

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OVIMBUNDU

Fig. 1. Using drill, Bailundu. Fig. 2. Girl, Bailundu

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[p. 389]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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OCCUPATIONS OF OVIMBUNDU, ELENDE

Fig. 1. Male cotton spinner. Fig. 2. Woman pounding maize

3. Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbunda FP13

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BLACKSMITHS AT WORK, OVIMBUNDU, ELENDE

Fig. 1. Working bellows. Fig. 2. Forging axhead

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[p. 391]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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BLACKSMITHS AT WORK, OVIMBUNDU, ELENDE

Fig. 1. Pounding on anvil. Fig. 2. Using cutting tool

[p. 392]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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OVIMBUNDU, ELENDE

Fig. 1. Hunter. Fig. 2. Woman making coiled basket

[p. 393]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP1

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3

OVIMBUNDU TRIBE

Fig. 1. Flute players, Bailundu. Fig. 2. Bark removed for making utensils, Humbe
Fig. 3. Girl, hair studded with brass nails, Humbe

[p.394]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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OVIMBUNDU WOOD-CARVERS, BLENDE

Fig. 1. Making human and animal figures. Fig. 2. Carving drum

[p.395]

xHambly E-5 (1929-1930)1934 FP3 Mbundu FP3

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OCIMBUNDU MAKING MATS, BLENDE

Fig. 1. Tool for mat-making. Fig. 2. Threading reeds on tool

[P. 396]

S. Hamilton E-5 (1899-1900) 1904 FF13 Mbundu FF13

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TRANSPORTATION, OVIMBUNDU, BLENDE

Fig. 1. Bridge across swamp and stream. Fig. 2. Carrying children

[p. 397]

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BUILDING CONSTRUCTION, OVIMBUNDU, ELENDE

Fig. 1. Mulao hut. Fig. 2. Framework of house

[p. 398]

B. Hambly E-6 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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FUNERAL RITES, OVIMBUNDU, ELENDE

Fig. 1. Old Ovimbundu questioning corpse and offering food. Fig. 2. Burial place of chief, Elende

[p. 399]

3: Hambly FE-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu

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FUNERAL RITES, OVIMBUNDU

Fig. 1. Hut where possessions of dead chiefs are kept, Elundu

Fig. 2. Horns of an ever grave, near Cacondo

[p. 400]

S. Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) FP94 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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FUNERAL RITES, OVIMBUNDU, CACONDA

Fig. 1. Bamboo and coffin pole on grave. Fig. 2. Hut over grave

[p. 401]

W. Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu F

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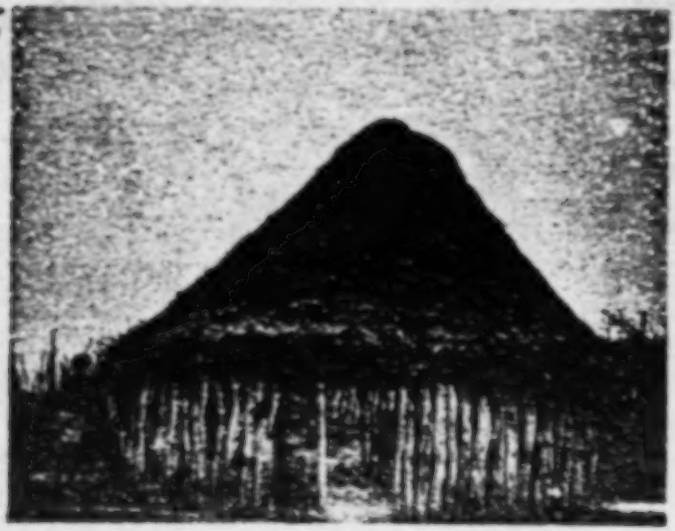

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SOCIAL LIFE OF OVIMBUNDU

Fig. 1. Men's club house, Bailundu. Fig. 2. Guest house, Bailundu

[p. 402]

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PHYSICAL TYPES, OVIMBUNDU, ELENDE

Fig. 1. Boys, showing tooth mutilation on left. Fig. 2. Girl with field basket

[p. 403]

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B. Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

S. Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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OVIMBUNDU WOMEN AND INFANTS, ELENDE

[p.404]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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OVIMBUNDU WOMEN AND CHILDREN, ELENDE

[p. 405]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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OVIMBUNDU YOUTHS, ELENDE

[p.406]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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OVIMBUNDU MEN, ELENDE

[p. 407]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13-Mbundu FP13

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[P.408]

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TYPES OF OVIMBUNDU, ELENDE

Fig. 1. Negro type, teeth mutilated in tribal manner. Fig. 2. Modified Negro type

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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PIGS OWNED BY OVIMBUNDU, ELENDE, KELTIC BREED

[p. 409]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP1

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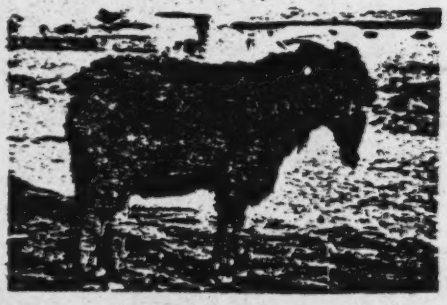

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DOMESTIC ANIMALS, OVIMBUNDU

Fig. 1. Sheep and lamb, Elende. Fig. 2. Dog, Elende, ears clipped "to make him hear well." Fig. 3. Goat, Bailundu

[p. 410]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1924 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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DOMESTIC ANIMALS, OVIMBUNDU, ELENDE

Fig. 1. Cattle. Fig. 2. Goats

[p. 411]

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3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13-Mbundu FP13

[P.412]

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PHYSICAL TYPES, SOUTHWEST ANGOLA

Fig. 1. Girls of Lovando tribe. Fig. 2. Woman of Gambos wearing ombu ornaments

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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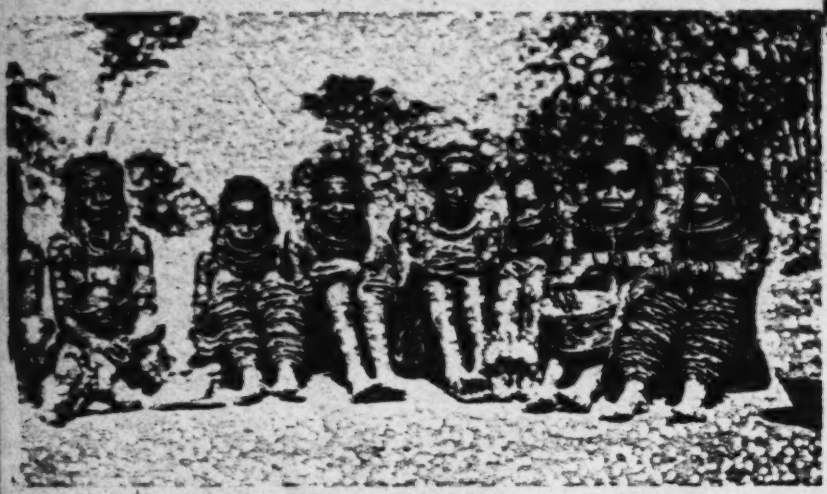
301



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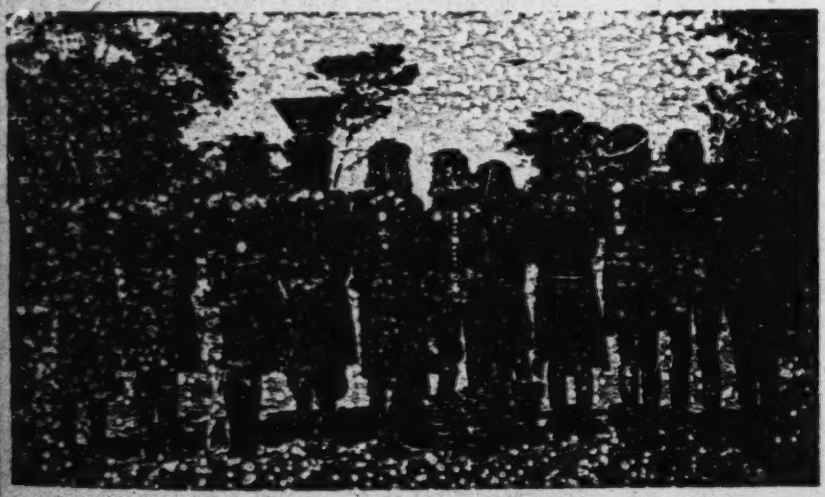

2

FEMALE TYPES, SOUTHWEST ANGOLA

Fig. 1. Lovando girls near Kipunco. Fig. 2. Back view, same type

[p. 413]

W. Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13-Mbundu FP13

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FEMALE TYPES, SOUTHWEST ANGOLA

Fig. 1. Girls of Vahenaca tribe near Huila. Fig. 2. Woman of Huila

[P. 414]

3. Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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FEMALE TYPES, SOUTHWEST ANGOLA

Fig. 1. Women of Gambos. Fig. 2. Women of Humbe tribe, Mongua

[p. 415]

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8: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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VAHENECA GIRL AT HUILA

Fig. 1. Front view. Fig. 2. Back view

[p. 416]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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VAKUANYAMA TYPES, MONGUA, SOUTH ANGOLA

[p.412]

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3. Hamely E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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[p.418]

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NATIVES OF HUILÁ, SOUTHWEST ANGOLA

Fig. 1. Wearing forehead band and ombo shell. Fig. 2. Wearing beaded collar and ombo shell

1 2 3

VAKUANYAMA WOMEN, MONGUA, SOUTH ANGOLA

Fig. 1. Wearing pleated leather skirts. Figs. 2, 3. Showing headdress which denotes position as principal wife in polygynous family

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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[p.419]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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[p. 470]

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STORAGE OF MAIZE, VAKUANYAMA, SOUTH ANGOLA

Fig. 1. Grain basket. Fig. 2. Shelter for basket

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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VAKUANYAMA TRIBE, SOUTH ANGOLA

Fig. 1. Man treading hide, for making woman's skirt. Fig. 2. Typical dwelling, Dera Mannel

[p.421]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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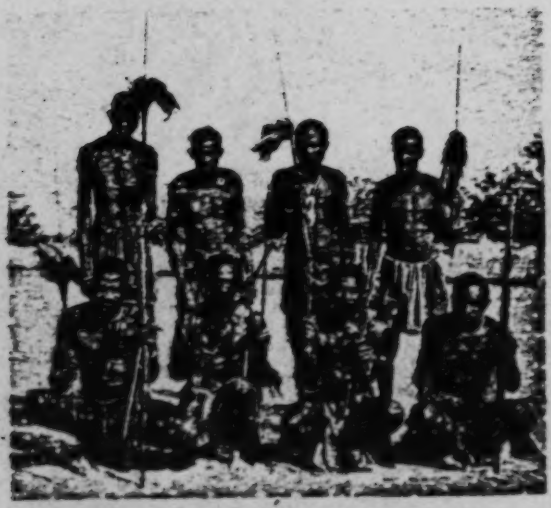

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TRIBES OF SOUTH ANGOLA

Fig. 1. Valuanca, right and left; Ganhar women and children, center. Fig. 2. Valuanyama men, with assagais, clubs, and bows, Humpar.

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BUSHMAN, CASSANGA

Fig. 1. Front view. Fig. 2. Side view

[p.423]

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3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13/Albundu FP13

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[p.424]

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MUSSURONGO TYPES, MALANGE, NORTHWEST ANGOLA
Fig. 1. Old. Fig. 2. Man

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MUSSURONGO WOMAN, NEAR MALANGE, NORTHWEST ANGOLA

Fig. 1. Front view. Fig. 2. Back view

[p.425]

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2: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FF13 Mbundu FF13

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP1

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DUGOUT CANOES, RIVER KWANZA, NEAR MALANGE, NORTHWEST ANGOLA

Fig. 1. Entrance. Fig. 2. View of stern

[p. 426]

[p.421]

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FISHING AND HUNTING

Fig. 1. Fishing spear, Ambrisette, northwest Angola. Fig. 2. Stakes for impaling antelope, Vasele, west-central Angola

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3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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HUNTER'S TOMB AND VILLAGE OF VASELE

Fig. 1. Tomb, near Luimbale. Fig. 2. Village, near Vila Nova de Salles

[p.428]

W. Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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FEMALE TYPES OF VASELE, WEST-CENTRAL ANGOLA

Fig. 1. Wearing nose-pin and cowrie-shell head-band. Fig. 2. Wearing beaded head-band. Note scarification of forehead and cheeks

[p.429]

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S. Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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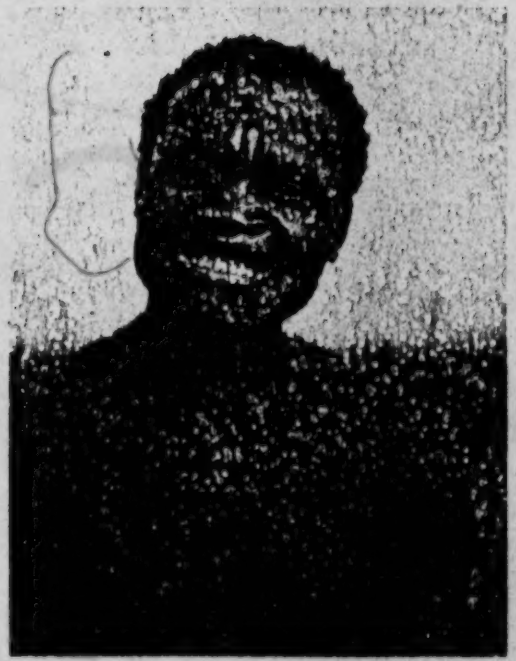

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MEN OF VARELE, WEST-CENTRAL ANGOLA

Fig. 1. Showing typical mutilation of teeth. Fig. 2. Displaying scarification on chest, said to cure pain

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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WOMEN IN CHARGE OF TRIBAL INITIATION OF GIRLS,
VANYEMBA, NGONGO, CENTRAL ANGOLA

Fig. 1. Front view. Fig. 2. Back view

[p.431]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13-Mbundu FP13

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[P.432]

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COSTUMES WORN IN TRIBAL INITIATION CEREMONIES FOR BOYS

Fig. 1. Costumes of Vasangulla and Ovimbundu, Mossamedes. Fig. 2. Ceremonial dress of mixed tribes at Kaleko

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TRIBAL INITIATION OF BOYS, VACHOKUE, CANGAMBA

Fig. 1. Novices in enclosure. Fig. 2. Public appearance after initiation

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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TRIBAL INITIATION OF BOYS, VACHOKUE, CANGAMBA

Fig. 1. [illegible] Fig. 2. Cages in which boys lie after circumcision

[P.434]

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CONCLUDING CEREMONIES, TRIBAL INITIATION, CANGAMBA

Fig. 1. Stilt-walkers, Vachokue. Fig. 2. Medicine-man, Lochasi

[p.435]

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S. Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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[p.434]

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VACHOKUE, EAST ANGOLA

Fig. 1. Medicine-man, Cangamba, performing ceremony to make thief return to village. Fig. 2. Man, Moxe Kuimbundu

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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TREATING SICK WOMAN, VACHOKUE, CANGAMBA

Fig. 1. Medicine-man stroking patient's spine. Fig. 2. Preparing for ablution of face

[p. 437]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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TYPES OF VACHOKUE, MONA KUIMBUNDU, NORTHEAST ANGOLA

Fig. 1. Women pounding maize. Fig. 2. Dwelling

[P.438]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FR12

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VACHOKUE FISHING AT CANGAMBA

Fig. 1. Women dragging basket. Fig. 2. Man in bark canoe, holding net

[p.439]

3: Hambly E-8 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13-Mbundu FP13

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VACHOKUE, EAST ANGOLA

Fig. 1. Cupping operation, Ngungo, Ngalangi. Fig. 2. Group, Mona Kulumbundu

[p. 440]

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VACHOKUE WOMEN, EAST ANGOLA

Fig. 1. Albino, Cangamba. Fig. 2. Women at Ngongo, Ngalangi

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[p. 444]

VACHOKUE WOMAN, NGONGO, NGALANGI

Fig. 1. Showing mutilated teeth. Fig. 2. Showing scarification

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SCENES IN CENTRAL ANGOLA

Fig. 1. House where king communes with ancestral spirits, Ngalangi
Fig. 2. House with painted walls, near Bailundu
Fig. 3. Group showing mixture of tribes at Ngalangi

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EAST-CENTRAL ANGOLA

Fig. 1. Woman of Vanjangelo, Cassanga. Fig. 2. Beehive, Inandongo

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TYPES OF BABUNDA, CANGAMBA, SHOWING MUTILATED TEETH

Fig. 1. Woman. Fig. 2. Man

[P. 445]

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3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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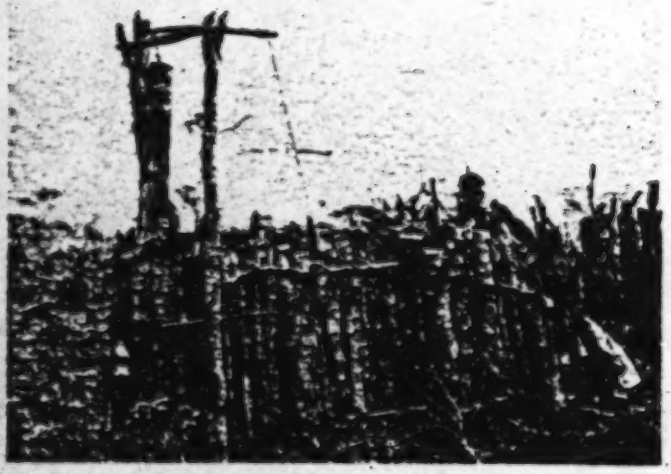

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MAGIC AND HUNTING, CENTRAL ANGOLA

Fig. 1. Mound where childless women are covered with mud to give fertility, Vangangalla, Ngalangi

Fig. 2. Trap for leopards, Cangumbo

[p.446]

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116 TEXTS--a full set of pages from each processed source, arranged in page order, as a means of establishing the context for any particular slip. Sets are arranged in the numerical order of the sources. See also:

Literary texts 539

4:Dorsey E-4, 5 (no date)1899 FP13 Mbundu FP13

THE OCIMBANDA, OR WITCH-DOCTOR OF THE OVIMBUNDU OF PORTUGUESE SOUTHWEST AFRICA.

114 In July of last year the Anthropological Department of the Field Columbian Museum ·ured an ethnological collection from the Ovimbundu of the Portuguese African province of Angola. The collection was made by Rev. T. W. Woodside, a missionary for seven years among the Ovimbundu, and, on account of its completeness and the full data which accompanied the objects, is of unusual [121] importance and value. Perhaps of chief interest among the series of objects illustrating the various phases of native life in this region is the complete "medicine chest" of a witch-doctor. This I shall describe, making free use of the extensive notes furnished by Mr. Woodside, supplemented by several conversations during which the objects themselves were discussed, and much information furnished concerning the Ovimbundu in general. The collection under consideration was obtained from a single individual, and has seen long use.

101 The Ovimbundu are a southern division of an extensive group of people known as the Bundas, who, in turn, belong to the group of Bantu populations. They occupy the territory of the Bailundu and Bihe plateaus, from Bengualla to the Quanza River, a table-land 4000 to upwards of 6000 feet high, and in south latitude about twelve 142 degrees. The Ovimbundu are described by Mr. Woodside as a dark-skinned people, varying from coffee-brown to quite black, with thick curly hair. They are entirely uncivilized, but are a peaceable, 105 kindly people. Their food is chiefly vegetal, although they possess cattle, sheep, goats, pigs, and chickens. They practise polygamy, and the women prepare the food and do nearly all the field work. The men are famous as traders, and journey to the interior for rubber, wax, ivory, and slaves; the latter they secure by purchase from the country of the Lubas. The principal medium of exchange is a cheap cotton cloth which is obtained from white travellers.

791 Among the Ovimbundu, as in nearly all parts of Africa, the 759 witch-doctor is an important personage. He is feared by all classes, and often has more influence and power than the chief himself. Whenever anything is lost or stolen, they apply to the witch-doctor to find out where the object is, or who is the thief. As no one is [761] supposed to die a natural death, the doctor is called in to discover the witch who caused the death. To him they go for all kinds of charms to protect themselves against all evils, or to cast a spell on some one whom they wish to injure; to him they also go for help in

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791 case of sickness. He is also a diviner, reading both the past and
759 future. At all spirit feasts, at the installation of a new chief, in preparation for war, and on almost every occasion the witch-doctor plays a prominent part. He bears an influential position among his people, and his art is the source of a considerable income, for always before he begins operations the pay must be brought and laid down before him. Thus it is that he is loth to part with even a few of his charms, much less a full set.

The ocimbanda does not inherit his power, but must serve a long apprenticeship to some old witch-doctor, whom he pays liberally. He is then given a small basket with a few charms, to which he adds from time to time. His idols and charms are not made by him, but
[778] are purchased one by one. All of these objects are considered powerful, *cikola* or sacred, and the common people are afraid to touch them; even the touch of a white man is sacrilegious. One of the distinguishing features of a witch-doctor's costume is a head-dress, *ekufue*, made of long porcupine quills fastened together at one end, sewn to a cloth disk about two inches in diameter. Many of the quills are over a foot in length. This headdress is only worn when divining. He also occasionally wears about the loins a girdle, *sya*, consisting of a strip of antelope skin sewn together along the two edges, thus forming a pouch which contains medicines. Attached to the girdle are war charms and medicines, of which he eats from time to time. There are also several kinds of small skins in the collection, on which the doctor kneels when about to perform. Two pigments should also be noticed. The first is a white, clayey
[302] substance, *ocikela*, with which the ocimbanda paints himself, and with which he also marks the person whom by his divining he has discovered to be innocent, the sign of acquittal being a mark across the forehead and down the arms. The other pigment is a red clay, *onongo*, with which he also marks his own body and employs as the sign of guilt.

787 Of the various objects of the ocimbanda's[1] outfit proper, the most
415 important is the basket, *uhamba*, in which the outfit is kept. When it is said that so and so has a "uhamba," it means that he is a witch-doctor. The basket is thirteen inches high by nineteen in length, and eight inches in thickness. The ends are rounded, thus giving the basket, as seen from above, an elliptical form. The cover, three inches in height, fits closely down over the basket, after the manner of our telescope bag. The bottom of the basket is made separate, and is fastened by means of an interlacing of grass braid. The sides of the basket are simply one long strip of interlaced reed and bark fibre, the ends overlapping and being fastened together by the grass braid, which passes up continuously from the bottom to

[1] [i.e., diviner.-- Analyst]

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the top of the basket which it circles, thus giving a decorative 787
effect as well as affording additional strength. The lid is built in a 415
similar manner.

Only second in importance is a small basket-shaped gourd, *ongombo*, used in divination. The basket is ten inches in diameter and three inches deep. Around the rim is bound two bands of grass fibre, thus affording strength, and, by means of the manner of binding these in place, a certain amount of decoration. The basket has evidently seen much use, for the bottom is cracked in several places and has been mended with cotton thread. On two sides near the rim are two cowry shells. The contents of this basket are extremely varied, all the objects being in the nature of charms. Among them may be enumerated several small images made of different kinds of wood, horn of a goat, ox hoof, piece of pig's foot, lion's tooth; skin from the nose of a hyena, to smell out crime; bone of a person, a supposed witch; chicken bones, and a chicken head with open mouth, which is supposed to represent a gossip; and dozens of other trinkets, each having its own significance in the eyes of the witch-doctor.

During the process of divination two images, *ovitakas*, represent- 789
ing male and female, are set up before the ocimbanda, that he may 778
cause them to be inhabited by spirits. These are not worshipped as idols, yet are venerated in a sense by the common people, especially by women and children. The images are carved out of hard wood, and stand a little over a foot in height. Each one is partially clothed in a cotton wrapper, and bears about the neck several strands of native beads. They possess unusual interest, as on the back of the head of each the manner of wearing the hair of each sex is carefully portrayed. Attached to the male by a string around the neck is a rosette of dull red and yellow feathers, one of which has been artificially notched. To enable the ocimbanda to call the spirits into these images, he uses a whistle, *omlinga*, consisting of the horn of a small antelope inserted into an ox-tail wrapped with beads arranged into broad bands of white, black, and red. Furthermore, when about to divine, the doctor eats a number of ants. He also has some medicines known collectively as *ovihemba*, which are kept in a skin, from which he takes and eats before and during divining. Of rattles, *ocisikilo*, shaken by the ocimbanda during the practice of his art, there are two, both bottle-shaped gourds containing cannalilly seeds.

When the ocimbanda goes to divine, he first carefully spreads his 787
skins one upon the other, and upon these he places his basket of charms. He puts white and red clay on his eyebrows, cheek bones, shoulders, and elbows; also stripes his body with these clays, and

4:Dorsey E-4, 5 (no date)1899 FP13 Mbundu FP13

787 puts on his necklace and headdress, which gives him a strange, wild appearance. Taking one of the gourd rattles, and giving the others to the parties interested, setting up the images, he is ready for operations. He begins by shaking the gourds and blowing the horn whistle, at the same time chanting in a minor strain, all the rest responding in chorus. In this way he works himself up into a sort of frenzy. He then takes the basket of charms, and, by throwing them slightly, claims to be able to read from them the past and future, and to declare the guilt or innocence of a person. In this way trivial matters, as well as the most weighty, even life and death, are decided. For instance, if, while determining whether an accused person is a witch or not, in his shaking and throwing of the charms the little horn with the wax and red seeds should stand upright, that would be taken as evidence of guilt; while if, on the contrary, the little image with the small cowry shell on the head should stand upright, that is evidence conclusive that the person is innocent. Not only is the question of guilt thus decided, but witch-doctors are thought to be able to predict coming events.

751 An important object in the outfit is a large horn of the roan antelope, containing a smaller antelope horn, medicines, oils, etc., prepared by the ocimbanda.[1] This is known as *ombinga*, or "loaded horn," and is considered efficacious in warding off from its possessor all harm, lightning, disease, witches, spirits, wild animals, etc. Carried upon journeys, it also insures a prosperous issue to the undertaking, and affords as well protection. Somewhat similar in [789] construction, but used for an entirely different purpose, is the *ocifungo* or rain wand. This is the tail of an ox, into which are inserted two small horns with medicines and oils. By blowing the horns and waving the tail, the ocimbanda is supposed to drive off rains at will.[1]

Of numerous small charms, *umbanda*, in the collection, two are of sufficient interest to merit notice. One consists of two four-inch-long bottle-shaped objects made of woven string, from the mouth of each of which projects a two-inch tuft of very tiny feathers. The two objects are joined at the top and bottom, and singly bear a decided resemblance to a Hopi *tiponi*, or religious society's palladium. They contain medicines and are worn from the neck. This is a special war charm, and affords protection against bullets and all harm in battle. The other charm is an ox's hoof into which is thrust a small antelope horn and medicines. In times of special danger, it is put up somewhere in the village for protection. Still

[1] Mr. Woodside also states that this same power is attributed by the Ovimbundu to white men; and when they are told that we do not possess this power, "they calmly look us in the eye and say, 'wa kemba' (you lie)."

[1] [i.e., diviner. Cf. pp. 183-186, cat. 116.--Analyst]

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Still another form of fetish for protection are two small images also 778 known as *ovitekas*. They, like the other *ovitekas* described above[1] are of wood, but are rudely carved from two round pieces of wood about sixteen inches long. No attempt has been made to represent the human form in any detail, only the face, neck, and arms being indicated. The face of both images has been besmeared with some reddish black pigment. These were placed where the path to the village branches off to the caravan road. A small hut before which they stood was built for them, about two feet square, and between two and three feet high, with a thatched grass roof. Within was a shelf on which from time to time was placed food, corn, and a small gourd of beer. This was done to appease certain spirits which were supposed to be angry with the village and were causing sickness.

For the so-called poison test three medicines are employed. The 695 first and most common is known as the *ombambu*, a drug obtained 278 from the country east of the Quanza River, and represented in the collection by a piece of bark. It has the property of a powerful spinal irritant, and it is said that a very small quantity will produce death. There is a current belief among the Ovimbundu that if a bird alights upon the *ombambu* tree it will fall down dead. The second drug, or *ombambu*, employed in the poison test is obtained from the Bihe country, and is represented by several roots. It is taken in the form of a decoction. The third test is known as *onsunga*. This is a mixture of powdered herbs, and is obtained from the country of the Ganguellas. With these three drugs should be mentioned a small gourd, *okopo*, used by the ocimbanda in mixing the medicines, and from which during the poison test the parties drink. The test medicines are stirred with the foot of a small antelope. Occasion for the administering of the poison may arise in various ways. Frequently one person will accuse another of being a witch. The accused may deny it, and appeal to the poison test to prove his innocency. They go to the chief, who calls an ocimbanda, who mixes up a concoction in a gourd, and both the accuser and accused drink. If the draughts make one sick and he vomits, he is acquitted; and if the other one becomes very sick and does not vomit, he is said to be the witch. This same test is often appealed to in other matters where one affirms and another denies. A man may drink by proxy, that is, he may have a friend drink the poison in his stead, or, more frequently, a slave drinks for his master.

Finally, it must be noticed that the ocimbandu is also a medicine- 791 man. He undoubtedly possesses some really valuable remedies, but 757 there is so much of the fetishistic cult bound up in the administering of the remedies that when they do help a person the credit of

[1] [Cf. p. 185. -- Analyst]

4:Dorsey E-4, 5 (no date)1899 FP13 Mbundu FP13

791 the cure is given to the charms and incantations. Of the medicines
757 contained in the collection I shall only mention four: The first is a love medicine, *ekulo*, a powdered mixture of seeds. When a wife becomes jealous of the other wives of her husband, she complains to her mother, who advises her to cook a chicken and in the broth to place some of this medicine, which, when her husband eats thereof, will compel him forever to love her above all the other wives. The second remedy is an emetic, *asanga*. This is frequently used, as, for example, when in the poison test a person becomes very sick, and the guilt has become fully established, the doctor will administer an emetic to save life. In cases of difficult labor, the woman is given a small piece of the bark of the *olusanga* to chew. For rheumatism, *ovihata*, a mixed powder called *omatoli*, is used.

George A. Dorsey.

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Library term 620

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OCCUPATIONAL RITUAL, BELIEF, AND CUSTOM AMONG THE OVIMBUNDU

By WILFRID DYSON HAMBLY

[114] WHEN leader of the Frederick H. Rawson-Field Museum Expedition of 1929–30 one of my chief objects was the assembling of a representative collection of the arts and handicrafts of Angola, and particularly of the Ovimbundu who occupy the Benguela highlands.

121

[177] The Ovimbundu have been in contact with Europeans for three centuries at least, therefore I was interested to know to what extent daily avocations had become secularized. That a close connection has existed between the sacred and the profane in Negro tribes is well known, and the influence of spiritual beliefs and magical acts in every department of economic life, including agriculture, hunting, fishing, and handicrafts, has been established. But how durable is this dependence of economic life on magical acts and ancestral benediction? How soon does primitive economic life become commercialized on a European pattern?

Other observations of academic interest and practical value relate to division of labor between the sexes, specialization by age and natural aptitude; also the possibility of some callings being of an hereditary nature.

[101] My observations, which were made chiefly in the regions of Bailundu, Elende near Cuma, and Ngalangi, are conveniently classified under the headings of food supply, handicrafts, medicine-men, and education.

FOOD SUPPLY

824 825 At the foundation of economic life is nature lore, which among the male population of the Ovimbundu is so detailed and extensive that the knowledge has given rise to a large vocabulary. The highly specialized acquaintance with trees, plants, birds, mammals, and reptiles on the part of most of the men was a surprise to me. Such information was commonly shared by males, and was in no way peculiar to the professional hunter.

I was easily able to collect a list of fifty birds which are readily distinguished by boys (who shoot them with blunt wooden arrows), and all men seemed familiar with forty species of trees, whose timbers, barks, and fruits were distinguished and named. Boys were exceptionally well acquainted with small mammals; including several kinds of rats and mice, which are trapped, boiled, and eaten. For Field Museum I made a collection of snakes and lizards; a task which again showed the native power of observation and adequacy of vocabulary. Some reptiles, whose re-

5: Hambly E-5 (1929-30) 1934 FP 13 Mbundu FP13

824 825 semblance for a time caused confusion in my mind, were well known to be distinct; though occasionally a prolonged and serious argument would arise among the old men respecting the correct Umbundu names for two similar snakes.

The cries of birds are interpreted in terms of human conversation: thus the female hornbill says to her mate, "I'm going; I'm going; I'm going to our village;" to which the male replies, "Don't go. The rain has come; let us plant." Another bird says, "Where will the guests stay? where? where? where?" This is an intimation that strangers will visit the village. All animals play a part in folk stories: human beings when introduced are usually of secondary importance.

Nature lore is, of course, fundamental to industries, since the artisans must know the best timbers for particular purposes. Thus certain woods yield the best charcoal for a blacksmith's forge; other woods are essential for house building because the timbers resist attacks of termites; again certain trees yield bark for making rope; while other woods are used for carving animals and household utensils.

[462] I am not sure of the extent to which women participate in nature lore; but certainly their knowledge cannot equal that of the men, since women are concerned chiefly with agriculture, domestic work, care of children, and collection of firewood. Yet women and little children are collectors. I have seen many of them together gathering caterpillars which are to be made into soup. Women know the plants that will yield dyes for basketry, and from women some of the bird calls were obtained. The conversation of men bears on their occupations and the nature lore fundamental to these; therefore women must learn, though perhaps only by unconscious absorption.

224 In connection with a study of food supply the occupation of hunting comes most closely to the general nature lore mentioned above. Here a distinction should be made between hunting as a general occupation for males, and hunting by a professional who gives his life to the work. The only occasion on which women and children assist hunters is during a communal hunt, when all the inhabitants of a village fire the dry grass and aid in the capture of game by shouting and driving the frightened animals.

A professional hunter is usually called ukongo, more rarely onyanga. The occupation is not hereditary. A boy has to serve two years with a professional hunter before his initiation. The principal guests at the initiation feast are professional hunters, who alone may dance, though a miscellaneous company is present. The boy who seeks initiation is required to keep quite still until he feels the "spirit on his head;" then he distributes meat to the people present. The meat used at the feast is that of antelope shot by

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224

A

B

A. Rock tomb of a hunter near Gando, west-central Angola. The entrance to the tomb is on the right. B. Tomb of a hunter near Luimbale, west-central Angola. Trophies of the chase are on the scaffold. (Photographs by courtesy of Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago.)

[Facing p. 158]

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professional hunters, and the smearing of the novice's bow and arrows with 224
blood from the meat is an important point of ritual. The bow and arrows
are made by the master for his pupil; a practice strictly analogous to the [326]
making of tools for a young blacksmith by the master who has trained
him.

In connection with the life and death of a hunter a certain amount of 177
ritual survives, and this despite long European contacts, game laws, and 224
the development of an economic system based primarily on extensive cul- [241]
tivation of maize and beans. But though these circumstances might tend to
discourage hunting and its attendant ritual, other facts have contributed
to survival. An embargo on guns and powder has led to prolonged use of
bows and arrows, with which all hunters are expert, though some, despite
official prohibition, have muzzle loading guns. Bows are in general use, and
their continuance has no doubt aided survival of ritual, since the rites
themselves are closely associated with the bows.

The night before a professional hunter sets out is an occasion for re- 224
newal of implements of the chase, that is, renewal in a spiritual sense, by a
ceremony designed to transfer power in a magical way from the disused
weapons of deceased hunters to the weapons in use. Weapons of dead
hunters are kept in a small hut to which a hunter repairs on the eve of de-
parture. He rubs the old weapons (bows, clubs, and spears) with palm-oil;
then pours over them a libation of beer. No medicine-man is present, so for
the occasion a hunter functions as his own priest.

It is hazardous and perhaps unprofitable to attempt an analysis of the
philosophy behind these ritual acts. Yet the weapons are symbols of the
personality and prowess of dead hunters whose names they have received.
Therefore the suggestion that the hunter is acquiring power from the dead
is reasonable, and the idea harmonizes with all that is known of ancestor
worship among Bantu tribes.

The food and cooking pots of a hunter must never be associated with
those of ordinary household use. If a hunter is following the tracks of an
animal he may not point with his finger, since this action will drive the
animal away. He may, however, point with the feathered end of an ar-
row. A dog must have his ears clipped in a peculiar way or he will not hear
and obey. A hunter may not sleep with his wife the night before setting out
in quest of game. Before leaving home a hunter washes his eyes with a con-
coction of herbs to give greater acuity of vision.

In any village the hut of a professional hunter can be readily distin- 224
guished by a number of poles erected near the entrance. On these supports 764
are placed the skulls of animals killed in the chase. A traveler cannot fail
to notice the tombs of hunters which consist of cairns
of stones enclosing a

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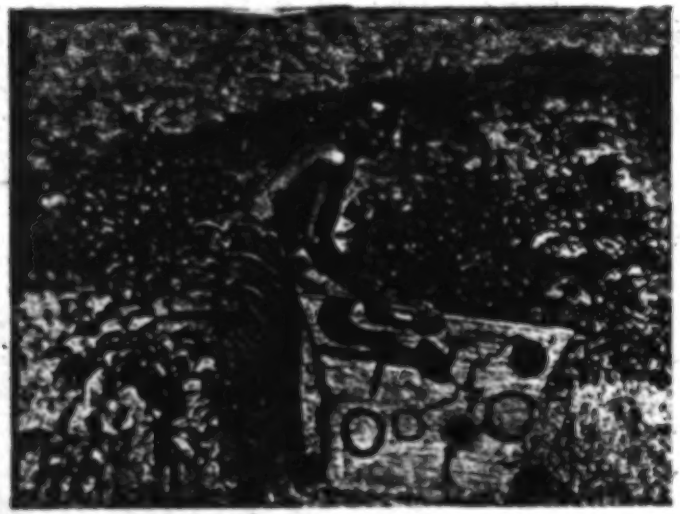

A

B

A. Player of the drum (ochagulu). B. Official flute players to a chief at Balundu. (Photographs by courtesy of Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago.)

[Facing p. 159]

5: Hambly E-5 (1929-30) 1934 / FP 13 Mbundu FP13

224 764 hollow chamber. I removed a thin slab of stone which formed an entrance to a tomb of this kind and observed within two skeletons lying supine. On the top of the cairns were skulls of animals killed by the hunter. I noted one instance of the burial of a hunter's dog under a cairn of stones.

825 794 Three birds are protected by a prohibition. Esuvi is a bird which has power to steal the souls of the dead, so making them die a second death. As usual, no direct explanation was given concerning this second death, but an explanation came later, quite fortuitously. For instance, an old man said he was sick because esuvi had stolen the spirit of his grandfather. This statement is logical, since welfare depends on a beneficent interest of dead ancestors, and it is evident that dying a second death prevents a spirit from exercising a benign influence over the living. Other protected birds are one which supplies feathers from which the decorations of kings and medicine-men are made, and one whose night cry is a warning of death in a village.

226 In fishing, a division of labor is recognized: men use a rod and line, while women drag baskets against the stream or use poison in slow, shallow water. The night before poison is to be used for fishing, husband and wife must avoid intercourse, since intimacy of this kind would make the fish stay together at the bottom of the river. A man who has prepared his rod and line, by transfixing a grasshopper and attaching it to a thin piece of bark, [339] sings a song which is of the nature of a spell. He says:

> "O fish come and take your good thing.
> Do not send the little fish to spoil the good thing.
> Better you come and take the good thing with all your strength."

439 Up to half a century ago the Ovimbundu were renowned traders whose caravans penetrated deeply into the Congo region and even to the east side of Africa. It is natural, therefore, that some ritual should be connected with such an important enterprise. At the present day caravans may be seen, but [443] these are local, and most of the carriers are found to be taking their maize, beans, and beeswax to traders' stores. I believe women did not accompany the transcontinental caravans of early days, but today women may be seen in line with the other carriers. Their loads are lighter, being on the average thirty pounds as compared with sixty pounds for a man. Children also carry small loads in the caravan.

439 787 Ngonga, my chief informant, said that in former times no caravan leader would set out without having consulted the preserved head of a de- [643] ceased king. Even at present the corpse of a king is suspended by the neck and twisted until the head is severed. The head is sewn in oxhide and preserved in a box. The ancient caravan custom consisted of taking the box

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containing the head and attaching it to a pole by which it was supported 439
on the shoulders of two bearers. Then followed a series of questions from 787
the village chief (sekulu), and answers were supposed to be given through forward or backward swinging of the pole. A forward swing was affirmative, and a backward swing was negative. I have seen this procedure followed with a coffin supported as described, and the questions related to the cause of death.

The head of a king would be asked, "Do you want an ox for sacrifice? We will give you one." "Do you want a new skin for your head? We will give you one." Such was the ceremony for bringing spiritual aid to what was otherwise a commercial undertaking.

A wooden figure of a female decorated with black feathers was an indispensable part of the equipment of a medicine-man who accompanied a caravan. When in doubt with regard to the path he knelt at the parting of the ways and consulted the figure. Replies came in a falsetto voice attained by plugging his nostrils. Horns containing a mixture of fat, charcoal, and other substances were carried so that they might be planted near a camping ground to drive away thieves and leopards. These horns are still used and are obtainable.

At the present day a belated Ocimbundu, who fears the sun may set 789
before he reaches the next village, will take some earth from an ant hill. This earth he places in the fork of a tree saying, "O sun wait for me a little while."

Examination of the culture of the Ovimbundu, combined with observa- 101
tions on the Umbundu language and somatic traits, indicate that the Ovim- 241
bundu are a part of the Bantu peoples of southwest Africa. They have, however, taken advantage of the open Benguela highlands to develop their system of agriculture far beyond that which is usually carried on by Negroes in forest clearings.

In agricultural work a clear division of labor is observed. Men clear 241
timber and burn the bush, after which hoe cultivation is in the hands of 562
women, though men assist with the harvest. Unmarried girls help in the fields and each has a piece of ground whose products are the cultivator's personal property. This gives unmarried girls a measure of economic independence. Usually a girl spends the proceeds of her work in buying trinkets and palm-oil for personal decoration. Under their system of poly- 595
gyny each wife has her own field, utensils, and a separate hut with its fire 562
and cooking arrangements. The husband visits each hut for four consecutive nights, though in some districts there is a seven night cycle. Men always take evening meals in the mens' council house (onjango) in the center (to notice the tombs of hunters, which consist of cairns of stones enclosing a) 1/A

1/A [Printer's error: This sentance refers to p, 159. -- Analyst]

5: Hambly E-5 (1929-30) 1934 FP 13 Mbundu FP13

595 of the village. The meals are brought there by those wives who are at the
562 time cohabiting with their husbands. But an exception is made in case of menstruation, for a woman is not allowed to cook or handle food during her period. At such times the preparation and transfer of food is carried out by another wife, and of course the time comes when such a service can be
241 requited. I found no survival of agricultural rites such as offering first fruits or other similar ceremony.

In some tribes of Sudanic and Bantu Negroes agricultural rites are important in relation to sowing and harvest, since land is in the first place the property of dead ancestors, but so far as my inquiries go such rites are not now known to the Ovimbundu. Maize may be pounded only on rocks that have been consecrated by the medicine-man: he kills a chicken and sprinkles
[462 the surface of the rock with its blood. Only women may pound corn, and a
838] youth who persisted in dressing as a woman and pounding on the rocks was beaten by his relatives. This information gave a clue to homosexual practices, but the information obtained was meager.

231 In connection with the care of domestic animals many tempting digressions present themselves, but I am concerned only with beliefs, ritual, and division of labor. Chickens are of ritual importance since they provide the least expensive sacrifice, and in connection with industries the piacular use of chickens will presently be mentioned. For sacrificial purposes a goat is preferred to a sheep since it makes more noise; but the reason for this is not clear, though making a surmise I would say that the noise better appeases ancestral spirits to whom most sacrifices are made. Pigs are kept, but I did not hear of them being used for sacrifice. The animals so far mentioned have little or no attention. Goats fend entirely for themselves; so also do sheep. Chickens receive maize from women and children, who also gather the eggs. Pigs receive maize and mush from cooking pots or that discarded in making beer, but they depend largely on foraging in refuse pits.

The castration of pigs and bulls is the work of a male specialist who receives a fee of four yards of cloth for operating on the latter animal, but only a small gift of tobacco or similar recognition for castrating a pig.

The Ovimbundu have acquired cattle of the long-horned Damara breed, and in connection with the care of these some important points of ritual and division of labor should be recorded. The herding of cattle is
[462] exclusively the work of males, and I am not aware that women have any
234 tasks connected with cattle. Only in recent times have some male owners of cattle begun to milk the cows. This they do somewhat stealthily, deceiving the cow from time to time by allowing the calf to suck for a few moments. If asked why milk is not used, the owners say that calves deprived of suck-

5: Hambly E-5 (1929-30)1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

ing become thin; but avoidance of milk is really one of those deeply rooted 234
food prejudices which even the people themselves could not explain if willing to do so.

The Vakuanyama of south Angola make butter by swinging two large calabashes on a pole, but though this practice is known to the Ovimbundu, they do not imitate the method. The flesh of cattle that have died from disease or accident is eaten, and uses are found for the hide, tail, and horns. 231
But cattle are not slaughtered except at a funeral feast, after which the horns are mounted on a pole over the grave, and perhaps the skulls are preserved near the site of burial.

Cattle serve as fines, sacrifices, and gifts, including a bride's dowry, but the social and religious importance is greater than the economic use. This is in accordance with what might be expected, since the pastoral activities of the Ovimbundu are but an adopted series of traits which can be found among numerous pastoral tribes of southwest, south, and east Africa. Wrapping the head of a king in oxhide which is ceremonially renewed has been mentioned.[1] In addition to this rite, the use of oxhide bracelets by mourners, and the use of an oxhide shroud for chiefs and kings, must be recorded. Use of ceremonial fire which is distributed from the chief's house when a new village is founded, and creation of new fire after epidemic sickness, are Umbundu traits which form part of the typical pastoral culture elsewhere.

Consideration of food supply has indicated the preservation of ritual and 182
belief, not intensively, but with sufficient force to show great tenacity of indigenous culture in the face of prolonged and disturbing intrusions.

HANDICRAFTS

Incomparably important is the craft of the blacksmith. The preservation 326
of ritual and belief was at once suggested by the workers' refusal to sell me any of the tools, especially the large hammer (onjundo), although the sum offered covered the value of the implements and the time lost in making new ones. After three months I acquired a large hammer from the wife of a blacksmith who had not worked at his trade for many years. She parted with the tool in the absence of her husband, but demanded a sum which would have purchased an ox. Other tools were made for me.

Information respecting the blacksmiths' ritual was given in the village of Njongolo in Elende, but I am informed that the beliefs are general, and they are certainly compatible with all that is known of blacksmiths' ritual among Bantu Negroes, Sudanic Negroes, and Hamiticized Negroes of east Africa. I found no mining of iron but saw a site where the ore was for-

1 [Cf. p.160, cat. 116. -- Analyst]

5: Hambly E-5 (1929-30) 1934 FP 13 Mbundu FP13

326 merly obtained. Blacksmiths now smelt scrap-iron from European sources.

[582] Among the Ovimbundu, blacksmiths are restricted in marriage only by those kinship laws arising from their classificatory system of relationships, and the operation of a system of cross-cousin marriage. The smiths are not an endogamous group, and the occupation is not hereditary.

But despite these differences, which are not quite in harmony with the general body of custom relating to Negro blacksmiths, the Ovimbundu preserve ritual which is part of a widely distributed attitude toward workers in iron.

When a boy begins his training he should be about eighteen years of age and physically robust. He is required to collect and soften fragments of iron in the charcoal fire, to work the bellows, and to beat iron on the anvil, but for a time he is not allowed to make implements, the chief of which are hoe blades and axe heads. At the end of two years the novice asks his master to examine him, and preparations are made for an inauguration ceremony should the youth have proved sufficiently skilled to become an independent blacksmith.

326 782 On the day of initiation the boy has to buy four chickens, two male and two female, one pup, and a goat. The master blacksmith has already made a complete set of tools for presentation to his pupil, but the big hammer (onjundo) is not quite completed until the day of initiation. While the final touches are being given to this object the novice stands still on a small stone anvil which is situated between the forge and the large anvil.

When the hammer is completed, and while it is still red hot, it is thrust into the belly of the pup provided by the novice. The goat and the four chickens are killed and some of their blood is sprinkled over the new tools which are gathered in a heap. The blacksmiths invite their friends to feast on the flesh of the sacrificed animals.

326 553 The boy remains standing on the anvil[1] until the master says, "You may speak and tell us what name you want." Perhaps the boy says, "I am Ndumbu;" then the people clap hands and trill with their fingers in their open mouths. My interpreter said, "The boy will work hard and people will pay him. He used to work hard but his master took the pay."

326 778 Near the large anvil may be seen one or more wooden figures which are still regarded as essential to the work of the blacksmith. I was informed that a blacksmith owes his skill to the aid of a spirit of some person he has killed, and that this spirit uses the wooden figure as a dwelling place. If this information is reliable the wooden figure is of the nature of a shrine, but I was not able to learn of any ceremony for inducing a spirit into the wooden figure. The impression left was that the spirit of the murdered person re-

1 [i.e., on the day of initiation of apprentice blacksmith. -- Analyst]

5: Hambly E-5 (1929-30)1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

sided permanently in the wooden figure. This ritual murder is now impossible, but the wooden figures are still used in the way described. 326 778

Women are never engaged in blacksmiths' work; neither are they employed as wood carvers. Among men wood carving is a specialized occupation, and within the craft itself are men who deal solely with one branch of the work. Thus in a village perhaps only one man is capable of making a drum, while another carves life-like wooden figures of animals, and a third specializes in the fabrication of household implements. [462] 532

Among the Ovimbundu women are the only potters, but I found just one exception in the case of a man who said that he learned the potter's craft in eastern Angola among the Vachokue. No ritual is connected with the making of pottery, but I observed that women always frequented one pit for their clay and in doing so passed better clay which was more accessible. I learned that a clay pit has to be consecrated by a medicine-man who kills a chicken and sprinkles the blood in the pit. All women at some time learn the arts of pottery making and basketry, but by the process of selection the industries become concentrated in the hands of the most skillful. 462 323 [782]

Only women make baskets; a craft in which they are skilled, especially in the gathering of plants and the extraction of dyes of soft shades. Such dyes have considerable endurance even though exposed to bright sunlight. Imported dyes are now competing with indigenous products, but the latter are still preferred in most localities. One might expect that women who are skilled in basket making would be expert weavers of mats, but this is not so. Mat making is in the hands of men who are skilled specialists, and within the mat making industry are at least three principal divisions of the craft, one for each type of mat. 462 285

Men spin cotton for mending clothes, but I have not seen women so engaged. I did not see any looms in use in Angola, but they survived up to a few years ago, and in the youth of my interpreter, who was about thirty years of age, looms worked by men were plentiful. 283 462 286

House building shows a division of labor according to age and sex. Men are responsible for cutting the poles, digging the trench in which these uprights are set, and binding the cross-pieces with bark. Men are likewise responsible for plastering the walls and laying the thatch. Women carry water to the clay pit and transport the puddled clay to the men who are plastering the walls. Children, some of them so young that they have to be rescued from a swampy grave, delight in puddling the clay with their feet. The rectangular pit is always as near the house as possible in order to minimize the labor of transport. I suggested that some of the tasks should 462 331

5: Hambly E-5 (1929-30) 1934 FP 13 Mbundu FP13

462 be reversed and asked whether men could not carry the water. I was told
331 that such a man would be laughed at and called a "he-woman." Yet division of labor does not imply sex inferiority, and ridicule would arise from incongruity.

MEDICINE-MEN

759 The training of a medicine-man (ocimbanda) and a medicine-woman
791 (chambula) involves few formalities, but this class of work requires that a novice shall have "spirit in the head." When visited by a sick boy the medicine-man shakes his divination basket and if a certain combination of objects appears, he says, "Your father was ocimbanda and his spirit wants you." The boy who is thus adopted has to accompany the medicine-man, his master, carrying apparatus and standing near to play a small friction drum while the master is shaking his divination basket.

Specialization among medicine-men is carried to great degree of refinement, especially among those practitioners who profess therapeutic knowledge. I employed three medicine-men to collect plants, of which they appeared to have an expert knowledge. Umbundu names were given and the curative properties of each plant were explained with enthusiasm and evident conviction. The men were undoubtedly sincere in their own beliefs. A specialist who can cure blood in the urine, and another who is said to treat dizziness successfully, are greatly respected. The rainmaker is ocimbanda opulia, "the medicine-man of the rain," who dances while flourishing a cow-tail switch, and blowing a shrill whistle intermittently.

Ocimbanda is of course distinguished from onganga, since the former is concerned with socially beneficent tasks such as those mentioned, while
[754] the latter may cause sickness, impotence, and sterility. In earlier days the task of finding sorcerers (onganga) by use of the poison ordeal was that of an ocimbanda. Medicine-women are called in to take care of difficult cases of childbirth, and I have seen a medicine-woman painting the face of a pregnant woman, who thereafter observed certain taboos.

Space will not permit enumeration of the contents of a divination basket and the significance attached to each item; neither can I give details of ceremonies for curing the sick or bringing a thief back to the village, but the foregoing notes suffice to show that the craft is specialized and still important. A medicine-man ceremonially washes a king or chief on rare occasions. He makes new fire by twirling; though flint and steel, also
[782] matches, are known. When a new village is founded a medicine-man stirs the blood of sacrificed animals with the claws of a chicken; then he sprinkles this blood on each new house.

5: Hambly E-5 (1929-30)1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

At Caconda I obtained the basket of a medicine-man which contained 759
a human tibia, a hoe for digging in graves, and a round stone for pounding 791
the bone before mixing it with fat and charcoal. Medicine-men still make potions for internal use, and these are usually carried in small horns suspended round the neck, or the paste may be contained in the carapace of a tortoise. In every way the medicine-man is still functioning, and his tasks are fundamental to the social and religious life of the Ovimbundu.

At an early age children specialize in their play which has a bearing 868
on the business of life. Boys make wooden-tipped arrows, play at hunting, and shoot at tubers which are rolled along the ground. Girls take clay from the potters to fabricate their own small cooking pots, and young girls attempt the coiling of basketry.

Men are the musicians, and among these a high degree of specialization 533
is observed. In a large village there are likely to be only a few competent drummers, and only a few men who play the small iron-keyed instrument called ocisanji. Osaka is a ritual game played only by men, and only when a village headman or a king is dying. The ball (ombunje) is made by sewing 535
lizard skin over a hard spherical fruit about six centimeters in diameter. A 524
man continues to dance with this little ball clenched in his outstretched 755
hand, while another dancer hits the muscles of his arm to make him release the ball. This game is thought to give strength to the sick man. There is a transfer of the endurance of the dancers to the invalid.

Preliminary observation in some villages occupied by Ovimbundu is 197
disappointing in its suggestion of Europeanization. The foreign culture is, however, a thin veneer, and further research shows a strong persistence of indigenous custom and belief quite near to centers of Portuguese influence.

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116

116 TEXTS--a full set of pages from each processed source, arranged in page order, as a means of establishing the context for any particular slip. Sets are arranged in the numerical order of the sources. See also:

Literary texts 839

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THE OVIMBUNDU UNDER TWO SOVEREIGNTIES

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THE OVIMBUNDU UNDER TWO SOVEREIGNTIES

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A STUDY OF SOCIAL CONTROL AND SOCIAL CHANGE AMONG A PEOPLE OF ANGOLA

ADRIAN C. EDWARDS

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The people of Epalanga and its neighbourhood were most patient and polite to me. I must mention by name my servant, Pedro Epalanga Chimbalanya.

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NOTE ON ORTHOGRAPHY

The orthography for Umbundu words used here is that adopted in the *Dicionário Etimológico Bundo-Português* of Padre Albino Alves. Generally speaking, I have used this for names of villages and of individuals (apart from Christian names). Towns, European settlements, and chiefdoms have been spelt according to the accepted Portuguese orthography. Dr. Childs has given all place names of Umbundu origin in his Umbundu orthography. Hence, my Cassongue is his Kasongi.

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INTRODUCTION

The Ovimbundu[1] of central Angola appear under various names[2] in narratives by nineteenth and early twentieth century travellers in West Central Africa. In the present century three anthropological studies have been written about them by Childs,[3] Hambly,[4] and Hastings,[5] as well as two shorter studies by Bastos[6] and Santos Brandao,[7] and a large number of articles.[8] Despite the large amount of documentation available there existed a considerable number of gaps, especially as regards the political system and the kinship system.[9] In proposing to work among the Ovimbundu, I hoped to be able to fill in these gaps, and in particular to provide a study of what appeared to be a double-descent kinship system. I also hoped to study the reactions of an African society to Portuguese rule.

I arrived at Nova Lisboa in roughly the centre of Umbundu country in October 1955. Here, as in Lisbon, I was told that it would be very difficult to find an area where the traditional social life of the Ovimbundu as described in the literature

[1] A plural from the singular Ocimbundu. The adjective and the name of the language is Umbundu. The Ovimbundu people are entirely distinct from the Kimbundu people of northern Angola and the two languages are not mutually intelligible. However, the confusion between the two has gone so far that both Europeans and Africans speak of the Ovimbundu people and language as Kimbundu and of the true Kimbundu as Kasundengo.

[2] Mambari, Nano, Ovimbali, and so on.

[3] G. M. Childs, *Umbundu Kinship and Character*, Oxford, 1949.

[4] W. D. Hambly, *The Ovimbundu of Angola*, Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago, 1934.

[5] *Ovimbundu Customs and Practices* (unpublished thesis) 1933, D. A. Hastings.

[6] Traços Gerais sobre a Etnografia do Districto de Benguella in *Boletim da Sociedade de Geografia de Lisboa*, 1908, pp. 5–15, 44–56, 81–99, 133–40, 169–76, 197–207.

[7] Articles in *Mundo Administrativo* (Luanda) March–April, July–August 1950, and Sept.–Oct., Nov.–Dec. 1952.

[8] See Bibliography.

[9] For an examination of the ethnographic material as it then was, see Merran McCulloch, *The Ovimbundu of Angola*, Ethnographic Survey of Africa. International African Institute, London, 1952.

[p. xiv is blank – Analyst]

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114 could be observed. Eventually I decided to work in the Bimbe
121 area, in the extreme north-western corner of Umbundu country.
184 The census[10] indicated that Bimbe had a smaller white popula-
[162] tion than any comparable area of Umbundu country, and people who knew it considered that it was one of the areas most likely to retain a relatively conservative social life.

114 In Bimbe I settled in the village of Epalanga in the chiefdom
121 of Gumba. The advantage of Gumba lay in the conservatism
184 for which its people were noted in other chiefdoms; its dis-
101 advantage lay in its proximity to the northern boundary of Umbundu speech and culture, which led me to collect some items of ethnographic information not typical of Umbundu country.[11] On the whole, I am satisfied that the people of Gumba were in the past as in the present Ovimbundu in both speech and way of life.[12]

121 Many of my discoveries were at first negative ones. I could not find any evidence that there was a double system of kinship groups actually in existence; the villages were not composed of agnatic kin; the chief seemed lacking in power. Nor was it easy to obtain detailed information about the past even from old
181 men. There is little interest nowadays in history, nor are the old social institutions regarded, even by those who once participated in them, as being necessarily better than those of the present day. The reason for this attitude seems to lie in Umbundu social psychology with its readiness to accept European authority and
121 values. Interesting as the motivations behind this attitude are, this 'cultural amnesia' caused me much disappointment. I found it much easier to get texts on the caravan trade, and on ceremonial practices and proverbs, than on the political and kinship systems. The inadequacies of the information I received on the political system may be explained by the fact that Gumba is on the fringe of the area tributary to the old kingdom of

[10] Of 1950.

[162] [11] The payment of fines by a man to his dead wife's kin had been formerly practised in Gumba, and still is further north. It does not seem to have been known in living memory elsewhere in Umbundu country.

[12] The northern limit of Umbundu speech is now somewhere to the north of the administrative post of Cela. As there has not been substantial migration from the south, it is reasonable to assume that it is many years since the Gumba-Cela boundary was also the language boundary.

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Bailundo.[13] On the kinship system, however, I was even more disappointed. The information which I was given on the matrilineal groups formerly existing was much less than that provided by Hastings,[14] or by Childs,[15] and I have therefore not been able to obtain the detail for which I had hoped on the double-descent system. [121]

Like all anthropologists I had a certain number of difficulties in making contact with the people, and to these were added the problems of finding underlying consistencies in a changing society. The Ovimbundu are not interested in genealogies and did not see why I was. My first attempts to take village censuses were regarded with great suspicion, and more than once people refused to give their names. Kinship terms and norms seemed to be and were very confused. Various matters, such as surviving pagan rituals, were concealed from me. My personal relations with the people were very happy, however, and almost everybody who came to know me was prepared to answer my questions at length. [121] [123] [122]

My two great problems in the field were to obtain information on the old social structure (which I already knew in outline from the written material), and to see how the present-day society worked. The material in this thesis will be laid out in the following way. The first part will give an outline of Umbundu social structure as it was in the period 1874–1911,[16] that is, the era of the rubber trade. The second part will give a series of chapters on present day Umbundu society, which will provide the information necessary for an understanding of the mechanisms of social control. In the third part a detailed discussion of social control is made, beginning with an examination of a number of disputes. It is shown how the network of kinship and marriage ties in a neighbourhood provide local continuity and stability, while the wider units in which the Ovimbundu now participate are of European origin and control. [121] [123]

[13] Caenogue and Cela were tributary to Bailundo but were not incorporated into the actual kingdom (Childs, p. 168). Caenogue people say that they are not Va-Mbailundu. [131]

[14] Hastings, Chapter VI.

[15] Hastings gives more information than Childs on the matrilineal kin group.

[16] The period of the rubber trade. Childs, pp. 200–13.

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CHAPTER I

THE OLD SOCIETY

1. *History*

The Ovimbundu, who live on the Benguela Highland[1] of central Angola, have been in contact with Europeans since their emergence as a people in the sixteenth–seventeenth centuries. Dr. Childs has provided an excellent account of their history,[2] based on the collection of traditional narratives and a study of the published sources in English, German, and Portuguese.

The Ovimbundu arose from a fusion of two stocks, one that of the 'Jagas', a conquering race who invaded the Benguela Highland in the sixteenth–seventeenth centuries, and the indigenous occupants of the area who were culturally and linguistically related to the peoples who now live in south-west Angola.[3] The Jagas were described in some detail by the English sailor Andrew Battell[4] who was their prisoner for some time at the beginning of the seventeenth century. He tells us that they were warlike cannibals who recruited their numbers by taking adolescents from the peoples they conquered.[5] This society did not reproduce itself normally by descent since all children born were put to death.[6] He locates them geographically in the Amboim–Cela–Quibala area[7] to the north of the present Umbundu territory. Cavazzi writing in the later seventeenth

[1] In Portuguese, Planalto de Benguela.

[2] Childs, pp. 164–215.

[3] Ibid. p. 190.

[4] Ravenstein (Ed.). *The Strange Adventures of Andrew Battell.* Hakluyt Society, London 1901.

[5] Ravenstein, p. 35.

[6] Ibid. p. 50.

[7] Ibid. pp. 84, 85; Childs, p. 88.

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175 century gives a broadly similar account,[8] among other information giving us the titles of some of the Umbundu ministers, thus Mani-Curio resembles Mwekalia, and Tendala Tjandala.[9] In the same period the Jagas appear in what is now southern Umbundu country.[10] According to Baumann[11] and Estermann[12] they raided and conquered some of the south-western people of the Nyaneka-Humbi group. At the end of the eighteenth century the Jagas and the Ovimbundu still formed distinctive [101] groups, and in the nineteenth century the word Jaga was still used to refer to the Umbundu rulers.[13]

Ethnologists have shown much interest in the question of the origin and subsequent travels of the Jagas.[14] Battell tells us that in a Jaga camp of several thousand persons there would be only twelve or fourteen persons who were of original Jaga stock, the rest recruited *en marche*.[15] There is some evidence to show that the core of some at least of the Jaga hordes were Lunda from the kingdom of Mwata Yamvo. Thus the Imbangala people of Cassange[16] claim to have originated from the migrants from the Northern Lunda kingdom. Both Battell at the beginning of the seventeenth century and Pinheiro de Lacerda at the end of the eighteenth tell us that the Jaga called themselves Imban-
000 gala.[17] The Hungarian explorer L. Magyar collected in the

[8] J. B. Labat, *Relation historique de l'Etiopie occidentale*. Paris 1732. (Translated from the Italian original of Cavazzi.) For the Jagas see Vol. II, pp. 88–303. On infanticide see pp. 114–15, which states that all children born inside a camp and male children born outside a camp were put to death. Presumably female children born outside a camp were spared. Cadornega states that a woman was forbidden under pain of death to give birth in a camp. Is this simply a purification taboo which Battell mistook for a rule of general infanticide? Battell seems fairly reliable, and it is possible that there had been a change of custom between Battell's contacts in about 1600, when the Jagas were simply nomadic raiders, and Cadornega's contacts of about 1670–80, when they were ruling settled states. There is some evidence for such a change in Cavazzi-Labat, who dates it around 1648.

[9] Childs, p. 187.

[10] Ibid. p. 195.

[11] H. Baumann, *Paideuma*, April 1936, pp. 118–31.

[12] C. Estermann, *Etnografia do Sudoeste de Angola* Vol. II (Lisbon 1937), pp. 26–29.

[13] Childs, p. 188 and sources cited there.

[14] Ravenstein, Introduction; Childs, pp. 181–90.

[15] Ravenstein, p. 33.

[16] F. Travassos Valdez. *Six Years of a Traveller's Life in Western Africa*, London, 1861. Vol. II, Chapter V.

[17] Ravenstein, p. 84; P. M. de Lacerda in *Annaes Maritimos e Coloniaes* 5a serie, p. 486 ff.

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Adapted from the map facing page 167 in Childs' *Umbundu Kinship and Character.*

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173 The Hungarian explorer L. Magyar collected in the

middle of the nineteenth century, in the eastern Umbundu kingdom of Bie, an historical legend which linked Bie origins to the kingdom of Mwata Yamvo.[18] Childs has suggested[19] that this legend was in fact not of Umbundu origin since later investigators from Serpa Pinto[20] (1878) to Childs himself (1938) have found that Bie traditions emphasized the local origins of the dynasty. This may of course be a case of the African tendency to manipulate historical narratives to accord with social relationships. It may be suggested that the Lunda traditions, which the core of the Jaga hordes carried with them, became diluted by the recruitment from the conquered peoples, and that the link between the Umbundu royal houses and the Northern Lunda were forgotten because the kings of the Ovimbundu felt no need, unlike the weak Luena and Ndembu chiefs,[21] to prop up their position by stressing their links with the mighty Mwata Yamvo.

175 177 By the end of the eighteenth century the Umbundu kingdoms that were to survive until the end of Umbundu independence were already well established.[22] In 1769 the first Portuguese fort in the Benguela Highland, that at Caconda, was established, and a few years later a king of Bie was to owe his throne to Portuguese intervention.[23] Trade in slaves had begun with the 175 177 Jagas; but other items such as beeswax and ivory were bought by the bare-footed Kimbundu traders who came from the 439 Portuguese settlements on the Cuanza (founded between 1582 and 1671); and by 1782 there existed small colonies of Portuguese traders in Bie and Caconda.[24]

Portuguese political influence was weak, and the kings con-

[18] L. Magyar, *Reisen in Sud-Afrika*, Pest and Leipzig, 1859, pp. 266–269.

[19] Childs, p. 173.

[20] A. Serpa Pinto, *How I Crossed Africa*, London, 1881. Vol. I, pp. 156–60.

[21] For Luena and Ndembu chiefs, see C. M. N. White, 'Clan, chieftainship, and slavery in Luvale political organization' (*Africa*, January 1957), and V. W. Turner, *Schism and Continuity in an African Society*, Manchester, 1957. For African attitudes to the recording of the past see J. A. Barnes, 'History in a Changing Society'. *Rhodes-Livingstone Journal* 1951, No. 11, Ian Cunnison, *History on the Luapula*, Rhodes-Livingstone Papers, No. 21, and L. Bohannan, 'A Genealogical Charter', *Africa*, October 1952. Mr. White informs me that the Luena regard the Bie kingdom as being of Northern Lunda origin.

[22] Childs, pp. 167–8.

[23] Ibid., pp. 174, 195.

[24] Ibid., p. 198.

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tinued to engage in warfare. However, trade became increasingly important as the Ovimbundu realized the advantage of their position in between the coastal towns of Benguela and Catumbela, and the tribes of the interior. By the middle of the nineteenth century Ovimbundu were travelling throughout the area bounded by the Congo River, the Great Lakes and the Kalahari, and even transcontinental journeys were made. The Ovimbundu carried with them cloths, guns, and rum which they exchanged for ivory, slaves, and wax, to which must be added corn and palm-oil, these latter, however, obtained not from the far interior but from inside or near Umbundu land. The safety of the Umbundu caravans was preserved by the negotiation of treaties with the local rulers, and by agreements (not always satisfactorily kept) between the different Umbundu kingdoms.[25]

From about 1874 rubber became important in Umbundu trade, and it is in the period from then until 1911,[26] when the caravan trade collapsed, that the Ovimbundu knew a prosperity which they have hardly recovered today.[27] It is in this period too that there occurred both the loss of Umbundu independence and the establishment of the missions. In 1890 Ndunduma, the king of Bie, was defeated and deposed, and in 1896 Numa, the king of Bailundo attacked, disastrously, the fort which his predecessors had allowed to be established near the capital. In 1902–3 a widespread revolt, known as the Bailundo war, broke out against the Portuguese, the traders being killed, and the forts besieged. The reasons for this revolt, whose leader Mutuya-Kevela was a minister of the Bailundo court, seem to have been injustices on the part of the white population, and possibly a fall in rubber prices. After 1903 the remaining parts of Umbundu country were brought under effective European rule,

[25] Magyar, pp. 292–9; Childs, pp. 203–5.

[26] Childs following A. Bastos, *Monografia de Catumbella* (*Bol. Soc. Geog. Lisboa*, 1910, pp. 74–81, 105–9, 141–5, 180–5, 225–8, 251–3, 279–85) divides the rubber trade into three periods: the rise of the trade 1874–86, the boom 1886–1900, and the decline 1900–11.

[27] I have heard it said by old men who had taken part in the caravan journeys, and by a local mulatto trader that the Ovimbundu of that period had more clothes than they have now. For Angolan economics after 1911 see Henrique Galvão and Carlos Selvagem, *Império Ultramarino Português*, Vol. III, pp. 124–39, Lisboa, 1950, and Clement Egerton, *Angola in Perspective*, London, 1957, pp. 108–13.

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and the European population greatly increased.[28] In some areas at this time a confused situation arose, in which 'robber barons', white and black, tyrannized over chiefs and villagers and engaged in the still vigorous slave trade, which now had acquired a few disguises on the coast.[29]

In 1911 the rubber trade ended, and about the same time slavery and the slave trade were effectively suppressed.[30] From this time onwards, too, civil administration began to be effective and the Benguela Railway became the most important link between the coast and the interior.[31] The trade disappeared, powers of the chiefs declined. The missions, both Catholic and Protestant, which had relatively little influence during the rubber trade period, gained more and more converts.[32]

2. *Ethnography*

Between the Ovimbundu and the sea lie the Hanya, the Nganda, and the Tjisanji tribes of whom little is known except that the Hanya and Nganda seem to be culturally related to the Ovimbundu.[33] To the south are the Nyaneka-Humbi group, cattle-keeping peoples who are culturally and linguistically related to the Ovimbundu, but who did not participate in the trade.[34] To the east lie the Ngangela[35], the Luimbi, and the

[28] Childs, pp. 210–11.

[29] For an account of Umbundu country at this time see H. W. Nevison, *A Modern Slavery*, New York, 1906. In Gumba I was told that Mutu-ya-Kevela the leader of the 1902–3 revolt had raided villages for slaves but that Samakaka whom Childs (p. 22) describes as a robber baron was spoken of favourably.

[30] Slavery had been legally suppressed from 1878. The slaves were called by other names but no effective change was made till 1910. See A. Bastos, *Monografia de Catumbella* in *Bol. Soc. Geog. Lisboa*, 1910 (pp. 74–81, 105–9, 141–55, 180–5, 225–8, 251–5, 279–5).

[31] Childs, p. 228.

[32] Ibid., pp. 220–23. Personal information.

[33] Ibid., p. 8.

[34] On these peoples see Estermann, *Etnografia do Sudoeste de Angola*, Vol. II.

[35] A tribe using this word as the root of the tribal name is to be found to the south-east of Umbundu country in the area round Vila Artur de Paiva. Padre A. Van Horrik, formerly of the Missão Católica de Cubango, tells me that the map contained in M. McCulloch, *The Southern Lunda and Related Peoples*, (London, 1951) should show the Ngangela as occupying much of the area actually assigned to the Mbwela and the south-eastern Ovimbundu. Mbwela does not seem to be the name any tribe uses for itself (Private information, Estermann and Van Horrik).

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Chokwe.[36] These people are culturally and linguistically different from the Ovimbundu, whom, however, they have influenced, especially in the fields of ritual; the initiation rituals typical of these people have spread into southern and eastern Umbundu territory.[37] The Ngangela call the Ovimbundu 'Ovimbali', a name used in Angola for Africans who live with or imitate whites.[38] I have heard an Otjimbundu use it for the Kimbundu of northern Angola. The south-western peoples call the Ovimbundu 'Va-Nano—they of the north',[39] but also regard the Ovimbundu as being 'civilized'. Very little is known about the peoples to the north of the Ovimbundu, who are also different in language and culture and who are said to have more rituals than the Ovimbundu. These are known collectively by the Ovimbundu as Olongoya, a term with a rather offensive meaning. Historically they are important for the Ovimbundu since it was here that Andrew Battell knew the Jaga hordes, and Umbundu tradition links a number of the chiefly lines to these northern peoples. The Umbundu language seems to be gaining ground in this area.[40]

All the neighbouring peoples seem to be matrilineal, as regards descent, inheritance, and succession, with the exception of the Hanya and the Nganda, who have (Dr. Childs suggests) a double-descent kinship system, as traditionally the Ovimbundu had. All seem, as far as is known, to have had chiefs,[41] though there were no kingdoms to equal the power of Bie and Bailundo in the nineteenth century. Culturally the Ovimbundu seem to have been ready to take over traits from neighbouring tribes, and the Portuguese, and this particularly in the sphere of ritual.[42]

[36] For the Luimbi, see C. W. Scott. 'A Note on the Luimbi of Central Angola', *Africa*, October 1955. For the Chokwe see M. McCulloch, op. cit.

[37] Childs, pp. 115–16.

[38] A trader said that Otjimbali means a domesticated black. Estermann is preparing a study of a Mbali group of southern Angola descended from Kimbundu slaves.

[39] The Nyaneka-Humbi tribes use it for the southern Ovimbundu, the southern Ovimbundu use it for the northern Ovimbundu.

[40] Childs, pp. 186–7; Baumann, op. cit.

[41] Baumann, op. cit. For the installation of chiefs in the Amboim area, see Antonio de Silva Maia, 'Ritos e Ceremonias para a Entronização' in *Mensário Administrativo*, July–August 1953.

[42] Childs, p. 220.

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[1874-1911]

THE OVIMBUNDU UNDER TWO SOVEREIGNTIES

178 The great distinguishing mark of the Ovimbundu was their participation in the caravan trade. Some of the neighbouring people also engaged in trading journeys (e.g. the Chokwe) but in central Angola the dominant traders were the Ovimbundu by reason of their control of the routes to Benguela and Catumbela, a control which as Livingstone's narrative shows they tried for a while to turn into a monopoly.[43] With this must be linked
177 the greater readiness of the Ovimbundu to adopt European ways, marked by the general adoption of cloths for wear by at latest the mid-nineteenth century.[44]

3. *Economics and Social Structure*

101 This section will describe the economic life and social structure which marked the period of the rubber trade (1874–1911).
436 A genuine currency existed in the form of cloth, and fortunes
439 could be made in it. Serpa Pinto tells us of one Otjimbundu who made £3,500 by trading in the interior and that he had met many men who 'turned over capital of a thousand to twelve hundred pounds sterling',[45] presumably in trade goods since Portuguese currency did not circulate among the Ovim-
361 bundu. At the capitals of the kingdoms genuine towns grew up. Magyar in the middle of the nineteenth century estimated that
[162] 5,000 people lived at Bailundo[46] and the British explorer Cameron who had crossed Africa from Zanzibar says of Ekovongo, the capital of Bie, 'the town of Kagnombe, the largest I came across during my whole journey, being more than three miles in circumference. On arrival I was met by the
644 Kagnombe's secretary, chamberlain, and captain of the guard who wore red waistcoats as a sign of their dignity. The secretary was more ornamental than useful, being unable to write, but a subordinate, a black man and native of Dondo, was better educated and conducted the trade of Kagnombe with the coast'.[47]

[43] Ibid., p. 205.
[44] Ibid., p. 206, referring to Magyar as evidence.
[45] Serpa Pinto, pp. 161–2.
[46] Magyar, p. 391.
[47] V. L. Cameron, *Across Africa*, London, 1877. Vol. II, pp. 206–7.

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THE OLD SOCIETY

The trade was conducted in caravans composed of up to several thousand people,[48] under the leadership of *entrepeneurs* called *olefumbelo* (of which the singular is *efumbelo*). Of such were the individuals whom Serpa Pinto describes as earning wealth equivalent to a thousand pounds or more. Their role was to get together the caravans, to negotiate with the local political authorities, and to provide ritual leadership. The exact relationship between the *efumbelo* and the ordinary members of the caravan is difficult to see. European travellers found that porters were content with low wages since they had opportunities for private trade, but apparently the caravan organizers had better opportunities for getting rich than had ordinary Ovimbundu. My informants stated that a man organized a caravan to gain wealth. A man who was in a position of prosperity would be known as an *okuate* (rich man), would stay at home and be expected to assist his relatives.[49] 437 472 474 [56]

Different ages and both sexes participated in the trade. Childs says that boys from the age of nine upwards travelled on the caravans, and this is confirmed by Serpa Pinto.[50] Tucker, and my informants however, give the age when caravan travel began as being fifteen or over.[51] Unmarried girls travelled too, but simply acted as helpers to some male relative. The caravan organizers (*olefumbelo*) were old men, I was told, and travelled in the rear while in front of the caravan marched a young man (called the *kasongo*) who carried a flag.[52]

Dr. Childs states that between 1874 and 1886 rubber was gathered from the forests of the interior and took eight months (four months each way presumably) for the Ovimbundu to obtain. From 1886, however, 'red rubber' was obtained from the sandy lands beyond the Cuanza, a journey which only took three months altogether. Hence, Childs states, the trading 439 474

[48] A Baston, *Monografia de Catombella*, in *Bol. Soc. Geog. Lisboa* 1910 (p. 131) states that caravans of several thousand were used in the 1870s but that by the time of writing (1908–9, nearly the end of the trade) people came in small parties. My informants who would remember this period spoke of the large size of the caravans.

[49] My informants.

[50] Serpa Pinto, p. 164.

[51] J. T. Tucker in *Africa* (News and Notes), April 1956.

[52] Informants.

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439 journeys diminished in distance as they increased in profit-
484 ability.[53]

My informants, however, gave a somewhat different picture. Long trading journeys were still being undertaken in the last decade of the trade (1901–11). Some men whom I met had travelled to the kingdom of the Mwata Yamvo and beyond to Luba country; one man had made a journey into what is now the Congo Republic which took a year to go and a year to return; another had visited Barotseland. It should be said that these seem to have been unusually long journeys; journeys totalling six to eight months were common.[54]

182 The significance of the trade in social life is reflected in the
829 mystical explanations of success in business found in Umbundu religion. Prosperity might be explained either by the favour of
[57] spirits such as Kandundu and Otjipukú, who received at their
[258] shrines libations of wine, or by malevolent sorcery involving the sacrifice of relatives in exchange for wealth.[55] The existence of these two explanations probably reflects the existence of some rich men who satisfied the expectations of their relatives and others who did not.

567 Apart from the rubber trade, the older slave trade continued
178 until its vigorous suppression in the period 1910–12, and indeed seems, as regards the Ovimbundu, to have become intensified in the period after 1890. The slaves went to S. Tome and Principe, or to coastal plantations. Up to that time the Ovimbundu had sold few of their own people, with the exception of criminals or people who had become generally unpopular with their kin. The collapse of the old political system played into the hands of adventurers who unscrupulously exploited the Umbundu custom of debt slavery or conducted raids for this purpose.[56]

484 It was then the 'trade' which was the common factor in the
439 life of all Ovimbundu, and which was so to speak the factor,

[53] Childs, p. 108.

[54] Informants.

[55] Although some old men still have shrines to the luck-giving spirits it is not possible to see how their cult functioned in the social structure then existing. It is, however, notable that success could be interpreted mystically in two ways by benevolent spirits or by sorcery.

[56] Childs, p. 213. I was told that Ombos had been raided from Bailundu.

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rather than any political alliance or opposition, which related the Ovimbundu as a whole to the Portuguese and the other tribes. Informants who remember 'the time of the rubber' talk about it with much more interest and much more detail than about any other aspect of the past, and it is far easier to make an ordered picture out of the narratives of the caravan journeys than to fill in the gaps in the descriptions of the political and kinship systems provided by Childs and Hastings.[57]

Politically the Ovimbundu were divided, as has been said, into several kingdoms. Bailundo, the largest of the kingdoms was divided, according to Childs into about 200 sub-chiefdoms. As it had about half a million inhabitants this would give an average population of about 2,500. While the kingdoms seem to have been more or less stable in number and boundaries from the end of the eighteenth century, the number of sub-chiefdoms seems to have increased. Thus an official Portuguese estimate made in 1799 gives Bailundo as having only 82 sub-chiefdoms, and Galangue, where Childs counted 112 sub-chiefdoms, as having 78. The sub-chiefdom paid tribute to the king, sent men for his armies, and recognized his court as the supreme arbitrator. Some sub-chiefdoms were held by ministers or relatives of the king.[58]

It is, however, not easy on the sparse detail available to decide how much autonomy the sub-chiefdoms really had. Gumba, the area where I worked, was a sub-chiefdom of the Bailundo kingdom, albeit on the north-western frontier, neighbouring Camongue and Cela, where the people did not call themselves Va-Mbailundu, though their rulers acknowledged the suzerainty of the king of Bailundo. Old men told me of raids from Bailundo for slaves, but I cannot say if this was the result of the period of disorder mentioned, or whether sub-chiefdoms on the border of a kingdom gave only nominal submission and received only nominal protection. In the area where I worked,

[57] This is not intended as a personal reflection on Dr. Childs and the late Dr. Hastings, both of whom deserve the highest praise for their work and for their obvious devotion to the Ovimbundu. Hastings devoted far more space to the magico-religious field than to the kinship system. Likewise Childs's description of kinship is much shorter, much less detailed, and much less satisfactory than his account of childhood and adolescence, or the really outstanding historical chapter.

[58] Magyar, pp. 389-90; Childs, pp. 23-24.

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631 634 at least, the effective unit of law and self-defence was formerly the sub-chiefdom.[59]

634 643 In both sub-chiefdom and kingdom the chief (a term used here for both king and sub-chief) passed through a cycle of rites to become truly chief and was surrounded, assisted, and [645] checked by titled ministers.[60] The future chief was selected from persons of chiefly stock. My informants stated that a new chief might be related either patrilineally or matrilineally to former chiefs; all other sources state that the chiefdom can only be held by somebody *patrilineally* of chiefly blood, with the exception of Santos Brandão writing on the Huambo kingdom.[61] The selection was the responsibility of the Mwekalia, whose role was to represent the people *vis-à-vis* the king, an opposition which is expressed in the Umbundu saying 'the chief is a guest, the Mwekalia is a man of the country'. When asked to explain this saying, the Ovimbundu point out that many chiefs come from outside the chiefdom, and also that 'If the chief does something wrong, we can send him away'.[62]

In such a constitutional deposition of the chief which nineteenth century observers describe as taking place fairly frequently,[63] the main responsibility fell on the Mwekalia. The cycle of royal rites consisted of the ceremonial entry of the chief into his capital and his taking of a new name, the rebuilding of certain shrines, a large-scale hunt, the building of an archway intended as a magical defence to the capital, and finally an act

[59] Inferences.

[60] For the king and his ministers see especially Hastings, pp. 69–71 (based on Bailundu), and for other details of the royal court see Serpa Pinto, p. 187 (based on Bié).

[61] For references to patrilineal succession see Serpa Pinto, p. 159, Capello and Ivens, *From Benguella to the Territory of Yaca* (London, 1882), p. 81, Hastings, p. 40, Childs, p. 92. Santos Brandão (*Mensário Administrativo*, July–August, 1950) gives a list of the kings of Huambo where there had been two successive royal lines, and this shows several cases of succession by sisters' sons. (The Umbundu text he gives makes this quite clear.)

[62] The underlying idea is not so much that the chiefly stock is of immigrant descent but rather that the people of one chiefdom call somebody from outside to rule over them, who can be sent away if he misbehaves. Of course people living within a chiefdom are not excluded, but this point about the chief being a stranger is very strongly emphasized.

[63] Childs, pp. 92–93 and references given there.

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634 643 [266]

of ritual cannibalism (*oku lia okonge*) after which he could not be deposed.[64]

Hastings in describing the principal ministers of the Bailundo court states that the Mwekalia and the Galamboli or Ngambole (whose function was to remember traditions) were representative of the indigenous pre-Jaga stock, the Kesongo who was the war leader was a slave from another tribe, and the Otjindulli was of immigrant stock, and points out that these represent the three sources from which the Ovimbundu sprang.[65] 645

At the sub-chiefdom level some of the titles found in the kingdoms would be found combined, and the chief's court, where cases were judged, was composed both of titled ministers living at the chief's village and of the village headmen (some of whom were also title-holders). The sub-chief represented his people to the outer world, led them in communal ritual and judged, with his councillors,[66] their disputes. Hastings describes a case thus: "When all the members of the court are seated in a circle, with an empty space in the centre, the plaintiff's counsel then relates the case, after which the lawyer for the defendant does likewise for his side. The chief in turn makes general comments. Lusenje, the official, whose duty it is to keep order at court and to announce the speakers, then calls on the accuser to come forward and make his statement."[67] 634 635

While the sub-chiefdom was the largest unit in which law and order reigned undisputed, there existed alliances and cross-cutting relationships providing a contact outside its area. There was the *ñjinda* alliance which existed between two sub-chiefdoms which were separated by a third. Gumbu sub-chiefdom was thus allied to Ndjandju from which it was separated by Chicunda, and messengers from Gumbu and Ndjandju travelled together to Bailundo once a year to carry tribute. Apparently a sub-chiefdom had only one *ñjinda* partner. The relationship was one of funeral friendship; *salangñinda* (*ñjinda* partners) undertook the burial of those who died without kinsfolk and also ordinary 631 631 764

[64] This is based on information from Gumbu. See also Magyar, pp. 270-271; Hastings, pp. 42-43; Childs p. 21.

[65] Hastings, p. 60.

[66] Informants.

[67] Hastings, pp. 140-42.

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631 564 funerals (though these burials could be undertaken by the cross-cousins of the deceased). When *sakwatjiseke* came to their partner-chiefdom for a funeral they had the right to steal small live-stock, such as chickens, or pigeons, but not cattle, goats, or [837] pigs. An *ukwatjiseke* could sleep with the wives of his *sakwatjiseke* partners without being sued for damages.[68]

631 The ties of kinship and affinity crossed the boundaries of [602] the sub-chiefdoms and even of the kingdoms.[69] The members [463] of the three spirit-protected professions, blacksmithing, divining, and hunting recognized obligations of hospitality to co-[574] professionals from other parts of the country.[70] Again the caravans were so large that they must have involved people [437] from many sub-chiefdoms, which presupposes a wide range of contacts.

182 It may be said that the picture given here is contradictory and inadequate. How can the existence of large kingdoms be reconciled to the extreme insecurity described by old men? How do the wealthy caravan organizers fit into the political system? What sort of politics were there in the kingdoms? It is not easy to answer these questions owing to the lack of evidence, and, probably, because the kingdoms were already in decline during the latter part of the rubber trade period. Indeed, the impression that accounts of the Ovimbundu in the nineteenth century give is that of adventure, battle, commerce, migration —a vigorous rather than a stable society.[71]

61 114 The kinship system is perhaps the field of Umbundu society which has aroused most interest among anthropologists. Childs and Hastings have written much that is interesting on the old double-descent grouping but as, with the kinship system, the form has been described rather than the functioning and it is

[68] Informants. The account in Childs, pp. 114–15 differs considerably. For this institution elsewhere in Angola see Estermann, 'Clans et alliances de clans', *Anthropos*, 1952.

[69] Childs, p. 54.

[70] Informants.

[71] Magyar describes the king and his courtiers as being extremely despotic towards the villagers, and states that their despotism depended on their having a standing military force called 'Sons of the Elephant' (pp. 178–80). Later accounts do not mention this, and Childs notes (p. 209) that at the height of the rubber trade it was more difficult for the kings to recruit armies for their wars.

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not now possible for field work to supply the gaps in the written material.[75]

The traditional kinship system had neither clans nor segmenting lineages. The patrilineal group (*ekau*) was localized in a village, the group head being at the same time a village headman. Patrilineal ties do not seem to have been recognized between villages.[76] This social independence of the agnatically united village was reflected in the surrounding palisade, in the close clustering of the houses (nowadays much more spread out) and in the village institutions of the dancing-floor and the men's house (*ondjange*). It was here that all the men and boys, from seven or eight up, ate. Hastings writes, 'Each woman, after preparing the meal, takes or sends the portion which is for the male members of her family. This food is common property. As soon as enough has arrived some responsible member among the men will have it divided among the boys. For days a man may never taste of the food which is prepared by his wife.'[78] The men's house was also a club, and a court-room, where minor cases were decided. It was through this localized body of patrikin that an individual claimed land and residence rights and through it that he participated in the political system.[79]

The matrilineal group (the *ekaisa*) was composed of the descendants of a common great-great-grandmother.[80] According to Childs, it had a head who might also at times be a village headman,[77] and it was presumably the matrilineal group head who settled the disputes over property which Hambly says

[75] For an attempt at reconstructing Umbundu kinship on the basis of Childs's book see J. A. Barnes's review of *Umbundu Kinship and Character* in *Africa*, 1950, pp. 126–128. It may be mentioned that the terms 'the side of the bow' and 'the side of the basket' are used simply to mean 'patrilateral kin' and 'matrilateral kin' (Dr. Childs, private information, and my own inquiries).

[76] A rather ambiguous phrase in Childs p. 43 ('The *ekau* consists of a large number of local village groups'), which might be interpreted as meaning that villages were patrilineally grouped into clans, seems really to mean simply that the village is the *ekau* unit.

[78] Hastings, p. 77.

[77] Ibid., p. 18. Childs, pp. 43–44.

[79] Hastings, p. 89, states that the matrilineal group consists of the descendants of a common great-great-great-grandmother (that is, five generations), and on p. 91 says that it consists of a group 'linked by a common great-great-grandmother'.

[80] Childs, p. 44.

[N 74-191]

613 could be resolved in the matrilineal group.[78] Hastings, who gives the most detailed account of the matrilineal groups, which he calls sibs, tells us, 'There can be no exaction of fines or taking of slaves between the members of a sib group—the group members are supposed to pay each other's debts, and one who has wealth and refuses so to communicate may be secretly poisoned by the others. It is within the group of matrilineal sibs that most compacts, whether social or economic, are formed and operate. The same is true even of malevolent plots and anti-
[75] social practices, such as killing by witchcraft.'[79]

102 613 937 Clearly, the matrilineal groups in which the rich had to pool their wealth with poorer kinsfolk and in which trading arrangements[80] were made indicate the adaptation of the kinship system to the needs of the trade. It may be suggested that one of the functions of the double descent system was to separate the fields of village and chiefdom relations, established through patrilineal ties, from the field of commerce, credit, and the inheritance of wealth gained by trade. Thus the conflicts in which a man would be involved in one set of relations would not involve his other set of ties, and this distribution of stresses must have limited the strains set up by disputes. The distinction between the local group and the commercial group would also prevent heavy losses from trade striking a whole village simul-
[49] taneously.[81] The credit institutions demanded by a trading system in which debt was frequently incurred were fitted into the kinship system, and associated with a device for levelling those who had become prosperous in the trade.

613 Unhappily the disintegration of the traditional social struc-
[175] ture, and the accompanying loss of knowledge of it, prevented me from adding to, or even corroborating entirely, the written material on the form of the matrilineal groups.[82] It is not at all evident how the groups maintained integration, or how new

[78] Hastings, p. xxx.

[79] Ibid., p. 92.

[80] Dr. Childs suggested to me that the core of the caravans might be composed of sibs. However, the caravans were so large that they clearly could not be organized on a kinship basis. See also Serpa Pinto, p. 189.

[81] This point was suggested to me by Dr. Mary Douglas.

[82] I did not obtain any information on the size of the matrilineal group, the existence of heads of the groups, and the degree to which it was a congregation.

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groups emerged. The information on the cult of the matrilineal spirits which might have thrown some light on matrilineal conflicts and integration, is confused. Both Hastings and Mrs. Tucker state that the matrilineal spirits are always malevolent, but this is not confirmed by my informants,[63] and it may be that they were referring to the traditional belief that sorcery was only practised between members of a matrilineal group. Although, as has been stated, a man looked to his matrilineal kin for economic aid, he might travel with his father (who had first claim on his services), or with his mother's brother or some other kinsman; indeed while his father was still alive he might travel and trade on his own account.[64] The matrilineal group (in this area at least) was not a unit from which trading teams were formed, but rather a means for providing financial assistance when needed for those engaged in trading. It is of course possible that in some areas of Umbundu country the matrilineal kin groups were significant in the organization of trading caravans.

Another institution whose form can be described but whose function cannot be properly known is that of preferential marriage with certain categories of kin. Childs states that the categories were cross-cousins (both patrilateral and matrilateral), the sister's daughter, and the father's sister, and indicates that the cross-cousin marriages were not generally with first-cousins. My informants generally denied that it had been permitted to marry a father's sister, but confirmed his other statements. They added that an indemnification was paid by the bridegroom to the bride's family 'to cut the blood',[65] and that the kinship terms were replaced by affinal. This suggests that these marriages may have been intended to restore distant kinship ties by turning them into affinal ties and so renewing them for the next generation, but how this would operate cannot even be guessed.

[63] Hastings, p. 87; L. S. Tucker, 'The Divining Basket of the Ovimbundu', *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, 1949, pp. 171–201.

[64] Informants.

[65] This was paid down to 1949 or so in the area where I was. It was about 20 [illegible], which has been hitherto [illegible]. It was formerly referred to by the Umbundu term for 'blood' (ombuka), as was the payment made on the death of a non-blood-relative [illegible].

[P74-191]

THE OVIMBUNDU UNDER TWO SOVEREIGNTIES

It was then the father who normally exercised authority over a boy, and on the father's death a child or youth would join the household of a father's brother. Yet the right of a sister's son to the inheritance of the movable property and to grants from his mother's brother was counterbalanced by the latter's right to sell his uterine nephew into slavery, a fate from which the father could save his son by ransoming him, in which case the mother's brother would no longer have this right.[66] In this society, the mother's brother—sister's son relationship was fundamentally an economic one, in which the sister's son received assistance in the trade and inherited his uncle's gains in this trade, but could himself be transformed into a source of capital.

I now summarize the evidence on Umbundu social control and its relation with the trading economy. It is clear that the Ovimbundu belonged to the number of those African societies with pyramidal[67] political systems and formal codes and courts of law, even though there exists uncertainty as to the relative power of the kingdoms and the sub-chiefdoms. Social control also operated through the kinship system, authority at the village level being in the hands of the head of the patrilineal group backed by the public opinion expressed in the men's house, and the dispersed matrilineal groups having sanctions in the right of sale of a sister's son and in the accusations of sorcery brought against those who failed to use wealth to aid their relatives. For the caravan trade to have attained the importance it did there must also have existed something of a *pax Umbundua* stimulated by the existence of such ties as that between *ginda* partners and the 'international' hospitality shown to diviners, hunters, and smiths. Evidence of this *pax Umbundua* is provided by the organization of caravans, and by the establishment of marriage ties between persons in different kingdoms, and between different royal houses.[68] However, warfare was not unknown between the different

[66] Childs, p. 44, and my informants.

[67] See Forde and Jones-Pritchard, Introduction to *African Political Systems*.

[68] Hastings (p. 17) notes a marriage between the daughter of a king of Bié and Ekuikui, king of Bailundo (1878–98). Childs (p. 171) notes that Kalandula, king of Bailundo, was a sister's son of a king of Bailundo.

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kingdoms of the Ovimbundu, though more frequently perhaps it was made against the non-Umbundu peoples.[89]

The question of the influence of the trade provides interesting opportunities for comparison. The Ovimbundu were the southernmost of the peoples who in the nineteenth century participated in the trade between the Europeans of the West African coast and the peoples of the interior.[90] In some ways the Ovimbundu seem to have been less influenced by it than were some of the peoples further north. The Ovimbundu did not develop genuine patterns of urban life as in Dahomey or Benin.[91]

Three explanations can be offered for the relative failure of associational groups and urban society to develop. Umbundu crafts were much inferior to those found along the coast of the Gulf of Guinea; there was no indigenous weaving industry, for instance, and the goods which the caravans carried to the interior were all of European or American origin, cloths, guns, and rum.[92] For these goods the Ovimbundu were dependent on the Portuguese settled at the coast or in the Highland and this meant that the Ovimbundu were far from economic autonomy. Again the trade had a relatively short time span—the real boom period lasted only from 1886 to 1900, and earlier on in the 1840's when the beeswax, ivory, and slave trade was flourishing, the Ovimbundu had plenty of time for warfare.

It would, however, be a grave mistake to think that trade had only a marginal influence on Umbundu society. It has been suggested that the form of the double-descent system owes its origin to the necessity to isolate economic relations from other social fields. In the sphere of ritual, there are some remarkable copies of European practices—for instance the holding of a feast in honour of the ancestors at Christmas-time.[93] Many ritual concepts are related to the explanation of business

[89] For information on Umbundu warfare see Magyar, pp. 277-80 and Serpa Pinto, pp. 177-9.

[90] See Balandier, *Sociologie Actuelle de l'Afrique Noire*, Paris, 1955, for a discussion of social change in other areas which had experienced a trade of a similar sort.

[91] For Dahomey see M. J. Herskovits, *Dahomey*, New York, 1938. For Benin see R. Bradbury, *The Benin Kingdom* (Ethnographic Survey of Africa), London, 1957.

[92] Childs, p. 108.

[93] Information.

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success. More generally, it may be suggested that the conditions of the trade in which wealth was dependent on contact with Europeans created not only the Umbundu esteem for 'shrewd behaviour' (*olu lungulu*) and their willingness for social change, but their marked docility and submissiveness towards Europeans.[84]

[84] See O. Mannoni, *Prospero and Caliban*, London, 1956, for an ingenious discussion of a similar set of attitudes.

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CHAPTER II

THE CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

In modern Angola, an Overseas Province of Portugal,[1] the Ovimbundu form the most numerous of the African peoples, with their million and a half of population,[2] and have also the reputation of being industrious—especially the Ovimbundu of Bailundo.[3] Their homeland, the Benguela Highland, has also been of importance in the modern economic development of Angola.

On the narrow strip of coastal plain stand three cities[4]—Lobito, Catumbela, and Benguela. Both Benguela and Catumbela knew the rubber trade; Lobito was founded in the early part of this century as the coastal terminal of the Benguela Railway which runs through Umbundu country and beyond the Congo frontier and thence to Elisabethville. The Benguela Railway is the economic backbone of the Highland. On it are the cities of Nova Lisboa and Silva Porto and a string of smaller trading towns. Traders from the Bimbe area drove regularly down to Vila Nova, one such trading town on the line, a distance of a hundred and thirty miles or so to sell maize, and buy trade goods and African villagers knew that along the railway maize sold for better prices and clothes were much cheaper.

[1] This term was used for nearly a hundred years up to 1955 when the term Colony was adopted. In 1951 'colony' was dropped in favour of the old term.

[2] Estimate made in 1955 by Mr. Theodore Tucker then of the Missão Evangélica do Dondi.

[3] Gabriel and Selvagem, op. cit., pp. 384-5.

[4] A city receives its title through official recognition. The 1950 census gives Nova Lisboa as having a higher 'civilized' population (7,982 of whom 4,756 were white) than any city except Luanda. The total population has been estimated at 60,000 (Egerton, p. 198). Estimates given me in 1955-6 suggested that Nova Lisboa has some 6,000 'civilized' persons and 20,000-30,000 natives. Lobito has fewer civilized persons but may have a larger native population of perhaps 30,000.

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M 496 463 Most of the employees of the Benguela Railway are Ovimbundu and many of the old pupils of the Catholic seminaries and of the Protestant secondary school[5] have found employment on it as clerks and telegraphists. The railway has also become a means M [167] of Umbundu migration carrying Ovimbundu to work in the coastal cities and plantations, and on the other side carrying their speech with it to the interior.

A 433 Angola is economically a land of primary production, and its cities and towns are founded on trade. There is little industry, although Lobito is noted for its cement works and saw mill, and drinks, both alcoholic and soft, paper and pottery are all manufactured in Angola.[6] On the coastal plain there are sugar plantations and there are a number of other plantations especially on the western fringe of the Highland, but the main crop of the Highland is maize, grown by the Ovimbundu and sold by the traders to the official boards which have store-houses on A 438 the railway line. The traders have generally tended to scatter themselves over the countryside though now the Government is insisting on new traders settling in recognized hamlets. The A 361 towns are small and frankly rather dismal places, serving as the administrative and postal centres for the neighbourhood, with a parish church, a school, two or three hotels, perhaps a club, and occasional cinema shows and a number of stores with a rather wider range of goods than those in the bush. They are significant from the point of view of communications, linking the traders in the bush to the cities and the railway.

A 49 A network of roads covers the Benguela Highland with the result that all villages are at most only a few miles from a track which is usable by motor vehicles. A truck seen on one of these roads will most likely belong to a trader, though it might belong to an official on one of his rare local trips, to a missionary, or to a labour recruiter. There are now a number of bus services in the Highland. As these serve only a certain number of roads, villagers who want to make a journey of any distance must walk or thumb a lift from a trader (who will charge) or a missionary (who will not charge) or ride on one of the still infrequent bicycles, his own, or a borrowed one.

[5] At Dondi, with Dr. Childs as headmaster.
[6] Egerton, op. cit., pp. 131–2. Galvão and Selvagem, op. cit., pp. 334–8.

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Men can go out to work in three ways. By going to look for work in a city or on a plantation, by being recruited in his village by a travelling labour recruiter (*angariador*), or by being recruited through the post for military service or for contract labour (a period of a year's non-voluntary work). 464

Men who are away at work may keep in touch with their kin by letters. These are sent to the nearest Catholic or Protestant mission station according to the religious sympathies of the sender and his kin and are sent from there to the villages. 205

Angola forms an Overseas Province of Portugal, and is therefore subject to the Overseas Ministry in Lisbon. The Overseas Provinces of Portugal are officially declared to be integral parts of Portugal, which is regarded as a nation existing in Europe, Africa, and Asia. The expression 'Here also is Portugal' is often heard in Angola. 648

The inhabitants of Angola are in legal status divided into 'civilized' persons, whether white, mulatto, or black, with Portuguese citizenship, and Portuguese 'natives' or 'uncivilized' persons,[7] this latter category including some 3,000 'uncivilized' mulattoes. The 1950 census gave Angola a total population of 4,145,266 of whom 135,355 were 'civilized'. This category was composed of 78,826 whites, 26,335 mulattoes, and 30,089 Africans, plus a balance of 105 presumably Goans. 641 162

The 'natives' are, unlike the 'civilized', subject to the Labour Code. There is no Native Legal Code, nor does Portuguese law apply to 'natives'. Administrative officers may apply Portuguese law, or native custom as known to them, or their own judgement. 641

The administration is headed by the Governor-General who resides at Luanda. The province of Angola is divided into districts each headed by a district governor. Both the governors-general and the district governors have usually distinguished themselves in the Services or in a legal career. Members of the administrative service are not usually promoted to these posts, although they may attain such positions as that of Secretary of Native Affairs. 631

The districts are in turn sub-divided into *concelhos* (a term

[7] By a law of 1961 Portuguese citizenship has been made universal.

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A 631

which I leave in Portuguese since there is no convenient English equivalent) ruled by an *administrador*, and the *concelho* in turn divides into *postos* (posts) each in the charge of a *chefe de posto*. There is no specific limit either of population or of geographical extension for these units,. and in actual fact very great disparities exist, despite the frequent revision of boundaries.[8]

M 797

Ovimdundu are found within four of the Catholic dioceses of Angola, though the diocese of Nova Lisboa is largely Umbundu as regards its African population. The Catholic missions to the Ovimbundu have been largely in the hands of the Congregação do Espirito Santo, and it is in this part of Angola that their work has been most intensive.[9] An effort has been made to build up a local clergy, and by 1956 there were some thirty-two priests of Umbundu origin. There is an official distinction between the Missions, which work among the 'native' population, and the Parishes, which are responsible for the 'civilised' population, that is all Portuguese citizens, whether white, of mixed race, or African; however, in practice natives come to parish churches, and 'civilized' persons come to Mission Churches.

A 797

M 797

Most of the Protestant missionary work[10] among the Ovimbundu has been achieved by a joint effort of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (Congregationalists) and the United Church of Canada, though the Swiss Mission and the Plymouth Brethren should also be mentioned. The headquarters of the American–Canadian mission at Dondi includes a seminary for pastors, a boys' secondary school, a girls' boarding-school, the printing press, a hospital, and a leper settlement.

The American–Canadian mission has for various reasons been confined to the Ovimbundu though catechists from its stations have settled among neighbouring peoples; hence the Native Church it has founded is the only all-Umbundu social grouping that exists. Ovimbundu Protestants do, however,

[8] Galvão and Selvagem, pp. 235–40.

[9] For the origins of the Catholic missions among the Ovimbundu see Luis Kelling *Quarenta Anos de Africa*, Braga 1934.

[10] For the history of the Protestant missions see J. R. Tucher, *Drums in the Darkness*, Toronto and New York 1927, and *Carrie of Chisamba*, Toronto 1945. Childs, pp. 220–1.

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meet other Angolan Protestants through such occasions as the Congress of Evangelical Youth, held at Malange in 1955. M 797

While the Catholic missions are not tied to the Ovimbundu in the same way as the Protestants the number of their adherents falls sharply when the Umbundu boundary is reached. Responsiveness to missionary activity is a mark of the Ovimbundu today just as was participation in the caravan trade. Indeed, the main common possession of the Ovimbundu, the Umbundu language, is, as a literary vehicle and object of study, almost a missionary monopoly. Both missions produce a monthly magazine in Umbundu and Portuguese, and several books of a religious or educational nature have been published with Umbundu on one side and Portuguese on the other as legally required. The dictionaries and grammars are almost all of missionary authorship. M [181] [184]

Acceptance of Christianity has also significance for Umbundu self-consciousness. The majority of Ovimbundu have come under missionary influence in varying degrees, and conversion to Christianity makes Ovimbundu feel closer to Europeans and superior to other African peoples. I have heard African priests claim that the Ovimbundu are the best people in Angola, largely on this ground, and at Lobito and Luanda tensions have been felt in the Protestant community between Ovimbundu and members of other tribes.[11] M [186]

The Ovimbundu live under economic, political, and religious systems introduced and controlled by Europeans. Yet trader, official, and missionary are all dependent on the Ovimbundu. The 'civilized' and the native live in symbiosis, and the two basic problems of this study are the nature of this symbiosis, and its relation to the social system of the native population themselves. To see this symbiosis in perspective it is necessary to describe what occupations and statuses Africans can hold. M 177 648 M 121

The strict segregation of black and white found in South Africa is alien to Portuguese traditions. There is a lack of almost all forms of public segregation between white and non-white.[12] A 563

[11] Personal information.

[12] In the racial discrimination that does exist the mulattoes generally count as whites. It is said to be difficult for a full African to obtain accommodation in a Luanda hotel, but the situation for mulattoes is quite different.

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563 Added to this, the existence of the mulattoes[13] and *assimilados* [641] (Africans possessing Portuguese citizenship) prevent social status from being identified with race. An analogy exists, however, with the social structures of the West Indies and Latin 563 America with their 'colour-class'[14] systems in which there exists 565 both a class system based on economic and cultural criteria, and a hierarchic arrangement of ethnic groups, the two systems coinciding broadly but by no means totally.

463 The occupational structures (that is, the division of the population into different occupations) found in different parts of Angola vary considerably, from Luanda, now nearly four centuries old, with its old mulatto families, and the body of cultured Africans who form the Liga Nacional Africana,[15] to some parts of southern Angola where something of a frontier atmosphere still survives among the traders, scattered among the very conservative pastoral tribes. In the Benguela Highland the native population provides the cultivators and unskilled labourers. At some points in Angola, notably at Cela, the [166] government has attempted to establish colonies of Portuguese peasants who will not employ native labour. Apart from this all agricultural work in Angola is done by natives, either for themselves or for 'civilized' employers.

There are a considerable number of African craftsmen, some *assimilados*,[16] others not, in such lines as brick-laying, carpentry, smithing, tailoring, and so on. Some Africans with secondary schooling have become clerks, dispensers, interpreters, and telegraphists. Of late years, a few of the most advanced pupils of the Dondi school have chosen medicine as a career. Licences to conduct a trader's store are confined to the civilized population but even so very few *assimilados* seem to become traders.

[13] The word mulatto is considered offensive in Angola. The correct term is mestiço. The white population rose in the decade 1940–50 far more rapidly than the mulatto or 'civilized' African.

[14] See F. Henriques, *Family and Colour in Jamaica*, London 1953. S. Tax (ed.). *Heritage of Conquest*, Glencoe, Illinois 1952.

[15] The Liga Nacional Africana is an association of *assimilados*. There are other [575] such groupings which act as benevolent societies and engage in cultural and social activities. For an interesting account of contemporary Luanda see Gilberto Freyre, *Aventura e Rotina*, Lisbon, 1953, pp. 324–41.

[16] The decision whether or not to recognize somebody as fulfilling the qualifications for the status of *assimilado* is very much dependent on the responsible officials. [641]

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While there are both African and white truck-drivers, this tends to be a speciality of the mulattoes. Business and professional men are usually white, though there are occasional Cape Verdians and Goan professional men, and in old-established cities like Luanda and Benguela there are mulattoes of high social status. There are no African *chefes de posto* in the Highland, though I have heard of an African holding an important position in the Treasury at Luanda.[17] The most significant section of those Ovimbundu who have received education are the Catholic priests, and the Protestant pastors because of their number, their social role, and their existence as groups.

There are, as I have said, some 32 African priests, and from 60 to 70 or so pastors. In the Catholic Church the most significant distinction is that between priest and layman, as can be seen by the courteous, even respectful manner Europeans adopt towards African priests; among the Protestants the significant distinction is rather that between the American and Canadian missionaries and the Ovimbundu members of the native church including the pastors.

While the white priests are members of a religious order and the African priests are not, both have similar duties and share a common life. The white and African priests eat together, pass their period of recreation together, and may alternate such duties as saying Mass, and hearing confessions. Both European and African clergy rely for their keep on the superior of the Mission. Three African priests have become superiors of missions.[18]

With the Protestants there is a division of functions, the missionaries providing supervisory and specialized services, such as agricultural advice, education, and medical work, and the Native Church being responsible for village work. Financially, this division involves missionary salaries being paid by the mission boards, and those of the pastors and the village school teachers by the Ovimbundu Protestants. Socially there is less contact between missionaries and pastors than between black and white priests. Many pastors live away from the missions at pastorate centres. The missionaries eat and pass their spare time with their families, and among themselves talk English,

[17] Private information.
[18] Personal observations.

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switching to Umbundu or Portuguese for addressing an African, whereas Portuguese is the language used at the Catholic missions even between non-Portuguese.

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The African Catholic priests then have approximate equality and identity of status with their white confreres within the hierarchic framework of the diocese of Nova Lisboa; the Ovimbundu pastors lack this equality and identity but instead possess greater independence and opportunities for leadership within the Umbundu Native Church, which functions as a partly autonomous body.[19] The difference in functions of the priests and pastors is related to the ultimate aims of missionary action; for the Catholic missions the establishment of a local clergy is part of the complete incorporation of Ovimbundu into the universal Church; for the Protestants the establishment of a local clergy is part of the building up of a totally independent local church.

M 121 A M 797 563

I attempt later in this work to show what roles the missions play in social life among the Ovimbundu and in the relations between the 'civilized' and native population. Here it should be noted that it is the missions rather than commerce or the Government which have opened status-giving positions to the Ovimbundu. The clergy have higher statuses in the total Angolan society than do any other of the *assimilados*. They combine this high status *vis-à-vis* the Europeans with leadership in groupings which include the ordinary villagers, unlike the various welfare societies in which the *assimilados* associate.

000 M 181 175

So much then for the general pattern of cities, communications, and trains, of administration, missionaries, and traders. I now turn to the particular features of the neighbourhood where I lived. Bimbe is said to derive from the name of a princess (Mbimbi) who ruled as a vassal of the king of Bailundo.[20] Here at the beginning of this century Samakaka, a

[19] The missions provide supervision and specialist services including agricultural instruction, community development, education, and health. Village work and actual pastoral activity is the responsibility of the Native Church. For an account of such specialist services see M. F. Cushmann, *Missionary Doctor in Africa*, New York, 1944 and A. Strangeways in *African Women* (June 1936).

M [562]

[20] Information obtained locally from 'civilised' people. Princesses were very rare among the Ovimbundu, though Childs notes that Sambos (Sambu) had a woman ruler early in its history (p. 178).

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'robber-baron', established himself[21] and in 1904 there was a minor rising against the Portuguese[22] (not to be confused with the very extensive Bailundo war of 1902–3). In 1908 the government post was founded for Bimbe, and in 1928 the Catholic Mission was established at the point where the Bailundo Mission had the furthest flung catechetical school in that direction. In 1927 the first trader had settled at Chicunda.[23] The areas under the mission and the post do not coincide, but it may be said that Bimbe is the territory bounded on the west by the River Cuvo or Keve and on the east by the main road from Bailundo to Gabela. The southern boundary of the post ran roughly on a line between the post and the Ponte Salazar (which bridges the Cuvo (or Keve) and takes the road into Cassongue), and the northern boundary is formed by a parallel line drawn from the road some way to the south of Cela to the river. In 1956 the post of Bimbe was divided; much of the western part including the Mission was placed under a new post Luvemba.

Chicunda is twenty kilometres beyond the mission, and seven kilometres beyond Chicunda a turning from the main track brings one to the village of Epalanga. Keeping on the track, a further bifurcation, say two and a half kilometres on, gives a track to the left which leads to a small leper colony, and a track leading straight on and sharply upwards to the village of the chief of Gumba.

This village lies at the summit of a sharp ridge which rises up from the ordinary level and then drops abruptly to a neighbourhood inaccessible to motor transport, which forms the greater part of the Gumba chiefdom. The boundary on the other side is a river across which lies Cela.

Such is the lay-out of the area studied. It is up in the north-western corner of the Umbundu country, indeed down by the Mission, people said that the people of Gumba were not Ovimbundu really but 'Olongoya', as the peoples to the north are termed. Many of the people in Gumba had come from

[21] Childs, p. 22.

[22] Information obtained locally. I did not see official records.

[23] Information obtained locally.

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167 Many of the people in Gumba had come from
177

Cela, and Cela influences are notable in several ways.[24] In Cassongue Umbundu has relatively recently ousted other
133 speech.[25] Geographically Bimbe generally is rather lower than most of the Highland. Although the railway line and the growth
167 of maize have been influential here, an alternative pull for
361 labour migration is provided by the coffee plantation of Amboim and Seles, and by the coastal towns of Novo Redondo and Porto Amboim.[26] In the days of the caravan trade Novo Redondo was an important trading centre, more important perhaps than Benguela for the people of this area.

464 Work is sought by Ovimbundu in lands far from their home.
[167] There are Ovimbundu at Brazzaville; others have settled permanently in the Congo Republic, or work in Rhodesia; the Johannesburg mines have employed many, and some have gone as far as Natal.[27] In Epalanga, the village where I lived, there were two men who had been to Johannesburg—nor was this very exceptional and I am told that among the people south of the railway it is quite common.

82 The world picture of the Ovimbundu is vague, except as regards Angola and the neighbouring countries. The existence of Europe (Putu) composed of different nations Portuguese, French, and English is known, and I was several times asked if there were black people in England. Little or nothing is known of the other continents. The island of S. Tomé in the Atlantic is known, since up to recently Angolan labourers went there, and some convicts are still sent to it. Several people from the neighbourhood had lived in Luanda or worked on coffee
[409] plantations in northern Angola. The Belgian Congo was known as Bula Matadi, though people seem little aware of Rhodesia, and Mozambique (Portuguese East Africa) is confused with the southern Angolan port of Moçamedes. The railway lines and
[409] the cities along it are of course well known, and some of the people I knew had travelled to Kwanyama country in the far south of Angola to buy cattle. Johannesburg (Zhwaini) and its

[24] Notably in the arm ornaments and hair styles favoured by some women. Cela diviners are often consulted.

[25] Childs (p. 179) suggests that the change came about in the nineteenth century.

[26] For this area of Angola see Egerton, pp. 186–8. Galvão and Selvagem, pp. 378–80, 457–8.

[27] Personal information. Also Childs, p. 213.

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mines are widely known to people. Although Ovimbundu Protestants are often referred to as 'America' a word used both as an adjective and a plural noun, they (that is, of course villagers, not educated men such as the pastors or teachers) have no clear idea of the existence of, still less any identification with, the United States.

Like the other parts of Umbundu country Bimbe has experienced much missionary activity. The Catholic Mission of Bimbe has had a great deal of influence, the catechists teaching catechism and leading daily prayers in the villages, which the priests visit once or twice a year, and at such feasts as Christmas and Easter great crowds attend the Church services.

The Protestants depend on the pastoral centres of Henge and Luvemba, which are regularly visited by a missionary from Bailundo. Both here and throughout the Highland Catholics are more numerous than Protestants, but in some sub-chiefdoms Protestants are in the majority, notably in Kapali and round Henge. I have already mentioned the differences between Catholic and Protestant missionary organization. At the local level a number of differences can be noticed, in such matters as the neater, more planned appearance of the Protestant villages which have far more rudimentary[88] (pre-primary) schools than the Catholics. These schools are entirely financed by the Protestant villagers; among the Catholics while there is a desire for more schooling there is a lack of the drive that the Protestants show. A *chefe de posto* said that Protestants spoke Portuguese better than Catholics; and the Protestants are more 'Europeanizing' in their outlook.

The *chefes de posto* visit each sub-chiefdom only once a year. As the relations between the *chefes* and the people are usually concerned with the gathering of fines and taxes, the recruitment of labour, and the arrest and punishment of offenders, it is not surprising that the people regard the *chefe* with fear and mistrust. Yet there is a genuine acceptance of Portuguese rule. Thus villagers sing the Portuguese National Anthem at parties, the Portuguese flag is a meaningful symbol, and there is a belief

[88] Rudimentary education is a course intended for natives at a pre-primary level. It includes teaching of Portuguese, and also some instruction in agriculture and hygiene.

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that the Government is benevolent even if its agents are not, and men say that they like the Europeans. There are other opposed currents of feeling, though; thus a cook to a European family said to me, 'The Portuguese do not wish us to learn' and a villager declared, 'The Portuguese say to the English that the Ovimbundu have tails.'[29] The great mass of the Ovimbundu seemed to be without political consciousness, or desire for independence; there is little nostalgia for the days of the caravans, and it is widely felt that the present is better than the past, since there is more contact with Europeans.

Traders in the neighbourhood were relatively few, compared to other parts of Umbundu country. At Chicunda there were three trading stores and people who did not like them went across the river to Cassongue. Traders try to prevent natives who live in their neighbourhood from dealing at other stores where they can get better prices, but this is not always effective. Some Ovimbundu realize that variations of price levels are related to such factors as proximity to the railway line. The traders are criticized for paying their servants low wages as compared with those paid in the coastal cities. Although there is a great deal of mutual suspicion between the traders and the Ovimbundu which is expressed in the arguing and haggling that takes place in the stores, there is none of the fear so noticeable in the people's attitudes to the *chefes*. Many traders have a smattering of Umbundu, and have a certain affection for the local people. Economically, the role of the traders is to receive the maize and other products grown locally for transport to the railway line, and to distribute trade goods to the villages. Their presence is also important in preventing the rise of any other system of trading by markets or pedlars.

The principal goods sold are blankets, cloths, and clothing of all sorts, including fancy items such as sun-glasses. There are also a good many bottles of wine, and also oil-lamps and kerosene tins, and electric torches. For literates or would-be literates, there are pens, pencils, writing-papers and slates. Such goods as bicycles, gramophones, and sewing-machines are generally

[29] i.e. The Portuguese say the Ovimbundu are savages and keep them from contact with other Europeans. The Bailundo area had not (up to September 1961) been affected by the revolt. However, a marked change in this attitude of subservience seems to have taken place.

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bought in the towns, and men returning from South Africa are said to bring all sorts of goods including typewriters. The traders do not lend money though they sometimes give credit. The living standards of the traders are often low, some being unable to buy a truck, and having therefore to come to terms with someone who has one. I have even heard of traders having to eat the staple Umbundu mush (*pirão* in Portuguese).

While the traders play an extremely important role in the local economy they do not establish any permanent face-to-face relationship with the natives outside their household and store, because they are not interested in them and have no reason to be. This does not apply in the same way to African *assimilados*, actual or self-styled, of whom there were a few in the neighbourhood, who lived more or less in Portuguese style. Of these one in particular, Justino, made a hobby of settling disputes, and will therefore re-appear later on. Their main source of revenue was coffee-growing, and they would occasionally have local labour working for them. As they tend to identify themselves with the 'civilized' population, their attitude to the natives is not unlike that of the traders, but culturally and linguistically they are linked to the Ovimbundu villagers, and if of local origin will have kinship links too.

This group is significant because it is in the total social structure of Angola a link between the 'civilized' and 'non-civilized' communities. Both the *assimilados* and those pseudo-*assimilados* who have persuaded the natives that they are *assimilados*, identify themselves with the whites but are also linked much more closely with the natives than any other group. As the division into 'civilized' and 'non-civilized' is legally sanctioned on the grounds of culture not race, a group which participates to some degree in the cultures of both sections must be of great significance in the study of the means by which the whole society is integrated. In the neighbourhood where I worked this group of Europeanized Africans were few in numbers,** both absolutely and in relation to other parts of Angola.

** I only knew of one genuine *assimilado* in the neighbourhood though there were others who claimed to be such. Galvão and Selvagem (p. 408) remark of the Cazengo concelho of northern Angola, 'The great number of civilized negroes, some planters incorporated in the European economic system, hastened the disintegration and confusion of the tribal institutions.'

! [assimilados are Africans perceiving Portuguese citizenship -- Analyst]

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565 Their higher social status limits their contacts with the villagers without giving them positions of direct control. Hence they are not leaders in the native social system. They are significant for
565 the culture of village Ovimbundu since they are one of the
177 channels for the communication of European culture traits, and their very existence indicates the possibility of becoming 'equal with the white man'[22]

797 More significant than the *assimilados* as a means of linking the
177 Ovimbundu with the whites, of the transmitting of cultural values, and of the creation of new statuses and groupings at village level, are the missions.

178 In the following chapters, the composition and degree of solidarity of the sub-chiefdom, and village, the network of kinship ties, the choice of marriage partners, and the means of social control will be discussed in their operation among the Ovimbundu who are inescapably tied to Portuguese rule, to world markets, and to the spiritual authority of the missions.

[22] I have the impression that in the cities there is some feeling that the status of *assimilado* does not give real equality but simply exemption from such burdens as road work.

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CHAPTER III

CHIEFS AND HEADMEN IN GUMBA

1. *The History of Gumba*

The historical perspective of Ovimbundu is short. Few, even elders, know of any landmark earlier than the Mutu-ya-Kevela rising of 1902–3, nor even for those who had participated in it did the time of the rubber trade form a Golden Age by which the present is judged. The period about which most was remembered was the reign of Mbati.[1]

Mbati had ruled over both Gumba and Chicunda, a union which had existed only during his lifetime, and which would have given him on present-day population figures 7,500–9,000 subjects.[2] He had managed to keep in his own hands the relations between his people and the government post. Policemen arriving at his capital to recruit labourers were entertained while Mbati's ministers got together the men required. Although an upholder of the traditional rites associated with chieftancy he had been on good terms with the missionaries and allowed a Catholic catechist to settle in his village. One of his sons became a Protestant schoolteacher near the railway line, another entered the Catholic seminary but left and became a policeman in Cela. Many of the numerous progeny provided by his seventeen wives are still living in Gumba.

Mbati's downfall came through his practising the traditional annual ritual cannibalism (*olu lia ekonge*). About 1934–5 he was banished for this to another part of Umbundu country.

[TEXT CONTINUES ON P. 37]

[1] L. Magyar marks a place called Gumba on his map (opposite to page 1) but puts it to the south of the capital of Bailundo. As he does not seem to have personal knowledge of this area, this does not rule out identification, especially as the Cuvo begins to the south of Bailundo.

[2] For the basis of this estimate see section 2 of this chapter.

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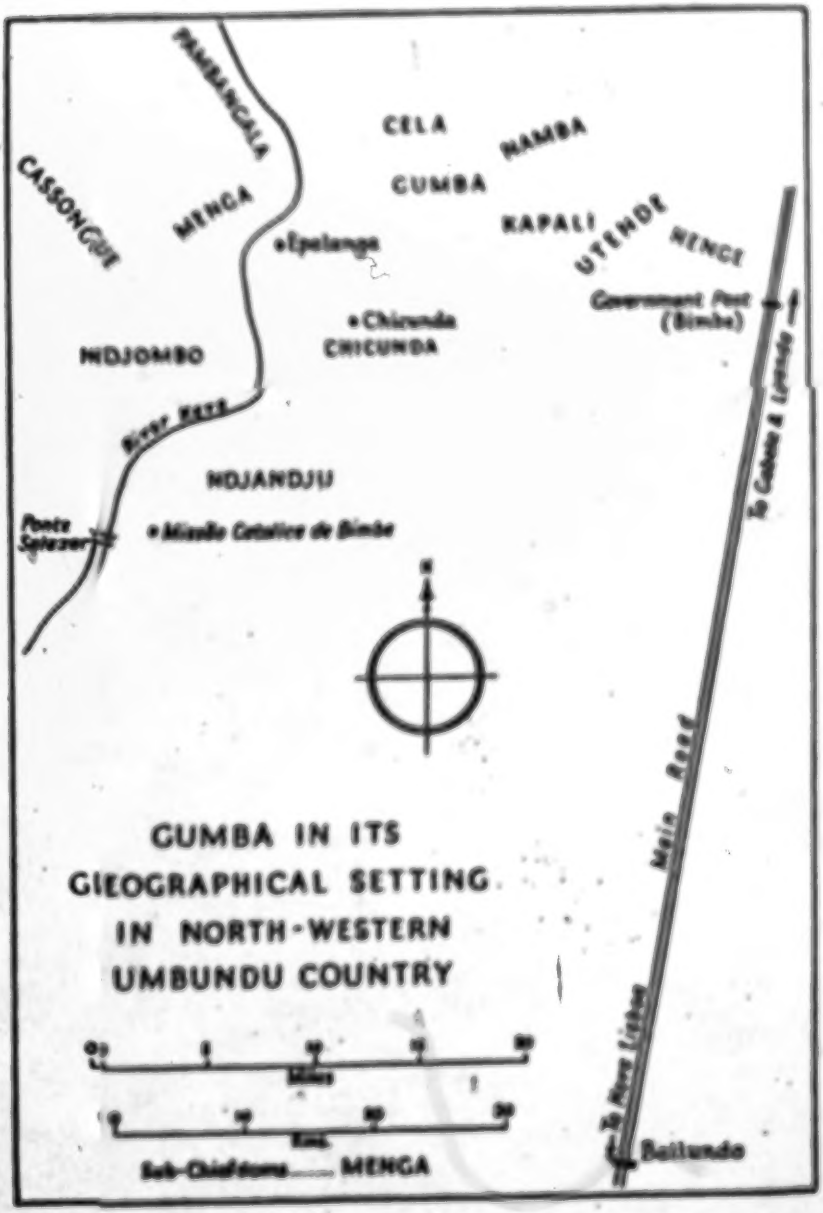

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Some ten years later he was allowed to return to Gumba but died on the way back.

His successor was Simbwyikoka, who was a mother's brother's son of Mbati, that is in Umbundu terminology a 'son'. Umbundu rules of succession allow anybody to succeed to a chiefdom who is paternally or maternally related to a previous chief, whether or not this relationship is genealogically traceable.[3]

Simbwyikoka was apparently nominated to act as regent during Mbati's absence, and as he did not complete the full cycle of chiefly rites he did not have quite the same prestige among the people as a chief in his own right who 'had finished', that is, had gone through all the rites. It was he who was the last ruler of Gumba to send the annual tribute in the form of a sack of fish to Bailundo, since it was a little after the time of his accession that Kandimba[4] (or Njahulu), the last of the Bailundo royal house to have any real authority over the kingdom, died.

Simbwyikoka had lived at the hamlet of Kamballa in Gumba. When he took up office he did not settle at Mbati's village of Katembo, but established, or rather re-established, as a previous chief had ruled there, his capital[5] on the top of the narrow ridge which cuts off the greater part of Gumba from access by road. It was not possible for many people to settle on this site. Accordingly Simbwyikoka encouraged people to settle at the foot of the ridge, swelling the population of an already existing village. This was called Mwekalia from the headman, who held the office of Mwekalia[6] another ministerial title associated with the chiefly court.

In 1938 Simbwyikoka was deposed by the *chefe* for shielding his dependents from the operation of 'contract labour' (administrative recruitment of non-voluntary labour). About 1944

[3] My informants. This means that within (and outside) any sub-chiefdom there are a number of potential heirs who in no way receive any special status or form any kind of corporate group from this fact.

[4] Reigned at Bailundo 1911–33. Childs, p. 229

[5] In Umbundu Ombala, often transcribed in Portuguese as Embala.

[6] For the role of Mwekalia see Hastings, p. 59. His statement that the office is matrilineally inherited was not confirmed by my informants. It seems that it can be inherited either patrilineally or matrilineally. The man who was known as Mwekalia and had been headman of the village of that name did not function as such at the chief's court during my stay. A kinsman of his, Ngumbe, acted as Mwekalia at the court of Lessee.

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173 634 646 Simbwyikoka founded a new village known by his name. In 1951 one of his sons, Sassungu, founded a new village Sassungu whose population originated with a group of people from his father's village. Simbwyikoka maintained contact with Kamballa, where another son, Felisi, lived and herded Simbwyikoka's cattle.

173 634 [646] The new chief was Kakope, a son of Tjiweka who had been chief of Gumba at the time of the Muta-ya-Kevela rising. He held office for only two years, being deposed by the *chefe* since ill-health made monthly visits to the post difficult for him. He was succeeded by Kafelo, who came to Gumba from Cassongue across the river. Kafelo was a cross-cousin of Mbati and paternal kinsman of Kakope. Having gone through the cycle of chiefly rites, and undertaken Mbati's funeral he was regarded as being fully chief, in a way that Simbwyikoka was not.

The Epalanga[7] of a chief is a minister chosen from among the chief's kin. Kafelo had nominated to this post Sapapula, a matrilateral 'brother' of his and an inhabitant of Menga. Sapapula moved into Gumba and founded the village of [646] Epalanga in 1945–6, where he was joined by various kinsmen. I have heard the foundation of Epalanga ascribed to another man, Mwehombo, who will be mentioned again, and should therefore be introduced. Mwehombo had been minister at the court of Mbati, his mother's brother. After Mbati's death Mwehombo had stayed at Katembo till 1941, when he settled in Menga with his kinsman Sapapula. Mwehombo crossed over to Gumba in 1944.[8]

173 634 646 In 1954 Kafelo was deposed by the *chefe*, as Kafelo had been drunk in his presence. Kutenga Lusase, who had in 1945 founded the village of Kamupa, saw his chance and told the *chefe* that he had been chosen chief according to custom. The people of Gumba did not complain about this to the post, as they were afraid of the consequences. Kutenga Lusase claimed to be related to Mbati and Simbwyikoka and was a matrilateral 'grandson' of Tjiweka. He was not related to Kafelo whose link to Tjiweka was a patrilateral one.

Kutenga Lusase was in his turn deposed by the *chefe* in 1956

[7] Hastings, p. 33.
[8] Information from his 'brother', Lusanga.

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for lack of effectiveness following a series of quarrels. His successor was Tjilombo a government headman and the leading personality of the village of Tjisangu. Such, then, is the recent history of Gumba.

2. *Chiefs, Government Headmen, and Traditional Headmen*

I have outlined the succession of chiefs in Gumba, and the villages with which they were associated. I have noted that nowadays there are government headmen as well as the traditional headmen. I wish now to indicate what authority the chiefs and the two sorts of headmen have and how this is related to the villages.

The sub-chiefdom is a recognized administrative unit. The census, and the annual check on the census, are taken on a sub-chiefdom basis, as are the collection of taxes and the recruitment of workers for contract labour, road work, and jobs to be done at the post. The sub-chief and the government headmen have to visit the post once a month. The *chefe de posto* (head of post = District Officer) will normally only visit each sub-chiefdom once a year for the check on the census. He may send orders for the recruitment of labourers or the arrest of an offender by one of the policemen who live at the post. His principal contact with the people comes in the adjudicating of disputes which the people are quite ready to carry to the post—the Bimbe *chefe*, whose area included Gumba, told me that hearing cases was his main occupation. Very few *chefes* have anything more than a smattering of the Umbundu language, and they have only the vaguest knowledge of the culture and social usages—for instance they may be aware of the classificatory extension of kinship terms and the association of leopardskins with chieftancy. The *chefes* are moved about fairly frequently and their names and personalitie tare not known to the people. As the people associate the post with demands for taxes, fines, and labour services, and are only likely to visit the post when recruited as non-voluntary labourers or to have their photographs taken for identity cards, it is not surprising that fear is the predominant emotion they feel towards the *chefe*.

The staff of the post consists of the interpreter, an African

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634 with primary and possibly some secondary education, the
648 clerks who have primary schooling, and the policemen, who are often illiterate. The police are locally recruited and are provided with their keep, from the farm attached to the post, and with uniforms. They are usually—by no means always—illiterate. The interpreter, clerks, and police tend to identify themselves with the *chefe* as against the people; however, a policeman may be influenced in his relations with the villagers by gifts and friendship.

634 The size of population of sub-chiefdoms varies. The 1950
161 census gave the total 'non-civilized' population of the Bailundo *concelho* as being 246,045, and the number of sub-chiefdoms as 82,[9] that is, an average of 3,000 individuals per sub-chiefdom. The *chefe* of Bimbe told me in August 1956 that Gumba had 800 taxpayers, and Chicunda had 700. Putting the proportion of taxpayers as 1 to 6 (on the basis of Epalanga proportions) this gives 4,800 as the population figure for Gumba and 4,200 as the figure for Chicunda. Even if the proportion of 1 to 5 be taken as the proportion between taxpayers and total population this gives us 4,000 as the figure for Gumba and 3,500 as the figure for Chicunda. I do not know what the local density of population is; in the Bailundo *concelho* as a whole it is 16–17 individuals per square kilometre.[10]

634 The chief and government headmen are the main channel of
640 conveying demands and orders from the post to the villagers.
648 They receive in return the remission of their taxes. Their
622 dependence on the post is not, however, sufficient to give them a position of marked superiority in their locality for the following reasons. They are unable to control all relations between the post and the people; anybody who has a dispute on hand may take it direct to the post. In village life their
634 influence can always be counterbalanced by that of the
622 catechists and 'elders of the school' whose contact with the
[792] missions is much closer than that of the chiefs and government headmen with the post. They also lack economic resources; the exemption from taxes (which the Catholic catechists share)

[9] See Gálvão and Selvagem, pp. 384-5. For Angolan population density see Egerton, pp. 36-37.

[10] My own estimate from figures given by Gálvão and Selvagem.

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does not give them any claim to financial assistance from the 634
people, or control over natural resources, such as land rights. 622
The only prerogative of this sort that the chief has is the right to the leg of an antelope killed in a hunt or a bull killed in a commemoration rite—and this is of symbolic rather than economic importance.

Nor, finally, does the post give the chiefs prestige and 641
support.[11] Five successive chiefs of Gumba had been deposed 634
by the post, and it is not uncommon for chiefs and government 622
headmen to be beaten or otherwise punished (for instance by being made to work for a fortnight at the post) for their shortcomings. They have in fact just sufficient power to carry out the commands of the *chefe* and to do nothing more. They are not disliked by the local people for doing what the *chefe* tells them to do, but any attempt at dictatorial behaviour on their part will stir up opposition which may lead to their downfall.

The relations between white *chefe* and black chief vary 648
according to individuals and neighbourhoods. Sometimes the 634
chefe will allow the chief to be chosen according to tradition; at other times he will impose a candidate of his own. A *chefe* may hear any cases that are brought to the post, or he may delegate the power of hearing minor cases to the chiefs. Some *chefes* will regard the chiefs with hostility as being enemies of their own people; others will abstain under any circumstances from beating a chief, as they feel their power should be supported. Here I describe the situation as it was in Gumba and in Bimbe generally.

A visit to a chief's village in Gumba or elsewhere will give an 634
opportunity of meeting those residents who hold the ministerial 178
titles, of gazing under overshadowing trees at the enclosure in 769
which are kept the skulls of former chiefs, and perhaps of seeing the chief and some of his cronies dance to a drum in commemoration of one of his predecessors. Ministers, skulls, dances, and drum are symbols of chiefly nostalgia rather than of political power. The ceremonies have little interest for the people in general, and many of them have been abandoned by the chief. Lusase's first wife had not, as custom demanded,

[11] For criticism of this policy by two Portuguese with administrative experience see Galvão and Selvagem, p. 213.

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634 178 769 [775] become *isakala* (queen) because she feared the unpleasant haunting by the spirits of former queens which is traditionally experienced by the holder of this office.[13] On one occasion Lusase himself offered to let me into the *alakala* (the enclosure where the skulls of dead chiefs were kept) for the payment of five or ten escudos (1s. 9d. or 2s. 6d.) although the entry of anybody except the chief and possibly certain of his courtiers appears traditionally to have been forbidden under the penalty of death sent by the spirits. Even the surviving rites are confined to the chief's village; the first-fruits ceremony in which the [796] whole chiefdom was involved disappeared a number of years ago. The association general in Umbundu country between the chiefs and paganism does not provide an added ritual 634 771 sanction to the chief's power, but rather links him with what is felt to be a dying past, essentially unimportant, at the present day.

692 The chief may also have some of his time occupied with hearing cases. A good many minor disputes are solved by local adjudication, but there seems to be no specific division between cases that ought to come to the chief and those which can be arbitrated by somebody else. Elders from outside a chiefdom may be invited to adjudicate on a particular case. The old formality of legal procedure has largely disappeared, probably because all disputes at a local level can be carried to the post—hence any ruling by chief or elders is essentially dependent on its acceptance by the disputants.

754 Accusations of sorcery are rather different from other cases since the post does not believe them, although such an accusation is not in itself punishable. Sometimes suspected sorcerers are accused at the post of 'poisoning'.[14] Lusase told me that convicted sorcerers were fined a chicken, a goat and a pig. Gregorio, the chief of Menga, at first said, when I asked about this, that it was not possible to know who was a sorcerer. When, rather to his surprise, I mentioned the traditional basket test, he agreed and explained that people convicted by this test were sent as labourers to the post to satisfy whatever demand was being made for workers.

[13] Informants. See also Hastings, p. 49.

[14] Childs, p. 58.

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The tasks of recruiting contract labourers and road-workers 626
and of getting fines and taxes paid, and such other duties as the 466
arranging of compulsory purchase of tickets for the travelling [208]
cinema (showing patriotic films) are carried out through a long
process of argument, attempted evasion, and pressure, between
the chief, the government headmen, and the locally influential
people, traditional headmen, catechists, and anyone else who
can get himself listened to. Persons actually picked for contract
labour or road work may make quite a fuss about it, but as
such numbers are recruited it is ultimately accepted resignedly.
It is not really practicable for a chief to discriminate in favour [634]
of his kinsman owing to the heavy demands for labour and the
likelihood of such discrimination being reported at the post, as
happened to Simbwyikoka. Demands for labour may fall
heavily on some households. Thus one Epalanga household [592]
consisted of a man, his daughter by an earlier marriage, his
wife and her baby daughter. The man had been taken for
contract labour, his wife had been called to road work, and the
adolescent daughter was carrying sisal[14] to the post. A kinsman
of the household head attempted to arrange for some watch to
be kept over the gardens lest animals should get in.

There were four government headmen in Gumba during my 622
stay. Theoretically they are village headmen. The villages in
which official records group Ovimbundu do not conform to the 166
actual villages in which Ovimbundu live. Anybody moving
from one village to another has to pay a fee; as the Ovimbundu
move about quite frequently and no attempt is made to enforce
this rule locally, the result is this discrepancy between paper and
real villages.

The government headman's duties are those already des- 622
cribed for the chief. As with the chief, there is only sufficient 648
backing from the post for him to carry out the orders he re- 634
ceives; he does not receive power to enable him to exercise
political leadership and judicial authority at the local level,
nor is he a representative of the post in the villages. His interests
and values are linked to those of his neighbours rather than to
the post. It is through the chief and the government headmen

[14] Some villages are obliged to grow sisal and take it to the post without payment. [248]

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that the administration gets labour and money from the villagers, and largely though not exclusively through them that the villagers keep in touch with the post which politically integrates them into Angola and legally provides sanctions which they do not possess. The government headmen do not supervise on behalf of the post the daily life of their fellow-villagers. The government laws—such as the prohibition of beer- and rum-brewing and grass-burning (for hunts)—which if enforced would bring about a certain number of changes in Umbundu social life, are not enforced for many reasons—the administration makes no real attempt to suppress these uses as opposed to levying annual fines[15] per head, the government headmen go in for these customs themselves, and they lack the power to achieve this enforcement. Were the government to introduce policies involving some reorganization of the social life they would need a stronger form of local authority. Under the present circumstances, however, the powers and status of the chief and government headmen are quite consistent with the demands made on them by the post.

There were four government headmen in Gumba in 1955–6, Guilherme, Lupassa, Tjilombo (who became chief after the deposition of Lusase), and Walivanga. Guilherme was in 1955 living in Epalanga. Some people thought he should live in Kamupa which had been founded by his mother's brother Lusase—however, when he left Epalanga in 1956 he settled near the Protestant village of Kalungwengwe. His change of residence had been the result of violent quarrels with Paulo and other Epalanga people. Lupassa lived in Katembo, and was a sister's son of Kaluywa, who was the traditional headman. I do not think Lupassa was the dominating personality in Katembo. Tjilombo was on the other hand the leading personality in Tjisangu, many of its people being related to him. Walivanga was similarly linked by kin or affinal ties to the majority of the people of Belem.

The foregoing paragraph raises the question of the relationship of the government headman to the traditional headmen. A man who is both a government headman and a traditional headman is in a fairly strong position in his village; when the

[15] Each fine is about 10–20 escudos (2/6d.–5/-).

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government headman is not the same person as the traditional headman he may become involved in quarrels unless he is careful to accept the position of the traditional headman; and both government headman and traditional headman may find it wise to be on good terms with the catechist and the elder of the school. 622

It is fairly simple to define the obligations of the government headman. Discussing the position of the traditional headman vague words such as 'influence' and 'prestige' must be used to describe a vague position. Indeed a purely synchronic picture would be inadequate, since the present position of the traditional headmen and the contemporary village organization must be understood against a historical background.

3. *Headmen and Their Villages*

In the time of the rubber trade the village headman was both the leader of a body of agnatic kinsmen and the representative of his village in the wider political system, the village headmen sitting with the chief to judge cases. Both Childs and Hambly emphasize the importance of the judicial role of the village headmen. Childs states that the village headman was also a ritual leader, being responsible for 'regular village worship including agricultural festivals'.[16] I have found no evidence of such ceremonies on a village basis. The only ritual which, according to my older informants, the village headman should perform for his people is communing with his ancestor spirits in the spirit hut during a village hunt, and this information was not confirmed by all my older informants. It may be added that I found no evidence of any installation rite for a new headman.

It may be assumed that a good deal of the old village structure survived till the middle or end of the 1930's. Dr. Childs in his description of the village of Ngendo (Cassongue) as it was in 1935–6 indicated that agnatic kinship was the main principle of village recruitment, and that this was typical of other Umbundu villages.[17] In Gumba it was still possible at this time 178 621

[16] Childs, p. 46.

[17] Ibid., pp. 25–37.

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for individuals to build up large villages—thus Simbwyikoka encouraged people to settle at Mwekalia to make it a large village. It may also be suggested that the power of the village headmen was to some extent linked with the power of the chief, since the headmen were associated politically with the chief, and would from this, tend to gain authority in their dealings with their fellow villagers. The village headmen also lacked any real competition from other types of leadership. Mbati had kept relations with the post in his own hands, and there were therefore no government headmen. The first catechist had arrived in Mbati's village in 1928, but cannot have met with much lasting success as there are few baptized Christians over thirty-five in Gumba.

Other factors at the time strengthening the position of the village headmen were the low rate of labour migration[18] and the fact that practically every man over forty at the time of Simbwyikoka's accession had participated in the rubber trade. This meant that many of the best known caravan leaders were still in full vigour, and enjoyed a prestige based on the first-hand knowledge of the middle-aged and older men.

Between this period of the middle thirties and the beginning of my own fieldwork twenty years had passed and many changes had taken place. The status of the chief had sharply declined and he was now assisted by the four government headmen. Every village except the chief's village had a Catholic or Protestant catechist, and there had been a marked trend towards learning catechism in preparation for baptism, which had begun about 1946. Hence the catechetical school was usually attended by the majority of under twenty-five's in the village.

Agnatic kinship had ceased to be the principle of village membership. Nor can it be said that headmen build up villages by getting people to settle at a particular spot. It is not always easy even to find the headman, village population is not very stable, and a man can settle with any category of kin.

To discover the traditional headman required careful phrasing of questions. When I visited a village and asked for the *osekulu yimbo* (the traditional phrase for the village headman) I

[18] Ibid., p. 214.

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might be told that he lived elsewhere. This would turn out to be a reference to the government headman. A request for the *osekulu* (literally elder father, hence elder or headman) might also bring me in contact with the 'elder of the school', the representative of the local Christians. I therefore began to ask for 'the old one' (*ukulu*), or to inquire 'Who built first?' or 'Who settles disputes?', when I wanted to find out who was the traditional headman. 622 124

Even these questions did not necessarily get a clear answer. Thus the village of Kamupa had been founded by Lusase, its government headman was Guilherme, and, as neither of these was living near, minor disputes were referred to two old men who lived in the village. Apart from the government headmen, there are also traditional headmen recognized by the post, who did not have the privileges and the duties of the former. It may happen in a particular village that the man recognized as traditional headman by the post is not the same person as the real traditional headman recognized by the village. This was the case in Epalanga, where Sapapula was unquestionably the headman recognized by the villagers but the duties of dealing with policemen fell to Luanga. In the local discussions as to the recruitment of road-workers, and so on, Sapapula had much more influence than Luanga. 622

The position of the traditional headman nowadays lacks clearly defined powers, or symbolic value. A village is frequently known by its founder's name. The headman is the only person who can speak of 'my village' as opposed to 'our village'.[19] The firing of the long grass in the dry season which marks the beginning of the great communal hunts is theoretically begun by the village headman, though this is not always adhered to in practice. The headman does not take any active part in leading the hunt, nor are the people who go on a communal hunt necessarily confined to the inhabitants of one village. He has 'to show land' to new-comers to the village. This reflects a moral responsibility to his people rather than control of land tenure, since there is always spare land away from the villages which anybody can cultivate. He also has the responsibility of hearing minor disputes. He receives from the 224 622 622 [31]

[19] Ibid., pp. 36-37.

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622 villagers a certain, not very marked, respect, which may be increased by such factors as kinship ties between him and them, and his personal qualities.

621 Nor is the village itself clearly defined as a social unit. It does not possess any corporate rights over fishing and hunting sites, or control access to firewood gathering. A man may hold land in two villages. It is rarely that a village acts or is treated as a unit. The two main occasions on which the village is thus 'represented' are at marriages and in the context of the catechetical school. The party which goes from the bridegroom's village to the bride's represents her village, to the other village; [628] at the wedding feast food is given out on large basket plates, one for each village represented among the guests.

797 The role of the catechetical school as representative of the village as a whole will be discussed in another chapter; here it should be noted that the ceremonial reception of visiting missionaries by the 'school people' of the village has been evidently copied to some extent from the welcome given to the bridegroom's party, and this has in turn copied certain features from the welcoming of missionaries—notably the use of speeches in Portuguese.

361 The hamlets[20] and isolated households do not indicate a modernizing 'individualistic' trend away from village life, since 'conservative' and 'progressive' people are to be found in both units of residence. The Ovimbundu, whether educated 621 or illiterate, when talking about themselves (particularly in 829 comparison with the Kimbundu of Northern Angola) emphasize that they are a village-dwelling people, and for them the real values of village life seem to be the sociability and mutual help that a man living among his kin can enjoy. By settling in a village one indicates where the pull of kinship ties is strongest rather than any particular allegiance to the village headman.

[20] I use this term for a settlement with less than four households.

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CHAPTER IV

THE INTERNAL STRUCTURE OF VILLAGES

1. *The Village Epalanga*

In this chapter the internal social relations of the village and the relevance to them of the headman will be examined. 621

Epalanga, which has been mentioned as associated with Sapapula, the Epalanga of the former chief Kafelo, was a village of 148 inhabitants living in 36 households. Its houses stretched from near the River Keve (or Cuvo) to near the track leading to Chicunda, a distance of between half and two-thirds of a mile. Its layout is of the untidy scattered sort typical of most Umbundu villages, indeed its size leads it to be more scattered and spread out than is usual. Houses are surrounded by their own gardens in which maize and other crops are grown, and there are a number of stretches of bush in between homesteads. 361

Four main sources of origin (as regards kinship ties not as regards localities) for Epalanga may be noted. The largest 'kinship core'[1] was composed of Sapapula and his kin numbering 16 households. The second largest was that of the kin of Mwehombo (who was a matrilateral 'brother'[2] of Sapapula) and Mbati the former chief of Gumba and mother's brother 621

[1] This term seems more satisfactory than 'cluster' which has a local meaning, or 'group' which suggests an unilineal descent group. It is not intended to give a term indicating a unit with defined boundaries. Childs notes that *imbo* (village) can also be used as a word for a cluster of houses within a village. He also gives the word *ndimbo* for a ward within a village. This word was not known locally.

[2] I have employed inverted commas to indicate classificatory use of terms which for Europeans refer to the members of the elementary family, e.g. matrilateral 'brother'. I have not done so where the classificatory use relates to a term not associated with the elementary family, e.g. mother's brother. In ordinary social life there is no great distinction between a 'true' and a 'classificatory' mother's brother. [601]

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[Village of Epalanga]

621 of both Mwehombo and Sapapula. The third grouping was that of Ndjoleya (who was not directly related to Mwhombo or Sapapula) and his kin. Finally there were some people who were linked to Lusase (chief of Gumba 1954–6) who was not and had apparently never been an inhabitant of Epalanga, plus a few individuals who cannot be fitted on to any kinship core.

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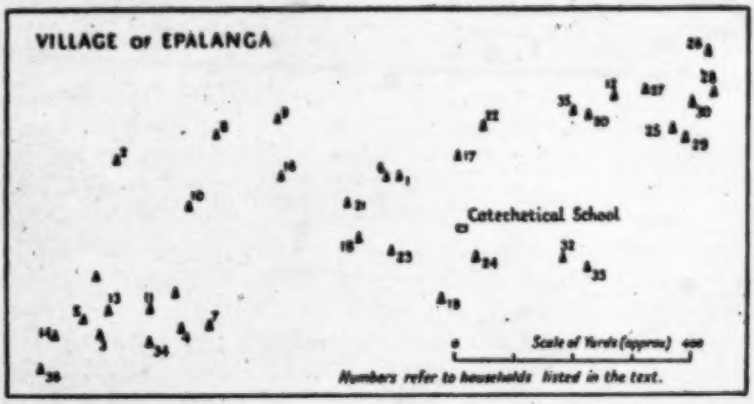

621 To some extent these differences of origin tended to be represented in the lay-out of the village. Sapapula's kin lived at the end of the village nearest the river, the kin of Mbati and Mwehombo lived in the centre of the village, and Ndjoleya's kinship core was to be found at the end of Epalanga by the Chicunda track. However, comparison of the list given below with the plan of the village show that the correspondence between core membership and the part of the village resided in is by no means total.[3]

In actual social life the differences between the cores to a large extent disappears. People from all cores take part in such activities as dances, funerals, house-building, and hunts, and this is facilitated by the numerous ties of kinship and marriage which exist between members of the different cores. Ndjoleya's

[3] Thus, Sendje, Sapapula's wife's mother, lived at Ndjoleya's end of the village. Ndjoleya had formerly lived at the other end of the village, but had moved. His 'sister', Tjingonene, still lived near his old home.

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[Village of Epalanga]

cluster was much more autonomous *vis-à-vis* Sapapula than were the members of the Mbati-Mwehombo grouping through the more numerous and closer kin ties; yet it would be wrong to regard Ndjoleya's kin as isolated.[4] This greater autonomy was a matter of degree rather than kind. 621

With regard to geographical origin, it is evident that the population had been recruited from over quite a wide area. Of the 36 household heads 7 were born in Cela of whom 6 had come from Cela to Gumba, and 1 had been born in Cela, then come to Gumba, then moved to Menga and then returned to Gumba. 3 household heads had come from Utende to Gumba, and 2 had come from Namba. 12 had come to Epalanga from Cassongue. 7 household heads (including 2 who had subsequently lived in Cassongue) had at one time lived in Katembo (the village associated with Mbati). 1 householder was apparently born in Gumba but had no Katembo link. 2 household heads were from Ndjandju (one having lived in Cassongue after leaving Ndjandju, the other being the catechist) and 1 was from Chicunda. On the origins of 5 household heads I have no information. 166 592

My information on Epalanga suffers from a number of gaps. Some genealogical information collected was lost. Too frequently I neglected to ask if a particular relationship was patrilateral or matrilateral, nor did I enquire sufficiently as to whether particular marriages were between kinsfolk or not. 114

These deficiencies to some extent 'fit' the kinship system. A kinship tie may exist between two people which is significant in the social relations between them, yet they may not be sure as to whether it is patrilateral or matrilateral, or even as to what is the category of kinship involved. Thus a resident of Simbwyikoka's village told me one day that Simbwyikoka was his 'brother', some time later he was a brother-in-law, and after this again said that he was a 'brother'. 602

There is also confusion over pedigrees. The pedigree which Simbwyikoka gave me in December 1955 differed from the one that he gave me in April 1956. Two people who claim to be

[4] Ndjoleya once referred to himself as *Oukulu yimbo* (elder of the *imbo*) this being a case of *imbo* used for a cluster within a village. Ndjoleya's folk recognized Sapapula as being head of the village.

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[Village of Epalanga]

602 'close' kin may not be able to indicate the set of genealogical[5] links between them and will not be at all surprised or even interested by this; hence it is impossible to draw up a genealogy of Epalanga. I have attempted to show the very complicated 128 network of relationships by a series of charts—one big chart would have so many cross-cutting lines as to be largely unintelligible.

Three charts are given to illustrate particular sections of the mesh of kin and affinal ties. They are not intended as exhaustive records of the relationship of any one kinship core or of any single individual. Rather, they are intended to give a general impression of how the proliferation of the strands of kinship [621] and marriage brings about a complicated and formless patchwork in which everybody is included.

2. *Information on Household Heads*

601 List I. Residents of Epalanga as of December 1956. Female 621 household heads are indicated by a star against their names. The numbers are used on the map of the village (see p. 50).

Sapapula's Kinship Core

1. Aspirante, sister's son of Sapapula, son-in-law of Wayangu.
2. *Avilo, sister's daughter of Sapapula, 'sister' to Tjingonene (31).
3. Batista, son of Epalata (5) and husband of a sister of Kasosi (7).
4. Bernacio, son-in-law of Sapapula, 'son' to Kasosi (7).
5. Epalata, matrilateral cross-cousin of Sapapula.
6. Ernesto, sister's son of Sapapula, full brother of Aspirante (1) married to a daughter's daughter of Sasamela (see List II).
7. Kasosi, 'grandson' of Sapapula through being sister's son[6] to Wasuka (15). A 'son' to Guilherme and 'father' to Bernacio (4).

[5] Ovimbundu even traditionally seem to have been little interested in genealogies. (Information from Dr. G. M. Childs.)

[6] According to Umbundu kinship terminology, Wasuka being a matrilateral cross-cousin of Sapapula could call him 'father' and Kasosi could call his mother's brother's (Wasuka) father 'grandfather'.

λ [cf. charts on pp. 91, 96, 97, in Category 116-Analyst]

[Village of Epalanga]

THE INTERNAL STRUCTURE OF VILLAGES

8. *Natjingendele, cross-cousin of Sapapula, had formerly lived at the other end of Epalanga near her 'brother' Ndjoleya (30). 60/ 62/
9. Patientia, 'brother' of Sapapula's wife Nahoka.
10. Sapapula, sister's son of Mbati, 'brother' of Luanga (21) and Mwehombo, not related to Ndjoleya (30) or Lusase.
11. Saviel, sister's son of Sapapula married to Soko, a daughter of Mwehombo. By an earlier marriage he had become affinally related to Tjingonene (31).
12. *Sendje, mother of Nahoka, Sapapula's wife.
13. Tjamwanga, matrilateral cross-cousin of Sapapula and paternal half-brother of Epalata (5).
14. Tjimbandongo, son of Epalata (5) and therefore a classificatory 'grandson' of Sapapula.
15. Wasuka, matrilateral cross-cousin of Sapapula, and 'brother' of Epalata (5).
16. *Wimbu, a widow, sister's daughter of Sapapula, her husband had been a mother's brother of Luanga (21).

The Mbati-Mwehombo kinship core

17. Armandio, sister's son of Mwehombo (and of Sapapula).
18. Gonçalve, own son of Mwehombo (therefore 'son' of Sapapula).
19. Jaime, son of Mbati—cross-cousin of Mwehombo, formerly married to Soko (daughter of Mwehombo) who was now the wife of Saviel (11), later married to Delfina, a brother's daughter of Ndjoleya.
20. Joaõ, cross-cousin of Sapapula. He tended, however, to be associated with the Mbati-Mwehombo kinship core, owing to his marriage to Paulina, daughter of Mwehombo, and full sister of Gonçalve (18).
21. Luanga, matrilateral 'brother' to Mwehombo (and also to Sapapula) patrilateral 'brother' to Ndjoleya. Luanga's wife Muhongo was a 'sister' of Maria, the wife of Paulo (24).
22. Manuel, sister's son of Mwehombo, his first wife had been a sister (not known if real or classificatory) of Maria, Paulo's wife (24).

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601 23. *Nahenge, cross-cousin of Sapapula, and sister of Joaõ (20).
621 24. Paulo, 'elder of the catechetical school', sister's son of Mwehombo (and of Sapapula). His wife Maria was a daughter of Mbati.

Ndjoleya's kinship core

25. Augusto, sister's son to Ndjoleya, his wife Luisa was a daughter (by an earlier marriage) of Nalivonga, daughter of Sapapula and wife of Bernacio (4).
26. Costa, 'brother' of Ndjoleya (30), and husband of Nakalende, a cross-cousin of Paulo (24).
27. Cypriano, sister's son of Ndjoleya (30).
28. Ferreira, 'brother' of Ndjoleya (30).
29. Julio, sister's son of Ndjoleya and full brother of Augusto (25).
30. Ndjoleya, one of his wives was a sister (not known whether real or classificatory) of Bernacio, another a full sister of one of Mwehombo's wives.
31. *Tjingonene, 'sister' of Ndjoleya, by another path 'sister' of Avilo. Her daughter Feliciana was a cross-cousin of Nahoka, the wife of Sapapula, and had married Daniel, a sister's son of Lusase.

Persons with kin links to Lusase

32. Bartolomeu, sister's son of Lusase and also of Sapapula, 'son' of Wasuka (15), cross-cousin of Ndjoleya and also of Paulo (24).
33. *Nalundu, matrilateral 'sister' of Bartolomeu.

Other residents

34. *Nasemela, widow of Sasamela. (See List II).
35. Pedro Tjikete Santos, catechist.
36. *Tjambo, 'sister' of Bartolomeu (32), not included with him in the group linked to Lusase, since although she had formerly lived near his house, she moved to be near Tjimbandongo (14), whose 'mother' she was.

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List II. Persons not living in Epalanga at the end of 1956, but significant for intra-village ties. 601

Angelo, son of Sasamela (q.v.) and therefore mother's brother to Teresa (wife of Ernesto (6) and daughter's daughter to Sasamela), had married Njamba, daughter (by another marriage) of Nakalende the wife of Costa (26).

Antonio Kasoma, patrilaterally a 'grandson' of Mbati had married three wives, one a daughter of Tjingonene (31), one a daughter of Sapapula, and one a sister's daughter of Guilherme. A 'brother' of his (not known if real or classificatory) had been an earlier husband of Nakalende, the wife of Costa (26). Kapapelo was a matrilateral cross-cousin of his.

Guilherme, sister's son of Kapapelo and Lusase, 'brother' to Bartolomeu (32) 'son' to Wasuka (15), 'father' to Kasosi (7) and 'grandson' to Sahuke.

Jeremias, Protestant catechist of Simbwyikoka village, wife's brother to Gonçalve (18), former husband of Natalia the sister of Aspirante (1) and Ernesto (6).

Kapapelo, 'brother' of Lusase, mother's brother of Bartolomeu (32) and Guilherme, patrilateral cross-cousin of Luanga (21), and matrilateral cross-cousin of Antonio Kasoma. Formerly married to the mother of Pungu, the fiancée of José the son of Paulo (24).

Lusase, chief of Gumba, 1954–1956, 'brother' to Kapapelo and Sahuke, mother's brother to Bartolomeu (32) and Guilherme. Another sister's son, Daniel of Kamupa, had married Feliciana, the daughter of Tjingonene (31), and cross-cousin of Nahoka the wife of Sapapula.

Pedro Nendi, son of Mbati and half-brother of Maria, wife of Paulo (24) and Jaime (19). His mother Wumba had after Mbati's death married Sahuke. Pedro Nendi lived in a hamlet just outside Epalanga. In it also lived his sister's son Cesario who was married to Natalia, a full sister of Aspirante (1) and Ernesto (6), and former wife of Jeremias (q.v.).

Sahuke, matrilateral 'brother' of Sapapula, and cross-cousin of Epalata (5). As noted he was a 'brother' of Lusase and a step-father to Pedro Nendi, also a 'brother' of Sasamela, a sister's son of Mbati and a mother's brother of Bartolomeu (32).

Sasamela, father of Angelo and grandfather of Teresa, the

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601 wife of Ernesto (6). Patrilateral 'father' to Paula (24) and Saviel (11). Affinally related to Mwehombo, a 'sister' of whom he had married.

Wayangu, paternal half-brother of Mwehombo, resident at Epalanga till the end of 1955, wife's father to Aspirante (1) had married a sister (not clear whether own or classificatory) of Lusase.

3. *Kinship and marriage in the village setting*

621 The foregoing tabulated information and the charts indicate the two main principles of integration in Epalanga, as in other Umbundu villages, the settling of individuals near senior kinsmen and the existence of a number of intra-village marriage ties.

621 For a clearer outline of village structure to appear, it is 602 necessary to give a brief sketch of the contemporary kinship system which will be discussed more thoroughly in later chapters. This is cognatic, with little distinction between patrilineal 592 and matrilineal kin, the elementary family being the basic 591 household unit, the individual being permitted to settle with 582 any category of kin, and a high percentage of preferential marriages.[7]

591 The right of settling where one pleases, as 'the heart chooses', is recognized even in children. Minessi, the 7-year-old son of Gonçalve (18), used generally to eat at the household of his father's sister Paulina, the wife of Joaõ (20). Gonçalve said about this to me 'He is very fond of his father's sister.'

While the traditional norm by which a man lived in his father's village is still remembered, at least by older men, a

[7] Childs (p. 56) states that it is permitted to marry a cross-cousin on either side, a sister's daughter, and a father's sister. My informants generally agreed that the marriage with a father's sister was not and had not been permitted. Marriage is not permitted with 'true' kin of these categories. Padre Feltin, the superior of the Bimbe Catholic Mission who knew of the existence of these marriages, told me that very few Umbundu marriages came within the prohibited (a prohibition removable by a dispensation) degrees of kinship laid down by the Catholic Church (that is, up to, and including, third cousins). Such marriages in the past might have been with geographically as well as socially distant kin. Childs quotes a case of a marriage arranged, after the discovery of a kinship tie, between partners living as far apart as Ciyaka (Quiaca) and Ngalangi (Galangue).

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father does not exercise great authority over his grown sons even if they live in the same village, nor does their living in different villages lead to a breach in personal relations. Sapapula who told me that a man should stay in his father's village till the latter's death had four sons, none of whom lived in Epalanga. Two lived in Menga (where Sapapula had lived up to 1946) and maintained friendly contact with their father. One who lived in Cela seemed socially as well as geographically more remote, and the fourth was a labour migrant given up for lost.

The preferential marriages[8] have continued in practice when most of the other institutions of the old kinship system have disintegrated. Their function is to multiply the relationships between individuals living in a particular neighbourhood, and to limit the socio-geographical range within which marriage partners are selected. Of a sample of 121 existing marriages 87, that is 70.3%, were with cross-cousins, and only 13.7% were with non-kinswomen.[9]

Even some of the non-kin marriages fitted into the general pattern of increasing ties within a limited social field. Thus in Epalanga Jaime (19) had married Delfina, a brother's daughter to Ndjoleya.. They were not kinsfolk yet this fitted in with the pattern of kin marriages in increasing links between different kinship cores in the village. Similarly Costa (26) and his wife Nakalende were not agreed (when questioned separately) as to whether they were kinsfolk, but this is not really significant since

[8] I had been inclined to interpret these marriages as functions of the relations between kin groups. Dr. Mary Douglas has suggested to me that these marriages were in the past not related to any system of kin groups but had, as at the present day, the function of multiplying the kinship ties within a limited field. I do not know of any clear evidence which could at this time settle the point.

[9] I count here as kin marriages those between *sakuetjiuka*, funeral friends, who though not kinsfolk tend to be assimilated to cross-cousins in social usage. 'Cross-cousin' tends to be at the present time a blanket category, and I have repeatedly found asking men about their wife's kinship status that they would first give some other term and then change to 'cross-cousin'. [Epalume]. This explains why under present conditions the percentage of cross-cousin marriages in relation to the total number of marriages seems to be rising. Thus in 56 marriages (existing or terminated) contracted by 23 men who had taken part in the caravan trade, while the percentage of marriages with non-kinswomen was slightly smaller (12.5) the figure of marriages with cross-cousins was very much smaller (42.9) and the figure of marriages with kin other than cross-cousins, sister's daughters, and *sakuetjiuka* was much higher (25 %) compared to the contemporary figure of 5%.

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their marriage also fits a general pattern of Umbundu marriage, a choice made within a limited range joining together individuals of different kinship cores.

The multiplication of ties and their concentration within a neighbourhood by this means do not prevent a man from having kin and affines a day or two's journey away. It has earlier been indicated that the population of Epalanga was from quite a wide area. Yet the consequences of previous preferential marriages (thus Paulo and Saviel were related both patrilaterally and matrilaterally) and the trend towards the establishment of new marriage ties had created a complicated mesh of linkages that has been described within a not particularly stable village population, whose senior residents had been there for only ten years. To use again the anthropological metaphor of kinship as a network, the network can have odd strings running out quite a way, but in a village the different ties will be bound up in a knot.

The long-range ties (with such obvious exceptions as those with kin living in cities) are not the result of the range of kin spreading wider and wider under modern conditions. The evidence of pedigrees indicates that kinship and marriage links between individuals in, and actual migration to and from Gumba and Cassongue, Cela, and Namba, date back well into the nineteenth century. There is far less evidence of connections and migration between Gumba and areas to the south and east. This geographical aspect of social relations persists at the present day.

It has been indicated that the high proportion of preferential marriages creates a certain local stability, since many marriages are with people living close to. Yet the basic stability lies not so much in the relative stability of a local population, but in the pattern by which links of distant kinship are changed into marriage ties and new bonds are speedily established among the fortuitously assembled population of a new village.

4. *Headmen and Kinship Cores*

I now turn to the other principle of village integration, the settling of individuals near senior kinsmen. In the previous

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In the previous

chapter I have indicated that the position of headman is today 622
a somewhat shadowy one, and that the headman emerges rather than succeeds by virtue of various grounds; the main ones being official recognition, some tie to the local chief, the presence of a core of one's kinsmen, a claim to be the first resident, and personality. During my stay Sapapula was as much a headman of Epalanga as anyone can reasonably be these days, yet his position had not always gone unchallenged.

In 1954 he had found himself in danger of being displaced 622
by his matrilateral 'brother' Mwehombo. Both men, apparently, claimed that they had founded the village, both had substantial cores of kinsfolk in the village, and both possessed strong personalities. Sapapula by holding the ministerial title of Epalanga to Kafelo had had a stronger position in village affairs. This prop to his power was taken away when Kafelo was deposed from the chiefdom, and Luanga and Mwehombo purchased the title of Epalanga from Lusase. 665

In this partnership Mwehombo must have been the leading personality, Luanga being extremely amiable but not at all domineering or energetic. Mwehombo's idea was presumably to establish himself as recognized headman of Epalanga, and to obtain whatever advantages were to be gained from an association with Lusase. Luanga's aim, from what he told me, was to escape contract labour by having a position as a traditional headman and title-holder. Titles will still be sought after, [554]
although the substance of power has gone, so long as they can confer some prestige or protection from administrative labour demands. It was not customary for the role of Epalanga to be held by two people jointly.

Mwehombo died shortly after this. He had been baptized 763
by the name of Simon when dying on January 13th 1955, when his social personality began its posthumous career. At the inquest, which was held according to the old Umbundu pattern in which the corpse suspended in a hammock from a pole held by two men was supposed to answer questions by the way it swung, it was found that Mwehombo had suffered the pro- [554]
verbial fate of the sorcerer in being killed by the spirit he had [561]
used to kill others.

The role of the questioner was taken by Paulo, sister's son to

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763 Mwehombo, and elder of the school, a post he would certainly have lost had this come to the ears of the missionaries. Attitudes to the verdict are interesting. Sapapula assured me that [754] Mwehombo had killed many people by sorcery both sons and sisters' sons; Luanga did not see the contradiction which I pointed out to him of his saying both that Mwehombo was good and that he had practised sorcery; Gonçalve, Mwehombo's son, appeared sceptical of the verdict, as did Aspirante, Sapapula's sister's son who was married to a daughter of Mwehombo's half-brother, Wayangu.

764 The verdict did not prevent Mwehombo having an impressive funeral. He was buried according to his wishes in the traditional hammock placed in the circular grave, instead of the modern coffin placed in the modern oblong grave. As a caravan-leader he was buried by the track to Chicunda at the point where the path to Epalanga branched off. A low thatched [237] covering was erected over his grave with the horns of the beast killed at the funeral on it. In 1956 Gonçalve and Pedro Nendi, son of Mbati and therefore a cross-cousin of Mwehombo, replaced this by a concrete memorial in the form of a cross with the base inscribed in Portuguese 'Simon Mwehombo Native of Gumba Great Man died 13th January 1955.'

797 Thus Mwehombo had twice undergone conversion from pagan to Christian, once as he lay dying and once after death. 754 His posthumous conviction for sorcery affected neither the form of funeral, nor the continued residence of his kin in the village. His conviction for sorcery was a reflection of the social strains in which he had been involved, not the opening of another cycle 621 of conflict. The kinship cores are not segments opposing one 571 another as in a lineage system; they possess no clearly defined boundaries[10] or continuing existence in time. Their existence is dependent on the persons around whom the cores have formed, and on their deaths they lack any integrating principles. Mwehombo dead, his kinsfolk mostly found no objection in continuing to live in the village where his rival now lived as undisputed traditional headman.

621 There is no word in Umbundu for these groupings. The

[10] For example I have included José in the Mwehombo-Mbati kinship core, on the basis of association, but he came to the village through a tie with Sapapula.

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word 'otjitawila' is given by Dr. Childs[11] as being used for a section of the village; however, I have not found this word known locally. 621

It may be asked how typical Epalanga is of other villages. In size it is larger than usual, having 36 households. (The average number, using figures from 14 villages, is 18.36 households; the largest, Epalanga, had 36 and the smallest 5.) In structure other villages presented the same picture of ill-defined kinship cores held together by a network of kin and affinal ties, with village headmen emerging by a varying collection of claims, of which the most significant seemed to be a position as the principal focus of kinship ties.

5. *Kinsmen and the Choice of Residence*

When one asks a man why he has settled in a particular village, a common enough answer is that he has settled there because he has 'family' there. When asked who his 'family' (the Portuguese word *familia* is used even by non-Portuguese speakers) is, he will give the name of a senior kinsman, or he may give more than one name. He may even give the name of somebody living outside the village. Thus in Epalanga when I asked Bartolomeu why he had settled there he replied that it was because of his mother's brother Lusase who was not an Epalanga resident. It was therefore not practicable for me, as I had at one time intended, to find which categories of kin are most likely to be settled with, by asking individuals in villages I censused, and obtaining percentages. 591 602

It is possible to indicate some of the 'pulls' which affect a choice of residence. In the traditional system, when a boy's father died he would settle with a father's brother. Nowadays, it is generally expected that he will settle with his mother's brother, this being the answer given by informants when asked where he will go. In practice, the pull of the mother's brother's household for a child does not seem to be so strong. In Epalanga, out of thirteen persons under 20 who had neither father nor mother resident in the village, only one was living with a mother's brother. 591

[11] See Childs, pp. 36–37.

604 621 On the village level, however, the importance of the mother's brother tie and of the tie between matrilateral 'brothers' becomes very apparent. None of Sapapula's four sons had settled in Epalanga, and his only classificatory 'son' was Gonçalve, own son to Mwehombo, Sapapula's matrilateral 'brother'. Seven household heads were sister's sons of Sapapula. This trend for matrilateral ties to predominate is marked also in Katembo and Mbunga, but less evident at Belem. Indeed, 'neo-matrilinearity' as a principle of village structure may be a general and not simply a local feature of Umbundu society, since Mr. C. M. N. White[18] has found that the settlements of Ovimbundu within Northern Rhodesia are marked by a predominance of matrilateral ties. This is referable to the contemporary kinship system in which the father-son tie is predominantly a personal one, with a limited extension of attitudes to classificatory fathers, whereas a man's relation with a mother's brother seems little affected by the question of genealogical distance. Perhaps the relations between the group of agnatic kin were so closely tied to the old village structure that when it broke up it disintegrated also the wider agnatic ties. Yet at the same time such matrilineal institutions as matrilineal inheritance and the non-repayment of loans among matrikin have weakened or disappeared.

[593] 602 178

591 Running counter to this principle of settling in the village of a senior kinsman who is likely to belong to one's matrikin, is the principle of cross-cousin marriage. 'If you have married your cross-cousin when your son grows up he will see a cross-cousin here, a cross-cousin there, and so he will stay.' That is, a man will stay in his father's village not simply by virtue of the father-son tie but because he will be surrounded by kinsmen. The relation between cross-cousins is one of equality and solidarity, expressed in joking and in burial services. To say that one stays in a place because one has cross-cousins at hand is to indicate an ideal of equal relations with a circle of kinsmen rather than attachment to the following of an important kinsman.

[582] [605] [602]

591 602 These two principles co-exist in actual social life. A man will recognize and respect a number of senior kinsmen living in his

[18] In letters.

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neighbourhood and will explain his choice of residence by 591
quoting the names of one or more of these; yet the weaving 602
together of so many strands of kinship and affinity, ultimately
through marriage links, is what gives the local population its [621]
relative degree of stability. It should be emphasized that the 602
integration established within a village by the network of 621
kinship and affinal ties is dependent on the integration created 631
by the same amorphous network which runs through and
beyond the sub-chiefdom. It is this network into which the 60
individual is woven by multiple ties that absorbs the neo-
matrilineal pull apparent to some degree in choice of residence
and keeps the system essentially cognatic.

The use of the word *familia* reflects this situation. A man may 602
say of a particular senior kinsman 'He is my *familia*', that is, my
kinsman, my most important kinsman with whom I have
settled, yet also he may say 'My *familia* is in Cela', that is, the
greater part of my kinsmen live in Cela. When Bartolomeu
explained that he had settled where he did because of Lusase,
he was perhaps combining the two kinds of references. He had [591]
settled in Gumba because he had a large number of kinsmen
there among whom Lusase was pre-eminent. A man explaining
the locality of his *familia* in the wider sense will associate it with
a particular sub-chiefdom—'My family is all in Menga'—
when he is outside it; when he is in it he is more likely to refer to
a particular village.

Although individuals living in a village may have come there 621
through several kinship sources yet the majority of them will
probably have some kinship or affinal tie with the traditional
headman. This collection of individual ties does not provide the 622
headman with a body of followers, nor is having a large number 602
of dependants a value of contemporary Umbundu culture. If
it were felt that the best thing to be in life is the patron of a
body of kinsmen and followers, headmanship would survive as a
predominant influence in local life despite the collapse of its
political and legal responsibilities. In fact not even old men feel
this way.

The idea of the village as a corporate group with a jural and 621
political personality rather than a residential unit has not 178
survived the break-up of agnatic solidarity, the disappearance

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621/128 of the men's house, and the headman's loss of status. The new institution of the catechetical school does not revive village solidarity in this form. The contemporary Ovimbundu do not live in a 'village headman society' comparable to those of British Central Africa,[13] since the concept and manifestations of village solidarity around a headman are so notably deficient. 356 Reference may also be made to the economic ethics of the Ovimbundu with their approval of making money and the [42] belief that all loans even within the circle of the elementary family should be repaid, that is, wealth is seen by all as an end in itself rather than a means of obtaining personal loyalties.

622/128 In the previous chapter it was shown how the traditional headmanship is no longer a significant legal and political institution. In this chapter I have tried to indicate that it lacks sources of authority and prestige within the village.

The line of argument has involved reference to the contemporary kinship system of which an outline has been given. 128 This will be more fully discussed in later chapters, when a more detailed comparison of present institutions with the traditional kinship system will be made.

[13] For an example of these societies see J. C. Mitchell, *The Yao Village*, Manchester 1956.

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CHAPTER V

VILLAGE ECONOMICS

The homeland of the Ovimbundu, the Benguela Highland, is mostly over 4,000 feet above sea-level. Rainfall is 50–60 inches a year, and the rainy season is from September to April.[1] In this season after a downpour there is frequently a cooling of the air, and the most intense heat comes just before the rainy season, during the dry spell that occurs in or about February, and just after the rains. Between the middle of May and the middle of July the nights and early mornings are bitterly cold but the days are pleasantly cool. After the middle of July the temperature gradually rises.

The soil of the Highland is poor; the Ovimbundu industriously cultivate beans, manioc, maize, potatoes, and tobacco. Less frequently they have coffee plants, fruit trees, and sisal. Occasionally wheat is grown but the ground is not really suitable. I am told that rice could be grown in the stream valleys. Four field types are recognized by the Ovimbundu—*otjumbo* (garden), *onaka* (stream-valley garden), *ombanda* (in ground sloping up from a stream), and *epya* (a field away from the streams on level ground).[2]

Umbundu country is well supplied with water in streams and rivers, and the Ovimbundu have built irrigation channels wherever possible. Cultivation in the stream valleys, that is, of the *onaka* type of garden, has only been practised since the 1870's or 80's.[3] They are planted in August or the beginning of September, and give crops in December and January. The

[1] For an excellent account of Umbundu habitat see Childs, pp. 1–11.

[2] Albino Alves, *Dicionário Etimológico Bundo-Português*, Lisbon, 1951, Vol. I, p. 659 gives ombanda as a synonym of onaka.

[3] Private information.

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241/ 221 maize from these beds is for home consumption, and it comes at a time when maize supplies are running low, and some people have to rely on manioc. The *ombanda* type is sown in September and early October. Then the main fields (*ovapya*, plural of *epya*) are sown in October and November, and only after this is maize sown in the gardens round the houses. In December and January the people are busy hoeing the fields and in February the sowing of beans takes place, continuing into March. This is followed by the harvesting of the gardens in the village, and by the gathering of the maize in the fields, the maize then being placed in field huts to dry. This takes place in March and April, and with its ending the dry season has come.

221 The dry season is the time for travelling to see relatives and for getting married, since the burden of work is much reduced. May is a good time to clear the bush and then and in later months there is time to build houses. During the dry season there was much more chance of finding people at home, and there were far more festive occasions. This is also a time when men and women can practise crafts such as basketry, fish-trap making, pottery, and so on. In July, the maize dried in the 22/ 241 field hut is pounded and brought back to the village, whence it is taken to the traders for sale. The pounding and carrying is often the work of parties of friends and relatives who are re- [223] warded with beer. Occasionally somebody's maize is collected like this well into September, but most people finish in August. 221 By August the grass has grown very high, and the firing of it is 224 the beginning of large-scale hunts in which men and boys from [628] several villages may join together. Hunts may be undertaken by individuals or by groups at other times of the year either as a hobby or to kill a destructive wild pig (in which case the hunt will be undertaken by a group of people). September is a 221 good month for fishing. The fire has cleared the stream 225 valleys which can now be sown, thus starting off the year's cycle again.

423 There is no shortage of land, and hence questions of land rights seldom come up in social relations. A village headman has no rights over land outside his village, and even within a village there are strips of bush from which a new garden can be [425] cut. Land is very occasionally sold. For instance a man return-

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ing home from labour in October wants cleared fields to sow. 423
If he cannot find any kinsman who would give him a cleared 425
field he will have to buy one, and will have perhaps to pay 200 escudos (£2 10s.). A man retains his rights to fields in a village he no longer inhabits.

The Ovimbundu keep cattle, sheep, goats, pigs, and fowls. 231
The cattle are not milked but are used in sacrifices, and for [262]
fines; some have been brought by Ovimbundu from Kwanyama Ambo country but they do not seem to thrive in this neighbourhood. Sheep are few. In my village goats were much less numerous than chickens or pigs. The traders and European residents buy cattle, chickens, and pigs.

Fishing and hunting are practised, but despite the ingenious 226
fish-traps, nets, poisons and weirs used for the first, and the 224
popular enthusiasm for, and ritual associations of the second, [262]
neither dominates the actual food supply and ecological background in the way that maize does.

The Ovimbundu believe that the dry-season grass fires also 241
help to fertilize the soil by leaving ashes. Ashes are sometimes spread in a village garden, and dry grass may also be left in a field for this purpose. Soil beside trees is considered to be especially rich, as to some extent are the sites of former villages. There is no idea of crop rotation and a field is worked for as long as it is fertile, that is indefinitely for an *onaka* and from three to six years, sometimes more, for a field of the *epya* type. The hoe is still the standard means of cultivation and the plough is a rarity.

Coffee-growing on any scale is usually undertaken by people 245
living away from the villages, except for the Protestants who have been encouraged by their missionaries to plant coffee in their villages. Coffee, like maize, is bought by the traders. However, at least two local coffee-growers sold their coffee at Porto Amboim on the coast to get a better price. Basically, the 241
agricultural economy of the neighbourhood is based on maize, 361
grown by methods of shifting cultivation. The frequency with which villages rise and fall and individuals change from one village to another is entirely consistent with this type of agriculture.

Axe and hoe blades, blankets, cloths, clothing, cutlery, 000

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drinking-mugs, lanterns, metal plates, pens, pencils, wine, and writing slates are bought from the traders. Axe and hoe handles, buckets, bedsteads, beer, bows and arrows, chairs, fish-traps, mats, mush sticks, pottery, pounding-blocks, stools, tables, and small metal objects such as knives are made by Ovimbundu and may be sold locally. To this local trade may be added the selling of pieces of meat by anyone who has killed a pig, or gone hunting and killed a duiker. Very occasionally somebody who has bought cloths in a town or has some hand-made object superior to the local average may tour villages selling his goods as a pedlar.

The only trade which at all recalls the days of the caravan trade is the cattle trade with the Kwanyama Ambo. As in the rubber trade the Ovimbundu make use of their intermediary geographical position. They obtain from Luanda shells called *olomande* (singular *omande*). One of these shells costs 10 escudos (2s. 6d.) at Luanda and ten of them will buy a beast in Kwanyama country. Alternatively 30 rounds of tobacco will buy a beast there. I knew several men who had made, or planned to make, trips of this nature. The analogy with the caravan trade breaks down, however, when the relative importance of the two is examined. The caravan trade determined the economic standards of the Ovimbundu, absorbed a great part of the time of every able-bodied man and youth, and influenced every aspect of Umbundu life from the foreign policy of the kings to accusations of sorcery; the cattle-keeping is relatively unimportant economically since the Ovimbundu do not drink milk, and eat meat, even chicken or pork, very irregularly, nor does the occasional sale of cattle to traders altogether balance their uncertain survival away from their indigenous grasses. The real importance of cattle in the economy seems to be as a form of capital investment for spare savings, an investment which can be liquidated either by sacrifice on ceremonial occasions or back into money by sale. Socially, it may be thought of as marking the survival of the Umbundu capacity and enthusiasm for trading in an age when the economic situation has closed the old routes. Indeed, perhaps the subconscious motive for the Ovimbundu who trade is to show that they can act outside of that economic framework of cultivation

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and wage labour which I have described as affecting the Ovimbundu as a whole.

It is not easy to compose budgets of household expenditure and income, partly because they have not yet much of a 'book-keeping' outlook, and partly because they suspect the motives behind questions of this sort. My own opinion is that from agriculture the average household would earn considerably less than 1,000 escudos (£12. 10s.) a year. The Banco de Angola in its Report for 1955[4] gives a budget for an African family at Silva Porto, consisting of father, mother, and two young children, having agriculture as their only source of income. Their total yearly income is given as 7,750 escudos (about £96. 17s. 6d.). Even allowing for the higher prices paid for crops on the railway line, an income of this order is far above anything earned by the average cultivating household, though it might be earned by the few men who cultivated coffee extensively and lived in Portuguese style.

Some details of the economic life of individuals may give depth to this chapter. Kambungo, a kinsman of Sapapula living in Menga, was a man of over sixty who had in his youth travelled on the caravans. He had a large house but lived in a village amongst kinsfolk. In June 1955 he had been in Kwanyama country where, with shells obtained at Luanda, he had bought cattle and for 15 of the *olomande* shells he got a sewing-machine. In the year 1955–6 (very roughly from the end of the dry season in '55 to the same period in '56) he had sold ten sacks of maize at 25 escudos each and six sacks of beans for 60 escudos each. He had, however, concluded that maize did not pay and had started to grow coffee. He had sold one beast for 900 escudos (£10. 15. 0), and had also sold ten sheep for 100 escudos (£1. 5. 0) each. He had also sold a coat for 120 escudos (£1. 10. 0).

The principal item of Kambungo's expenditure was a bicycle which he bought for 1,500 escudos (£18. 15s.). He had also bought two beds each 100 escudos, and ten plates 100 escudos altogether. He had bought ten bottles of wine, at 5 escudos each, and had also bought some indigenous rum, price not noted. Ten traditional sleeping mats cost 2½ escudos each, and four

[4] Quoted by Egerton, pp. 124–5.

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511 pairs of shorts cost 70 escudos each. Two kerchiefs for women cost 50 escudos each.

Total income recorded is 2,870 escudos (£35. 17. 6). Total expenditure recorded is 2,255 escudos (£28. 3. 9). It should be noted that Kambungo, while not living in Portuguese style, was considered wealthy for an Otjimbundu and that much of his income, for instance from the sale of the ten sheep, was from exceptional sales which could not be annually repeated. As regards livestock Kambungo had five head of cattle, five chickens, four sheep and two ducks.

More typical would be the year's expenditure of Pedro Musungu, an inhabitant of a Protestant village, who had bought two cloths, each of four metres and each costing 50 escudos (about 12s 6d.) for his wife, and for each of his four children two cloths, one 25 escudos the other 30. He had bought a hoe for 7½ escudos, a book for the same. To this total expendi-
[651] ture should be added the tax (180 escudos) plus the communal fines levied each year for burning the grass and so on which may come to 40 escudos or more. The total expenditure then would be about 555 escudos (£6. 18. 9). It was not possible to calculate his income since he could not remember how many sacks he had sold to the traders. He had, however, raised 200 escudos by selling a pig and had got 40 escudos for two kilos of coffee, though most of the coffee he planted had not produced berries.

A yet poorer household was that of Cypriano, a villager of Epalanga with a wife and two young children. His maize crop in 1956 had gone to pay debts to traders, for the 1955 maize harvest had been very poor. He had got tax-money by making pounding-blocks, and pounding-sticks (for beating out maize), but could not remember how much he had earned thus. Although Cypriano's stock amounted to one sow and one hen,
[292] he and his wife had a set of smart clothes for special occasions, like all Ovimbundu.

Much better off was Luveli, who like Cypriano combined a craft with agriculture. He had sold ten kilos of coffee for 20 escudos each, as well as twelve sacks of maize at 25 escudos each and two sacks of potatoes at 20 escudos each, making a total agricultural revenue of 540 escudos, to which must be added

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Luveli's income from bricklaying. The laying of the bricks that form a modern villager's house may bring 100 escudos. 511

The basic cash need of an Otjimbundu, then, is for money to pay government demands and to provide clothing for his wife and children, who seem more likely than the men to get new clothing every year.[5] Add to this the possibility of other calls (e.g. provision for a relative's funeral) a desirable income even for this low level of consumption would be 400 escudos (£5) and a more prosperous villager might earn and spend double the amount. Exceptional individuals still remaining within the normal conditions of Umbundu cultural and social life, such as Kambungo, may earn from 2,000 to 3,000 escudos a year, perhaps even more, from agriculture. Maize is the foundation of the agricultural economy, but Kambungo's remark that maize did not pay seems to reflect a trend to find other openings such as growing coffee, which is, however, subject to difficulties of climate.

Within the villages there is some trade in handmade objects such as pottery, sleeping-mats, and sticks for stirring mush, and there are quite a number of bricklayers, carpenters, and tailors (proprietors of sewing-machines) who have acquired European skills which bring them money. These craftsmen are, on payment of a fee of 250 escudos (a figure given me by a tailor), exempt from contract labour. 438 463 [648]

Many European residents seem to think that the only European products natives desire are cloths, clothing, and wine. This is not so; villagers wanted me to sell them kerosene for lamps, D.D.T. powder for their hair, and soap. It is interesting that the occasions on which an Otjimbundu would accumulate large (for him) sums all fall outside the maize-for-cloth pattern of trading. These occasions are bridewealth payment (and counting all expenses this may well come to 800 escudos—£10 or more), which is a traditional due, the purchase of bicycles (according to place of purchase from 1,200 escudos [£15] to 1,500 escudos [£18. 15. 0]) which are prestige-giving objects, and the trading journeys to buy cattle. Kambungo had 434 454 [583] [493] [37]

[5] The trader whose opinions I have previously quoted (Senhor Alberto Oliveira Mendes of Chicunda), remarked, 'It is the women who save us. The men make a shirt last for three or four years but the women get something new every year.'

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spent 10,000 escudos, he told me, in buying shells to trade in Kwanyama country and even if this be regarded as an exaggeration such an expedition will cost at least several hundred escudos.

I have not so far discussed labour migration and its economic consequences. There are three ways of going out to work: being recruited for 'contract labour', which involves selection by the chief and government headmen who send people to the post whence they are directed to wherever they are required; being recruited by labour-recruiters who visit villages with their lorries; and travelling, usually on foot, to find work. Contract labour is for a year, which may be followed by a fortnight's work at the post to which the *contratados* are returned. The coffee plantations of Amboim and Seles are important centres for voluntary labour from Gumba and neighbouring chiefdoms. Women, and boys from ten years up, go to work there for spells which may be only two months. However, even in Gumba whose people have a reputation for backwardness and for lack of enthusiasm for going away to work, there is nothing at all surprising in meeting men who have learnt a few words of English in Johannesburg.

Of the 36 household heads of Epalanga, 9 were women, and 8 were men who for one reason or another (elders, cripples, the catechist) would not leave the village. Of the other 19, 6 were absent as labourers during some part of my stay, and this figure excludes individuals who were not expected home within a year. In the cities there are large numbers of permanently or semi-permanently urbanized Ovimbundu, who have largely lost contact with their home villages. Some people who have spent years in the towns may come home—in Epalanga there were at least five women who had visited cities.

Although almost all able-bodied men and many women have lived outside the context of village life as servants to Europeans, as labourers on plantations, and as urban workers, it would be a mistake to think of the rural areas of the Benguela Highland, as being labour reservoirs economically dependent on the towns. It seems that prices of manufactured goods are lower near the railway line and in the cities; hence a man returning from wage labour may buy cloths, a bicycle, a sewing-machine, or a

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gramophone in a town rather than at a trader's near his home village. Most of the money paid for purchases at the stores is money raised by selling crops or livestock. Through labour migration there is, however, some transmission of skills; it is easy to find bricklayers and carpenters of a sort even in Gumba.

Money, rather than barter, is the principal means of exchange among the villages in the selling of local products, and even of meat from pigs. Payment for labour service, such as assistance in house-building and in bringing in maize, is made in beer, except among Protestants who substitute a meal. There is also a custom by which a household which finds, probably at the end of the dry season, that it has not enough maize will make beer to exchange on a particular day for maize.

Ties of kinship and friendship have some economic significance. A kinsman will help with house-building without expecting payment; likewise a man who has a cleared field which he does not want to use may sell it for 200 escudos (£2. 10s.) but would give it free to a kinsman. A man may make a charge for lending his bicycle, though this varies with individuals; he certainly would not do so if it were lent to a friend. Loans between kinsmen should be repaid, and a tailor with a sewing-machine will make the same charges to relatives as to non-kinsmen.

There are few occasions for groups to work together. The unit of consumption and production is the domestic family. Even here, the husband, each wife, and the adolescents have their own fields, though a man may help his wife. Such other occasions of mutual help, in clearing a field, which may occur between friends or kinsmen, will only bring a few, often only two of them.

The Ovimbundu I knew were (with exceptions) not avaricious or grasping; thus, beer might be given to people who have not actually worked in house-building parties. It is regarded as a moral duty to pay one's monetary debts as soon as possible. On various occasions I lent money to people who were pressed and I received back all the money lent. Borrowers insisted that borrowings should be written down, and that the paper on which it was written should be given to them when they paid, or destroyed. Making money and being rich are regarded with

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181 Making money and being rich are regarded with

unambiguous approval, though there is a certain undertone suggesting cunning in the verb *oku lunguka* (to be shrewd) used about prosperous people. The old suspicion of sorcery attaching to people who were more successful farmers than their neighbours[8] seems to have disappeared. While a prosperous villager would be expected to lend money to a poorer kinsman (provided the latter was not known as a bad debtor) yet, the situation which occurs in other parts of Africa, where, as Dr. V. W. Turner notes of the Mwinilunga Ndembu, prosperous Africans 'find themselves increasingly embarrassed by the demands of their kin for presents in cash and kind'[9], would not arise among the Ovimbundu, who would regard such demands as being unjustified, even outrageous.

Wealthy Ovimbundu may spend some of their wealth on clothing and on drink. Cattle-buying has been noted as a form of capital investment and the same term may be used of small stock buying. Another way of disposing of money is by building a house of bricks with the assistance of a bricklayer. A plough may be, but rarely is, bought by two men joining together to pool their money. Generally speaking, the agricultural technology of the Ovimbundu has been little changed since 1911 except for the spread of the techniques of coffee-growing.

It has been noted earlier that the Ovimbundu play an important part in the economic life of Angola both as cultivators and labourers. In this chapter an attempt has been made to show how at the local level it is the cultivation of cash crops, rather than migration for wage labour, which incorporates villagers into the commercial economy of modern Angola. The main source of money in rural areas is the trader's store, which is also the main recipient of money, apart from the administration. While trade both between Ovimbundu and between Ovimbundu and other tribes survives on a minor scale, the social institutions associated with the rubber trade, the large caravans, the non-repayable loans within the matrilineal group, and the obligations of wealthy traders to assist their kin, have disappeared. The contemporary social structure with the

[8] Childs, pp. 106–8.

[9] V. W. Turner, op. cit., p. 135.

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instability of village sites and village populations, the marked emergence of the elementary family, and the non-existence of economic activities and rights associated with corporate groups, is consistent with the growth of cash crops by shifting cultivation.

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CHAPTER VI

THE CATECHETICAL SCHOOL

797 Both the Catholic and Protestant missions have, in order to provide religious teaching and leadership at the village level, made use of catechists whose responsibility it is to prepare people for baptism and children for Communion by teaching them catechism, to lead the village people in prayers, and to maintain contact with the missions. There are a number of differences between the roles of the Catholic and the Protestant catechists. As most of the Christians in my immediate neighbourhood were Catholics, I shall deal in this chapter with the Catholic catechists, though I shall indicate some of the differences which the Protestant organization shows.

[166] In the early days large numbers of Christians settled round the missions. The first Catholic converts were slaves purchased from traders by the missionaries and settled in villages near the missions. While the Protestant missions did not do this, they were somewhat embarrassed by the large crowds of converts who settled round mission stations.[1] The missions expanded by sending out catechists who gathered converts. At one time the 797 practice was for the Christians to settle in a 'school village', 361 which was in fact a hamlet partially separated from the rest of the village from which its membership was recruited. This is still found in some Gumba villages. In other villages, however, there is no geographical division between Christian and pagan, and the school may occupy a central position in the lay-out of the village. There are as yet no purely Catholic villages in Gumba. These are established by the missionaries when there is considered to be a significant number of Catholic married couples. This pattern is followed even on the outskirts of Nova Lisboa.

[1] Childs, p. 66.

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The catechist is appointed by the mission, though there is a fairly common tendency for him to have relatives in the village where he is catechist. It is often the case that somebody who is already recognized by the mission as qualified to be a catechist, that is, has a good knowledge of the catechism, prayers and hymns, may be asked by some kinsman to come to his village to teach catechism, and his acceptance needs only to be confirmed by the mission. Even in Gumba, notable for the relative strength of its surviving paganism and the relatively slow rate of conversion, every village except the chief's capital and the hamlets had a catechetical school. 797

The catechist does not receive a salary from the mission. He is, however, exempt from the personal tax, and is not liable for road-work or contract labour. He may be able to persuade his flock to cultivate a field for him, and the school itself, and perhaps a house for visiting missionaries, will be built by the school people. The other representative of the school is the elder of the school, whose responsibility is to arrange for the catechist's settling down in the village, and his getting on well with the local people. This office had particular importance in the days when a catechist might be sent from the mission to a region quite different from his own. Nowadays, when so many catechists have kin in the villages where they settle, the balance of influence between catechist and elder of the school will depend on their personalities. In one village the elder of the school may be pushing and shrewd, and the catechist may be rather under his influence; in another an active, enterprising, catechist may make the elder of the school his assistant. The elder of the school is not exempt from taxes, but is not called on for labour service.

The school people may include both baptized people and catechumens. For both the word *vakwasikola* (they of the school) applies and the former may be called Christians, and these will sometimes object to non-baptized people using Christian names. The period of catechumenate is three years, but people who learn catechism quickly are given baptism in two years. There are a certain number of peripheral school people who may turn up at the school for prayers but who are not actively learning the catechism. There are other people who do not

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797 usually come to the school but say they want to be baptized. Many people who would have to be classified as pagans are people with Christian names who at one time attended catechism classes and prayers, and who may very occasionally turn up to some service, for instance the Corpus Christi procession at the Mission.

Adult and adolescent converts may only receive baptism at the mission. The children of Christian parents are baptized by priests on their visits to the villages; it is the catechists' duty to teach them catechism in preparation for their first confession and communion which should take place when they are about seven to ten years old. The missionaries frequently complain of the inadequacies of the catechists as teachers of doctrine. Few of the old pupils of the elementary school at the Bimbe mission become catechists, as there is no pay attached to it. Some, certainly, of the catechists are devoted and intelligent men, and a few have a real gift for speaking in public.

Some catechists attempt to teach their pupils the three Rs; and a catechist ready to teach reading, writing and counting will find a number of boys eager to learn. There are about half a dozen 'rudimentary', that is pre-primary, schools dependent on the Bimbe mission, none of which is in Gumba or Chicunda, and a primary school at the mission itself. Learning to read and write is not confined to Christians; some pagans in [212] Epalanga could write their names, and I was told that among contract labourers on plantations those who were literate would teach those who were not in the dormitories at night.

Apart from religious instruction, the catechists have the duty of leading the people in morning and evening prayers at the school. These prayers are in Umbundu with occasionally a hymn in Portuguese. On Sunday mornings there is a longer set of prayers and hymns, some in Latin taken from the Mass, held about ten o'clock. Only a few people turn up for morning prayers, considerably more to evening prayers, and nearly everybody who can be considered a 'school person' comes to the Sunday gathering.

The evening gatherings for prayers may be used as opportunities for announcing news—e.g. the approaching visit of a missionary. More usually they are followed and sometimes

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More usually they are followed and sometimes

preceded by singing, and dancing. There are a certain number 797
of 'school' songs as distinct from hymns, which are semi- or 533
non-religious in nature, which are taught by the catechist and are sung on these occasions with other Umbundu traditional songs. There seems to be little composition of songs by present day Ovimbundu nor do they know popular Portuguese songs.

The school itself, the centre of these activities, is generally 797
built of adobe bricks in the shape of a church. In any village [346]
where there is a fair number of school people it will be the largest building in the village and even in villages of mixed Christian and pagan population the school building tends to be in the centre of the village, a topographical reflection of the social significance of the catechist and the catechetical school. In the school men and women are separated, men on the right, women on the left, a custom also found in some Angolan parish churches.

The catechist's presence is a mark of the identity of the 797
village. The catechetical school is the only institution which 621
groups people of different domestic groups on a village-wide basis, and in which people participate in a wider set of social relations on a village and not on an individual basis, as people are linked to kinsmen, or to the post or to an employer. One can and does associate oneself with a village if one does not belong geographically to it but simply attends its school. Thus Fernando considered himself as belonging to the village of Ngolo Catolica whose catechetical school he attended, although his house was well away from the main village, being much nearer the Protestant village of Vila Graça, where indeed he had kinsmen. When I asked a woman where she lived she replied by giving the name of the village catechist. The only occasions on which a group of people represent one village *vis-à-vis* another are in connection with the travels of missionaries, and in the wedding feasts, which will be described in another chapter.

A missionary on leaving one village for another has his 797
luggage carried by the school people of the village where he 484
has been staying, who will march singing, with perhaps a boy banging on a drum. When they get to the next village they will be greeted at the entrance into the village by the catechist and

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his people, who will be neatly dressed and lined up. The welcoming catechist will deliver a speech in Portuguese, and will conclude with three Vivas one, say, for the Bishop of Nova Lisboa, one for the Mission, and one for the visiting priest. These may be varied—I have heard a Viva for Diogo Cão, the Portuguese navigator who discovered Angola. This formal welcome to a procession seems copied from the welcome given to the party from the bride's village when they arrive at the bridegroom's village; and this welcome has in turn copied elements—speeches in Portuguese and calls for Vivas—from the reception of missionaries. Then both parties singing and dancing will proceed to the house where the priest is to stay. The people of the welcoming village should have taken over his luggage at the point where they met his party—if they have not, his carriers will complain vigorously.

It is the catechist's responsibility to get his people to provide the customary gifts of a chicken or two, and possibly eggs and bananas to the visiting priest. He must explain the spiritual state of the school people to the missionary, notably telling him if any of the Christians have married according to pagan custom. It is to him that the priest will direct criticisms on the state of the school building or on the lack of catechetical knowledge of the people. The catechist has also the obligation to visit the mission occasionally during the year—how often depends on nearness, on circumstances and on his own enthusiasm. The most popular times for visiting the mission are Christmastime, the New Year, Easter, and Corpus Christi, when the catechist may go with a number of the school people, though individual Christians also go alone. A catechist will also visit the mission when he has some catechumens who are sufficiently advanced to be tested on their religious knowledge. He has also a general responsibility to report to the mission the activities of diviners, or Christians who have married polygamously. He may also be responsible for referring other disputes to the mission, or for obtaining a letter of commendation to the post in some dispute.

The catechist, then, does not have much authority of his own; his personal role is that of a teacher and leader of prayers. He can, however, invoke the authority of the mission, which

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even in non-religious matters has influence with the post, and can through this influence effect the arrest of diviners and baptized polygamists, or intervene on the side of somebody called before the post.

A catechist may be removed from his position by the mission for incompetence, or for moral failings, such as unchastity or rum-brewing on an extensive scale. He may also become involved in quarrels with his people, who may say that he is bad-tempered, while he will say that they are disobedient. Such a dispute will be referred to the mission where an attempt will be made to persuade the two parties to sink their differences. If this fails, the catechist may return to his old village, but may become a catechist elsewhere if the circumstances have not been such as to destroy the mission's confidence in him.

There are other ways in which the catechist represents his village. The post may impose certain responsibilities; thus the catechist may be told to record all live births in the village for the purposes of official statistics. The catechist will try and keep on good terms with the policemen who live at the post and visit the villages. The catechist of Epalanga gave a chicken to a visiting policeman and explained that this was a general practice in order that catechists visiting the post for the annual check on their papers should find a policeman who would be good to them. However, a catechist will object to attempts to associate him with the more unpopular activities of the post. Thus when a policeman came to the Epalanga catechist and asked him to help in recruiting labourers, the latter was rather angry. 'My work is to teach doctrine, not to seize people.' Similarly, when visiting a Protestant village once I asked where the government headman lived and was told in rather an irritated tone, 'No, we have nothing of the post here. We have only the school.'

The sense of responsibility which the catechist feels for his village is sometimes counterbalanced by his lack of effective power. Thus in the dry season of 1956 a bridge near Epalanga which was crossed by the track to Chicunda was broken down. Pedro Chiquete Santos thought that this might bring punishment on the villagers, and accordingly appealed for volunteers to repair it. He also asked Jeremias, the Protestant catechist of

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797 Simbwyikoka, to help. Jeremias turned up with three of his
571 pupils; Pedro, however, had no response. Returning at night to Epalanga, he complained of the attitude of his people, not so much that they had not been ready to help but that they had spread the rumour that he was going to complain to the post. He insisted that he had not said that he would complain to the post; what he had said was that a white labour-recruiter who had had difficulty with the bridge would complain to the post. The attitudes expressed by the catechist are interesting; he feels a responsibility for the village, he has not a corresponding authority to get people to do something which is concerned with the village, but not with the school, but is indignant at the suggestion that he would be willing to denounce his fellow villagers to the post. Indeed, cases arose, which will be described in later chapters, in which a catechist and an elder of the school took an active part in opposing a domineering government headman.

One evening two Kimbundu men, from a different geographical and tribal area, arrived in Epalanga with an unusual story. They had been travelling in the company of a European employer who had suddenly gone off, leaving them without money. This was at a town on the main Luanda–Nova Lisboa road. They had then set out travelling through the villages relying on the hospitality of the catechists to get to the Missão Católica de Bimbe, where they hoped to obtain money to pay bus fares back home. I do not know why they took this way; perhaps as missionary effort to the immediate north of Umbundu country lacks intensity there were no helpful catechists linking the place where they were stranded to their home. What is interesting is that they could rely on the hospitality of the catechists, although they had no kin or tribal bond to appeal to. Here again the catechist appears as the representative of his village who has particular moral duties. Another example of this was when the catechist of Epalanga took part in a funeral as a funeral-friend, which he was, being a native of Ndjandju, the partner-chiefdom of Gumba. He said that he would not take a chicken, as was his right, since he was a catechist, that is, he had special obligations to be generous.

In general the position of the Protestant catechists and elders

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of the school seems considerably stronger than that of their Catholic counterparts. This impression is gained by visits to Protestant villages and to episodes like that just quoted, where the Protestant catechist had more success than the Catholic in recruiting volunteers for work on the bridge. The reasons for this lie in the organization of the Protestant Church, which owes its origin to Congregationalist missionaries, and in which the distribution of power differs from that in the Catholic Church. The white missionaries exercise only a supervisory role over the work of the Native Church which is responsible for pastoral activity in the villages. The African clergy of the Native Church are entirely dependent financially on their people.

Compared with Catholicism, Protestantism lays much less stress on the sacraments of baptism and communion and much more on Bible-reading and the religious knowledge of the individual. Hence the teaching role of the catechist is more strongly stressed among the Protestants. For example, the Protestant catechists teach girls as well as boys to read and write. His dependence on the clergy is reduced; indeed, owing to the lay participation in the Umbundu Native Church he exercises some control over them. Among the Ovimbundu, as elsewhere in the world, the 'pyramidal' form of Catholicism is absent in Protestantism in which the position of the clergy is weaker and that of the lay leaders strengthened.

The relative autonomy of the Umbundu Native Church *vis-à-vis* the white missionaries and the disintegration of the traditional system of authority have given judicial powers to its officials. Dr. Childs has written in a recent article:[2] 'In Angola . . . the breakdown of traditional authority has been so rapid that the social life of the villages is now very near to complete anarchy . . . the missions and churches have been compelled to take over. Church leaders—catechists, deacons, and pastors—have taken on judicial functions. Church meetings, both local and regional, have become courts and councils.' He goes on to describe the legalistic attitudes and casuistical morality which is associated with these developments, and suggests that the lack of opportunity for political activity

[2] G. M. Childs, *International Review of Missions*, April 1958.

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795 confines the pursuit of power to the Native Church with un-
178 fortunate results. It might, on the other hand, be suggested that the Protestants among the Ovimbundu are the section of the population who have come nearest to building up new systems of authority and law. It might also be suggested that Umbundu Protestantism retains certain historical features of Congregationalism—democratic selection of officials with strict discipline binding members of the congregation, industriousness and zeal for education, and a certain consciousness of being a spiritual *élite*.[3]

795 Another factor in the situation is that the Protestants are a minority compared with the Catholics and tend to have the heightened self-consciousness of religious minorities. They also tend to isolate themselves from the pagans much more than the Catholics do, both geographically by moving into separate hamlets and separate villages and by the greater efforts they make to understand and follow European custom. Protestants for instance seem to know more how the Portuguese kinship terms should be used.

797 Ultimately, the position of the catechist, whether Catholic or
177 Protestant, is dependent on his role as a teacher of Christian doctrine, and as being a representative of 'modern' values. It may be said that Christian doctrine and 'modern' values are not necessary identical. It is, however, in this field that the Ovimbundu establish their closest contacts with the Europeans. A Protestant explaining why a kinship usage had been discontinued said: 'We are Christians, we are like the Europeans.'

795 A Catholic catechist arguing the superiority of Catholicism to Protestantism began by saying that the Protestants had no sacraments—then the elder of the school chimed in saying: 'And ours is the religion of the government.' The catechist took up this theme: 'The *chefe de posto* is baptized and married in church, the Governor-General [*sic*] of Nova Lisboa is baptized and married in church.' During my first weeks in Epalanga I was asked by the catechist: 'Are there priests in England?' and replied that in England there were both Catholics and Protestants, on which the catechist commented: 'It's the same
that in Bimbe.'

[3] For the history of Congregationalism see E. Troeltsch, *The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches*, London, 1931, Vol. II, p. 661–6.

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thing in Bimbe.' That is, church membership is recognized as giving entry to a world-wide grouping. This sense of being linked to the Europeans by participation in the same sacraments is paralleled on the European side by the custom widespread in Angola of whites standing as godparents to their servants or servants' children. More generally, the missions are regarded as being the cause of that social change which is welcomed by Ovimbundu. Thus the fact that this was 'the time of the school' was given by one of my servants as the reason for such improvements as the decline of sorcery and the increase of cleverness.

Ovimbundu Christians are also aware of the doctrinal significance of baptism—when I asked various people 'Why did you receive baptism?' a general reply would be: 'I want to go to heaven', or some equivalent phrase. The apprehension of Catholic doctrine by the Ovimbundu is a complicated subject. It may be said that the receiving of the sacraments is the aspect of religion that has made most impression on the people. In the conversation previously cited, the catechist began by emphasizing the presence of sacraments as the distinctive mark of Catholicism against Protestantism, and then when the elder of the school pointed to the official associations of Catholicism, the catechist developed this by indicating the receiving of sacraments by those in high office. In the same way a catechist may commend somebody by saying: 'He is baptized and married in Church', as we would say of somebody: 'He is a real Christian'. The contact of the people with the priests, whether at the mission, or in the villages, usually involves the making of confessions and the receiving of communion. Cultural traits particularly characteristic of Portuguese Catholicism are little marked with the exception of the social importance of the godfather-godson tie. Christian ideas of the after-life have penetrated among the pagans, who will say that the soul after death goes to God (Suku) except in the case of bad people who go to hell.

The social relations between Christians and pagans are friendly. The old rites in which the sub-chiefdom as a whole participated have disappeared, and the rites performed at the capital, a liturgy which like other aspects of chieftaincy is a shadow of its former self, arouse little public interest. Christians

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and pagans co-operate in weddings and funerals. In certain aspects of funeral rites, and in commemorations of ancestors the Christians participate, justifying themselves by arguing that they are purely social functions and have no religious significance. This differs from their attitude to the major exorcism rites,[4] which are avoided by Christians, who regard them with some horror, and towards consulting diviners. Although visiting diviners is strictly forbidden by both Catholic and Protestant missionaries, a high proportion of their people do this,[5] but clandestinely. Thus I was told that there were no diviners in Gumba; in fact, there were two living in Epalanga. It is important to remember that there exist nowadays no pagan 'congregations', that is, permanent groups associated with the performance of ritual.

It is, indeed, through the missions that most of the formal teaching of European culture (apart from the instructions given to labourers and servants) which Ovimbundu receive is given. To the Ovimbundu the missionaries are the Europeans who appear in the most favourable light, and even among pagans the attitude to the missions is without the fear accorded to the post or the suspicion with which the traders are regarded. The missionaries alone run schools, and they provide most of the modern medical services. The missionaries come into far more frequent contact with the people than do the *chefes*, and their relationship with the people is not confined to economics as is that of the traders. The Ovimbundu desire to imitate and learn from Europeans; it is from the missionaries that they have most opportunity of learning, and it is in the African clergy that they have the most clear evidence that this learning from Europeans will bring them results.

The organization of the missions is the form of large-scale social structure with which the people are best acquainted, and with which they are most capable of identifying themselves. A

[4] These involve drumming and an open invitation to anybody who wants to turn up. The idea is to persuade the tormenting spirit to pass into a small animal or inanimate object. The minor exorcism (*ola likutilila*) also involves sending the spirit into an inanimate object, but without drumming or the headshaking by the patient which is believed to mark the arrival of the spirit and his acceptance of the offering.

[5] Childs, loc. cit. Personal information.

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servant of mine explaining how the Mwekalia chose the chief said, giving me a comparison: 'The Bishop of Nova Lisboa thinks "This priest has sense" and so makes him the superior of a mission'.[8] The disintegration of the old political system, and the association of its representatives with the ritual values which are no longer very significant for the mass of Ovimbundu, has destroyed the old pyramid of authority and prestige. The people associate demands and punishment, for which they seem to receive very little in return, with the post. Many draw a distinction between the actual *chefe* and the government, which they regard as benevolent and ignorant of the behaviour of its representatives. Despite such expressions of loyalty as the singing of the Portuguese national anthem at village parties the 'government' is too distant and shadowy for the Ovimbundu to have much knowledge of it. Nor has the post tried effectively to build up new types of bureaucratic authority in the villages—the government headmen are not given sufficient backing or responsibility by the post to do more than execute its orders.

Hence, the establishment of new types of grouping and leadership at the local level has been the work of the missions, and it is through the missions that these new groupings are articulated on to the total Angolan social system. The missionaries, who provide this articulation between the 'civilized' society and the local organization of the natives, form the section of the 'civilized' population which most satisfies, in its relations with the people, the expectations of the Africans.

To use another term, it is within the Catholic and Protestant Churches that Ovimbundu most clearly identify themselves. Baptism identifies an individual by giving him a name, hence Christians object to non-baptized people identifying themselves in this way. To an individual baptism is significant since it is concerned with his destiny. By it also he identifies himself with the 'civilized' population and achieves a new status superior to that of the pagans. The newly-born child of Christian parents will be given a Christian name and also an Umbundu name from one already held by a dead kinsman.[9] A few villagers

[8] Actually responsibility for appointing superiors of missions largely belongs to the superior of the Nova Lisboa district of the Congregação do Espírito Santo.

[9] For Umbundu names, see Elizabeth Ennis, *African Studies* (Johannesburg) March 1945.

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795 551 attempt to take on European surnames. Alternatively, a man may take his father's name and attempt to use it as a surname. Thus Joaõ Batista Tjindandi, a resident of Epalanga, had received Joaõ Batista in baptism, and had taken Tjindandi, his father's name, as a surname. This is, however, not at all a general trend. Even a village of mixed Christian-pagan population may be known by the name of its school, identifying itself by its Christian name.

795 554 A man identifies himself also with social change and with progress by 'entering the school'. When a small girl, whom I asked if she had 'entered into the school' replied 'Not at all', her elder sister's husband remarked: 'She is asleep'. In the general Angolan society the religious referent is the most status-giving type of reference that most Ovimbundu can give.

186 554 There is no very marked feeling in the superiority of one area of Umbundu country to another nor even is there a marked sense of the superiority of Ovimbundu to other tribes—thus the Kimbundu will be highly praised for the degree of European culture they have acquired. The very word Ovimbundu is used as an equivalent of '*pretos*' (blacks) a word not used of 'civilized' Africans, since it is indicative of the lowest colour-class. As a Christian, a man has a status which he shares with Europeans.

797 648 He can also identify himself not only in a general way with the Europeans but more particularly with the general church organization. There is much closer contact between the authority-figures of the church organization and the people than between the authority-figures of the administration and the natives. Thus all Catholics in the Nova Lisboa diocese are confirmed by the Bishop of Nova Lisboa, and have seen him—similarly many of the Protestant Ovimbundu know of Dr. Childs, the headmaster of the Protestant secondary school at Dondi, through having heard him preach at a conference. Some Christian villagers would know the names of pioneer missionaries. Little is known by the people about the personalities or duties of the senior members of their administration, and even their titles are not properly understood.

795 648 The religious differences which exist at local level have no marked significance in the relations of natives to the post. In certain circumstances a pagan may appeal to a Christian

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catechist or missionary for support at the post. There is no tendency to confine government appointments to chiefdoms and headmanships to Catholics.[8] However, the Protestant catechists are, unlike the Catholic catechists, not exempt from taxes.[9]

The Ovimbundu no longer possess a coherent political system of their own. They cannot, owing to the nature of their relations with the post and their ignorance of the higher administration, regard the Government as being their representative; the only wide-range systems with which they can identify themselves are the missions. It is through them that the individual is promised eternal life, that the village receives a new type of identity and unity, and that the Ovimbundu as a people participate with the 'civilized' population in ritual communities cutting across the boundaries of culture and geography.

The objection may be made that it is only the Christians who could effectively be represented by the missions and that in Epalanga and Gumba generally baptized Christians formed a minority. It has, however, been previously noted how the school may give its name to a village of mixed population. The catechist will represent both Christians and pagans when he is concerned with the post or with the mission. Moreover, the percentage of pagans in Gumba is far higher than in the rest of Bimbe to which they are linked by the Umbundu language and culture, by administrative divisions, and by a wide range of personal contacts.

It may, then, be asserted, that the catechetical schools and the wider groupings which they build up are the social groups most significant for Umbundu integration on any scale wider than that of the household.

[8] In Gumba the chief and government headman were pagan. There are government-recognised Protestant chiefs elsewhere in Umbundu country.

[9] In some parts of Angola the Catholic catechists are not automatically granted exemption but have to have obtained certain other qualifications, e.g. a certain degree of literacy.

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CHAPTER VII

KINSHIP

1. *General Aspects*

128 A good deal has been said about the contemporary kinship system in Chapter IV, where it was discussed from the point of view of the local organization rather than in its own right. This chapter must, therefore, to some extent, refer to information already presented in Chapters I and IV, since there are three problems to be discussed—the form of the old kinship [121] system, the form of the present kinship system, and the reasons for the changes from one system to the other.

The following approach will be adopted: the ethnographic sources for Umbundu kinship will be examined, information will then be given on the kinship norms formerly valid, and an attempt will then be made to give a coherent sketch of the system then existing. After this, reference will be made to the actual operation of present-day kinship norms and the significance of descent and inheritance. Then factors in the transition between the two systems will be brought forward.

611 It has been generally accepted by commentators on the ethnographic material that the traditional Umbundu kinship system is of the type called a 'double-descent' system.[1] 'Descent' is used by British anthropologists to imply membership of a group involving rights and duties.[2] Hence, it can only be claimed that the Ovimbundu possessed such a system if there existed two sets of kin groups, and not simply some combination of matrilineal inheritance and virilocal residence at marriage.

One anthropologist, Mr. W. D. Hambly, and two missionaries

[text continues on p.92]

[1] For other African double-descent systems see *African Systems of Kinship and Marriage*, ed. Radcliffe-Brown and Forde (Oxford, 1950), pp. 79, 285–359.

[2] The word seems to have been first used in this sense by W. H. R. Rivers.

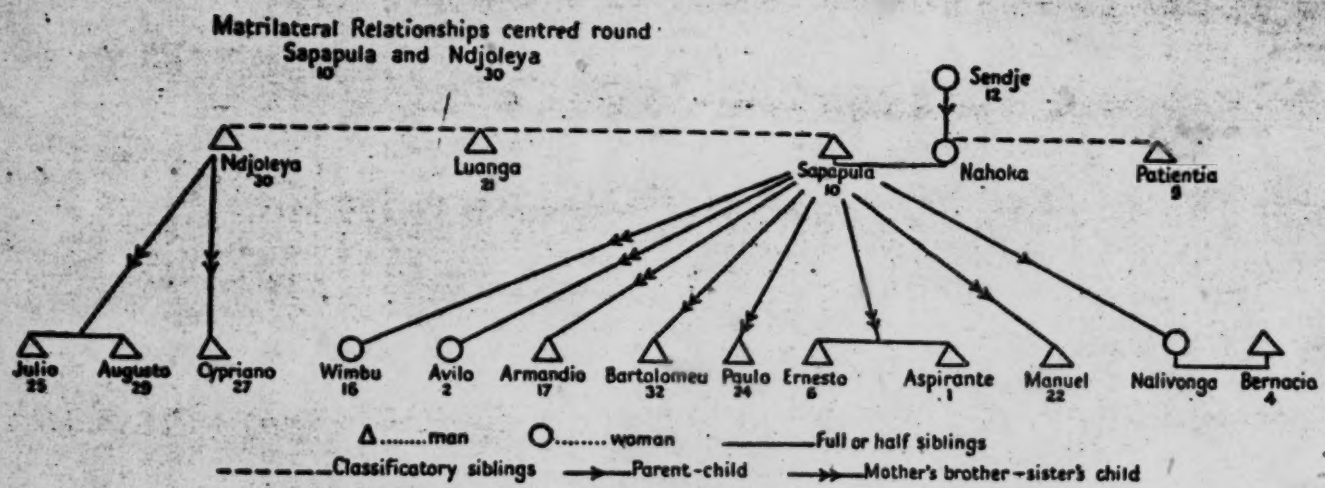

CHART 1. This shows the relationships centred round Sapapula (10) and Ndjoleya (30), the leading personalities of the village. Although they were not directly related there was a link through Luanga (21), who was matrilaterally a 'brother' of Sapapula, and patrilaterally of Ndjoléya. All are living members of the village.

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114 One anthropologist, Mr. W.D. Hambly, and two missionaries

with anthropological knowledge and interests, Dr. Daniel A. Hastings and Dr. Gladwyn Murray Childs, have written on Umbundu kinship.[3] Mr. Hambly's main interest was in material culture and the conditions of his fieldwork were not such as to give him much evidence on the kinship system.[4] Both Dr. Hastings and Dr. Childs recognized the central importance of kinship in Umbundu social life, but have outlined the kinship ties and kinship groups rather than given a detailed analysis.

602 Mr. Hambly states that 'The phrase *Epata Lia Tate* (or *Oluse*) means "family of my father" and includes all relatives on the father's side. The words *Epata Lia Mai* (or *Oluina*) mean "family of my mother".'[5] This could mean that the Umbundu kinship system is bilateral. He states that inheritance is matrilineal and marriage virilocal, a situation consistent with such a matrilineal kinship system as that of the Bakongo.[6]

613 622 Dr. Hastings, whose thesis was completed the year before the publication of Hambly's book, makes it clear that there are two sets of kin groups. 'Over each village is a ruling elder who is the head of the kinship group of that village since all who reside in the village are generally related to him and to each other patrilineally. This elder, greatly revered, is considered the patriarch of that local group. Residence being patrilocal, [59] the office of an elder is hereditary through the male line.'[7] He 613 then goes on to contrast with this, 'the matrilineal sib to which each member is linked, though he may be living in a village away from his sib group.'[8] This group is a clearly defined

[3] Works cited in footnotes to Chapter I. There is a typescript of Hastings's thesis in the library of the International African Institute, London.

[4] Mr. Hambly spent five months in the country, and used as his interpreter and main informant an English-speaking Otjimbundu. He seems simply to have visited villages without living in them. Dr. Childs and Dr. Hastings had both spent several years as 'bush' missionaries. Dr. Childs had actually taken over from Dr. Hastings work in the area to the north-west of Bailundo in the direction of Bimbe, and had subsequently obtained information in Cassongue. He later obtained a good deal of material from African pastors, teachers and schoolboys.

[5] Hambly, pp. 191–2.

[6] For the Bakongo see the discussion by A. I. Richards, in Radcliffe-Brown and Forde, pp. 213–21. Anthropologists have more than once suggested to the author that the Umbundu system was not of the 'double-descent' category but some combination of virilocal marriage and matrilineal descent.

[7] Hastings, p. 16.

[8] Ibid.

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social unit. 'All descendants of the same great-great-grandmother speak of themselves as a group (matrilineally descended), by the term *Imolietu*, i.e. "children from a common source".'[9] Dr. Hastings did not apply the concept of double-descent to this society but regarded it as being matrilineal with patrilineal trimmings. After noting the patrilineal succession to the chiefdom, virilocal residence after marriage, and social preference for patrilineal kinsman, Dr. Hastings states: 'Apart from these apparent indications which might mislead one into concluding that the Ovimbundu are patronymic [*sic*], every other behaviour is obviously linked up as far as social attitudes and relations of the living are concerned within the matrilineal sib.'[10] 613 [611]

The neat tabulation by Dr. Childs[11] of the functions of the two kin groups, when considered in conjunction with the passages cited from Hastings, seems to provide quite clear proof that it is correct to apply the category 'double-descent kinship system' to that formerly prevailing among the Ovimbundu. [611]

2. *Kinship Terms* 601

Tate	my father	Extended to all brothers, real or classificatory, of a father, all men married to a 'mother', and to the father's sister's son, particularly if he has been your father's heir.
So	your father	
Iso	his father	
Mai	my mother	Extended to all sisters, real or classificatory, of a mother, and to all wives of any 'father'.
Nyoho	your mother	
Ina	his mother	
Sekulu	mother's brother	Extended to any brother, real or classificatory, of a mother, and to the husband of any *apahai*.
Apahai[12]	my father's sister, his father's sister,	Extended to any sister of any father and the wife of any *sekulu*.
Sohai	your father's sister	

[9] Ibid., p. 83. *Imolietu* actually means 'our womb'.
[10] Ibid., p. 87.
[11] Childs, pp. 45–46.
[12] *Tatakai* (father-woman), used in other parts of Umbundu country for 'my father's sister', is not found in Gumba.

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601 The reciprocal of *tate* and *mai* is *omola* (child), usually with the possessive pronoun. *Nungulu* is used for the first-born son, and *kwasula* for the youngest. The reciprocal of both *sekulu* and *apahai* is *otjimumba*. Elder sibling is *huva*, younger sibling is *mandja*, both used with the possessive pronouns. *Kota* seems to have meant formerly the eldest sibling but it is now equivalent to *huva*. *Mukai* is sister, man speaking, and *mume* is brother, woman speaking.

Epalume, pl. *apalume*, cross-cousin
K'oluse patrilateral cross-cousin
K'oluina matrilateral cross-cousin

Makulu[13] is used for 'grandfather' and very often for grandmother, though for the latter there is a separate term, *inakulu*; the reciprocal is *onekulu*.

Nawa brother-in-law, sister-in-law. Extended to all siblings, real or classificatory, of a wife, the husband of any female sibling, and the siblings of such a husband.

Ndatembo father-in-law, mother-in-law;
son-in-law, daughter-in-law.
Ndatembo is used only in reference; to address these affines one uses *tate* and *mai*.

Tjikwelume[14] sister's daughter's husband, sometimes father's sister's husband. The wife's mother's brother may be regarded as a mother's brother or as a *ndatembo*.

[602] *Tjisoko* (funeral friend) is used as a kinship term both in address and reference. This is an abbreviation of the more correct *ukwatjisoko*, of which the plural is *vakwatjisoko*.

The term for wife is *ukai* (woman) or *ufeko* (girl), the latter being perhaps more frequent. *Vey'yange* (my husband) is used as a term of reference by a woman rather than *ulume* (man, husband). Husband and wife would address each other by name or '*a ukutu*' (O friend). If an individual is both an affine and a kinsman the affinal ties take precedence.

[13] Elsewhere *Sekulu* is used for 'grandfather'.
[14] Albino Alves, Vol. I, p. 448, gives *Tjikwelume* as sister's son.

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Osanto or *osiala* (namesake) is used as a kinship term, both in address and as reference. 601

Oluse and *oluina*, which were formerly the words for the agnatic and matrilineal kin group, now mean the patrikin, that is, all to whom one is paternally related, and the matrikin, all to whom one is matrilaterally related. A man, describing a particular tie, may say that it is 'in the matrikin of my father', that is, the relative is a matrilineal kinsman of his father. The terms *onele yohondji* ('the side of the bow') and *onele yohumba* ('the side of the basket') are equivalents of *oluse* and *oluina*.[15] The term *epata* may be used in a general sense for kin but it has very often a primary reference to the matrikin. *Familia* (from the Portuguese) means kin in general but it may mean 'kinsman with reference to a single individual: 'So-and-so is (or is not) my *Familia*.' *Ngandi* (which also means 'So-and-so,' equivalent to the Portuguese *fulano*) means kinsman and *usitwe* is kinship. 602 [177]

The use of Portuguese terms is now frequent even among those who do not speak Portuguese. The terms most frequently taken into the Umbundu language are *mano* which is used to mean 'elder brother,' and *mana* which is used to mean 'elder sister,' both terms being used by either sex, *primo* (feminine *prima*), cousin, which is used as an equivalent of *epalume* (cross-cousin), *tio* (uncle), which is now used more frequently than *sekulu*, and *cunhado* (feminine *cunhada*) brother-in-law or sister-in-law, used in the same way as is *nawa*. Ovimbundu villagers talking Portuguese will apply the Portuguese terms in Umbundu style. Thus *irmaõ* (brother) will be used as an equivalent of *mandja* (younger sibling of either sex), and *irmaõ mais velho* (older brother) will be used as an equivalent of *huwa* (elder sibling of either sex). Similarly *tia* (aunt) will be used as an equivalent of *apahai*. 601 177

The rules about which term may be used in a particular defined relationship (e.g. my wife's mother's brother) are not clearly and exclusively defined. What is more surprising is that a man may not be certain what is the category in which he should class a kinsman with whom he has frequent contacts. Thus Paulo, the elder of the school at Epalanga, often played 601

[15] As noted previously in the references to Chapter I these terms do not seem to have referred to descent groups.

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601 with Adolfo, the small son of Jaime, his wife's brother, but when asked what relation Adolfo was to him, became confused and said, 'My son, my sister's son.'

601 184 There exist marked variations in terminology in Umbundu country.[16] For instance, *sekulu* seems to be used for mother's brother only in north-western Umbundu country. Elsewhere *manu*[17] is used for mother's brother, and *sekulu* is used for grandfather. At Caconda, where there has been strong Portuguese [172] influence since the eighteenth century, only the Portuguese kinship terms are known.[18]

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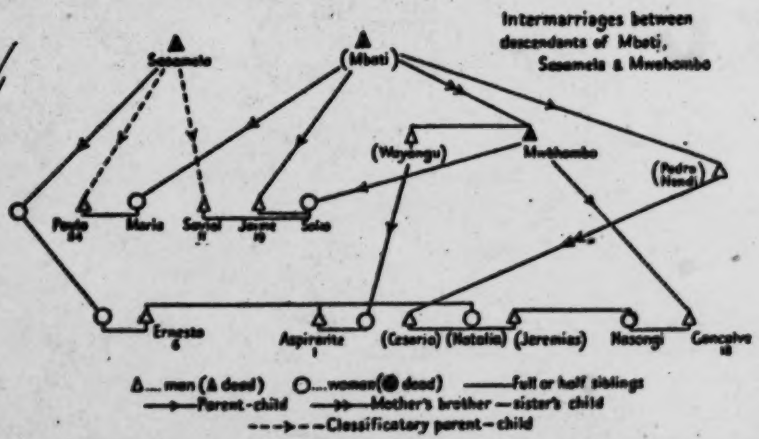

CHART 2. Mbati, Mwehombo and some of their kin. For Mbati (dead, non-member) and Mwehombo (dead, former member) see Chapter III, section 1. For Sasamela (dead, former member) and Cesario, Jeremias, Natalia, Pedro Nendi, and Wayangu (all living non-members) see List II (pp. 55–6). The rest of the individuals named on the chart are members of Epalanga. Paulo and Saviel were 'brothers', both patrilaterally and matrilaterally.

3. *Kinship Norms*

593 In this section I shall describe the relations that existed within the elementary family in the time of the rubber trade. A man

[16] For other lists of kinship terms see Hastings, pp. 83–85. Childs, pp. 47–56. M. Howe, *Umbundu Lessons* (Dondi, 1955), Vol. II, pp. 195–7.
[17] Etymologically, *manu* seems to mean 'mother-person'.
[18] Private information.

[text continues on p. 98]

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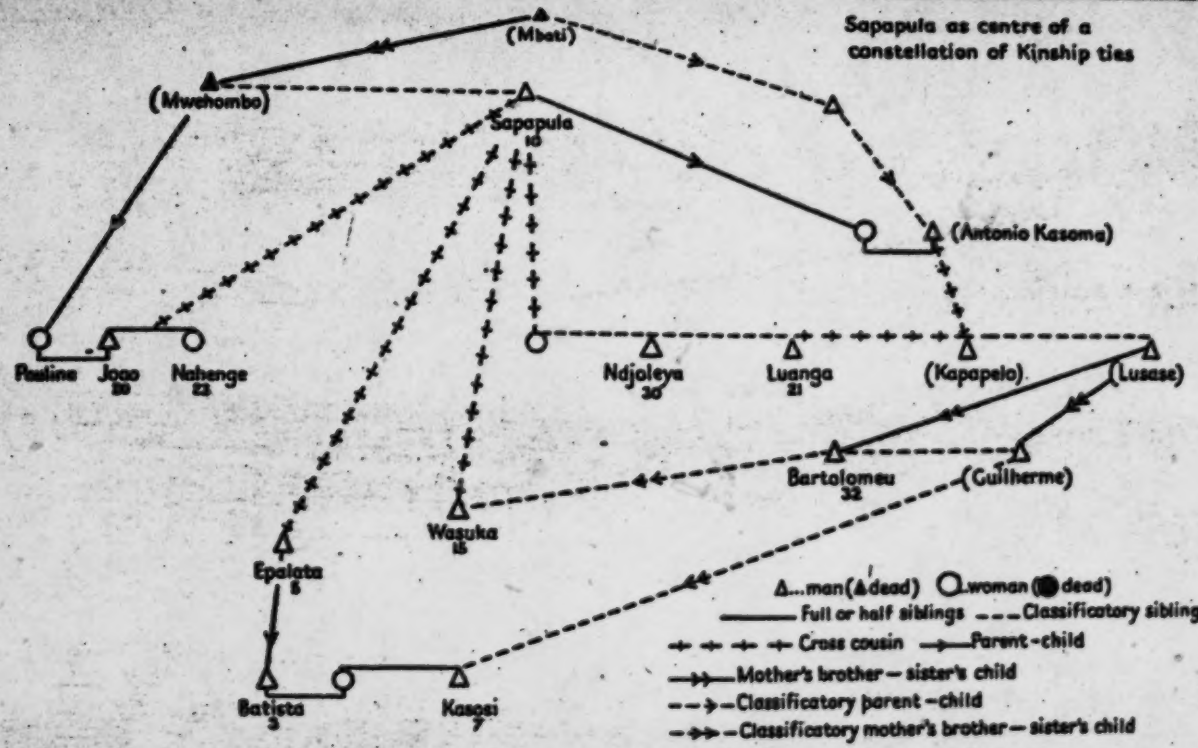

CHART 3. Sapapula as the centre of a constellation of kinship ties. It is interesting to note how, in view of the conflict described in Chapter IX, Sapapula is linked to Guilherme, Kapapelo, and Lusase by several paths. All are living members of Epalanga except for Mbati and Mwehombo (for whom see note to Chart 2) and Antonio Kasoma, Guilherme, Kapapelo, and Lusase. For details on these living non-members see List II, pp. 55–6. Not all ties existing between these individuals have been shown.

Correction. The relation of Bartolomeu and Guilherme to Lusase and of Mwehombo to Mbati should be that of classificatory sister's sons.

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[1874-1911]

593 A man did not eat or chat with his eldest son or his daughters. Nor did a woman eat or chat with her sons. By 'chatting' I mean a prolonged conversation. It was not forbidden for people in these relationships to speak to one another. Nor could a man eat or joke with his sister (although chatting was permitted) or be alone with her at night. A grown man could not sleep in the same room as his father, except perhaps on a journey, nor could he wear his father's clothes while he was still alive. A grown woman might sleep in the same room as her mother, provided they were far apart.

The reason for these avoidances is usually given simply as 'shame' (*osoi*) although I have also heard it said in explanation of the father-eldest son avoidance 'If you don't have an eldest son you can't have a family', that is, it is the birth of his eldest son which gives a man status as a father. There seems to be no formalized norm of behaviour towards the *Kwasula*, but it is said that the youngest child is the parent's favourite.[19] When I asked what would happen if a man was alone with his mother at night the answer given was, 'Your father would be angry.'

It is evident that these avoidances would limit the role of the elementary family as an associational unit. This was further 575 limited by the institution of the men's house in which the men and boys from the age of seven or so upwards eat together. In this way, a boy was associated from childhood with the body of agnatic kinsmen from whose conversation he received much of his education in matters ranging from table manners to history.

593 The authority of a man over his grown sons does not seem to have been very marked. A father had first claim on the services of his adolescent son in the caravan trade; if his father did not need him a lad could travel with another kinsman and a grown man could trade on his own account. Nor did a father apparently control his son's access to land, since this was allocated by [622] the village headman. There was, however, one very important service a father could perform for his son, that of ransoming him when the latter's mother's brother wished to sell him as a

[19] I am not sure if the *kwasula* is the youngest child, either male or female, or the youngest child provided that he is male. I think the latter.

[1874-1911]

slave. Once ransomed a boy could not be sold again. If, how- 593
ever, the father was displeased with his son's behaviour he
could refuse to ransom him. When a man died, his adolescent 768
sons would go to the household of a classificatory father and the
children who did not yet 'have sense' would go with the widow
to her kin, returning to their agnatic kin when they were older.

4. *Analysis of the Old Kinship System*

The ethnography of the Ovimbundu does show that there 611
existed a double-descent kinship system, each individual be- 613
longing to both a local patrilineal group, and a dispersed
matrilineal group, in which movable property is inherited. [622]
So great has been the impact of social change that not only 613
have these groups disappeared but it is practically impossible 178
to gain additional information on them by direct questions
about their nature and functions. The information on kinship
norms does give a somewhat clearer picture.

Within the village there was a very strong emphasis on the 575
unity and solidarity of the men of the village. The men's house
was the main social centre of the village where the men ate,
received guests, and listened to cases. It was about it rather
than about the person of the headman that ritual clustered.[20]
The elementary family was not the unit of domestic consump- 594
tion, and it is clear, from the taboos regarding contact with 575
women kin, and the evidence as to the social life of the man's
house that there was little recreational contact between the
sexes. The concept of *ondjamba*[21] shows that the elementary
family of husband, wife, and children, was morally and ritually
significant, but many of the educational, nutritive, and recrea-
tional functions frequently associated with it were here attached
to the men's house.

The strength of the agnatic ties in this society seems to have 593
lain in the solidarity of the men of the village rather than in the [602]
patriarchal authority of fathers over sons. A son was economic-
ally independent of his father since he could trade on his own
while his father was still living; the most powerful social sanc-
tion in the hands of kinsmen, that of being sold as a slave, was [604]

[20] For these rituals see Hastings, pp. 73–76, and Childs, p. 39.
[21] *Ondjamba* will be discussed more fully in the next chapter.

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[1874-1911]

593 604 in the hands of the mother's brother, though the father could, if he wished, intervene; and a man could establish a shrine of his own while his father lived.

613 It is not altogether easy to see how the matrilineal group maintained its cohesion. It was not the working team on which the caravan trade operated since a man's father had first claim on his services, and he could travel with other relatives. Within it alone loans need not be repaid and accusations of sorcery were made; with this in mind, it is evident why, as Dr. Hastings tells us, people tended to avoid the company of their matrikin, [578] and why most disputes arose in the matrilineal groups.[22] It 613 seems that probably the key to the functioning of the matri- 437 lineal groups lies in the details, not now recoverable, of the economy of the caravan trade. As everybody, however successful, was in danger at some time or another of incurring heavy losses,[23] an arrangement by which anybody who was in difficulties could call on his kin for help would be generally acceptable. The association of mutual aid of this sort with matrilineal rather than patrilineal kin would spread losses geographically and would exclude conflicts over currency and movable property from village life. Moreover, the dispersal of the matrilineal kin would provide an individual with business contacts over a considerable area.

5. *Contemporary Kinship Norms*

593 Much of this has disappeared. The men's house is no longer 264 the dining-room of the village male population. Men now often 178 eat with their wives and children though attitudes and practice of this vary between households. People in their twenties knew of the existence of these avoidance rules but it seems that the rules forbidding sons to eat with their mother and eldest sons and daughters to eat with their father are now generally ignored.

[692] [22] Hastings, pp. 18, 87. Disputes within the matrilineal group could be, and very often were, referred to the sub-chief and king. The account of legal proceedings in Hastings (pp. 139–51) suggests that a high proportion of the cases heard by the kings were to do with sorcery. In such cases the social extension of the matrilineal group beyond the area of the sub-chiefdom and the wider political integration achieved by the kingdoms 'co-operated' in preserving a range of social relations beyond the sub-chiefdom.

[23] Apropos of loans Childs quotes Magyar as saying that the Ovimbundu traded for excitement rather than gain (p. 204).

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The rules about avoidance at night are still kept. The prohibitions on a man borrowing his father's clothes and sleeping in the same room as his father seem to survive. The prohibition on a child speaking the name of his father or mother reported by Childs is not, and was not formerly, found in this area. It is, however, wrong for a child to address his parents by name. 593 551

Children begin to work in the fields when they are about six. Occasionally boys of 10 to 11 go to the coffee fields for two months work, but usually boys do not go out to work until they are about 14 or 15. 857

A boy going out to work should ask his father's permission to go though this is not always done. Returning from work whether contract labour or voluntary work a boy should bring presents to his relatives. He would be expected to give something, say, a jacket, to his father, and a cloth to his mother, on returning from voluntary work and a shirt to his father on coming back from contract labour. These gifts should be made in kind. Money lent from son to father should be repaid, though it is wrong for a son to enforce payment by appealing to the post for policemen. A father may give money to his son for bridewealth, and may suggest a choice of bride. He cannot constrain, nor could he in the past, his son and daughter to a marriage they do not wish. 593 [583]

A man cannot be said to have real authority over his grown sons. The stated norm is that a man's sons stay in the same village till he dies. He has no power to make them do so, and they are not condemned by public opinion if they live elsewhere. A man's attitude to classificatory 'fathers' is determined by the age, status, and personalities of those involved, rather than by jural rights and obligations. I have found men unable to tell me what had become of their own brothers' children. 604

Formerly when the father of an adolescent boy died he would join the household of a father's brother. Nowadays this would be much less likely, as it is common for such a boy to settle with other categories of kin, notably siblings and maternal kinsfolk. A man is free to stay with his brothers if he wishes, or to leave them. 768

While the tie between full brothers is held to be the strongest, as regards classificatory brothers there seems to be a slight 602

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602 leaning towards matrilateral rather than patrilateral brothers. The classificatory kinship terminology, and the lack of genealogies and kinship groups, means that a man knows a great many classificatory brothers living in his neighbourhood of whom he vaguely recognizes some as 'close' others as 'distant', but with whom his relations are not especially significant. A boy or girl who loses his or her parents is fairly likely, judging from the [268] evidence of Epalanga households, to settle with a full- or half-brother or sister.

602 Formerly, owing to virilocal marriage, a sister was geographically separated from her brother, and even if widowed or 591 divorced would not necessarily return to his village, but might 178 go to her mother's brother.[24] With this geographical separation went a situation of possible conflict, since the brother could sell his sister's children to recoup his own debts, and the shadow of sorcery fears seems to have touched this relationship.[25] The suppression of the rubber and slave trades and the subsequent disintegration of the kinship groups have removed the economic pressures which made for conflict between matrilineal kin and the residence rules which divided people locally into groups of agnates and their wives. The brother-sister tie has therefore [593] changed its content, since it is released from the heavy pressures formerly active in the matrilineal kin groups.

562 It would be wrong to produce any such generalization as 'a woman must always be under the guardianship of a male relative'. A woman who is widowed or divorced or whose husband is away working will tend, however, to develop a particular link with the male head of some household, her own kinsman usually, except in the case of a labour migrant's wife, when it may be a kinsman of her husband. Thus in Epalanga, Augusto (25) aided the household of his absent full brother Julio (29).

602 Aid is most likely to be given to a kinsman's wife when the two households are close together. The underlying idea seems to be to keep the kinsman's household together rather than any duty of aiding an affine. For a widow or divorced woman or the

[24] Childs, pp. 23–37.

[25] H. W. Nevinson (*A Modern Slavery*) gives a complicated story which suggests this possibility (p. 101).

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wife of a 'lost' labour migrant the tie with the brother or other kinsman will be more important, though the degree to which there is contact between the two households will vary. 602

It would seem that the present significance of the brother-sister tie is due to the frequency and likelihood of husbands being away from villages as labourers. The strength of this tie gives added significance to the mother's brother—sister's son tie. 583

A sister's son traditionally inherited his mother's brother's movable property, and during his lifetime might borrow from him without need of repayment. Against this, the mother's brother had the right to sell his sister's son as a slave and it was he who was considered most likely, both traditionally and at the present day, to practise sorcery against his sister's son. My informants were divided as to whether the sister's son can practise sorcery against his mother's brother. However, it was stated by Hastings[26] and by my informants that sorcery was only practised between matrilineal kin. It is not easy to see how in the past the relationship between a man and his mother's brothers operated—to what extent a man had particular expectations and obligations to one particular mother's brother rather than to the whole set of senior matrilineal kin. 604 [254]

At the present time the content of the relationship between mother's brother and sister's son seems very fluid, depending on age and personal compatibility. An important difference arises between one's attitude to 'mother's brothers' and to 'fathers'. There is no strong tie with one's mother's own brother, as there is with one's own father; on the other hand, a boy whose father has died is regarded as much more likely to go to the house of a classificatory mother's brother than to the house of a classificatory father, although, as has been noted, children and adolescents may settle with kin of other categories.

Traditionally the relationship between a man and his wife's brother was distant and reserved, the two men being forbidden to eat together or joke. Nowadays the relations between a man and his wife's full or half brother are often very friendly; quite often when one finds two households close together they turn out to belong to men related in this way. 607

A brother-in-law is not regarded as a kinsman—he does not

[26] Hastings, p. 87.

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have a kinsman's obligation to lend money in case of need if he has it, and it is said that one should only work very occasionally with a brother-in-law. When I asked which a woman preferred, her husband or her brother, men told me that she liked both equally, and the fact that a man and his wife's brother often live close together confirms that there is relatively little for them to quarrel over. A woman does not establish close ties with any of her affines. Formerly, when a man died leaving a widow (and according to some informants a small child) a patrilateral cross-cousin of his might marry her. My informants, however, denied that a sororate had existed even in the past.[27]

Cross-cousins are the relatives with whom solidarity is most strongly felt. When I asked about the relationship between full siblings I was told 'They like each other just as cross-cousins do.' Now that it is no longer customary for agnatic kin to live together, it is often said that it is good to live near cross-cousins.

Formerly funeral friendship (*ukwatjisoko*) was part of an alliance between sub-chiefdoms, which were not contiguous. Nowadays, since people move about the country, funeral friendships may be regarded as another category of kinship—when one asks a man his relationship with somebody else this may be given. There is a tendency to regard *vakwatjisoko*, funeral friends, as being a sort of cross-cousins since both perform funeral services. This survival of funeral friendship, as a tie between individuals and as a haphazard means of supplying undertakers, exists in Gumba. In Ndjandju, which is the sub-chiefdom in which the Missão Católica de Bimbe is built, the *tjisoko* relationship is now established between two neighbouring villages and is apparently the normal means of performing burials, and the permitted theft of small livestock regularly takes place.

Between parents-in-law and children-in-law the relation was and is one of restraint. This is most marked in the relations between in-laws of opposite sex, and least between the mother-in-law and daughter-in-law.

[27] See Albino Alves under (o)mieganjo, for evidence of a sororate in some Umbundu areas.

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6. *Descent, Inheritance and Succession*

There is little interest in genealogical detail among contemporary Ovimbundu, which is not surprising since there exists no system of descent groups in which the position of the individual may be genealogically defined nor does affiliation to a particular line of descent give status *vis-à-vis* people of less eminent descent. Pedigrees are traced (in either line) for only two to four ascending generations though one man I met could name ancestors for nine ascending generations. 602

Despite this vagueness and lack of interest in the articulation of relationships, Ovimbundu will say that such-and-such a kinsman is 'close' and such-and-such is 'distant' even though they cannot fit this into a genealogical framework. 'Closeness' and 'nearness' are not simply used to refer to geographical proximity or social co-operation, since there may be much mutual assistance between kinsmen who are 'distant'. One might speak of a blurred edge of kinship not clearly defined in categories of kin but not non-kinsmen. A man may speak of somebody on this 'blurred edge' thus: 'He must be a kinsman but I don't know how.' Similarly the *vakwatjisoko*[1] are a class of people who are not definitely kin, and not non-kin. [608]

There is little formalized distinction between patrikin and matrikin. There is a certain matrilateral pull in the choice of residence, a man being, as has been noted, more likely to settle with a mother's brother than with a 'father'. I had the impression that a man is more likely to settle with a matrilateral 'brother' than with a patrilateral one, but it would be very difficult to establish this by quantitative methods owing to the complexity of the factors affecting residence. As a man tends to settle where he has a number of kin rather than in the shelter of one particular kinsman, this trend does not lead to the formation of matrilineal clusters of kin. The majority of informants still consider that sorcery can only be practised among matrilineal kin but for various reasons it may be said that the fear of sorcery is not significant in kinship relations.[88] 602 591 602 754

[88] It may be suggested that the disappearance of the matrilineal groups which imposed a co-operation involving exacting demands has been paralleled by the decline of sorcery, the mystical reflection of underlying tensions. How is the fact that several informants told me that sorcery had declined since the days of the [178]

[1] [i.e., funeral friends -- Analyst]

428 Inheritance of movable goods was traditionally entirely matrilineal. Today informants are confused as to what ought [183] to be done. Inquiry about particular cases will reveal that often no movable property was left by the deceased, it having been used to pay for such expenses of the illness and funeral as the purchase of medicines and the buying of animals to be slaughtered at the feasts.

Where there is movable property, the transmission of it to the heirs is carried out in a rather informalized way, as so often happens in Umbundu social activities. The actual division of property is undertaken by a kinsman of the deceased. This should apparently be the most senior kinsman. It may be a cross-cousin or 'brother' or a sister's son.[29] How it is decided who is the senior kinsman, and who are fitted to participate in the share-out is not very clear. Nor does it seem that there is any effective device against the sharer-out giving himself the lion's share, except the general pressures and reciprocities of kinship. The principle accepted in the share-out is that inheritance should be a reflection of the relations which existed with the dead man, and also be a reward of funeral services. Nothing is kept for kin who are away working, and a son who did not keep in contact with his father would be omitted from the share-out.

By inheritance a man can increase his small stock of possessions. He is unlikely to receive anything much in the way of money, and since there is no land shortage, and, as yet, little in the way of valuable immovable property such as brick

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602 754 178 rubber trade to be reconciled with the statement by Childs that fear of sorcery was increasing (Childs pp. 57–58)? I suggest that the final disintegration of the old kinship groups may have been marked by particularly sharp social tensions, but that once these groups were in fact dissolved and a new form of social relations established the fear of sorcery may have declined. It should also be remembered that as indicated in Chapter V the present-day economic values of the Ovimbundu do not lead to expectations that a prosperous individual will share his wealth with poorer kinsmen, as was the case in the time of the rubber trade. Hence accusations of sorcery based on disappointed expectations of generosity are unlikely to arise.

Another aspect of the question which cannot be explored here in detail is the [811] lack of agreement on the causality of classes of happenings or individual events. Thus one informant will say that a woman's pains in childbirth are due to sorcerers among her kin, another will say that they are caused by God (as we would say, are natural).

[29] Hambly, pp. 199–200.

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houses, coffee plants and so on there is little likelihood of disputes arising about the inheritance of land claims. A woman's property should be given to her sisters, after her children have had their cut. In one case a man inherited his sister's debts but allowed her children to inherit her property, 'lest they be sad'. A wife's fields return to her husband.

Inheritance is then a process by which the relations of certain kin, both sons and sister's sons, with the deceased are recognized by the transmission of his property. As with other aspects of Umbundu kinship, while the existence of the kinship tie provides the basis on which to found a relationship, its content is determined by the nature of the contacts between the individuals involved and the services given.

Although there is a definite tendency for men of chiefly stock to have longer pedigrees than other individuals there is no chiefly genealogy. When Paulo, the elder of the school of Epalanga, told me that had he not been blind he might have been chief of Gumba, he quoted the names of four chiefs to whom he was related. The chieftancy is not tied to a lineage, but can be held by any individual who can claim links with a former chief or chiefs. People 'of the blood of the chiefs' in no sense form a differentiated group of aristocrats significant in social life.

In similar fashion membership of the spirit-linked professions and of certain cults seems to have been a matter of succession of one individual to the role of another.[30] Membership of the hunting and smithing professions descended patrilineally, but if a hunter or smith had no son his position could be succeeded to by a daughter's son.[31]

7. *Kinship in a Changing Society*

From this, and from other chapters, a picture of Umbundu kinship may emerge as something so blurred, confused, and confusing, as hardly to merit the term 'kinship system', yet at

[30] i.e. rather than admission to a corporate group of hunters. A man can inherit his father's hunting spirit before the latter's death; in Epalanga Batista had received the hunting spirit of his father Epalata.

[31] My informants were not agreed as to whether a sister's son could inherit in default of a son.

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the same time clearly an important part of social life. Kinship norms are confused, as is the correct term to use in a particular relationship. Ritual and jural sanctions are lacking, as are institutions based on the regular co-operation of groups of kinsmen. Yet a man likes to live with kinsfolk and there is a tendency for kin to cluster together in a neighbourhood.

By the very facts, that so many of a man's neighbours are his kinsmen, and that there is very little marked differentiation between the behaviour towards different categories of kin, kinship is robbed of any great specificity of content. It might be said that it is the quantity rather than the quality of kinship ties that makes kinship significant in establishing a 'sense of community' in a neighbourhood, in that the multiplicity of local kin ties creates some identification between a man's range of kin and his neighbourhood. At the same time a kinship tie provides a basis on which a closer relationship may be built by reciprocal services. It appears that the inheritance of property recognizes kinship in this way by recognizing claims not on the basis of strict genealogical proximity but on the quality of the relationship.

A discussion of marriage and the household must be left to the next chapter. The outline given of the present kinship system is sufficiently clear to begin an examination of the reasons for the changes. This must rely to some extent on speculation, owing to a lack of information on the actual working of the kinship system while it was in transition to its present form.

The key change is the disappearance of the kinship groups. These, it seems, disappeared because of their high degree of dependence on the particular type of economy existing before 1911. It has already been argued that the distinction between the patrikin and the matrikin is an attempt to isolate economic claims and conflicts from village and political relationships, and that the giving of loans without right of repayment within the matrikin was called for by a trading system in which credit played an important part. With the end of the trade the wealth passing through Umbundu hands declined sharply, and there was neither need for funds to meet trading losses nor currency to provide them. A man obtained money either by growing crops

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helped by his wife and children or by going out to work. Neither means of making money involves regular co-operation with a body of kinsmen. The occasional co-operation needed in situations of financial crisis or mutual help for some particular job can be provided by those of a man's numerous kinsfolk with whom he has established ties of amity above the mere recognition of relationship.[52] 613 178

The disappearance of the matrilineal group was a logical consequence of the disappearance of its *raison d'être*. With the disappearance of the matrilineal group, there was no longer any need to preserve the distinctive nature of the agnatic group. It is quite possible to suppose that the village might have preserved its patrilineal base if other factors had come into play. Such possible factors would be a shortage of land, danger of attack from enemies, or the use by the headman of his political power to keep control over his patrikin.[53]

A question of some significance arises from the differences of attitude to a man's 'fathers' and to his 'mother's brothers' which has been noted earlier on. From the literature it might seem that the link between agnates was very strong, and that it is surprising that it should have broken up so completely. It may be suggested that the unity of agnatic kin was expressed in the idiom of relations between villagers rather than of relations between kin, and that within the village there was not necessarily much greater solidarity between siblings than between distant agnates. The solidarity of paternal siblings was then, granting this hypothesis, a reflection of the wider solidarity of the village. When the village disintegrated the close ties between brothers disintegrated also. 602 178

The unity of the matrikin was perhaps expressed to a much greater degree in a kinship idiom.[54] This is perhaps one of the

[52] The amount of aid an individual can mobilize in case of need depends to a very great extent on personal factors. It should be emphasised that it is personal co-operation over a number of years rather than any genealogical nearness that inclines a man to be helpful. While helpfulness to kinsfolk is a norm of Umbundu ethics, it is possible in practice to provide excuses for non-co-operation. [476]

[53] The rapid disintegration of the indigenous system of authority after the middle thirties may reasonably be linked with the decay of agnatic ties of residence.

[54] 'When an Ocimbundu speaks of his family (*epata*) in the sense of a large and widespread organization with a recognized head in some elder, it is generally his *ekina* to which he refers.' Childs, p. 44.

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reasons behind the 'neo-matrilineal' pull in residence, the other being the new relationship between brother and sister, with its consequent influence on the mother's brother—sister's son relationship.

In this chapter on the kinship system the preferential marriages have not been discussed at length, but without them the contemporary kinship system would not tie up as it does with the local organization. The next chapter complements this one.

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CHAPTER VIII

MARRIAGE

1. *The Significance of Preferential Marriage*

Informants say that it is permissible to marry a classificatory cross-cousin, are divided as to the permissibility of marriage with a classificatory sister's daughter, and generally disapprove of marriage with other kin categories, or with true kin of these two categories. Indeed, kinsfolk who marry seem usually not to have any traceable common ancestor.[1] Up to recently,[2] a man marrying a kinswoman had to pay an indemnification of, say, 20 escudos to 'cut the blood'. This changed the kin relationship into an affinal one. 582

It has been previously stated that preferential marriages have an important social role to play in keeping kinsfolk together and multiplying the ties of kinship and affinity. If this is to be proved, it is necessary to show what the people themselves think of preferential marriages, what proportion of the marriages are between kinsfolk, whether this proportion has decreased under modern conditions, and how it relates to the contemporary kinship system. [162]

Several reasons may be given for choosing a cross-cousin bride. The bridewealth is likely to be lower, the girl is more likely to stay and not run away, if one cannot find another girl there will always be a cross-cousin to marry, and, old men point out, one will not be fined if a cross-cousin bride dies.

[1] This statement does not depend simply on my own information. Padre Feltin, superior of the Bimbe mission, who knew of the existence of these marriages told me that very few Umbundu marriages were between kin within the degrees of kinship prohibited (a prohibition removable by a dispensation) by the Catholic Church. Marriage with a first cousin is not infrequent both in Portugal itself and among the white Portuguese in Angola. [115]

[2] About 1949.

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582 Another explanation, which I have quoted earlier, is that if one marries a kinswoman, one's children, when they grow up, will not leave, since they see 'a cross-cousin here, a cross-cousin there'.

All these reasons are no doubt to some extent valid. There are no fixed limits for bridewealth and no doubt some bride-
[583] wealths paid in a cross-cousin marriage are higher than some paid in marriages between non-kin; however, it is generally held that a kinsman is less demanding over the question of bridewealth than a non-kinsman. There is some evidence that cross-cousin marriages are more stable than those with non-kinsfolk. The high proportion of cross-cousin marriages naturally leads to an individual tending, when considering the possibility of marriage, to think of his female kin, even though there is no individual girl whom he is expected to marry.

768 The custom of fining a man whose wife had died was noted among the Ovimbundu a hundred years ago by Ladislau Magyar; in recent times it seems to have disappeared from most of Umbundu country. Its survival in Gumba up to the last few years may be related to the links existing between Gumba and the northern non-Umbundu peoples, who apparently practise it to this day.

582 The last of the explanations given may be translated thus, 'Cross-cousin marriage means that the children will have the same individuals as both patrikin and matrikin. They will remain in their father's village, where he is living with his kin and will not be inclined to return to their matrikin.' This line of argument comes close to the 'observer' explanation previously offered that preferential marriage greatly increases the number of social relations within a neighbourhood. The Ovimbundu do not see this aspect of cross-cousin marriage, and this fits their
[829] lack of any 'model' of their own society as a whole, which is in turn a consequence of the rapid social change they have experienced. However, they do see cross-cousin marriage as increasing the number of ties which exist for an individual in his village and neighbourhood.

602 The diagrams and information contained in Chapter IV have already indicated how individuals are linked by marriage ties, and in Chapter VII the way in which brothers-in-law may

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live next to each other has been noted as a new development, 602
impossible in the days of agnatic residence groups. It will be remembered how in listing the kinship cores of Epalanga, Joaõ was placed among the kin of Mbati and Mwehombo with which he had become associated through his marriage to Paulina, although he had come to Epalanga through his relationship to Sapapula.

I have earlier described the preferential marriages as giving 582
'stability' to the kinship system and as providing a limit on 602
the spread of affinal ties. In what does this stability consist, and how far is there really a limit?

The stability given by the marriage system is not the sum of the stability of individual marriages. Nor is it more than partially a local stability; marriages are not limited to a small geographical range, although the network of marriages between kin is very significant in local relations and even 'long distance' marriages which renew links with Cela and Namba reflect long-standing contacts of marriage and migration. The stability lies in the 'pattern' by which new preferential marriages are constantly being made.

The socio-geographical range over which wives are found does not differ appreciably from the socio-geographical range over which kin ties exist, which, as has been noted in Chapter IV[3], links Gumba strongly to Cassongue, Cela, and Namba, rather than with areas to the south and east, and this range does not seem to be expanding under modern conditions. Migrant labourers do not return to Gumba with wives from other areas. The only definite exception I knew to this rule was provided by Sawaisi, a traditional village headman, who had travelled on the caravans and had subsequently been a soldier. Stationed at Luanda he had there married three Kimbundu women with [640] whom he returned to Gumba, where they were still living with him during my stay.

The preference for kinship marriage is not a limiting factor on marriage in the way that a rule of endogamy is, since a number of marriages occur with non-kinswomen. It is a limiting factor in the way that it gives an additional significance to kinship, since in the choice of a wife the distinction between kin and

[3] See p. 58.

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582 602 non-kin, which is not marked in ordinary social life, becomes important. Kinship marriages transform 'distant' kin ties into close affinal ties which will in the next generation become close kinship ties.

It is extremely difficult even to guess how this system operated in the past. Did the high rate of preferential marriages have the same function formerly as now? Or has the institution continued in being, while its function relative to the total society has changed? The testimony of that informant of Dr. Childs who told him that formerly all marriages were kin marriages and that patrilaterally one only married on 'the side of the basket' and matrilaterally only on 'the side of the bow'[4] has led Professor Barnes to suggest[5] that the preferential [114] marriages functioned as links between descent groups. Both Dr. Childs and myself, however, have found that 'the side of the bow' and 'the side of the basket' are simply synonyms for '*oluse*' and '*oluina*'.[6] Moreover, my informants did not confirm his statement since they denied the right of marriage with a father's sister, and the quantitative information shows that even in the past some marriages were with non-kinswomen, and that others were with categories of kin theoretically forbidden, so that, then as now, the preferential marriages were with distant kinswomen rather than with a specific category of kin.

If, however, kinship marriages in the past operated as they now do, it is difficult to see their relation to the patrilineal and matrilineal groups. A clue to a solution is surely given by the custom of 'cutting the blood', which destroyed kinship to begin affinity. Marriages were arranged, it may be suggested, with those people who were still just kin, and who probably often were also geographically as well as socially distant so that the number of ties outside the sub-chiefdom might be increased, a matter of importance for long-distance traders. Later, Portuguese rule made travel no longer dependent on such long range contacts. Meanwhile the disintegration of the agnatic residence

[4] The exact words are 'Formerly people never married unless they were related, that is to say unless they touched the blood together. If in the mother's kin (*k'oluina*) only on the side of the bow (i.e. male line). If in the father's kin (*k'oluse*) only on the side of the basket (i.e. female line)'. See Childs, pp. 53–56.

[5] Review of Childs in *Man*, 1950, pp. 126–8.

[6] Dr. Childs was speaking to me apropos of Barnes's interpretation.

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groups began to make the socio-geographical function of these 582
marriages no longer the renewal of ties with distant kin but the 602
holding together of the local community no longer held in the firm framework of the old local organization.

Several explanations can therefore be given for preferential 582
marriages. From the point of view of the man making such a marriage there are economic advantages in the probably lower bridewealth and, formerly, the avoidance of the fine payable on the death of a non-related wife. The marriage itself is more likely to be stable, and a man's children are more likely to stay with him if they have other kin close at hand. The local mobility of the Ovimbundu to some extent assists marital stability, since a bride arriving in a village may well find there other kin than her husband and his relatives, and may find such relatives helpful to her.

From an observer's view-point, preferential marriage is important on the village and neighbourhood level by multiplying social links within them. Its importance for the kinship system lies in its giving significance to the distinction between kin and non-kin and in keeping kinsfolk together without either localization of kinship groups or villages with strong headmen.

2. *Husband, Wife, and Household*

Traditionally the Ovimbundu lived chastely till marriage, 836
and there existed sanctions in the form of fines, alterations in 684
the marriage ceremony, and mystically caused illness, against unchastity.[7] The force of these sanctions has weakened in modern times;[8] however, many Ovimbundu remain chaste until marriage.

The age of marriage is about twenty-two for a man, and about 582
eighteen for a girl. In Gumba there is some tendency to marry younger at about 16–17. Villagers in Epalanga ascribed this to contract labour, that is, to the necessity of a contract labourer having to have someone to cook for him. This is a point which will be considered later in reference to the wife's services to her

[7] Hastings, p. 181. Childs, p. 113.

[8] Childs, loc. cit., and fieldwork.

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582 husband. Another explanation is that this is a northern practice which has spread into Gumba.[9]

584 A young man who wishes to marry approaches the girl of his choice and asks her to marry him. He then asks her parents for their permission. The consent of both partners and of their parents is required now as in the past, though parental consent may often be evaded by running off to the towns and getting married there. After that negotiations are conducted with a senior kinsman as intermediary. Before the marriage can take 583 place, bridewealth must be paid over. It is this that gives the right to claim damages for adultery. When asked why bridewealth is paid, informants are likely to say that it compensates the father for the expense of the bringing up of his daughter.

[178] The amount of bridewealth paid has been rising. Two informants said that four yards (metres) of cloth and a bottle of rum formed the bridewealth in the time of the rubber trade. Others suggested as the bridewealth of that period a hoe and a few sleeping-mats. Alternatively seashells or even Portuguese coins, which were not then used in transactions among the Ovimbundu, were employed. These bridewealth objects were obtained from outside Umbundu country and had a certain rarity value, unlike the other objects which were very common. In the early thirties Hastings also mentioned the bridewealth as consisting of four yards of cloth, a bottle of rum, plus a kerchief given to her father's sister.[10] Money seems to have come in as a regular part of bridewealth about 1940.

When Cypriano married in 1949 Rosa, a sister's daughter, he paid 200 escudos (about £2. 10s.), a black cloth to her mother, and a small pig to her father. When Pedro Epalanga Chimbalanya married, near the Bimbe mission, in 1955 he paid 400 escudos, one cloth of six metres, a head cloth, a woman's blouse, and a bottle of rum. When in 1956 Daniel married Feliciana, a sister's daughter of Ndjoleya and his cross-cousin, he paid 400 escudos, whereas when Jose the son of Paulo married in the same year he paid 300 escudos also for a cross-cousin.

The bridewealth should be paid to the father. If however, a

[9] Explanation given by Padre Feltin.
[10] Hastings, p. 95.

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man has four daughters he will receive the bridewealth only for the two oldest. The mother's brother will receive the bridewealth for the third sister and a brother for the fourth. If the father is dead, the payment is made to a mother's brother or a brother real or classificatory. To some extent the size of the bridewealth is a reflection of the status of the girl—thus on the railway line 1,000 escudos (£12. 10s.) might be paid for a girl who could read and write. In my own area a Gumba man might pay more for a girl from Ndjandju than for a Cela girl because Ndjandju is regarded, owing to its proximity to the mission, as being more civilized. There exist also counter-gifts. Ndjoleya, who as mother's brother received the bridewealth for Feliciana, gave a pig to Daniel, and it is customary for a pig to be given to the husband by his wife's father on the birth of their first child.[11]

The Umbundu word for marriage *oku kwela* is applied both to customary marriage and to Christian marriage. To distinguish between the two, Portuguese words are taken over, *amigar* (originally, to live in concubinage) being used for the customary marriage, and *casar* (to marry) being used for marriage in church. The use of *amigar* of a particular marriage implies that the people making it are pagans, or Christians who have omitted the church ceremony for one reason or another. In Gumba the church marriage, while it gives status among Christians is not an important occasion in the local milieu, and people who have been through the church marriage but who have not made the *uvala*, the traditional wedding feast, are not permitted by their senior kin to cohabit. Around the mission the church ceremony is regarded as the important thing, and the *uvala* seems to be thought of simply as a party. Traditionally and usually at the present day the *uvala* is held in the dry season.

In the wedding feast there are a number of variations between one occasion and another, but a general outline can

[11] Hastings, p. 110, states that a year or two after the birth of the first child another pig is given which is called the pig of cutting off. The giving and the accepting of this severes all responsibilities between the families. The women can no more be returned to her father's people for misdemeanour—only in the case of the death of her husband will she be taken back.

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585 be described.[12] The bride, if she belongs to another village, will arrive in the evening accompanied by some girls who are kin to her. She sits down on the bed in the house of the bridegroom with her companions. A crowd of people of the village and neighbourhood dance in and about the hut and people come in to talk to the bride. The bridegroom may also come in and sit on the bed with friends, but he will not take any particular notice of his bride. The dancing will go on till well into the night. This usually happens on a Saturday night so that the main part of the festivity will fall on the Sunday which all Ovimbundu, Christian or pagan, observe as a day of rest.

On the Sunday morning little will happen, though there may be some dancing and the bride and her companions will comb one another's hair. In the afternoon (usually about four), the time being told by the sun, comes the procession and the feast. For the procession bride and bridegroom walk together, both dressed in as European style of clothing as can be obtained. The procession advances dancing and singing, with the exception of the bridegroom and bride whose sedateness is striking. On the way an archway may be erected, made of branches. Under this, concealed in a blanket, will be lying the father's sister or other senior kinswoman of the groom to whom he will make a present of money. Continuing, the couple will arrive at an enclosure built for the purpose with a wooden framework covered over on the sides with branches with leaves on and mats, where a table is laid in European style at which the customary Umbu-
[263] ndu food, mush made from maize flour, and relish (that is almost anything, meat or vegetables, which is not mush) is served. Others besides the bride and bridegroom are allowed into the enclosure—this is not a private rite. It is at this point that *oku fwikisa* takes place, that is, the feeding of affines to break down avoidances. Food is served to the guests on basket plates, one plate per village represented. The actual serving will be done by kinsmen or friends of the bridegroom. After the meal will come further dancing.

The next day a party of kin and fellow-villagers may set out

[12] For accounts of the traditional marriage ceremony see Hastings, pp. 94–101 and R. K. Evambi. 'The Marriage Customs of the Ovimbundu', *Africa*, 1958, pp. 342–8.

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for the bride's village. Here they may be greeted with formal speeches of welcome in Portuguese, a usage copied from the reception of missionaries. 585

One only turns up to a wedding if one has been invited, and not everybody who is a kinsman living in the neighbourhood is invited. Nor is there any marked distinction between kin and non-kin in the ceremony, except for the ending of avoidances and the recognition of the father's sister, who is recompensed for her services as nursemaid. Village membership is significantly recognized in the distribution of food, and the sending of the party to the bride's home to represent the bridegroom's village.

Umbundu marriage is virilocal, although a certain number of marriages are within the village. Apart from such marriages, it seems to be rare to find a man settling in a village because his wife has kin there. 591

Although during the early months of the marriage the bridegroom's mother may supervise the bride's work, the individual household is essentially an independent unit[13] and was not even in the past merged with other household units to form a 'grandfamily'. This independence is not isolation. I have only a very few times seen houses with any sort of compound about them. Much of domestic life, eating, working, resting, talking, may be done out of doors in front of the house. Paying visits is a great feature of village life especially when the day's work is over, although there is also a term *oku pasula*, to visit in the morning, referring to what are usually just short calls, involving the exchange of greetings. Perhaps the opportunity of calling and being called on is one of the factors maintaining the village as a social unit. The idea that a man should not eat with his wife still survives to some extent so that questions on this topic receive contradictory answers. Observation shows that even among the men who travelled on the caravans, eating with one's wife is the general practice. 592 594 264

One of the most striking features of Umbundu domestic life is the close companionship which exists between husband and wife and which is unquestionably a modern development.[14] 593 178

[13] See Magyar, pp. 281–3.

[14] The role of the *Ondjango* as described by Childs and Hastings indicates that a man's normal companions both for eating and recreation were other men.

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593 178 Going round the houses at night one meets in one house a man and his wife sitting together talking, in another a group of men and women sitting round a fire. This is a very definite change from traditional pattern of social life in which men and women sat in separate groups, a pattern which is still observed at funerals.[15] A man who has a case at the post is likely to take with him his wife as a witness. A husband has the right to beat 593 his wife, and she should show respect to him. In fact wife-beating is rare, and the relationship seems from observation to be often one of mutual affection and close companionship. Informants were divided as to whether one can joke with one's wife—some people may fear that she will cease to respect her husband if he jokes with her—but conversationally an Umbundu wife often seems to enjoy an easy familiarity with her husband. A wife may occasionally go and stay with her relatives, and in the neighbourhood she may pay calls on kinsfolk, friends, or co-villagers, without her husband. This contrasts with the way the white and mulatto wives of traders follow the custom of rural Portugal by staying more or less permanently in the house.

The wife has her own fields, and her own granary. If the marriage is polygamous, each wife has her field and granary. [24] Her husband may help her in her fields, although he also has fields of his own. The maize in the husband's granary is sold to [434] produce money to pay tax and to buy clothing for both husband and wife, and the maize in the wife's granary is used for food. If her husband is away a woman will buy her clothes from her own granary. The cooking of maize has not only a nutritive importance but also a social one since it is considered the service, which is specifically wifely. Thus, the explanation I was given 582 for the lower age of marriage emphasizes this—I should explain that people returning from contract labour are sent first to the post at which they were recruited and may have to do an additional fortnight's work there. 'It is because of the hardship.[16] In the past one married only when one was fully grown. Now it is necessary to have somebody who will send food to the post when you come back.' 'Perhaps,' I suggested, 'your mother

[15] Childs, pp. 32, 35.
[16] Okali, a word often used with regard to administrative demands.

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could send food.' 'Perhaps your mother is dead, and she has to 592
think of your father.' A man should not cook for himself in a village, by a rule of convention which has no sanction attached, 462
although he may do so when away working.

Clearing fields, house-building, and thatching are men's work, as are brick-making, fishing, hunting, mat-making, sewing, and woodwork. Beer-brewing, cooking, maize-pounding, and water and firewood gathering are women's work. Men and women can work together in most forms of agriculture, sowing, hoeing, harvesting, feeding small stock and treating tobacco. The division of labour is based on ideas of what is natural and fitting, not on any sanctions, mystical or otherwise. Nor is the division always strictly observed. A man may fetch water if his wife is ill, or simply away visiting relatives, and I have seen an adolescent boy pounding out maize on a pounding-block.

A man should look after his sick wife. There is a song which 593
is sung about the married couples of the village, each being named in turn, which tells how the husband went to the post and his wife climbed a tree to get some fruit down. She fell down and hurt herself and then wailed because there was nobody to look after her. A woman who is ill for some time will return to her kin to get better.

The husband does not attend his wife's funeral, but washes 764
himself all over, and then has to lie down asleep, or as if sleeping, during the funeral. Grains of maize and other crops may be, but are not always, even at pagan funerals, thrown over a woman's coffin as it is taken to the cemetery. A man should leave his old home when his wife dies, although this rule is [768]
neglected nowadays, certainly by the owners of brick houses. After a year or two, a widower should *oku wonga*, pile up stones on his wife's grave, a duty which has behind it a vague mystical sanction of illness. The widow of a hunter should be buried beside her husband even though after his death she has married again.[17]

A widow may marry again about six months after the funeral. 587
The exception to this is the *inakulu*, the chief's main wife. Formerly, it was permitted for a widow to marry her husband's

[17] A case of this occurred during my stay.

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587 patrilateral cross-cousin, the reason for this being apparently to enable him to look after the children. Other marriages of a widow with her dead husband's kin were and are forbidden under pain of mystical sanctions. Thus, marriage with one's [684] dead wife's sister would lead to the latter's death through her sister's spirit. Illness or death was suggested as the penalty for marriage with a mother's brother's widow, although I know of two cases of such marriages happening. The reason for this prohibition against any marriage by a widow or widower with the kin of a deceased spouse is given as being that it is wrong to mix the blood.

684 Adultery is subject to mystical sanctions in the illness called *ondjamba* which seems to involve swelling of the legs. This afflicts not the guilty party but the other spouse (whether husband or wife) and the children.[18] I was also told by some informants that this illness affected the other spouse if there were no children; if there were children adultery would endanger their lives and the life of the innocent spouse. Some [183] people do not believe in this nowadays; however the line between believers and non-believers cannot be equalled with that between pagan and Christian or old and young. It is of course impossible to say how frequent adultery is in any community. Informants complain of the frequency of adultery. It should be noted that public opinion seems to condemn it strongly, and men who have discovered their wives being unfaithful usually send them away. The adulterer has to pay a heavy fine, assuming that he does not move away. The usual figure given for a fine was two cattle and a big pig, though in practice the fine would be smaller; in one case in 1948 it was 200 escudos (£2 10s.) and a pig. The word for the man who commits adultery with one's wife, or who marries one's ex-wife, is *tjikwelume* (he of jealousy) a word already referred to in the account of the kinship terminology. There is a rule against eating with him and if one goes to his funeral it is said that one's own death will soon follow. There is a similar rule against a woman eating with the wife of a man with whom she has committed adultery.

[18] For a detailed discussion of this concept, see Hastings, pp. 111–25. It is not nowadays believed that it afflicts people guilty of pre-marital sexual relations.

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Marriages may also be ended by the wife leaving her husband. 586
This may be the consequence of quarrels; however at times a woman may just run off without any apparent reason. Her husband may go to her kin and bring her back or may just get married again—such an episode may occur after many years of a marriage which has previously appeared happy. People 587
who have been married previously can be married again according to the pattern described previously. Middle-aged and elderly people would leave out the festivities and would just have the meal together, or simply count themselves as married by the payment of the bridewealth.

There does exist a formal ceremony of divorce in which 586
maize flour is smeared on the upper part of the face by the husband, and this will take place in the presence of representatives of the wife's kin. A man will do this when his wife has shown herself disrespectful to him or has quarrelled with his kin or her co-wife. As the Ovimbundu regard marriage as [581]
being for the procreation of children, a barren wife should be, [842]
they say, sent away but often in practice this is not done, if the wife is otherwise satisfactory.

Legally, the Portuguese administration recognizes both the 582
customary marriage and the Catholic marriage ceremony. The Catholic missions report to the post people who, having been married in church, then make customary marriages, and these may be subjected to such sanctions as being sent to contract labour. The Protestant church marriages are not apparently legally recognized but they are subject to the authority of the Protestant church courts which grant divorces on certain grounds. The *chefe de posto* on his annual visit to take the check on the census may get angry with polygynists, but in fact no very effective administrative action exists with regard to indigenous marriage.

The motives given for polygynous marriage are the desire 595
to have many children and (in the case of a chief) the need to have cooks to provide hospitality for guests. Large-scale polygyny is thought to be rather funny; I was told, as something amusing, that the former chief Mbati had 17 wives. Kafelo, the former chief of Gumba, had 6 wives, the highest number of continuing polygynous marriages I found. In Epalanga out of

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595 17 married men, 5 were polygynists. It is a common practice for a man with two wives to keep one in one village, another in another. Relations between co-wives are expected to be somewhat strained, as the very word for co-wife, *osepekai* (she of the jealousy of women) indicates. When I asked if a woman would help a co-wife who had run short of grain I was told that she would not help but would jeer at the other woman. There is no defined division of duties between wives in a polygynous household. It is interesting to note that the missions are not criticized for imposing monogamy—indeed the Catholic catechist of Epalanga thought he had found a good argument against the Protestants by accusing them sincerely but inaccurately of allowing polygynous marriages. The idea of Catholic marriage as indissoluble is difficult for many Ovimbundu converts.

592 While the most common form of household is that of the elementary family, the fact that not all widows or divorcées are absorbed into such households leads to the appearance of households under women heads of which there were 9 (out of a total of 36) in Epalanga. Such a household may be two- (mother, children) or three-generation groups (grandmother, daughter(s), grandchildren). Of these 9 households 2 were composed of a grandmother, who was effective head of the household, her children, and the children of a daughter; 1 was similarly composed but with the grandmother rather pushed into the background as in households with male heads; 3 were composed of women and their own child, or children; 1 was composed of a woman and a grandchild; and 2 consisted of women living alone. The adolescent sons of such a household will tend to become associated with the house of some male kinsman, probably a mother's brother. It is not always clear to what extent individuals associated with a particular household in fact participate in its activities. Thus it is not infrequent to find the elderly mother of the husband or wife living in a hut of her own behind the main hut or huts of the household, and in Epalanga there were four of these attached mothers. They do not exercise any authority over their sons, or sons-in-law.[19]

[19] Tumbu, the mother of Maria, the wife of Paulo (24), and of Jaime (19) lived in a hut near both households, and it would have been difficult to say to which she was attached, to her son's, or her son-in-law's.

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At the other end of the age-scale it is not easy always to tell to what household a child is attached. Small children may often eat with kin other than their own parents if they like them and thus share in the lives of two households. Children and adolescents may go on visits to kin and this may lead to permanent residence. This familiarity with other households is not confined to children. Although, as has been stated, eating with one's wife is the usual practice, it is by no means uncommon to see two or more men eating together, either because the wife of one of them is away or simply to be sociable.

This right of children to move about, coupled with such other factors[20] as the relatively high divorce rate, tends to bring about quite a high proportion of children who live with kin other than their own parents. Out of 70 under 20's in Epalanga (out of a total population of 148), 34 had both parents living in Epalanga,[21] 23 had one parent living in Epalanga and 13 had neither parent living in Epalanga. Of the 23 who had only one parent living in Epalanga, 7 lived with their father and 16 with their mother. Those 7 living with their father were all over 14, thus confirming the norm given by informants that young children on the death of the mother go to their mother's kin until they 'have sense', that is, are about 12 or 13, when they return to their father. Of the 13 who were living with neither parent, 2 (boys) were living with a cross-cousin (father's sister's son, for whom the term 'father' can be used), 1 (boy) with a patrilateral 'father,' 2 (1 girl, 1 small boy) with a mother's mother, 4 (3 boys, 1 girl) with a sister's husband, 1 (boy) with a paternal half-brother, 1 with a fiancé's father, 1 (boy) with a mother's brother, and on 1 (girl) I have no information.

These figures are too small to base any very strong argument on them. It is, however, notable that only 1 of the 12 children on whom information was obtained was living with a mother's brother, whereas 4 were living with a brother-in-law. This seems to conflict with statements made earlier as to the present-day trend of individuals to settle with their mother's brothers.

[20] Childs notes about the traditional system that the sending of children to stay with kin or friends for a year or two was common (pp. 104–5).

[21] This figure includes one case where although both parents lived in Epalanga they were separated.

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604 This strong pull towards the mother's brother is, however, marked on the level of village relationships as has been already noted. It is possible that with regard to co-operation on the [607] domestic plane the tie between a man and his wife's full or half siblings is stronger than that with his sister's children. This 607 argument would claim that the tie created by marriage between a man and his wife's full or half siblings is one of the strongest in the Umbundu social structure, and as a further proof (albeit not quantitively assessed) may be quoted the frequency with which two households close together turn out to belong to a man and his wife's brother.

582 602 In the first section of this chapter it was argued that the high rate of preferential marriages greatly increased the number of social ties between individuals in a neighbourhood, and brought a renewal of ties with distant kin. In this section various aspects 593 of the relationship between husband and wife have been examined. Husband and wife co-operate economically and outside working hours may pass their evenings together. In a dispute taken to the post a man is likely to take his wife as a witness. Mystically sanctioned obligations do exist between husband and wife. While the elementary family is the main 592 domestic type, households headed by women are also found and there is a certain amount of mobility of children between households. The tie of a man with his wife's siblings, particu- [607] larly when they are children, is significant for the domestic organization of households.

582 602 621 Marriage is indeed the pivotal institution of the Umbundu kinship system. The preferential marriages do not link descent groups to one another; rather they bring about the local concentration of kin which makes out of many vague and insecure links a strongly-woven community in which both husband and wife can live with relatives near at hand.

593 Of the personal relationship between husband and wife it would be impossible to say as an anthropologist has of another African people, 'Here people looked for little in marriage. A man would turn to his sixteenth cousin twice removed before he turned to his wife.'[22] A man shares with his wife his work and leisure, is linked to her by mystical obligations which are not

[22] Elenore Smith Bowen, *Return to Laughter*, London, 1954, p. 117.

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ended by her death, and can rely on her testimony in a case. Even though adultery is reputedly frequent it is deplored and, as will be shown in a discussion of disputes, a man's hostility to another will be ascribed to thwarted lust for the latter's wife. The conjugal bond is the closest social relation that can exist between adults, and therefore the very type of personal enmity is provided by the adulterer or would-be adulterer.

I am here emphasizing the factors which strengthen the conjugal bond; at the end of the previous chapter I emphasized the strength which the brother-sister tie possessed under changed conditions. The balance between these two ties is to be seen in the way in which a man and his wife's brother are often next door neighbours and the best of friends. It may be suggested that this balance reflects the part-peasant part-proletarian condition of the Ovimbundu, the emergence of the conjugal family with its importance as the working team for the cultivation of cash crops, and the 'reshaping of' the brother-sister tie with the absence of husbands as labourers. It seems probable from the example of the substantial coffee-growers that had the Ovimbundu become full-time cultivators there would have been a strong trend towards isolated households and the weakening of the 'neo-matrilineal' pull which operates in the villages.

It is then the marriage tie which holds the vague, amorphous, kinship system together; it is against this vagueness that the marriage bond appears as the closest and most definite relation that can exist between two adults; and the change-over from trade to an economy based on wage-labour and cash agriculture has been accompanied by a transition from a double-descent kinship system to one in which the emergence of the elementary family co-exists with a certain pull towards matrilineal kin.

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CHAPTER IX

SOCIAL CONTROL

1. *Introduction*

121 626 In this chapter I shall describe and analyse three disputes which reveal the working of social control in present-day Umbundu society. The first dispute is between an elder of the school and a government headman, the second is between a traditional headman and a villager with the intervention of a local self-styled *assimilado*[1], and the third arose from a quarrel between an irregularly installed chief and a traditional headman.

The points which it is hoped will arise from the analysis of the material are the disappearance or extreme weakness of the [178] traditional institutions of social control, the way in which the Ovimbundu appeal to the members of the 'civilized' community for decisions or support in cases, and how kinship ties affect the relations between persons involved in a dispute.

2. *Guilherme and Paulo*

578 The parties principally involved in the first dispute were Paulo (24. See List of Epalanga residents), the elder of the school at Epalanga, and his cross-cousin Guilherme (see List II, p. 55), a government headman then living in Epalanga, Francisco, a son of the former chief Mbati and wife's brother to Paulo, and Sapapula (10), the headman and reputed founder of Epalanga. The sequence of the dispute is first a quarrel between Paulo and Guilherme. Guilherme then attacks Paulo through his wife's brother Francisco. This brings about a general attack

[1] The fact that Justino was not actually an *assimilado* is not relevant, since he used the belief of the local people that he was.

[assimilado is an African possessing Portuguese citizenship -- Ana/rt]

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by the people under Paulo's leadership on Guilherme's position. 578
Guilherme counter-attacks by using his relationship with the post but finds himself forced to seek a reconciliation with the people of Epalanga.

The quarrel had begun with the proposed marriage of Anna, a step-daughter of Guilherme, and a member of his household, to Luciano, a son of the former chief Simbwyikoka and an inhabitant of the latter's village. Guilherme had no effective religious affiliation but Anna had been baptized as a Catholic, her godmother being Maria, the wife of Paulo. Luciano on the other hand was the elder of the Protestant catechetical school in Simbwyikoka village. Paulo therefore intervened to stop the marriage in accordance with the rule made by the Catholic [582] missions against marriage with non-Catholics. Guilherme, angry at this, decided to pick on Pedro Nendi (see List II, p. 55) and Francisco Lyonjanga, sons of Mbati, and therefore wife's brothers to Paulo. Pedro Nendi had been at one time a Catholic catechist but had since been dismissed. Francisco was at the time of my arrival in Epalanga moving out of his village to stay near Pedro in a hamlet near the village. He worked as assistant to Abel Pinheiro, an African carpenter, who lived a little further along the road to Chicunda and who was employed by a white living elsewhere. Guilherme accordingly reported to the post that the two brothers had never gone to contract labour and got a policeman to come with an order for [648] them to be brought to the post for contract labour. The policeman arrived and got Francisco, but Pedro was away visiting relatives at Nova Lisboa. Francisco then claimed that he was in fact employed by a white and was therefore exempt from contract labour. At that time Antonio Pires, an African priest from the *Missão Católica de Bimbe*, was visiting Epalanga as part of a tour through the villages. Accordingly, on the morning of the 16th January 1956, Francisco came to my house where the priest had been breakfasting with me, and stated his case. This action brought the dispute between Guilherme and Paulo for the first time within the sphere of a representative of the civilized community. The priest told Francisco to get a letter from his employer to the post. Francisco duly arrived at the post with a letter, but forgot to bring his

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pass[1] and was sent to contract labour. The *chefe* apparently informed his employer that he could get other carpenters from the post.

Paulo, then acting in his official capacity as elder of the school, had intervened in a projected marriage in which Guilherme had received the bridewealth. Guilherme, acting in his official capacity, had attacked Paulo's wife's brothers Francisco and Pedro. The dispute had now been brought within the sphere of the mission (as represented by the priest Antonio Pires) and of the administration which had ordered the recruitment of the two men. The conflict between Guilherme and Paulo was now to widen out to include several other people.

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[648]

On the 21st January the strain between Guilherme and Paulo showed itself again in violent quarrelling, from which I learnt about the broken engagement of Anna. Paulo said that he would refer the matter to Antonio Pires when the priest came back.

On the morning of the 24th the question was brought before Antonio Pires, the catechist Pedro Chiquete Santos (35), Paulo, and Guilherme all speaking in turn. Then other people raised their grievances. Sapapula declared that Guilherme was the enemy of everybody in the village. A man called Kasosi (7), a sister's son of Wasuka (15), stepped forward to claim that Guilherme had attacked him and injured him. Apparently Guilherme, while having illicit rum in his own house, had beaten up Kasosi for possessing rum. Both Maria, Paulo's wife, and Nahoka, Sapapula's wife, joined in the argument. The only man who seemed in any way favourable to Guilherme was Kapapelo (see List II, p. 55), a mother's brother of his, who was also a 'brother' of Lusase (see List II, p. 55). Antonio Pires came down heavily against Guilherme, at which the latter declared that he owed obedience only to the post and ran off.

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Towards the end of the argument Luciano (the former fiancé of Anna) and Jeremias (the Protestant catechist from Simbwyikoka) came to the priest to ask for the repayment of the bridewealth.

On the 25th Lusase, the chief of Gumba, happened to visit

[648]

[1] The legal obligation for natives to possess passes is not enforced with the zeal which applies in South Africa.

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Epalanga. Told what had happened, he said that he would keep out of it, and that he had advised Guilherme to live elsewhere. In the afternoon of the same day, as heavy rain was falling, a number of people ran up and bounded on to my veranda. These included Anna, another girl (I think a sister of hers) both rather frightened, Simbwyikoka, Luciano, Paulo and some others. Anna said that Simbwyikoka was a sorcerer[3] and would kill her, and sooner than be killed by sorcery she would jump in the river. Simbwyikoka and Luciano had come to Epalanga to try and recover the 250 escudos which had been paid over in bridewealth. The catechist tried to intervene saying 'The catechist is the chief[4] of everybody in the village', but nobody paid any attention to him. Eventually, as the girl continued to threaten to jump in the river, I contributed 200 escudos, and so those involved left satisfied.

Early the following day I heard that Guilherme had returned from the post with two policemen to arrest various people. Those arrested were Sapapula, his cross-cousins Epalata (5), and Wasuka, and the latter's son Kuseka, Kasosi, Paulo, Pedro the catechist, Bartolomeu (32), Paulo's assistant in school matters, and his son Eugenio. Eugenio and Kuseka were arrested for not paying taxes and their fathers were arrested presumably for their supposed responsibility. Epalata was arrested for a similar alleged offence on the part of one of his sons, who was away as a labourer.

When I came to Guilherme's house a lengthy wrangle was going on from which I select some themes. Guilherme denied that he had planned to burn the catechetical school, the anthropologist's house, and his own house. (These charges were almost certainly invented.)

Paulo said that he had baptized a dying son of Guilherme, who, despite this, had not shown him any respect. He also denied that he had committed adultery with Guilherme's wife. (This would in any case be most unlikely owing to Paulo's blindness, resulting from an eye disease.)

Sapapula declared angrily: 'I gave Guilherme land here but

[3] This accusation was regarded simply as the product of fear and nothing more was heard of it.

[4] He used the word applied to chiefs of Gumbu and other sub-chiefdoms.

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578 Guilherme isn't grateful'—(then to Guilherme) 'I did no harm, I gave you everything, and you beat me.' This arguing eventually died down.

A little later another quarrel sprang up between Wasuka, and Kapapelo, Guilherme's mother's brother and witness. Wasuka declared that Kapapelo had committed adultery with his wife and must be killed. Kapapelo indignantly denied this.

The same day the catechist went to the mission to find the priest Antonio Pires to ask him to support the case against Guilherme. He returned to say that Padre Pires had been moved to the Bailundo Mission, but that he had been given a letter from the mission to the post setting out the case.

Guilherme in the evening came to my house to pay back the 200 escudos which I had paid to Simbwyikoka for the bride-wealth given for Anna. He had raised the 200 escudos from Paulo (his cross-cousin) and from Bartolomeu (his 'brother'), both of whom were under arrest (although free to walk about the village) through Guilherme's actions.

The following day (27th January) the policeman moved off with Guilherme and the others, Bartolomeu, Eugenio, Epalata, Wasuka, Kuseka, Kasosi, Paulo, Pedro Chiquete Santos (the catechist) and Sapapula.

About noon the next day I found that Paulo and the catechist had returned to Epalanga and heard from them what had happened. On the way Guilherme had declared that his violent temper was to blame in having so many people arrested, apologized, and promised to go to another village. He pulled
[762] out a knife and threatened to commit suicide if this proposal was not accepted. This appeal was directed mainly to the catechist, and was reinforced by Guilherme's wife, who also threatened suicide and appealed to the catechist's feelings by pointing out that she had had two of her children baptized. This was accepted, and accordingly all turned back to the village except for Guilherme, Bartolomeu, his son Eugenio, and Wasuka's son Kuseka. Eugenio and Kuseka had been arrested
[648] for not paying taxes, a matter of more interest to the *chefe* than the village brawl for which the others had been arrested. Eugenio and Kuseka were considered by the *chefe* not to be yet old enough for payment of tax, and Guilherme produced some

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story to explain the non-appearance of the others which satisfied the *chefe*.

The catechist was somewhat criticized for not having pushed on with the case, and thereby perhaps getting Guilherme landed in jail. Guilherme did move out of the village in February and settled near the outskirts of the Protestant village of Kalungwengwe. Kapapelo also set about moving out of Epalanga.

In the conflict which has just been described, there are three disputes, the question of the bridewealth which involved Luciano, Simbwyikoka, Guilherme, and the anthropologist, the quarrel between Paulo and Guilherme, and the subsequent uprising against Guilherme which takes its signal from Paulo's reference of the dispute to the priest.

The question of bridewealth repayment is subordinate to, indeed enclosed within, the main dispute. It does illustrate one point central to the problem of Umbundu social control, the absence of any court machinery. Jeremias and Luciano had tried to recover it by appealing to the priest; later Luciano and Simbwyikoka attempted to get it back by coming and demanding it, that is by self-help. Another extremely significant aspect of the social structure is revealed by this 'enclosed' case. Guilherme after a bitter dispute with Paulo which has ended in the arrest of Paulo and Bartolomeu borrows 200 escudos from them as a kinsman. This indicates that kinship ties can survive and function despite a quarrel which they do not check or prevent, a point which will be developed later in an examination of how kinship affects and is affected by a dispute.

The conflict cannot be viewed as simply a dispute between individuals, nor as a dispute between the holders of opposed roles. Guilherme was generally regarded as lacking 'sense' (*olondunge*), the quality, greatly admired by the Ovimbundu, of good judgement and decent social behaviour, and he confessed himself to be at fault. Yet he could not have acted in the way he did unless he had been a government headman, nor would the uprising against him have taken the form it did had he not held an office dependent on the post. There is, however, no necessary conflict between a government headman and the catechist or

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elder of the school in the sense that there is no sphere where their duties overlap and where they must compete.

The roles of government headmen and of officials of the school are complementary. It is through the chief and the government headman that the Ovimbundu pay their taxes and fines, are recruited as contract labourers and are called to road service, are arrested for crimes and misdemeanours and are entered on official records. It is through the catechists and elders of the school that the Ovimbundu find the expression of village unity by which at the same time they are linked to the whites and to the rest of the world on the religious level. The missions bring the Ovimbundu closer to the whites than does the administration, without the administration's predominant interest in making demands.[5]

While at the level of the total Angolan political system the administration is more powerful than the missions, the position of the catechist or elder of the school is stronger at the local level because the catechist and the elder represent the catechetical school which is the only social grouping existing on a village basis, whereas the government headman in fact represents no social group but is simply an executant of the orders of the *chefe*. Hence the catechist owing to this representative role and to his contact with the mission (which is much closer than that of the government headman) can lead the people and invoke the aid of the mission against abuses on the part of chiefs or government headmen. This would not be the case if the post gave firm backing to its local agents and turned a deaf ear to communications from the missions. Opposition to an overbearing government headman is then likely to be led by the leaders of the 'school', who can count on the backing of the mission, if they have a good case, to intervene for them at the post. The relative importance in a village of the catechist and elder of the school varies according to such factors as personality. The way in which the catechist was ignored when he tried to intervene in the dispute over the bridewealth shows that the catechist cannot claim authority in disputes as a matter of course.

[5] The missions impose fees and a yearly levy on their adherents which are small compared to the official taxes.

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The transformation of the dispute between Guilherme and Paulo into what amounted to both a trial of, and an uprising against, the government headman is not purely accidental but is a natural consequence of the principle latent in the social organization by which the 'school' leaders complement and can check the chief and government headman.

The case also indicates the limited nature of their roles. Both Paulo (by preventing Anna's marriage) and Guilherme (by getting Francisco sent to contract labour) can strike at the other through the lawful exercise of their authority; any real attack on the other's position involves an appeal to either mission or post, and hence brings about a trial of some sort. Guilherme finding that the quasi-trial before the priest went against him, tried to bring the case before the post, but realizing that this also was likely to go against him came to terms with his enemies. That is, any determined attempt to solve a dispute is likely to involve at least the threat of a reference to the post or the mission.

The power of the priest to intervene in the actions of the agents of the post is limited. Thus Antonio Pires did not intervene in the case of Francisco but advised him to get a letter from his employer. It is, however, notable that the missionaries are not simply appealed to by Catholics. Protestants like Jeremias and Luciano, and pagans like Kasosi and Sapapula, were ready to appeal to the priest although the initiative came from Paulo. That this is so is a convincing argument for the claim which has been made that the catechetical school represents the whole village, although it could also be claimed that it reflects rather an aspect of 'civilized'-native relations in the total Angolan system, clientship, as the typical form of relations between the two groups, with the missions being the patrons *par excellence* to whom all natives are at least potentially clients. The general well-being of all natives is the concern of the missions, who are therefore liable to be appealed to in such cases as this.

In particular cases where there is another patron to appeal to his aid will be sought. This patron-client situation will crop up again in the account of subsequent disputes. Its origin historically lies in the history of attitudes to employees and to

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627 servants in Portugal and Angola;[8] sociologically it reflects the
648 lack of any system of bureaucratic administration at the local
571 level and the isolation of the *chefes* from the people. The uncertainties of taking a case to the post are such that it is thought desirable to have some backing (such as the letter the catechist got from the mission) from a representative of the 'civilized' community and in the absence of any other 'civilized' person the mission becomes the patron of all natives, whatever their religious allegiance.

578 The importance of this case, then, is its illustration of what
627 may happen in a conflict between a catechist or elder of the
571 school and a government headman. The limited nature of their powers, and the fact that their roles are not competitive, make a conflict between them, so long as it is not extended to pull in other people, necessarily confined to indirect attacks. If either party wishes to bring down the other he must appeal to the post or to the mission. The government headman can pull people in by accusing them at the post of not paying taxes or creating a disturbance, or by recommending them for contract labour. His position is not so strong as his dependence on the post might suggest, since the intervention of the mission, at the request of the villagers, can bring him down.

Within this main 'political' dispute is the quarrel over bridewealth, which is illuminating both in indicating the absence of legal mechanisms at the village level, and in showing how kinship ties continue to function at the height of a bitter quarrel. Both these points will be noticed again in the accounts of later disputes.

3. *Kapapelo and Sapapula*

578 The next case involved Sapapula and Kapapelo and was
627 again to end in an averted appeal to the *chefe de posto*. On the 21st of February Sapapula, Sahuke (see List II, p. 56), Wasuka, Luanga (21), and others went from Epalanga to the house of Justino, who had called them there to settle a dispute. Justino

[8] An inhabitant of Lisbon, wishing to emigrate to Canada, wooed the maid of a former official of the British Embassy. Discovering that this would get him nowhere, he transferred his affections to the maid of one of the staff of the American Embassy. The implications are interesting.

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was a man of fifty or more, who lived in Portuguese style making money from coffee and other crops. He claimed to be an *assimilado* (African with the status of a Portuguese citizen) but in actual fact he was not one. He had employed a man called Kusumula, who lived in Epalanga and was the brother of Kapapelo's wife.

To appreciate the point of Justino's complaint, it is necessary to explain the significance of certain terms indicative of ethnic and social status. Otjimbundu is the singular of Ovimbundu, a people defined by the use of the Umbundu language. It is also used to refer to any black person (thus I was often asked whether there were Ovimbundu [i.e. Africans] in England), and is therefore equivalent to the Portuguese *preto* (black), which when used of a person has a rather pejorative sense like 'native' in other parts of Africa. Livingstone, writing a hundred years ago, remarks of one area in Angola: 'The people under him (the chief) are divided into a number of classes. . . . They are also divided into gentlemen and little gentlemen, and, though quite black, speak of themselves as white men and of the others, who may not wear shoes, as "blacks".'[7] Justino's complaint was that Sapapula had referred to him as a *preto qualquer* or in Umbundu (Sapapula did not speak Portuguese), *otjimbundu tjango*, a mere black.

Justino delivered a speech when the people from Epalanga had settled on the veranda of his house in which he declared with much force that he was not an Otjimbundu '*Ame sitjimbunduko*.' This accusation was based on information given him by Kusumula, who alleged that Sapapula had said to government headmen that Kusumula could be recruited for road work, as he worked not for a white (a term applied also to *assimilados*) but for a mere black.

I give the main lines of the ensuing argument. Sapapula denied that he had called Justino a black. Kusumula claimed that Sapapula was always picking on him. Sapapula declared that he had founded the village, and that Kusumula wanted to break it up. Kapapelo said that he had at one time given medicine to a girl and Sapapula had told Jaime to kill him because he might have seduced her. Kutenga Lusase, the chief

[7] Livingstone, *Missionary Travels and Researches*, p. 411.

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of Gumba who had also turned up, intervened and denounced Kusumula for not wishing to work for the post, and then brought the case back to Sapapula's alleged slander of Justino. The latter intervened again here to say that he had been slandered. Sapapula, by now very excited, denied this and said that Kusumula and Kapapelo wanted to break up the village. This was followed by three people trying to talk at once. Justino strolled round to the back of his house. Sapapula and Kapapelo wrangled.

Justino was not the only person to find this tedious. Paulo suggested that we should go. Kapapelo complained that Saviel, a sister's son of Sapapula, had made advances to his wife. Sapapula continued to declare that Kapapelo must not break up the village. Kutenga Lusase criticized Kapapelo for not working for the post. Gonçalve (18) intervened to refer back to the visit of the priest, Antonio Pires, and said that he had left with the words (i.e. he had come to a decision). Gonçalve was a pagan. The wrangling continued until Justino returned, told Sapapula not to insult him again and not to be angry with Kusumula. Sapapula said that Kusumula had left the village (Epalanga) and so would not be needed for the post again (that is, Sapapula would not be any longer responsible for him), and that he had never been angry with Kapapelo. Nahoka, Sapapula's wife, said that Kapapelo was not *ukwafeka* 'a man of the country'. Justino then dismissed the gathering, telling Sapapula to buy a bottle of wine for the elders who had come with him.

Kapapelo and Kusumula were not connected with the post as Guilherme was, nor with the mission as Paulo was. Kusumula was the employee of Justino and had thus an opportunity to appeal to him by accusing Sapapula of denying his status. It is not particularly significant whether Sapapula had actually said this or not. The accusation is important since it is a reflection of a common Umbundu way of attacking one's enemies, by accusing them of some offence against a 'civilized' person. Thus, to refer back to the earlier dispute between Paulo and Guilherme, the latter found it necessary to deny that he had planned to set fire to the catechetical school and the anthropologist's house, charges which were intended to weigh heavily with the *chefe*. Hence, when a quarrel between natives comes to a civilized

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person, it is likely that the details will be re-organized to gain his attention and support. 578 627

It is also notable that Sapapula was ready to accept Justino's right to hold a case on the matter. The acceptance and even readiness (as appears later) on Sapapula's part that Justino should hear cases is partly again a result of the lack of any legal machinery on the village level, partly an aspect of the 'patron-client' situation which has so often marked 'civilized'-native relations in Angola. No doubt much in Justino's behaviour arose from the taste he showed at times for settling cases, which led to a certain number of local cases being referred to him, and his readiness to settle them may not have been particularly common among *assimilados*. 627.

Much of the actual case consisted of accusations and counter-accusations between Sapapula and Kapapelo with other people intervening. There is a kind of attempt to establish a balance of wrongs, Kusumula claiming that Sapapula was always picking on him when there was a call for labour from the post, Kapapelo accusing Sapapula of inciting Jaime to kill him and Sapapula's sister's son Saviel of planning to seduce his wife. Sapapula had accused Kusumula and Kapapelo of trying to break the village. Lusase intervened rather against Kusumula and Kapapelo, who was his 'brother'. As previously, the demands of the post for labour are regarded as being used by their local executants in a discriminating way. 578 627

On the evening of the same day, as I was calling round the village, I found Kapapelo at the door of Sapapula's kitchen. Apparently he had arrived drunk and had threatened to kill himself. Sapapula was greatly enraged at this, as were his women folk, Nahoka, his wife, Wumba, his daughter, and Nayangu, his 'sister', who vigorously abused Kapapelo. They warned Sapapula not to accept food from Kapapelo, lest the latter use it as a means of sorcery. Kapapelo complained that Nahoka had called him a slave thus expanding the hint contained in her previous enigmatic remark that Kapapelo was not a man of the country. 578 [262] [254]

On the next day, Wednesday the 22nd, Sapapula had intended to go again to Justino's to settle his case with Kapapelo, but there was a funeral to which a large number of people went. 627

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627 Moreover, Justino did not want to bother any more with the case, and said that anybody who went on with it was just vindictive. It had been proposed to hold a moot at Sapapula's house, but this was impracticable as Kapapelo would not come. Accordingly, on the afternoon of the 23rd February, a number of people gathered at Kapapelo's house. The gathering at first consisted of Sapapula, Sahuke, and Kafelo (the former chief) who sat close together joined by the anthropologist and his interpreter Pedro Chimbalanya Epalanga, two men from Menga, one of them a son of Sapapula, Nahoka, Nayangu, and Wumba respectively (as previously mentioned), Sapapula's wife, 'sister', and daughter, Lusase the *de facto* chief of Gumba, Ngombe the Mwekalia at his court, Alexandro a son of Mwehombo, temporarily visiting Epalanga, and four people from Ndjoleya's end of Epalanga, Augusto (25) (grandson-in-law of Sapapula), Costa (26), Ferreira (28), and Filemeno, who later moved to Belem. Other people turned up later, including Ndjoleya (30) himself. My point in quoting these names is to show that the crowd which turned up to the moot was not composed either of Sapapula's kin or of his co-villagers as exclusive groups.

Lusase was not received with any great respect, but bowed low to Kafelo. Ngombe explained that he had been invited as a guest.[8] Sapapula explained to Ngombe what had happened at Justino's. By this time Epalata, Luanga, Paulo, and Wasuka had arrived. Sapapula alleged that Kapapelo had wanted to seduce Nahoka, but that she had refused, and that Kapapelo had then wanted to kill him so that he could then obtain Nahoka. The conversation between Kapapelo and Nahoka had been in the woods so that he had no witnesses. Sapapula, who was now very angry, finished his speech by declaring that he had given land to Kapapelo. Meanwhile more people arrived.

Ngombe now spoke discussing the evidence and summing up very much against Kapapelo. Lusase spoke, avoiding the

[8] On another occasion, three elders from Gumba (one of them Sinbeyilinka) were invited to Chicunda to arbitrate a case. Ngombe's appearance here in fact was not significant, except perhaps as showing the discrepancy between ideas about cases and the reality.

question of Kapapelo's intention towards Nahoka, but criticized Kapapelo for reopening his quarrel with Sapapula. Kapapelo (who did not strike me as particularly intelligent) was wandering about more or less ignoring the criticisms which had been made of him, which greatly annoyed the assembly. At length, Kapapelo, urged to speak by Lusase, did so.

Kapapelo stated that he had committed adultery with Nahoka, Sapapula's wife, and asked to be fined for adultery. This created a fresh uproar. Nahoka got up and said that the question was within the competence of Lusase since he and not Kafelo was now the chief. She denied that she had committed adultery. As evidence against this, she pointed out that Kapapelo's wife had visited her house to eat mush, and that Kapapelo's conduct when he came to Sapapula's kitchen showed that she had not committed adultery. Antonio Kasoma (see List II, p. 55) said that it was necessary to decide how much Kapapelo should pay.

Kapapelo's wife joined in to support her husband's confession, saying that Kapapelo had given Nahoka soap. Sapapula declared that Kapapelo was worthless, and had received everything he had from Sapapula. Some people called on Kapapelo to work sorcery. Kafelo suggested that Kapapelo should pay 150 escudos (£1. 17s. 6d.). The meeting now broke up, some people saying that the post should be informed and that Kapapelo had (illicit) rum in his house. One of the Menga then said that in the past even attempted seductions were punished. Sapapula demanded a payment of 500 escudos or a big pig, for Kapapelo's offences of not showing respect to Sapapula, and attempting adultery. He seemed more inclined, however, to take the case to the post, since (he claimed) Kapapelo was threatening to kill him. Kapapelo refused to pay.

The argument now swirled round, Kapapelo wavering between paying and not paying, Sapapula wavering between going to the post and being ready to accept a fine. Kafelo and Lusase both favoured a payment. People said that Guilherme was responsible for this. Paulo, Kusumula and Ndjoleya all urged Kapapelo to pay. Sapapula had now moved off, and was eventually followed by everybody else. Various wrangles continued over the question of paying a fine or having recourse

627 to the post. Somebody said to me 'Lusase wants a fine to be paid so that he can get something from it' (the chief traditionally [681] having a right to commission on a fine paid in a dispute which he had settled). Eventually the dispute did not go to the post, as Kapapelo paid a fine, and the matter dropped.

A great deal of detail has been given here, but it can be shown that consistencies can be extracted from what seems complete confusion.

578 Kapapelo had, no doubt, as was said, under the influence of drink, decided to carry on his conflict with Sapapula after the gathering at Justino's and had arrived at Sapapula's threatening to commit suicide. The threat of suicide was here [762] used as Guilherme had used it to put an opponent in a difficult position, but it infuriated Sapapula, who decided that he must try and get another hearing. He therefore turned again to 627 Justino, although the latter had previously decided against him; thus implying that even a possibly unfavourable judge is acceptable, rather than let a squabble continue indefinitely.

Eventually, owing to Justino's refusal to hear the case, what I have called a 'moot' was got together, a body which lacked any deciding, dominating figure, but represented the local community. This became concerned with the question of the 578 relation of Kapapelo and Sapapula as affected by the action of Kapapelo in respect of Sapapula's wife Nahoka. As has been mentioned in the chapter on marriage, the relation between a [837] man and his wife's lover is one of mystically manifested hostility. Sapapula by accusing Kapapelo of desiring to seduce his wife was indicating a very serious state of hostility between the two men; and one can only explain Kapapelo's confession to something of which he was not guilty as a mark of his hostility to Sapapula. Kapapelo was accused by Sapapula of attempting to do him a grievous wrong, and Kapapelo claimed that he had in fact done this wrong. Nahoka denied that she had wronged her husband, and produced evidence of her assertion. Before considering her arguments, it must be noted what were the interests of the other people involved in the case.

627 It might be suggested that Kafelo, Lusase, and Ngombe had to some extent the function of judges or at least arbitrators, and Sapapula had indeed invited Ngombe to give his opinion, (I

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do not know how Kafelo and Lusase came to hear of the case). 627
In practice, their role was that of any other spectator in trying to bring about a settlement, although a chief has, as was noted, the right to a commission on any indemnification. The right of spectators to intervene is not based on any particular relationship to those involved nor on any reputation for wisdom. There is in fact no organized routine for determining who may and who must turn up and who may and who must speak. Spectators and speakers are simply members of the neighbourhood community, some related to Sapapula, some simply fellow-villagers, and it is natural that in present Umbundu society, [571] lacking clearly-defined social groups, the crowd that assembles on such an occasion should look like a chance gathering. Its lack of recognized procedure, of accepted leadership, and of specific criteria of recruitment are all typical of the neighbourhood community among the contemporary Ovimbundu.

Despite the 'unorganized' character of this gathering, there 627
exists evidently a set of generally accepted symbolic values, 183
which are accepted by Christian and pagan, by young and old. 837
Thus Nahoka claimed as evidence that she had not committed adultery her meal with Kapapelo's wife, and the latter in turn offered as evidence that adultery had been committed a statement that her husband had made a gift of soap to Nahoka. These actions provide presumptive evidence of innocence or guilt since an adulterer or adulteress may not eat under apparently mystical sanctions with the spouse of the person with whom he or she has committed adultery, and the giving of gifts by a man to a woman implies a sexual relationship. These actions were presumably recognized as convincing evidence in the days when there existed a formal court system, and continue to be recognized as such at the present day.

The nature of contemporary social relations, as being the 578
end-product of a series of acts between individuals rather than 571
as the content of jural norms defined by status, is also revealed in [671]
the dispute, particularly in the episode at Justino's. Sapapula does not complain that Kapapelo had not behaved as a villager should to his headman, but that he had not been grateful for having been given land. Kapapelo's complaint that Saviel, Sapapula's sister's son, had attempted to seduce his wife was,

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like his accusation that Sapapula had incited Jaime to kill him, an attempt to portray himself not as an ungrateful recipient of Sapapula's goodness but a much suffering victim of his malevolence.

Although the moot reflects the existing social structure and values there are occasional reminiscences of the former social system. Thus Ngombe seems to have been acting according to a traditional but non-effective pattern in giving a long, judicial, summing up, which had no practical effect. Again, when Sapapula accused Kapapelo of wishing to break up the village it is probable that he was thinking of the old villages socially defined by the agnatic tie and physically enclosed by a stockade rather than the physically and socially amorphous villages of the present day. Values such as these survive in the minds of individuals when the associated social forms have disintegrated. They are brought out on occasions analogous to those in which they were formerly used, but are not nowadays decisive in the way they would have been.

The quarrel between Kapapelo and Sapapula is different from the other cases, since the meeting held to discuss it is held without the presence of a 'civilized' person and it pivots about a question of adultery or rather attempted adultery, a subject which has hitherto appeared marginally as a subject for insults. The case is held without the presence of a 'civilized' person, and this is from necessity, not from choice. Sapapula had tried to have the case heard by Justino, and Kapapelo was eventually brought to terms by Sapapula's threat to refer the matter to the post. While the moot shows us the community acting to uphold social control, such action is regarded as an unsatisfactory substitute for a decision by somebody who could, as Gonçalve said of Antonio Pires, 'leave with the words', that is, settle the case.

Adultery has previously occurred as an accusation thrown in during a squabble that has begun with something else. Thus Guilherme accused Paulo and Wasuka accused Kapapelo of adultery because they were angry with them; they were not angry with them because they thought they had committed adultery with their wives. It is parallel to the suggestions that Kapapelo was a sorcerer, an insult not an accusation. It now

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occurs, whether in intention as declared by Sapapula and Nahoka, as accomplished as claimed by Kapapelo, as the substance of the conflict between the two men. 578 637

To sum up, Kapapelo had originally been aligned with his kinsman Guilherme against Sapapula, who had then shown hostility to Kapapelo, and especially to his wife's brother Kusumula. The latter had counter-attacked by accusing Sapapula before Justino, and there the matter might have rested if Kapapelo had not tried to attack Sapapula again, by making the threat to commit suicide at his kitchen door. This led to the moot at which the charge of attempted adultery was made, and at which Sapapula intended to, and succeeded in, taming Kapapelo. 578 627

4. *Lusase, Sapapula, and Luanga*

In this case, individuals previously met, notably Sapapula, and Lusase reappear, this time as enemies. The principal scenes are first an attempt by a kinsman of Lusase's to recover a debt from Sapapula, secondly an attack by Lusase on Sapapula, thirdly a decision by the *chefe de posto* in favour of Sapapula, fourthly a fresh complaint to the post by Luanga against Lusase, fifthly a post decision in favour of Luanga, sixthly and finally reconciliation of Luanga and Lusase.

This chain of disputes had begun actually before the episodes mentioned in the last case. On the 19th February, Ndonga a kinsman of Lusase (whom he had helped to power), arrived in Epalanga and tied up Sapapula, as a result of the latter not paying a debt. I produced the money and for the present no more was heard of it. Lusase said that he did not know what went on in the villages, when the matter was mentioned to him.

On 13th May, Simbwyikoka, a former chief whose village was near Sapapula's, was holding a ceremony in which a bull had been killed. Sapapula had taken part in the ceremony and had been responsible for sending a leg of the bull (the chief's traditional prerogative) not to Lusase but to Kafelo, who, although he had been deposed in 1954, had the advantage over Lusase of having passed through the royal rituals, and 578 631 [231]

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having been elected according to traditional rules. Lusase was angry at this, turned up at the ceremony, and attacked Sapapula.

The following morning Epalanga buzzed with indignation. Gregorio, the chief of Menga, and Mandumba, Sapapula's son, had arrived at Epalanga to express their support, and Gregorio asked me[9] to write a letter to the Mission to get its support against Lusase at the post. I said that I would go to the chief's village to persuade Lusase to seek a reconciliation. The elder Wasuka, a cross-cousin of Sapapula, declared that even if Lusase offered five cattle in compensation they would not be accepted, and Sapapula's supporters portrayed him as a much injured man, repeatedly the victim of the Guilherme, Kapapelo, Lusase, Ndonga clique. My offer to go to the chief's village fell through when we heard that Lusase was now no longer there, but near, apparently at Simbwyikoka's.

I suggested that the moot should be held at Simbwyikoka's since the case had begun there; the others said 'No, let him come over here.' The crowd settled down in the open space before my house. News was then brought to us that Lusase refused to come over and insisted on the people coming to him, declaring that he ruled all, and did not obey the anthropologist but only the *chefe*. Accordingly everybody got up and walked over to Simbwyikoka's. Here we leant that Lusase had fled. Kambungo[10], an elder of Menga and kinsmen of Sapapula, declared that somebody who behaved like this could not be chief. Gregorio the chief of Menga became involved in an argument with Ndonga, who he said was responsible for installing Lusase. This Ndonga denied. This, incidentally, was the first time that I had heard that Lusase was not properly elected. As previously noted on the fall of Kafelo, Lusase had arrived at the post and announced himself as being the new chief. The Gumba people did not protest about this for fear of possible reactions from the post.

It now became known that Lusase could not be found.

[9] It may be suggested that my interventions were not in accordance with anthropological etiquette. It is difficult to see what else I could have done; it is, after all, the local custom for 'civilised' persons to provide letters of recommendation, and a refusal on my part would not have been understood.

[10] He has been mentioned in Chapter V.

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People said that he had fled to the house of his sister's son Guilherme en route for the post; Gregorio now said to me that Lusase had made advances to Nahoka, trying to seduce her by saying that Sapapula was old. 627

On the same day Sapapula left for the post with, as his witnesses, Nahoka and Wasuka carrying a letter of recommendation from me. At the post the *chefe* took his part and told Lusase 'Sapapula is your father' and made Lusase kneel down to seek pardon. Sapapula said that he wished to move across the river into Menga, where he had formerly lived. The *chefe* told him to stay at Epalanga (because of the anthropologist's presence there), but transferred Epalanga administratively from Gumba to Chicunda. This settlement pleased the Epalanga people. It may be added that had Sapapula actually crossed over, a number of householders, including Paulo, would not have followed him. 648 [631]

Despite the *chefe's* acts it was not certain whether the change was to be given effect immediately or only after the *chefe's* annual visit; hence some more wrangling took place over the question of where Epalanga was situated for such purposes as the payment of fines for rum-brewing.

Luanga, who shared with Sapapula the title of Epalanga, came to my house on the night of the 27th June to ask for a letter to the *chefe de posto*. He told me that Lusase wanted to take away his title of Epalanga and send him to contract (non-voluntary) labour. I suggested that we should go together to see Lusase at his village on the following day. The next morning he decided not to go to the chief but to go straight to the post with his wife Adriana. He told me that when Lusase became chief in 1954, he and his 'brother' Mwehombo had bought the title of Epalanga (held under Kafelo by Sapapula) which they held jointly. Luanga had paid for this two pigs equal to 1,000 escudos (about £12. 10s. in British currency) and other things as well. Luanga's motive was not political power (which the present-day chief lacks and of which his ministers have even less) nor prestige, but because he would thus be exempt from contract labour. Luanga said that he did not mind going to contract labour, but insisted on having back what he had paid to Lusase. I said I would write a letter to say that he should not 578 631 648 [634]

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578 631 648 go to contract labour and accordingly he left for the post with my letter.

Luanga returned quite satisfied a few days later, the *chefe* having decided in his favour. Two days later he went to the 578 chief's village to complain of Lusase's actions. With him came 631 Bartolomeu and Paulo. Ngombe, as Mwekalia, and thereby responsible for the relations between chief and people, acted as the presiding figure, more chairman than judge, although he spoke for some time on the case. Lusase defended himself by saying that it was not he but somebody else who had recommended Luanga for contract labour. This explanation was accepted by Luanga. Bartolomeu and Paulo received small sums of money from Lusase for acting as witnesses, and later Luanga left with Lusase for another village. Here they effected the succession of a man to his father's title of Mbesi (another ministerial position). Luanga was much pleased with his share of the fee.

578 Not only the personalities but many of the features of previous cases reappear here. Of the ways of acting which people choose, 627 Ndonga and Lusase use self-help, Ndonga to recover a debt, 648 and Lusase to uphold his prestige. Against Lusase, as against Kapapelo, a moot was formed. Lusase like Guilherme insisted on his responsibility to the post alone, when the opposition seemed to be using a 'civilized' person of a different category. Final decisions are obtained by appeals to the post but the risky nature of such procedures is shown by the desire to get a letter of recommendation. Luanga believed that Lusase had got him sent to contract labour just as Francisco believed (correctly) that Guilherme had got him recruited. Ngombe as Mwekalia is more successful here as arbitrator than in the moot at Kapapelo's. Finally we see the contrast again between the survival of formal recognition in symbol of the prestige of chieftancy (the episode of the bull's leg) and its actual impotence [634] caught between *chefe* and people. The specific issue in this dispute turns on a conflict between a chief and his people, and it shows how a chief can be defeated in the same way that the first dispute showed a government headman being defeated.

627 Lusase's opponents had, as previously, other means of influ- 648 encing the post. Gregorio had proposed getting a letter from the

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mission to give Sapapula's case, and, as things worked out, it was the anthropologist who was made the 'civilized' focus for the opposition to Lusase as Antonio Pires had been made the focus of the opposition to Guilherme. Lusase, like Guilherme, reacted by saying that he owed allegiance only to the *chefe de posto*, and running off to the post.

Luanga's case shows how desire to get out of contract labour may give a new reason for taking a ministerial title, and also once again how sending someone to contract labour is regarded as a means of injuring those whom one dislikes.

I have spoken of the conflict between Lusase and Sapapula as being a conflict between a chief and his people, and this is true in so far as it shows how opposition forms against a chief and how he can be checked. It is therefore of importance as indicating the position of the chief in the contemporary social system. The people themselves interpreted the dispute as being essentially one between individuals—Lusase's behaviour was attributed to his lust for Nahoka, and Gregorio entered the dispute not as the ruler of the neighbouring chiefdom of Menga but as a friend of Sapapula. The interpretation of what is a political conflict as a quarrel between individuals may be explained as being due to the relatively limited nature of the role of chief (Lusase) and of traditional headman (Sapapula) which therefore do not predominate in the social status of the individual. (In this particular case, had I got Lusase's viewpoint he would probably have said that he was defending his dignity as chief, whereas Sapapula did not regard Lusase as being really chief.) The lack of a formal court system or even of an articulated political system at the local level has brought into desuetude the old legal and political idioms and the Ovimbundu have not yet learnt new terms from the Portuguese.

5. *Social Control and Social Structure in the Disputes*

I now return to the points mentioned at the beginning of this chapter. It is hardly necessary to underline the decayed state of the traditional system of authority. Lusase had, at the time of the quarrel between Guilherme and Paulo, expressed his

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178 intention of staying out of the dispute, just in the same way as
634 he said, when Ndonga's action was reported to him, that he did not know what went on in the villages. That is, Lusase disclaimed any general responsibility for maintaining law and order in the sub-chiefdom. He had turned up at the case before Justino and at the moot by Kapapelo's house, when Nahoka had pointed out that it was he, and not Kafelo, who was effectively chief. The very fact that such a remark could be made indicates a weakness in Lusase's position, and his lack of authority is further illustrated by his being but one of a crowd of would-be conciliators.

It was, indeed, Lusase's position with relation to Kafelo that brought about his quarrel with Sapapula. Lusase, on meeting Kafelo at Kapapelo's, had bowed to him, and must have been uneasily aware that public opinion held that Kafelo 'had finished', had completed the cycle of chiefly rites, whereas Lusase was just 'the *chefe de posto's* boy'. It is unlikely that there would be among the Ovimbundu developed forms of the situation reported from some colonial areas by which one person acts as chief or headman *vis-à-vis* the government while another is the real chief or headman with effective power over the people, if only because so much of the content of chieftancy today is simply post work. Yet a chief differs from a government headman precisely because of the surviving prestige which clings to the capital village, the skulls of the dead chiefs, the titled ministers, and the drums, and it was such an expression of prestige which Sapapula gave to Kafelo and denied to Lusase. Not surprisingly Lusase reacted to this sharp evidence of the weakness of his position. In acting as he did, he made things worse; since he lacked any local means of imposing his will by force, or mobilizing moral support, he had to fall back on the post.

178 This weakening of the chieftancy is, of course, only part of the
127 general disintegration of the old social system. Sapapula, in personality and prestige, was the equal of any traditional head-
[622] man in the neighbourhood, and was consulted by the chief and government headmen when fines or roadworkers were required from Epalanga. Yet it was Paulo and not Sapapula who launched the attack on Guilherme, an attack speedily supported

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by other villagers. Nor does residence in a village or sub-chiefdom compel or limit participation in a dispute. Neither Ndjoleya nor any of his kin participated in the dispute between Paulo and Guilherme. Gregorio came from Menga to support his friend Sapapula against Lusase, acting as a private individual, and not as the chief of Menga intervening in the internal politics of a neighbouring sub-chiefdom.

The social institutions participated in exclusively by Ovimbundu (i.e. the system of kinship and marriage and the local organization) do not provide machinery for resolving disputes. Therefore, binding decisions must be obtained from a representative of the 'civilized' society, and much importance attaches to setting out the details of the case in such a way as to gain the interest of this representative. It would seem likely from this that all cases will pass into the hands of the *chefe*, and that those 'natives' who are most closely linked to the post—the chief and the government headmen—will therefore be the most influential people in indigenous society. In fact, as the disputes show, this does not happen. Cases are taken to other 'civilized' persons—the priest Antonio Pires and the *sui-disant assimilado* Justino—and Lusase, instead of making up on the bureaucratic roundabouts what he has lost on the traditional swings, falls heavily off both.

The willingness of villagers to submit their cases to Justino and the mission rather than to the post is a result of the much closer personal contact which exists with them, and their lack of direct punitive sanctions. Any case referred to the *chefe* is thought liable to produce uncertain consequences. It was because of this that the people of Gumba did not dare to complain to the post about Lusase's usurpation; for this reason, too, Guilherme, knowing the *chefe* trusted him no more than any other native, sought reconciliation before getting to the post. The chief and government headman neither enjoy official confidence nor control access to the post.

On the level of the total Angolan society the State is obviously more powerful than the Church. On the local level the chief and government headmen have more executive power[11]

[11] The capacity to give orders backed by force; but this only applies to orders received from the post.

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than the catechists and 'elders of the school'; yet the weakness of the agents of the post before a local opposition led, not by such traditional figures as Kafelo and Sapapula, but by the school functionaries, has been demonstrated. The post accepts intervention by the mission in supporting disputants, and the mission is ready to help not only its disputants but any native who has a strong case—that is, it has a generalized relation of patronage to all natives.[13] Hence, since in a serious dispute people look round for a 'civilized' patron, the mission is the one most likely to be appealed to, and these appeals usually go through its local agents.

While the symbiosis of two societies, one ruling, the other ruled, is a common feature of modern Africa, the extremely limited nature of the role delegated by the administration to the native authority, the 'patron-client' tie linking 'civilized' persons to the natives, and the opportunity given to patrons to intervene in cases before the *chefe*, seem to be distinctive features of Portuguese colonization.[13]

The third aspect of the social structure mentioned in the introductory section was the role in disputes of kinship ties. It has been earlier noted that Sapapula's supporters regarded him as a victim of a concerted alliance by Guilherme, Kapapelo, Lusase, and Ndonga. In fact Lusase had avoided getting involved in the dispute between Guilherme and Paulo, had supported Sapapula against Kapapelo, and had disclaimed responsibility for Ndonga's act. The present social structure is not one in which groups of kin habitually co-operate;[14] and it is possible that this belief in a coalition against Sapapula reflects memories of the old social structure.

Kinship ties between individuals seem neither to restrain them from quarrelling nor to be liable to permanent disruption as a result of quarrels. By August 1956 Kasosi was once again

[13] It is felt in administrative circles that the advancement of the African is mainly the responsibility of the missions.

[13] Anybody who knows the Portuguese well will acknowledge the importance given to personal influence (*ambo*) and the lack of esteem for bureaucratic (in the Weberian sense) procedures.

[14] See Chapters IV and VII for details on the kinship ears and on general aspects of kinship. The support which Sapapula received was not confined to his own kinship ears—thus Gregorio who enthusiastically supported Sapapula was not even a kinsman.

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on good terms with Guilherme, who was a 'father' of his, and even earlier in June part of the celebrations which marked the marriage of Paulo's son Jose to Pungu, a girl from Namba, whose mother had at one time been married to Kapapelo, took place at the latter's house. Most strikingly of all, as has been noted, Guilherme could borrow money from Bartolomeu and Paulo at the height of their quarrel. The kinship bond exists outside of and, it might be said, at a deeper level than, the quarrel, and the rebukes hurled at an adversary reflect this. Paulo did not complain that Guilherme was a bad cross-cousin; instead he complained that Guilherme was not grateful to him for having baptized his dying child. The motive for co-operation or conflict in everyday life is to be found not in the tracing of genealogies but in the tally of reciprocal services and grievances between two individuals.

It may be claimed that this portrait of the kinship system which emerges from the disputes as being loosely structured and lacking defined obligations, but providing an underlying continuity, is very similar to that given in Chapter VII, which was based on questioning and the observation of everyday life.

The significance of the conjugal bond appears both positively in the way Luanga and Sapapula both take their wives to the post as witnesses, and negatively in the way the hostility of Kapapelo and Luase to Sapapula is interpreted as being inspired by lust for his wife. Even the accusations of adultery so readily hurled about in disputes reflect the stereotype of the adulterer as the arch-enemy, and likewise the arch-enemy of the moment as at least a potential adulterer.

One question remains to be answered: Was Epalanga a particularly rebellious, squabbling, divided, village, because of the presence of an unusual number of aggressive individuals? It is not possible to estimate the number of disputes per village, and the disputes which have been described were the most important of which I had personal knowledge. They were touched off by personal antagonisms rather than by structural contradictions. Yet they tie in with what has been said of the Umbundu social structure in earlier chapters to such a degree that they seem to reflect the lines along which any case of the sort would proceed. The weakness of the chiefs, stripped of

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traditional sanctions and lacking official confidences, the powerless prestige of the traditional headman, the lack of defined village unity, the role of the catechetical school and its officials, who have come to represent the village as a whole, the loosely structured yet stabilizing kinship system, all described in earlier chapters, have re-emerged as parts of a reasonably effective system of social control within which people quarrel and by which their quarrels are settled. It is possible for the villagers by appealing to patrons to check tyrannical behaviour on the part of chief and headmen and to get a fair hearing at the post. Within the local community disputants, once their anger has blown over, may be reunited by the ties of kinship and affinity.

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CONCLUSIONS

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The phrase 'A Study of Social Control and Social Change among the Ovimbundu' implies an analysis of the working of the social maintenance mechanism in a period of social change. The concept appears almost paradoxical since it seems that effective maintenance machinery[1] would prevent social change, and rapid social change is often associated by anthropologists with a situation of individual and social demoralization and disintegration.[2] At the present time the Ovimbundu of the area where fieldwork was done have undergone very [128] rapid social change and have a reasonably effective system of social control, which, however, differs considerably from the traditional system. To confirm these statements, I briefly summarize the material provided in previous chapters.

In the time of the rubber trade (1874–1911) there existed 125 a number of Umbundu kingdoms. The king, assisted and 175 checked, as elsewhere in Africa by titled ministers, was responsible for external relations, undertook certain rituals, and provided a supreme court of appeal where trials were conducted by set rules of procedure. The real unit of law, as regards Gumba at least, seems to have been the sub-chiefdom, with its few thousand inhabitants, governed by a chief who like the king had to administer justice together with his councillors.

This body of councillors included the village headmen who were the heads of bodies of agnatic kin. They had general legal and political responsibility for the village. While the disputes arising in village relations were kept within the patrilineal kin group, the problems arising from the inheritance of movable goods and particularly from the highly important caravan trade were dealt with in the matrilineal group. Owing to the dispersed nature of this group and to its commercial preoccupations the sanctions operating within it must have differed somewhat from those found at the chief's court or village men's

[1] For this term see S. F. Nadel, *Theory of Social Structure*, London, 1957, p. 55.
[2] e.g. G. and M. Wilson, *Analysis of Social Change*, Cambridge, 1945.

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105 125 house. Wealthy members who did not assist their kin were liable to be accused of sorcery. A mother's brother had the right to sell his sister's son as punishment for the latter's misconduct or to pay his own debts, a sanction counterbalancing the rights of the poorer matrilineal kin to receive loans without the obligation of repayment. As the matrilineal groups existed apparently across sub-chiefdom boundaries they formed a means of social control in those trading activities which provided the major focus of Umbundu interests and which flowed over the boundaries of the political groupings whose smallest unit was the patrilineally based village.

105 178 The disappearance of the matrilineal kin groups must be associated with the collapse of the old economy, and to judge from my difficulty in getting information about them their disintegration must have come about fairly rapidly after the end of the trade. Authority within the sub-chiefdom and village remained at a level fairly near the traditional norm till about 1935. After that social change has rapidly dissolved most of the traditional institutions.

The existing system of social control depends on political, local, and kinship systems very different from those previously operative. Cases are very often taken to the post without being previously taken to the chief. The latter's position is a combination of executive of the orders of the post (a role he shares with the government headman) with the surviving prestige represented by the skulls of his predecessors and the ministerial titles allocated to his kinsmen and associates. While the chief and government headmen may settle minor cases, they do not operate any system of courts by which disputes can be regularly and satisfactorily settled.

Judicial power has been effectively transferred from the indigenous society to the 'civilized' community and for a dispute to be brought to a settlement a decision must be obtained from some 'civilized' person or a negotiated arrangement may be made under threat of referring the matter to the post. Considerable importance therefore attaches to the mobilization of ties with some 'civilized' person who may be an employer but is most frequently the mission, which to some degree acts as a patron for all natives. Hence the local

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representatives of the mission, the catechist and elder of the school, tend to become the guardians of the public interest against arrogance on the part of the chief and government headmen. /105 /178

In the conflict between the local representatives of the post and of the mission the latter are likely, if they have a good case, to win since they have a closer link with the mission than the chief and government headmen have with the post. While the policy of the administration of dissolving the indigenous political system has been highly successful it has not created new bureaucratic institutions at the local level, and the chief and government headmen have just sufficient power to do what the post tells them to do. The traditional headmen, while they still act as focuses of kin ties in a village have prestige rather than power; a prestige, however, sufficient to rally considerable support for them in a dispute. The catechetical school and its officials, represent the village to the outside world and provide what is nowadays the only institutional grouping on a village basis.

The role of the missions in social control is threefold; the establishment of new social groupings and forms of leadership at village level, the decision of disputes and the influencing of the *chief's* decisions, and the giving of a feeling of approximation to the 'civilized' population. It is the missions rather than the chiefs and headmen who provide the main social bridges between the 'civilized' and native populations, since both groups participate in their institutions and values.[9]

The kinship system, whose operation must form an important part of any system of social control, has also undergone very great changes. The old kinship groups have disappeared, and the system is now cognatic, with little distinction between patrilateral and matrilateral kin although there is a certain matrilineal pull in choice of residence. Kinship norms have

[9] This does not deny the importance of the administration and the economy in linking the 'civilized' and natives together; yet this administrative and economic integration does not provide the sense of community which to a limited degree is given through the missions, which also provide the only opportunity for individual natives to have influence in a social sphere beyond the range of kin and neighbours; in the Catholic missions by the provision of an influential patron, in the Protestant Native Church by participation in Church councils and courts.

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become confused and vague; the existence of a kinship tie provides an opportunity to build a social relation rather than a jural obligation to fulfil certain duties. With the disappearance of the commensality which marked the patrilineal kin, and the economic co-operation characteristic of the matrilineal groups, the elementary family has emerged as the primary domestic and economic grouping.

In this rather amorphous system, coherence is given by the marriage tie. The very high rate of preferential marriages creates a great number of affinal (and subsequently kinship) ties within a limited area, and it seems to be from this that the neighbourhood community derives its cohesion. At the level of the individual marriage (as opposed to that of the total structure) the relation between husband and wife is a very close one, with, conversely, the relation between a man and his wife's lover being the archetype of hostility.

It is now necessary to see how the description of the two systems of social control relate to the problems of the social changes which have intervened to turn into the other. Obviously social change has been very great. It is not perhaps possible to point to any one factor responsible for the speed of the process. The old political system would not have disintegrated if the administration had used it as the intermediary between it and the natives. However, the hostility of the administration to the chiefs has not succeeded in all parts of Angola in breaking down traditional authority.[4]

Economic change has certainly affected very considerably the social structure. In other parts of Africa a cash economy gained by selling crops and working for wages has replaced a subsistence economy where exchanges were made by barter and gift exchanges. The Ovimbundu were experienced traders used to a currency and with a business-like, rather grasping outlook.[5] Through the matrilineal groups this commercial activity was fitted into the kinship system. The disappearance of the trade brought a sharp fall in the Umbundu standard of living and destroyed the need for developed credit facilities. Instead of the

[4] Among the Ngangela of the area round Vila Artur de Paiva the chiefs retain their authority.

[5] See Serpa Pinto, pp. 169-71 and F. S. Arnot, Garenganze, London, 1889, p. 126.

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gaining of wealth by means involving extensive economic co-operation among the Ovimbundu themselves, money was earned in an individual relation to a particular European whether planter or trader.

It must be recognized that the relation between economic change and the continuation or disintegration of kinship groups is a yet unsolved problem of anthropology,[6] particularly as it is seldom possible to isolate the economic pressure. I emphasize the readiness of the Ovimbundu for change, their willing acceptance of the role of clients to the whites.[7] It may be suggested that this attitude was established in the period of the trade when the Ovimbundu were ultimately dependent on the whites for trade goods and that this attitude of imitation and receptivity lies behind the disappearance of so much of the old social structure and the lack of any myth of, or even interest in, the past.[8]

I have claimed that the present system of social control is effective.[9] This may be granted empirically for the reasons already given, the absence of serious crime or prolonged conflict involving the whole community, the effective checks on the functionaries of the post, and the failure of squabbles to tear the network of kin and affinal ties. If a working social system is a proof of an integrated society, then contemporary Umbundu society qualifies for this description. This is not the only possible way of looking at it. It may be claimed that under present circumstances the Ovimbundu are no longer integrated by their tribal system but are held together by the Angolan

[6] For various comments on this problem see A. I. Richards, in *African Systems of Kinship and Marriage*, p. 251, M. Fortes, 'Structure of Unilineal Descent Groups', in *American Anthropologist*, Feb. 1953, M. Douglas (review of Mitchell's *The Yao Village*) in *Africa*, July 1957.

[7] Cf. the Ngangela name for the Ovimbundu, the Ovimbali, a term traditionally applied to Africans living in close contact with the whites. The Ovimbundu accept this stereotype.

[8] 'A lack of history is correlated with the amorphous character of the society.' R. Colson in Colson and Gluckman (ed.) *Seven Tribes of British Central Africa*, Oxford, 1951, p. 100.

[9] Other quarrels of which I heard while in Epulungu: a messenger from the mission sent to intervene in a marriage dispute was attacked; the chief of Chiwundu summoned to the mission for a telling-off after beating up one of his people; a man from Cumbu refusing to go to a funeral in Cuanongue of a man whose death he was thought to have caused by sorcery.

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105 182 Government,[10] which has deprived them of all legal and political autonomy. The present Umbundu social system deprived of any form of public life ticks over, as a man who has been paralysed may continue to live. The cultural barriers and structural gulf between the post, the basic unit of the administration, and the people, are to a certain extent bridged by the mission. This task throws a considerable strain on the organizations set up by the missions, to which they are far from equal.[11] The common values shared by 'civilized' and native, whose introduction was ascribed to the missions, give the Ovimbundu psychological compensation rather than a genuine participation in the culture of the ruling group. The stability which marks social relations in the area is passivity rather than integration.

105 178 182 The most truthful approach would seem to be a synthesis of the two arguments. The disintegration of the old legal and political institutions and the attitude of dependence and passivity towards Europeans cohere with a stability provided by the pattern of kin and affinal ties and the continuity of local relations. It has been argued that the range of marriages (and hence the range of kinship ties) has not noticeably expanded in recent years, and that the links which orient Gumba to the north and west rather than to the south and east date back to the nineteenth century. Such other factors as the poor local communications, the limited economic development of the area, and the absence of resident whites in Gumba may also have helped to preserve the continuity and security of the 'private' life of individuals.[12] In other areas of Umbundu country, especially near the railway line, where communications are easy, Europeans and *assimilados* are numerous, and there are more marked differences of wealth, this 'coherence' of change and continuity may have very much less empirical efficiency.

In one part of Umbundu country in 1955, a contra-acculturа-

[10] Putting it another way; there is no Umbundu political system, and hence the nearest approach to Umbundu politics are the squabbles of Chapter IX.

[11] The administrators complain of the poor calibre of many catechists, and the catechists complain of the lack of obedience of their people.

[12] The relations between two individuals may remain friendly, even though the form of their relations changes.

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In one part of Umbundu country in 1955, a contra-

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tive movement arose which combined features found in cargo-cults and anti-witchcraft campaigns,[13] social activities usually regarded as products of a malaise in the relations between Europeans and an indigenous society.[14] The Ovimbundu whom I knew were not ready to take the initiative in their dealings with the 'civilized' population; but it would be wrong to regard the system of social control that I have tried to describe as being true for much more than a very small area of Umbundu country and a very limited extent of time.

[13] The movement began at Bela Vista on the railway line and spread over south-eastern Umbundu country into the Ngangela area. Its leaders were men and women who called themselves saints and claimed to have died and come to life again. They announced that all sorcery would cease, and those who continued it would die in an unusual way. They forbade the wearing of black clothes and ordered the killing of black livestock (fowls and pigs). They also forbade the growing of maize for sale. It was stated that rain would come from heaven to kill the whites (according to some accounts only the bad whites) and the blacks would then have their goods. This movement was spread through the catechetical schools. It was eventually repressed by administrative action. Private information. Also article in *O Apostolado*, Luanda, Oct. 27, 1956.

[14] See A. I. Richards, 'A Modern Movement of Witchfinders', *Africa*, Oct. 1935.

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PREFACE

[p. v]

THAT Chief of California Indians who told Dr. Benedict of the /2/ power of his people in the old days when they had eaten 'the health of the desert' made a profoundly interesting observation.

> In the beginning, he said, God gave to every people a cup, a cup of clay, and from that cup they drank their life. . . . They all dipped in the water but their cups were different. Our cup is broken now. . . .[1]

The African peoples also have had their cups of clay or wood, or their gourd dippers. They have worked out their intricate and appropriate adaptations to their particular environments; a social structure well suited to their needs, and a remarkably successful system of education.

Now that Africa has come under Western influences, however, the environment has changed. In many cases the changes have been so rapid that the Africans by their own unaided efforts, and within the pattern of their cultures, are no longer able to make the necessary adaptations. The results in social disintegration are well described by the Umbundu proverb:

> Where the pot breaks, there also the potsherds remain.[2]

The broken pot no longer has either utility or beauty—is no more a pot, but only broken and scattered sherds. So it is also with a broken social group—only scattered individuals remain. This proverb refers primarily to a broken family, but thoughtful Ovimbundu are now applying it to their whole social structure.

Since the life of Africa has been thrust thus suddenly into the world's life, 'it becomes a problem of urgent importance, how, while introducing the European system . . . to conserve the very real values of the indigenous African system'.[3] The solution of this problem is a responsibility of Christian missions inasmuch as theirs is the responsibility for the greater part of the education of the Africans.

The Ovimbundu,[4] the people chosen for the present study, are /0/

[1] Ruth Benedict, *Patterns of Culture*, p. 21 f. (Boston and N.Y.: Houghton Mifflin, 1934).

[2] *Pa fila ombia, haipo oviye pa viala.*

[3] E. W. Smith, *Essays presented to C. G. Seligman*, p. 334, quoted in the *Year Book of Education, 1938*, p. 697 (London: Evans).

[4] *For explanation of terms see note on Orthography, p. xi.*

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101 a Bantu-speaking group numbering about one and one third
(161) million, whose home is the Benguela Highland of Angola (Portuguese West Africa). Christian missions have worked among them since 1881, the date of founding of the W.C.A.M. of the A.B.C.F.M., with which work the writer has been connected since 1924.

121 *Umbundu mentality.* It is not the purpose of this study to
114 appraise Bantu or Umbundu mentality. Every new description of a Bantu culture gives a new angle or vantage point from which to view the versatile mentality of that interesting group of people. All available objective views unite to show us, as Driberg holds for primitive man in general, 'a being as human as ourselves, affected by the same emotions . . . with thoughts, responses, and actions differing in no essential way from our own'[1]—neither the noble savage of Rousseau nor the subhuman creature of more recent doctrinaires. 'The grouping of savages with children and idiots is but another symptom of an attitude which, when faced with a different type of culture, insists on assuming a lower type of mentality to account for that culture.'[1]

It must be owned that different views of primitive mentality are held, but it would seem that those which hold primitive man to be incapable of reasoning logically, his mentality in some way inferior or 'pre-logical', base their conclusions too largely on theoretical or library material and too little on results of actual field work.[2] It is not the purpose of the present study to examine these theories, but a word of protest must be raised against some who, basing their view of the mentality of Bantu peoples on some such theories as those mentioned above, and with or without sup-

[1] J. H. Driberg, *The Savage as He Really Is*, pp. 2, 3 (London: Routledge, 1929).

[2] Cf., for example, L. Levy-Bruhl, *Les Fonctions Mentales dans les Sociétés Inférieures*, *Le Mentalité Primitive*, &c. The seriousness with which these and similar theoretical studies have been taken is surprising. Cf. e.g., R. Allier, *Mind of the Savage* (London: Bell, 1929); J. W. C. Dougall, *Characteristics of African Thought* (London: International Institute of African Languages and Cultures, 1932); N. S. Booth, *Teaching a Bantu Community* (MS. copy). Dr. Max Gluckman of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute told me that I had wrongly interpreted Levy-Bruhl, and he kindly loaned me a copy of a paper by Evans-Pritchard which sets forth a different interpretation of Levy-Bruhl's thesis with regard to the 'pre-logical' mentality. It is not my intention here to combat the thesis of the 'pre-logical' mentality, but rather a common interpretation of it (Evans-Pritchard, 'Levy-Bruhl's Theory of Primitive Mentality', *Bulletin of the Faculty of Arts of the Egyptian University*, vol. i, pt. ii).

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port from intelligence tests of doubtful suitability, have called in question the 'educability' of some Bantu groups.[1]

I shall not examine these theories but rather leave to descriptions of Umbundu culture given in the main part of the study, the task of showing that the mental capacity of the Ovimbundu is sufficient to enable them to assimilate the education placed at their disposal. Educators who really believe otherwise would hardly waste their time in attempting to educate a people who, after all, may be incapable of education.

> If we do not believe in the logic of the savage and in the identity of his processes of thought with our own, then we should be proved illogical ourselves in attempting to develop along logical lines peoples of an alien mentality, and in attempting to transmit our civilization to peoples mentally incapable of assimilating it.[2]

The capacity of the Ovimbundu and their 'educability' are assumed.

The Approach. All the various types of approach to African education have been classed under one of the two aims: Assimilation, which has represented Latin colonial policy; and Adaptation, which has been more representative of the British and Belgian point of view. *Assimilation* would make African Frenchmen, African Portuguese, &c., of the natives. *Adaptation* would take what is best in both the African and the European cultures in order to produce a better African civilization'.[3]

Within the aim of *assimilation* there may be distinguished at least two policies. One ignores indigenous culture, presents the European culture quite without reference to it, and treats the African as though he had no cultural background—as though he were a *tabula rasa*. The other may study the indigenous culture, but only in order to be able to uproot it the more thoroughly and efficiently.

Within the aim of *adaptation* at least three distinct policies may

[1] See discussion in Malherbe (ed.), *Educational Adaptations*, Chap. XVIII (*N.E.F. Conference Report*, Cape Town, 1937); also P. A. W. Cook, *The Education of a South African Tribe* (Cape Town, 1934).

[2] Driberg, op. cit., p. 4.

[3] There is an interesting discussion of these two policies by H. Dubois, 'Assimilation ou Adaptation?' in *Africa*, 1929, pp. 1 ff. See also the discussion in the Preface of *Western Civilization and the Natives of South Africa*, by I. Schapera (London, 1934). There are other policies for dealing with the Africans such as repression, exploitation, &c., but since they cannot be classed as educational theories I have not included them in this analysis.

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121 177 be recognized. *First*, there is a sympathetic but entirely unsystematic use of the culture in question which collects folk-lore, customs, or other single items to use them as illustrations, as lesson or sermon material, &c., but without reference to their context in the fabric or pattern of the culture. *Second*, there is an attempt to rebuild those functions or institutions which *a priori* are judged essential and to leave untouched those judged unessential. Still, whatever is done, is done without reference to the pattern of the culture in question and the criteria are predetermined. *The third method* is that advocated by the present study. It begins with a systematic study of the culture in question, especially its characteristic patterns of behaviour, significant attitudes, beliefs and customs; and the effect of its contact with other cultures; in order

To determine and describe the content;

To analyse and evaluate this content with reference to its bearing upon present local needs; and

To make suggestions for tentative procedures which shall build upon indigenous patterns of behaviour, make adjustment to approved attitudes from the outside as easy as possible, and work toward a continuous and self-functioning process of self-adjustment.

The view-point assumed is a composite of practical anthropology, progressive education, and the newer approach to Christian missions. The criteria have been evolved in part through a study of the local situation and its needs.

127 *Sources.* More documentary material has been sifted than the references indicate. The historical account which has finally been incorporated as Chapter XII was written before the main part of this study and served as an important part of its background.

128 124 The chief sources, however, are original materials descriptive of certain phases of Umbundu life and culture—materials gathered on the field over a period of years, especially between 1933 and 1938. Much of it consists of traditional 'literature' (folk-tales, proverbs, riddles and songs). More of it, however, consists of descriptions of customs, beliefs, institutions and other culture traits secured from personal observation, from descriptions by natives, from schedules collected and written up by trained natives, and Umbundu autobiographical data. Much of this is given in direct translation, certain parts in summary or by reference, while the rest has served as background.

1: Childs M-S (1924-1940) 1940 FF 13 Missouls FF 13

Limits of time and space have made it necessary to restrict the study to the two major fields of social structure and education. These two phases were chosen because description of them seems to be pre-requisite to treatment of other areas of the culture, and also because of their inherent importance both anthropologically and educationally. In order to provide background and make for better understanding, an introductory chapter on 'Habitat' has been provided. I hope to illustrate the remaining phases of the culture at a later date. 121

It is not possible adequately to thank, nor even to mention by name, all those for whose help I am indebted. It would never have been possible to organize this study had it not been for a generous provision of fellowships and of many facilities by Union Theological Seminary in New York City, and also for the necessary allowance of time during two furloughs by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. For extraordinary facilities put at my disposal, I am grateful to the Missionary Research Library and to its Director, Mr. C. H. Fahs. Among my many teachers at Union Seminary, Teachers' College, and in the Anthropology Department of Columbia University, for whose help I am indebted, I must name Professors I. L. Kandel, D. J. Fleming, A. L. Swift, Jun., Gene Weltfish, George Herzog, and Ralph Linton, who have freely given me much advice, counsel, and encouragement. For an especially high order of help I am very deeply indebted to Dr. Ruth Fulton Benedict and to Professor Harrison S. Elliott. Dr. Benedict not only gave freely of her time and wisdom as teacher and counsellor, but she also gave much encouragement and assistance in the task of arranging publication. For help with the German source material, I am indebted to my wife. To those whom I have named, and to many others, go my sincere thanks. 000

G. M. C.

UNION THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
NEW YORK CITY
May 1939

THE manuscript was revised in Africa in 1940 and the typing, done by J. C. Lazaro, African secretary of Currie Institute (Dondi), was completed in March 1941. It is now nearly six years later that the opportunity for publication has finally been realized. It is not 128

PART ONE [p.17]

SOCIAL STRUCTURE

121 *The object of Part One is (1) to describe the present social structure of the Ovimbundu, and (2) to suggest significant elements that this social structure has or may have for the programme of Christian missions among this people.*

CHAPTER II

POLITICAL AND SOCIAL LIFE

127 122 HAD my historical survey revealed a detailed description of Umbundu social structure made at some former time, it would also be useful to make comparisons with the present state of affairs. Since there is no such witness out of the past, it is only possible to describe and analyse that which at present exists. For this purpose some excerpts from Umbundu narratives are presented and references made to certain folk-tales and proverbs. The basis of the analysis and description rests more especially, however, upon notes and impressions gathered in field-work over a period of years and upon a considerable number of genealogical tables and schedules of marriage arrangements.[1] These latter are referred to here only to a certain extent. I hope to treat these more fully later. The subject of marriage properly belongs to the field of social structure, but because of its importance I hope to devote a chapter to it. Only certain of the genealogical tables are presented fully and in their several aspects, while the others have served as basis and background for the whole of this part of the study.

565 175 The most significant historical allusion to the social structure of the Ovimbundu which I have found was an observation of Pinheiro de Lacerda about 1790. "These are they of the Highlands who are made up of two "systems" the one call themselves [264] "Quimbundos" (i.e. Ovimbundu), (these do not eat human flesh): the others are called "Quimbangalas" (i.e. the royal households of Imbangala stock), who eat it, and when they make their sacrifice, [172] at which all together attend, then all eat the "Makongo".[2]

[1] I have 192 of the former and 73 of the latter.
[2] *Annaes Maritimos & Coloniaes*, 5a ser., p. 482.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

175 565 Evidently royal persons could then be easily distinguished from the commoners.

565 178 The question naturally arises how far may a similar distinction be observed at the present time. The genealogical tables presented may answer the question. It may be seen that intermarriage of commoners and royalty has proceeded to such a degree that the differences have been greatly dimmed, if not quite erased. Furthermore, the loss of the political power which the royal families formerly held has levelled down distinctions until they have largely lost their meaning. This loss again has hastened the process of intermarriage with commoners. While there are some distinctive practices which persist, they may now pertain to or be practised by certain members of a family only, or in some instances, and not in others. These refer especially to inheritance and to the naming of children.

121 By 'social structure' is meant the more or less permanent framework of relationships between members of a community which manifests itself in an ordered group-life, with reciprocal rights and duties, privileges and obligations, of members, determining behaviour-patterns . . . and moulding the feelings, thoughts, and conduct of members according to these patterns, so that it is only in and through them that the individual can achieve his personal self-realization and participate in the satisfactions offered by the life of his community.

This framework of social organization, or social structure, is permanent compared with the stream of human lives that, in the succession of the generations, flows through it. Each new generation finds it there, as an inheritance from untold generations of his predecessors. Yet the framework of social structure is not absolutely rigid or fixed for all time, but is itself a thing of growth, capable of variation in detail, sometimes giving birth to new developments, at other times undergoing disintegration and decay.[1]

101 [601] The genealogical tables which I have collected are fairly representative of the major divisions or 'tribes' of the Ovimbundu. The only 'tribes' not represented are those of the border regions of Namba, Sanga, Cikomba, and Kalukembe, none of which save the last are numerically important. These border groups themselves offer an interesting field of study and particularly in that they may provide cultural and linguistic bridges between the Ovimbundu and their neighbors.

[1] A. W. Hoernlé in Schapera, *The Bantu-Speaking Tribes of South Africa* (London: Routledge, 1937), p. 67 f.

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[p.81]

PART TWO

INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION

121 *The purpose of Part Two is (1) to describe the life-cycle or development of the individual Ocimbundu from birth until adulthood, (2) to analyse the Umbundu educational process, and (3) to indicate and evaluate elements in this process that are or may be significant for the educational work of Christian missions among the Ocimbundu.*

Chapters V, VI, and VII describe the Umbundu life-cycle and consist largely of Umbundu narrative given in direct translation. The principal source is a composite manuscript compiled for classroom use from the contributions of a number of Ocimbundu.[1] *Comments and other Umbundu material are interpolated from time to time into this principal source.*

In Chapter VIII there is an analysis of Umbundu development. The evaluations are in Chapters IX, X, and XI.

CHAPTER V

THE UMBUNDU BABY

Birth

844 WHEN birth occurs in the house, it is supposed to take place on the grinding-stone (*olumbambo*). That this was so is indicated by the folk-tales and proverbs which refer to the place of birth as *polumbambo*, or *kewe liolku cita* (on the stone of giving birth).[2] In this case, and especially if a woman is giving birth for the first time, she may be assisted by older women of the village. These, in the case of widows, may be relatives of the husband, or in the case of wives of householders, they will be his relatives by marriage. A woman's own mother may assist, but when she lives in a different village she is unlikely to attend. It would not be proper for the

[538]

[1] This source is given in quotation but without further reference. The chief contributors were R. Kavita Evambi, of Ciyaka; Alteko Ngulu and A. Siku Nunda, both of Balundu; R. Kalupeteka of Ngalangi; I. Kayalo of Viye; Ndondi students of the normal classes and several women there. It was compiled and edited (in Umbundu) by Padre Paulo of the Currie Institute staff.

[2] Cf. the 'birth-stool' of the Hebrews (or Egyptians), *vide* Exod. i. 16.

[p.119]

CHAPTER VIII

ANALYSIS OF UMBUNDU DEVELOPMENT

THE question as to whether there is a Native African education is discussed by Mr. H. S. Scott in the *Year Book of Education 1938*.[1] He notes that anthropologists have insufficiently described the educational processes of the various African peoples and that educationists have been at fault in disregarding indigenous methods. It is to be hoped that the foregoing description of individual development has shown clearly that there is an Umbundu education, the function of which is the integration of the individual in the on-going process of society—the 'moulding of individuals to the social norm'.[2] /21

In order better to understand this process and to determine in what way it may be adapted to meet present needs, it is now necessary to analyse Umbundu educational concepts and methods.

The theory of personality upon which the Ovimbundu act does not seem to be entirely consistent. First, they act as though they believed that the child is born quite without character and that desirable traits have to be consciously formed. 'Children are generally ignorant until they have been taught by their relatives with whom they live.'[3] On this premiss, they proceed to instil psychological attitudes in the young child and to teach him social usages. With the social psychologist they seem to 'regard childhood . . . as an opportunity which must be used in *learning* useful behaviour through social contact'.[4] It is abundantly evident that they regard education as clearly a *social* process. §22

A baby is born pink and it is only when he turns dark at the sixth or eighth day that he shows the first indication of becoming a person (*omuntu*). He shows further promise in that direction with his first show of sense, but all through childhood he is, in a

[1] *The Year Book of Education 1938* (Univ. of London, Inst. of Education, London: Evans Bros.), part 2, pp. 639 ff.

[2] A. W. Hoernlé, 'An Outline of the Native Conception of Education in Africa', *Africa*, 1931, p. 147. This is quite close to Dewey's conception of education as 'transmission through communication'; cf. *Democracy and Education* (New York: Macmillan, 1916), chap. i.

[3] *Supra*, p. 100.

[4] F. H. Allport, *Social Psychology* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1924), p. 80.

1: Childs M-S (1904-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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CHAPTER IX

EDUCATIONAL EVALUATIONS

121 THE conception of African education underlying the present study is frankly one of adaptation of all that is suitable from indigenous culture in order to weave it into the fabric of a new African civilization. This point of view, stated in the Preface and already elaborated with reference to the social structure in Part One, needs no detailed re-statement here.

661 Umbundu education, as described and analysed in the foregoing chapters, obviously has points of contact with a progressive conception of Christian education. If nothing else, at least the degree of success which it achieves should cause us to search out its secret. It is probable that there is no formal system of education which could show as great a percentage of success as can this primitive system. In terms of artistic or scientific achievement or discovery its results may not bulk very large, but in terms of successful adaptation to environment they are remarkable.[1] In terms of personal and social integration achieved the results are yet greater.[2] The success achieved by Umbundu education requires the attention of the educationist seeking to serve this people.

050 Among those elements of Umbundu education which may be built upon by missionary education, I wish to consider three: (1) The Umbundu conception of character, (2) Educational method as actual participation in real life situations, and (3) Educational 'content' as life itself—all of life.

Character

The significance of what the Ovimbundu estimate to be desirable character is evident, and no one would dispute the importance of perpetuating and generalizing the more desirable types of behaviour analysed. Only by grafting into these behaviour patterns, which the Ovimbundu recognize and understand, can

[1] This subject cannot be given adequate treatment in a chapter on education. Cf. J. H. Driberg, *The Savage as He Really Is* (London: Routledge, 1929), chaps. ii, iii.

[2] As with many primitive peoples, delinquents and misfits are relatively rare. In Umbundu society allowance for dissent is usually large.

D. McCulloch E-4 (1945-52) 1955 F913 Minutes F913

[p. iii]

ETHNOGRAPHIC SURVEY OF AFRICA

FOREWORD

The preparation of a comprehensive survey of the tribal societies of Africa was discussed by the Executive Council of the Institute as far back as 1937, but the interruption and restricting of its activities caused by the war resulted in the postponement of the project. Events and developments during recent years, however, have led to a wider recognition of the need for collecting and making more generally available the wealth of existing but uncoordinated material on the ethnic groupings and social conditions of African peoples, particularly in connection with plans for economic and social development. Moreover, it appeared that the International African Institute, as an international body which has received support from and performed services for the different Colonial governments, was in a very favourable situation for undertaking such a task. 121

The Institute, therefore, in 1944, applied to the recently established British Colonial Social Science Research Council for a grant from the Colonial Development and Welfare Fund to finance the preparation of an Ethnographic Survey of Africa, and a grant was allocated for a period of five years from 1945, and was subsequently extended for a further period of three years. A committee, under the Chairmanship of Professor Radcliffe-Brown, was appointed to consider the scope and form of the survey, and collaboration was established with research institutions in South Africa, Rhodesia, East Africa, French West Africa, Belgium and the Belgian Congo. 122

The aim of the Ethnographic Survey is to present a concise, critical, and accurate account of our present knowledge of the tribal groupings, distribution, physical environment, social conditions, political and economic structure, religious beliefs and cult practices, technology and art of the African peoples. The material is presented as briefly and on as consistent a plan as possible, and the texts are supplemented by maps and comprehensive bibliographies. 121

The Ethnographic Survey is being published as a series of separate, self-contained studies, each devoted to one particular people or cluster of peoples. It is hoped that publication in this form will make the results more quickly and readily available to those interested in specific areas or groups. A list of the sections which have already appeared is given on the cover of this volume.

Since the unequal value and the generally unsystematic nature of the available information constituted a chief reason for undertaking this survey, it will be obvious that the material here presented can make no claim to be complete or definitive. Every effort has been made, however, to scrutinise all available literature and to check it by reference to unpublished sources and to workers actually in the field; thus it is intended to present a clear picture of our existing knowledge and to point out the directions in which the need for further studies is most pressing. Any assistance from those who are in a position to remedy deficiencies and correct inaccuracies by providing supplementary material will be

THE OVIMBUNDU OF ANGOLA

I. INTRODUCTION

Research work among the Ovimbundu of Angola indicates the 121
presence of numerous cultural traits revealing what are probably distinct stratifications of culture. These diverse elements have been welded together into a pattern, the examination of which constitutes the present problem.

The object of this study is an analysis of these traits with a view to showing the sequence in which they have been received, from whence they came, and the processes which have been responsible for coordinating them so as to form the present social system.

My presentation passes from geographical and historical considerations to an ethnological approach, locally applied in the first place for complete analysis of the culture of the Ovimbundu and surrounding peoples. The traits have to be considered singly and in combination. Then follows an examination of some of these traits which are widely distributed outside Angola. We next seek to ascertain the geographical origin of traits, their history, and the psychology of their combinations and assimilation into an aggregate. What elements have been acquired through adoption? And what has been the historical process? Which traits have arisen through independent invention? What factors have been discarded, and why? To what extent have the Ovimbundu utilized opportunities for enriching their culture, and what possibilities have been neglected?

What are the classes of evidence which might be expected to assist an inquiry into the growth of Umbundu culture?

Field work was of primary importance for obtaining a first hand knowledge of the tribal life of the Ovimbundu as it exists today, and in order to estimate the effects of cultural contacts extensive journeys were made to the north, east, and south of the central territory occupied by the Ovimbundu. The results of personal investigation are given in chapters IV–IX, dealing with the economic, social, and religious life of the Ovimbundu. These facts have been kept free from the observations of other investigators whose reports are summarized in chapter III, "Historical Sources."

Unfortunately there are no archaeological data which can assist 172
a study of historical processes, for archaeology has not yet been approached in Angola.

121 Geographical study is valuable in showing that physical factors such as position, topography, soil, and climate have had not only a permissive but a stimulating effect on the development of certain cultural traits.

127 Historical documents dating from the year A.D. 1500 present valuable evidence for tribal movements, the effect of early European contacts, and the existence of certain beliefs and ceremonies. The facts adduced in chapter III are used in chapters X–XII in discussing culture contacts and cultural processes.

197 Inquiry respecting relationships of the Ovimbundu to other African tribes is aided by a study of the Umbundu language, which is shown to be of pure Bantu structure and vocabulary (chapter VIII). The characteristic features of the Umbundu language are those which form the basic elements of Bantu speech in general. These characteristics are alliterative concord (that is, repetition of the prefix before every word in agreement with the noun); absence of grammatical gender; and a position of the genitive in which the name of the thing possessed comes before the possessor. Umbundu, though structurally assignable to the Bantu group, has its own vocabulary, whose degree of relationship to that of surrounding peoples may to some extent be judged by the vocabularies of F. and W. Jaspert (Die Völkerstämme Mittel Angolas, Frankfort, 1930, pp. 144–150). The fact that the language of the Ovimbundu has become the lingua franca of Angola, still further testifies to the thoroughness of the contacts, which from historical sources are known to have been made in the period 1500–1900.

104 The spelling of proper names leaves a wide margin for individual preference. The Umbundu language requires "M" before "B," yet custom has sanctioned the form Bailundu. Nevertheless I have retained "N" in Ngalangi despite the form Galangi on several maps. Maps show great diversity of spelling, but I have adhered throughout to Kipungo (Quipungo) and Kwanza (Quanza). Among tribal names I prefer Vakuanyama to OvaKwanyama and Vacholue to BaKioko or BaDjokue; in making the choice I have tried to imitate the sounds I heard from the natives themselves. In referring to the papers of E. Torday, who knew the southwest Congo well and spoke several Congo languages fluently, I note that he sometimes prefers to recognize the prefix as in BaMbala and BaYaka, but he also writes Badjokue and Bayaka. J. H. Weeks writes Bangala (BaNgala). C. H. L. Hahn uses the form Ovambo (OvaMbo). Ovimbundu I have preferred throughout; the accent is on the

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

penultimate syllable as is usual with Bantu words. The alternative form would be OviMbundu. Some writers hyphenate after a prefix. *Lu* is the plural prefix in the tribal names Luchazi, Luvando, Luena and Luimba. Ocivokue, Ocimbundu and Uluchazi are singulars. The word Umbundu is used adjectivally as well as for the name of the language. 104

Observations relating to the physical appearance of the Ovimbundu (chapter IV) deal with physique, dress, tooth mutilation, hairdressing, scarification, and personal ornaments. The object of this chapter is to estimate the results of contacts so far as these affect the traits just mentioned. 121

Of great importance in an inquiry into the growth of Umbundu culture is the inferential testimony to be derived from ethnological study of surrounding tribes. This subject is considered in chapter X, "Culture Contacts," with special reference to the Congo basin, Rhodesia, and South West Africa, concerning which there exists an adequate and reliable literature.

In chapter XII, "Cultural Processes," ethnological facts derived from field work and historical sources have been combined with data relating to geography, physique, and language. This has been done in such a way as to present a hypothesis of cultural growth which is consonant with direct evidence and inferential testimony.

Finally, personal acquaintance with the daily life of the Ovimbundu is made the corner stone for behavioristic study. This is intended to explain the operation of social forces and controls in welding the tribal traits whose origin and assembly have been previously discussed.

Should my colleagues of the functional school contend that my approach is too static in its historical and anatomical method, I would reply that my research does at least lay a sure ethnological foundation for those psychological and sociological studies which are today rightly regarded as essential for the adjustment of relationships between Africans and their European administrators. The correlation of all aspects of tribal life, including culture contacts, cannot be too strongly stressed. The headings chosen for chapters are adopted merely for convenience of presentation. But an endeavor has been made throughout the book, and particularly in the final chapter, to emphasize the coordination of economics, social organization, education, language, and religion.

II. GEOGRAPHICAL FACTORS

121 This chapter is intended to give an outline of the geographical conditions of Angola and to point out the way in which these have influenced the growth of Umbundu culture in all its aspects.

A presentation of geographical data is of primary importance here, and the actual relationship between the facts of geography and culture is a matter for gradual evaluation in the following chapters. The extent to which geographic determinism has entered into the cultural growth of the Ovimbundu is particularly well seen in chapter V, "Economic Life," which deals with industries, agriculture, domestic animals, fishing, and transport.

The area of Angola is a factor of importance, for the greater the extent of any country the more diversified will be the products and the cultural differences. This is particularly true if there are considerable differences in the elevation, because altitude modifies temperature and affects the distribution of rainfall.

131 Angola has an area of almost 500,000 square miles. The greatest length is a distance of about 900 miles from the river Congo in the north to the region of South West Africa. The greatest breadth is about 700 miles from the Atlantic Ocean on the west to the borders of the Rhodesian plateau in the east. This range over twelve degrees of latitude, from 5° S. to 17° S., in association with differences in altitude, have produced ecological regions which are described in the following paragraphs.

132 311 167 The northern part of Angola is ecologically a part of the Congo basin, with conditions of heat and moisture giving rise to a dense tropical flora. Owing to the presence of tsetse fly, the great heat, and the lack of open grasslands, such country is unsuited for the rearing of cattle, while agriculture, including cultivation of maize, is restricted to forest clearings. Manioc, palm trees, peanuts, and sweet potatoes are the chief products serviceable to man. This region was, according to the historical evidence of chapter III, the area in which the Ovimbundu moved before they entered the Benguela Highlands of central Angola. Parts of chapters III and X ("Historical Sources" and "Culture Contacts," respectively) are devoted to an analysis of the cultural factors of the Congo area from the year A.D. 1500 to the present day.

131 The central portion of Angola is the area most important in this research because it is the home of the Ovimbundu, whose cultural

III. HISTORICAL SOURCES

175 The object of this chapter is the presentation of a summary of
173 literature relating to Angola from A.D. 1500 down to the present
167 day. In this literature there may be accounts of the movements of tribes which will throw some light on the origin of the Ovimbundu, and the date of their migration into the Benguela Highlands. Present-day tradition of the Ovimbundu is unanimous in declaring that the tribe came from the northeast of its present locality, but some
[101] historical justification of this belief is desirable. The word Ovimbundu ("people of the fog") may refer to the heavy morning mists of highland regions, and there is the possibility that the Ovimbundu adopted this name when they settled on the high plateau.

121 If there is historical evidence in favor of the traditional home of the Ovimbundu being the region of the north and northeast of Angola, what was the ethnological background of these areas at the time when the Ovimbundu became detached from a matrix of northern Angolan tribes? In other words, what cultural factors are the Ovimbundu likely to have brought with them into the Benguela Highlands? The ultimate origin of these factors is a point which has not been neglected (chapter XI, "Wider Culture Contacts"), but for the moment the primary concern is the historical background of the Ovimbundu, with special reference to tribal movements and cultural traits.

As part of this historical inquiry, contacts of the Portuguese and the Ovimbundu are of importance. When and where did the Portuguese come into contact with the Ovimbundu and with what results to the indigenous culture?

127 Chapters IV–IX deal exclusively with my field work among the Ovimbundu in 1929. Therefore it is pertinent to ask to what extent the ethnological observations of travelers and early explorers will corroborate the information recorded in my own notes. Will there be contradiction or confirmation of personal observations? Possibly the ethnological notes obtained from historical sources will serve, not merely to corroborate my field work, but actually to extend the area of occurrence of important cultural traits which I noted in 1929.

The literature describing Angolan history and customs is here presented in the form of a chronological bibliography, which is annotated so as to emphasize points bearing on the purpose of this historical analysis. That there should be a fragmentary presentation of data is an inevitable consequence of the nature of the literature

X. CULTURE CONTACTS

174 The foregoing chapters have presented the main outlines of the tribal life of the Ovimbundu, with a brief reference to some factors in the cultures of Angolan tribes with whom the Ovimbundu are in close contact. But hitherto no attempt has been made to analyze the cultural contacts of the Ovimbundu outside Angola.

The data recorded indicate that the tribal life of the Ovimbundu is not an independent growth in the Benguela Highlands. We have, therefore, a problem involving a detailed study of surrounding cultures. The most important of these are located in the Congo basin, Rhodesia, and South West Africa, and for this reason the present chapter is divided into three sections, each of which deals with one of these areas which are all contiguous to Angola.

[121] In analyzing these surrounding cultures for comparison with the tribal life of the Ovimbundu, the social patterns as a whole are considered, and no attempt is made to construct a theory of derivations based on what might be a few fortuitous resemblances arising through convergence. Our study is aided by a knowledge of historical contacts and geographical contiguity of the areas compared. Therefore the method is not open to the objections that have been made justly against an assumption of cultural relationships between two widely separated regions, in which only a few artifacts or institutions have an alleged resemblance.

Chapters X and XI are concerned with discussing the probable cultural relationships of the Ovimbundu, and a final chapter, "Cultural Processes," indicates the way in which historical events and geographical factors have contributed to the selection and welding of traits whose aggregate now constitutes the tribal life of the Ovimbundu.

Congo Basin

An examination of the cultural traits of the Congo basin is of particular importance, because of the known historical connection of the Ovimbundu with Congo tribes, before the former entered the Benguela Highlands. Such a survey is conveniently made by examining the culture of the Congo basin from the estuary along the course of the main river, then southward along the Kasai and its tributaries into the northeast of Angola.

Despite minor differences the Congo area may be regarded as a region of considerable uniformity with regard to environment and

XI. WIDER CULTURE CONTACTS

171 When dealing with the immediate culture contacts of the Ovimbundu, the traits found in central Angola were considered in relation to the cultural elements of each of three areas, the Congo basin, Rhodesia, and South West Africa. In this chapter attention is given to some traits that are found, not only among the Ovimbundu and adjacent peoples, but among some other African tribes remote from the present-day location of the Ovimbundu. The Graebnerian school has indeed claimed that some of these widely distributed African traits are Melanesian and Indonesian in origin, a theory which is briefly considered in the latter part of this chapter.

114 The present examination of widely distributed traits is facilitated by referring to each of a number of papers not previously mentioned. For example, E. Torday (IV) has dealt in general with religion and social organization among Bantu tribes. H. Baumann (II) has discussed hoe-culture and matriarchal conditions in Bantu Africa. G. Lindblom (I) has brought together a large body of evidence relating to the distribution of hunting devices. H. Balfour (I, II, III) has outlined the distribution of the friction drum. Hence there exist useful summaries of trait distributions with which cultural factors of the Ovimbundu can be compared.

Antiquity of Cultural Traits

171 At the outset we must recognize that the extent of distribution of a trait and its importance in the cultural pattern may be but a treacherous guide to its antiquity. The widespread use and cultivation of tobacco and maize are instances of this kind. The growth and curing of tobacco led to the adoption of this commodity as a medium of exchange which could be conveniently carried by caravans. Exchange of snuff as a form of greeting, also the passing of a communal pipe from hand to hand in the men's house, are instances of social usages which caused a rapid spread of a commodity in a short time (Laufer, Hambly, and Linton, Tobacco and Its Uses in Africa, Field Mus. Nat. Hist., Anthr. Leaflet 29, 1929).

The use of maize, one of the most important factors in the building and preservation of Umbundu culture, has a wide distribution in Africa, but its introduction is dated only from the sixteenth century. The Portuguese carried on a regular traffic in slaves between Angola and Brazil, and in all probability this resulted in the introduction of manioc, peanuts, and sweet potatoes. Possibly

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

Cattle-keepers of southern Angola make butter in calabash churns which are gently swung on a pole. The Ovimbundu have taken cattle from the south and west, but have not adopted dairy products. The cattle of the Ovimbundu are valued as a standard of wealth; have great purchasing power; are used to pay taxes and fines; and, in addition to these social and economic values, are the most important sacrificial animals. This is an instance of the arbitrary selection of some traits of a culture complex, while other factors, even those of economic importance, are ignored. 177

Cultural losses, and failures to utilize factors which were accessible are, according to the foregoing examples, due to change of habitat from northern Angola to the Benguela Highlands; European contacts; long-established agricultural habit; and conservatism, which to some extent is a characteristic of tribes at all cultural levels.

INTEGRATION OF TRAITS

A study which is concerned with growth of culture, demands more than a historical, geographical, and mechanistic interpretation. Morphological and historical research assists in tracing origins and in forming hypotheses respecting the order in which the traits were brought together. But such inquiries are static rather than dynamic, and they are a necessary prelude to anthropological work rather than an ultimate aim. 121

To the methods of research already followed there should be added a psychological approach with the object of showing the way in which various elements of culture are blended and are made to function.

The following pages illustrate the way in which a field investigation is brought into contact with the welding of cultural elements, and the examples chosen call attention to principles that are responsible for the process of integration. This assimilation of cultural elements renders the study of an isolated trait impossible, as the following instances indicate. These illustrations are chosen from field notes, and are grouped in such a way as to emphasize the pivotal elements of Umbundu culture around which minor traits revolve.

Some of the examples given are intended to illustrate a relationship between language (which includes folklore, proverbs, and riddles) and nature knowledge. The latter is closely connected with hunting, food-gathering, and the selection of materials for handwork. 105 182

The part played by Portuguese influence in the formation of the culture of the Ovimbundu has previously been recognized, and in conclusion reference should be made to Portuguese and Ovimbundu relationships at the present day. 177

Native trade and military organization were at one time aided by caravan journeys resulting in the acquisition of slaves and ivory, which were traded for guns and powder. But this caravan trade touching remote parts of central and east Africa is now obsolete. Therefore a breaking down of the economic structure has occurred, but this has to some extent been counteracted by the development of agriculture, which yields large crops of maize and beans.

In the administration of law a new social consciousness has arisen. Portuguese government is of a somewhat direct kind, yet village chiefs and kings have some juridical rights. Appeal to a chief or a king was the old method of securing justice, and at present such appeal may be made by an aggrieved Ocimbundu; but should the appellant be dissatisfied he turns to the Portuguese court.

Portuguese policy aims at making the Ovimbundu a social reflection of the Portuguese themselves. European clothing and manufactures are favored, and Portuguese speech is encouraged, to the detriment of the native Umbundu.

Initiation ceremonies are forbidden, but the bush is wide and protective. To prevent these ceremonies is to take the core from the social system, which has already been weakened by recruiting of labor, so leading to disturbance of family life and village organization. Christian missions have an influence on dress, beliefs, and habits, but these effects appear to be local.

Although this report has been chiefly geographical, ethnological, historical, and analytical, no apology for the method chosen is necessary since this kind of approach is fundamental. I might, in compliance with a modern trend, have made the monograph center in persons, especially Ngonga. By making a close psychological study of his early years, his native environment, and changes in mental attitude arising from contact with Portuguese rule and American missions, an illuminating record of the result of conflicting social forces could be given. 121

In a sense, Ngonga, who speaks English, Portuguese, and Umbundu fluently, has been the focus of study, and care has been taken to recognize his personality in this report. I realize that in Angola work of an intensive psychological and sociological kind remains to be done by means of a penetrating analysis of many [115]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

121 individual careers. Inquirers should closely observe persons who are yet molded chiefly by their native environment, and these individuals should be compared with those who have left their own culture, either permanently or temporarily, to form part of a European social and economic system.

Ethnologists, educationalists, and administrators are concerned with the effects of conflicting cultures on individual attitudes and the stability of native institutions of all kinds. This type of psychological and sociological study has not been attempted in detail here, and I am not confident that research so closely concerned with administrative methods would be encouraged from a foreigner, though he might be welcomed in Angola as a collector and ethnologist.

During four centuries of foreign contacts the Ovimbundu have continued their resistance to European influence, and field records of 1929 are clear evidence of the tenacity of indigenous culture. But, unfortunately, the decline of indigenous industries, thought processes, institutions, and language has begun. Yet I venture to hope that this monograph will lay a dependable and timely foundation for future studies of behavior, for on research of that kind depends a sympathetic understanding of Negro reaction to European intrusion.

4:Dorsey E-4, 5 (no date)1899 FP13 Mbundu FP13

THE OCIMBANDA, OR WITCH-DOCTOR OF THE OVIMBUNDU OF PORTUGUESE SOUTHWEST AFRICA.

114 In July of last year the Anthropological Department of the Field Columbian Museum secured an ethnological collection from the Ovimbundu of the Portuguese African province of Angola. The collection was made by Rev. T. W. Woodside, a missionary for seven years among the Ovimbundu, and, on account of its completeness and the full data which accompanied the objects, is of unusual [121] importance and value. Perhaps of chief interest among the series of objects illustrating the various phases of native life in this region is the complete "medicine chest" of a witch-doctor. This I shall describe, making free use of the extensive notes furnished by Mr. Woodside, supplemented by several conversations during which the objects themselves were discussed, and much information furnished concerning the Ovimbundu in general. The collection under consideration was obtained from a single individual, and has seen long use.

101 The Ovimbundu are a southern division of an extensive group of people known as the Bundas, who, in turn, belong to the group of Bantu populations. They occupy the territory of the Bailundu and Bihe plateaus, from Bengualla to the Quanza River, a table-land 4000 to upwards of 6000 feet high, and in south latitude about twelve 142 degrees. The Ovimbundu are described by Mr. Woodside as a dark-skinned people, varying from coffee-brown to quite black, with thick curly hair. They are entirely uncivilized, but are a peaceable, 105 kindly people. Their food is chiefly vegetal, although they possess cattle, sheep, goats, pigs, and chickens. They practise polygamy, and the women prepare the food and do nearly all the field work. The men are famous as traders, and journey to the interior for rubber, wax, ivory, and slaves; the latter they secure by purchase from the country of the Lubas. The principal medium of exchange is a cheap cotton cloth which is obtained from white travellers.

791 Among the Ovimbundu, as in nearly all parts of Africa, the 759 witch-doctor is an important personage. He is feared by all classes, and often has more influence and power than the chief himself. Whenever anything is lost or stolen, they apply to the witch-doctor to find out where the object is, or who is the thief. As no one is [761] supposed to die a natural death, the doctor is called in to discover the witch who caused the death. To him they go for all kinds of charms to protect themselves against all evils, or to cast a spell on some one whom they wish to injure; to him they also go for help in

5: Hambly E-5 (1929-30)1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

OCCUPATIONAL RITUAL, BELIEF, AND CUSTOM AMONG THE OVIMBUNDU

By WILFRID DYSON HAMBLY

[114] WHEN leader of the Frederick H. Rawson-Field Museum Expedition of 1929–30 one of my chief objects was the assembling of a representative collection of the arts and handicrafts of Angola, and particularly of the Ovimbundu who occupy the Benguela highlands.

121

[177] The Ovimbundu have been in contact with Europeans for three centuries at least, therefore I was interested to know to what extent daily avocations had become secularized. That a close connection has existed between the sacred and the profane in Negro tribes is well known, and the influence of spiritual beliefs and magical acts in every department of economic life, including agriculture, hunting, fishing, and handicrafts, has been established. But how durable is this dependence of economic life on magical acts and ancestral benediction? How soon does primitive economic life become commercialized on a European pattern?

Other observations of academic interest and practical value relate to division of labor between the sexes, specialization by age and natural aptitude; also the possibility of some callings being of an hereditary nature.

[101] My observations, which were made chiefly in the regions of Bailundu, Elende near Cuma, and Ngalangi, are conveniently classified under the headings of food supply, handicrafts, medicine-men, and education.

FOOD SUPPLY

824 825 At the foundation of economic life is nature lore, which among the male population of the Ovimbundu is so detailed and extensive that the knowledge has given rise to a large vocabulary. The highly specialized acquaintance with trees, plants, birds, mammals, and reptiles on the part of most of the men was a surprise to me. Such information was commonly shared by males, and was in no way peculiar to the professional hunter.

I was easily able to collect a list of fifty birds which are readily distinguished by boys (who shoot them with blunt wooden arrows), and all men seemed familiar with forty species of trees, whose timbers, barks, and fruits were distinguished and named. Boys were exceptionally well acquainted with small mammals; including several kinds of rats and mice, which are trapped, boiled, and eaten. For Field Museum I made a collection of snakes and lizards; a task which again showed the native power of observation and adequacy of vocabulary. Some reptiles, whose re-

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

INTRODUCTION

The Ovimbundu[1] of central Angola appear under various names[2] in narratives by nineteenth and early twentieth century travellers in West Central Africa. In the present century three anthropological studies have been written about them by Childs,[3] Hambly,[4] and Hastings,[5] as well as two shorter studies by Bastos[6] and Santos Brandao,[7] and a large number of articles.[8] Despite the large amount of documentation available there existed a considerable number of gaps, especially as regards the political system and the kinship system.[9] In proposing to work among the Ovimbundu, I hoped to be able to fill in these gaps, and in particular to provide a study of what appeared to be a double-descent kinship system. I also hoped to study the reactions of an African society to Portuguese rule.

I arrived at Nova Lisboa in roughly the centre of Umbundu country in October 1955. Here, as in Lisbon, I was told that it would be very difficult to find an area where the traditional social life of the Ovimbundu as described in the literature

[1] A plural from the singular Ovimbundu. The adjective and the name of the language is Umbundu. The Ovimbundu people are entirely distinct from the Kimbundu people of northern Angola and the two languages are not mutually intelligible. However, the confusion between the two has gone so far that both Europeans and Africans speak of the Ovimbundu people and language as Kimbundu and of the true Kimbundu as Kassandongo.

[2] Mambari, Nano, Ovimbali, and so on.

[3] G. M. Childs, *Umbundu Kinship and Character*, Oxford, 1949.

[4] W. D. Hambly, *The Ovimbundu of Angola*, Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago, 1934.

[5] *Ovimbundu Customs and Practices* (unpublished thesis) 1933, D. A. Hastings.

[6] Trançam Gomes sobre a Etnografia do Districto de Benguella in *Boletim da Sociedade de Geografia de Lisboa*, 1908, pp. 3–13, 44–56, 81–99, 135–40, 169–76, 197–207.

[7] Articles in *Mensário Administrativo* (Luanda) March–April, July–August 1950, and Sept.–Oct., Nov.–Dec. 1952.

[8] See Bibliography.

[9] For an examination of the ethnographic material as it then was, see Merran McCulloch, *The Ovimbundu of Angola*, Ethnographic Survey of Africa. International African Institute, London, 1952.

[p. xiv is blank – Analyst]

114 could be observed. Eventually I decided to work in the Bimbe
121 area, in the extreme north-western corner of Umbundu country.
184 The census[10] indicated that Bimbe had a smaller white popula-
[62] tion than any comparable area of Umbundu country, and people who knew it considered that it was one of the areas most likely to retain a relatively conservative social life.

114 In Bimbe I settled in the village of Epalanga in the chiefdom
121 of Gumba. The advantage of Gumba lay in the conservatism
184 for which its people were noted in other chiefdoms; its dis-
101 advantage lay in its proximity to the northern boundary of Umbundu speech and culture, which led me to collect some items of ethnographic information not typical of Umbundu country.[11] On the whole, I am satisfied that the people of Gumba were in the past as in the present Ovimbundu in both speech and way of life.[12]

121 Many of my discoveries were at first negative ones. I could not find any evidence that there was a double system of kinship groups actually in existence; the villages were not composed of agnatic kin; the chief seemed lacking in power. Nor was it easy to obtain detailed information about the past even from old
181 men. There is little interest nowadays in history, nor are the old social institutions regarded, even by those who once participated in them, as being necessarily better than those of the present day. The reason for this attitude seems to lie in Umbundu social psychology with its readiness to accept European authority and
121 values. Interesting as the motivations behind this attitude are, this 'cultural amnesia' caused me much disappointment. I found it much easier to get texts on the caravan trade, and on ceremonial practices and proverbs, than on the political and kinship systems. The inadequacies of the information I received on the political system may be explained by the fact that Gumba is on the fringe of the area tributary to the old kingdom of

[10] Of 1950.

[11] The payment of fines by a man to his dead wife's kin had been formerly
[102] practised in Gumba, and still is further north. It does not seem to have been known in living memory elsewhere in Umbundu country.

[12] The northern limit of Umbundu speech is now somewhere to the north of the administrative post of Cela. As there has not been substantial migration from the south, it is reasonable to assume that it is many years since the Gumba-Cela boundary was also the language boundary.

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Bailundo.[13] On the kinship system, however, I was even more disappointed. The information which I was given on the matrilineal groups formerly existing was much less than that provided by Hastings,[14] or by Childs,[15] and I have therefore not been able to obtain the detail for which I had hoped on the double-descent system. [21]

Like all anthropologists I had a certain number of difficulties in making contact with the people, and to these were added the problems of finding underlying consistencies in a changing society. The Ovimbundu are not interested in genealogies and did not see why I was. My first attempts to take village censuses were regarded with great suspicion, and more than once people refused to give their names. Kinship terms and norms seemed to be and were very confused. Various matters, such as surviving pagan rituals, were concealed from me. My personal relations with the people were very happy, however, and almost everybody who came to know me was prepared to answer my questions at length. [21] [23] [22]

My two great problems in the field were to obtain information on the old social structure (which I already knew in outline from the written material), and to see how the present-day society worked. The material in this thesis will be laid out in the following way. The first part will give an outline of Umbundu social structure as it was in the period 1874–1911,[16] that is, the era of the rubber trade. The second part will give a series of chapters on present day Umbundu society, which will provide the information necessary for an understanding of the mechanisms of social control. In the third part a detailed discussion of social control is made, beginning with an examination of a number of disputes. It is shown how the network of kinship and marriage ties in a neighbourhood provide local continuity and stability, while the wider units in which the Ovimbundu now participate are of European origin and control. [21] [22]

[13] Caenguse and Cela were tributary to Bailundo but were not incorporated into the actual kingdom (Childs, p. 168). Caenguse people say that they are not Va-Mbailundu. [63]

[14] Hastings, Chapter VI.

[15] Hastings gives more information than Childs on the matrilineal kin group.

[16] The period of the rubber trade. Childs, pp. 200–15.

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meet other Angolan Protestants through such occasions as the Congress of Evangelical Youth, held at Malange in 1955.

While the Catholic missions are not tied to the Ovimbundu in the same way as the Protestants the number of their adherents falls sharply when the Umbundu boundary is reached. Responsiveness to missionary activity is a mark of the Ovimbundu today just as was participation in the caravan trade. Indeed, the main common possession of the Ovimbundu, the Umbundu language, is, as a literary vehicle and object of study, almost a missionary monopoly. Both missions produce a monthly magazine in Umbundu and Portuguese, and several books of a religious or educational nature have been published with Umbundu on one side and Portuguese on the other as legally required. The dictionaries and grammars are almost all of missionary authorship.

Acceptance of Christianity has also significance for Umbundu self-consciousness. The majority of Ovimbundu have come under missionary influence in varying degrees, and conversion to Christianity makes Ovimbundu feel closer to Europeans and superior to other African peoples. I have heard African priests claim that the Ovimbundu are the best people in Angola, largely on this ground, and at Lobito and Luanda tensions have been felt in the Protestant community between Ovimbundu and members of other tribes.[11]

The Ovimbundu live under economic, political, and religious systems introduced and controlled by Europeans. Yet trader, official, and missionary are all dependent on the Ovimbundu. The 'civilized' and the native live in symbiosis, and the two basic problems of this study are the nature of this symbiosis, and its relation to the social system of the native population themselves. To see this symbiosis in perspective it is necessary to describe what occupations and statuses Africans can hold.

The strict segregation of black and white found in South Africa is alien to Portuguese traditions. There is a lack of almost all forms of public segregation between white and non-white.[12]

[11] Personal information.

[12] In the racial discrimination that does exist the mulattoes generally count as whites. It is said to be difficult for a full African to obtain accommodation in a Luanda hotel, but the situation for mulattoes is quite different.

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switching to Umbundu or Portuguese for addressing an African, whereas Portuguese is the language used at the Catholic missions even between non-Portuguese.

The African Catholic priests then have approximate equality and identity of status with their white confreres within the hierarchic framework of the diocese of Nova Lisboa; the Ovimbundu pastors lack this equality and identity but instead possess greater independence and opportunities for leadership within the Umbundu Native Church, which functions as a partly autonomous body.[19] The difference in functions of the priests and pastors is related to the ultimate aims of missionary action; for the Catholic missions the establishment of a local clergy is part of the complete incorporation of Ovimbundu into the universal Church; for the Protestants the establishment of a local clergy is part of the building up of a totally independent local church.

I attempt later in this work to show what roles the missions play in social life among the Ovimbundu and in the relations between the 'civilized' and native population. Here it should be noted that it is the missions rather than commerce or the Government which have opened status-giving positions to the Ovimbundu. The clergy have higher statuses in the total Angolan society than do any other of the *assimilados*. They combine this high status *vis-à-vis* the Europeans with leadership in groupings which include the ordinary villagers, unlike the various welfare societies in which the *assimilados* associate.

So much then for the general pattern of cities, communications, and trains, of administration, missionaries, and traders. I now turn to the particular features of the neighbourhood where I lived. Bimbe is said to derive from the name of a princess (Mbimbi) who ruled as a vassal of the king of Bailundo.[20] Here at the beginning of this century Samakaka, a

[19] The missions provide supervision and specialist services including agricultural instruction, community development, education, and health. Village work and actual pastoral activity is the responsibility of the Native Church. For an account of such specialist services see M. F. Cushmann, *Missionary Doctor in Africa*, New York, 1944 and A. Strangeways in *African Women* (June 1956).

[20] Information obtained locally from 'civilized' people. Princesses were very rare among the Ovimbundu, though Childs notes that Sambos (Sambo) had a woman ruler early in its history (p. 178).

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CHAPTER VII

KINSHIP

1. *General Aspects*

128 A good deal has been said about the contemporary kinship system in Chapter IV, where it was discussed from the point of view of the local organization rather than in its own right. This chapter must, therefore, to some extent, refer to information already presented in Chapters I and IV, since there are three problems to be discussed—the form of the old kinship system, the form of the present kinship system, and the reasons for the changes from one system to the other.

The following approach will be adopted: the ethnographic sources for Umbundu kinship will be examined, information will then be given on the kinship norms formerly valid, and an attempt will then be made to give a coherent sketch of the system then existing. After this, reference will be made to the actual operation of present-day kinship norms and the significance of descent and inheritance. Then factors in the transition between the two systems will be brought forward.

611 It has been generally accepted by commentators on the ethnographic material that the traditional Umbundu kinship system is of the type called a 'double-descent' system.[1] 'Descent' is used by British anthropologists to imply membership of a group involving rights and duties.[2] Hence, it can only be claimed that the Ovimbundu possessed such a system if there existed two sets of kin groups, and not simply some combination of matrilineal inheritance and virilocal residence at marriage.

One anthropologist, Mr. W. D. Hambly, and two missionaries

[text continues on p.92]

[1] For other African double-descent systems see *African Systems of Kinship and Marriage*, ed. Radcliffe-Brown and Forde (Oxford, 1950), pp. 79, 283–335.

[2] The word seems to have been first used in this sense by W. H. R. Rivers.

CHAPTER IX

SOCIAL CONTROL

1. *Introduction*

121 626 In this chapter I shall describe and analyse three disputes which reveal the working of social control in present-day Umbundu society. The first dispute is between an elder of the school and a government headman, the second is between a traditional headman and a villager with the intervention of a local self-styled *assimilado*[1], and the third arose from a quarrel between an irregularly installed chief and a traditional headman.

[178] The points which it is hoped will arise from the analysis of the material are the disappearance or extreme weakness of the traditional institutions of social control, the way in which the Ovimbundu appeal to the members of the 'civilized' community for decisions or support in cases, and how kinship ties affect the relations between persons involved in a dispute.

2. *Guilherme and Paulo*

578 The parties principally involved in the first dispute were Paulo (24. See List of Epalanga residents), the elder of the school at Epalanga, and his cross-cousin Guilherme (see List II, p. 55), a government headman then living in Epalanga, Francisco, a son of the former chief Mbati and wife's brother to Paulo, and Sapapula (10), the headman and reputed founder of Epalanga. The sequence of the dispute is first a quarrel between Paulo and Guilherme. Guilherme then attacks Paulo through his wife's brother Francisco. This brings about a general attack

[1] The fact that Justino was not actually an assimilado is not relevant, since he used the belief of the local people that he was.

[assimilado is an African governing Portuguese citizenship -- Analyst]

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CONCLUSIONS

The phrase 'A Study of Social Control and Social Change among the Ovimbundu' implies an analysis of the working of the social maintenance mechanism in a period of social change. The concept appears almost paradoxical since it seems that effective maintenance machinery[1] would prevent social change, and rapid social change is often associated by anthropologists with a situation of individual and social demoralization and disintegration.[2] At the present time the Ovimbundu of the area where fieldwork was done have undergone very rapid social change and have a reasonably effective system of social control, which, however, differs considerably from the traditional system. To confirm these statements, I briefly summarize the material provided in previous chapters.

In the time of the rubber trade (1874–1911) there existed a number of Úmbundu kingdoms. The king, assisted and checked, as elsewhere in Africa by titled ministers, was responsible for external relations, undertook certain rituals, and provided a supreme court of appeal where trials were conducted by set rules of procedure. The real unit of law, as regards Gumba at least, seems to have been the sub-chiefdom, with its few thousand inhabitants, governed by a chief who like the king had to administer justice together with his councillors.

This body of councillors included the village headmen who were the heads of bodies of agnatic kin. They had general legal and political responsibility for the village. While the disputes arising in village relations were kept within the patrilineal kin group, the problems arising from the inheritance of movable goods and particularly from the highly important caravan trade were dealt with in the matrilineal group. Owing to the dispersed nature of this group and to its commercial preoccupations the sanctions operating within it must have differed somewhat from those found at the chief's court or village men's

[1] For this term see S. F. Nadel, *Theory of Social Structure*, London, 1957, p. 55.
[2] e.g. G. and M. Wilson, *Analysis of Social Change*, Cambridge, 1945.

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gaining of wealth by means involving extensive economic co-operation among the Ovimbundu themselves, money was earned in an individual relation to a particular European whether planter or trader. 105 178

It must be recognized that the relation between economic change and the continuation or disintegration of kinship groups is a yet unsolved problem of anthropology,[8] particularly as it is seldom possible to isolate the economic pressure. I emphasize the readiness of the Ovimbundu for change, their willing acceptance of the role of clients to the whites.[7] It may be suggested that this attitude was established in the period of the trade when the Ovimbundu were ultimately dependent on the whites for trade goods and that this attitude of imitation and receptivity lies behind the disappearance of so much of the old social structure and the lack of any myth of, or even interest in, the past.[8] [121]

I have claimed that the present system of social control is effective.[9] This may be granted empirically for the reasons already given, the absence of serious crime or prolonged conflict involving the whole community, the effective checks on the functionaries of the post, and the failure of squabbles to tear the network of kin and affinal ties. If a working social system is a proof of an integrated society, then contemporary Umbundu society qualifies for this description. This is not the only possible way of looking at it. It may be claimed that under present circumstances the Ovimbundu are no longer integrated by their tribal system but are held together by the Angolan 105 182

[8] For various comments on this problem see A. I. Richards, in *African Systems of Kinship and Marriage*, p. 251, M. Fortes, 'Structure of Unilineal Descent Groups', in *American Anthropologist*, Feb. 1953, M. Douglas (review of Mitchell's *The Yao Village*) in *Africa*, July 1957.

[7] Cf. the Ngangela name for the Ovimbundu, the Ovimbali, a term traditionally applied to Africans living in close contact with the whites. The Ovimbundu accept this stereotype.

[8] 'A lack of history is correlated with the amorphous character of the society.' R. Cohen in Cohen and Gluckman (ed.) *Seven Tribes of British Central Africa*, Oxford, 1951, p. 100.

[9] Other quarrels of which I heard while in Epalanga: a messenger from the mission sent to intervene in a marriage dispute was attacked; the chief of Chicunda summoned to the mission for a telling-off after beating up one of his people; a man from Gumba refusing to go to a funeral in Cassongue of a man whose death he was thought to have caused by sorcery.

PART ONE [p.17]

SOCIAL STRUCTURE

121 *The object of Part One is* (1) *to describe the present social structure of the Ovimbundu, and* (2) *to suggest significant elements that this social structure has or may have for the programme of Christian missions among this people.*

CHAPTER II

POLITICAL AND SOCIAL LIFE

127 122 HAD my historical survey revealed a detailed description of Umbundu social structure made at some former time, it would also be useful to make comparisons with the present state of affairs. Since there is no such witness out of the past, it is only possible to describe and analyse that which at present exists. For this purpose some excerpts from Umbundu narratives are presented and references made to certain folk-tales and proverbs. The basis of the analysis and description rests more especially, however, upon notes and impressions gathered in field-work over a period of years and upon a considerable number of genealogical tables and schedules of marriage arrangements.[1] These latter are referred to here only to a certain extent. I hope to treat these more fully later. The subject of marriage properly belongs to the field of social structure, but because of its importance I hope to devote a chapter to it. Only certain of the genealogical tables are presented fully and in their several aspects, while the others have served as basis and background for the whole of this part of the study.

565 175 The most significant historical allusion to the social structure of the Ovimbundu which I have found was an observation of Pinheiro de Lacerda about 1790. 'These are they of the Highlands who are made up of two "systems" the one call themselves [266] "Quimbundos" (i.e. Ovimbundu), (these do not eat human flesh): the others are called "Quimbangalas" (i.e. the royal households of Imbangala stock), who eat it, and when they make their sacrifice, [782] at which all together attend, then all eat the "Makongo".'[2]

[1] I have 192 of the former and 75 of the latter.
[2] *Annaes Maritimos & Coloniaes*, 5a Ser., p. 488.

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[p. iii]

ETHNOGRAPHIC SURVEY OF AFRICA

FOREWORD

The preparation of a comprehensive survey of the tribal societies of Africa was discussed by the Executive Council of the Institute as far back as 1937, but the interruption and restricting of its activities caused by the war resulted in the postponement of the project. Events and developments during recent years, however, have led to a wider recognition of the need for collating and making more generally available the wealth of existing but uncoordinated material on the ethnic groupings and social conditions of African peoples, particularly in connection with plans for economic and social development. Moreover, it appeared that the International African Institute, as an international body which has received support from and performed services for the different Colonial governments, was in a very favourable situation for undertaking such a task. 121

The Institute, therefore, in 1946, applied to the recently established British Colonial Social Science Research Council for a grant from the Colonial Development and Welfare Fund to finance the preparation of an Ethnographic Survey of Africa, and a grant was allocated for a period of five years from 1945, and was subsequently extended for a further period of three years. A committee, under the Chairmanship of Professor Radcliffe-Brown, was appointed to consider the scope and form of the survey, and collaboration was established with research institutions in South Africa, Rhodesia, East Africa, French West Africa, Belgium and the Belgian Congo. 122

The aim of the Ethnographic Survey is to present a concise, critical, and accurate account of our present knowledge of the tribal groupings, distribution, physical environment, social conditions, political and economic structure, religious beliefs and cult practices, technology and art of the African peoples. The material is presented as briefly and on as consistent a plan as possible, and the texts are supplemented by maps and comprehensive bibliographies. 121

The Ethnographic Survey is being published as a series of separate, self-contained studies, each devoted to one particular people or cluster of peoples. It is hoped that publication in this form will make the results more quickly and readily available to those interested in specific areas or groups. A list of the sections which have already appeared is given on the cover of this volume.

Since the unequal value and the generally unsystematic nature of the available information constituted a chief reason for undertaking this survey, it will be obvious that the material here presented can make no claim to be complete or definitive. Every effort has been made, however, to scrutinise all available literature and to check it by reference to unpublished sources and to workers actually in the field; thus it is intended to present a clear picture of our existing knowledge and to point out the directions in which the need for further studies is most pressing. Any assistance from those who are in a position to remedy deficiencies and correct inaccuracies by providing supplementary material will be 000

PREFACE

As leader of the Frederick H. Rawson-Field Museum Ethnological Expedition to West Africa I undertook research in Angola and Nigeria, from February, 1929, to February, 1930. The present publication is concerned with the ethnology of Angola (Portuguese West Africa), where a study of the Ovimbundu and their culture contacts was made. 122

At the outset I must express thanks to the Portuguese government for permission to carry on this investigation. Owing to the courtesy of the American Vice-Consul, Mr. Arthur F. Tower of Loanda, I received from the Governor General of Angola a letter of introduction which was of inestimable service during my journey in the interior. 000

From Portuguese officials much help was obtained, and sound advice accompanied by practical assistance was always courteously given.

In London I was assisted in the most cordial way by Mr. David Boyle, of the Cunard Steamship Lines, and Colonel B. Follett, D.S.O., of the Tanganyika Concessions Company.

My base camp in Angola was pitched near the Elende Mission Station, where Dr. Merlin W. Ennis kindly provided safe storage for collections and a room for photography. Dr. Ennis was ever ready to discuss and aid my investigation among the Ovimbundu with whom he has spent thirty years. Mrs. Ennis and Miss Rounds aided my studies of handicraft among women. Dr. Hollenbeck gave valuable notes on the ailments of the Ovimbundu; these have been incorporated with my study of medicine-men. 122

Ngonga, my interpreter and chief informant, was secured by Dr. Ennis to assist the investigation, and this he did with the greatest tact and ability. Ngonga speaks English, Portuguese, and Umbundu fluently. These accomplishments were so combined with a deep regard for the customs of his own people, the Ovimbundu, that he made an ideal interpreter. 115

From the base at Elende three journeys were made into the interior. The first of these led to the far south of Angola, among the Vakuanyama; a second journey took me into the Vasele country of northwest Angola; while the third and longest itinerary led as far east as Cangamba, a center of Vachokue culture, thence northward to Saurimo in Lunda. 122

3:Hambly E-5 (1929-1930)1934 FPI3 Mbundu FPI3

122 At the end of each of these journeys, which totaled 5,000 miles, I returned to the base camp, developed photographs, shipped collections, and continued my studies among the Ovimbundu.

In the interior I received help from Mr. and Mrs. H. C. McDowell of Ngalangi, both of whom gave considerable aid in investigating initiation ceremonies for boys and girls, and in securing three medicine-men and a rain-maker to explain their vocations. At Bailundu Mr. G. M. Childs obtained many valuable objects relating to the medicine-man's work, and the worth of these was greatly enhanced by full descriptions, and translations of the Umbundu language in which the explanations were given.

126 Owing to the interest of Professor Edward Sapir, formerly of the University of Chicago, now at Yale, assistance in transcribing phonographic records of the Umbundu language was obtained. The phonetic transcriptions were made by Dr. M. H. Watkins and Mr. R. T. Clarke, whose expert aid was greatly appreciated. Records of drum music were transcribed by Dr. G. Herzog of the University of Chicago. Drawings of objects collected have been prepared by Mr. Carl F. Gronemann, Staff Illustrator of Field Museum.

This recognition of cooperation would be incomplete without gratefully remembering my servants, who shared the fatigue and hazards of the journey. Abilio Esteves proved to be a thoroughly competent guide and adviser. The servants aided in locating ceremonies, acquiring objects, and dealing with the tribes among whom the expedition passed.

WILFRID DYSON HAMBLY

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The fieldwork on which this study is based was undertaken as a Research Fellow of the International African Institute between November 1955 and December 1956. I am grateful to the Executive Council of the Institute for awarding me the Fellowship and to Professor Daryll Forde, Director, and Mrs. B. E. Wyatt, then Secretary of the Institute, for much help in various ways. 122

Professor Meyer Fortes and Dr. Jack Goody were my supervisors during my period as a research student, their advice and criticism being the hammer under which my arguments have acquired some sort of shape. I must also acknowledge the great help and stimulus of Dr. Mary Douglas of University College, London, who contributed greatly to the revision of the manuscript for publication. I am also grateful for the assistance of Dr. V. W. Turner of Manchester, Mr. Charles White, who provided information on the Ovimbundu in Northern Rhodesia, Dr. Ernst Westphal, who introduced me to Umbundu, and Dr. and Mrs. Guy Atkins, who gave me much helpful advice and information.

In Lisbon the late Professor Mendes Correia, Professor Antonio de Almeida, and Dr. Roderigo de Sá Nogueira of the Instituto de Estudos Ultramarinos received me most courteously and were responsible for obtaining authorization for my work from the Overseas Ministry. Dr. and Mrs. Scott, of the Liga Evangelica, Lisbon, aided me with advice, introductions, and a much valued personal friendship.

I should also like to acknowledge the assistance of Senhor Norberto Lopes, at that time Director of Civil Services, the Archbishop of Luanda (the Very Reverend Moyses Alves de Pinho), Colonel Manuel Nascimento Vieira, then Governor of Huambo, Senhor Alberto de Oliveira Mendes, and the British and Portuguese staffs of Messrs. Robert Hudson and Messrs. Hull, Blyth and Co. (Casa Inglesa).

To Dr. Gladwyn Childs I owe both my introduction to the Umbundu people through his book, and his personal hospitality and interest. Other Protestant missionaries who helped

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

122 me in various ways are Dr. Gilchrist, Mr. Henderson, Mr. Okuma, and Mr. Theodore Tucker. The late Padre Albino Alves, C.S.Sp., of Nova Lisboa, Padre C. Estermann, C.S.Sp., of Sá Da Bandeira, and Padre J. Feltin, C.S.Sp., of Bimbe, gave me advice, information, hospitality, friendship, and much kindness.

The people of Epalanga and its neighbourhood were most patient and polite to me. I must mention by name my servant, Pedro Epalanga Chimbalanya.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

764 The interpretation of the chanting is "God has cheated me of a life." That is, God gave a life and he has taken it.

My interpreter, who was a relative of the deceased boy, explained to the people that I was seriously interested. This was necessary, as they were afraid of ridicule and hostile opinion. I sat down by the father of the dead boy and talked with him through my interpreter. In the meantime I observed that the corpse was in a cloth-covered box slung on a pole, which was supported on the shoulders of two men who stood very close to the drummers. The bearers remained immovable except for the occasional changing of the coffin pole from one shoulder to another. At intervals women came out from the group to dance near the coffin, one, two, or three at a time. One boy was particularly energetic in leaping in front of the corpse. When the performers had danced they returned to the crowd from which other persons immediately advanced. These detached and spontaneous performances each lasted about two minutes.

After two hours the bearers of the coffin moved away, followed on one side by some of the men, on the other side by a few women. A large number of men and women remained behind with the drummers. The music and the solo dancing continued. The corpse was removed to a place about a hundred yards from the spot where the initial ceremonies had been performed. The bearers still held the coffin on their shoulders, while men and women seated themselves on each side of the bier. This part of the proceeding was solemn and there was little conversation, though tobacco-smoking continued among both men and women (Plate XLV, Fig. 1).

A woman about forty-five years of age held a plate of corn meal in her hand while she stood close to the corpse and in line with the bier. She addressed the corpse very earnestly and paused intermittently for a reply. While speaking, the woman looked intently at the foremost of the bearers, who both stood immovable with their heads inclined forward and eyes directed to the ground.

764 602 My interpreter (Ngonga) said that the woman addressing the corpse was the oldest sister of the father of the dead boy, and that she was asking the spirit of the dead boy why he died. Here Ngonga threw a side light on family relationships.

The father of the dead boy was the son of Ngonga's mother's brother. The dead boy used to call Ngonga *tate* ("my father"); Ngonga called him *omolānge* ("my child"). When the woman had addressed the corpse an old man took her place. He held up the

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Bailundo.[13] On the kinship system, however, I was even more disappointed. The information which I was given on the matrilineal groups formerly existing was much less than that provided by Hastings,[14] or by Childs,[15] and I have therefore not been able to obtain the detail for which I had hoped on the double-descent system. 121

Like all anthropologists I had a certain number of difficulties in making contact with the people, and to these were added the problems of finding underlying consistencies in a changing society. The Ovimbundu are not interested in genealogies and did not see why I was. My first attempts to take village censuses were regarded with great suspicion, and more than once people refused to give their names. Kinship terms and norms seemed to be and were very confused. Various matters, such as surviving pagan rituals, were concealed from me. My personal relations with the people were very happy, however, and almost everybody who came to know me was prepared to answer my questions at length. 121 123 [182]

My two great problems in the field were to obtain information on the old social structure (which I already knew in outline from the written material), and to see how the present-day society worked. The material in this thesis will be laid out in the following way. The first part will give an outline of Umbundu social structure as it was in the period 1874–1911,[16] that is, the era of the rubber trade. The second part will give a series of chapters on present day Umbundu society, which will provide the information necessary for an understanding of the mechanisms of social control. In the third part a detailed discussion of social control is made, beginning with an examination of a number of disputes. It is shown how the network of kinship and marriage ties in a neighbourhood provide local continuity and stability, while the wider units in which the Ovimbundu now participate are of European origin and control. 121 128

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[14] Hastings, Chapter VI.

[15] Hastings gives more information than Childs on the matrilineal kin group.

[16] The period of the rubber trade. Childs, pp. 202–15.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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having been elected according to traditional rules. Lusase was angry at this, turned up at the ceremony, and attacked Sapapula.

The following morning Epalanga buzzed with indignation. Gregorio, the chief of Menga, and Mandumba, Sapapula's son, had arrived at Epalanga to express their support, and Gregorio asked me[9] to write a letter to the Mission to get its support against Lusase at the post. I said that I would go to the chief's village to persuade Lusase to seek a reconciliation. The elder Wasuka, a cross-cousin of Sapapula, declared that even if Lusase offered five cattle in compensation they would not be accepted, and Sapapula's supporters portrayed him as a much injured man, repeatedly the victim of the Guilherme, Kapapelo, Lusase, Ndonga clique. My offer to go to the chief's village fell through when we heard that Lusase was now no longer there, but near, apparently at Simbwyikoka's.

I suggested that the moot should be held at Simbwyikoka's since the case had begun there; the others said 'No, let him come over here.' The crowd settled down in the open space before my house. News was then brought to us that Lusase refused to come over and insisted on the people coming to him, declaring that he ruled all, and did not obey the anthropologist but only the *chefe*. Accordingly everybody got up and walked over to Simbwyikoka's. Here we leant that Lusase had fled. Kambungo[10], an elder of Menga and kinsmen of Sapapula, declared that somebody who behaved like this could not be chief. Gregorio the chief of Menga became involved in an argument with Ndonga, who he said was responsible for installing Lusase. This Ndonga denied. This, incidentally, was the first time that I had heard that Lusase was not properly elected. As previously noted on the fall of Kafelo, Lusase had arrived at the post and announced himself as being the new chief. The Gumba people did not protest about this for fear of possible reactions from the post.

It now became known that Lusase could not be found.

[9] It may be suggested that my interventions were not in accordance with anthropological etiquette. It is difficult to see what else I could have done; it is, after all, the local custom for 'civilised' persons to provide letters of recommendation, and a refusal on my part would not have been understood.

[10] He has been mentioned in Chapter V.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

121 be recognized. *First*, there is a sympathetic but entirely unsyste-
177 matic use of the culture in question which collects folk-lore, customs, or other single items to use them as illustrations, as lesson or sermon material, &c., but without reference to their context in the fabric or pattern of the culture. *Second*, there is an attempt to rebuild those functions or institutions which *a priori* are judged essential and to leave untouched those judged unessential. Still, whatever is done, is done without reference to the pattern of the culture in question and the criteria are predetermined. *The third method* is that advocated by the present study. It begins with a systematic study of the culture in question, especially its characteristic patterns of behaviour, significant attitudes, beliefs and customs; and the effect of its contact with other cultures; in order

To determine and describe the content;

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6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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for individuals to build up large villages—thus Simbwyikoka encouraged people to settle at Mwekalia to make it a large village. It may also be suggested that the power of the village headmen was to some extent linked with the power of the chief, since the headmen were associated politically with the chief, and would from this, tend to gain authority in their dealings with their fellow villagers. The village headmen also lacked any real competition from other types of leadership. Mbati had kept relations with the post in his own hands, and there were therefore no government headmen. The first catechist had arrived in Mbati's village in 1928, but cannot have met with much lasting success as there are few baptized Christians over thirty-five in Gumba.

Other factors at the time strengthening the position of the village headmen were the low rate of labour migration[18] and the fact that practically every man over forty at the time of Simbwyikoka's accession had participated in the rubber trade. This meant that many of the best known caravan leaders were still in full vigour, and enjoyed a prestige based on the first-hand knowledge of the middle-aged and older men.

Between this period of the middle thirties and the beginning of my own fieldwork twenty years had passed and many changes had taken place. The status of the chief had sharply declined and he was now assisted by the four government headmen. Every village except the chief's village had a Catholic or Protestant catechist, and there had been a marked trend towards learning catechism in preparation for baptism, which had begun about 1946. Hence the catechetical school was usually attended by the majority of under twenty-five's in the village.

Agnatic kinship had ceased to be the principle of village membership. Nor can it be said that headmen build up villages by getting people to settle at a particular spot. It is not always easy even to find the headman, village population is not very stable, and a man can settle with any category of kin.

To discover the traditional headman required careful phrasing of questions. When I visited a village and asked for the *ankulu yimbo* (the traditional phrase for the village headman) I

[18] Ibid., p. 214.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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might be told that he lived elsewhere. This would turn out to be a reference to the government headman. A request for the *asekulu* (literally elder father, hence elder or headman) might also bring me in contact with the 'elder of the school', the representative of the local Christians. I therefore began to ask for 'the old one' (*ukulu*), or to inquire 'Who built first?' or 'Who settles disputes?', when I wanted to find out who was the traditional headman.

Even these questions did not necessarily get a clear answer. Thus the village of Kamupa had been founded by Lusase, its government headman was Guilherme, and, as neither of these was living near, minor disputes were referred to two old men who lived in the village. Apart from the government headmen, there are also traditional headmen recognized by the post, who did not have the privileges and the duties of the former. It may happen in a particular village that the man recognized as traditional headman by the post is not the same person as the real traditional headman recognized by the village. This was the case in Epalanga, where Sapapula was unquestionably the headman recognized by the villagers but the duties of dealing with policemen fell to Luanga. In the local discussions as to the recruitment of road-workers, and so on, Sapapula had much more influence than Luanga.

The position of the traditional headman nowadays lacks clearly defined powers, or symbolic value. A village is frequently known by its founder's name. The headman is the only person who can speak of 'my village' as opposed to 'our village'.[19] The firing of the long grass in the dry season which marks the beginning of the great communal hunts is theoretically begun by the village headman, though this is not always adhered to in practice. The headman does not take any active part in leading the hunt, nor are the people who go on a communal hunt necessarily confined to the inhabitants of one village. He has 'to show land' to new-comers to the village. This reflects a moral responsibility to his people rather than control of land tenure, since there is always spare land away from the villages which anybody can cultivate. He also has the responsibility of hearing minor disputes. He receives from the

[19] Ibid., pp. 56-57.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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and wage labour which I have described as affecting the Ovimbundu as a whole.

It is not easy to compose budgets of household expenditure and income, partly because they have not yet much of a 'book-keeping' outlook, and partly because they suspect the motives behind questions of this sort. My own opinion is that from agriculture the average household would earn considerably less than 1,000 escudos (£12. 10s.) a year. The Banco de Angola in its Report for 1955[4] gives a budget for an African family at Silva Porto, consisting of father, mother, and two young children, having agriculture as their only source of income. Their total yearly income is given as 7,750 escudos (about £96. 17s. 6d.). Even allowing for the higher prices paid for crops on the railway line, an income of this order is far above anything earned by the average cultivating household, though it might be earned by the few men who cultivated coffee extensively and lived in Portuguese style.

Some details of the economic life of individuals may give depth to this chapter. Kambungo, a kinsman of Sapapula living in Menga, was a man of over sixty who had in his youth travelled on the caravans. He had a large house but lived in a village amongst kinsfolk. In June 1955 he had been in Kwanyama country where, with shells obtained at Luanda, he had bought cattle and for 15 of the *olomande* shells he got a sewing-machine. In the year 1955–6 (very roughly from the end of the dry season in '55 to the same period in '56) he had sold ten sacks of maize at 25 escudos each and six sacks of beans for 60 escudos each. He had, however, concluded that maize did not pay and had started to grow coffee. He had sold one beast for 900 escudos (£10. 15. 0), and had also sold ten sheep for 100 escudos (£1. 5. 0) each. He had also sold a coat for 120 escudos (£1. 10. 0).

The principal item of Kambungo's expenditure was a bicycle which he bought for 1,500 escudos (£18. 15s.). He had also bought two beds each 100 escudos, and ten plates 100 escudos altogether. He had bought ten bottles of wine, at 5 escudos each, and had also bought some indigenous rum, price not noted. Ten traditional sleeping mats cost 2½ escudos each, and four

[4] Quoted by Egerton, pp. 124–5.

3:Hambly E-5 (1929-1930)1934 FP3 Mbundu FP3

122 At the end of each of these journeys, which totaled 5,000 miles, I returned to the base camp, developed photographs, shipped collections, and continued my studies among the Ovimbundu.

In the interior I received help from Mr. and Mrs. H. C. McDowell of Ngalangi, both of whom gave considerable aid in investigating initiation ceremonies for boys and girls, and in securing three medicine-men and a rain-maker to explain their vocations. At Bailundu Mr. G. M. Childs obtained many valuable objects relating to the medicine-man's work, and the worth of these was greatly enhanced by full descriptions, and translations of the Umbundu language in which the explanations were given.

126 Owing to the interest of Professor Edward Sapir, formerly of the University of Chicago, now at Yale, assistance in transcribing phonographic records of the Umbundu language was obtained. The phonetic transcriptions were made by Dr. M. H. Watkins and Mr. R. T. Clarke, whose expert aid was greatly appreciated. Records of drum music were transcribed by Dr. G. Herzog of the University of Chicago. Drawings of objects collected have been prepared by Mr. Carl F. Gronemann, Staff Illustrator of Field Museum.

This recognition of cooperation would be incomplete without gratefully remembering my servants, who shared the fatigue and hazards of the journey. Abilio Esteves proved to be a thoroughly competent guide and adviser. The servants aided in locating ceremonies, acquiring objects, and dealing with the tribes among whom the expedition passed.

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in the works of Battell, Cavazzi, and other early writers. A description of the whipping of boys at initiation (p. 99) agrees with my own records, but details of the period and place are not given by Tucker. Questioning a corpse (p. 102) is a ceremony I have witnessed and described, but the instance referred to by Tucker relates to the interrogation of the corpse of a chief with regard to his choice of a successor; there are laws of succession, but these may be waived. The ceremony described in my monograph was conducted to discover the cause of death and not to determine succession. If Tucker has any detailed information with regard to puberty ceremonies for girls his reticence is regrettable (p. 142). Tucker says that suicide among women is common (p. 143). A mention of *ocisanji*, a feast for spirits at which meat is offered to idols, is interesting (p. 168) but details are lacking, and the use of the word idols is ambiguous. The information respecting use of charms is corroborative of my own observations in two other centers, Elende and Ngalangi.

The most recent publication on the ethnology of Angola is that of F. and W. Jaspert of the Städtisches Völkermuseum, Frankfort, 1930. Their journey was undertaken primarily to make collections for a museum, but linguistic and ethnological information was recorded among several tribes, notably the Kimbundu, Vachokue, Luchazi, Luimba, and Kusongo. The farthest point attained in a southerly direction was just north of Kipungo, and the general line of march was from Benguela to the northeast, into Lunda. There is very little overlapping in the work of the Jasperts and myself. My itinerary took me to the extreme south into the Vakuanyama country, and to the far east of Moxico among the Vachokue.

My work is presented as a monograph on the Ovimbundu only, and of their culture I treat exclusively, with some reference to the culture contacts observed on all sides of them. The Jasperts do not give an entire section to any one tribe; but combine their information respecting the tribes in a concurrent way, under such subjects as technology, language, and art.

If the sections relating to history and languages are excluded there remain a hundred pages, only one-sixth of which refer to the Ovimbundu; but there is a difficulty in reading through the book without being confused as to the tribe and exact locality under discussion.

The pages devoted to a comparative vocabulary form an important part of the work, and one which I barely touched, though I prepared an outline of Umbundu grammar and made dictaphone records of the

114 Umbundu language. The illustrations in photogravure are excellent,
126 but the small-scale map is difficult to follow.

114 As might be expected in a work covering an enormous tract of
241 country, the information is of a very general kind; I have nowhere
224 been able to check in any detail on my own observations. F. and W. Jaspert recognize that Umbundu culture is primarily based on agriculture, maize being the most important crop, but they do not admit the importance of hunting (p. 16).

I saw many successful parties of Umbundu hunters, tested their precision with the bow and arrow, and was able to record the ritual connected with the initiation of a professional hunter. There is also a ceremony before the hunter sets out. It would be more accurate to say that, although Umbundu culture is based primarily on agriculture, hunting still retains some of its earlier importance.

114 The diagrams of houses in different parts of Angola are a useful feature of the work. I made many photographs but did not record details of planning.

114 The masks I obtained are exactly like those pictured, but my
881 observations were carried out a long way to the southeast of the point where the Jasperts touched the Vachokue culture. I do not understand from their description whether the writers saw an initiation ceremony. They state that boys are circumcised and girls are excised when very young, even at the age of five or six years. I observed initiation camps and dances at three centers, Ngalangi, Katoko, and Cangamba; the last named is the main center of Vachokue culture. The male novices varied in age from twelve to sixteen years hence they were older than the novices mentioned by the Jasperts. I was informed that there were no excision operations for girls, though at Ngalangi, Vanyemba girls were secluded in the bush during initiation rites lasting for a month.

Bibliographical references to the research of H. Baumann will be found useful for comparative study. His detailed record of initiation among the Vachokue is valuable as a check on my observation, as we worked independently in areas separated by several hundred miles.

Consultation of historical sources gives the following answers to questions which were asked as an introduction to this chapter.

174 On the grounds of tribal tradition, historical evidence, and cultural affinities, the original home of the Ovimbundu was likely to have been in the southwest Congo. The Ovimbundu undoubtedly possess important cultural traits that have been characteristic of the southern Congo region from the earliest time for which a record exists.

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PART ONE [p.17]

SOCIAL STRUCTURE

121 *The object of Part One is* (1) *to describe the present social structure of the Ovimbundu, and* (2) *to suggest significant elements that this social structure has or may have for the programme of Christian missions among this people.*

CHAPTER II

POLITICAL AND SOCIAL LIFE

127 122 HAD my historical survey revealed a detailed description of Umbundu social structure made at some former time, it would also be useful to make comparisons with the present state of affairs. Since there is no such witness out of the past, it is only possible to describe and analyse that which at present exists. For this purpose some excerpts from Umbundu narratives are presented and references made to certain folk-tales and proverbs. The basis of the analysis and description rests more especially, however, upon notes and impressions gathered in field-work over a period of years and upon a considerable number of genealogical tables and schedules of marriage arrangements.[1] These latter are referred to here only to a certain extent. I hope to treat these more fully later. The subject of marriage properly belongs to the field of social structure, but because of its importance I hope to devote a chapter to it. Only certain of the genealogical tables are presented fully and in their several aspects, while the others have served as basis and background for the whole of this part of the study.

565 175 The most significant historical allusion to the social structure of the Ovimbundu which I have found was an observation of Pinheiro de Lacerda about 1790. 'These are they of the Highlands who are made up of two "systems" the one call themselves [266] "Quimbundos" (i.e. Ovimbundu), (th[illegible]do not eat human flesh): the others are called "Quimbangalas" (i.e. the royal households of [782] Imbangala stock), who eat it, and when they make their sacrifice, at which all together attend, then all eat the "Makongo".'[2]

[1] I have 192 of the former and 75 of the latter.
[2] *Annaes Maritimos & Coloniaes*, 5a Ser., p. 488.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

121 Geographical study is valuable in showing that physical factors such as position, topography, soil, and climate have had not only a permissive but a stimulating effect on the development of certain cultural traits.

• 127 Historical documents dating from the year A.D. 1500 present valuable evidence for tribal movements, the effect of early European contacts, and the existence of certain beliefs and ceremonies. The facts adduced in chapter III are used in chapters X–XII in discussing culture contacts and cultural processes.

197 Inquiry respecting relationships of the Ovimbundu to other African tribes is aided by a study of the Umbundu language, which is shown to be of pure Bantu structure and vocabulary (chapter VIII). The characteristic features of the Umbundu language are those which form the basic elements of Bantu speech in general. These characteristics are alliterative concord (that is, repetition of the prefix before every word in agreement with the noun); absence of grammatical gender; and a position of the genitive in which the name of the thing possessed comes before the possessor. Umbundu, though structurally assignable to the Bantu group, has its own vocabulary, whose degree of relationship to that of surrounding peoples may to some extent be judged by the vocabularies of F. and W. Jaspert (Die Völkerstämme Mittel Angolas, Frankfort, 1930, pp. 144–150). The fact that the language of the Ovimbundu has become the lingua franca of Angola, still further testifies to the thoroughness of the contacts, which from historical sources are known to have been made in the period 1500–1900.

104 The spelling of proper names leaves a wide margin for individual preference. The Umbundu language requires "M" before "B," yet custom has sanctioned the form Bailundu. Nevertheless I have retained "N" in Ngalangi despite the form Galangi on several maps. Maps show great diversity of spelling, but I have adhered throughout to Kipungo (Quipungo) and Kwanza (Quanza). Among tribal names I prefer Vakuanyama to OvaKwanyama and Vachokue to BaKioko or BaDjokue; in making the choice I have tried to imitate the sounds I heard from the natives themselves. In referring to the papers of E. Torday, who knew the southwest Congo well and spoke several Congo languages fluently, I note that he sometimes prefers to recognize the prefix as in BaMbala and BaYaka, but he also writes Badjokue and Bayaka. J. H. Weeks writes Bangala (BaNgala). C. H. L. Hahn uses the form Ovambo (OvaMbo). Ovimbundu I have preferred throughout; the accent is on the

III. HISTORICAL SOURCES

175 The object of this chapter is the presentation of a summary of
173 literature relating to Angola from A.D. 1500 down to the present
167 day. In this literature there may be accounts of the movements of tribes which will throw some light on the origin of the Ovimbundu, and the date of their migration into the Benguela Highlands. Present-day tradition of the Ovimbundu is unanimous in declaring that the tribe came from the northeast of its present locality, but some
[101] historical justification of this belief is desirable. The word Ovimbundu ("people of the fog") may refer to the heavy morning mists of highland regions, and there is the possibility that the Ovimbundu adopted this name when they settled on the high plateau.

121 If there is historical evidence in favor of the traditional home of the Ovimbundu being the region of the north and northeast of Angola, what was the ethnological background of these areas at the time when the Ovimbundu became detached from a matrix of northern Angolan tribes? In other words, what cultural factors are the Ovimbundu likely to have brought with them into the Benguela Highlands? The ultimate origin of these factors is a point which has not been neglected (chapter XI, "Wider Culture Contacts"), but for the moment the primary concern is the historical background of the Ovimbundu, with special reference to tribal movements and cultural traits.

As part of this historical inquiry, contacts of the Portuguese and the Ovimbundu are of importance. When and where did the Portuguese come into contact with the Ovimbundu and with what results to the indigenous culture?

127 Chapters IV–IX deal exclusively with my field work among the Ovimbundu in 1929. Therefore it is pertinent to ask to what extent the ethnological observations of travelers and early explorers will corroborate the information recorded in my own notes. Will there be contradiction or confirmation of personal observations? Possibly the ethnological notes obtained from historical sources will serve, not merely to corroborate my field work, but actually to extend the area of occurrence of important cultural traits which I noted in 1929.

The literature describing Angolan history and customs is here presented in the form of a chronological bibliography, which is annotated so as to emphasize points bearing on the purpose of this historical analysis. That there should be a fragmentary presentation of data is an inevitable consequence of the nature of the literature

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

itself. Observations have been made, not in a well-ordered time sequence, but at irregular intervals. Moreover, the writings of the majority of observers have not been undertaken with any specific ethnological purpose in view. Early explorers in particular were prone to intersperse historical and ethnological notes among a mass of descriptive material relating to incidents of travel, animal life, and meteorological observations. 127

At the conclusion of this chapter an effort is made to remedy the disjointed nature of the historical evidence. This object is achieved by summarizing the points which provide an answer to the queries brought forward in the opening paragraphs of this chapter respecting the origin and cultural background of the Ovimbundu.

The Portuguese entered the Congo in 1482 under the leadership of Diego Cão (E. G. Ravenstein, The Voyages of Diego Cão, *Geog. Journ.*, 1900, pp. 625–649) and from that time onward Portuguese influence of a political and religious kind was exerted along the course of the Congo. Gradually the Portuguese established themselves on the coast of Angola. Paolo Diaz founded Loanda in 1576, and about eleven years later built the fort of Benguela. 175

The year 1590 saw the Portuguese making war in the interior of Angola against the Jaggas, a northern tribe among whom Andrew Battell was held in honorable captivity as a leader against the Portuguese and all natives of northern Angola, who were exploited by the Jaggas. In 1645 another Portuguese punitive expedition penetrated the interior as far as Bailundu, the center from which the strongest caravans of Umbundu traders and slavers set out for central Africa.

Caconda in the southwest of Angola was founded in 1682, and a century later the coastal town of Mossamedes became a starting point from which early exploration penetrated the interior in search of the sources of the Cunene River. (For the details of Portuguese penetration of Angola see Bibliography: T. E. Bowditch; R. F. Burton; E. G. Ravenstein; T. Lewis.)

When the Portuguese landed at the mouth of the Congo at the close of the fifteenth century they came into contact with the kingdom of Congo, ruled with great pomp and ceremony at Ambassa, about 150 miles inland, and identical with the San Salvador of the Portuguese. The old kingdom of Congo was made up of six strong clans of whose rivalry the Portuguese took advantage to strengthen their own commercial and political position. The slave trade was considered to be as respectable as it was lucrative, and there is no doubt

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Limits of time and space have made it necessary to restrict the study to the two major fields of social structure and education. These two phases were chosen because description of them seems to be pre-requisite to treatment of other areas of the culture, and also because of their inherent importance both anthropologically and educationally. In order to provide background and make for better understanding, an introductory chapter on 'Habitat' has been provided. I hope to illustrate the remaining phases of the culture at a later date. 121

It is not possible adequately to thank, nor even to mention by name, all those for whose help I am indebted. It would never have been possible to organize this study had it not been for a generous provision of fellowships and of many facilities by Union Theological Seminary in New York City, and also for the necessary allowance of time during two furloughs by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. For extraordinary facilities put at my disposal, I am grateful to the Missionary Research Library and to its Director, Mr. C. H. Fahs. Among my many teachers at Union Seminary, Teachers' College, and in the Anthropology Department of Columbia University, for whose help I am indebted, I must name Professors I. L. Kandel, D. J. Fleming, A. L. Swift, Jun., Gene Weltfish, George Herzog, and Ralph Linton, who have freely given me much advice, counsel, and encouragement. For an especially high order of help I am very deeply indebted to Dr. Ruth Fulton Benedict and to Professor Harrison S. Elliott. Dr. Benedict not only gave freely of her time and wisdom as teacher and counsellor, but she also gave much encouragement and assistance in the task of arranging publication. For help with the German source material, I am indebted to my wife. To these whom I have named, and to many others, go my sincere thanks. 000

G. M. C.

UNION THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
NEW YORK CITY
May 1939

THE manuscript was revised in Africa in 1940 and the typing, done by J. C. Lasaro, African secretary of Currie Institute (Dondi), was completed in March 1941. It is now nearly six years later that the opportunity for publication has finally been realized. It is not 128

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

128 possible to make a new revision at this time nor do I feel this necessary. Many changes have taken place, but I feel that the tendencies here outlined in 1939–40 continue to operate. A few notes have been added, especially with regard to matters on which the 1940 Census of Angola, published 1941–43, has thrown new light. For much original material, and for suggestions and help 000 in revision, I am very grateful to many of my African friends and colleagues, especially the Rev. P. Ngonga Liahuka, Rev. Abraham Ngulu, Rev. R. Kavita Evambi (deceased, 1946), Sr. Pedro Paulo, and Sr. H. Kapiñalã Sukuakueche; and also to Dr. and Mrs. Merlin W. Ennis. I wish to thank Mr. Lewin and Professor Doke of the University of the Witwatersrand, Professor Schapera of the University of Cape Town, and Dr. Max Gluckman of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute (Northern Rhodesia) for their helpful interest. I am grateful, indeed, to the International African Institute and to the University of Witwatersrand Press, under whose auspices this study appears.

G. M. C.

AUBURNDALE, MASSACHUSETTS,

January 1947

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

283 In the beginning a thread from the fluffy mass on the stick is fastened to a corncob or to a potato, the weight of which keeps the thread taut (Plate XXXVI, Fig. 1).

[462] I have never seen a woman spinning and am informed that in former days the working of the loom was a task for men only.

463 In presenting facts bearing on the economic life of the Ovimbundu attention has been paid to the importance of ritual, specialization 791 in industry, and division of labor on a sex basis. Clearly, the economic life is one of the fundamentals of social structure, while at many points it is a field in which the magician works.

132 Topography and climate have fixed certain conditions which, so far as the Benguela Highlands are concerned, favor agriculture on 241 an extensive scale, also the keeping of cattle. In the Benguela Highlands a moderate temperature, combined with sufficient rainfall, has produced a type of vegetation which provides timbers serviceable to the craftsman, together with bush that affords shelter for game.

128 The bearing of these economic facts on the probable origins of traits, and their assembly to form the tribal life of the Ovimbundu, is reserved for discussion in chapters dealing with culture contacts and cultural processes. In chapters X–XII the factual material presented here under "Economic Life" is correlated with what is known of similar activities in cultures surrounding that of the Ovimbundu.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

Bailundo.[13] On the kinship system, however, I was even more disappointed. The information which I was given on the matrilineal groups formerly existing was much less than that provided by Hastings,[14] or by Childs,[15] and I have therefore not been able to obtain the detail for which I had hoped on the double-descent system. 121

Like all anthropologists I had a certain number of difficulties in making contact with the people, and to these were added the problems of finding underlying consistencies in a changing society. The Ovimbundu are not interested in genealogies and did not see why I was. My first attempts to take village censuses were regarded with great suspicion, and more than once people refused to give their names. Kinship terms and norms seemed to be and were very confused. Various matters, such as surviving pagan rituals, were concealed from me. My personal relations with the people were very happy, however, and almost everybody who came to know me was prepared to answer my questions at length. 121 123 [182]

My two great problems in the field were to obtain information on the old social structure (which I already knew in outline from the written material), and to see how the present-day society worked. The material in this thesis will be laid out in the following way. The first part will give an outline of Umbundu social structure as it was in the period 1874–1911,[16] that is, the era of the rubber trade. The second part will give a series of chapters on present day Umbundu society, which will provide the information necessary for an understanding of the mechanisms of social control. In the third part a detailed discussion of social control is made, beginning with an examination of a number of disputes. It is shown how the network of kinship and marriage ties in a neighbourhood provide local continuity and stability, while the wider units in which the Ovimbundu now participate are of European origin and control. 121 128

[13] Cassongue and Cela were tributary to Bailundo but were not incorporated into the actual kingdom (Childs, p. 168). Cassongue people say that they are not Va-Mbailundu. [631]

[14] Hastings, Chapter VI.

[15] Hastings gives more information than Childs on the matrilineal kin group.

[16] The period of the rubber trade. Childs, pp. 202–15.

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565 Their higher social status limits their contacts with the villagers without giving them positions of direct control. Hence they are not leaders in the native social system. They are significant for 565 the culture of village Ovimbundu since they are one of the 177 channels for the communication of European culture traits, and their very existence indicates the possibility of becoming 'equal with the white man"[21]

797 More significant than the *assimilados* as a means of linking the 177 Ovimbundu with the whites, of the transmitting of cultural values, and of the creation of new statuses and groupings at village level, are the missions.

128 In the following chapters, the composition and degree of solidarity of the sub-chiefdom, and village, the network of kinship ties, the choice of marriage partners, and the means of social control will be discussed in their operation among the Ovimbundu who are inescapably tied to Portuguese rule, to world markets, and to the spiritual authority of the missions.

[21] I have the impression that in the cities there is some feeling that the status of *assimilado* does not give real equality but simply exemption from such burdens as road work.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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[Village of Epalanga]

602 'close' kin may not be able to indicate the set of genealogical[8] links between them and will not be at all surprised or even interested by this; hence it is impossible to draw up a genealogy of Epalanga. I have attempted to show the very complicated 128 network of relationships by a series of charts—one big chart would have so many cross-cutting lines as to be largely unintelligible.

Three charts are given to illustrate particular sections of the mesh of kin and affinal ties. They are not intended as exhaustive records of the relationship of any one kinship core or of any single individual. Rather, they are intended to give a general impression of how the proliferation of the strands of kinship [621] and marriage brings about a complicated and formless patchwork in which everybody is included.

2. *Information on Household Heads*

601 List I. Residents of Epalanga as of December 1956. Female 621 household heads are indicated by a star against their names. The numbers are used on the map of the village (see p. 50).

Sapapula's Kinship Core

1. Aspirante, sister's son of Sapapula, son-in-law of Wayangu.
2. *Avilo, sister's daughter of Sapapula, 'sister' to Tjingonene (31).
3. Batista, son of Epalata (5) and husband of a sister of Kasosi (7).
4. Bernacio, son-in-law of Sapapula, 'son' to Kàsosi (7).
5. Epalata, matrilateral cross-cousin of Sapapula.
6. Ernesto, sister's son of Sapapula, full brother of Aspirante (1) married to a daughter's daughter of Sasamela (see List II).
7. Kasosi, 'grandson' of Sapapula through being sister's son[9] to Wasuka (15). A 'son' to Guilherme and 'father' to Bernacio (4).

[8] Ovimbundu even traditionally seem to have been little interested in genealogies. (Information from Dr. G. M. Childs.)

[9] According to Umbundu kinship terminology, Wasuka being a matrilateral cross-cousin of Sapapula could call him 'father' and Kasosi could call his mother's brother's (Wasuka) father 'grandfather'.

[cf. charts on pp. 91, 96, 97, in category 116-Analyst]

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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621/178 of the men's house, and the headman's loss of status. The new institution of the catechetical school does not revive village solidarity in this form. The contemporary Ovimbundu do not live in a 'village headman society' comparable to those of British Central Africa,[13] since the concept and manifestations of village solidarity around a headman are so notably deficient. 356 Reference may also be made to the economic ethics of the Ovimbundu with their approval of making money and the [428] belief that all loans even within the circle of the elementary family should be repaid, that is, wealth is seen by all as an end in itself rather than a means of obtaining personal loyalties.

622/178 In the previous chapter it was shown how the traditional headmanship is no longer a significant legal and political institution. In this chapter I have tried to indicate that it lacks sources of authority and prestige within the village.

The line of argument has involved reference to the contemporary kinship system of which an outline has been given. 128 This will be more fully discussed in later chapters, when a more detailed comparison of present institutions with the traditional kinship system will be made.

[13] For an example of these societies see J. C. Mitchell, *The Yao Village*, Manchester 1956.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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CHAPTER VII

KINSHIP

1. *General Aspects*

128 A good deal has been said about the contemporary kinship system in Chapter IV, where it was discussed from the point of view of the local organization rather than in its own right. This chapter must, therefore, to some extent, refer to information already presented in Chapters I and IV, since there are three problems to be discussed—the form of the old kinship [121] system, the form of the present kinship system, and the reasons for the changes from one system to the other.

The following approach will be adopted: the ethnographic sources for Umbundu kinship will be examined, information will then be given on the kinship norms formerly valid, and an attempt will then be made to give a coherent sketch of the system then existing. After this, reference will be made to the actual operation of present-day kinship norms and the significance of descent and inheritance. Then factors in the transition between the two systems will be brought forward.

611 It has been generally accepted by commentators on the ethnographic material that the traditional Umbundu kinship system is of the type called a 'double-descent' system.[1] 'Descent' is used by British anthropologists to imply membership of a group involving rights and duties.[2] Hence, it can only be claimed that the Ovimbundu possessed such a system if there existed two sets of kin groups, and not simply some combination of matrilineal inheritance and virilocal residence at marriage.

One anthropologist, Mr. W. D. Hambly, and two missionaries

[text continues on p.92]

[1] For other African double-descent systems see *African Systems of Kinship and Marriage*, ed. Radcliffe-Brown and Forde (Oxford, 1950), pp. 79, 283–359.

[2] The word seems to have been first used in this sense by W. H. R. Rivers.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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the same time clearly an important part of social life. Kinship norms are confused, as is the correct term to use in a particular relationship. Ritual and jural sanctions are lacking, as are institutions based on the regular co-operation of groups of kinsmen. Yet a man likes to live with kinsfolk and there is a tendency for kin to cluster together in a neighbourhood.

By the very facts, that so many of a man's neighbours are his kinsmen, and that there is very little marked differentiation between the behaviour towards different categories of kin, kinship is robbed of any great specificity of content. It might be said that it is the quantity rather than the quality of kinship ties that makes kinship significant in establishing a 'sense of community' in a neighbourhood, in that the multiplicity of local kin ties creates some identification between a man's range of kin and his neighbourhood. At the same time a kinship tie provides a basis on which a closer relationship may be built by reciprocal services. It appears that the inheritance of property recognizes kinship in this way by recognizing claims not on the basis of strict genealogical proximity but on the quality of the relationship.

A discussion of marriage and the household must be left to the next chapter. The outline given of the present kinship system is sufficiently clear to begin an examination of the reasons for the changes. This must rely to some extent on speculation, owing to a lack of information on the actual working of the kinship system while it was in transition to its present form.

The key change is the disappearance of the kinship groups. These, it seems, disappeared because of their high degree of dependence on the particular type of economy existing before 1911. It has already been argued that the distinction between the patrikin and the matrikin is an attempt to isolate economic claims and conflicts from village and political relationships, and that the giving of loans without right of repayment within the matrikin was called for by a trading system in which credit played an important part. With the end of the trade the wealth passing through Umbundu hands declined sharply, and there was neither need for funds to meet trading losses nor currency to provide them. A man obtained money either by growing crops

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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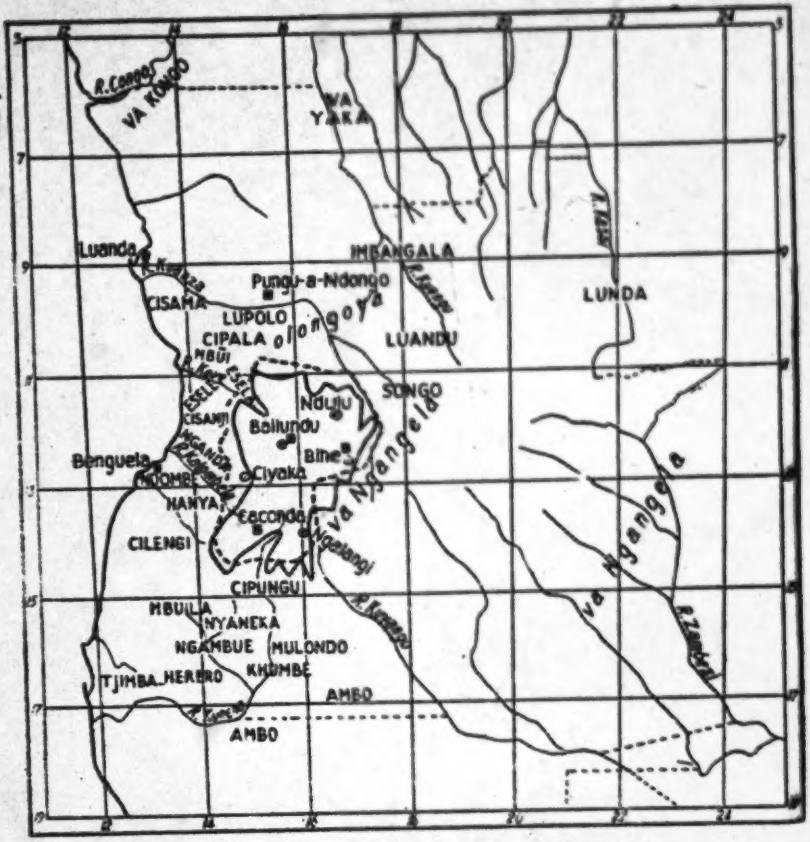

HABITAT OF THE OVIMBUNDU

AND THEIR POSITION WITH REGARD TO THEIR NEIGHBOURS

Heavy continuous line indicates elevation of 1,500 metres (4,920 ft.).
Broken line indicates limits of Umbundu territory.
© Leading capital villages (*olombala*). ■ Portuguese presidios.

[facing p. 1]

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER I

HABITAT

[p. 1]

Morphology

131 THE homeland of the Ovimbundu is the Benguela Highland in
133 central Angola. Strictly speaking the Highland comprises those regions which have an elevation of 1,500 metres (about 4,920 feet) or more. A glance at the accompanying map will show how closely the territory inhabited by the Ovimbundu corresponds with the extent of the Highland proper. The adjoining regions, in which the Ovimbundu also live, nowhere have an elevation inferior to 1,000 metres (about 3,280 feet). Geographically the region of the Highland is a part of the South African sub-continental plateau. The ridges of the Highland form the plateau's highest north-western portion.

133 Geologically this sub-continental plateau is one of the oldest parts of the earth's surface. The north-western portion, with which this study is concerned, has remained above sea-level from before the time of fossils. The vast slab of primeval crystalline rock which forms the foundation of the plateau often outcrops in the form of isolated rocks of unusual appearance,[1] or in massive peaks, the highest of which, in the western escarpment, reach an elevation of nearly 9,000 feet (2,850 metres).[2] Some of these outcrops remain bare, some are hidden by laterite and some by soil formed from decomposition of rock.

Among the sediments which overlie these primeval rocks there are unfossiliferous sandstones, conglomerates, and others, all of
[316] which are considered to be of Palaeozoic age. Deposits of iron are numerous, many of which were once worked by the Ovimbundu
000 or by their predecessors. Much of the soil has been greatly im-

[1] Several of these rocks have caught the attention of travellers and writers. *Luvili* (north-west of Bailundu) is perhaps the most striking of all. Cameron said that the natives called it 'The Devil's Finger', a name I have not been able to verify. *Nganda* and *Kawe* are near the railway between Nova Lisboa and Vila Robert Williams. A journalist recently gave them the name of 'Cleopatra's Breasts'.

[2] One of the peaks of the ridge called *Moko* (The Knife) is the highest, but no complete survey has been made.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

The Village

Among the Ovimbundu the outstanding social and political unit at the present time is the village (*imbo*, plural *ovaimbo*). The village may consist of from 5 to 500 households,[1] the heads of which are in the great majority of cases related to each other in the male line. Each village has a headman or elder (*sekulu*, literally 'grandfather' or 'elder father') who is literally, according to Umbundu kinship usage, the patriarch of the villagers. He was formerly responsible for his village to the sub-chief, and through him to the king. At the present time, the administrative authorities hold the village headmen responsible for matters relating to taxes, labour recruiting, &c. The present decay of this office and of village life varies very greatly from region to region. Nearly everywhere matters of purely local concern are not directly interfered with, and the headman continues his patriarchal government, assisted by a council of all (male) householders.

Ngendo, a typical village. The village of Ngendo lies at about 14° 40′ east, 11° 40′ south, about thirty-five miles south-west of the Keve, where that river crosses the fifteenth parallel, and about sixty miles in a direct line from the Atlantic Ocean. Its altitude is about 1,650 metres, and the ground on which it is built slopes down to a small stream of the Keve system. Directly across the stream to the north rises the granite outcrop on which may be seen the ruined fortress of Usengo. Ngendo belongs to the tribe of Kasongi, *etumbu* of Ekongo. It is about fifteen miles north-west of the administrative post of Cassongue and about two miles from the motor road which connects that post and points farther inland with the district capital and port of Novo Redondo.

The most striking feature of this village is the fact that it consists of four smaller units or wards (*ovitawila*, plural), each of which appears to be quite self-contained. The four together make up the village (*imbo*), which name is also applied to either of the two larger units by themselves. Each unit has its own elder, but

[1] Most, but not all, of the larger villages are *olombala* (q.v., *supra*), but even these are not as large now as they formerly were. In 1850 the *ombala* of Bailundu was said to have 5,000 inhabitants (Magyar, op. cit.). At the present time there is probably no village with more than 3,000 inhabitants, and few of that size. The tendency seems to be toward smaller villages, and there is even some movement toward isolated households and farmsteads after the fashion of so many of the Southern Bantu.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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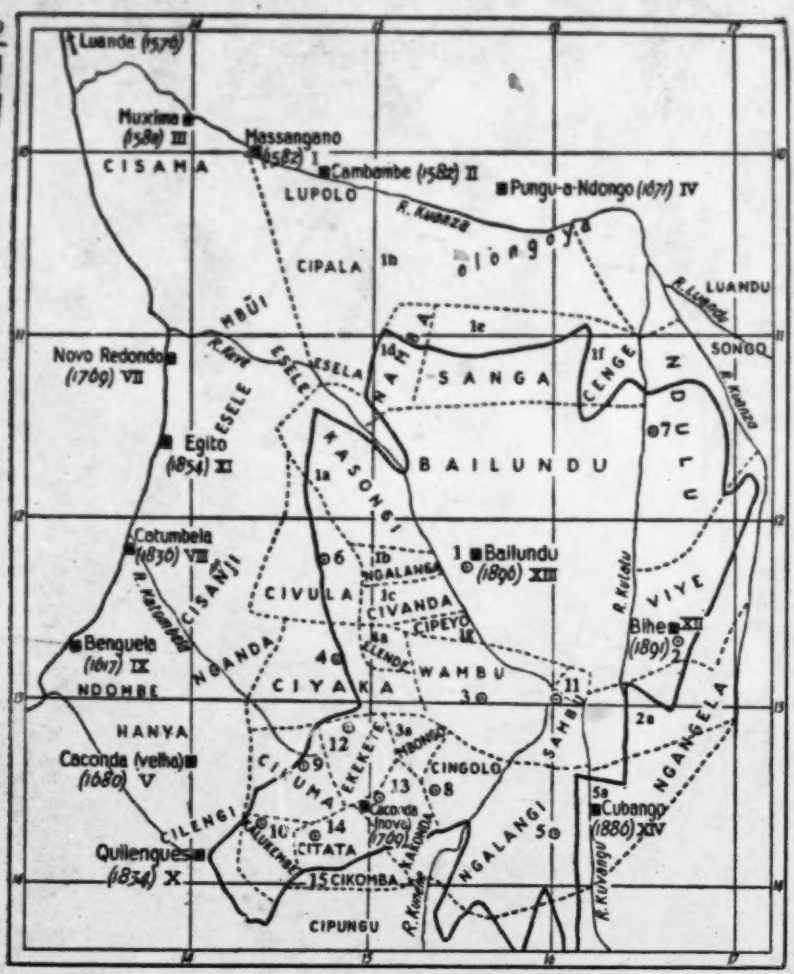

TRIBAL DIVISIONS AND HISTORY OF THE OVIMBUNDU

Heavy continuous line indicates elevation of 1,500 metres (4,920 ft.).
Broken lines indicate Umbundu political boundaries.
⊙ Principal capital towns (*olombala*) numbered 1 to 14.
1a, 1b, 1c, 1d, 1e, 1f, 1g, 1h, tributaries of Bailundu; 2a, tributaries (Ngangela) of Viye; 5a, tributaries of Ngalangi; 3a, tributary of Civaka; 4a, tributary of Wambu.
Portuguese presídios with dates of founding (numbered I—XIV).

[Facing p. 167]

2: McCulloch FP13 Mbundu FP13
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a	b
c	f
e	d

Chart of positions of sections of End Map.

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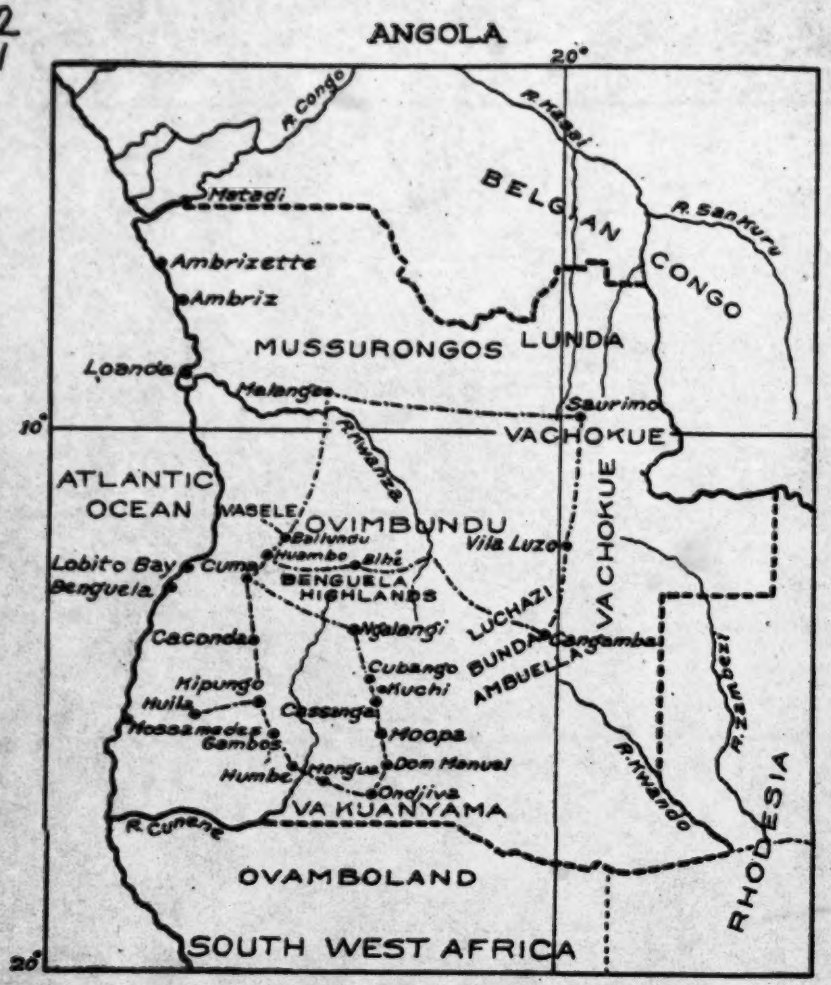

MAP SHOWING ROUTE OF EXPEDITION
Scale: 1 inch = 220 miles; ——— Indicates route

[Facing p. 87]

II. GEOGRAPHICAL FACTORS

121 This chapter is intended to give an outline of the geographical conditions of Angola and to point out the way in which these have influenced the growth of Umbundu culture in all its aspects.

A presentation of geographical data is of primary importance here, and the actual relationship between the facts of geography and culture is a matter for gradual evaluation in the following chapters. The extent to which geographic determinism has entered into the cultural growth of the Ovimbundu is particularly well seen in chapter V, "Economic Life," which deals with industries, agriculture, domestic animals, fishing, and transport.

The area of Angola is a factor of importance, for the greater the extent of any country the more diversified will be the products and the cultural differences. This is particularly true if there are considerable differences in the elevation, because altitude modifies temperature and affects the distribution of rainfall.

131 Angola has an area of almost 500,000 square miles. The greatest length is a distance of about 900 miles from the river Congo in the north to the region of South West Africa. The greatest breadth is about 700 miles from the Atlantic Ocean on the west to the borders of the Rhodesian plateau in the east. This range over twelve degrees of latitude, from 5° S. to 17° S., in association with differences in altitude, have produced ecological regions which are described in the following paragraphs.

132 311 167 The northern part of Angola is ecologically a part of the Congo basin, with conditions of heat and moisture giving rise to a dense tropical flora. Owing to the presence of tsetse fly, the great heat, and the lack of open grasslands, such country is unsuited for the rearing of cattle, while agriculture, including cultivation of maize, is restricted to forest clearings. Manioc, palm trees, peanuts, and sweet potatoes are the chief products serviceable to man. This region was, according to the historical evidence of chapter III, the area in which the Ovimbundu moved before they entered the Benguela Highlands of central Angola. Parts of chapters III and X ("Historical Sources" and "Culture Contacts," respectively) are devoted to an analysis of the cultural factors of the Congo area from the year A.D. 1500 to the present day.

131 The central portion of Angola is the area most important in this research because it is the home of the Ovimbundu, whose cultural

growth is under examination. This central plateau, the Benguela 131
Highlands, rises in places to a height of 6,000 feet, an altitude which [133]
reduces the heat of the tropics and so modifies the flora, discouraging
some types of vegetation and encouraging others. Hostility of the
highlands to palm trees and the banana is appropriately discussed [241]
when dealing with cultural losses; while the fostering effect of reduced
temperature and the presence of wide expanses of open country on
the growth of maize and the keeping of cattle is a cultural gain.

The prevailing rains of Angola are from the northeast to the 132
southwest; consequently the high plateau intercepts rain clouds which
give an annual fall of sixty inches. This adequate rainfall is another
factor which has affected economic life, density of population, com-
munal welfare, and powers of expansion.

The villages of the Ovimbundu are built on hillsides having a 361
commanding view of the surrounding country. There is in the
nature of the land a natural protection from enemies. In addition
to this the Benguela Highlands are an admirable base from which
expeditions both predatory and commercial might, and actually did
set out eastward to the interior of Africa, and southwest to the
cattle-keeping country.

It is important to note that this central plateau is the watershed 133
for four large river systems; the Kwanza to the northwest; the Cunene
to the southwest; the tributaries of the Kasai to the northeast; and
the Zambezi and its affluents to the southeast. Fishing, with attend- [226]
ant beliefs of a ritualistic kind, is of local importance; so also is the
making of canoes. Moreover, the river valleys have marked out a
natural means of communication in several directions.

In connection with the river system the biological factor of the 136
tsetse fly is important, because the presence of the fly locally dis- 231
courages human habitation and prevents the keeping of cattle. The
exact distribution of the fly is imperfectly known, but *Glossinia* [164]
palpalis, the cause of sleeping sickness in human beings, also *Glos-*
sinia morsitans, which carries disease to cattle, are both present along
the Kwanza and parts of the other rivers (J. C. B. Statham, Through
Angola, p. 294).

The western coastal strip is a region of great aridity which has in 132
some years no rainfall whatever, because the northeasterly rains have 137
expended themselves on the high plateau. This region displays
vegetation of the semi-desert type; namely, baobab trees, prickly
acacias, euphorbias, and aloes. Population in this area is sparse, [162]
always nomadic, and in some places non-existent. The coastal strip

The coastal strip

131 was at times traversed by the Ovimbundu who know of the sea and
484 call it *kalunga*. Bihéan caravans crossed to the coast with slaves, as history shows, but the nature of the coastal strip marks it as a western barrier limiting the expansion of the Ovimbundu in that direction. The coast line itself is of the greatest moment in the consideration of historical factors. From Loanda, Benguela, and
[177] Mossamedes on the coast, the Portuguese penetrated the interior, so making contacts with the Ovimbundu to the encouragement of caravan trade. The importance of this European contact will be seen in subsequent chapters.

The south and southwest parts of Angola are of particular importance in studying the contacts of the Ovimbundu, but to give here the details of the wealthy cattle-keeping culture of these regions, which were accessible through peaceful proximity, trade, and occasional raiding, would be an anticipation of chapter X, "Culture Contacts."
[723] One topographical point is of primary importance; namely, the ease with which the Ovimbundu could descend from their strongholds to the low-lying land of the west and south, whereas the reverse journey is much more difficult for a people unaccustomed to manoeuvring and finding their way among hills.

101 Having described the northern, central, western, and southern areas, there remains only the eastern section to consider; this presents several features of peculiar geographical and ethnological interest.
[133] The eastern section of Angola is either slightly undulating or flat, the general characteristic is dryness, and vegetation is somewhat
[136] sparse though sufficient to shelter many kinds of antelope.

The major population is the Vachokue, a warlike, hunting people, who follow agricultural pursuits but slightly, and do not keep cattle. Examination of the literature describing early exploration indicates
[726] the truculent nature of these eastern people with whom caravans of Ovimbundu were in frequent conflict. Umbundu caravans crossed this country when making their way to Rhodesia, culture contacts with which are discussed in chapter X.

The results of contact of Ovimbundu and Vachokue tribes, so far as physical miscegenation is concerned, are mentioned in chapter "Physical Appearance"; while the social effects of slavery resulting from hostilities are described in chapter VI, "Social Life."

174 Rhodesia is a cattle-raising country, but the hostility of the
231 Vachokue, the great distance from central Angola to Rhodesia, and the general dryness of the country to be crossed, discourage the idea that the Ovimbundu obtained their cattle from Rhodesia. If it is

174 there is tribal and cultural miscegenation. Both Umbundu and
171 Vachokue languages are spoken; boys of Ngalangi were seen to wear
[281] initiation costumes similar to those worn at Cangamba by the Vachokue, but on proceeding farther westward into territory exclusively occupied by the Ovimbundu, such initiation ceremonies are either absent or attenuated in ritual.

144 Elende, one center of research among the Ovimbundu, repre-
101 sents the purest Umbundu speech and culture observable at the present day. But in chapter IV some physical resemblance of the Ovimbundu to the Vachokue is noted. Warfare commonly resulted in the taking of slaves, a fact which might account for an apparent infusion of Vachokue blood in some of the Ovimbundu.

174 The historical data suggest a northern or northeastern starting
167 point of Umbundu migrations. Therefore an inquiry into the ethnology of these areas will be useful in showing the kind of culture with which the Ovimbundu were in contact before their settlement in the Benguela Highlands. If historical sources disclose the nature of northern Angolan culture from the year A.D. 1500 onward, such evidence can then be considered in relation to cultural traits of the Ovimbundu at the present day.

The establishment of strong cultural resemblances between extant Umbundu culture and older cultural patterns of northern Angola, would tend to strengthen the evidence of history respecting the northern origin of the Ovimbundu.

131 The regions dealt with in the following summary of ethnological
174 facts are the Cabinda Enclave to the north of the Congo estuary, the region of San Salvador, the hinterlands of Loanda and Benguela, and the area of northern Angola between Lat. 7° and 9° S. and Long. 13° to 22° E. This covers the whole area with which the Ovimbundu are likely to have been in contact before entering their present home.

175 My survey begins with the observations of Andrew Battell in
101 1596. His account deals mainly with the northwestern part of Angola, a country bordering on and actually including territory now occupied by the Ovimbundu, who in all probability came in contact with the Jaggas, whose habits of life are described by Battell.

Torday and Joyce identify the Jaggas with the present-day Bayaka, whose cultural resemblances to the Ovimbundu are examined later. In my opinion, the Jaggas correspond well with the Bihéan section of the Ovimbundu, an itinerant and exceedingly warlike people.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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CHAPTER I

THE OLD SOCIETY

1. *History*

The Ovimbundu, who live on the Benguela Highland[1] of central Angola, have been in contact with Europeans since their emergence as a people in the sixteenth–seventeenth centuries. Dr. Childs has provided an excellent account of their history,[2] based on the collection of traditional narratives and a study of the published sources in English, German, and Portuguese.

The Ovimbundu arose from a fusion of two stocks, one that of the 'Jagas', a conquering race who invaded the Benguela Highland in the sixteenth–seventeenth centuries, and the indigenous occupants of the area who were culturally and linguistically related to the peoples who now live in south-west Angola.[3] The Jagas were described in some detail by the English sailor Andrew Battell[4] who was their prisoner for some time at the beginning of the seventeenth century. He tells us that they were warlike cannibals who recruited their numbers by taking adolescents from the peoples they conquered.[5] This society did not reproduce itself normally by descent since all children born were put to death.[6] He locates them geographically in the Amboim–Cela–Quibala area[7] to the north of the present Umbundu territory. Cavazzi writing in the later seventeenth

[1] In Portuguese, Planalto de Benguela.

[2] Childs, pp. 164–215.

[3] Ibid. p. 190.

[4] Ravenstein (Ed.). *The Strange Adventures of Andrew Battell.* Hakluyt Society, London 1901.

[5] Ravenstein, p. 33.

[6] Ibid. p. 32.

[7] Ibid. pp. 84, 85; Childs, p. 86.

[p. xviii is blank - Analyst]

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

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Adapted from the map facing page 167 in Childs' *Umbundu Kinship and Character.*

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

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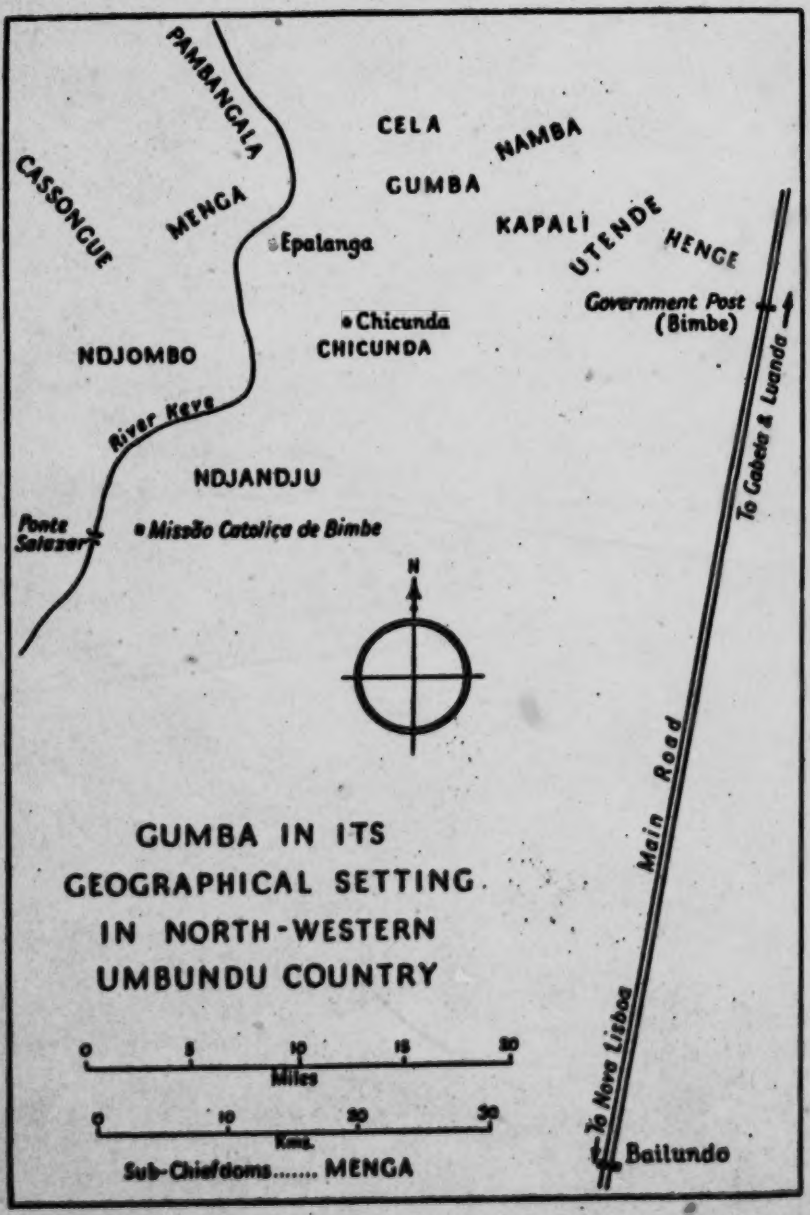

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

they came to call it *ofeka yonjala*, 'The Hungry Country' or better 133
'The Country of Hunger', since it was without inhabitants and 167
consequently without the possibility of purchasing provisions.[1]
Much of the soil in all three of these adjoining regions is very [134]
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Many rivers find in the Benguela Highland a great catchment 133
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a side-line occupation for those who live conveniently near the streams. The rivers themselves, however, have always been of the greatest importance to the mass of the people who are dependent upon them for water, whether it comes in the form of rainfall or is taken more directly from the streams.

Climate

The regions under consideration in this study belong to the 132
South Central African zone of summer rains. Coming on the monsoon from the Indian Ocean, the rains are precipitated by cold winds from the south-western antarctic current.[3] The Benguela Highland constitutes a distinct climatic zone, as the fact of the altitude would lead one to infer. The adjoining and coastal regions

[1] Cf. H. W. Nevinson, *A Modern Slavery*, chap. vi (New York: Harpers, 1906); also M. Burr, *A Fossicker in Angola* (London: Adelphi, 1933).

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[3] See C. E. P. Brooks and S. T. A. Mirrlees, *A Study of the Atmospheric Circulation over Tropical Africa*. Meteorological Office. Geophysical memoirs no. 55 (London: H.M.S.O., 1932).

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

132 are divided into several sub-zones. A glance at the map[1] reproduced herewith will give a fairly good idea of the climatic regions. This map, apparently based entirely upon temperature averages and relative humidity in the localities for which such data are to be had,[1] is useful for an approximation of the principal zones and sub-zones. The names given to the several zones and sub-zones, however, are somewhat misleading, and the data on which the map is based are insufficient to assure accuracy.

The mean annual rainfall varies from 1,000 mm. (40 inches) to 1,500 mm. (60 inches) according to region[2] and locality. In the Highland the rains begin with a few showers during September and usually set in heavily during October. During November they increase in intensity and then suffer a break of from two to four weeks in December, January, or February. Then they continue until the end of April with sometimes a few showers in May. The heaviest fall is often in November or December, but sometimes in March. There seems to be some sort of cycle of morning, afternoon, and night rains, but I know of no study on this subject. Afternoon and evening rains are more common. Night rains seem to be more common towards the end of the season. Morning rains 512 are least frequent. A day in which rain begins near (or before) 132 daybreak and continues well into the day is called in Umbundu *ulembi*. On such a day agricultural work and travel are suspended. There is a custom that on such a day the first, after greeting, to [431] speak the word *ulembi* can claim a gift from the one to whom he says it. The number of days in which work or travel may be suspended on account of rain is relatively not large. The working day is customarily from early morning until mid-afternoon. Men often continue field-work later in the day than do women. The connexion of the working day with weather conditions is readily seen. 132 Whether the heavier rainfall occurs in November–December or in February–March, it is in March and April that transportation is most likely to be interfered with. That is the time of swollen

[1] See Dr. José de Oliveira Ferreira Diniz, 'As características climatológicas de Angola' (*Boletim Geral das Colónias*, 1930, no. 62, 63, pp. 3–15).

[2] See maps and charts of rainfall in H. F. Shantz and C. F. Marbut, *The Vegetation and Soils of Africa* (New York, 1923); also some figures on rainfall and temperature in J. C. B. Statham, *Through Angola, a Coming Colony* (London, 1922) and in O. Letcher, *South Central Africa*, chap. xiii (Johannesburg, 1932). More detailed treatment of the whole subject is given by Marquardsen u. Stahl, *Angola*, chap. v (Berlin, 1928).

1 [Facing p. 8.—Analyst]

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

streams and washed-out bridges. Electrical discharges in connexion with storms are very common and often cause property and personal damage. In connexion with mean annual rainfall figures, the cycle of rainy and dry seasons is of importance. An annual rainfall of 50 or 60 inches may not seem unduly heavy save when it is realized that practically all of it falls during seven or even six months. It is this heavy seasonal rainfall which has made much of the Highland into what is known in South Africa as 'sour veld'—a type of pasturage relatively ill-suited for cattle raising. 132

The Benguela Highland is well within the tropics (between 11° and 14° 30′ South), but the altitude and the effect of the antarctic current combine to produce a decidedly moderate climate. The variations of temperature, however, are quite unlike those found in most regions having a 'temperate' climate. The régime of the rains, tropical position, altitude, and other factors combine to produce a peculiar set of temperature variations. The annual variation of temperature is relatively slight, a day's maximum is seldom above 90° F., it may be as low as 60°, but the more usual maximum is around 80°. The minimum of 32° or even 30° is sometimes reached in the winter (about 20 May–20 July),[1] but it seldom goes quite so low. A day's minimum has been registered as high as 63°, more usually the minimum goes to about 40° or 45° in winter and between 50° and 55° during the rest of the year. Daily variations are important. Greatest variations occur in winter with differences of as much as 42° often registered. During the rest of the year there is a considerable range of daily variation—sometimes as much as 40° and sometimes as little as 7° with usual variation of from 20° to 30°.[2] On the days when it rains or remains cloudy all day the slightest variations are registered. Such days are cold and disagreeable and a grate fire is almost a necessity.[3]

Environmental Factors

Differences of characteristic vegetation as between the Highland and the lower zones are striking. The most characteristic feature 137

[1] Ice forms nearly every winter—at least in small pools along the streams, and sometimes more generally. There are Umbundu words for hoar-frost (*ocikokoto*) and for hail (*ociwe*), but not for ice nor, of course, for snow.

[2] Figures compiled from records of the weather station of Currie Institute, Ndondi—elevation 1,800 metres (5,900 feet).

[3] Grate fires are agreeable mornings and evenings during ten to eleven months of the year. In the winter they are a real necessity.

1: Childs M-5 (1934-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

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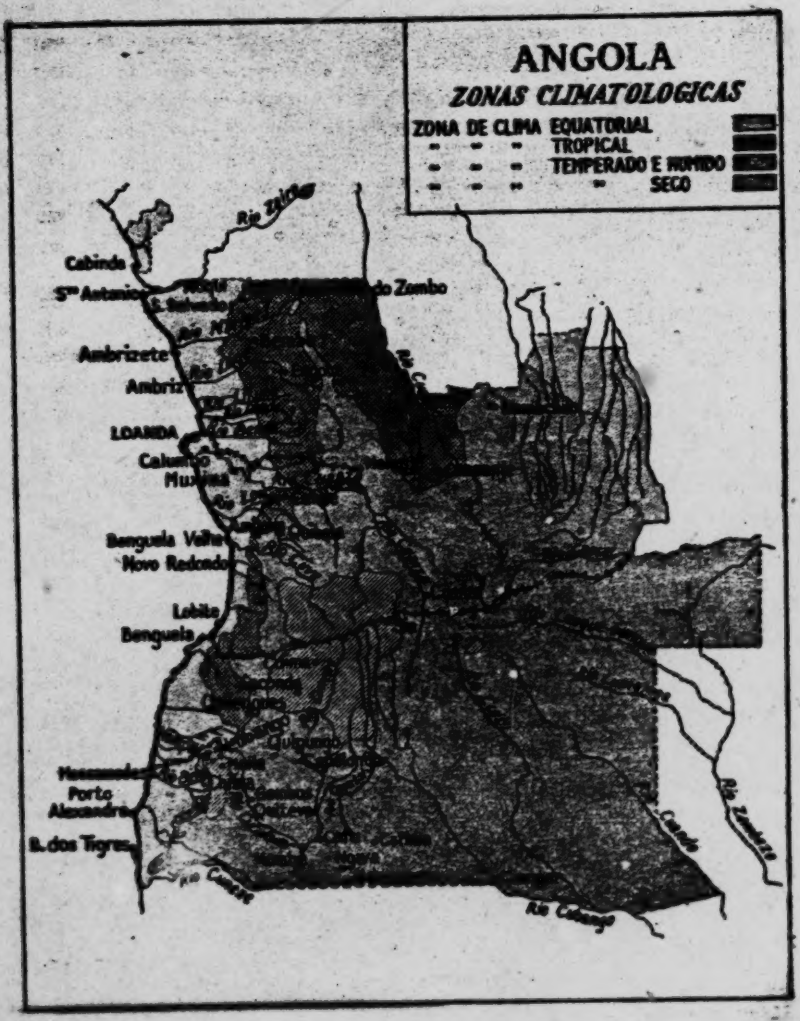

[Facing p. 8]

The two largest rivers flowing from the Highland are the Kwanza and the Kunene, both of which flow into the Atlantic Ocean. Between them are the Keve, the Balombo and the Katumbela. The Kubango rises near the source of the Kunene and flows southwards towards the Kalahari Desert. 133

SOILS AND VEGETATION

The foundation of the plateau is a vast slab of primeval crystalline rock, which frequently outcrops in the form of isolated rocks or of massive peaks. Some of these outcrops remain bare, while others are hidden by laterite and soil formed by rock decomposition. Sediments overlying the rocks include unfossiliferous sandstones and conglomerates, considered to be of Palaeozoic age. Much of the soil is poor, in many areas impoverished by use and by erosion; there are however a few alluvial deposits, and on the whole the soil is of better quality than in the adjoining regions to the east, north and south. 134 133

Differences in vegetation between the Highland and the lower zone towards the coast are striking. Characteristic feature of the coastal area is the baobab *(Adansonia digitata)* and in the better-watered areas tropical forests occur. The Highland proper was until recently well-covered with a variety of trees; today, however, except in isolated areas in Bailundu and other regions, grasslands have taken the place of forest and woodland. Native methods of agriculture and annual fires have caused much deforestation, and this has been accentuated by the demands of European settlement and of the Railway, which up to the present time uses principally wood for fuel. 137

CLIMATE

The Highland is well within the Tropical Zone, but altitude and the effect of the south-western Antarctic current combine to produce a moderate climate. The annual variation of temperature is relatively slight; a day's maximum is seldom above 90°F, and may be as low as 60°, but the usual maximum is around 80°. The minimum of 32° or even 30° is sometimes reached in the winter (about May 20th - July 20th), but more usually the minimum is 40° to 50° in the winter, and 50° to 55° for the rest of the year. There is considerably daily variation, especially in the winter, when differences of 42° are often registered. 132

Mean annual rainfall varies from 40 to 60 inches, according to region. In the Highland the rains begin with a few showers during September, increase during October and November, have a break of two to four weeks in December, January or February, and continue until the end of April. The heaviest falls are usually in November and December, occasionally in March.

TRADITIONS OF ORIGIN AND HISTORY(1)

The Ovimbundu people represent a fusion of diverse stocks, chiefly of the Southern Bantu and of the Congo or Central Bantu peoples. The ruling 174 167

(1) This section is a summary of the detailed account given by Childs 1949, pp. 164-231.

II. GEOGRAPHICAL FACTORS

121 This chapter is intended to give an outline of the geographical conditions of Angola and to point out the way in which these have influenced the growth of Umbundu culture in all its aspects.

A presentation of geographical data is of primary importance here, and the actual relationship between the facts of geography and culture is a matter for gradual evaluation in the following chapters. The extent to which geographic determinism has entered into the cultural growth of the Ovimbundu is particularly well seen in chapter V, "Economic Life," which deals with industries, agriculture, domestic animals, fishing, and transport.

The area of Angola is a factor of importance, for the greater the extent of any country the more diversified will be the products and the cultural differences. This is particularly true if there are considerable differences in the elevation, because altitude modifies temperature and affects the distribution of rainfall.

131 Angola has an area of almost 500,000 square miles. The greatest length is a distance of about 900 miles from the river Congo in the north to the region of South West Africa. The greatest breadth is about 700 miles from the Atlantic Ocean on the west to the borders of the Rhodesian plateau in the east. This range over twelve degrees of latitude, from 5° S. to 17° S., in association with differences in altitude, have produced ecological regions which are described in the following paragraphs.

132 311 167 The northern part of Angola is ecologically a part of the Congo basin, with conditions of heat and moisture giving rise to a dense tropical flora. Owing to the presence of tsetse fly, the great heat, and the lack of open grasslands, such country is unsuited for the rearing of cattle, while agriculture, including cultivation of maize, is restricted to forest clearings. Manioc, palm trees, peanuts, and sweet potatoes are the chief products serviceable to man. This region was, according to the historical evidence of chapter III, the area in which the Ovimbundu moved before they entered the Benguela Highlands of central Angola. Parts of chapters III and X ("Historical Sources" and "Culture Contacts," respectively) are devoted to an analysis of the cultural factors of the Congo area from the year A.D. 1500 to the present day.

131 The central portion of Angola is the area most important in this research because it is the home of the Ovimbundu, whose cultural

growth is under examination. This central plateau, the Benguela 131
Highlands, rises in places to a height of 6,000 feet, an altitude which [133]
reduces the heat of the tropics and so modifies the flora, discouraging
some types of vegetation and encouraging others. Hostility of the
highlands to palm trees and the banana is appropriately discussed [241]
when dealing with cultural losses; while the fostering effect of reduced
temperature and the presence of wide expanses of open country on
the growth of maize and the keeping of cattle is a cultural gain.

The prevailing rains of Angola are from the northeast to the 132
southwest; consequently the high plateau intercepts rain clouds which
give an annual fall of sixty inches. This adequate rainfall is another
factor which has affected economic life, density of population, com-
munal welfare, and powers of expansion.

The villages of the Ovimbundu are built on hillsides having a 361
commanding view of the surrounding country. There is in the
nature of the land a natural protection from enemies. In addition
to this the Benguela Highlands are an admirable base from which
expeditions both predatory and commercial might, and actually did
set out eastward to the interior of Arica, and southwest to the
cattle-keeping country.

It is important to note that this central plateau is the watershed 133
for four large river systems; the Kwanza to the northwest; the Cunene
to the southwest; the tributaries of the Kasai to the northeast; and
the Zambezi and its affluents to the southeast. Fishing, with attend- [226]
ant beliefs of a ritualistic kind, is of local importance; so also is the
making of canoes. Moreover, the river valleys have marked out a
natural means of communication in several directions.

In connection with the river system the biological factor of the 136
tsetse fly is important, because the presence of the fly locally dis- 231
courages human habitation and prevents the keeping of cattle. The
exact distribution of the fly is imperfectly known, but *Glossinia* [164]
palpalis, the cause of sleeping sickness in human beings, also *Glos-*
sinia morsitans, which carries disease to cattle, are both present along
the Kwanza and parts of the other rivers (J. C. B. Statham, Through
Angola, p. 294).

The western coastal strip is a region of great aridity which has in 132
some years no rainfall whatever, because the northeasterly rains have 137
expended themselves on the high plateau. This region displays
vegetation of the semi-desert type; namely, baobab trees, prickly
acacias, euphorbias, and aloes. Population in this area is sparse, [162]
always nomadic, and in some places non-existent. The coastal strip

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

283 In the beginning a thread from the fluffy mass on the stick is fastened to a corncob or to a potato, the weight of which keeps the thread taut (Plate XXXVI, Fig. 1).

[462] I have never seen a woman spinning and am informed that in former days the working of the loom was a task for men only.

463 In presenting facts bearing on the economic life of the Ovimbundu attention has been paid to the importance of ritual, specialization 791 in industry, and division of labor on a sex basis. Clearly, the economic life is one of the fundamentals of social structure, while at many points it is a field in which the magician works.

132 Topography and climate have fixed certain conditions which, so 241 far as the Benguela Highlands are concerned, favor agriculture on an extensive scale, also the keeping of cattle. In the Benguela Highlands a moderate temperature, combined with sufficient rainfall, has produced a type of vegetation which provides timbers serviceable to the craftsman, together with bush that affords shelter for game.

128 The bearing of these economic facts on the probable origins of traits, and their assembly to form the tribal life of the Ovimbundu, is reserved for discussion in chapters dealing with culture contacts and cultural processes. In chapters X–XII the factual material presented here under "Economic Life" is correlated with what is known of similar activities in cultures surrounding that of the Ovimbundu.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

CHAPTER V

VILLAGE ECONOMICS

The homeland of the Ovimbundu, the Benguela Highland, is mostly over 4,000 feet above sea-level. Rainfall is 50–60 inches a year, and the rainy season is from September to April.[1] In this season after a downpour there is frequently a cooling of the air, and the most intense heat comes just before the rainy season, during the dry spell that occurs in or about February, and just after the rains. Between the middle of May and the middle of July the nights and early mornings are bitterly cold but the days are pleasantly cool. After the middle of July the temperature gradually rises.

The soil of the Highland is poor; the Ovimbundu industriously cultivate beans, manioc, maize, potatoes, and tobacco. Less frequently they have coffee plants, fruit trees, and sisal. Occasionally wheat is grown but the ground is not really suitable. I am told that rice could be grown in the stream valleys. Four field types are recognized by the Ovimbundu—*otjumbo* (garden), *onaka* (stream-valley garden), *ombanda* (in ground sloping up from a stream), and *epya* (a field away from the streams on level ground).[2]

Umbundu country is well supplied with water in streams and rivers, and the Ovimbundu have built irrigation channels wherever possible. Cultivation in the stream valleys, that is, of the *onaka* type of garden, has only been practised since the 1870's or 80's.[3] They are planted in August or the beginning of September, and give crops in December and January. The

[1] For an excellent account of Umbundu habitat see Childs, pp. 1–11.

[2] Albino Alves, *Dicionário Etimológico Bundo-Português*, Lisbon, 1951, Vol. I, p. 659 gives ombanda as a synonym of onaka.

[3] Private information.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER I

HABITAT

[p. 1]

Morphology

131 THE homeland of the Ovimbundu is the Benguela Highland in
133 central Angola. Strictly speaking the Highland comprises those regions which have an elevation of 1,500 metres (about 4,920 feet) or more. A glance at the accompanying map will show how closely the territory inhabited by the Ovimbundu corresponds with the extent of the Highland proper. The adjoining regions, in which the Ovimbundu also live, nowhere have an elevation inferior to 1,000 metres (about 3,280 feet). Geographically the region of the Highland is a part of the South African sub-continental plateau. The ridges of the Highland form the plateau's highest north-western portion.

133 Geologically this sub-continental plateau is one of the oldest parts of the earth's surface. The north-western portion, with which this study is concerned, has remained above sea-level from before the time of fossils. The vast slab of primeval crystalline rock which forms the foundation of the plateau often outcrops in the form of isolated rocks of unusual appearance,[1] or in massive peaks, the highest of which, in the western escarpment, reach an elevation of nearly 9,000 feet (2,850 metres).[2] Some of these outcrops remain bare, some are hidden by laterite and some by soil formed from decomposition of rock.

Among the sediments which overlie these primeval rocks there are unfossiliferous sandstones, conglomerates, and others, all of
[316] which are considered to be of Palaeozoic age. Deposits of iron are numerous, many of which were once worked by the Ovimbundu
000 or by their predecessors. Much of the soil has been greatly im-

[1] Several of these rocks have caught the attention of travellers and writers. *Luvili* (north-west of Bailundu) is perhaps the most striking of all. Cameron said that the natives called it 'The Devil's Finger', a name I have not been able to verify. *Nganda* and *Kawe* are near the railway between Nova Lisboa and Vila Robert Williams. A journalist recently gave them the name of 'Cleopatra's Breasts'.

[2] One of the peaks of the ridge called *Moko* (The Knife) is the highest, but no complete survey has been made.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

Much of the soil has been greatly im-
134 poverished both by use and by the action of the weather. The most productive soil areas consist of alluvial deposits, but the precipitate nature of much of the region precludes the formation of such deposits. The bulk of the soil is rather poor, but still it is of better quality, on the whole, than in adjoining regions to the north, east, and south.[1]

•133 In common with several of the African plateaux the Benguela Highland rises very precipitately from the sea. This is one of the most striking features of African geography. The steepness of the [48] ascent forces the Benguela Railway to use a cog-line for a short distance. The village of Ngendo, described in the section dealing with the social structure, has an elevation of about 1,650 metres (5,400 feet) but is situated at only about 60 miles from the ocean.[2] That part of the intermediate zone which adjoins the Highland on the west consists of river valleys between mountain ridges and is well watered, but between that and the sea the country is very arid. This arid region is in reality a northern extension of the Kalahari, Omaheke, and Namieb deserts. Much of this arid stretch is exceedingly rough mountainous country. All along the African coast there is a coastal plain, but in the region under consideration it is very narrow. Plain and mountain are equally arid and this desert country generally has an elevation of less than 1,000 metres (about 3,280 feet). This intermediate zone is well known to the Ovimbundu and played an important role in the history of their commercial developments since they were obliged to cross it to reach the European stations on the coast.

Other adjoining regions have also been of importance to the
101 Ovimbundu. It was from the region to the north between the Highland and the Kuanza River that some of the principal ruling families came. Across this same region the Ovimbundu had their
[177] first European contacts—with the Portuguese establishments on the Kuanza River. In the regions to the south live cattle-raising people whence the Ovimbundu got cattle, whether by raiding or
133 by trading. East of the Kuanza River valley the elevation drops
167 gradually toward the basins of the Congo and the Zambezi. When the slave- and rubber-trades led the Ovimbundu into this region

[1] i.e. of all adjoining regions only on the north-west are there valleys of superior soil. No complete survey of the soils of Angola has been made. Most books overrate the qualities of the soils of the colony.

[2] See *infra*, Chap. II.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

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1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

133

Photo. R. S. Webb

a. Rock outcrop beside the Keve River

Photo. M. W. Bunde

b. Rapids of the Kuvale River (Katombela system)

[facing p. 16]

161 But this number is probably made up by Ovimbundu emigrants to other colonies and to the Union of South Africa.[1]

162 There are no recent estimates of the populations of the various groups of Ovimbundu. Magyar in 1859 however gave figures which are of some interest.[2] He estimated the total Ovimbundu ("Kimbanda") population at 1,880,000, but points out that this number includes 300,000 from tribes which, though culturally resembling the Ovimbundu, are not linguistically related to them (Kissama, Mupinda, Mussumbe, Lusseke, Munyemba and Massongo). Another 300,000 are from tribes which Magyar includes as "Kimbanda" speaking, but which are not generally reckoned as Ovimbundu today. (Nganda, Esele, Humbi, Lupolo, Hako and Kakingi.) This would leave 1,280,000, a figure remarkably near to the present estimate. The following are his figures for the separate groups:-

	Area in sq.m.	*Population*
Viye (Bie)	800	120,000
Bailundu	2,000	450,000
Wambu (Hambo)	?	120,000
Ciyaka (Kiakka)	?	75,000
Ngalangi (Galangue)	1,000	250,000
Civula (Kibala)	200	35,000
Ndulu (Andulo)	160	40,000
Sambu (Sambos)	120	30,000
Kakonda (Caconda)	300	100,000
	Total	1,220,000

There are no recent estimates of tribal density. The 1940 Census[3] gives density in the Provinces as :-

Bie Province[4]	1.5 per sq. km.
Benguella	8.5 per sq. km.
Huila	2.0 per sq. km.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT[5]

TOPOGRAPHY

133 The homeland of the Ovimbundu corresponds closely with the highest part of the Benguella Highland, i.e. the area lying between 11° and 15° South Latitude, and meridians 14° and 18° E. Altitude in this region is everywhere over 4,000 feet, and the western ridges rise as high as 9,000 feet, forming the highest north-western portion of the ancient South African sub-continental plateau. To the east, elevation drops gradually from the Kwanza valley towards the Kasai and Zambesi rivers. To the west, descent is irregular - in places almost precipitous - to the coastal plain. This plain and the stretch of higher country (below 3,200 feet) which separates it from the Highland proper, form an arid and sparsely-populated region which is a northerly extension of the Kalahari, Namieb and Onaheke deserts.

(1) Childs, op.cit., p.9. (2) Magyar, 1859, pp.125, 239, 361 etc.
(3) Quoted by Sarmento, 1948.
(4) This figure is of little significance since Bie Province includes large sparsely-inhabited non-Ovimbundu areas in south-east Angola.
(5) Childs 1949, chap.I. Fitzgerald 1948, pp.278f. Hambly 1934, pp.108f.

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The foundation of the plateau is a vast slab of primeval crystalline rock, which frequently outcrops in the form of isolated rocks or of massive peaks. Some of these outcrops remain bare, while others are hidden by laterite and soil formed by rock decomposition. Sediments overlying the rocks include unfossiliferous sandstones and conglomerates, considered to be of Palaeozoic age. Much of the soil is poor, in many areas impoverished by use and by erosion; there are however a few alluvial deposits, and on the whole the soil is of better quality than in the adjoining regions to the east, north and south. 134 133

Differences in vegetation between the Highland and the lower zone towards the coast are striking. Characteristic feature of the coastal area is the baobab *(Adansonia digitata)* and in the better-watered areas tropical forests occur. The Highland proper was until recently well-covered with a variety of trees; today, however, except in isolated areas in Bailundu and other regions, grasslands have taken the place of forest and woodland. Native methods of agriculture and annual fires have caused much deforestation, and this has been accentuated by the demands of European settlement and of the Railway, which up to the present time uses principally wood for fuel. 137

CLIMATE

The Highland is well within the Tropical Zone, but altitude and the effect of the south-western Antarctic current combine to produce a moderate climate. The annual variation of temperature is relatively slight; a day's maximum is seldom above 90°F, and may be as low as 60°, but the usual maximum is around 80°. The minimum of 32° or even 30° is sometimes reached in the winter (about May 20th - July 20th), but more usually the minimum is 40° to 50° in the winter, and 50° to 55° for the rest of the year. There is considerably daily variation, especially in the winter, when differences of 42° are often registered. 132

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3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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131 was at times traversed by the Ovimbundu who know of the sea and
484 call it *kalunga*. Bihéan caravans crossed to the coast with slaves, as history shows, but the nature of the coastal strip marks it as a western barrier limiting the expansion of the Ovimbundu in that direction. The coast line itself is of the greatest moment in the consideration of historical factors. From Loanda, Benguela, and
[177] Mossamedes on the coast, the Portuguese penetrated the interior, so making contacts with the Ovimbundu to the encouragement of caravan trade. The importance of this European contact will be seen in subsequent chapters.

The south and southwest parts of Angola are of particular importance in studying the contacts of the Ovimbundu, but to give here the details of the wealthy cattle-keeping culture of these regions, which were accessible through peaceful proximity, trade, and occasional raiding, would be an anticipation of chapter X, "Culture Contacts."
[723] One topographical point is of primary importance; namely, the ease with which the Ovimbundu could descend from their strongholds to the low-lying land of the west and south, whereas the reverse journey is much more difficult for a people unaccustomed to manoeuvring and finding their way among hills.

101 Having described the northern, central, western, and southern areas, there remains only the eastern section to consider; this presents several features of peculiar geographical and ethnological interest.
• [133] The eastern section of Angola is either slightly undulating or flat, the general characteristic is dryness, and vegetation is somewhat
[136] sparse though sufficient to shelter many kinds of antelope.

The major population is the Vachokue, a warlike, hunting people, who follow agricultural pursuits but slightly, and do not keep cattle. Examination of the literature describing early exploration indicates
[726] the truculent nature of these eastern people with whom caravans of Ovimbundu were in frequent conflict. Umbundu caravans crossed this country when making their way to Rhodesia, culture contacts with which are discussed in chapter X.

The results of contact of Ovimbundu and Vachokue tribes, so far as physical miscegenation is concerned, are mentioned in chapter "Physical Appearance"; while the social effects of slavery resulting from hostilities are described in chapter VI, "Social Life."

174 Rhodesia is a cattle-raising country, but the hostility of the
231 Vachokue, the great distance from central Angola to Rhodesia, and the general dryness of the country to be crossed, discourage the idea that the Ovimbundu obtained their cattle from Rhodesia. If it is

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argued that the cattle might have been brought along the course of the Zambezi and Kwando there is the objection that there are here several tsetse fly belts. On the contrary, cattle-producing country in the southwest and south of Angola is far more accessible than the Rhodesian plateau. 174 231

In the south there is the cultural habit of digging wells, especially among the Vakuanyama; but the Vachokue have not developed this trait. The substrata underlying the sand of southern Angola hold water which serves through the dry season, a fact which is advantageously employed by the cattle-keepers. The Vachokue lack this well-digging habit, and, even if subsurface water were present, the transient Ovimbundu would have lacked opportunity to dig for it when passing through hostile country. 312 111

The acquisition of cattle by the Ovimbundu is of great importance, because it is concerned with the grafting of a series of pastoral traits on a culture in no way originally associated with pastoral pursuits. The truth of this will later be made clear by examination of historical and ethnological evidence. 233

Geographical considerations give a picture of the Ovimbundu situated in naturally fortified country from which they had access to four surrounding areas, whose cultural characters agree well with the determinism of topography and climate. The natural advantages of the central highlands, and the results of contact with each of the adjacent areas, are points which will be developed in appropriate sections throughout the ensuing chapters. 133

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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167 Many of the people in Gumba had come from
177

Cela, and Cela influences are notable in several ways.[24] In Cassongue Umbundu has relatively recently ousted other
133 speech.[25] Geographically Bimbe generally is rather lower than most of the Highland. Although the railway line and the growth
167 of maize have been influential here, an alternative pull for
361 labour migration is provided by the coffee plantation of Amboim and Seles, and by the coastal towns of Novo Redondo and Porto Amboim.[26] In the days of the caravan trade Novo Redondo was an important trading centre, more important perhaps than Benguela for the people of this area.

464 Work is sought by Ovimbundu in lands far from their home.
[167] There are Ovimbundu at Brazzaville; others have settled permanently in the Congo Republic, or work in Rhodesia; the Johannesburg mines have employed many, and some have gone as far as Natal.[27] In Epalanga, the village where I lived, there were two men who had been to Johannesburg—nor was this very exceptional and I am told that among the people south of the railway it is quite common.

82 The world picture of the Ovimbundu is vague, except as regards Angola and the neighbouring countries. The existence of Europe (Putu) composed of different nations Portuguese, French, and English is known, and I was several times asked if there were black people in England. Little or nothing is known of the other continents. The island of S. Tomé in the Atlantic is known, since up to recently Angolan labourers went there, and some convicts are still sent to it. Several people from the neighbourhood had lived in Luanda or worked on coffee
[484] plantations in northern Angola. The Belgian Congo was known as Bula Matadi, though people seem little aware of Rhodesia, and Mozambique (Portuguese East Africa) is confused with the southern Angolan port of Moçamedes. The railway lines and
[484] the cities along it are of course well known, and some of the people I knew had travelled to Kwanyama country in the far south of Angola to buy cattle. Johannesburg (Zhwaini) and its

[24] Notably in the arm ornaments and hair styles favoured by some women. Cela diviners are often consulted.

[25] Childs (p. 179) suggests that the change came about in the nineteenth century.

[26] For this area of Angola see Egerton, pp. 186–8. Galvão and Selvagem, pp. 378–80, 437–8.

[27] Personal information. Also Childs, p. 215.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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CHAPTER V

VILLAGE ECONOMICS

The homeland of the Ovimbundu, the Benguela Highland, is 132 mostly over 4,000 feet above sea-level. Rainfall is 50–60 inches [133] a year, and the rainy season is from September to April.[1] In this season after a downpour there is frequently a cooling of the air, and the most intense heat comes just before the rainy season, during the dry spell that occurs in or about February, and just after the rains. Between the middle of May and the middle of July the nights and early mornings are bitterly cold but the days are pleasantly cool. After the middle of July the temperature gradually rises.

The soil of the Highland is poor; the Ovimbundu industri- 241 ously cultivate beans, manioc, maize, potatoes, and tobacco. [134] Less frequently they have coffee plants, fruit trees, and sisal. Occasionally wheat is grown but the ground is not really suitable. I am told that rice could be grown in the stream valleys. Four field types are recognized by the Ovimbundu—*otjumbo* (garden), *onaka* (stream-valley garden), *ombanda* (in ground sloping up from a stream), and *epya* (a field away from the streams on level ground).[2]

Umbundu country is well supplied with water in streams and 312 rivers, and the Ovimbundu have built irrigation channels wherever possible. Cultivation in the stream valleys, that is, of 311 the *onaka* type of garden, has only been practised since the 1870's or 80's.[3] They are planted in August or the beginning of 241 September, and give crops in December and January. The 221

[1] For an excellent account of Umbundu habitat see Childs, pp. 1–11.

[2] Albino Alves, *Dicionário Etimologico Bundo-Português*, Lisbon, 1951, Vol. I, p. 659 gives ombanda as a synonym of onaka.

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1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

Much of the soil has been greatly im-
134 poverished both by use and by the action of the weather. The most productive soil areas consist of alluvial deposits, but the precipitate nature of much of the region precludes the formation of such deposits. The bulk of the soil is rather poor, but still it is of better quality, on the whole, than in adjoining regions to the north, east, and south.[1]

133 In common with several of the African plateaux the Benguela Highland rises very precipitately from the sea. This is one of the most striking features of African geography. The steepness of the [48] ascent forces the Benguela Railway to use a cog-line for a short distance. The village of Ngendo, described in the section dealing with the social structure, has an elevation of about 1,650 metres (5,400 feet) but is situated at only about 60 miles from the ocean.[2] That part of the intermediate zone which adjoins the Highland on the west consists of river valleys between mountain ridges and is well watered, but between that and the sea the country is very arid. This arid region is in reality a northern extension of the Kalahari, Omaheke, and Namieb deserts. Much of this arid stretch is exceedingly rough mountainous country. All along the African coast there is a coastal plain, but in the region under consideration it is very narrow. Plain and mountain are equally arid and this desert country generally has an elevation of less than 1,000 metres (about 3,280 feet). This intermediate zone is well known to the Ovimbundu and played an important role in the history of their commercial developments since they were obliged to cross it to reach the European stations on the coast.

101 Other adjoining regions have also been of importance to the Ovimbundu. It was from the region to the north between the Highland and the Kuanza River that some of the principal ruling families came. Across this same region the Ovimbundu had their [177] first European contacts—with the Portuguese establishments on the Kuanza River. In the regions to the south live cattle-raising people whence the Ovimbundu got cattle, whether by raiding or 133 by trading. East of the Kuanza River valley the elevation drops 167 gradually toward the basins of the Congo and the Zambezi. When the slave- and rubber-trades led the Ovimbundu into this region

[1] i.e. of all adjoining regions only on the north-west are there valleys of superior soil. No complete survey of the soils of Angola has been made. Most books overrate the qualities of the soils of the colony.

[2] See *infra*, Chap. II.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

they came to call it *ofeka yonjala*, 'The Hungry Country' or better 133
'The Country of Hunger', since it was without inhabitants and 167
consequently without the possibility of purchasing provisions.[1]
Much of the soil in all three of these adjoining regions is very [134]
sandy and comparatively unproductive.

Many rivers find in the Benguela Highland a great catchment 133
basin. The two largest are the Kuanza (Kuanja) and the Cunene (Kunene), both flowing into the Atlantic. Between them are the Queve (Keve, also marked 'Cuvo'), the Balombo, and the Catumbela (Katombela), which also reach the ocean. A peculiar stream is the Cubango (Kuvango or Okavango), which rises near the source of the Cunene, and after becoming a great and free-flowing river loses itself in the Kalahari desert. Some authorities hold that through the Chobe swamp it maintains a seasonal connexion with the Zambezi. In this event the springs of the Benguela Highland feed the waters of both oceans. The part played by the Mbuluvulu plain in Bié (Viye) has often been noted by travellers and writers, for it drains into the Kuanza and also into the Cubango. As with most of the Southern Bantu,[2] rivers have had little directly to do with building the material culture of the Ovimbundu. Watersheds have furnished trade-routes, and fishing has become [226]
a side-line occupation for those who live conveniently near the streams. The rivers themselves, however, have always been of the greatest importance to the mass of the people who are dependent upon them for water, whether it comes in the form of rainfall or is taken more directly from the streams.

Climate

The regions under consideration in this study belong to the 132
South Central African zone of summer rains. Coming on the monsoon from the Indian Ocean, the rains are precipitated by cold winds from the south-western antarctic current.[3] The Benguela Highland constitutes a distinct climatic zone, as the fact of the altitude would lead one to infer. The adjoining and coastal regions

[1] Cf. H. W. Nevinson, *A Modern Slavery*, chap. vi (New York: Harpers, 1906); also M. Burr, *A Fossicker in Angola* (London: Adelphi, 1933).

[2] A. J. H. Goodwin, 'Habitat', p. 34, in Schapera, *The Bantu-Speaking Tribes of South Africa* (London: Routledge, 1937).

[3] See C. E. P. Brooks and S. T. A. Mirrlees, *A Study of the Atmospheric Circulation over Tropical Africa*. Meteorological Office. Geophysical memoirs no. 55 (London: H.M.S.O., 1932).

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1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 199 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

survivors acquire at least a limited immunity. Many observers have noted the comparative rarity among African natives of that chronic complication of malaria known as black-water fever, although it frequently attacks Europeans. Another disease, which has been found largely among Africans, and was at one time considered as a possible malarial complication, is now classified by most observers as a variety of scurvy. This disease is known to medical science by the Umbundu name of *onyalãi*.[1] Among other common diseases are yaws, tick fever, tropical ulcers, common sores, infections, intestinal parasites, and pneumonia. Others, such as bilharzia and leprosy, are less common but well known. The comparatively recent introduction and spread of pulmonary tuberculosis and the venereal diseases give cause for alarm.[2] Neither sleeping-sickness nor the cattle nagana are found. There are a number of cattle diseases, such as scab, carbuncle, quarter evil, pleuro-pneumonia, and gal-sickness.

Termites are a tropical pest present in large numbers. Their depredations require the periodical replacement of woodwork, unless made of the very few species of hard wood which they seem unable to attack. In common with all of South Africa, locusts are always to be found and they increase greatly at irregular intervals.

The *fauna* of the country under consideration includes nearly all of the commoner south and central African species. Some of the rarer and more localized species are not present, but on the other hand this is the home of certain rare species, as, for example, the giant sable.[3] The elephant, the rhinoceros, and other large species are no longer to be found in the Highland proper, but only in adjoining comparatively unpopulated regions to the west, south, and south-east. All game is comparatively scarce, which is not surprising considering that the Ovimbundu have possessed firearms for about 250 years, and considering also the extent of European settlement during the past fifty years.

[1] First reported by Dr. F. C. Wellman, a missionary physician who worked among the Ovimbundu.

[2] No figures on the incidence of any disease with reference to the population of the colony are available. Nor are population movements known, for previous to the first general census, which was taken in 1940, such figures on population as there were, were hardly more than guess-work. Results of this first census were published in 10 volumes, 1941–3. (Colónia de Angola, Repartição de Estatística Geral: *Censo Geral da População*. Luanda: Imprensa Nacional.)

[3] *Hippotragus niger varianii*.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

PLATE X

136
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Photo. M. W. Ennis

a. Wounded bull eland (Malolo)

Photo. R. S. Webb

b. Head of wart hog (Bailundu)

[Facing p. 129]

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

the occupations of warfare and of trade to the more settled agricultural life. And it is the possession and cultivation of land which provides a minimum basis for those who are also able to engage in any sort of trade, either commercial or one of the handicrafts.

Health. A sanitary history, or the course of health among the Ovimbundu throughout their national existence, would be of interest if it could be made known. Legend tells of a time in the distant past when sickness was rare and death came hardly ever, if at all. It is said that hasty burials were not permitted because there had been cases of the supposed corpse returning to life. Some have taken this to mean that the tribe came from a more healthful region than the one which it now occupies, but it seems rather to be a traditional recognition of the fact that many of the diseases and bodily ills which at present afflict the Ovimbundu are of comparatively recent date. The time of arrival of some of these unwelcome guests can be estimated. Some are the subject of traditional tales as, for example, the jigger[1] (*pulex penetrans*), which a Ngalangi tradition says came to them from Bailundu, and Bailundu tradition says was first recognized in the time of Ekongo-liohombo (*c.* 1875) or Ekuikui II (*c.* 1876–93). Now the jigger is well known in Africa as an importation from South America, and the time of its first appearance could probably be determined. This parasite is widely present in tropical Africa, but there are some regions which it has not (yet) reached.[2] Its coming to Angola is probably, therefore, of recent date. Silva Porto, writing in 1879, said, 'This evil is of recent date on the coast . . . (*pulex penetrans*).'[3] The first notice of this pest which reached the pages of the *Boletim Official* of Angola was in 1875. If this date really represents the time when the jigger first appeared in Angola, it seems strange that it should have been so late, in view of the slave-ships ferrying back and forth from Brazil for the previous three hundred years.

Small-pox[4] might also be thought of as a recent arrival for, according to a note in the *Boletim Official*, it first appeared in Novo Redondo in June 1864, having been brought from Luanda by ships' crews.[5] Its first appearance on the Plateau, however,

[1] *Ewundu* or *ocindiundiu* is the Umbundu name, from *oku wunda*, to hide (the hidden one).

[2] e.g. Amboland, according to Umbundu testimony.

[3] *Boletim Soc. Geog. Lisboa*, 5*a* Ser., p. 10.

[4] *Ocingongo* is the Umbundu name.

[5] *Boletim Official da Provincia de Angola*, 1865, no. 5.

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The coastal strip

131 was at times traversed by the Ovimbundu who know of the sea and
484 call it *kalunga*. Bihéan caravans crossed to the coast with slaves, as history shows, but the nature of the coastal strip marks it as a western barrier limiting the expansion of the Ovimbundu in that direction. The coast line itself is of the greatest moment in the consideration of historical factors. From Loanda, Benguela, and
[177] Mossamedes on the coast, the Portuguese penetrated the interior, so making contacts with the Ovimbundu to the encouragement of caravan trade. The importance of this European contact will be seen in subsequent chapters.

The south and southwest parts of Angola are of particular importance in studying the contacts of the Ovimbundu, but to give here the details of the wealthy cattle-keeping culture of these regions, which were accessible through peaceful proximity, trade, and occasional raiding, would be an anticipation of chapter X, "Culture Contacts."
[723] One topographical point is of primary importance; namely, the ease with which the Ovimbundu could descend from their strongholds to the low-lying land of the west and south, whereas the reverse journey is much more difficult for a people unaccustomed to manoeuvring and finding their way among hills.

101 Having described the northern, central, western, and southern areas, there remains only the eastern section to consider; this presents several features of peculiar geographical and ethnological interest.
[133] The eastern section of Angola is either slightly undulating or flat, the general characteristic is dryness, and vegetation is somewhat
[136] sparse though sufficient to shelter many kinds of antelope.

The major population is the Vachokue, a warlike, hunting people, who follow agricultural pursuits but slightly, and do not keep cattle. Examination of the literature describing early exploration indicates
[726] the truculent nature of these eastern people with whom caravans of Ovimbundu were in frequent conflict. Umbundu caravans crossed this country when making their way to Rhodesia, culture contacts with which are discussed in chapter X.

The results of contact of Ovimbundu and Vachokue tribes, so far as physical miscegenation is concerned, are mentioned in chapter "Physical Appearance"; while the social effects of slavery resulting from hostilities are described in chapter VI, "Social Life."

174 Rhodesia is a cattle-raising country, but the hostility of the
231 Vachokue, the great distance from central Angola to Rhodesia, and the general dryness of the country to be crossed, discourage the idea that the Ovimbundu obtained their cattle from Rhodesia. If it is

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

114 trative posts. I agree that people between Caconda and Huila
101 represent a racial mixture of the Ovimbundu and the Ovambo. The record speaks of painting-houses for girls at Cabinda, an item which agrees with reports from other sources. The jottings concerning tribes from Cabinda to the far south of Angola are too vague to be used in ethnological work with confidence.

There are many points on which the work of A. Schachtzabel should be consulted for the purpose of making comparisons with my [621] own observations. The chief of these are a note and photograph on [281] village construction (p. 130); the musical bow (p. 32); the loom [175] (plate VI); transmigration of the soul of a chief into an animal (p. 51); [524] and the game of mancala (p. 52). My observations of initiation at [881] Katoko, Ngalangi, and Cangamba agree well with that of Schachtzabel at Katoko, but I was able to obtain more detail and more [283] numerous photographs of the ritual of initiation. The spinning of cotton (p. 143) is exactly the process so frequently witnessed now at Elende. Iron-working (p. 111) appears to be comparable with the technique at Elende, but Schachtzabel seems to have missed the ritual. I was not so fortunate as this author in finding the old type of iron-smelting furnace in use.

114 The work of Statham is devoted primarily to hunting and descrip-
136 tions of plant and animal life. The chapter given to a casual description of people among whom he passed is not useful as ethnology; but the book is of service in providing a background of natural history. Information on the tsetse fly in Angola (p. 294) assists ethnological work by showing the determining effect of this biological factor. [231] Presence of the fly is prohibitive to cattle-keeping, therefore cattle are not kept along the river courses which are infested with this pest.

114 Alexander Barns made no pretence of writing more than a travel book; nevertheless he publishes photographs of ethnological value, gives useful historical summaries, and deals with economic problems of production and transportation.

114 Tucker's book "Drums in the Darkness," though written to
175 interest the American public in mission work, contains many ethnological statements. The chief of these relate to the structure of the compound (p. 37); the dress of women (p. 39); naming of twins and triplets; and other items which agree well with data from the district in which I worked. There are notes on drum signals (p. 74) and [202] cannibalism (p. 77). Apparently drum signals were in use at Bihé half a century ago. Forty years ago a slave was killed and eaten [266] at the installation ceremonies for a new king, a point that was noted

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

streams and washed-out bridges. Electrical discharges in connexion with storms are very common and often cause property and personal damage. In connexion with mean annual rainfall figures, the cycle of rainy and dry seasons is of importance. An annual rainfall of 50 or 60 inches may not seem unduly heavy save when it is realized that practically all of it falls during seven or even six months. It is this heavy seasonal rainfall which has made much of the Highland into what is known in South Africa as 'sour veld'—a type of pasturage relatively ill-suited for cattle raising. 132

The Benguela Highland is well within the tropics (between 11° and 14° 30′ South), but the altitude and the effect of the antarctic current combine to produce a decidedly moderate climate. The variations of temperature, however, are quite unlike those found in most regions having a 'temperate' climate. The régime of the rains, tropical position, altitude, and other factors combine to produce a peculiar set of temperature variations. The annual variation of temperature is relatively slight, a day's maximum is seldom above 90° F., it may be as low as 60°, but the more usual maximum is around 80°. The minimum of 32° or even 30° is sometimes reached in the winter (about 20 May–20 July),[1] but it seldom goes quite so low. A day's minimum has been registered as high as 63°, more usually the minimum goes to about 40° or 45° in winter and between 50° and 55° during the rest of the year. Daily variations are important. Greatest variations occur in winter with differences of as much as 42° often registered. During the rest of the year there is a considerable range of daily variation—sometimes as much as 40° and sometimes as little as 7° with usual variation of from 20° to 30°.[2] On the days when it rains or remains cloudy all day the slightest variations are registered. Such days are cold and disagreeable and a grate fire is almost a necessity.[3]

Environmental Factors

Differences of characteristic vegetation as between the Highland and the lower zones are striking. The most characteristic feature 137

[1] Ice forms nearly every winter—at least in small pools along the streams, and sometimes more generally. There are Umbundu words for hoar-frost (*ocihohoto*) and for hail (*ociwe*), but not for ice nor, of course, for snow.

[2] Figures compiled from records of the weather station of Currie Institute, Ndondi—elevation 1,800 metres (5,900 feet).

[3] Grate fires are agreeable mornings and evenings during ten to eleven months of the year. In the winter they are a real necessity.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

•137 of the lower zones between the plateau and the coast is the baobab (*Adansonia digitata*). Where these lower zones are well watered, especially along the streams, dense tropical forests are the rule.

The Highland proper until quite recent times was well covered with a good variety of trees. This gave a pleasing aspect not lost upon travellers. Commander Cameron, who crossed from Zanzibar [114] to Benguela in 1875, was greatly impressed by the rustic beauty of the country-side:

> As we went forward the scenery increased in beauty, and at last I was constrained to halt and surrender myself to the enjoyment of the view which lay before me.
>
> I will content myself with asserting that nothing could be more lovely than this entrancing scene, this glimpse of Paradise. To describe it would be impossible. Neither poet, . . . nor painter . . . could by pen or pencil do full justice to the country of Bailundu.
>
> In the foreground were glades in the woodland, varied with knolls crowned by groves of large, English-looking trees, sheltering villages with yellow thatched roofs; . . . plantations with the fresh green of young crops and the bright red of newly hoed ground in vivid contrast, and running streams flashing in the sunlight; while in the far distance were mountains of endless and pleasing variety of form, gradually fading away until they blended with the blue of the sky. . . .
>
> That evening we camped in a wood, a clear space having literally to be cut out of the masses of sweet-scented creepers which festooned the trees.[1]

Some of this natural beauty still remains in Bailundu and other parts of the country, but much of it has gone, as grasslands have taken the place of forest and woodland. Native agriculture and the annual fires have caused much deforestation and much has [375] also come about from the demands of European settlement and the needs of the railway, which up to the present time uses only wood for fuel. The question as to whether the rainfall has yet been much affected is often discussed.

164 The Benguela Highland is within the tropics and therefore subject to many tropical diseases. Malaria is prevalent owing to the presence of the *Anopheles* mosquito, one of the two essential hosts in the life-cycle of the malaria germ, man being the other. Infant mortality owing to malaria seems to be high among the Ovimbundu. It seems probable, however, that many of the

[1] V. L. Cameron, *Across Africa* (New York: Harpers, 1877), p. 410 f.

The two largest rivers flowing from the Highland are the Kwanza and the Kunene, both of which flow into the Atlantic Ocean. Between them are the Keve, the Balombo and the Katumbela. The Kubango rises near the source of the Kunene and flows southwards towards the Kalahari Desert. 133

SOILS AND VEGETATION

The foundation of the plateau is a vast slab of primeval crystalline rock, which frequently outcrops in the form of isolated rocks or of massive peaks. Some of these outcrops remain bare, while others are hidden by laterite and soil formed by rock decomposition. Sediments overlying the rocks include unfossiliferous sandstones and conglomerates, considered to be of Palaeozoic age. Much of the soil is poor, in many areas impoverished by use and by erosion; there are however a few alluvial deposits, and on the whole the soil is of better quality than in the adjoining regions to the east, north and south. 134 133

Differences in vegetation between the Highland and the lower zone towards the coast are striking. Characteristic feature of the coastal area is the baobab *(Adansonia digitata)* and in the better-watered areas tropical forests occur. The Highland proper was until recently well-covered with a variety of trees; today, however, except in isolated areas in Bailundu and other regions, grasslands have taken the place of forest and woodland. Native methods of agriculture and annual fires have caused much deforestation, and this has been accentuated by the demands of European settlement and of the Railway, which up to the present time uses principally wood for fuel. 137

CLIMATE

The Highland is well within the Tropical Zone, but altitude and the effect of the south-western Antarctic current combine to produce a moderate climate. The annual variation of temperature is relatively slight; a day's maximum is seldom above 90°F, and may be as low as 60°, but the usual maximum is around 80°. The minimum of 32° or even 30° is sometimes reached in the winter (about May 20th - July 20th), but more usually the minimum is 40° to 50° in the winter, and 50° to 55° for the rest of the year. There is considerably daily variation, especially in the winter, when differences of 42° are often registered. 132

Mean annual rainfall varies from 40 to 60 inches, according to region. In the Highland the rains begin with a few showers during September, increase during October and November, have a break of two to four weeks in December, January or February, and continue until the end of April. The heaviest falls are usually in November and December, occasionally in March.

TRADITIONS OF ORIGIN AND HISTORY(1)

The Ovimbundu people represent a fusion of diverse stocks, chiefly of the Southern Bantu and of the Congo or Central Bantu peoples. The ruling 174 167

(1) This section is a summary of the detailed account given by Childs 1949, pp.164-231.

growth is under examination. This central plateau, the Benguela 131
Highlands, rises in places to a height of 6,000 feet, an altitude which [133]
reduces the heat of the tropics and so modifies the flora, discouraging
some types of vegetation and encouraging others. Hostility of the
highlands to palm trees and the banana is appropriately discussed [241]
when dealing with cultural losses; while the fostering effect of reduced
temperature and the presence of wide expanses of open country on
the growth of maize and the keeping of cattle is a cultural gain.

The prevailing rains of Angola are from the northeast to the 132
southwest; consequently the high plateau intercepts rain clouds which
give an annual fall of sixty inches. This adequate rainfall is another
factor which has affected economic life, density of population, com-
munal welfare, and powers of expansion.

The villages of the Ovimbundu are built on hillsides having a 361
commanding view of the surrounding country. There is in the
nature of the land a natural protection from enemies. In addition
to this the Benguela Highlands are an admirable base from which
expeditions both predatory and commercial might, and actually did
set out eastward to the interior of Africa, and southwest to the
cattle-keeping country.

It is important to note that this central plateau is the watershed 133
for four large river systems; the Kwanza to the northwest; the Cunene
to the southwest; the tributaries of the Kasai to the northeast; and
the Zambezi and its affluents to the southeast. Fishing, with attend- [226]
ant beliefs of a ritualistic kind, is of local importance; so also is the
making of canoes. Moreover, the river valleys have marked out a
natural means of communication in several directions.

In connection with the river system the biological factor of the 136
tsetse fly is important, because the presence of the fly locally dis- 231
courages human habitation and prevents the keeping of cattle. The
exact distribution of the fly is imperfectly known, but *Glossinia* [164]
palpalis, the cause of sleeping sickness in human beings, also *Glos-*
sinia morsitans, which carries disease to cattle, are both present along
the Kwanza and parts of the other rivers (J. C. B. Statham, Through
Angola, p. 294).

The western coastal strip is a region of great aridity which has in 132
some years no rainfall whatever, because the northeasterly rains have 137 ●
expended themselves on the high plateau. This region displays
vegetation of the semi-desert type; namely, baobab trees, prickly
acacias, euphorbias, and aloes. Population in this area is sparse, [162]
always nomadic, and in some places non-existent. The coastal strip

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP18

PLATE XIV

887
142

Photo. M. W. Ennis

b. Old age

854

Photo. R. S. Webb

a. Woman (educated) carrying baby (*ohu vehu*)

[Facing p. 155]

197 v. Two significant tones on radicals; no tonal alternance on nominal suffixes. In this Umbundu resembles the Lunda-Luena languages."[1]

Childs[2] classifies Umbundu with the Ambo-Herero group as belonging to the Western Province of Southern Bantu. He suggests[3] that the similarity of Umbundu to the Ngangela languages is due to the dominating influence of the Umbundu spoken in Viye (where the racial stock had a greater Ngangela element) over that spoken in other regions. This dominating influence may be explained by the relatively large number of missions in the Viye region, and presumably also by the activities of Viye traders.[4]

197
177

Dialectal differences in Umbundu speech are very small. There are certain noticeable differences between "up-country" and "down-country", roughly divided by the Keve and Kunene rivers. Each of the outlying regions has its own peculiarities, often due to foreign influences.[5]

It has been mentioned above that while the homeland of the Ovimbundu is in the Benguella Highland, the use of the Umbundu language is now more widespread. The Nganda and the Hanya tribes are increasingly using it, and the mixed populations of the coastal towns of Lobito, Katumbela and Benguella use it almost exclusively. It is also spoken in Nova Redondo, in Mossamedes, and along the Benguella Railway. This process of "Umbundu-ization" does not seem however to be taking place in Cipala, Sela, or Musende, in spite of the long period during which they owned the king of Bailundu as their overlord.[6]

PHYSICAL APPEARANCE AND DRESS

142 Among the Ovimbundu two main physical types are distinguished by some writers:[7] one is of brown skin colour and slender build, the other a shorter, darker type with more facial hair. No correlation of these types with chiefly families on the one hand and commoners on the other has been recorded. Hambly[8] gives several good illustrations of physical types among the Ovimbundu, and contrasts them with those found among neighbouring tribes.

301 The Ovimbundu retain distinctive styles of dress, ornament, tooth
304 mutilation (a V-shaped notch in the upper incisors), scarification and hair-dressing. Women are dressed in trade cloth: unmarried girls wear
291 one piece of cloth which hangs from the armpits to the knees, while a married woman drapes herself with two pieces of cloth, a skirt hanging from her girdle, and an upper piece so folded as to hold her baby tightly on her back. Certain cloth designs are considered appropriate for girls, others only for older women. Men now dress usually in European fashion.

(1) This linguistic note has been written by C.M.N. White.
(2) Op.cit., p.169. (3) p.190, fn.2.
(4) See above, pp.8-9.
(5) Childs op.cit., p.190, fn.2. See also Kalukembe, p.7 above.
(6) Childs, op.cit., pp.11, 179-80.
(7) See Hambly 1934, p.128; Cashmen 1944, p.36.
(8) Op.cit., plates XLIX-LIV.

IV. PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

142 Among the Ovimbundu there are two main physical types. One of these is of brown skin color and slender build. In this type the calves and thighs are poorly developed, and the chest girth is slender in keeping with the general development. In general the physical 144 characteristics are distinctly different from those of a typical West African Negro as represented by the Kru and the Ibo tribes.

The Ovimbundu are Bantu Negroes who possibly result from a crossing of Hamites and true Negroes, a hypothesis which would account for both the light-colored slim type and the shorter, darker, more sturdy type. But E. Torday (Herbert Spencer, Descriptive [114] Sociology of African Races, London, 1930, Preface, p. iii) thinks that differences of physique among Sudanic and Bantu Negroes are sufficiently accounted for by isolations and environmental differences. Torday denies the need for postulating an infusion of Hamitic blood, but his opinion is opposed to that which has found general acceptance.

The darker Ovimbundu with more facial hair may represent an infusion of Vachokue blood because there was warfare between the Ovimbundu and the Vachokue of eastern Angola with the result that some of the latter were taken as slaves. Types of the Ovimbundu are shown (Plates LII–LIV).

101 The Vasele, an Umbundu-speaking people of west-central Angola, 142 form a linguistic and cultural pocket because of their isolation in rugged country. Their physique shows no pronounced differences [304] from that of the Ovimbundu, but the methods of scarification, tooth mutilation, and personal ornament are in distinct contrast with those of the Ovimbundu. The Ovimbundu have only a V-shaped notch in the two upper central incisors, whereas the Vasele chip all their teeth to points (Plate LXXVI, Figs. 1, 2).

[302] The Luvando of southwest Angola resemble the Ovimbundu in general physique, though the great difference in hairdressing and personal ornament is likely to give a contrary impression (Plate LIX, Figs. 1, 2).

The Vaheneca are particularly well developed (Plate LXII, Figs. 1, 2). Not until Mongua is reached does one find a people who are distinctly different from the Ovimbundu in all respects. The Vakuanyama of Mongua are noticeably tall and slim, much taller and slimmer than the Ovimbundu, while their physiognomy is more refined (Plates LXIII; LXVIII, Fig. 2). The Vakuanyama are a pastoral tribe whereas the Ovimbundu are principally agricultural.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

The picture of types gathered at Ngalangi (Plate LXXXIX, Fig. 3) shows, reading from left to right along the back row, then along the front row in the same direction: an Ocimbundu; an Ocivokue; a man of the Vangangella; an Uluchazi woman; a Lunda man; and two types of the Vangangella. 142 101

The M'Bunda man and woman photographed at Cangamba display characteristic deformation of the upper central incisors (Plate XCI, Figs. 1, 2). Photographs of a Mussurongo man and two women, taken about a hundred miles east of Malange, show no great difference from the Ovimbundu except in their shorter stature (Plates LXX, Figs. 1, 2; LXXI, Figs. 1, 2). The Bushman (Plate LXIX, Figs. 1, 2) shows a type found wandering in small bands in the south of Angola. These photographs were taken at Cassanga. [304]

The dress and personal ornaments of the tribes dwelling to the south of the Ovimbundu (Plates LIX–LXVIII) are entirely different from the clothing and decorative styles observed in the areas occupied by the Ovimbundu. This statement is true with regard to bodily covering, ornaments, tooth mutilation, use of pigment, scarification, and hairdressing. 171 301 304

In respect of all these factors, males and females of the Ovimbundu have distinctive patterns which do not appear to have influenced, or to have been influenced by the styles around them. [177]

In working southward from Elende I passed through typical Umbundu cultures until the vicinity of Kipungo was reached. At this place the change in physical appearance, ornaments, and hairdressing was remarkable both for its abruptness and distinctiveness. But the change from agricultural to pastoral pursuits is gradual.

A comparison of photographs indicates at once the truth of this statement, which can be further illustrated by a detailed description of the ornaments observed from Kipungo to Mongua.

By far the most important of these is the circular *omba* shell made from the basal part of a gastropod shell of the genus *Conus* Linn; and allied forms. These are highly prized, not because of any intrinsic worth, but on account of strong sentiment arising from their bequest, which is usually in the female line. I have, however, seen a few males of the Vakuanyama wearing these shells. For the old *omba* shells monetary offers equal to the earnings of a woman for a period of six months were made, but without success. One woman wavered somewhat, but finally decided that she dared not return to her home without her *omba* shells. From a Portuguese trader I bought, for a small sum, *omba* shells showing stages in manufacture. 301 321 [825] [562]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

are within the African continent (Stone Age Cultures of Kenya, Cambridge, England, 1931): H. H. Johnston concludes that the place of origin of the African Negro is unknown. A. C. Haddon (The Wandering of Peoples, p. 54) surmises that "there is reason to believe that all the main races reached Africa from Asia." G. Sergi (The Mediterranean Race, pp. 41–42) regards the Hamites as a single human stock, but disagrees with a theory of Asiatic origin, and postulates the origin of Hamites in northeast Africa.

C. G. Seligman summarizes the views of Sergi and other writers respecting the origin of Hamites (Races of Africa, pp. 96–156). Among the eastern Hamites cranial characteristics, though variable, are generally convergent and are to be regarded as old variations of an original stock. Apart from Negro admixture the face of the Hamite is never prognathous. The nose is straight. The lips are often thick but never everted as in the Negro. The hair is often frizzly, but sometimes wavy or almost straight. The color of the skin varies; it may be yellowish, coppery red-brown, through every shade of brown to black, according to the amount of miscegenation that has taken place. Seligman states "that the Hamitic cradleland is generally agreed to be Asiatic, perhaps southern Arabia, or possibly an area farther east. Be this as it may, there is no doubt that the Hamites and Semites must be regarded as modifications of an original stock" (Some Aspects of the Hamitic Problem in the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, *J.R.A.I.*, XLIII, pp. 593–705).

As a result of research in the north Arabian desert Henry Field states that the stony desert between Transjordania and the Euphrates River was probably well watered and fertile at an unknown period. The locality may have been a focus, first of concentration, then of dispersal. Archaeological evidence arising from a comparative study of stone implements from Arabia and east Africa, together with data of physical anthropology, and the basic unity of Semitic and Hamitic languages support a theory of Hamitic intrusion from Asia (H. Field, The Cradle of Homo Sapiens, *Amer. Jour. Arch.*, XXXVI, No. 4, pp. 426–430; The Antiquity of Man in Southwestern Asia, *Amer. Anth.*, XXXV, pp. 51–62).

Although the origin of Hamites and Negroes is obscure it has been possible to give a summary of the chief physical traits of the former, and the same can be done for the latter. Typical Sudanic-speaking Negroes, who are sometimes referred to as "true Negroes," are to be seen in the Ibo and Ijaw tribes of southern Nigeria, and among the Kru of Liberia. The characteristics of the Negro are a

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

heavy torso, disproportionately long arms, a dark skin, prognathous 144
jaws, broad nostrils, thick everted lips, and woolly hair. But usually 142
a modification of these features occurs in Bantu-speaking Negroes. How did this modification of physique arise?

A. C. Haddon (Wandering of Peoples, p. 54) expresses a generally 144
accepted view when he states that Bantu-speaking Negroes are 114
a mixture of true Negroes with Hamites. Seligman (Races of Africa, p. 181) refers to an infusion of Hamitic blood which has differentiated the Bantu Negroes from true Negroes, and this is a generally accepted hypothesis. But Torday (H. Spencer, Descriptive Sociology of African Races, preface, p. iii) questions whether the physical and linguistic cleavage between Bantu-speaking and Sudanic-speaking Negroes is due to an admixture of Hamitic blood. He attributes the physical differences of the two great linguistic divisions of Negroes to disparity of environmental conditions. But at present no physical anthropologist could say to what extent climatic factors, nutrition, and other environmental conditions can be held responsible for the physical differences of Negroes.

The question of a mingling of Hamite and true Negro to produce a modified type of Negro is not the only difficulty. How does one account for aberrant Negroid types such as the Pygmies of the Ituri forest and the Bushmen? They have a phylogenetic relationship, but what is the racial affinity? Again, will change of environmental conditions account for the Pygmy and Bushman types? Or are we to form a hypothesis of origins by assuming establishment of new species by variation or mutation?

In the absence of certain knowledge science accepts a hypothesis 144
which best explains the known facts. And in this matter of a modified Negro type speaking Bantu languages, the idea of a mingling of the blood of Negroes and Hamites best explains the gradation of physical types from west African, Sudanic-speaking Negroes, through various types of Bantu Negroes, to Hamites, as exemplified by the Somali, Beja, and Hadendoa.

The main characters of linguistic families of Africa are clearly 197
defined by A. Werner (Language Families of Africa, pp. 20–23) who refers to the works of D. Westermann and C. Meinhof. The distinguishing features of Hamitic, Semitic, Bantu, Sudanic, and Bushman speech are known, yet the task of placing a particular language in its appropriate family is not always simple. The classification may depend on the particular facet of the language which is under examination. Hausa (Hamitic), is difficult to classify

ASSEMBLING OF TRAITS

The data which have been assembled in relation to the Ovimbundu, if considered in conjunction with the analysis of African cultures made in the foregoing chapter, lead to the following historical reconstruction. 174

When somatic traits of the Ovimbundu are considered it is clear that the general type is removed from that of true Negroes. Among the Ovimbundu are persons of a slender, brown-skinned type, with some refinement of lips and nasal width; while other persons possess the opposites of these features, but in no instance as intensely as do true Negroes. I accept the view of physical admixture of Hamites with true Negroes and believe that types like the Ovimbundu and the Vakuanyama have resulted from infusion of Hamitic blood which has modified Negro somatic traits in the way mentioned. [142]

Linguistically the Ovimbundu have a pure form of Bantu speech. The Umbundu language is tonal, but there are few semantic words whose meaning depends on a high, middle, or low tone. Probably Umbundu should be classified with the southwestern Bantu languages, but further research may show that on structural grounds Umbundu has to be accorded an intermediate position between the southwestern and the central Bantu languages. Study of vocabulary definitely links Umbundu with the Ukuanyama language of the southwestern Bantu group, but conclusions based on comparison of vocabularies are hazardous because of the dissemination of Umbundu words by extensive caravan trade of the Ovimbundu. We may therefore be dealing with loan words and not with bifurcation from the same matrix. 174 197

When comparing the social pattern of the Ovimbundu with that of other African tribes the following elements of culture should be borne in mind. 174

(1) Traits associated with an archaic hunting culture.

(2) Factors typical of the culture of Negroes, both Bantu and Sudanic.

(3) Cultural traits from pastoral tribes of south and southwest Angola. These tribes speak Bantu languages but have somatic traits which are Hamitic, while their culture exhibits some main features of the Hamitic pastoral pattern.

Among the earliest elements of Umbundu culture would probably be the traits of hunting and food-gathering. The antiquity of hunting has been indicated by considering the wide distribution of appliances

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

1

2

OVIMBUNDU

Fig. 1. Using drill, Ballundu. Fig. 2. Girl, Elende

[p.389]

142

S: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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142

OVIMBUNDU WOMEN AND INFANTS, ELENDE

[p.404]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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142

OVIMBUNDU WOMEN AND CHILDREN, ELENDE

[p. 405]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

142

OVIMBUNDU YOUTHS, ELENDE

[p.406]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

142

OVIMBUNDU MEN, ELENDE

[p. 407]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1994 FP13-Mbundu FP13

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304

[p.408]

1

2

TYPES OF OVIMBUNDU, BLENDE

Fig. 1. Negro type, both mutilated in tribal manner. Fig. 2. Modified Negro type

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13-Mbundu FP13

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[p.412]

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PHYSICAL TYPES, SOUTHWEST ANGOLA

Fig. 1. Girls of Lovande tribe. Fig. 2. Woman of Gambos wearing ombo ornaments

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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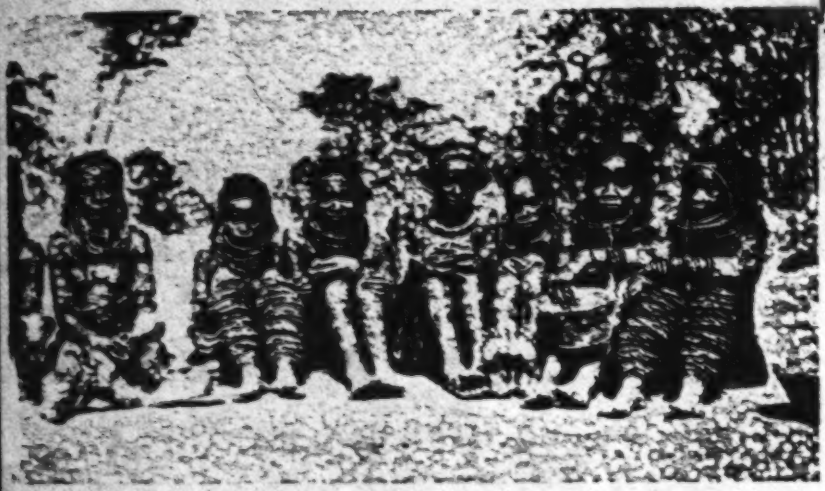

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FEMALE TYPES, SOUTHWEST ANGOLA

Fig. 1. Lovundo girls near Kipungo. Fig. 2. Body view, same types

[p. 413]

J. Hamby E-S (1929-1930) 1934 FP13-M/Bundle FP13

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PEMALE TYPES, SOUTHWEST ANGOLA

Fig. 1. Girls of Vahanera tribe near Huila. Fig. 2. Woman of Huila

[p. 414]

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FEMALE TYPES, SOUTHWEST ANGOLA

Fig. 1. Women of Gambos. Fig. 2. Women of Humbe tribe, Mongua

[p. 414]

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FF13 Mitsumbe FF13

(1929-1930) 1934

E-5

M. Hrdlicka

B. Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FF13 Mbundu FF13

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[p. 446]

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VAHENECA GIRL AT HUILA

Fig. 1. Front view. Fig. 2. Back view

3: Hambly E-6 (1929-1930) 1934 FF13 Wheeler FF13

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VAKUANYAMA TYPES, MONGUA, SOUTH ANGOLA

[p.413]

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3. Hamm, E-5 (1929-1937) 1934 F713 Mbundu FP13

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[p.116]

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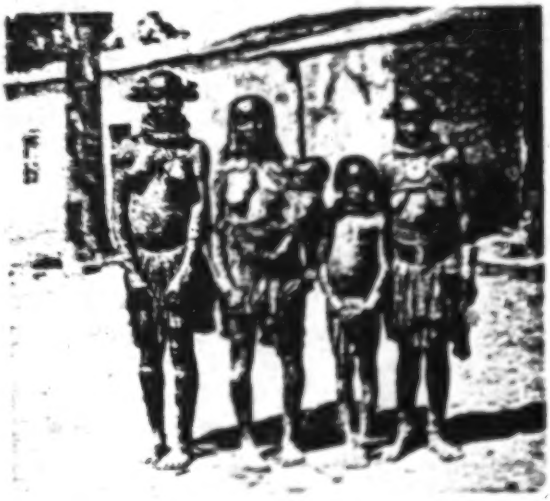
NATIVES OF HUILA, SOUTHWEST ANGOLA.

Fig. 1. Wearing forehead band and cowie shell. Fig. 2. Wearing beaded collar and cowie shell

3: Hambly. E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13



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TRIBES OF SOUTH ANGOLA

Fig. 1. Vahumbu, right and left; Gambos women and children, center. Fig. 2. Vahumbu men, with canopic, shoes, and horns, Mongua

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BUSHMAN, CASSANGA

Fig. 1. Front view. Fig. 2. Side view

S: Hambly I-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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[p.423]

S. Hambly E-5 (1926-1930) 1934 FP13-Mbundu FP13

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[p.424]

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MUSSURONGO TYPES, MALANGE, NORTHWEST ANGOLA
Fig. 1. Old. Fig. 2. Man

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MUSSURONGO WOMAN, NEAR MALANGE, NORTHWEST ANGOLA

Fig. 1. Front view. Fig. 2. Back view

[p.425]

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W. Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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FEMALE TYPES OF VASELE, WEST-CENTRAL ANGOLA

Fig. 1. Wearing nose-pin and cowrie-shell head-band. Fig. 2. Wearing beaded head-band. Note scarification of forehead and cheeks

[p.429]

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E. Hambly E-5 (1928-1930) 1934 FP18 Mikindo FP19

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S: Hambly E-5 (1927-1930) 1934 FP13-Mbundu FP13

[R430]

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MEN OF VAREKI, WEST-CENTRAL ANGOLA

Fig. 1. Showing typical mutilation of teeth. Fig. 2. Displaying scarification on chest, said to cure pain

[p.456]

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VACHOKWE, BAFT ANGOLA

Fig. 1. Medicine-man, Cangombe, performing ceremony to make child return to village. Fig. 2. Man, Mona Kimbundu

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VACHOKUE, EAST ANGOLA

Fig. 1. Crossing operation, Nyongo, Kalongi. Fig. 2. Group, Moon Kalabanda

[p. 440]

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VACHOKUE WOMEN, EAST ANGOLA

Fig. 1. Alibão, Cangamba. Fig. 2. Women at Ngongo, Ngalongi

[P. 441]

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R. Hambly R-6 (1889-1890) 1894 FF13 Mbundu FF13

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WOMEN IN CENTRAL ANGOLA

Fig. 1. Home where King sometimes with ancestral spirits, Ngalangi

Fig. 2. Home with painted walls, near Bailundu

Fig. 3. Group showing varieties of coiffure at Ngalangi

[p. 443]

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Anthropology, Vol. XXI, Plate XC

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Field Museum of Natural History

BAKUTA CENTRAL AFRICA

Fig. 1. Women of Wabangola (Gamage). Fig. 2. Bakuta, Bandaka

[p. 444]

St. Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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TYPES OF BABUNDA, CANGAMBA, SHOWING MUTILATED TEETH

Fig. 1. Woman. Fig. 2. Man

[P. 443]

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4:Dorsey E-4, 5 (no date)1899 FP13 Mbundu FP13

THE OCIMBANDA, OR WITCH-DOCTOR OF THE OVIMBUNDU OF PORTUGUESE SOUTHWEST AFRICA.

114 In July of last year the Anthropological Department of the Field Columbian Museum secured an ethnological collection from the Ovimbundu of the Portuguese African province of Angola. The collection was made by Rev. T. W. Woodside, a missionary for seven years among the Ovimbundu, and, on account of its completeness and the full data which accompanied the objects, is of unusual [121] importance and value. Perhaps of chief interest among the series of objects illustrating the various phases of native life in this region is the complete "medicine chest" of a witch-doctor. This I shall describe, making free use of the extensive notes furnished by Mr. Woodside, supplemented by several conversations during which the objects themselves were discussed, and much information furnished concerning the Ovimbundu in general. The collection under consideration was obtained from a single individual, and has seen long use.

101 The Ovimbundu are a southern division of an extensive group of people known as the Bundas, who, in turn, belong to the group of Bantu populations. They occupy the territory of the Bailundu and Bihe plateaus, from Benguella to the Quanza River, a table-land 4000 to upwards of 6000 feet high, and in south latitude about twelve 142 degrees. The Ovimbundu are described by Mr. Woodside as a dark-skinned people, varying from coffee-brown to quite black, with thick curly hair. They are entirely uncivilized, but are a peaceable, 105 kindly people. Their food is chiefly vegetal, although they possess cattle, sheep, goats, pigs, and chickens. They practise polygamy, and the women prepare the food and do nearly all the field work. The men are famous as traders, and journey to the interior for rubber, wax, ivory, and slaves; the latter they secure by purchase from the country of the Lubas. The principal medium of exchange is a cheap cotton cloth which is obtained from white travellers.

791 Among the Ovimbundu, as in nearly all parts of Africa, the 759 witch-doctor is an important personage. He is feared by all classes, and often has more influence and power than the chief himself. Whenever anything is lost or stolen, they apply to the witch-doctor to find out where the object is, or who is the thief. As no one is [761] supposed to die a natural death, the doctor is called in to discover the witch who caused the death. To him they go for all kinds of charms to protect themselves against all evils, or to cast a spell on some one whom they wish to injure; to him they also go for help in

174 there is tribal and cultural miscegenation. Both Umbundu and
171 Vachokue languages are spoken; boys of Ngalangi were seen to wear
[281] initiation costumes similar to those worn at Cangamba by the Vachokue, but on proceeding farther westward into territory exclusively occupied by the Ovimbundu, such initiation ceremonies are either absent or attenuated in ritual.

144 Elende, one center of research among the Ovimbundu, repre-
101 sents the purest Umbundu speech and culture observable at the present day. But in chapter IV some physical resemblance of the Ovimbundu to the Vachokue is noted. Warfare commonly resulted in the taking of slaves, a fact which might account for an apparent infusion of Vachokue blood in some of the Ovimbundu.

174 The historical data suggest a northern or northeastern starting
167 point of Umbundu migrations. Therefore an inquiry into the ethnology of these areas will be useful in showing the kind of culture with which the Ovimbundu were in contact before their settlement in the Benguela Highlands. If historical sources disclose the nature of northern Angolan culture from the year A.D. 1500 onward, such evidence can then be considered in relation to cultural traits of the Ovimbundu at the present day.

The establishment of strong cultural resemblances between extant Umbundu culture and older cultural patterns of northern Angola, would tend to strengthen the evidence of history respecting the northern origin of the Ovimbundu.

131 The regions dealt with in the following summary of ethnological
174 facts are the Cabinda Enclave to the north of the Congo estuary, the region of San Salvador, the hinterlands of Loanda and Benguela, and the area of northern Angola between Lat. 7° and 9° S. and Long. 13° to 22° E. This covers the whole area with which the Ovimbundu are likely to have been in contact before entering their present home.

175 My survey begins with the observations of Andrew Battell in
101 1596. His account deals mainly with the northwestern part of Angola, a country bordering on and actually including territory now occupied by the Ovimbundu, who in all probability came in contact with the Jaggas, whose habits of life are described by Battell.

Torday and Joyce identify the Jaggas with the present-day Bayaka, whose cultural resemblances to the Ovimbundu are examined later. In my opinion, the Jaggas correspond well with the Bihéan section of the Ovimbundu, an itinerant and exceedingly warlike people.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

He draws the crescentic arrowhead (p. 123) still common among the Ovimbundu and Vachokue; the double iron gong (p. 122); and the musical bow, which he calls a viola (p. 121). 175 114 [534]

Sogaur states that iron-working had an advanced technique at Dindo, more than half a century ago. According to Sogaur, the blacksmith was using scrap iron from European sources (II, p. 14). 175 326

Perhaps the most valuable of Chatelain's books is "Fifty Folk Tales of Angola." The stories are accompanied by translations and ethnological notes, the most important of which are references to the carrying of a corpse on a pole; the building of a cairn of stones over the corpse of a hunter; matrilineal descent and the power of the maternal uncle over the persons of his nieces and nephews (sisters' children). My observations included some details respecting the pawning of a sister's children to redeem the debts of their mother's brother. Chatelain adds that sisters' children are successors to private property and chieftainship (pp. 8–10). My notes agree that property is inherited by children of a deceased man's sister, but my informants said that a new chieftain is normally the eldest son of the principal wife of the dead chief. Chatelain's folklore stories, fifty in number, relate chiefly to animals; this was the only kind of story told to me, but W. C. Bell has recorded a few tales of another type. 173 [114] [764] [611] [604] [428] [538]

Marquardsen (1928) devotes only one-fourth of his book to the ethnology of Angola, which he treats in a very general way; there is no section dealing specifically with any particular tribe. The author calls attention to Chapman's observation of rock paintings of South African Bushman type, between Cuma and Luimbale in northwest Angola. I have elsewhere remarked on the occasional occurrence of physical types which show a strain of Bushman blood. Today Bushmen penetrate southern Angola from the Kalahari (Plate LXIX, Figs. 1, 2), but their presence in times past or present does not affect the course of history or the data of ethnology to an appreciable extent. 114 177 [531] [144]

Marquardsen gives some notes of a general kind on Vaheneca, Mahuila and other tribes of southwest Angola. The suggestion is feasible that the Umbundu name Suku, for a supreme being, is the same as the Nzambi of Lunda and the Congo. Marquardsen refers to the importance of the maternal uncle in Umbundu society, to the poison ordeal, and to the burial of an Umbundu chief in oxhide, all of which points were recorded in my observations at Elende. 114 101

Ferreira Diniz's book is unobtainable, but, judging from the summary given in *Anthropos* (XX, 1925, pp. 321–331), the information was collected by a questionnaire widely distributed among adminis-

IV. PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

142 Among the Ovimbundu there are two main physical types. One of these is of brown skin color and slender build. In this type the calves and thighs are poorly developed, and the chest girth is slender in keeping with the general development. In general the physical 144 characteristics are distinctly different from those of a typical West African Negro as represented by the Kru and the Ibo tribes.

The Ovimbundu are Bantu Negroes who possibly result from a crossing of Hamites and true Negroes, a hypothesis which would account for both the light-colored slim type and the shorter, darker, more sturdy type. But E. Torday (Herbert Spencer, Descriptive [114] Sociology of African Races, London, 1930, Preface, p. iii) thinks that differences of physique among Sudanic and Bantu Negroes are sufficiently accounted for by isolations and environmental differences. Torday denies the need for postulating an infusion of Hamitic blood, but his opinion is opposed to that which has found general acceptance.

The darker Ovimbundu with more facial hair may represent an infusion of Vachokue blood because there was warfare between the Ovimbundu and the Vachokue of eastern Angola with the result that some of the latter were taken as slaves. Types of the Ovimbundu are shown (Plates LII–LIV).

The Vasele, an Umbundu-speaking people of west-central Angola, 101 form a linguistic and cultural pocket because of their isolation in 142 rugged country. Their physique shows no pronounced differences [304] from that of the Ovimbundu, but the methods of scarification, tooth mutilation, and personal ornament are in distinct contrast with those of the Ovimbundu. The Ovimbundu have only a V-shaped notch in the two upper central incisors, whereas the Vasele chip all their teeth to points (Plate LXXVI, Figs. 1, 2).

[302] The Luvando of southwest Angola resemble the Ovimbundu in general physique, though the great difference in hairdressing and personal ornament is likely to give a contrary impression (Plate LIX, Figs. 1, 2).

The Vaheneca are particularly well developed (Plate LXII, Figs. 1, 2). Not until Mongua is reached does one find a people who are distinctly different from the Ovimbundu in all respects. The Vakuanyama of Mongua are noticeably tall and slim, much taller and slimmer than the Ovimbundu, while their physiognomy is more refined (Plates LXIII; LXVIII, Fig. 2). The Vakuanyama are a pastoral tribe whereas the Ovimbundu are principally agricultural.

XII. CULTURAL PROCESSES

Analysis of African Cultures

The difficulties of making a study of the Ovimbundu in their relation to a general background of African cultures are connected with unsolved problems of archaeology, physical anthropology, linguistic study, and the history of cultural traits. 172

With the exception of data from Algeria, Egypt, Kenya, and south Africa there is a paucity of archaeological information which might determine the antiquity of past cultures, the relation of these to past and present races, and the routes by which races and cultures traveled. In the regions mentioned systematic excavations are in progress, but for the greater part of Africa archaeologists have no knowledge of the relative antiquity of stone implements found on the surface.

African ethnologists are not consistent in the connotations of terms such as Bantu and Hamitic. The word Bantu primarily refers to a linguistic family of Negroes, but a Bantu Negro culture exists with many divisions, and later we shall see that a somatological concept is associated with the word Bantu. The word Hamitic may describe a linguistic family, a series of physical traits differing from those which characterize the Negro, and a type of pastoral culture in which all the activities and beliefs of tribal life center in the keeping of cattle. The adjective Semitic can also be used to denote a well-defined linguistic family, a type of culture, or somatic traits. But the Semitic problem does not concern us since the Ovimbundu have no traits that could be associated with Semitic culture, either Mohammedan or pre-Koranic; with the possible exception of blood brotherhood by exchange of blood, and the use of a scapegoat (Robertson Smith, Lectures on the Religion of the Semites, p. 296; Kinship and Marriage in Early Arabia, pp. 57, 61). [171]

The comparative studies of physical anthropologists are retarded by paucity of skeletal material both ancient and modern, while series of measurements on living subjects, especially women, are inadequate in relation to the great size of Africa and the complexity of the problems which arise from comparative study of anatomical data. 144 114

Darwin's "Descent of Man" recognized the possibility of man's origin in Africa, and the recent excavations of L. S. B. Leakey in Kenya may finally prove that the oldest remains of *Homo sapiens*

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

114 are within the African continent (Stone Age Cultures of Kenya,
144 Cambridge, England, 1931). H. H. Johnston concludes that the place of origin of the African Negro is unknown. A. C. Haddon (The Wandering of Peoples, p. 54) surmises that "there is reason to believe that all the main races reached Africa from Asia." G. Sergi (The Mediterranean Race, pp. 41–42) regards the Hamites as a single human stock, but disagrees with a theory of Asiatic origin, and postulates the origin of Hamites in northeast Africa.

C. G. Seligman summarizes the views of Sergi and other writers respecting the origin of Hamites (Races of Africa, pp. 96–156). Among the eastern Hamites cranial characteristics, though variable, are generally convergent and are to be regarded as old variations of an original stock. Apart from Negro admixture the face of the Hamite is never prognathous. The nose is straight. The lips are often thick but never everted as in the Negro. The hair is often frizzly, but sometimes wavy or almost straight. The color of the skin varies; it may be yellowish, coppery red-brown, through every shade of brown to black, according to the amount of miscegenation that has taken place. Seligman states "that the Hamitic cradleland is generally agreed to be Asiatic, perhaps southern Arabia, or possibly an area farther east. Be this as it may, there is no doubt that the Hamites and Semites must be regarded as modifications of an original stock" (Some Aspects of the Hamitic Problem in the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, *J.R.A.I.*, XLIII, pp. 593–705).

As a result of research in the north Arabian desert Henry Field states that the stony desert between Transjordania and the Euphrates River was probably well watered and fertile at an unknown period. The locality may have been a focus, first of concentration, then of dispersal. Archaeological evidence arising from a comparative study of stone implements from Arabia and east Africa, together with data of physical anthropology, and the basic unity of Semitic and Hamitic languages support a theory of Hamitic intrusion from Asia (H. Field, The Cradle of Homo Sapiens, *Amer. Jour. Arch.*, XXXVI, No. 4, pp. 426–430; The Antiquity of Man in Southwestern Asia, *Amer. Anth.*, XXXV, pp. 51–62).

144 Although the origin of Hamites and Negroes is obscure it has
142 been possible to give a summary of the chief physical traits of the former, and the same can be done for the latter. Typical Sudanic-speaking Negroes, who are sometimes referred to as "true Negroes," are to be seen in the Ibo and Ijaw tribes of southern Nigeria, and among the Kru of Liberia. The characteristics of the Negro are a

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

heavy torso, disproportionately long arms, a dark skin, prognathous 144
jaws, broad nostrils, thick everted lips, and woolly hair. But usually 142
a modification of these features occurs in Bantu-speaking Negroes. How did this modification of physique arise?

A. C. Haddon (Wandering of Peoples, p. 54) expresses a generally 144
accepted view when he states that Bantu-speaking Negroes are 114
a mixture of true Negroes with Hamites. Seligman (Races of Africa, p. 181) refers to an infusion of Hamitic blood which has differentiated the Bantu Negroes from true Negroes, and this is a generally accepted hypothesis. But Torday (H. Spencer, Descriptive Sociology of African Races, preface, p. iii) questions whether the physical and linguistic cleavage between Bantu-speaking and Sudanic-speaking Negroes is due to an admixture of Hamitic blood. He attributes the physical differences of the two great linguistic divisions of Negroes to disparity of environmental conditions. But at present no physical anthropologist could say to what extent climatic factors, nutrition, and other environmental conditions can be held responsible for the physical differences of Negroes.

The question of a mingling of Hamite and true Negro to produce a modified type of Negro is not the only difficulty. How does one account for aberrant Negroid types such as the Pygmies of the Ituri forest and the Bushmen? They have a phylogenetic relationship, but what is the racial affinity? Again, will change of environmental conditions account for the Pygmy and Bushman types? Or are we to form a hypothesis of origins by assuming establishment of new species by variation or mutation?

In the absence of certain knowledge science accepts a hypothesis 144
which best explains the known facts. And in this matter of a modified Negro type speaking Bantu languages, the idea of a mingling of the blood of Negroes and Hamites best explains the gradation of physical types from west African, Sudanic-speaking Negroes, through various types of Bantu Negroes, to Hamites, as exemplified by the Somali, Beja, and Hadendoa.

The main characters of linguistic families of Africa are clearly 197
defined by A. Werner (Language Families of Africa, pp. 20–23) who refers to the works of D. Westermann and C. Meinhof. The distinguishing features of Hamitic, Semitic, Bantu, Sudanic, and Bushman speech are known, yet the task of placing a particular language in its appropriate family is not always simple. The classification may depend on the particular facet of the language which is under examination. Hausa (Hamitic), is difficult to classify

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

cölölö, they will say, They have bewitched him with *oloseta*.[1] 757
In going to the diviner they take a cock for the cure. They 853
kill their cock, the diviner eats it, they (go) to the threshing-floor for the cure. That threshing-floor is holy and no one may pass over it unless in passing he spits out a little saliva and says, There may it stay, there. Only so may they pass on, even though they may be many, each person does just that.' The 'many' who go to the diviner are representatives of the family, for their presence is necessary not only for proper diagnosis but also to show their concern and good faith.

Babyhood Proper

(From the second week until about the seventh month)

The period of lying-in is terminated when the cord falls and the navel heals, but the second period only begins when the baby turns dark. This period begins with 'Breaking the pot' (*Oku ipaya ombia*). The reference is to the gourd or pot in which the beer and medicine have been kept. 'Breaking the pot', says one informant, 'means dividing the dark from the light.' [858]

'When a child is first born he is perfectly pink and it is not possible to say whether he will be light or dark. When six or eight [145] days have passed he begins to change and to get the skin with which he will grow. At that time they recognize whether the child will be light or dark. Then is the time when those who do not like to hold a pink baby will begin to take him up, for also it is then that his neck begins to be strong. Then too the baby begins to cause people to laugh. Should he be a boy, those who take him 854 will say, Ah my husband are you well? Ha, how is the man? Then the parent will rejoice and say, Shucks, this man doesn't give any cloth at all. Should she be a girl, they will also say, How is my girl? The parent replies, She is quite well. The man then says, Where is a beer-jug for a man? The parent says, Shucks, your girl can't brew at all, she's no good, they've just put her out of her house; they've just divorced her because she can't keep house properly.'

This period from about the eighth day until about the end of the sixth month is the period of babyhood proper. At night the baby sleeps with his mother and by day he is carried in a cloth on her back (*oku velekua*). When it is not raining his head may be seen

[1] *Oloseta* (plural) are a wild fruit, hard and about the size of hazel-nuts, used for playing *ocela*.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

thoroughly drilled in fear of the stranger that he can rarely act naturally in the presence of one. 867

Physical development. From the time that the child is weaned his physical development proceeds more slowly on the whole than is the case with the children of European peoples. This slow development continues to be noticeable through childhood and adolescence. In early childhood there also seems to take place an increase in the rate of mortality. These facts may be due, at least in part, to specific deficiencies of diet. As has been noted, the customary diet of the Ovimbundu is lacking in fats, in calcium, and in certain vitamins, elements which are very necessary for the growing child, and which, before weaning, the mother's milk had supplied. The difference in physical well-being as between babies and children after weaning is marked among the Ovimbundu. 145

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1940 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

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CHAPTER VII

ADOLESCENCE

From Puberty until Marriage

The Youth (*Ukuenje* or *umalihi*); The Girl (*Ufeko*)

THE onset of puberty is generally late among the Ovimbundu both for boys and for girls.[1] The number of individuals who have exact records of their birth is not yet large, and for other reasons it is difficult to collect a large mass of exact data on this subject. From exact data in a few cases, biographical and genealogical data in more, and observation of a great many, I have concluded that, in general, puberty comes for girls at about fourteen to sixteen and for boys at about fifteen to seventeen. I have the impression that this may be due to faulty diet and other poor conditions of living. A careful study of this problem might yield interesting and significant results. 46

Soon after puberty young people generally stop sleeping in the parents' house. The girls congregate in kitchens and each boy builds himself a house. 'When he builds he does not wait for anyone to act as his teacher at all: he just goes ahead. A boy's father will show him saying, Begin there your house; stand a pole here, another there, and in the ground between, run a trench straight through. Then he will begin to cut poles and after that to build (the house) and thatch it. On the day of plastering it, they will show him how to mix the mud and throw it on, right up to the eaves.'[2] This is the boy's own house in which he will live through adolescence and young manhood, and to which he will bring his bride. 881 342

Before his marriage can take place, there must be a great deal of preparation, most of which must be undertaken by the young man himself, just as he has himself built the house. Umbundu adolescent development involves growth and progress on those lines already begun in childhood, but it takes on a conscious urge and direction, for it is now preparation for the responsibilities of adult life, 883

[1] This is in contradiction to the opinion given by Magyar (op. cit., p. 283). Might it be that dietary and other conditions of life have changed enough in eighty years to produce this result? I think it more likely that Magyar's observations were faulty.

[2] R. Kavita Evambi: manuscript cited.

862 "The practice of leaving the ocisemb in the village by day makes his elder sibling[1] responsible for much of his education....She herself may not be more than six or seven years old and consequently cannot be expected to 'educate' her charge very thoroughly. She interests herself in his walking and talking and he will imitate her in many things."[2]

863 General instruction in cleanliness begins at this age, although sphincter control may have begun much earlier, since the mother feels every movement made by the baby on her back.

● 145 After weaning the physical development of the child proceeds more slowly than that of European peoples, and Childs believes that this may be due to deficiencies in diet.[3]

CHILDHOOD AND EDUCATION

857 From the time a child is able to walk until he is about nine years
861 old he continues seeing the same people as before, but he becomes less dependent upon the elder sister or cousin who helped him, and begins his life-long association with his age-mates. The sex-division of society starts for him at this stage: from about eight years boys begin to eat in the *onjango* with their fathers, girls continuing in the kitchen with their mothers. *After about eight years the father becomes largely responsible* for the education of boys, the mother for that of girls. During this period the child's education may be summarised under three heads:

869 (a) *Psychological*, chiefly fear of real or imaginary dangers. This is imparted by mother, elder siblings, and perhaps by a grandmother; there is a tendency for the teaching of fear to be done by women.[4]

867 (b) *Social*, chiefly usages of etiquette and acquaintance with the kinship structure and its requirements. A child of about eight is supposed to know his social status and all the etiquette that pertains to it. In the *onjango* the hierarchy of age is observed, honoured guests and old men being served first, and so on all down the line. With the decline of the *onjango*, there has been a great decline in the teaching of etiquette and social usage, and this naturally affects boys rather than girls.

864 Little direct sex teaching is attempted, and adults are reticent in speaking of sexual matters in the presence of children. But since children live with their parents in one-roomed houses, it is inevitable that children should sometimes observe intercourse.

868 (c) *Training in skills*: Children are taught few definite skills before the age of eight or nine, but many of their games are in imitation of adult activities.

604 From the age of six or seven years children are usually sent to spend
857 one or two years with the mother's brother. They may also be sent to the father's sister or brother for a period, and, in the case of girls, to the mother's mother. Formerly prominent families sent their children for a

(1) Either a brother or sister may act as nurse.
(2) Childs, op.cit., p.95. (3) Ibid., p.97.
(4) Childs actually writes " 'the side of the basket' " (p.100), but seems to be referring simply to female relatives.

1: Childs M-S (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP1.

164 177 was prior to this, for it was mentioned by Magyar.[1] Among the imported diseases are grippe, pneumonia, tuberculosis, and other complaints of the lungs and bronchia; the venereal diseases (especially syphilis); several so-called 'children's diseases' such as measles, scarlet fever, mumps, &c.[2] Typhoid fever is only beginning to appear, although it has long been known at the coast, at Malange (to the north), &c.[3] Diseases of other regions, as tropical ulcers, sleeping sickness, &c., are found only in patients coming from regions affected with those ills.

146 177 In comparison with the diet of other non-cattle-keeping tribes of West and Central Africa, the diet of the Ovimbundu is fairly satisfactory. Certain it is that the articles imported by the Portuguese from America and elsewhere have done much to enrich the diet of this people. Only the mention of maize,[4] their staple and mainstay, makes this evident. Their early and close contact with the Portuguese gave them the advantage of many plants[5] brought by those rural-minded conquistadores,[6] which found their way inland only much later. (Mrs.) Alice K. Strangway has made an interesting study of Umbundu diet and has come to the conclusion that its principal deficiencies are fats and calcium. The Ovimbundu need to learn to make better use of the resources which are already theirs or at their command, as, for example, peanuts and soy-beans. Other improvements such as a more general use of milk and other animal foods can only come with education and an improved economic situation.

164 Magyar's account (1849–57) of the Ovimbundu gives the impression of a people in better health, suffering from fewer ills, and

[1] L. Magyar, op. cit., p. 290.

[2] There are Umbundu names for all the foregoing, with several names or euphemisms for some, except for the lung and bronchial complaints which are spoken of simply as *vomalo* (in the chest), and scarlet fever which is called *osalambu* (from the Portuguese *sarampo*).

[3] In 1936 there was an epidemic of typhoid at Bela Vista among Europeans and natives. Infection was traced to Catumbela (at the coast).

[4] Maize has a true Umbundu name, *epungu*, as is the case with most of the early importations which the Ovimbundu adopted, save tomatoes (*amatia*).

[5] There is a good discussion of the American plants introduced into Africa in Ficalho, *Plantas úteis da Africa Portugueza*, pp. 32 ff. In *Benguella e seu sertão*, 1617–22, p. 17, the anonymous writer states that 'all kinds of vegetables of our Portugal do very well . . . such as: large corn (i.e. *mayz*), beans of various kinds, pumpkins . . . and melons'.

[6] Cá da Mosto tells of trying to grow wheat in Senegal (João de Barros, quoted by Ficalho, op. cit., p. 29 f.).

Ongunja. Large round gourd.
Ongunu. Net in which gourd is carried.
Okunji. Bow.
Usunga. Arrow.
Okundwi (plural ekundwi). Bark rope.
Ombulumbumba. Musical bow.
Okuma. Drum.
Okuñga. Throwing stick.
Okungunga. Drill for boring wood.
Ongunda. Basket used in divination.
Ekunga. Water jar.
Ocipunga. Jar for palm oil.
Ocimbunga. Skin-covered box carried to war by a king.
Omusuko (diminutive, ekusinuko). Flour-sifter.
Ongui. Tobacco-pipe.
Endungumbunga. Bull-roarer.
Omunungu (singular, ekunungu). Rattles for tying on the legs when dancing.
Okumbunda. Wooden flute.
Ongunda or ocifumunu. Wooden hair-comb.
Ocinjo. Long needle used in making mats.
Ovundu. Wooden pigeon and dove.
Ocula. Head-dress worn by kings, warriors, medicine-men and hunters. Small brush used by medicine-man.
Ocikumpkuma. Wooden image of human figure.
Ongunda. Rat trap of cane.
Ocubulumu. Snuff box.

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The names for colors are restricted to a few words; but in all other respects the Umbundu vocabulary is extensive.

My interpreter said, "When I was learning colors, the women at the school told me many names, but I could see no difference at all." Ngonga contended that there was no difference between the color of a dark blue book and the black box on which it was resting. [151]

The following colors have names. Black is *tekiñu*. White is *pela*. Yellow is *ondunga*. Red is *kunuki*. Greens and blues are not well distinguished linguistically, but green is *ovikombolo*. The word *tekiñu* is used to indicate that a color is not distinctly green or blue. The word *pelisu* is used to describe gray, and all dark reds. *Wumbulu* is the term which describes a greenish-blue shade.

A further study of vocabulary was made by asking Ngonga to speak into the dictaphone. In doing so he gave lists of words including nouns in their singular and plural forms, together with many examples of other parts of speech and illustrations of syntax. These records have been transcribed by Dr. M. H. Watkins. (This section was prepared with use of phonetic symbols that were easily available. For the most recent system, see "Practical Phonetics for Students of African Languages," by D. Westermann and I. C. Ward, London, 1933.) 194 113

PHONETICS

VOWELS

194

The vowels are *a*, *e*, *i*, *o*, *u*, and perhaps *ɔ*. They seem to be somewhat lower than the cardinal vowels. There was only one word in which the vowel *ɔ* was heard, *ɔpitɔlɔ́ñá* (leather pouch for a belt). This word, however, appears in the field notes as *opatoloña* (*opato-*

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

157 538 593 animals.[1] Other tales with frankly human protagonists portray the same theme,[2] and there are a number of Umbundu adaptations and variations of such European versions of this theme as Cinderella, Snow White, &c. In some tales, such as 'Kalitangi', the hero escaped as an infant from an agreement made by his mother before his birth with another expectant mother that they would both destroy their offspring. Does this indicate a resentment of, or a protest against, child-sacrifice in certain Umbundu rites? I mention this as one possible source for the feeling of neglect and 'rejection' which, however, does not seem to be as acute or as widespread as in our own society.[3] The exact situation could only be determined by careful and extensive investigation.

593 152 [543] Adjustments between siblings among the Ovimbundu on the whole are relatively satisfactory. Resentment on the part of the younger does sometimes occur as indicated above. Overt sibling conflict has also arisen quite frequently in the royal families because of disputes over the succession. Instances of this latter type of conflict may be found in narratives of the early missionaries,[4] in diaries of Silva Porto,[5] and in other early sources. Conflict from jealousy arising out of the parent–child relationship, however, seems to be relatively rare. In a kinship society regulated by the hierarchy of age, jealousy between siblings does not quite fit into the picture. The two most common terms for jealousy over personal relations refer strictly to sexual jealousy: *esepa*, woman's jealousy; and *ukuelume*, jealousy on the part of a man. The other terms are somewhat more applicable but they belong less to household affairs. The meaning of *onya* is jealousy and envy, while *ocipululu* is covetousness and so belongs to the economic sphere.

572 [554] Friendship, especially between age-mates or 'coevals', has played and continues to play an important role in Umbundu social adjustments. Such differences as social station, family, distance of habitation, and even diversity of language and culture are easily bridged by friendship. Many friendships were formed on trading

[1] Cf. *Journal of the American Folk-Lore Society*, 1922, vol. 35, nos. 1 and 18, pp. 116 f., 140 ff.

[2] The tale of *Ñaña la hota liaye* (Baby and his elder sister) referred to *supra*, p. 84.

[3] Investigations of the 'foster-child phantasy', feelings of neglect ,'rejection', &c., reported by Murphy, op. cit., p. 415 f.; and by Allport, op. cit., p. 364 f.

[4] *Missionary Herald*, 1888, p. 242 f.

[5] In *Boletim da Sociedade de Geografia de Lisboa*, 1885, 1886.

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gramophone in a town rather than at a trader's near his home village. Most of the money paid for purchases at the stores is money raised by selling crops or livestock. Through labour migration there is, however, some transmission of skills; it is easy to find bricklayers and carpenters of a sort even in Gumba.

Money, rather than barter, is the principal means of exchange among the villages in the selling of local products, and even of meat from pigs. Payment for labour service, such as assistance in house-building and in bringing in maize, is made in beer, except among Protestants who substitute a meal. There is also a custom by which a household which finds, probably at the end of the dry season, that it has not enough maize will make beer to exchange on a particular day for maize.

Ties of kinship and friendship have some economic significance. A kinsman will help with house-building without expecting payment; likewise a man who has a cleared field which he does not want to use may sell it for 200 escudos (£2. 10s.) but would give it free to a kinsman. A man may make a charge for lending his bicycle, though this varies with individuals; he certainly would not do so if it were lent to a friend. Loans between kinsmen should be repaid, and a tailor with a sewing-machine will make the same charges to relatives as to non-kinsmen.

There are few occasions for groups to work together. The unit of consumption and production is the domestic family. Even here, the husband, each wife, and the adolescents have their own fields, though a man may help his wife. Such other occasions of mutual help, in clearing a field, which may occur between friends or kinsmen, will only bring a few, often only two of them.

The Ovimbundu I knew were (with exceptions) not avaricious or grasping; thus, beer might be given to people who have not actually worked in house-building parties. It is regarded as a moral duty to pay one's monetary debts as soon as possible. On various occasions I lent money to people who were pressed and I received back all the money lent. Borrowers insisted that borrowings should be written down, and that the paper on which it was written should be given to them when they paid, or destroyed. Making money and being rich are regarded with

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861 This unity of 'the social sphere of adult and child' is a striking
867 feature of the Umbundu educational process. A child learns by actual participation in adult activities. He participates as soon as he is able and in so far as he is able in all phases of adult life. A child begins early to assume responsibility both for himself and for as much regular 'adult activity' as his knowledge and ability may allow him to take on. This being the case, it is to be expected that all factors—physiological, psychological, social, and cultural—are so closely interrelated in the process of Umbundu education that their unity is almost organic.

Given this unitary social sphere, it is easy to understand that children always want to grow up. They are anxious to undertake full responsibility and full participation as early as they may. It has been pointed out that adults do not, or are expected not to, force the pace: they must not set tasks beyond the ability of the children in the actual stage of their development.[1] Normal development and normal behaviour are expected of children as a matter of course.[2] The possibility of aberrant behaviour[3] does not seem regularly to enter parents' minds, much less their utterances, as is too often the case with us. Adult expectation of normal develop-
[828] ment in children is perhaps best seen in the Umbundu concept of sense or intelligence (*olondunge*), something which every normal person is expected to have in some measure from the time of weaning. It is a relative term when applied to children and the young.[4] Some adults have it in greater measure than others. But every *person* will have it according to the proverb:

[538] *Omuku lovonya, omunu lolondunge.*
A rat with fur, a person with sense.

As every rat has fur, every person has sense.

861 Learning, as he does, in the real social and cultural situation
153 of Umbundu life, the child develops genetically the behaviour

Mead, *Coming of Age in Samoa* (New York: Morrow, 1928). Some writers have claimed this to be true of all the simpler cultures, e.g. Dewey, op. cit., p. 8 f., but cf. Margaret Mead, *Growing up in New Guinea* (New York: Morrow, 1930). Many of the African initiation rites seem to have been introduced from the outside and hence involve a distinct dichotomy, *vide* Stayt, op. cit.

[1] See *supra*, p. 110.

[2] See Fortes' discussion of a similar attitude among the Tallensi, op. cit., pp. 25–8.

[3] For the fatalistic attitude taken on failure to conform, see *supra*, p. 106.

[4] See *supra*, p. 100.

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pattern 'singled out in the institutions of his culture'.[1] I agree with 861
Fortes on the Tallensi that 'The total pattern is not built up brick 153●
by brick like a house, but evolves'.[2] I am not convinced, however, [114]
of the necessity for postulating 'embryonic forms' or *schemas* of the total patterns supposed to be present in the child from the beginning.[3] Whether the *schemas* are supposed to be a part of the child's innate equipment, Fortes does not make clear, but I see no necessity for any such hypothesis. The method by which and the situation in which the Ocimbundu child learns, are ample explanation for the early and thorough development of the pattern of his culture.

Neither is it necessary to postulate either 'faculties' or 'instinctive drives' to explain Umbundu education.[4] Rather this study takes a view of 'human nature . . . as consisting essentially of specific situations'.[5] Instances in support of this view could be cited from the descriptive part of this chapter but that would be outside the scope of this study. The most important fact with regard to Umbundu education is its identification with life: the absence of cleavage as between 'school' and society, as between the social sphere of the child and the adult. The most important educational method in use is actual participation in the social and cultural or 'real life' situation. The educational 'content' is the whole Umbundu culture, consisting of attitudes (psychological and social), social usages, skills, observances, and traditional 'literature'. By far the most important are the social attitudes and usages. I turn therefore to the problems of

Social Adjustment

The education of the Ocimbundu child in the traditional social 867
setting is far more social than is the case with us. The child learns

[1] Ruth Benedict, *Patterns of Culture* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1934), p. 254.

[2] M. Fortes, op. cit., p. 42.

[3] Ibid., pp. 42 ff. Fortes attributes the concept of *schemas* to F. C. Bartlett (*Remembering*).

[4] In his discussion of education among the Tallensi, quoted above, Fortes does not specifically mention either of these hypotheses and he rightly remarks that some writers have 'attributed an almost mystical significance to imitation' as the principal method by which a child learns. He then proceeds, however, to classify the learning processes under *Mimesis*, *Identification*, *Co-operation*, and *Play*. Except for the first, these activities are of much importance in Umbundu education.

[5] Hugh Hartshorne, *Character in Human Relations*, p. 195 (New York: Scribner's, 1932); see also Allport, op. cit., p. 81.

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867 the correct adjustments early, naturally grows into a comparatively well-adjusted life, and so avoids the major conflicts to a much greater degree than is the case in our society. A very large proportion of those in conflict in present-day Umbundu society are de-
154 tribalized or partially de-tribalized individuals, especially those who as children were brought up outside or largely outside the kinship groups. The large proportion of those brought up on the mission stations who are out of adjustment, and often in overt conflict, has been noticed by many observers. The biographies and autobiographies which I have collected witness clearly to the same fact, that most of the ill-adjusted individuals and those in overt conflict were products of an extra-tribal, de-tribalized, or non-traditional situation; while practically all of the well-adjusted persons were educated within the kinship system.

154 The three major conflicts which have been recognized in our
865 society, that is, 'struggle', sex, and 'inferiority',[1] are all present in some form among the Ovimbundu. The adjustments by which they resolve these conflicts are distinctive.

Adjustments in anger by which the 'struggle conflict' is resolved are interesting and important educationally. The child is taught when quite young that the expression of anger is taboo.[2] Tantrums are rare among Ovimbundu children. Anger and ill-will are named by thoughtful Ovimbundu as the chief root-cause of sorcery. The more thoughtful ones also recognize these as an important cause of accusations of sorcery. Expression of anger is traditionally much feared. It is not desired in the character of the king.[3] Nowadays
[177] there are more who give free vent to expressions of anger, but they are for the most part either individuals who imitate Europeans and who seek to discard Umbundu cultural habits and values; or they are those who are considered sorcerers, either by themselves or others. An Ocimbundu who as a child has learned traditional adjustments in anger will rarely allow his anger to break through the resistance and become 'extroverted' except in recognized outlets. These outlets are somewhat analogous to our own rationalizations of anger.[4]

154 The chief 'introverted' reaction of anger which I have noted
578

[1] The psychological analysis follows Allport, op. cit., chap. xiv.
[2] See *supra*, p. 101.
[3] See *supra*, p. 21.
[4] Cf. Allport, op. cit., p. 344. The Ovimbundu have not thought up such a high-sounding term as 'moral indignation' as a euphemism for anger.

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among the Ovimbundu is 'grudge-building'. This is probably 154
fairly common and often eventuates either in sorcery or in suspicion 578
of sorcery. There is special danger of this type of reaction between men and women who have an in-law relation to each other. This is probably a principal reason for the avoidance with which these relations are so carefully hedged and the respectful treatment mutually enjoined.[1] Grudges are sometimes inherited through several generations. According to folk-tales, children sometimes bear grudges against their parents for real or fancied ill treatment.[2]

Recognized outlets for anger in frankly 'extroverted' form are found in war and raiding parties, in the hunt, and in lawsuits. War is no longer resorted to but up to the present day anger still finds a recognized expression in actions at law. One of the commonest of such actions is the accusation of sorcery (*oku sunga owanga*) already touched upon above. Church councils and meetings have taken over some functions of the traditional courts of law and this is probably one reason for the decidedly stormy sessions which sometimes occur.

The importance of wit and humour as an outlet for anger has 154
been recognized. 'The ability to turn one's anger into a jest goes 522
with the trait of insight . . . and is sometimes appropriately called 828
"the saving sense of humour".'[3] That the Ovimbundu have this ability and use it often and to good advantage is very much in their favour. May not this be one indication of a considerable degree of insight which many observers have noted in the Umbundu character?[4] I would not claim that the Ovimbundu have made any very remarkable attainments in the social control of anger: their achievements in that direction may be slight when compared to some of the more advanced peoples, as, for example, the Scandinavians, the Hollanders, or the English. What is remarkable, however, is that they have frankly recognized the necessity for such control more clearly than have some supposedly more advanced peoples.

Adjustments in family life are held to be resolutions of what 593
are ultimately sex conflicts.[5] Marital adjustments are of prime

[1] See *supra*, pp. 57 ff.

[2] Cf. *Journal of American Folk-Lore Society*, 1922, vol. 35, no. 6, p. 123 f.

[3] Allport, op. cit., p. 344.

[4] Some writers have attributed to negroes a quality of 'insight' superior to that possessed by whites, cf. article 'Insight, &c.' in the *Atlantic Monthly*, Sept. 1938.

[5] Allport, op. cit., pp. 345–53.

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572 expeditions. Many blood-brotherhoods were doubtless under-
[608] taken purely from motives of friendship.[1] The *vakuacisoko* is a
[181] friendly institution. The Ovimbundu are a friendly people.

Identification is a strikingly important feature of Umbundu
156 social adjustments and of the whole learning process. Children overtly identify themselves with older siblings, with parents, with other older relatives both living and dead, with friends of their parents, with the village headman, or even the king.[2] This perhaps is the process involved in that which the Ovimbundu name re-incarnation. It is largely through identification that character appears to run in families. This is why boys are so keen to learn the professions of their fathers or their mother's brothers. Identification with their seniors in social position and economic activity more closely cements the unity of the child–adult sphere and gives the children yet another urge to enter into adult life and assume complete responsibility as quickly as possible.

158 'Inferiority Conflict' has probably been present in Umbundu life for a long time, perhaps since the rubber trade (1874), perhaps even longer. When a people's activity is keyed to so high a pitch there will be some individuals who find themselves inadequate. There are a number of proverbs which ridicule the stay-at-homes or those 'too lazy' to undertake the exceedingly arduous trading
[177] expeditions. European domination has set new paces and created new frustrations, with one result, that 'inferiority conflicts' are probably on the increase. Many individual instances could be cited. A particularly striking one of my observation is of a man whose suffering from epileptic seizures had induced attitudes of inferiority. The conflict was exacerbated by his selection as a hospital assistant, in which position the responsibility required was plainly beyond his ability.[3] Individuals suffering from any physical disability find life difficult among such an aggressive people.

[732] If the disability is great the handicapped individual generally finds the adjustment beyond his powers. I have observed a number of severely crippled individuals brought up in traditional kinship groups, and all of them were suffering from overt inferiority conflicts. All of these individuals had adopted compensatory

[1] Although the rite seems to have connotations of sorcery.

[2] Among the Tallensi, according to Fortes, identification is only with older siblings, with parents, and with 'the clan' (op. cit., pp. 46 ff.).

[3] Epilepsy (*ocinonya*) is considered by the Ovimbundu as a visitation of the spirits and is much feared.

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158 behaviour of an anti-social nature.[1] The foregoing analysis refers chiefly to those of the Ovimbundu who now live or were reared within their traditional social structure, with but slight reference to other individuals.

The Umbundu Estimate of Character

156 183 The Umbundu concept of personality as being achieved by a process of social integration is of fundamental importance, bearing in mind that society consists of the whole kinship group—including the living and the dead, men and spirits. The process of achieving integration together with reactions to various cultural elements interestingly reveal the types of character appreciated and those disliked by the Ovimbundu.

Almost everything in Umbundu life and culture reveals them to be a strong and aggressive people. Their history, whether of raiding or of trading, is eloquent testimony to this. The early age at which children participate and assume responsibility in social and economic life has doubtless contributed toward the development of aggressive attitudes. The system of marriage which places the balance of responsibility in all particulars upon the bridegroom and not on his elders, but at the same time requires the willing consent of the bride, is evidently a development of a strongly aggressive people. Their economic life witnesses to the same fact, whether one considers their trade or their agriculture. None but an aggressive (or a very stubborn) people could succeed at farming in a region of such poor soil. Basing his observations only on their pillage and robbery of all their neighbours, and on the submission of the latter, Magyar remarked that the Ovimbundu were the greatest people of South Africa.[2]

In view of these facts it is not difficult to understand that the Ovimbundu appreciate character integration which includes a high degree of self-expression. Such 'traits'[3] as drive, extroversion, insight, ascendance, and expansion[4] are desired and appreciated by the Ovimbundu. Introversion and reclusion, on the other hand, are disliked. In the more extreme forms they are feared and

[1] Stealing is one of the commonest types of behaviour in such cases.

[2] L. Magyar, *Reisen in Süd-Afrika*, p. 265.

[3] The term is used merely for convenience to cover types of behaviour. The specificity of the responses which make up character is assumed; cf. Hugh Hartshorne and Mark May, *Studies in the Nature of Character*, 3 vols. (New York: Macmillan, 1928–30).

[4] After Allport, op. cit., chap. v.

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suspected as indications of sorcery. It would of course be impossible to indicate what proportion achieve the ideal. It would seem that their respective manners of life have favoured its development in the men more largely than in the women. May this perhaps be one reason why women seem to be caught more often in the vicious circle of suspicion of sorcery? 156 183

Fearing anger and ill will as a root-cause of sorcery, yet developing a very aggressive type of character, and achieving in their villages and other social groupings such a large measure of socialized life, the adjustments in anger achieved have been, perhaps, a necessary prerequisite. That does not make the achievement any less important. Note has already been made of the ability to use humour as an outlet for anger, which is held to be an indication of true insight.[1]

Statesmanlike ability, good judgement, and dignity were often noted by the early missionaries as qualities of some of the old kings, councillors, and headmen.[2] After 1900 these qualities were less often observed, owing perhaps to the demoralizing effects of the rum trade. These qualities have, however, survived to the present day and may be observed in pastors, elders, teachers, and other leaders of the church. That shrewd behaviour (*oku lunguka*) is appreciated by this great trading people is easily understood, but it is not as universally or unreservedly admired as are some other types. [554]

There is also a tender side to Umbundu character. It might conceivably be supposed that long-continued and intimate participation in such inhumane occupations as the slave-trade might leave a stamp of callous brutality on the character of the Ovimbundu generally.[3] On second thought a similar question might be raised with regard to Americans because of their participation in the same slave-traffic, or their more recent participation in equally ruthless practices under the banner of modern capitalism.

The rarity or absence among kings of the Ovimbundu of resort to 'revolting and wholesale punishments—so common at African courts' has been noted.[4] On the positive side, a most admirable

[1] Cf. Allport, op. cit., pp. 118, 344.

[2] Cf. *Missionary Herald*, 1883, p. 229; 1886, p. 143; 1887, pp. 26, 530, &c.

[3] H. W. Nevinson alleged some such effect. Cf. *A Modern Slavery*, chap. ii. The references are to people of Viye. The effects noted were more probably due to long association with Europeans.

[4] *Supra*, p. 21 f.

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156 tenderness towards and consideration for those weaker than one-
183 self, for women, for children, and for the aged may be seen among Ovimbundu who are quite untouched by Christianity or Christian teachings in any form. This was often noticed and remarked upon by the early missionaries.[1] Umbundu treatment of children, the habitually respectful form of address used in speaking to them, and respect for their personalities[2] is further evidence of this tender side of Umbundu character, as is also their banning of angry behaviour from the relations of the home.[3]

141 Such a combination of aggressive, dignified, and tender behaviour makes for character worthy of admiration. It is a heritage worth conserving and passing on to succeeding generations.

000 Description and analysis now hands the problem to education. I cannot find a more fitting close for this chapter than the following statement of the problem:

> From the obscurities that for us still hang about African childhood, the fact emerges that Africans do educate their children. It is a genuine education. . . . What the African sets out to do, namely, to prepare the new generation to take its place in the community and carry on the tribal tradition, he accomplishes with a very considerable measure of success. . . . What Mr. Bryant has said of the Zulus may be said of some other African tribes: 'Through the ages, this admirable system of forming character and imparting knowledge continued, until at length was evolved a Zulu race noble of heart, dignified of bearing, refined of manners, and learned in natural science—qualities, alas! rapidly dying out before the destructive and demoralizing advance of European civilization!' The concluding sentence applies to many a tribe. No small part of the demoralization is caused by the disturbance of family life through the prolonged absence of the senior males at work on European mines and plantations and through the flocking of boys to European towns; it is in the family life, as we have seen, that the most

[1] 'We saw a party crossing the Kulili (*Kulēlē*) River on a bridge of the frailest construction. The young men went first, deposited their loads on the bank, and returned for the loads of the old men, who carefully crept over unburdened. Then some of the young men recrossed and took their baskets from the women, and their babies as well. Last of all, two strong youths assisted the women themselves to cross. Nothing could be more tenderly considerate.

'Whatever customs may prevail in other parts of Africa, here it is entirely false to say that women are ill-treated. No one of either sex does any great amount of work, but such as it is is fairly divided. . . . They are certainly as well-treated as the wives of the poorer classes at home, and do infinitely less drudgery.' From a letter of Dr. Nichols in the *Missionary Herald* for 1883, p. 229.

[2] See *supra*, p. 120 f.

[3] See *supra*, p. 124 f.

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Ethnologists have often emphasized the supposed subjection of the individuals to the group. Initiation rites do tend to uniformity of conduct and group control; yet among the Ovimbundu there are renowned leaders of caravans, chiefs who are respected because of their justice and intelligence, also medicine-men, craftsmen, and musicians who display great individuality. Their self-expression in tribal life results from special aptitude and natural force of character, which qualities are made evident by daily actions, or through loquacity in the council house. In several localities live chiefs, who, by personality and tact, make possible a social adjustment between the indigenous culture and foreign intruders.

In former times kings were at the head of the legal and military systems, and in this capacity they acted when appeals were made from the jurisdiction of village chiefs. Prosperity of the country is today thought to center in kings both living and dead, and the extant ritual associated with the obsequies of a king is an illustration of this dependence. The importance of the medicine-man as a diviner, physician, and rain-maker is little diminished even at the present day.

The operation of village communism and the manner in which this centers about persons of importance is seen during the preparation of a new site for a village. A description has been given relating to the selection of the site, employment of communal labor, the creation and distribution of new fire, and the function of the medicine-man on this occasion.

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Direct questioning concerning spiritual beliefs and the nature of a supreme being elicits little information, and that of a contradictory kind. As usual, actions are more important than statements. At a funeral, women dance, clap hands, and sing, "God has cheated us of a life." The inference seems to be that Suku gives and determines life. Beliefs respecting the good and bad spirits (*Olosande* and *Olondele*) are deeply ingrained in the lives of the Ovimbundu, who are confident of the need for placation of spirits by sacrifice, the use of wooden figurines, and the aid of the medicine-man. A study of the contents of a diviner's basket gives a clear idea of the powers and the activities of spirits; and the function of a spirit, which is able to hear and answer the living, is understood after observing the questioning of the corpse at a funeral. Without doubt, a belief in spirits and a reliance on the power of medicine-men are two of the fundamental ideas which permeate every thought and activity of the Ovimbundu, for by these agencies mundane matters are raised to a spiritual level.

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servant of mine explaining how the Mwekalia chose the chief said, giving me a comparison: 'The Bishop of Nova Lisboa thinks "This priest has sense" and so makes him the superior of a mission'.[6] The disintegration of the old political system, and the association of its representatives with the ritual values which are no longer very significant for the mass of Ovimbundu, has destroyed the old pyramid of authority and prestige. The people associate demands and punishment, for which they seem to receive very little in return, with the post. Many draw a distinction between the actual *chefe* and the government, which they regard as benevolent and ignorant of the behaviour of its representatives. Despite such expressions of loyalty as the singing of the Portuguese national anthem at village parties the 'government' is too distant and shadowy for the Ovimbundu to have much knowledge of it. Nor has the post tried effectively to build up new types of bureaucratic authority in the villages—the government headmen are not given sufficient backing or responsibility by the post to do more than execute its orders.

Hence, the establishment of new types of grouping and leadership at the local level has been the work of the missions, and it is through the missions that these new groupings are articulated on to the total Angolan social system. The missionaries, who provide this articulation between the 'civilized' society and the local organization of the natives, form the section of the 'civilized' population which most satisfies, in its relations with the people, the expectations of the Africans.

To use another term, it is within the Catholic and Protestant Churches that Ovimbundu most clearly identify themselves. Baptism identifies an individual by giving him a name, hence Christians object to non-baptized people identifying themselves in this way. To an individual baptism is significant since it is concerned with his destiny. By it also he identifies himself with the 'civilized' population and achieves a new status superior to that of the pagans. The newly-born child of Christian parents will be given a Christian name and also an Umbundu name from one already held by a dead kinsman.[7] A few villagers

[6] Actually responsibility for appointing superiors of missions largely belongs to the superior of the Nova Lisboa district of the Congregação do Espírito Santo.

[7] For Umbundu names, see Elizabeth Ennis, *African Studies* (Johannesburg) March 1945.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

593 importance, but treatment of that subject must be reserved for [562] another time. The balance maintained in the Umbundu social system, which has already been noted,[1] together with woman's important position in the economic sphere, give to the women and girls a relatively satisfactory place in Umbundu society. It has also been noted that woman's sphere has suffered less disintegration than has man's. Although the girl may have somewhat less freedom than the boy, her personal prospects are more stable, and in the long run more satisfactory.

Adjustments between parents and children among the Ovimbundu are relatively satisfactory. The fact that there are no specific father–daughter or mother–son avoidances or taboos, beyond the general laws of incest which nearly all cultures maintain, indicates an absence of strain in these relationships. In our own society adult–child fixations, and particularly the parent–child fixations, with the consequent repressions, are very common and are held to be responsible, at least in part, for much trouble including difficulties of adjustment at pubescence.[2] In traditional Umbundu society such fixations occur very infrequently, if at all.[3] In this context we should be reminded of the following factors:

[855] 1. The early and continued close association of the child largely (although not exclusively) with the parent of the same sex.[4]
2. The association of the child with many (classificatory) 'fathers' and 'mothers' which may result in a partial transfer of affection.[2]
3. The absence of fondling, kissing, and other close bodily contact in display of affection.[5]

157 The picture in these respects is not unlike that of the Samoans given by Margaret Mead.[6] In some other respects it is quite different but it is similar in the apparent absence of a period of adolescent *Sturm und Drang*. What actual correlations there may be between parent–child fixations and a period of adolescent stress I do not know. The absence of any such period has been reported

[1] *Vide supra*, p. 43.
[2] Cf. Allport, op. cit., pp. 355 ff.
[3] The proverbial inability of a widow properly to rear a child (*vide supra*, p. 102) may indicate difficulties of this sort.
[4] *Vide supra*, p. 98.
[5] No display of affection whatever is congenial to the Ovimbundu, except to babies and between adolescent age-mates of the same sex.
[6] Op. cit., chap. x.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

from several primitive cultures,[1] and some experimental studies seem to indicate that it is less general in the United States than had previously been supposed.[2] It is recognized that in this country parent–child fixations have produced many pathological cases.[3] With the practical absence of such fixations among the Ovimbundu, no such group of pathological cases exists. This is a clear gain, but there is also probably a loss, in that there seems to be a corresponding scarcity of the more or less introverted idealistic persons, 'the tender-minded class described by William James'.[4]

Ovimbundu parents proverbially love their eldest child (*nuñulũ*) in a special way,[5] but there is not in their family situation as much invidious distinction as that which in ours often produces the domineering eldest child, the inadequate youngest, and others in the sequence with feelings of neglect or 'rejection'. The Umbundu family situation almost inevitably involves less sharpness of distinction, for although the eldest child may be loved in a special way he deals not only with his parents but with other relatives of their generation and with elder (classificatory) siblings and cross-cousins of his own generation. So, also, the last or youngest child of a sequence would hardly sense himself the youngest since there will almost certainly be younger (classificatory) siblings and cross-cousins toward whom he in turn will act as his elders acted toward him.[6] In a normal Umbundu family situation the problem of the 'only child', so acute in America, is almost inconceivable.

Some Ovimbundu, not only as children but also as younger siblings and as secondary wives, do suffer from feelings of neglect and rejection. I have not noted this from biographical or other direct evidence, except from observation of resentment on the part of younger siblings of fagging by their elders. Evidence exists, however, in the frequency of the Cinderella motif in Umbundu folk-tales. Many are the fables in which Little Hare (*Kandimba*), Little Tortoise (*Kambeu*), or Little Weasel (*Kavili*) gets the better of his stupid elders, represented by almost any and all of the larger

[1] Cf. Mead, loc. cit., Fortes, op. cit., p. 9.

[2] Gardner and Lois B. Murphy, *Experimental Social Psychology* (New York: Harpers, 1931), pp. 429–32.

[3] Allport, op. cit., p. 362.

[4] Quoted from Allport, op. cit., p. 362.

[5] Cf. the proverb: *Epungu liwa konendela; omõlã sole kunuñulũ*, '(Of) corn best the first fruits; (of) children (you) love the first born'.

[6] This seems to be the state of affairs quite generally in societies having a classificatory kinship system. Cf. M. Mead, op. cit., chaps. iii, iv.

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157 animals.[1] Other tales with frankly human protagonists portray
538 the same theme,[2] and there are a number of Umbundu adapta-
593 tions and variations of such European versions of this theme as Cinderrella, Snow White, &c. In some tales, such as 'Kalitangi', the hero escaped as an infant from an agreement made by his mother before his birth with another expectant mother that they would both destroy their offspring. Does this indicate a resentment of, or a protest against, child-sacrifice in certain Umbundu rites? I mention this as one possible source for the feeling of neglect and 'rejection' which, however, does not seem to be as acute or as widespread as in our own society.[3] The exact situation could only be determined by careful and extensive investigation.

593 Adjustments between siblings among the Ovimbundu on the
152 whole are relatively satisfactory. Resentment on the part of the younger does sometimes occur as indicated above. Overt sibling
[643] conflict has also arisen quite frequently in the royal families because of disputes over the succession. Instances of this latter type of conflict may be found in narratives of the early missionaries,[4] in diaries of Silva Porto,[5] and in other early sources. Conflict from jealousy arising out of the parent–child relationship, however, seems to be relatively rare. In a kinship society regulated by the hierarchy of age, jealousy between siblings does not quite fit into the picture. The two most common terms for jealousy over personal relations refer strictly to sexual jealousy: *esepa*, woman's jealousy; and *ukuelume*, jealousy on the part of a man. The other terms are somewhat more applicable but they belong less to household affairs. The meaning of *onya* is jealousy and envy, while *ocipululu* is covetousness and so belongs to the economic sphere.

572 Friendship, especially between age-mates or 'coevals', has played
[554] and continues to play an important role in Umbundu social adjustments. Such differences as social station, family, distance of habitation, and even diversity of language and culture are easily bridged by friendship. Many friendships were formed on trading

[1] Cf. *Journal of the American Folk-Lore Society*, 1922, vol. 35, nos. 1 and 18, pp. 116 f., 140 ff.

[2] The tale of *Ñaña la kota liaye* (Baby and his elder sister) referred to *supra*, p. 84.

[3] Investigations of the 'foster-child phantasy', feelings of neglect, 'rejection', &c., reported by Murphy, op. cit., p. 415 f.; and by Allport, op. cit., p. 364 f.

[4] *Missionary Herald*, 1888, p. 242 f.

[5] In *Boletim da Sociedade de Geografia de Lisboa*, 1885, 1886.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

572 expeditions. Many blood-brotherhoods were doubtless under-
[48] taken purely from motives of friendship.[1] The *vakuacisoko* is a
[181] friendly institution. The Ovimbundu are a friendly people.

Identification is a strikingly important feature of Umbundu
156 social adjustments and of the whole learning process. Children overtly identify themselves with older siblings, with parents, with other older relatives both living and dead, with friends of their parents, with the village headman, or even the king.[2] This perhaps is the process involved in that which the Ovimbundu name reincarnation. It is largely through identification that character appears to run in families. This is why boys are so keen to learn the professions of their fathers or their mother's brothers. Identification with their seniors in social position and economic activity more closely cements the unity of the child–adult sphere and gives the children yet another urge to enter into adult life and assume complete responsibility as quickly as possible.

158 'Inferiority Conflict' has probably been present in Umbundu life for a long time, perhaps since the rubber trade (1874), perhaps even longer. When a people's activity is keyed to so high a pitch there will be some individuals who find themselves inadequate. There are a number of proverbs which ridicule the stay-at-homes or those 'too lazy' to undertake the exceedingly arduous trading
[177] expeditions. European domination has set new paces and created new frustrations, with one result, that 'inferiority conflicts' are probably on the increase. Many individual instances could be cited. A particularly striking one of my observation is of a man whose suffering from epileptic seizures had induced attitudes of inferiority. The conflict was exacerbated by his selection as a hospital assistant, in which position the responsibility required was plainly beyond his ability.[3] Individuals suffering from any physical disability find life difficul among such an aggressive people.

[732] If the disability is great the handicapped individual generally finds the adjustment beyond his powers. I have observed a number of severely crippled individuals brought up in traditional kinship groups, and all of them were suffering from overt inferiority conflicts. All of these individuals had adopted compensatory

[1] Although the rite seems to have connotations of sorcery.

[2] Among the Tallensi, according to Fortes, identification is only with older siblings, with parents, and with 'the clan' (op. cit., pp. 46 ff.).

[3] Epilepsy (*ocinonya*) is considered by the Ovimbundu as a visitation of the spirits and is much feared.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

159 behaviour of an anti-social nature.[1] The foregoing analysis refers chiefly to those of the Ovimbundu who now live or were reared within their traditional social structure, with but slight reference to other individuals.

The Umbundu Estimate of Character

156 183 The Umbundu concept of personality as being achieved by a process of social integration is of fundamental importance, bearing in mind that society consists of the whole kinship group—including the living and the dead, men and spirits. The process of achieving integration together with reactions to various cultural elements interestingly reveal the types of character appreciated and those disliked by the Ovimbundu.

Almost everything in Umbundu life and culture reveals them to be a strong and aggressive people. Their history, whether of raiding or of trading, is eloquent testimony to this. The early age at which children participate and assume responsibility in social and economic life has doubtless contributed toward the development of aggressive attitudes. The system of marriage which places the balance of responsibility in all particulars upon the bridegroom and not on his elders, but at the same time requires the willing consent of the bride, is evidently a development of a strongly aggressive people. Their economic life witnesses to the same fact, whether one considers their trade or their agriculture. None but an aggressive (or a very stubborn) people could succeed at farming in a region of such poor soil. Basing his observations only on their pillage and robbery of all their neighbours, and on the submission of the latter, Magyar remarked that the Ovimbundu were the greatest people of South Africa.[2]

In view of these facts it is not difficult to understand that the Ovimbundu appreciate character integration which includes a high degree of self-expression. Such 'traits'[3] as drive, extroversion, insight, ascendance, and expansion[4] are desired and appreciated by the Ovimbundu. Introversion and reclusion, on the other hand, are disliked. In the more extreme forms they are feared and

[1] Stealing is one of the commonest types of behaviour in such cases.

[2] L. Magyar, *Reisen in Süd-Afrika*, p. 265.

[3] The term is used merely for convenience to cover types of behaviour. The specificity of the responses which make up character is assumed; cf. Hugh Hartshorne and Mark May, *Studies in the Nature of Character*, 3 vols. (New York: Macmillan, 1928–30).

[4] After Allport, op. cit., chap. v.

positions on domes of rock. The first tomb examined was in Ganda 224
(Plate LXXIV, Fig. 1). This tomb is carefully built up from pieces 766
of granite detached from the rocks which serve as a base. Horns of animals are placed on the cairn which is further decorated by a stick bearing the tail of an animal. Plate XXXII, Fig. 1, shows a tomb of similar structure in the country of the Vasele. From one such tomb it was possible to detach a slab so that the interior could be seen. There were two male skeletons; one lay supine while the bones of the other were in disorder.

In a hunter's house of bows there are implements of deceased hunters, whose ceremonies centering in these relics have been described under the heading of hunting.

TRAINING OF MEDICINE-MEN

Training for the position of male or female magician (*ocimbanda*) 756
is not carried out with formality ending in initiatory rites, neither is the position hereditary; but the boy or girl who wishes to become an *ocimbanda* must have "spirit in the head." This choice of children of peculiar neurotic temperament for the positions of medicine-men and medicine-women is widely distributed, as I have shown in some detail (Origins of Education, 1926, pp. 256–259).

Among the Ovimbundu there does not appear to be an intensifying of natural psychoses by seclusion, starvation, or beating. [158]
When a boy is sick, the medicine-man says, "You have a spirit who wants you to be *ocimbanda*." The medicine-man kills a dog, a goat, and four chickens, then the boy has to accompany his master, carrying his apparatus and obeying him in every way. The medicine-man says, "Your father was an *ocimbanda* and the spirit wants you." The female *ocimbanda* is called *cambula* by other women, and her [845]
services are preferred to those of the male *ocimbanda* in cases of difficult childbirth.

In Ngalangi I was informed that the Ovimbundu have great faith in the medicine-men of the Vangangella, a name vaguely applied by the Ovimbundu to several tribes of east-central Angola. An Ocimbundu will make a journey of several days in order to visit a distant medicine-man of another tribe.

FUNCTIONS OF MEDICINE-MEN

Magical practices are of two kinds, social and anti-social. The man who carries out divination, rain-making, healing the sick, and [791]
many other functions is *ocimbanda*, while the secret worker of evil, the witch or wizard, is *onganga*. In one village there may be several

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

101 a Bantu-speaking group numbering about one and one third
• (161) million, whose home is the Benguela Highland of Angola (Portuguese West Africa). Christian missions have worked among them since 1881, the date of founding of the W.C.A.M. of the A.B.C.F.M., with which work the writer has been connected since 1924.

121 *Umbundu mentality*. It is not the purpose of this study to
114 appraise Bantu or Umbundu mentality. Every new description of a Bantu culture gives a new angle or vantage point from which to view the versatile mentality of that interesting group of people. All available objective views unite to show us, as Driberg holds for primitive man in general, 'a being as human as ourselves, affected by the same emotions . . . with thoughts, responses, and actions differing in no essential way from our own'[1]—neither the noble savage of Rousseau nor the subhuman creature of more recent doctrinaires. 'The grouping of savages with children and idiots is but another symptom of an attitude which, when faced with a different type of culture, insists on assuming a lower type of mentality to account for that culture.'[1]

It must be owned that different views of primitive mentality are held, but it would seem that those which hold primitive man to be incapable of reasoning logically, his mentality in some way inferior or 'pre-logical', base their conclusions too largely on theoretical or library material and too little on results of actual field work.[2] It is not the purpose of the present study to examine these theories, but a word of protest must be raised against some who, basing their view of the mentality of Bantu peoples on some such theories as those mentioned above, and with or without sup-

[1] J. H. Driberg, *The Savage as He Really Is*, pp. 2, 3 (London: Routledge, 1929).

[2] Cf., for example, L. Levy-Bruhl, *Les Fonctions Mentales dans les Sociétés Inférieures*, *La Mentalité Primitive*, &c. The seriousness with which these and similar theoretical studies have been taken is surprising. Cf. e.g., R. Allier, *Mind of the Savage* (London: Bell, 1929); J. W. C. Dougall, *Characteristics of African Thought* (London: International Institute of African Languages and Cultures, 1932); N. S. Booth, *Teaching a Bantu Community* (MS. copy). Dr. Max Gluckman of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute told me that I had wrongly interpreted Levy-Bruhl, and he kindly loaned me a copy of a paper by Evans-Pritchard which sets forth a different interpretation of Levy-Bruhl's thesis with regard to the 'pre-logical' mentality. It is not my intention here to combat the thesis of the 'pre-logical' mentality, but rather a common interpretation of it (Evans-Pritchard, 'Levy-Bruhl's Theory of Primitive Mentality', *Bulletin of the Faculty of Arts of the Egyptian University*, vol. i, pt. ii).

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631 ones. This situation was reported by Magyar, when he wrote,
635 'Quibanda (should be Civanda) to the east has 500 villages. The Chief has great power. He sends tribute every year to the king of Bailundu but is himself fully independent.'[1] Magyar described about 15 *atumbu* or '*ovikandscho*',[2] as he called them, of Bailundu. [161] He estimated the population of Bailundu at 450,000, and for all the kingdoms of the Ovimbundu 1,200,000,[3] figures which are probably not very different from present-day facts. The report [175] and description of the 'Capitania de Benguella' in 1799 said that the king of Bailundu dominated 2,056 villages; the king of Viye, 886; and the king of Ngalangi, 900; and listed their 'feudos' respectively as 82, 54, and 78.[4] My list of the Ngalangi *atumbu* shows 112. In Bailundu about 20 *atumbu* were ruled by members of the royal family, including heirs apparent or expectant, and the queen (*Inakulu*), who also had her own establishment.[5] About 20 were ruled by other court officials.

621 Most of these *atumbu* are still recognized as such or as *olombala*.[6]
622 Their decay has not been as great as that of the *ombala*[6] of their
177 liege lord, for they still fulfil certain functions in native life. They have also been given new functions by the administrative authorities. [651] The minor chiefs as well as village headmen are all required to assist in assessing and collecting the native tax, and also in recruiting labour for government works and for contracts. In some areas they receive in return the remission of their own taxes. In some areas they are required to wear uniforms. On the dancing floors [692] of most of these minor *olombala* courts are still held, justice determined, and (to a limited extent) fines 'eaten'. Such judgements are not officially recognized or allowed by the European authorities. The African, however, often finds that European courts do not meet his needs or accord with his concepts of justice.

[1] Magyar, op. cit., p. 389.

[2] Umbundu *ovikanjo* (plural), 'branches', a term which through commercial or European influence is applied to the *atumbu*.

[3] For these figures and for descriptions of the several kingdoms, see Magyar, op. cit., chap. ix.

[4] *Annaes Mar. e Col.*, 4a Ser., pp. 155 ff.

[5] Magyar, op. cit., p. 390.

[6] *Olombala*, plural of *ombala*, a capital village or chief's residence.

3

an elevation of 4,000 feet or more, and the boundaries of Ovimbundu territory closely correspond with this area.(1) Ovimbundu are found also in regions adjoining the Highland, and Umbundu-speaking groups stretch as far as the Atlantic coast-line, between the towns of Loanda and Benguella. Ovimbundu country is divided between the Administrative Provinces of Bie, Benguella, and Huila, in the Districts of Benguella, Huambo, Cuanza Sul, Bie and Huila. 101 631

NEIGHBOURING TRIBES

To the east and south-east of the Ovimbundu are the Luimbe, Luchaze, Mbunda, Mbwela, etc., for all of whom the Ovimbundu use the derogatory term *Ngangela*, or *Ganguella* in the Portuguese version.(2) The Ovimbundu attitude towards these people is illustrated in the proverb "as a grass hut is not a house, so an *ocingangela* is not a person".(3) This eastern region was a favourite hunting-ground for slave-traders from Viye and Bailundu. 161 [186]

To the north-east are the Chokwe, Bangala and Songo peoples, who are related to the Lunda group.(4)

To the west and south of the Ovimbundu are cattle-keeping peoples - the Nganda, Ndombe, Hanya, Cilenge, Cipungu, Muila, Nyaneka, Mulondo and Khumbi. These form a fairly homogeneous cultural group, and are in certain respects similar to the southern Ovimbundu.(5) Childs, following Estermann,(6) uses the collective name *"Bangala"* in referring to them, but in order to avoid confusion with the Bangala tribe to the north-east, this usage is not adopted here. Still further south are the Ambo and Herero, also cattle-keepers.

The tribes to the north of the Ovimbundu - Esela, Cipala, Lupolo, Ndongo or Kimbundo etc. - belong to the western or Angola 'cluster' of the Congo people.(7) The Esele (Vesele) and Mbui (Amboim) may also belong to this group, but have not yet been surely classified.(8) The northern tribes are sometimes collectively called by the Ovimbundu *Olongoya*, a term which implies that they speak a language unintelligible to the Ovimbundu, but which has not the derogatory sense of *"Ngangela"*.(9) Unlike the eastern peoples, the peoples to the south and north of the Ovimbundu are recognised as *omunu* (people), or even *vakuetu* (comrades).(10) [186]

DEMOGRAPHY

The 1940 Angola Census(11) estimates the number of Ovimbundu (Mbundo) as 1,331,087, of whom 694,504 are females, 636,583 males. Childs(12) points out that this number should be decreased by at least 150,000 owing to the erroneous inclusion of several small non-Ovimbundu tribal groups. 161

(1) See map.
(2) See McCulloch, 1951, p.52.
(3) The term used for "person" in the proverb is *omunu*, a "potential" person - a word used for adolescents. See pp. below.
(4) The Bangala are sometimes held to be related to the Congo rather than the Lunda group.
(5) See below, p.
(6) 1935, pp.45-69.
(7) Childs, 1949, p.8.
(8) Ibid.
(9) Ibid., p.189.
(10) Ibid. p.x.
(11) Quoted by Mendes Correia, 1943, p.423, and Sermento, 1948.
(12) 1949, p.9.

161 But this number is probably made up by Ovimbundu emigrants to other colonies and to the Union of South Africa.[1]

162 There are no recent estimates of the populations of the various groups of Ovimbundu. Magyar in 1859 however gave figures which are of some interest.[2] He estimated the total Ovimbundu ("Kimbanda") population at 1,880,000, but points out that this number includes 300,000 from tribes which, though culturally resembling the Ovimbundu, are not linguistically related to them (Kissama, Mupinda, Mussumbe, Lusseke, Mmyemba and Massongo). Another 300,000 are from tribes which Magyar includes as "Kimbanda" speaking, but which are not generally reckoned as Ovimbundu today. (Nganda, Esele, Humbi, Lupolo, Hako and Kakingi.) This would leave 1,280,000, a figure remarkably near to the present estimate. The following are his figures for the separate groups:-

	Area in sq.m.	*Population*
Viye (Bie)	800	120,000
Bailundu	2,000	450,000
Wambu (Huambo)	?	120,000
Ciyaka (Kiakka)	?	75,000
Ngalangi (Galangue)	1,000	250,000
Civula (Kibala)	200	35,000
Ndulu (Andulo)	160	40,000
Sembu (Sambos)	120	30,000
Kakonda (Caconda)	300	100,000
	Total	1,220,000

There are no recent estimates of tribal density. The 1940 Census[3] gives density in the Provinces as :-

Bie Province[4]	1.5 per sq. km.
Benguella	8.5 per sq. km.
Huila	2.0 per sq. km.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT[5]

TOPOGRAPHY

133 The homeland of the Ovimbundu corresponds closely with the highest part of the Benguella Highland, i.e. the area lying between 11° and 15° South Latitude, and meridians 14° and 18° E. Altitude in this region is everywhere over 4,000 feet, and the western ridges rise as high as 9,000 feet, forming the highest north-western portion of the ancient South African sub-continental plateau. To the east, elevation drops gradually from the Kwanza valley towards the Kasai and Zambesi rivers. To the west, descent is irregular - in places almost precipitous - to the coastal plain. This plain and the stretch of higher country (below 3,200 feet) which separates it from the Highland proper, form an arid and sparsely-populated region which is a northerly extension of the Kalahari, Namieb and Omaheke deserts.

(1) Childs, op.cit., p.9. (2) Magyar, 1859, pp.125, 239, 361 etc.
(3) Quoted by Sarmento, 1948.
(4) This figure is of little significance since Bie Province includes large sparsely-inhabited non-Ovimbundu areas in south-east Angola.
(5) Childs 1949, chap.1. Fitzgerald 1948, pp.278f. Hambly 1934, pp.108f.

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CHAPTER II

THE CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

In modern Angola, an Overseas Province of Portugal,[1] the Ovimbundu form the most numerous of the African peoples, with their million and a half of population,[2] and have also the reputation of being industrious—especially the Ovimbundu of Bailundo.[3] Their homeland, the Benguela Highland, has also been of importance in the modern economic development of Angola.

On the narrow strip of coastal plain stand three cities[4]—Lobito, Catumbela, and Benguela. Both Benguela and Catumbela knew the rubber trade; Lobito was founded in the early part of this century as the coastal terminal of the Benguela Railway which runs through Umbundu country and beyond the Congo frontier and thence to Elisabethville. The Benguela Railway is the economic backbone of the Highland. On it are the cities of Nova Lisboa and Silva Porto and a string of smaller trading towns. Traders from the Bimbe area drove regularly down to Vila Nova, one such trading town on the line, a distance of a hundred and thirty miles or so to sell maize, and buy trade goods and African villagers knew that along the railway maize sold for better prices and clothes were much cheaper.

[1] This term was used for nearly a hundred years up to 1933 when the term Colony was adopted. In 1951 'colony' was dropped in favour of the old term.

[2] Estimate made in 1935 by Mr. Theodore Tucker then of the Missão Evangelica de Dondi.

[3] Galvão and Selvagem, op. cit., pp. 384-5.

[4] A city receives its title through official recognition. The 1950 census gives Nova Lisboa as having a higher 'civilized' population (7,982 of whom 4,756 were white) than any city except Luanda. The total population has been estimated at 60,000 (Egerton, p. 199). Estimates given me in 1955-6 suggested that Nova Lisboa has some 6,000 'civilized' persons and 20,000-30,000 natives. Lobito has fewer civilized persons but may have a larger native population of perhaps 30,000.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

CHAPTER III

CHIEFS AND HEADMEN IN GUMBA

1. *The History of Gumba*

The historical perspective of Ovimbundu is short. Few, even elders, know of any landmark earlier than the Mutu-ya-Kevela rising of 1902–3, nor even for those who had participated in it did the time of the rubber trade form a Golden Age by which the present is judged. The period about which most was remembered was the reign of Mbati.[1]

Mbati had ruled over both Gumba and Chicunda, a union which had existed only during his lifetime, and which would have given him on present-day population figures 7,500–9,000 subjects.[2] He had managed to keep in his own hands the relations between his people and the government post. Policemen arriving at his capital to recruit labourers were entertained while Mbati's ministers got together the men required. Although an upholder of the traditional rites associated with chieftancy he had been on good terms with the missionaries and allowed a Catholic catechist to settle in his village. One of his sons became a Protestant schoolteacher near the railway line, another entered the Catholic seminary but left and became a policeman in Cela. Many of the numerous progeny provided by his seventeen wives are still living in Gumba.

Mbati's downfall came through his practising the traditional annual ritual cannibalism (*oku lia ekongo*). About 1934–5 he was banished for this to another part of Umbundu country.

[text continues on p. 37]

[1] L. Magyar marks a place called Gumba on his map (opposite to page 1) but puts it to the south of the capital of Bailundo. As he does not seem to have personal knowledge of this area, this does not rule out identification, especially as the Cuvo begins to the south of Bailundo.

[2] For the basis of this estimate see section 2 of this chapter.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

634 with primary and possibly some secondary education, the
648 clerks who have primary schooling, and the policemen, who are often illiterate. The police are locally recruited and are provided with their keep, from the farm attached to the post, and with uniforms. They are usually—by no means always—illiterate. The interpreter, clerks, and police tend to identify themselves with the *chefe* as against the people; however, a policeman may be influenced in his relations with the villagers by gifts and friendship.

634 The size of population of sub-chiefdoms varies. The 1950
161 census gave the total 'non-civilized' population of the Bailundo *concelho* as being 246,045, and the number of sub-chiefdoms as 82,[9] that is, an average of 3,000 individuals per sub-chiefdom. The *chefe* of Bimbe told me in August 1956 that Gumba had 800 taxpayers, and Chicunda had 700. Putting the proportion of taxpayers as 1 to 6 (on the basis of Epalanga proportions) this gives 4,800 as the population figure for Gumba and 4,200 as the figure for Chicunda. Even if the proportion of 1 to 5 be taken as the proportion between taxpayers and total population this gives us 4,000 as the figure for Gumba and 3,500 as the figure for Chicunda. I do not know what the local density of population is; in the Bailundo *concelho* as a whole it is 16–17 individuals per square kilometre.[10]

634 The chief and government headmen are the main channel of
648 conveying demands and orders from the post to the villagers.
622 They receive in return the remission of their taxes. Their dependence on the post is not, however, sufficient to give them a position of marked superiority in their locality for the following reasons. They are unable to control all relations between the post and the people; anybody who has a dispute on hand may take it direct to the post. In village life their
634 influence can always be counterbalanced by that of the
622 catechists and 'elders of the school' whose contact with the
[797] missions is much closer than that of the chiefs and government headmen with the post. They also lack economic resources; the exemption from taxes (which the Catholic catechists share)

[9] See Gálvao and Selvagem, pp. 384–5. For Angolan population density see Egerton, pp. 36–37.

[10] My own estimate from figures given by Galvão and Selvagem.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13
Angola FP1

M 101 197

'Kimbundu', Imbangala, &c.). The Esele and the Mbuï, on the north-west, may belong to the Western Province but they have not yet been surely classified.[1]

These neighbouring peoples have been listed only as background for studying the Ovimbundu. Linguistically the Ovimbundu belong to South Africa even as their country geographically is a part of it. 'In respect of climate and vegetation Angola is essentially a borderland and may be regarded as the area of mergence of several distinct zones which attain their fullest development outside the Colony.'[2] Since the Benguela Highland comprises the north-western ridges of the South African sub-continental plateau, it is not surprising that its inhabitants should be the northernmost of the Southern Bantu.[3]

European Administration, Communications, Missions

A 631

As a Portuguese colony, Angola is governed under the Ministry of Colonies in Lisbon by a Governor-General whose residence is Luanda, the capital of the colony since 1576. For administrative purposes the colony is divided into five provinces, each with a governor in charge. These are divided into thirteen districts which in turn are divided into circumscriptions and these again into administrative areas. The country of the Ovimbundu is divided between the provinces of Benguela, Bié, and Huila in the districts of Benguela, Huambo, Cuanza-Sul, Bié, and Huila. 'Direct rule' is the method of administration and native political

A M 631

[1] Ibid.

[2] Walter Fitzgerald, *Africa, a Social, Economic and Political Geography of its Major Regions* (London: Methuen, 1934).

A M 162

[3] The general census of 1940 (*vide supra*, p. 7, note 2) showed the population as follows:

Whites . .	44,083
Mixed . .	28,035
Blacks . .	3,665,829
Others . .	63
	3,738,010 (op. cit., vol. i, p. 78 f.)

Of the various tribal divisions, the Ovimbundu ('Mbundo') are listed with 1,331,087 (op. cit., vol. ix, p. 23). Owing to the mistaken inclusion of several small tribal groups, this number should probably be reduced by at least 150,000, but on the other hand there are without doubt more Ovimbundu than this last number who have emigrated to neighbouring colonies and to the Union of South Africa.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13
Angola FP1

A M 162

institutions or divisions have had little consideration in drawing administrative boundaries.

A 496

Systems of communications have been developed during the last forty years. The Benguela Railway, built by Sir Robert Williams and the Tanganyika Concessions, Ltd., was completed in 1931 from Lobito to Elisabethville in the Katanga region, where direct connexion is made with the South, Central, and East African systems of rail and water transport. This railway serves as the most direct outlet for the mines of the Congo and Northern Rhodesia. The great majority of native employees of the railway are Ovimbundu and it has also brought this people their first contact with the mines and with industrialized South Africa. Regular steamship connexion between Lobito and Europe includes Portuguese, Belgian, German, and British lines with occasional calls from American, Japanese, and Scandinavian ships.[1] Recent years have seen considerable extensions of telegraphic and radio service throughout the colony. Motor roads have been built extensively, especially on the plateau and along the watersheds. In addition there are many wagon-tracks for ox-wagons which were introduced by the voortrekkers almost seventy years ago. In many cases the routes followed are those first used by native caravans.

M 486 177 A 505 M A 206 487 494

M 797

There are eleven missionary societies at work among the Ovimbundu: five Protestant and six Roman Catholic.[2] There is only one fully organized Umbundu Church. It includes the work of three Protestant societies. It is the work of this Church and of the Missions of the A.B.C.F.M.[3] and of the United Church of Canada with which the evaluations of this study are concerned. The Mission of the A.B.C.F.M. was founded in 1880, as the first Christian work undertaken among the Ovimbundu.[4]

[1] This was the situation in 1939. During the period of the war the Portuguese services were maintained, although with less regularity than before. The U.S. Maritime Commission maintained a cargo service. There were occasional calls by cargo vessels of various nationalities. The Belgian line is reopening its service (1946) and the Portuguese lines have acquired additional vessels.

[2] Pères du Saint-Esprit began work among the Ovimbundu in 1890; the Padres Seculares have been working in the towns; the Benedictines and several orders of nuns also have stations.

[3] American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions.

[4] The two missions mentioned conduct their work in most respects as a single mission. The other Protestant societies do not have very extensive work among the Ovimbundu.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

621 592 Going on to the marital status of the villagers, I found that the forty-eight households were to be classified as follows:

Monogynous	27 (including 7 at the school)
Widowers (all formerly monogynous)	3 (" 1 ")
Widows	7 (" 4 ")
Young (unmarried) man . . .	1 (at the school)
Polygynous	10
Total	48

Whether a similar proportion of monogynous to polygynous households would also be found more widely among the Ovimbundu is a question which could only be settled by extensive 595 592 demographic studies.[1] My impression is that the proportion of polygynous to monogynous households is higher in the region of Kasonge than in other Umbundu areas for the following reasons:

1. The proximity of Kasonge to the Esele country which has long been a source of supply for concubines (slaves). (Five of the ten polygynous householders in Ngendo included at least one Esele concubine.)
2. The comparatively low bride-price in Kasonge as compared to other areas.

The South African Census for 1921 showed that at that time only one man in eight was polygynous.[2] My impression is that the proportion among the Ovimbundu is no greater and that economic factors will soon do away with any considerable polygyny.

In each of the ten polygynous households in Ngendo save one, there were only two wives or concubines. The one exception was

102

[1] The census of 1940 gives more reliable figures and more details than were previously available, but it does not provide a basis for studies of this order. The number or proportion of polygamous unions among the 'uncivilized population' was not recorded. For the whole colony, the division of the native population by sex is given as follows: males, 1,733,328, females, 1,932,501 (op. cit., vol. i, p. 78 f.); and for the Ovimbundu (*Mbundo*), as follows: males, 636,583, females, 694,504 (op. cit., vol. ix, p. 22 f.). Owing to the migration of labourers, and especially to the system known as 'contract labour', certain areas (of recruitment) show a large excess of females over males (as much as 4 to 1 in the 20–29 age-groups of certain areas), while certain (receiving) areas show a corresponding excess of males over females (4 to 1 in several areas and even 22 to 1 in one area, for the same age-groups) (op. cit., vol. iii, *passim*). On this subject, *vide* R. R. Kuczynski, *Colonial Population* (London, 1937), and *Population Movements* (ibid., 1936); both summarized in the *Rhodes-Livingstone Journal*, no. 2.

[2] Quoted by P. A. W. Cook, *The Education of a South African Tribe* (Cape Town; Juta, 1934), p. 3.

161 But this number is probably made up by Ovimbundu emigrants to other colonies and to the Union of South Africa.[1]

162 There are no recent estimates of the populations of the various groups of Ovimbundu. Magyar in 1859 however gave figures which are of some interest.[2] He estimated the total Ovimbundu ("Kimbanda") population at 1,880,000, but points out that this number includes 300,000 from tribes which, though culturally resembling the Ovimbundu, are not linguistically related to them (Kissama, Mupinda, Mussumbe, Lusaeke, Munyemba and Massongo). Another 300,000 are from tribes which Magyar includes as "Kimbanda" speaking, but which are not generally reckoned as Ovimbundu today. (Nganda, Esele, Humbi, Lupolo, Hako and Kakingi.) This would leave 1,280,000, a figure remarkably near to the present estimate. The following are his figures for the separate groups:-

	Area in sq.m.	Population
Viye (Bie)	800	120,000
Bailundu	2,000	450,000
Wambu (Hambo)	?	120,000
Ciyaka (Kiakka)	?	75,000
Ngalangi (Galangue)	1,000	250,000
Civula (Kibala)	200	35,000
Ndulu (Andulo)	160	40,000
Sambu (Sambos)	120	30,000
Kakonda (Caconda)	300	100,000
	Total	1,220,000

There are no recent estimates of tribal density. The 1940 Census[3] gives density in the Provinces as :-

Bie Province[4]	1.5 per sq. km.
Benguella	8.5 per sq. km.
Huila	2.0 per sq. km.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT[5]

TOPOGRAPHY

133 The homeland of the Ovimbundu corresponds closely with the highest part of the Benguella Highland, i.e. the area lying between 11° and 15° South Latitude, and meridians 14° and 18° E. Altitude in this region is everywhere over 4,000 feet, and the western ridges rise as high as 9,000 feet, forming the highest north-western portion of the ancient South African sub-continental plateau. To the east, elevation drops gradually from the Kwanza valley towards the Kasai and Zambesi rivers. To the west, descent is irregular - in places almost precipitous - to the coastal plain. This plain and the stretch of higher country (below 3,200 feet) which separates it from the Highland proper, form an arid and sparsely-populated region which is a northerly extension of the Kalahari, Namieb and Omaheke deserts.

(1) Childs, op.cit., p.9. (2) Magyar, 1859, pp.125, 239, 361 etc.
(3) Quoted by Sarmento, 1948.
(4) This figure is of little significance since Bie Province includes large sparsely-inhabited non-Ovimbundu areas in south-east Angola.
(5) Childs 1949, chap.I. Fitzgerald 1948, pp.278f. Hambly 1934, pp.108f.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

growth is under examination. This central plateau, the Benguela 131
Highlands, rises in places to a height of 6,000 feet, an altitude which [133]
reduces the heat of the tropics and so modifies the flora, discouraging
some types of vegetation and encouraging others. Hostility of the
highlands to palm trees and the banana is appropriately discussed [241]
when dealing with cultural losses; while the fostering effect of reduced
temperature and the presence of wide expanses of open country on
the growth of maize and the keeping of cattle is a cultural gain.

The prevailing rains of Angola are from the northeast to the 132
southwest; consequently the high plateau intercepts rain clouds which
give an annual fall of sixty inches. This adequate rainfall is another
factor which has affected economic life, density of population, com-
munal welfare, and powers of expansion.

The villages of the Ovimbundu are built on hillsides having a 361
commanding view of the surrounding country. There is in the
nature of the land a natural protection from enemies. In addition
to this the Benguela Highlands are an admirable base from which
expeditions both predatory and commercial might, and actually did
set out eastward to the interior of Africa, and southwest to the
cattle-keeping country.

It is important to note that this central plateau is the watershed 133
for four large river systems; the Kwanza to the northwest; the Cunene
to the southwest; the tributaries of the Kasai to the northeast; and
the Zambezi and its affluents to the southeast. Fishing, with attend- [226]
ant beliefs of a ritualistic kind, is of local importance; so also is the
making of canoes. Moreover, the river valleys have marked out a
natural means of communication in several directions.

In connection with the river system the biological factor of the 136
tsetse fly is important, because the presence of the fly locally dis- 231
courages human habitation and prevents the keeping of cattle. The
exact distribution of the fly is imperfectly known, but *Glossinia* [164]
palpalis, the cause of sleeping sickness in human beings, also *Glos-*
sinia morsitans, which carries disease to cattle, are both present along
the Kwanza and parts of the other rivers (J. C. B. Statham, Through
Angola, p. 294).

The western coastal strip is a region of great aridity which has in 132
some years no rainfall whatever, because the northeasterly rains have 137
expended themselves on the high plateau. This region displays
vegetation of the semi-desert type; namely, baobab trees, prickly
acacias, euphorbias, and aloes. Population in this area is sparse, [162]
always nomadic, and in some places non-existent. The coastal strip

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

114 could be observed. Eventually I decided to work in the Bimbe
121 area, in the extreme north-western corner of Umbundu country.
184 The census[10] indicated that Bimbe had a smaller white popula-
[162] tion than any comparable area of Umbundu country, and people who knew it considered that it was one of the areas most likely to retain a relatively conservative social life.

114 In Bimbe I settled in the village of Epalanga in the chiefdom
121 of Gumba. The advantage of Gumba lay in the conservatism
184 for which its people were noted in other chiefdoms; its dis-
101 advantage lay in its proximity to the northern boundary of Umbundu speech and culture, which led me to collect some items of ethnographic information not typical of Umbundu country.[11] On the whole, I am satisfied that the people of Gumba were in the past as in the present Ovimbundu in both speech and way of life.[12]

121 Many of my discoveries were at first negative ones. I could not find any evidence that there was a double system of kinship groups actually in existence; the villages were not composed of agnatic kin; the chief seemed lacking in power. Nor was it easy to obtain detailed information about the past even from old
181 men. There is little interest nowadays in history, nor are the old social institutions regarded, even by those who once participated in them, as being necessarily better than those of the present day. The reason for this attitude seems to lie in Umbundu social psychology with its readiness to accept European authority and
121 values. Interesting as the motivations behind this attitude are, this 'cultural amnesia' caused me much disappointment. I found it much easier to get texts on the caravan trade, and on ceremonial practices and proverbs, than on the political and kinship systems. The inadequacies of the information I received on the political system may be explained by the fact that Gumba is on the fringe of the area tributary to the old kingdom of

[10] Of 1950.

[602] [11] The payment of fines by a man to his dead wife's kin had been formerly practised in Gumba, and still is further north. It does not seem to have been known in living memory elsewhere in Umbundu country.

[12] The northern limit of Umbundu speech is now somewhere to the north of the administrative post of Cela. As there has not been substantial migration from the south, it is reasonable to assume that it is many years since the Gumba–Cela boundary was also the language boundary.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

[1874-1911]

THE OVIMBUNDU UNDER TWO SOVEREIGNTIES

178 The great distinguishing mark of the Ovimbundu was their participation in the caravan trade. Some of the neighbouring people also engaged in trading journeys (e.g. the Chokwe) but in central Angola the dominant traders were the Ovimbundu by reason of their control of the routes to Benguela and Catumbela, a control which as Livingstone's narrative shows they tried for a while to turn into a monopoly.[43] With this must be linked
177 the greater readiness of the Ovimbundu to adopt European ways, marked by the general adoption of cloths for wear by at latest the mid-nineteenth century.[44]

3. *Economics and Social Structure*

101 This section will describe the economic life and social structure which marked the period of the rubber trade (1874–1911).
436 A genuine currency existed in the form of cloth, and fortunes
439 could be made in it. Serpa Pinto tells us of one Otjimbundu who made £3,500 by trading in the interior and that he had met many men who 'turned over capital of a thousand to twelve hundred pounds sterling',[45] presumably in trade goods since Portuguese currency did not circulate among the Ovim-
361 bundu. At the capitals of the kingdoms genuine towns grew up. Magyar in the middle of the nineteenth century estimated that
[162] 5,000 people lived at Bailundo[46] and the British explorer Cameron who had crossed Africa from Zanzibar says of Ekovongo, the capital of Bie, 'the town of Kagnombe, the largest I came across during my whole journey, being more than three miles in circumference. On arrival I was met by the
644 Kagnombe's secretary, chamberlain, and captain of the guard who wore red waistcoats as a sign of their dignity. The secretary was more ornamental than useful, being unable to write, but a subordinate, a black man and native of Dondo, was better educated and conducted the trade of Kagnombe with the coast'.[47]

[43] Ibid., p. 205.
[44] Ibid., p. 206, referring to Magyar as evidence.
[45] Serpa Pinto, pp. 161–2.
[46] Magyar, p. 391.
[47] V. L. Cameron, *Across Africa*, London, 1877. Vol. II, pp. 206–7.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

[1874-1911]

rather than any political alliance or opposition, which related the Ovimbundu as a whole to the Portuguese and the other tribes. Informants who remember 'the time of the rubber' talk about it with much more interest and much more detail than about any other aspect of the past, and it is far easier to make an ordered picture out of the narratives of the caravan journeys than to fill in the gaps in the descriptions of the political and kinship systems provided by Childs and Hastings.[57]

Politically the Ovimbundu were divided, as has been said, into several kingdoms. Bailundo, the largest of the kingdoms was divided, according to Childs into about 200 sub-chiefdoms. As it had about half a million inhabitants this would give an average population of about 2,500. While the kingdoms seem to have been more or less stable in number and boundaries from the end of the eighteenth century, the number of sub-chiefdoms seems to have increased. Thus an official Portuguese estimate made in 1799 gives Bailundo as having only 82 sub-chiefdoms, and Galangue, where Childs counted 112 sub-chiefdoms, as having 78. The sub-chiefdom paid tribute to the king, sent men for his armies, and recognized his court as the supreme arbitrator. Some sub-chiefdoms were held by ministers or relatives of the king.[58]

It is, however, not easy on the sparse detail available to decide how much autonomy the sub-chiefdoms really had. Gumba, the area where I worked, was a sub-chiefdom of the Bailundo kingdom, albeit on the north-western frontier, neighbouring Cassongue and Cela, where the people did not call themselves Va-Mbailundu, though their rulers acknowledged the suzerainty of the king of Bailundo. Old men told me of raids from Bailundo for slaves, but I cannot say if this was the result of the period of disorder mentioned, or whether sub-chiefdoms on the border of a kingdom gave only nominal submission and received only nominal protection. In the area where I worked,

[57] This is not intended as a personal reflection on Dr. Childs and the late Dr. Hastings, both of whom deserve the highest praise for their work and for their obvious devotion to the Ovimbundu. Hastings devoted far more space to the magico-religious field than to the kinship system. Likewise Childs's description of kinship is much shorter, much less detailed, and much less satisfactory than his account of childhood and adolescence, or the really outstanding historical chapter.

[58] Magyar, pp. 385-92; Childs, pp. 23-24.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu
Angola FP1

THE CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

Men can go out to work in three ways. By going to look for work in a city or on a plantation, by being recruited in his village by a travelling labour recruiter (*angariador*), or by being recruited through the post for military service or for contract labour (a period of a year's non-voluntary work). 464

Men who are away at work may keep in touch with their kin by letters. These are sent to the nearest Catholic or Protestant mission station according to the religious sympathies of the sender and his kin and are sent from there to the villages. 205

Angola forms an Overseas Province of Portugal, and is therefore subject to the Overseas Ministry in Lisbon. The Overseas Provinces of Portugal are officially declared to be integral parts of Portugal, which is regarded as a nation existing in Europe, Africa, and Asia. The expression 'Here also is Portugal' is often heard in Angola. 648

The inhabitants of Angola are in legal status divided into 'civilized' persons, whether white, mulatto, or black, with Portuguese citizenship, and Portuguese 'natives' or 'uncivilized' persons,[7] this latter category including some 3,000 'uncivilized' mulattoes. The 1950 census gave Angola a total population of 4,145,266 of whom 135,355 were 'civilized'. This category was composed of 78,826 whites, 26,335 mulattoes, and 30,089 Africans, plus a balance of 105 presumably Goans. 641 162

The 'natives' are, unlike the 'civilized', subject to the Labour Code. There is no Native Legal Code, nor does Portuguese law apply to 'natives'. Administrative officers may apply Portuguese law, or native custom as known to them, or their own judgement. 641

The administration is headed by the Governor-General who resides at Luanda. The province of Angola is divided into districts each headed by a district governor. Both the governors-general and the district governors have usually distinguished themselves in the Services or in a legal career. Members of the administrative service are not usually promoted to these posts, although they may attain such positions as that of Secretary of Native Affairs. 631

The districts are in turn sub-divided into *concelhos* (a term

[7] By a law of 1961 Portuguese citizenship has been made universal.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

bought in the towns, and men returning from South Africa are said to bring all sorts of goods including typewriters. The traders do not lend money though they sometimes give credit. The living standards of the traders are often low, some being unable to buy a truck, and having therefore to come to terms with someone who has one. I have even heard of traders having to eat the staple Umbundu mush (*pirão* in Portuguese).

While the traders play an extremely important role in the local economy they do not establish any permanent face-to-face relationship with the natives outside their household and store, because they are not interested in them and have no reason to be. This does not apply in the same way to African *assimilados*, actual or self-styled, of whom there were a few in the neighbourhood, who lived more or less in Portuguese style. Of these one in particular, Justino, made a hobby of settling disputes, and will therefore re-appear later on. Their main source of revenue was coffee-growing, and they would occasionally have local labour working for them. As they tend to identify themselves with the 'civilized' population, their attitude to the natives is not unlike that of the traders, but culturally and linguistically they are linked to the Ovimbundu villagers, and if of local origin will have kinship links too.

This group is significant because it is in the total social structure of Angola a link between the 'civilized' and 'non-civilized' communities. Both the *assimilados* and those pseudo-*assimilados* who have persuaded the natives that they are *assimilados*, identify themselves with the whites but are also linked much more closely with the natives than any other group. As the division into 'civilized' and 'non-civilized' is legally sanctioned on the grounds of culture not race, a group which participates to some degree in the cultures of both sections must be of great significance in the study of the means by which the whole society is integrated. In the neighbourhood where I worked this group of Europeanized Africans were few in numbers,[30] both absolutely and in relation to other parts of Angola.

[30] I only know of one genuine *assimilado* in the neighbourhood though there were others who claimed to be such. Galvão and Selvagem (p. 408) remark of the Cazengo concelho of northern Angola, 'The great number of civilized negroes, some planters incorporated in the European economic system, hastened the disintegration and confusion of the tribal institutions.'

[assimilados are Africans possessing Portuguese citizenship -- Analyst]

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

137 of the lower zones between the plateau and the coast is the baobab (*Adansonia digitata*). Where these lower zones are well watered, especially along the streams, dense tropical forests are the rule.

The Highland proper until quite recent times was well covered with a good variety of trees. This gave a pleasing aspect not lost upon travellers. Commander Cameron, who crossed from Zanzibar [114] to Benguela in 1875, was greatly impressed by the rustic beauty of the country-side:

> As we went forward the scenery increased in beauty, and at last I was constrained to halt and surrender myself to the enjoyment of the view which lay before me.
>
> I will content myself with asserting that nothing could be more lovely than this entrancing scene, this glimpse of Paradise. To describe it would be impossible. Neither poet, . . . nor painter . . . could by pen or pencil do full justice to the country of Bailundu.
>
> In the foreground were glades in the woodland, varied with knolls crowned by groves of large, English-looking trees, sheltering villages with yellow thatched roofs; . . . plantations with the fresh green of young crops and the bright red of newly hoed ground in vivid contrast, and running streams flashing in the sunlight; while in the far distance were mountains of endless and pleasing variety of form, gradually fading away until they blended with the blue of the sky. . . .
>
> That evening we camped in a wood, a clear space having literally to be cut out of the masses of sweet-scented creepers which festooned the trees.[1]

Some of this natural beauty still remains in Bailundu and other parts of the country, but much of it has gone, as grasslands have taken the place of forest and woodland. Native agriculture and the annual fires have caused much deforestation and much has [375] also come about from the demands of European settlement and the needs of the railway, which up to the present time uses only wood for fuel. The question as to whether the rainfall has yet been much affected is often discussed.

• 164 The Benguela Highland is within the tropics and therefore subject to many tropical diseases. Malaria is prevalent owing to the presence of the *Anopheles* mosquito, one of the two essential hosts in the life-cycle of the malaria germ, man being the other. Infant mortality owing to malaria seems to be high among the Ovimbundu. It seems probable, however, that many of the

[1] V. L. Cameron, *Across Africa* (New York: Harpers, 1877), p. 410 f.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

survivors acquire at least a limited immunity. Many observers have noted the comparative rarity among African natives of that chronic complication of malaria known as black-water fever, although it frequently attacks Europeans. Another disease, which has been found largely among Africans, and was at one time considered as a possible malarial complication, is now classified by most observers as a variety of scurvy. This disease is known to medical science by the Umbundu name of *onyalãi*.[1] Among other common diseases are yaws, tick fever, tropical ulcers, common sores, infections, intestinal parasites, and pneumonia. Others, such as bilharzia and leprosy, are less common but well known. The comparatively recent introduction and spread of pulmonary tuberculosis and the venereal diseases give cause for alarm.[2] Neither sleeping-sickness nor the cattle nagana are found. There are a number of cattle diseases, such as scab, carbuncle, quarter evil, pleuro-pneumonia, and gall-sickness.

Termites are a tropical pest present in large numbers. Their depredations require the periodical replacement of woodwork, unless made of the very few species of hard wood which they seem unable to attack. In common with all of South Africa, locusts are always to be found and they increase greatly at irregular intervals.

The *fauna* of the country under consideration includes nearly all of the commoner south and central African species. Some of the rarer and more localized species are not present, but on the other hand this is the home of certain rare species, as, for example, the giant sable.[3] The elephant, the rhinoceros, and other large species are no longer to be found in the Highland proper, but only in adjoining comparatively unpopulated regions to the west, south, and south-east. All game is comparatively scarce, which is not surprising considering that the Ovimbundu have possessed firearms for about 250 years, and considering also the extent of European settlement during the past fifty years.

[1] First reported by Dr. F. C. Wellman, a missionary physician who worked among the Ovimbundu.

[2] No figures on the incidence of any disease with reference to the population of the colony are available. Nor are population movements known, for previous to the first general census, which was taken in 1940, such figures on population as there were, were hardly more than guess-work. Results of this first census were published in 10 volumes, 1941–3. (Colónia de Angola, Repartição de Estatística Geral: *Censo Geral da População*. Luanda: Imprensa Nacional.)

[3] *Hippotragus niger varianii.*

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

the occupations of warfare and of trade to the more settled agricul- 423
tural life. And it is the possession and cultivation of land which provides a minimum basis for those who are also able to engage in any sort of trade, either commercial or one of the handicrafts.

Health. A sanitary history, or the course of health among the 164
Ovimbundu throughout their national existence, would be of 173
interest if it could be made known. Legend tells of a time in the 177
distant past when sickness was rare and death came hardly ever, if at all. It is said that hasty burials were not permitted because there had been cases of the supposed corpse returning to life. Some have taken this to mean that the tribe came from a more healthful region than the one which it now occupies, but it seems rather to be a traditional recognition of the fact that many of the diseases and bodily ills which at present afflict the Ovimbundu are of comparatively recent date. The time of arrival of some of these unwelcome guests can be estimated. Some are the subject of [136]
traditional tales as, for example, the jigger[1] (*pulex penetrans*), which a Ngalangi tradition says came to them from Bailundu, and Bailundu tradition says was first recognized in the time of Ekongo-liohombo (*c.* 1875) or Ekuikui II (*c.* 1876–93). Now the jigger is well known 164
in Africa as an importation from South America, and the time of 177
its first appearance could probably be determined. This parasite is widely present in tropical Africa, but there are some regions which it has not (yet) reached.[2] Its coming to Angola is probably, therefore, of recent date. Silva Porto, writing in 1879, said, 'This evil is of recent date on the coast . . . (*pulex penetrans*).'[3] The first notice of this pest which reached the pages of the *Boletim Official* of Angola was in 1875. If this date really represents the time when the jigger first appeared in Angola, it seems strange that it should have been so late, in view of the slave-ships ferrying back and forth from Brazil for the previous three hundred years.

Small-pox[4] might also be thought of as a recent arrival for, according to a note in the *Boletim Official*, it first appeared in Novo Redondo in June 1864, having been brought from Luanda by ships' crews.[5] Its first appearance on the Plateau, however,

[1] *Ewundu* or *ocindiundiu* is the Umbundu name, from *oku wunda*, to hide (the hidden one).
[2] e.g. Amboland, according to Umbundu testimony.
[3] *Boletim Soc. Geog. Lisboa*, 5a Ser., p. 10.
[4] *Ocingongo* is the Umbundu name.
[5] *Boletim Official da Provincia de Angola*, 1865, no. 5.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP1.

164 was prior to this, for it was mentioned by Magyar.[1] Among the
177 imported diseases are grippe, pneumonia, tuberculosis, and other complaints of the lungs and bronchia; the venereal diseases (especially syphilis); several so-called 'children's diseases' such as measles, scarlet fever, mumps, &c.[2] Typhoid fever is only beginning to appear, although it has long been known at the coast, at Malange (to the north), &c.[3] Diseases of other regions, as tropical ulcers, sleeping sickness, &c., are found only in patients coming from regions affected with those ills.

146 In comparison with the diet of other non-cattle-keeping tribes
177 of West and Central Africa, the diet of the Ovimbundu is fairly satisfactory. Certain it is that the articles imported by the Portuguese from America and elsewhere have done much to enrich the diet of this people. Only the mention of maize,[4] their staple and mainstay, makes this evident. Their early and close contact with the Portuguese gave them the advantage of many plants[5] brought by those rural-minded conquistadores,[6] which found their way inland only much later. (Mrs.) Alice K. Strangway has made an interesting study of Umbundu diet and has come to the conclusion that its principal deficiencies are fats and calcium. The Ovimbundu need to learn to make better use of the resources which are already theirs or at their command, as, for example, peanuts and soy-beans. Other improvements such as a more general use of milk and other animal foods can only come with education and an improved economic situation.

164 Magyar's account (1849–57) of the Ovimbundu gives the impression of a people in better health, suffering from fewer ills, and

[1] L. Magyar, op. cit., p. 290.

[2] There are Umbundu names for all the foregoing, with several names or euphemisms for some, except for the lung and bronchial complaints which are spoken of simply as *vomulo* (in the chest), and scarlet fever which is called *osalambu* (from the Portuguese *sarampo*).

[3] In 1936 there was an epidemic of typhoid at Bela Vista among Europeans and natives. Infection was traced to Catumbela (at the coast).

[4] Maize has a true Umbundu name, *epungu*, as is the case with most of the early importations which the Ovimbundu adopted, save tomatoes (*amatia*).

[5] There is a good discussion of the American plants introduced into Africa in Ficalho, *Plantas úteis da Africa Portugueza*, pp. 32 ff. In *Benguella e seu sertão*, 1617–22, p. 17, the anonymous writer states that 'all kinds of vegetables of our Portugal do very well . . . such as: large corn (i.e. *mayz*), beans of various kinds, pumpkins . . . and melons'.

[6] Cá da Mosto tells of trying to grow wheat in Senegal (João de Barros, quoted by Ficalho, op. cit., p. 29 f.).

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

generally more resistant than those whom we know to-day. Some of the imported diseases have probably been with the Ovimbundu since they first encountered Europeans, others are more recent, but all seem to be more deadly to Africans than to Europeans. This is especially true of the lung complaints, against which the Ovimbundu have little resistance, and the manner of their life makes tuberculosis very difficult to check.

Diseases native to the region also constitute a great problem, notably malaria in its several forms, leprosy, bilharzia, yaws, goitre, nutritional diseases, &c. The medical staffs of the government services and of the missions are well aware of the magnitude of the problem. The resources at their command, however, are terribly inadequate. It is urgently necessary that resources be found and made available.

Religious Development. Before bringing this historical survey to a close it is necessary to take note of certain developments with regard to religion. It was noted in passing that representatives of the ruling families had, on occasion, returned to the lands of their exodus to worship their ancestors at the ancient shrines. From this it is evident that the ancestors of the ruling families became the gods of the kingdoms over which they ruled. The commoners kept their own ancestral deities, family by family. Special cults of various sorts have grown up. From the texts of a hundred to a hundred and fifty years ago it is evident that many of the religious practices of the Ovimbundu were then similar to those which are observed at the present time. Some practices described in those texts, on the other hand, seem to have ceased or to have been altered beyond recognition. The very presence of the Europeans must have affected the rites and their observance, for their attitudes, whether of approval or of disapproval, registered over so long a period, must have produced some effect.[1] Degrees of intensity of this European contact, varying from region to region, must have had their influence in the development of regional differences. Some such differences have been noted.[2]

[1] Battell records that the 'Jagas' would not let him witness certain rites. Pinheiro de Lacerda, writing in 1797, says that he burned more than one hundred *oratorios* called *chacopombo* (*Annaes Mar. e. Col.*, 1845, p. 491).

[2] W. H. Sanders put down to their closer contact with Europeans the fact that the king's councillors of Viye were not 'a very dignified set. . . . They seemed to have none of that decorum which prevails among the head men of Bailundu' (*Missionary Herald*, 1886, p. 143).

growth is under examination. This central plateau, the Benguela 131
Highlands, rises in places to a height of 6,000 feet, an altitude which [133]
reduces the heat of the tropics and so modifies the flora, discouraging
some types of vegetation and encouraging others. Hostility of the
highlands to palm trees and the banana is appropriately discussed [241]
when dealing with cultural losses; while the fostering effect of reduced
temperature and the presence of wide expanses of open country on
the growth of maize and the keeping of cattle is a cultural gain.

The prevailing rains of Angola are from the northeast to the 132
southwest; consequently the high plateau intercepts rain clouds which
give an annual fall of sixty inches. This adequate rainfall is another
factor which has affected economic life, density of population, com-
munal welfare, and powers of expansion.

The villages of the Ovimbundu are built on hillsides having a 361
commanding view of the surrounding country. There is in the
nature of the land a natural protection from enemies. In addition
to this the Benguela Highlands are an admirable base from which
expeditions both predatory and commercial might, and actually did
set out eastward to the interior of Africa, and southwest to the
cattle-keeping country.

It is important to note that this central plateau is the watershed 133
for four large river systems; the Kwanza to the northwest; the Cunene
to the southwest; the tributaries of the Kasai to the northeast; and
the Zambezi and its affluents to the southeast. Fishing, with attend- [226]
ant beliefs of a ritualistic kind, is of local importance; so also is the
making of canoes. Moreover, the river valleys have marked out a
natural means of communication in several directions.

In connection with the river system the biological factor of the 136
tsetse fly is important, because the presence of the fly locally dis- 231
courages human habitation and prevents the keeping of cattle. The
exact distribution of the fly is imperfectly known, but *Glossinia* [164]
palpalis, the cause of sleeping sickness in human beings, also *Glos-*
sinia morsitans, which carries disease to cattle, are both present along
the Kwanza and parts of the other rivers (J. C. B. Statham, Through
Angola, p. 294).

The western coastal strip is a region of great aridity which has in 132
some years no rainfall whatever, because the northeasterly rains have 137
expended themselves on the high plateau. This region displays
vegetation of the semi-desert type; namely, baobab trees, prickly
acacias, euphorbias, and aloes. Population in this area is sparse, [162]
always nomadic, and in some places non-existent. The coastal strip 000

756 men and women each of whom receives the name *ocimbanda*, and specialization in some particular form of magical practice is the [554] rule. Some practitioners are more highly esteemed than others. For example, an *ocimbanda* who has the reputation for curing dizziness, madness, and *onyalai* (p. 281) is one of great repute; so also is the man who can cure a case of blood in the urine (*biliosa*). [164] This is the Portuguese term commonly applied to blackwater fever.

DIVINATION

787 An examination of objects collected gives the best indication of the equipment of the *ocimbanda*, and among these no item is more important than the small divination basket containing a heterogeneous collection of objects.

A diviner receives the distinguishing title of *ocimbanda congomba*, and a description of his methods explains his belief in the activities of spirits. He shakes the basket while his assistant plays a small friction drum; then he inspects the objects lying at the top.

A figure with beads on its neck indicates that trouble is due to the ghost of a dead baby whose spirit wishes to come back.

A piece of gourd with a round orifice means that some one has been talking too much. The orifice represents a human mouth.

Two figures, male and female, whispering together, indicate that a husband and wife are making a plan to poison somebody.

The figure of a female with a large abdomen indicates that the spirit of a deceased pregnant woman is causing sickness in the village.

The horn with shells on it indicates that the woman who is consulting the diviner will not bear children.

There is a little figure with a black tuft on its head, whose [177] arrival at the top of the basket indicates that misfortune among the natives is caused by Europeans. When talking to this figure the medicine-man tries to speak like a white man by adopting a falsetto voice and mimicking the intonation of Europeans.

The figure with a little crest on its head is an indication of sickness or other trouble arising from a spirit which likes to drink blood. When this figure comes to the top of the basket, the medicine-man induces the blood-drinking spirit to enter a man, because the evil must first be localized before it can be exorcised. This possessed person dances with a small ax or a hair switch in his hand. When dancing has induced a frenzy, the dancer kills a pig and drinks the fresh blood. The blood-drinking spirit is in this way exorcised from the community.

755 man, and fastened to the wall, was a strip of bark cloth painted with white circles. These recorded the number of times the patient came for treatment.

278 757 At Ngalangi there was no difficulty in obtaining information respecting plants used medicinally. Each of three medicine-men returned with a number of roots and stems which they readily described. *Okakamba* and *okapelangalo* are roots that cure "big head." This disease, which is rare in white people, begins with blood blisters in the mouth; these may spread to the intestines and cause death. *Okayenje* is a root that induces vomiting; it is also a purgative to free a patient from worms. *Olutikitiki* is given to a woman soon after her baby is born. *Kalungdumona* is a plant having a purple flower. If the root is pounded and drunk in water it acts as an aperient. *Okumbiasoko*, when pounded and placed on the fire, restores a person after fainting; the head of the patient is held in the smoke. To a violent maniac the root *usonge* is given, pounded in water and mixed with maize beer. At Ngalangi a man who had been subject to homicidal mania was sitting on the ground quietly with his hands tied behind his back. I was informed that *usonge* was making him better. *Ocinyeni* is a bark that is chewed to remedy stomachache. *Kosamba* is a plant used to cure people who fall into the fire; it is also a remedy for toothache. The action of this drug *kosamba* causes vomiting and evacuation.

Cilendaluka is pounded in water and smeared on the patient's body as a treatment following the internal application of *kosamba*. *Mbundakataka* is a root that is pounded and applied externally to cure sores on the lips.

278 In addition to the plants just mentioned the following are important:

Ocimbinga. This plant, whose name means "the big horn," is probably *Strophanthus*. It is used in the treatment of worms and chest colds.

Ocipumbulu. This is a trailing herb whose leaves when pulverized are said to be a cure for bad sores.

Ocindiambala and *oluasava*. These are used to give to women who are suffering in difficult delivery. *Ongolo* sometimes takes the place of these drugs. The bark of *ongolo* is pounded in boiling water which is contained in a basin over which the woman sits. Use of the bark in this way is a protection against injuries resulting from childbirth.

Omondolua. This is good for headaches and whooping cough. The roots are boiled and mixed with sweet beer.

Okalolulo-lokala. This is said to be used in cases of dysentery. At Elende it is used for curing skin diseases.

Okeile. This is used in cases of snake bite, swellings, and stings.

164 In connection with the foregoing study of the native pharmacopoeia it will be of interest to consider some maladies to which the Ovim-

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

bundu are subject. Information relating to these points was given 164
by Dr. Hollenbeck of the Mission Station at Elende.

Of intestinal worms there are many kinds. Hookworm is of somewhat common occurrence. Ascaris, an intestinal worm several inches long, is extremely common. Infection may arise from the soil, also from the use of dirty cooking utensils. The disease trichinosis, which arises from the activities of the parasite trichina, is rare. Tapeworm is frequent because much of the pork and beef is infected. Oxyuris, a small round worm about half an inch long, is common. Bilharzia is fairly prevalent.

Malaria is so usual that almost every one suffers at some period. Every baby has malaria within the first two years of its life. Malaria is not followed by blackwater fever, but possibly by *onyalai*, which is known at Elende. The symptoms are the appearance of blood-blisters on the tongue. These spread to the throat and intestines, possibly with fatal results. This disease, which does not attack white people, is local.

There is no sleeping sickness at Elende, but the disease occurs at Katombela, at some points on the Kwanza, also near the mouth of the Congo. There are at Elende cases of elephantiasis due to the activities of a filaria which affects the lymphatic glands. Infantile paralysis occurs.

Leprosy is fairly common; the nervous form is more usual than the nodular. There are instances of yaws, a disease somewhat resembling syphilis inasmuch as the disease is communicated by a spirochaete, but yaws is not communicated by sexual infection. Venereal disease is not common at Elende.

The pulmonary form of tuberculosis occurs, but is not usual at Elende. There are places in the Benguela Highlands where the disease is increasing. Both whooping cough and measles are well known, but there is no scarlet fever or diphtheria. Chickenpox and smallpox are both known to occur, the latter in epidemic form from time to time. There is occasional dysentery, but no typhoid.

Hernia in its inguinal form is common. Umbilical hernia, due to lack of skilled attention at birth, is frequent, but with advancing age this defect is often rectified, or at least greatly modified. There are cases of injury to women at childbirth; for example, vesical-vaginal fistula. Blindness is fairly common as a result of the neglect of inflammation of the conjunctiva. Babies suffer from corneal ulcers, which sometimes result in total blindness. Cataract is fairly common in both its senile and juvenile forms.

164 Deformities resulting from burns are frequent. Cooking pots
[732] are unstably placed on logs which form the fire, and, in addition to this, people sleep very near the fire. There is no cerebro-spinal fever. Pneumonia is very common; the result is often fatal. Weakness of the heart is only occasional. Varicose veins are rare. There is no appendicitis.

One cannot fail to notice the prevalence of tropical ulcers among the Ovimbundu. These occur most frequently on the tibia. The
[757] big sloughing ulcer makes a large hole which the native fills with clay and a pulp of leaves. Sometimes a bark is pounded to a pulp and used in this way. These ulcers are very obstinate even under skilled treatment. Often after the wound has been healed it will break out again when irritated by the slightest injury. Medical
[732] opinion is divided as to the cause of these ulcers. Jiggers are a cause of deformation of the toes, which sometimes fall off or have to be amputated. Cancer is not usual in people under sixty years of age. Superficial cancer is the most common form.

515 Water, even when procurable, is sparingly used by the Ovimbundu. The hands and face may receive a perfunctory wash each day, but the entire body seldom receives this attention.

757 Cupping was observed on two occasions, but I think the operations were performed by the mothers of the children concerned, and not by a medicine-man. The method of using the horns or gourds is illustrated (Plate LXXXVI, Fig. 1). After incisions had been made the cups were applied. The operator sucked the pointed end of the cup, so creating a vacuum, which was maintained by pushing forward with the tip of the tongue a small ball of wax. This wax filled the hole at the pointed end of the cupping horn. The people shown in the photograph are Vachokue, but the method is the same among the Ovimbundu.

At Elende there was a sweat bath in the form of a hole in the ground containing a heap of stones. The stones are heated in a fire, then cold water is thrown over them so that steam arises to the patient, who crouches above the hole covered with a blanket.

In the Vasele country, also among the Ovimbundu at Elende, I examined corporeal incisions other than tribal marks. The explanation was to the effect that the making of cuts cured pain (Plates XXIV, Fig. 3; LXXVI, Fig. 2).

RAIN-MAKING

791 The rain-maker (*upuli*) is a medicine-man who has specialized in this function. The *upuli*, who was an Ocivokue of Ngongo, and

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 18

their own wards, 'my ward' (*ocitawila cange*). The other villagers will speak only of 'our village' (*imbo lietu*). 622 554

There are, in general, two quite different and distinct types of Umbundu village according to the terrain on which they are built. The villages of the plains have room to spread out and tend toward a circular shape, with the dancing floor and men's club house near the centre. The wards may appear as quarters of a single whole or they may be added on in haphazard fashion. The villages of the mountains must conform to the possibilities of the terrain. Formerly, many villages were built on mountains for defence, and capital villages of this type may still be seen with the houses built on ledges and rocks almost one on top of the other. In this type of village, there is often not sufficient or sufficiently good soil for even small garden plots within the palisades. Occasionally one of these mountain villages may be found which has not even room within it for the dancing floor, which will in this case be found outside the palisade. If the site is not too severely confined, the wards of the mountain village tend either to string themselves out horizontally along the mountain-side, or to find successive ledges. The village of Ngendo is of an intermediate type, built as it is, on a slope. Sikilile's village was first built as near the stream as possible. The wards later added themselves on, each a little higher than the one before. The school village, which was built last, got the highest and most hygienic site. 361

Moving a Village

Villages may be moved for any one of several reasons. When fields are worn out and others are not available[1] near by, a village may be moved to a site more conveniently located. More often, however, the reason assigned is that there has been much illness or death, that the old site is polluted, that its 'air is bad', which to the Ovimbundu means that some action displeasing to the spirits has been committed which has brought on these misfortunes. This will generally have been determined by divination, as will also the spirits' consent to the proposed new site. A site which has long been occupied is of course fertile soil. Since old sites are generally cultivated to good advantage this fact should not be overlooked as a possible additional reason for moving. 361 166 [768] [787]

[1] Nowadays European settlement often pre-empts such lands. [177]

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

361 A few words from the childhood recollections of Paulino
● 166 Ngonga Liahuka[1] bring out the facts.

787 One day we noticed that Sekulu Upalandanda[2] and my father went to the mountain of Kalilonge saying, 'We go to look around (and find out) whether the spirits (*olosande*) have agreed to our moving there.' Then another day we saw that the fathers were coming out of the spirit huts (*atambo*, plural), with the sacred chests (*ovimbangu*, plural), saying, 'We go to start a new village.' When they had arrived under the mountain of Kalilonge, they said, 'The spirits have agreed.' Then when everyone had moved, the elder, whose name had been Upalandanda at Muenesi, now changed his name, declaring, 'I am *Cilembo-camunda* (Shadow of Mountain). From that time the place was called Cilembo.

621 On seeking a new site the headman's fire in the old village is put out and the procession starts: a girl carries the sacred chest
[778] (*ocimbangu*) containing the relics (*ociye*) and the balls of iguana skin, and a boy the sacred bows.[3] They lead the way to the site
[346] selected where they cut a pole[4] suitable for a house-wall (*ekoso*), and tie a leaf of the *upu*[5] tree to it, dig a hole into which they put mud made by rain-water (*onata yondombo*),[6] and then together they lift the stick and let it fall into the hole. This is the beginning of the spirit hut (*etambo*), the first house to be built on the new site. The boy and the girl must take part ceremonially in each operation
[372] of building the hut. After that they together ignite (*oku tiafula*)[7] the new fire. A hen and a cock are killed, cooked on the new fire, and eaten inside the *etambo* by all who have taken part in the building. The headman and his wife cannot return to the old village but must camp at the new site (*itula*) and keep the new fire alight.
342 In building their houses, the villagers may commute (*oku usala*)
621 from the old site, but often the distance is too great to do this, and

[1] Of Ciyaka, ordained pastor of Elende Church in 1930. He was Hambly's chief informant.

[2] Sekulu Upalandanda was the younger brother of Ngonga's father's father, and therefore grandfather to Ngonga.

[776] [3] The bow (*okonji*) of each ascendant who is now a guardian spirit (*osande*) of the family.

[4] When this first pole is cut, the axe should first be pointed toward the cardinal directions.

[824] [5] A leaf of the *upu* tree is used in the divorce ceremony. Its use here is a sign of divorce from the old site.

[6] Literally, 'mud of the rainy season'.

[7] This was formerly done with a fire drill (*vide* Hambly, op. cit., Plate XXXV), but not for a number of years now. When I showed the above picture to a group of 150 young men of 27 to 25 years of age, not one of them even knew what it was.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

175 It was only with the beginning of World War I that trade in powder
567 and fire-arms was stopped. For more than a century Portuguese
648 patriots and thinkers had been insisting upon the necessity for ending the export of man-power, so evidently impoverishing in its effects on the life of the colony.[1] Law succeeded law, and regulation followed regulation, but there was little real change.[2] With the Republic,[3] however, real changes began. Conditions were
175 investigated,[4] and although complete and immediate reform could
567 hardly have been expected, changes did begin. Provisions for
166 manumission upon presentation to authority were made and carried out. Repatriation from island and mainland plantations began to be undertaken. This was the origin of small communities of Cokue and other 'Ngangela' people now living at various points in the Umbundu country. From the plantations they were repatriated to 'their places of origin', which were, however, not their own homes but the places whence they had been sold into servitude.
464 Under various regulatory practices, contract labour has been
467 continued down to the present day. The depression which came
175 to Central Africa in 1930 reduced the demand to a minimum, and for a few years it did not represent a serious problem in the life of the Ovimbundu. There was a time of great activity in road building (approximately 1915–32) when the demands for labour were a serious problem to Umbundu life. Soon after the opening of World War II a strong demand for colonial products revived the industries of Angola and stimulated the creation of new ones. The consequent demand for labour and the means used to supply it have come to constitute the most severe trial which has yet come to the Ovimbundu. Their docility has made this service bear more hardly on them than on some other people of the colony. Their

[1] e.g. Saldanha da Gama, *Memoria*, 1814; Sá da Bandeira, 1839; Lopes de Lima, *Ensaios* (1846), pp. xxxviii, 6 f., 44 f.; Casmiro, *Africa Nostra*, p. 60 f.

[2] The principal laws were promulgated as follows: 1836 (Formal abolition of the traffic); 1839 (Authorizing co-operation with the international naval squadron); 1840, 1841, 1845 (Supplementary ordinances); 1875 (Law of Liberation and regulation of contract labour); 1878, 1889 (Further regulations); 1899 (Dealing with 'corrective labour'); 1902, 1903 (Further regulation of recruitment).

[3] Proclaimed in Portugal, 5 Oct., 1910.

[4] A Commission came from Lisbon that same year and took testimony throughout the colony. For conditions just previous to the Republic, see Nevinson, op. cit.; C. A. Swan, *The Slavery of To-day* (1909); H. R. F. Bourne, *Slave Traffic in Portuguese Africa* (1908); W. A. Cadbury, *Labour in Portuguese West Africa* (2nd ed. 1910); C. Harding, *In Remotest Barotseland* (1905).

174 167 families, probably for the most part of Lunda origin, entered the Benguella Highlands during the seventeenth century and began to found their respective kingdoms. The tribes whom they encountered appear to have belonged to the cattle-keeping Ndombe-Nganda or to the Ngangela group.(1) Childs suggests that the upper strata of these local populations must have moved on southwards with their cattle to join related stocks in the border regions, while the masses stayed behind to form the nucleus of the Ovimbundu. The cultural influence of these early inhabitants on the Ovimbundu seems to have been slight, except in the south-west, particularly in Kalukembe, where a semblance of the cattle-culture complex remains, together with a recognition of kinship ties with southern neighbours (see below). The linguistic [197] influence of the Southern Bantu (Ndombe-Nganda) group in the south and west has however been considerable. It is noteworthy that over the whole Ovimbundu region a single language has developed with only small dialectal differences, and that although commercial contact has assisted this development, it has not been fostered by political union between the various segments of the Ovimbundu.

TRADITIONS

173 166 Each of the principal groups listed above (page 2) has separate legends of origin. Usually these traditions refer to the birthplace and adventures of the ancestors of the chiefly families, and only mention the indigenous inhabitants. Childs has made a careful and lucid summary of the traditions of the various groups;(2) these are therefore only very briefly outlined below.

Ndulu. There is evidence that Ndulu may be one of the oldest Ovimbundu kingdoms. The progenitor of the ruling dynasty is said to have come from the region near the confluence of the Kwanza and Luando rivers, and to have conquered and expelled the Luimbe, who live today to the east of Ndulu. This migration may have been a result of the prolonged wars between the Portuguese and the Kingdom of Angola,(3) which ended in 1671.

Bailundu. The Bailundu dynasty is said to have its origin in Cipala, a region which remained subject to Bailundu until the end of the nineteenth century, and from which, according to tradition, the king's principal wife comes. Childs estimates the date of the foundation of the dynasty at not earlier than about 1700. The Sambu ruling family is said to descend either from a woman of Bailundu stock or from common stock with the Bailundu.

Viye. Versions of the Viye legend are recorded by Tucker,(4) Serpa Pinto,(5) Silva Porto,(6) and Magyar,(7) and these do not all agree. According to the most widely-known version today, Viye, an elephant-hunter of the Humbi people, tracking game down the Kwanza valley, met and married a princess of the Songo people; their son, Ulundu, founded the Viye chiefdom. From documentary evidence Childs estimates that this must have been in about 1750. This version also suggests that the original inhabitants were of the Ngangela group of tribes.

(1) See above, p.3.
(2) Op.cit., pp.170-81.
(3) To the north of the present Ovimbundu country.
(4) 1927, pp.34f.
(5) 1881, vol.1, pp.156f.
(6) 1942, pp.165-71.
(7) 1859, pp.266f.

7

Magyar's account of the Viye legend is of interest since it suggests a direct link between the movements of the Ovimbundu ancestors and contemporary migrations of the Lunda in the Congo basin and western Angola.(1) Magyar relates that the forefathers of the Viye came from the land of the Moropu (or Lunda(2)) under the two chiefs Kinguri and Schakambindi, conquered the Songo, and settled on the Luanda river, engaging in agriculture between raids. The tribe subsequently sub-divided, one group going southwards to the Kukema river, where Ngangela were living, to found the chiefdom of Viye. 173 166

Ngalangi tradition is the only one which attempts a creation myth. Feti, the first chief of Ngalangi, is said to have "come down from above"; having no wives, he went to a lagoon of the Kunene river and caught them as they came out of the reeds. Sons of Feti drove out the Ngangela from what is now Ngalangi country, and founded their principal village.(3) Childs estimates that this must have taken place in about 1750. The village was later attacked unsuccessfully by Ngangela, and this is one of the very few traditions which mention resistance met by the invaders.

Wambu. The first chief, Wambu Kalunga, is said to have come from Sela country, north-west of Bailundu. The Nganda, who now live south-west of Umbundu country and are of Southern Bantu stock, were previously living in Wambu country. The founder of the *Ciyaka* royal family is said to have been a relative of Wambu Kalunga, and to have driven out the Ndombe (also of Southern Bantu stock) from Ciyaka country, probably during the first half of the seventeenth century. Wambu Kalunga is said to have been also the progenitor of the dynasties of *Cingolo, Citata* or *Cikuma, Kalukembe, Elende* and *Ekatete*.(4)

Kakonda, the founder of the Kakonda kingdom, was of northern stock, but born in Ngalangi, whence he was sold as a slave to Benguella. He escaped with his wife, Cilombo, and set up the present kingdom in about 1760.

Cengi, Sanga, Nambo and *Kasongi* on the northern flank of Bailundu have only recently become Umbundu-speaking. *Kasongi*, one of the largest Bailundu tributaries, has however had a line of Umbundu-speaking chiefs for more than 100 years. *Civula* was listed by Magyar as tributary to Ciyaka. *Kalukembe* is of interest in that it is more clearly linked than other sections of the Ovimbundu with the Nganda-Ambo group. Factors which point to this closer link include: the similarities in language between the two groups; the inheritance of the Kalukembe kingship in the maternal line, as among the Nganda-Ambo group, and not in the paternal line, as among other Ovimbundu;(5) and the fact that the Nganda-Ambo, who have an exogamous clan organisation, may marry in any of the related Nganda-Ambo groups, and for this purpose include Kalukembe but not other Ovimbundu.(6) 174 631 [643] [582]

(1) McCulloch 1951, pp.9ff., 32ff., 57ff.
(2) Dias de Carvalho 1890, p.66.
(3) According to the same legend, where the Ngalangi rested their loads of food and household goods, sticks took root and became the sycamore figs which to this day encircle the capital village. This circle of trees is a characteristic of the older Ngangela villages.
(4) Childs op.cit., pp.178, 225.
(5) Although descent among Ovimbundu commoners is in the maternal line.
(6) Childs, op.cit., p.179.

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Some ten years later he was allowed to return to Gumba but died on the way back. 173 634

His successor was Simbwyikoka, who was a mother's brother's son of Mbati, that is in Umbundu terminology a 'son'. Umbundu rules of succession allow anybody to succeed to a chiefdom who is paternally or maternally related to a previous chief, whether or not this relationship is genealogically traceable.[3]

Simbwyikoka was apparently nominated to act as regent during Mbati's absence, and as he did not complete the full cycle of chiefly rites he did not have quite the same prestige among the people as a chief in his own right who 'had finished', that is, had gone through all the rites. It was he who was the last ruler of Gumba to send the annual tribute in the form of a sack of fish to Bailundo, since it was a little after the time of his accession that Kandimba[4] (or Njahulu), the last of the Bailundo royal house to have any real authority over the kingdom, died. [631]

Simbwyikoka had lived at the hamlet of Kamballa in Gumba. When he took up office he did not settle at Mbati's village of Katembo, but established, or rather re-established, as a previous chief had ruled there, his capital[5] on the top of the narrow ridge which cuts off the greater part of Gumba from access by road. It was not possible for many people to settle on this site. Accordingly Simbwyikoka encouraged people to settle at the foot of the ridge, swelling the population of an already existing village. This was called Mwekalia from the headman, who held the office of Mwekalia[6] another ministerial title associated with the chiefly court. 173 634 166

In 1938 Simbwyikoka was deposed by the *chefe* for shielding his dependents from the operation of 'contract labour' (administrative recruitment of non-voluntary labour). About 1944 [648]

[3] My informants. This means that within (and outside) any sub-chiefdom there are a number of potential heirs who in no way receive any special status or form any kind of corporate group from this fact.

[4] Reigned at Bailundo 1911–35. Childs, p. 229

[5] In Umbundu Ombala, often transcribed in Portuguese as Embala.

[6] For the role of Mwekalia see Hastings, p. 59. His statement that the office is matrilineally inherited was not confirmed by my informants. It seems that it can be inherited either patrilineally or matrilineally. The man who was known as Mwekalia and had been headman of the village of that name did not function as such at the chief's court during my stay. A kinsman of his, Ngombe, acted as Mwekalia at the court of Lusaac. [114]

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173 634 166 Simbwyikoka founded a new village known by his name. In 1951 one of his sons, Sassungu, founded a new village Sassungu whose population originated with a group of people from his father's village. Simbwyikoka maintained contact with Kamballa, where another son, Felisi, lived and herded Simbwyikoka's cattle.

173 634 [648] The new chief was Kakope, a son of Tjiweka who had been chief of Gumba at the time of the Muta-ya-Kevela rising. He held office for only two years, being deposed by the *chefe* since ill-health made monthly visits to the post difficult for him. He was succeeded by Kafelo, who came to Gumba from Cassongue across the river. Kafelo was a cross-cousin of Mbati and paternal kinsman of Kakope. Having gone through the cycle of chiefly rites, and undertaken Mbati's funeral he was regarded as being fully chief, in a way that Simbwyikoka was not.

The Epalanga[7] of a chief is a minister chosen from among the chief's kin. Kafelo had nominated to this post Sapapula, a matrilateral 'brother' of his and an inhabitant of Menga. Sapapula moved into Gumba and founded the village of [166] Epalanga in 1945–6, where he was joined by various kinsmen. I have heard the foundation of Epalanga ascribed to another man, Mwehombo, who will be mentioned again, and should therefore be introduced. Mwehombo had been minister at the court of Mbati, his mother's brother. After Mbati's death Mwehombo had stayed at Katembo till 1941, when he settled in Menga with his kinsman Sapapula. Mwehombo crossed over to Gumba in 1944.[8]

173 634 648 In 1954 Kafelo was deposed by the *chefe*, as Kafelo had been drunk in his presence. Kutenga Lusase, who had in 1945 founded the village of Kamupa, saw his chance and told the *chefe* that he had been chosen chief according to custom. The people of Gumba did not complain about this to the post, as they were afraid of the consequences. Kutenga Lusase claimed to be related to Mbati and Simbwyikoka and was a matrilateral 'grandson' of Tjiweka. He was not related to Kafelo whose link to Tjiweka was a patrilateral one.

Kutenga Lusase was in his turn deposed by the *chefe* in 1956

[7] Hastings, p. 53.

[8] Information from his 'brother', Luzanga.

CHIEFS AND HEADMEN IN GUMBA

The tasks of recruiting contract labourers and road-workers 626
and of getting fines and taxes paid, and such other duties as the 466
arranging of compulsory purchase of tickets for the travelling [208]
cinema (showing patriotic films) are carried out through a long
process of argument, attempted evasion, and pressure, between
the chief, the government headmen, and the locally influential
people, traditional headmen, catechists, and anyone else who
can get himself listened to. Persons actually picked for contract
labour or road work may make quite a fuss about it, but as
such numbers are recruited it is ultimately accepted resignedly.
It is not really practicable for a chief to discriminate in favour [634]
of his kinsman owing to the heavy demands for labour and the
likelihood of such discrimination being reported at the post, as
happened to Simbwyikoka. Demands for labour may fall
heavily on some households. Thus one Epalanga household [592]
consisted of a man, his daughter by an earlier marriage, his
wife and her baby daughter. The man had been taken for
contract labour, his wife had been called to road work, and the
adolescent daughter was carrying sisal[14] to the post. A kinsman
of the household head attempted to arrange for some watch to
be kept over the gardens lest animals should get in.

There were four government headmen in Gumba during my 622
stay. Theoretically they are village headmen. The villages in
which official records group Ovimbundu do not conform to the 166
actual villages in which Ovimbundu live. Anybody moving
from one village to another has to pay a fee; as the Ovimbundu
move about quite frequently and no attempt is made to enforce
this rule locally, the result is this discrepancy between paper and
real villages.

The government headman's duties are those already des- 622
cribed for the chief. As with the chief, there is only sufficient 648
backing from the post for him to carry out the orders he re- 634
ceives; he does not receive power to enable him to exercise
political leadership and judicial authority at the local level,
nor is he a representative of the post in the villages. His interests
and values are linked to those of his neighbours rather than to
the post. It is through the chief and the government headmen

[14] Some villages are obliged to grow sisal and take it to the post without payment. [248]

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[Village of Epalanga]

cluster was much more autonomous *vis-à-vis* Sapapula than were the members of the Mbati-Mwehombo grouping through the more numerous and closer kin ties; yet it would be wrong to regard Ndjoleya's kin as isolated.[4] This greater autonomy was a matter of degree rather than kind. 621

With regard to geographical origin, it is evident that the population had been recruited from over quite a wide area. Of the 36 household heads 7 were born in Cela of whom 6 had come from Cela to Gumba, and 1 had been born in Cela, then come to Gumba, then moved to Menga and then returned to Gumba. 3 household heads had come from Utende to Gumba, and 2 had come from Namba. 12 had come to Epalanga from Cassongue. 7 household heads (including 2 who had subsequently lived in Cassongue) had at one time lived in Katembo (the village associated with Mbati). 1 householder was apparently born in Gumba but had no Katembo link. 2 household heads were from Ndjandju (one having lived in Cassongue after leaving Ndjandju, the other being the catechist) and 1 was from Chicunda. On the origins of 5 household heads I have no information. 166 592

My information on Epalanga suffers from a number of gaps. Some genealogical information collected was lost. Too frequently I neglected to ask if a particular relationship was patrilateral or matrilateral, nor did I enquire sufficiently as to whether particular marriages were between kinsfolk or not. 114

These deficiencies to some extent 'fit' the kinship system. A kinship tie may exist between two people which is significant in the social relations between them, yet they may not be sure as to whether it is patrilateral or matrilateral, or even as to what is the category of kinship involved. Thus a resident of Simbwyikoka's village told me one day that Simbwyikoka was his 'brother', some time later he was a brother-in-law, and after this again said that he was a 'brother'. 602

There is also confusion over pedigrees. The pedigree which Simbwyikoka gave me in December 1955 differed from the one that he gave me in April 1956. Two people who claim to be

[4] Ndjoleya once referred to himself as *Oseulu yimbo* (elder of the *imbo*) this being a case of *imbo* used for a cluster within a village. Ndjoleya's folk recognized Sapapula as being head of the village.

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582 621 their marriage also fits a general pattern of Umbundu marriage, a choice made within a limited range joining together individuals of different kinship cores.

The multiplication of ties and their concentration within a neighbourhood by this means do not prevent a man from having kin and affines a day or two's journey away. It has earlier been indicated that the population of Epalanga was from quite a wide area. Yet the consequences of previous preferential marriages (thus Paulo and Saviel were related both patrilaterally and matrilaterally) and the trend towards the establishment of new marriage ties had created a complicated mesh of linkages that has been described within a not particularly stable village population, whose senior residents had been there for only ten years. To use again the anthropological metaphor of kinship as a network, the network can have odd strings running out quite a way, but in a village the different ties will be bound up in a knot.

602 166 The long-range ties (with such obvious exceptions as those with kin living in cities) are not the result of the range of kin spreading wider and wider under modern conditions. The evidence of pedigrees indicates that kinship and marriage links between individuals in, and actual migration to and from Gumba and Cassongue, Cela, and Namba, date back well into the nineteenth century. There is far less evidence of connections and migration between Gumba and areas to the south and east. This geographical aspect of social relations persists at the present day.

621 It has been indicated that the high proportion of preferential marriages creates a certain local stability, since many marriages are with people living close to. Yet the basic stability lies not so much in the relative stability of a local population, but in the pattern by which links of distant kinship are changed into marriage ties and new bonds are speedily established among the fortuitously assembled population of a new village.

4. *Headmen and Kinship Cores*

622 I now turn to the other principle of village integration, the settling of individuals near senior kinsmen. In the previous

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CHAPTER VI

THE CATECHETICAL SCHOOL

797 Both the Catholic and Protestant missions have, in order to provide religious teaching and leadership at the village level, made use of catechists whose responsibility it is to prepare people for baptism and children for Communion by teaching them catechism, to lead the village people in prayers, and to maintain contact with the missions. There are a number of differences between the roles of the Catholic and the Protestant catechists. As most of the Christians in my immediate neighbourhood were Catholics, I shall deal in this chapter with the Catholic catechists, though I shall indicate some of the differences which the Protestant organization shows.

[166] In the early days large numbers of Christians settled round the missions. The first Catholic converts were slaves purchased from traders by the missionaries and settled in villages near the missions. While the Protestant missions did not do this, they were somewhat embarrassed by the large crowds of converts who settled round mission stations.[1] The missions expanded by sending out catechists who gathered converts. At one time the practice was for the Christians to settle in a 'school village', which was in fact a hamlet partially separated from the rest of the village from which its membership was recruited. This is still found in some Gumba villages. In other villages, however, there is no geographical division between Christian and pagan, and the school may occupy a central position in the lay-out of the village. There are as yet no purely Catholic villages in Gumba. These are established by the missionaries when there is considered to be a significant number of Catholic married couples. This pattern is followed even on the outskirts of Nova Lisboa.

797 361

[1] Childs, p. 66.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

Much of the soil has been greatly im-
134 poverished both by use and by the action of the weather. The most productive soil areas consist of alluvial deposits, but the precipitate nature of much of the region precludes the formation of such deposits. The bulk of the soil is rather poor, but still it is of better quality, on the whole, than in adjoining regions to the north, east, and south.[1]

133 In common with several of the African plateaux the Benguela Highland rises very precipitately from the sea. This is one of the most striking features of African geography. The steepness of the [48] ascent forces the Benguela Railway to use a cog-line for a short distance. The village of Ngendo, described in the section dealing with the social structure, has an elevation of about 1,650 metres (5,400 feet) but is situated at only about 60 miles from the ocean.[2] That part of the intermediate zone which adjoins the Highland on the west consists of river valleys between mountain ridges and is well watered, but between that and the sea the country is very arid. This arid region is in reality a northern extension of the Kalahari, Omaheke, and Namieb deserts. Much of this arid stretch is exceedingly rough mountainous country. All along the African coast there is a coastal plain, but in the region under consideration it is very narrow. Plain and mountain are equally arid and this desert country generally has an elevation of less than 1,000 metres (about 3,280 feet). This intermediate zone is well known to the Ovimbundu and played an important role in the history of their commercial developments since they were obliged to cross it to reach the European stations on the coast.

Other adjoining regions have also been of importance to the
101 Ovimbundu. It was from the region to the north between the Highland and the Kuanza River that some of the principal ruling families came. Across this same region the Ovimbundu had their [177] first European contacts—with the Portuguese establishments on the Kuanza River. In the regions to the south live cattle-raising people whence the Ovimbundu got cattle, whether by raiding or
133 by trading. East of the Kuanza River valley the elevation drops
167 gradually toward the basins of the Congo and the Zambezi. When the slave- and rubber-trades led the Ovimbundu into this region

[1] i.e. of all adjoining regions only on the north-west are there valleys of superior soil. No complete survey of the soils of Angola has been made. Most books overrate the qualities of the soils of the colony.

[2] See *infra*, Chap. II.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

they came to call it *ofeka yonjala*, 'The Hungry Country' or better 133
'The Country of Hunger', since it was without inhabitants and 167
consequently without the possibility of purchasing provisions.[1]
Much of the soil in all three of these adjoining regions is very [134]
sandy and comparatively unproductive.

Many rivers find in the Benguela Highland a great catchment 133
basin. The two largest are the Kuanza (Kuanja) and the Cunene (Kunene), both flowing into the Atlantic. Between them are the Queve (Keve, also marked 'Cuvo'), the Balombo, and the Catumbela (Katombela), which also reach the ocean. A peculiar stream is the Cubango (Kuvango or Okavango), which rises near the source of the Cunene, and after becoming a great and free-flowing river loses itself in the Kalahari desert. Some authorities hold that through the Chobe swamp it maintains a seasonal connexion with the Zambezi. In this event the springs of the Benguela Highland feed the waters of both oceans. The part played by the Mbuluvulu plain in Bié (Viye) has often been noted by travellers and writers, for it drains into the Kuanza and also into the Cubango. As with most of the Southern Bantu,[2] rivers have had little directly to do with building the material culture of the Ovimbundu. Watersheds have furnished trade-routes, and fishing has become [226]
a side-line occupation for those who live conveniently near the streams. The rivers themselves, however, have always been of the greatest importance to the mass of the people who are dependent upon them for water, whether it comes in the form of rainfall or is taken more directly from the streams.

Climate

The regions under consideration in this study belong to the 132
South Central African zone of summer rains. Coming on the monsoon from the Indian Ocean, the rains are precipitated by cold winds from the south-western antarctic current.[3] The Benguela Highland constitutes a distinct climatic zone, as the fact of the altitude would lead one to infer. The adjoining and coastal regions

[1] Cf. H. W. Nevinson, *A Modern Slavery*, chap. vi (New York: Harpers, 1906); also M. Burr, *A Fossicher in Angola* (London: Adelphi, 1933).

[2] A. J. H. Goodwin, 'Habitat', p. 34, in Schapera, *The Bantu-Speaking Tribes of South Africa* (London: Routledge, 1937).

[3] See C. E. P. Brooks and S. T. A. Mirrlees, *A Study of the Atmospheric Circulation over Tropical Africa*. Meteorological Office. Geophysical memoirs no. 55 (London: H.M.S.O., 1932).

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

Ovimbundu and their neighbours. I have no tables representative of the Umbundu-speaking *diaspora* at the coast and in other outlying regions. There is an interesting and significant article in *Africa*[1] on those of these *diaspora* which are settled in the Mossamedes–Lubango area. The author has done all that could be expected within the limits of an article necessarily short, and it is to be hoped that subsequent writings may clear up matters left in doubt, especially with regard to the present social structure of the groups described.[2]

The social structure described in this chapter is that of the main body of the Ovimbundu. I may say that from observations and from a study of the genealogical tables collected, I have concluded that the structure of kinship and of social life is fairly homogeneous throughout the several tribes.

The Tribe

A complete enumeration of the Umbundu-speaking tribes or kingdoms with descriptions of their reciprocal relations is included in Chapter XII. Almost half of the twenty-two kingdoms were generally tributaries of one of the larger or more powerful kings, so that for practical purposes the Ovimbundu may be divided into eight or ten tribal groups. Although more than half of the Umbundu kingdoms may be said to be feudatories of the larger ones, it is nevertheless true that each of them had its own separate

[1] C. Estermann, 'Coutumes des Mbali du Sud d'Angola', *Africa*, Jan. 1939, pp. 74–86. The author states that their language is Kimbundu (of Luanda-Malange), but the examples which he gives show that although there are words borrowed from Kimbundu, from Portuguese, and from other sources, the structure both of verbs and of nouns and the method of 'Bantuization' of Portuguese words belong to Umbundu. These people may declare their language to be 'Kimbundu' in imitation of the European usage. So did the native 'Mohongo' taken to Paris by the Mission Rohan-Chabot (*Angola et Rhodesie*, Paris, 1914). I have personally ascertained that Umbundu is commonly spoken in Mossamedes and may also say that the samples of the language given in this article show it to be much the same as that spoken in the cities of Benguela, Lobito, &c. It would be better if an orthography more nearly like that recommended by the International African Institute were used. The term 'Mbali' (va Mbali, Mambari, Ovimbali) is an Umbundu term used for nearly one hundred years to designate those who imitate the Europeans or who live at or near the European towns which are collectively designated by the cognate term—*Lupali*. (For 'Mambari', &c., *vide* Livingstone, *Missionary Travels and Researches in South Africa*, pp. 91 f., 271, 384, &c.)

[2] e.g., who is the '*tante* de la jeune mariée ou la "marraine" des noces'? (op. cit., p. 78).

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

101 to-day.[1] The principal Umbundu-speaking groups may be listed
631 as follows:

I. *Independent kingdoms* (in approximate order of their present population):

Mbailundu (*Bailundo*).
Viye (*Bie* or *Bihe*).
Wambu (*Huambo*, *Huamba*, or even *Hambo*).
Ciyaka (*Quiyaca* or *Quiaca*).
Ngalangi (*Galangue*).
Civula[2] (*Quibula*).
Ndulu[2] (*Andulo*, *Ondulo* or even *Ondura*).
Cingolo (*Quingolo*).
Kalukembe (*Caluquembe*, *Caluguembe*, or even *Caluqueme*).
Sambu[2] (*Sambo* or *Sambos*).
Ekekete (*Quiquete*).
Kakonda or Cilombo-coñoma (*Caconda* or *Quilombo*).
Citata (*Quitata*).

[636] II. *Kingdoms generally tributary but not integral parts of the kingdoms to which they owed allegiance*:

Kasongi (*Cassongue*)—generally a tributary of Bailundu.
Ngalanga (*Galanga*)—generally a tributary of Bailundu.
Civanda (*Quibanda*)—generally a tributary of Bailundu.
Namba—generally a tributary of Bailundu.
Sanga—generally a tributary of Bailundu.
Cenge (*Chiengue*)—generally a tributary of Bailundu.
Cipeyo (*Quipeyo*)—a tributary of Bailundu or Wambu.
Mbongo (*Bongo*)—generally a tributary of Wambu.
Elende (*Lende*)—generally a tributary of Ciyaka.

167 Nearly all of these groups are listed in the report of 1799 to
174 which we have referred, and many of them may be identified on the map of 1776. How long before that had they lived in these their present homes? Since it is already well established that none of the Southern Bantu are autochthonous, we shall not stop to ask

[1] Neither of these accounts mentioned Kasongi, which, according to genealogical evidence, is probably one of the most recently formed of the Umbundu-speaking groups. Both accounts made the non-Umbundu-speaking regions of 'Quibala' (Cipala), Mussende, and Cella tributaries of Bailundu. This was the state of affairs as late as 1893.

[2] See *supra*, p. 167, n. 2.

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that question concerning the Ovimbundu. Rather, whence did they come and when? Can the lines of their migrations now be ascertained? Can their racial origins be determined with even approximate certainty? 167 174

The available evidence regarding origins and migrations of the Ovimbundu is mainly of five sorts: (1) linguistic; (2) legendary, whether of the several groups of the Ovimbundu or of the tribes from which they seem to have sprung; (3) historical; (4) evidence from place-names; and (5) evidence of comparative attitudes and culture-traits as between the Ovimbundu and their neighbours. In addition, we might list evidence of physical measurements and blood-group tests, but such evidence is not yet available for the Ovimbundu.

Tribal Origins

Language Affinities. As I pointed out in the introductory chapter, by linguistic classification the Ovimbundu belong to the western 'province' or group of the Southern Bantu. Linguistically, the Ovimbundu belong with their southern neighbours, the so-called 'Bangala'[1] and with the Ambo and Herero. The northern and eastern neighbours all belong to other language groups. This is a fact that must not be lost sight of, especially since Umbundu has been so often confused with the so-called 'Kimbundu' of the Ndongo or Angola kingdom. We are not surprised to find an author of 1846 declare that 'From the Congo to Cabo Negro (Alexander Bay) these black natives all speak the same language (*bunda*) with small changes of dialect';[2] but when this confusion is compounded in works laying claim to considerable value as linguistic and ethnological studies, as, for example, one which was published by a well-known museum in 1930,[3] a protest is in order. 197 114

[1] The Ndombe, Nganda, Cilengi, Cipungo, Muila, Mulondo, Humbi, Gambue, &c. I do not know that the term 'Bangala' may be applied with correctness to these people. I only use it for convenience. See 'Notas Etnográficas sôbre os povos indígenas do Distrito da Huila', *Boletim Geral das Colónias*, fev. 1935, p. 41.

[2] Lopes de Lima, *Ensaios sôbre a Statística d'Angola e Benguella*, part i, p. 196.

[3] See F. u. W. Jaspert, *Die Völkerstämme Mittel-Angolas* (Frankfort, 1930). It is reported that the spurious nature of the works of these writers has been exposed by Baumann and others, but although I have searched, apart from a rather ambiguous footnote in Baumann's *Lunda*, I have found no such references, and am unable to say whether this has been done. The origin of the erroneous concept of a Bunda language (also called Bundu, or Mbundu), has been traced, and correctly I think on the whole, by Max Buchner, 'Die Ambakisten' (in

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197 114 Sir Harry Johnston made this classification abundantly clear in his monumental work published in 1919,[1] and the recent translation and revision of Carl Meinhof's important work on Bantu phonology[2] has used Umbundu extensively for illustrative material. It should now be abundantly clear to all that Umbundu is the northernmost of the Southern Bantu languages, and that in their language the Ovimbundu have elements in common with their southern neighbours.

167 173 *Traditional Histories.* Each of the principal groups among the Ovimbundu has legends with regard to the migrations of their forefathers and the country from which they came. For the most part these legends refer to ancestors of the respective royal families, but some references are also made to the people whom these new-comers found in the country which they came to occupy. All of these legends point to countries of origin in the north or north-east. Several writers have noted this as a fact,[3] but it is necessary to take more explicit notice of each of several legends.

Ndulu has not received as much notice as have some of the other Umbundu kingdoms, but I have come to the conclusion that it is perhaps one of the oldest. The tradition runs that the progenitor of the dynasty, Katekula-Mengo, was an elephant-hunter and that he came with his wife, Ukungu (also called Mbala) from the region of the confluence of the Luandu and the Kuanza rivers. Following elephant-herds down the course of the Kuanza they passed the famous rocks of Pungu-a-Ndongo and in them left the imprints of Katekula-Mengo's bow and of Ukungu's basket, which, it is said, may be seen to this day; for in that early day the rocks had not yet hardened but were like fresh concrete. This couple

Zeitschr. f. Ethnol., 1915, pp. 398 ff.). This writer also interestingly and properly shows how the name Kimbundu came to be mistakenly applied to the Ngola or Ndongo language. The error, however, still continues to be propagated (e.g. *vide* A. Miranda Magalhães, 'Os Ambundus de Angola', &c., in *Trabalhos do I° Congresso Nacional de Antropologia Colonial*, Pôrto, 1934, vol. ii, pp. 536–55). This article contains so little of value that a systematic refutation would not be worth while. The writer's notions on the Bantu migrations seem especially fantastic.

[1] *A Comparative Vocabulary of Bantu and Semi-Bantu Languages*, vol. i.

[2] Meinhof, *An Introduction to the Phonology of the Bantu Languages*, translated, revised, and enlarged (Berlin and London, 1932).

[3] J. T. Tucker, *Drums in the Darkness*, p. 34 f. W. D. Hambly (*The Ovimbundu of Angola*) notes this fact at the beginning of his otherwise rather confused chapter on 'Historical Sources'.

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came to the region of Ndulu and wished to settle but could not (i.e. without permission), since they were strangers and newcomers. Thereupon a certain elder of the country, Kakoko by name, caused them to build, first at Ngumba and later at Nduluyolosima. Their two sons fought for the succession: Cikolongonjo won and set about to consolidate his position by conquering the va Luimbi, who then left the country. He also won over the region of Kapeyo (*Capeio*), although not by force of arms but through trickery,[1] or superior knowledge. The sixth in the succession and a great-grandson of Katekula-Mengo was Kakulukusu, who, it is said, was a nephew[2] of Cingi I of Bailundu, and was also taken to Luanda when the latter was imprisoned. Historical records show that this was at the end of the campaign of 1774–6.[3] It is chiefly this historical connexion which leads me to place the beginning of Cikolongonjo's rule at about 1680. With regard to the migration of Katekula-Mengo and Ukungu, it seems reasonable to advance the hypothesis that its immediate cause may have been the prolonged wars between the Portuguese and the kingdom of Angola, which ended in 1671 with the taking of the royal residence in the rocks of Pungu-a-Ndongo and its conversion into a presidio. The highland country of Ndulu offered a remote and peaceful refuge.

The Bailundu tradition states that when Katiavala came from Cipala (*Quibala*), he settled in Mbonga and came to visit Mbulu whose village on the capital hill had at first been built only as a hunter's camp, but, largely by reason of its strategical location, had become, or was becoming, the capital of Bailundu. Mbulu gave Katiavala his daughter to wife, which indicates that Mbulu had also come from the same northern stock. There was a good opportunity when Mbulu and his people were away on a hunt, and Katiavala with his followers occupied the capital, while Mbulu

[1] Kapeyo was ruling over the region now called after him. When Cikolongonjo demanded that he submit, Kapeyo agreed only if he should lose in the *elembe* test, which is used in the dry season by putting out cloths by night to find which will be wet in the morning. In this case they left the *alembe* (pl.) out while they went on a hunt, but on returning Cikolongonjo's *elembe*, which was a kerchief, was wet with the spiritual blessing, whereas Kapeyo's, which was paper (since he evidently had not known the difference) was quite destroyed. Kapeyo, having lost, left the country and settled in Viye. It is significant to find articles of European manufacture mentioned in this tradition, which is one of the oldest of Umbundu records; also to note that the invaders from the north were already familiar with such things while the local inhabitants were not.

[2] Cingi was *inamu* (mother's brother) to Kakulukusu.

[3] See historical chart *infra*, p. 224 f.

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167 173 took refuge near the Keve River and called his village Eyula,[1] but it was afterwards called Cimbulu after the founder. The dynasty of Katiavala has ruled Bailundu ever since and has also maintained its connexion with Cipala, which was subject to Bailundu until the end of the last century, at the time of effective European occupation. From Cipala has come the queen, the king's principal wife. Katiavala's son Cingi was the third in succession. As has already been noted,[2] he was captured by the Portuguese in 1776 and died in the fortress of São Miguel in Luanda.[3] This date enables us to place the beginning of Katiavala's dynasty at not earlier than about 1700.

The Viye legend has been told by Dr. J. T. Tucker,[4] and before that was given by Major Serpa Pinto.[5] A recent publication of excerpts from the diaries and notes of A. F. Silva Porto gives a slightly different version of the same legend, together with a few notes on the traditional history of Viye (Bie) until the year 1867.[6] Some of these latter are very valuable and enable us to fix more surely the actual or approximate dates of a number of the kings of Viye. Where Silva Porto's data on the earliest days of Viye conflict with those traditionally current, which latter have also been accepted by Serpa Pinto (1878) and by Tucker (1927), I feel that the former must be taken with considerable reserve. Viye, an elephant-hunter of the Humbi people, was tracking his game down the valley of the Kuanza River when he visited the village of Etalala for a beer-drink. There he saw and loved Kahanda, a princess of the Songo people, and they were married. When Viye died he was buried at Kahoko and his spirit is still expected to furnish the country with rain. The younger son, Kahoko, built up the kingdom of that name, which remained subject to Ekovongo, the new capital, built by the older son Ulundu.[7] It is interesting to note the union of the two tribal groups in this legend: the Songo of the north-east and the Humbi who now live in the south.[8] This legend also

[1] From *Yula*, the root of the verb 'to be overcome'.

[2] See *supra*, p. 171.

[3] See historical chart *infra*, p. 224.

[4] Op. cit., p. 34 f.

[5] Major A. A. da Rocha de Serpa Pinto, *How I crossed Africa*, vol. i, p. 156 f.

[6] A. A. F. da Silva Porto, *Viagens e apontamentos de um portuense em África* (Excerptos do seu Diário) (Lisboa: Agência Geral das Colónias, 1942), pp. 165–71.

[7] This name came from Viye's people—cf. the Mulondo, a tribe related to the Humbi.

[8] They had previously lived farther north, however, in the region of Ndondi

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has it that the people then in the country, apart from the Songo, were 'Ngangela'[1] tribes. Magyar[2] has given different tradition with regard to the origin of the kingdom of Viye. He says that the forefathers came from the land of 'Moropu'[3] about three hundred years previously under the two chiefs 'Kinguri and Schakambundi', and, having conquered 'Masongo', settled on the Luandu River, engaging in agriculture between raids. They had the custom of eating their prisoners, and when there were not enough prisoners they lapsed into internecine warfare and ate each other. Certain leaders began to fear tribal suicide and formed a secret society of buffalo-hunters ('*empakasserros*'), pledged to give up cannibalism by substituting the flesh of the buffalo. When the tribal elder (the 'Jaga') suspected the innovation and objected strenuously, rather than fight the buffalo-hunters moved away and settled on the Kuanza River. After a further subdivision of the tribe, one party, 'under a certain Bihe', went south to the Kukema River, where 'Ganguella' were living, and founded the kingdom of 'Bihe'. Later on, continues Magyar, the people of the 'Jaga' mixed with neighbouring tribes, took on milder manners, and finally found themselves in the land of Kassanji 'near the Kingdom of the well-known Jaga of Kassanji'. This tradition related by Magyar cannot be completely harmonized with the familiar legend of Viye and Kahanda. I have given that tradition as Viye elders told it to me, and have noted that it had already been recorded before. Since these two traditions are at variance, since the version gotten by Serpa Pinto in 1878 is the same one and the only one which is current to-day, and since it is unlikely that in only twenty-one years, between 1857 (when Magyar was in Viye) and 1878, a tradition as interesting as that of the buffalo-hunters should have been forgotten, I am inclined to hypothecate that the source (whether immediate or remote) of the tradition given by Magyar was *not* Viye, but perhaps Songo or even Lunda, both of which regions were visited by Magyar. This report probably contains

where, near Chinguar, is the place called Saviye (Father of Viye); and later, in Ngalangi, whence, according to Ngalangi tradition, came Viye (cf. *infra*).

[1] 'Ngangela' is a deprecatory term by which the Ovimbundu designate the Luimbi, Cimbandi, Lucazi, Nyemba, Ngonzelo, Cokue, and other tribes who live to the east.

[2] Op. cit., p. 266 f.

[3] Dias de Carvalho (*Ethnographia e História Tradicional dos povos da Lunda*, p. 66) explains that this was a term which *os nossos antigos viajantes* applied to Lunda.

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167 173 traditional elements of truth and value, especially since it agrees with the other traditions in tracing descent to Songo, and since its connecting of Songo with the people of Lunda is substantiated by the traditional histories given by Dias de Carvalho,[1] and by Ferreira Diniz.[2] The tradition of Viye, the elephant-hunter of Humbi, is of further interest through the definite connexion which it gives with the people of the south.

Serpa Pinto's version of the Viye traditional history[3] is interesting for its substantial agreement with the tradition current to-day. He gives a genealogical table containing the same number of kings as the table which I got in 1938,[4] and with only two or three differences which might, even so, be resolved. Serpa Pinto was interested in determining dates, which he might easily have done had he bothered to look up the records. Kangombe, the fourth king who 'mounted the stool' in Ekovongo and grandson of Ulundu, the founder, had been sold to Luanda as a slave by his brother Njilahulu for adultery with one of Njilahulu's wives. In Luanda he became a favourite of the governor, was sponsored by him for baptism, and then took the name of his sponsor, Dom Antonio de Lancastre.[5] Returning to Viye, he took with him some very material help in arms and a few warriors. Dom Antonio de Lancastre held the office of governor from 1772 to 1779. Since there was war in Bailundu, &c., between 1773 and 1776, Kangombe's return was probably toward the end of Dom Antonio's term of office—say, 1778. This being the case, the founding of Viye was probably about 1750.

The Ngalangi tradition also tells of this connexion in another way, but it is of especial interest because it is the only one which attempts to relate the beginning of things. Feti it was, say the Ngalangi elders, who began, that is to say, he came down from above, and whence he came is not known. Inasmuch as he had no wives, he went to a certain lagoon of the Kunene River and there he caught his wives as they came up out of the reeds. To this day, it is said, there may be seen in the rocks by that lagoon the imprints of Feti's foot and of the foot of his dog. Feti's wives were Tembo

[1] Op. cit., p. 94 f.
[2] Ferreira Diniz, *Populações indígenas de Angola* (Coimbra, 1918).
[3] Op. cit., p. 156 f.
[4] Op. cit., p. 160.
[5] The story was related by Silva Porto more than once. *Vide* op. cit., p. 167; also *Boletim Soc. Geog. Lisboa*, 5a Ser., p. 27.

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and Coya and Cīvi.[1] Now Coya's child was ill and she begged Cīvi to help by blowing the breath of life back into him. Cīvi refused because of jealousy: the child died, and ever since then death has clung to us. That, then, is the beginning of Feti. Very soon Feti parted with his son Ngola who went to Luanda to rule; while another child of his, Viye, went to found the kingdom of Viye.[2] When Feti died he left his place to his son Ndumba-Visoso with his wife Katia. Ndumba-Visoso underwent circumcision, since when all Ngalangi kings have submitted to the rite. They founded first one village and then another, and they were hunters, shooting roan antelopes and elephants, for at that time there were many animals in the land. At the instigation of Ngalangi, the younger brother of Ndumba-Visoso, they attacked and drove out the 'va Ngangela', who then occupied what is now the *ombala* (capital or king's residence) of Ngalangi. Taking it for their own, they brought their loads of food: beans, emmer wheat, kaffir-corn, mandioc, and maize;[3] and where they rested their loads the load sticks took root and became the sycamore figs which to this day encircle the capital village. After that the wives of Feti departed: Tembo married in Humbi (or according to another account, in Cilengi or Kalukembe); Coya in Ndulu; and Cīvi in Ngalangi.[4] There follows an account of an attack on the village by the 'va Ngangela' while the men were away in another country. With only the women at home Katia saved the day with a powerful

[1] The name Feti, it is said, comes from the word *fetika* (the verb *oku fetika*, to begin); while Coya is traced to *oya* (the verb *oku oya*, to finish). Thus it is said, *Feti wa fetika, Coya woyapo* (Feti began, Coya finished).

[2] This tradition connecting Ngalangi, Viye, and Ngola (Ndongo) is interesting and perhaps contains elements of truth, whether from tribal recollections or other sources, but it cannot be reconciled with the strictly historical facts since the kingdom of Ngola (Ndongo) was founded before 1550, and when Paulo Diaz de Novaes first came in 1560 he found that Ngola-Mbandi had inherited the kingdom from his father Ngola-Njinga the previous year. The country then came to be called A-Ngola. (See summary in the Introduction to Lopes de Lima, *Ensaios*.) As I have shown, Viye was founded about two hundred years later.

[3] The order is that of the Ngalangi narrator and is probably a recognition of the more recent importation of the last two named. On another occasion he said that his grandmother had told him that in the olden days when people always carried some seed about in pouches on their persons for fear of sudden raids, maize was not known and emmer wheat was the staple food.

[4] This further attempt to establish connexion with neighbouring tribes is significant. The Humbi and the Cilengi belong to the 'Bangala' group of people, while the Kalukembe are Ovimbundu, but seemingly more nearly related to these 'Bangala' than are the other Ovimbundu.

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charm which caused the bullets of the enemy to fall to the ground immediately upon leaving the muzzles of their muskets, so that they did no harm, whereupon the women went out and beheaded the enemy with their hoes.[1] When Katia died her husband sent to his brother Ngola to have a figure of her made. Soon after Ndumba-Visoso died and left his place to his sons, first Mulunda and then Kambuenge.

I have given this Ngalangi tradition at length because of its inherent interest and because of the attempts which it makes to show a relationship between the peoples.

The tradition of Wambu is that the first king, Wambu-Kalunga, came from the north from Sela, which is just to the north-west of Bailundu. He came with his cross-cousins Cihamba, Katutu, and Sunguandumbo.[2] The Nganda[3] were then living in Wambu. Wambu-Kalunga was a great warrior and raider. He had a special penchant for human flesh and would catch and eat the children left in the village when their parents went to their fields. He would also dig up and eat recently buried corpses. The elders were greatly disturbed over this custom and sought to kill King Wambu-Kalunga. They managed to get a live man into a rock tomb who speared Wambu-Kalunga when he came at night to get the supposed corpse. His capital was at the rocks of Nganda-la-Kawe (near the present town and railway station at Caála), and to this day his tomb is shown.

Ciyaka tradition names as the founder of its royal family, Cihamba, son or cousin of Wambu-Kalunga. Cihamba was a great hunter and brought back so much game that Wambu-Kalunga gave him one of his concubines and permission to seek a kingdom for himself. His younger brother Katutu accompanied him and each built his village in the mountainous country of Ciyaka, where at that time the Ndombe[4] people were living with their chief Siku. Katutu's village was raided by a party from Wambu. Cihamba

[1] The appearance of fire-arms so early in the tradition is interesting, but not surprising, as we shall see when we examine historical accounts.

[2] Another account makes Cihamba and Katutu sons of Wambu-Kalunga, while Sunguandumbo (or Songombanda) is their cross-cousin (*epalume*).

[3] The Nganda belong to the 'Bangala' group and now live just west of the Umbundu country.

[4] The Ndombe are also one of the 'Bangala' people. They are now confined to the Benguela coast-lands, where some of them were already living when the Portuguese first came about 1580. (See *Benguella e seu sertão*, p. 18 f.; *Andrew Battell*, pp. 16 ff.)

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167 173 came with his five famous hunting dogs and with their aid caught up with the raiders and finished them off. After the battle he collected five baskets of heads and set off for Wambu to present them and find out whether Wambu-Kalunga had sent the raiders. When the bereaved relatives recognized the heads, Wambu-Kalunga had to admit having sent the raid.[1] He also admitted the uncanny ability of Cihamba, to whom he now gave a new name, saying, 'Henceforth, you are Cilũlũ (Ghost), because your anger is altogether too great.' He also gave him the royal insignia[2] for which he should build a spirit-hut (*etambo*) and sent him away to rule, saying, 'From now on you are the war-leader of Wambu.'

Then Cilũlũ and Katutu returned to Ciyaka and to their hunting. One day when Cilũlũ returned from a hunt (on which he had gone without his dogs), only four dogs came out to meet him: Ndumbu was missing. When he found that his own sons had eaten the favourite dog which had hunted and fought for him, his sorrow and anger knew no bounds: his heart was black. Straightway he sent for his brother Katutu and insisted that he take the royal insignia and rule in his stead. 'I, Cilũlũ,' he said, 'am Cihamba; from to-day I shall beget no more sons to be kings; to-day I have cursed them and none of them shall rule any more.[3] To-day, oh Katutu, build the spirit-hut, the kitchen, and the chief's hut.'[4]

Later Katutu built the *ombala* of Kawa,[5] and Cihamba came to live with him. One day the queen was gathering firewood on a mountain and found a much better mountain-top site, then

[1] Wambu-Kalunga's alleged reason for having sent the raid was that Cihamba had impregnated the concubine given to him, whereas the intention was that relations should have been those of the trial-marriage in which partners occupy the same bed but explicitly avoid conception.

[2] i.e. the small mat, the double-headed ceremonial axe, the bell, and the chalk (to mark the face in ceremony and ritual).

[3] One reason for this particular phase of the tradition was perhaps to explain why the king's brother often inherits rather than a son. There is an Elende tradition designed to explain why the royal succession is in the paternal line rather than in the maternal, as is the case with inheritance among commoners, and also with the royal families of the related people to the south.

[4] *Etambo, ociwo, eyemba*, the three royal buildings. A commoner may have a spirit-hut (*etambo*), he may have a kitchen (*ociwo*) for each of his wives, but a house of his own he may not have, only a house for each wife.

[5] This appears in the old Portuguese records as *Quiaca a velha* (see Report of Governor of Benguela for 1799 in *Annaes Mar. e Col.*, 1844, p. 154).

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167 occupied by Siku of the Ndombe people, which site Katutu soon
173 appropriated. This is the present site[1] of the Ciyaka capital.

While reworking some of the material in this paper I had the
[115] good fortune to receive help from a member of the royal family of Ciyaka[2] who has more precise data on the succession of that kingdom than I had supposed it possible now to obtain. He not only completed and corrected my list of the kings of Ciyaka, but he also supplied the actual dates for all of them since 1842.[3] Their number would seem to impute to the Ciyaka kingdom a longer history than I have been able to verify for any of the other Umbundu kingdoms, but the absence of historical data from European sources makes confirmation impossible. It would seem, however, that the beginning of the Ciyaka dynasty must date from not later than the first half of the seventeenth century.

Some of the other Umbundu-speaking groups are of considerable importance and interest, but unfortunately there is neither time nor space to give to their origins attention equal to that given to those treated above. The Sambu kingdom has long specialized in the training of medical practitioners and witch-doctors. The tradition is that it was founded by a woman who seems to have come either from Bailundu or from the stock whence came the Bailundu royal family at an even earlier date. From the family of Wambu-Kalunga, in addition to Ciyaka, came those who set up the kingdoms of Elende, which had a woman ruler early in its history; of Cingolo; of Ekekete; and of Cikuma (also called Citata), in whose lands the fort of Caconda a Nova was built in 1769. It was probably after this that the capital of Citata moved across the Katumbela (*Catombela*) River to its present site. Kakonda, the founder of the kingdom generally known by that name, was of Luanda stock but born in Ngalangi,[4] whence he was sold as a slave to Benguela. He ran away with his wife Cilombo[5] and settled in the region near the (present) site of Caconda (a Nova). Kakonda and Cilombo probably settled there only a very short time before the building of the fort, for most of Kakonda's fifteen successors

[1] Called *Quiaca a nova* in the old Portuguese records (see loc. cit.).

[2] Lauriano M. Bahu Ciyaka, a graduate of Currie Institute, teacher of the village of Canja.

[3] *Vide* chronological chart, p. 224 f. *infra*.

[4] It is likely that his ascendants were *pombeiros* (traders) from Luanda and had settled in Ngalangi.

[5] After her, the kingdom was called Cilombo-coñoma (Camp of the Drum).

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had Portuguese names, and tradition speaks of a great accession 167
of mulatto stock, which also is confirmed by observation. 173

The Umbundu-speaking border groups are interesting. Ngamba 174
was formerly occupied by the Songo and has been peopled by 173
Ovimbundu coming from near the capital of Viye only within 167
the past forty years. Cengi, Sanga, Namba, and Kasongi on the northern flank of Bailundu have probably all only recently become Umbundu-speaking groups. Kasongi is one of the largest groups which paid tribute to Bailundu, and has had a line of Umbundu-speaking kings for more than a hundred years; but judging from genealogical evidence the bulk of the people have not been Ovimbundu that long. Civula is another large group and its uncertain feudal status has been noted. Perhaps the most interesting of the border groups, at least from a linguistic standpoint, is Kalukembe. The royal house seems to have come from Ciyaka and it has been [643] claimed that in Kalukembe the kingship is inherited by the mother's brother's son. This is not supported by the only local traditional history which I have been able to secure and requires further investigation. At any rate it is through the maternal line that the commoners of all the Umbundu-speaking groups inherit, and it is noteworthy that this is also true of the kingship among the 'Bangala' and the Ambo tribes.[1] The 'Bangala' people have clan [582] organizations and are exogamous, so that they may marry in any of the related 'Bangala' groups, and for this purpose they include the Kalukembe but not others of the Ovimbundu.[2] Finally, the variations with which Umbundu is spoken in Kalukembe[3] point to closer connexions with the language-group of the 'Bangala'. There are certain areas which at the present day seem to be under- 197 going a linguistic 'Umbundu-ization'. This is most evident in the coast towns such as Novo Redondo, Lobito, Catumbela, Benguela,

[1] See Estermann, 'Notas Etnográficas sôbre os povos do Distrito da Huila' in *Boletim Geral das Colónias*, fev. 1935, p. 63; Hahn, *et al.*, *The Native Tribes of South West Africa*, p. 8.

[2] This last item was learned from Mulondo people. The above-cited article deals only with the people of the District of Huila, while 'Bangala' people live also in other adjoining districts.

[3] Compare Umbundu language work of H. Chatelain and others of the 'Mission Philafricaine' in Kalukembe, as versus illustrations of Umbundu used by Johnston, Meinhof, *et al.* Evidently the native 'Mohongo' taken to Paris by Homburger of the Mission Rohan-Chabot, was a native of Kalukembe, for the 'Bailoundou' vocabulary taken from him is of the Kalukembe variation. (See *Mission Rohan-Chabot*, t. III, f. 1.)

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197 and Mossamedes. The region of Catumbela, and perhaps of Benguela, seems to have been subjected to migrations of Ovimbundu, or of proto-Ovimbundu, between the sixteenth and the nineteenth centuries, and it is probable that some of these groups early established themselves there permanently.[1] At the present time peoples of many tribes make up the population of these towns and of the surrounding regions, but Umbundu is already the dominant speech, and in Lobito and Catumbela almost no other Bantu language is heard. Certain other areas on the fringe of the Umbundu lands now seem to be in process of 'Umbunduization', at least as regards language. This does not seem to have taken place in Musende, in Cipala (Quibala), or in Sela, in spite of the long time during which they owned the king of Bailundu as their overlord. Just now, however, such a process seems to be taking place in Mbuiva (Amboiva), in Cisanji (area of Bocoio), in Nganda, and in Cikomba (Chicomba, south of Caconda).

173 Some of the neighbouring peoples have traditions of migrations
101 which corroborate the traditions of the Ovimbundu. The Nganda
174 say that they formerly lived in the region of Wambu, around the
rocks of Nganda-la-Kawe, and that they moved down-country for
167 two reasons: (1) to escape Wambu-Kalunga and his penchant for eating their children; (2) to be by themselves to practise the rite of circumcision. When they migrated to their present home, the kingdom of Ciyaka, they say, was not yet established.

Traditions of the Herero and Ambo peoples may have bearing on the problem of the migrations of the Ovimbundu. Dr. Vedder concludes from tradition and genealogical evidence that the Herero must have crossed the Kunene 'about the year 1700'.[2] Some of the tribes of Angola with which the Njimba-Herero claim relationship[3] may easily be identified as belonging to the 'Bangala' group, as, for example, the Ovangambue, the Ovangumbi, and the Ovatjerenge, which are plainly the va Ngambue, the va Khumbi (or Nkhumbi), and the va Cilengi, respectively. Other names in the list are very much like some place-names in the Umbundu country.

Traditions of the Songo and Lunda people have already been

[1] According to a Ciyaka tradition. Also see A. Bastos, *Monographia de Catumbella*, pp. 6, 7; L. Cordeiro (ed.), *Benguella e seu sertão*, 1617–22; Ravenstein (ed.), op. cit., p. 19 f.

[2] Hahn *et al.*, op. cit., p. 157.

[3] Loc. cit.

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mentioned. H. A. Dias de Carvalho collected the traditional 174
history of the people of Lunda, which attempted to show that the 101
Imbangala, the Songo, and the Cokue, or rather their reigning 173
families, were descended from the royal house of the Bongo people 167
of Lunda.[1] Through Ilunga, father of the first Muata Yanvo, this author connects these people, or at least all of them except the Imbangala, with the Luba.[2] Torday offers the hypothesis that Ilunga (or Ihunga) may have been a Bushongo prince.[3] I have heard the hypothesis offered that the Songo were in effect an offshoot of the Bushongo people, but it seems that such knowledge as we have of the Songo cannot be said to substantiate this theory. Should these theories prove to accord with the facts, we could claim a long traditional descent for the people of our study in consideration of the careful work done by Torday in tracing the genesis of the Bushongo.[4]

Historical Evidence. Turning from tribal traditions to the solid 175 x
ground of historical evidence, regarding the migrations in question, 167
it is immediately evident that there is no lack of witnesses. The regions with which we are dealing have been known to Europe since 1482, when the expedition under Diogo Cão first sailed up the Congo River and sent ambassadors representing King John II of Portugal to the king of Kongo. Diogo Cão returned in 1485–6, and then in 1491 there came a great expedition with a specially appointed embassy and a mission of ten Franciscan friars.[5] From this time on the Kongo was not without European observers. The earliest record which we have of native migrations in what is now Angola was the invasion of the kingdom of Kongo in 1568,[6] when it was overrun by hordes of terrible 'Jagas',[7] from the east. The reigning king, Dom Alvaro I (Nenemi-a-lukeni-luambemba), and his forces were so utterly routed that his only resource was to

[1] Dias de Carvalho, op. cit., p. 76 f.

[2] Op. cit., p. 65.

[3] E. Torday, *On the Trail of the Bushongo*, pp. 170, 281.

[4] Ibid., chap. xiii.

[5] See João de Barros, *Decadas* I, liv. 3; Ruy de Pina, *Chronica*, p. 174 f.; Garcia de Resende, *Chronica*, pp. 155 ff.; Fr. Luiz de Sousa, *História de S. Domingos*, pt. ii, liv. vi, c. 8.

[6] There has been considerable disagreement over this date, which has been variously reported as 1558, 1568, and 1570; 1568 seems the most likely date, see Ravenstein (ed.), *The Strange Adventures of Andrew Battell*, p. 119 f.

[7] There are many spellings of this name, according to the language, or even the caprice, of the observer. The commoner forms are: Jagas, Jakas, Iagges, Giaghi, Giaki, and Ayaka. This last is probably the more nearly correct.

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175 167 take refuge on an island in the lower Congo and send to Lisbon begging aid. In 1570 Dom Sebastião sent out Francisco de Gouveia with six hundred men who, after a year and a half of fighting, expelled the barbarian hordes and reinstated Dom Alvaro in possession of his kingdom, but as a vassal of the king of Portugal.[1] Warriors called 'Jagas' are next mentioned in 1590 as allies of the armies of Ndongo (Ngola) and Matamba, helping to defeat the Portuguese and their native allies under Luiz Serrão at 'Anguolome-aquitambo'.[2] Migrating hordes called 'Jagas' are next mentioned as having been met (about 1620–1)[3] by Andrew Battell, when on a trading expedition on behalf of the Governor of Angola, at Benguela Velha.[4] I quote Battell's own description of this encounter:

In our second voyage, turning up along the coast, we came to the Morro, or cliff of Benguele, which standeth in twelve degrees of southerly latitude. Here we saw a mighty camp on the south side of the river Cova.[5] And being desirous to know what they were, we went on shore with our boat; and presently there came a troop of five hundred men to the waterside. We asked them who they were. Then they told us they were the Gagas, or Gindes, that came from Sierra de lion,[6] and passed through the city of Congo, and so travelled to the eastward of the great city of Angola, which is called Dongo.[7] The great Gaga, which is their general, came down to the waterside to see us, for he had never seen white men before. He asked wherefore we came. We told him that we came to trade upon the coast. Then he bade us welcome, and called us on shore with our commodities. We laded our ship with slaves in seven days, and bought them so cheap that many did not cost one real, which were worth in the city (of Loanda) twelve milreis.

[In a marginal note Purchas adds: 'He, in discourse with me, called them Iagges, and their chief the great Iagge. I think he writ them Gagas for Giagas, by false spelling.']

[1] Domingos d'Abreu de Brito (1592), quoted by Paiva Manso, *História do Kongo*, p. 138; J. J. Lopes de Lima, in *Annaes Mar. e Col.*, 1845, pp. 93 ff.; Cavazzi, *Descrizione de' Tre Regni*, pp. 183 ff.; Ravenstein, op. cit., p. 119 f.; A. de Lemos, *História de Angola*, p. 98; Duarte Lopes, *A Report of the Kingdom of Kongo*, pp. 96 ff.

[2] Ravenstein, op. cit., p. 148.

[3] Ravenstein, op. cit., p. xiv. Andrew Battell was one of Purchas's Pilgrims.

[4] Now called 'Porto Amboim'.

[5] i.e. the Keve, which generally appears on maps as the 'Cuvo'.

[6] This does not necessarily mean the region of Sierra Leone. There are many places called Lion Mountain in Africa.

[7] Ndongo is the name of the kingdom of Ngola (Angola). Its capital was at Pungu-a-Ndongo, a remarkable group of rocks.

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Being ready to depart, the great Giaga staid us, and desired our boat to pass his men over the river Cova, for he determined to overrun the realm of Benguele, which was on the north side of the river Cova. So we went with him to his camp, which was very orderly, intrenched with piles of wood; we had houses provided for us that night, and many burthens (loads) of palm-wine, cows, goats, and flour. 175x 167

In the morning before day, the general did strike his *gongo*, which is an instrument of war that soundeth like a bell, and presently made an oration with a loud voice, that all the camp might hear, that he would destroy the Benguelas, with such courageous and vehement speeches as were not to be looked for among the heathen people. And presently they were all in arms, and marched to the river side, where he had provided Gingados.[1] And being ready with our boat and Gingados, the general was fain to beat them back because of the credit who should be first. We carried over eighty men at once, and with our muskets we beat the enemy off, and landed, but many of them were slain. By twelve of the clock all the Gagas were over. [726]

Then the general commanded all his drums, *tavales*, *petes*, *pongos*, and all his instruments of warlike music to strike up, and gave the onset, which was a bloody day for the Benguelas. These Benguelas presently broke, and turned their backs, and a very great number of them were slain, and were taken captives, man, woman and child. The prince, Hombiangymbe, was slain, which was ruler of this country, and more than one hundred of his chief lords, and their heads presented and thrown at the feet of the great Gaga. The men, women and children that were brought in captive alive, and the dead corpses that were brought to be eaten, were strange to behold. For these Gagas are the greatest cannibals and man-eaters that be in the world, for they feed chiefly upon man's flesh (notwithstanding of their) having all the cattle of that country. [727] [266]

They settled themselves in this country and took the spoil of it. We had great trade with these Gagas, five months, and gained greatly by them. . . .

In these five months' space we made three voyages to the city of San Paul, and coming the fourth time we found them not.[2]

On a subsequent voyage Battell was left by 'the Portugals and Mulattos' as a hostage among the 'Benguelas', whence he escaped to 'the Great Gaga', living in his camp and helping to fight his battles during twenty-one months. His description of the life and customs of which he was a daily witness are of great interest, and

[1] 'Gingado', elsewhere spelt 'Iergado', is evidently a misprint for *Jangada*, Portuguese for 'raft'.

[2] Ravenstein, op. cit., pp. 19 ff.

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175 seem to bear the stamp of truth in contrast to the evident fabrications of some and the well-meaning confusion of others.

167 'Jagas' are next reported during the conquest of Benguela[1] in 1617–22 by Manuel Cerveira Pereira. The second and fifth of the five battles described in a contemporary document[2] were with 'Jagas', the latter of which had been an ally of the Portuguese for a time. About this time 'Jagas' were also commonly reported as allies of the Portuguese forces in the conquest of Ndongo and Matamba. References to this state of affairs could be given from many sources, but more significant is the testimony of an eye-witness, one of the conquistadores, who, in a petition to King Philip, dated 16 January 1620, inserted the following:

[648] that the *Jagas* who aid us and are ferocious, who are with us, who are of great effect to overawe the heathen that they may not rise, that Your Majesty should make them a favour of wine, for they desire nothing else, to send them three hogsheads a year at the three principal feasts, for it is necessary to have them for friends, and the said *jagas*, Your Majesty ordering to give them this, they will always give in slaves[3] the value and much more.[4]

Another of the conquistadores also wrote:

The Iacas are stranger folk and who live by robbery and war.

This people came many years ago to these kingdoms and have overrun all the hinterland even to Mozambique. . . .

From them came some to our protection and service, fleeing from their captains. . . .

These people themselves are cruel and great thieves, and were more so after we made use of them: they go about robbing unjustly [*sic*] and captivating the miserable heathen; but, however, the fault is not of the *iaca*, but rather of the governors and captains who command them, and so they should be kept for friends and used well, during the necessary time.[5]

Other contemporary writers could be cited,[6] but enough evidence

[1] The present city of Benguela and its surroundings.

[2] L. Cordeiro (ed.), 1617–22, *Benguella e seu sertão por um Anonymo*, pp. 10, 13; J. J. Lopes de Lima, *Ensaios*, pt. ii, pp. 30 ff.

[3] Lit. 'pieces', a somewhat deprecatory euphemism used in the old Portuguese works.

[4] L. Cordeiro (ed.), 1574–1620, *Da Mina ao Cabo Negro segundo Garcia Mendes Castello Branco*, p. 16 f.

[5] L. Cordeiro (ed.), 1593–1631, *Terras e minas africanas segundo Balthazar Rebello de Aragão*, p. 16 f.

[6] Compare Cavazzi, op. cit., pp. 630 ff.; Duarte Lopes, op. cit., p. 156 f.; Dapper; *Description de l'Afrique*, p. 357 f.

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has been cited to prove conclusively that the 'Jagas' were not one horde but many, and that they multiplied by splitting into other and smaller groups as they went from pillage to pillage. Battell recounts that they killed their own offspring,[1] and this is further attested by other contemporary writers.[2] They ensured their increase by taking the young of their enemies who, as Purchas noted, were trained up as a sort of Janisaries. Battell said that of 16,000 in the camp 'there were but twelve natural Gagas that were their captains, and fourteen or fifteen women'.[3] Purchas added to the first edition of *Purchas, His Pilgrimage* (1613) a note which is helpful in determining, if not their ultimate, at least their proximate, origin, and also their final place of settling. He wrote:

> He (i.e., Battell) saith they are called Iagges by the Portugals, by themselves Imbangolas . . . and come from Sierra Liona. . . .
>
> Elembe, the great Iagge, brought with him twelve thousand of these cruel monsters from Sierra Liona, and after much mischief and spoil settled himself in Benguele, twelve degrees from the Zone southwards, and there breedeth and groweth into a nation. But Kelandula, sometime his page, proceeds in that beastly life before mentioned, and the people of Elembe, by great troops, run to him and follow his camp in hope of spoil.[4]

According to this, we may take it that the designation of Iagges, Jaga, Jaka, or Ayaka came from the Portuguese, which means that it came from one or more of the Bantu languages—that it was originally a description given to these hordes or to their leaders by the African people whom they fought and conquered, or even by the African traders[5] who went to the 'Jaga' camps to buy slaves in exchange for cloth, beads, rum, and muskets. The word evidently comes from the verb to fight, *oku yaka*; they fight, *a yaka*,[6] or *va yaka*. Father Van Wing[7] and Emil Torday[8] both hold that there is some real relationship between the tribe of the Bayaka of the middle Kuango and the 'Jaga' hordes, and make that

[1] Ravenstein, op. cit., pp. 32, 84 f. Could this have been an (extreme) instance of the well-known fear of menstrual-blood found among many people, including the Ovimbundu?

[2] Ravenstein, op. cit., p. 32, note 4.

[3] Ravenstein, op. cit., p. 33.

[4] Ravenstein, op. cit., pp. 84, 85.

[5] *Pombeiros descalços*, barefoot traders.

[6] The Portuguese transcription of this form is *a iaca*, or *a iacca*, with the hard *c* mistakenly changed to *g*, and *i* taken for *j* as was formerly often done.

[7] Van Wing, op. cit., p. 106.

[8] Torday, op. cit., see map facing p. 282.

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175x the origin of this tribal name. It is no less reasonable to suppose that the name has also been preserved in the name of a section of
167 the Ovimbundu—the va Ciyaka,[1] which is an augmentative noun from the same verbal stem.

'He saith they are called . . . by themselves Imbangolas.' This statement has given rise to a great deal of speculation from the time of Purchas to our own. The *Imbangala*, better known as 'the people of Jaga Cassange' or Bangalas, are generally recognized to have been one of the marauding hordes which troubled Angola in the seventeenth century, and it has already been noted that their own traditional history, as given by Dias de Carvalho and by Ferreira Diniz, fits in with this theory. It seems reasonable, therefore, to make this further identification of the 'Jagas' of Battell with the Imbangala of Cassange. There is one more
[173] traditional link to add, and that is that the Ovimbundu of Ciyaka recognize the region of Cassange as the location of the oldest ancestral tombs of which they have any tradition. Once when there was a particularly severe drought, tribal elders were sent from Ciyaka to Cassange to worship at these ancient tombs, to anoint the skulls, and to plead for rain.

When Purchas noted in 1613 that 'Elembe settled himself in Benguele', he meant the hinterland of Benguela Velha,[2] i.e. in the regions of Mbũi (*Amboim*), Cipala (*Quibala*), or Sela (*Cela*). As I have shown, tradition connects the kingdom of Wambu with Sela, and the kingdom of Bailundu with Cipala. Although 'Kelandula, sometime his page, proceeds in that beastly life before mentioned'. we may be reasonably sure that eventually he also, or his followers, settled in the same general region. Both Elembe and Kalandula are common Umbundu names and the latter is found twice among the kings of Bailundu.

175x There is further evidence in the similarity of customs as be-
266 tween the 'Jagas' and the royal families of the Ovimbundu, for
566 both Battell and Cavazzi have given fairly full accounts. To show these similarities fully it would be necessary to re-edit Battell, and therefore I shall speak of only a few outstanding points. The cannibalism of the 'Jagas' was perhaps their most striking custom.

[1] The Portuguese transcription of this form would be 'Giaca', but this has become changed to 'Quiaca', as also with many similar names.

[2] See p. 122, n. 4 *supra*. It was only in 1617 that the settlement on the *Baia das Vaccas* was made, and (wrongly) given the name of Benguela.

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which the 'Jagas' had, although they soon adopted the language of the people whom they conquered. As recently as fifty years ago the mother of the king of Bailundu spoke Umbundu brokenly, since she came from Cipala, and her sons were sent to complete their education with her people where later they were often called to rule.[1]

Recognition by the Ciyaka people that their forefathers came from the region where the Imbangala now live has been noted. It may have been a similar tradition heard in Viye which started Magyar to find out the tradition of 'Kinguri'. Such a tradition was mentioned in Viye as late as 1898.[2] This relation between the Umbundu ruling families and either the 'Jagas' or the Imbangala has been noted by several of the Portuguese writers. Lopes de Lima, in his History of the Discovery of the Congo, adds a footnote on the 'Jagas' as follows: 'The Jagas are almost nomadic peoples . . . coming from the interior of Africa, . . . there are some on the frontiers of the Congo, Angola, and Benguella, where some have fixed their habitations (as those of Cassange, and Bailundo).'[3] Writing in 1797 a certain Col. Pinheiro de Lacerda said of the inhabitants of Ngalangi, Kakonda, Wambu, Bailundu, &c.: 'These are they of the uplands, who are divided into two groups, those of one are called "Quinbundos",[4] (these do not eat human flesh); the others are called "Quimbangalas", who eat it, and when they make their sacrifice, which all attend, all eat the "Macongo".'[5] At that period the diversity of these two component parts of the Ovimbundu people was so apparent that they were even spoken of as separate and distinct peoples.

Place-names. Before leaving the subject of migratory movements a word should be said on the evidence of place-names. There is nothing to prove, except in a few instances where traditions have been collected, that the recurrence of identical or similar names at different places indicates the actual lines of migration followed by the several tribal groups represented. It may be said, however, that this line of evidence, taken together

[1] See *Missionary Herald*, 1888, p. 70.

[2] *Missionary Herald*, 1898, p. 108.

[3] *Annaes Mar. Col.*, 1845, p. 93.

[4] Taken from the singular form *ocimbundu*. As already explained, the change of *chi* to *qui* is a commonly met mutilation of the Bantu forms.

[5] *Annaes Mar. Col.*, 1845, p. 488. There follows a circumstantial account of the ceremony of *Oku lia Ekongo*, to which reference has already been made.

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with that which has already been reviewed, might make it possible 103
to determine the demography of the Benguela Highland prior to 167
the formation of the Umbundu kingdoms. It is also further evidence as to the demographic make-up of the Ovimbundu. Some of these recurring place-names evidently represent elements which now constitute separate entities outside the Umbundu kingdoms, although they probably made contributions to the formation of those kingdoms. Others represent elements which probably moved away from the earlier invasions from the north but stayed in their new sites to amalgamate with later arrivals. Some may represent successive splittings-off from a stock which thus settled at various places. Many recurrent place-names could be shown both in this region and outside the language-grouping.

Attitudes toward Other Tribes. Attitudes of the Ovimbundu 619
towards the various neighbouring tribes are instructive. Mention 186
has already been made of the attitude of the southern 'Bangala' 101
people in their inclusion of the Ovimbundu of Kalukembe within their own system of exogamy. The Ovimbundu recognize a common humanity with the peoples who are their neighbours both on the south and on the north. They are all *omanu*,[1] people, or even *vakuetu*, comrades. Similar recognition is not extended to the eastern and south-eastern neighbours who are lumped together under the derogatory term of 'va Ngangela' or *ovingangela*.[2] This eastern region as far as the Great Lakes was the happy hunting-ground of the slave-traders from Viye and from Bailundu. There is a term *olongoya* which is applied to the northern neighbours, but without the derogatory connotation of 'Ngangela'. *Olongoya* has a linguistic connotation as did *barbaroi* in the Greek, and refers to the fact that these neighbours speak what is to the Ovimbundu an unintelligible language. How much of rationalization there may be in these attitudes and prejudices one cannot say, but it seems that in them there is some recognition of tribal origins and relationships, of the fact that across the Benguela Highland migrations have swept from north to south.

Conclusion. In consideration of the above evidence, it is now 174
possible to draw conclusions concerning the origin of the Ovi- 167

[1] *Omanu* is the Umbundu equivalent for the Nguni *abantu*, which has come to be applied to the whole language family.

[2] This Umbundu attitude is best illustrated by the proverb 'As a grass hut is not a house, so an *ocingangela* (singular) is not a person (*omanu*).'

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174 mbundu. They are the result of a fusion of diverse stocks, chiefly of
167 the Southern Bantu and of the Congo or Central Bantu peoples. The ruling families probably were Lunda emigrants for the most part,[1] at least in their origin. It was probably during the seventeenth century that these people entered the Benguela Highland and began to found their respective dynasties. The people whom they encountered in these lands were mostly of Southern Bantu stock, with some 'Ngangela' people in Ndulu, Viye, and Ngalangi. The upper strata of these local populations seem to have moved on with their cattle to join related stocks in the border regions, while the masses seem to have stayed behind to form the nucleus of the Ovimbundu. Especially does this appear to have been the case with the original Southern Bantu stock, for many who were cattle-owners seem to have fled to the drier and more suitable lands in the south and west, while those who stayed must have lost to the invaders such cattle as they had. Only in the south-west (especially Kalukembe) was the Southern Bantu influence of sufficient strength to preserve any semblance of the cattle-culture complex, together with a recognition of kinship from their southern neigh-
[197] bours. Everywhere, it seems, the Southern Bantu nucleus was of sufficient strength to exert a dominant linguistic influence. It is certainly noteworthy that over the whole region a single language has developed with only small dialectic differences[2]—and that without benefit of political union. Commercial intercourse has probably largely supplied the place of the latter.

Historical Development

175 *Dominant Tendency.* The origins of the principal groups of the Ovimbundu have been traced in outline from both native and European sources. It now remains to sketch the main lines of

[1] But Viye and Ngalangi traditions *in re* the origin of their ruling families must be borne in mind—traditions also supported by other evidence.

[2] Retention of peculiarities of the parent stock by Kalukembe has been noted. There are certain noticeable differences as between 'up-country' and 'down-country'—roughly divided by the Keve and Kunene Rivers. Each of the outlying regions has its own peculiarities due to local foreign influences. In Kasongi, in Ngalangi, and in Viye these are quite noticeable but can hardly be called separate dialects. Regions of older European occupation—Kakonda and Viye—have taken more from the Portuguese. In consideration of these facts and the further fact that the Viye racial stock had a larger 'Ngangela' element than had other regions, the recent linguistic influence of Viye has been out of all proportion to reality and may be explained by the relatively larger number of missions and missionaries working in that region.

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geographic position in the centre of the colony has also made it harder for them to evade it. Nevertheless, many have emigrated. In 1941 and again in 1944, when the writer visited South Africa, he found thousands of Ovimbundu on the Rand and many more in the Rhodesias and the Congo. Many are also known to have gone to the South-West Territory and to Bechuanaland, and some even to such distant points as Natal's north coast and French Equatorial Africa.[1]

175x 464 467 [167]

Recent Developments

Currency, in the sense of money, is quite a recent introduction to the Ovimbundu. To the end of their trading activities, cloth ('trade goods') was the standard of exchange. Although dependence upon world markets caused prices to fluctuate with the course of the rubber trade, as we have seen, there was not, however, the great range which follows the fluctuations of the money market through a course of inflation and deflation. The Ovimbundu had had some dealings in money before the time of World War I, when there was a silver coinage, so that the depreciation which set in about 1921 was all the more confusing to them. This is not the place to discuss the finances and banking of Angola, but it must be noted that the conversion of the 'Escudo' into the 'Angolar' in 1928 at the rate of Ag. 0,80 to Esc. 1 $00 greatly increased the sense of confusion among the natives. This was only to be expected when the native tax remained at Ag. 80,00 where it was Esc. 80,00 before, whereas daily wages to contract labourers became Ag. 0,80 where before they were Esc. 1 $00. The confusion was considerable.[2]

436 [457] [651] [465]

Taxes began to be levied soon after military occupation, but for some years they were very small, especially in relation to opportunities for earning. When the head-tax reached Esc. 80,00 it remained at that figure for some years. In 1935 a 'work tax' and

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[1] This state of affairs is frequently and quite freely commented upon in the Angola papers. For a recent notice see local correspondence entitled 'Notícias do Cuma' in the *Voz do Planalto* (Nova Lisboa) for 17 Aug. 1946. One of the most serious recent indictments is contained in an article in *O Farolim*, Luanda, 5 Nov. 1945, by Padre J. Alves Correia. This distinguished writer asserts that the present labour policy is 'killing the goose which lays the golden egg'.

[2] For finance, currency, banking, and economic conditions in general, see Department of Overseas Trade, *Economic Conditions in Angola*, H.M.S.O., 1929. There are also reports for 1923 and 1925, but the one for 1929 covers the previous decade.

The two largest rivers flowing from the Highland are the Kwanza and the Kunene, both of which flow into the Atlantic Ocean. Between them are the Keve, the Balombo and the Katumbela. The Kubango rises near the source of the Kunene and flows southwards towards the Kalahari Desert. 133

SOILS AND VEGETATION

The foundation of the plateau is a vast slab of primeval crystalline rock, which frequently outcrops in the form of isolated rocks or of massive peaks. Some of these outcrops remain bare, while others are hidden by laterite and soil formed by rock decomposition. Sediments overlying the rocks include unfossiliferous sandstones and conglomerates, considered to be of Palaeozoic age. Much of the soil is poor, in many areas impoverished by use and by erosion; there are however a few alluvial deposits, and on the whole the soil is of better quality than in the adjoining regions to the east, north and south. 134 133

Differences in vegetation between the Highland and the lower zone towards the coast are striking. Characteristic feature of the coastal area is the baobab *(Adansonia digitata)* and in the better-watered areas tropical forests occur. The Highland proper was until recently well-covered with a variety of trees; today, however, except in isolated areas in Bailundu and other regions, grasslands have taken the place of forest and woodland. Native methods of agriculture and annual fires have caused much deforestation, and this has been accentuated by the demands of European settlement and of the Railway, which up to the present time uses principally wood for fuel. 137

CLIMATE

The Highland is well within the Tropical Zone, but altitude and the effect of the south-western Antarctic current combine to produce a moderate climate. The annual variation of temperature is relatively slight; a day's maximum is seldom above 90°F, and may be as low as 60°, but the usual maximum is around 80°. The minimum of 32° or even 30° is sometimes reached in the winter (about May 20th - July 20th), but more usually the minimum is 40° to 50° in the winter, and 50° to 55° for the rest of the year. There is considerably daily variation, especially in the winter, when differences of 42° are often registered. 132

Mean annual rainfall varies from 40 to 60 inches, according to region. In the Highland the rains begin with a few showers during September, increase during October and November, have a break of two to four weeks in December, January or February, and continue until the end of April. The heaviest falls are usually in November and December, occasionally in March.

TRADITIONS OF ORIGIN AND HISTORY(1)

The Ovimbundu people represent a fusion of diverse stocks, chiefly of the Southern Bantu and of the Congo or Central Bantu peoples. The ruling 174 167

(1) This section is a summary of the detailed account given by Childs 1949, pp.164-231.

174 families, probably for the most part of Lunda origin, entered the Benguella
● 167 Highlands during the seventeenth century and began to found their respective kingdoms. The tribes whom they encountered appear to have belonged to the cattle-keeping Ndombe-Ngandà or to the Ngangela group.[1] Childs suggests that the upper strata of these local populations must have moved on southwards with their cattle to join related stocks in the border regions, while the masses stayed behind to form the nucleus of the Ovimbundu. The cultural influence of these early inhabitants on the Ovimbundu seems to have been slight, except in the south-west, particularly in Kalukembe, where a semblance of the cattle-culture complex remains, together with a recognition of kinship ties with southern neighbours (see below). The linguistic
[197] influence of the Southern Bantu (Ndombe-Ngandà) group in the south and west has however been considerable. It is noteworthy that over the whole Ovimbundu region a single language has developed with only small dialectal differences, and that although commercial contact has assisted this development, it has not been fostered by political union between the various segments of the Ovimbundu.

TRADITIONS

173 Each of the principal groups listed above (page 2) has separate
166 legends of origin. Usually these traditions refer to the birthplace and adventures of the ancestors of the chiefly families, and only mention the indigenous inhabitants. Childs has made a careful and lucid summary of the traditions of the various groups;[2] these are therefore only very briefly outlined below.

Ndulu. There is evidence that Ndulu may be one of the oldest Ovimbundu kingdoms. The progenitor of the ruling dynasty is said to have come from the region near the confluence of the Kwanza and Lumbo rivers, and to have conquered and expelled the Luisbe, who live today to the east of Ndulu. This migration may have been a result of the prolonged wars between the Portuguese and the Kingdom of Angola,[3] which ended in 1671.

Bailundu. The Bailundu dynasty is said to have its origin in Cipala, a region which remained subject to Bailundu until the end of the nineteenth century, and from which, according to tradition, the king's principal wife comes. Childs estimates the date of the foundation of the dynasty at not earlier than about 1700. The Sambu ruling family is said to descend either from a woman of Bailundu stock or from common stock with the Bailundu.

Viye. Versions of the Viye legend are recorded by Tucker,[4] Serpa Pinto,[5] Silva Porto,[6] and Magyar,[7] and these do not all agree. According to the most widely-known version today, Viye, an elephant-hunter of the Humbi people, tracking game down the Kwanza valley, met and married a princess of the Songo people; their son, Ulundu, founded the Viye chiefdom. From documentary evidence Childs estimates that this must have been in about 1750. This version also suggests that the original inhabitants were of the Ngangela group of tribes.

(1) See above, p.3.
(2) Op.cit., pp.170-81.
(3) To the north of the present Ovimbundu country.
(4) 1927, pp.34f.
(5) 1881, vol.I, pp.136f.
(6) 1942, pp.165-71.
(7) 1859, pp.264f.

II. GEOGRAPHICAL FACTORS

121 This chapter is intended to give an outline of the geographical conditions of Angola and to point out the way in which these have influenced the growth of Umbundu culture in all its aspects.

A presentation of geographical data is of primary importance here, and the actual relationship between the facts of geography and culture is a matter for gradual evaluation in the following chapters. The extent to which geographic determinism has entered into the cultural growth of the Ovimbundu is particularly well seen in chapter V, "Economic Life," which deals with industries, agriculture, domestic animals, fishing, and transport.

The area of Angola is a factor of importance, for the greater the extent of any country the more diversified will be the products and the cultural differences. This is particularly true if there are considerable differences in the elevation, because altitude modifies temperature and affects the distribution of rainfall.

131 Angola has an area of almost 500,000 square miles. The greatest length is a distance of about 900 miles from the river Congo in the north to the region of South West Africa. The greatest breadth is about 700 miles from the Atlantic Ocean on the west to the borders of the Rhodesian plateau in the east. This range over twelve degrees of latitude, from 5° S. to 17° S., in association with differences in altitude, have produced ecological regions which are described in the following paragraphs.

132 311 167 The northern part of Angola is ecologically a part of the Congo basin, with conditions of heat and moisture giving rise to a dense tropical flora. Owing to the presence of tsetse fly, the great heat, and the lack of open grasslands, such country is unsuited for the rearing of cattle, while agriculture, including cultivation of maize, is restricted to forest clearings. Manioc, palm trees, peanuts, and sweet potatoes are the chief products serviceable to man. This region was, according to the historical evidence of chapter III, the area in which the Ovimbundu moved before they entered the Benguela Highlands of central Angola. Parts of chapters III and X ("Historical Sources" and "Culture Contacts," respectively) are devoted to an analysis of the cultural factors of the Congo area from the year A.D. 1500 to the present day.

131 The central portion of Angola is the area most important in this research because it is the home of the Ovimbundu, whose cultural

III. HISTORICAL SOURCES

175 The object of this chapter is the presentation of a summary of
173 literature relating to Angola from A.D. 1500 down to the present
167 day. In this literature there may be accounts of the movements of tribes which will throw some light on the origin of the Ovimbundu, and the date of their migration into the Benguela Highlands. Present-day tradition of the Ovimbundu is unanimous in declaring that the tribe came from the northeast of its present locality, but some
[101] historical justification of this belief is desirable. The word Ovimbundu ("people of the fog") may refer to the heavy morning mists of highland regions, and there is the possibility that the Ovimbundu adopted this name when they settled on the high plateau.

121 If there is historical evidence in favor of the traditional home of the Ovimbundu being the region of the north and northeast of Angola, what was the ethnological background of these areas at the time when the Ovimbundu became detached from a matrix of northern Angolan tribes? In other words, what cultural factors are the Ovimbundu likely to have brought with them into the Benguela Highlands? The ultimate origin of these factors is a point which has not been neglected (chapter XI, "Wider Culture Contacts"), but for the moment the primary concern is the historical background of the Ovimbundu, with special reference to tribal movements and cultural traits.

As part of this historical inquiry, contacts of the Portuguese and the Ovimbundu are of importance. When and where did the Portuguese come into contact with the Ovimbundu and with what results to the indigenous culture?

127 Chapters IV–IX deal exclusively with my field work among the Ovimbundu in 1929. Therefore it is pertinent to ask to what extent the ethnological observations of travelers and early explorers will corroborate the information recorded in my own notes. Will there be contradiction or confirmation of personal observations? Possibly the ethnological notes obtained from historical sources will serve, not merely to corroborate my field work, but actually to extend the area of occurrence of important cultural traits which I noted in 1929.

The literature describing Angolan history and customs is here presented in the form of a chronological bibliography, which is annotated so as to emphasize points bearing on the purpose of this historical analysis. That there should be a fragmentary presentation of data is an inevitable consequence of the nature of the literature

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

175 that the Church participated actively (T. Lewis, The Old Kingdom of Kongo, *Geog. Journ.*, 1908, pp. 598–600).

Political influence of the Portuguese, working often through the agency of Jesuit priests, led to factions within the Congo Empire, and the resulting disturbances caused movements of peoples that affected the whole of northern Angola and the population of the Benguela Highlands.

Portuguese penetration of the hinterland of Angola, especially from Loanda to Bihé, was concerned with attempts to subjugate native tribes, the establishment of trading posts, and the encouragement of the slave trade (S. Marquardsen, Angola, 1928, pp. 6–10).

439 721 The value of the Portuguese as allies of Umbundu caravans from Bihé lay in their ability to supply guns and powder to their native henchmen, who gave something more than military service in return. In response to Portuguese demand for slaves and ivory, Umbundu caravans made long journeys into the Congo basin, Rhodesia, south and southwest Angola, and possibly across Africa to lakes Tanganyika and Nyasa. The arms supplied in exchange for ivory and slaves must have helped the Ovimbundu in all their predatory excursions.

648 Thus the Ovimbundu were, in the early centuries of contact with the Portuguese, invaders encouraged in the building up of their tribal life and resources. Never were the Portuguese strong enough completely to subjugate northern Angola. Relationships with natives, especially the Bihéan section of the Ovimbundu, were directed toward alliances on a commercial basis. The political result of this was a combination of the Portuguese and the stronger tribes for the exploitation of the weaker.

167 177 The historical ethnology of the southwest Congo is so complex that the elements are difficult to disentangle. The number of tribes concerned is great, and their movements are not easy to follow; but a gradual extension of people from the Congo in a southwesterly direction through Lunda to the Benguela Highlands (1600–1800) seems to be the summation of all the conflict. I regard the Ovimbundu as the most southerly branch of these mass movements, during which they received a discipline that enabled them to make their home in central Angola, despite opposition from the Portuguese and earlier arrivals.

114 For these conclusions reliance has been placed on the extensive field work and historical analyses of E. Torday and T. A. Joyce, whose "Notes on the Ethnography of the Bambala" (*J.R.A.I.*, XXXV, pp. 396–426) have proved of particular value in this connection.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

The kernel of the migratory problem of the Ovimbundu is reached 101
when Torday traces out the history of the Kimbundu, for the Kimbundu are present-day neighbors of the Ovimbundu, to whom they are closely allied in language and culture (*ovi* is a Bantu plural prefix, which was perhaps used to express the inclusion of Kimbundu and Babunda under the general name Ovimbundu).

Torday's sifting of the historical evidence results in the conclusion 174
that the Kimbundu came from the northeast, fighting their way to 167
the Luando. These Kimbundu divided, with civil war as a conse- 101
quence. One section crossed the river Kwanza, south of which they specialized in agriculture after becoming sedentary. Their sub-chief they called the *Kalunga*, which is the present-day word used by the Ovimbundu in greeting their chiefs. Traditions of the Ovimbundu point to the northeast as a center from which they spread at least ten generations ago. The rise of the powerful kingdom of Lunda dates from the seventeenth century, and although the details of this concentration of power in northeast Angola are unknown the general effects are understood. There was a great displacement of tribes in a southerly and southwesterly direction. In connection with the suggestion that the Ovimbundu came from the northeast of Angola, there is the necessity for recording the absence of even a fragment of historical evidence or tribal tradition indicating that the Ovimbundu came from the south or the east of Angola.

Cultural affinities of the Ovimbundu with tribes of the southwest. 174
Congo in particular, and with western Bantu culture in general, 171
strongly support the foregoing deductions from historical sources (chapter X).

There is a probability that tribal disturbances resulting from the rise of the Lunda Empire led to a spread of the Vachokue over eastern Angola. Some of the effects of this contact have already been mentioned in chapter II, where contacts of the Ovimbundu and the Vachokue were discussed. The journey brought me into contact with the Vachokue at Cangamba, Katoko, and Ngalangi, of which Cangamba is the most easterly.

Witnessing of initiation ceremonies combined with observation of physique, language, and artifacts, leads me to agree with Torday that Cangamba is probably the ancient center of Vachokue culture. As one proceeds from Cangamba westward this type of culture becomes thinner as the borders of the country occupied by the Ovimbundu are approached. On the border line, between the cultures of the Vachokue and the Ovimbundu, notably at Ngongo near Ngalangi,

174 there is tribal and cultural miscegenation. Both Umbundu and
171 Vachokue languages are spoken; boys of Ngalangi were seen to wear
[881] initiation costumes similar to those worn at Cangamba by the Vachokue, but on proceeding farther westward into territory exclusively occupied by the Ovimbundu, such initiation ceremonies are either absent or attenuated in ritual.

144 Elende, one center of research among the Ovimbundu, repre-
101 sents the purest Umbundu speech and culture observable at the present day. But in chapter IV some physical resemblance of the Ovimbundu to the Vachokue is noted. Warfare commonly resulted in the taking of slaves, a fact which might account for an apparent infusion of Vachokue blood in some of the Ovimbundu.

174 The historical data suggest a northern or northeastern starting
167 point of Umbundu migrations. Therefore an inquiry into the ethnology of these areas will be useful in showing the kind of culture with which the Ovimbundu were in contact before their settlement in the Benguela Highlands. If historical sources disclose the nature of northern Angolan culture from the year A.D. 1500 onward, such evidence can then be considered in relation to cultural traits of the Ovimbundu at the present day.

The establishment of strong cultural resemblances between extant Umbundu culture and older cultural patterns of northern Angola, would tend to strengthen the evidence of history respecting the northern origin of the Ovimbundu.

131 The regions dealt with in the following summary of ethnological
174 facts are the Cabinda Enclave to the north of the Congo estuary, the region of San Salvador, the hinterlands of Loanda and Benguela, and the area of northern Angola between Lat. 7° and 9° S. and Long. 13° to 22° E. This covers the whole area with which the Ovimbundu are likely to have been in contact before entering their present home.

175 My survey begins with the observations of Andrew Battell in
101 1596. His account deals mainly with the northwestern part of Angola, a country bordering on and actually including territory now occupied by the Ovimbundu, who in all probability came in contact with the Jaggas, whose habits of life are described by Battell.

Torday and Joyce identify the Jaggas with the present-day Bayaka, whose cultural resemblances to the Ovimbundu are examined later. In my opinion, the Jaggas correspond well with the Bihéan section of the Ovimbundu, an itinerant and exceedingly warlike people.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13
Angola FP1

M 496 463 Most of the employees of the Benguela Railway are Ovimbundu and many of the old pupils of the Catholic seminaries and of the Protestant secondary school[5] have found employment on it as clerks and telegraphists. The railway has also become a means M [167] of Umbundu migration carrying Ovimbundu to work in the coastal cities and plantations, and on the other side carrying their speech with it to the interior.

A 433 Angola is economically a land of primary production, and its cities and towns are founded on trade. There is little industry, although Lobito is noted for its cement works and saw mill, and drinks, both alcoholic and soft, paper and pottery are all manufactured in Angola.[6] On the coastal plain there are sugar plantations and there are a number of other plantations especially on the western fringe of the Highland, but the main crop of the Highland is maize, grown by the Ovimbundu and sold by the traders to the official boards which have store-houses on A 438 the railway line. The traders have generally tended to scatter themselves over the countryside though now the Government is insisting on new traders settling in recognized hamlets. The A 361 towns are small and frankly rather dismal places, serving as the administrative and postal centres for the neighbourhood, with a parish church, a school, two or three hotels, perhaps a club, and occasional cinema shows and a number of stores with a rather wider range of goods than those in the bush. They are significant from the point of view of communications, linking the traders in the bush to the cities and the railway.

A 49 A network of roads covers the Benguela Highland with the result that all villages are at most only a few miles from a track which is usable by motor vehicles. A truck seen on one of these roads will most likely belong to a trader, though it might belong to an official on one of his rare local trips, to a missionary, or to a labour recruiter. There are now a number of bus services in the Highland. As these serve only a certain number of roads, villagers who want to make a journey of any distance must walk or thumb a lift from a trader (who will charge) or a missionary (who will not charge) or ride on one of the still infrequent bicycles, his own, or a borrowed one.

[5] At Dondi, with Dr. Childs as headmaster.
[6] Egerton, op. cit., pp. 151–2. Galvão and Selvagem, op. cit., pp. 334–8.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

167 Many of the people in Ovimba had come from
177

Cela, and Cela influences are notable in several ways.[24] In Cassongue Umbundu has relatively recently ousted other
133 speech.[25] Geographically Bimbe generally is rather lower than most of the Highland. Although the railway line and the growth
167 of maize have been influential here, an alternative pull for
361 labour migration is provided by the coffee plantation of Amboim and Seles, and by the coastal towns of Novo Redondo and Porto Amboim.[26] In the days of the caravan trade Novo Redondo was an important trading centre, more important perhaps than Benguela for the people of this area.

464 Work is sought by Ovimbundu in lands far from their home.
[167] There are Ovimbundu at Brazzaville; others have settled permanently in the Congo Republic, or work in Rhodesia; the Johannesburg mines have employed many, and some have gone as far as Natal.[27] In Epalanga, the village where I lived, there were two men who had been to Johannesburg—nor was this very exceptional and I am told that among the people south of the railway it is quite common.

82 The world picture of the Ovimbundu is vague, except as regards Angola and the neighbouring countries. The existence of Europe (Putu) composed of different nations Portuguese, French, and English is known, and I was several times asked if there were black people in England. Little or nothing is known of the other continents. The island of S. Tomé in the Atlantic is known, since up to recently Angolan labourers went there, and some convicts are still sent to it. Several people from the neighbourhood had lived in Luanda or worked on coffee
[468] plantations in northern Angola. The Belgian Congo was known as Bula Matadi, though people seem little aware of Rhodesia, and Mozambique (Portuguese East Africa) is confused with the southern Angolan port of Moçamedes. The railway lines and
[469] the cities along it are of course well known, and some of the people I knew had travelled to Kwanyama country in the far south of Angola to buy cattle. Johannesburg (Zhwaini) and its

[24] Notably in the arm ornaments and hair styles favoured by some women. Cela diviners are often consulted.

[25] Childs (p. 179) suggests that the change came about in the nineteenth century.

[26] For this area of Angola see Egerton, pp. 186–8. Galvão and Selvagem, pp. 378–80, 457–8.

[27] Personal information. Also Childs, p. 215.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

On nights when there is little or no moonlight, the evening gatherings in the village sometimes, although not always, follow the sex division, with the men and boys in the *onjango*, and the women and girls at one or more of the kitchens. Discussion of affairs, with youth listening to age, is the usual order, but the time is often passed in the recital of folk-tales or in propounding riddles. 562 517

Riddles are more especially a field of youth but age also enjoys hearing the answers given. A favourite occupation of the men, especially by day, is *ocela*, a game known all over Africa and in other parts of the world as well.[1] Junod calls it 'the national game of Africa'.[2] 524 171

The Ovimbundu have brought recreation to the service of their work. Europeans are often irritated by the amount of conversation which Ovimbundu carry on during working hours, but on consideration it may be found that were it not for the conversation and other psychological aids, the work might be quite unendurable. This is especially the case with regard to road work and many types of contract labour. Road songs and work songs are of real help in keeping up morale and in prolonging endurance. Most of them seem to have been developed in the days of the caravan trade, but they have not been forgotten and are now used on many occasions. 461 [533]

A word about ceremonial occasions before leaving the social life of the village. Some rites and ceremonies are celebrated so quietly that they are not even social occasions. Most of them, however, are very social. This is especially true of funerals and post-mortuary rites. During visits to Ngendo I was able to witness two post-mortuary rites and the funeral of an important person of a near-by village. Other ceremonial occasions, such as weddings and a return from a trading expedition, also call for much sociability, but funerals and post-mortuary rites are the social occasions which occupy the most time and attention and make for the greatest conviviality. 764 [585]

[1] Known under the name *Mancala*, which is evidently a Bantu word, or taken from one; cf. the Umbundu *oku mangala*, to play. Hambly mentions *ocela*, op. cit., p. 219. See also Nevinson, op. cit., p. 91. The *New Standard Dictionary* (Funk and Wagnalls) attributes to Arabian origin both the game and the word *Mankalah*.

[2] H. A. Junod, *The Life of a South African Tribe*, 2nd ed., vol. i, p. 345 f.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

Kinship groupings: *oluse* and *oluina*.[1] Every Ocimbundu 613
belongs to an *oluse*, i.e. his father's kin, and to an *oluina*, i.e. his mother's kin. Each of these family groupings is divided into male and female lines (*onēlē yohonji*, 'the side of the bow'; *onēlē yohumba*, 'the side of the basket'). Uterine brothers and sisters belong to the same *oluse* and *oluina*, and to the male or female 'side' respectively, according to sex. It is of great importance to get a clear idea of this bilateral nature of these kinship groupings. Every student of [171]
ethnology will note the similarity of this division to the Herero [197]
oruzo and *eanda*.[2] Considering the affinities between the Herero and Umbundu languages, I think that these conceptions are probably related. Further study of other peoples of this Western Bantu zone may reveal cultural and racial as well as linguistic affinities.[3] The *oluse* and *oluina* of the Ovimbundu follow their own pattern.

The *oluse* consists of a large number of local village groups, 613
some of which recognize mutual relationships, but with no recog- 825
nized headship save in the case of the several royal families. The 621
only suggestion of any totemic relation or origin is with the royal families which have in common several taboos with regard to certain animals the flesh of which may not be eaten, nor the skins used, &c. Chief of these animals are the *ongulungu* (bushbuck, *Tragelaphus scriptus*), the *ocisema*[4] (the waterbuck, *Cobus defessa*

[1] *Olu-se*, perhaps 'the place of father', the root *se* being equivalent to the forms *sa*, *so*, *isia*; *olu-ina*, perhaps 'the place of mother'.

[2] See Vedder, pp. 185 ff. (in *The Native Tribes of South West Africa*): 'The Herero nation is divided into 2 large family groups . . . the Herero belongs to the *oruzo* of his father and also to the *eanda* of his mother.' J. Irle, *Die Herero* (Gutersloh, 1906), pp. 87–93.

[3] An interesting study of the VaNyaneka, one of the cattle-rearing people living between Ambo and Umbundu territory, was recently published: A. Lang et C. Tastevin, *La Tribu des Va-Nyaneka* (Mission Rohan-Chabot, Tome V), Corbeil: Impr. Créto. This volume was not available in England or the U.S.A. until 1940, and could not therefore have been used in the present study. I may now say, however, that the authors' treatment of the social structure is not such that it would help to solve the problem in question. The clans are described only from the standpoint of totemism. The maternal line of descent (*e-mala*) is briefly mentioned (p. 45), but not the corresponding paternal line. The authors' evident lack of familiarity with other Bantu material is a great drawback. The system used for the transcription of the vernacular is most confusing, owing to an evident lack of understanding of the Bantu phonetic and grammatical genius with consequent procrustean attempts to force it into foreign forms.

[4] The king's sons may not eat flesh of the *ocisema* lest they should *i wa sema*, 'have an impediment of speech'. This may be simply a taboo on grounds of *similia similibus* (or the obverse).

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

582 Cross-cousin marriage of the type practised by the Sotho[1] or Venda[2] tribes is quite foreign to Umbundu life. It is possible that the Ovimbundu formerly had some such type of cross-cousin marriage, but not for a very long time. Among the seventy-five schedules which I have collected illustrating marriage arrangements there are a few describing marriages which took place about ninety years ago. Magyar also wrote of the financial arrangements made for marriage in Viye about 1850.[3] Both of these sources, together with native tradition, indicate that, at least with regard to the financial arrangements, the cross-cousin type of marriage has not been practised by the Ovimbundu for more than one hundred
582 years. On the other hand, the Ovimbundu know nothing of the
171 exogamous marriage demanded by the Herero,[4] the Zulu,[5] &c. The Umbundu ideal includes marriage with a cross-cousin, but also goes out into the wider kinship group, as does the type of marriage of the Thonga,[6] which in turn is linked with that of the Ndau and the Shona group.[7]

582 The Umbundu principle that only 'those whose blood has
174 touched', or who can 'count' relatives in common, has for a very long time admitted of liberal application. There are cases on record of individuals belonging to regions as widely separated as Ciyaka and Ngalangi contracting marriage *after* having properly 'counted' their common relationship. These cases refer to grandparents of the present generation. It is probable that the diverse racial and cultural elements which have fused to form the Ovimbundu people long ago made imperative the broadening of the cross-cousin type of marriage to the 'ideal' or 'classic' form of (present) Umbundu tradition. An analogous process (with modifications) has continued to operate until to-day this very ideal of marriage within the kinship group is losing its hold in favour of yet more 'liberal' practices.

601 In summary, the Umbundu terminology for the relative by marriage and also the connexion between the ideas of relation by marriage and relation by blood may be seen by the following:

[1] W. M. Eiselen, 'Preferential Marriage: Correlation of the various modes among the Bantu of South Africa', *Africa*, 1928, pp. 413–28.
[2] H. A. Stayt, *The Bavenda* (London, 1931), chaps. xi and xv.
[3] Magyar, op. cit., p. 282 f.
[4] Vedder in Hahn *et al.*, op. cit., p. 187; Irle, op. cit., p. 89.
[5] Krige, op. cit., pp. 34–5. [6] Junod, op. cit., vol. i, pp. 253–64.
[7] Hoernlé in Shapera, op. cit., p. 93 f.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

The extent to which the order of the *vakuacisoko* exists at present or has existed among the Ovimbundu would be a very interesting subject of inquiry. It is certain that the institution does not exist throughout the territory but only in certain families which belong to the order and pass on membership in it by heredity. Whether there are certain regions where it is or was in the past more strongly held to is not known. It seems to be or to have been more strongly entrenched among the cattle-rearing people to the south, but it is also said to have been practised in Lupolo (Libolo) and even in the region of Luanda.[1] Among the Ovimbundu it seems to have been stronger in the past than at present. Few if any practising members of the set are now known. All 'coevals' or members of the set were in duty bound to render mutual assistance. All had mutual rights to the property of the others without complaint or remedy. These mutual rights seem to have been extended to the extreme limit of having intercourse with each other's wives, nor did the injury or even the death of one brought about by another allow the injured family to seek revenge or legal redress. It was the duty of *vakuacisoko* to bury their fellows, themselves digging the grave and attending to all expenses not already supplied by the family. Theirs was also the duty of burying strangers without family who would not be buried by others fearing defilement or responsibility for their debts. Bastos gives a tradition ascribing the origin of this institution to a wager laid between two chiefs.[2] It seems more probable, however, that it is connected with circumcision and tribal initiation. An analogous set of rights and duties is said to have existed among the Herero between 'coevals' circumcised at the same time.[3]

Tribal initiation for both boys (*oku lisevi:a evamba*) and girls (*uso vakãi*) is carried on in camps or 'schools' in the southern and south-eastern tribes of the Ovimbundu. These camps are regularly held in Kalukembe, Kakonda, and Ngalangi. Sporadic instances of individual camps have also occurred recently in Viye, Bailundu, Sambu, Wambu, Cingolo, and Cikuma. Even in those regions where camps are regularly held, only the children of certain families enter. It seems that there has been some passing on of the custom by heredity and, in general, there is intermarriage only between families and individuals who adhere to the initiation rites.

[1] Bastos, 1909, op. cit., pp. 67–70.
[2] Ibid., p. 69 f.
[3] Vedder in Hahn *et al.*, op. cit., p. 178.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

881 rites. It seems, however, that it is largely by imitation that the
171 camps have spread from Kalukembe, Kakonda, and Ngalangi into adjoining regions. The girls' camps have been less often imitated
881 in these other regions than have those for boys. Whether these
174 rites may have been taken over by the Ovimbundu from the practice of neighbouring peoples, or whether they may have survived from the customs of a culture previously prevalent in the region, is a question. In favour of the latter hypothesis is the fact that nearly all the neighbouring peoples seem to have or to have had these rites in one form or another and also that certain of the Umbundu kings are required to be circumcised before they can assume office. On the other hand, if the camps were held at all in former times, they must have been exceedingly inconspicuous to have escaped the notice of all the older writers. Bastos (1909) stated 'The Ovimbundu proper do not practise it (circumcision).'[1] Neither Silva Porto (1840–90), nor Magyar (1849–57), nor Pinheiro de Lacerda (*c.* 1790) makes any reference to initiation rites. The missionaries who came to the country in 1880 seem first to have encountered these camps on the Luimbi borders about 1900 but elsewhere hardly before 1915. The conclusion seems to be that it was toward the end of the rubber trade (1911) that the initiation camps were either revived or taken over from the neighbouring cultures to the south and east.[2] Whether initiation rites may spread further among the Ovimbundu or not remains to be seen. Their main emphasis seems to be quite contrary to the more typical trend of Umbundu education. The initiation camps of Ngalangi and Kakonda with their definite break from, and contrast to, the routine of life not only differ from the regular method of instruction but are quite contrary to it. In their methods of educating the young, the Ovimbundu certainly may be characterized as casual. The special times and occasions of education are the regular cycles of the social and economic life and special discipline to enforce specific teaching is used but rarely. The

[1] Bastos, op. cit., p. 50.

[2] Differences in these rites as practised by the various neighbouring tribes would form an interesting study. The majority initiate both boys and girls at or near puberty but some practise infant circumcision or circumcision at weaning or at the appearance of the permanent teeth. The Ambo are said to have let boys' initiation lapse but to attach much importance to rites for girls (Hahn *et al.*, op. cit., pp. 27–31). I do not know of any nearby tribes which have for girls either any excision or elongation of the labia. Various tests of virginity are used.

683 One of the commonest forms of punishment for sorcery was, and still is, banishment. Only the chief could pronounce the death penalty. Charges of sorcery are sometimes brought today to civil courts and to church courts under the guise of "poisoning".(1)

781 776 171 There are obvious gaps in the information on Umbundu religion and magic e.g. on spirits other than those of ancestors; on ritual connected with the ancestors; on productive and protective magic; on the work of the medicine-man as distinct from the diviner, and on the functions of the two separate offices of family priest. From existing accounts, however, Umbundu magico-religious concepts would appear to have much in common with those of the peoples to the east of the Plateau, and many of the words used for these concepts *(ngombo, ahamba, wanga, nganga* e.g.*)* are in fact the same. These peoples have been described in another section of the Survey.(2)

THE LIFE CYCLE

852 114 Childs' chapters on infancy, childhood, and adolescence form the main part of his book, and his treatment of the subject is much more detailed and on a deeper level than information offered by other writers,(3) and should be consulted.

BIRTH

844 A woman remains in her husband's village for the birth of her children. During the first birth, she is generally assisted by older women of the village, usually relatives of the husband. No man is present unless delayed labour entails the presence of a medical practitioner, or a diviner. [845] Difficult delivery is said to be caused by broken taboos, adultery on the part of the mother, sorcery, or the woman's own refusal to give birth. There is little ceremony connected with childbirth, and a woman may give birth to her second and later children alone when she is [846] in the fields. There is a customary lying-in period until the cord falls from the navel, but this is frequently ignored today.

845 *Twins* are welcomed but are considered prodigies whose birth requires the administrations of an *ocimbanda*.(4) Soon after the birth, and every month while the children are growing, the whole village takes part in a ceremony to preserve their lives. In the case of triplets, one is given to the paramount chief.(5)

553 *Naming* usually takes place, in the case of a first-born, on the day of its birth. Childs notes several factors:

(a) The name *(onduko)* should have been borne by a relative, whether living or dead, whose character and state of well-being are satisfactory; sometimes the child may be considered the re-incarnation of the deceased relative after whom he is named.

(1) Childs, personal communication. (2) McCulloch, 1951, pp.72-83.
(3) Hambly, (2) 1934, pp.212-33, and Cushman, 1944.
(4) Ennis, 1945. (5) Childs, 1949, p.83.

[Childs, op. cit, p. 87-]

882 and young manhood, and to which he will bring his wife. In this house a kind of trial marriage *(uponji)* takes place. The young man will *oku tumisa* ("cause to send") a male friend to ask permission of a girl's mother and
582 also to bring her to his house each night. The girl is called *eponji*. (The custom may also be called *uvaisi*, the girl *ombaisi*.) A young man may first *tumisa* at about seventeen or eighteen years, if he has sufficient money or goods to make the "betrothal" payment (*itambelo* - "enticements" or *oku lupula ikuelure* - "chasing away jealousies"). The amount of the payment (which is made to the girl's parents) varies with locality, wealth and status, but is usually about one tenth of the amount of the marriage payment proper. The amounts of both payments are increasing rapidly.[1]
[833] The nature of the intercourse is carefully circumscribed, and the girl is
[585] warned by her mother not to let intromission take place. Proofs of virginity are required on the marriage morning, and there are severe sanctions against premarital pregnancy. Childs' informants stressed that the chief purpose of the custom is that the two young people should get to know each other as well as possible with marriage in view. Ennis however[2] states that *uvaisi* does not necessarily lead to marriage and may be entered upon without the intention of marriage; the girl may leave the man if she does not like him, and if the *uvaisi* is broken off both may marry other persons without any difficulties.

INITIATION[3]

881 Tribal initiation for boys *(oku lisevisa evamba)* and girls *(uso wakai)*
171 is carried on in camps or "schools" in the southern and south-eastern Umbundu chiefdoms, especially in Kalukembe, Kakonda, and Ngalangi. Sporadic instances of individual camps have also occurred recently in Viye, Bailundu, Sambu, Wambu, Cingolo and Cikuma. Even in regions where camps are regularly held, only the children of certain families enter. There appears to have been some passing on of the custom by heredity, and, in general, there is intermarriage only between families and individuals who adhere to the initiation rites. It is not known whether the rites have been taken over by the Ovimbundu from neighbouring peoples, or whether they represent a custom formerly widespread in Umbundu country. Initiation camps are not mentioned by the earlier writers.

Childs gives little information about what goes on in initiation camps, apart from pointing out that in making a definite break from the routine of life they contrast with other aspects of Umbundu education, and that "the hardship and cruelty of initiation camps have their parallel in the trading and slave-raiding expeditions of the past." His statement that "as an 'educational institution' [the initiation camps] do not seem to fit into the culture" is not very clear. From the few details given by Hambly[4] Umbundu camps appear to be identical with those of the tribes to the east, and here one of the most important aspects of the camps is their ritually-emphasised contrast with regular life.[5]

(1) Childs, personal communication.
(2) 1945.
(3) Childs, op.cit., pp.115-7.
(4) (2) 1934, pp.226f.
(5) See McCulloch, 1951, pp.85-91.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

argued that the cattle might have been brought along the course of the Zambezi and Kwando there is the objection that there are here several tsetse fly belts. On the contrary, cattle-producing country in the southwest and south of Angola is far more accessible than the Rhodesian plateau. 174 231

In the south there is the cultural habit of digging wells, especially among the Vakuanyama; but the Vachokue have not developed this trait. The substrata underlying the sand of southern Angola hold water which serves through the dry season, a fact which is advantageously employed by the cattle-keepers. The Vachokue lack this well-digging habit, and, even if subsurface water were present, the transient Ovimbundu would have lacked opportunity to dig for it when passing through hostile country. 312 174

The acquisition of cattle by the Ovimbundu is of great importance, because it is concerned with the grafting of a series of pastoral traits on a culture in no way originally associated with pastoral pursuits. The truth of this will later be made clear by examination of historical and ethnological evidence. 233

Geographical considerations give a picture of the Ovimbundu situated in naturally fortified country from which they had access to four surrounding areas, whose cultural characters agree well with the determinism of topography and climate. The natural advantages of the central highlands, and the results of contact with each of the adjacent areas, are points which will be developed in appropriate sections throughout the ensuing chapters. 133

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

The kernel of the migratory problem of the Ovimbundu is reached 101
when Torday traces out the history of the Kimbundu, for the Kimbundu are present-day neighbors of the Ovimbundu, to whom they are closely allied in language and culture (*ovi* is a Bantu plural prefix, which was perhaps used to express the inclusion of Kimbundu and Babunda under the general name Ovimbundu).

Torday's sifting of the historical evidence results in the conclusion 174
that the Kimbundu came from the northeast, fighting their way to 167
the Luando. These Kimbundu divided, with civil war as a conse- 101
quence. One section crossed the river Kwanza, south of which they specialized in agriculture after becoming sedentary. Their sub-chief they called the *Kalunga*, which is the present-day word used by the Ovimbundu in greeting their chiefs. Traditions of the Ovimbundu point to the northeast as a center from which they spread at least ten generations ago. The rise of the powerful kingdom of Lunda dates from the seventeenth century, and although the details of this concentration of power in northeast Angola are unknown the general effects are understood. There was a great displacement of tribes in a southerly and southwesterly direction. In connection with the suggestion that the Ovimbundu came from the northeast of Angola, there is the necessity for recording the absence of even a fragment of historical evidence or tribal tradition indicating that the Ovimbundu came from the south or the east of Angola.

Cultural affinities of the Ovimbundu with tribes of the southwest 174
Congo in particular, and with western Bantu culture in general, 171
strongly support the foregoing deductions from historical sources (chapter X).

There is a probability that tribal disturbances resulting from the rise of the Lunda Empire led to a spread of the Vachokue over eastern Angola. Some of the effects of this contact have already been mentioned in chapter II, where contacts of the Ovimbundu and the Vachokue were discussed. The journey brought me into contact with the Vachokue at Cangamba, Katoko, and Ngalangi, of which Cangamba is the most easterly.

Witnessing of initiation ceremonies combined with observation of physique, language, and artifacts, leads me to agree with Torday that Cangamba is probably the ancient center of Vachokue culture. As one proceeds from Cangamba westward this type of culture becomes thinner as the borders of the country occupied by the Ovimbundu are approached. On the border line between the cultures of the Vachokue and the Ovimbundu, notably at Ngongo near Ngalangi,

174 there is tribal and cultural miscegenation. Both Umbundu and
171 Vachokue languages are spoken; boys of Ngalangi were seen to wear
[881] initiation costumes similar to those worn at Cangamba by the Vachokue, but on proceeding farther westward into territory exclusively occupied by the Ovimbundu, such initiation ceremonies are either absent or attenuated in ritual.

144 Elende, one center of research among the Ovimbundu, repre-
101 sents the purest Umbundu speech and culture observable at the present day. But in chapter IV some physical resemblance of the Ovimbundu to the Vachokue is noted. Warfare commonly resulted in the taking of slaves, a fact which might account for an apparent infusion of Vachokue blood in some of the Ovimbundu.

174 The historical data suggest a northern or northeastern starting
167 point of Umbundu migrations. Therefore an inquiry into the ethnology of these areas will be useful in showing the kind of culture with which the Ovimbundu were in contact before their settlement in the Benguela Highlands. If historical sources disclose the nature of northern Angolan culture from the year A.D. 1500 onward, such evidence can then be considered in relation to cultural traits of the Ovimbundu at the present day.

The establishment of strong cultural resemblances between extant Umbundu culture and older cultural patterns of northern Angola, would tend to strengthen the evidence of history respecting the northern origin of the Ovimbundu.

131 The regions dealt with in the following summary of ethnological
174 facts are the Cabinda Enclave to the north of the Congo estuary, the region of San Salvador, the hinterlands of Loanda and Benguela, and the area of northern Angola between Lat. 7° and 9° S. and Long. 13° to 22° E. This covers the whole area with which the Ovimbundu are likely to have been in contact before entering their present home.

175 My survey begins with the observations of Andrew Battell in
101 1596. His account deals mainly with the northwestern part of Angola, a country bordering on and actually including territory now occupied by the Ovimbundu, who in all probability came in contact with the Jaggas, whose habits of life are described by Battell.

Torday and Joyce identify the Jaggas with the present-day Bayaka, whose cultural resemblances to the Ovimbundu are examined later. In my opinion, the Jaggas correspond well with the Bihéan section of the Ovimbundu, an itinerant and exceedingly warlike people.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

As early as 1600 there were cattle as far north as Benguela, and the Jaggas regarded these as a most valuable part of their plunder. Palms are a characteristic part of the vegetation of Angola north of the Benguela Highlands. Evidently the Jaggas moved extensively in northern Angola because they cut down palms for making wine (Battell, p. 30). The usual method is to tap the top of a standing tree, but the Jaggas were an itinerant people who did not cultivate palms. 175 171 [824]

Sprinkling the blood of sacrificed animals on a newly kindled fire I have mentioned in connection with Umbundu rites celebrating the founding of a new village. The Jaggas carried out this ceremony before a raiding expedition, when cows and other animals were sacrificed (Battell, p. 33). Battell mentions the use of red *tukula* wood for personal decoration. This wood (*Pterocarpus tinctorius*) is used in many parts of Angola at the present time. [824]

Reference to Battell confirms the information given to me in relation to an old iron gong obtained at Ngalangi. He says (p. 20), "The general did strike his gong, which is an instrument of war that soundeth like a bell, and presently made an oration with a loud voice." [534]

Battell reported that the Jaggas wore beads of ostrich eggshell. Ravenstein, the editor of this volume in the Hakluyt Series, seems to doubt this statement, saying, "There are no ostriches in Angola, and as to beads made of ostrich eggs I can give no explanation." I noted the presence of captive ostriches in southern Angola as far north as Gambos. The Vakuanyama women greatly value their long necklaces of ostrich-eggshell beads. Necklaces made in the north of Angola are traded to the south and conversely, each kind of necklace having a high value due to remoteness of origin. This instance, like many other points, confirms the reliability of Battell's observations in Angola. [237] [114]

Father Jerome Merolla (1682) describes the poison ordeal which was used from the Congo estuary to San Salvador (Churchills' Voyages, II, p. 675). "The aforesaid oath is administered to the supposed traitor by a sort of wizard, who, making a certain composition out of the juices of herbs, serpent's flesh, pulp of fruits, and divers other things, gives it to the supposed delinquent to drink. If guilty (as they tell you) he will immediately fall down in a swoon or trembling to the ground." The marimba was used, and a double iron gong was carried before a chief and struck by an attendant. [695]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

175 O. Dapper (Description de l'Afrique, 1732, p. 369) shows a scene
•171 in which an ax, such as I obtained from the Vasele country, is being
[412] used for beheading a slave.

Cavazzi (Istorica descrizione, etc., Bologna, 1687) describes the three kingdoms of Congo, Matamba, and northern Angola. The
[325] poison ordeal, the scapegoat, the blacksmith's bellows (pp. 101, 170)
[534] are all traits known to the Ovimbundu. The musical instrument made from a large gourd, which has a ridged board attached for rubbing with a stick, is the type I collected. Cavazzi pictures the double iron gong and the long drum held between the knees. He
[782] also shows a rain-maker (p. 214) and the sacrifice of two hundred victims at the accession of a king (p. 210).

174 Consideration of the history of maize in Africa is of importance
243 in connection with these early writings, as this grain is the staple agricultural product of the Ovimbundu. I am indebted to Dr.
[113] Berthold Laufer for access to his unpublished research on this subject. From the following facts one may assume that, in all probability, the maize culture of the Ovimbundu was derived from the Congo region before their migration into the Benguela Highlands.

175 Father Jerome Merolla remarks that maize was growing in the
243 neighborhood of San Salvador (1683–92). The native names were *mampunni* and *massambuta;* from this corn an alcoholic beverage was prepared. According to Cavazzi (Ehrmann, Geschichte der merkwürdigsten Reisen, XIII, 1794) maize was not intensively cultivated by the Negroes of lower Guinea, though it thrives well and may be harvested twice or thrice a year. The natives said that the grain
[177] was brought by the Portuguese, but they did not esteem it highly, and were accustomed to use it as food for pigs.

Bosman (p. 312) records that prior to the arrival of the Portuguese, Negroes were entirely ignorant of *milho* ("maize"). The account of Duarte Lopez preserved by Filippo Pigafetta states that the Negroes consider maize the vilest of all grains, so that it is given to swine. This contempt and lack of knowledge of the food value, combined with ignorance of methods of preparation, suggest a recent introduction (Pigafetta, translation by M. Hutchinson, 1881, p. 40). Dapper (Description de l'Afrique, 1732, p. 345) also mentions the cultivation of maize. Battell lived as prisoner in northern Angola about the year 1600, consequently his records of the use of the great Guinea wheat (maize), which the natives call *mas-importo*, give early evidence for the use of this grain (Hakluyt Soc., 1901, pp. 9, 11, 67).

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

The foregoing facts, when compared with field work among the Ovimbundu, indicate that the old culture of the Congo and northern Angola bears a strong resemblance to Umbundu culture at the present day. A more detailed analysis of this resemblance is made in chapter X. 174

The following notes dealing with exploration in Angola (1800-1930) are adduced for critical comparison with my own observations among the Ovimbundu. 175 171

The work of Sir R. F. Burton describing the exploration of Lacerda and other Portuguese pioneers, is more useful for geographical than for ethnological information. Lacerda's journey to Czambe, south of Lake Moero, was performed in 1798. A mention of veneration for the dead and consultation of the deceased on all occasions of war or of good fortune, is made (p. 127). These are important points in the present tribal life of the Ovimbundu. [114] [769]

Bowditch (1824) writes from information given to him by Almeida and Saldanha. There are valuable references to the Vacilenge, a people adjacent to the Ovimbundu, who refused to kill their cattle, "rather than do which they will endure famine to extremity." This note was made about Long. 15° E. and Lat. 15° S. (p. 34). The cattle were milked, and cattle-raiding by the Ovimbundu was common at this time. Many present-day Ovimbundu do not milk their cattle, but the Vacilenge still follow their milking custom observed before 1824. 175 101 234

Livingstone's journey through northeast and northern Angola in 1853 contains references to the Vacholue who seemed bent on plunder (I, p. 370). Livingstone noted cotton spinning, which I recorded as an occupation of males of the Ovimbundu at Elende. Livingstone, like other early travelers, encountered caravans of Bihéans (Ovimbundu) bearing elephants' tusks and beeswax, commodities, which, along with slaves, formed the chief merchandise of these caravans from the Benguela Highlands (p. 466). Livingstone notes and sketches (Plate XIII, Fig. 10) the double-handled hoe (p. 442) which is still used. 175 171 [439] [412]

J. J. Monteiro (I, p. 61) saw the poison ordeal administered. The poison itself was prepared from the thick hard bark of a large tree (*Erythrophlæum guineense*). The place of observation was Mongue Grande, just south of the Congo estuary, and again Monteiro was present when the poison cup was given to two women at Ambrizette. Of this ordeal there is more to be said when discussing the culture contacts of the Ovimbundu, because the ordeal is a basic factor of [695] [824]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

171 wide distribution in Africa (C. Wiedemann, 1909) and the ceremony
175 still survives among the Ovimbundu in modified form.

[114] Though an informative writer, Monteiro is sometimes vague; he says (I, p. 278) that circumcision is a universal custom among the blacks of Angola. In view of the extent of Angola, the diversity of tribes, and the fact that Monteiro traveled over only a small part of the country, this information is misleading.

Monteiro is the only writer in whose works I have found a reference to the Vasele tribe; probably no part of Angola has been so neglected as the Esele country in the hinterland of Novo Redondo. At the present day the Vasele have a reputation for cannibalism.
[266] Monteiro saw human flesh eaten at Cuacra, while the skulls of the victims were placed on adjacent trees. Monteiro states (II, p. 167) that on the death of a king the Mucelis (Vasele) put out all the fires in the kingdom; these were relighted by the succeeding king who
[321] used fire produced by rubbing two sticks together. The flat beads of shell called *dongos*, made from *Achatina monstaryis* (II, p. 168), are made today and traded to the far south of Angola, where their novelty assures them a value far beyond their intrinsic worth. I was fortunate in obtaining an example of the old beheading ax mentioned by Monteiro (II, p. 157) and sketched by Cavazzi (p. 210). Par-
[262] boiled and roasted rats were offered to me as food; Monteiro mentions the offering of a roasted rat on a skewer (I, p. 99).

The account of Commander V. L. Cameron, who left Zanzibar for his journey across Africa in 1873, mentions several points of anthropological importance in relation to the Angolan section of his
[756] journey. Cameron saw a net-covered medicine-man of the Kibokue (Vachokue) wearing a mask and a kilt of grass (p. 384). The function
[524] of this man was to frighten devils from the woods. The contest in which boys discharge their arrows at a rolling root was seen by Cameron near Kagnombe (Cangamba?). Skulls of victims killed in
[787] war were spiked on poles (p. 399). The diviner was followed by attendants who struck iron gongs, while the diviner himself shook a rattle made of basket-work in the form of a dumb-bell (p. 404). Cameron gives an accurate description of the divination basket and its use without going into details. These I have been able to supply
[482] (chapter IX). The explorer met caravans of Bihéans, renowned carriers then as they are today. They were usually drunk and abusive; in some instances they attempted to rob the stragglers.
000 The use of caterpillars as food is noted (p. 416): "A man cut open

The use of caterpillars as food is noted (p. 46): "A man cut open [262]
a large cocoon, extracted the contents, and smacked his lips with 171
great gusto." My field notes mention the use of caterpillars as food. 175

Capello and Ivens (1877–80) remark on the burial places of [766]
hunters which are distinguishable by the skulls of antelopes, buffalo, and hippopotamuses, stuck on upright poles, mixed with skulls of oxen killed in honor of the defunct. The writers noted that a heap of stones protected the body. I photographed two types of cairn in the regions of Ganda and Luimbale respectively. Capello and Ivens are not precise in their locality, but I judge it to have been Long. 17° E. and Lat. 13° S., a considerable distance from my own observations (Plates XXXII, Fig. 1; LXXIV, Fig. 1).

I photographed the stilt-walkers at the final stages of the initiation [481]
ceremonies at Cangamba. These men had no costumes; on the contrary they were almost naked but were covered with white clay. [292]
Capello and Ivens (p. 295), saw a stilt-walker with a feathered mask and a netting costume. Such attire I saw on an Uluchazi medicine-man, but not on the stilt-walkers (Plate LXXXI, Figs. 1, 2).

I was unable to obtain information about the stilt-walkers, but 693
Capello states that they castigated misdemeanants, punished shameless women, and accused criminals. Capello and Ivens were 187 miles to the northwest of my area of observation. The Uluchazi medicine-man, who appeared with the stilt-walkers during my visits, was said to make bad magic for women. The men ignored him but women gathered round in a derisive way; they quickly scattered when he pursued them.

Serpa Pinto, who made his journey across Angola in 1878, has 175
so many references to customs and objects still extant, that I propose 114
to tabulate his observations because of their value in showing the preservation of indigenous traits in spite of Portuguese contacts.

The body of a chief is buried with a covering of oxhide. Many 175
oxen are sacrificed at the death of a king. The heir to the deceased 766
is bound to sacrifice his whole herd in order to regale his people and give peace to the departed (S. Pinto, I, p. 63). The Ovimbundu conform at the present time to similar methods of burial and sacrifice.

Near Huambo, Serpa Pinto saw in every village a kind of "temple 175
for conversation." This is the ombanga, that I have described and [345]
photographed (Plate XLVIII, Fig. 1). It is the house in which all males foregather for the evening meal, which is brought by their women (I, p. 96).

The gathering and eating of caterpillars is described. This con- [262]
tinues today (I, p. 120).

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175 [316] [325] Serpa Pinto saw shafts for the working of iron ore in the neighborhood of Cubango. The ore was mixed with charcoal and smelted in shallow pits. It is stated that the iron was sometimes tempered with ox-grease and salt. The bellows are of the type made at Elende (I, p. 128). Of the tempering process I have no confirmation.

175 787 [764] Somewhere near Bihé Serpa Pinto saw the ceremony of questioning a corpse which was made to sway to and fro, the people believing all the while that it does so without human intervention. The diviner declared that the soul of a dead person will tell who caused the death (I, p. 130). I observed and photographed this ceremony (Plate XLV, Fig. 1).

[695] The ordeal of the poison cup is described; blood-letting, and divination by shaking articles in a basket are also mentioned. Pinto says that in the articles that appear uppermost the diviner reads what his hearers are desirous of learning of the past, present, or future. Sorcery and rain-making are likewise briefly mentioned (I, p. 132). The divination basket, the poison ordeal, and rain-making, are Umbundu cultural traits today.

171 224 Here Pinto illustrates the existing practice of mounting the skulls of animals killed by a hunter on a pole in the village. There is a further reference to this custom among the Ambuellas (I, p. 333). These instances, combined with those personally noted, give a wide distribution for the practice (I, p. 177).

175 [304] Pinto saw the operation of tooth mutilation among the Luimba. The operation was performed with a knife which was struck by repeated light blows (I, p. 209).

[711] Pinto illustrates arrowheads in use in 1879 (I, pp. 277, 346). These are exactly the same as those made and used in 1929 (Plate XVII, Figs. 1–9).

[412] Axes used by the Luchazi are sketched with a detail that shows the old forms to persist without alteration (II, p. 36).

[321] Water-pipes made from horns and gourds by the Luina of eastern Angola are of the forms now used in that region, also by the Ovimbundu of the present day (II, pp. 33, 37).

175 114 For use in checking and supplementing my observations Serpa Pinto's book was found to be of the greatest service, though the precise locality was sometimes difficult to identify. This explorer, in common with others, scattered his ethnological observations among descriptions of the route and botanical, zoological, and other notes.

LUX traveled from Loanda due east, following the Kwanza on the northern bank between 9° and 10° S. Lat., and so into Lunda.

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The picture of types gathered at Ngalangi (Plate LXXXIX, Fig. 3) shows, reading from left to right along the back row, then along the front row in the same direction: an Ocimbundu; an Ocivokue; a man of the Vangangella; an Uluchazi woman; a Lunda man; and two types of the Vangangella. 142 101

The M'Bunda man and woman photographed at Cangamba display characteristic deformation of the upper central incisors (Plate XCI, Figs. 1, 2). Photographs of a Mussurongo man and two women, taken about a hundred miles east of Malange, show no great difference from the Ovimbundu except in their shorter stature (Plates LXX, Figs. 1, 2; LXXI, Figs. 1, 2). The Bushman (Plate LXIX, Figs. 1, 2) shows a type found wandering in small bands in the south of Angola. These photographs were taken at Cassanga. [304]

The dress and personal ornaments of the tribes dwelling to the south of the Ovimbundu (Plates LIX–LXVIII) are entirely different from the clothing and decorative styles observed in the areas occupied by the Ovimbundu. This statement is true with regard to bodily covering, ornaments, tooth mutilation, use of pigment, scarification, and hairdressing. 171 301 304

In respect of all these factors, males and females of the Ovimbundu have distinctive patterns which do not appear to have influenced, or to have been influenced by the styles around them. [177]

In working southward from Elende I passed through typical Umbundu cultures until the vicinity of Kipungo was reached. At this place the change in physical appearance, ornaments, and hairdressing was remarkable both for its abruptness and distinctiveness. But the change from agricultural to pastoral pursuits is gradual.

A comparison of photographs indicates at once the truth of this statement, which can be further illustrated by a detailed description of the ornaments observed from Kipungo to Mongua.

By far the most important of these is the circular *ombo* shell made from the basal part of a gastropod shell of the genus *Conus* Linn; and allied forms. These are highly prized, not because of any intrinsic worth, but on account of strong sentiment arising from their bequest, which is usually in the female line. I have, however, seen a few males of the Vakwanyama wearing these shells. For the old *ombo* shells monetary offers equal to the earnings of a woman for a period of six months were made, but without success. One woman wavered somewhat, but finally decided that she dared not return to her home without her *ombo* shells. From a Portuguese trader I bought, for a small sum, *ombo* shells showing stages in manufacture. 301 321 [825] [562]

301 The new ornaments had acquired no sentimental value, therefore
321 their price was moderate.

[171] *Ombo* shells are to be seen in use from Kipungo southward through Huila, among the Luvando, and among the Vakuanyama of southern Angola. In the places mentioned one may judge the social status
[554] of a woman by the number of *ombo* shells she wears. A principal wife is usually well supplied with these ornaments.

302 In this southern journey it was noticeable that there was an
171 increasing use of red pigment which is lavishly employed for smearing
[294] every kind of ornament, the body, and the hair. Leather belts and skirts of Vakuanyama women are thickly coated with red pigment which is invariably mixed with grease. The red powder is prepared
[824] by desiccating a red wood called *tukula* by the Vakuanyama, a name which is used through Angola and the southern Congo area.

412 From Kipungo southward through the Vakuanyama country
171 there is a notable absence of decorative wooden hair combs. On the contrary, delicately carved combs are used by both men and women of the Ovimbundu. The Vasele make such combs, but by far the best
[532] examples are made and used by the Vachokue tribe of eastern Angola. Here the decorative design usually includes a well-carved human figure at the top of the comb.

301 Among the Vakuanyama, necklaces of disks made from ostrich
[237] eggshell are worn by the women only. A woman of importance has a dozen loops of such necklaces, each loop being about 125 cm long.
[551] These necklaces are so greatly esteemed that only after much persuasion can a woman be induced to part with a single link. Perhaps, as is the case with *ombo* shell, there is more than the intrinsic value to be considered. One point is constantly noticed in considering social status and ornament. All the wives of a wealthy man, especially among the Vakuanyama, are made to advertise their husband's position by the profusion of their ornaments and the quality of their leather skirts and belts.

[321] There is, in addition to the necklaces of ostrich-eggshell beads, a highly prized necklace made from small perforated disks of shell having a diameter of about a centimeter. The Vakuanyama women smear a necklace of this kind with grease and *tukula* powder; the
[435] value of a necklace 125 cm long is equivalent to that of an ox. In describing these necklaces there is interest in noting that they are traded to the south of Angola from places six hundred miles to the
[939] north; therefore their value is to some extent dependent on rarity and distant origin.

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Young unmarried girls of the Luvando tribe wear a large number of leg-bands which extend from the ankles to the knees as a sign that puberty has not been reached. These leg-bands are somewhat roughly twisted from fibrous roots and twigs from which the cortex has been removed. Collars of tough, elastic, cane-like substance are worn by Luvando women, and so numerous are these that the neck is entirely covered. These cane neck-bands are ornamented with burned, incised, geometrical patterns, and, in keeping with other ornaments, are thickly smeared with grease and red powder from *tukula* wood (Plate LIX, Figs. 1, 2). 301 124 [881] [531]

Women of the Vakipungo and Vakuanyama wear heavy coils of brass or copper wire on their forearms. In southern Angola women wear bracelets of twisted wire which are identical with those worn by Zulu women. Bracelets of beaten trade brass, ornamented with incised geometrical designs, are worn by women of the Ovimbundu, Vakuanyama, Luvando, and Vakipungo tribes. Ovimbundu women now depend largely on trade goods for personal ornament. 171 301 439 [531]

Ovimbundu men and women are dressed in trade cloth. Unmarried girls wear one piece of cloth which hangs from the armpits to the knees. A married woman drapes herself with two pieces of cloth, a skirt hanging from her girdle, and an upper piece so folded as to hold her baby tightly to her back. Men wear a single piece of cloth as a skirt; the upper part of the body is bare (Plates XLIX–LI). From the region of Kipungo to the southern border, clothing is of leather. The Vachokue wear trade cloth or bark cloth. 291 171

Hairdressing is of many styles. Ovimbundu women braid their hair neatly in strands across their foreheads, and small blue and white trade beads are used to decorate the braids. The hairdressing of the Ovimbundu women is different from that in any other part of Angola. At an early age the hair is trained into two long loops at the back of the head. Then these are covered with black cloth which is bound tightly. The two loops are afterwards studded with brass-headed tacks obtained from a store (Plate XL, Fig. 3). 302 171

Luvando women in the region of Kipungo dress the hair to form a large triangular projection from the back of the head. Girls of the Vaheneca tribe near Huila mass the hair with clay to form large "cock's comba." Women of Gambos pass each small plait of hair through hollow reeds. Humbe women do not redden or grease their hair which is massed into three high ridges on the top, while at the sides there are hornlike projections. Vakuanyama women dress their hair with grease and *tukula* powder. A principal wife builds up her

302 A principal wife builds up her
[595] hair into five high cones. Vachokue women mass their hair into separate balls shaped and held by clay and red coloring matter.
171 I know of no hairdressing for Vachokue men, but ornamental wooden combs are sometimes used.

304 In only one place have I seen a nose pin worn, namely, the Esele country of Vila Nova de Selles. The fashion is out of date, but women of only twenty-five years of age have the septum of the nose bored; evidently the custom has not been obsolete for a long period (Plate LXXV, Fig. 1).

177 The most popular European importations are blue cloth with
439 white spots, metal hair combs, beads, and bright metal crosses
301 bearing a figure of the Virgin Mary with the infant Jesus. This ornament has penetrated to districts far away from Christian missions, and its wide dispersal shows that a newly introduced and attractive ornament from a foreign source may readily be accepted by tribes of different cultures.

517 There are interesting points of psychology in the attitude of the
391 Ovimbundu toward European importations. Only a few patterns of cloth are favored, and there is no sale for any other design. Some designs are thought to be appropriate for young girls while others are favored by older women. The same may be said of colored beads, for whereas both blue and white beads are the usual decoration for young women and immature girls, red beads are worn chiefly by the elderly women.

178 A consideration of personal ornament establishes the general truth that in scarification, hairdressing, tooth mutilation, the use of red powder and grease, the anointing of the hair with palm oil, and the wearing of trade cloth, leather, or bark cloth, there is little exchange of styles. There are diffusions in language and other cultural traits, but decorative elements which have for a long period been regarded as distinctive of tribal life are rigidly preserved.

824 *Okolalulu.* This tree has leaves which are used in treating a skin disease.
813 *Urendangulure.* This small tree, only three feet in height, gives straight twigs which are used in making arrow shafts.

FOOD SUPPLY

COLLECTING AND HUNTING

222 Collecting of natural products which serve as food substances is
462 chiefly in the hands of women and children, though an exception has to be made in the instance of honey, which is gathered by men and boys.

Boys diligently search for nests, noting their location so as to be able to visit them again when the fledglings are large enough to serve as food. Large numbers of women and children may be seen
252 gathering caterpillars in gourds The insides of the caterpillars are
222 squeezed into boiling water to make soup.

When a cloud of locusts appears, as in 1925, the creatures are gathered. They are sometimes fried, or they may be boiled in water, dried, and preserved with salt in earthenware pots.

A number of miscellaneous items of the food supply were mentioned in connection with names of trees whose fruits are gathered.

223 Boys engaged in food-gathering usually carry small bows and
[411] blunt wooden arrows (*ocilavi*). One type of bird arrow is fixed to the bowstring. The forward end of the arrow is split so that it may contain small stones that are ejected when the string is released. From the wild fig tree mucilage is obtained and this is boiled until it forms a thick paste which is smeared on the boughs of trees.
[231] Some of the small birds captured in this way are eaten, others are kept in wicker cages made by children.

343 In all parts of Angola large cylindrical beehives may be seen
● 171 fixed high in the trees (Plate XC, Fig. 2). Two types of hive have been noted in particular. In the Elende district a hive is made by opposing two half cylinders of wood each about three feet long, so forming a hive which has a diameter of one foot. The ends are covered, with the exception of a small round hole. The whole structure is bound round with grass which is kept in position by lashings of bark. In the neighborhood of Cassanga a difference in the structure of the hives was noticed. This type of hive is made from a cylinder of strong reddish bark, the edges of which are fastened together with stout wooden pegs. The dimensions are the same as for the hive used in Elende, but the hive of bark is uncovered.

231 In the Elende district honey of wild bees is removed from the hives in the months of August and December. One man ascends
[see pp. 138-140, category 116]

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the tree in order to lower the hive with a long rope of bark or plaited 231
fiber, while beneath the tree men are prepared to take the hive, which is opened over a smoky fire. The men wear no protection, consequently they are badly stung. Boys are encouraged to help, and those who run away receive no honey. Honey may be eaten 263
alone or with manioc. No drink is made from honey only, but 273
ochaa is the name given to beer with honey in it. *Ovingundu* is a drink made from pounded corn which has been soaked in water to which a little honey has been added. The drink is allowed to remain untouched over night; thus it becomes sweet and is mildly intoxicating.

Wax is a very important item of trade. In the remote places 439
natives bring to small trading posts balls of wax which are about 257
two pounds in weight. These in former days were a standard of [436]
exchange in terms of which other values could be measured. These balls of wax are made into large cakes for foreign export. In the Easle country a fiber strainer is used for cleaning the wax. Honey is sometimes dried in very large baskets which are three feet in diameter and two inches deep. These baskets were not observed among the Ovimbundu, but they are used in the region of Cassanga in southern Angola. The honey of wild bees when eaten in the comb is palatable; it would be more so if one could disregard the presence of numerous dead bees.

The bow is the chief weapon of the hunter. The release of the 411
arrow is made with the index and middle fingers (Plate XXXIX, 171
Fig. 1). I have observed this method among the Ovimbundu of 224
the Benguela Highlands, in the region of Kipungo, in the far south among the Vakuanyama, and among the Vasele of the Novo Redondo hinterland. Arrows differ considerably in pattern as the illustrations show (Plate XVII, Figs. 1-9); the Ovimbundu have arrow-points of excellent workmanship. The manufacture of these arrow-points is [326]
one of the most skilled occupations of the blacksmith. Each man makes his own shafts and feathers them. The arrows of the Vasele have leaf-shaped iron points; so also have those used by the Vakuanyama.

Among the Ovimbundu are specialists who make bows from [463]
elastic woods called *usia* and *ocambia*. The bow itself is *ohonji* and the arrow is *usongo*. At the third shot I saw a young Ocimbundu boy split a cane which was placed upright at a distance of thirty-three feet. The throwing club (*ohunya*) is used for killing small game such as hares.

226 spear eight feet long, the end of which consisted of ten sharp prongs
462 of palm stem (Plate LXXIII, Fig. 1).

Near Cangamba in eastern Angola, fishing in the Kwando River
[171] occupied numerous men and women of the mixed tribes in the district, namely, Vachokue, Luchazi, and Babunda. Men paddled into midstream in small bark canoes from which fishing operations were directed. The fishermen carried small conical string nets, which were attached to stakes in such a way that the openings of the nets faced upstream. Vachokue women, working in pairs, dragged baskets against the current (Plate LXXXV, Figs. 1, 2).

AGRICULTURE AND COOKING

343 *Osila* is the Umbundu word for the granary which stands on
243 wooden supports (Plate XLIV, Fig. 1); this *osila* is for the restricted family, and there is one *osila* for every house. The Ovimbundu store their corn in bulk, but in the Esele country I noted that the cobs themselves were carefully packed. Each Ocimbundu girl culti-
[432] vates a small patch of ground, the produce of which she is at liberty to sell in order to buy brass ornaments, beads, and palm oil.

In addition to maize, barley, oats, and wheat, with here and
241 there a little rye, are occasionally grown. There are three colors of beans, red, white, and black. There is no attempt to keep the varieties
[651] separate, so they cross-fertilize freely. The Ovimbundu try to
[438] cultivate a surplus of beans and maize which they use to pay their taxes to the Portuguese, likewise to sell at the stores of traders.

252 Corn is pounded on the rock which has been used for generations
512 after it has been consecrated by sprinkling the blood of a chicken. Pounding begins as early as five o'clock in the morning, before sunrise, and from that time to sunset the pounding-rock is in use. The
[521] rock is evidently regarded as a meeting place for social intercourse; it is undoubtedly the center of village gossip so far as the women are concerned (Plate XXXVI, Fig. 2).

As corn alone is considered a poor food, it is sprinkled on boiling water to which beans are added. Cooking goes on from early morning to sunset over a slow fire. Children sometimes receive as their evening meal a thick plastic cake of mushed corn to which green leaves of a squash are added.

252 There are five kinds of manioc resembling one another in general appearance, but the Ovimbundu distinguish the plants, and reserve for each what they consider to be appropriate preparation. The method varies for sweet and bitter varieties of manioc.

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The flesh of goats, sheep, and pigs might be more frequently 262
used if these animals were bred and cared for under some system [232]
of animal husbandry. The Ovimbundu are familiar with the preser- 251
vation of meat by smoking and drying it, because flesh of animals killed in the chase is sometimes preserved in this way by hunters, yet the method is not widely and constantly applied in order to assure a regular supply of meat.

Failure to utilize the milk of cattle and goats is another example 234
of the neglect of useful commodities. The Vacilenge, who are near 171
neighbors of the Ovimbundu, milk their cows as do the Ovimbundu themselves in some districts, though the practice is by no means general. Even where cows are milked, butter and cheese are not made, though the Ovimbundu know of the process, which is practised by the Vakuanyama of southern Angola.

There are three kinds of beer. *Ocisangua* is a sweet beer which 272
even children may drink because it is not intoxicating. Water is heated slowly in the pot but not boiled; meanwhile meal of Kafir corn or maize is added. Pounded sweet potato is strained in such a way that the liquid part goes into the beer pot; the residual mush is given to pigs. After the beer has cooled out of doors, it is transferred to a large gourd and allowed to stand over night. Next day it is considered a fit drink to consume or to offer to visitors (Plate XXIII, Fig. 3).

The making of an intoxicating beer *ekundi* proceeds as for 273
ocisangua, but instead of adding strained liquid from sweet potatoes a root called *ombundi* is included in the brew. The large pot containing this beer is covered tightly and allowed to stand untouched for twenty-four hours, at the end of which time it is a potent drink. It is important to note that the corn is allowed to sprout in the ground before it is made into the infusion to which the root *ombundi* is added.

Ocimbombo is a strongly intoxicating drink. In order to prepare this brew, corn is soaked for a week; then it is left in the ground for the same length of time until it has germinated. It is then pounded on the rocks and placed in large pots filled with water to which sweet meal of corn is added. Simmering over the fire is continued for two days with constant stirring. This brew differs from *ekundi* in the longer germination of the corn and the longer period of simmering. On the fourth day after the simmering is completed the drink is said to be ready for consumption. If the people have honey, they add some to the brew on the third day of standing. My inform-

273 ant said, "Sometimes a man who has drunk this beer will sleep on the ground all day and say nothing."

263 438 Salt is a welcome gift in all parts of Angola. Native tribes appreciate its culinary value but show no eagerness to barter for the commodity. At the present time salt is sold in every trader's store, but in earlier times the substance had to be obtained along caravan routes from the coast and was therefore more highly prized than it is today. 317 The Ovimbundu realize the value of salt in the diet of cattle; therefore the animals are occasionally driven to a salt lick in the hills. The [331] Ovimbundu do not use this salt for their own diet, possibly because the salt enjoyed by the cattle is some form of potash and not sodium chloride.

[171] The Vachokue extract salt from the leaves of a river plant by burning it to ashes which are soaked and strained. This is a common African method, but I did not hear of it among the Ovimbundu. The probability is that the Ovimbundu have always obtained salt from the coast.

372 In connection with cooking and brewing beer, methods of making fire are of importance.

Matches are coming into use among the Ovimbundu, but the necessity for them is not great as the hearth fire is not extinguished. [354] In the center of each hut is a fireplace made of three hearth-stones over which logs of wood are placed with their ends in the fire which is kept alight by pushing the logs forward from time to time. A blaze is made by breaking off bark from the logs, placing it on the center of the fire and blowing. Fire is carried from one place to another by conveying a smoldering log. In the Esele country boys may be seen setting off at dawn to scare birds in the corn field, each carrying fire with him.

Usually the children or some other members of the family sleep on mats close to the fire, which requires no attention other than a pushing forward of the logs.

372 171 The Vasele make fire by the twirling method, and at Ngalangi the same procedure was witnessed. In the twirling method two different kinds of wood are used, soft wood for the base and hard wood for the twirling stick. The twirler used at Ngalangi was a piece of cane into the end of which a piece of hard white wood was secured by binding. Ngonga, my interpreter and informant, thinks that any man of the Ovimbundu could make fire by the twirling method if the necessity arose, but the performance witnessed at Ngalangi led me to doubt the truth of this statement. The operator

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undoubtedly knew the apparatus and the method, but he appeared 372
to have lost the dexterity which is necessary for a rapid moving of the 171
hands from the bottom of the twirler to the top. There was consequently a long period of smoldering before the flame appeared.

Among the Vachokue a little wooden box of tinder, a piece of quartz, and an iron blade are carried for fire-making. From an Esele man a bag containing tinder and quartz was obtained.

The making of fire ceremonially in connection with ritual and sacrifice is described among the functions of the medicine-man, because the sacred and profane uses of fire are quite distinct.

Tobacco is a very important item of trade. The cultivation is a 249
domestic industry followed usually by women but to some extent by 462
men. In former days when the Ovimbundu traded extensively in Africa every man had a field of tobacco which he himself cultivated. At the present time each man is likely to have a mound of tobacco plants in the middle of a corn field (Plate XXIX, Fig. 1). Women do sometimes cultivate tobacco near their huts, but in this case the little plantation must be strongly fenced. Goats are numerous, and they eat the leaves of the tobacco plant with avidity.

Toward the end of September, when the rains begin, tobacco seed is sown on a patch of ground a yard square to raise seedlings which are planted out in October. A few flowers only are left to produce seed. As a further effort to improve the quality of the tobacco many of the lower leaves are removed. The cutting of leaves intended for use as tobacco is done by men in the months of February and March; women and children assist if the field is large.

After the midrib has been removed from each leaf, the leaves are suspended from the roof in a bundle. At the end of five days, when the leaves have turned brown, they are twisted into a long straight roll which is hung in the sun for three days. At intervals the roll is twisted in another direction. This gradually exposes all parts of the leaves, so that the drying is thorough. There are three methods of making up the rolls: *ombola* is an oval roll; *ongalo* is the round coil; *ocine* is the name given to tobacco which has been dried and twisted 276
round a stick. Tobacco-pipes are varied in size and design (Plate XV, Figs. 1–3); those for men are larger than those used by women. A mixture of tobacco and hemp is smoked in a water-pipe made from the horn of a cow. Details of structure and ornament are given under "Wood-carving."

In order to make snuff a piece of dried tobacco is slowly baked near the fire on the end of a pointed stick which is turned frequently.

276 The snuff is pounded and placed in a small wooden box of cylindrical
[531] shape. Usually the box is ornamented with incised, burned patterns. The Ovimbundu of Bihé add ashes of wood to their snuff, so producing a mixture called *ulelemo*. The Ovimbundu of Elende usually use the
[349] snuff without adulteration. Two main species of tobacco plants are grown.

Women smoke in all parts of Angola. The Ovimbundu do not chew tobacco, neither have I seen it so used elsewhere in Angola. Boys and girls are not allowed to smoke before the age of thirteen years.

576 In the *ombala* of the Vangangella near Ngalangi, I asked a girl
[834] for her pipe which I desired for my collection. The interpreter took the pipe when she proffered it, explaining that, according to local custom, I had asked for the girl. If I took the proffered pipe *from her hand* I accepted her. Another social custom associated with tobacco is the passing of the communal pipe from hand to hand in the men's council house.

276 Ngonga, my interpreter, says that he has never seen an Ocimbundu
171 woman smoke hemp, but he has seen a woman of the Vangangella (people to the east of the Ovimbundu) smoking hemp. Hemp (*epangue*) is cultivated only by the Ovimbundu men who smoke it. Pure hemp is smoked in the water-pipe which is not passed from hand to hand. Only tobacco is used in communal smoking. Smoking of hemp or tobacco consists of a few deep inhalations; there is not usually a prolonged placid smoking. When hemp is placed in the bowl of the water-pipe it is covered with large grains of sand or a piece of tin. This intervening substance prevents the hot coals from coming into contact with the hemp. The object is to secure slow ignition.

DOMESTIC ANIMALS

231 The principal domestic animals are cow (*onjindi*), ox (*ongombe*, which is also the generic name for cattle), bull (*onui*), sheep (*omeme*), goat (*ohombo*), pig (*ongulu*), dog (*ombua*), chicken (*osanji*) (Plates LV, LVI, LVII).

492 The transport animals, donkey, horse, and mule, are not used by the Ovimbundu of Elende and not to any extent by Ovimbundu of other parts; but in the south of Angola the Vakuanyama have sturdy ponies and well-kept mules. The ox when ridden by Portuguese is provided with a leather saddle which is very comfortable if covered with a blanket. The brass stirrups are broad and massive. Through the septum of the bullock's nostrils there is a short brass rod to the ends of which the reins are attached (Plate XXX, Fig. 1).

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I have seen an Ocimbundu male riding an ox without saddle. A cord was passed through the animal's nose to serve as reins. 492

The Portuguese name for horse is *cavalo*, a word which the Ovimbundu use in the form *okavalu*, though there is an Umbundu word *ocingongovala*, which means "going with his neck up." The Umbundu words for donkey and mule are *ocimbulu* and *omula*, respectively. 192

Generally speaking, the ears of animals are not clipped, neither are cattle branded or otherwise marked to indicate ownership, but sometimes the ears of pigs and goats are cut to aid identification. When asked why the tips of the ears of dogs are mutilated an Ocimbundu will say that a dog with uncut ears does not hear when called (Plate LVI, Fig. 2). 231

Not many families own large herds of cattle among the Ovimbundu, and I did not see a big kraal until I was in southwest Angola. Cattle, which are a measure of wealth, are used for paying fines, making funeral feasts, paying debts, and securing wives. The cattle throughout Angola are well-developed, handsome animals (Plate LVII, Fig. 1). The bull remains with the herd the entire year; there is therefore no particular season for the birth of calves. Usually cows are not milked by the Ovimbundu, consequently these people have no milk, butter, or cheese. The Vakuanyama of the south milk their cows and churn butter in calabashes slung on a pole. 233 556 [171]

The Ovimbundu say that milking the cow makes the calf thin, but where the idea of milking the cow is borrowed from the Portuguese the Ovimbundu have a procedure which is as follows: The calf is allowed to suck for a few minutes in order to deceive the cow; then the milker begins his work. At intervals of a few minutes the calf is allowed to suck in order to continue the deception. 234 [177]

Cattle are killed at the funeral feasts of the rich, and the horns of the slaughtered animals are generally mounted on a pole in the vicinity of the grave (Plate XLVI, Fig. 2). [765]

The horns of the cow may be used for making water-pipes in which tobacco is smoked, or they may be employed as magical horns when filled with medicine. The hide is pegged out in the sunlight for one day after it has been scraped; it is then rolled and kept until required. When about to be used, the skin is soaked in water for one day. The hide is used to cover the tops of stools, to make pouches and to manufacture bags for carrying corn. In bygone days each king had a wooden box covered with hide, which contained his powder and metal when he went to war. The cow's tail is used 237 281 90

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straight lines. The legs show the usual flexion of the knees and a 532
shortening which is out of proportion to the body length. The lower limbs of most Angolan figures have these characteristics. The body of this figure is hollow and the head detachable. The incised head-dress is imitative of the coiffure of Vachokue women.

Cangamba, a village in eastern Angola, is a confluence of tribal 171
elements, namely, Vambuella, Luchazi, Babunda, and Vachokue, whose physical appearance, hairdressing, tooth mutilation, and tribal marks differ considerably. The man who sold the figurine brought it furtively. He was an Ocimbundu, but the work is of Chokue origin. The figure, I am informed, was filled with medicine, [755]
then placed near a patient who was undergoing curative treatment.

The figurine (*ngeve*) of a woman having a number of dark feathers 484
attached to her back has only one use. A caravan setting out for a 778
long journey is accompanied by a medicine-man whose outfit includes 787
such a figurine. Should the caravan leader be in doubt when choosing between two paths, the medicine-man sets up the image at the parting of the ways. He kneels before it and asks questions, then plugs his nostrils in order to make replies in a falsetto voice supposed to come from the figurine. Thus advised respecting the route to follow, the caravan continues its journey (Plate XXI, Fig. 5; p. 156).

The wooden figure (Plate XXI, Fig. 3) is of exceptional interest 326
because of its connection with the blacksmith's craft, which is asso- 775
ciated with introductory rites for apprentices. In former days a newly initiated blacksmith was expected to disappear for a period during which he killed a man. On returning to the work of his forge the blacksmith made a wooden figure of which this example, one of five obtained, is typical. The spirit of the murdered man took up its abode in the effigy and in this way helped with the work. The figure, which is of the usual dimensions, namely, 36 cm high, has the greater part of its surface covered with reddened earth (pp. 159–160).

Two figurines (Plate XXI, Figs. 1, 6) were obtained from 171
women of the Vachokue tribe in the village of Ngongo, Ngalangi. 842
Here the Vachokue and the Ovimbundu mingle to such an extent that customs are no doubt transferred from one culture to the other. These wooden images are used by childless women, or by women whose infants have died. The woman who sold these figures pressed them to her breasts to show the manner of use. People standing around smiled and nodded their approval. A wooden figure of this [845]
kind is substituted for a dead twin.

787 532 A common type of small figurine, some of which are female, others asexual, is represented by an illustration (Plate XXI, Fig. 2). Such little carvings are a normal part of the miscellaneous contents of a divination basket described in chapter IX. These figures have been obtained from Elende, Bailundu, and Caconda, all of which are centers of Umbundu culture.

322 532 756 In addition to the figurines described, the collection contains many more whose use may be conjectured. The interrogation of Ovimbundu people indicates clearly that there are specific uses of wooden figures which are consulted by the medicine-man. The foregoing explanations illustrate the nature of the beliefs associated with carved wooden figures, but it is not always possible to elicit a clear account of the specific use of each one.

171 532 Consideration of this aspect of the wood-carver's art has an important bearing on the culture contacts of the Ovimbundu. In studying this question I have instituted comparisons between these figures from the Ovimbundu of Angola and similar figures from the Kasai area of the Congo region (chapter X). The publications of the Musée Congo Belge provide illustrations for comparison with the figures in Field Museum's collection.

The carving of animal forms (Plate XIX, Figs. 1–5) is no more than a means of aesthetic expression resulting from accurate observations of animal life as recorded under "Nature Lore." Inquiry failed to show that figures of animals are, or were at any time, used in rites and ceremonies.

[643] The carrying of a carved stick is essential when a chief is visiting, attending a council in his own village, or receiving visitors. The ornamental paddle (Plate XX, Fig. 8) was owned by the chief of the capital village (*ombala*) of the Vangangella, near Ngalangi.

[765] At the death of a chief his staff of office, with his tobacco-pipe and sleeping mat, are placed in a small house where such relics of deceased chiefs are kept permanently (Plate XLVI, Fig. 1). Plate XX, Fig. 6, shows a staff of this kind which was preserved in a sacred house in the capital village of Ngalangi, and on the same plate are drawn short ornamental clubs which French ethnologists call *batons de promenade*, an appropriate name because of their use as part of the full dress equipment.

[276] The Ovimbundu have specialized in the carving of small objects, for, in addition to clubs and staffs, tobacco-pipes and snuff boxes are often elaborately carved (Plate XV, Figs. 2, 4).

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

The water-pipe of the Ovimbundu consists of the horn of a cow 276
into the side of which a short hollow pipe stem is introduced; at the top of the stem is a clay bowl for the reception of tobacco, or a mixture of tobacco and hemp. The wide end of the horn is plugged with clay, while a hole is made at the tip in order to provide a mouthpiece. A gourd water-pipe, similar to that used by the Vachokue, is also found among the Ovimbundu.

Cylindrical snuff boxes are ornamented with incised, burned, 276
geometrical patterns. The lid is usually attached to the box by a 531
leather thong. One large snuff box is ornamented with three well-carved female figures. The smoker's equipment is sometimes carried in a leather pouch fastened on a waist belt, or the container may be a hollow cylinder of ivory with a leather cap at each end.

To this information respecting the smoking and snuff-taking outfit 276
of the Ovimbundu, some observations on the pipes and snuff boxes 171
of other tribes should be added. When making a journey from Cangamba to Saurimo I seldom met an Ocivokue man who was not carrying a gourd water-pipe for the smoking of tobacco and hemp. Such pipes are usually ornamented with brass nails and are finely bound with thin brass wire (Plate XV, Fig. 3). One long pipe from Ngalangi has a pair of metal tongs attached for taking charcoal from the fire in order to ignite the tobacco (Plate XV, Fig. 1). A pipe with two bowls, closely resembling some Zulu patterns, was smoked by an Ocimbundu woman at Ngalangi. The Vachokue make snuff boxes from a yellow wood, which they ornament by burning portions of the surface in such a way that the yellow color is here and there visible.

Both men and women of the Vakipungo and Vakuanyama tribes carry snuff boxes of conical shape on their leather waist belts. At the top and bottom such snuff boxes are neatly bound with brass or copper wire.

DOMESTIC IMPLEMENTS

At an early age girls become accustomed to the use of the V-shaped 412
pounder which is made from hard heavy wood (Plate XXXVI, Fig. 2). The small end of the shaft is a convenient thickness for grasping in such a way that the knuckles are on the under side of the shaft. This is the very reverse of what appears to be the natural grip. Women use the pounder with an easy, circular swing so that the flat round surface comes into contact with the grain on the rock. Endurance in this work is remarkable, and there is no doubt that

412 fatigue is avoided by the method of holding and swinging so that the work of crushing is done by the weight of the implement.

412 252 Two less usual methods of pulverizing grain are by use of a long pestle, which is worked up and down in a heavy wooden mortar as shown by Plate LXXXIV, Fig. 1, in which Vachokue women are so employed, and the crushing of grain with a cylindrical stone which is rolled on a flat slab. This latter method I judge to be very old, for on a pre-Umbundu site encircled by stone walls I have seen flat slabs of stone and cylindrical rollers. Some of the flat slabs were worn extremely thin in the middle and a few were perforated by the friction.

It is noteworthy that there are rocks especially reserved for the pounding of grain with the wooden mallet. Such rocks are to be [782] found close to every village, and the dedication of a new rock for this purpose requires the killing of a chicken whose blood is sprinkled on the rock.

252 Work of this kind is begun before daybreak. From that time to [512] sunset the pounding of the wooden mallets, accompanied by the singsong of the women, marks the progress of the day's work. At intervals the pounded grain is sifted through the hands and spread out on a basket-work tray, which is shaken to separate the fine meal. The unbroken and partly broken grain is replaced on the rock for further pounding. A small brush of grass is used for bringing together the grain which is dispersed by the blows.

412 The sole implement used in agriculture, which is entirely in the ● 171 hands of women, is the hoe. Of this implement there are several [862] variations according to locality. The Ovimbundu and others of Ngalangi employ the form illustrated in Plate XIII, Fig. 10. The long handles measuring 85 cm no doubt reduce fatigue by minimizing bending. Both hands are used, and, furthermore, the increased length of the handles must give a greater leverage. The smaller hoe used by Ovimbundu women of Elende has short handles only 51 cm (Plate XIII, Fig. 9), while that from the Esele country is distinguished by a broader blade and still shorter handles only 36 cm in length.

412 Included in the outfit of every Umbundu home is the heavy wooden floor beater. This implement, which is fashioned from a single piece of wood, consists of a narrow handle, round in cross section, and a flat portion for beating the moist, newly made, mud floor of the hut. The total length is about 83 cm.

Not only the carpenter, but almost every Ocimbundu man possesses an implement which may be readily adapted as ax or adze (Plate XIII, Fig. 2). The wooden shaft, from 50 to 70 cm in length, terminates in a narrow grip at one end, while the other end expands into a large oval knob into which a circular hole is bored. The strong iron blade, one of the main products of the local forge, can be removed. If the round tang of the blade is inserted so that the cutting edge is in the same plane as the shaft, the implement is an ax. On the contrary, insertion so that the cutting edge is at right angles to the shaft converts the implement into an adze. When placed over the shoulder this implement is used for carrying utensils in a fiber bag (Plate XXVIII, Fig. 1). 412 [482]

Gourds are of three main kinds, which may be found growing on the ground or resting on the roofs of houses at the ends of the climbing stems that bear them. *Ombenge* is a gourd which is narrow in the middle. It is often converted into a dipper for ladling liquids. The narrow neck is the handle, while a round hole is cut in the larger part so that the dipper can be filled with liquid. *Onganja* is round, or perhaps oval in form. There is a size used as a measure of capacity. *Onganja* can be used as a ladle by fixing it at the end of a stick. *Olukuembo* has a round body and a narrow hook-shaped neck; like the gourd *ombenge*, it is used as a ladle. 415 [244]

Gourds are elaborately decorated with incised and burned designs (Plate XII, Figs. 1–6). Usually these patterns are geometrical, but human figures and animals are sometimes included. Decorated gourds from Bailundu, used for containing beer at a wedding, are among the best examples of their kind (Plate XII, Fig. 6). The owner of a decorated gourd takes great pains to repair a crack with rattan, which is threaded through holes bored in the edges of the fracture. A large gourd is sometimes carried in a native-made net of vegetable fiber. 531 415

POTTERY

A large and varied collection of pottery has been acquired from the Ovimbundu, the Vachokue, and the Vasele. The shapes and styles are best indicated by the illustrations in Plate XIV, Figs. 1–5. 323 171

Among the Ovimbundu, only women make pots, which are inferior in workmanship to those of the Vachokue and the Vasele. At Elende, among the Ovimbundu, I was surprised to find a man making pottery. Further inquiry showed that he had learned his craft when young in the Vachokue country of eastern Angola. This man, whose work was not copied at all by Ovimbundu women, was regarded as a specialist whose products were in great demand. [462]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

323 specialist whose products were in great demand. Instead of making
171 crude patterns with a piece of gourd, as do the Ovimbundu women,
531 he presses a brass bracelet round the rims of the pots. The bracelet is deeply indented with geometrical patterns which appear on the clay (Plate XIV, Fig. 5). This man selects a very fine clay for his work, his products are symmetrical, and a polish is given with a smooth pebble after baking. Like all other potters of Angola, this artisan has no knowledge of the potter's wheel.

323 171 531 The vessels made by Vasele women, among whom the trade is confined to female specialists, are unlike the products from any other part of Angola. The chevron design is characteristic, so also is the ornamenting of the pot by laying on strips of clay below the rim. This is appliqué work which may consist of only a few bands of clay, or the strips may pass repeatedly round the pot until one-half or two-thirds of the surface has been covered (Plate XIV, Fig. 2).

323 At Elende two Ovimbundu women were observed during the pot-making processes (Plates XXXIII, XXXIV). Woman *A* built up the pot in a basket lined with wet leaves. Woman *B* pounded the clay on a stone with the heavy wooden pounder used for pounding corn on the rocks. Between the two women was a gourd of water in which *A* moistened her fingers. Operator *B* poured water on the clay which she was pounding. *A* made a cup of clay five inches in diameter and four inches deep which served as a base on which the pot was built up by the coiling process. This cup was placed in the basket containing moist leaves.

The rim of the cup was built in height and breadth by the addition of rolls of clay supplied by woman *B*. As the rolls of clay were laid on the edges of the pot, the inside was smoothed with a piece of gourd. Meanwhile the outside of the pot was supported with one hand. Shaping of the pot proceeded by applying smaller and smaller rolls of clay as the neck of the pot was approached. Gentle smoothing pressure forced out the greatest breadth of the pot just below the base of the neck. A pause was made to allow a partial drying before the neck was built up. Ornamentation consisted of making deep incisions with a piece of gourd while the pot was still wet. During these processes there was constant wetting of the hands.

The pots were sun dried, then fired several at a time by placing them in a kiln of dry grass. Polish was given to a pot while it was still hot by covering the surface with liquid made from a tuberous root, during which process the pot was quickly turned on a stick.

285 171 Among the Ovimbundu are to be found baskets which they themselves seldom copy. These examples are from the Vachokue country of eastern Angola. The Vachokue specialize in making winnowing trays and rectangular baskets which are twilled by passing each weft over two or more warps.

By this technique, combined with the use of brown and black weft and warp, a great variety of geometrical patterns is produced. Trays of this kind vary in diameter from 50 to 200 cm. The Vachokue also make large strong trays in which honey is exposed to dry.

In the neighborhood of Cassanga wicker-work baskets are made. The warps or stakes are rigid while the more flexible wefts bend in and out. At this place there are both Ovimbundu and Vachokue inhabitants.

Women of the Vakuanyama in southern Angola make exceptionally neat little conical baskets by lashing coils very tightly. The lashing is done in such a way as to leave the outer surface covered with small chevron-shaped designs.

177 285 There is an intrusion of European influence which tends to mar the work of the Ovimbundu and other native craftswomen. Soft dyes produced by methods described are sometimes replaced by brightly colored, imported dyes; old ribbons from typewriters are soaked in order to extract coloring. The Ovimbundu are imitating European forms of basketry in a few centers, though the native method of coiling is still used.

WEAPONS

411 The bow of the Ovimbundu is made of hard red wood which takes a high polish after use. It is round in cross section and tapers considerably toward the ends. The length is usually 150 cm, not an inconvenient size in view of the fairly open bush through which the hunter has to make his way. The bowstring is made of a thin strip of twisted hide, which is looped over each end of the bow by a slip knot made of two half-hitches. A shoulder at each end of the bow shaft prevents the slip knot from passing down the shaft. In some examples only one end of the bow stave is notched. Usually, after completing the slip knot, the hunter leaves a surplus of bowstring which is wound round the shaft. One bow which is not notched has rattan wound round the stave to prevent the loops from slipping.

The bow for shooting bird arrows is small and is used only by boys; the string is of twisted vegetable fiber.

3: Hamaly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FF13 Mbundu FF13

The foregoing description applies to all bows collected in Elende, an Umbundu center; neither is there any appreciable difference between these bows and those of the Vachokue of the area from Cangamba to Saurimo in Lunda. The bows collected in the Vachokue region are on the average 10 cm longer than those collected at Elende, a structural difference probably connected with the heavier arrowheads used by the Vachokue (Plate XVII, Figs. 1–9). 411 171

The Vakuanyama of southern Angola make and use a bow which bears very little resemblance to those already described. The arrows, too, are entirely different from those used by the Ovimbundu and Vachokue.

The lengths of three bows collected at Mongua, a typical Kuanyama center, are 111, 123, and 123 cm. The bow stave, which is made from a monocotyledonous wood, is 5 cm broad in the widest part, while the cross section is a flattened ellipse. The bowstring is of twisted leather, looped at each end for slipping over the ends of the bow shaft (Plate XVII, Fig. 8).

According to L. S. B. Leakey (A New Classification of the Bow and Arrow in Africa, *J.R.A.I.*, LVI, 1926, pp. 259–294), the bows and arrows of Angola have not been studied. I am inclined to place the bows of the Ovimbundu and Vachokue with Leakey's "knotted string bows" (pp. 266–269). [114]

Leakey states that the technique employed in stabilizing flight forms the best basis of classification of arrows, but so far as Angola is concerned, the shapes of arrowheads form a basis of classification according to locality. Ovimbundu, Vachokue, Vakuanyama, and Vasele, have distinctive patterns. Naturally there is borrowing of patterns where Ovimbundu and Vachokue intermingle, but, even so, there are distinguishing signs of Vachokue workmanship. The information respecting bows and arrows of Angola is best presented in paragraph form, and comparison of types is facilitated by reference to Plate XVII, Figs. 1–9.

The following arrows are used for killing birds: 411

(1) Elende. Ovimbundu boys use a wooden arrow with a heavy blunt head which is carved into five nodules (Plate XVII, Fig. 3). The head is tanged into a reed shaft and bound there with fine fiber covered with wax. The feathers are whole, bent over, and tied. The number of feathers varies considerably in different examples. 223

(2) Kipungo. The Vakipungo have a wooden-headed arrow with nine well-carved barbs (Plate XVII, Fig. 7). The head is socketed

3: Hambly 1-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

223 fairly tightly into a reed shaft bound at the junction to prevent
411 further splitting of the shaft. There are four whole, untrimmed feathers at the butt; these feathers are bent over and bound.

(3) Vakuanyama. Wooden arrows having eleven sets of barbs are in use. The head is bound into a reed shaft with strong gut. Another type of wooden arrow has three sets of barbs with three barbs in each set. There are four whole feathers at the butt.

(4) Vasele. The Vasele use an arrow, pointed with fine pieces of sharp bamboo, for shooting lizards (Plate XVII, Fig. 9).

411 The foregoing information (1–4) relates only to wooden arrows
171 which are used by boys when hunting birds. The following paragraphs summarize the structural details of arrows used by men, and the data are arranged to call attention to differences in the patterns of arrows used by several principal tribes of Angola.

The Vasele make the arrow shafts of hollow reeds, and into these the narrow, ovate, iron heads are tanged and bound in position with fine bark which is not waxed. Three unsplit feathers are bent and tied to the shaft with fine bark fiber. The nock at the butt of the arrow is rectangular in shape and 0.3 cm deep. No quiver was observed.

The Ovimbundu form arrow shafts from hollow reeds, the average length of which is 76 cm. All arrowheads of iron are tanged and the tangs are inserted in the hollow reeds. A binding of fine bark fiber is given, and this is covered with wax. From five to ten feathers are used for each arrow. The feathers may be split or they may be left in the natural state. The trimming of the feathers is roughly executed. The depth of the rectangular nocks is 0.5 cm, and splitting of the shaft is prevented by binding the nock with fine bark. No quiver was observed.

The Vachokue of Cangamba, and thence northward to Saurimo, make arrow shafts of hollow reeds whose average length (79 cm) is a little in excess of those made by the Ovimbundu. The shapes of the iron heads are shown in comparison with those of the Ovimbundu (Plate XVII, Fig. 1). All arrowheads are tanged and bound into the hollow shaft with bark fiber which is then waxed. The feathers are split and bent with a neatness much greater than that shown in examples of Umbundu arrows. The rectangular nocks are 1 cm deep. No quiver was observed.

The Vakuanyama make solid wooden arrow shafts having an average length of 65 cm. The arrowheads of iron are socketed.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

Three prevailing shapes of arrowhead are conical, narrow ovate, and V-shaped. The quills are split, bent over, and tied. The usual number of feathers used for each arrow is eight. The workmanship is neat and symmetrical. The rectangular nock is 0.5 cm deep. A quiver of hide is used. 411 M

In addition to the assagai (Plates XIII, Fig. 8; LXVIII, Fig. 2) commonly used by the Vakuanyama and adopted to a very limited extent by the Ovimbundu, there are spearheads which originate in eastern Angola among the Vachokue, whose blacksmiths are expert.

Typical spearheads were collected at Munyangi where Ovimbundu and Vachokue cultures meet. The leaf-shaped blade and tang have a length of 30 cm and an average breadth of 4 cm across the blade (Plate XVI, Fig. 1). The upper part of the tang, made for insertion into a wooden shaft, is round in cross section while the lower part is square. The blade, which has a keen edge, is well graded from a central, raised midrib to the margin.

I did not observe many spears among the Ovimbundu and Vachokue. The former value highly a type of assagai which is owned by every man of the Vakuanyama. At Elende and Bailundu I obtained from Ovimbundu men assagais identical with those collected in the Vakuanyama country. The assagai is made entirely of iron: it has a narrow, leaf-shaped iron blade which is socketed to the iron shaft. The butt is sharply pointed. The shaft passes through a cow's tail on which the tuft of hair remains. Consequently the iron shaft is encased in hide for part of its length.

At Elende I obtained from Ovimbundu men two spears said to be a product of the local forge. The flat, narrow, leaf-shaped blades were tanged into very rough wooden shafts. Wax was thickly smeared over the junction. The workmanship, which followed the tanged method of hafting arrowheads, was extremely crude.

By far the most distinctive knives made in Angola are those manufactured and used by the Vakuanyama of the extreme south (Plate XVI, Fig. 10). I have never found this knife in use elsewhere in Angola, and similar types are to be found only among the Ovambo to the south of the Vakuanyama.

These knives vary in length from 48 cm to 78 cm, with a breadth of 5 cm to 7 cm across the scabbard. The general outline is a well-balanced ellipse. The wood used is hard in texture and dark red in color. On one side the scabbard is left open in such a way as to display the blade, which is long, keen, and tapering. A leather thong attached to the back of the scabbard provides means of attach-

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

411 171 ment either to the arm or to the belt of the wearer. The crescent-shaped expansion at the tip of the scabbard is sometimes held between the toes while the blade is withdrawn.

A small knife obtained from an Ocivokue man near Saurimo in the province of Lunda, northeast Angola, has a black wooden haft neatly bound with fine brass wire (Plate XVI, Fig. 2). The steel blade of Vachokue workmanship is eminently suitable for the purpose for which it is employed, namely, that of carving pipe bowls and snuff boxes, which are sometimes elaborately incised. The knife has a distribution from Saurimo to Cangamba, an area of intermittent Vachokue culture, but I have never observed it in the possession of an Ocimbundu. Men of the Ovimbundu have knives of somewhat poor quality. The roughly made wooden haft is attached to a blade which is protected by a sheath of lizard skin. More frequently than not, an Ocimbundu does not carry a knife; neither does he appear to have borrowed knives or the art of making them from the expert Vakuanyama or Vachokue, who are reluctant to part with their tools and weapons.

A knife used by Vasele men in the region of Vila Nova de Selles, in the hinterland of Novo Redondo, resembles one used by the Bangala of the Congo (Plate XIII, Fig. 1). The distribution of the implement, which is used for cutting branches from trees, is local in the Esele country. I have never seen such a knife in use among the Ovimbundu or in any other part of Angola. The preservation of this peculiar form, in common with other specialized traits of Esele culture, is due to isolation of the Vasele among hills difficult of access.

LEATHER WORK

282 Leather pouches worn on a broad leather belt are part of the essential equipment of a hunter. The pouch usually contains scrap [411] metal and powder for muzzle-loading guns. This type of firearm is, under present Portuguese regulations, difficult to obtain and still more difficult to furnish with powder, which is forbidden to the native. Consequently such a pouch may contain only a pipe and tobacco.

The pouch itself is either square, rectangular, or semi-cylindrical in shape (Plate XIII, Fig. 6). The hair may or may not have been removed from the hide. Some examples show signs of careful workmanship in stamping cross-shaped patterns. Brass-headed nails are used for decorative effect on these pouches among the Ovimbundu of Elende and as far south as Huila.

3. Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbunc.

In addition to pouches, hide is used by the Ovimbundu for the seats of four-legged wooden stools. Before stretching the hide over the wooden frame the edge of the leather is cut into strips which are interlaced on the under side of the stool (Plate XVIII, Fig. 1). There are few evidences of the hide having been dressed; usually the hair is attached. The Ovimbundu understand the dressing of hides in a crude way. The hide is soaked, after which the inner surface is rubbed with ashes. The hair is scraped away and the hide is tightly pegged out. Hide was formerly used for covering wooden boxes in which a king carried his powder and possessions to war. Scraped hide is used to form the tympanum in tubular wooden drums. 282 [534]

In only one part of Angola, notably in the south among the Vakuanyama, is leather used as clothing. Women wear pleated skirts of hide and several broad leather belts, while the men have small leather aprons in front and behind. Men only are the leather workers. The hide is soaked and trampled under foot for many hours in order to soften it and make it pliable; the hair is not removed. Before leather clothing is worn it is thickly greased with a mixture of fat and red powder from *takula* wood (Plates LXV, Figs. 1–3; LXVII, Fig. 1). 171 282 [291] 462

SPINNING AND WEAVING

My interpreter Ngonga remembers the use of a heavy upright loom about twenty years ago, but this loom is not used at the present time among the Ovimbundu. The Ovimbundu have been in contact with Europeans for three centuries. This has not been a close and permanent contact, but it has been sufficient to account for the disappearance of a one-time essential art. There are in Elende some very fine raffia palm trees, but no use is made of the leaf fiber for manufacturing clothes. Bark cloth is not made by the Ovimbundu of Elende, but I have seen the Vangangella and Ovimbundu of Ngalangi engaged in stripping, beating, and preparing bark for use as clothing, which is formed of one piece wound round the body. The bark cloth is not dyed or decorated with patterns. 286 177 287 171

Frequently at Elende men are seen engaged in spinning cotton which is used for repairs, and not for fabricating garments. The cotton is obtained from a shrub which has reddish leaves and yellow flowers. The cotton may be seen protruding from the calyx in the months of June and July. The man who is winding holds high in his left hand a slender stick which is wrapped for a length of two feet with fluffy cotton. All work of pressing and twisting the cotton into a thread is done by the thumb and index finger of the right hand. 283 524

Kukulula or *sekulula*. These terms are applicable to my father's father's brother, my father's father's brother's wife; my father's father's sister's husband; and my mother's father (the reciprocal *cesekula* describes the reciprocals, brother's son's son; husband's brother's son's son; wife's brother's son's son; daughter's son). 601

Mokula. This designation, which is derived from *wai*, meaning mother, and *kala*, an old person, is applied to my father's mother (reciprocal, *cesekula* *ponga*, son's son). *Mokula* also means my father's father's sister; my mother's mother; my mother's mother's brother's wife; and my mother's mother's sister (the reciprocal is *cesekula* which equals the English reciprocals brother's son's son; daughter's son; husband's daughter's child; and sister's daughter's child).

This completes the second generation of ascendants.

NOTE: Ngonga's wife uses the names *mokula* and *kukulula* for those relatives of her husband to whom Ngonga himself applies those terms. These relatives call Ngonga's wife *cesekula*.

TABLE D

(*See Table E IV and V, also Table F II, IV and V*)

SOME OF NGONGA'S DESCENDANTS

Nuvala or *usoli* is my first-born son. Other sons are *omola*, meaning child. *Omola ulume* means a male child. *Omola ukai* is a female child. *Usoli* also means a first daughter (the reciprocal for these terms is *tata*, meaning father).

Omolange means my child. I apply the word, not only to my own children, but to my elder brother's son (reciprocal, *tate*, father's younger brother); to my elder brother's daughter; and to my younger brother's son.

Ndatembo. The word is applied to my son's wife; my daughter's husband; my elder brother's son's wife; my elder brother's daughter's husband; and my younger brother's son's wife (the same word *ndatembo* is used for the reciprocals of these terms; namely, husband's father; wife's father; husband's father's younger brother; wife's father's younger brother; and husband's father's elder brother).

The foregoing classificatory system of relationship is not peculiar 601
to the Ovimbundu, but is a cultural trait of many Bantu-speaking 171
and some Sudanic-speaking Negroes. The similarity of the Umbundu system to those of surrounding peoples in Rhodesia and the Congo will be pointed out in chapters dealing with culture contacts.

When describing marriage rites reference was made to the fact 591
that a wife goes to live near her husband's relatives; the system is
therefore patrilocal. The limited family consists of husband and 592
wife (or wives) with their children. The greatest number of wives (595)
observed in the family of a commoner was four, and in the family
of a king eleven. A household sometimes contains adopted children, [597]
also domestic slaves (pawns) who are working to pay off debts for [567]
their maternal uncles. An extended family may include a grand- 596
father and his wife, his sons, their wives and children, and his unmarried daughters, with classes and nomenclatures mentioned in the foregoing tables.

The phrase *epata lia tate* (or *olase*) means "family of my father" 613
and includes all relatives on the father's side. The words *epata lia*

601 *Sekulu* includes the father's father, the mother's mother's brother, and the mother's mother's sister's husband. The terms *sekululu* and *kukululu* were used by Ngonga as being synonymous, and therefore they have the same connotation. With regard to the term *moikulu* Ngonga seemed clear, but in reply to questions concerning the reason for having the terms *kukululu* and *sekululu*, he was evidently confused. At last he said, "It does not matter, they are the same people." Ngonga never hesitated in giving the reciprocal for all these terms, which is in every instance *osekulu*. These terms may have been correlated with different functions which have now become obsolete.

604 601 The two most important collateral relatives in the parent's generation are the father's sister (*ophai*) and the mother's brother (*mana*). The term for father's sister means "female father." As such her relations to ego are similar to those of a father, consequently it is not considered right to marry her daughters. The mother's brother, on the other hand, is without doubt ego's most important relative. The two are linked by a series of reciprocal duties and obligations. Marriage of a mother's brother's daughter, or a mother's brother's widow, is a correct procedure. The value of the more important reciprocal duties is indicated in the following sections on law and government.

602 171 There was no possibility of devoting more time to the matter of relationship terms, but there is here sufficient to indicate the remarkable persistence of the kinship system in spite of three centuries of contact with the Portuguese and other Europeans. Moreover, the information gleaned by interrogation of Ngonga and his wife gives the main points for comparison with systems of a similar kind that have been given for Ashanti, Uganda, and Rhodesia, by Rattray, Roscoe, and Smith and Dale respectively. These kinship systems are the same both in general principles and in considerable detail.

601 The foregoing notes and tables were studied by Mr. Zachary Taylor of the University of Chicago, who prepared Tables E and F. Mr. F. Eggan offered useful criticisms. The Arabic numerals on these charts refer to the numbers used to designate terms of relationship on the list on page 199. The ego or speaker is Ngonga, [115] my interpreter, whose direct line of relationships is shown in Table E, while Table F indicates the terms used by Ngonga for his wife's relatives. The levels numbered in Roman numerals on Tables E and F indicate the generation stratification as follows:

338 feet. A trench about eighteen inches deep is dug for the poles (*akoso*), which form the framework. The wattle work is tied to the uprights with strong strips of red bark before the plastering is begun.
341 The old type of Umbundu house was round, but most of the houses
● 171 now show a transition to square or rectangular forms (Plate XLIV, Fig. 2).

[531] Exterior wall-painting is found only in the northern districts of Angola (Plate LXXXIX, Fig. 2). Between Saurimo and Malange in the north, rectangular, painted houses are frequently seen. Wall-painting is a cultural trait from the Congo region where that form of decoration is common.

796 The method of forming a village site and the right of the chief to
621 allot land have been described. The house of the chief is the first to be erected. There is drinking of beer to celebrate the completion of the village, and the pots of beer have to be stirred with the claws of chickens; these have been killed to provide blood for sprinkling the walls of the new houses. Village chiefs go through the process of stirring and drinking. The medicine-man drinks first, then he offers the cup to the chief.

344 The communal house is built by the united efforts of all men of
476 the village. Ngonga says, "The king never helps with any of the
[485] building, but he talks very much." The guest house is also built
644 by communal labor. The king of the *ombala* of Ngalangi told me that a king always uses the house of his predecessor, which must not be pulled down. No repairs are permitted and the house is used until it is absolutely untenable.

359 The interior of a commoner's house has three hearth stones in the
342 middle of the floor, which is of hard mud beaten down with a heavy wooden implement called *ocikandulo*. The ceremonial placing of the stones has been described in discussing marriage. There is no chimney, consequently the walls and roof are blackened with smoke. The junction of roof and walls provides pockets for the reception of small articles. On the floor near the walls may be several large beer pots. The dark smoky interior is almost intolerable. The sleeping
352 room is sometimes separated from the living room by matting. The bed is made from a cross-work of sticks supported on four Y-shaped posts, one at each corner. On the bed are coarse sleeping mats and possibly a modern blanket.

356 The miscellaneous contents of the hut are gourds, dippers, cooking
252 pots of several sizes, pounders, and baskets. In many of the huts I found cooking going on in the general room, but frequently a sepa-

says, "Here's your mother." The children look and sing, "She's not there." They throw sand in that direction. The leopard repeatedly leads to places where the mother is not hidden, while each time the same words are repeated and sand is thrown. Finally the leopard leads the children to the place where the mother is hidden. Then the mourning song is changed to a glad dance. The children clap hands and sing, *Mai Cisangu weya. Mai Cisangu weya* ("Mother Cisangu has come"). 524

After transcribing the music of this song Dr. Herzog reported, "The melodies are rather simple, moving within a restricted range, with a plain rhythm, the same short unassuming melodic fragment being repeated as long as the game may require it, or changed slightly to suit the words. It should be kept in mind that these are children's songs; other songs of the Ovimbundu are probably much more elaborate. The manner of singing songs by a solo and a responding choir is highly characteristic of African singing. Thirds as seen in the transcriptions on page 218 are often used in the music of west Africa. 533

"In the musical notations, *S* stands for Solo, *Ch* for the Choir. *A* as a sign above a note indicates that the tone is sung approximately a quartertone higher than noted. It indicates a short transitional tone of slight rhythmic or melodic significance and of uncertain pitch."

There is but one example of children's dolls in Field Museum's collection. This was obtained from a little Ocimbundu girl of Elende. The doll is made from a corncob which is draped in blue cloth of European origin such as women wear. My interpreter said that the dressing of dolls made from corncobs is a general custom at the time of cutting the corn. In view of the frequent occurrence of agricultural rites among Bantu Negroes, the use of dolls led me to inquire into the possibility of there being some kind of fertility cult associated with a corn-mother concept, but my inquiries met with negative results. 524 [241]

There is an Umbundu word for game (*omapalo;* plural, *olomapalo*) which is used for games in general. The verb *oku papala* means "to play." As a rule, male adults do not play games, but they have the game of mancala which is called *ocela*. This is difficult because it involves quick counting. Mancala has a wide distribution as shown by the fact that it occurs in Africa, Syria, the Malay Archipelago, South America, and the West Indies. At Dom Manuel in the southeast of Angola I saw an arrangement of holes in the ground which was used for this game. There were four rows of fourteen holes in each row. The counters were nuts from an oil palm. [171]

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rattle made by fixing seed pods on a stick. Rattles of the latter type are sometimes tied to the ankles during dancing and they usually form a part of the medicine-man's outfit (Plate XXII, Fig. 4). From Cangamba a basket rattle of dumb-bell form was obtained; the basket-work receptacles at each end of the connecting rod contain hard seeds (Plate XXII, Fig. 1). 534

At Bailundu three Ovimbundu flute players met a party of visitors whom they accompanied around the native village under the leadership of a chief. The men played the flutes continuously except when the chief was speaking. The wooden flutes varied in length from 20 to 50 cm. The instruments were end-played, and the smallest of them had seven stop-holes. The visitors were conducted from the village by this small orchestra which is a permanent guard of honor for the chief (Plate XL, Fig. 1). 533 543 534

At Cangamba the Vachokue have an instrument consisting of eight slats of wood which vary in length and thickness. These sounding boards are attached to two parallel cords which are kept tight by two assistants. The performer taps the wooden slats with two sticks terminating in balls of wax. This is the well-known marimba, but the gourds which are usually fastened under the slats of wood were absent in this instance. 534 171

The instrument *ocisanji* is played well by only a few men. It consists of a wooden board, often well carved, on which there are from eight to nineteen thin keys of metal. These can be pushed backward and forward in their bridge so as to alter the vibrating length and pitch of the note. The pitch may also be varied by placing small balls of wax on the under side of the keys. When the instrument is held between the palms the player's thumbs are in position for stroking the keys. Sometimes *ocisanji* is played inside a wide gourd (Plate XXII, Fig. 5). 534

The musical bow is called *ombumbumba*. The bridge, which is a small stone, or a piece of wood placed at one end of the bow, keeps the string taut. The gourd is tightly fastened to the bowstring with a loop of string. One end of the bow is sometimes placed in the player's mouth. The left hand holds the bow and presses the gourd to the body, then releases it a little from time to time in order to assist tone and resonance. The player holds in his right hand a reed which is tapped lightly on the bowstring, while the thumb and forefinger of the left hand are used occasionally in pressing on the string to alter its vibrating length (Plate XXII, Fig. 6).

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tribes, for everywhere these rites aim at securing ideas of unity, coop- 867
eration, conformity to tribal law, and admission to adult tribal life. 881

The methods used to achieve these aims are seclusion, circumcision, physical suffering, direct tuition, dancing, hunting, a change of name, and finally a ceremonial return to the tribe with adult status and the right to marry.

The following notes give details of ceremonies witnessed at 114
three centers; namely, Katoko, Ngalangi, and Cangamba. For 171
comparison of these rites with others performed in eastern Angola 881
reference should be made to the books of A. Schachtzabel, and to the papers of H. Baumann (III), and F. and W. Jaspert, whose observations were made independently of each other and of my own investigation.

The dances of the novices at Katoko, where there is a mixed 881
population of Ovimbundu, Vangangella, and Vachokue tribes, are part of the final ceremonies following circumcision and seclusion. The social group formed by this collective circumcision, seclusion, and dancing, is called *ovinganji*, which is the name of the initiatory rites themselves. A boy who has been initiated is not allowed to become friendly with one who has not suffered the ceremony, and all boys who were circumcised at the same time preserve a sense of unity by dancing in a company and moving about together for twelve weeks after their return to the village from which they came.

Circumcision, which is prohibited by the Portuguese govern- 881
ment, is still practised secretly in some regions. When circumcision 304
is carried out by primitive methods serious infection may result from the lack of clean instruments, for the knife is, of course, unsterilized.

After the operation the patients are subjected to harsh treatment during the period of cure that follows. The circumcised are secluded in a wooded area. Food provided by the parents is placed on the bank of a river near which the initiation camp is built, and after the parents have gone away the boys bring their rations from the river to the camp. Before eating, the boys are obliged to give profuse thanks to the men who are acting as tutors. In some regions there is no food ration for the boys, and the rule is that each boy must subsist on what he is able to catch and collect with his hands.

Each boy has a male guardian who takes care of him after the operation. Those who have been operated upon are not permitted to wear clothes, nor are they allowed to warm themselves until quite healed. Any infraction of the rules results in a severe whipping.

881 mony at which the older initiates dance while the novices clap their hands.

I witnessed the dance of initiated boys at Ngongo, where the [292] costumes resembled those I had seen at Katoko. At night a youth brought for me a set of initiation costumes (Plate LXXVIII, Fig. 1), which resembled those worn during the dance; this he did with great secrecy.

While at Ngalangi, the initiation of girls was investigated. After several days of negotiation with a village headman three female guardians of the girls came from the bush. The illustrations (Plate LXXVII, Figs. 1, 2) show the attitudes of these women and their decoration. There were three male drummers in the orchestra and several women, who sang and clapped their hands. On emerging from the bush the females moved toward the orchestra with their backs toward the players. As there were about two hundred yards to cover, this slow backward movement occupied a long time, since the three women did not take more than a few inches at each step. The dance [535] itself was a slow, shuffling, swaying movement, made while the bodies of the performers remained inclined forward and their heads were bent so that it was almost impossible to see their faces. The women wore no clothing except loin cloths. Each female was [302] plastered from head to foot with alternate bands of red and white clay smeared thickly. These three females are the women who act [864] as instructors for the girls during isolation in the bush where they receive sexual and domestic instruction.

881 The seclusion of girls covers a period of one month. During 304 this time the novices suffer no harsh treatment though an operation is performed, possibly excision of the clitoris, but I am not certain on this point. It was also stated that a corncob is introduced into the vagina. The tribe practising this ceremony for girls was the [171] Vanyemba, living close to the Ovimbundu at Ngongo near Ngalangi in central Angola.

881 In order to corroborate further the two accounts of initiation 171 ceremonies for boys I journeyed to Cangamba in Moxico, eastern 304 Angola. The position of the two first centers visited (Katoko and Ngongo) is on the border line where Ovimbundu and Vachokue mingle, and although there is a mixture of these and other tribes at Cangamba, the culture, language, and physique of the Vachokue predominate. A description of the circumcision ceremonies witnessed at Cangamba is given below for comparison with the accounts resulting from visits to Katoko and Ngongo.

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The compound in which the initiates had been confined for three months was a circular enclosure made of light branches and leafy boughs, at the narrow embrasure of which stood a guardian of the boys, who permitted entrance. In the middle of the large enclosure were seven small cages, each of which was just large enough to allow one boy to lie on his back, and I was informed that the boys lie thus for two weeks after circumcision (Plate LXXX, Fig. 2). 881 304 171

The ages of the boys appeared to be from ten to seventeen years (Plate LXXX, Fig. 1), an observation which agrees well with that made at Katoko and Ngongo. The disparity of age among the novices at each center where initiation was observed bears out the statement that initiation ceremonies are held at irregular intervals, but not more frequently than once in four years.

During confinement in the large enclosure the novices had made masks and costumes (Plate LXXIX, Fig. 1), and when they were pulling on the coarse netting suits, which fit tightly, I observed that circumcision had been performed thoroughly, evidently some weeks ago, for the wounds were healed. Masks were obtained, and these the instructors of the boys were careful to wrap in bark cloth, at the same time requesting me not to show the objects to women.

A few days later these boys returned to their village to dance while wearing the costumes which had been made in the enclosure. At Cangamba the final ceremony lasted twelve hours amid great excitement, including ceaseless drumming and dancing. One boy, who wore a skirt on his fiber costume, lifted this to display an artificial penis of great size (Plate LXXIX, Fig. 2). This organ he grasped in his hand while chasing the women and girls, who ran away screaming and laughing. [522]

At this ceremony there appeared stilt-walkers (Plate LXXXI, Fig. 1) and a medicine-man, a member of the Luchazi tribe (Plate LXXXI, Fig. 2).

Circumcision among the Bdjok (Vachokue) has been witnessed by C. P. Holdredge and described by Kimball Young (*Amer. Anthr.*, XXIX, pp. 661–669). This ceremony took place in the far northeast of Angola. The man described as the *magish* of whom women are afraid, but who is known to the initiates, corresponds to the Uluchazi medicine-man seen in the final ceremony at Cangamba. Of this grotesquely dressed person the men and boys took no notice, neither did he pay attention to them. On the contrary he chased women, who ran away screaming. Kimball Young's description of the enclosure where boys are confined, and his account of the [113] [756]

881 short fiber skirts worn within this enclosure by the novices, are in
171 agreement with the observations made at Cangamba. There is
304 also a close resemblance between the independent accounts of
[114] H. Baumann and F. and W. Jaspert for the Vachokue, also P. A. Delille and E. de Jonghe for the southwest Congo.

The question of initiation rites, past and present, among people of pure Umbundu culture is important. The matter is more fully dealt with later in discussing cultural contacts and cultural losses, but there are a few points which should not be omitted here.

At Caconda, an Umbundu center of western Angola, Père R. P. Laagel stated that only two years ago he had visited an initiation camp of Ovimbundu boys in the hope of persuading them to return to his mission school at Caconda. My informant stated that the boys were circumcised, beaten, and confined to an enclosure for several weeks. Those who cried out when flogged received a double portion of blows. Poisoning is the fate of a boy who reveals the secrets of the initiation camp to women or uninitiated boys. This is the most direct testimony I have received concerning initiation rites among unmixed Ovimbundu.

881 From Bailundu and Elende I have obtained slight evidence of
292 initiation rites. At the former place, which, like Elende, is a center
171 of the Ovimbundu tribe, fiber costumes were obtained. The mask from Elende is unlike those used at Cangamba, Katoko, and Ngongo. The fiber suits are, however, no different from costumes used at these places. Initiation ceremonies are not held at Elende today, and beyond Dr. Ennis's statement that circumcision rites have been revived in the past fifteen years of his long residence in the neighborhood of Elende, I have no evidence of ritual.

881 The data relating to initiation of boys in Angola suggest loss
177 of the initiatory rites from Umbundu culture, until only a few old masks and costumes, along with attenuated ritual, remain sporadically. On the contrary, in eastern Angola and particularly among the Vachokue, who are farther than the Ovimbundu from coastal influence, initiation ceremonies flourish. At present there is occurring a penetration of initiation rites from the Vachokue area into east-central Angola, which is a region of cultural admixture.

867 The foregoing pages have described certain institutions and social forces which collectively bring individuals into conformity with tribal standards of conduct. The influences at work in this direction may be direct or indirect.

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539 mother leopard returned, the jerboa brought out the only cub four times. On the fourth day the jerboa ate the last of the cubs.

When the mother leopard came home the jerboa was terrified, so said, "The cubs are not very well, you must go in the room to feed them; I cannot bring them out." When the leopard had gone into the sleeping room the jerboa ran quickly into his hole in the ground.

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538 These tales from my records were all told to me by Ngonga. It is true that some of the stories appear in the Umbundu reader [113] "Olosapo Vioku Likisa Oku Tanga" (Kamundongo, 1914). But when this book was printed Ngonga was already well acquainted with all the stories therein, and many more. Most of the tales were, and are today, an integral part of the Umbundu language.

My own inquiries had the same result as those of Chatelain in revealing a preponderance of stories of animals. Yet W. C. Bell [113] was able to collect several tales relating entirely to the adventures of human beings (*Jour. Amer. Folk-Lore*, XXXV, pp. 116–150). At times there is a didactic theme running through a tale, which emphasizes the value of courage, presence of mind, and perseverance. A sense of humor is shown in the conversations of animals and the tricks which the smaller creatures use to the discomfort of the larger animals.

538 171 Comparative study of stories told by the Ovimbundu with those from other parts of Africa opens up a field of research, especially in view of the long caravan journeys of the Ovimbundu. Chatelain narrates the Angolan story of the frog who boasted that he could ride the elephant, and contrived to do so by a clever ruse (*Jour.* [113] *Amer. Folk-Lore*, VII, p. 62). The Nigerian story of the tortoise who fulfilled the same boast is told by A. B. Ellis (Yoruba-speaking Peoples of the Slave Coast, London, 1894, p. 265).

The Ovimbundu have the story of the tortoise who made a wager with the antelope respecting a race which they agreed to run. The tortoise won the wager by placing one of his brothers at the winning post. The Umbundu version is given in "Olosapo" (p. 53), and there is a Cameroon version.

The tug-of-war story which tells of a trick played against the hippopotamus and the elephant is known to the Ovimbundu. The story has a wide distribution with local variations. Sometimes the elephant and the hippopotamus are unwittingly made to pull

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against one another by some small clever animal such as the monkey or the hare. In the version given by H. S. Stannus (Harvard African Studies, vol. III, p. 329) the hare perpetrates this ruse. The version given by Smith and Dale (The Ila-speaking Peoples of Rhodesia, vol. II, p. 377) makes the contestants a hippopotamus and a rhinoceros, but the hare again arranges the tug-of-war. E. Dayrell (Folklore Stories from Southern Nigeria, London, 1910, p. 104) gives another variant of the tug-of-war story, which states that one end of the rope was made fast to a palm tree. The hippopotamus was under water so he could not see the object against which he was pulling. He thought he was tugging against the tortoise as arranged.

538 171 [113]

Umbundu stories are humorous and didactic, while some indicate a process of rationalizing. An example of the latter kind is found in the story explaining why the bat flies at night. Dayrell (pp. 36, 51) gives two different versions of this rationalizing tale.

These folklore stories of the Ovimbundu give information respecting vocabulary, structure of the language, powers of observation, customs, and ideas of conduct.

I have found no stories which illustrate the grafting of elements from two different cultures. In some parts of Africa tales may be heard which contain blended elements from a Negro and a Semitic culture, as in Nigeria. But assimilation of features which were foreign to the story at its cultural origin does not occur in the tales given here, with the exception of the European story of the greedy dog, which is an importation.

The Ovimbundu were noted for their long caravan journeys, which were undertaken in territory occupied by tribes of the same linguistic family (Bantu), a fact which may account for the similarity of Umbundu and other Bantu versions of the same tales.

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cultural factors. The transitions from the Congo basin to the Benguela Highlands are of a gradual kind with respect to climatic conditions, physical features, and culture. Therefore, there are no compelling conditions which caused the Ovimbundu suddenly to abandon traits already acquired before their southern migration. 174

Nevertheless, several traits of Congo culture which must have been known to the Ovimbundu have disappeared from their tribal life, while other factors have been emphasized in importance because of a change in locality. The disappearance of traits and the welding of others is discussed in chapter XII. The present section is concerned with summarizing the points of resemblance and difference between the Congo culture and that of the Ovimbundu.

The books of J. J. Monteiro mention several traits which are a link between cultures of the Congo and the Ovimbundu culture of the Benguela Highlands. The Mushicongos chip all their teeth to fine points (vol. I, p. 262), a practice which resembles that of the Umbundu-speaking Vasele. Monteiro describes the musical bow, the friction drum, and the rubbing of a grooved piece of wood with a stick (vol. I, pp. 139–141). All these musical devices are used today by the Ovimbundu far to the south of the areas described by this writer. When describing the Esele country which forms a cultural pocket of the Ovimbundu people, I have previously referred to Monteiro's mention of the extinguishing of old fires and the ceremonial creation of new ones at the death of a king (vol. II, p. 167); also the functioning of the poison ordeal with use of the bark of *Erythrophlaeum guineense* (vol. I, p. 61). The former of these customs is carefully observed by the Ovimbundu at the present time, while the latter is practised furtively. 171

A part of Angola that is frequently omitted is the Cabinda Enclave to the north of the Congo estuary. Overbergh describes this territory in "Les Mayombe"; the Mayombe are a forest people living near Boma. They use red *tukula* wood for bodily ornament. There are special names for the first- and second-born of twins (p. 217). Circumcision is practised (p. 233). The poison ordeal is used with the drug Kasa. There is a classificatory system of relationships (p. 259), but without sufficient detail for comparison with that of the Ovimbundu. The most artistic figurines, which are carved in wood or ivory, are sometimes filled with a mixture of clay and blood as "medicine" (p. 219). The Mayombe believe in the existence of a supreme being named Ngambi but they have no cult for him; there is, however, a very active belief in a world

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171 of invisible spirits who work through apparitions, cries, and displacement of objects (p. 307). All these traits are features of Umbundu culture (see also "Etudes Bakongo," by R. P. J. van Wing).

J. H. Weeks (V) describes a number of traits which are typical of Ovimbundu culture. Mat-making by sewing long reeds together is pictured (p. 88) in such a way as to identify the method with that of the Ovimbundu. The Bakongo use a stick for making sounds by rubbing on notched bamboo (p. 179). The Bakongo have the dumb-bell basket-work rattle (p. 250), and the bull-roarer as a plaything (p. 126). The friction drum is used (p. 131). There are circumcision lodges for boys, also bachelors' clubs near San Salvador. The function of the bachelors' club corresponds with that of the *onjango*, the council house of the Ovimbundu. The graves of hunters are specially cared for (p. 181). The poison ordeal *nkasa* is carried out with an infusion made from the bark of a tree; vomiting indicates innocence. Nzambi, as among the Ovimbundu, is a vaguely conceived, powerful spirit who receives little attention; there are no prayers and no sacrifices in his honor (p. 276). Descent is reckoned on the mother's side. There is a kinship system of classified relationships; thus *ntekolo* means son's son, son's daughter, daughter's son, and daughter's daughter. *Nkaka* means mother's father, mother's mother, etc., in such a way as to show a parallel between *nkaka* and the *kukululu* class of the Ovimbundu.

R. E. Dennett has mentioned several ethnological points which serve further to connect the Congo culture with that of the Ovimbundu. Dennett's account deals with the Bavili, a branch of the Fjort of the Loango region to the north of the Congo estuary. The father and his brothers are *tata*, the grandchild class is *batekulu* (Umbundu *onekulu*); descent is matrilineal. A man must not marry the daughter of his father's brother or of his mother's sister, because such children are his brothers and sisters (p. 36). Girls are secluded at puberty in the "paint house," and the red coloring is beaten from them with switches (p. 38). The women I saw at Ngongo giving a demonstration of the decoration and dances of a secret society were elaborately painted from head to foot with alternate bands of red and white. The mother's brother may sell his sister's children to pay his debts (p. 41). Inheritance of property is in the female line, to the sons of the deceased man's sister. The heir to chieftainship is the eldest brother of the deceased, and the next in line of succession is a sister's son. The wife and children of the deceased are not entitled to any property (p. 46). The poison ordeal is given

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with powdered bark administered by the medicine-man, and vomiting is a sign of innocence (p. 25). Nzambi, who is the supreme being from whom everything originated, corresponds to Suku and Kalunga of the Ovimbundu, for like these high beings he is remote and otiose. /7/

When inquiring into the ethnology of the Kasai valley, situated to the northeast of the Benguela Highlands, a large body of literature is available. Each book or article confirms cultural resemblances between the social pattern of the Ovimbundu and that of the Congo basin, but not all points of comparison are to be found together in the works of one writer.

In an article on the "Ethnology of the South West Congo Free State" E. Torday and T. A. Joyce describe the use of manioc by *the Bayanzi who scatter the flour on water, so making a paste.* To eliminate the poisonous principle, bitter manioc is soaked in water for three days, after which it is peeled, dried, and pounded in wooden mortars (p. 138). *Tukula* wood, which is well known and widely used in Angola, yields a red powder that is employed for corporeal decoration by the Bapindi and the Bakuba (p. 147). The Vakuanyama of southern Angola use the powder mixed with fat as an unguent for their bodies and a dressing for leather clothing.

The evidence of Torday and Joyce shows that children of the Bakwese owe obedience to their maternal uncle; for example, boys who wished to accompany Torday had to ask permission from this relative (p. 150). The practice of cupping, use of friction drums and the marimba, are found among the Bakwese, who test the guilt of an accused person by giving a poisonous concoction prepared from the bark of *Erythrophlaeum guineense;* innocence is proved by vomiting.

Torday and Joyce (I) call attention to several traits which are common to the cultures of the Bambala and the Ovimbundu. Skin puncturing and the introducing of decayed rubber into the cuts are practised (p. 401); this is a common usage among Ovimbundu women. The poison ordeal is practised. Water-pipes for smoking tobacco are made from gourds. During agricultural operations hoe culture by women follows clearance of the ground by men. Women use a short iron-bladed hoe, and the result of their labor is the production of manioc, bananas, sweet potatoes, haricot beans, and peanuts (p. 405).

Rats are shot with blunt wooden arrows. There are great communal hunts for large game. The grass is fired, and at the conclusion

171 of the hunt horns and skulls are presented to the village fetish, a practice which is comparable to the mounting of skulls and horns outside the hut of an Umbundu hunter whose grave is later decorated with similar trophies.

Among the Bambala a hunter's bow is *bata* (Umbundu *uta*, "a weapon"). Exchange of blood seals an alliance between chiefs. Kinship is reckoned chiefly in the female line and children belong to the eldest maternal uncle. Widows never inherit property; this passes to the eldest son of the eldest sister. The word for father is *tata*. Personal names may be changed at puberty or later at the pleasure of the owner (pp. 410–412). Poison for the ordeal is made from the bark of a tree imported from the mouth of the Kwilu River (p. 416). The name for the soul is *mityima* ("the heart," Umbundu *utima*). In all these points the Ovimbundu resemble the Bambala.

Torday and Joyce have reported on the culture of the Bayaka (II). This tribe has the friction drum, but in a form rather different from that of Angola. The poison ordeal with the use of *Erythrophlaeum guineense* is employed. Straw shelters are built over graves which are covered with broken pots. Ovimbundu graves of this kind were photographed near Caconda (Plate XLVII, Figs. 1, 2).

The Basonge live near the Baluba close to the Lualaba River, and the report of C. van Overbergh has been consulted for information which shows cultural resemblances between the Basonge and the Ovimbundu. The Basonge use short ornamental clubs called by van Overbergh *batons de promenade*. Such clubs as these are one of the most artistic features in the wood-carving industry of the Ovimbundu. The clubs are too ornamental for use as missiles, and the name given by van Overbergh (plate I, fig. 13) is an appropriate description.

Hoe blades and the method of hafting are the same for the Basonge and the Ovimbundu. The wooden stools and gourd tobacco-pipes of the Basonge have forms well known to Umbundu wood-carvers. Manioc is the principal food of the Basonge (p. 125). Fire is made by twirling the point of a stick on a baseboard. Only rich chiefs have a few cattle, and the word for ox is *ngombe* (Umbundu *ongombe*).

I have examined the evidence of J. H. Weeks (III, IV) with regard to the Bangala (Im Bangala) of the southwest Congo region. The Bangala use the word *nganga* for "medicine-man," but for the Ovimbundu *nganga* is a witch, while *ocimbanda* is the legitimate

practitioner of healing and divination. If sickness visits a house /7/ of the Bangala the fire is extinguished and a new one is kindled. Women who have prepared a corpse for burial are purified by sitting in a circle of fires (p. 114).

Manioc, of which there are several varieties, is the principal food, and the methods of agriculture agree well with those followed by the Ovimbundu, since beans, yams, maize, and peanuts are cultivated. Caterpillars are used as food. Milk is tabooed by all Bangala, who regard it with great abhorrence, though no reason is given. The best hunters among the Bangala are specialists who are prepared for the hunt by the medicine-man (p. 123).

Fish are stupefied by poison of a vegetable kind which is scattered on the surface of the water (p. 127). The Bangala have the poison ordeal (p. 434). I have reported the use of the word *ekandu* by the Ovimbundu, who employ the term to denote any evil action which causes pain to others. If there is sickness in the family, the Baloki say, "There is an *ekandu* in the family" (Weeks, IV, p. 390), and the witch doctor removes this *ekandu* ceremonially.

The Baloki use painted wooden posts which are placed near the houses of the sick so that the spirits of sickness may be driven into them; the spirits are then appeased with offerings of food and drink. From Bailundu I obtained a carved wooden post in the form of a human figure; this was set on a path near a village so that offerings might be made to the spirit within the post if an epidemic attacked the village (cf. Weeks, p. 390).

The Umbundu game of shooting at a tuber has been described; apparently this amusement is like that of the Baloki game as described by Weeks (p. 405). Baloki youths cut the root of a plantain into the form of a wheel, and the players are then divided into two competing parties as among the Ovimbundu; but Baloki boys throw bamboo splinters at the wheel, they do not shoot arrows as do the Ovimbundu. Mancala is played (p. 414) as it is among the Ovimbundu, who call the game *ocela;* but I am not informed concerning the details of the game among the Baloki and Ovimbundu respectively.

H. von Weissmann (II) indicates that his route lay up the Congo to the junction with the Kasai. He then turned up the Kasai and traveled through the country of the Bambala, the Bassongo, and the Bakuba; thence along the valley of the Sankuru. He gives his impressions of the Bihéan (Ovimbundu) caravans from Bihé in

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[7] the Benguela Highlands (p. 145). "They carry on the most shameful trade imaginable and undertake longer journeys than any other Negroes of the west coast. They exchange their prisoners for ivory among the Bakuba tribes." Weissmann journeyed among the Wawemba of northern Rhodesia where he noted the poison ordeal. He states that it was customary to settle a dispute between two persons by drinking a poisonous draft made from a bark, and the one who vomits is cleared of suspicion. Weissmann's accounts emphasize the importance of Umbundu contacts through the caravan trade.

M. W. Hilton-Simpson, who accompanied Torday for a period, has noted several points of importance in the establishment of cultural resemblances between the Ovimbundu and tribes of the Kasai (pp. 225, 257, 259, 282). The Bambala play end-blown wooden flutes like those from Bailundu, but there is no evidence to show that the Ovimbundu play a nose flute as do the Bambala. The eating of dogs by the Bapende is a widely distributed cultural trait of the Congo, and the Ovimbundu follow this practice. Initiation masks pictured by Hilton-Simpson bear a resemblance to those of eastern Angola. The Batatela smoke hemp in a gourd water-pipe as do the Vachokue and some of the Ovimbundu. The short friction drum used by the Batatela is held under the arm. In the form of the drum and the method of holding there is resemblance to the Umbundu custom. The Batatela have the flat drum called *ocingufu* by the Ovimbundu (p. 52). Painting the exterior surfaces of walls of houses is a southern Congo custom followed by the Batatela. This practice has extended into Angola as far south as the Malange-Saurimo line, and even to the Bailundu-Huambo area, but south of the halfway line across Angola I do not recollect seeing houses with painted walls.

In dealing with the evidence of culture contacts indicated by the text and illustrations of the "Annales Musée du Congo Belge," a condensed statement will call attention to the many identities between artifacts of the Ovimbundu and those of the southwest Congo. The following details, which are well illustrated in the "Annales Musée du Congo Belge," should be compared with Plates IX–XXII, showing similar objects made by the Ovimbundu.

Series III, II, fasc. 1: Carved wooden staffs for chiefs closely resemble those used by chiefs among the Ovimbundu (p. 70).

Carved wooden hair-combs are like those used by the Ovimbundu and the Vachokue (p. 82).

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Initiation of boys who are isolated in the bush where there is ceremonial bathing and circumcision is a practice of eastern Angola (p. 81). |7|

The oval wooden masks worn by initiates are similar to those of eastern Angola (p. 84).

The mancala board with twenty-eight holes, arranged four by seven, is of the form used at Ngalangi, central Angola (p. 86).

The Babende use the friction drum (p. 87).

Bashilele arrowheads are of Umbundu pattern (p. 98).

Use of red *tukula* wood is common among the Bushongo (p. 165).

The wood-carving of the Bakongo and the Bashilele resembles that of the Ovimbundu. Faces are oval or triangular, and eyes are represented by narrow oval slits so as to conform in style and balance with the general outline of the face (p. 200).

Series III, II, fasc. 2, plates XXII, XXXI show reed mats made near Leopoldville. Such mats are made by Umbundu males, who call them *esaisa*.

The flat drum (*ocingufu* of the Ovimbundu) is played by the Batatela. The Bahuana use the long narrow-necked flour sifter which is in common use among the Vachokue, though not among the Ovimbundu (plate VIII).

Series III, I, fasc. 2, plate XLVIII, figs. 586–587; plate LIII, fig. 619; and III, plate XXXIII, fig. 470: The general style and pose of the figurines on these plates is exactly like the work of the Ovimbundu. Legs are short, knees are flexed, hands are clasped on the abdomen, and necks are elongated, while hair and cicatrization are clearly shown. All these figures are the same in form and function as those used by the Ovimbundu. Plate XXII, figs. 342, 354, 357, describes horns of antelope, also tortoise shells which are filled with medicine. The latter are provided with cords for suspension round the neck. Batatela war clubs are of the form used by the Ovimbundu (p. 65). These resemblances between work of the Ovimbundu and tribes of the southwest Congo is further shown by reference to illustrations by H. Clouzot and A. Level (L'art nègre, Paris, 1919).

Series III, I, fasc. 1: Mural decorations on houses resemble the designs on houses of northern Angola (p. 6).

The basket-work dumb-bell rattle is of the form used in eastern Angola (plate II, figs. 36–38).

Plate VI, figs. 123 A and B, indicates that the flat drum of the Ovimbundu is of the exact form used in the Kasai and Sankuru

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●171 region. Plate XVI, fig. 284, shows long wooden flutes like those of Umbundu pattern at Bailundu. Plate XIX, figs. 124 and 313, indicates that the musical bow with its gourd resonator is of the form used by the Ovimbundu.

The ethnographical catalogue of the Rijks Museum of Leiden shows many objects of the southwest Congo which are identical with those used by the Ovimbundu. Plate 193 pictures the sanza and the marimba which are common to both regions. Plates 224, fig. 1, and 225, fig. 1, show tobacco-pipes and a mancala board of Ngalangi pattern. The mancala board from the Sankuru region has twenty-eight holes arranged seven by four. Plates 75, fig. 10, and 236, fig. 4, indicate that curved knives used by the Bangala are like those used by the Vasele of northeast Angola. Plate 227, fig. 2, shows that head-dresses for initiates closely resemble those worn by Vachokue boys at Cangamba, eastern Angola.

174 This examination of the traits of Congo culture calls attention to numerous resemblances between the cultural pattern of the Congo region and that of the Ovimbundu of the present day. I think there is reason to accept the following factors of Umbundu life as a part of the Congo culture before the separation of the Umbundu-speaking peoples. The historical and geographical facts when considered in relation to the number of cultural identities fully support the thesis that the Ovimbundu are of the central African matrix of cultures.

On the material side resemblances are close, as the following summary will show. The Ovimbundu cultivate maize from which beer is made; they have manioc, peanuts, yams, sweet potatoes, and beans. Methods of agriculture and preparation of foods are similar. The animals common to both regions are the sheep, goat, chicken, and dog. The difference is the rearing of cattle by the Ovimbundu, who have also concentrated on the cultivation of maize to an extent not possible in the more densely wooded areas of the Congo basin. The use of dogs' flesh as food is common in both areas.

The musical instruments of the Ovimbundu are in keeping with Congo patterns in every way. Indeed, there exist few and only minor differences. Forms common to both areas are the *ocisanji*, a flat board with two rows of metal keys; dumb-bell basket rattles and gourd rattles; the friction drum; the marimba; wooden flutes; the flat drum *ocingufu*; the double iron gong; and the long tubular drum which is held between the performer's legs. Resemblances

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439 177 The vertebrae of serpents strung together as a girdle are a cure for rheumatism (p. 237). A necklace of pythons' vertebrae was obtained from a chief of Ngalangi who wore the bones to cure that affliction. In Garenganze twins were introduced to the chief at a ceremony conducted by a female *ocimbanda*. The Ovimbundu welcome twins and one of triplets is given to the king.

171 E. Holub (II) mentions important traits of culture among the Marutse, a Rhodesian people who keep cattle. The Marutse have an aptitude for working in iron, horn, wood, bone, and leather. The masked dance at which performers wore tightly fitting jackets of netted fiber, with close-fitting sleeves, gloves, and stockings of the same material, would serve as a description of the costumes worn in the ceremonies observed at Cangamba in eastern Angola. Holub notes the use of the double iron gong at these dances (vol. II, pp. 168–170). The bark receptacle (p. 308) is the one commonly used in eastern Angola, and along the line from Saurimo to Malange.

The Marutse have the poison ordeal in which vomiting is a sign of innocence, the witness being the god Nyambe (p. 322). Gourd decorations of the Marutse and Babunda tribes show a technique comparable with work of this kind done by the Ovimbundu (pp. 305, 335). The practice of cupping is described by Holub (p. 325); so also is the custom of wearing wooden hair-combs (p. 349). These are cultural traits of the Vachokue and the Ovimbundu.

In his "Eine Kulturskizze des Marutse-Mambunda Reiches" Holub gives a few additional points which connect the Marutse culture with that of eastern and central Angola. The main instances are the technique in gourds (p. 81); the form and hafting of axes (p. 116); blacksmith's bellows and tongs (p. 129); the musical bow (p. 139); the board with metal keys (p. 138); the small friction drum, identical in pattern with my specimen from Elende (p. 140, fig. 70); a musical instrument consisting of a notched board which is rubbed with a stick (p. 142); tobacco-pipes made from the horns of animals and from gourds (p. 147); cylindrical snuff boxes and sticks for pounding snuff (p. 150, fig. 83); wooden hair-combs (p. 155, fig. 87); and wooden stools (p. 163, fig. 92).

All these articles, which are pictured by Holub as being representative of the work of the Marutse of Rhodesia, have their exact parallels in Field Museum collections from the Ovimbundu.

Perusal of "The New Africa" by Schulz and Hammar was not ethnologically fruitful except for a series of outline drawings

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(p. 110) showing forms of arrowheads used along the course of the Chobe River, near the southeast border of Angola. One of the heads is of the form most common among the Ovimbundu, while the remainder are those in use among the Vachokue. Gourds are of the same shapes and decorations as those obtained from Bailundu by Field Museum expedition. 17

F. H. Melland describes the culture of the Bakonde of northern Rhodesia. He is particularly concerned with the Kasempa district bordering on eastern Angola, Katanga, and the Barotse country. The poison ordeal (p. 222) is in use; vomiting implies innocence. The small ceremonial ax is used by the Bakonde in divination rites such as I have described for the Ovimbundu at Bailundu and Ngalangi (p. 227). The Lunda people wear masks in connection with initiation ceremonies (p. 232). Medicines are mixed in the horns of the duiker and the bush buck (p. 232). The four-legged, skin-topped stool is the same as that made by the Ovimbundu (p. 280).

Melland's description (p. 235) of a rite performed by a belated Konde traveler in order to retard the setting of the sun, should be mentioned. The top of a small ant heap is stuck into the fork of a tree; this is the custom which prevails among the Ovimbundu of Elende, and it is also a Lamba practice (C. M. Doke, p. 288). The idea is unusual and I suggest that the Rhodesian rite may have been derived from the practice of Umbundu carriers. Yet, on the contrary, men of the Bihéan caravans may have imitated a Rhodesian custom; but the act is so peculiar that independent origin seems improbable.

H. S. Stannus mentions points which aid the working out of a scheme of culture contacts. Stannus describes the Wayao and other tribes near Lake Nyasa, which was an area familiar to caravans from the Benguela Highlands. The carving of wooden animals (p. 348) of no known significance is a favorite pastime in which the Ovimbundu are skilled. Gourd vessels ornamented with lines and triangles (p. 349) have a technique similar to that used by the Ovimbundu. The shooting of arrows having blunt wooden heads; preparing staked pits; use of mucilage for catching birds; poisoning fish; and making noose traps (p. 355), are all everyday usages among the Ovimbundu, as they are among the Wayao.

Eastern and east-central Angola are the regions where bark cloth is made and worn. The Angolan industry forms an extension of the craft as practised in Rhodesia and the southwest Congo basin. Stages of stripping bark from the tree and soaking and beating it

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171 with a wooden mallet are the same over a large area, but there are no painted patterns or other fine points of technique which aid the study of possible diffusions (Stannus, p. 343).

The following traits mentioned by Stannus have been recorded among the Ovimbundu. There exists the custom of opening graves to obtain portions of human remains for use as charms (p. 293); the poison ordeal is applied to human beings or to fowls (p. 296); the use of horns stuffed with medicine is common (p. 304); and divination by means of the small objects contained in a gourd resembles the method of the Umbundu diviner (p. 302). Stannus states that the gourd contains a number of small articles, each of which is named. In the divination gourd are small pieces of white earthenware which denote innocence, also bits of fiber from a sleeping mat to denote sickness. The Ovimbundu use a divination basket, not a gourd, for these symbolic objects, but otherwise the methods are the same.

The bark canoe and the dugout are used. Maize, cassava, beans, and peanuts are the principal crops (p. 346). There is ancestor worship combined with great fear of ghosts. The head of a family petitions a deceased relative, and the headman of a village intercedes with his predecessor's ghost. I have mentioned that a headman of the Ovimbundu brings out the head of a dead chief wrapped in oxhide, makes sacrifice, and asks favors. Stannus notes the seclusion and circumcision of boys at puberty, also the ceremonial use of bark cloth in these rites (p. 256). These observations from Nyasaland agree with notes made at Cangamba in eastern Angola. A menstruating woman sleeps on a mat away from her husband, and she is not allowed to prepare food (p. 234). These were noted as prohibitions for women of the Ovimbundu.

The classificatory system of relationship outlined by Stannus for the Nyasa region is the same as that of the Ovimbundu of Angola. A man may not marry a daughter of his mother's sister, but marriage with a daughter of his father's brother is a normal union (p. 236). The statement of Stannus (p. 239) with regard to the burial of a pregnant woman recalls the custom which prevailed until recent times at Ngalangi, where a sharp stake projecting from the surface soil rested on the abdomen of the dead woman. After the grave had been filled the stake was driven downward. Stannus says that before filling in the earth one of the gravediggers descends into the pit, and, after cutting the abdomen, he inserts the lower end of a bamboo, while the upper end is made to project above the surface of the grave. In Nyasaland and eastern Angola the alleged reason

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for this procedure is the prevention of death among other pregnant women. Twins are welcome and well treated (p. 239). /7/

A corpse is tied to a pole with its limbs bound, and in this manner it is carried to the grave, accompanied by drummers. A widow watches by the corpse of her husband. At the conclusion of funeral rites fires are extinguished, and a new fire is kindled with the fire drill in the chief's house, from which distribution of the new fire is made. The ashes of the old fires, with the stones supporting the cooking pots, are taken to cross-paths and destroyed.

Cupping is practised (p. 289), and the vapor bath is used (p. 290). The patient, covered with a blanket, squats over a pot of water into which herbs have been dropped. Hot stones are added to the water until it boils and gives off clouds of steam. Wayao boys have the whipping top (p. 359); so also have the Ovimbundu. The Wayao warm their drums and add wax to alter the tone (p. 365). The conical rat trap of plaited cane, used for placing in grass which is fired, is that in use by the Ovimbundu (Stannus, plate XX).

When describing the Wayao culture, C. H. Stigand confirms many of the points mentioned by Stannus. Stigand describes the making of bark cloth (p. 119); the sewing of reed mats with a long needle (p. 120); and the importance of the maternal uncle, whose consent to the marriage of his sister's children is necessary (p. 122).

C. Gouldsbury and H. Sheane describe the poison ordeal (p. 61). The Wawemba make their poison from the bark of *Erythrophlaeum guineense*, the tree mentioned so frequently in my summary of the Congo culture, in which this trait of the poison ordeal is common. A chief of the Wawemba goes to the bush accompanied by a medicine-man who is stripped of all clothing, and an offering of white beads is made to the tree from which the bark is taken. The bark is then given into the hands of a young child, who is carried to the village so that his feet may not touch the ground. As usual in this ordeal, vomiting is a sign of innocence.

The Wawemba practise cupping (p. 134). A man may not marry the daughter of his mother's sister because she is his sister (p. 172). The Wawemba carry a corpse on a pole. The king's corpse is wrapped in oxhide, and his bows, arrows, and spears are placed in a hut on the grave. Then an ox is killed to provide hide for binding the rafters of this tomb. Wives and slaves were formerly sacrificed at the death of a king. These customs are similar to those described for the funeral rites of a king of the Ovimbundu.

171 E. W. Smith and A. M. Dale describe tribes which claim that they are an offshoot from the eastern Bantu. This ancestry no doubt accounts for the presence of many traits which are characteristic of the culture pattern of the cattle-keeping areas of east Africa. The writing of Smith and Dale is important because it deals with a region in contact with the Congo, east Africa, and the Ovimbundu. The Wawemba and other tribes described by these authors are in contact with the Baluba and the Bambala, who have been in touch with the Ovimbundu from the earliest times for which any record exists.

According to Smith and Dale the tribes grouped as Ila-speaking peoples extinguish all fires after a funeral, while ashes from mourners' fires are collected and thrown away (vol. II, p. 142). This regard for ceremonial fire accompanies factors of the cattle culture wherever that occurs in east, south, southwest Africa, and the Benguela Highlands. The Ila-speaking people grow maize and beans (vol. I, p. 137); they smoke hemp through the calabash water-pipe (vol. I, p. 152); a conical basket fish-trap of Umbundu pattern is used (vol. I, p. 163); they peg out hides and scrape them; they also make twine by rolling fiber on the inner side of the thigh (vol. I, p. 185). Coiled basketry in which the coils are made of many strands of fine grass, also shallow winnowing trays, are like those used by the Ovimbundu (vol. I, p. 187).

Pottery is made by the coiling method (vol. I, p. 192). The method of carving stools bears a distinct resemblance to that of the Ovimbundu. The bases of milk vessels and stools show supports of peculiar shape which are triangular in cross section (vol. I, pp. 199–202). The Ila-speaking people have a classificatory system of relationships consisting of groups of grandparents, fathers, and mothers. Terms of address vary according to the relative ages of the speaker and the person addressed. *Wangu* ("older") is the term used by the Ovimbundu; so also is *tata* ("father"). Children of the father's brothers, and children of the mother's sisters, that is, ortho-cousins, are real brothers and sisters. The mother's eldest brother is the most important relative. The word *tata* is applied to all the brothers of the speaker's father. This is the system of the Ovimbundu in principle and considerable detail.

The Ba-ila play mancala (*chisolo*) with holes in the ground (vol. II, p. 233). They have the musical bow (vol. II, p. 263) and the metal-keyed musical instrument (Umbundu *ocisanji*) which is played in a gourd (vol. II, p. 265). The Ba-ila use the friction drum

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(vol. II, p. 265), which is an instrument of the Ovimbundu and /7/ several tribes of the southwest Congo. The marimba, made from eight slats of wood with gourds underneath, is well known in the north and east of Angola.

There is real similarity both in form and function between the /74 culture of Rhodesia and that of the Ovimbundu. This assertion does not rest on consideration of a few factors of a general kind. In addition to the weight of evidence afforded by the long list of similar factors detailed in this section, one must bear in mind the geographical proximity and the known historical connection of the areas under discussion. The following points are of primary importance in accounting for the similarity of culture patterns in Rhodesia and the highlands of Angola occupied by the Ovimbundu.

(1) Central Angola and Rhodesia have so many traits in common with each other and with the southwest Congo culture that together the three form a cultural harmony.

(2) Central Angola and Rhodesia have both derived factors from the cattle culture of east Africa, though by different routes.

(3) Rhodesia and central Angola have had prolonged direct contacts through caravan trade carried on by the Ovimbundu.

(4) In addition to diffusion there has been a convergence of cultures in Rhodesia and central Angola because of similarity of geographical conditions. Both are high plateau regions having a degree of heat and a rainfall suitable for the growth of maize and the rearing of cattle. Therefore these occupations have developed in both regions because in each locality there has been a need, favorable conditions, and a like response to physical conditions.

SOUTH WEST AFRICA

The principal tribes of this area are the Ovambo, Herero, Berg /77 Damara, Nama Hottentots, and Bushmen. The most important tribes to consider from the cultural point of view are the Ovambo and the Herero. Wandering bands of Bushmen occur in Angola, and here and there may be seen among the Ovimbundu individuals who appear to have a trace of Bushman blood; but comparison of collections and notes relating to the Ovimbundu with literature on Bushman tribes does not reveal any similarities. There has undeniably been some contact of Bushmen with the inhabitants of Angola, but Bushman influence has probably been very slight from a cultural and physical point of view (D. Bleek; S. Marquardsen, p. 109).

177 [197] The Ovambo include eight kindred tribes, all of whom are branches of the Bantu linguistic family to which the Ovimbundu belong. The Vakuanyama, who inhabit large tracts of southern Angola, are a numerous, warlike, pastoral branch of the Ovambo. The Vakuanyama are the only section of the cattle-keeping peoples of the southwest of Africa with whom I have made personal contact; but their culture is generally representative of that of the Ovambo and the Herero.

171 233 When making a journey southward from the country of the Ovimbundu in central Angola, there is a noticeable increase in the size of the kraals as the journey is continued. The first large kraal was observed near Kipungo, and when as far south as Mongua the wealthy cattle-keeping Vakuanyama were by far the most numerous people. Their total strength is probably about 55,000. I journeyed through the Kuanyama country in July, halfway through the dry season, but found that cattle were watered at deep wells from which men and women were constantly drawing water for the herds. Near Ondjiva, only a few miles from British South West Africa, the ruler of the Vakuanyama owned at that time 14,000 head of cattle.

After examining 1,200 objects collected in Angola, I feel sure that cultural contact between the Ovimbundu and the Vakuanyama is unimportant, so far as artifacts are concerned; but, if the inquiry turns to other aspects of culture, there is a more fruitful line of investigation.

Many beliefs and customs center in the keeping of cattle in east and south Africa. The typical cattle-keeping area begins with the Bahima in the vicinity of Lake Victoria Nyanza. The region extends down the eastern side of the continent, through the south and southwest into Damaraland. The Vakuanyama of southern Angola should be included in this area, which has homologies in respect to certain laws, ceremonies, economic customs, and religious beliefs.

The true pastoral area of the south of Angola extends at least as far north as Huila, where there is sufficient rainfall to produce good pasture in open country which is well adapted for raising stock. All the traditions of the Ovimbundu, along with the writings of Battell, suggest this southwest part of Angola as the line of entry for cattle. The Congo basin is not a pastoral country, and transportation of cattle from Rhodesia would necessitate the crossing of hundreds of miles of arid country in Moxico, eastern Angola. There remains, therefore, the cattle-keeping area of south and southwest

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Angola as the source of supply for the Ovimbundu, who both traded and made warfare with the south.

Therefore, reasonable ground exists for believing that the cultural traits that the Ovimbundu associate with the keeping of cattle have been taken over with the cattle themselves. The traits agree in principle and detail with the factors of the African cattle-keeping areas. The characteristics of this pastoral culture have been outlined by M. J. Herskovits (The Cattle Complex in East Africa, *Amer. Anth.*, XXVIII, 1926, pp. 270–272; 424–528; 630–664). I wish, however, to give prominence to the factor of sacred fire which is fundamental in the cattle-keeping culture. The importance of sacred fire in the ritual of the Ovimbundu has been demonstrated, and this trait is a most important link between the typically Negro culture of the Ovimbundu and the Hamitic pastoral culture of east Africa.

A brief summary of the salient facts of the cattle-keeping culture, such as is found in east and south Africa, will be given. This will be followed by a statement of the cultural traits associated with the keeping of cattle among the Ovimbundu in order to demonstrate similarities of custom.

In describing cattle-keeping people of the Lakes region J. Roscoe (VI) outlines a pre-pastoral condition characterized by agricultural pursuits which still survive near Ruwenzori and Elgon. Of the pastoral people the most conservative are the Banyankole of Ankole, among whom all social customs fall into line with the keeping of cattle. Milk is the principal food, and strong purgatives are taken after eating vegetable food, which is regarded as unclean. Agriculturists are a serf class who are not allowed to have milk. A woman of the pastoral class would not accept a husband from the agricultural people, because they are social inferiors. In such a community one finds a strict preservation of customs centering in cattle. Bulls are killed beside the grave of a chief, while cows are dedicated to the dead chief at whose shrine their milk is offered daily (p. 21).

Roscoe's account of the worship of the dead in Uganda (III) further explains customs that are characteristic of pastoral communities in which the connection between cattle-keeping and kingship is important. The death of the king is not announced and the fact of death is kept secret for several days until preparations for the succession have been made. "The fire is extinct" is a euphemism which refers to the death of the king. The king is buried in a hut surrounded by a fence. This hut is later visited by the new king

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233 174 who cleans and decorates the jawbone of his predecessor, then preserves it in a case of lion skin. Among the Basoga the skull of the king is cleaned and stitched in cowhide. It is then placed in a temple where a medium lives in order to converse with the ghost of the king (p. 43). The Bunyoro line the grave of a king with cowhide, and the slaughtered cows are said to serve the dead king with milk in a spirit world.

Roscoe (I, p. 101) states that the Bahima wrap the body of a king in the skin of a freshly killed cow; the deities are not often invoked, but attention is paid to ancestral ghosts (p. 109). There is a Bahima custom of making blood brotherhood by drinking blood mixed with milk (p. 117). The Banyankole (Roscoe, V, p. 32), institute a blood brotherhood by rubbing each other with blood drawn from their navels by an arrow. The body of a king is sewn in cowhide (p. 58). A cow is killed and eaten at the grave of a chief (p. 146).

171 A further examination of Roscoe's observations (IV) adds corroborative information. The Bakitara have rain-makers for each district (p. 28). There is a ritual for establishing blood brotherhood (p. 46). At the king's death all fires in the royal enclosure are extinguished; so also are the fires in each royal cow kraal. Fresh fires are made by friction in the new royal enclosure from which fire is distributed to the kraals (p. 47). The Bakitara test two litigants or accused persons by asking each to provide chickens which are made to take poison (p. 70). The death of the king is not announced for some days; he is said to be asleep. A young bull is killed to provide a shroud for the king's body (p. 121). The king's spear and walking stick are kept in the tomb (p. 126). At the death of a king of the Baganda the guardian of the king's sacred fire is strangled. A war leader rubs himself with ashes from the sacred fire in order to increase his strength and courage (Roscoe, II, pp. 103, 349).

The concept of the sacred fire has spread, not only down the east side of Africa and into Angola, but northeastward to the Lotuko-speaking peoples. Here a new fire has to be kindled at the initiation of a member of the drum-house. At puberal initiation ceremonies for boys, the rain-maker creates new fire with twirling sticks, which are never again used, though they are preserved. All fires in the village are extinguished before the new fires are made. The freshly ignited fire is distributed first to drum-houses then to the homes (C. G. and B. Z. Seligman, Sudan Notes and Records, VIII, pp. 12,

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15). Fire is kindled on the grave and tended by a relative for thirty days (p. 38). 171

When the Masai desire rain, a fire of cordia wood is lighted. Into this a medicine-man throws charms, after which several medicine-men dance round the fire and sing (A. C. Hollis, The Masai, p. 348).

Bösch states that the Banyamwezi have a fire-making rite which is symbolic and religious, "mais avant tout il est magique." The new fire is made annually at the brewing of the first beer. New fire is made when epidemics of sickness occur, also at the inauguration of a new chief. The Ovimbundu make and distribute new fire on each of these occasions. The Banyamwezi strangle their decrepit king but do not announce the death. A report stating that the king is sick is issued (Les Banyamwezi, pp. 229–233).

The usages of the cattle-keeping Ovambo (of whom the Vakuanyama of southern Angola are a section) and the Herero, are of paramount importance in this research because of their proximity to the Ovimbundu.

H. Vedder (III, p. 156) has come to the conclusion that the Herero represent the southern extremity of a racial migration from the region of the Great Lakes, and this is the generally accepted view. Vedder states that the Herero came through the south of Angola, crossed the Cunene River, and entered the Kaokoveld (p. 166). From a study of native traditions, philology, and cultural elements, there is reason for supposing that the Ovambo, including the Vakuanyama, extended farther into Angola than they do today; hence contacts with the Ovimbundu were probably frequent, and possibly continuous for a period. 174 114

C. H. L. Hahn has recently made an analysis of the traits of Kuanyama culture. His introductory pages give an account of Kalunga, a supreme being whose name is coupled with the name Nangombe. There is here a philological resemblance to words used by the Ovimbundu. *Kalunga* is an Umbundu word meaning "greetings," "sea," "lord," and "death," the meaning varying with the context and accent. *Ongombe* is the Umbundu word for ox, while *Kangombe* is the name of more than one chief of historical importance. The Herero respect a supreme being whom they call Ndjambi Karunga. *Nyambi* is a well-known word in the Congo region, and the Ovimbundu have the word *Njambi*, or *Na-Njambi*, which means "Lord Njambi."

174 114 The Ovambo will not allow the tribal fire of the chief's kraal to burn out because it is the life of the people (Hahn, p. 3). This author writes in the past tense, from which one infers that the customs he describes have declined. Two old men were the keepers of the sacred fire; these guardians were chosen from the circumcised men (p. 17). The fire was never allowed to flare, but only to smolder. No one referred to this fire, nor was anyone allowed to sit near it, cook over it, or warm himself. The whole tribe received the fire from the chief, who originally gave it to the headman for distribution to commoners (p. 18). Hahn remarks that, although these customs are declining, they are still observed by the Vakuanyama, the branch of the Ovambo which is in closest contact with the Ovimbundu.

171 In the same publication (III, p. 68) Vedder says of the Berg Damara that a series of religious ideas centers in the holy fire which burns perpetually on the eastern side of a sacred tree in the middle of each village. At this fire the elders cook their meat, and here the council meeting is held. In order to obtain a seat at the holy fire a young man has to submit to initiation as a hunter on three occasions, at intervals of a year. Children may not play at the holy fire. When hunting becomes unprofitable the Berg Damara move to a new site, and a glowing piece of wood is taken from the sacred fire in order to kindle a new one. This is the practice described in connection with the formation of a new village site by the Ovimbundu. A more detailed account of sacred fire is given by Vedder (II, pp. 23–27).

L. Fourie, another contributor to "Native Tribes of Southwest Africa," shows that the Heikom Bushmen have a sacred fire kindled and owned by the headman, who is the only person who knows how to bring from this fire the properties which induce health and well-being. When making a new settlement the headman kindles the new fire under the sacred tree, and fire from the old camp may not be used. After the headman has dropped herbs into the fire and has lighted his pipe therefrom, his wife takes brands for kindling the fire in her hut. The fire is then distributed from this point among the whole group (p. 87).

The center for religious worship among the Herero is an ash heap in which a weak fire glimmers. This is blown into a blaze only on festive occasions. The fire is always situated between the chief kraal and the house of the principal wife. Round the fire lie horns of cattle which have been slaughtered as an offering (Vedder, III, p. 167). The holy fire is a gift from Mukuru, and extinction of

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the fire means disaster for the tribe. If the fire should die out, only the priest as living representative of Mukuru may rekindle it. The relighting is done by means of fire-sticks, which are said to be male and female. A traveler makes sure of the blessing of his ancestors by taking a firebrand from the holy fire with him. When laying the foundation of a new house the builder must obtain a firebrand from the fire of a recognized priest-chief. 171

To corroborate the information given by Vedder, one may turn to the work of J. Irle (II, pp. 337, 342, 346). The soul, which is not corporeal, is identified with the heart as among the Ovimbundu and in the southwest Congo. The Herero use sandals which they bury with the dead. Probably the Ovimbundu have borrowed the idea of sandals from this southern culture, since there are no sandal-wearing people found on any other side of them. The Herero speak of Ndjambi, and Irle asks, "Who is Ndjambi, with whom they so frequently associated the name Karunga?" They say that Karunga is Ndjambi who sends rain, thunder, and lightning. The Herero say, "Karunga dwells in heaven. He does us only good, therefore we do not fear him and do not sacrifice to him." Holy fire, which is never allowed to go out, is made with fire-sticks in the ancestor house.

A. W. Hoernlé has commented on the use of sacred fire by the Hottentots. *Nau* is a mystic force; for example, an animal killed by lightning is *nau*. As soon as a person becomes *nau*, the fire in his hut is *nau* and must no longer be used for cooking. A fire kindled with the fire-sticks is used for the purification ceremony of a girl who menstruates for the first time. After the ceremony she may resume her milking duties. The Hottentots use the sweat bath as a means of purifying mourners. An article entitled "The Sacred Fire of the Bapedi of the Transvaal," by W. M. Eiselen, adds important data to the notes given here.

All this evidence from east and southwest Africa is in close agreement with personal observations among the Ovimbundu. The contacts of the Ovimbundu with southern Angola are established facts, hence history and geography render the hypothesis of a derivation of culture probable. The Ovimbundu regard cattle as an estimate of weath and social standing. Usually the animals are not killed or milked, but they are used to pay fines, and to make purchases. 174

In dealing with kingship among the Ovimbundu I note a strong resemblance to customs prevailing near Victoria Nyanza, the

XI. WIDER CULTURE CONTACTS

171 When dealing with the immediate culture contacts of the Ovimbundu, the traits found in central Angola were considered in relation to the cultural elements of each of three areas, the Congo basin, Rhodesia, and South West Africa. In this chapter attention is given to some traits that are found, not only among the Ovimbundu and adjacent peoples, but among some other African tribes remote from the present-day location of the Ovimbundu. The Graebnerian school has indeed claimed that some of these widely distributed African traits are Melanesian and Indonesian in origin, a theory which is briefly considered in the latter part of this chapter.

114 The present examination of widely distributed traits is facilitated by referring to each of a number of papers not previously mentioned. For example, E. Torday (IV) has dealt in general with religion and social organization among Bantu tribes. H. Baumann (II) has discussed hoe-culture and matriarchal conditions in Bantu Africa. G. Lindblom (I) has brought together a large body of evidence relating to the distribution of hunting devices. H. Balfour (I, II, III) has outlined the distribution of the friction drum. Hence there exist useful summaries of trait distributions with which cultural factors of the Ovimbundu can be compared.

Antiquity of Cultural Traits

171 At the outset we must recognize that the extent of distribution of a trait and its importance in the cultural pattern may be but a treacherous guide to its antiquity. The widespread use and cultivation of tobacco and maize are instances of this kind. The growth and curing of tobacco led to the adoption of this commodity as a medium of exchange which could be conveniently carried by caravans. Exchange of snuff as a form of greeting, also the passing of a communal pipe from hand to hand in the men's house, are instances of social usages which caused a rapid spread of a commodity in a short time (Laufer, Hambly, and Linton, Tobacco and Its Uses in Africa, Field Mus. Nat. Hist., Anthr. Leaflet 29, 1929).

The use of maize, one of the most important factors in the building and preservation of Umbundu culture, has a wide distribution in Africa, but its introduction is dated only from the sixteenth century. The Portuguese carried on a regular traffic in slaves between Angola and Brazil, and in all probability this resulted in the introduction of manioc, peanuts, and sweet potatoes. Possibly

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the yam also was introduced. All these food plants spread with great rapidity, hence the extent of their distribution is not a guide to their antiquity. 171

THE BLACKSMITH'S CRAFT IN AFRICA

The antiquity of the blacksmith's occupation is not easy to determine, though the usefulness of the craft, and the accessibility of surface-ore in many parts of Africa, might incline one to favor a theory of rapid diffusion. There is an extensive literature dealing with the origin of the blacksmith's craft, which is variously attributed to the Negro, the ancient Egyptians, or to Hamitic invaders. 326 171

Diffusion of the craft, and not independent invention in many parts of Africa, is suggested by the continuity of like forms of apparatus; taboos of the same kind connected with the blacksmith; treatment of smiths as a special caste; also their employment of ritual in making furnaces, training apprentices, and consecrating their tools.

Iron objects requiring considerable skill in their manufacture are described by the earliest writers who came in contact with northern Angola, and early observations relating to iron gongs and axes have already been given. This evidence therefore suggests that the Ovimbundu must have had a knowledge of the working of iron when they entered the Benguela Highlands.

The following data from many parts of Africa are adduced to show the relation of the blacksmith's craft among the Ovimbundu to a wider background, of which Umbundu customs form a part. The Ovimbundu have developed ritual aspects of the blacksmith's craft which have already been described, and along with these the following instances should be considered.

Naturally, special local developments occur, but the general attitude of the Ovimbundu toward blacksmiths is in accord with a widely distributed body of African beliefs affecting Bantu, semi-Bantu, Sudanic, and Hamitic-speaking tribes, from which a few instances may be noted.

Among the Kpelle of Liberia a blacksmith receives no pay for work done for a chief, but he is free from military service. The blacksmith is a confidential person for the whole village, and he is conversant with many family secrets (D. Westermann, Die Kpelle, p. 170). Blacksmiths of the Ibo of Nigeria form a strong union which resents intrusion into the secrets of the craft. Blacksmiths are to be found only in certain towns which form halting places on

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171 their itinerary (G. T. Basden, Among the Ibos of Nigeria, p. 176).
326 At Ife in a sacred grove I saw objects which were described as the hammer and the anvil of the first blacksmith. Over the anvil stone were the remains of a recently sacrificed dog. Such an offering is made twice a year to Ogun, the patron god of blacksmiths. Among the Masai, blacksmiths are said to be unlucky with cattle, and are therefore not allowed to own them. Smiths have their own language which is not well understood by other people of the tribe (A. C. Hollis, The Masai, p. 331). The Suk say that no woman may see a blacksmith at work because his tools would become heavy in his hand, then he would go mad and die. There is chanting by the blacksmiths during forging and molding (M. W. H. Beech, The Suk, p. 18).

Working in iron is accompanied by many special rites among the Bakitara; in fact, taboos are observed from the time of preparing the charcoal. Smiths belong to the serf class. Among the omens, sneezing is a warning from a ghost indicating that there is danger near and work is therefore discontinued. Offerings are made to the spirit of the hill where ore is dug in order to prevent burial of the diggers (J. Roscoe, IV, p. 218). When a Banyankole smith is making a new hammer he gives a feast at which six goats are killed. This sacredness of the large hammer was emphasized among the Ovimbundu.

Southwest of Lake Bangweolo a small shrine is erected near the smelting furnace, and here a prayer is offered to spirits of former smelters (H. B. Barnes, *J.R.A.I.*, LVI, p. 191). The Ila-speaking people of Rhodesia have a principal blacksmith who is named *munganga wa butale* ("the iron doctor"). Secrets of the craft are preserved by transmission from father to son only. The *munganga* takes charge of the preparation of iron and directs the ceremonies (E. W. Smith and A. M. Dale, I, pp. 203–207). E. Torday records that the Bambala have a T-shaped hammer with a pointed handle. "It is practically impossible to obtain a specimen of these hammers since death is the portion of a smith who parts with his tools." (I, p. 406.)

These examples do not reveal the origin of the blacksmith's craft and its ritual, but they explain Umbundu customs as part of a system of ideas which affects the whole continent of Africa south of the Sahara.

BANTU RELIGION AND SOCIAL SYSTEM

171 The spiritual beliefs of the Ovimbundu have already been shown to agree with those of the Congo basin and southwest Africa.

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E. Torday's paper, "Dualism in Western Bantu Religion and Social Organization," is an admirable summary of a wide background of Bantu beliefs with which those of the Ovimbundu agree in detail. Torday (VI) has also given a summary of Bantu sexual relations. His summary of prenuptial relationships of boys and girls, the system of polygyny, and domestic arrangements in general, indicates that records made among the Ovimbundu are but a sample of an extensive and homogeneous series of Bantu sex customs. 171

With regard to the classificatory system of relationships and cross-cousin marriage, sufficient quotations have been given to indicate that the system of the Ovimbundu is one which is paralleled in Rhodesia, the Congo basin, and still more remote regions. To the instances given should be added corroborative examples from J. Roscoe (The Baganda, p. 109), R. S. Rattray (Ashanti, p. 29), and H. A. Stayt (The Bavenda, pp. 172–184). L. H. Buxton and R. S. Rattray have offered a theory to explain the kinship system and cross-cousin marriage in Ashanti (*Jour. African Soc.*, XXIV, p. 83; Religion and Art in Ashanti, p. 318). 171 601

In Africa a classificatory system of relationships is particularly characteristic of the Bantu area. The system is Semitic and Hamitic. It is not reported among the Bushmen, but is in vogue among the Nama Hottentots. The wide distribution of a classificatory system, with variations, and its importance in tribal life, suggest antiquity (see Hoernlé, II, and B. Z. Seligman, III).

H. Baumann (I) has prepared maps showing the distribution of customs affecting descent of property in Africa. Investigation among the Ovimbundu proves that their scheme of inheritance of property is part of a more widely distributed system. Baumann (pp. 66, 127) states that in the Kasai valley and the Cabinda Enclave the rights of the mother's brother are expressed in his control of his sister's children. The power of the maternal uncle in Ovimbundu families was reported, and it was stated that he has the right to sell his sister's children for redemption of his debts. Baumann's map further indicates an area in which property descends, not to a wife or children, but to a mother's brother, or to the sons of the deceased man's oldest sister. The social system of the Ovimbundu is definitely a part of this cultural matrix, which extends to the north and northeast of the Ovimbundu but, according to Baumann's record, not to the south of Angola. In the south of Angola among pastoral people a system of succession and inheritance in the male line prevails, and 171 428

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171 428 this method is characteristic of many pastoral tribes of south and east Africa.

171 611 The Ovimbundu are situated between two systems of reckoning descent, succession, and inheritance; namely, the Negro system of the Congo region, and that of the eastern and southern cattle-keeping people. In view of the culture contacts described in Chapter X, the mixed system of the Ovimbundu is intelligible.

On the one hand the Ovimbundu emphasize the rights of the mother's brother while denying inheritance to a wife and her children, but in royal families the eldest son of the principal wife succeeds to kingship. Among commoners descent is reckoned through both the father and the mother. Therefore the inference is that the [174] Ovimbundu have, by virtue of their position and contacts, made a blending of two distinct social systems, one of which gives succession to office in the male line, while the other gives inheritance in the female line. In their system of burial rites for kings the Ovimbundu follow the usages of the pastoral area.

171 608 Exchange of blood is an Umbundu custom resembling that which occurs widely in Negro Africa. This exchange of blood is the typical Negro form of the blood brotherhood. Another rite is the Hamitic custom of drinking a mixture of blood and milk; this the Ovimbundu do not practise.

171 241 The hoe-cultivation practised by Ovimbundu women is in agreement with Baumann's association of hoe-culture and matriarchal conditions, the latter being indicated by the importance of the mother's brother. These concomitant factors are shown by Baumann (II, p. 292) to be characteristic of a wide area in the Congo basin. To this area may be added the whole of central Angola.

171 567 The factors of slavery among the Ovimbundu are in agreement with all that is known of the treatment of slaves in the Congo area and farther west Africa. Slaves of the Ovimbundu taken in warfare were treated with less consideration than those who passed into slavery to redeem a debt. There was also discrimination in favor of slaves taken in local quarrels among the Ovimbundu themselves. The killing and eating of slaves in north Angola is a custom whose early occurrence has already been noted.

AFRICAN PUBERTY RITES

171 881 Initiation ceremonies for boys and girls are at present well preserved among the Vachokue of eastern Angola; for a period such ceremonies declined among the Ovimbundu, but there is now a

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recrudescence. Masks of eastern Angola most closely resemble those of the Bapindi of the southwest Congo, but the general background of these puberty rites is comparable in Angola, parts of the Congo, and in several parts of the forest belt of west Africa from Sierra Leone to Cameroon. 171 881

Usually there is seclusion, hardship, training in dances and tribal customs, with ceremonial reappearance and change of name. Evidently the Ovimbundu share the material traits and the psychological background of initiatory rites with a very large number of tribes, which occupy the forest zones of west and central Africa.

G. Lindblom's publication, "The Use of Stilts in Africa and America," helps to explain the occurrence of stilt-walking at the final ceremonies of initiation witnessed at Cangamba. Since stilt-walking in Angola occurs chiefly in the eastern section, perhaps one should link the trait with the stilt-walking in Nyasaland, because there has been continuous communication from Angola to Nyasaland along the Zambezi valley. The stilt-walking of eastern Angola may, however, be a cultural offshoot from the southwest Congo, for according to Lindblom the stilt-walking trait occurs there, and the contacts of eastern Angola with the southwest Congo have been important.

In turning from these factors of social life to traits of a more material kind, there are points of importance to be noted in connection with food supply and industries. A possibility exists that such traits as hunting, use of certain types of musical instruments, basketry, and pottery, will indicate that the Ovimbundu, before their separation, drew some of their fundamental traits from a widely distributed matrix. 174

HUNTING APPLIANCES OF AFRICA

L. S. B. Leakey (A New Classification of the Bow and Arrow in Africa, *J.R.A.I.*, LVI, pp. 259–294) has dealt with the distribution of bows and arrows. Leakey states that, owing to lack of evidence, he was unable to describe the bows and arrows of Angola. I have therefore illustrated these in detail (Plate XVII, Figs. 1–9). 171 411

Some of the arrowheads used by the Ovimbundu resemble those of the Bashilele in the southwest Congo, but on the whole arrowheads used in Angola are of distinctive patterns, and presumably they represent a special local development. The round bow of the Ovimbundu and the Vachokue is like that of the southern Congo, and it is absolutely distinct from the short flat bow used in southern Angola among the Vakuanyama.

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171 411 The question of arrow release is important in this connection. R. B. Dixon (The Building of Cultures, p. 131), while discussing evidence from Wissler, Kroeber, and Morse, has plotted a map showing the distribution of types of arrow release in all parts of the world. The Ovimbundu (Plate XXXIX, Fig. 1) use the Mediterranean release, which is shown by Kroeber (Univ. Calif. Pub., XXIII, p. 286) to occur in the southwest Congo region along with the tertiary release. My illustration and Kroeber's description of the Mediterranean release show that the thumb is kept entirely out of the way. The string is engaged by the inner surfaces of the tips of the index and middle fingers. The engaging finger-ends are at right angles to the string.

Young boys often use the primary release when shooting blunt wooden arrows at birds. In this release the butt of the arrow is clasped between the end of the thumb and the middle knuckle of the index finger. Kroeber remarks that the primary release is almost invariably attempted by children and uninstructed novices, which accords with my observations made in Angola. Presumably boys of the Ovimbundu change their method of release from the primary to the Mediterranean when they handle a man's bow and arrows. The Mediterranean release was observed throughout Angola, with the exception of the primary release employed by boys.

G. Lindblom (I, Part I) assists in comparing hunting apparatus of the Ovimbundu with a large number of African forms.

The throwing clubs of the Ovimbundu are definitely like those of the Hottentots, Barotse, and Bushmen (pp. 120–126).

224 171 In Part II of his leaflet Lindblom discusses many kinds of traps. The trap built of heavy poles, which is used for catching lions, leopards, and hyenas, is used all over Negro Africa; there is nothing distinctive in the form and use of the Umbundu pattern. The cane rat trap of conical form is described and its distribution is plotted (pp. 52, 53, 56). Lindblom's map shows a clustering round the mouth of the Congo, also again at Long. 30° E. and Lat. 10° S. The blank for Angola can now be filled. These traps are used in many parts of Angola, notably among the Vasele of the northwest, at Elende, Ngalangi, and Cangamba. The use of this trap in Angola explains its presence among the Vakuanyama. On Lindblom's map the occurrence of the trap in south Angola is isolated from the general African distribution, but use of the trap is really continuous from the Congo estuary through Angola to the Vakuanyama.

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The use of bird-arrows with blunt, wooden knobs was common 171
at Elende, and I collected sharp, barbed, wooden arrows from the 411
Vasele, also from the areas of Kipungo and Mongua. This will assist in extending the information given by Lindblom (pp. 94–98). Lindblom's map (p. 99) indicates that bird-arrows are used round Lake Victoria Nyanza, at the junction of the Kasai and the Congo, and likewise among the Bushongo and the Bayaka. My observation of the distribution of wooden arrows in Angola links up these regions shown by Lindblom with the south of Angola. Perhaps a transcontinental diffusion in a southwesterly direction from Victoria Nyanza may be assumed, for it is unlikely that the diffusion would go counter to the generally accepted line of tribal migration which has been from northeast to southwest.

AFRICAN POTTERY, BASKETS, AND MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

171
There is no reason to connect the pottery of the Ovimbundu [323]
with that of any particular region. The coiling method is far too widespread and generic to afford evidence of contacts. The Ovimbundu have evolved their own peculiar designs and forms.

In coiled basketry also the Ovimbundu have made special [285]
developments from a generic trait known in Egypt before 2000 B.C. Designs and dyes appear to be of local origin. My observation of African basketry does not suggest any particular parent form; moreover, resemblances of design may be misleading, for the nature of the material controls the shapes of the designs to a great extent in coiled basketry.

Wood-carving, on the contrary, links the culture of the Ovim- [532]
bundu very definitely with that of the southwest Congo. Perhaps the work of Angola is most closely allied with that of the Bakuba, who excel in the carving of figurines, cups, and staffs.

H. Balfour's article (III) on the distribution of the friction drum [534]
helps to identify the form used by the Ovimbundu with types of this instrument from other African areas. The type from Elende is like that of Barotseland with which the Ovimbundu caravans were frequently in contact, while the large friction drum from Ngalangi is of the Bayaka pattern. The friction drum is widely used in the southwest Congo among the Bakwese, the Bambala, and the Baluba.

Thus far research has been able to show a large number of cultural traits of the Ovimbundu in relation to immediate culture contacts of the Congo basin, Rhodesia, and South West Africa (chapter X). In addition to this, many traits connected with social

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171 organization and artifacts have been described in relation to a wide cultural background in Negro Africa. There remains, however, the more difficult problem of a possible introduction of some of these cultural traits from regions outside the continent of Africa itself.

KULTURKREIS THEORY

174 114 Our investigation is able to account for the occurrence of certain widely distributed traits which the Ovimbundu possess, either in their common form or in some specialized aspect. The broader problem of the possible origin of African traits in Melanesia and Indonesia is one that should not be neglected.

The kulturkreis theory as expounded by Graebner (Methode der Ethnologie, Heidelberg, 1911) has been applied to Africa by B. Ankermann (*Zeitsch. Ethn.*, 1905, pp. 62–90). Frobenius has expressed his views in "Der Ursprung der afrikanischen Kulturen," Leipzig, 1894; "Das unbekannte Afrika," Munich, 1923; and the "Atlas afrikanus," Munich, 1922.

An article of Frobenius (Smithsonian Institution Reports, 1898, pp. 638–647) summarizes the Graebnerian thesis so far as Africa is concerned. Frobenius says that the Malayo-Negritan relationship of African culture is established. Certain cultural elements appear together and are equally distributed. Ethnographical objects illustrative of phases of culture may be examined with a view to fixing their descent, just as we examine the limbs and organs of a living being, and the theory is concerned with morphological considerations in particular.

Frobenius states (p. 639). that he is concerned with studying the genealogical tree of culture forms, and as a first example he chooses wooden drums which are found in the Congo basin and lower Guinea; these drums are said to be of Malayo-Negritan origin. The next example chosen is that of the Malayo-Negritan bow. Wooden shields of Africa with reed covering have related forms in New Guinea and the Solomon Islands. Pile dwellings are found in Dahomey and among the Ambuella; also in New Guinea. Chairs and neck rests used by many Negro tribes are of Oceanic form. There is a Malayo-Negritan affinity of bark fabrics of Africa with the well-known tapa cloth of Oceania (p. 644). The "likeness of anatomical origin, coupled with the outlined area of distribution, is evidence not to be gainsaid" (p. 645). The culture of a fishing community is on all sides characterized by mesh work. In New Guinea the net is used as clothing, and in the whole of west Africa we

XII. CULTURAL PROCESSES

Analysis of African Cultures

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With the exception of data from Algeria, Egypt, Kenya, and south Africa there is a paucity of archaeological information which might determine the antiquity of past cultures, the relation of these to past and present races, and the routes by which races and cultures traveled. In the regions mentioned systematic excavations are in progress, but for the greater part of Africa archaeologists have no knowledge of the relative antiquity of stone implements found on the surface.

African ethnologists are not consistent in the connotations of terms such as Bantu and Hamitic. The word Bantu primarily refers to a linguistic family of Negroes, but a Bantu Negro culture exists with many divisions, and later we shall see that a somatological concept is associated with the word Bantu. The word Hamitic may describe a linguistic family, a series of physical traits differing from those which characterize the Negro, and a type of pastoral culture in which all the activities and beliefs of tribal life center in the keeping of cattle. The adjective Semitic can also be used to denote a well-defined linguistic family, a type of culture, or somatic traits. But the Semitic problem does not concern us since the Ovimbundu have no traits that could be associated with Semitic culture, either Mohammedan or pre-Koranic; with the possible exception of blood brotherhood by exchange of blood, and the use of a scapegoat (Robertson Smith, Lectures on the Religion of the Semites, p. 296; Kinship and Marriage in Early Arabia, pp. 57, 61). [171]

The comparative studies of physical anthropologists are retarded by paucity of skeletal material both ancient and modern, while series of measurements on living subjects, especially women, are inadequate in relation to the great size of Africa and the complexity of the problems which arise from comparative study of anatomical data. 144 114

Darwin's "Descent of Man" recognized the possibility of man's origin in Africa, and the recent excavations of L. S. B. Leakey in Kenya may finally prove that the oldest remains of *Homo sapiens*

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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Chokwe.[36] These people are culturally and linguistically different from the Ovimbundu, whom, however, they have influenced, especially in the fields of ritual; the initiation rituals typical of these people have spread into southern and eastern Umbundu territory.[37] The Ngangela call the Ovimbundu 'Ovimbali', a name used in Angola for Africans who live with or imitate whites.[38] I have heard an Otjimbundu use it for the Kimbundu of northern Angola. The south-western peoples call the Ovimbundu 'Va-Nano—they of the north',[39] but also regard the Ovimbundu as being 'civilized'. Very little is known about the peoples to the north of the Ovimbundu, who are also different in language and culture and who are said to have more rituals than the Ovimbundu. These are known collectively by the Ovimbundu as Olongoya, a term with a rather offensive meaning. Historically they are important for the Ovimbundu since it was here that Andrew Battell knew the Jaga hordes, and Umbundu tradition links a number of the chiefly lines to these northern peoples. The Umbundu language seems to be gaining ground in this area.[40]

All the neighbouring peoples seem to be matrilineal, as regards descent, inheritance, and succession, with the exception of the Hanya and the Nganda, who have (Dr. Childs suggests) a double-descent kinship system, as traditionally the Ovimbundu had. All seem, as far as is known, to have had chiefs,[41] though there were no kingdoms to equal the power of Bie and Bailundo in the nineteenth century. Culturally the Ovimbundu seem to have been ready to take over traits from neighbouring tribes, and the Portuguese, and this particularly in the sphere of ritual.[42]

[36] For the Luimbi, see C. W. Scott. 'A Note on the Luimbi of Central Angola', *Africa*, October 1955. For the Chokwe see M. McCulloch, op. cit.

[37] Childs, pp. 115–16.

[38] A trader said that Otjimbali means a domesticated black. Estermann is preparing a study of a Mbali group of southern Angola descended from Kimbundu slaves.

[39] The Nyaneka-Humbi tribes use it for the southern Ovimbundu, the southern Ovimbundu use it for the northern Ovimbundu.

[40] Childs, pp. 186–7; Baumann, op. cit.

[41] Baumann, op. cit. For the installation of chiefs in the Amboim area, see Antonio de Silva Maia, 'Ritos e Ceremonias para a Entronização' in *Mensário Administrativo*, July–August 1953.

[42] Childs, p. 220.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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[1874-1911]

kingdoms of the Ovimbundu, though more frequently perhaps it was made against the non-Umbundu peoples.[89]

The question of the influence of the trade provides interesting opportunities for comparison. The Ovimbundu were the southernmost of the peoples who in the nineteenth century participated in the trade between the Europeans of the West African coast and the peoples of the interior.[90] In some ways the Ovimbundu seem to have been less influenced by it than were some of the peoples further north. The Ovimbundu did not develop genuine patterns of urban life as in Dahomey or Benin.[91]

Three explanations can be offered for the relative failure of associational groups and urban society to develop. Umbundu crafts were much inferior to those found along the coast of the Gulf of Guinea; there was no indigenous weaving industry, for instance, and the goods which the caravans carried to the interior were all of European or American origin, cloths, guns, and rum.[92] For these goods the Ovimbundu were dependent on the Portuguese settled at the coast or in the Highland and this meant that the Ovimbundu were far from economic autonomy. Again the trade had a relatively short time span—the real boom period lasted only from 1886 to 1900, and earlier on in the 1840's when the beeswax, ivory, and slave trade was flourishing, the Ovimbundu had plenty of time for warfare.

It would, however, be a grave mistake to think that trade had only a marginal influence on Umbundu society. It has been suggested that the form of the double-descent system owes its origin to the necessity to isolate economic relations from other social fields. In the sphere of ritual, there are some remarkable copies of European practices—for instance the holding of a feast in honour of the ancestors at Christmas-time.[93] Many ritual concepts are related to the explanation of business

[89] For information on Umbundu warfare see Magyar, pp. 277–80 and Serpa Pinto, pp. 177–9.

[90] See Balandier, *Sociologie Actuelle de l'Afrique Noire*, Paris, 1955, for a discussion of social change in other areas which had experienced a trade of a similar sort.

[91] For Dahomey see M. J. Herskovits, *Dahomey*, New York, 1938. For Benin see R. Bradbury, *The Benin Kingdom* (Ethnographic Survey of Africa), London, 1957.

[92] Childs, p. 206.

[93] Informants.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

p.164

PART THREE

CHAPTER XII

HISTORICAL

000 'HEUREUX les peuples qui n'ont pas d'histoire', quotes Father Van Wing in introducing his *Études Bakongo*, and having noted that the Kongo people 'had entered into history' in 1482 with the discovery of the River Congo.[1] It is very doubtful whether there are any people, however primitive, or however remote or inaccessible their dwelling, who could qualify for that blessed state. If this characterization means entering upon the stage of continuous contact with Europe and Europeans, it may mark a definite stage in the life of this people.

175 101 The Ovimbundu have not in this sense as old a 'history' as have the Kongo people. Their first contacts with Europeans probably took place in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries before their formation as a people—before they were Ovimbundu; but it was from the second or third quarter of the eighteenth century that they began to have regular and constant contacts which have continued with increasing frequency down to the present day.

Pre-History

172 The pre-history of the Umbundu country awaits competent investigation and should prove a fruitful field. Dr. Merlin W. Ennis has collected stone artifacts from several sites, but chiefly from Elende (twelve miles north of the railway station of Cuma), some of which have been placed in the Peabody Museum of Harvard University, some in the Logan Museum of Beloit College (Wisconsin), and some in the National Museum of Bulawayo, Southern Rhodesia. These artifacts have been classified as similar to those of the Chellean culture.[2] The strata from which they

[1] R.P. Van Wing, S.J., *Études Bakongo* (Bruxelles: Goemaere, 1921), p. 1.

[2] For a description, see J. J. Williams, S.J., *Africa's God* (Boston College, 1937), V. Congo and Angola, p. 96; also W. D. Hambly, *The Ovimbundu of Angola* (Field Museum, 1934), p. 207. Several Portuguese and Belgian writers have described stone artifacts found near the northern borders of Angola, comparing them with examples discovered at various sites in the Congo. See *Trabalhos do I° Congresso Nacional de Antropologia Colonial*, Pôrto, 1934: J. R. Santos, Jr., 'Rui de Serpa Pinto e a arqueologia de Angola', pp. 433–51;

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

were taken yielded no pottery. Polished stone implements have not been found. Rock paintings or reliefs have not been observed.[1] This region has as yet yielded up no pre-historic skeletal remains. Whether any are present only competent and intensive study may reveal. The geological structure must be borne in mind: that this is one of the oldest parts of the earth's surface, having been exposed since primeval times, and without having had the great earth movements which took place in the eastern part of the continent.

The presence of stone ruins has been mentioned by several writers.[2] I have evidence for the existence of ruins at fifteen sites so widely scattered over Umbundu territory that practically every region of major importance is represented. I feel sure that if a careful survey were made, at least twice this number would be found. All those which have been reported thus far are of similar construction—of natural unworked stone, loosely placed, without any attempt to use mud or mortar; all were evidently built for defence, and all the sites were obviously chosen because of the natural advantages of the terrain, as, for example, on an eminence or at the confluence of streams. Some seem to have had earthworks in addition to the walls of stone.[3] Considering the materials used most of them were evidently well built and well adapted to the specific purpose for which they were intended. Some are now in a better state of preservation than others. Major Artur de Paiva reported that in October 1890 the *Ombala* (capital village) of Sambu, then occupied, had formerly been strongly fortified, as evidenced by the remains of 'walls of loose stone and others of earthworks in front of the present palisades'.[4] In one of the Elende forts may be seen evidence of important iron workings.

In May 1936, while on a field trip in the region of Kasongi (Cassongue), I visited a site called Usengo which had been

and J. da Silveira and J. R. dos Santos, Jr., 'Instrumento pre-historico de quartzo, etc.', pp. 532–5; also J. Janmart, *Subsídios para a História, Arqueologia, e Etnografia dos povos da Lunda* (Lisboa, [illegible]).

[1] Marquardsen–Stahl (*Angola*) mention a 'rock painting', but on investigation it was found to be quite recent.

[2] Hambly, loc. cit.; E. W. Smith, *Africa, What Do We Know of It?* (1935), p. 64 f.; Serpa Pinto, *How I Crossed Africa*, i. 86; Major Artur de Paiva in *Boletim Soc. Geog. Lisboa*, Serie 14, p. 14; Nevinson, *A Modern Slavery*, p. 81; Cameron, *Across Africa*, p. 405.

[3] Paiva, p. 18; also *Annaes do Cons. Ultr.*, Serie I, p. 520.

[4] Paiva, loc. cit. He also reported the stone ruins at a site in Cingolo (*Quingolo*), which I am inclined to believe was the same site previously reported by Major Serpa Pinto in 1877 (loc. cit.).

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

172 fortified with loose stone walls built upon a great rock out-crop, projecting portions of which greatly reinforced the wall and made it unnecessary to build a complete circuit. The wall reached a height of nearly six feet in places. Inside the fortress, under an overhanging ledge of rock, I picked up fragments of pottery evidently of Umbundu make, and also pieces of wine jug of tne type used by the Portuguese for *vinho verde*. The dry season had just begun and the growth of grass in the ruin was very rank so that it was not possible to make a systematic search for other vestiges of former occupation. Across the valley, at the village of Ndumba, I found an old man seeming to be about sixty-five or seventy years of age, who declared that he had himself helped to build the walls of Usengo in his youth 'before he had married'. He said that they had fortified the place against the exactions of Soma[1] Saviti of Kasongi; that three chiefs had ruled in it,[2] and that the reason for moving was lack of nearby supplies of water and of earth to daub the walls of the huts, the village site being solid rock. This, he said, was all during the reign of Saviti and before the end of the rubber trade, which fixes it approximately between the dates 1890 and 1910. The largest of the three ruins on the slopes of Elende, mentioned by Hambly and by E. W. Smith,[3] is the subject of a legend recounted by Elende villagers which ascribes its building to Ovimbundu or their immediate predecessors. The most detailed and circumstantial report of the build-
[175] ing and occupancy of one of these ruins is found in an account of the campaign of 1774–6, in which Portuguese troops and native allies fought the kings of Bailundu (*Baylundo*) and Cingolo (*Quingolo*), and their allies.[4] The map of this campaign,[5] drawn in 1776, contains an inset representing a plan of the fortification alluded to, which, according to the report,[6] was too strong to be taken and was beseiged until the defenders fled by night, when it was entered, sacked, and thrown down, which last operation occupied nearly two months. Further evidence that the Ovimbundu were using stone-walled fortresses during the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries is found in the fact that the Portuguese reports of these periods generally allude to the forti-

[1] King or Chief.
[2] (1) Ekulika, the builder; (2) Ukelengenje; and (3) Satutu, who moved out.
[3] See *supra*, p. 165, n. 2.
[4] *Annaes do Cons. Ultr.*, loc. cit.
[5] Op. cit., facing p. 518.
[6] Op. cit., p. 520 f.; and especially *Catalogo dos Governadores*, pp. 423 ff.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

172 fied towns of the natives as *quipacas*, a word adapted from the Umbundu word *ocimbaka*, meaning a wall. The word for the palisade with which their villages are now enclosed is *olumbo*. Until evidence is adduced to the contrary, it seems that we must conclude that the stone-walled ruins found throughout the Umbundu country were built by Ovimbundu or by their immediate (Bantu) predecessors. As the ruins of Rhodesia and Mozambique seem to have been built by Bantu under Arab or Malay influences, so the Ovimbundu may have modelled their fortifications on the Portuguese forts which they had seen at Caconda, at the coast, along the Kuanza River, or even the walls with which individual traders fortified their establishments. These various forts were first built between 1575 and 1603, and it is probable that individual Ovimbundu themselves took part in some of the building operations.

Tribal Divisions of the Ovimbundu

631 Before going on with Umbundu history let us fix in mind the principal kingdoms, tribes, or divisions of the Ovimbundu and
101 their present location with reference to one another and to their other neighbours. This may most easily be seen with the aid of the accompanying map.[1] Their mutual relations prior to effective Portuguese occupation, whether of dependence or independence, are also shown. These are the divisions the Ovimbundu were found to have at the beginning of the present century, and these are the divisions still recognized by them, although they no longer retain their former political significance. It is of interest to find that according to Ladislau Magyar, who lived in and travelled through the Umbundu country from 1849 until 1857,[2] essentially these same divisions were then in existence. Under date of 1 August 1799 the Governor of Benguela reported on the 'provinces' and people in the hinterland.[3] It is significant to find that the divisions of the Ovimbundu were then essentially the same as they are

[1] Facing p. 164.

[2] Ladislau Magyar, *Reisen in Süd-Afrika* (tr. Hunfalvy), Pesth, 1859. Magyar made 'Quipeyo' (Cipeyo) a part of Bailundu and Sambu a sort of tributary. 'Quibula' (Civula), he said, paid tribute to 'Quiyaka' (Ciyaka).

[3] See *Annaes Maritimos e Coloniaes*, 4a Ser., pp. 147–61 (*parte não official*). This report made 'Quipeyo' tributary to Huambo, 'Ondura' (Ndulu) to Bailundu. Several kingdoms, later tributaries of Ciyaka, were listed as independent.

1: Childs M-S (1924-1948) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

PLATE XVI

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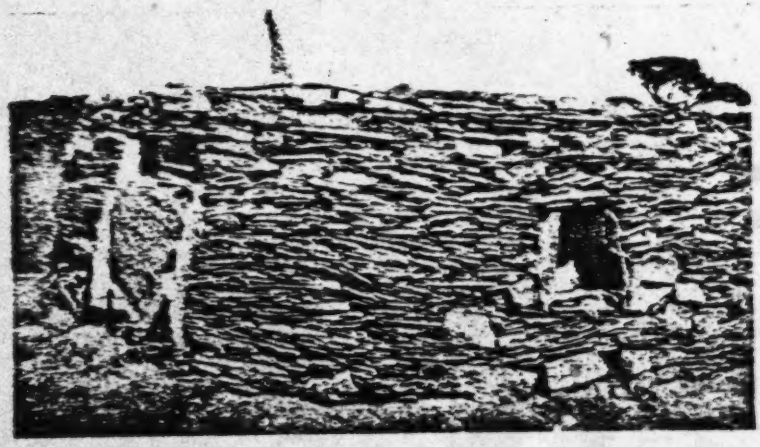
a. Ruins at Usengo: section of wall between stone outcrops



b. Rock tomb of the va Sela (Kasongi)

[Facing p. 177]

THE OVIMBUNDU OF ANGOLA

I. INTRODUCTION

Research work among the Ovimbundu of Angola indicates the /121 presence of numerous cultural traits revealing what are probably distinct stratifications of culture. These diverse elements have been welded together into a pattern, the examination of which constitutes the present problem.

The object of this study is an analysis of these traits with a view to showing the sequence in which they have been received, from whence they came, and the processes which have been responsible for coordinating them so as to form the present social system.

My presentation passes from geographical and historical considerations to an ethnological approach, locally applied in the first place for complete analysis of the culture of the Ovimbundu and surrounding peoples. The traits have to be considered singly and in combination. Then follows an examination of some of these traits which are widely distributed outside Angola. We next seek to ascertain the geographical origin of traits, their history, and the psychology of their combinations and assimilation into an aggregate. What elements have been acquired through adoption? And what has been the historical process? Which traits have arisen through independent invention? What factors have been discarded, and why? To what extent have the Ovimbundu utilized opportunities for enriching their culture, and what possibilities have been neglected?

What are the classes of evidence which might be expected to assist an inquiry into the growth of Umbundu culture?

Field work was of primary importance for obtaining a first hand knowledge of the tribal life of the Ovimbundu as it exists today, and in order to estimate the effects of cultural contacts extensive journeys were made to the north, east, and south of the central territory occupied by the Ovimbundu. The results of personal investigation are given in chapters IV–IX, dealing with the economic, social, and religious life of the Ovimbundu. These facts have been kept free from the observations of other investigators whose reports are summarized in chapter III, "Historical Sources."

Unfortunately there are no archaeological data which can assist /172 a study of historical processes, for archaeology has not yet been approached in Angola.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

are small streams of pure water falling down the cliffs and hillsides. 361
Near Bailundu and Ngalangi, villages still retain their defences which consist of high poles set in a trench.

Judging from sites visited at Elende there was a pre-Ovimbundu 172
stone-building culture. One of the sites has such a commanding 712
view over extensive plains and valleys that the position would be almost impregnable. At the present day the line of fortifications is well marked by stone walls three feet high. These are composed of boulders to which the builders had ready access on adjacent hillsides. Large stones were no doubt rolled from the slopes to the small plateau chosen as a building site. This small plain lies midway between the hill crest and the valley.

At present this old site, which is enclosed by lichen-covered walls, is overgrown by tall grass and trees attaining twenty feet in height. Photography would be uninstructive unless a preliminary clearance were made—a formidable task owing to the density of vegetation.

In the center of the enclosure is a group of transported boulders possibly marking the site of a place of assembly. A search among the long grass reveals stone slabs and cylindrical crushers which were used for grinding grain over a very long period, as may be seen by the wear on the base stone; some thick stones are so worn as to be almost perforated. Weather-worn stones that were probably used as scrapers, are to be found. Surface potsherds are of the material of which present-day Ovimbundu women make their cooking pots. These sherds mark the places now used by small nomadic bands, hence the surface pottery may have no connection with a pre-Umbundu culture.

In the vicinity of this walled stone village are hillside cairns marking the sites of graves. These have been robbed by medicine-men in search of material for their charms.

The Ovimbundu have no traditions regarding the site, neither is there legendary or other evidence to show that the Ovimbundu ever [764]
made their villages of stone. The raising of a cairn of stones over the body of a hunter is, however, a present-day practice near Ganda and in the Esele country.

If a site cannot be systematically worked, it is better left alone until scientific investigation is possible. The preliminary clearance of grass and timber would be a long process. The archaeological material recovered from such a site would be of a uniform and simple kind. There is no evidence of anything beyond an elementary stone age culture.

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1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

197 Sir Harry Johnston made this classification abundantly clear in his
114 monumental work published in 1919,[1] and the recent translation and revision of Carl Meinhof's important work on Bantu phonology[2] has used Umbundu extensively for illustrative material. It should now be abundantly clear to all that Umbundu is the northernmost of the Southern Bantu languages, and that in their language the Ovimbundu have elements in common with their southern neighbours.

167 *Traditional Histories.* Each of the principal groups among the
173 Ovimbundu has legends with regard to the migrations of their forefathers and the country from which they came. For the most part these legends refer to ancestors of the respective royal families, but some references are also made to the people whom these new-comers found in the country which they came to occupy. All of these legends point to countries of origin in the north or north-east. Several writers have noted this as a fact,[3] but it is necessary to take more explicit notice of each of several legends.

Ndulu has not received as much notice as have some of the other Umbundu kingdoms, but I have come to the conclusion that it is perhaps one of the oldest. The tradition runs that the progenitor of the dynasty, Katekula-Mengo, was an elephant-hunter and that he came with his wife, Ukungu (also called Mbala) from the region of the confluence of the Luandu and the Kuanza rivers. Following elephant-herds down the course of the Kuanza they passed the famous rocks of Pungu-a-Ndongo and in them left the imprints of Katekula-Mengo's bow and of Ukungu's basket, which, it is said, may be seen to this day; for in that early day the rocks had not yet hardened but were like fresh concrete. This couple

Zeitschr. f. Ethnol., 1915, pp. 398 ff.). This writer also interestingly and properly shows how the name Kimbundu came to be mistakenly applied to the Ngola or Ndongo language. The error, however, still continues to be propagated (e.g. *vide* A. Miranda Magalhães, 'Os Ambundus de Angola', &c., in *Trabalhos do I° Congresso Nacional de Antropologia Colonial*, Pôrto, 1934, vol. ii, pp. 536–55). This article contains so little of value that a systematic refutation would not be worth while. The writer's notions on the Bantu migrations seem especially fantastic.

[1] *A Comparative Vocabulary of Bantu and Semi-Bantu Languages*, vol. i.

[2] Meinhof, *An Introduction to the Phonology of the Bantu Languages*, translated, revised, and enlarged (Berlin and London, 1932).

[3] J. T. Tucker, *Drums in the Darkness*, p. 34 f. W. D. Hambly (*The Ovimbundu of Angola*) notes this fact at the beginning of his otherwise rather confused chapter on 'Historical Sources'.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

came to the region of Ndulu and wished to settle but could not (i.e. without permission), since they were strangers and newcomers. Thereupon a certain elder of the country, Kakoko by name, caused them to build, first at Ngumba and later at Nduluyolosima. Their two sons fought for the succession: Cikolongonjo won and set about to consolidate his position by conquering the va Luimbi, who then left the country. He also won over the region of Kapeyo (*Capeio*), although not by force of arms but through trickery,[1] or superior knowledge. The sixth in the succession and a great-grandson of Katekula-Mengo was Kakulukusu, who, it is said, was a nephew[2] of Cingi I of Bailundu, and was also taken to Luanda when the latter was imprisoned. Historical records show that this was at the end of the campaign of 1774–6.[3] It is chiefly this historical connexion which leads me to place the beginning of Cikolongonjo's rule at about 1680. With regard to the migration of Katekula-Mengo and Ukungu, it seems reasonable to advance the hypothesis that its immediate cause may have been the prolonged wars between the Portuguese and the kingdom of Angola, which ended in 1671 with the taking of the royal residence in the rocks of Pungu-a-Ndongo and its conversion into a presidio. The highland country of Ndulu offered a remote and peaceful refuge.

The Bailundu tradition states that when Katiavala came from Cipala (*Quibala*), he settled in Mbonga and came to visit Mbulu whose village on the capital hill had at first been built only as a hunter's camp, but, largely by reason of its strategical location, had become, or was becoming, the capital of Bailundu. Mbulu gave Katiavala his daughter to wife, which indicates that Mbulu had also come from the same northern stock. There was a good opportunity when Mbulu and his people were away on a hunt, and Katiavala with his followers occupied the capital, while Mbulu

[1] Kapeyo was ruling over the region now called after him. When Cikolongonjo demanded that he submit, Kapeyo agreed only if he should lose in the *elembe* test, which is used in the dry season by putting out cloths by night to find which will be wet in the morning. In this case they left the *alembe* (pl.) out while they went on a hunt, but on returning Cikolongonjo's *elembe*, which was a kerchief, was wet with the spiritual blessing, whereas Kapeyo's, which was paper (since he evidently had not known the difference) was quite destroyed. Kapeyo, having lost, left the country and settled in Viye. It is significant to find articles of European manufacture mentioned in this tradition, which is one of the oldest of Umbundu records; also to note that the invaders from the north were already familiar with such things while the local inhabitants were not.

[2] Cingi was *inamu* (mother's brother) to Kakulukusu.

[3] See historical chart *infra*, p. 224 f.

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167 173 took refuge near the Keve River and called his village Eyula,[1] but it was afterwards called Cimbulu after the founder. The dynasty of Katiavala has ruled Bailundu ever since and has also maintained its connexion with Cipala, which was subject to Bailundu until the end of the last century, at the time of effective European occupation. From Cipala has come the queen, the king's principal wife. Katiavala's son Cingi was the third in succession. As has already been noted,[2] he was captured by the Portuguese in 1776 and died in the fortress of São Miguel in Luanda.[3] This date enables us to place the beginning of Katiavala's dynasty at not earlier than about 1700.

The Viye legend has been told by Dr. J. T. Tucker,[4] and before that was given by Major Serpa Pinto.[5] A recent publication of excerpts from the diaries and notes of A. F. Silva Porto gives a slightly different version of the same legend, together with a few notes on the traditional history of Viye (Bie) until the year 1867.[6] Some of these latter are very valuable and enable us to fix more surely the actual or approximate dates of a number of the kings of Viye. Where Silva Porto's data on the earliest days of Viye conflict with those traditionally current, which latter have also been accepted by Serpa Pinto (1878) and by Tucker (1927), I feel that the former must be taken with considerable reserve. Viye, an elephant-hunter of the Humbi people, was tracking his game down the valley of the Kuanza River when he visited the village of Etalala for a beer-drink. There he saw and loved Kahanda, a princess of the Songo people, and they were married. When Viye died he was buried at Kahoko and his spirit is still expected to furnish the country with rain. The younger son, Kahoko, built up the kingdom of that name, which remained subject to Ekovongo, the new capital, built by the older son Ulundu.[7] It is interesting to note the union of the two tribal groups in this legend: the Songo of the north-east and the Humbi who now live in the south.[8] This legend also

[1] From *Yula*, the root of the verb 'to be overcome'.

[2] See *supra*, p. 171.

[3] See historical chart *infra*, p. 224.

[4] Op. cit., p. 34 f.

[5] Major A. A. da Rocha de Serpa Pinto, *How I crossed Africa*, vol. i, p. 156 f.

[6] A. A. F. da Silva Porto, *Viagens e apontamentos de um portuense em África* (Excerptos do seu Diário) (Lisboa: Agência Geral das Colónias, 1942), pp. 165–71.

[7] This name came from Viye's people—cf. the Mulondo, a tribe related to the Humbi.

[8] They had previously lived farther north, however, in the region of Ndondi

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has it that the people then in the country, apart from the Songo, were 'Ngangela'[1] tribes. Magyar[2] has given different tradition with regard to the origin of the kingdom of Viye. He says that the forefathers came from the land of 'Moropu'[3] about three hundred years previously under the two chiefs 'Kinguri and Schakambundi', and, having conquered 'Masongo', settled on the Luandu River, engaging in agriculture between raids. They had the custom of eating their prisoners, and when there were not enough prisoners they lapsed into internecine warfare and ate each other. Certain leaders began to fear tribal suicide and formed a secret society of buffalo-hunters ('*empakasserros*'), pledged to give up cannibalism by substituting the flesh of the buffalo. When the tribal elder (the 'Jaga') suspected the innovation and objected strenuously, rather than fight the buffalo-hunters moved away and settled on the Kuanza River. After a further subdivision of the tribe, one party, 'under a certain Bihe', went south to the Kukema River, where 'Ganguella' were living, and founded the kingdom of 'Bihe'. Later on, continues Magyar, the people of the 'Jaga' mixed with neighbouring tribes, took on milder manners, and finally found themselves in the land of Kassanji 'near the Kingdom of the well-known Jaga of Kassanji'. This tradition related by Magyar cannot be completely harmonized with the familiar legend of Viye and Kahanda. I have given that tradition as Viye elders told it to me, and have noted that it had already been recorded before. Since these two traditions are at variance, since the version gotten by Serpa Pinto in 1878 is the same one and the only one which is current to-day, and since it is unlikely that in only twenty-one years, between 1857 (when Magyar was in Viye) and 1878, a tradition as interesting as that of the buffalo-hunters should have been forgotten, I am inclined to hypothecate that the source (whether immediate or remote) of the tradition given by Magyar was *not* Viye, but perhaps Songo or even Lunda, both of which regions were visited by Magyar. This report probably contains

where, near Chinguar, is the place called Saviye (Father of Viye); and later, in Ngalangi, whence, according to Ngalangi tradition, came Viye (cf. *infra*).

[1] 'Ngangela' is a deprecatory term by which the Ovimbundu designate the Luimbi, Cimbandi, Lucazi, Nyemba, Ngonzelo, Cokue, and other tribes who live to the east.

[2] Op. cit., p. 266 f.

[3] Dias de Carvalho (*Ethnographia e História Tradicional dos povos da Lunda*, p. 66) explains that this was a term which *os nossos antigos viajantes* applied to Lunda.

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167 173 traditional elements of truth and value, especially since it agrees with the other traditions in tracing descent to Songo, and since its connecting of Songo with the people of Lunda is substantiated by the traditional histories given by Dias de Carvalho,[1] and by Ferreira Diniz.[2] The tradition of Viye, the elephant-hunter of Humbi, is of further interest through the definite connexion which it gives with the people of the south.

Serpa Pinto's version of the Viye traditional history[3] is interesting for its substantial agreement with the tradition current to-day. He gives a genealogical table containing the same number of kings as the table which I got in 1938,[4] and with only two or three differences which might, even so, be resolved. Serpa Pinto was interested in determining dates, which he might easily have done had he bothered to look up the records. Kangombe, the fourth king who 'mounted the stool' in Ekovongo and grandson of Ulundu, the founder, had been sold to Luanda as a slave by his brother Njilahulu for adultery with one of Njilahulu's wives. In Luanda he became a favourite of the governor, was sponsored by him for baptism, and then took the name of his sponsor, Dom Antonio de Lancastre.[5] Returning to Viye, he took with him some very material help in arms and a few warriors. Dom Antonio de Lancastre held the office of governor from 1772 to 1779. Since there was war in Bailundu, &c., between 1773 and 1776, Kangombe's return was probably toward the end of Dom Antonio's term of office—say, 1778. This being the case, the founding of Viye was probably about 1750.

The Ngalangi tradition also tells of this connexion in another way, but it is of especial interest because it is the only one which attempts to relate the beginning of things. Feti it was, say the Ngalangi elders, who began, that is to say, he came down from above, and whence he came is not known. Inasmuch as he had no wives, he went to a certain lagoon of the Kunene River and there he caught his wives as they came up out of the reeds. To this day, it is said, there may be seen in the rocks by that lagoon the imprints of Feti's foot and of the foot of his dog. Feti's wives were Tembo

[1] Op. cit., p. 94 f.
[2] Ferreira Diniz, *Populações indígenas de Angola* (Coimbra, 1918).
[3] Op. cit., p. 156 f.
[4] Op. cit., p. 160.
[5] The story was related by Silva Porto more than once. *Vide* op. cit., p. 167; also *Boletim Soc. Geog. Lisboa*, 5a Ser., p. 27.

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and Coya and Cīvi.[1] Now Coya's child was ill and she begged Cīvi to help by blowing the breath of life back into him. Cīvi refused because of jealousy: the child died, and ever since then death has clung to us. That, then, is the beginning of Feti. Very soon Feti parted with his son Ngola who went to Luanda to rule; while another child of his, Viye, went to found the kingdom of Viye.[2] When Feti died he left his place to his son Ndumba-Visoso with his wife Katia. Ndumba-Visoso underwent circumcision, since when all Ngalangi kings have submitted to the rite. They founded first one village and then another, and they were hunters, shooting roan antelopes and elephants, for at that time there were many animals in the land. At the instigation of Ngalangi, the younger brother of Ndumba-Visoso, they attacked and drove out the 'va Ngangela', who then occupied what is now the *ombala* (capital or king's residence) of Ngalangi. Taking it for their own, they brought their loads of food: beans, emmer wheat, kaffir-corn, mandioc, and maize;[3] and where they rested their loads the load sticks took root and became the sycamore figs which to this day encircle the capital village. After that the wives of Feti departed: Tembo married in Humbi (or according to another account, in Cilengi or Kalukembe); Coya in Ndulu; and Cīvi in Ngalangi.[4] There follows an account of an attack on the village by the 'va Ngangela' while the men were away in another country. With only the women at home Katia saved the day with a powerful

[1] The name Feti, it is said, comes from the word *fetika* (the verb *oku fetika*, to begin); while Coya is traced to *oya* (the verb *oku oya*, to finish). Thus it is said, *Feti wa fetika, Coya woyapo* (Feti began, Coya finished).

[2] This tradition connecting Ngalangi, Viye, and Ngola (Ndongo) is interesting and perhaps contains elements of truth, whether from tribal recollections or other sources, but it cannot be reconciled with the strictly historical facts since the kingdom of Ngola (Ndongo) was founded before 1550, and when Paulo Diaz de Novaes first came in 1560 he found that Ngola-Mbandi had inherited the kingdom from his father Ngola-Njinga the previous year. The country then came to be called A-Ngola. (See summary in the Introduction to Lopes de Lima, *Ensaios*.) As I have shown, Viye was founded about two hundred years later.

[3] The order is that of the Ngalangi narrator and is probably a recognition of the more recent importation of the last two named. On another occasion he said that his grandmother had told him that in the olden days when people always carried some seed about in pouches on their persons for fear of sudden raids, maize was not known and emmer wheat was the staple food.

[4] This further attempt to establish connexion with neighbouring tribes is significant. The Humbi and the Cilengi belong to the 'Bangala' group of people, while the Kalukembe are Ovimbundu, but seemingly more nearly related to these 'Bangala' than are the other Ovimbundu.

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173 167 charm which caused the bullets of the enemy to fall to the ground immediately upon leaving the muzzles of their muskets, so that they did no harm, whereupon the women went out and beheaded the enemy with their hoes.[1] When Katia died her husband sent to his brother Ngola to have a figure of her made. Soon after Ndumba-Visoso died and left his place to his sons, first Mulunda and then Kambuenge.

I have given this Ngalangi tradition at length because of its inherent interest and because of the attempts which it makes to show a relationship between the peoples.

The tradition of Wambu is that the first king, Wambu-Kalunga, came from the north from Sela, which is just to the north-west of Bailundu. He came with his cross-cousins Cihamba, Katutu, and Sunguandumbo.[2] The Nganda[3] were then living in Wambu. Wambu-Kalunga was a great warrior and raider. He had a special penchant for human flesh and would catch and eat the children left in the village when their parents went to their fields. He would also dig up and eat recently buried corpses. The elders were greatly disturbed over this custom and sought to kill King Wambu-Kalunga. They managed to get a live man into a rock tomb who speared Wambu-Kalunga when he came at night to get the supposed corpse. His capital was at the rocks of Nganda-la-Kawe (near the present town and railway station at Caála), and to this day his tomb is shown.

Ciyaka tradition names as the founder of its royal family, Cihamba, son or cousin of Wambu-Kalunga. Cihamba was a great hunter and brought back so much game that Wambu-Kalunga gave him one of his concubines and permission to seek a kingdom for himself. His younger brother Katutu accompanied him and each built his village in the mountainous country of Ciyaka, where at that time the Ndombe[4] people were living with their chief Siku. Katutu's village was raided by a party from Wambu. Cihamba

[1] The appearance of fire-arms so early in the tradition is interesting, but not surprising, as we shall see when we examine historical accounts.

[2] Another account makes Cihamba and Katutu sons of Wambu-Kalunga, while Sunguandumbo (or Songombanda) is their cross-cousin (*epalume*).

[3] The Nganda belong to the 'Bangala' group and now live just west of the Umbundu country.

[4] The Ndombe are also one of the 'Bangala' people. They are now confined to the Benguela coast-lands, where some of them were already living when the Portuguese first came about 1580. (See *Benguella e seu sertão*, p. 18 f.; *Andrew Battell*, pp. 16 ff.)

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167 came with his five famous hunting dogs and with their aid caught
173 up with the raiders and finished them off. After the battle he collected five baskets of heads and set off for Wambu to present them and find out whether Wambu-Kalunga had sent the raiders. When the bereaved relatives recognized the heads, Wambu-Kalunga had to admit having sent the raid.[1] He also admitted the uncanny ability of Cihamba, to whom he now gave a new name, saying, 'Henceforth, you are Cilũlũ (Ghost), because your anger is altogether too great.' He also gave him the royal insignia[2] for which he should build a spirit-hut (*etambo*) and sent him away to rule, saying, 'From now on you are the war-leader of Wambu.'

Then Cilũlũ and Katutu returned to Ciyaka and to their hunting. One day when Cilũlũ returned from a hunt (on which he had gone without his dogs), only four dogs came out to meet him: Ndumbu was missing. When he found that his own sons had eaten the favourite dog which had hunted and fought for him, his sorrow and anger knew no bounds: his heart was black. Straightway he sent for his brother Katutu and insisted that he take the royal insignia and rule in his stead. 'I, Cilũlũ,' he said, 'am Cihamba; from to-day I shall beget no more sons to be kings; to-day I have cursed them and none of them shall rule any more.[3] To-day, oh Katutu, build the spirit-hut, the kitchen, and the chief's hut.'[4]

Later Katutu built the *ombala* of Kawa,[5] and Cihamba came to live with him. One day the queen was gathering firewood on a mountain and found a much better mountain-top site, then

[1] Wambu-Kalunga's alleged reason for having sent the raid was that Cihamba had impregnated the concubine given to him, whereas the intention was that relations should have been those of the trial marriage in which partners occupy the same bed but explicitly avoid conception.

[2] i.e. the small mat, the double-headed ceremonial axe, the bell, and the chalk (to mark the face in ceremony and ritual).

[3] One reason for this particular phase of the tradition was perhaps to explain why the king's brother often inherits rather than a son. There is an Elende tradition designed to explain why the royal succession is in the paternal line rather than in the maternal, as is the case with inheritance among commoners, and also with the royal families of the related people to the south.

[4] *Etambo, ociwo, eyemba*, the three royal buildings. A commoner may have a spirit-hut (*etambo*), he may have a kitchen (*ociwo*) for each of his wives, but a house of his own he may not have, only a house for each wife.

[5] This appears in the old Portuguese records as *Quiaca a velha* (see Report of Governor of Benguela for 1799 in *Annaes Mar. e Col.*, 1844, p. 154).

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167 occupied by Siku of the Ndombe people, which site Katutu soon
173 appropriated. This is the present site[1] of the Ciyaka capital.

While reworking some of the material in this paper I had the
[115] good fortune to receive help from a member of the royal family of Ciyaka[2] who has more precise data on the succession of that kingdom than I had supposed it possible now to obtain. He not only completed and corrected my list of the kings of Ciyaka, but he also supplied the actual dates for all of them since 1842.[3] Their number would seem to impute to the Ciyaka kingdom a longer history than I have been able to verify for any of the other Umbundu kingdoms, but the absence of historical data from European sources makes confirmation impossible. It would seem, however, that the beginning of the Ciyaka dynasty must date from not later than the first half of the seventeenth century.

Some of the other Umbundu-speaking groups are of considerable importance and interest, but unfortunately there is neither time nor space to give to their origins attention equal to that given to those treated above. The Sambu kingdom has long specialized in the training of medical practitioners and witch-doctors. The tradition is that it was founded by a woman who seems to have come either from Bailundu or from the stock whence came the Bailundu royal family at an even earlier date. From the family of Wambu-Kalunga, in addition to Ciyaka, came those who set up the kingdoms of Elende, which had a woman ruler early in its history; of Cingolo; of Ekekete; and of Cikuma (also called Citata), in whose lands the fort of Caconda a Nova was built in 1769. It was probably after this that the capital of Citata moved across the Katumbela (*Catombela*) River to its present site. Kakonda, the founder of the kingdom generally known by that name, was of Luanda stock but born in Ngalangi,[4] whence he was sold as a slave to Benguela. He ran away with his wife Cilombo[5] and settled in the region near the (present) site of Caconda (a Nova). Kakonda and Cilombo probably settled there only a very short time before the building of the fort, for most of Kakonda's fifteen successors

[1] Called *Quiaca a nova* in the old Portuguese records (see loc. cit.).

[2] Lauriano M. Bahu Ciyaka, a graduate of Currie Institute, teacher of the village of Canja.

[3] *Vide* chronological chart, p. 224 f. *infra*.

[4] It is likely that his ascendants were *pombeiros* (traders) from Luanda and had settled in Ngalangi.

[5] After her, the kingdom was called Cilombo-coñoma (Camp of the Drum).

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had Portuguese names, and tradition speaks of a great accession 167
of mulatto stock, which also is confirmed by observation. 173

The Umbundu-speaking border groups are interesting. Ngamba 174
was formerly occupied by the Songo and has been peopled by 173
Ovimbundu coming from near the capital of Viye only within 167
the past forty years. Cengi, Sanga, Namba, and Kasongi on the northern flank of Bailundu have probably all only recently become Umbundu-speaking groups. Kasongi is one of the largest groups which paid tribute to Bailundu, and has had a line of Umbundu-speaking kings for more than a hundred years; but judging from genealogical evidence the bulk of the people have not been Ovimbundu that long. Civula is another large group and its uncertain feudal status has been noted. Perhaps the most interesting of the border groups, at least from a linguistic standpoint, is Kalukembe. The royal house seems to have come from Ciyaka and it has been [643] claimed that in Kalukembe the kingship is inherited by the mother's brother's son. This is not supported by the only local traditional history which I have been able to secure and requires further investigation. At any rate it is through the maternal line that the commoners of all the Umbundu-speaking groups inherit, and it is noteworthy that this is also true of the kingship among the 'Bangala' and the Ambo tribes.[1] The 'Bangala' people have clan [582] organizations and are exogamous, so that they may marry in any of the related 'Bangala' groups, and for this purpose they include the Kalukembe but not others of the Ovimbundu.[2] Finally, the variations with which Umbundu is spoken in Kalukembe[3] point to closer connexions with the language-group of the 'Bangala'. There are certain areas which at the present day seem to be under- 197 going a linguistic 'Umbundu-ization'. This is most evident in the coast towns such as Novo Redondo, Lobito, Catumbela, Benguela,

[1] See Estermann, 'Notas Etnográficas sôbre os povos do Distrito da Huila' in *Boletim Geral das Colónias*, fev. 1935, p. 63; Hahn, *et al.*, *The Native Tribes of South West Africa*, p. 8.

[2] This last item was learned from Mulondo people. The above-cited article deals only with the people of the District of Huila, while 'Bangala' people live also in other adjoining districts.

[3] Compare Umbundu language work of H. Chatelain and others of the 'Mission Philafricaine' in Kalukembe, as versus illustrations of Umbundu used by Johnston, Meinhof, *et al.* Evidently the native 'Mohongo' taken to Paris by Homburger of the Mission Rohan-Chabot, was a native of Kalukembe, for the 'Bailoundou' vocabulary taken from him is of the Kalukembe variation. (See *Mission Rohan-Chabot*, t. III, f. 1.)

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197 and Mossamedes. The region of Catumbela, and perhaps of Benguela, seems to have been subjected to migrations of Ovimbundu, or of proto-Ovimbundu, between the sixteenth and the nineteenth centuries, and it is probable that some of these groups early established themselves there permanently.[1] At the present time peoples of many tribes make up the population of these towns and of the surrounding regions, but Umbundu is already the dominant speech, and in Lobito and Catumbela almost no other Bantu language is heard. Certain other areas on the fringe of the Umbundu lands now seem to be in process of 'Umbunduization', at least as regards language. This does not seem to have taken place in Musende, in Cipala (Quibala), or in Sela, in spite of the long time during which they owned the king of Bailundu as their overlord. Just now, however, such a process seems to be taking place in Mbuiva (Amboiva), in Cisanji (area of Bocoio), in Nganda, and in Cikomba (Chicomba, south of Caconda).

●173 ●101 174 167 Some of the neighbouring peoples have traditions of migrations which corroborate the traditions of the Ovimbundu. The Nganda say that they formerly lived in the region of Wambu, around the rocks of Nganda-la-Kawe, and that they moved down-country for two reasons: (1) to escape Wambu-Kalunga and his penchant for eating their children; (2) to be by themselves to practise the rite of circumcision. When they migrated to their present home, the kingdom of Ciyaka, they say, was not yet established.

Traditions of the Herero and Ambo peoples may have bearing on the problem of the migrations of the Ovimbundu. Dr. Vedder concludes from tradition and genealogical evidence that the Herero must have crossed the Kunene 'about the year 1700'.[2] Some of the tribes of Angola with which the Njimba-Herero claim relationship[3] may easily be identified as belonging to the 'Bangala' group, as, for example, the Ovangambue, the Ovangumbi, and the Ovatjerenge, which are plainly the va Ngambue, the va Khumbi (or Nkhumbi), and the va Cilengi, respectively. Other names in the list are very much like some place-names in the Umbundu country.

Traditions of the Songo and Lunda people have already been

[1] According to a Ciyaka tradition. Also see A. Bastos, *Monographia de Catumbella*, pp. 6, 7; L. Cordeiro (ed.), *Benguella e seu sertão*, 1617–22; Ravenstein (ed.), op. cit., p. 19 f.

[2] Hahn *et al.*, op. cit., p. 157.

[3] Loc. cit.

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mentioned. H. A. Dias de Carvalho collected the traditional 174
history of the people of Lunda, which attempted to show that the 101
Imbangala, the Songo, and the Cokue, or rather their reigning 173
families, were descended from the royal house of the Bongo people 167
of Lunda.[1] Through Ilunga, father of the first Muata Yanvo, this author connects these people, or at least all of them except the Imbangala, with the Luba.[2] Torday offers the hypothesis that Ilunga (or Ihunga) may have been a Bushongo prince.[3] I have heard the hypothesis offered that the Songo were in effect an offshoot of the Bushongo people, but it seems that such knowledge as we have of the Songo cannot be said to substantiate this theory. Should these theories prove to accord with the facts, we could claim a long traditional descent for the people of our study in consideration of the careful work done by Torday in tracing the genesis of the Bushongo.[4]

Historical Evidence. Turning from tribal traditions to the solid 175 x
ground of historical evidence, regarding the migrations in question, 167
it is immediately evident that there is no lack of witnesses. The regions with which we are dealing have been known to Europe since 1482, when the expedition under Diogo Cão first sailed up the Congo River and sent ambassadors representing King John II of Portugal to the king of Kongo. Diogo Cão returned in 1485–6, and then in 1491 there came a great expedition with a specially appointed embassy and a mission of ten Franciscan friars.[5] From this time on the Kongo was not without European observers. The earliest record which we have of native migrations in what is now Angola was the invasion of the kingdom of Kongo in 1568,[6] when it was overrun by hordes of terrible 'Jagas',[7] from the east. The reigning king, Dom Alvaro I (Nenemi-a-lukeni-luambemba), and his forces were so utterly routed that his only resource was to

[1] Dias de Carvalho, op. cit., p. 76 f.

[2] Op. cit., p. 65.

[3] E. Torday, *On the Trail of the Bushongo*, pp. 170, 281.

[4] Ibid., chap. xiii.

[5] See João de Barros, *Decadas* I, liv. 3; Ruy de Pina, *Chronica*, p. 174 f.; Garcia de Resende, *Chronica*, pp. 155 ff.; Fr. Luiz de Sousa, *História de S. Domingos*, pt. ii, liv. vi, c. 8.

[6] There has been considerable disagreement over this date, which has been variously reported as 1558, 1568, and 1570; 1568 seems the most likely date, see Ravenstein (ed.), *The Strange Adventures of Andrew Battell*, p. 119 f.

[7] There are many spellings of this name, according to the language, or even the caprice, of the observer. The commoner forms are: Jagas, Jakas, Iagges, Giaghi, Giaki, and Ayaka. This last is probably the more nearly correct.

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175x the origin of this tribal name. It is no less reasonable to suppose that the name has also been preserved in the name of a section of 167 the Ovimbundu—the va Ciyaka,[1] which is an augmentative noun from the same verbal stem.

'He saith they are called . . . by themselves Imbangolas.' This statement has given rise to a great deal of speculation from the time of Purchas to our own. The *Imbangala*, better known as 'the people of Jaga Cassange' or Bangalas, are generally recognized to have been one of the marauding hordes which troubled Angola in the seventeenth century, and it has already been noted that their own traditional history, as given by Dias de Carvalho and by Ferreira Diniz, fits in with this theory. It seems reasonable, therefore, to make this further identification of the 'Jagas' of Battell with the Imbangala of Cassange. There is one more [173] traditional link to add, and that is that the Ovimbundu of Ciyaka recognize the region of Cassange as the location of the oldest ancestral tombs of which they have any tradition. Once when there was a particularly severe drought, tribal elders were sent from Ciyaka to Cassange to worship at these ancient tombs, to anoint the skulls, and to plead for rain.

When Purchas noted in 1613 that 'Elembe settled himself in Benguele', he meant the hinterland of Benguela Velha,[2] i.e. in the regions of Mbũi (*Amboim*), Cipala (*Quibala*), or Sela (*Cela*). As I have shown, tradition connects the kingdom of Wambu with Sela, and the kingdom of Bailundu with Cipala. Although 'Kelandula, sometime his page, proceeds in that beastly life before mentioned', we may be reasonably sure that eventually he also, or his followers, settled in the same general region. Both Elembe and Kalandula are common Umbundu names and the latter is found twice among the kings of Bailundu.

175x There is further evidence in the similarity of customs as be- 266 tween the 'Jagas' and the royal families of the Ovimbundu, for 566 both Battell and Cavazzi have given fairly full accounts. To show these similarities fully it would be necessary to re-edit Battell, and therefore I shall speak of only a few outstanding points. The cannibalism of the 'Jagas' was perhaps their most striking custom.

[1] The Portuguese transcription of this form would be 'Giaca', but this has become changed to 'Quiaca', as also with many similar names.

[2] See p. 122, n. 4 *supra*. It was only in 1617 that the settlement on the *Baia das Vaccas* was made, and (wrongly) given the name of Benguela.

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175 which the 'Jagas' had, although they soon adopted the language of the people whom they conquered. As recently as fifty years ago the 197 mother of the king of Bailundu spoke Umbundu brokenly, since she came from Cipala, and her sons were sent to complete their education with her people where later they were often called to rule.[1]

173 Recognition by the Ciyaka people that their forefathers came from the region where the Imbangala now live has been noted. 114 It may have been a similar tradition heard in Viye which started 167 Magyar to find out the tradition of 'Kinguri'. Such a tradition was mentioned in Viye as late as 1808.[2] This relation between the Umbundu ruling families and either the 'Jagas' or the Imbangala has been noted by several of the Portuguese writers. Lopes de Lima, in his History of the Discovery of the Congo, adds a footnote on the 'Jagas' as follows: 'The Jagas are almost nomadic peoples . . . coming from the interior of Africa, . . . there are some on the frontiers of the Congo, Angola, and Benguella, where some have fixed their habitations (as those of Cassange, and Bailundo).'[3] Writing in 1797 a certain Col. Pinheiro de Lacerda said of the inhabitants of Ngalangi, Kakonda, Wambu, Bailundu, &c.: 'These are they of the uplands, who are divided into two groups, those of one are called "Quinbundos",[4] (these do not eat human flesh); the others are called "Quimbangalas", who eat it, and when they make their sacrifice, which all attend, all eat the "Macongo".'[5] At that period the diversity of these two component parts of the Ovimbundu people was so apparent that they were even spoken of as separate and distinct peoples.

103 *Place-names.* Before leaving the subject of migratory move- 167 ments a word should be said on the evidence of place-names. There is nothing to prove, except in a few instances where traditions have been collected, that the recurrence of identical or similar names at different places indicates the actual lines of migration followed by the several tribal groups represented. It may be said, however, that this line of evidence, taken together

[1] See *Missionary Herald*, 1888, p. 70.

[2] *Missionary Herald*, 1898, p. 108.

[3] *Annaes Mar. Col.*, 1845, p. 93.

[4] Taken from the singular form *ocimbundu*. As already explained, the change of *chi* to *qui* is a commonly met mutilation of the Bantu forms.

[5] *Annaes Mar. Col.*, 1845, p. 488. There follows a circumstantial account of the ceremony of *Oku lia Ehongo*, to which reference has already been made.

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dropped off; of ivory there was no more. From 1893 on, says Bastos, rubber was practically the sole export of the District of Benguela and of its hinterland.[1] In 1891 more than one million milreis' worth of rubber was exported from Benguela, sixteen times as much as was exported only five years before, and three and one-half times the value of the *three* leading exports in 1886. Until 1891 this increase was not at the expense of other exports, but rather in addition to them.

All of this rubber, and the other exports as well, came to the coast in caravans of the Ovimbundu or their neighbours. In its inception and its great development it was an enterprise of the Ovimbundu. Everyone who was able to carry a load joined a caravan. It had always been the custom to take boys on trading expeditions, as young as they could go—say, from their tenth year—as a part of their education. Now girls were also taken and hardly any but the women stayed at home to raise the crops and provide rations for the caravans. European residents experienced great difficulty in securing necessary porters,[2] and this was one reason for finally putting through the wagon-road from Benguela to Caconda.[3] It was extended to Viye during the military campaign of 1890. The fever of the rubber trade reached into all the villages of the land and took in everyone able to travel. Mission schools had been established since 1881, but they had but few pupils until 1900. There were also other reasons for this, but a principal one was the attractiveness of the rubber trade.[4] Even the kings found it more difficult to gather armies for their wars: trade had become more attractive than the possibility of plunder.

Of all the kings who ruled the various Umbundu kingdoms during this time, the one who is best remembered is Ekuikui (II) of Bailundu (1876–93). Tradition has begun to ascribe to him and to his reign some things which properly belong to earlier

[1] Bastos, op. cit., p. 34. He does not include *serviçaes* in the exports, since they all went to the mainland or island plantations, but he remarks that at this time the price rose to even 90$000 (p. 33). The rise in price was perhaps due to the smaller supply owing to the preoccupation of the Ovimbundu with the rubber trade.

[2] See *Missionary Herald*, 1889, p. 350.

[3] *Benguella*, 1891, op. cit., p. 10.

[4] The reports of the governor of Benguela, to which reference has been made, also mentioned this fact, saying that although the American missions were intelligently directed, their results were small, since parents would not send their children to learn while they could pick up loads of rubber (1887, p. 19; 1891, p. 20).

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643 times, which is a sure sign of his greatness in Umbundu estima-
173 tion. Ekuikui's reign marked the end of an era and the beginning of another, not only for the people of Bailundu, but for all the Ovimbundu. The rubber trade had begun just before he came to
[185] the stool and his reign saw its intensive development. Tradition is probably right in placing the beginning of intensive agricultural pursuits during Ekuikui's time, for the great development of trade, need for rations for the long journeys, and a market for foodstuffs at the coast provided the necessary stimulus to cultivate beyond immediate seasonal need. Ekuikui carried on the tradition of
[648] warfare[1] which was so large a part of his ancestral heritage, but he had the good sense to attempt no large-scale operations either against his relatively powerful Ovimbundu confrères, or against European establishments. There was plenty of provocation[2] and no lack of warlike counsel, but he probably realized that the tenor of the times was against such operations. Had his contemporaries of Viye and his own successors been possessed of equal good sense, the Ovimbundu might have been saved some very difficult times
x 175 and not a little bloodshed. The military occupation of Viye came
648 about in 1890, after a disastrous war brought on by foolishly high-
726 handed treatment on the part of King Ndunduma[3] and his counsellors of a little expedition bound for the interior under Captain Paiva Couceiro, and of Silva Porto,[4] resulting in the suicide of the latter. The ruler and people of Viye relied on a largely magical defence against Boer sharpshooters and Portuguese field artillery with Krupp guns. When finally Ndunduma came in and gave himself up[5] he was exiled to São Tiago in the Cape Verde Islands,

[1] For King Ekuikui's wars see *Missionary Herald*, 1882, p. 225; 1883, p. 339; 1884, pp. 145 f., 504; 1885, pp. 279, 355, 375; 1889, p. 67; 1890, p. 292.

[2] See op. cit., 1886, pp. 228 f., 452, 508.

[3] *Ndunduma* (Thunderer) was the name assumed by Cikunyu when he took office after a *coup d'état* in 1888 (see *Missionary Herald*, 1889, p. 242 f.).

[4] Antonio Francisco Ferreira da Silva Porto, appointed 'Captain-major and exterior judge' of Bihe in 1885. He had authority only over the European residents, but he knew the country and people well and had tried to bring about a peaceful occupation of the country; neither the Government in Benguela nor the native authorities, however, would take his advice. His suicide brought the importance of the Umbundu country to the fore, and he became a Portuguese national hero.

[5] It was the Rev. W. H. Sanders, in charge of Kamundongo Mission Station, who sought Ndunduma and got him to surrender in order to avoid further slaughter. For a report of this 'war' see *Relatorio do Districto de Benguella*, 1891, pp. 12–14; also *Missionary Herald*, 1891, pp. 47, 63 f., 88, 108 f.; Dr. J. Johnston, *Romance versus Reality in South Central Africa*, pp. 59–63. F. S. Arnot (*Bihe*

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the occupations of warfare and of trade to the more settled agricultural life. And it is the possession and cultivation of land which provides a minimum basis for those who are also able to engage in any sort of trade, either commercial or one of the handicrafts.

Health.- A sanitary history, or the course of health among the Ovimbundu throughout their national existence, would be of interest if it could be made known. Legend tells of a time in the distant past when sickness was rare and death came hardly ever, if at all. It is said that hasty burials were not permitted because there had been cases of the supposed corpse returning to life. Some have taken this to mean that the tribe came from a more healthful region than the one which it now occupies, but it seems rather to be a traditional recognition of the fact that many of the diseases and bodily ills which at present afflict the Ovimbundu are of comparatively recent date. The time of arrival of some of these unwelcome guests can be estimated. Some are the subject of traditional tales as, for example, the jigger[1] (*pulex penetrans*), which a Ngalangi tradition says came to them from Bailundu, and Bailundu tradition says was first recognized in the time of Ekongo-liohombo (*c.* 1875) or Ekuikui II (*c.* 1876–93). Now the jigger is well known in Africa as an importation from South America, and the time of its first appearance could probably be determined. This parasite is widely present in tropical Africa, but there are some regions which it has not (yet) reached.[2] Its coming to Angola is probably, therefore, of recent date. Silva Porto, writing in 1879, said, 'This evil is of recent date on the coast . . . (*pulex penetrans*).'[3] The first notice of this pest which reached the pages of the *Boletim Official* of Angola was in 1875. If this date really represents the time when the jigger first appeared in Angola, it seems strange that it should have been so late, in view of the slave-ships ferrying back and forth from Brazil for the previous three hundred years.

Small-pox[4] might also be thought of as a recent arrival for, according to a note in the *Boletim Official*, it first appeared in Novo Redondo in June 1864, having been brought from Luanda by ships' crews.[5] Its first appearance on the Plateau, however,

[1] *Ewundu* or *ocindiundiu* is the Umbundu name, from *oku wunda*, to hide (the hidden one).

[2] e.g. Amboland, according to Umbundu testimony.

[3] *Boletim Soc. Geog. Lisboa*, 5a Ser., p. 10.

[4] *Ocingongo* is the Umbundu name.

[5] *Boletim Official da Provincia de Angola*, 1865, no. 5.

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SYNCHRONIZED CHART OF THE PORTUGUESE HISTORY OF

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DATES	EVENTS RECORDED
1482	Diogo Cão discovers the Congo.
1485–6	Diogo Cão's second voyage.
1490–1	Embassy to King of Kongo and Franciscan Mission.
1560	First expedition to Kingdom of Angola under Dias de Novaes.
1568	'Jagas' overrun Kingdom of Kongo.
1575	Luanda founded by Dias de Novaes and Jesuits.
1590	'Jagas' allied with Angola and Matamba defeat Portuguese.
From 1600	Some 'Jagas' allies of Portuguese, others met south of Kuanza and on Benguela Coast.
1617	Benguela founded.
1620	Hinterland forbidden to traders save *pombeiros descalços*.
1640–8	Dutch hold Luanda, Benguela, &c.; Portuguese hold Massangano.
From 1645	Raids from Massangano across Libolo to and across Keve River and to Bailundu.
From 1660	Raids inland from Benguela find some natives using fire-arms.
1671	End of Kingdom of Angola; presídio at Pungu-a-Ndongo.
1680	One million slaves exported since 1576 (Cadornega). First Caconda Fort founded in Hanha.
1685	Second Caconda Fort rebuilt nearby; many attacks on this fort and on nearby natives by native kings from interior.
1718	Further attacks on Caconda and its neighbours; king of 'Gallangue' captured and exiled; his successor said to have become vassal of Portugal. (Delgado.)
1760	Expulsion of Jesuits.
1769	Third Caconda fort built, on present site; presídio of Novo Redondo founded; various 'towns' ordered established in Benguela hinterland and Captains-major named. Formal prohibition of hinterland to traders removed.
1770–1	J. J. Rodrigues (first) Captain-major of Bihe.
1774	Great military campaign from Luanda and from Benguela against Bailundu, Cingolo, Ciyaka, &c.
1776	Return of military forces; king of Bailundu and two nephews captured.
1778	Kangombe baptised as 'Antonio de Vasconcellos' in Luanda and restored to stool of Viye with Governor's help.
1782	J. Gregorio de Freitas, Captain-major of Bihe.

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NATIVE TRADITIONAL HISTORY AND THE UMBUNDU ROYAL SUCCESSIONS

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'Kinguri' leaves Lunda to seek new home; his subsequent wanderings (Magyar).

Traditional origins of the Imbangala, of the Songo; in 'Libolo', in 'Quibala', &c. (Dias de Carvalho; Ferreira Diniz, &c.).

Ngalangi tradition of Feti the First, who found his wives in the reeds, and how they became the mothers of many peoples.

Wambu-Kalunga, the cannibal chief, founder of Wambu, progenitor of Ciyaka, Cingolo, Citata, Kalukembe, &c.

Ndulu tradition of Katekula-Mengo, elephant-hunter, who left imprints in the rocks of Pungu-a-Ndongo.

Katiavala from the north, comes to Bailundu.

Viye and Kahanda.

UMBUNDU ROYAL SUCCESSIONS

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	Ciyaka	*Ndulu*	*Bailundu*	*Ngalangi*	*Viye*
1650	Cilili I (*Cihambu*)[2] Kapango				
		Cikolongonjo			
	Atende I				
	Ukolongonjo I	Kavelavela	Mbulu (*Cilica*)[2]		
1700	Ndumbu I (*Konyo-ya-Cipembe*)[3]				
		Etande	Katiavala I		
			Njahulu		
	Luanjangombe I	Cibuaya	Somandalu	(Kasenje)[2]	Viye
	Mukuku	Cingi		(Cihongo)[2]	(Civava)[2]
1750	Cilili II				(Ndalu)[2]
	Handa I	(Ndulu)[7]	Cingi I[1] c. 1760–76	Ndumba Viseso	Ulundu
	Ngalangi				
	Katutu I	Kakulukusu[1]			
					Eyambi
					Njilahulu
1775	Ndumbu II				
			(*Cilica*)[2]		
	Kanutumuku				Kangombe[1] 1778–c.1795
	Kamela			Mulunda	
	Ukolongonjo II	Lunanyula			

For notes see page 231.

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DATES	EVENTS RECORDED
175 1795	Mello and Teixeira, third journey to 'Loval' via Bailundu and Viye.
173 1808–15	First recorded crossing of Africa (via Lunda, not Viye) by two *pombeiros*.
1817	Native wars in Benguela hinterland.
1819	João Nepomuceno Correia, Captain-major of Bihe.
1823–5	'Golden Age of Slave Trade'—average annual export 11,457 (Lopes de Lima).
1832–8	First export of new products: gum copal and orchilia.
1834	Abolition of royal monopoly in ivory.
1836	Formal abolition of slave trade, but enforcement held up for many years, owing to feeling in the colony.
1837	Lt. Sandoval in Bailundu, whence he describes native life.
1838	F. J. Coimbra, Captain-major of Bihe.
1840	Silva Porto reaches Bihe, coming from Luanda.
1844	Ports of Luanda and Benguela opened to foreign shipping; Prize Court in Luanda to implement suppression of slave trade.
1845	Presídio of Huila founded.
1846	Expedition of J. R. Graça to Lunda, passes through Viye.
1849–57	Ladislau Magyar in Viye.
1852	Silva Porto opens 'new road' from Viye to coast via Bailundu and Balombu (Civula).
1853	'Arabs' in Benguela, coming overland from Zanzibar. Livingstone meets Silva Porto and parties of 'Mambari' (Ovimbundu) at Naliele on the Zambezi.
1854	Livingstone meets 'Mambari' near Golungo Alto, visits Luanda, and returns to Zambezi valley and east coast.
1856–7	Attacks on southern presídios. Great attack on Huila by Ciyaka, Cingolo, Kalukembe, &c.
1865	Slaves now called freedmen (*libertos*) and apprenticed to their masters.
1869	First (experimental) export of rubber.
1870	Silva Porto leaves Viye for Benguela because of exactions of King Cilemo. Export of slaves to Americas now stopped; many sent to local plantations (Bastos).
1875	Lt. Cameron passes through Viye, Bailundu, &c., and reaches coast.
1878	Serpa Pinto, Capello, and Ivens in Caconda and in Viye. Great trading activity in Bailundu and in Viye.
1879–81	Trek Boers who left Transvaal in 1876 settle at Humpata.
1879	Silva Porto returns to Viye and goes on to 'Moyo'.
1880	Bagster, Sanders, and Miller land at Benguela (November), reach Bailundu following March to open W.C.A. Mission of A.B.C.F.M.
1882	Rubber takes second place in exports (after wax).

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	Ciyaka	*Ndulu*	*Bailundu*	*Ngalangi*	*Viye*
1795	Atende II				Kawewe
	Cikoko I	Cindele	Ekuikui I Numa I Hundungulu	Kambuenge	Moma (*Vasovavu*)[2]
	Kuvombo-inene				
	Ndumbu III	Mbundi	Cisende I Njunjulu	Ndumba II (*Cihongo*)[2]	
			Ngungi		
1835	Handa II (*Kaciyombo*)[2]		Civukuvuku[2]		Mbandus[2] 1833–9
			Utondosi		Kakembembe[2] (*Hundungulu*)[2] 1839–42
1842	Njimbi[4] 1842–50	Siakalembe	Mbonge[2] 1842–61	Ndumba III[2] (*Epope Kateyavi-lombo*) *c.* 1844–*c.* 1860	Liambula[2] 1842–7
					Kayangula[2] 1847–50
1850	Canja I[4] (*Luanjangombe III*)[2] 1850–70				(Mukinda[2]) 1850–7[2]
1857		Luaise		Etumbu Lutate	Nguvenge[2] 1857–9
1861			Cisende II[2] 1861–9 Vasovavu[2] 1869–72		Konya Cilemo[2] 1860–83
1870	Njundo[4] 1870–98	Elundu Civavu[4] *c.* 1870–*c.* 1890			
			Ekonge-liohombo[2] 1872–6		
1875			Ekuikui II[2] 1876–93	Ndumbu[2]	
1880					Ciponge[2] (*Njembayemina*)[2] 1883–6

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DATES	EVENTS RECORDED
175 173 1884	Sanders opens Kamundongo station in Viye; Mission expelled from Bailundu by King Ekuikui upon a trader's misrepresentation; Mission appeals to Gov.-Gen. at Luanda; Arnot's arrival at Bailundu influences Ekuikui; Mission invited to return.
1885	Silva Porto, Captain-major of Bihe.
1886	Ovimbundu traders discover new source of rubber—more easily available and more abundant: great boom begins.
1887	Rubber takes first place in exports.
1888	Occupation of Congo by 'Free State' stops ivory trade. Currie opens Canadian Congregational station at Chissamba.
1890	King Ndunduma orders Paiva Couceiro's expedition out of Viye; suicide of Silva Porto. Punitive expedition under Artur de Paiva occupies Viye and receives surrender of king. Roman Catholic mission opened at Caconda. Plymouth Brethren begin work at Kuanjulula (Viye).
1891	Teixeira da Silva begins military occupation of Bailundu. Many traders arrive for settlement in Bailundu and in Viye.
1892	R.C. 'Mission of Bihe' opened at Kacingi (outside Umbundu area).
1895	R.C. Mission station of Bailundu opened.
1896	King Numa attacks Bailundu Fort.
1897	Mission Philafricaine (Swiss) opens station in Kalukembe.
1899	Peak of rubber trade.
1900	Slump in rubber trade; no more ivory (A. Bastos).
1902–3	Revolt in Bailundu put down and remaining Umbundu regions soon occupied.
1904	Benguela Railway begins construction at Lobito. Rubber slump aggravated by debasing product. W.C.A. Mission opens Cileso (Ndulu) Station.
1906	W.C.A. Mission opens Elende (Ciyaka) Station.
1908	R.C. Mission station of Huambo (Wambu) opened.
1910	The Republic proclaimed in Portugal; worst abuses of contract labour abolished; civil administration begins to replace military in interior. Benguela Ry. reaches Cuma; porterage to coast gradually ends.
1912	Gen. Norton de Matos, Governor-General.
1914	W.C.A. Mission opens Currie Institute, normal and training school for young men.
1915	German forces take Portuguese forts on southern border; Portugal enters war against Germany. Benguela Ry. reaches Chinguar (edge of Viye) and suspends construction.
1916	W.C.A. Mission opens Means School for training of young women.
1917	Bailundu troops used to quell Sele revolt.
1919	Gen. Norton de Matos, High Commissioner; period of many public works and of much road-building activity (until about 1930).
1921	Decree 77 severely limits teaching and use of vernaculars. Beginning of currency devaluation with great fluctuations.
1922	Benguela Ry. resumes construction. Galangue (Ngalangi) mission station opened by representatives of coloured Congregational churches of the U.S.
1924	Seventh Day Adventists open work in Mbongo.

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	Ciyaka	*Ndulu*	*Bailundu*	*Ngalangi*	*Viye*
1885					Ciyoka[1] 1886–8 Cikunyu[1] (*Ndundumo*)[2] 1888–90
1890		Civange		Ekumbi	Kalufele
			Katiavala II[3] 1893–5		
1895			Numa II[3] 1895–6	Cihonga II	Kaninguluka
		Cipati	Hundungulu Kalakata	Ciyo	
	Cilölö III[4] 1898–1904				
1900		Cisululu Kasuanje	Kalandula		
					Ciyuka[5] 1901–3
		Siakanjimba	(Mutu-ya Kevela) [1, 7] 1903		Kavova[5] 1903–15
1904	Handa III[4] 1904–11	Ndingilinya	Cisende III[3] 1904–11		
		Sihinga Congolola		Cipala	
1910					
	Atende III[4] 1911–15		Njahölö[4] 1911–35		
1915	Cikoko[4] 1915–18				Ngungu[5] 1915–28
		Ciockokua		Kangombe	
1920	Cilölö IV[4] 1920–5			Ngangwe	
				Cuvika	

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DATES	EVENTS RECORDED
175 173 1926	'Corporative Régime' gains power in Portugal, May 28; Roman Catholics given large government subsidies and many advantages; they open many new mission stations from this time on.
1927	United Church of Canada takes over part of work of W.C.A.M. Umbundu Church of Christ organized to include work of three Protestant Missions.
1928	Currency conversion with 25 per cent. devaluation. Angola Boers return to Damaraland. Mission Philafricaine opens Evanga (Ganda) station.
1929	Completion of Benguela Ry. to frontier.
1929–30	First ordinations in Umbundu Church of Christ.
1930	W.C.A. Mission celebrates Jubilee with attendance of 12,000 Africans, many Europeans, and deputations from abroad.
1931	Completion of Katanga Ry., making connexion across Africa; opening of through traffic. Portuguese Baptists open small work at Nova Lisboa.
1935	Provincial Exposition at Nova Lisboa.
1938	H.E. President Carmona of Portugal visits Colony.
1939	World War II, Portugal neutral.
From 1941	Rapid rise of prices, rise in wages less marked.
1945–6	Visit of Minister of Colonies includes Protestant Missions.
1946	West Central Africa Regional Conference, Léopoldville, Congo Belge: African and European delegates from French, Belgian, and Portuguese colonies.

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UMBUNDU ROYAL SUCCESSIONS

	Ciyaka	*Ndulu*	*Bailundu*	*Ngalangi*	*Viye*
1925				Cikuetekole	
	Handa IV[4] (*Kalumbombo*)[8] 1926–8	Cihopio[4] d. 1935			
				Mbumba-Kambuakatepa	
					Ciyuka[4, 6] 1928–40
	Sakulanda[4] (*Luanjangombe IV*)[8] 1929–39				
1930				Cingelesi[4] 1931–3	
				Ndumbu II[4] 1933–5	
1935		(Sangombe Esita)[7] 1935–	Musita[4] 1935–8	Congolola[4] 1935–	
			Cinendele[4] 1938–		
	Chilu V[4] 1939–40				
1940	Tomasi[4] 1940–				

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NOTES

[1] Dates fixed by agreement of native tradition with historical reference.

[2] These names mentioned by European writers; native tradition with reference to them not known.

[3] Dates fixed from historical reference.

[4] Dates from native sources.

[5] Tradition mentions a solar eclipse during this reign, which would be 1886 or 1889.

[6] This is the same king as the one listed for 1901–3: he reigned twice.

[7] The names in parentheses are of men not of royal lines and not regularly enthroned, but usurpers, war leaders, or 'guarders of the stool'.

[8] The italicised names in parentheses after the names of certain kings are appelatives which they took on assuming office.

174 167 families, probably for the most part of Lunda origin, entered the Benguella Highlands during the seventeenth century and began to found their respective kingdoms. The tribes whom they encountered appear to have belonged to the cattle-keeping Ndombe-Nganda or to the Ngangela group.(1) Childs suggests that the upper strata of these local populations must have moved on southwards with their cattle to join related stocks in the border regions, while the masses stayed behind to form the nucleus of the Ovimbundu. The cultural influence of these early inhabitants on the Ovimbundu seems to have been slight, except in the south-west, particularly in Kalukembe, where a semblance of the cattle-culture complex remains, together with a recognition of kinship ties with southern neighbours (see below). The linguistic [197] influence of the Southern Bantu (Ndombe-Nganda) group in the south and west has however been considerable. It is noteworthy that over the whole Ovimbundu region a single language has developed with only small dialectal differences, and that although commercial contact has assisted this development, it has not been fostered by political union between the various segments of the Ovimbundu.

TRADITIONS

173 166 Each of the principal groups listed above (page 2) has separate legends of origin. Usually these traditions refer to the birthplace and adventures of the ancestors of the chiefly families, and only mention the indigenous inhabitants. Childs has made a careful and lucid summary of the traditions of the various groups;(2) these are therefore only very briefly outlined below.

Ndulu. There is evidence that Ndulu may be one of the oldest Ovimbundu kingdoms. The progenitor of the ruling dynasty is said to have come from the region near the confluence of the Kwanza and Luando rivers, and to have conquered and expelled the Luimbe, who live today to the east of Ndulu. This migration may have been a result of the prolonged wars between the Portuguese and the Kingdom of Angola,(3) which ended in 1671.

Bailundu. The Bailundu dynasty is said to have its origin in Cipala, a region which remained subject to Bailundu until the end of the nineteenth century, and from which, according to tradition, the king's principal wife comes. Childs estimates the date of the foundation of the dynasty at not earlier than about 1700. The Sambu ruling family is said to descend either from a woman of Bailundu stock or from common stock with the Bailundu.

Viye. Versions of the Viye legend are recorded by Tucker,(4) Serpa Pinto,(5) Silva Porto,(6) and Magyar,(7) and these do not all agree. According to the most widely-known version today, Viye, an elephant-hunter of the Humbi people, tracking game down the Kwanza valley, met and married a princess of the Songo people; their son, Ulundu, founded the Viye chiefdom. From documentary evidence Childs estimates that this must have been in about 1750. This version also suggests that the original inhabitants were of the Ngangela group of tribes.

(1) See above, p.3.
(2) Op.cit., pp.170-81.
(3) To the north of the present Ovimbundu country.
(4) 1927, pp.34f.
(5) 1881, vol.I, pp.156f.
(6) 1942, pp.165-71.
(7) 1859, pp.266f.

7

Magyar's account of the Viye legend is of interest since it suggests a direct link between the movements of the Ovimbundu ancestors and contemporary migrations of the Lunda in the Congo basin and western Angola.[1] Magyar relates that the forefathers of the Viye came from the land of the Moropu (or Lunda[2]) under the two chiefs Kinguri and Schakambindi, conquered the Songo, and settled on the Luanda river, engaging in agriculture between raids. The tribe subsequently sub-divided, one group going southwards to the Kukema river, where Ngangela were living, to found the chiefdom of Viye. 173 166

Ngalangi tradition is the only one which attempts a creation myth. Feti, the first chief of Ngalangi, is said to have "come down from above"; having no wives, he went to a lagoon of the Kunene river and caught them as they came out of the reeds. Sons of Feti drove out the Ngangela from what is now Ngalangi country, and founded their principal village.[3] Childs estimates that this must have taken place in about 1750. The village was later attacked unsuccessfully by Ngangela, and this is one of the very few traditions which mention resistance met by the invaders.

Wambu. The first chief, Wambu Kalunga, is said to have come from Sela country, north-west of Bailundu. The Nganda, who now live south-west of Umbundu country and are of Southern Bantu stock, were previously living in Wambu country. The founder of the *Ciyaka* royal family is said to have been a relative of Wambu Kalunga, and to have driven out the Ndombe (also of Southern Bantu stock) from Ciyaka country, probably during the first half of the seventeenth century. Wambu Kalunga is said to have been also the progenitor of the dynasties of *Cingolo, Citata* or *Cikuma, Kalukembe, Elende* and *Eketete*.[4]

Kakonda, the founder of the Kakonda kingdom, was of northern stock, but born in Ngalangi, whence he was sold as a slave to Benguella. He escaped with his wife, Cilombo, and set up the present kingdom in about 1[illegible]0.

Cengi, Sanga, Nambo and *Kasongi* on the northern flank of Bailundu have only recently become Umbundu-speaking. *Kasongi*, one of the largest Bailundu tributaries, has however had a line of Umbundu-speaking chiefs for more than 100 years. *Civula* was listed by Magyar as tributary to Ciyaka. *Kalukembe* is of interest in that it is more clearly linked than other sections of the Ovimbundu with the Nganda-Ambo group. Factors which point to this closer link include: the similarities in language between the two groups; the inheritance of the Kalukembe kingship in the maternal line, as among the Nganda-Ambo group, and not in the paternal line, as among other Ovimbundu;[5] and the fact that the Nganda-Ambo, who have an exogamous clan organisation, may marry in any of the related Nganda-Ambo groups, and for this purpose include Kalukembe but not other Ovimbundu.[6] 174 631 [643] [582]

(1) McCulloch 1951, pp.9ff., 32ff., 57ff.
(2) Dias de Carvalho 1890, p.66.
(3) According to the same legend, where the Ngalangi rested their loads of food and household goods, sticks took root and became the sycamore figs which to this day encircle the capital village. This circle of trees is a characteristic of the older Ngangela villages.
(4) Childs op.cit., pp.178, 225.
(5) Although descent among Ovimbundu commoners is in the maternal line.
(6) Childs, op.cit., p.179.

III. HISTORICAL SOURCES

175 The object of this chapter is the presentation of a summary of
● 173 literature relating to Angola from A.D. 1500 down to the present
167 day. In this literature there may be accounts of the movements of tribes which will throw some light on the origin of the Ovimbundu, and the date of their migration into the Benguela Highlands. Present-day tradition of the Ovimbundu is unanimous in declaring that the tribe came from the northeast of its present locality, but some
[101] historical justification of this belief is desirable. The word Ovimbundu ("people of the fog") may refer to the heavy morning mists of highland regions, and there is the possibility that the Ovimbundu adopted this name when they settled on the high plateau.

121 If there is historical evidence in favor of the traditional home of the Ovimbundu being the region of the north and northeast of Angola, what was the ethnological background of these areas at the time when the Ovimbundu became detached from a matrix of northern Angolan tribes? In other words, what cultural factors are the Ovimbundu likely to have brought with them into the Benguela Highlands? The ultimate origin of these factors is a point which has not been neglected (chapter XI, "Wider Culture Contacts"), but for the moment the primary concern is the historical background of the Ovimbundu, with special reference to tribal movements and cultural traits.

As part of this historical inquiry, contacts of the Portuguese and the Ovimbundu are of importance. When and where did the Portuguese come into contact with the Ovimbundu and with what results to the indigenous culture?

127 Chapters IV–IX deal exclusively with my field work among the Ovimbundu in 1929. Therefore it is pertinent to ask to what extent the ethnological observations of travelers and early explorers will corroborate the information recorded in my own notes. Will there be contradiction or confirmation of personal observations? Possibly the ethnological notes obtained from historical sources will serve, not merely to corroborate my field work, but actually to extend the area of occurrence of important cultural traits which I noted in 1929.

The literature describing Angolan history and customs is here presented in the form of a chronological bibliography, which is annotated so as to emphasize points bearing on the purpose of this historical analysis. That there should be a fragmentary presentation of data is an inevitable consequence of the nature of the literature

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

He draws the crescentic arrowhead (p. 123) still common among the Ovimbundu and Vachokue; the double iron gong (p. 122): and the musical bow, which he calls a viola (p. 121). 175 114 [534]

Sogaur states that iron-working had an advanced technique at Dindo, more than half a century ago. According to Sogaur, the blacksmith was using scrap iron from European sources (II, p. 14). 175 326

Perhaps the most valuable of Chatelain's books is "Fifty Folk Tales of Angola." The stories are accompanied by translations and ethnological notes, the most important of which are references to the carrying of a corpse on a pole; the building of a cairn of stones over the corpse of a hunter; matrilineal descent and the power of the maternal uncle over the persons of his nieces and nephews (sisters' children). My observations included some details respecting the pawning of a sister's children to redeem the debts of their mother's brother. Chatelain adds that sisters' children are successors to private property and chieftainship (pp. 8–10). My notes agree that property is inherited by children of a deceased man's sister, but my informants said that a new chieftain is normally the eldest son of the principal wife of the dead chief. Chatelain's folklore stories, fifty in number, relate chiefly to animals; this was the only kind of story told to me, but W. C. Bell has recorded a few tales of another type. 173 [114] [764] [611] [604] [428] [538]

Marquardsen (1928) devotes only one-fourth of his book to the ethnology of Angola, which he treats in a very general way; there is no section dealing specifically with any particular tribe. The author calls attention to Chapman's observation of rock paintings of South African Bushman type, between Cuma and Luimbale in northwest Angola. I have elsewhere remarked on the occasional occurrence of physical types which show a strain of Bushman blood. Today Bushmen penetrate southern Angola from the Kalahari (Plate LXIX, Figs. 1, 2), but their presence in times past or present does not affect the course of history or the data of ethnology to an appreciable extent. 114 177 [531] [144]

Marquardsen gives some notes of a general kind on Vaheneca, Mahuila and other tribes of southwest Angola. The suggestion is feasible that the Umbundu name Suku, for a supreme being, is the same as the Nzambi of Lunda and the Congo. Marquardsen refers to the importance of the maternal uncle in Umbundu society, to the poison ordeal, and to the burial of an Umbundu chief in oxhide, all of which points were recorded in my observations at Elende. 114 101

Ferreira Diniz's book is unobtainable, but, judging from the summary given in *Anthropos* (XX, 1925, pp. 321–331), the information was collected by a questionnaire widely distributed among adminis-

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

173 The Hungarian explorer L. Magyar collected in the

middle of the nineteenth century, in the eastern Umbundu kingdom of Bie, an historical legend which linked Bie origins to the kingdom of Mwata Yamvo.[18] Childs has suggested[19] that this legend was in fact not of Umbundu origin since later investigators from Serpa Pinto[20] (1878) to Childs himself (1938) have found that Bie traditions emphasized the local origins of the dynasty. This may of course be a case of the African tendency to manipulate historical narratives to accord with social relationships. It may be suggested that the Lunda traditions, which the core of the Jaga hordes carried with them, became diluted by the recruitment from the conquered peoples, and that the link between the Umbundu royal houses and the Northern Lunda were forgotten because the kings of the Ovimbundu felt no need, unlike the weak Luena and Ndembu chiefs,[21] to prop up their position by stressing their links with the mighty Mwata Yamvo.

175 177 By the end of the eighteenth century the Umbundu kingdoms that were to survive until the end of Umbundu independence were already well established.[22] In 1769 the first Portuguese fort in the Benguela Highland, that at Caconda, was established, and a few years later a king of Bie was to owe his throne to Portuguese intervention.[23] Trade in slaves had begun with the 175 Jagas; but other items such as beeswax and ivory were bought 177 by the bare-footed Kimbundu traders who came from the 439 Portuguese settlements on the Cuanza (founded between 1582 and 1671); and by 1782 there existed small colonies of Portuguese traders in Bie and Caconda.[24]

Portuguese political influence was weak, and the kings con-

[18] L. Magyar, *Reisen in Sud-Afrika*, Pest and Leipzig, 1859, pp. 266–269.

[19] Childs, p. 173.

[20] A. Serpa Pinto, *How I Crossed Africa*, London, 1881. Vol. I, pp. 156–60.

[21] For Luena and Ndembu chiefs, see C. M. N. White, 'Clan, chieftainship, and slavery in Luvale political organization' (*Africa*, January 1957), and V. W. Turner, *Schism and Continuity in an African Society*, Manchester, 1957. For African attitudes to the recording of the past see J. A. Barnes, 'History in a Changing Society'. *Rhodes-Livingstone Journal* 1951, No. 11, Ian Cunnison, *History on the Luapula*, Rhodes-Livingstone Papers, No. 21, and L. Bohannan, 'A Genealogical Charter', *Africa*, October 1952. Mr. White informs me that the Luena regard the Bie kingdom as being of Northern Lunda origin.

[22] Childs, pp. 167–8.

[23] Ibid., pp. 174, 195.

[24] Ibid., p. 198.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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CHAPTER III

CHIEFS AND HEADMEN IN GUMBA

1. *The History of Gumba*

The historical perspective of Ovimbundu is short. Few, even elders, know of any landmark earlier than the Mutu-ya-Kevela rising of 1902–3, nor even for those who had participated in it did the time of the rubber trade form a Golden Age by which the present is judged. The period about which most was remembered was the reign of Mbati.[1]

Mbati had ruled over both Gumba and Chicunda, a union which had existed only during his lifetime, and which would have given him on present-day population figures 7,500–9,000 subjects.[2] He had managed to keep in his own hands the relations between his people and the government post. Policemen arriving at his capital to recruit labourers were entertained while Mbati's ministers got together the men required. Although an upholder of the traditional rites associated with chieftancy he had been on good terms with the missionaries and allowed a Catholic catechist to settle in his village. One of his sons became a Protestant schoolteacher near the railway line, another entered the Catholic seminary but left and became a policeman in Cela. Many of the numerous progeny provided by his seventeen wives are still living in Gumba.

Mbati's downfall came through his practising the traditional annual ritual cannibalism (*oku lia ekongo*). About 1934–5 he was banished for this to another part of Umbundu country.

[text continues on p. 37]

[1] L. Magyar marks a place called Gumba on his map (opposite to page 1) but puts it to the south of the capital of Bailundo. As he does not seem to have personal knowledge of this area, this does not rule out identification, especially as the Cuvo begins to the south of Bailundo.

[2] For the basis of this estimate see section 2 of this chapter.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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Some ten years later he was allowed to return to Gumba but died on the way back. 173 634

His successor was Simbwyikoka, who was a mother's brother's son of Mbati, that is in Umbundu terminology a 'son'. Umbundu rules of succession allow anybody to succeed to a chiefdom who is paternally or maternally related to a previous chief, whether or not this relationship is genealogically traceable.[3]

Simbwyikoka was apparently nominated to act as regent during Mbati's absence, and as he did not complete the full cycle of chiefly rites he did not have quite the same prestige among the people as a chief in his own right who 'had finished', that is, had gone through all the rites. It was he who was the last ruler of Gumba to send the annual tribute in the form of a sack of fish to Bailundo, since it was a little after the time of his accession that Kandimba[4] (or Njahulu), the last of the Bailundo royal house to have any real authority over the kingdom, died. [631]

Simbwyikoka had lived at the hamlet of Kamballa in Gumba. When he took up office he did not settle at Mbati's village of Katembo, but established, or rather re-established, as a previous chief had ruled there, his capital[5] on the top of the narrow ridge which cuts off the greater part of Gumba from access by road. It was not possible for many people to settle on this site. Accordingly Simbwyikoka encouraged people to settle at the foot of the ridge, swelling the population of an already existing village. This was called Mwekalia from the headman, who held the office of Mwekalia[6] another ministerial title associated with the chiefly court. 173 634 100

In 1938 Simbwyikoka was deposed by the *chefe* for shielding his dependents from the operation of 'contract labour' (administrative recruitment of non-voluntary labour). About 1944 [648]

[3] My informants. This means that within (and outside) any sub-chiefdom there are a number of potential heirs who in no way receive any special status or form any kind of corporate group from this fact.

[4] Reigned at Bailundo 1911–35. Childs, p. 229

[5] In Umbundu Ombala, often transcribed in Portuguese as Embala.

[6] For the role of Mwekalia see Hastings, p. 59. His statement that the office is matrilineally inherited was not confirmed by my informants. It seems that it can be inherited either patrilineally or matrilineally. The man who was known as Mwekalia and had been headman of the village of that name did not function as such at the chief's court during my stay. A kinsman of his, Ngombe, acted as Mwekalia at the court of Lusase. [114]

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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173 634 166 Simbwyikoka founded a new village known by his name. In 1951 one of his sons, Sassungu, founded a new village Sassungu whose population originated with a group of people from his father's village. Simbwyikoka maintained contact with Kamballa, where another son, Felisi, lived and herded Simbwyikoka's cattle.

173 634 [648] The new chief was Kakope, a son of Tjiweka who had been chief of Gumba at the time of the Muta-ya-Kevela rising. He held office for only two years, being deposed by the *chefe* since ill-health made monthly visits to the post difficult for him. He was succeeded by Kafelo, who came to Gumba from Cassongue across the river. Kafelo was a cross-cousin of Mbati and paternal kinsman of Kakope. Having gone through the cycle of chiefly rites, and undertaken Mbati's funeral he was regarded as being fully chief, in a way that Simbwyikoka was not.

The Epalanga[7] of a chief is a minister chosen from among the chief's kin. Kafelo had nominated to this post Sapapula, a matrilateral 'brother' of his and an inhabitant of Menga. Sapapula moved into Gumba and founded the village of [166] Epalanga in 1945–6, where he was joined by various kinsmen. I have heard the foundation of Epalanga ascribed to another man, Mwehombo, who will be mentioned again, and should therefore be introduced. Mwehombo had been minister at the court of Mbati, his mother's brother. After Mbati's death Mwehombo had stayed at Katembo till 1941, when he settled in Menga with his kinsman Sapapula. Mwehombo crossed over to Gumba in 1944.[8]

173 634 648 In 1954 Kafelo was deposed by the *chefe*, as Kafelo had been drunk in his presence. Kutenga Lusase, who had in 1945 founded the village of Kamupa, saw his chance and told the *chefe* that he had been chosen chief according to custom. The people of Gumba did not complain about this to the post, as they were afraid of the consequences. Kutenga Lusase claimed to be related to Mbati and Simbwyikoka and was a matrilateral 'grandson' of Tjiweka. He was not related to Kafelo whose link to Tjiweka was a patrilateral one.

Kutenga Lusase was in his turn deposed by the *chefe* in 1956

[7] Hastings, p. 33.

[8] Information from his 'brother', Lusaga.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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for lack of effectiveness following a series of quarrels. His successor was Tjilombo a government headman and the leading personality of the village of Tjisangu. Such, then, is the recent history of Gumba.

2. *Chiefs, Government Headmen, and Traditional Headmen*

I have outlined the succession of chiefs in Gumba, and the villages with which they were associated. I have noted that nowadays there are government headmen as well as the traditional headmen. I wish now to indicate what authority the chiefs and the two sorts of headmen have and how this is related to the villages.

The sub-chiefdom is a recognized administrative unit. The census, and the annual check on the census, are taken on a sub-chiefdom basis, as are the collection of taxes and the recruitment of workers for contract labour, road work, and jobs to be done at the post. The sub-chief and the government headmen have to visit the post once a month. The *chefe de posto* (head of post = District Officer) will normally only visit each sub-chiefdom once a year for the check on the census. He may send orders for the recruitment of labourers or the arrest of an offender by one of the policemen who live at the post. His principal contact with the people comes in the adjudicating of disputes which the people are quite ready to carry to the post—the Bimbe *chefe*, whose area included Gumba, told me that hearing cases was his main occupation. Very few *chefes* have anything more than a smattering of the Umbundu language, and they have only the vaguest knowledge of the culture and social usages—for instance they may be aware of the classificatory extension of kinship terms and the association of leopardskins with chieftancy. The *chefes* are moved about fairly frequently and their names and personalitie tare not known to the people. As the people associate the post with demands for taxes, fines, and labour services, and are only likely to visit the post when recruited as non-voluntary labourers or to have their photographs taken for identity cards, it is not surprising that fear is the predominant emotion they feel towards the *chefe*.

The staff of the post consists of the interpreter, an African

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

This so-called democratic streak is also abundantly attested by folk-tales which give incidental and intimate pictures of petty details in the life of kings. There is one in which a king gives instructions for caring for his field while he is absent on a war party; another which tells of a fine levied on a man who while hiding up a tree accidentally urinated on a king; another, of a king who in a time of hunger himself climbed a tree for the *epōlē* fruit and nearly starved when the prop by which he had climbed was taken away. Recent arrivals in Africa upon meeting some king just coming up from work in his fields may at first conclude, as did I, that this extreme of 'democracy' is due to the low estate to which royalty has fallen in these latter days, but these historical and legendary references show that this 'democracy', such as it is, is not a degeneration but an essential part of the picture.

With this I shall have to leave royalty. I trust that enough of the picture has been given, and enough also to show what inherent interest would lie in a study of such a Divine King who is at the same time a sort of 'democratic' leader. Should 'indirect rule' ever come to this part of Africa, a resurrection of the royal office would be the order of the day as has been the case in Tanganyika Territory and in the Belgian Congo. For this additional reason an early and a thorough treatment of the subject is to be desired.

Sub-Tribes

Each of the kings of the Ovimbundu was an overlord, for the tribe was made up of a number of sub-tribes called *atumbu* (plural), a word derived from the verb *oku tumbulula*, to transplant. Some of these princes, whether of the blood-royal or not, themselves established dynasties, while others were newly appointed and promoted from time to time. Some of the *atumbu* were ruled by court officials not of royal birth, while others belonged to separate dynasties some of which were natives of the respective regions, at least more anciently native than was the paramount royal family. The kingdom of Bailundu had about 200 *atumbu*, each of which had from 3 to 300 villages or more, and a number of the larger *atumbu* were themselves made up of several smaller

Lacerda in *Annaes Mar. e Col.*, 5 Ser., p. 488 f.; L. Magyar, *Reisen in Süd-Afrika* (tr. Hunfalvy, Pesth, 1859), p. 278.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

582 Cross-cousin marriage of the type practised by the Sotho[1] or Venda[2] tribes is quite foreign to Umbundu life. It is possible that the Ovimbundu formerly had some such type of cross-cousin marriage, but not for a very long time. Among the seventy-five schedules which I have collected illustrating marriage arrangements there are a few describing marriages which took place about ninety years ago. Magyar also wrote of the financial arrangements made for marriage in Viye about 1850.[3] Both of these sources, together with native tradition, indicate that, at least with regard to the financial arrangements, the cross-cousin type of marriage has not been practised by the Ovimbundu for more than one hundred
582 years. On the other hand, the Ovimbundu know nothing of the
171 exogamous marriage demanded by the Herero,[4] the Zulu,[5] &c. The Umbundu ideal includes marriage with a cross-cousin, but also goes out into the wider kinship group, as does the type of marriage of the Thonga,[6] which in turn is linked with that of the Ndau and the Shona group.[7]

582 The Umbundu principle that only 'those whose blood has touched', or who can 'count' relatives in common, has for a very
174 long time admitted of liberal application. There are cases on record of individuals belonging to regions as widely separated as Ciyaka and Ngalangi contracting marriage *after* having properly 'counted' their common relationship. These cases refer to grandparents of the present generation. It is probable that the diverse racial and cultural elements which have fused to form the Ovimbundu people long ago made imperative the broadening of the cross-cousin type of marriage to the 'ideal' or 'classic' form of (present) Umbundu tradition. An analogous process (with modifications) has continued to operate until to-day this very ideal of marriage within the kinship group is losing its hold in favour of yet more 'liberal' practices.

601 In summary, the Umbundu terminology for the relative by marriage and also the connexion between the ideas of relation by marriage and relation by blood may be seen by the following:

[1] W. M. Eiselen, 'Preferential Marriage: Correlation of the various modes among the Bantu of South Africa', *Africa*, 1928, pp. 413–28.
[2] H. A. Stayt, *The Bavenda* (London, 1931), chaps. xi and xv.
[3] Magyar, op. cit., p. 282 f.
[4] Vedder in Hahn *et al.*, op. cit., p. 187; Irle, op. cit., p. 89.
[5] Krige, op. cit., pp. 34–5. [6] Junod, op. cit., vol. i, pp. 253–64.
[7] Hoernlé in Shapera, op. cit., p. 93 f.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

881 rites. It seems, however, that it is largely by imitation that the
171 camps have spread from Kalukembe, Kakonda, and Ngalangi into adjoining regions. The girls' camps have been less often imitated
881 in these other regions than have those for boys. Whether these
174 rites may have been taken over by the Ovimbundu from the practice of neighbouring peoples, or whether they may have survived from the customs of a culture previously prevalent in the region, is a question. In favour of the latter hypothesis is the fact that nearly all the neighbouring peoples seem to have or to have had these rites in one form or another and also that certain of the Umbundu kings are required to be circumcised before they can assume office. On the other hand, if the camps were held at all in former times, they must have been exceedingly inconspicuous to have escaped the notice of all the older writers. Bastos (1909) stated 'The Ovimbundu proper do not practise it (circumcision).'[1] Neither Silva Porto (1840–90), nor Magyar (1849–57), nor Pinheiro de Lacerda (*c.* 1790) makes any reference to initiation rites. The missionaries who came to the country in 1880 seem first to have encountered these camps on the Luimbi borders about 1900 but elsewhere hardly before 1915. The conclusion seems to be that it was toward the end of the rubber trade (1911) that the initiation camps were either revived or taken over from the neighbouring cultures to the south and east.[2] Whether initiation rites may spread further among the Ovimbundu or not remains to be seen. Their main emphasis seems to be quite contrary to the more typical trend of Umbundu education. The initiation camps of Ngalangi and Kakonda with their definite break from, and contrast to, the routine of life not only differ from the regular method of instruction but are quite contrary to it. In their methods of educating the young, the Ovimbundu certainly may be characterized as casual. The special times and occasions of education are the regular cycles of the social and economic life and special discipline to enforce specific teaching is used but rarely. The

[1] Bastos, op. cit., p. 50.

[2] Differences in these rites as practised by the various neighbouring tribes would form an interesting study. The majority initiate both boys and girls at or near puberty but some practise infant circumcision or circumcision at weaning or at the appearance of the permanent teeth. The Ambo are said to have let boys' initiation lapse but to attach much importance to rites for girls (Hahn *et al.*, op. cit., pp. 27–31). I do not know of any nearby tribes which have for girls either any excision or elongation of the labia. Various tests of virginity are used.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

hardship and the cruelty of the initiation camps have their parallel 981
in the trading and slave-raiding expeditions of the past, but this 174
is practically the only recognizable likeness. May it not be that initiation camps were adopted or revived to fill the lacuna that came about when trading expeditions ceased? As an 'educational institution' they do not seem to fit into the culture.

Whether with or without initiation rites, adolescence is largely 882
preparation for marriage and full adult life. Traditionally, adolescence is not a time of conflict or of stress. Young people who as children had already assumed in considerable degree the responsibilities of life met the onset of puberty and made the transition to adult life without fuss or flourish. On the whole there was relatively small chance for conflict between the generations, since the place of each is recognized as mutually complementary. Nor was there competition between the sexes. This ordered and well-balanced society began to change with the rubber trade, and with the beginning of the present century changes have come rapidly. Contract and *corvée* labour have brought profound changes, especially for the young men. As for the girls, a few have gone to the towns; relatively few however, other than those who attend a boarding-school, lead a life essentially different from that which has been traditionally theirs. Conflict between the generations, adolescence as a period of stress, delinquence, hysteria, and other problems, some of them characteristic of our own culture, are beginning to appear among the young people of the mission schools. I feel that these manifestations are quite uncharacteristic of Umbundu culture.

As for adult life, there are no recognized divisions or separate 885
periods. Adulthood comes with marriage and marriage is only 581
recognized as fully complete with the birth of a child. The early years of marriage and family rearing are years of much hard work with less time for leisure or enjoyment than either before or after. It is not postponed, however, on that account. If the young man marries relatively late, it is largely because of the very considerable economic burdens involved. Singleness is coveted by no one. The Umbundu ideal is mature life when one may have acquired competence, but at any rate is assured of descendants and care in old age. There is not, however, any ceremonial status such as the fixing of the wax ring among the Thonga,[1] nor does the mature Ocimbundu cease to do manual labour. There may be some

[1] Junod, op. cit., 1927, vol. i, p. 129 f.

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101 to-day.[1] The principal Umbundu-speaking groups may be listed
631 as follows:

I. *Independent kingdoms* (in approximate order of their present population):

Mbailundu (*Bailundo*).
Viye (*Bie* or *Bihe*).
Wambu (*Huambo*, *Huamba*, or even *Hambo*).
Ciyaka (*Quiyaca* or *Quiaca*).
Ngalangi (*Galangue*).
Civula[2] (*Quibula*).
Ndulu[2] (*Andulo*, *Ondulo* or even *Ondura*).
Cingolo (*Quingolo*).
Kalukembe (*Caluquembe*, *Caluguembe*, or even *Caluqueme*).
Sambu[2] (*Sambo* or *Sambos*).
Ekekete (*Quiquete*).
Kakonda or Cilombo-coñoma (*Caconda* or *Quilombo*).
Citata (*Quitata*).

[636] II. *Kingdoms generally tributary but not integral parts of the kingdoms to which they owed allegiance*:

Kasongi (*Cassongue*)—generally a tributary of Bailundu.
Ngalanga (*Galanga*)—generally a tributary of Bailundu.
Civanda (*Quibanda*)—generally a tributary of Bailundu.
Namba—generally a tributary of Bailundu.
Sanga—generally a tributary of Bailundu.
Cenge (*Chiengue*)—generally a tributary of Bailundu.
Cipeyo (*Quipeyo*)—a tributary of Bailundu or Wambu.
Mbongo (*Bongo*)—generally a tributary of Wambu.
Elende (*Lende*)—generally a tributary of Ciyaka.

167 Nearly all of these groups are listed in the report of 1799 to
which we have referred, and many of them may be identified on
174 the map of 1776. How long before that had they lived in these their present homes? Since it is already well established that none of the Southern Bantu are autochthonous, we shall not stop to ask

[1] Neither of these accounts mentioned Kasongi, which, according to genealogical evidence, is probably one of the most recently formed of the Umbundu-speaking groups. Both accounts made the non-Umbundu-speaking regions of 'Quibala' (Cipala), Mussende, and Cella tributaries of Bailundu. This was the state of affairs as late as 1893.

[2] See *supra*, p. 167, n. 2.

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that question concerning the Ovimbundu. Rather, whence did they come and when? Can the lines of their migrations now be ascertained? Can their racial origins be determined with even approximate certainty? 167 174

The available evidence regarding origins and migrations of the Ovimbundu is mainly of five sorts: (1) linguistic; (2) legendary, whether of the several groups of the Ovimbundu or of the tribes from which they seem to have sprung; (3) historical; (4) evidence from place-names; and (5) evidence of comparative attitudes and culture-traits as between the Ovimbundu and their neighbours. In addition, we might list evidence of physical measurements and blood-group tests, but such evidence is not yet available for the Ovimbundu.

Tribal Origins

Language Affinities. As I pointed out in the introductory chapter, by linguistic classification the Ovimbundu belong to the western 'province' or group of the Southern Bantu. Linguistically, the Ovimbundu belong with their southern neighbours, the so-called 'Bangala'[1] and with the Ambo and Herero. The northern and eastern neighbours all belong to other language groups. This is a fact that must not be lost sight of, especially since Umbundu has been so often confused with the so-called 'Kimbundu' of the Ndongo or Angola kingdom. We are not surprised to find an author of 1846 declare that 'From the Congo to Cabo Negro (Alexander Bay) these black natives all speak the same language (*bunda*) with small changes of dialect';[2] but when this confusion is compounded in works laying claim to considerable value as linguistic and ethnological studies, as, for example, one which was published by a well-known museum in 1930,[3] a protest is in order. 197 114

[1] The Ndombe, Nganda, Cilengi, Cipungo, Muila, Mulondo, Humbi, Gambue, &c. I do not know that the term 'Bangala' may be applied with correctness to these people. I only use it for convenience. See 'Notas Etnográficas sôbre os povos indígenas do Distrito da Huila', *Boletim Geral das Colónias*, fev. 1935, p. 41.

[2] Lopes de Lima, *Ensaios sôbre a Statistica d'Angola e Benguella*, part i, p. 196.

[3] See F. u. W. Jaspert, *Die Völkerstämme Mittel-Angolas* (Frankfort, 1930). It is reported that the spurious nature of the works of these writers has been exposed by Baumann and others, but although I have searched, apart from a rather ambiguous footnote in Baumann's *Lunda*, I have found no such references, and am unable to say whether this has been done. The origin of the erroneous concept of a Bunda language (also called Bundu, or Mbundu), has been traced, and correctly I think on the whole, by Max Buchner, 'Die Ambakisten' (in

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p.179

had Portuguese names, and tradition speaks of a great accession 167
of mulatto stock, which also is confirmed by observation. 173

The Umbundu-speaking border groups are interesting. Ngamba 174
was formerly occupied by the Songo and has been peopled by 173
Ovimbundu coming from near the capital of Viye only within 167
the past forty years. Cengi, Sanga, Namba, and Kasongi on the northern flank of Bailundu have probably all only recently become Umbundu-speaking groups. Kasongi is one of the largest groups which paid tribute to Bailundu, and has had a line of Umbundu-speaking kings for more than a hundred years; but judging from genealogical evidence the bulk of the people have not been Ovimbundu that long. Civula is another large group and its uncertain feudal status has been noted. Perhaps the most interesting of the border groups, at least from a linguistic standpoint, is Kalukembe. The royal house seems to have come from Ciyaka and it has been [643]
claimed that in Kalukembe the kingship is inherited by the mother's brother's son. This is not supported by the only local traditional history which I have been able to secure and requires further investigation. At any rate it is through the maternal line that the commoners of all the Umbundu-speaking groups inherit, and it is noteworthy that this is also true of the kingship among the 'Bangala' and the Ambo tribes.[1] The 'Bangala' people have clan [582]
organizations and are exogamous, so that they may marry in any of the related 'Bangala' groups, and for this purpose they include the Kalukembe but not others of the Ovimbundu.[2] Finally, the variations with which Umbundu is spoken in Kalukembe[3] point to closer connexions with the language-group of the 'Bangala'. There are certain areas which at the present day seem to be under- 197
going a linguistic 'Umbundu-ization'. This is most evident in the coast towns such as Novo Redondo, Lobito, Catumbela, Benguela,

[1] See Estermann, 'Notas Etnográficas sôbre os povos do Distrito da Huila' in *Boletim Geral das Colónias*, fev. 1935, p. 63; Hahn, *et al.*, *The Native Tribes of South West Africa*, p. 8.

[2] This last item was learned from Mulondo people. The above-cited article deals only with the people of the District of Huila, while 'Bangala' people live also in other adjoining districts.

[3] Compare Umbundu language work of H. Chatelain and others of the 'Mission Philafricaine' in Kalukembe, as versus illustrations of Umbundu used by Johnston, Meinhof, *et al.* Evidently the native 'Mohongo' taken to Paris by Homburger of the Mission Rohan-Chabot, was a native of Kalukembe, for the 'Bailoundou' vocabulary taken from him is of the Kalukembe variation. (See *Mission Rohan-Chabot*, t. III, f. 1.)

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197 and Mossamedes. The region of Catumbela, and perhaps of Benguela, seems to have been subjected to migrations of Ovimbundu, or of proto-Ovimbundu, between the sixteenth and the nineteenth centuries, and it is probable that some of these groups early established themselves there permanently.[1] At the present time peoples of many tribes make up the population of these towns and of the surrounding regions, but Umbundu is already the dominant speech, and in Lobito and Catumbela almost no other Bantu language is heard. Certain other areas on the fringe of the Umbundu lands now seem to be in process of 'Umbunduization', at least as regards language. This does not seem to have taken place in Musende, in Cipala (Quibala), or in Sela, in spite of the long time during which they owned the king of Bailundu as their overlord. Just now, however, such a process seems to be taking place in Mbuiva (Amboiva), in Cisanji (area of Bocoio), in Nganda, and in Cikomba (Chicomba, south of Caconda).

173 Some of the neighbouring peoples have traditions of migrations
101 which corroborate the traditions of the Ovimbundu. The Nganda
174 say that they formerly lived in the region of Wambu, around the
167 rocks of Nganda-la-Kawe, and that they moved down-country for two reasons: (1) to escape Wambu-Kalunga and his penchant for eating their children; (2) to be by themselves to practise the rite of circumcision. When they migrated to their present home, the kingdom of Ciyaka, they say, was not yet established.

Traditions of the Herero and Ambo peoples may have bearing on the problem of the migrations of the Ovimbundu. Dr. Vedder concludes from tradition and genealogical evidence that the Herero must have crossed the Kunene 'about the year 1700'.[2] Some of the tribes of Angola with which the Njimba-Herero claim relationship[3] may easily be identified as belonging to the 'Bangala' group, as, for example, the Ovangambue, the Ovangumbi, and the Ovatjerenge, which are plainly the va Ngambue, the va Khumbi (or Nkhumbi), and the va Cilengi, respectively. Other names in the list are very much like some place-names in the Umbundu country.

Traditions of the Songo and Lunda people have already been

[1] According to a Ciyaka tradition. Also see A. Bastos, *Monographia de Catumbella*, pp. 6, 7; L. Cordeiro (ed.), *Benguella e seu sertão*, 1617–22; Ravenstein (ed.), op. cit., p. 19 f.

[2] Hahn *et al.*, op. cit., p. 157.

[3] Loc. cit.

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mentioned. H. A. Dias de Carvalho collected the traditional 174 ●
history of the people of Lunda, which attempted to show that the 101
Imbangala, the Songo, and the Cokue, or rather their reigning 173
families, were descended from the royal house of the Bongo people 167
of Lunda.[1] Through Ilunga, father of the first Muata Yanvo, this author connects these people, or at least all of them except the Imbangala, with the Luba.[2] Torday offers the hypothesis that Ilunga (or Ihunga) may have been a Bushongo prince.[3] I have heard the hypothesis offered that the Songo were in effect an offshoot of the Bushongo people, but it seems that such knowledge as we have of the Songo cannot be said to substantiate this theory. Should these theories prove to accord with the facts, we could claim a long traditional descent for the people of our study in consideration of the careful work done by Torday in tracing the genesis of the Bushongo.[4]

Historical Evidence. Turning from tribal traditions to the solid 175 ×
ground of historical evidence, regarding the migrations in question, 167
it is immediately evident that there is no lack of witnesses. The regions with which we are dealing have been known to Europe since 1482, when the expedition under Diogo Cão first sailed up the Congo River and sent ambassadors representing King John II of Portugal to the king of Kongo. Diogo Cão returned in 1485–6, and then in 1491 there came a great expedition with a specially appointed embassy and a mission of ten Franciscan friars.[5] From this time on the Kongo was not without European observers. The earliest record which we have of native migrations in what is now Angola was the invasion of the kingdom of Kongo in 1568,[6] when it was overrun by hordes of terrible 'Jagas',[7] from the east. The reigning king, Dom Alvaro I (Nenemi-a-lukeni-luambemba), and his forces were so utterly routed that his only resource was to

[1] Dias de Carvalho, op. cit., p. 76 f.

[2] Op. cit., p. 65.

[3] E. Torday, *On the Trail of the Bushongo*, pp. 170, 281.

[4] Ibid., chap. xiii.

[5] See João de Barros, *Decadas* I, liv. 3; Ruy de Pina, *Chronica*, p. 174 f.; Garcia de Resende, *Chronica*, pp. 155 ff.; Fr. Luiz de Sousa, *História de S. Domingos*, pt. ii, liv. vi, c. 8.

[6] There has been considerable disagreement over this date, which has been variously reported as 1558, 1568, and 1570; 1568 seems the most likely date, see Ravenstein (ed.), *The Strange Adventures of Andrew Battell*, p. 119 f.

[7] There are many spellings of this name, according to the language, or even the caprice, of the observer. The commoner forms are: Jagas, Jakas, Iagges, Giaghi, Giaki, and Ayaka. This last is probably the more nearly correct.

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with that which has already been reviewed, might make it possible to determine the demography of the Benguela Highland prior to the formation of the Umbundu kingdoms. It is also further evidence as to the demographic make-up of the Ovimbundu. Some of these recurring place-names evidently represent elements which now constitute separate entities outside the Umbundu kingdoms, although they probably made contributions to the formation of those kingdoms. Others represent elements which probably moved away from the earlier invasions from the north but stayed in their new sites to amalgamate with later arrivals. Some may represent successive splittings-off from a stock which thus settled at various places. Many recurrent place-names could be shown both in this region and outside the language-grouping.

Attitudes toward Other Tribes. Attitudes of the Ovimbundu towards the various neighbouring tribes are instructive. Mention has already been made of the attitude of the southern 'Bangala' people in their inclusion of the Ovimbundu of Kalukembe within their own system of exogamy. The Ovimbundu recognize a common humanity with the peoples who are their neighbours both on the south and on the north. They are all *omanu*,[1] people, or even *vakuetu*, comrades. Similar recognition is not extended to the eastern and south-eastern neighbours who are lumped together under the derogatory term of 'va Ngangela' or *ovingangela*.[2] This eastern region as far as the Great Lakes was the happy hunting-ground of the slave-traders from Viye and from Bailundu. There is a term *olongoya* which is applied to the northern neighbours, but without the derogatory connotation of 'Ngangela'. *Olongoya* has a linguistic connotation as did *barbaroi* in the Greek, and refers to the fact that these neighbours speak what is to the Ovimbundu an unintelligible language. How much of rationalization there may be in these attitudes and prejudices one cannot say, but it seems that in them there is some recognition of tribal origins and relationships, of the fact that across the Benguela Highland migrations have swept from north to south.

Conclusion. In consideration of the above evidence, it is now possible to draw conclusions concerning the origin of the Ovi-

[1] *Omanu* is the Umbundu equivalent for the Nguni *abantu*, which has come to be applied to the whole language family.

[2] This Umbundu attitude is best illustrated by the proverb 'As a grass hut is not a house, so an *ocingangela* (singular) is not a person (*omunu*).'

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174 167 mbundu. They are the result of a fusion of diverse stocks, chiefly of the Southern Bantu and of the Congo or Central Bantu peoples. The ruling families probably were Lunda emigrants for the most part,[1] at least in their origin. It was probably during the seventeenth century that these people entered the Benguela Highland and began to found their respective dynasties. The people whom they encountered in these lands were mostly of Southern Bantu stock, with some 'Ngangela' people in Ndulu, Viye, and Ngalangi. The upper strata of these local populations seem to have moved on with their cattle to join related stocks in the border regions, while the masses seem to have stayed behind to form the nucleus of the Ovimbundu. Especially does this appear to have been the case with the original Southern Bantu stock, for many who were cattle-owners seem to have fled to the drier and more suitable lands in the south and west, while those who stayed must have lost to the invaders such cattle as they had. Only in the south-west (especially Kalukembe) was the Southern Bantu influence of sufficient strength to preserve any semblance of the cattle-culture complex, together with a recognition of kinship from their southern neighbours. [197] Everywhere, it seems, the Southern Bantu nucleus was of sufficient strength to exert a dominant linguistic influence. It is certainly noteworthy that over the whole region a single language has developed with only small dialectic differences[2]—and that without benefit of political union. Commercial intercourse has probably largely supplied the place of the latter.

Historical Development

175 *Dominant Tendency.* The origins of the principal groups of the Ovimbundu have been traced in outline from both native and European sources. It now remains to sketch the main lines of

[1] But Viye and Ngalangi traditions *in re* the origin of their ruling families must be borne in mind—traditions also supported by other evidence.

[2] Retention of peculiarities of the parent stock by Kalukembe has been noted. There are certain noticeable differences as between 'up-country' and 'down-country'—roughly divided by the Keve and Kunene Rivers. Each of the outlying regions has its own peculiarities due to local foreign influences. In Kasongi, in Ngalangi, and in Viye these are quite noticeable but can hardly be called separate dialects. Regions of older European occupation—Kakonda and Viye—have taken more from the Portuguese. In consideration of these facts and the further fact that the Viye racial stock had a larger 'Ngangela' element than had other regions, the recent linguistic influence of Viye has been out of all proportion to reality and may be explained by the relatively larger number of missions and missionaries working in that region.

The two largest rivers flowing from the Highland are the Kwanza and the Kunene, both of which flow into the Atlantic Ocean. Between them are the Keve, the Balombo and the Katumbela. The Kubango rises near the source of the Kunene and flows southwards towards the Kalahari Desert. 133

SOILS AND VEGETATION

The foundation of the plateau is a vast slab of primeval crystalline rock, which frequently outcrops in the form of isolated rocks or of massive peaks. Some of these outcrops remain bare, while others are hidden by laterite and soil formed by rock decomposition. Sediments overlying the rocks include unfossiliferous sandstones and conglomerates, considered to be of Palaeozoic age. Much of the soil is poor, in many areas impoverished by use and by erosion; there are however a few alluvial deposits, and on the whole the soil is of better quality than in the adjoining regions to the east, north and south. 134 133

Differences in vegetation between the Highland and the lower zone towards the coast are striking. Characteristic feature of the coastal area is the baobab *(Adansonia digitata)* and in the better-watered areas tropical forests occur. The Highland proper was until recently well-covered with a variety of trees; today, however, except in isolated areas in Bailundu and other regions, grasslands have taken the place of forest and woodland. Native methods of agriculture and annual fires have caused much deforestation, and this has been accentuated by the demands of European settlement and of the Railway, which up to the present time uses principally wood for fuel. 137

CLIMATE

The Highland is well within the Tropical Zone, but altitude and the effect of the south-western Antarctic current combine to produce a moderate climate. The annual variation of temperature is relatively slight; a day's maximum is seldom above 90°F, and may be as low as 60°, but the usual maximum is around 80°. The minimum of 32° or even 30° is sometimes reached in the winter (about May 20th - July 20th), but more usually the minimum is 40° to 50° in the winter, and 50° to 55° for the rest of the year. There is considerably daily variation, especially in the winter, when differences of 42° are often registered. 132

Mean annual rainfall varies from 40 to 60 inches, according to region. In the Highland the rains begin with a few showers during September, increase during October and November, have a break of two to four weeks in December, January or February, and continue until the end of April. The heaviest falls are usually in November and December, occasionally in March.

TRADITIONS OF ORIGIN AND HISTORY(1)

The Ovimbundu people represent a fusion of diverse stocks, chiefly of the Southern Bantu and of the Congo or Central Bantu peoples. The ruling 174 167

(1) This section is a summary of the detailed account given by Childs 1949, pp.164-231.

174 167 families, probably for the most part of Lunda origin, entered the Benguella Highlands during the seventeenth century and began to found their respective kingdoms. The tribes whom they encountered appear to have belonged to the cattle-keeping Ndombe-Nganda or to the Ngangela group.(1) Childs suggests that the upper strata of these local populations must have moved on southwards with their cattle to join related stocks in the border regions, while the masses stayed behind to form the nucleus of the Ovimbundu. The cultural influence of these early inhabitants on the Ovimbundu seems to have been slight, except in the south-west, particularly in Kalukembe, where a semblance of the cattle-culture complex remains, together with a recognition of kinship ties with southern neighbours (see below). The linguistic [197] influence of the Southern Bantu (Ndombe-Nganda) group in the south and west has however been considerable. It is noteworthy that over the whole Ovimbundu region a single language has developed with only small dialectal differences, and that although commercial contact has assisted this development, it has not been fostered by political union between the various segments of the Ovimbundu.

TRADITIONS

173 166 Each of the principal groups listed above (page 2) has separate legends of origin. Usually these traditions refer to the birthplace and adventures of the ancestors of the chiefly families, and only mention the indigenous inhabitants. Childs has made a careful and lucid summary of the traditions of the various groups;(2) these are therefore only very briefly outlined below.

Ndulu. There is evidence that Ndulu may be one of the oldest Ovimbundu kingdoms. The progenitor of the ruling dynasty is said to have come from the region near the confluence of the Kwanza and Lumdo rivers, and to have conquered and expelled the Luimbe, who live today to the east of Ndulu. This migration may have been a result of the prolonged wars between the Portuguese and the Kingdom of Angola,(3) which ended in 1671.

Bailundu. The Bailundu dynasty is said to have its origin in Cipala, a region which remained subject to Bailundu until the end of the nineteenth century, and from which, according to tradition, the king's principal wife comes. Childs estimates the date of the foundation of the dynasty at not earlier than about 1700. The Sambu ruling family is said to descend either from a woman of Bailundu stock or from common stock with the Bailundu.

Viye. Versions of the Viye legend are recorded by Tucker,(4) Serpa Pinto,(5) Silva Porto,(6) and Magyar,(7) and these do not all agree. According to the most widely-known version today, Viye, an elephant-hunter of the Humbi people, tracking game down the Kwanza valley, met and married a princess of the Songo people; their son, Ulundu, founded the Viye chiefdom. From documentary evidence Childs estimates that this must have been in about 1750. This version also suggests that the original inhabitants were of the Ngangela group of tribes.

(1) See above, p.3.
(2) Op.cit., pp.170-81.
(3) To the north of the present Ovimbundu country.
(4) 1927, pp.34f.
(5) 1881, vol.I, pp.156f.
(6) 1942, pp.165-71.
(7) 1859, pp.266f.

7

Magyar's account of the Viye legend is of interest since it suggests a direct link between the movements of the Ovimbundu ancestors and contemporary migrations of the Lunda in the Congo basin and western Angola.[1] Magyar relates that the forefathers of the Viye came from the land of the Moropu (or Lunda[2]) under the two chiefs Kinguri and Schakambindi, conquered the Songo, and settled on the Luanda river, engaging in agriculture between raids. The tribe subsequently sub-divided, one group going southwards to the Kukema river, where Ngangela were living, to found the chiefdom of Viye. 173 166

Ngalangi tradition is the only one which attempts a creation myth. Feti, the first chief of Ngalangi, is said to have "come down from above"; having no wives, he went to a lagoon of the Kunene river and caught them as they came out of the reeds. Sons of Feti drove out the Ngangela from what is now Ngalangi country, and founded their principal village.[3] Childs estimates that this must have taken place in about 1750. The village was later attacked unsuccessfully by Ngangela, and this is one of the very few traditions which mention resistance met by the invaders.

Wambu. The first chief, Wambu Kalunga, is said to have come from Sela country, north-west of Bailundu. The Nganda, who now live south-west of Umbundu country and are of Southern Bantu stock, were previously living in Wambu country. The founder of the *Ciyaka* royal family is said to have been a relative of Wambu Kalunga, and to have driven out the Ndombe (also of Southern Bantu stock) from Ciyaka country, probably during the first half of the seventeenth century. Wambu Kalunga is said to have been also the progenitor of the dynasties of *Cingolo, Citata* or *Cikuma, Kalukembe, Elende* and *Eketete.*[4]

Kakonda, the founder of the Kakonda kingdom, was of northern stock, but born in Ngalangi, whence he was sold as a slave to Benguella. He escaped with his wife, Cilombo, and set up the present kingdom in about 1760.

Cengi, Songa, Nambo and *Kasongi* on the northern flank of Bailundu have only recently become Umbundu-speaking. *Kasongi*, one of the largest Bailundu tributaries, has however had a line of Umbundu-speaking chiefs for more than 100 years. *Civula* was listed by Magyar as tributary to Ciyaka. *Kalukembe* is of interest in that it is more clearly linked than other sections of the Ovimbundu with the Nganda-Ambo group. Factors which point to this closer link include: the similarities in language between the two groups; the inheritance of the Kalukembe kingship in the maternal line, as among the Nganda-Ambo group, and not in the paternal line, as among other Ovimbundu;[5] and the fact that the Nganda-Ambo, who have an exogamous clan organisation, may marry in any of the related Nganda-Ambo groups, and for this purpose include Kalukembe but not other Ovimbundu.[6] 174 [643] [582]

(1) McCulloch 1951, pp.9ff., 32ff., 57ff.
(2) Dias de Carvalho 1890, p.66.
(3) According to the same legend, where the Ngalanga rested their loads of food and household goods, sticks took root and became the sycamore figs which to this day encircle the capital village. This circle of trees is a characteristic of the older Ngangela villages.
(4) Childs op.cit., pp.178, 225.
(5) Although descent among Ovimbundu commoners is in the maternal line.
(6) Childs, op.cit., p.179.

The coastal strip

131 was at times traversed by the Ovimbundu who know of the sea and
484 call it *kalunga*. Bihéan caravans crossed to the coast with slaves, as history shows, but the nature of the coastal strip marks it as a western barrier limiting the expansion of the Ovimbundu in that direction. The coast line itself is of the greatest moment in the consideration of historical factors. From Loanda, Benguela, and
[177] Mossamedes on the coast, the Portuguese penetrated the interior, so making contacts with the Ovimbundu to the encouragement of caravan trade. The importance of this European contact will be seen in subsequent chapters.

The south and southwest parts of Angola are of particular importance in studying the contacts of the Ovimbundu, but to give here the details of the wealthy cattle-keeping culture of these regions, which were accessible through peaceful proximity, trade, and occasional raiding, would be an anticipation of chapter X, "Culture Contacts."
[723] One topographical point is of primary importance; namely, the ease with which the Ovimbundu could descend from their strongholds to the low-lying land of the west and south, whereas the reverse journey is much more difficult for a people unaccustomed to manoeuvring and finding their way among hills.

101 Having described the northern, central, western, and southern areas, there remains only the eastern section to consider; this presents several features of peculiar geographical and ethnological interest.
[133] The eastern section of Angola is either slightly undulating or flat, the general characteristic is dryness, and vegetation is somewhat
[136] sparse though sufficient to shelter many kinds of antelope.

The major population is the Vachokue, a warlike, hunting people, who follow agricultural pursuits but slightly, and do not keep cattle. Examination of the literature describing early exploration indicates
[726] the truculent nature of these eastern people with whom caravans of Ovimbundu were in frequent conflict. Umbundu caravans crossed this country when making their way to Rhodesia, culture contacts with which are discussed in chapter X.

The results of contact of Ovimbundu and Vachokue tribes, so far as physical miscegenation is concerned, are mentioned in chapter "Physical Appearance"; while the social effects of slavery resulting from hostilities are described in chapter VI, "Social Life."

174 Rhodesia is a cattle-raising country, but the hostility of the
231 Vachokue, the great distance from central Angola to Rhodesia, and the general dryness of the country to be crossed, discourage the idea that the Ovimbundu obtained their cattle from Rhodesia. If it is

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argued that the cattle might have been brought along the course of the Zambezi and Kwando there is the objection that there are here several tsetse fly belts. On the contrary, cattle-producing country in the southwest and south of Angola is far more accessible than the Rhodesian plateau.

In the south there is the cultural habit of digging wells, especially among the Vakuanyama; but the Vachokue have not developed this trait. The substrata underlying the sand of southern Angola hold water which serves through the dry season, a fact which is advantageously employed by the cattle-keepers. The Vachokue lack this well-digging habit, and, even if subsurface water were present, the transient Ovimbundu would have lacked opportunity to dig for it when passing through hostile country.

The acquisition off cattle by the Ovimbundu is of great importance, because it is comcerned with the grafting of a series of pastoral traits on a culture im no way originally associated with pastoral pursuits. The truth of this will later be made clear by examination of historical and ethnological evidence.

Geographical considerations give a picture of the Ovimbundu situated in naturally fortified country from which they had access to four surrounding areas, whose cultural characters agree well with the determinism of topography and climate. The natural advantages of the central highlands,, and the results of contact with each of the adjacent areas, are points which will be developed in appropriate sections throughout the ensuing chapters.

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The kernel of the migratory problem of the Ovimbundu is reached 101
when Torday traces out the history of the Kimbundu, for the Kimbundu are present-day neighbors of the Ovimbundu, to whom they are closely allied in language and culture (*ovi* is a Bantu plural prefix, which was perhaps used to express the inclusion of Kimbundu and Babunda under the general name Ovimbundu).

Torday's sifting of the historical evidence results in the conclusion 174
that the Kimbundu came from the northeast, fighting their way to 167
the Luando. These Kimbundu divided, with civil war as a conse- 101
quence. One section crossed the river Kwanza, south of which they specialized in agriculture after becoming sedentary. Their sub-chief they called the *Kalunga*, which is the present-day word used by the Ovimbundu in greeting their chiefs. Traditions of the Ovimbundu point to the northeast as a center from which they spread at least ten generations ago. The rise of the powerful kingdom of Lunda dates from the seventeenth century, and although the details of this concentration of power in northeast Angola are unknown the general effects are understood. There was a great displacement of tribes in a southerly and southwesterly direction. In connection with the suggestion that the Ovimbundu came from the northeast of Angola, there is the necessity for recording the absence of even a fragment of historical evidence or tribal tradition indicating that the Ovimbundu came from the south or the east of Angola.

Cultural affinities of the Ovimbundu with tribes of the southwest 174
Congo in particular, and with western Bantu culture in general, 171
strongly support the foregoing deductions from historical sources (chapter X).

There is a probability that tribal disturbances resulting from the rise of the Lunda Empire led to a spread of the Vachokue over eastern Angola. Some of the effects of this contact have already been mentioned in chapter II, where contacts of the Ovimbundu and the Vachokue were discussed. The journey brought me into contact with the Vachokue at Cangamba, Katoko, and Ngalangi, of which Cangamba is the most easterly.

Witnessing of initiation ceremonies combined with observation of physique, language, and artifacts, leads me to agree with Torday that Cangamba is probably the ancient center of Vachokue culture. As one proceeds from Cangamba westward this type of culture becomes thinner as the borders of the country occupied by the Ovimbundu are approached. On the border line between the cultures of the Vachokue and the Ovimbundu, notably at Ngongo near Ngalangi,

174 there is tribal and cultural miscegenation. Both Umbundu and
171 Vachokue languages are spoken; boys of Ngalangi were seen to wear
[881] initiation costumes similar to those worn at Cangamba by the Vachokue, but on proceeding farther westward into territory exclusively occupied by the Ovimbundu, such initiation ceremonies are either absent or attenuated in ritual.

144 Elende, one center of research among the Ovimbundu, repre-
101 sents the purest Umbundu speech and culture observable at the present day. But in chapter IV some physical resemblance of the Ovimbundu to the Vachokue is noted. Warfare commonly resulted in the taking of slaves, a fact which might account for an apparent infusion of Vachokue blood in some of the Ovimbundu.

174 The historical data suggest a northern or northeastern starting
167 point of Umbundu migrations. Therefore an inquiry into the ethnology of these areas will be useful in showing the kind of culture with which the Ovimbundu were in contact before their settlement in the Benguela Highlands. If historical sources disclose the nature of northern Angolan culture from the year A.D. 1500 onward, such evidence can then be considered in relation to cultural traits of the Ovimbundu at the present day.

The establishment of strong cultural resemblances between extant Umbundu culture and older cultural patterns of northern Angola, would tend to strengthen the evidence of history respecting the northern origin of the Ovimbundu.

131 The regions dealt with in the following summary of ethnological
174 facts are the Cabinda Enclave to the north of the Congo estuary, the region of San Salvador, the hinterlands of Loanda and Benguela, and the area of northern Angola between Lat. 7° and 9° S. and Long. 13° to 22° E. This covers the whole area with which the Ovimbundu are likely to have been in contact before entering their present home.

175 My survey begins with the observations of Andrew Battell in
101 1596. His account deals mainly with the northwestern part of Angola, a country bordering on and actually including territory now occupied by the Ovimbundu, who in all probability came in contact with the Jaggas, whose habits of life are described by Battell.

Torday and Joyce identify the Jaggas with the present-day Bayaka, whose cultural resemblances to the Ovimbundu are examined later. In my opinion, the Jaggas correspond well with the Bihéan section of the Ovimbundu, an itinerant and exceedingly warlike people.

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175 171 [412] O. Dapper (Description de l'Afrique, 1732, p. 369) shows a scene in which an ax, such as I obtained from the Vasele country, is being used for beheading a slave.

Cavazzi (Istorica descrizione, etc., Bologna, 1687) describes the three kingdoms of Congo, Matamba, and northern Angola. The [325] poison ordeal, the scapegoat, the blacksmith's bellows (pp. 101, 170) [534] are all traits known to the Ovimbundu. The musical instrument made from a large gourd, which has a ridged board attached for rubbing with a stick, is the type I collected. Cavazzi pictures the double iron gong and the long drum held between the knees. He [782] also shows a rain-maker (p. 214) and the sacrifice of two hundred victims at the accession of a king (p. 210).

174 243 Consideration of the history of maize in Africa is of importance in connection with these early writings, as this grain is the staple agricultural product of the Ovimbundu. I am indebted to Dr. [113] Berthold Laufer for access to his unpublished research on this subject. From the following facts one may assume that, in all probability, the maize culture of the Ovimbundu was derived from the Congo region before their migration into the Benguela Highlands.

175 243 Father Jerome Merolla remarks that maize was growing in the neighborhood of San Salvador (1683–92). The native names were *mampunni* and *massambuta;* from this corn an alcoholic beverage was prepared. According to Cavazzi (Ehrmann, Geschichte der merkwürdigsten Reisen, XIII, 1794) maize was not intensively cultivated by the Negroes of lower Guinea, though it thrives well and may be harvested twice or thrice a year. The natives said that the grain [177] was brought by the Portuguese, but they did not esteem it highly, and were accustomed to use it as food for pigs.

Bosman (p. 312) records that prior to the arrival of the Portuguese, Negroes were entirely ignorant of *milho* ("maize"). The account of Duarte Lopez preserved by Filippo Pigafetta states that the Negroes consider maize the vilest of all grains, so that it is given to swine. This contempt and lack of knowledge of the food value, combined with ignorance of methods of preparation, suggest a recent introduction (Pigafetta, translation by M. Hutchinson, 1881, p. 40). Dapper (Description de l'Afrique, 1732, p. 345) also mentions the cultivation of maize. Battell lived as prisoner in northern Angola about the year 1600, consequently his records of the use of the great Guinea wheat (maize), which the natives call *mas-importo*, give early evidence for the use of this grain (Hakluyt Soc., 1901, pp. 9, 11, 67).

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The foregoing facts, when compared with field work among the Ovimbundu, indicate that the old culture of the Congo and northern Angola bears a strong resemblance to Umbundu culture at the present day. A more detailed analysis of this resemblance is made in chapter X. 174

The following notes dealing with exploration in Angola (1800–1930) are adduced for critical comparison with my own observations among the Ovimbundu. 175 171

The work of Sir R. F. Burton describing the exploration of Lacerda and other Portuguese pioneers, is more useful for geographical than for ethnological information. Lacerda's journey to Czambe, south of Lake Moero, was performed in 1798. A mention of veneration for the dead and consultation of the deceased on all occasions of war or of good fortune, is made (p. 127). These are important points in the present tribal life of the Ovimbundu. [114] [769]

Bowditch (1824) writes from information given to him by Almeida and Saldanha. There are valuable references to the Vacilenge, a people adjacent to the Ovimbundu, who refused to kill their cattle, "rather than do which they will endure famine to extremity." This note was made about Long. 15° E. and Lat. 15° S. (p. 34). The cattle were milked, and cattle-raiding by the Ovimbundu was common at this time. Many present-day Ovimbundu do not milk their cattle, but the Vacilenge still follow their milking custom observed before 1824. 175 101 234

Livingstone's journey through northeast and northern Angola in 1853 contains references to the Vachokue who seemed bent on plunder (I, p. 370). Livingstone noted cotton spinning, which I recorded as an occupation of males of the Ovimbundu at Elende. Livingstone, like other early travelers, encountered caravans of Bihéans (Ovimbundu) bearing elephants' tusks and beeswax, commodities, which, along with slaves, formed the chief merchandise of these caravans from the Benguela Highlands (p. 466). Livingstone notes and sketches (Plate XIII, Fig. 10) the double-handled hoe (p. 442) which is still used. 175 171 [439] [412]

J. J. Monteiro (I, p. 61) saw the poison ordeal administered. The poison itself was prepared from the thick hard bark of a large tree (*Erythrophlaeum guineense*). The place of observation was Mongue Grande, just south of the Congo estuary, and again Monteiro was present when the poison cup was given to two women at Ambrizette. Of this ordeal there is more to be said when discussing the culture contacts of the Ovimbundu, because the ordeal is a basic factor of [695] [824]

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114 Umbundu language. The illustrations in photogravure are excellent,
126 but the small-scale map is difficult to follow.

114 As might be expected in a work covering an enormous tract of
241 country, the information is of a very general kind; I have nowhere
224 been able to check in any detail on my own observations. F. and W. Jaspert recognize that Umbundu culture is primarily based on agriculture, maize being the most important crop, but they do not admit the importance of hunting (p. 16).

I saw many successful parties of Unbundu hunters, tested their precision with the bow and arrow, and was able to record the ritual connected with the initiation of a professional hunter. There is also a ceremony before the hunter sets out. It would be more accurate to say that, although Umbundu culture is based primarily on agriculture, hunting still retains some of its earlier importance.

114 The diagrams of houses in different parts of Angola are a useful feature of the work. I made many photographs but did not record details of planning.

114 The masks I obtained are exactly like those pictured, but my
881 observations were carried out a long way to the southeast of the point where the Jasperts touched the Vachokue culture. I do not understand from their description whether the writers saw an initiation ceremony. They state that boys are circumcised and girls are excised when very young, even at the age of five or six years. I observed initiation camps and dances at three centers, Ngalangi, Katoko, and Cangamba; the last named is the main center of Vachokue culture. The male novices varied in age from twelve to sixteen years hence they were older than the novices mentioned by the Jasperts. I was informed that there were no excision operations for girls, though at Ngalangi, Vanyemba girls were secluded in the bush during initiation rites lasting for a month.

Bibliographical references to the research of H. Baumann will be found useful for comparative study. His detailed record of initiation among the Vachokue is valuable as a check on my observation, as we worked independently in areas separated by several hundred miles.

Consultation of historical sources gives the following answers to questions which were asked as an introduction to this chapter.

174 On the grounds of tribal tradition, historical evidence, and cultural affinities, the original home of the Ovimbundu was likely to have been in the southwest Congo. The Ovimbundu undoubtedly possess important cultural traits that have been characteristic of the southern Congo region from the earliest time for which a record exists.

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In northern Angola the Ovimbundu could not have had other than a warlike existence, which trained them in military tactics and the building up of an aggressive confederacy. In this they were aided by contact with the Portuguese, who supplied guns and powder in exchange for slaves and ivory from the interior. This accumulated wealth further stimulated the building up of Umbundu tribal life. 174 178

Introduction of maize by the Portuguese gave the Ovimbundu a knowledge of this grain, which later became their staple wealth and food supply. 177

The cultural pattern of the northern Congo was the same in the year 1600 as it is today, and consideration of the ethnology of the Congo region reveals numerous similarities with Umbundu culture of the present time. 174

Writings of explorers in Angola from A.D. 1800 to the present day bring out many points which are in agreement with my field observations. There are no discrepancies which would make me question the validity of information given by my informants.

In early records, Battell's observation of cattle in the hinterland of Benguela (1600), is important in showing that at such an early date the Ovimbundu had access to cattle when raiding from their home in the Benguela Highlands. [231]

From these fundamentals of geography and history the inquiry turns to a detailed account of my observations among the Ovimbundu and surrounding tribes.

The cow's tail is used
237 as a sheath for covering the iron shafts of assagais, and it is sometimes made into a switch which the rain-maker uses during his performances.

233 Bulls are castrated when two years old. The wound is rubbed
[232] with ashes, salt, soot, and palm oil. Bullocks are used for riding, also
[492] for pull-carts introduced by the Boers. The herd obtains most of its food by grazing. In the dry season grass withers, with the result that the animals become thin and stall-feeding is necessary. In former days cattle-raiding was a practice of the Ovimbundu, who
233 robbed the Vacilenge. It is certain that the Ovimbundu did not own
174 cattle when they entered Angola. If the general tradition is correct the Ovimbundu came into Angola from a northeasterly direction, from the borders of the Belgian Congo as it is called today; this is not a cattle-raising region.

The Ovimbundu of Elende have a joke against the people of Bailundu, because the latter on first seeing a cow offered the animal some food on a wooden platter. This story suggests that the Bailundu people, who are of the Ovimbundu confederacy, did not know the animal and its habits as early as did the Ovimbundu themselves.

233 Although the Ovimbundu do not usually kill their cattle they may do so in the months of June and July, because at this time pasture is withered and food is scarce. Animals which are diseased, aged, or injured, are killed and eaten.

231 The native pig is distinguishable from European breeds by its long thin snout and slender development. This breed is said by the Director of Animal Husbandry, Humpata, to be the Keltic breed (Plate LV). There is, he says, no evidence to prove that the
[176] Ovimbundu have at any time domesticated pigs from the wild hogs which are to be found in Angola. There is no family which does not own a pig, and on the whole the pig fares much better than the sheep or the goat. The pig receives water and a daily ration of food, which is usually sweet potatoes and their leaves, together with some
232 corn. Male pigs are castrated at any time between the ages of six
[463] months and one year by an operator who is a paid specialist. The fee for castrating a bull is four yards of cloth, but a small gift is considered sufficient reward for performing the operation on a pig.
[282] If a pig is thin, the leather is said to be of good quality and therefore
252 suitable for making sheaths for knives. Usually the flesh of the pig is eaten shortly after the animal has been killed, but the meat of the bullock, on the contrary, is sometimes dried over a fire and preserved. But this is not a general practice as the animals are too valuable to be slaughtered.

X. CULTURE CONTACTS

174 The foregoing chapters have presented the main outlines of the tribal life of the Ovimbundu, with a brief reference to some factors in the cultures of Angolan tribes with whom the Ovimbundu are in close contact. But hitherto no attempt has been made to analyze the cultural contacts of the Ovimbundu outside Angola.

The data recorded indicate that the tribal life of the Ovimbundu is not an independent growth in the Benguela Highlands. We have, therefore, a problem involving a detailed study of surrounding cultures. The most important of these are located in the Congo basin, Rhodesia, and South West Africa, and for this reason the present chapter is divided into three sections, each of which deals with one of these areas which are all contiguous to Angola.

[121] In analyzing these surrounding cultures for comparison with the tribal life of the Ovimbundu, the social patterns as a whole are considered, and no attempt is made to construct a theory of derivations based on what might be a few fortuitous resemblances arising through convergence. Our study is aided by a knowledge of historical contacts and geographical contiguity of the areas compared. Therefore the method is not open to the objections that have been made justly against an assumption of cultural relationships between two widely separated regions, in which only a few artifacts or institutions have an alleged resemblance.

Chapters X and XI are concerned with discussing the probable cultural relationships of the Ovimbundu, and a final chapter, "Cultural Processes," indicates the way in which historical events and geographical factors have contributed to the selection and welding of traits whose aggregate now constitutes the tribal life of the Ovimbundu.

Congo Basin

An examination of the cultural traits of the Congo basin is of particular importance, because of the known historical connection of the Ovimbundu with Congo tribes, before the former entered the Benguela Highlands. Such a survey is conveniently made by examining the culture of the Congo basin from the estuary along the course of the main river, then southward along the Kasai and its tributaries into the northeast of Angola.

Despite minor differences the Congo area may be regarded as a region of considerable uniformity with regard to environment and

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cultural factors. The transitions from the Congo basin to the Benguela Highlands are of a gradual kind with respect to climatic conditions, physical features, and culture. Therefore, there are no compelling conditions which caused the Ovimbundu suddenly to abandon traits already acquired before their southern migration. 174

Nevertheless, several traits of Congo culture which must have been known to the Ovimbundu have disappeared from their tribal life, while other factors have been emphasized in importance because of a change in locality. The disappearance of traits and the welding of others is discussed in chapter XII. The present section is concerned with summarizing the points of resemblance and difference between the Congo culture and that of the Ovimbundu.

The books of J. J. Monteiro mention several traits which are a link between cultures of the Congo and the Ovimbundu culture of the Benguela Highlands. The Mushicongos chip all their teeth to fine points (vol. I, p. 262), a practice which resembles that of the Umbundu-speaking Vasele. Monteiro describes the musical bow, the friction drum, and the rubbing of a grooved piece of wood with a stick (vol. I, pp. 139–141). All these musical devices are used today by the Ovimbundu far to the south of the areas described by this writer. When describing the Esele country which forms a cultural pocket of the Ovimbundu people, I have previously referred to Monteiro's mention of the extinguishing of old fires and the ceremonial creation of new ones at the death of a king (vol. II, p. 167); also the functioning of the poison ordeal with use of the bark of *Erythrophlaeum guineense* (vol. I, p. 61). The former of these customs is carefully observed by the Ovimbundu at the present time, while the latter is practised furtively. 171

A part of Angola that is frequently omitted is the Cabinda Enclave to the north of the Congo estuary. Overbergh describes this territory in "Les Mayombe"; the Mayombe are a forest people living near Boma. They use red *tukula* wood for bodily ornament. There are special names for the first- and second-born of twins (p. 217). Circumcision is practised (p. 233). The poison ordeal is used with the drug Kasa. There is a classificatory system of relationships (p. 259), but without sufficient detail for comparison with that of the Ovimbundu. The most artistic figurines, which are carved in wood or ivory, are sometimes filled with a mixture of clay and blood as "medicine" (p. 219). The Mayombe believe in the existence of a supreme being named Ngambi but they have no cult for him; there is, however, a very active belief in a world

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171 region. Plate XVI, fig. 284, shows long wooden flutes like those of Umbundu pattern at Bailundu. Plate XIX, figs. 124 and 313, indicates that the musical bow with its gourd resonator is of the form used by the Ovimbundu.

The ethnographical catalogue of the Rijks Museum of Leiden shows many objects of the southwest Congo which are identical with those used by the Ovimbundu. Plate 193 pictures the sanza and the marimba which are common to both regions. Plates 224, fig. 1, and 225, fig. 1, show tobacco-pipes and a mancala board of Ngalangi pattern. The mancala board from the Sankuru region has twenty-eight holes arranged seven by four. Plates 75, fig. 10, and 236, fig. 4, indicate that curved knives used by the Bangala are like those used by the Vasele of northeast Angola. Plate 227, fig. 2, shows that head-dresses for initiates closely resemble those worn by Vachokue boys at Cangamba, eastern Angola.

174 This examination of the traits of Congo culture calls attention to numerous resemblances between the cultural pattern of the Congo region and that of the Ovimbundu of the present day. I think there is reason to accept the following factors of Umbundu life as a part of the Congo culture before the separation of the Umbundu-speaking peoples. The historical and geographical facts when considered in relation to the number of cultural identities fully support the thesis that the Ovimbundu are of the central African matrix of cultures.

On the material side resemblances are close, as the following summary will show. The Ovimbundu cultivate maize from which beer is made; they have manioc, peanuts, yams, sweet potatoes, and beans. Methods of agriculture and preparation of foods are similar. The animals common to both regions are the sheep, goat, chicken, and dog. The difference is the rearing of cattle by the Ovimbundu, who have also concentrated on the cultivation of maize to an extent not possible in the more densely wooded areas of the Congo basin. The use of dogs' flesh as food is common in both areas.

The musical instruments of the Ovimbundu are in keeping with Congo patterns in every way. Indeed, there exist few and only minor differences. Forms common to both areas are the *ocisanji*, a flat board with two rows of metal keys; dumb-bell basket rattles and gourd rattles; the friction drum; the marimba; wooden flutes; the flat drum *ocisgufu*; the double iron gong; and the long tubular drum which is held between the performer's legs. Resemblances

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of a definite kind are found in the game with rolling tubers; the use of red *tukula* wood for decorating the body; the insertion of burned rubber into scarifications; the gourd water-pipe for smoking tobacco and hemp; the dugout canoe; conical fishing baskets; and the use of narcotic poisons for fish. The wood-carving of the Ovimbundu is related not only in general style but in detail to that of the southwest Congo. 174

Close resemblances in points of social organization and religious belief exist, but some of these identities are common not merely to tribes of the Congo basin and the Benguela Highlands; they form traits of a wider cultural basis, as will be shown.

These resemblances have great weight in establishing relationship between a parent culture and the offshoot, because we are dealing with a large number of allied factors that have been welded into cultural patterns; the comparison does not depend on a few isolated resemblances of form. A point of identity in spiritual belief is the recognition of a supreme being, Suku, Nzambi, or Kalunga, a creator who is too far away to be concerned with the affairs of men. To him no sacrifice or appeal is made, since all attention is reserved for the ancestral spirits whose cult is connected with the use of wooden figurines, which are of similar pattern in the Congo basin and the Benguela Highlands.

The soul is said to reside in the heart, and the words used for soul are almost the same. There are houses for sacred objects once the property of men of importance. Distinction is usually made between the *nganga*, a practitioner of witchcraft of an antisocial kind, and the legitimate medicine-man. Both cultures have the rain-maker. *Ekandu* is a word describing any action contrary to the moral standards.

As a social factor there is the men's house where only males congregate for the evening meal brought by their women, and here the communal pipe is passed round. Government is the same, by kings of great power who delegate local affairs to village chiefs. The social structure of the Ovimbundu rested formerly on a system of alliances, warfare, and slavery similar to that of the Congo. A classificatory system of relationships and descent of property, not to a wife and children but to the maternal uncle or to children of the deceased man's sister, is similar for tribes of the Congo and the Ovimbundu.

The prenuptial relationship of boys and girls, freedom of choice in marriage, and the giving of marriage tokens are of the same

174 pattern. In principle, the puberty rites for boys and girls of eastern Angola are the same as those of the Congo region, and masks of eastern Angola resemble those used by the Bapindi of the southwest Congo. Cannibalism was a factor common to the Congo basin and the territory occupied by the Ovimbundu, who have practised ceremonial cannibalism within the memory of persons still alive.

The foregoing summary, supported by preceding details, makes clear that a substantial part of Umbundu culture is definitely like that of the Congo basin. There can be no objection to the evidence as a possibly fortuitous series of vague resemblances, since the entire backgrounds are of the same pattern. The Ovimbundu have a tribal life which is demonstrably a part of the matrix from which, on historical grounds, it is thought to have been derived. The loss of elements, the stressing of others, and the welding of traits from different sources, are matters for discussion in a final chapter dealing with the processes of cultural growth.

RHODESIA

439 177 A constant factor in the economic and cultural development of the Ovimbundu has been the caravan trade from Bihé and Bailundu northeastward across Africa to the Great Lakes, and southward across Moxico into the Zambezi valley and Rhodesia. Every traveler from Battell (1600) onward mentions these caravans which returned to the Benguela Highlands with slaves and ivory. The traditions of journeys still live. Umbundu words are used to describe the Great Lakes, and I have mentioned a wooden figure used for consultation by the medicine-man at a division of routes. There are even today a few large caravans.

The first regular slave traders into northern Rhodesia were the Mbundus from Angola. The Lambas say they were peaceful traders who brought calico, guns, and beads to trade for ivory and slaves. The Mbundu traders were often treated treacherously by both the Lambas and the Lenjes. In some cases they were robbed by the Lamba chiefs. It is said that the Lenjes used to bring their own children to the Mbundu traders in order to buy calico and powder. In the evening the Lenjes used the newly acquired guns to attack the Mbundu traders so that they might recover the children who had been traded (C. M. Doke, p. 79).

The account of F. S. Arnot is a valuable record of a journey which brought him into touch with these traders' caravans, whose route he followed into Garenganze, a country to the southwest of

(vol. II, p. 265), which is an instrument of the Ovimbundu and /7/
several tribes of the southwest Congo. The marimba, made from eight slats of wood with gourds underneath, is well known in the north and east of Angola.

There is real similarity both in form and function between the /174
culture of Rhodesia and that of the Ovimbundu. This assertion does not rest on consideration of a few factors of a general kind. In addition to the weight of evidence afforded by the long list of similar factors detailed in this section, one must bear in mind the geographical proximity and the known historical connection of the areas under discussion. The following points are of primary importance in accounting for the similarity of culture patterns in Rhodesia and the highlands of Angola occupied by the Ovimbundu.

(1) Central Angola and Rhodesia have so many traits in common with each other and with the southwest Congo culture that together the three form a cultural harmony.

(2) Central Angola and Rhodesia have both derived factors from the cattle culture of east Africa, though by different routes.

(3) Rhodesia and central Angola have had prolonged direct contacts through caravan trade carried on by the Ovimbundu.

(4) In addition to diffusion there has been a convergence of cultures in Rhodesia and central Angola because of similarity of geographical conditions. Both are high plateau regions having a degree of heat and a rainfall suitable for the growth of maize and the rearing of cattle. Therefore these occupations have developed in both regions because in each locality there has been a need, favorable conditions, and a like response to physical conditions.

SOUTH WEST AFRICA

The principal tribes of this area are the Ovambo, Herero, Berg /177
Damara, Nama Hottentots, and Bushmen. The most important tribes to consider from the cultural point of view are the Ovambo and the Herero. Wandering bands of Bushmen occur in Angola, and here and there may be seen among the Ovimbundu individuals who appear to have a trace of Bushman blood; but comparison of collections and notes relating to the Ovimbundu with literature on Bushman tribes does not reveal any similarities. There has undeniably been some contact of Bushmen with the inhabitants of Angola, but Bushman influence has probably been very slight from a cultural and physical point of view (D. Bleek; S. Marquardsen, p. 109).

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Angola as the source of supply for the Ovimbundu, who both traded and made warfare with the south.

Therefore, reasonable ground exists for believing that the cultural traits that the Ovimbundu associate with the keeping of cattle have been taken over with the cattle themselves. The traits agree in principle and detail with the factors of the African cattle-keeping areas. The characteristics of this pastoral culture have been outlined by M. J. Herskovits (The Cattle Complex in East Africa, *Amer. Anth.*, XXVIII, 1926, pp. 270–272; 424–528; 630–664). I wish, however, to give prominence to the factor of sacred fire which is fundamental in the cattle-keeping culture. The importance of sacred fire in the ritual of the Ovimbundu has been demonstrated, and this trait is a most important link between the typically Negro culture of the Ovimbundu and the Hamitic pastoral culture of east Africa.

A brief summary of the salient facts of the cattle-keeping culture, such as is found in east and south Africa, will be given. This will be followed by a statement of the cultural traits associated with the keeping of cattle among the Ovimbundu in order to demonstrate similarities of custom.

In describing cattle-keeping people of the Lakes region J. Roscoe (VI) outlines a pre-pastoral condition characterized by agricultural pursuits which still survive near Ruwenzori and Elgon. Of the pastoral people the most conservative are the Banyankole of Ankole, among whom all social customs fall into line with the keeping of cattle. Milk is the principal food, and strong purgatives are taken after eating vegetable food, which is regarded as unclean. Agriculturists are a serf class who are not allowed to have milk. A woman of the pastoral class would not accept a husband from the agricultural people, because they are social inferiors. In such a community one finds a strict preservation of customs centering in cattle. Bulls are killed beside the grave of a chief, while cows are dedicated to the dead chief at whose shrine their milk is offered daily (p. 21).

Roscoe's account of the worship of the dead in Uganda (III) further explains customs that are characteristic of pastoral communities in which the connection between cattle-keeping and kingship is important. The death of the king is not announced and the fact of death is kept secret for several days until preparations for the succession have been made. "The fire is extinct" is a euphemism which refers to the death of the king. The king is buried in a hut surrounded by a fence. This hut is later visited by the new king

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233 174 who cleans and decorates the jawbone of his predecessor, then preserves it in a case of lion skin. Among the Basoga the skull of the king is cleaned and stitched in cowhide. It is then placed in a temple where a medium lives in order to converse with the ghost of the king (p. 43). The Bunyoro line the grave of a king with cowhide, and the slaughtered cows are said to serve the dead king with milk in a spirit world.

Roscoe (I, p. 101) states that the Bahima wrap the body of a king in the skin of a freshly killed cow; the deities are not often invoked, but attention is paid to ancestral ghosts (p. 109). There is a Bahima custom of making blood brotherhood by drinking blood mixed with milk (p. 117). The Banyankole (Roscoe, V, p. 32), institute a blood brotherhood by rubbing each other with blood drawn from their navels by an arrow. The body of a king is sewn in cowhide (p. 58). A cow is killed and eaten at the grave of a chief (p. 146).

171 A further examination of Roscoe's observations (IV) adds corroborative information. The Bakitara have rain-makers for each district (p. 28). There is a ritual for establishing blood brotherhood (p. 46). At the king's death all fires in the royal enclosure are extinguished; so also are the fires in each royal cow kraal. Fresh fires are made by friction in the new royal enclosure from which fire is distributed to the kraals (p. 47). The Bakitara test two litigants or accused persons by asking each to provide chickens which are made to take poison (p. 70). The death of the king is not announced for some days; he is said to be asleep. A young bull is killed to provide a shroud for the king's body (p. 121). The king's spear and walking stick are kept in the tomb (p. 126). At the death of a king of the Baganda the guardian of the king's sacred fire is strangled. A war leader rubs himself with ashes from the sacred fire in order to increase his strength and courage (Roscoe, II, pp. 103, 349).

The concept of the sacred fire has spread, not only down the east side of Africa and into Angola, but northeastward to the Lotuko-speaking peoples. Here a new fire has to be kindled at the initiation of a member of the drum-house. At puberal initiation ceremonies for boys, the rain-maker creates new fire with twirling sticks, which are never again used, though they are preserved. All fires in the village are extinguished before the new fires are made. The freshly ignited fire is distributed first to drum-houses then to the homes (C. G. and B. Z. Seligman, Sudan Notes and Records, VIII, pp. 12,

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15). Fire is kindled on the grave and tended by a relative for 171
thirty days (p. 38).

When the Masai desire rain, a fire of cordia wood is lighted. Into this a medicine-man throws charms, after which several medicine-men dance round the fire and sing (A. C. Hollis, The Masai, p. 348).

Bösch states that the Banyamwezi have a fire-making rite which is symbolic and religious, "mais avant tout il est magique." The new fire is made annually at the brewing of the first beer. New fire is made when epidemics of sickness occur, also at the inauguration of a new chief. The Ovimbundu make and distribute new fire on each of these occasions. The Banyamwezi strangle their decrepit king but do not announce the death. A report stating that the king is sick is issued (Les Banyamwezi, pp. 229–233).

The usages of the cattle-keeping Ovambo (of whom the Vakuanyama of southern Angola are a section) and the Herero, are of paramount importance in this research because of their proximity to the Ovimbundu.

H. Vedder (III, p. 156) has come to the conclusion that the 174
Herero represent the southern extremity of a racial migration from 114
the region of the Great Lakes, and this is the generally accepted view. Vedder states that the Herero came through the south of Angola, crossed the Cunene River, and entered the Kaokoveld (p. 166). From a study of native traditions, philology, and cultural elements, there is reason for supposing that the Ovambo, including the Vakuanyama, extended farther into Angola than they do today; hence contacts with the Ovimbundu were probably frequent, and possibly continuous for a period.

C. H. L. Hahn has recently made an analysis of the traits of Kuanyama culture. His introductory pages give an account of Kalunga, a supreme being whose name is coupled with the name Nangombe. There is here a philological resemblance to words used by the Ovimbundu. *Kalunga* is an Umbundu word meaning "greetings," "sea," "lord," and "death," the meaning varying with the context and accent. *Ongombe* is the Umbundu word for ox, while *Kangombe* is the name of more than one chief of historical importance. The Herero respect a supreme being whom they call Ndjambi Karunga. *Nyambi* is a well-known word in the Congo region, and the Ovimbundu have the word *Njambi*, or *Na-Njambi*, which means "Lord Njambi."

174 114 The Ovambo will not allow the tribal fire of the chief's kraal to burn out because it is the life of the people (Hahn, p. 3). This author writes in the past tense, from which one infers that the customs he describes have declined. Two old men were the keepers of the sacred fire; these guardians were chosen from the circumcised men (p. 17). The fire was never allowed to flare, but only to smolder. No one referred to this fire, nor was anyone allowed to sit near it, cook over it, or warm himself. The whole tribe received the fire from the chief, who originally gave it to the headman for distribution to commoners (p. 18). Hahn remarks that, although these customs are declining, they are still observed by the Vakuanyama, the branch of the Ovambo which is in closest contact with the Ovimbundu.

171 In the same publication (III, p. 68) Vedder says of the Berg Damara that a series of religious ideas centers in the holy fire which burns perpetually on the eastern side of a sacred tree in the middle of each village. At this fire the elders cook their meat, and here the council meeting is held. In order to obtain a seat at the holy fire a young man has to submit to initiation as a hunter on three occasions, at intervals of a year. Children may not play at the holy fire. When hunting becomes unprofitable the Berg Damara move to a new site, and a glowing piece of wood is taken from the sacred fire in order to kindle a new one. This is the practice described in connection with the formation of a new village site by the Ovimbundu. A more detailed account of sacred fire is given by Vedder (II, pp. 23–27).

L. Fourie, another contributor to "Native Tribes of Southwest Africa," shows that the Heikom Bushmen have a sacred fire kindled and owned by the headman, who is the only person who knows how to bring from this fire the properties which induce health and well-being. When making a new settlement the headman kindles the new fire under the sacred tree, and fire from the old camp may not be used. After the headman has dropped herbs into the fire and has lighted his pipe therefrom, his wife takes brands for kindling the fire in her hut. The fire is then distributed from this point among the whole group (p. 87).

The center for religious worship among the Herero is an ash heap in which a weak fire glimmers. This is blown into a blaze only on festive occasions. The fire is always situated between the chief kraal and the house of the principal wife. Round the fire lie horns of cattle which have been slaughtered as an offering (Vedder, III, p. 167). The holy fire is a gift from Mukuru, and extinction of

the fire means disaster for the tribe. If the fire should die out, only the priest as living representative of Mukuru may rekindle it. The relighting is done by means of fire-sticks, which are said to be male and female. A traveler makes sure of the blessing of his ancestors by taking a firebrand from the holy fire with him. When laying the foundation of a new house the builder must obtain a firebrand from the fire of a recognized priest-chief. 171

To corroborate the information given by Vedder, one may turn to the work of J. Irle (II, pp. 337, 342, 346). The soul, which is not corporeal, is identified with the heart as among the Ovimbundu and in the southwest Congo. The Herero use sandals which they bury with the dead. Probably the Ovimbundu have borrowed the idea of sandals from this southern culture, since there are no sandal-wearing people found on any other side of them. The Herero speak of Ndjambi, and Irle asks, "Who is Ndjambi, with whom they so frequently associated the name Karunga?" They say that Karunga is Ndjambi who sends rain, thunder, and lightning. The Herero say, "Karunga dwells in heaven. He does us only good, therefore we do not fear him and do not sacrifice to him." Holy fire, which is never allowed to go out, is made with fire-sticks in the ancestor house.

A. W. Hoernlé has commented on the use of sacred fire by the Hottentots. *Nau* is a mystic force; for example, an animal killed by lightning is *nau*. As soon as a person becomes *nau*, the fire in his hut is *nau* and must no longer be used for cooking. A fire kindled with the fire-sticks is used for the purification ceremony of a girl who menstruates for the first time. After the ceremony she may resume her milking duties. The Hottentots use the sweat bath as a means of purifying mourners. An article entitled "The Sacred Fire of the Bapedi of the Transvaal," by W. M. Eiselen, adds important data to the notes given here.

All this evidence from east and southwest Africa is in close agreement with personal observations among the Ovimbundu. The contacts of the Ovimbundu with southern Angola are established facts, hence history and geography render the hypothesis of a derivation of culture probable. The Ovimbundu regard cattle as an estimate of weath and social standing. Usually the animals are not killed or milked, but they are used to pay fines, and to make purchases. 174

In dealing with kingship among the Ovimbundu I note a strong resemblance to customs prevailing near Victoria Nyanza, the

174 principal focus of the cattle-keeping areas. The king's death is not announced by the Ovimbundu. There is a special hut for burial, and part of the head is later removed for decoration and separate interment. This part of the royal corpse is subsequently brought out for worship and supplication. The Ovimbundu never admit the death of a king until a successor has been chosen. The king's body is buried in oxhide, but the head is severed by suspending the corpse with a rope round the neck, then twisting the body. The head is sewn in oxhide and kept in a box. In time of drought or before a journey a chief or medicine-man visits the head to make a sacrifice and ask for help. Oxen are killed at funeral feasts of the wealthy and the horns are mounted over the grave. Mourners for the king wear strips of oxhide round their wrists.

There can be no doubt that the Ovimbundu received the above traits, also their knowledge and use of the sacred fire, from the cattle-keeping area. The use of sacred fire has been shown to be a primary trait associated with the keeping of cattle. Reference to field work among the Ovimbundu indicates that the usages connected with sacred fire agree in detail with those of the pastoral area. The Ovimbundu keep the sacred fire burning in the burial place of kings; for instance at Ngalangi, as described. The Ovimbundu create new fire by twirling when a new village site is opened, and the fire is distributed from the chief's home. Lustration after an epidemic of sickness is always ceremonially carried out by creation of new fire on which the blood of sacrificed animals is sprinkled. Therefore, in general outline and considerable detail the factors associated with cattle-keeping among the Ovimbundu are those of the pastoral areas of east, south, and southwest Africa.

In summarizing we may say that contacts of the Ovimbundu with southwest Africa have arisen from occupation of contiguous territory, along with trading and raiding. The acquisitions made by the Ovimbundu from pastoral tribes include several artifacts such as sandals, the assagai, and the throwing club. More important than the diffusion of these objects into Umbundu culture has been the reception of the cattle themselves, along with the social values, usages, and religious beliefs which are the usual concomitants of the African pastoral culture.

174 181 A study of the culture contacts of the Ovimbundu conclusively shows that they are not an isolated people whose artifacts, religious beliefs, and social life stand out distinctively from the culture patterns around them. On the contrary the Ovimbundu have,

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through trade and warfare, been an absorbent people, reaching out in all directions and assimilating all cultural traits which were of service. 174 181

Up to this point, only the immediate culture contacts of the Ovimbundu have been considered. Yet it is evident that some of the cultural traits which have been discussed are widely diffused in Africa. Consequently, some further inquiry is needed if the tribal life of the Ovimbundu is to be considered against a broad ethnological background of African culture.

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171 428 this method is characteristic of many pastoral tribes of south and east Africa.

171 611 The Ovimbundu are situated between two systems of reckoning descent, succession, and inheritance; namely, the Negro system of the Congo region, and that of the eastern and southern cattle-keeping people. In view of the culture contacts described in Chapter X, the mixed system of the Ovimbundu is intelligible.

On the one hand the Ovimbundu emphasize the rights of the mother's brother while denying inheritance to a wife and her children, but in royal families the eldest son of the principal wife succeeds to kingship. Among commoners descent is reckoned through both the father and the mother. Therefore the inference is that the [174] Ovimbundu have, by virtue of their position and contacts, made a blending of two distinct social systems, one of which gives succession to office in the male line, while the other gives inheritance in the female line. In their system of burial rites for kings the Ovimbundu follow the usages of the pastoral area.

171 608 Exchange of blood is an Umbundu custom resembling that which occurs widely in Negro Africa. This exchange of blood is the typical Negro form of the blood brotherhood. Another rite is the Hamitic custom of drinking a mixture of blood and milk; this the Ovimbundu do not practise.

171 241 The hoe-cultivation practised by Ovimbundu women is in agreement with Baumann's association of hoe-culture and matriarchal conditions, the latter being indicated by the importance of the mother's brother. These concomitant factors are shown by Baumann (II, p. 292) to be characteristic of a wide area in the Congo basin. To this area may be added the whole of central Angola.

171 567 The factors of slavery among the Ovimbundu are in agreement with all that is known of the treatment of slaves in the Congo area and farther west Africa. Slaves of the Ovimbundu taken in warfare were treated with less consideration than those who passed into slavery to redeem a debt. There was also discrimination in favor of slaves taken in local quarrels among the Ovimbundu themselves. The killing and eating of slaves in north Angola is a custom whose early occurrence has already been noted.

AFRICAN PUBERTY RITES

171 881 Initiation ceremonies for boys and girls are at present well preserved among the Vachokue of eastern Angola; for a period such ceremonies declined among the Ovimbundu, but there is now a

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recrudescence. Masks of eastern Angola most closely resemble those of the Bapindi of the southwest Congo, but the general background of these puberty rites is comparable in Angola, parts of the Congo, and in several parts of the forest belt of west Africa from Sierra Leone to Cameroon.

Usually there is seclusion, hardship, training in dances and tribal customs, with ceremonial reappearance and change of name. Evidently the Ovimbundu share the material traits and the psychological background of initiatory rites with a very large number of tribes, which occupy the forest zones of west and central Africa.

G. Lindblom's publication, "The Use of Stilts in Africa and America," helps to explain the occurrence of stilt-walking at the final ceremonies of initiation witnessed at Cangamba. Since stilt-walking in Angola occurs chiefly in the eastern section, perhaps one should link the trait with the stilt-walking in Nyasaland, because there has been continuous communication from Angola to Nyasaland along the Zambezi valley. The stilt-walking of eastern Angola may, however, be a cultural offshoot from the southwest Congo, for according to Lindblom the stilt-walking trait occurs there, and the contacts of eastern Angola with the southwest Congo have been important.

In turning from these factors of social life to traits of a more material kind, there are points of importance to be noted in connection with food supply and industries. A possibility exists that such traits as hunting, use of certain types of musical instruments, basketry, and pottery, will indicate that the Ovimbundu, before their separation, drew some of their fundamental traits from a widely distributed matrix.

HUNTING APPLIANCES OF AFRICA

L. S. B. Leakey (A New Classification of the Bow and Arrow in Africa, *J.R.A.I.*, LVI, pp. 259–294) has dealt with the distribution of bows and arrows. Leakey states that, owing to lack of evidence, he was unable to describe the bows and arrows of Angola. I have therefore illustrated these in detail (Plate XVII, Figs. 1–9).

Some of the arrowheads used by the Ovimbundu resemble those of the Bashilele in the southwest Congo, but on the whole arrowheads used in Angola are of distinctive patterns, and presumably they represent a special local development. The round bow of the Ovimbundu and the Vachokue is like that of the southern Congo, and it is absolutely distinct from the short flat bow used in southern Angola among the Vakuanyama.

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171 organization and artifacts have been described in relation to a wide cultural background in Negro Africa. There remains, however, the more difficult problem of a possible introduction of some of these cultural traits from regions outside the continent of Africa itself.

KULTURKREIS THEORY

174 114 Our investigation is able to account for the occurrence of certain widely distributed traits which the Ovimbundu possess, either in their common form or in some specialized aspect. The broader problem of the possible origin of African traits in Melanesia and Indonesia is one that should not be neglected.

The kulturkreis theory as expounded by Graebner (Methode der Ethnologie, Heidelberg, 1911) has been applied to Africa by B. Ankermann (*Zeitsch. Ethn.*, 1905, pp. 62–90). Frobenius has expressed his views in "Der Ursprung der afrikanischen Kulturen," Leipzig, 1894; "Das unbekannte Afrika," Munich, 1923; and the "Atlas afrikanus," Munich, 1922.

An article of Frobenius (Smithsonian Institution Reports, 1898, pp. 638–647) summarizes the Graebnerian thesis so far as Africa is concerned. Frobenius says that the Malayo-Negritan relationship of African culture is established. Certain cultural elements appear together and are equally distributed. Ethnographical objects illustrative of phases of culture may be examined with a view to fixing their descent, just as we examine the limbs and organs of a living being, and the theory is concerned with morphological considerations in particular.

Frobenius states (p. 639), that he is concerned with studying the genealogical tree of culture forms, and as a first example he chooses wooden drums which are found in the Congo basin and lower Guinea; these drums are said to be of Malayo-Negritan origin. The next example chosen is that of the Malayo-Negritan bow. Wooden shields of Africa with reed covering have related forms in New Guinea and the Solomon Islands. Pile dwellings are found in Dahomey and among the Ambuella; also in New Guinea. Chairs and neck rests used by many Negro tribes are of Oceanic form. There is a Malayo-Negritan affinity of bark fabrics of Africa with the well-known tapa cloth of Oceania (p. 644). The "likeness of anatomical origin, coupled with the outlined area of distribution, is evidence not to be gainsaid" (p. 645). The culture of a fishing community is on all sides characterized by mesh work. In New Guinea the net is used as clothing, and in the whole of west Africa we

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hear of the netted jerseys of the disguised. The matriarchate is possibly to be classed among Malayo-Negritan characteristics, in particular when accompanied by exogamy. So runs the Graebnerian argument. 174 114

To these cultural factors from Melanesia Frobenius adds the gora, which he compares with a form from New Pommern. He also mentions the marimba; tobacco-pipes of the Ituri region, which are likened to those of New Guinea; and the scarification of the Bashilange, which has some circular characters said to be like Maori moko. The prows of canoes in Dualla (Cameroon) are compared with those of the Admiralty Islands.

The factors of Asiatic culture which have affected northern Africa are more readily accepted because of known historical contacts of a continuous kind over geographically contiguous regions. Probably Frobenius is right in attributing the drum with a pottery base, chain armor, quilted armor, the long knife, and the stringed instrument *rababa*, to Asiatic sources. The round shields of northeast Africa may be accepted as of Asiatic origin. These points, though part of the general theory, do not concern our study of the Ovimbundu, who do not possess these alleged Asiatic traits.

The supposed line of migration of Malayo-Negritan culture up the Zambezi valley, thence along the Sankuru into the Congo basin and so to Cameroon and fartner west Africa, presents no great obstacle, but the hypothesis lacks a coordination of cultural elements and a historico-psychological explanation.

In considering several Indonesian factors such as those mentioned by R. Linton as occurring in Madagascar (*Amer. Anth.*, 1928, pp. 372–389), and while regarding the evidence of J. Hornell (*Man*, 1928, No. 1) respecting the similarity of canoes on Lake Victoria Nyanza and along the coast with those from Java, there is no difficulty in admitting impacts from Indonesia. There is, however, only the beginning of a hypothesis in these comparisons.

The construction of a theory purporting to show phylogenetic connection between cultures as remote as those of Sierra Leone and Melanesia still requires elaboration. At the present time there is not sufficient detail available for the filling in of distribution maps purporting to show the line of migration of this postulated Malayo-Negritan culture. But according to Graebnerian views a hiatus merely means that the intrusive culture has disappeared.

The question arises respecting evidence from Angola which may favor or refute the validity of a Malayo-Negritan origin of some

174 114 culture elements of Negro Africa. Among the cultural traits of the Ovimbundu are a few which the Graebnerians would claim as evidence of the passage of Indonesian cultural waves. Use of the bow is part of the bow culture. Matriarchal conditions and hoe-culture by women would be regarded as a somewhat later wave of culture. Frobenius would ascribe the use of netted clothing during initiation to an Oceanic origin. There is a small area in southeast Angola where pile dwellings are built by the Ambuella tribe. Bark cloth is made in eastern Angola. The marimba and the musical bow are traits of Umbundu and Oceanic culture.

The point at issue seems to be the acceptance or rejection of cultural contacts on the ground of alleged resemblance in forms. Frobenius would doubtless add that the supposed Malayo-Negritan factors in Umbundu culture lie only a little to the southwest of the Zambezi, which is a main line of hypothetical migration of Malayo-Negritan factors.

Each of these elements of Umbundu culture is of a non-specific kind. For example, there is nothing about the bark cloth, except that it is a bark cloth, to link it with similar material in any other part of the world. Stripping the tree, soaking the bark and beating it, are part of the general technique.

The musical bow has a wide distribution, as H. Balfour (I) has shown. He studies the distribution in Africa, North and South America, Asia, India, the Malay Archipelago, Melanesia, and Polynesia. He postulates the derivation from the archers' bow and says (p. 85), "The question whether or no we are to regard the musical bows in India and in Africa as belonging to one family, is one which is difficult to answer." Balfour is impressed with similarity of forms in India and Africa, but feels that the common origin is not demonstrable.

When comparing types of masks and costumes within the African continent itself the work of Frobenius (I) is found to be useful in indicating areas over which certain types of regalia are used in initiation ceremonies. There is undoubtedly a localization of types, and we previously noted that Angolan forms of masks and costumes are definitely like those of the Bakuba and the Baluba in the southwest Congo region. Moreover, the netting costumes used by the Ovimbundu and the Vachokue of Angola closely resemble those used in some parts of the Congo basin, Cameroon, and from that point westward to Sierra Leone. Therefore, so long as comparisons are

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limited to Africa itself, they are instructive in showing cultural traits of Angola against a broader background. 174 114

But if the inquiry is extended with a view to proving that African masks and costumes are derivatives from Oceania, there exists no acceptable evidence of generic relationship. The mere use of fiber skirts, of netting suits, and of bark cloth for masks, is not acceptable evidence for supporting a theory of derivation of African from Oceanic forms.

More important than the study of forms is the psychological background of masks and costumes in Africa and Melanesia. In "Origins of Education" I made a comparison of factors included in the initiation of boys in Africa and Melanesia. The boys are secluded, circumcised, instructed, harshly treated, and after a change of name are reintroduced to their villages at a dance in which masks and costumes are used.

Waiving the question of similarity of masks and costumes, do the psychological factors provide reasonable grounds for assuming generic relationship of initiation customs? Possibly the psychological setting suggests a single origin, but the matter is so largely subjective, that a decision cannot be made without further evidence of the correlation of forms, the details underlying their origin and use, and the establishment of a more definite and unbroken track of distribution. To have an intuition and a vague hypothesis is very different from the demonstration of a theory. Delafosse (Negroes of Africa, p. 3) pictures the peopling of Africa by Negro impacts from Asia on the east coast near Madagascar. If true, this suggestion would support the views of the Graebnerian school, but the theory is highly speculative.

The extent to which an observer may be misled by fortuitous resemblances in form has been demonstrated by a number of American anthropologists. Every investigator who attempts comparative study and classification is prone to unite concepts, customs, and artifacts which have only a superficial and misleading resemblance to one another. This failure to discriminate may be illustrated as follows: R. H. Lowie (Plains Indian Age-Societies, Amer. Mus. Nat. Hist., Anth. Papers, No. 11, pp. 883–951) has shown the fallacy of assuming genuine cultural resemblances between Age-Societies of Plains Indians, the Masai, and the Melanesians, because the phenomena when analyzed prove to have different psychological settings, and they are structurally as distinct as are their geographical areas.

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174 114 W. D. Wallis points out the care that should be exercised in assessing the evidential values of culture traits. These should be weighted according to their simplicity or complexity, and their logical connection with one another (*Amer. Anth.*, XXX, p. 94). The cultural factors of the Malayo-Negritan migration have not been considered in the manner advocated by Wallis.

Lowie examined apparently similar cases of exogamy, but found that these depended on different conditions; for example, exogamy might depend on either clan or locality (The Principle of Convergence in Ethnology, *Jour. Amer. Folk-lore*, XXV, pp. 24–42).

A. A. Goldenweiser shows that totemism has many social and psychological interpretations differing greatly according to locality. In order to include the many forms of totemism a broad definition has to be accepted. Totemism is indeed nothing more than a tendency of social units or individuals to become associated with symbols of emotional value (Totemism an Analytical Study, *Jour. Amer. Folk-lore*, XXIII).

Lowie further emphasizes the distinctive types of totemism, in order to show the fallacy of linking many different concepts under one term, without recognizing the broad significance of the term (*Amer. Anth.*, XIII, p. 189). This research shows Frobenius to be at fault in merely noting the presence of totemism and other traits without defining their forms and examining the psychological background.

An article by A. L. Kroeber and C. Holt (Masks and Moieties as a Culture Complex, *J.R.A.I.*, L, p. 452) has a special bearing on Graebnerian views with regard to the spread of cultures. Kroeber set out to test the validity of the statement that North American culture had been affected by the east Papuan layer of the Graebnerian culture stream, which was supposed to have brought masks and moieties to North America. The Graebnerian method assumes that a culture trait never develops twice; also that instances of geographical isolation of a trait must be ascribed to migration and subsequent loss in intervening areas. The conclusion of Kroeber, based on statistical examination of instances of conjoint occurrence of the two traits, indicates that the union of masks and moieties comes out fortuitously.

R. B. Dixon indicates several factors to which attention should be paid in making comparisons of culture traits (*Science*, XXXV, p. 46). In the first place there is the question of relationship on geographical and historical grounds. It is also important to know

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

what degree of complexity there is in the artifacts and beliefs which 174
are under comparison. Reason and form, that is, psychology and 114
morphology, are both important aspects of comparison. The work so far accomplished with regard to the Malayo-Negritan theory of African cultural traits fails to comply with the foregoing essentials of comparative study.

There is consensus of opinion against the Graebnerian hypothesis in its present form. E. S. Hartland reviews Graebner's "Methode der Ethnologie" (*Man*, 1914, No. 70) with the result that he finds Graebner too insistent on the value of forms as a criterion of generic relationship. In fact such a method may degenerate into pure subjectivity. F. Boas (*Science*, XXXIV, No. 884) takes the same point of view in remarking on the exclusion of the psychological field of inquiry; Graebner's method has a too mechanical character.

In view of this criticism, and as a result of personal observation of the culture elements of Angola, I am convinced that the somatological, linguistic, and cultural data for considering the spread of the Malayo-Negritan culture in Africa are not sufficiently understood to lead to a demonstration of any kind. For instance, Portuguese East Africa, the hypothetical starting point of the migration, is by no means well studied in detail, and the problem demands that data relating to the supposed area of introduction should be particularly complete.

The same criticism relates to the farthest point of west Africa reached by the supposed cultural stream from Melanesia. A theory which aims at showing generic relationship between secret societies of west Africa and Oceania cannot successfully rely only on general resemblances of masks and the use of netting costumes. Something more specific than a comparison of forms of artifacts and the occurrence of such ill-defined institutions as age-grades, totemism, and secret societies is essential in order to make the kulturkreis theory acceptable.

The problem of cultural relationships between the Ovimbundu 174
and other African tribes is simplified in several ways. Geographical 177
continuity exists between the African areas discussed, and to a great extent the cultural contacts described are matters of historical fact. Data relating to the Ovimbundu themselves are fairly complete; and what is equally important, there is trustworthy literature bearing on the areas surrounding the Ovimbundu. Therefore, comparisons do not rest on the study of a few simple forms, but on the cultures taken as a whole with regard to cultural traits of all kinds.

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Evidence adduced up to the present has indicated the relationship of cultural elements of the Ovimbundu to those of tribes immediately surrounding them (chapter X).

In addition to this, the ethnological facts of the present chapter have made it clear that the tribal life of the Ovimbundu cannot be explained by confining the inquiry to immediate culture contacts. The Ovimbundu have without doubt drawn very widely on African cultural streams during the growth of their present social pattern. The truth of this statement has just been illustrated by reference to ritual connected with blacksmiths, Bantu religious beliefs, the Bantu social system, African puberty rites, hunting appliances, musical instruments, and other cultural elements.

A consideration of the kulturkreis theory indicated that a search for the origins of Umbundu culture cannot profitably be extended to Indonesia and Melanesia. Therefore the final chapter is confined to a summary of types of African culture, with a view to showing the relationship of Umbundu culture to each of the main racial, linguistic, and cultural patterns that are known to have affected the African continent.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

197 since the language has Sudanic and Hamitic elements with some Semitic roots. The earliest relationships of African linguistic families, for instance Hamitic and Semitic, also Sudanic, Bantu, and Bushman, is a field for further research. To take only one instance of complexity, Bantu is divided into more than two hundred languages and innumerable dialects, whose origin, structure, and evolution have been treated by C. Meinhof (Introduction to the Phonology of the Bantu Languages, London, 1932; a translation, by A. Werner and N. J. von Warmelo, of Meinhof's Grundriss eine Lautlehre der Bantusprachen).

174 114 In conclusion of this summary of the background of African history, there arises the difficulty of ascribing to each of the races those cultural elements for which the race is responsible, either by primary invention within Africa, or by introduction from some source outside Africa. The difficulty may be illustrated by quotations relating to the iron industry of African Negroes. Rival theories claim origin of the craft in Asia, in Egypt, and among African Negroes themselves.

Seligman (Races of Africa, p. 158) states, "We may believe that the Negro, who is now an excellent iron worker, learnt this art from the Hamite." Torday writes (H. Spencer, Descriptive Sociology of African Races, preface, p. iii), "To state that Bantu civilization—or any civilization whatever—is due to the ancestors of such absolutely primitive tribes as the Hadendoa and Beja (identified by some with the enigmatic Hamites) presupposes that these people who were ignorant of agriculture, or the production of iron, and of all arts and crafts denoting a higher culture, who, as we know, have not progressed a step within the past five hundred years and considered all manual labor degrading, had the power to give that which they never possessed."

The complexity of argument relating to the origin of just one cultural trait, iron-working, can be judged by consulting the writings of W. Gowland (The Metals in Antiquity, *J.R.A.I.*, XLII, pp. 235–287), W. M. F. Petrie (The Arts and Crafts of Ancient Egypt), W. Belck (Die Erfinder der Eisentechnik, *Zeitsch. Ethn.*, XXXIX, pp. 335–381; XL, pp. 45–69; XLII, pp. 15–30), and F. Luschan (Eisentechnik in Afrika, *ibid.*, XLI, pp. 23–59).

Even with these reservations and disputed points in mind, it is yet possible to speculate with some accuracy respecting the origin and assembly of traits which, welded together, form the culture of the Ovimbundu.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

ASSEMBLING OF TRAITS

The data which have been assembled in relation to the Ovimbundu, if considered in conjunction with the analysis of African cultures made in the foregoing chapter, lead to the following historical reconstruction. 174

When somatic traits of the Ovimbundu are considered it is clear that the general type is removed from that of true Negroes. Among the Ovimbundu are persons of a slender, brown-skinned type, with some refinement of lips and nasal width; while other persons possess the opposites of these features, but in no instance as intensely as do true Negroes. I accept the view of physical admixture of Hamites with true Negroes and believe that types like the Ovimbundu and the Vakuanyama have resulted from infusion of Hamitic blood which has modified Negro somatic traits in the way mentioned. [142]

Linguistically the Ovimbundu have a pure form of Bantu speech. The Umbundu language is tonal, but there are few semantic words whose meaning depends on a high, middle, or low tone. Probably Umbundu should be classified with the southwestern Bantu languages, but further research may show that on structural grounds Umbundu has to be accorded an intermediate position between the southwestern and the central Bantu languages. Study of vocabulary definitely links Umbundu with the Ukuanyama language of the southwestern Bantu group, but conclusions based on comparison of vocabularies are hazardous because of the dissemination of Umbundu words by extensive caravan trade of the Ovimbundu. We may therefore be dealing with loan words and not with bifurcation from the same matrix. 174 197

When comparing the social pattern of the Ovimbundu with that of other African tribes the following elements of culture should be borne in mind. 174

(1) Traits associated with an archaic hunting culture.

(2) Factors typical of the culture of Negroes, both Bantu and Sudanic.

(3) Cultural traits from pastoral tribes of south and southwest Angola. These tribes speak Bantu languages but have somatic traits which are Hamitic, while their culture exhibits some main features of the Hamitic pastoral pattern.

Among the earliest elements of Umbundu culture would probably be the traits of hunting and food-gathering. The antiquity of hunting has been indicated by considering the wide distribution of appliances

174 of like kind. Furthermore, the details of ritual connected with the hunter's occupation, and the survival of these to the present day, tend to show that hunting was not a trait of late introduction. A people who adopted hunting when in an advanced state of their cultural history would not invent an elaborate ritual which is still connected with the initiation of young hunters, ancestor worship, and special modes of burial. Moreover, the Ovimbundu are primarily an agricultural people; therefore it is unlikely that at a late date in their cultural development they would take over hunting and its ritual as a means of augmenting their food supply. I conclude, therefore, that the elements of a hunting culture are ancient and fundamental.

To the archaic elements of hunting and food-gathering should perhaps be added the use of the musical bow, the bull-roarer, and the making of fire by twirling. The bull-roarer is an object associated with important ceremonies among many African and other tribes of the present day, though among the Ovimbundu the instrument is used only as a toy. This is probably a degradation of function associated with the known disappearance of initiation ceremonies. Making of fire by twirling is now of importance only as a ceremonial method of creating new fire at the time of building a village, during epidemics, and after the death of a king. But formerly the twirling method was the only means of ignition.

The most important cultural traits of the Ovimbundu are those which they possess in common with Negroes who speak Bantu languages. Most of the traits mentioned here as characteristic of the Bantu are also to be found among the Sudanic Negroes of west Africa.

Negro cultural traits which are or were prominent in the tribal life of the Ovimbundu are as follows:

Tooth mutilation and scarification of the body.

Blood brotherhood by exchange of blood.

Hoe cultivation by women.

Classificatory system of kinship terms and cross-cousin marriage.

A system of succession, inheritance, and family government in which the maternal uncle plays an important part.

Tribal government under a well-coordinated political system in which kings and village chiefs are of paramount importance.

Slavery as an economic institution.

Ritualistic slaughter and eating of slaves at the death of a king.

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Tribal initiation for boys with use of masks, netting costumes, seclusion, circumcision, harsh treatment, change of name, and re-introduction into society. 174

The poison ordeal of general Negro type.

Religious ideas of a supreme being, Suku, Nzambi, or Kalunga, who is thought of as a creator. He is, however, far removed from all tribal affairs, and there is no sacrifice or appeal to him.

An active ancestor worship with good and bad spirits who require sacrifice and recognition by supplication through the agency of a medicine-man. Use of wooden figures in connection with this appeal to spirits. Great importance of the spirits of kings as arbiters in matters of tribal welfare.

Importance of medicine-men in conducting trial by ordeal, making rain, healing the sick, and consulting ancestral spirits by divination and the use of wooden images in which "medicine" is placed.

Methods of fishing with poisons and conical fish traps.

The technique and ritual of the blacksmith's craft.

Wood-carving which particularly resembles that of the southwest Congo region.

Making of bark cloth.

Types of musical instruments, including the friction drum, the marimba, tubular drums, flat drums, metal-keyed instruments, and many other forms which are typical of Negro culture, particularly that of the southwest Congo.

Weaving on a loom of central African type (now obsolete).

Coiled basketry and pottery.

The foregoing elements are associated to form the cultural pattern of the Ovimbundu. All these traits are characteristic of Bantu and Sudanic Negro culture in general. Therefore the Ovimbundu are most closely allied with Negroes, from the cultural point of view.

The elements taken by the Ovimbundu from pastoral tribes, whose culture has invaded east and south Africa, are: 174 177

Cattle and the social values attached to these, together with ceremonial rites which are characteristic of pastoral cultures. Such rites include burial of kings in oxhide, and the killing of oxen at the funeral feast; also the mounting of horns over the grave, and use of sacred fire.

Ideas of succession in the male line, whereby kingship passes to the eldest son of the principal wife, are more characteristic of pastoral than Negro systems.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

174 From the pastoral tribes of southern Angola the Ovimbundu
177 have adopted a peculiar type of assagai, a throwing club, and sandals.

Primarily the culture of the Ovimbundu is that of African Negroes with persistence of traits that have survived, possibly from a pre-Negro culture, which depended entirely upon food-gathering and hunting. Grafted on these traits are important elements from a pastoral culture which is generally conceded to be Hamitic.

European contacts led to the introduction of maize, manioc, sweet potatoes, and peanuts, so stimulating the indigenous hoe culture. This agricultural life was further encouraged by settlement in the Benguela Highlands, where temperature, rainfall, and open spaces favored a great expansion of agricultural pursuits, especially the growth of maize and beans.

Early contact with the Portuguese led to an encouragement of trade. Guns and powder, together with other European goods, were received in exchange for ivory and slaves. An increase in the supply of slaves led to changes in the social life, whereby the Ovimbundu gained more time and opportunity for extensive raiding and trading, by which means their wealth was further increased.

As time progressed, the nature of the contact with the Portuguese changed. Instead of alliances made on a commercial basis, the Portuguese gradually assumed control, the results of which are now distinctly felt in the disintegration of Umbundu tribal life.

The data supplied by personal field work, supported by a perusal of ethnological literature, suggest the foregoing summary as the briefest possible outline of the history of the Ovimbundu, the growth of their culture, and the nature of traits that have been welded together.

Cultural losses will now be considered, and in the final pages an explanation will be given of the way in which traits derived from various sources are associated to form a workable tribal system.

CULTURAL LOSSES

177 The loom and the conical furnace for smelting iron have disappeared in recent times because of the increasing importation of foreign cloth and the greater facility for obtaining scrap iron. Bark cloth, except in eastern Angola, is no longer made because traders are distributing European goods. For the same reason wooden hair-combs are going out of use. Drum signaling has declined with the disappearance of warfare, and for the same reason the double iron gong is rare.

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/For recorded historical references to the Mbundu see category 116, pp. 181-188 and 190-215).

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PART ONE [p.17]

SOCIAL STRUCTURE

121 *The object of Part One is (1) to describe the present social structure of the Ovimbundu, and (2) to suggest significant elements that this social structure has or may have for the programme of Christian missions among this people.*

CHAPTER II

POLITICAL AND SOCIAL LIFE

127 122 HAD my historical survey revealed a detailed description of Umbundu social structure made at some former time, it would also be useful to make comparisons with the present state of affairs. Since there is no such witness out of the past, it is only possible to describe and analyse that which at present exists. For this purpose some excerpts from Umbundu narratives are presented and references made to certain folk-tales and proverbs. The basis of the analysis and description rests more especially, however, upon notes and impressions gathered in field-work over a period of years and upon a considerable number of genealogical tables and schedules of marriage arrangements.[1] These latter are referred to here only to a certain extent. I hope to treat these more fully later. The subject of marriage properly belongs to the field of social structure, but because of its importance I hope to devote a chapter to it. Only certain of the genealogical tables are presented fully and in their several aspects, while the others have served as basis and background for the whole of this part of the study.

565 175 The most significant historical allusion to the social structure of the Ovimbundu which I have found was an observation of Pinheiro de Lacerda about 1790. 'These are they of the Highlands who are made up of two "systems" the one call themselves [266] "Quimbundos" (i.e. Ovimbundu), (these do not eat human flesh): the others are called "Quimbangalas" (i.e. the royal households of Imbangala stock), who eat it, and when they make their sacrifice, [782] at which all together attend, then all eat the "Makongo".'[2]

[1] I have 190 of the former and 75 of the latter.
[2] *Annaes Maritimos e Coloniaes*, 5a Ser., p. 458.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

175 565 Evidently royal persons could then be easily distinguished from the commoners.

565 178 The question naturally arises how far may a similar distinction be observed at the present time. The genealogical tables presented may answer the question. It may be seen that intermarriage of commoners and royalty has proceeded to such a degree that the differences have been greatly dimmed, if not quite erased. Furthermore, the loss of the political power which the royal families formerly held has levelled down distinctions until they have largely lost their meaning. This loss again has hastened the process of intermarriage with commoners. While there are some distinctive practices which persist, they may now pertain to or be practised by certain members of a family only, or in some instances, and not in others. These refer especially to inheritance and to the naming of children.

121 By 'social structure' is meant the more or less permanent framework of relationships between members of a community which manifests itself in an ordered group-life, with reciprocal rights and duties, privileges and obligations, of members, determining behaviour-patterns . . . and moulding the feelings, thoughts, and conduct of members according to these patterns, so that it is only in and through them that the individual can achieve his personal self-realization and participate in the satisfactions offered by the life of his community.

This framework of social organization, or social structure, is permanent compared with the stream of human lives that, in the succession of the generations, flows through it. Each new generation finds it there, as an inheritance from untold generations of his predecessors. Yet the framework of social structure is not absolutely rigid or fixed for all time, but is itself a thing of growth, capable of variation in detail, sometimes giving birth to new developments, at other times undergoing disintegration and decay.[1]

101 [601] The genealogical tables which I have collected are fairly representative of the major divisions or 'tribes' of the Ovimbundu. The only 'tribes' not represented are those of the border regions of Namba, Sanga, Cikomba, and Kalukembe, none of which save the last are numerically important. These border groups themselves offer an interesting field of study and particularly in that they may provide cultural and linguistic bridges between the Ovimbundu and their neighbors.

[1] A. W. Hoernlé in Schapera, *The Bantu-Speaking Tribes of South Africa* (London: Routledge, 1937), p. 67 f.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

631 ones. This situation was reported by Magyar, when he wrote,
635 'Quibanda (should be Civanda) to the east has 500 villages. The Chief has great power. He sends tribute every year to the king of Bailundu but is himself fully independent.'[1] Magyar described about 15 *atumbu* or '*ovikandscho*',[2] as he called them, of Bailundu. [161] He estimated the population of Bailundu at 450,000, and for all the kingdoms of the Ovimbundu 1,200,000,[3] figures which are probably not very different from present-day facts. The report [175] and description of the 'Capitania de Benguella' in 1799 said that the king of Bailundu dominated 2,056 villages; the king of Viye, 886; and the king of Ngalangi, 900; and listed their 'feudos' respectively as 82, 54, and 78.[4] My list of the Ngalangi *atumbu* shows 112. In Bailundu about 20 *atumbu* were ruled by members of the royal family, including heirs apparent or expectant, and the queen (*Inakulu*), who also had her own establishment.[5] About 20 were ruled by other court officials.

621 Most of these *atumbu* are still recognized as such or as *olombala*.[6]
622 Their decay has not been as great as that of the *ombala*[6] of their
177 liege lord, for they still fulfil certain functions in native life. They have also been given new functions by the administrative authorities. [651] The minor chiefs as well as village headmen are all required to assist in assessing and collecting the native tax, and also in recruiting labour for government works and for contracts. In some areas they receive in return the remission of their own taxes. In some areas they are required to wear uniforms. On the dancing floors [692] of most of these minor *olombala* courts are still held, justice determined, and (to a limited extent) fines 'eaten'. Such judgements are not officially recognized or allowed by the European authorities. The African, however, often finds that European courts do not meet his needs or accord with his concepts of justice.

[1] Magyar, op. cit., p. 389.

[2] Umbundu *ovikanjo* (plural), 'branches', a term which through commercial or European influence is applied to the *atumbu*.

[3] For these figures and for descriptions of the several kingdoms, see Magyar, op. cit., chap. ix.

[4] *Annaes Mar. e Col.*, 4a Ser., pp. 155 ff.

[5] Magyar, op. cit., p. 390.

[6] *Olombala*, plural of *ombala*, a capital village or chief's residence.

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PART THREE

CHAPTER XII

HISTORICAL

000 'HEUREUX les peuples qui n'ont pas d'histoire', quotes Father Van Wing in introducing his *Études Bakongo*, and having noted that the Kongo people 'had entered into history' in 1482 with the discovery of the River Congo.[1] It is very doubtful whether there are any people, however primitive, or however remote or inaccessible their dwelling, who could qualify for that blessed state. If this characterization means entering upon the stage of continuous contact with Europe and Europeans, it may mark a definite stage in the life of this people.

175 101 The Ovimbundu have not in this sense as old a 'history' as have the Kongo people. Their first contacts with Europeans probably took place in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries before their formation as a people—before they were Ovimbundu; but it was from the second or third quarter of the eighteenth century that they began to have regular and constant contacts which have continued with increasing frequency down to the present day.

Pre-History

172 The pre-history of the Umbundu country awaits competent investigation and should prove a fruitful field. Dr. Merlin W. Ennis has collected stone artifacts from several sites, but chiefly from Elende (twelve miles north of the railway station of Cuma), some of which have been placed in the Peabody Museum of Harvard University, some in the Logan Museum of Beloit College (Wisconsin), and some in the National Museum of Bulawayo, Southern Rhodesia. These artifacts have been classified as similar to those of the Chellean culture.[2] The strata from which they

[1] R.P. Van Wing, S.J., *Études Bakongo* (Bruxelles: Goemaere, 1921), p. 1.

[2] For a description, see J. J. Williams, S.J., *Africa's God* (Boston College, 1937), V. Congo and Angola, p. 96; also W. D. Hambly, *The Ovimbundu of Angola* (Field Museum, 1934), p. 207. Several Portuguese and Belgian writers have described stone artifacts found near the northern borders of Angola, comparing them with examples discovered at various sites in the Congo. See *Trabalhos do I° Congresso Nacional de Antropologia Colonial*, Pôrto, 1934: J. R. Santos, Jr., 'Rui de Serpa Pinto e a arqueologia de Angola', pp. 433–51;

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172 fortified with loose stone walls built upon a great rock out-crop, projecting portions of which greatly reinforced the wall and made it unnecessary to build a complete circuit. The wall reached a height of nearly six feet in places. Inside the fortress, under an overhanging ledge of rock, I picked up fragments of pottery evidently of Umbundu make, and also pieces of wine jug of tne type used by the Portuguese for *vinho verde*. The dry season had just begun and the growth of grass in the ruin was very rank so that it was not possible to make a systematic search for other vestiges of former occupation. Across the valley, at the village of Ndumba, I found an old man seeming to be about sixty-five or seventy years of age, who declared that he had himself helped to build the walls of Usengo in his youth 'before he had married'. He said that they had fortified the place against the exactions of Soma[1] Saviti of Kasongi; that three chiefs had ruled in it,[2] and that the reason for moving was lack of nearby supplies of water and of earth to daub the walls of the huts, the village site being solid rock. This, he said, was all during the reign of Saviti and before the end of the rubber trade, which fixes it approximately between the dates 1890 and 1910. The largest of the three ruins on the slopes of Elende, mentioned by Hambly and by E. W. Smith,[3] is the subject of a legend recounted by Elende villagers which ascribes its building to Ovimbundu or their immediate predecessors. The most detailed and circumstantial report of the build-
[175] ing and occupancy of one of these ruins is found in an account of the campaign of 1774–6, in which Portuguese troops and native allies fought the kings of Bailundu (*Baylundo*) and Cingolo (*Quingolo*), and their allies.[4] The map of this campaign,[5] drawn in 1776, contains an inset representing a plan of the fortification alluded to, which, according to the report,[6] was too strong to be taken and was beseiged until the defenders fled by night, when it was entered, sacked, and thrown down, which last operation occupied nearly two months. Further evidence that the Ovimbundu were using stone-walled fortresses during the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries is found in the fact that the Portuguese reports of these periods generally allude to the forti-

[1] King or Chief.
[2] (1) Ekulika, the builder; (2) Ukelengenje; and (3) Satutu, who moved out.
[3] See *supra*, p. 165, n. 2.
[4] *Annaes do Cont. Ultr.*, loc. cit.
[5] Op. cit., facing p. 518.
[6] Op. cit., p. 520 f.; and especially *Catalogo dos Governadores*, pp. 423 ff.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

came to the region of Ndulu and wished to settle but could not (i.e. without permission), since they were strangers and newcomers. Thereupon a certain elder of the country, Kakoko by name, caused them to build, first at Ngumba and later at Ndulu-yolosima. Their two sons fought for the succession: Cikolongonjo won and set about to consolidate his position by conquering the va Luimbi, who then left the country. He also won over the region of Kapeyo (*Capeio*), although not by force of arms but through trickery,[1] or superior knowledge. The sixth in the succession and a great-grandson of Katekula-Mengo was Kakulukusu, who, it is said, was a nephew[2] of Cingi I of Bailundu, and was also taken to Luanda when the latter was imprisoned. Historical records show that this was at the end of the campaign of 1774–6.[3] It is chiefly this historical connexion which leads me to place the beginning of Cikolongonjo's rule at about 1680. With regard to the migration of Katekula-Mengo and Ukungu, it seems reasonable to advance the hypothesis that its immediate cause may have been the prolonged wars between the Portuguese and the kingdom of Angola, which ended in 1671 with the taking of the royal residence in the rocks of Pungu-a-Ndongo and its conversion into a presidio. The highland country of Ndulu offered a remote and peaceful refuge.

The Bailundu tradition states that when Katiavala came from Cipala (*Quibala*), he settled in Mbonga and came to visit Mbulu whose village on the capital hill had at first been built only as a hunter's camp, but, largely by reason of its strategical location, had become, or was becoming, the capital of Bailundu. Mbulu gave Katiavala his daughter to wife, which indicates that Mbulu had also come from the same northern stock. There was a good opportunity when Mbulu and his people were away on a hunt, and Katiavala with his followers occupied the capital, while Mbulu

[1] Kapeyo was ruling over the region now called after him. When Cikolongonjo demanded that he submit, Kapeyo agreed only if he should lose in the *elembe* test, which is used in the dry season by putting out cloths by night to find which will be wet in the morning. In this case they left the *alembe* (pl.) out while they went on a hunt, but on returning Cikolongonjo's *elembe*, which was a kerchief, was wet with the spiritual blessing, whereas Kapeyo's, which was paper (since he evidently had not known the difference) was quite destroyed. Kapeyo, having lost, left the country and settled in Viye. It is significant to find articles of European manufacture mentioned in this tradition, which is one of the oldest of Umbundu records; also to note that the invaders from the north were already familiar with such things while the local inhabitants were not.

[2] Cingi was *inamu* (mother's brother) to Kakulukusu.

[3] See historical chart *infra*, p. 224 f.

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SYNCHRONIZED CHART OF THE PORTUGUESE HISTORY OF

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DATES	EVENTS RECORDED
1482	Diogo Cão discovers the Congo.
1485–6	Diogo Cão's second voyage.
1490–1	Embassy to King of Kongo and Franciscan Mission.
1560	First expedition to Kingdom of Angola under Dias de Novaes.
1568	'Jagas' overrun Kingdom of Kongo.
1575	Luanda founded by Dias de Novaes and Jesuits.
1590	'Jagas' allied with Angola and Matamba defeat Portuguese.
From 1600	Some 'Jagas' allies of Portuguese, others met south of Kuanza and on Benguela Coast.
1617	Benguela founded.
1620	Hinterland forbidden to traders save *pombeiros descalços*.
1640–8	Dutch hold Luanda, Benguela, &c.; Portuguese hold Massangano.
From 1645	Raids from Massangano across Libolo to and across Keve River and to Bailundu.
From 1660	Raids inland from Benguela find some natives using fire-arms.
1671	End of Kingdom of Angola; presídio at Pungu-a-Ndongo.
1680	One million slaves exported since 1576 (Cadornega). First Caconda Fort founded in Hanha.
1685	Second Caconda Fort rebuilt nearby; many attacks on this fort and on nearby natives by native kings from interior.
1718	Further attacks on Caconda and its neighbours; king of 'Gallangue' captured and exiled; his successor said to have become vassal of Portugal. (Delgado.)
1760	Expulsion of Jesuits.
1769	Third Caconda fort built, on present site; presídio of Novo Redondo founded; various 'towns' ordered established in Benguela hinterland and Captains-major named. Formal prohibition of hinterland to traders removed.
1770–1	J. J. Rodrigues (first) Captain-major of Bihe.
1774	Great military campaign from Luanda and from Benguela against Bailundu, Cingolo, Ciyaka, &c.
1776	Return of military forces; king of Bailundu and two nephews captured.
1778	Kangombe baptized as 'Antonio de Vasconcellos' in Luanda and restored to stool of Viye with Governor's help.
1782	J. Gregorio de Freitas, Captain-major of Bihe.

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NATIVE TRADITIONAL HISTORY AND THE UMBUNDU ROYAL SUCCESSIONS

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'Kinguri' leaves Lunda to seek new home; his subsequent wanderings (Magyar).

Traditional origins of the Imbangala, of the Songo; in 'Libolo', in 'Quibala', &c. (Dias de Carvalho; Ferreira Diniz, &c.).

Ngalangi tradition of Feti the First, who found his wives in the reeds, and how they became the mothers of many peoples.

Wambu-Kalunga, the cannibal chief, founder of Wambu, progenitor of Ciyaka, Cingolo, Citata, Kalukembe, &c.

Ndulu tradition of Katekula-Mengo, elephant-hunter, who left imprints in the rocks of Pungu-a-Ndongo.

Katiavala from the north, comes to Bailundu.

Viye and Kahanda.

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	Ciyaka	*Ndulu*	*Bailundu*	*Ngalangi*	*Viye*
1650	Cilulu I (*Cihamba*)[5]				
	Kapango				
		Cikolongonjo			
	Atende I				
	Ukolongonjo I	Kavelavela	Mbulu (*Cilicu*)[5]		
1700	Ndumbu I (*Konya-ya-Cipamba*)[5]	Etande	Katiavala I		
			Njahulu		
	Luanjangombe I	Cibuaya	Somandalu	(Kasenje)[3]	Viye
	Mukuku	Cingi		(Cibongo)[3]	(Civava)[3]
1730	Cilulu II				(Ndalu)[3]
	Handa I	(Ndulu)[7]	Cingi I[1] c. 1760–76	Ndumba Viseo	Ulundu
	Ngalangi				
	Katutu I	Kakulukusu[1]			
					Eyambi
					Njilahulu
1775	Ndumbu II				
			(*Cilicu*)[5]		
	Kanutumulus				Kangombe[1] 1778–c.1795
	Kamela			Mulunda	
	Ukolongonjo II	Lumanyula			

For notes see page 231.

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DATES	EVENTS RECORDED
175 1795	Mello and Teixeira, third journey to 'Loval' via Bailundu and Viye.
173 1808–15	First recorded crossing of Africa (via Lunda, not Viye) by two *pombeiros*.
1817	Native wars in Benguela hinterland.
1819	João Nepomuceno Correia, Captain-major of Bihe.
1823–5	'Golden Age of Slave Trade'—average annual export 11,457 (Lopes de Lima).
1832–8	First export of new products: gum copal and orchilia.
1834	Abolition of royal monopoly in ivory.
1836	Formal abolition of slave trade, but enforcement held up for many years, owing to feeling in the colony.
1837	Lt. Sandoval in Bailundu, whence he describes native life.
1838	F. J. Coimbra, Captain-major of Bihe.
1840	Silva Porto reaches Bihe, coming from Luanda.
1844	Ports of Luanda and Benguela opened to foreign shipping; Prize Court in Luanda to implement suppression of slave trade.
1845	Presídio of Huila founded.
1846	Expedition of J. R. Graça to Lunda, passes through Viye.
1849–57	Ladislau Magyar in Viye.
1852	Silva Porto opens 'new road' from Viye to coast via Bailundu and Balombu (Civula).
1853	'Arabs' in Benguela, coming overland from Zanzibar. Livingstone meets Silva Porto and parties of 'Mambari' (Ovimbundu) at Naliele on the Zambezi.
1854	Livingstone meets 'Mambari' near Golungo Alto, visits Luanda, and returns to Zambezi valley and east coast.
1856–7	Attacks on southern presídios. Great attack on Huila by Ciyaka, Cingolo, Kalukembe, &c.
1865	Slaves now called freedmen (*libertos*) and apprenticed to their masters.
1869	First (experimental) export of rubber.
1870	Silva Porto leaves Viye for Benguela because of exactions of King Cilemo. Export of slaves to Americas now stopped; many sent to local plantations (Bastos).
1875	Lt. Cameron passes through Viye, Bailundu, &c., and reaches coast.
1878	Serpa Pinto, Capello, and Ivens in Caconda and in Viye. Great trading activity in Bailundu and in Viye.
1879–81	Trek Boers who left Transvaal in 1876 settle at Humpata.
1879	Silva Porto returns to Viye and goes on to 'Moyo'.
1880	Bagster, Sanders, and Miller land at Benguela (November), reach Bailundu following March to open W.C.A. Mission of A.B.C.F.M.
1882	Rubber takes second place in exports (after wax).

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	Ciyaka	*Ndulu*	*Bailundu*	*Ngalangi*	*Viye*
1795	Atende II				Kawewe
	Cikoko I	Cindele	Ekuikui I Numa I Hundungulu	Kambuenge	Moma (*Vasovava*)[2]
	Kuvombo-inene				
	Ndumbu III	Mbundi	Cisende I Njunjulu Ngungi	Ndumba II (*Cihongo*)[2]	
1835	Handa II (*Kaciyombo*)[2]		Civukuvuku[3]		Mbandua[3] 1833–9
			Utondosi		Kakembembe[3] (*Hundungulu*)[2] 1839–42
1842	Njimbi[4] 1842–50	Siakalembe	Mbonge[3] 1842–61	Ndumba III[3] (*Epope Kateyavilombo*) *c.* 1844–*c.* 1860	Liambula[3] 1842–7
					Kayangula[3] 1847–50
1850	Canja I[4] (*Luanjangambe III*)[2] 1850–70				(Mukinda[2]) 1850–7[3]
1857		Lusase			Nguvenge[3] 1857–9
				Etumbu Lutate	Konya Cilemo[3] 1860–83
1861			Cisende II[3] 1861–9 Vasovava[3] 1869–72		
1870	Njundo[4] 1870–98	Elundu Civava[4] *c.* 1870–*c.* 1890			
			Ekongo-liohombo[3] 1872–6		
1875			Ekuikui II[3] 1876–93	Ndumbu[5]	
1880					Ciponge[3] (*Njambayamina*)[2] 1883–6

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DATES	EVENTS RECORDED
175 173 1884	Sanders opens Kamundongo station in Viye; Mission expelled from Bailundu by King Ekuikui upon a trader's misrepresentation; Mission appeals to Gov.-Gen. at Luanda; Arnot's arrival at Bailundu influences Ekuikui; Mission invited to return.
1885	Silva Porto, Captain-major of Bihe.
1886	Ovimbundu traders discover new source of rubber—more easily available and more abundant: great boom begins.
1887	Rubber takes first place in exports.
1888	Occupation of Congo by 'Free State' stops ivory trade. Currie opens Canadian Congregational station at Chissamba.
1890	King Ndunduma orders Paiva Couceiro's expedition out of Viye; suicide of Silva Porto. Punitive expedition under Artur de Paiva occupies Viye and receives surrender of king. Roman Catholic mission opened at Caconda. Plymouth Brethren begin work at Kuanjulula (Viye).
1891	Teixeira da Silva begins military occupation of Bailundu. Many traders arrive for settlement in Bailundu and in Viye.
1892	R.C. 'Mission of Bihe' opened at Kacingi (outside Umbundu area).
1895	R.C. Mission station of Bailundu opened.
1896	King Numa attacks Bailundu Fort.
1897	Mission Philafricaine (Swiss) opens station in Kalukembe.
1899	Peak of rubber trade.
1900	Slump in rubber trade; no more ivory (A. Bastos).
1902–3	Revolt in Bailundu put down and remaining Umbundu regions soon occupied.
1904	Benguela Railway begins construction at Lobito. Rubber slump aggravated by debasing product. W.C.A. Mission opens Cileso (Ndulu) Station.
1906	W.C.A. Mission opens Elende (Ciyaka) Station.
1908	R.C. Mission station of Huambo (Wambu) opened.
1910	The Republic proclaimed in Portugal; worst abuses of contract labour abolished; civil administration begins to replace military in interior. Benguela Ry. reaches Cuma; porterage to coast gradually ends.
1912	Gen. Norton de Matos, Governor-General.
1914	W.C.A. Mission opens Currie Institute, normal and training school for young men.
1915	German forces take Portuguese forts on southern border; Portugal enters war against Germany. Benguela Ry. reaches Chinguar (edge of Viye) and suspends construction.
1916	W.C.A. Mission opens Means School for training of young women.
1917	Bailundu troops used to quell Sele revolt.
1919	Gen. Norton de Matos, High Commissioner; period of many public works and of much road-building activity (until about 1930).
1921	Decree 77 severely limits teaching and use of vernaculars. Beginning of currency devaluation with great fluctuations.
1922	Benguela Ry. resumes construction. Galangue (Ngalangi) mission station opened by representatives of coloured Congregational churches of the U.S.
1924	Seventh Day Adventists open work in Mbongo.

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	Ciyaka	*Ndulu*	*Bailundu*	*Ngalangi*	*Viye*
1885					Ciyoka[3] 1886–8 Cikunyu[3] (*Ndunduma*)[8] 1888–90
1890		Civange		Ekumbi	Kalufele
			Katisvala II[3] 1893–5		
1895			Numa II[3] 1895–6	Cihonga II	Kaninguluka
		Cipati	Hundungulu Kalakata	Ciyo	
	Cibala III[4] 1898–1904				
1900		Cisululu Kasuanje	Kalandula		
					Ciyuka[4] 1901–3
		Siekanjimba	(Mutu-ya Kevela)[2, 7] 1903		Kavova[4] 1903–15
1904	Handa III[4] 1904–11	Ndingilinya	Ciende III[3] 1904–11		
		Sihinga Congolola		Cipala	
1910					
	Atunde III[4] 1911–15		Njahulo[4] 1912–35		
1915	Cikoko[4] 1915–18				Ngungu[4] 1915–28
		Cisokolua		Kangombe	
1920	Cibala IV[4] 1920–5			Ngangawe	
				Cuvika	

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DATES	EVENTS RECORDED
●175 173 1926	'Corporative Régime' gains power in Portugal, May 28; Roman Catholics given large government subsidies and many advantages; they open many new mission stations from this time on.
1927	United Church of Canada takes over part of work of W.C.A.M. Umbundu Church of Christ organized to include work of three Protestant Missions.
1928	Currency conversion with 25 per cent. devaluation. Angola Boers return to Damaraland. Mission Philafricaine opens Evanga (Ganda) station.
1929	Completion of Benguela Ry. to frontier.
1929–30	First ordinations in Umbundu Church of Christ.
1930	W.C.A. Mission celebrates Jubilee with attendance of 12,000 Africans, many Europeans, and deputations from abroad.
1931	Completion of Katanga Ry., making connexion across Africa; opening of through traffic. Portuguese Baptists open small work at Nova Lisboa.
1935	Provincial Exposition at Nova Lisboa.
1938	H.E. President Carmona of Portugal visits Colony.
1939	World War II, Portugal neutral.
From 1941	Rapid rise of prices, rise in wages less marked.
1945–6	Visit of Minister of Colonies includes Protestant Missions.
1946	West Central Africa Regional Conference, Léopoldville, Congo Belge: African and European delegates from French, Belgian, and Portuguese colonies.

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	Ciyaka	*Ndulu*	*Bailundu*	*Ngalangi*	*Viye*
1925				Cikuetekele	
	Handa IV[4] (*Kalumbombo*)[8] 1926–8	Cihopio[4] d. 1935			
				Mbumba-Kambuakatepa	
					Ciyuka[4, 6] 1928–40
	Sakulanda[4] (*Luanjangombe IV*)[8] 1929–39				
1930				Cingelesi[4] 1931–3 Ndumbu II[4] 1933–5	
1935		(Sangombe Esita)[7] 1935–	Musita[4] 1935–8	Congolola[4] 1935–	
			Cinendele[4] 1938–		
	Cilili V[4] 1939–40				
1940	Tomasi[4] 1940–				

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NOTES

[1] Dates fixed by agreement of native tradition with historical reference.

[2] These names mentioned by European writers; native tradition with reference to them not known.

[3] Dates fixed from historical reference.

[4] Dates from native sources.

[5] Tradition mentions a solar eclipse during this reign, which would be 1886 or 1889.

[6] This is the same king as the one listed for 1901–3: he reigned twice.

[7] The names in parentheses are of men not of royal lines and not regularly enthroned, but usurpers, war leaders, or 'guarders of the stool'.

[8] The italicised names in parentheses after the names of certain kings are appelatives which they took on assuming office.

EARLY HISTORY

175 The earliest records of native migration in what is now Angola concern the warrior hordes of Jagas (Jaggas, Jakas, Iaggas, Giaghis, Giaki, Ayaka etc.), who from about 1560 onwards were reported in north-western Angola and the adjacent Kingdom of Congo.(1) Various attempts have been made to identify the Jagas. Van Wing(2) and Torday(3) hold that the name is derived from the Bayaka tribe on the middle Kwango; Battell's account would seem to identify them with the Bangala (Imbangala) of Jaga Cassange, who are known to have been invading western Angola at this time. Childs points to suggestive links of the Jagas with Ovimbundu dynasties: e.g. the Ciyaka group of Ovimbundu, who recognise the region of Cassange as the location of their earliest ancestral tombs. He also shows that certain Jaga customs as described by the earlier writers resemble those connected with Ovimbundu kingship. Childs suggests that the name *Jaga* (which seems to derive from the verb "to fight" -oku yaka; "they fight" = a yaka or vayaka) was originally a name given to these hordes or to their leaders by the African peoples whom they fought and conquered.(4)

175 177 European contacts with the people of the Benguella Highland took place in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, before the migrations had settled down. Dutch and Portuguese raids took place in 1645, 1650 and 1661, and since fire-arms appear to have been used at that time by the Africans, it seems likely that Umbundu dynasties had them when they came into the region.(5) In 1760 the throwing open of the hinterland to European traders(6) led to greatly increased commercial contact, and this in turn gave rise to wars between the native rulers and the Portuguese. In 1774-6 a war was fought between the Portuguese and their native allies and the kings of Bailundu and Cingolo. Ciyaka and neighbouring kingdoms continued to raid the European garrisons until recent times, and Europeans appear not to have penetrated Ciyaka until almost the turn of the present century.

[721]

THE DEVELOPMENT OF OVIMBUNDU TRADE

175 439 There are indications that before the end of the eighteenth century the Ovimbundu were becoming, or had become, traders. The slave-trade was formally prohibited in 1836,(7) and subsequently European traders began to move inland in greater numbers in search of ivory, settling especially in Bailundu and Viye. This began a period of great commercial development among the Ovimbundu, the principal commodities being ivory, beeswax, and, in the third quarter of the century, rubber.(8) Trading caravans of the Ovimbundu (under the names *Nambari*, *Eihenas*, *Bailundus*, or *Mbundus*) became

(1) See especially Battell, pp.19f. (2) 1921, p.106.
(3) 1925, map facing p.282.
(4) Childs, op.cit., pp.185-6. (5) Ibid., p.195.
(6) Entry of European traders to the hinterland had been forbidden by law in 1620, although the law had become largely a dead letter.
(7) Although contraband slave-trade continued until late in the nineteenth century, the slaves being used for the transport of ivory and other goods from the hinterland to the coast.
(8) These were at first one-way agreements, allowing Ovimbundu to trade in many lands, since it was to the advantage of the rulers of these countries. The Ovimbundu are said in fact to have discouraged the tribes to the east from venturing out on their own account. See Livingstone 1857, p.394, Cameron 1877, p.406.

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known throughout the territory bounded by the Congo river, the Great Lakes, and the Kalahari desert. Most other Ovimbundu kingdoms fell into line with the trading activities of Bailundu and Viye. By the middle of the century this had resulted in a loose system of alliances and mutual understandings to the effect that the traders and caravans of each kingdom would be permitted to enter or travel through the others. At time these "trade-agreements" seem to have embraced all the Umbundu-speaking peoples, but violations were frequent, especially between Viye and the Ciyaka-Cingola-Citata group. Trade-agreements were also made beyond the Umbundu-speaking area, e.g. with the Mwata Yamvo of the Lunda.(1) [484]

From roughly the turn of the twentieth century the large-scale trading activities of the Ovimbundu declined. Military occupation of Viye and Bailundu took place in 1890, and from that date European traders began to settle in Viye and Bailundu in ever-increasing numbers. In 1902 the Bailundu war occurred, after which the occupation of the whole of Umbundu country was quickly completed. This campaign paralysed trade, which was already suffering because of a great fall in rubber prices. Other factors which hastened the decline of Ovimbundu trading activities(2) include the famine in Ngangela country in 1911, the disappearance of illicit slave-traffic, and, finally, the building of the Benguella Railway (commenced in 1904), which put an end to the porterage and trading caravans of former days.(3) [721] [456]

LANGUAGE

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"Umbundu is usually(4) associated with Ambo, Herero and kindred languages. It would however seem that more comparative study is required to show how real this apparent relationship is: it appears to be especially based on the fact that Umbundu uses prefixial o- with many of its noun classes. In general structure, however, Umbundu shows remarkable similarity in grammar and vocabulary to Luena, Luchazi and other languages of the Ganguella [Ngangela] group.

Features of Umbundu which are worthy of note are:-

i. Presence of nasal vowels before and after 'l', 'h', 'v' and 'w'.

ii. In certain nasal compounds, subtraction occurs, involving the second consonant, but not the nasal, e.g. muntu is realised as ounu.

iii. Compared with the Lunda-Luena languages Umbundu exhibits an unusually large number of defective verbs.

iv. A vowel system of five vowels.

(1) These were at first one-way agreements, allowing Ovimbundu to trade in many lands, since it was to the advantage of the rulers of these countries. The Ovimbundu are said in fact to have discouraged the tribes to the east from venturing out on their own account. See Livingstone 1857, p.394, Cameron 1877, p.496.
(2) For much greater detail concerning the rise and fall of Ovimbundu trade see Childs op.cit., pp.191-215.
(3) Ibid.
(4) Duke 1945, p.181; Guthrie 1948, p.64; Childs 1949, p.8.

III. HISTORICAL SOURCES

175 The object of this chapter is the presentation of a summary of
173 literature relating to Angola from A.D. 1500 down to the present
167 day. In this literature there may be accounts of the movements of tribes which will throw some light on the origin of the Ovimbundu, and the date of their migration into the Benguela Highlands. Present-day tradition of the Ovimbundu is unanimous in declaring that the tribe came from the northeast of its present locality, but some historical justification of this belief is desirable. The word Ovimbundu ("people of the fog") may refer to the heavy morning mists of highland regions, and there is the possibility that the Ovimbundu adopted this name when they settled on the high plateau.

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121 If there is historical evidence in favor of the traditional home of the Ovimbundu being the region of the north and northeast of Angola, what was the ethnological background of these areas at the time when the Ovimbundu became detached from a matrix of northern Angolan tribes? In other words, what cultural factors are the Ovimbundu likely to have brought with them into the Benguela Highlands? The ultimate origin of these factors is a point which has not been neglected (chapter XI, "Wider Culture Contacts"), but for the moment the primary concern is the historical background of the Ovimbundu, with special reference to tribal movements and cultural traits.

As part of this historical inquiry, contacts of the Portuguese and the Ovimbundu are of importance. When and where did the Portuguese come into contact with the Ovimbundu and with what results to the indigenous culture?

127 Chapters IV–IX deal exclusively with my field work among the Ovimbundu in 1929. Therefore it is pertinent to ask to what extent the ethnological observations of travelers and early explorers will corroborate the information recorded in my own notes. Will there be contradiction or confirmation of personal observations? Possibly the ethnological notes obtained from historical sources will serve, not merely to corroborate my field work, but actually to extend the area of occurrence of important cultural traits which I noted in 1929.

The literature describing Angolan history and customs is here presented in the form of a chronological bibliography, which is annotated so as to emphasize points bearing on the purpose of this historical analysis. That there should be a fragmentary presentation of data is an inevitable consequence of the nature of the literature

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itself. Observations have been made, not in a well-ordered time sequence, but at irregular intervals. Moreover, the writings of the majority of observers have not been undertaken with any specific ethnological purpose in view. Early explorers in particular were prone to intersperse historical and ethnological notes among a mass of descriptive material relating to incidents of travel, animal life, and meteorological observations. 127

At the conclusion of this chapter an effort is made to remedy the disjointed nature of the historical evidence. This object is achieved by summarizing the points which provide an answer to the queries brought forward in the opening paragraphs of this chapter respecting the origin and cultural background of the Ovimbundu.

The Portuguese entered the Congo in 1482 under the leadership of Diego Cão (E. G. Ravenstein, The Voyages of Diego Cão, *Geog. Journ.*, 1900, pp. 625–649) and from that time onward Portuguese influence of a political and religious kind was exerted along the course of the Congo. Gradually the Portuguese established themselves on the coast of Angola. Paolo Diaz founded Loanda in 1576, and about eleven years later built the fort of Benguela. 175

The year 1590 saw the Portuguese making war in the interior of Angola against the Jaggas, a northern tribe among whom Andrew Battell was held in honorable captivity as a leader against the Portuguese and all natives of northern Angola, who were exploited by the Jaggas. In 1645 another Portuguese punitive expedition penetrated the interior as far as Bailundu, the center from which the strongest caravans of Umbundu traders and slavers set out for central Africa.

Cacunda in the southwest of Angola was founded in 1682, and a century later the coastal town of Mossamedes became a starting point from which early exploration penetrated the interior in search of the sources of the Cunene River. (For the details of Portuguese penetration of Angola see Bibliography: T. E. Bowditch; R. F. Burton; E. G. Ravenstein; T. Lewis.)

When the Portuguese landed at the mouth of the Congo at the close of the fifteenth century they came into contact with the kingdom of Congo, ruled with great pomp and ceremony at Ambasas, about 150 miles inland, and identical with the São Salvador of the Portuguese. The old kingdom of Congo was made up of six strong clans of whose rivalry the Portuguese took advantage to strengthen their own commercial and political position. The slave trade was considered to be as respectable as it was lucrative, and there is no doubt

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175 that the Church participated actively (T. Lewis, The Old Kingdom of Kongo, *Geog. Journ.*, 1908, pp. 598–600).

Political influence of the Portuguese, working often through the agency of Jesuit priests, led to factions within the Congo Empire, and the resulting disturbances caused movements of peoples that affected the whole of northern Angola and the population of the Benguela Highlands.

Portuguese penetration of the hinterland of Angola, especially from Loanda to Bihé, was concerned with attempts to subjugate native tribes, the establishment of trading posts, and the encouragement of the slave trade (S. Marquardsen, Angola, 1928, pp. 6–10).

459 721 The value of the Portuguese as allies of Umbundu caravans from Bihé lay in their ability to supply guns and powder to their native henchmen, who gave something more than military service in return. In response to Portuguese demand for slaves and ivory, Umbundu caravans made long journeys into the Congo basin, Rhodesia, south and southwest Angola, and possibly across Africa to lakes Tanganyika and Nyasa. The arms supplied in exchange for ivory and slaves must have helped the Ovimbundu in all their predatory excursions.

648 Thus the Ovimbundu were, in the early centuries of contact with the Portuguese, invaders encouraged in the building up of their tribal life and resources. Never were the Portuguese strong enough completely to subjugate northern Angola. Relationships with natives, especially the Bihéan section of the Ovimbundu, were directed toward alliances on a commercial basis. The political result of this was a combination of the Portuguese and the stronger tribes for the exploitation of the weaker.

167 177 The historical ethnology of the southwest Congo is so complex that the elements are difficult to disentangle. The number of tribes concerned is great, and their movements are not easy to follow; but a gradual extension of people from the Congo in a southwesterly direction through Lunda to the Benguela Highlands (1600–1800) seems to be the summation of all the conflict. I regard the Ovimbundu as the most southerly branch of these mass movements, during which they received a discipline that enabled them to make their home in central Angola, despite opposition from the Portuguese and earlier arrivals.

114 For these conclusions reliance has been placed on the extensive field work and historical analyses of E. Torday and T. A. Joyce, whose "Notes on the Ethnography of the Bambala" (*J.R.A.I.*, XXXV, pp. 399–426) have proved of particular value in this connection.

174 there is tribal and cultural miscegenation. Both Umbundu and
171 Vachokue languages are spoken; boys of Ngalangi were seen to wear
[281] initiation costumes similar to those worn at Cangamba by the Vachokue, but on proceeding farther westward into territory exclusively occupied by the Ovimbundu, such initiation ceremonies are either absent or attenuated in ritual.

144 Elende, one center of research among the Ovimbundu, repre-
101 sents the purest Umbundu speech and culture observable at the present day. But in chapter IV some physical resemblance of the Ovimbundu to the Vachokue is noted. Warfare commonly resulted in the taking of slaves, a fact which might account for an apparent infusion of Vachokue blood in some of the Ovimbundu.

174 The historical data suggest a northern or northeastern starting
167 point of Umbundu migrations. Therefore an inquiry into the ethnology of these areas will be useful in showing the kind of culture with which the Ovimbundu were in contact before their settlement in the Benguela Highlands. If historical sources disclose the nature of northern Angolan culture from the year A.D. 1500 onward, such evidence can then be considered in relation to cultural traits of the Ovimbundu at the present day.

The establishment of strong cultural resemblances between extant Umbundu culture and older cultural patterns of northern Angola, would tend to strengthen the evidence of history respecting the northern origin of the Ovimbundu.

131 The regions dealt with in the following summary of ethnological
174 facts are the Cabinda Enclave to the north of the Congo estuary, the region of San Salvador, the hinterlands of Loanda and Benguela, and the area of northern Angola between Lat. 7° and 9° S. and Long. 13° to 22° E. This covers the whole area with which the Ovimbundu are likely to have been in contact before entering their present home.

175 My survey begins with the observations of Andrew Battell in
101 1596. His account deals mainly with the northwestern part of Angola, a country bordering on and actually including territory now occupied by the Ovimbundu, who in all probability came in contact with the Jaggas, whose habits of life are described by Battell.

Torday and Joyce identify the Jaggas with the present-day Bagalia, whose cultural resemblances to the Ovimbundu are examined later. In my opinion, the Jaggas correspond well with the Bibéan section of the Ovimbundu, an itinerant and exceedingly warlike people.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

As early as 1600 there were cattle as far north as Benguela, and the Jaggas regarded these as a most valuable part of their plunder. Palms are a characteristic part of the vegetation of Angola north of the Benguela Highlands. Evidently the Jaggas moved extensively in northern Angola because they cut down palms for making wine (Battell, p. 30). The usual method is to tap the top of a standing tree, but the Jaggas were an itinerant people who did not cultivate palms. 175 171 [824]

Sprinkling the blood of sacrificed animals on a newly kindled fire I have mentioned in connection with Umbundu rites celebrating the founding of a new village. The Jaggas carried out this ceremony before a raiding expedition, when cows and other animals were sacrificed (Battell, p. 33). Battell mentions the use of red *tukula* wood for personal decoration. This wood (*Pterocarpus tinctorius*) is used in many parts of Angola at the present time. [824]

Reference to Battell confirms the information given to me in relation to an old iron gong obtained at Ngalangi. He says (p. 20), "The general did strike his gong, which is an instrument of war that soundeth like a bell, and presently made an oration with a loud voice." [534]

Battell reported that the Jaggas wore beads of ostrich eggshell. Ravenstein, the editor of this volume in the Hakluyt Series, seems to doubt this statement, saying, "There are no ostriches in Angola, and as to beads made of ostrich eggs I can give no explanation." I noted the presence of captive ostriches in southern Angola as far north as Gamboa. The Vakuanyama women greatly value their long necklaces of ostrich-eggshell beads. Necklaces made in the north of Angola are traded to the south and conversely, each kind of necklace having a high value due to remoteness of origin. This instance, like many other points, confirms the reliability of Battell's observations in Angola. [237] [114]

Father Jerome Merolla (1682) describes the poison ordeal which was used from the Congo estuary to San Salvador (Churchills' Voyages, II, p. 675). "The aforesaid oath is administered to the supposed traitor by a sort of wizard, who, making a certain composition out of the juices of herbs, serpent's flesh, pulp of fruits, and divers other things, gives it to the supposed delinquent to drink. If guilty (as they tell you) he will immediately fall down in a swoon or trembling to the ground." The marimba was used, and a double iron gong was carried before a chief and struck by an attendant. [695]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

175 171 [412] O. Dapper (Description de l'Afrique, 1732, p. 369) shows a scene in which an ax, such as I obtained from the Vaseie country, is being used for beheading a slave.

Cavazzi (Istorica descrizione, etc., Bologna, 1687) describes the three kingdoms of Congo, Matamba, and northern Angola. The [325] poison ordeal, the scapegoat, the blacksmith's bellows (pp. 101, 170) [534] are all traits known to the Ovimbundu. The musical instrument made from a large gourd, which has a ridged board attached for rubbing with a stick, is the type I collected. Cavazzi pictures the double iron gong and the long drum held between the knees. He [782] also shows a rain-maker (p. 214) and the sacrifice of two hundred victims at the accession of a king (p. 210).

174 243 Consideration of the history of maize in Africa is of importance in connection with these early writings, as this grain is the staple agricultural product of the Ovimbundu. I am indebted to Dr. [113] Berthold Laufer for access to his unpublished research on this subject. From the following facts one may assume that, in all probability, the maize culture of the Ovimbundu was derived from the Congo region before their migration into the Benguela Highlands.

175 243 Father Jerome Merolla remarks that maize was growing in the neighborhood of San Salvador (1683–92). The native names were *mampanzi* and *massambuta*; from this corn an alcoholic beverage was prepared. According to Cavazzi (Ehrmann, Geschichte der merkwürdigsten Reisen, XIII, 1794) maize was not intensively cultivated by the Negroes of lower Guinea, though it thrives well and may be [177] harvested twice or thrice a year. The natives said that the grain was brought by the Portuguese, but they did not esteem it highly, and were accustomed to use it as food for pigs.

Bosman (p. 312) records that prior to the arrival of the Portuguese, Negroes were entirely ignorant of *milho* ("maize"). The account of Duarte Lopez preserved by Filippo Pigafetta states that the Negroes consider maize the vilest of all grains, so that it is given to swine. This contempt and lack of knowledge of the food value, combined with ignorance of methods of preparation, suggest a recent introduction (Pigafetta, translation by M. Hutchinson, 1881, p. 40). Dapper (Description de l'Afrique, 1732, p. 345) also mentions the cultivation of maize. Battell lived as prisoner in northern Angola about the year 1600, consequently his records of the use of the great Guinea wheat (maize), which the natives call *mas-imparto*, give early evidence for the use of this grain (Hakluyt Soc., 1901, pp. 9, 11, 67).

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

The foregoing facts, when compared with field work among the Ovimbundu, indicate that the old culture of the Congo and northern Angola bears a strong resemblance to Umbundu culture at the present day. A more detailed analysis of this resemblance is made in chapter X. 174

The following notes dealing with exploration in Angola (1800–1930) are adduced for critical comparison with my own observations among the Ovimbundu. 175 171

The work of Sir R. F. Burton describing the exploration of Lacerda and other Portuguese pioneers, is more useful for geographical than for ethnological information. Lacerda's journey to Cambe, south of Lake Moero, was performed in 1798. A mention of veneration for the dead and consultation of the deceased on all occasions of war or of good fortune, is made (p. 127). These are important points in the present tribal life of the Ovimbundu. [114] [769]

Bowditch (1824) writes from information given to him by Almeida and Saldanha. There are valuable references to the Vacilenge, a people adjacent to the Ovimbundu, who refused to kill their cattle, "rather than do which they will endure famine to extremity." This note was made about Long. 15° E. and Lat. 15° S. (p. 34). The cattle were milked, and cattle-raiding by the Ovimbundu was common at this time. Many present-day Ovimbundu do not milk their cattle, but the Vacilenge still follow their milking custom observed before 1824. 175 101 234

Livingstone's journey through northeast and northern Angola in 1853 contains references to the Vachokue who seemed bent on plunder (I, p. 370). Livingstone noted cotton spinning, which I recorded as an occupation of males of the Ovimbundu at Elende. Livingstone, like other early travellers, encountered caravans of Bihéans (Ovimbundu) bearing elephants' tusks and beeswax, commodities, which, along with slaves, formed the chief merchandise of these caravans from the Benguela Highlands (p. 466). Livingstone notes and sketches (Plate XIII, Fig. 10) the double-handled hoe (p. 442) which is still used. 175 171 [illegible] [439] [412]

J. J. Monteiro (I, p. 61) saw the poison ordeal administered. The poison itself was prepared from the thick hard bark of a large tree (*Erythrophlæum guineense*). The place of observation was Mongue Grande, just south of the Congo estuary, and again Monteiro was present when the poison cup was given to two women at Ambrisette. Of this ordeal there is more to be said when discussing the culture contacts of the Ovimbundu, because the ordeal is a basic factor of [695] [829]

171 wide distribution in Africa (C. Wiedemann, 1909) and the ceremony
175 still survives among the Ovimbundu in modified form.

[114] Though an informative writer, Monteiro is sometimes vague; he says (I, p. 278) that circumcision is a universal custom among the blacks of Angola. In view of the extent of Angola, the diversity of tribes, and the fact that Monteiro traveled over only a small part of the country, this information is misleading.

Monteiro is the only writer in whose works I have found a reference to the Vasele tribe; probably no part of Angola has been so neglected as the Esele country in the hinterland of Novo Redondo. At the present day the Vasele have a reputation for cannibalism. [266] Monteiro saw human flesh eaten at Cuacra, while the skulls of the victims were placed on adjacent trees. Monteiro states (II, p. 167) that on the death of a king the Mucelis (Vasele) put out all the fires in the kingdom; these were relighted by the succeeding king who [321] used fire produced by rubbing two sticks together. The flat beads of shell called *dongue*, made from *Achatina monetaria* (II, p. 168), are made today and traded to the far south of Angola, where their novelty assures them a value far beyond their intrinsic worth. I was fortunate in obtaining an example of the old beheading ax mentioned by Monteiro (II, p. 157) and sketched by Cavazzi (p. 210). Par- [262] boiled and roasted rats were offered to me as food; Monteiro mentions the offering of a roasted rat on a skewer (I, p. 99).

The account of Commander V. L. Cameron, who left Zanzibar for his journey across Africa in 1873, mentions several points of anthropological importance in relation to the Angolan section of his [756] journey. Cameron saw a net-covered medicine-man of the Kibokue (Vachokue) wearing a mask and a kilt of grass (p. 384). The function [524] of this man was to frighten devils from the woods. The contest in which boys discharge their arrows at a rolling root was seen by Cameron near Kagnombe (Cangamba?). Skulls of victims killed in [787] war were spiked on poles (p. 399). The diviner was followed by attendants who struck iron gongs, while the diviner himself shook a rattle made of basket-work in the form of a dumb-bell (p. 404). Cameron gives an accurate description of the divination basket and its use without going into details. These I have been able to supply [482] (chapter IX). The explorer met caravans of Bibéans, renowned carriers then as they are today. They were usually drunk and abusive; in some instances they attempted to rob the stragglers. 000 The use of caterpillars as food is noted (p. 416): "A man cut open

The use of caterpillars as food is noted (p.416): "A man cut open [262]
a large cocoon, extracted the contents, and smacked his lips with 171
great gusto." My field notes mention the use of caterpillars as food. 175

Capello and Ivens (1877–80) remark on the burial places of [766]
hunters which are distinguishable by the skulls of antelopes, buffalo, and hippopotamuses, stuck on upright poles, mixed with skulls of oxen killed in honor of the defunct. The writers noted that a heap of stones protected the body. I photographed two types of cairn in the regions of Ganda and Luimbale respectively. Capello and Ivens are not precise in their locality, but I judge it to have been Long. 17° E. and Lat. 13° S., a considerable distance from my own observations (Plates XXXII, Fig. 1; LXXIV, Fig. 1).

I photographed the stilt-walkers at the final stages of the initiation [481]
ceremonies at Cangamba. These men had no costumes; on the [292]
contrary they were almost naked but were covered with white clay. Capello and Ivens (p. 295), saw a stilt-walker with a feathered mask and a netting costume. Such attire I saw on an Uluchazi medicine-man, but not on the stilt-walkers (Plate LXXXI, Figs. 1, 2).

I was unable to obtain information about the stilt-walkers, but 693
Capello states that they castigated misdemeanants, punished shameless women, and accused criminals. Capello and Ivens were 187 miles to the northwest of my area of observation. The Uluchazi medicine-man, who appeared with the stilt-walkers during my visits, was said to make bad magic for women. The men ignored him but women gathered round in a derisive way; they quickly scattered when he pursued them.

Serpa Pinto, who made his journey across Angola in 1878, has 175
so many references to customs and objects still extant, that I propose 114
to tabulate his observations because of their value in showing the preservation of indigenous traits in spite of Portuguese contacts.

The body of a chief is buried with a covering of oxhide. Many 175
oxen are sacrificed at the death of a king. The heir to the deceased 766
is bound to sacrifice his whole herd in order to regale his people and give peace to the departed (S. Pinto, I, p. 63). The Ovimbundu conform at the present time to similar methods of burial and sacrifice.

Near Huambo, Serpa Pinto saw in every village a kind of "temple 175
for conversation." This is the *ombanda*, that I have described and [345]
photographed (Plate XLVIII, Fig. 1). It is the house in which all males foregather for the evening meal, which is brought by their women (I, p. 96).

The gathering and eating of caterpillars is described. This con- [262]
tinues today (I, p. 120).

175 [316] [325] Serpa Pinto saw shafts for the working of iron ore in the neighborhood of Cubango. The ore was mixed with charcoal and smelted in shallow pits. It is stated that the iron was sometimes tempered with ox-grease and salt. The bellows are of the type made at Elende (I, p. 128). Of the tempering process I have no confirmation.

175 787 [764] Somewhere near Bihé Serpa Pinto saw the ceremony of questioning a corpse which was made to sway to and fro, the people believing all the while that it does so without human intervention. The diviner declared that the soul of a dead person will tell who caused the death (I, p. 130). I observed and photographed this ceremony (Plate XLV, Fig. 1).

[695] The ordeal of the poison cup is described; blood-letting, and divination by shaking articles in a basket are also mentioned. Pinto says that in the articles that appear uppermost the diviner reads what his hearers are desirous of learning of the past, present, or future. Sorcery and rain-making are likewise briefly mentioned (I, p. 132). The divination basket, the poison ordeal, and rain-making, are Umbundu cultural traits today.

171 224 Here Pinto illustrates the existing practice of mounting the skulls of animals killed by a hunter on a pole in the village. There is a further reference to this custom among the Ambuellas (I, p. 333). These instances, combined with those personally noted, give a wide distribution for the practice (I, p. 177).

175 [304] Pinto saw the operation of tooth mutilation among the Luimba. The operation was performed with a knife which was struck by repeated light blows (I, p. 209).

[711] Pinto illustrates arrowheads in use in 1879 (I, pp. 277, 346). These are exactly the same as those made and used in 1929 (Plate XVII, Figs. 1–9).

[412] Axes used by the Luchazi are sketched with a detail that shows the old forms to persist without alteration (II, p. 36).

[321] Water-pipes made from horns and gourds by the Luina of eastern Angola are of the forms now used in that region, also by the Ovimbundu of the present day (II, pp. 33, 37).

175 114 For use in checking and supplementing my observations Serpa Pinto's book was found to be of the greatest service, though the precise locality was sometimes difficult to identify. This explorer, in common with others, scattered his ethnological observations among descriptions of the route and botanical, zoological, and other notes.

Lux traveled from Loanda due east, following the Kwanza on the northern bank between 9° and 10° S. Lat., and so into Lunda.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

He draws the crescentic arrowhead (p. 123) still common among the Ovimbundu and Vachokue; the double iron gong (p. 122); and the musical bow, which he calls a viola (p. 121). 175 114 [534]

Sogaur states that iron-working had an advanced technique at Dindo, more than half a century ago. According to Sogaur, the blacksmith was using scrap iron from European sources (II, p. 14). 175 326

Perhaps the most valuable of Chatelain's books is "Fifty Folk Tales of Angola." The stories are accompanied by translations and ethnological notes, the most important of which are references to the carrying of a corpse on a pole; the building of a cairn of stones over the corpse of a hunter; matrilineal descent and the power of the maternal uncle over the persons of his nieces and nephews (sisters' children). My observations included some details respecting the pawning of a sister's children to redeem the debts of their mother's brother. Chatelain adds that sisters' children are successors to private property and chieftainship (pp. 8–10). My notes agree that property is inherited by children of a deceased man's sister, but my informants said that a new chieftain is normally the eldest son of the principal wife of the dead chief. Chatelain's folklore stories, fifty in number, relate chiefly to animals; this was the only kind of story told to me, but W. C. Bell has recorded a few tales of another type. 173 [114] [764] [611] [604] [428] [538]

Marquardsen (1928) devotes only one-fourth of his book to the ethnology of Angola, which he treats in a very general way; there is no section dealing specifically with any particular tribe. The author calls attention to Chapman's observation of rock paintings of South African Bushman type, between Cuma and Luimbale in northwest Angola. I have elsewhere remarked on the occasional occurrence of physical types which show a strain of Bushman blood. Today Bushmen penetrate southern Angola from the Kalahari (Plate LXIX, Figs. 1, 2), but their presence in times past or present does not affect the course of history or the data of ethnology to an appreciable extent. 114 177 [531] [144]

Marquardsen gives some notes of a general kind on Vaheneca, Mahuila and other tribes of southwest Angola. The suggestion is feasible that the Umbundu name Suku, for a supreme being, is the same as the Nzambi of Lunda and the Congo. Marquardsen refers to the importance of the maternal uncle in Umbundu society, to the poison ordeal, and to the burial of an Umbundu chief in oxhide, all of which points were recorded in my observations at Elende. 114 101

Ferreira Diniz's book is unobtainable, but, judging from the summary given in *Anthropos* (XX, 1925, pp. 321–331), the information was collected by a questionnaire widely distributed among adminis-

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

114 trative posts. I agree that people between Caconda and Huila
101 represent a racial mixture of the Ovimbundu and the Ovambo. The record speaks of painting-houses for girls at Cabinda, an item which agrees with reports from other sources. The jottings concerning tribes from Cabinda to the far south of Angola are too vague to be used in ethnological work with confidence.

There are many points on which the work of A. Schachtzabel should be consulted for the purpose of making comparisons with my
[621] own observations. The chief of these are a note and photograph on
[281] village construction (p. 130); the musical bow (p. 32); the loom
[175] (plate VI); transmigration of the soul of a chief into an animal (p. 51);
[524] and the game of mancala (p. 52). My observations of initiation at
[881] Katoko, Ngalangi, and Cangamba agree well with that of Schachtzabel at Katoko, but I was able to obtain more detail and more
[283] numerous photographs of the ritual of initiation. The spinning of cotton (p. 143) is exactly the process so frequently witnessed now at Elende. Iron-working (p. 111) appears to be comparable with the technique at Elende, but Schachtzabel seems to have missed the ritual. I was not so fortunate as this author in finding the old type of iron-smelting furnace in use.

114 The work of Statham is devoted primarily to hunting and descrip-
136 tions of plant and animal life. The chapter given to a casual description of people among whom he passed is not useful as ethnology; but the book is of service in providing a background of natural history. Information on the tsetse fly in Angola (p. 294) assists ethnological work by showing the determining effect of this biological factor.
[231] Presence of the fly is prohibitive to cattle-keeping, therefore cattle are not kept along the river courses which are infested with this pest.

114 Alexander Barns made no pretence of writing more than a travel book; nevertheless he publishes photographs of ethnological value, gives useful historical summaries, and deals with economic problems of production and transportation.

114 Tucker's book "Drums in the Darkness," though written to
175 interest the American public in mission work, contains many ethnological statements. The chief of these relate to the structure of the compound (p. 37); the dress of women (p. 39); naming of twins and triplets; and other items which agree well with data from the district in which I worked. There are notes on drum signals (p. 74) and
[202] cannibalism (p. 77). Apparently drum signals were in use at Bihé half a century ago. Forty years ago a slave was killed and eaten
[266] at the installation ceremonies for a new king, a point that was noted

3:Hambly E-5 (1929-1930)1934 FP3 Mbundu FP3

in the works of Battell, Cavazzi, and other early writers. A description of the whipping of boys at initiation (p. 99) agrees with my own records, but details of the period and place are not given by Tucker. Questioning a corpse (p. 102) is a ceremony I have witnessed and described, but the instance referred to by Tucker relates to the interrogation of the corpse of a chief with regard to his choice of a successor; there are laws of succession, but these may be waived. The ceremony described in my monograph was conducted to discover the cause of death and not to determine succession. If Tucker has any detailed information with regard to puberty ceremonies for girls his reticence is regrettable (p. 142). Tucker says that suicide among women is common (p. 143). A mention of *ocisunji*, a feast for spirits at which meat is offered to idols, is interesting (p. 168) but details are lacking, and the use of the word idols is ambiguous. The information respecting use of charms is corroborative of my own observations in two other centers, Elende and Ngalangi.

The most recent publication on the ethnology of Angola is that of F. and W. Jaspert of the Städtisches Völkermuseum, Frankfort, 1930. Their journey was undertaken primarily to make collections for a museum, but linguistic and ethnological information was recorded among several tribes, notably the Kimbundu, Vachokue, Luchazi, Luimba, and Kusongo. The farthest point attained in a southerly direction was just north of Kipungo, and the general line of march was from Benguela to the northeast, into Lunda. There is very little overlapping in the work of the Jasperts and myself. My itinerary took me to the extreme south into the Vakuanyama country, and to the far east of Moxico among the Vachokue.

My work is presented as a monograph on the Ovimbundu only, and of their culture I treat exclusively, with some reference to the culture contacts observed on all sides of them. The Jasperts do not give an entire section to any one tribe; but combine their information respecting the tribes in a concurrent way, under such subjects as technology, language, and art.

If the sections relating to history and languages are excluded there remain a hundred pages, only one-sixth of which refer to the Ovimbundu; but there is a difficulty in reading through the book without being confused as to the tribe and exact locality under discussion.

The pages devoted to a comparative vocabulary form an important part of the work, and one which I barely touched, though I prepared an outline of Umbundu grammar and made dictaphone records of the

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CHAPTER I

THE OLD SOCIETY

1. *History*

The Ovimbundu, who live on the Benguela Highland[1] of central Angola, have been in contact with Europeans since their emergence as a people in the sixteenth–seventeenth centuries. Dr. Childs has provided an excellent account of their history,[2] based on the collection of traditional narratives and a study of the published sources in English, German, and Portuguese.

The Ovimbundu arose from a fusion of two stocks, one that of the 'Jagas', a conquering race who invaded the Benguela Highland in the sixteenth–seventeenth centuries, and the indigenous occupants of the area who were culturally and linguistically related to the peoples who now live in south-west Angola.[3] The Jagas were described in some detail by the English sailor Andrew Battell[4] who was their prisoner for some time at the beginning of the seventeenth century. He tells us that they were warlike cannibals who recruited their numbers by taking adolescents from the peoples they conquered.[5] This society did not reproduce itself normally by descent since all children born were put to death.[6] He locates them geographically in the Amboim–Cela–Quibala area[7] to the north of the present Umbundu territory. Cavazzi writing in the later seventeenth

[1] In Portuguese, Planalto de Benguela.

[2] Childs, pp. 164–215.

[3] Ibid. p. 190.

[4] Ravenstein (Ed.). *The Strange Adventures of Andrew Battell.* Hakluyt Society, London 1901.

[5] Ravenstein, p. 33.

[6] Ibid. p. 32.

[7] Ibid. pp. 84, 85; Childs, p. 86.

[p. xviii is blank - Analyst]

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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175 century gives a broadly similar account,[8] among other information giving us the titles of some of the Umbundu ministers, thus Mani-Curio resembles Mwekalia, and Tendala Tjandala.[9] In the same period the Jagas appear in what is now southern Umbundu country.[10] According to Baumann[11] and Estermann[12] they raided and conquered some of the south-western people of the Nyaneka-Humbi group. At the end of the eighteenth century the Jagas and the Ovimbundu still formed distinctive [101] groups, and in the nineteenth century the word Jaga was still used to refer to the Umbundu rulers.[13]

Ethnologists have shown much interest in the question of the origin and subsequent travels of the Jagas.[14] Battell tells us that in a Jaga camp of several thousand persons there would be only twelve or fourteen persons who were of original Jaga stock, the rest recruited *en marche*.[15] There is some evidence to show that the core of some at least of the Jaga hordes were Lunda from the kingdom of Mwata Yamvo. Thus the Imbangala people of Cassange[16] claim to have originated from the migrants from the Northern Lunda kingdom. Both Battell at the beginning of the seventeenth century and Pinheiro de Lacerda at the end of the eighteenth tell us that the Jaga called themselves Imbangala.[17] The Hungarian explorer L. Magyar collected in the 000

[8] J. B. Labat, *Relation historique de l'Etiopie occidentale*. Paris 1732. (Translated from the Italian original of Cavazzi.) For the Jagas see Vol. II, pp. 88–303. On infanticide see pp. 114–15, which states that all children born inside a camp and male children born outside a camp were put to death. Presumably female children born outside a camp were spared. Cadornega states that a woman was forbidden under pain of death to give birth in a camp. Is this simply a purification taboo which Battell mistook for a rule of general infanticide? Battell seems fairly reliable, and it is possible that there had been a change of custom between Battell's contacts in about 1600, when the Jagas were simply nomadic raiders, and Cadornega's contacts of about 1670–80, when they were ruling settled states. There is some evidence for such a change in Cavazzi-Labat, who dates it around 1648.

[9] Childs, p. 187.

[10] Ibid. p. 195.

[11] H. Baumann, *Paideuma*, April 1936, pp. 118–51.

[12] C. Estermann, *Etnografia do Sudoeste de Angola* Vol. II (Lisbon 1957), pp. 26–29.

[13] Childs, p. 188 and sources cited there.

[14] Ravenstein, Introduction; Childs, pp. 181–90.

[15] Ravenstein, p. 33.

[16] F. Travassos Valdez. *Six Years of a Traveller's Life in Western Africa*, London, 1861. Vol. II, Chapter V.

[17] Ravenstein, p. 84; P. M. de Lacerda in *Annaes Maritimos e Coloniaes* 3a serie, p. 486 ff.

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173 The Hungarian explorer L. Magyar collected in the

middle of the nineteenth century, in the eastern Umbundu kingdom of Bie, an historical legend which linked Bie origins to the kingdom of Mwata Yamvo.[18] Childs has suggested[19] that this legend was in fact not of Umbundu origin since later investigators from Serpa Pinto[20] (1878) to Childs himself (1938) have found that Bie traditions emphasized the local origins of the dynasty. This may of course be a case of the African tendency to manipulate historical narratives to accord with social relationships. It may be suggested that the Lunda traditions, which the core of the Jaga hordes carried with them, became diluted by the recruitment from the conquered peoples, and that the link between the Umbundu royal houses and the Northern Lunda were forgotten because the kings of the Ovimbundu felt no need, unlike the weak Luena and Ndembu chiefs,[21] to prop up their position by stressing their links with the mighty Mwata Yamvo.

175 177 By the end of the eighteenth century the Umbundu kingdoms that were to survive until the end of Umbundu independence were already well established.[22] In 1769 the first Portuguese fort in the Benguela Highland, that at Caconda, was established, and a few years later a king of Bie was to owe his throne to Portuguese intervention.[23] Trade in slaves had begun with the 175 Jagas; but other items such as beeswax and ivory were bought 177 by the bare-footed Kimbundu traders who came from the 439 Portuguese settlements on the Cuanza (founded between 1582 and 1671); and by 1782 there existed small colonies of Portuguese traders in Bie and Caconda.[24]

Portuguese political influence was weak, and the kings con-

[18] L. Magyar, *Reisen in Sud-Afrika*, Pest and Leipzig, 1859, pp. 266–269.

[19] Childs, p. 173.

[20] A. Serpa Pinto, *How I Crossed Africa*, London, 1881. Vol. I, pp. 156–60.

[21] For Luena and Ndembu chiefs, see C. M. N. White, 'Clan, chieftainship, and slavery in Luvale political organization' (*Africa*, January 1957), and V. W. Turner, *Schism and Continuity in an African Society*, Manchester, 1957. For African attitudes to the recording of the past see J. A. Barnes, 'History in a Changing Society'. *Rhodes-Livingstone Journal* 1951, No. 11, Ian Cunnison, *History on the Lunda*, Rhodes-Livingstone Papers, No. 21, and L. Bohannan, 'A Genealogical Charter', *Africa*, October 1952. Mr. White informs me that the Luena regard the Bie kingdom as being of Northern Lunda origin.

[22] Childs, pp. 167–8.

[23] Ibid., pp. 174, 195.

[24] Ibid., p. 198.

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tinued to engage in warfare. However, trade became increasingly important as the Ovimbundu realized the advantage of their position in between the coastal towns of Benguela and Catumbela, and the tribes of the interior. By the middle of the nineteenth century Ovimbundu were travelling throughout the area bounded by the Congo River, the Great Lakes and the Kalahari, and even transcontinental journeys were made. The Ovimbundu carried with them cloths, guns, and rum which they exchanged for ivory, slaves, and wax, to which must be added corn and palm-oil, these latter, however, obtained not from the far interior but from inside or near Umbundu land. The safety of the Umbundu caravans was preserved by the negotiation of treaties with the local rulers, and by agreements (not always satisfactorily kept) between the different Umbundu kingdoms.[25]

From about 1874 rubber became important in Umbundu trade, and it is in the period from then until 1911,[26] when the caravan trade collapsed, that the Ovimbundu knew a prosperity which they have hardly recovered today.[27] It is in this period too that there occurred both the loss of Umbundu independence and the establishment of the missions. In 1890 Ndunduma, the king of Bie, was defeated and deposed, and in 1896 Numa, the king of Bailundo attacked, disastrously, the fort which his predecessors had allowed to be established near the capital. In 1902–3 a widespread revolt, known as the Bailundo war, broke out against the Portuguese, the traders being killed, and the forts besieged. The reasons for this revolt, whose leader Mutuya-Kevela was a minister of the Bailundo court, seem to have been injustices on the part of the white population, and possibly a fall in rubber prices. After 1903 the remaining parts of Umbundu country were brought under effective European rule,

[25] Magyar, pp. 292–9; Childs, pp. 203–5.

[26] Childs following A. Bastos, *Monografia de Catumbella* (*Bol. Soc. Geog. Lisboa*, 1910, pp. 74–81, 105–9, 141–5, 180–5, 225–8, 251–5, 279–85) divides the rubber trade into three periods: the rise of the trade 1874–86, the boom 1886–1900, and the decline 1900–11.

[27] I have heard it said by old men who had taken part in the caravan journeys, and by a local mulatto trader that the Ovimbundu of that period had more clothes than they have now. For Angolan economics after 1911 see Henrique Galvão and Carlos Selvagem, *Imperio Ultramarino Portugues*, Vol. III, pp. 124–39, Lisboa, 1952, and Clement Egerton, *Angola in Perspective*, London, 1957, pp. 106–19.

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175 648 and the European population greatly increased.[28] In some areas at this time a confused situation arose, in which 'robber barons', white and black, tyrannized over chiefs and villagers [567] and engaged in the still vigorous slave trade, which now had acquired a few disguises on the coast.[29]

In 1911 the rubber trade ended, and about the same time slavery and the slave trade were effectively suppressed.[30] From this time onwards, too, civil administration began to be effective [496] and the Benguela Railway became the most important link between the coast and the interior.[31] The trade disappeared, powers of the chiefs declined. The missions, both Catholic and [297] Protestant, which had relatively little influence during the rubber trade period, gained more and more converts.[32]

101 2. *Ethnography*

Between the Ovimbundu and the sea lie the Hanya, the Nganda, and the Tjisanji tribes of whom little is known except that the Hanya and Nganda seem to be culturally related to the Ovimbundu.[33] To the south are the Nyaneka-Humbi group, cattle-keeping peoples who are culturally and linguistically related to the Ovimbundu, but who did not participate in the [177] trade.[34] To the east lie the Ngangela[35], the Luimbi, and the

[28] Childs, pp. 210–11.

[29] For an account of Umbundu country at this time see H. W. Nevison, *A Modern Slavery*, New York, 1906. In Gumba I was told that Mutu-ya-Kevela the leader of the 1902–3 revolt had raided villages for slaves but that Samakaka whom Childs (p. 22) describes as a robber baron was spoken of favourably.

[30] Slavery had been legally suppressed from 1878. The slaves were called by other names but no effective change was made till 1910. See A. Bastos, *Monografia de Catumbella* in *Bol. Soc. Geog. Lisboa*, 1910 (pp. 74–81, 105–9, 141–55, 180–5, 225–8, 251–5, 279–5).

[31] Childs, p. 228.

[32] Ibid., pp. 220–23. Personal information.

[33] Ibid., p. 8.

[34] On these peoples see Estermann, *Etnografia do Sudoeste de Angola*, Vol. II.

[35] A tribe using this word as the root of the tribal name is to be found to the south-east of Umbundu country in the area round Vila Artur de Paiva. Padre A. Van Horrik, formerly of the Missão Católica de Cubango, tells me that the map contained in M. McCulloch, *The Southern Lunda and Related Peoples*, (London, 1951) should show the Ngangela as occupying much of the area actually assigned to the Mbwela and the south-eastern Ovimbundu. Mbwela does not seem to be the name any tribe uses for itself (Private information, Estermann and Van Horrik).

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switching to Umbundu or Portuguese for addressing an African, whereas Portuguese is the language used at the Catholic missions even between non-Portuguese.

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The African Catholic priests then have approximate equality and identity of status with their white confreres within the hierarchic framework of the diocese of Nova Lisboa; the Ovimbundu pastors lack this equality and identity but instead possess greater independence and opportunities for leadership within the Umbundu Native Church, which functions as a partly autonomous body.[19] The difference in functions of the priests and pastors is related to the ultimate aims of missionary action; for the Catholic missions the establishment of a local clergy is part of the complete incorporation of Ovimbundu into the universal Church; for the Protestants the establishment of a local clergy is part of the building up of a totally independent local church.

M 121 A M 797 563

I attempt later in this work to show what roles the missions play in social life among the Ovimbundu and in the relations between the 'civilized' and native population. Here it should be noted that it is the missions rather than commerce or the Government which have opened status-giving positions to the Ovimbundu. The clergy have higher statuses in the total Angolan society than do any other of the *assimilados*. They combine this high status *vis-à-vis* the Europeans with leadership in groupings which include the ordinary villagers, unlike the various welfare societies in which the *assimilados* associate.

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So much then for the general pattern of cities, communications, and trains, of administration, missionaries, and traders. I now turn to the particular features of the neighbourhood where I lived. Bimbe is said to derive from the name of a princess (Mbimbi) who ruled as a vassal of the king of Bailundo.[20] Here at the beginning of this century Samakaka, a

[19] The missions provide supervision and specialist services including agricultural instruction, community development, education, and health. Village work and actual pastoral activity is the responsibility of the Native Church. For an account of such specialist services see M. F. Cushmann, *Missionary Doctor in Africa*, New York, 1944 and A. Strangeways in *African Women* (June 1956).

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[20] Information obtained locally from 'civilized' people. Princesses were very rare among the Ovimbundu, though Childs notes that Samboe (Sambu) had a woman ruler early in its history (p. 178).

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'robber-baron', established himself[21] and in 1904 there was a minor rising against the Portuguese[22] (not to be confused with the very extensive Bailundo war of 1902–3). In 1908 the government post was founded for Bimbe, and in 1928 the Catholic Mission was established at the point where the Bailundo Mission had the furthest flung catechetical school in that direction. In 1927 the first trader had settled at Chicunda.[23] The areas under the mission and the post do not coincide, but it may be said that Bimbe is the territory bounded on the west by the River Cuvo or Keve and on the east by the main road from Bailundo to Gabela. The southern boundary of the post ran roughly on a line between the post and the Ponte Salazar (which bridges the Cuvo (or Keve) and takes the road into Cassongue), and the northern boundary is formed by a parallel line drawn from the road some way to the south of Cela to the river. In 1956 the post of Bimbe was divided; much of the western part including the Mission was placed under a new post Luvemba.

Chicunda is twenty kilometres beyond the mission, and seven kilometres beyond Chicunda a turning from the main track brings one to the village of Epalanga. Keeping on the track, a further bifurcation, say two and a half kilometres on, gives a track to the left which leads to a small leper colony, and a track leading straight on and sharply upwards to the village of the chief of Gumba.

This village lies at the summit of a sharp ridge which rises up from the ordinary level and then drops abruptly to a neighbourhood inaccessible to motor transport, which forms the greater part of the Gumba chiefdom. The boundary on the other side is a river across which lies Cela.

Such is the lay-out of the area studied. It is up in the north-western corner of the Umbundu country, indeed down by the Mission, people said that the people of Gumba were not Ovimbundu really but 'Olongoya', as the peoples to the north are termed. Many of the people in Gumba had come from

[21] Childs, p. 22.

[22] Information obtained locally. I did not see official records.

[23] Information obtained locally.

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CONCLUSIONS

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The phrase 'A Study of Social Control and Social Change among the Ovimbundu' implies an analysis of the working of the social maintenance mechanism in a period of social change. The concept appears almost paradoxical since it seems that effective maintenance machinery[1] would prevent social change, and rapid social change is often associated by anthropologists with a situation of individual and social demoralization and disintegration.[2] At the present time the Ovimbundu of the area where fieldwork was done have undergone very [178] rapid social change and have a reasonably effective system of social control, which, however, differs considerably from the traditional system. To confirm these statements, I briefly summarize the material provided in previous chapters.

In the time of the rubber trade (1874–1911) there existed 105 a number of Umbundu kingdoms. The king, assisted and 175 checked, as elsewhere in Africa by titled ministers, was responsible for external relations, undertook certain rituals, and provided a supreme court of appeal where trials were conducted by set rules of procedure. The real unit of law, as regards Gumba at least, seems to have been the sub-chiefdom, with its few thousand inhabitants, governed by a chief who like the king had to administer justice together with his councillors.

This body of councillors included the village headmen who were the heads of bodies of agnatic kin. They had general legal and political responsibility for the village. While the disputes arising in village relations were kept within the patrilineal kin group, the problems arising from the inheritance of movable goods and particularly from the highly important caravan trade were dealt with in the matrilineal group. Owing to the dispersed nature of this group and to its commercial preoccupations the sanctions operating within it must have differed somewhat from those found at the chief's court or village men's

[1] For this term see S. F. Nadel, *Theory of Social Structure*, London, 1957, p. 55.
[2] e.g. G. and M. Wilson, *Analysis of Social Change*, Cambridge, 1945.

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105 178 house. Wealthy members who did not assist their kin were liable to be accused of sorcery. A mother's brother had the right to sell his sister's son as punishment for the latter's misconduct or to pay his own debts, a sanction counterbalancing the rights of the poorer matrilineal kin to receive loans without the obligation of repayment. As the matrilineal groups existed apparently across sub-chiefdom boundaries they formed a means of social control in those trading activities which provided the major focus of Umbundu interests and which flowed over the boundaries of the political groupings whose smallest unit was the patrilineally based village.

105 178 The disappearance of the matrilineal kin groups must be associated with the collapse of the old economy, and to judge from my difficulty in getting information about them their disintegration must have come about fairly rapidly after the end of the trade. Authority within the sub-chiefdom and village remained at a level fairly near the traditional norm till about 1935. After that social change has rapidly dissolved most of the traditional institutions.

The existing system of social control depends on political, local, and kinship systems very different from those previously operative. Cases are very often taken to the post without being previously taken to the chief. The latter's position is a combination of executive of the orders of the post (a role he shares with the government headman) with the surviving prestige represented by the skulls of his predecessors and the ministerial titles allocated to his kinsmen and associates. While the chief and government headmen may settle minor cases, they do not operate any system of courts by which disputes can be regularly and satisfactorily settled.

Judicial power has been effectively transferred from the indigenous society to the 'civilized' community and for a dispute to be brought to a settlement a decision must be obtained from some 'civilized' person or a negotiated arrangement may be made under threat of referring the matter to the post. Considerable importance therefore attaches to the mobilization of ties with some 'civilized' person who may be an employer but is most frequently the mission, which to some degree acts as a patron for all natives. Hence the local

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The cow's tail is used
237 as a sheath for covering the iron shafts of assagais, and it is sometimes made into a switch which the rain-maker uses during his performances.

233 Bulls are castrated when two years old. The wound is rubbed
[232] with ashes, salt, soot, and palm oil. Bullocks are used for riding, also
[492] for pull-carts introduced by the Boers. The herd obtains most of its food by grazing. In the dry season grass withers, with the result that the animals become thin and stall-feeding is necessary. In former days cattle-raiding was a practice of the Ovimbundu, who
233 robbed the Vacilenge. It is certain that the Ovimbundu did not own
174 cattle when they entered Angola. If the general tradition is correct the Ovimbundu came into Angola from a northeasterly direction, from the borders of the Belgian Congo as it is called today; this is not a cattle-raising region.

The Ovimbundu of Elende have a joke against the people of Bailundu, because the latter on first seeing a cow offered the animal some food on a wooden platter. This story suggests that the Bailundu people, who are of the Ovimbundu confederacy, did not know the animal and its habits as early as did the Ovimbundu themselves.

233 Although the Ovimbundu do not usually kill their cattle they may do so in the months of June and July, because at this time pasture is withered and food is scarce. Animals which are diseased, aged, or injured, are killed and eaten.

231 The native pig is distinguishable from European breeds by its long thin snout and slender development. This breed is said by the Director of Animal Husbandry, Humpata, to be the Keltic breed (Plate LV). There is, he says, no evidence to prove that the
[176] Ovimbundu have at any time domesticated pigs from the wild hogs which are to be found in Angola. There is no family which does not own a pig, and on the whole the pig fares much better than the sheep or the goat. The pig receives water and a daily ration of food, which is usually sweet potatoes and their leaves, together with some
232 corn. Male pigs are castrated at any time between the ages of six
[463] months and one year by an operator who is a paid specialist. The fee for castrating a bull is four yards of cloth, but a small gift is considered sufficient reward for performing the operation on a pig.
[282] If a pig is thin, the leather is said to be of good quality and therefore
252 suitable for making sheaths for knives. Usually the flesh of the pig is eaten shortly after the animal has been killed, but the meat of the bullock, on the contrary, is sometimes dried over a fire and preserved. But this is not a general practice as the animals are too valuable to be slaughtered.

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port from intelligence tests of doubtful suitability, have called in question the 'educability' of some Bantu groups.[1] 114 121

I shall not examine these theories but rather leave to descriptions of Umbundu culture given in the main part of the study, the task of showing that the mental capacity of the Ovimbundu is sufficient to enable them to assimilate the education placed at their disposal. Educators who really believe otherwise would hardly waste their time in attempting to educate a people who, after all, may be incapable of education.

> If we do not believe in the logic of the savage and in the identity of his processes of thought with our own, then we should be proved illogical ourselves in attempting to develop along logical lines peoples of an alien mentality, and in attempting to transmit our civilization to peoples mentally incapable of assimilating it.[2]

The capacity of the Ovimbundu and their 'educability' are assumed.

The Approach. All the various types of approach to African education have been classed under one of the two aims: Assimilation, which has represented Latin colonial policy; and Adaptation, which has been more representative of the British and Belgian point of view. *Assimilation* would make African Frenchmen, African Portuguese, &c., of the natives. *Adaptation* would take what is best in both the African and the European cultures in order to produce a better African civilization'.[3] 121 177

Within the aim of *assimilation* there may be distinguished at least two policies. One ignores indigenous culture, presents the European culture quite without reference to it, and treats the African as though he had no cultural background—as though he were a *tabula rasa*. The other may study the indigenous culture, but only in order to be able to uproot it the more thoroughly and efficiently.

Within the aim of *adaptation* at least three distinct policies may

[1] See discussion in Malherbe (ed.), *Educational Adaptations*, Chap. XVIII (*N.E.F. Conference Report*, Cape Town, 1937); also P. A. W. Cook, *The Education of a South African Tribe* (Cape Town, 1934).

[2] Driberg, op. cit., p. 4.

[3] There is an interesting discussion of these two policies by H. Dubois, 'Assimilation ou Adaptation?' in *Africa*, 1929, pp. 1 ff. See also the discussion in the Preface of *Western Civilization and the Natives of South Africa*, by I. Schapera (London, 1934). There are other policies for dealing with the Africans such as repression, exploitation, &c., but since they cannot be classed as educational theories I have not included them in this analysis.

1: Childs M-S (1924-1940) 1949 FF13 Mbundu FF13

121 177 be recognized. *First*, there is a sympathetic but entirely unsystematic use of the culture in question which collects folk-lore, customs, or other single items to use them as illustrations, as lesson or sermon material, &c., but without reference to their context in the fabric or pattern of the culture. *Second*, there is an attempt to rebuild those functions or institutions which *a priori* are judged essential and to leave untouched those judged unessential. Still, whatever is done, is done without reference to the pattern of the culture in question and the criteria are predetermined. *The third method* is that advocated by the present study. It begins with a systematic study of the culture in question, especially its characteristic patterns of behaviour, significant attitudes, beliefs and customs; and the effect of its contact with other cultures; in order

To determine and describe the content;

To analyse and evaluate this content with reference to its bearing upon present local needs; and

To make suggestions for tentative procedures which shall build upon indigenous patterns of behaviour, make adjustment to approved attitudes from the outside as easy as possible, and work toward a continuous and self-functioning process of self-adjustment.

The view-point assumed is a composite of practical anthropology, progressive education, and the newer approach to Christian missions. The criteria have been evolved in part through a study of the local situation and its needs.

127 *Sources.* More documentary material has been sifted than the references indicate. The historical account which has finally been incorporated as Chapter XII was written before the main part of this study and served as an important part of its background.

128 124 The chief sources, however, are original materials descriptive of certain phases of Umbundu life and culture—materials gathered on the field over a period of years, especially between 1933 and 1938. Much of it consists of traditional 'literature' (folk-tales, proverbs, riddles and songs). More of it, however, consists of descriptions of customs, beliefs, institutions and other culture traits secured from personal observation, from descriptions by natives, from schedules collected and written up by trained natives, and Umbundu autobiographical data. Much of this is given in direct translation, certain parts in summary or by reference, while the rest has served as background.

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Much of the soil has been greatly im-
139 poverished both by use and by the action of the weather. The most productive soil areas consist of alluvial deposits, but the precipitate nature of much of the region precludes the formation of such deposits. The bulk of the soil is rather poor, but still it is of better quality, on the whole, than in adjoining regions to the north, east, and south.[1]

133 In common with several of the African plateaux the Benguela Highland rises very precipitately from the sea. This is one of the most striking features of African geography. The steepness of the
[142] ascent forces the Benguela Railway to use a cog-line for a short distance. The village of Ngendo, described in the section dealing with the social structure, has an elevation of about 1,650 metres (5,400 feet) but is situated at only about 60 miles from the ocean.[2] That part of the intermediate zone which adjoins the Highland on the west consists of river valleys between mountain ridges and is well watered, but between that and the sea the country is very arid. This arid region is in reality a northern extension of the Kalahari, Omaheke, and Namieb deserts. Much of this arid stretch is exceedingly rough mountainous country. All along the African coast there is a coastal plain, but in the region under consideration it is very narrow. Plain and mountain are equally arid and this desert country generally has an elevation of less than 1,000 metres (about 3,280 feet). This intermediate zone is well known to the Ovimbundu and played an important role in the history of their commercial developments since they were obliged to cross it to reach the European stations on the coast.

Other adjoining regions have also been of importance to the
101 Ovimbundu. It was from the region to the north between the Highland and the Kuanza River that some of the principal ruling families came. Across this same region the Ovimbundu had their
• [177] first European contacts—with the Portuguese establishments on the Kuanza River. In the regions to the south live cattle-raising people whence the Ovimbundu got cattle, whether by raiding or
133 by trading. East of the Kuanza River valley the elevation drops
167 gradually toward the basins of the Congo and the Zambezi. When the slave- and rubber-trades led the Ovimbundu into this region

[1] i.e. of all adjoining regions only on the north-west are there valleys of superior soil. No complete survey of the soils of Angola has been made. Most books overrate the qualities of the soils of the colony.

[2] See *infra*, Chap. II.

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institutions or divisions have had little consideration in drawing administrative boundaries.

A 496

Systems of communications have been developed during the last forty years. The Benguela Railway, built by Sir Robert Williams and the Tanganyika Concessions, Ltd., was completed in 1931 from Lobito to Elisabethville in the Katanga region, where direct connexion is made with the South, Central, and East African systems of rail and water transport. This railway serves as the most direct outlet for the mines of the Congo and Northern Rhodesia. The great majority of native employees of the railway are Ovimbundu and it has also brought this people their first contact with the mines and with industrialized South Africa. Regular steamship connexion between Lobito and Europe includes Portuguese, Belgian, German, and British lines with occasional calls from American, Japanese, and Scandinavian ships.[1] Recent years have seen considerable extensions of telegraphic and radio service throughout the colony. Motor roads have been built extensively, especially on the plateau and along the watersheds. In addition there are many wagon-tracks for ox-wagons which were introduced by the voortrekkers almost seventy years ago. In many cases the routes followed are those first used by native caravans.

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M 797

There are eleven missionary societies at work among the Ovimbundu: five Protestant and six Roman Catholic.[2] There is only one fully organized Umbundu Church. It includes the work of three Protestant societies. It is the work of this Church and of the Missions of the A.B.C.F.M.[3] and of the United Church of Canada with which the evaluations of this study are concerned. The Mission of the A.B.C.F.M. was founded in 1880, as the first Christian work undertaken among the Ovimbundu.[4]

[1] This was the situation in 1939. During the period of the war the Portuguese services were maintained, although with less regularity than before. The U.S. Maritime Commission maintained a cargo service. There were occasional calls by cargo vessels of various nationalities. The Belgian line is reopening its service (1946) and the Portuguese lines have acquired additional vessels.

[2] Pères du Saint-Esprit began work among the Ovimbundu in 1890; the Padres Seculares have been working in the towns; the Benedictines and several orders of nuns also have stations.

[3] American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions.

[4] The two missions mentioned conduct their work in most respects as a single mission. The other Protestant societies do not have very extensive work among the Ovimbundu.

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631 life and each could be taken as a unit complete in itself. Individual studies and comparisons of one with another would provide much valuable material. Familiarity with individuals and groups belong-
184] ing to all the major tribal groups, and study of their folk-lore and customs has led me to conclude that as in language, so in social structure and in culture, the differences are of small account. In offering illustrative material, I shall give its tribal source.

The King

643 To describe the royal office and functions it would be necessary
177 to use the past tense. That reason, along with others, leads me to exclude this subject from the present study. Effective European occupation of the country and government by direct rule[1] have atrophied the royal office among the Ovimbundu until to-day kings survive as hardly more than living museum pieces. This being the case, I shall only enumerate the royal functions, very briefly characterize them, and pass on to describe other and living parts of the Umbundu social organism.

643 The principal functions of the royal office were:

776 1. *Religious.* The spirits of the king's ancestors were the principal national deities. The king was not only high priest but also the visible vice-regent and incarnation of the spirits. The
[778] sacrifices at the royal shrine, *kakokoto* (literally, at the skulls), the place of the royal skulls, were for the nation in order:

643 (*a*) *To control the elements*, i.e. to ensure a sufficient supply of
372 rain and avoid the dangers caused by hail, by lightning, &c. Also to control fire by providing a new fire properly (ceremonially)
789 kindled from which everyone took his fire. A king's reign was spoken of as 'during the Water of Lord So-and-so' (*Kovava a Ñalã Ngandi*), or 'during the Fire of Lord So-and-so' (*Kondalu ya Ñalã Ngandi*).

241 (*b*) *To ensure fertility*, toward which desideratum the royal
644 marriage had great influence. The queen's special province was agriculture and her kitchen was sanctified by human sacrifice to
[782] guarantee the national food supply. Ceremonially treated seed was distributed to be mixed with the seed of each granary.

[1] 'Direct rule' is applied in most parts of Africa where European settlement is the predominant consideration and also where centralized government is the ideal. 'Indirect rule' is best illustrated in the Gold Coast, Nigeria, Uganda, and Tanganyika Territory.

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631 ones. This situation was reported by Magyar, when he wrote,
635 'Quibanda (should be Civanda) to the east has 500 villages. The Chief has great power. He sends tribute every year to the king of Bailundu but is himself fully independent.'[1] Magyar described about 15 *atumbu* or '*ovikandscho*',[2] as he called them, of Bailundu. [161] He estimated the population of Bailundu at 450,000, and for all the kingdoms of the Ovimbundu 1,200,000,[3] figures which are [175] probably not very different from present-day facts. The report and description of the 'Capitania de Benguella' in 1799 said that the king of Bailundu dominated 2,056 villages; the king of Viye, 886; and the king of Ngalangi, 900; and listed their 'feudos' respectively as 82, 54, and 78.[4] My list of the Ngalangi *atumbu* shows 112. In Bailundu about 20 *atumbu* were ruled by members of the royal family, including heirs apparent or expectant, and the queen (*Inakulu*), who also had her own establishment.[5] About 20 were ruled by other court officials.

621 Most of these *atumbu* are still recognized as such or as *olombala*.[6]
622 Their decay has not been as great as that of the *ombala*[6] of their
● 177 liege lord, for they still fulfil certain functions in native life. They have also been given new functions by the administrative authorities. [651] The minor chiefs as well as village headmen are all required to assist in assessing and collecting the native tax, and also in recruiting labour for government works and for contracts. In some areas they receive in return the remission of their own taxes. In some areas they are required to wear uniforms. On the dancing floors [692] of most of these minor *olombala* courts are still held, justice determined, and (to a limited extent) fines 'eaten'. Such judgements are not officially recognized or allowed by the European authorities. The African, however, often finds that European courts do not meet his needs or accord with his concepts of justice.

[1] Magyar, op. cit., p. 389.

[2] Umbundu *ovikanjo* (plural), 'branches', a term which through commercial or European influence is applied to the *atumbu*.

[3] For these figures and for descriptions of the several kingdoms, see Magyar, op. cit., chap. ix.

[4] *Annaes Mar. e Col.*, 4a Ser., pp. 155 ff.

[5] Magyar, op. cit., p. 390.

[6] *Olombala*, plural of *ombala*, a capital village or chief's residence.

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517 some pulling on their stubby little pipes and watching the m[illegible].
521 As the men smoke, they may pass the pipe from mouth to mouth,
562 but not so the women.

577 Tobacco (*akaya*) is a great vehicle for sociability whether in
276 the pipe or in the form of snuff. 'Snuffing is held to clear the head, to clarify the thought, to enlighten the eyes, to sharpen the hearing, and comfort the heart.'[1] 'Taking a pinch of snuff, between the forefinger and the thumb, is unknown . . . and would be considered . . . very unsatisfactory. . . . They pour about a teaspoonful into the palm of the hand, and burying their . . . nostrils in the peppery mixture snort it up loudly, aided by a rotary motion of the half-closed hand.'[2]

273 Beer (*ocimbombo*) is of even greater importance. Its place has long been threatened by such drinks as the stronger beer made from emmer wheat (*ehundi*), mead (*ingundu* and *ocasa*), and
• [177] imported rum. Within the past thirty or forty years the Ovimbundu have themselves learned to distil rum (*okacipembe*) from sweet potatoes, sugar-cane, pumpkins, &c., and although the industry is illegal, it has grown to great proportions and nothing now seems able to stop it. It is the widespread use of this strong drink, with its concomitant evils, which is to-day the greatest enemy of the social life.

535 The dance is probably the most important element in the social life of the village. The Ovimbundu have many different dances and they dance on every occasion and on the slightest provocation. I have collected thirty songs to accompany dances. About three-fourths of them are sometimes used at funerals or at other ceremonial occasions, some of them are for more frivolous purposes, and most of those which are used for ceremonies are used at other times also. It is not for nothing that an Umbundu equivalent of
(538) the proverb 'Strike while the iron is hot', runs as follows:

> *Nda wa mõlã oñoma, piluka:*
> When you see a drum, dance:
> *Oñoma ka yi mulwã lwali.*
> A drum may not be seen twice.

During one of my visits to Ngendo there was an important funeral with much dancing at Ndumba, just across the valley. At

[1] Tucker, *Drums in the Darkness* (Toronto and New York; Doran, 1927), p. 38.
[2] Monteiro, *Angola and the River Congo*, 2 vols. (London: Macmillan, 1875), vol. ii, p. 271.

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their own wards, 'my ward' (*ocitawila cange*). The other villagers will speak only of 'our village' (*imbo lietu*). 622 554

There are, in general, two quite different and distinct types of Umbundu village according to the terrain on which they are built. The villages of the plains have room to spread out and tend toward a circular shape, with the dancing floor and men's club house near the centre. The wards may appear as quarters of a single whole or they may be added on in haphazard fashion. The villages of the mountains must conform to the possibilities of the terrain. Formerly, many villages were built on mountains for defence, and capital villages of this type may still be seen with the houses built on ledges and rocks almost one on top of the other. In this type of village, there is often not sufficient or sufficiently good soil for even small garden plots within the palisades. Occasionally one of these mountain villages may be found which has not even room within it for the dancing floor, which will in this case be found outside the palisade. If the site is not too severely confined, the wards of the mountain village tend either to string themselves out horizontally along the mountain-side, or to find successive ledges. The village of Ngendo is of an intermediate type, built as it is, on a slope. Sikilile's village was first built as near the stream as possible. The wards later added themselves on, each a little higher than the one before. The school village, which was built last, got the highest and most hygienic site. 361

Moving a Village

Villages may be moved for any one of several reasons. When fields are worn out and others are not available[1] near by, a village may be moved to a site more conveniently located. More often, however, the reason assigned is that there has been much illness or death, that the old site is polluted, that its 'air is bad', which to the Ovimbundu means that some action displeasing to the spirits has been committed which has brought on these misfortunes. This will generally have been determined by divination, as will also the spirits' consent to the proposed new site. A site which has long been occupied is of course fertile soil. Since old sites are generally cultivated to good advantage this fact should not be overlooked as a possible additional reason for moving. 361 166 [768] [787]

[1] Nowadays European settlement often pre-empts such lands. [177]

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754 attacks also upon the persons or possessions of enemies. This type of sorcery in a very common form involves the enslavement of the spirit of another person, often a child of one's own family or kin.[1] The person whose spirit is used may be killed either by violent or by magical means. Sorcery of this type is much feared, but if wealth supposedly gained by this means is used for the benefit of the kin, the sorcerer may be tolerated or even protected in the exercise of his black art. Beneficiaries do not often have qualms concerning the source of the benefits received. One who, by reason of his family connexions or his own power, has secured a strong position may escape interference. Jealousy or grudges, however, often bring out accusations from within the circle of kin. 754 Accusations may also be made by outsiders. With the decline in 682 influence which the tribal courts have suffered, and their inability to inflict capital punishment, sorcery is less frequently punished than formerly. The consequent reductions in the number of innocent victims is a gain. This same cause has operated, how- [177] ever, to increase dealings in, and fear of, sorcery. Most of the cases brought to European courts, and even to the Church, under the name of 'poisoning' are in reality accusations of sorcery.

178 In the foregoing brief note it has not been possible adequately 754 to treat the subject, but it will be seen that sorcery has long been a divisive influence in Umbundu life. It sometimes seriously affects the cohesion of the household and the larger kinship groups. Economic, political, and other forces now seem to be acting to increase the incidence of sorcery, the influence of which is probably a considerable factor in the present rapid disintegration of the Umbundu social structure.

The Hierarchy of Age

Passing references have been made to associations of coevals. 561 The Ovimbundu recognize very definitely the hierarchy of age and consider orderly society quite impossible without it. One of the keenest criticisms of the European and his ways is contained in the aphorism:

Kundele ka ku li ukulu.
[538] In 'civilization' there is no senior.

To Umbundu wisdom this is an impossible state of affairs;

[1] The Umbundu term is *oku andeka*; *vide* ref. *infra*, p. 107, n. 1.

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on which the social cohesion of African peoples rests'.[1] In the article here quoted, and more recently at the New Education Fellowship Conference, she summarizes her conclusions regarding 'Positive Values in the African Social Organization', with special reference to the Sotho-Tswana and Zulu-Xhosa groups of the South African Bantu.[2]

Nor have American educational authorities failed to recognize the crucial importance to educational and missionary efforts of a primitive people's social structure. Were it necessary, numerous quotations might be given. Two of the four 'Essentials of Primitive Society' listed by Dr. Thomas Jesse Jones, have to do with the social structure:

II. Power of integration with the environment, material and human:

III. A proper regard for the home and the household.[3]

Even more explicit are the counsels to be found in *The Educational Yearbook* for 1931 and 1933:

> . . . we often find that the organization of the family and the relationships between its members are as good as, and in some cases superior to, those which are found among western peoples. . . .
>
> When it comes to other matters of social relationships, such as the communal system and the practice of sharing . . . it is little less than disastrous that the western educator, brought up in a system of individualism, seems to wish to make it necessary for the indigenous peoples to go back to a social organization from which his own world is attempting to move.[4]
>
> Social forms have got to change. But whatever changes may take place, . . . the vital thing is that the sense of mutual obligation and responsibility which is found in existing relations should be conserved and express itself in the new conditions.[5]

The village is the key to an educational or mission approach to the Ovimbundu. This fact has long been recognized by the missions. The Deputation of the American Board of Com-

[1] M. Stauffer, ed., *Thinking with Africa* (New York, 1927), p. 86 (article by Mrs. Hoernlé), also quoted by C. T. Loram in *The Educational Yearbook, 1933* (Dr. Kandel, ed.), p. 280.

[2] See E. G. Malherbe, ed., *Educational Adaptations in a Changing Society* (N.E.F. Conference Report, Cape Town, 1937), pp. 405-7.

[3] T. J. Jones, *Essentials of Civilization* (New York, 1929), pp. 7 ff.

[4] C. T. Loram in *The Educational Yearbook, 1931*, I. Kandel, ed. (New York, 1931), pp. 10, 12.

[5] J. W. C. Dougall in op. cit., 1933, p. 159.

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missioners for Foreign Missions which visited the Umbundu area in 1911 found some difficult problems from the great numbers of converts who had flocked to live on the mission stations. That, however, was a situation from which the missionaries had already been trying to recede for some time since 1897[1] when outstations were first undertaken by Abrão Ngulu and José Katito who went back to their own kin; and even more definitely since 1905 when Elende Station was opened with the idea that the only natives to reside there would be a small number of teachers and other leaders and boarding-school pupils who would afterwards return to their own families to form new centres of work.[2] That the village is a kinship unit has also been recognized and the description of the village of Ngendo showed that outstation work is being carried on *within* the kinship pattern of the village, and without doing violence to the Umbundu concept of social structure. The church elder and his villagers are accepted by the other villagers as kinsmen.[3] While it is evident that the way of life of the people of the school village differed from that of the elder's village, and the extent to which they mutually fulfilled kinship obligations toward each other may be questioned, nevertheless, the very fact that they mutually recognized ties of kinship and that they live side by side in harmony is of significance. It is also significant that the outstation leadership had come from within the kinship group. Likuluta Samikanjo, the elder, had attended boarding-school on a mission station, but only for a short time, and he did not pretend to be a teacher. In the beginning of the work an elder and also a teacher had been sent out from Elende Mission Station, but they had stayed only until the local people were able to carry on. The teacher at the time of my visits was Vitorino Mbambi. He belonged to the household of Likuluta's sister's son. The situation of the outstation of Ngendo is not unusual and could be duplicated many times by examples taken from various parts of the Umbundu country. It has been quite the thing for those individual Christians among the Ovimbundu who have become church elders to seek to establish villages or 'wards' of their own among their own kinsmen. Some teachers have also followed a similar bent, but if they were too young to receive the respect due to an elder of the Ovi-

[1] *Missionary Herald*, 1898, p. 108.
[2] A.B.C.F.M., *Report of the Deputation to the W.C.A. Mission*, 1911, p. 66.
[3] See *supra*, p. 29 f.

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mbundu, they have not, independent of some related elder, generally been very successful within the kinship group.

There is another factor in the situation of the Ngendo out-station which has tended to preserve the ties of kinship between the villagers of the two groups. The support of the two leaders is very largely found locally. Neither teacher nor elder has ever received more than a very occasional bonus from either the native church or the mission. They carry on by the help of the local people and through their own efforts. Dr. Gutmann holds that it is the schools which are most disruptive in their influence on African social structure because of their organization and the way in which they are carried on. A school, he says, should reflect the organic connexions of native society and enter into reciprocal relations with the folk group. Instead, he points out, this is being made impossible in East Africa by raising the salaries of the teachers until they are removed from the ordinary life of the rest of the people.[1] This cleavage between educated individuals who should be leaders and the masses of the people seems to have reached an even more markedly advanced stage in South Africa, according to Mrs. Hoernlé, Eiselen, and others who also seek remedies in strengthening or renewing the natural social bonds.[2] What I wish to emphasize is that the more important point is not how much salary a teacher or an elder may receive, but whether his appointment and the remuneration he receives tend to weaken the organic bonds of native society and to make difficult his relations with the folk group. Do the conditions of his position *ipso facto* place him or keep him outside the local group?

In seeking to lay among the Ovimbundu sure foundations for a truly indigenous Church, the importance of ties of kinship have probably been recognized by more than one missionary. The importance of stimulating local self-support both for its influence on building up the Church and on the development of indigenous leadership has long been stressed in mission circles, although it must be recognized that the principle has often been honoured rather in the breach than in the observance. While recognizing the value of these principles as long-term objectives, impatient of meagre immediate and visible 'results' or failing to realize how

[1] Gutmann, *Africa*, 1928, p. 443 f.

[2] e.g., see Eiselen in Schapera (ed.), *Western Civilization and the Natives of South Africa* (London, 1934), p. 81.

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to eat in public, will be served by himself in the *etambo* (spirit-hut). 867
With the decline of the *onjango* as an institution, there has been a great decline in the teaching of etiquette and social usage. As might be expected, this has affected boys more directly than girls. Girls and young women of the present generation and of the generation now coming on are, on the whole, more given to customary usage and forms of civility than are boys and young men. It is probable that contacts with Europeans, which have been going on for more than 150 years, have produced a number of [177] individuals and families who have paid less heed to correct usage and have neglected to teach children properly, but never has there been the wholesale disregard which is now encountered. If the analogy of the South African Bantu peoples is any criterion, a reaction back to things Umbundu may soon be expected. Some observers feel that it is already under way.

Little direct sex teaching is attempted, but the very fact of the 864
sex division of society is a considerable factor.

'A mother will teach her daughter saying, A girl does not play with boys, for boys are sharp ones.[1] Don't play with them. This advice is because of sex, although the child may not understand it at the time. But when the boys call her, she will remember the advice of her mother and may quickly reply, saying, My mother says, Don't play with boys: they'll hurt you. Thus she has taken to heart what her mother has told her and may go ahead in the same way. But as she grows up and separates from her parents,[2] then she may separate herself from their teaching.' Young children acquire incidentally a good deal of knowledge about sex both from other children and from adults. Although adults observe considerable reticence in speaking of sexual matters in the presence of children, living as they do with their parents in one-room homes, it is inevitable that sexual intercourse should sometimes be observed by children.[3] Although euphemisms of speech are employed in the presence of children, all the true terms are known by them. Hetero-sexual play is not in vogue.

[1] *Imelīlē*, lit. sharpened stakes such as those used at the bottom of a pit-fall to trap game.

[2] i.e. at adolescence, when she leaves her mother to stay with other girls of her age.

[3] Cf. Father Van Wing on the Congo child: 'A six ans . . . il en emporte une connaissance de la vie qui ferait rougir de bons jeunes gens d'Europe' (op. cit., p. 262).

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463 *Wood-working*, including the following specializations:
462 Doors, windows, and their frames; coffins.
[322] Beds, tables, chairs, &c.
Mortars, pestles, grinding-handles, and handles for various iron implements.
Stools, household utensils, carved images, staves, knobkerries, &c.
Drums and other musical instruments.
Canoes (dug-outs and coracles).
Rope-making, nets, and rudimentary weaving.
Thatching has its specialists although all men can thatch.
Fishing.
Bee-hunting, including the making of hives.
224 *Hunting*.
326 *Iron-smelting and smithing*.
791 *Medical-practice and Divination*.

The last three professions of the list are sacred and are entered under special conditions. They are often passed on by inheritance, but not always. All of them require sacrifice at certain stages, and when the enslavement of a spirit (*oku andeka*) is required, it is socially allowable. This seems to be the case with these offices as with those of the king and his ministers, both because of benefits accruing to the community in their exercise and also because of inherent danger to the individuals who exercise these functions.

•177 The advent of European commerce, industry, and government
463 has created a number of types of employment for boys and young men, some of which entail prolonged absence from the village and a loosening or severing of kinship ties. Church and mission have
[797] also offered employment and have opened new opportunities for advance in place and in position.

861 Later childhood, then, is the period of technical training during which it is expected that a large amount of economic responsibility will be assumed. A child begins to own property even before this, and from the beginning of later childhood will be accounted legally responsible for his actions. It is recognized, however, that he should not be set tasks beyond the experience or ability of his age and that the full responsibility of adulthood will only come with marriage.

[538] *Umālēhē ka tonyōlā ongulu yuvala*;
A youth does not scrape the pig for the wedding feast;
pehonjo pa siala (*ovonya*).
on the hoof there remain (bristles).

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867 the correct adjustments early, naturally grows into a comparatively well-adjusted life, and so avoids the major conflicts to a much greater degree than is the case in our society. A very large proportion of those in conflict in present-day Umbundu society are de-
154 tribalized or partially de-tribalized individuals, especially those who as children were brought up outside or largely outside the kinship groups. The large proportion of those brought up on the mission stations who are out of adjustment, and often in overt conflict, has been noticed by many observers. The biographies and autobiographies which I have collected witness clearly to the same fact, that most of the ill-adjusted individuals and those in overt conflict were products of an extra-tribal, de-tribalized, or non-traditional situation; while practically all of the well-adjusted persons were educated within the kinship system.

154 The three major conflicts which have been recognized in our
865 society, that is, 'struggle', sex, and 'inferiority',[1] are all present in some form among the Ovimbundu. The adjustments by which they resolve these conflicts are distinctive.

Adjustments in anger by which the 'struggle conflict' is resolved are interesting and important educationally. The child is taught when quite young that the expression of anger is taboo.[2] Tantrums are rare among Ovimbundu children. Anger and ill-will are named by thoughtful Ovimbundu as the chief root-cause of sorcery. The more thoughtful ones also recognize these as an important cause of accusations of sorcery. Expression of anger is traditionally much feared. It is not desired in the character of the king.[3] Nowadays
[177] there are more who give free vent to expressions of anger, but they are for the most part either individuals who imitate Europeans and who seek to discard Umbundu cultural habits and values; or they are those who are considered sorcerers, either by themselves or others. An Ocimbundu who as a child has learned traditional adjustments in anger will rarely allow his anger to break through the resistance and become 'extroverted' except in recognized outlets. These outlets are somewhat analogous to our own rationali-
154 zations of anger.[4]
578 The chief 'introverted' reaction of anger which I have noted

[1] The psychological analysis follows Allport, op. cit., chap. xiv.
[2] See *supra*, p. 101.
[3] See *supra*, p. 21.
[4] Cf. Allport, op. cit., p. 344. The Ovimbundu have not thought up such a high-sounding term as 'moral indignation' as a euphemism for anger.

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572 expeditions. Many blood-brotherhoods were doubtless under-
[608] taken purely from motives of friendship.[1] The *vakuacisoko* is a
[181] friendly institution. The Ovimbundu are a friendly people.

Identification is a strikingly important feature of Umbundu
156 social adjustments and of the whole learning process. Children overtly identify themselves with older siblings, with parents, with other older relatives both living and dead, with friends of their parents, with the village headman, or even the king.[2] This perhaps is the process involved in that which the Ovimbundu name reincarnation. It is largely through identification that character appears to run in families. This is why boys are so keen to learn the professions of their fathers or their mother's brothers. Identification with their seniors in social position and economic activity more closely cements the unity of the child–adult sphere and gives the children yet another urge to enter into adult life and assume complete responsibility as quickly as possible.

158 'Inferiority Conflict' has probably been present in Umbundu life for a long time, perhaps since the rubber trade (1874), perhaps even longer. When a people's activity is keyed to so high a pitch there will be some individuals who find themselves inadequate. There are a number of proverbs which ridicule the stay-at-homes or those 'too lazy' to undertake the exceedingly arduous trading
[177] expeditions. European domination has set new paces and created new frustrations, with one result, that 'inferiority conflicts' are probably on the increase. Many individual instances could be cited. A particularly striking one of my observation is of a man whose suffering from epileptic seizures had induced attitudes of inferiority. The conflict was exacerbated by his selection as a hospital assistant, in which position the responsibility required was plainly beyond his ability.[3] Individuals suffering from any physical disability find life difficult among such an aggressive people.

[732] If the disability is great the handicapped individual generally finds the adjustment beyond his powers. I have observed a number of severely crippled individuals brought up in traditional kinship groups, and all of them were suffering from overt inferiority conflicts. All of these individuals had adopted compensatory

[1] Although the rite seems to have connotations of sorcery.

[2] Among the Tallensi, according to Fortes, identification is only with older siblings, with parents, and with 'the clan' (op. cit., pp. 46 ff.).

[3] Epilepsy (*ocinonya*) is considered by the Ovimbundu as a visitation of the spirits and is much feared.

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000 have for several years agreed to be the most effective. This is the method whereby babies learn their own language, a method which competent African teachers can easily understand and have adapted with good results.

Physical education and recreation would seem to be a simple matter among a people which spends so large a proportion of its time in out-of-doors occupations and one which, again, has almost universally good posture, and a large proportion of which is of good physique. Comparing the Ovimbundu with their neighbours 535 to the north, the Ovimbundu are greatly superior both in physique 868 and in posture. Umbundu forms of physical education are responsible at least in part. Carrying loads on the head, which is done by all ages and both sexes, has also had undoubted influence. Most important of all is the dance. The dance is very good physical exercise but it is much more than that. It is more than mere recreation. 'The dance is in most primitive societies an important factor in maintaining group solidarity.'[1] This is certainly true of the Ovimbundu. There is nothing which can take 000 its place. It is doubtful whether the solidarity of any group of Ovimbundu can be firmly established or long maintained without the dance. They do adopt various foreign forms of recreation, but the dance meets a deeper need. Whatever new exercises and games may be introduced the physical educator cannot afford to neglect indigenous forms.

533 Music is of great importance to the Ovimbundu. The Church 177 and mission schools have made much use of this musical ability and bent. The great choirs which give such pleasing renditions of European classical and sacred music would do credit to schools or colleges in any part of the world.[2] Less use has been made of native music but it is still sung, and some teachers have taken real interest in it. Not having described the Umbundu musical forms it is not possible to extend this evaluation. However, it must be noted that European music has been supplied with Umbundu words, and very successfully in some instances. Contrary to the predictions of several authorities, the result, most emphatically, is not 'a kind of musical pidgin'.[3]

[1] Krige, 1936, op. cit., p. 336.

[2] See article by Elizabeth Scattergood Chalmers, 'The Music at the Jubilee', *Missionary Herald*, 1930, pp. 335–8.

[3] See E. M. von Hornbostel, 'African Negro Music', *Africa*, 1928, pp. 30–62. He offers some interesting suggestions on the use of drums. His conclusions on

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their historical development. The traditional history and separate European contacts of each of the several Umbundu kingdoms would occupy far more time and space than the limits of this study permit. I propose, therefore, to give in outline the broader trends of European contacts from the earliest days, filling in such items of traditional history as may be necessary for complete understanding, and to summarize this with a chronological chart in which the dynastic successions of the principal Umbundu kingdoms are included.

There are many books about Angola and several histories of Angola, so-called, but the History of Angola, in the proper sense of the term, remains to be written. None of the books written thus far has taken sufficient cognizance of the economic factors involved, whereas a history of Angola is no history at all if not an economic history. This is particularly true of this territory where two of the greater traders of the continent have met.

The Portuguese are the most tenacious traders of all the Europeans who have gone to Africa. Proof of this is the fact that the Hausa, Indian, Syrian, Armenian, or Greek traders, who almost monopolize the petty trade of most African colonies, in Angola have no footing whatever. From the first, the Portuguese traders began to utilize in their trade the services of natives of the old kingdom of Angola. Early in the nineteenth century the Ovimbundu began to be noticed as traders and soon came to be known[1] as the greatest traders of Bantu Africa, after the Zanzibar Arabs.[2] These latter they met in the Great Lakes region, and they (the Arabs) subsequently began to come down to Benguela or Luanda themselves.[3] In the middle of the nineteenth century the Yankees in their clipper ships played a large part in the trade of the Angola coast. More recently the British have made considerable investments in trade and in industrial developments. After the war of 1914–18 Germans played an important part in the commercial life of the colony. Any history of Angola, then, that makes sense must be an economic history. This is no less true of the history of the Ovimbundu and their European contacts.

[1] Under various names, as, for example, Mambari, Biheans, Bailundos, Kimbundus, Mbundus, &c.

[2] Cf. comparisons drawn by Serpa Pinto, op. cit., p. 163.

[3] The Umbundu name for the Zanzibaris is 'va Lunguana'; compare the mediæval (1228) name for Zanzibar, Langujah (C. M. Doke in *Bantu Studies*, 1938, p. 135 f.).

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175x *European Influences 1600–1770.* The first European contact of the Ovimbundu or of the 'proto-Ovimbundu' was without doubt
• 177 for purposes of trade. The first record which we have of any such
439 contact is in *Andrew Battell in Guinea.* About 1600 the governor, as the chief trader,[1] sent his prisoner Battell on trading expeditions along the Benguela coast. At the Bahia das Vaccas, the Ndombe, a cattle-keeping people, were met. They supplied the Europeans with produce,[2] including cattle and 'the famous sheep which have five quarters',[3] but *not* with the principal article of commerce, for as another of the conquistadores noted, 'In this kingdom there is
[567] no slave trade, for it is not their custom to sell each other.'[4] This lack was soon supplied by 'proto-Ovimbundu' when, on the next voyage, Battell with the 'Portugals and Mulattos' found the encampment of 'Jagas' at the mouth of the Keve River, from Battell's account of which we have already quoted.[5] Although hardly recognized as such at the time, this, it seems, was the beginning of a long commercial partnership. As long as the 'Jagas' continued 'to take the spoil of the land', they supplied many slaves[6] for the trade, and after they settled they became traders both in direct European employ and on their own account.

439 The early European settlements in Africa were made with the
567 hope of finding gold, but although that metal was not found in the
797 Congo or Angola, black gold—human gold—soon proved to be
175x equally profitable. There was a religious motive in the Portuguese discoveries, for from the time of Prince Henry the Navigator, his captains were bidden to 'plant the Cross on some new headland'. With every ship priests went out to convert the heathen. Some priests doubtless did good work but more of them, both individually and as members of the various orders, early came to the conclusion that the best way to convert the heathen was to sell

[1] The governors continued to engage in trade openly, until forbidden by the law of 17 Sept. 1721, and then, says Lopes de Lima, some complied, while others did not (*Ensaios*, part i, p. 84).

[2] A. Battell, p. 16.

[3] L. Cordeiro (ed.), 1574–1620, *Da Mina ao Cabo Negro segundo Garcia Mendes Castello Branco*, p. 34. The reference is to the fat-tailed sheep of the Hottentots and their neighbours. This is perhaps the first reference to it on the west coast.

[4] Ibid., 1593–1631, *Terras e minas africanas segundo Balthazar Rebello de Aragão*, p. 15.

[5] *Supra*, p. 182 f.

[6] Battell, pp. 20, 28; L. Cordeiro (ed.), 1574–1620, *Da Mina ao Cabo Negro segundo Garcia Mendes Castello Branco*, p. 17.

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people living there,[1] which also leads me to conclude that the Ovimbundu as we now know them were not there at that date. 175* 726

About 1661 there was an expedition from Benguela in order to restore a native ally, the 'Iaga Caconda', against an 'intruding Iaga' who used fire-arms.[2] This is the first record of fire-arms in native hands in the hinterland of Benguela. Muskets and powder were sold from the time of Luanda's founding (1576),[3] but not all tribes took to them quickly.[4] If fire-arms were already in use by natives in the Benguela hinterland in 1661, it is most probable that the founders of the present Umbundu dynasties had them when they came to the country. The first presídio of Caconda was built in 1680, destroyed soon after, and rebuilt nearby in 1685. This was at four or five days' journey from Benguela but not on the Plateau nor within the present Umbundu area. The third presídio, known as Caconda-Nova, was built at its present site in 1769. Most writers have supposed this fort to have been built at its present site in 1685, overlooking the fact that there were not two sites but three.[5] 648 [411] [177]

European Influences 1770–1840. The governor who effected the final moving of Caconda on to the Plateau, D. Francisco de Souza Coutinho, also undertook many other reforms designed to better the economic state of the colony. He brought something of the intentions of the great Marquez de Pombal to this remote tropical dependency. He seems to have been the first governor of Angola to realize the immense superiority of the Benguela Highland, 175* 648

[1] Cadornega, op. cit., vol. ii, pp. 42–6.

[2] Cadornega, op. cit., p. 176 f. It is of interest that according to this author (1680) this expedition passed the Bay then known as 'Catumbella of Salt Water' or 'Catumbella of the Oysters'. Jaspert made the error of stating that this Bay (Lobito) was 'discovered by the English' about 1900!

[3] Garcia Mendes Castello Branco (1620) protested against allowing this traffic (*Da Mina ao Cabo Negro*, p. 25).

[4] In 1790 the Ovimbundu used fire-arms very well, but the 'Ganguellas' had not then adopted their use (*Annaes Mar. e Col.*, *5a Ser.*, p. 489).

[5] Lopes de Lima (*Ensaios*) made this error (or omission), and more recent writers have perhaps erred by following him. The correct accounts are given in the *Catálogo dos Governadores*, pp. 396 ff., 416 ff. (also to be found in *Arquivos de Angola*, vol. iii, pp. 507 f., 528). The facts are most clearly brought out by the governor of the District of Benguela in reporting a visit made to Caconda. He gives a short history of the presídio and tells of having seen the ruins of the earlier forts (*Districto de Benguella 1892*, Lisboa, 1894). The report to the Ministry in Lisbon of the governor, D. Francisco Inocencio de Souza Coutinho, explaining (among other things) the moving of this presídio, and dated 18 Oct. 1769, has been published in *Arquivos de Angola*, vol. i, no. 1 (Oct. 1933).

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even earlier. Long before that the forerunners of the Ovimbundu kings, the 'Jagas', had sold their prisoners to the *pombeiros*. The other side of the national lineage had probably bought salt from Cisama[1] even before the white men came to the land.

Dominant Tendencies 1840–74. The next period in which there was great commercial development among the Ovimbundu began with the fourth decade of the nineteenth century, following upon the abolition of the monopoly in ivory and the development of new products as substitutes for the slave-trade, formally prohibited in 1836. This period saw a considerable increase in the number of traders resident in the region. The new régime at the coast may have caused some to go inland.[2] In Bailundu, and especially in Viye, they were well received by kings and by people who saw in the coming of more Europeans to live among them increased commercial opportunities.[3] For various reasons most of these traders established themselves in Viye,[4] and from this time Viye took first place in trade with the interior and with the coast. But since the caravan road to Benguela must pass either through

[1] Lopes de Lima, *Ensaios*, part ii, p. 55.

[2] Some statistics on these older periods are available, but since they are themselves in disagreement and none of them seem to be very reliable I do not include them here. The Report of the Governor of Benguela for 1799 gives the rather optimistic figure of 78 *whites* (including 5 women) resident in the several interior districts (*Annaes Mar. e Col.*, 1844, p. 161), with correspondingly larger numbers for persons of mixed race and (civilized) blacks. In 1838, according to Lopes de Lima (*Ensaios*, part i, p. 4 f.), the number of *whites* in the same districts was only 14, with no women, and the number of 'brown inhabitants' correspondingly small except in Caconda, for which he gives the number of 2,992—more than in all the rest of the colony! J. R. Graça gave a list of 101 names of inhabitants of Viye alone, 'Portuguese or descendants of Portuguese . . . *including 6 Europeans*'. This was probably near the truth for 1846. Magyar (1849–57) gave very interesting calculations of the population and area of the several Umbundu kingdoms, but no figures on European residents.

[3] A very interesting glimpse of Bailundu in 1837 was given by a political exile, Carlos de Almeida Sandoval (*Annaes do Cons. Ultr., Ia Ser.*, p. 519 f.). Very full accounts of life in Viye have been given by Silva Porto, who first reached Viye in 1840, coming from Luanda (see some of his diaries in *Annaes do Cons. Ultr.*, Ser. I; *Boletim Soc. Geog. Lisboa*, Ser. 5, 6. A small volume of excerpts from Silva Porto's diaries was published in 1942 by the Agência Geral das Colónias under the title *Viagens e apontamentos de um portuense em África.*)

[4] The early continuous connexion of the dynasty with the Luanda government has been mentioned, as also the continuous appointment of a *capitão mor*. The incumbent at the time (appointed 1838) was Francisco José Coimbra, of mixed race from Caconda (*Annaes Mar. e Col.*, 1846, p. 118; *Annaes do Cons. Ultr., Ia Ser.*, p. 112 f.). Both Cameron and the early missionaries mention dealings with his sons. Some of his grandsons and great-grandsons, now reincorporated with the Ovimbundu, still tell of their descent.

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made, there as elsewhere throughout the Umbundu-speaking territory, their wholesale manufacture was only carried on in Ndulu. This was a natural specialization, for the best and most easily accessible deposits of iron ore are in the Ndulu country,[1] whose smiths have become justly famous. In exchange for hoes they received palm-oil or cattle from other regions, or salt, rum, or goods from the coast. Other regional specializations were—Kasongi and the Sele country for palm-oil, Cikuma for bees-wax (also obtained from the interior), cattle from Ngalangi, Kalukembe, Cilengi, and farther south. Ciyaka, Civula, and Bailundu took much corn-meal to the coast in those early days. 'Trade-agreements' were also made beyond the Umbundu-speaking area. At first these were strictly one-way affairs, allowing the Ovimbundu traders to operate in many lands, near and far, since this was to the advantage of the rulers of those lands. At the same time, the men from Bailundu and Viye did and said everything possible to discourage the interior peoples from venturing out on their own account.[2] Later, when the trade, as well as knowledge of the whites and their trade, spread, arrangements were made between the king of Viye and various interior chiefs allowing them to send their own caravans through to the coast, and gifts were exchanged periodically.[3]

Their very early introduction to articles of European use and manufacture has undoubtedly had great influence upon the development of the Ovimbundu. Their early and thorough familiarity with fire-arms certainly played a decisive role in their national formation and subsequent history. The introduction of domestic plants and animals from abroad is an important subject, but too broad for treatment at this time. The early introduction of European-manufactured goods has had profound influences.

[1] See article on smelting and smithing in Ndulu by F. W. Read in *Journal of the African Society*, 1902, pp. 44–9.

[2] Livingstone tells of the displeasure of the Ovimbundu ('Mambari') at meeting the Makololo near Luanda. The Ovimbundu tried to frighten them from trading with the whites with tall tales, making the whites out as impossibly clever magicians and wizards (op. cit., p. 384). Cameron and his east-coast carriers experienced the displeasure of Viye people owing to jealousy of the same sort, but no longer so openly expressed (op. cit., p. 406).

[3] The Muata-Yanvo of Lunda was one of those who had such a 'trade-agreement' with Viye. Silva Porto notes in his diary on 14 Jan. 1880 that an embassy from the Muata-Yanvo had arrived with a tusk of ivory for Cilemo (*Boletim Soc. Geog. Lisboa, 5a Ser.*, p. 148).

1: Childs MM-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

175* 177 influences. The stock to which the common people belong were wearers of skins, which is true of many of them to the present time. The people from whom the ruling houses came have a highly developed weaving industry. The 'Ngangela' neighbours, who [565] have also contributed elements to the racial make-up of the Ovi- [287] mbundu, make and use bark-cloth. The Ovimbundu evidently gave up the use of skins for clothing more than a hundred years ago.[1] This fact, and the additional one that they never developed weaving or bark-cloth industries, was probably due to their early and widespread use of trade-cloth. Rum came with the slave-trade 177 from Brazil. They were almost inseparable. The ships which 273 fetched the slaves came laden with rum distilled in Brazil. The 567 rum was used in buying the slaves, and much more of it was con- 439 sumed by Ovimbundu—traders, chiefs, and retainers—than by 175* the interior people. Thus, while the slave-trade had such a disruptive influence in the life of the interior tribes, rum did much to corrupt the Ovimbundu. Native tradition[2] and the accounts of early travellers agree on this point. Rum continued to come from Brazil and from other countries or oversea colonies all through this early period, but import was partly supplanted by distillation at the coast, and this process was soon learned by the Ovimbundu themselves.

439 The part which the Umbundu trade had in spreading the goods and uses of the outside world is a fascinating subject and one which 567 would repay study. Ethnographical and historical knowledge of 175* Central Africa is not yet so extensive or precise that the dates and places of these movements can be plotted with certainty. Professor C. M. Doke records that Nkumine, who ruled the Lamba sometime before 1840, sold many of his people 'as slaves to the Mbundu traders from the West Coast for calico, guns, and powder'.[3] It is important to remember that throughout this period the Ovimbundu were for all this part of Africa the chief intermediaries in the slave-trade. These activities affected the ultimate

[1] See Magyar, *passim*.

[2] A Ngalangi tradition says that from the time of King Ndumba II (*c.* 1840) rum was so plentiful that it was poured into troughs, whence it was lapped up by all—men, women, and children. A constant difficulty encountered by the early missionaries was the objection of chiefs and their counsellors to the missionaries' refusal to give liberal presents of rum, as did all the traders.

[3] C. M. Doke, *The Lambas of Northern Rhodesia* (London: Harrap, 1931), pp. 36, 37.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

the occupations of warfare and of trade to the more settled agricul- 423
tural life. And it is the possession and cultivation of land which provides a minimum basis for those who are also able to engage in any sort of trade, either commercial or one of the handicrafts.

Health. A sanitary history, or the course of health among the 164
Ovimbundu throughout their national existence, would be of 173
interest if it could be made known. Legend tells of a time in the 177
distant past when sickness was rare and death came hardly ever, if at all. It is said that hasty burials were not permitted because there had been cases of the supposed corpse returning to life. Some have taken this to mean that the tribe came from a more healthful region than the one which it now occupies, but it seems rather to be a traditional recognition of the fact that many of the diseases and bodily ills which at present afflict the Ovimbundu are of comparatively recent date. The time of arrival of some of these unwelcome guests can be estimated. Some are the subject of [136]
traditional tales as, for example, the jigger[1] (*pulex penetrans*), which a Ngalangi tradition says came to them from Bailundu, and Bailundu tradition says was first recognized in the time of Ekongo-liohombo (*c.* 1875) or Ekuikui II (*c.* 1876–93). Now the jigger is well known 164
in Africa as an importation from South America, and the time of 177
its first appearance could probably be determined. This parasite is widely present in tropical Africa, but there are some regions which it has not (yet) reached.[2] Its coming to Angola is probably, therefore, of recent date. Silva Porto, writing in 1879, said, 'This evil is of recent date on the coast . . . (*pulex penetrans*).'[3] The first notice of this pest which reached the pages of the *Boletim Official* of Angola was in 1875. If this date really represents the time when the jigger first appeared in Angola, it seems strange that it should have been so late, in view of the slave-ships ferrying back and forth from Brazil for the previous three hundred years.

Small-pox[4] might also be thought of as a recent arrival for, according to a note in the *Boletim Official*, it first appeared in Novo Redondo in June 1864, having been brought from Luanda by ships' crews.[5] Its first appearance on the Plateau, however,

[1] *Ewundu* or *ocindiundiu* is the Umbundu name, from *oku wunda*, to hide (the hidden one).
[2] e.g. Amboland, according to Umbundu testimony.
[3] *Boletim Soc. Geog. Lisboa*, 5a Ser., p. 10.
[4] *Ocingongo* is the Umbundu name.
[5] *Boletim Official da Provincia de Angola*, 1865, no. 5.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP1.

164 was prior to this, for it was mentioned by Magyar.[1] Among the
177 imported diseases are grippe, pneumonia, tuberculosis, and other complaints of the lungs and bronchia; the venereal diseases (especially syphilis); several so-called 'children's diseases' such as measles, scarlet fever, mumps, &c.[2] Typhoid fever is only beginning to appear, although it has long been known at the coast, at Malange (to the north), &c.[3] Diseases of other regions, as tropical ulcers, sleeping sickness, &c., are found only in patients coming from regions affected with those ills.

146 In comparison with the diet of other non-cattle-keeping tribes
177 of West and Central Africa, the diet of the Ovimbundu is fairly satisfactory. Certain it is that the articles imported by the Portuguese from America and elsewhere have done much to enrich the diet of this people. Only the mention of maize,[4] their staple and mainstay, makes this evident. Their early and close contact with the Portuguese gave them the advantage of many plants[5] brought by those rural-minded conquistadores,[6] which found their way inland only much later. (Mrs.) Alice K. Strangway has made an interesting study of Umbundu diet and has come to the conclusion that its principal deficiencies are fats and calcium. The Ovimbundu need to learn to make better use of the resources which are already theirs or at their command, as, for example, peanuts and soy-beans. Other improvements such as a more general use of milk and other animal foods can only come with education and an improved economic situation.

164 Magyar's account (1849–57) of the Ovimbundu gives the impression of a people in better health, suffering from fewer ills, and

[1] L. Magyar, op. cit., p. 290.

[2] There are Umbundu names for all the foregoing, with several names or euphemisms for some, except for the lung and bronchial complaints which are spoken of simply as *vonulo* (in the chest), and scarlet fever which is called *ovalambu* (from the Portuguese *sarampo*).

[3] In 1936 there was an epidemic of typhoid at Bela Vista among Europeans and natives. Infection was traced to Catumbela (at the coast).

[4] Maize has a true Umbundu name, *epungu*, as is the case with most of the early importations which the Ovimbundu adopted, save tomatoes (*amatia*).

[5] There is a good discussion of the American plants introduced into Africa in Ficalho, *Plantas úteis da Africa Portugueza*, pp. 32 ff. In *Benguella e seu sertão*, 1617–22, p. 17, the anonymous writer states that 'all kinds of vegetables of our Portugal do very well . . . such as: large corn (i.e. *mayz*), beans of various kinds, pumpkins . . . and melons'.

[6] Cá da Mosto tells of trying to grow wheat in Senegal (João de Barros, quoted by Ficalho, op. cit., p. 29 f.).

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

generally more resistant than those whom we know to-day. Some of the imported diseases have probably been with the Ovimbundu since they first encountered Europeans, others are more recent, but all seem to be more deadly to Africans than to Europeans. This is especially true of the lung complaints, against which the Ovimbundu have little resistance, and the manner of their life makes tuberculosis very difficult to check.

Diseases native to the region also constitute a great problem, notably malaria in its several forms, leprosy, bilharzia, yaws, goitre, nutritional diseases, &c. The medical staffs of the government services and of the missions are well aware of the magnitude of the problem. The resources at their command, however, are terribly inadequate. It is urgently necessary that resources be found and made available.

Religious Development. Before bringing this historical survey to a close it is necessary to take note of certain developments with regard to religion. It was noted in passing that representatives of the ruling families had, on occasion, returned to the lands of their exodus to worship their ancestors at the ancient shrines. From this it is evident that the ancestors of the ruling families became the gods of the kingdoms over which they ruled. The commoners kept their own ancestral deities, family by family. Special cults of various sorts have grown up. From the texts of a hundred to a hundred and fifty years ago it is evident that many of the religious practices of the Ovimbundu were then similar to those which are observed at the present time. Some practices described in those texts, on the other hand, seem to have ceased or to have been altered beyond recognition. The very presence of the Europeans must have affected the rites and their observance, for their attitudes, whether of approval or of disapproval, registered over so long a period, must have produced some effect.[1] Degrees of intensity of this European contact, varying from region to region, must have had their influence in the development of regional differences. Some such differences have been noted.[2]

[1] Battell records that the 'Jagas' would not let him witness certain rites. Pinheiro de Lacerda, writing in 1797, says that he burned more than one hundred *oratorios* called *chacapombo* (*Annaes Mar. e. Col.*, 1845, p. 491).

[2] W. H. Sanders put down to their closer contact with Europeans the fact that the king's councillors of Viye were not 'a very dignified set. . . . They seemed to have none of that decorum which prevails among the head men of Bailundu' (*Missionary Herald*, 1886, p. 143).

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

177 The field of Umbundu reactions to cultural influences is a wide
771 and an important one. Whatever contact the Ovimbundu or their progenitors may have had with the early Roman Catholic missions, little impress seems to have been made. The cross has been
[787] adopted as an object used in divination. Certain rites *seem* superficially to resemble the procession with the Host, but there is no indication of the assimilation of any ethical or conceptual element from Christianity during the early or formative period.[1]

797 Christianity first came to the Ovimbundu with the arrival of three missionaries at Bailundu in March 1881.[2] This was during the reign of Ekuikui and proved to be not the least important event of that reign. It is not within the scope of this study to give a history of the work of this Mission.[3] Its inception was planned as carefully as the times permitted, and although its subsequent development did not always proceed according to plan, its progress on the whole has been of an orderly nature, and it has produced noteworthy results which have been evaluated by deputations, by commissions, and by other visitors from time to time.[4]

795 The amount of interdenominational co-operation achieved in
797 this field is worthy of note. There are the missions of the

[1] There were missions of the Jesuits, Capuchins, Carmelites, &c., in Angola from 1575 until about 1800, and there were priests as chaplains of the various presídios visited by the Ovimbundu during most of their history. Major Artur de Paiva, writing in 1890 (see *Boletim Soc. Geog. Lisboa*, 1895, p. 15 f.), describes the ruins of a Roman Catholic mission which he found in Cingolo (*Quingolo*) and which he judged to have dated from the end of the eighteenth century. I have found no reference in any historical work to the founding or operation of such a mission. It may have been built about 1770 when Governor Souza Coutinho ordained a number of towns in the Benguela hinterland, but the absence of specific reference to it seems to indicate that its existence was short.

[2] Messrs. Bagster, Sanders, and Miller sent out by the A.B.C.F.M. (Boston) to inaugurate a mission in Bihe, for that region was well known from the reputation of its traders, while Bailundu and other Umbundu regions had scarcely been heard of.

[3] For a brief summary of the early years see Strong, *The Story of the American Board*, pp. 336 ff.; also two articles in vol. 126 (1930) of the *Missionary Herald*, pp. 424–9; J. T. Tucker, *Drums in the Darkness*, gives a historical treatment of the work of this mission.

[4] There have been two 'deputations' sent to the West Central Africa Mission, in 1911 and in 1930, reports of which were issued by the A.B.C.F.M. Secretaries have visited the mission in 1924, '28, '30, '34, '38, and '46, and have given their impressions either in the *Missionary Herald* or in the *United Church Record and Missionary Review*. The report of the African Education Commission dealt with the work of this mission (T. J. Jones, *Education in Africa*, pp. 40, 239 f., 245 ff.). Among visitors who have written of this work see Nevinson, op. cit., chap. 7; J. Johnston, op. cit., chaps. 2, 3, and 4.

EARLY HISTORY

175 The earliest records of native migration in what is now Angola concern the warrior hordes of Jagas (Jaggas,, Jakas, Iagges, Giaghis, Giaki, Ayaka etc.), who from about 1560 onwards were reported in north-western Angola and the adjacent Kingdom of Congo.[1] Various attempts have been made to identify the Jagas. Van Wing[2] and Torday[3] hold that the name is derived from the Bayaka tribe on the middle Kwango; Battell's account would seem to identify them with the Bangala (Imbangala) of Jaga Cassange, who are known to have been invading western Angola at this time. Childs points to suggestive links of the Jagas with Ovimbundu dynasties: e.g. the Ciyaka group of Ovimbundu, who recognise the region of Cassange as the location of their earliest ancestrall tombs. He also shows that certain Jaga customs as described by the earlier writers resemble those connected with Ovimbundu kingship. Childs suggests that the name *Jaga* (which seems to derive from the verb "to fight" -*oku yaka*; "they fight" = *a yaka* or *vayaka*) was originally a name given to these hordes or to their leaders by the African peoples whom they fought and conquered.[4]

175 European contacts with the people of the Benguella Highland took place in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, before the migrations
● 177 had settled down. Dutch and Portuguese raids took place in 1645, 1650 and 1661, and since fire-arms appear to have been used at that time by the Africans, it seems likely that Umbundu dynasties had them when they came
[921] into the region.[5] In 1760 the throwing open of the hinterland to European traders[6] led to greatly increased commercial contact, and this in turn gave rise to wars between the native rulers and the Portuguese. In 1774-6 a war was fought between the Portuguese and their native allies and the kings of Bailundu and Cingolo. Ciyaka and neighbouring kingdoms continued to raid the European garrisons until recent times, and Europeans appear not to have penetrated Ciyaka until almost the turn of the present century.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF OVIMBUNDU TRADE

175 There are indications that before the end of the eighteenth century
439 the Ovimbundu were becoming, or had become, traders. The slave-trade was formally prohibited in 1836,[7] and subsequently European traders began to move inland in greater numbers in search of ivory, settling especially in Bailundu and Viye. This began a period of great commercial development among the Ovimbundu, the principal commodities being ivory, beeswax, and, in the third quarter of the century, rubber.[8] Trading caravans of the Ovimbundu (under the names *Mombari*, *Eihsans*, *Bailundus*, or *Mbundus*) became

(1) See especially Battell, pp.19f. (2) 1921, p.106.
(3) 1925, map facing p.282.
(4) Childs, op.cit., pp.185-6. (5) Ibid., p.195.
(6) Entry of European traders to the hinterland had been forbidden by law in 1620, although the law had become largely a dead letter.
(7) Although contraband slave-trade continued until late in the nineteenth century, the slaves being used for the transport of ivory and other goods from the hinterland to the coast.
(8) These were at first one-way agreements, allowing Ovimbundu to trade in many lands, since it was to [illegible] advantage of the rulers of these countries. The Ovimbundu are said in f[illegible] have discouraged the tribes to the east from venturing out on their o[illegible] account. See Livingstone 1857, p.384, Cameron 1877, p.406.

197 v. Two significant tones on radicals; no tonal alternance on nominal suffixes. In this Umbundu resembles the Lunda-Luena languages."[1]

Childs[2] classifies Umbundu with the Ambo-Herero group as belonging to the Western Province of Southern Bantu. He suggests[3] that the similarity of Umbundu to the Ngangela languages is due to the dominating influence of the Umbundu spoken in Viye (where the racial stock had a greater Ngangela element) over that spoken in other regions. This dominating influence may be explained by the relatively large number of missions in the Viye region, and presumably also by the activities of Viye traders.[4]

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Dialectal differences in Umbundu speech are very small. There are certain noticeable differences between "up-country" and "down-country", roughly divided by the Keve and Kunene rivers. Each of the outlying regions has its own peculiarities, often due to foreign influences.[5]

It has been mentioned above that while the homeland of the Ovimbundu is in the Benguella Highland, the use of the Umbundu language is now more widespread. The Nganda and the Hanya tribes are increasingly using it, and the mixed populations of the coastal towns of Lobito, Katumbela and Benguella use it almost exclusively. It is also spoken in Nova Redondo, in Mossamedes, and along the Benguella Railway. This process of "Umbundu-ization" does not seem however to be taking place in Cipala, Sela or Musende, in spite of the long period during which they owned the king of Bailundu as their overlord.[6]

PHYSICAL APPEARANCE AND DRESS

142 Among the Ovimbundu two main physical types are distinguished by some writers:[7] one is of brown skin colour and slender build, the other a shorter, darker type with more facial hair. No correlation of these types with chiefly families on the one hand and commoners on the other has been recorded. Hambly[8] gives several good illustrations of physical types among the Ovimbundu, and contrasts them with those found among neighbouring tribes.

301 The Ovimbundu retain distinctive styles of dress, ornament, tooth mutilation (a V-shaped notch in the upper incisors), scarification and hair-dressing. Women are dressed in trade cloth: unmarried girls wear one piece of cloth which hangs from the armpits to the knees, while a married woman drapes herself with two pieces of cloth, a skirt hanging from her girdle, and an upper piece so folded as to hold her baby tightly on her back. Certain cloth designs are considered appropriate for girls, others only for older women. Men now dress usually in European fashion.
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(1) This linguistic note has been written by C.M.N. White.
(2) Op.cit., p.169. (3) p.190, fn.2.
(4) See above, pp.8-9.
(5) Childs op.cit., p.190, fn.2. See also Kalukembe, p.7 above.
(6) Childs, op.cit., pp.11, 179-80.
(7) See Hambly 1934, p.128; Cashman 1944, p.36.
(8) Op.cit., plates XLIX-L.v.

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advancement, will go to the head of their *oluina* to ask for his intercession with the spirits.[1] 613

As legal head of the village, the *sekulu yimbo* presides over both the more serious cases, which are held before the whole village on the dance-floor, and the simpler ones, which require the attendance only of those concerned, together with their respective elders, and may be taken up either in the *onjango* or in the headman's own courtyard. Hambly seems to suggest that all the section-heads act with the village headman as a kind of council, but does not give details. He states also that the *olosekulu* (sing. *sekulu*) of the village formerly had charge of trials for murder, theft, adultery, and arguments over land,[2] and points out that they were more active in the legal system than the chiefs.[3] This is even more true today, when the village court of justice continues to function in spite of political and administrative changes, although the offices of chiefs and to some extent of sub-chiefs have largely decayed. 622 623 691 [177]

Other functions of the village headman include: the distribution of land to the various families when new village sites are opened;[4] the direction of the communal fire-hunts;[5] and, today, the collecting of taxes from the villagers and the direction and organisation of labour to work on the roads.[6] But however numerous the headman's official duties, he usually finds some time to attend to his own affairs, whether he is a farmer, hunter, or trader.[7] 622 423 651 466 [463]

Succession to headmanship is usually from father to son or from elder to younger brother, "with only as much recognition of primogeniture as belongs to the general ... hierarchy of age."[8] Succession is, however, affected by the "democratic" tendencies in succession to chieftainship.[9] 622 643

The Chief (osoma or sova)[10]

The Ovimbundu are grouped in 22 chiefdoms, of which half were in the past generally tributary to the more powerful chiefs.[11] At the same time each chiefdom had its separate government and could be considered as a unit in itself. Effective European occupation and direct rule have atrophied the chiefly office among the Ovimbundu, until today chiefs survive as little more than "living museum pieces".[12] Childs[13] enumerates the functions of the chiefly office as follows: 631 643 [177]

(a) *Religious.* The chief's ancestral spirits were the principal chiefdom deities, and the king was high-priest as well as the visible "vice-regent and incarnation" of the spirits. 643 793 769

(1) Childs, personal communication.
(2) The maternal uncle is responsible for settling disputes over property which occur within the *olusina*. (Hambly op.cit., p.200).
(3) Ibid. (4) Ibid.
(5) Cushman, op.cit., p.115. (6) Ibid., p.121.
(7) Childs, op.cit., p.36. (8) Ibid., p.44.
(9) Ibid.
(10) *Osoma* means chief or king. *Soma* is the personalised form used with the name. This the Portuguese writers have corrupted into *sova* or *seba*. (Childs, personal communication)
(11) See above, p.2.
(12) Childs, op.cit., p.20. (13) Ibid.

lives of chiefs.[1]

The chief's council and court 646

It has been noted that there is a chiefdom council responsible for electing the chief or deposing him, and for sitting with him in law cases. The composition of this council has not been clearly described.[2]

The Sub-chief

The chiefdom[3] was made up of a number of sub-chiefdoms called *atumbu* (sing. *etumbu*); Bailundu had about 200 *atumbu*, each of which had from 3 to more than 300 villages, while a number of the larger *atumbu* were themselves made up of smaller ones. About 20 *atumbu* were ruled by members of the chiefly family, including heirs apparent or expectant, and the chief's wife *(inakulu)* had also her own sub-chiefdom.[4] Others were ruled by court officials not of royal birth, who sometimes themselves established dynasties, others again by dynasties native to the respective regions, or at least dynasties longer resident in the area than the chiefly family. Villages of sub-chiefs, like those of chiefs, are known as *olombala*. Most of the *atumbu* are still recognised, and the sub-chiefs have retained more of their old functions than have the chiefs, and have in addition been given new functions. They as well as village headmen are required to assist in assessing and collecting native tax,[5] and also in recruiting labour for government work and for contracts. In some areas they receive in return the remission of their own taxes. On the dancing floor of most of their *olombala* cases are still heard, judgments given and fines received, although such judgments are not officially recognised or allowed by the European authorities.[6]

643 631 [177] [651] [692]

LAW

Courts

Very little information is available. We are told that certain disputes, e.g. concerning inheritance, are settled within the *oluina*;[7] that in the village cases are tried by a council which apparently consists of the section-heads under the leadership of the village headman;[8] and that these village courts continue to function; that certain cases (unspecified) are still unofficially heard in the courts of the sub-chiefs; and that prior to European occupation the paramount chief's decision was final.

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(1) Ibid., p.23. But chiefs were treated with respect; Hambly (1934, p.214) notes that the ancient custom was for commoners to fall on their knees when greeting a chief, and today this still applies to women and children although less often to men. (2) See Serpa Pinto, 1881, p.167.
(3) Most writers use "kingdom" and "king"; "chief" when used here without qualification refers always to the paramount chief of one of the 22 chiefdoms.
(4) Magyar, 1851, pp.389f, also quoted by Childs, op.cit., p.24.
(5) The amount of the tax levied on all males from 16 years is now Ags. 200,000 annually. As noted by Childs (p.215-6), it has been steadily increasing. Opportunities for earning are comparatively small in Angola, not now for lack of work, but because of "contract labour" required of all males in addition to taxes. Payment for "contract labour" is considerably below current wages, and it is a great hindrance to productive agricultural activities. (Childs, personal communication) (6) Childs, op.cit., pp.24-5.
(7) Hambly, (2) 1934, p.200. (8) See above, p.29.

Vakuacisoko (lit. "those of the set")[1]

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Childs considers that the custom of *vacuacisoko* is probably connected with circumcision and initiation. It does not exist throughout the territory but only in certain families who belong to the order and are said to pass it on by heredity. It seems to have been stronger in the past, but few practising members of the set are now known. All 'coevals' or members of the set were in duty bound to render mutual assistance, and all had mutual rights to the property of the others without complaint or remedy. These rights seem to have included that of having intercourse with each other's wives. Injury or even death of one member brought about by another did not allow the injured family to seek revenge or legal redress. It was the duty of the *vacuacisoko* to bury their fellows, themselves digging the grave and attending to all the expenses ordinarily supplied by the family of the deceased. They also had the duty of burying strangers without family who would not be buried by others for fear of defilement or responsibility for their debts.[2] Childs describes the *vacuacisoko* associations as "age-grade sets",[3] but gives no further explanation.

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"With or without initiation rites, adolescence is largely preparation for marriage and full adult life. Traditionally, adolescence is not a time of conflict or stress....Contract and *corvée* labour have brought profound changes, especially for the young men. As for the girls, a few have gone into the towns; relatively few, however, other than those who attend a boarding-school, lead a life essentially different from that which has been traditionally theirs."[4]

MARRIAGE

582

Available information concerning degrees of relationship in which marriage is permitted, marriage-payment, polygyny and divorce has been given above.[5] Evambi[6] and Hambly[7] describe some of the customs and ceremonies connected with marriage.

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For three nights after the commencement of the marriage ceremony the girl sleeps with her own parents, while the married woman and six unmarried girls whom she has chosen as her attendants sleep in the house of her husband. On the fourth day she moves to the man's house, bringing her cooking utensils. For the first month, according to Hambly, or, according to Evambi, the first year, i.e. until the grain is ripe in her new fields, she lives with her husband's mother or aunt, in whose kitchen she cooks food each night to send to her husband in the *onjango*. When her first child is two or three months old, a present of a pig passes from the girl's mother to her husband.

[606]

Childs[8] adds that adulthood comes with marriage, and marriage is only recognised as complete when the first child has been born. A child or an adolescent is only a "potential" person *(omunu)* and the permanency

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(1) Childs, op.cit., p.115.
(2) Those who buried a man were considered responsible for his debts. Hence corpses were often placed in trees.
(3) Childs, op.cit., p.59.
(4) Ibid., p.117.
(5) Pp.20f.
(6) 1938.
(7) 1934, pp.180f.
(8) Op.cit., pp.119-20.

The coastal strip

131 was at times traversed by the Ovimbundu who know of the sea and
484 call it *kalunga*. Bihéan caravans crossed to the coast with slaves, as history shows, but the nature of the coastal strip marks it as a western barrier limiting the expansion of the Ovimbundu in that direction. The coast line itself is of the greatest moment in the consideration of historical factors. From Loanda, Benguela, and
• [177] Mossamedes on the coast, the Portuguese penetrated the interior, so making contacts with the Ovimbundu to the encouragement of caravan trade. The importance of this European contact will be seen in subsequent chapters.

The south and southwest parts of Angola are of particular importance in studying the contacts of the Ovimbundu, but to give here the details of the wealthy cattle-keeping culture of these regions, which were accessible through peaceful proximity, trade, and occasional raiding, would be an anticipation of chapter X, "Culture Contacts."
[123] One topographical point is of primary importance; namely, the ease with which the Ovimbundu could descend from their strongholds to the low-lying land of the west and south, whereas the reverse journey is much more difficult for a people unaccustomed to manoeuvring and finding their way among hills.

101 Having described the northern, central, western, and southern areas, there remains only the eastern section to consider; this presents several features of peculiar geographical and ethnological interest.
[133] The eastern section of Angola is either slightly undulating or flat, the general characteristic is dryness, and vegetation is somewhat
[136] sparse though sufficient to shelter many kinds of antelope.

The major population is the Vachokue, a warlike, hunting people, who follow agricultural pursuits but slightly, and do not keep cattle. Examination of the literature describing early exploration indicates
[126] the truculent nature of these eastern people with whom caravans of Ovimbundu were in frequent conflict. Umbundu caravans crossed this country when making their way to Rhodesia, culture contacts with which are discussed in chapter X.

The results of contact of Ovimbundu and Vachokue tribes, so far as physical miscegenation is concerned, are mentioned in chapter "Physical Appearance"; while the social effects of slavery resulting from hostilities are described in chapter VI, "Social Life."

174 Rhodesia is a cattle-raising country, but the hostility of the
231 Vachokue, the great distance from central Angola to Rhodesia, and the general dryness of the country to be crossed, discourage the idea that the Ovimbundu obtained their cattle from Rhodesia. If it is

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

175 that the Church participated actively (T. Lewis, The Old Kingdom of Kongo, *Geog. Journ.*, 1908, pp. 598–600).

Political influence of the Portuguese, working often through the agency of Jesuit priests, led to factions within the Congo Empire, and the resulting disturbances caused movements of peoples that affected the whole of northern Angola and the population of the Benguela Highlands.

Portuguese penetration of the hinterland of Angola, especially from Loanda to Bihé, was concerned with attempts to subjugate native tribes, the establishment of trading posts, and the encouragement of the slave trade (S. Marquardsen, Angola, 1928, pp. 6–10).

439 721 The value of the Portuguese as allies of Umbundu caravans from Bihé lay in their ability to supply guns and powder to their native henchmen, who gave something more than military service in return. In response to Portuguese demand for slaves and ivory, Umbundu caravans made long journeys into the Congo basin, Rhodesia, south and southwest Angola, and possibly across Africa to lakes Tanganyika and Nyasa. The arms supplied in exchange for ivory and slaves must have helped the Ovimbundu in all their predatory excursions.

648 Thus the Ovimbundu were, in the early centuries of contact with the Portuguese, invaders encouraged in the building up of their tribal life and resources. Never were the Portuguese strong enough completely to subjugate northern Angola. Relationships with natives, especially the Bihéan section of the Ovimbundu, were directed toward alliances on a commercial basis. The political result of this was a combination of the Portuguese and the stronger tribes for the exploitation of the weaker.

167 177 The historical ethnology of the southwest Congo is so complex that the elements are difficult to disentangle. The number of tribes concerned is great, and their movements are not easy to follow; but a gradual extension of people from the Congo in a southwesterly direction through Lunda to the Benguela Highlands (1600–1800) seems to be the summation of all the conflict. I regard the Ovimbundu as the most southerly branch of these mass movements, during which they received a discipline that enabled them to make their home in central Angola, despite opposition from the Portuguese and earlier arrivals.

114 For these conclusions reliance has been placed on the extensive field work and historical analyses of E. Torday and T. A. Joyce, whose "Notes on the Ethnography of the Bambala" (*J.R.A.I.*, XXXV, pp. 898–926) have proved of particular value in this connection.

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175 171 [412] O. Dapper (Description de l'Afrique, 1732, p. 369) shows a scene in which an ax, such as I obtained from the Vasele country, is being used for beheading a slave.

Cavazzi (Istorica descrizione, etc., Bologna, 1687) describes the three kingdoms of Congo, Matamba, and northern Angola. The [325] poison ordeal, the scapegoat, the blacksmith's bellows (pp. 101, 170) [534] are all traits known to the Ovimbundu. The musical instrument made from a large gourd, which has a ridged board attached for rubbing with a stick, is the type I collected. Cavazzi pictures the double iron gong and the long drum held between the knees. He [782] also shows a rain-maker (p. 214) and the sacrifice of two hundred victims at the accession of a king (p. 210).

174 243 Consideration of the history of maize in Africa is of importance in connection with these early writings, as this grain is the staple agricultural product of the Ovimbundu. I am indebted to Dr. [113] Berthold Laufer for access to his unpublished research on this subject. From the following facts one may assume that, in all probability, the maize culture of the Ovimbundu was derived from the Congo region before their migration into the Benguela Highlands.

175 243 Father Jerome Merolla remarks that maize was growing in the neighborhood of San Salvador (1683–92). The native names were *mampunni* and *massambuta;* from this corn an alcoholic beverage was prepared. According to Cavazzi (Ehrmann, Geschichte der merkwürdigsten Reisen, XIII, 1794) maize was not intensively cultivated by the Negroes of lower Guinea, though it thrives well and may be [177] harvested twice or thrice a year. The natives said that the grain was brought by the Portuguese, but they did not esteem it highly, and were accustomed to use it as food for pigs.

Bosman (p. 312) records that prior to the arrival of the Portuguese, Negroes were entirely ignorant of *milho* ("maize"). The account of Duarte Lopez preserved by Filippo Pigafetta states that the Negroes consider maize the vilest of all grains, so that it is given to swine. This contempt and lack of knowledge of the food value, combined with ignorance of methods of preparation, suggest a recent introduction (Pigafetta, translation by M. Hutchinson, 1881, p. 40). Dapper (Description de l'Afrique, 1732, p. 345) also mentions the cultivation of maize. Battell lived as prisoner in northern Angola about the year 1600, consequently his records of the use of the great Guinea wheat (maize), which the natives call *mas-importo*, give early evidence for the use of this grain (Hakluyt Soc., 1901, pp. 9, 11, 67).

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He draws the crescentic arrowhead (p. 123) still common among the Ovimbundu and Vachokue; the double iron gong (p. 122); and the musical bow, which he calls a viola (p. 121). 175 114 [534]

Sogaur states that iron-working had an advanced technique at Dindo, more than half a century ago. According to Sogaur, the blacksmith was using scrap iron from European sources (II, p. 14). 175 326

Perhaps the most valuable of Chatelain's books is "Fifty Folk Tales of Angola." The stories are accompanied by translations and ethnological notes, the most important of which are references to the carrying of a corpse on a pole; the building of a cairn of stones over the corpse of a hunter; matrilineal descent and the power of the maternal uncle over the persons of his nieces and nephews (sisters' children). My observations included some details respecting the pawning of a sister's children to redeem the debts of their mother's brother. Chatelain adds that sisters' children are successors to private property and chieftainship (pp. 8–10). My notes agree that property is inherited by children of a deceased man's sister, but my informants said that a new chieftain is normally the eldest son of the principal wife of the dead chief. Chatelain's folklore stories, fifty in number, relate chiefly to animals; this was the only kind of story told to me, but W. C. Bell has recorded a few tales of another type. 173 [114] [764] [611] [604] [428] [538]

Marquardsen (1928) devotes only one-fourth of his book to the ethnology of Angola, which he treats in a very general way; there is no section dealing specifically with any particular tribe. The author calls attention to Chapman's observation of rock paintings of South African Bushman type, between Cuma and Luimbale in northwest Angola. I have elsewhere remarked on the occasional occurrence of physical types which show a strain of Bushman blood. Today Bushmen penetrate southern Angola from the Kalahari (Plate LXIX, Figs. 1, 2), but their presence in times past or present does not affect the course of history or the data of ethnology to an appreciable extent. 114 177 [531] [144]

Marquardsen gives some notes of a general kind on Vaheneca, Mahuila and other tribes of southwest Angola. The suggestion is feasible that the Umbundu name Suku, for a supreme being, is the same as the Nzambi of Lunda and the Congo. Marquardsen refers to the importance of the maternal uncle in Umbundu society, to the poison ordeal, and to the burial of an Umbundu chief in oxhide, all of which points were recorded in my observations at Elende. 114 101

Ferreira Diniz's book is unobtainable, but, judging from the summary given in *Anthropos* (XX, 1925, pp. 321–331), the information was collected by a questionnaire widely distributed among adminis-

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

In northern Angola the Ovimbundu could not have had other than 174
a warlike existence, which trained them in military tactics and the 178
building up of an aggressive confederacy. In this they were aided by contact with the Portuguese, who supplied guns and powder in exchange for slaves and ivory from the interior. This accumulated wealth further stimulated the building up of Umbundu tribal life.

Introduction of maize by the Portuguese gave the Ovimbundu a 177
knowledge of this grain, which later became their staple wealth and food supply.

The cultural pattern of the northern Congo was the same in the 174
year 1600 as it is today, and consideration of the ethnology of the Congo region reveals numerous similarities with Umbundu culture of the present time.

Writings of explorers in Angola from A.D. 1800 to the present day bring out many points which are in agreement with my field observations. There are no discrepancies which would make me question the validity of information given by my informants.

In early records, Battell's observation of cattle in the hinterland [231]
of Benguela (1600), is important in showing that at such an early date the Ovimbundu had access to cattle when raiding from their home in the Benguela Highlands.

From these fundamentals of geography and history the inquiry turns to a detailed account of my observations among the Ovimbundu and surrounding tribes.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

The picture of types gathered at Ngalangi (Plate LXXXIX, Fig. 3) shows, reading from left to right along the back row, then along the front row in the same direction: an Ocimbundu; an Ocivokue; a man of the Vangangella; an Uluchazi woman; a Lunda man; and two types of the Vangangella. 142 101

The M'Bunda man and woman photographed at Cangamba display characteristic deformation of the upper central incisors (Plate XCI, Figs. 1, 2). Photographs of a Mussurongo man and two women, taken about a hundred miles east of Malange, show no great difference from the Ovimbundu except in their shorter stature (Plates LXX, Figs. 1, 2; LXXI, Figs. 1, 2). The Bushman (Plate LXIX, Figs. 1, 2) shows a type found wandering in small bands in the south of Angola. These photographs were taken at Cassanga. [304]

The dress and personal ornaments of the tribes dwelling to the south of the Ovimbundu (Plates LIX–LXVIII) are entirely different from the clothing and decorative styles observed in the areas occupied by the Ovimbundu. This statement is true with regard to bodily covering, ornaments, tooth mutilation, use of pigment, scarification, and hairdressing. 171 301 304

In respect of all these factors, males and females of the Ovimbundu have distinctive patterns which do not appear to have influenced, or to have been influenced by the styles around them. [177]

In working southward from Elende I passed through typical Umbundu cultures until the vicinity of Kipungo was reached. At this place the change in physical appearance, ornaments, and hairdressing was remarkable both for its abruptness and distinctiveness. But the change from agricultural to pastoral pursuits is gradual.

A comparison of photographs indicates at once the truth of this statement, which can be further illustrated by a detailed description of the ornaments observed from Kipungo to Mongua.

By far the most important of these is the circular *omba* shell made from the basal part of a gastropod shell of the genus *Conus* Linn; and allied forms. These are highly prized, not because of any intrinsic worth, but on account of strong sentiment arising from their bequest, which is usually in the female line. I have, however, seen a few males of the Vakuanyama wearing these shells. For the old *omba* shells monetary offers equal to the earnings of a woman for a period of six months were made, but without success. One woman wavered somewhat, but finally decided that she dared not return to her home without her *omba* shells. From a Portuguese trader I bought, for a small sum, *omba* shells showing stages in manufacture. 301 321 [825] [562]

302 A principal wife builds up her
[595] hair into five high cones. Vachokue women mass their hair into separate balls shaped and held by clay and red coloring matter.
171 I know of no hairdressing for Vachokue men, but ornamental wooden combs are sometimes used.

304 In only one place have I seen a nose pin worn, namely, the Esele country of Vila Nova de Selles. The fashion is out of date, but women of only twenty-five years of age have the septum of the nose bored; evidently the custom has not been obsolete for a long period (Plate LXXV, Fig. 1).

177 The most popular European importations are blue cloth with
439 white spots, metal hair combs, beads, and bright metal crosses
301 bearing a figure of the Virgin Mary with the infant Jesus. This ornament has penetrated to districts far away from Christian missions, and its wide dispersal shows that a newly introduced and attractive ornament from a foreign source may readily be accepted by tribes of different cultures.

517 There are interesting points of psychology in the attitude of the
301 Ovimbundu toward European importations. Only a few patterns of cloth are favored, and there is no sale for any other design. Some designs are thought to be appropriate for young girls while others are favored by older women. The same may be said of colored beads, for whereas both blue and white beads are the usual decoration for young women and immature girls, red beads are worn chiefly by the elderly women.

178 A consideration of personal ornament establishes the general truth that in scarification, hairdressing, tooth mutilation, the use of red powder and grease, the anointing of the hair with palm oil, and the wearing of trade cloth, leather, or bark cloth, there is little exchange of styles. There are diffusions in language and other cultural traits, but decorative elements which have for a long period been regarded as distinctive of tribal life are rigidly preserved.

V. ECONOMIC LIFE

The words "economic life" are here used with a wide connotation including nature lore, food supply, trade, transport, and industries; all these are combined to form a foundation for every aspect of the social life of the tribe. 182

The truth of this is realized if one pays attention to the rites connected with occupations. For the hunter there is special training, ritual, and a peculiar mode of burial. Final ceremonies in the initiation of a young blacksmith are associated with sacred acts such as sacrifice of animals and the sprinkling of the tools with their blood. Even the simple occupation of pounding corn requires that the rock shall be dedicated to this purpose by sprinkling the blood of a chicken on the surface. Similarly, a clay pit has to be consecrated before the raw material may be taken for making pottery. A caravan journey is not merely a commercial undertaking; the accompanying medicine-man carries a wooden figure which he consults with regard to the route (Plate XXI, Fig. 5). 788 782 [787]

Division of labor according to sex is one of the most important principles involved in the economic life, more particularly in occupational groupings, which are strictly observed. Moreover, within any one activity, such as house-building, there are tasks for men only, while other parts of the work are performed exclusively by women or children. 462

The study of industries is of great importance when a comparison of Umbundu and adjacent cultures is being made. This is particularly true in the instance of wood-carving, an occupation yielding highly specialized products some of which are connected with religious belief and ritual. All artifacts are valuable as criteria of cultural contacts, though their reliability as evidence of trait diffusion naturally varies with their degree of complexity. Study of native industries in relation to European contacts illustrates a cultural process which may result in acceptance, rejection, or ingenious adaptation of new ideas. 322 177 ● [778]

That a study of the economic life of a tribe is not merely a recording of material processes and artifacts, is illustrated by observation of the treatment of cattle. This pastoral pursuit naturally falls under a heading "Domestic Animals," but the ideas associated with cattle, including funeral feasts, use of horns on graves, and the wrapping of the royal corpse in oxhide, lead directly into important matters of belief and ritual. 182 231

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Olungunga is not a sweet manioc, so is not eaten raw. The roots are placed to soak in a stream for three or four days before they are roasted on a fire, after which they may be eaten with impunity. As an alternative the roots may be dried in the sun; they are then pounded into meal which is scattered into boiling water so that a mush is formed. The Umbundu name for this preparation is *iputa viutombo*, meaning "mush of manioc." The leaves of *olungunga* are not soaked in water; on the contrary, they may be cooked as soon as they are gathered, but they must not be eaten when warm. There is no danger in eating them after they have been boiled and have been allowed to become cold. The leaves are served with salt or fat. 252 [263]

All the manioc, with the exception of *olungunga*, is sweet. *Kandona* has roots which may be eaten uncooked, but both leaves and roots are sometimes cooked in water. Other varieties of manioc known as *otetu*, *elemba*, and *esela* are eaten in the same way as *kandona*. Manioc is in use all the year, but the greatest quantity is consumed in November and December, a period when the growing corn is not ripe and the storage supplies have dwindled. [221]

Sweet potatoes are plentiful all the year with the exception of the months of November and December. They are placed in the pot, without removal of the skin, and boiled for a period of twenty or thirty minutes. They are taken out, peeled, and eaten. European potatoes are sometimes peeled and made into a mush. The variety of garden produce naturally depends on proximity to a trading post, a mission, or some other European settlement. [177]

In propagating manioc a stem is cut off from the parent plant which is about three feet high; but probably two or three years pass before the tubers are considered large enough for use. Sweet potatoes are planted in January, but there is very little of this food available in February and March. Toward the end of March or early in April a few potatoes may be ready for consumption. 244 [221]

Peanuts (*Arachis hypogaea*, Leguminosae) are planted in October by women who prepare patches of ground which are drilled with holes one inch deep and eight inches apart. One nut is placed in each hole after the shell has been removed. Above the ground small leaves appear. After the flower-stalk withers it has the peculiarity of elongating and bending down. In this way the young pod is forced underground, and the seeds mature a little way below the surface.

Some natives employ irrigation by leading small channels of water from a hillside stream to a garden containing maize and 312

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I have seen an Ocimbundu male riding an ox without saddle. A 492
cord was passed through the animal's nose to serve as reins.

The Portuguese name for horse is *cavalo*, a word which the Ovim- 192
bundu use in the form *okavalu*, though there is an Umbundu word *ocingongovala*, which means "going with his neck up." The Umbundu words for donkey and mule are *ocimbulu* and *omula*, respectively.

Generally speaking, the ears of animals are not clipped, neither 231
are cattle branded or otherwise marked to indicate ownership, but sometimes the ears of pigs and goats are cut to aid identification. When asked why the tips of the ears of dogs are mutilated an Ocimbundu will say that a dog with uncut ears does not hear when called (Plate LVI, Fig. 2).

Not many families own large herds of cattle among the Ovim- 233
bundu, and I did not see a big kraal until I was in southwest Angola. 556
Cattle, which are a measure of wealth, are used for paying fines, making funeral feasts, paying debts, and securing wives. The cattle throughout Angola are well-developed, handsome animals (Plate LVII, Fig. 1). The bull remains with the herd the entire year; there is therefore no particular season for the birth of calves. Usually cows are not milked by the Ovimbundu, consequently these people have no milk, butter, or cheese. The Vakuanyama of the south milk their [171]
cows and churn butter in calabashes slung on a pole.

The Ovimbundu say that milking the cow makes the calf thin, 234
but where the idea of milking the cow is borrowed from the Portu- [177]
guese the Ovimbundu have a procedure which is as follows: The calf is allowed to suck for a few minutes in order to deceive the cow; then the milker begins his work. At intervals of a few minutes the calf is allowed to suck in order to continue the deception.

Cattle are killed at the funeral feasts of the rich, and the horns [765]
of the slaughtered animals are generally mounted on a pole in the vicinity of the grave (Plate XLVI, Fig. 2).

The horns of the cow may be used for making water-pipes in 237
which tobacco is smoked, or they may be employed as magical horns when filled with medicine. The hide is pegged out in the sunlight 281
for one day after it has been scraped; it is then rolled and kept until required. When about to be used, the skin is soaked in water for one day. The hide is used to cover the tops of stools, to make pouches and to manufacture bags for carrying corn. In bygone days each king had a wooden box covered with hide, which contained his powder and metal when he went to war. The cow's tail is used

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322 The tools used by the wood-carver are the saw, ax, adze, and knife.
532 The products of this craft may be conveniently divided into the following groups:

(1) Figurines of human form (Plate XXI, Figs. 1–6).

(2) Animal forms, chiefly snakes, tortoises, birds, and lizards. The dog is sometimes represented (Plates XIX, Figs. 1–5; XLI, Fig. 1).

[534] (3) Parts of musical instruments, such as drums and the base-boards of *sansas*. The latter often have the metal keys mounted on boards decorated with elaborately incised patterns (Plates XLI, Fig. 2; XXII, Fig. 5).

[415] (4) Domestic implements and utensils, chief of which are heavy wooden beaters for flattening mud floors of houses, grain pounders, stools, cups, platters, bowls, and a heavy pestle and mortar (Plates XIII, Fig. 3; XVIII, Figs. 1, 2).

[531] (5) Carved sticks and clubs; these often show elaborate incised decorations of geometrical patterns. Frequently the head of the stick is carved to represent a human head or a full-length figure.
[293] The ornamented stick or club is carried as part of the personal dress and artistic equipment. The throwing club is usually a straight stick with an undecorated knob at the end (Plate XX, Figs. 1–10).

(6) Carved wooden posts representing the human form. These are set up at the wayside. One has been obtained from a grave near Bailundu.

(7) Tobacco-pipes and snuff boxes (Plate XV, Figs. 2, 4).

177 Figurines of human form require special consideration, because
532 they have claims other than that of aesthetic expression. The figures representing Europeans, or natives using some article of foreign introduction, illustrate the grafting of foreign ideas on older methods of work.

113 The art of the African Negro has of late years been accorded a place of honor in critical circles of Europe and America (P. Guillaume and T. Munro, Primitive Negro Sculpture, New York, 1926). Usually, however, the formal technique of lines, curves, and the general aesthetic effect have been discussed to the exclusion of the ethnological background which determines style and function.

532 By far the best example of carved human figures collected in Angola was the one from Cangamba (Plate XXI, Fig. 4). This female figure, 60 cm high, is carved from hard, dark, red wood in such a way as to achieve a graceful result by the employment of a few

285 Among the Ovimbundu are to be found baskets which they them-
171 selves seldom copy. These examples are from the Vachokue country of eastern Angola. The Vachokue specialize in making winnowing trays and rectangular baskets which are twilled by passing each weft over two or more warps.

By this technique, combined with the use of brown and black weft and warp, a great variety of geometrical patterns is produced. Trays of this kind vary in diameter from 50 to 200 cm. The Vachokue also make large strong trays in which honey is exposed to dry.

In the neighborhood of Cassanga wicker-work baskets are made. The warps or stakes are rigid while the more flexible wefts bend in and out. At this place there are both Ovimbundu and Vachokue inhabitants.

Women of the Vakuanyama in southern Angola make exceptionally neat little conical baskets by lashing coils very tightly. The lashing is done in such a way as to leave the outer surface covered with small chevron-shaped designs.

177 There is an intrusion of European influence which tends to mar
285 the work of the Ovimbundu and other native craftswomen. Soft dyes produced by methods described are sometimes replaced by brightly colored, imported dyes; old ribbons from typewriters are soaked in order to extract coloring. The Ovimbundu are imitating European forms of basketry in a few centers, though the native method of coiling is still used.

WEAPONS

411 The bow of the Ovimbundu is made of hard red wood which takes a high polish after use. It is round in cross section and tapers considerably toward the ends. The length is usually 150 cm, not an inconvenient size in view of the fairly open bush through which the hunter has to make his way. The bowstring is made of a thin strip of twisted hide, which is looped over each end of the bow by a slip knot made of two half-hitches. A shoulder at each end of the bow shaft prevents the slip knot from passing down the shaft. In some examples only one end of the bow stave is notched. Usually, after completing the slip knot, the hunter leaves a surplus of bowstring which is wound round the shaft. One bow which is not notched has rattan wound round the stave to prevent the loops from slipping.

The bow for shooting bird arrows is small and is used only by boys; the string is of twisted vegetable fiber.

S. Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbunc.

In addition to pouches, hide is used by the Ovimbundu for the seats of four-legged wooden stools. Before stretching the hide over the wooden frame the edge of the leather is cut into strips which are interlaced on the under side of the stool (Plate XVIII, Fig. 1). There are few evidences of the hide having been dressed; usually the hair is attached. The Ovimbundu understand the dressing of hides in a crude way. The hide is soaked, after which the inner surface is rubbed with ashes. The hair is scraped away and the hide is tightly pegged out. Hide was formerly used for covering wooden boxes in which a king carried his powder and possessions to war. Scraped hide is used to form the tympanum in tubular wooden drums. 282 [534]

In only one part of Angola, notably in the south among the Vakuanyama, is leather used as clothing. Women wear pleated skirts of hide and several broad leather belts, while the men have small leather aprons in front and behind. Men only are the leather workers. The hide is soaked and trampled under foot for many hours in order to soften it and make it pliable; the hair is not removed. Before leather clothing is worn it is thickly greased with a mixture of fat and red powder from *tukula* wood (Plates LXV, Figs. 1–3; LXVII, Fig. 1). 171 282 [291] 462

SPINNING AND WEAVING

My interpreter Ngonga remembers the use of a heavy upright loom about twenty years ago, but this loom is not used at the present time among the Ovimbundu. The Ovimbundu have been in contact with Europeans for three centuries. This has not been a close and permanent contact, but it has been sufficient to account for the disappearance of a one-time essential art. There are in Elende some very fine raffia palm trees, but no use is made of the leaf fiber for manufacturing clothes. Bark cloth is not made by the Ovimbundu of Elende, but I have seen the Vangangella and Ovimbundu of Ngalangi engaged in stripping, beating, and preparing bark for use as clothing, which is formed of one piece wound round the body. The bark cloth is not dyed or decorated with patterns. 286 177 287 171

Frequently at Elende men are seen engaged in spinning cotton which is used for repairs, and not for fabricating garments. The cotton is obtained from a shrub which has reddish leaves and yellow flowers. The cotton may be seen protruding from the calyx in the months of June and July. The man who is winding holds high in his left hand a slender stick which is wrapped for a length of two feet with fluffy cotton. All work of pressing and twisting the cotton into a thread is done by the thumb and index finger of the right hand. 283 824

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

in return. Even a slave used to have rights of appeal to the king if he were starved and beaten without cause. The king was the prime mover in warfare. The whole legal system is at this time directly under Portuguese administration though the kings and chiefs have minor powers. Ngonga says that complainants who are dissatisfied with the decision of their own chief go to the Fort, meaning of course the Portuguese military post, or office of the Administrador.

There is no doubt that in former days the responsibility for crime and debt was transferred to a relative in the absence of the delinquent. If a thief escaped, responsibility would rest with a brother, a father or a son. The mother's brother was often held to be responsible for the misdeeds and debts of his sister's children. The mother's brother has rights that extend to the sale of his sister's children to pay his debts. For this reason Ngonga says, "If I have done wrong and they cannot catch me it is right that he (mother's brother) should pay for me."

I supposed the case of Ngonga having stolen a cow; he has been caught but escapes. Ngonga said that the man from whom he had stolen the animal would go to his (Ngonga's) mother's brother in order to name the price required for the cow, or any other possession which had been stolen. If the mother's brother thought the price reasonable he would pay. On the contrary, if the price claimed were too high the mother's brother would appeal, first to the village chief, then if necessary to the king.

Ownership of land does not appear to have been a source of dispute. Apparently land was distributed by the chief as explained in dealing with village organization. Rights seem to have been well defined and there was always enough land for a stranger. When a man was going away on a trading journey he might lend his land to another who would agree to cultivate it and take the produce for a year. I was unable to satisfy myself that land is now, or was in time past held to be the property of dead ancestors. The right to land depends on its use and allotment by a chief at the time of founding a village. A man who intended to be absent would make a payment so that he might leave his goods at the house of another. The chief would settle any disputes arising from these arrangements.

The complainant in a suit is called *ombile*, the defendant is *ovilue*. The name for a witness is *uvangi*. In the old days a false witness had to make recompense to the man about whom he had told a lie; he would probably have a beating as well. A master was in every way responsible for the actions of a slave. The degree of responsi-

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Social Life

fines were in their hands. If he murdered one of the royal family 682
he was killed after he had paid the fine." The punishment of a woman [562]
who has committed a murder is the same as that for a man.

Ombulungu is the name given to trial by poison ordeal. The 695
medicine-man holds out both his hands, in each of which there is a potato, only one of which is poisoned. The accused man says, "If I have done this thing, this potato will be poison for me. If I have not done this thing, this potato will be food for me." The complainant says, "If this is not the man who poisoned my brother, this potato will be poison for me." They sit in front of the medicine-man, and each must take the potato in the hand opposite to him. The poison makes a man very sick. His mouth swells so that he cannot speak.

When a woman was accused of murder her son or her brother [562]
would take her place in the poison ordeal. A boy of fifteen years of age would have the same treatment as a man. "I don't think a girl would kill anybody. I never heard about it," said Ngonga. It appears that resort was made to a medicine-man when the accused was thought to have committed murder by poison or magic. If the murderer used weapons, the accuser, who was usually a relative, was entitled to kill him with the kind of weapon used for the crime.

The penalties for adultery were the same as those for murder. 684
The woman appears to have escaped punishment, except that "her husband would not have her any more." The male adulterer had to pay the husband; if he could not pay or escape, the husband had the right to kill him. In the old days the price for adultery was two oxen, a pig, and a slave. At the present day a man who has committed adultery and made payment, possibly takes the woman and all children under three years of age. The husband has the right to decide whether the adulterer has the privilege of taking the woman and her children. An adulterer with one of the king's wives was
castrated but not killed. He might, instead of mutilation, pay a very [567]
high price, while he himself along with his sisters and the sons of his sisters, would become slaves of the king. If a man could not pay, he might be sold as a slave in order to provide money for the fine.
Criminal law did not distinguish between responsibility for inten- [671]
tional and unintentional offences.

It is very difficult to say how much of the old law survives. One 681
feels that underneath the ostensible Portuguese rule there is an active 177
native life that is resisting subjugation.

Only two years ago Ngonga paid an ox to prevent one of his female 686
relatives from being pawned. Within the past ten years Ngonga has

686 actually paid to redeem his brother and sister who were sold to pay the debts of his maternal uncle. Officialdom is one thing and actual [177] practice is another. Ngonga is right when he says that people appeal to the native law as laid down by the chief or king. If they are not satisfied they pretend a great respect for Portuguese law and therefore go to the Administrador.

WARFARE AND SLAVERY

648 The Ovimbundu have been for centuries an organized people 726 possessed of a well-developed language, a legal system, and complex social organization. In trade and travel too, the Ovimbundu have been in the vanguard of African tribes. These reasons, in conjunction with the fact of numerical superiority and early contact with the Portuguese, would account for the success of the Ovimbundu in warfare. The defensive federations existing between the ten or twelve main political units, whereby they did not habitually war on each other, helped to assure success. Should the eldest son of a king's (643) principal wife be thought unsuitable as successor, a competent son of the deceased king was elected by a council of village chiefs.

411 There is no evidence that the Ovimbundu poisoned their weapons, neither do they do so today. The Ovimbundu do not use a shield at the present time, neither is it certain that they had shields in former times. A skin-covered powder-box was carried in the king's train when on the warpath.

718 Signaling-drums were about two feet long. They were made from a cylinder of wood over the ends of which skin was stretched. Signaling, which was accomplished by drumming with the palms of the hands, was the task of boys who resided in the king's compound, except when they accompanied him to war or on a trading journey. There was no system of smoke signaling. The iron war gong was named *ongonge*, but the instrument is nowadays tapped by the assistant of a medicine-man during his performance. In former times the gong was struck in the night to give assurance that the enemy was not in sight.

726 In war the oldest son of a king or of a chief went ahead of the war party accompanied by a few men who wore red leaves on their foreheads.

721 Intertribal jealousies, raiding for cattle and slaves, also reprisals for interference with caravan trade, were the chief causes of conflict with surrounding peoples. There was undoubtedly some internal warfare within the confederacy. The Ovimbundu of Elende, Bail-

881 short fiber skirts worn within this enclosure by the novices, are in
171 agreement with the observations made at Cangamba. There is
304 also a close resemblance between the independent accounts of
[114] H. Baumann and F. and W. Jaspert for the Vachokue, also P. A. Delille and E. de Jonghe for the southwest Congo.

The question of initiation rites, past and present, among people of pure Umbundu culture is important. The matter is more fully dealt with later in discussing cultural contacts and cultural losses, but there are a few points which should not be omitted here.

At Caconda, an Umbundu center of western Angola, Père R. P. Laagel stated that only two years ago he had visited an initiation camp of Ovimbundu boys in the hope of persuading them to return to his mission school at Caconda. My informant stated that the boys were circumcised, beaten, and confined to an enclosure for several weeks. Those who cried out when flogged received a double portion of blows. Poisoning is the fate of a boy who reveals the secrets of the initiation camp to women or uninitiated boys. This is the most direct testimony I have received concerning initiation rites among unmixed Ovimbundu.

881 From Bailundu and Elende I have obtained slight evidence of
292 initiation rites. At the former place, which, like Elende, is a center
171 of the Ovimbundu tribe, fiber costumes were obtained. The mask from Elende is unlike those used at Cangamba, Katoko, and Ngongo. The fiber suits are, however, no different from costumes used at these places. Initiation ceremonies are not held at Elende today, and beyond Dr. Ennis's statement that circumcision rites have been revived in the past fifteen years of his long residence in the neighborhood of Elende, I have no evidence of ritual.

881 The data relating to initiation of boys in Angola suggest loss
177 of the initiatory rites from Umbundu culture, until only a few old masks and costumes, along with attenuated ritual, remain sporadically. On the contrary, in eastern Angola and particularly among the Vachokue, who are farther than the Ovimbundu from coastal influence, initiation ceremonies flourish. At present there is occurring a penetration of initiation rites from the Vachokue area into east-central Angola, which is a region of cultural admixture.

867 The foregoing pages have described certain institutions and social forces which collectively bring individuals into conformity with tribal standards of conduct. The influences at work in this direction may be direct or indirect.

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Among direct educational forces are the home training given by parents and the mutual responsibility of children and their mother's brother, whose reciprocal obligations have been explained. Family life is undeniably an important institution whose power is by no means suppressed by the strength of the village community and tribal organization. 867

Initiation, which may or may not coincide with puberty, is perhaps the most potent direct influence in formation of character and the inculcation of principles tending to tribal solidarity. Formerly warfare and hunting were more important than they are today, consequently initiation rites imposing hardship and emphasizing the importance of concerted action, had a greater social value than they have at present. 867 881

Formal instruction in industries such as iron-working, or professional hunting, indicates one aspect of occupational training. In these instances there are apprenticeship and an initiatory rite. All children are, however, subject to an indirect industrial education through the agency of play, while a few, according to desire and aptitude, become experts in some particular occupation. 874 [868]

At all times the force of suggestion is at work in the home, in the men's council house, and through everyday observation of the conduct of elders. Probably folklore stories also have an indirect educational value, because some of the fables show the desirability of courage, honesty, and foresight, at the same time deprecating cowardice, stupidity, and low cunning. 869

In chapter IX religious beliefs are discussed, and, in connection with these, standards of conduct are outlined. Although the Ovimbundu have a belief in a supreme being and creator (Suku), and although they believe in survival after death, there is no evidence to show that conduct and education are influenced by theological beliefs. Suku, who is vaguely conceived, is far away and uninterested. He issues no commands. Neither is there a belief in punishments and rewards after death. The standards of conduct are based on utilitarian principles which secure harmony and unity. 771 869 [776]

The efficiency of the direct and indirect educational forces of the Ovimbundu is attested by the history of the tribe. The indigenous system of education, supported by favorable environment, consolidated these people so that they became the dominating power in Angola. Moreover, their cohesion has been such that three centuries of European contacts have failed to eliminate all the basic elements of their tribal life. 177

193 *ka wa tuŋgili*, you did not build
ka va tuŋgile, they did not build
omanu ka va yongola oku tila, the people do not wish to flee
ocimunu ka ci yongola upange, the thief does not wish work
ha ngombe ko, it is not an ox
ha njoko, it is not a house
ha munuko, it is not a person
ha manuko, they are not people
ha ci munuko, he is not a thief
ha meko, it is not I
he yeko, it is not he
ha veko, it is not you
he tuko, it is not we
he nako, it is not you
ha voko, it is not they
si ci munuko, I am not a thief
ku ci munuko, you are not a thief
ha ci munuko, he is not a thief
ka tui munuko, we are not thieves
ka wi munuko, you are not thieves
ha i munuko, they are not thieves

TRANSCRIPTION OF FOLKLORE STORIES

539

Ombwá lolwisó lwáyo[1]
Dog with Greed His

Ombwá kèyaù, okásitu vómèlà. Yi li lóluyókàyoka
Dog on bridge little meat in mouth. It is there to cross

òlwi. Vovává yi letemo ómbwá yekwávò lonumbá
stream. In water it sees dog another with piece

yinénè yósitù. Ombwá yà lólá okásitu káhè; yà wílà
big of meat. Dog dropped little meat his; it threw itself

vovává hà yi kwátà ósitù yinénè yikwávò. Omó yà
in water in order to catch meat large other. Thus it

ñelísá òlònúmbá vìváli, yikwávò ya káilè láyò,
lost pieces two, the other it was with him,

yikwávò yi léte pólwi. Yà vi ñelísá momo o kwete
(the) other it saw in stream. It then lost because he had

olúŋgòŋgò. Isó lilmólá mólá ondjámba, òkù liénda ka li ká
greed. Eye sees (continuously) elephant, in going it is not

velèla ohatù.
increased meat-hunger.

[1]Presumably an adoption of the well-known European fable of the dog and his reflection.

[177]

756 men and women each of whom receives the name *ocimbanda*, and specialization in some particular form of magical practice is the [554] rule. Some practitioners are more highly esteemed than others. For example, an *ocimbanda* who has the reputation for curing dizziness, madness, and *onyalai* (p. 281) is one of great repute; so also is the man who can cure a case of blood in the urine (*biliosa*). [164] This is the Portuguese term commonly applied to blackwater fever.

DIVINATION

787 An examination of objects collected gives the best indication of the equipment of the *ocimbanda*, and among these no item is more important than the small divination basket containing a heterogeneous collection of objects.

A diviner receives the distinguishing title of *ocimbanda congomba*, and a description of his methods explains his belief in the activities of spirits. He shakes the basket while his assistant plays a small friction drum; then he inspects the objects lying at the top.

A figure with beads on its neck indicates that trouble is due to the ghost of a dead baby whose spirit wishes to come back.

A piece of gourd with a round orifice means that some one has been talking too much. The orifice represents a human mouth.

Two figures, male and female, whispering together, indicate that a husband and wife are making a plan to poison somebody.

The figure of a female with a large abdomen indicates that the spirit of a deceased pregnant woman is causing sickness in the village.

The horn with shells on it indicates that the woman who is consulting the diviner will not bear children.

There is a little figure with a black tuft on its head, whose [177] arrival at the top of the basket indicates that misfortune among the natives is caused by Europeans. When talking to this figure the medicine-man tries to speak like a white man by adopting a falsetto voice and mimicking the intonation of Europeans.

The figure with a little crest on its head is an indication of sickness or other trouble arising from a spirit which likes to drink blood. When this figure comes to the top of the basket, the medicine-man induces the blood-drinking spirit to enter a man, because the evil must first be localized before it can be exorcised. This possessed person dances with a small ax or a hair switch in his hand. When dancing has induced a frenzy, the dancer kills a pig and drinks the fresh blood. The blood-drinking spirit is in this way exorcised from the community.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

174 pattern. In principle, the puberty rites for boys and girls of eastern Angola are the same as those of the Congo region, and masks of eastern Angola resemble those used by the Bapindi of the southwest Congo. Cannibalism was a factor common to the Congo basin and the territory occupied by the Ovimbundu, who have practised ceremonial cannibalism within the memory of persons still alive.

The foregoing summary, supported by preceding details, makes clear that a substantial part of Umbundu culture is definitely like that of the Congo basin. There can be no objection to the evidence as a possibly fortuitous series of vague resemblances, since the entire backgrounds are of the same pattern. The Ovimbundu have a tribal life which is demonstrably a part of the matrix from which, on historical grounds, it is thought to have been derived. The loss of elements, the stressing of others, and the welding of traits from different sources, are matters for discussion in a final chapter dealing with the processes of cultural growth.

RHODESIA

439 177 A constant factor in the economic and cultural development of the Ovimbundu has been the caravan trade from Bihé and Bailundu northeastward across Africa to the Great Lakes, and southward across Moxico into the Zambezi valley and Rhodesia. Every traveler from Battell (1600) onward mentions these caravans which returned to the Benguela Highlands with slaves and ivory. The traditions of journeys still live. Umbundu words are used to describe the Great Lakes, and I have mentioned a wooden figure used for consultation by the medicine-man at a division of routes. There are even today a few large caravans.

The first regular slave traders into northern Rhodesia were the Mbundus from Angola. The Lambas say they were peaceful traders who brought calico, guns, and beads to trade for ivory and slaves. The Mbundu traders were often treated treacherously by both the Lambas and the Lenjes. In some cases they were robbed by the Lamba chiefs. It is said that the Lenjes used to bring their own children to the Mbundu traders in order to buy calico and powder. In the evening the Lenjes used the newly acquired guns to attack the Mbundu traders so that they might recover the children who had been traded (C. M. Doke, p. 79).

The account of F. S. Arnot is a valuable record of a journey which brought him into touch with these traders' caravans, whose route he followed into Garenganze, a country to the southwest of

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

Lake Moero, close to the territory occupied by the Barotse. With his Bihéan carriers Arnot passed along the valley of the Kwando (Livingstone's Chobe). He notes the use of bark cloth (p. 101) and gives an excellent description of the divination basket. "For divining they have a basket filled with bones, teeth, finger nails, seeds, stones, and such articles which are rattled by the diviner till the spirit comes and speaks to him by the movement of these things" (pp. 106, 116). The *onganga* or witch doctor is described on page 115; he is a person not to be confused with the *ocimbanda* or legitimate medicine-man.

Arnot saw a corpse tied to a pole supported on the shoulders of several men. "The witch-doctors demanded of the dead man the cause of his death, whether by poison or by witchcraft, and if by the latter, who was the witch? The jerking of the bier is taken as the dead man's answer." This is the ceremony I described at Elende about three hundred miles from the place mentioned by Arnot. "When a chief dies they say he is sick or asleep [p. 117], and an oxhide from a beast killed at the funeral should be buried with the chief's remains." Arnot was not quite correct; the body of the chief is sewn in the hide. "The people of Bihé say that there is a great spirit Suku over and above all, but they do not know him—I cannot say they believe him to be a universal god" (p. 119).

These instances recorded half a century ago are particularly interesting because of their agreement with present-day procedure. Arnot's description of the Vachokue country and the preparation of beeswax, also the method of extracting honey from hives lodged in trees (p. 146), would serve as a present-day record.

Arnot's information concerns the Garenganze country bordering on Katanga, a copper-producing region near the Lualaba River. Here traders from Uganda, Unyamwezi, the Luba country, the basin of the Zambezi, Bihé, Nyasa, and Zanzibar, gathered to carry on their trade in copper, salt, ivory, slaves, flintlock guns, powder, cloth, and beads. Apart from the evidence of any other writer, that of Arnot alone would suffice to prove the importance of cultural contacts of the Ovimbundu through caravan trade.

One would be mistaken in supposing that the Bihéans made occasional contacts only. For three centuries there has been this to-and-fro movement between the Benguela Highlands and central Africa. In Garenganze, about eight hundred miles from the centers of my research, Arnot noted several points that have been recorded in my notes. The word for medicine-man is *ocimbanda* (p. 242).

439 177 The vertebrae of serpents strung together as a girdle are a cure for rheumatism (p. 237). A necklace of pythons' vertebrae was obtained from a chief of Ngalangi who wore the bones to cure that affliction. In Garenganze twins were introduced to the chief at a ceremony conducted by a female *ocimbanda*. The Ovimbundu welcome twins and one of triplets is given to the king.

171 E. Holub (II) mentions important traits of culture among the Marutse, a Rhodesian people who keep cattle. The Marutse have an aptitude for working in iron, horn, wood, bone, and leather. The masked dance at which performers wore tightly fitting jackets of netted fiber, with close-fitting sleeves, gloves, and stockings of the same material, would serve as a description of the costumes worn in the ceremonies observed at Cangamba in eastern Angola. Holub notes the use of the double iron gong at these dances (vol. II, pp. 168–170). The bark receptacle (p. 308) is the one commonly used in eastern Angola, and along the line from Saurimo to Malange.

The Marutse have the poison ordeal in which vomiting is a sign of innocence, the witness being the god Nyambe (p. 322). Gourd decorations of the Marutse and Babunda tribes show a technique comparable with work of this kind done by the Ovimbundu (pp. 305, 335). The practice of cupping is described by Holub (p. 325); so also is the custom of wearing wooden hair-combs (p. 349). These are cultural traits of the Vachokue and the Ovimbundu.

In his "Eine Kulturskizze des Marutse-Mambunda Reiches" Holub gives a few additional points which connect the Marutse culture with that of eastern and central Angola. The main instances are the technique in gourds (p. 81); the form and hafting of axes (p. 116); blacksmith's bellows and tongs (p. 129); the musical bow (p. 139); the board with metal keys (p. 138); the small friction drum, identical in pattern with my specimen from Elende (p. 140, fig. 70); a musical instrument consisting of a notched board which is rubbed with a stick (p. 142); tobacco-pipes made from the horns of animals and from gourds (p. 147); cylindrical snuff boxes and sticks for pounding snuff (p. 150, fig. 83); wooden hair-combs (p. 155, fig. 87); and wooden stools (p. 163, fig. 92).

All these articles, which are pictured by Holub as being representative of the work of the Marutse of Rhodesia, have their exact parallels in Field Museum collections from the Ovimbundu.

Perusal of "The New Africa" by Schulz and Hammar was not ethnologically fruitful except for a series of outline drawings

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

(vol. II, p. 265), which is an instrument of the Ovimbundu and several tribes of the southwest Congo. The marimba, made from eight slats of wood with gourds underneath, is well known in the north and east of Angola. /171

There is real similarity both in form and function between the culture of Rhodesia and that of the Ovimbundu. This assertion does not rest on consideration of a few factors of a general kind. In addition to the weight of evidence afforded by the long list of similar factors detailed in this section, one must bear in mind the geographical proximity and the known historical connection of the areas under discussion. The following points are of primary importance in accounting for the similarity of culture patterns in Rhodesia and the highlands of Angola occupied by the Ovimbundu. /174

(1) Central Angola and Rhodesia have so many traits in common with each other and with the southwest Congo culture that together the three form a cultural harmony.

(2) Central Angola and Rhodesia have both derived factors from the cattle culture of east Africa, though by different routes.

(3) Rhodesia and central Angola have had prolonged direct contacts through caravan trade carried on by the Ovimbundu.

(4) In addition to diffusion there has been a convergence of cultures in Rhodesia and central Angola because of similarity of geographical conditions. Both are high plateau regions having a degree of heat and a rainfall suitable for the growth of maize and the rearing of cattle. Therefore these occupations have developed in both regions because in each locality there has been a need, favorable conditions, and a like response to physical conditions.

SOUTH WEST AFRICA

The principal tribes of this area are the Ovambo, Herero, Berg Damara, Nama Hottentots, and Bushmen. The most important tribes to consider from the cultural point of view are the Ovambo and the Herero. Wandering bands of Bushmen occur in Angola, and here and there may be seen among the Ovimbundu individuals who appear to have a trace of Bushman blood; but comparison of collections and notes relating to the Ovimbundu with literature on Bushman tribes does not reveal any similarities. There has undeniably been some contact of Bushmen with the inhabitants of Angola, but Bushman influence has probably been very slight from a cultural and physical point of view (D. Bleek; S. Marquardsen, p. 109). /177

177 [197] The Ovambo include eight kindred tribes, all of whom are branches of the Bantu linguistic family to which the Ovimbundu belong. The Vakuanyama, who inhabit large tracts of southern Angola, are a numerous, warlike, pastoral branch of the Ovambo. The Vakuanyama are the only section of the cattle-keeping peoples of the southwest of Africa with whom I have made personal contact; but their culture is generally representative of that of the Ovambo and the Herero.

171 233 When making a journey southward from the country of the Ovimbundu in central Angola, there is a noticeable increase in the size of the kraals as the journey is continued. The first large kraal was observed near Kipungo, and when as far south as Mongua the wealthy cattle-keeping Vakuanyama were by far the most numerous people. Their total strength is probably about 55,000. I journeyed through the Kuanyama country in July, halfway through the dry season, but found that cattle were watered at deep wells from which men and women were constantly drawing water for the herds. Near Ondjiva, only a few miles from British South West Africa, the ruler of the Vakuanyama owned at that time 14,000 head of cattle.

After examining 1,200 objects collected in Angola, I feel sure that cultural contact between the Ovimbundu and the Vakuanyama is unimportant, so far as artifacts are concerned; but, if the inquiry turns to other aspects of culture, there is a more fruitful line of investigation.

Many beliefs and customs center in the keeping of cattle in east and south Africa. The typical cattle-keeping area begins with the Bahima in the vicinity of Lake Victoria Nyanza. The region extends down the eastern side of the continent, through the south and southwest into Damaraland. The Vakuanyama of southern Angola should be included in this area, which has homologies in respect to certain laws, ceremonies, economic customs, and religious beliefs.

The true pastoral area of the south of Angola extends at least as far north as Huila, where there is sufficient rainfall to produce good pasture in open country which is well adapted for raising stock. All the traditions of the Ovimbundu, along with the writings of Battell, suggest this southwest part of Angola as the line of entry for cattle. The Congo basin is not a pastoral country, and transportation of cattle from Rhodesia would necessitate the crossing of hundreds of miles of arid country in Moxico, eastern Angola. There remains, therefore, the cattle-keeping area of south and southwest

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

what degree of complexity there is in the artifacts and beliefs which 174
are under comparison. Reason and form, that is, psychology and 114
morphology, are both important aspects of comparison. The work so far accomplished with regard to the Malayo-Negritan theory of African cultural traits fails to comply with the foregoing essentials of comparative study.

There is consensus of opinion against the Graebnerian hypothesis in its present form. E. S. Hartland reviews Graebner's "Methode der Ethnologie" (*Man*, 1914, No. 70) with the result that he finds Graebner too insistent on the value of forms as a criterion of generic relationship. In fact such a method may degenerate into pure subjectivity. F. Boas (*Science*, XXXIV, No. 884) takes the same point of view in remarking on the exclusion of the psychological field of inquiry; Graebner's method has a too mechanical character.

In view of this criticism, and as a result of personal observation of the culture elements of Angola, I am convinced that the somatological, linguistic, and cultural data for considering the spread of the Malayo-Negritan culture in Africa are not sufficiently understood to lead to a demonstration of any kind. For instance, Portuguese East Africa, the hypothetical starting point of the migration, is by no means well studied in detail, and the problem demands that data relating to the supposed area of introduction should be particularly complete.

The same criticism relates to the farthest point of west Africa reached by the supposed cultural stream from Melanesia. A theory which aims at showing generic relationship between secret societies of west Africa and Oceania cannot successfully rely only on general resemblances of masks and the use of netting costumes. Something more specific than a comparison of forms of artifacts and the occurrence of such ill-defined institutions as age-grades, totemism, and secret societies is essential in order to make the kulturkreis theory acceptable.

The problem of cultural relationships between the Ovimbundu 174
and other African tribes is simplified in several ways. Geographical 177
continuity exists between the African areas discussed, and to a great extent the cultural contacts described are matters of historical fact. Data relating to the Ovimbundu themselves are fairly complete; and what is equally important, there is trustworthy literature bearing on the areas surrounding the Ovimbundu. Therefore, comparisons do not rest on the study of a few simple forms, but on the cultures taken as a whole with regard to cultural traits of all kinds.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

174 177 Evidence adduced up to the present has indicated the relationship of cultural elements of the Ovimbundu to those of tribes immediately surrounding them (chapter X).

In addition to this, the ethnological facts of the present chapter have made it clear that the tribal life of the Ovimbundu cannot be explained by confining the inquiry to immediate culture contacts. The Ovimbundu have without doubt drawn very widely on African cultural streams during the growth of their present social pattern. The truth of this statement has just been illustrated by reference to ritual connected with blacksmiths, Bantu religious beliefs, the Bantu social system, African puberty rites, hunting appliances, musical instruments, and other cultural elements.

A consideration of the kulturkreis theory indicated that a search for the origins of Umbundu culture cannot profitably be extended to Indonesia and Melanesia. Therefore the final chapter is confined to a summary of types of African culture, with a view to showing the relationship of Umbundu culture to each of the main racial, linguistic, and cultural patterns that are known to have affected the African continent.

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Tribal initiation for boys with use of masks, netting costumes, seclusion, circumcision, harsh treatment, change of name, and re-introduction into society. 174

The poison ordeal of general Negro type.

Religious ideas of a supreme being, Suku, Nzambi, or Kalunga, who is thought of as a creator. He is, however, far removed from all tribal affairs, and there is no sacrifice or appeal to him.

An active ancestor worship with good and bad spirits who require sacrifice and recognition by supplication through the agency of a medicine-man. Use of wooden figures in connection with this appeal to spirits. Great importance of the spirits of kings as arbiters in matters of tribal welfare.

Importance of medicine-men in conducting trial by ordeal, making rain, healing the sick, and consulting ancestral spirits by divination and the use of wooden images in which "medicine" is placed.

Methods of fishing with poisons and conical fish traps.

The technique and ritual of the blacksmith's craft.

Wood-carving which particularly resembles that of the southwest Congo region.

Making of bark cloth.

Types of musical instruments, including the friction drum, the marimba, tubular drums, flat drums, metal-keyed instruments, and many other forms which are typical of Negro culture, particularly that of the southwest Congo.

Weaving on a loom of central African type (now obsolete).

Coiled basketry and pottery.

The foregoing elements are associated to form the cultural pattern of the Ovimbundu. All these traits are characteristic of Bantu and Sudanic Negro culture in general. Therefore the Ovimbundu are most closely allied with Negroes, from the cultural point of view.

The elements taken by the Ovimbundu from pastoral tribes, whose culture has invaded east and south Africa, are: 174 177

Cattle and the social values attached to these, together with ceremonial rites which are characteristic of pastoral cultures. Such rites include burial of kings in oxhide, and the killing of oxen at the funeral feast; also the mounting of horns over the grave, and use of sacred fire.

Ideas of succession in the male line, whereby kingship passes to the eldest son of the principal wife, are more characteristic of pastoral than Negro systems.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

174 From the pastoral tribes of southern Angola the Ovimbundu
•177 have adopted a peculiar type of assagai, a throwing club, and sandals.

Primarily the culture of the Ovimbundu is that of African Negroes with persistence of traits that have survived, possibly from a pre-Negro culture, which depended entirely upon food-gathering and hunting. Grafted on these traits are important elements from a pastoral culture which is generally conceded to be Hamitic.

European contacts led to the introduction of maize, manioc, sweet potatoes, and peanuts, so stimulating the indigenous hoe culture. This agricultural life was further encouraged by settlement in the Benguela Highlands, where temperature, rainfall, and open spaces favored a great expansion of agricultural pursuits, especially the growth of maize and beans.

Early contact with the Portuguese led to an encouragement of trade. Guns and powder, together with other European goods, were received in exchange for ivory and slaves. An increase in the supply of slaves led to changes in the social life, whereby the Ovimbundu gained more time and opportunity for extensive raiding and trading, by which means their wealth was further increased.

As time progressed, the nature of the contact with the Portuguese changed. Instead of alliances made on a commercial basis, the Portuguese gradually assumed control, the results of which are now distinctly felt in the disintegration of Umbundu tribal life.

The data supplied by personal field work, supported by a perusal of ethnological literature, suggest the foregoing summary as the briefest possible outline of the history of the Ovimbundu, the growth of their culture, and the nature of traits that have been welded together.

Cultural losses will now be considered, and in the final pages an explanation will be given of the way in which traits derived from various sources are associated to form a workable tribal system.

CULTURAL LOSSES

177 The loom and the conical furnace for smelting iron have disappeared in recent times because of the increasing importation of foreign cloth and the greater facility for obtaining scrap iron. Bark cloth, except in eastern Angola, is no longer made because traders are distributing European goods. For the same reason wooden haircombs are going out of use. Drum signaling has declined with the disappearance of warfare, and for the same reason the double iron gong is rare.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

The Ovimbundu have lost any ideas that they may have had concerning sentimental relationships between men and animals. I know of no belief in animal helpers, and of no divisions of people with an animal or a plant as their emblem. The only idea of reincarnation was expressed in the instance of a spirit, neglected in sacrifice, prowling near the village in the form of a lion or a leopard. 177

There has been a total absence of the shield for so long that no one was able to describe it. Old men state that the Ovimbundu used to have a shield; probably this information is correct, as the shield is commonly used in the Congo region. The Ovimbundu use the bow, spear, and throwing-club; no doubt a fourth item of equipment was more than a man could conveniently manage. Furthermore, individuals who obtained guns and powder would naturally discard other weapons.

Originally the Ovimbundu were cannibals. The Vasele, a sequestered Umbundu-speaking people, were definitely known to be practising cannibalism in 1865 (Monteiro, vol. II, p. 157). The early writers, Battell, Merolla, and Cavazzi, mention cannibalism in northern Angola; undoubtedly slaves were killed and eaten at the accession of a king until late in the nineteenth century. From Bailundu a spear formerly used for thrusting into the side of a slave, then into the side of an ox, was obtained. The flesh was cooked and eaten before a warlike expedition. Among objects from the Esele country is an ax formerly used for beheading slaves at the accession of a new king. These objects, collected in 1929, and described on page 277, are survivals of defunct traits.

Kingship, warfare, slavery, and cannibalism constitute an allied group of factors which are here mentioned in the order of their importance. European contacts have discouraged all these traits. Portuguese authority has gradually usurped the jurisdiction of native kings, and at the same time has discouraged intertribal warfare. With the decline of warfare the capture of slaves became obsolete. In addition to the discouragement of cannibalism by direct legislation, the decline of slavery has tended to make cannibalism fall into desuetude, because slaves were always the victims for ceremonial cannibal feasts.

The present attenuated distribution and form of puberty rites for Ovimbundu boys may be accounted for as follows: During the period of desultory warfare in northern Angola (1600–1800), ceremonies, which in Africa are usually associated with sedentary life, must have suffered interruption and curtailment. Such ceremonies

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177 are typically allied, so far as Africa is concerned, with a forest culture with its sacred groves and facilities for seclusion during a period of three months or longer. Such a condition was lacking in the Benguela Highlands, which are sparsely wooded in comparison with the more northern tropical areas of Angola.

When the Ovimbundu settled in the highlands, warfare and distant caravan trade were factors that would tend further to disintegrate elaborate ceremonies requiring several months for their completion. As a supplement to these reasons for decline, there is the effect of European disapproval, and in some localities positive prohibition.

In addition to traits that have blended and those that have become obsolete, there arises the question of opportunities which have been neglected in the course of cultural growth.

The Ovimbundu, with local exceptions, do not use the milk or flesh of cattle, neither is the milk of goats utilized; vegetable food forms a large proportion of the diet.

The papaya (papaw) and the banana are not cultivated to any great extent by the natives. The raffia palm grows well in some parts of the Benguela Highlands, but the Ovimbundu do not use the fiber for anything except ropes. They have no raffia weaving such as is found in the Congo region.

Failure to utilize these vegetable products has to some extent a rational basis. The fruit of the papaya could never be more than an addition to the already generous vegetable diet, as it is unsuitable for consumption in large quantities owing to laxative properties; neither has it the food value and the marketable possibility of maize. The banana will grow at a height of 3,000 feet in the Benguela Highlands, but attention is required. Nights are cold, hence some naturally screened site should be selected. During the dry season the roots should be protected against too rapid evaporation, but this careful attention is foreign to native methods of agriculture. Use of raffia is discouraged by the presence of trade cloth and easy access to locally grown cotton, which is made into thread.

To account for the failure to use the milk and flesh of cattle is not easy, neither is the neglect of goat's milk readily explicable. Neglect of these foods is due to prejudice and conservatism, of which there are many examples in Africa. For instance, Hamitic tribes, of whom the Bahima are typical, avoid all vegetable food. Milk is their staple diet, and vegetable foods are regarded as positively unclean.

Cattle-keepers of southern Angola make butter in calabash churns which are gently swung on a pole. The Ovimbundu have taken cattle from the south and west, but have not adopted dairy products. The cattle of the Ovimbundu are valued as a standard of wealth; have great purchasing power; are used to pay taxes and fines; and, in addition to these social and economic values, are the most important sacrificial animals. This is an instance of the arbitrary selection of some traits of a culture complex, while other factors, even those of economic importance, are ignored. 177

Cultural losses, and failures to utilize factors which were accessible are, according to the foregoing examples, due to change of habitat from northern Angola to the Benguela Highlands; European contacts; long-established agricultural habit; and conservatism, which to some extent is a characteristic of tribes at all cultural levels.

INTEGRATION OF TRAITS

A study which is concerned with growth of culture, demands more than a historical, geographical, and mechanistic interpretation. Morphological and historical research assists in tracing origins and in forming hypotheses respecting the order in which the traits were brought together. But such inquiries are static rather than dynamic, and they are a necessary prelude to anthropological work rather than an ultimate aim. 121

To the methods of research already followed there should be added a psychological approach with the object of showing the way in which various elements of culture are blended and are made to function.

The following pages illustrate the way in which a field investigation is brought into contact with the welding of cultural elements, and the examples chosen call attention to principles that are responsible for the process of integration. This assimilation of cultural elements renders the study of an isolated trait impossible, as the following instances indicate. These illustrations are chosen from field notes, and are grouped in such a way as to emphasize the pivotal elements of Umbundu culture around which minor traits revolve.

Some of the examples given are intended to illustrate a relationship between language (which includes folklore, proverbs, and riddles) and nature knowledge. The latter is closely connected with hunting, food-gathering, and the selection of materials for handwork. 105 182

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The part played by Portuguese influence in the formation of the culture of the Ovimbundu has previously been recognized, and in conclusion reference should be made to Portuguese and Ovimbundu relationships at the present day. 177

Native trade and military organization were at one time aided by caravan journeys resulting in the acquisition of slaves and ivory, which were traded for guns and powder. But this caravan trade touching remote parts of central and east Africa is now obsolete. Therefore a breaking down of the economic structure has occurred, but this has to some extent been counteracted by the development of agriculture, which yields large crops of maize and beans.

In the administration of law a new social consciousness has arisen. Portuguese government is of a somewhat direct kind, yet village chiefs and kings have some juridical rights. Appeal to a chief or a king was the old method of securing justice, and at present such appeal may be made by an aggrieved Ocimbundu; but should the appellant be dissatisfied he turns to the Portuguese court.

Portuguese policy aims at making the Ovimbundu a social reflection of the Portuguese themselves. European clothing and manufactures are favored, and Portuguese speech is encouraged, to the detriment of the native Umbundu.

Initiation ceremonies are forbidden, but the bush is wide and protective. To prevent these ceremonies is to take the core from the social system, which has already been weakened by recruiting of labor, so leading to disturbance of family life and village organization. Christian missions have an influence on dress, beliefs, and habits, but these effects appear to be local.

Although this report has been chiefly geographical, ethnological, historical, and analytical, no apology for the method chosen is necessary since this kind of approach is fundamental. I might, in compliance with a modern trend, have made the monograph center in persons, especially Ngonga. By making a close psychological study of his early years, his native environment, and changes in mental attitude arising from contact with Portuguese rule and American missions, an illuminating record of the result of conflicting social forces could be given. 121

In a sense, Ngonga, who speaks English, Portuguese, and Umbundu fluently, has been the focus of study, and care has been taken to recognise his personality in this report. I realize that in Angola work of an intensive psychological and sociological kind remains to be done by means of a penetrating analysis of many [115]

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METHODS OF TRANSPORTATION, BLENDE

[p. 384]

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OCCUPATIONAL RITUAL, BELIEF, AND CUSTOM AMONG THE OVIMBUNDU

By WILFRID DYSON HAMBLY

[114] 121 WHEN leader of the Frederick H. Rawson-Field Museum Expedition of 1929–30 one of my chief objects was the assembling of a representative collection of the arts and handicrafts of Angola, and particularly of the Ovimbundu who occupy the Benguela highlands.

[177] The Ovimbundu have been in contact with Europeans for three centuries at least, therefore I was interested to know to what extent daily avocations had become secularized. That a close connection has existed between the sacred and the profane in Negro tribes is well known, and the influence of spiritual beliefs and magical acts in every department of economic life, including agriculture, hunting, fishing, and handicrafts, has been established. But how durable is this dependence of economic life on magical acts and ancestral benediction? How soon does primitive economic life become commercialized on a European pattern?

Other observations of academic interest and practical value relate to division of labor between the sexes, specialization by age and natural aptitude; also the possibility of some callings being of an hereditary nature.

[101] My observations, which were made chiefly in the regions of Bailundu, Elende near Cuma, and Ngalangi, are conveniently classified under the headings of food supply, handicrafts, medicine-men, and education.

FOOD SUPPLY

824 825 At the foundation of economic life is nature lore, which among the male population of the Ovimbundu is so detailed and extensive that the knowledge has given rise to a large vocabulary. The highly specialized acquaintance with trees, plants, birds, mammals, and reptiles on the part of most of the men was a surprise to me. Such information was commonly shared by males, and was in no way peculiar to the professional hunter.

I was easily able to collect a list of fifty birds which are readily distinguished by boys (who shoot them with blunt wooden arrows), and all men seemed familiar with forty species of trees, whose timbers, barks, and fruits were distinguished and named. Boys were exceptionally well acquainted with small mammals; including several kinds of rats and mice, which are trapped, boiled, and eaten. For Field Museum I made a collection of snakes and lizards; a task which again showed the native power of observation and adequacy of vocabulary. Some reptiles, whose re-

5: Hambly E-5 (1929-30)1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

professional hunters, and the smearing of the novice's bow and arrows with 224
blood from the meat is an important point of ritual. The bow and arrows
are made by the master for his pupil; a practice strictly analogous to the [326]
making of tools for a young blacksmith by the master who has trained
him.

In connection with the life and death of a hunter a certain amount of 177
ritual survives, and this despite long European contacts, game laws, and 224
the development of an economic system based primarily on extensive cul- [241]
tivation of maize and beans. But though these circumstances might tend to
discourage hunting and its attendant ritual, other facts have contributed
to survival. An embargo on guns and powder has led to prolonged use of
bows and arrows, with which all hunters are expert, though some, despite
official prohibition, have muzzle loading guns. Bows are in general use, and
their continuance has no doubt aided survival of ritual, since the rites
themselves are closely associated with the bows.

The night before a professional hunter sets out is an occasion for re- 224
newal of implements of the chase, that is, renewal in a spiritual sense, by a
ceremony designed to transfer power in a magical way from the disused
weapons of deceased hunters to the weapons in use. Weapons of dead
hunters are kept in a small hut to which a hunter repairs on the eve of de-
parture. He rubs the old weapons (bows, clubs, and spears) with palm-oil;
then pours over them a libation of beer. No medicine-man is present, so for
the occasion a hunter functions as his own priest.

It is hazardous and perhaps unprofitable to attempt an analysis of the
philosophy behind these ritual acts. Yet the weapons are symbols of the
personality and prowess of dead hunters whose names they have received.
Therefore the suggestion that the hunter is acquiring power from the dead
is reasonable, and the idea harmonizes with all that is known of ancestor
worship among Bantu tribes.

The food and cooking pots of a hunter must never be associated with
those of ordinary household use. If a hunter is following the tracks of an
animal he may not point with his finger, since this action will drive the
animal away. He may, however, point with the feathered end of an ar-
row. A dog must have his ears clipped in a peculiar way or he will not hear
and obey. A hunter may not sleep with his wife the night before setting out
in quest of game. Before leaving home a hunter washes his eyes with a con-
coction of herbs to give greater acuity of vision.

In any village the hut of a professional hunter can be readily distin- 224
guished by a number of poles erected near the entrance. On these supports 764
are placed the skulls of animals killed in the chase. A traveler cannot fail
to notice the tombs of hunters, which consist of rairos
of stones enclosing a

5: Hambly E-5 (1929-30)1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

At Caconda I obtained the basket of a medicine-man which contained 759
a human tibia, a hoe for digging in graves, and a round stone for pounding 791
the bone before mixing it with fat and charcoal. Medicine-men still make potions for internal use, and these are usually carried in small horns suspended round the neck, or the paste may be contained in the carapace of a tortoise. In every way the medicine-man is still functioning, and his tasks are fundamental to the social and religious life of the Ovimbundu.

At an early age children specialize in their play which has a bearing 868
on the business of life. Boys make wooden-tipped arrows, play at hunting, and shoot at tubers which are rolled along the ground. Girls take clay from the potters to fabricate their own small cooking pots, and young girls attempt the coiling of basketry.

Men are the musicians, and among these a high degree of specialization 533
is observed. In a large village there are likely to be only a few competent drummers, and only a few men who play the small iron-keyed instrument called ocisanji. Osaka is a ritual game played only by men, and only when a village headman or a king is dying. The ball (ombunje) is made by sewing 535
lizard skin over a hard spherical fruit about six centimeters in diameter. A 524
man continues to dance with this little ball clenched in his outstretched 755
hand, while another dancer hits the muscles of his arm to make him release the ball. This game is thought to give strength to the sick man. There is a transfer of the endurance of the dancers to the invalid.

Preliminary observation in some villages occupied by Ovimbundu is 177
disappointing in its suggestion of Europeanization. The foreign culture is, however, a thin veneer, and further research shows a strong persistence of indigenous custom and belief quite near to centers of Portuguese influence.

FIELD MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

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CHAPTER I

THE OLD SOCIETY

1. *History*

The Ovimbundu, who live on the Benguela Highland[1] of central Angola, have been in contact with Europeans since their emergence as a people in the sixteenth–seventeenth centuries. Dr. Childs has provided an excellent account of their history,[2] based on the collection of traditional narratives and a study of the published sources in English, German, and Portuguese.

The Ovimbundu arose from a fusion of two stocks, one that of the 'Jagas', a conquering race who invaded the Benguela Highland in the sixteenth–seventeenth centuries, and the indigenous occupants of the area who were culturally and linguistically related to the peoples who now live in south-west Angola.[3] The Jagas were described in some detail by the English sailor Andrew Battell[4] who was their prisoner for some time at the beginning of the seventeenth century. He tells us that they were warlike cannibals who recruited their numbers by taking adolescents from the peoples they conquered.[5] This society did not reproduce itself normally by descent since all children born were put to death.[6] He locates them geographically in the Amboim–Cela–Quibala area[7] to the north of the present Umbundu territory. Cavazzi writing in the later seventeenth

[1] In Portuguese, Planalto de Benguela.

[2] Childs, pp. 164–215.

[3] Ibid. p. 190.

[4] Ravenstein (Ed.). *The Strange Adventures of Andrew Battell.* Hakluyt Society, London 1901.

[5] Ravenstein, p. 33.

[6] Ibid. p. 32.

[7] Ibid. pp. 84, 85; Childs, p. 86.

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173 The Hungarian explorer L. Magyar collected in the

middle of the nineteenth century, in the eastern Umbundu kingdom of Bie, an historical legend which linked Bie origins to the kingdom of Mwata Yamvo.[18] Childs has suggested[19] that this legend was in fact not of Umbundu origin since later investigators from Serpa Pinto[20] (1878) to Childs himself (1938) have found that Bie traditions emphasized the local origins of the dynasty. This may of course be a case of the African tendency to manipulate historical narratives to accord with social relationships. It may be suggested that the Lunda traditions, which the core of the Jaga hordes carried with them, became diluted by the recruitment from the conquered peoples, and that the link between the Umbundu royal houses and the Northern Lunda were forgotten because the kings of the Ovimbundu felt no need, unlike the weak Luena and Ndembu chiefs,[21] to prop up their position by stressing their links with the mighty Mwata Yamvo.

175 177 By the end of the eighteenth century the Umbundu kingdoms that were to survive until the end of Umbundu independence were already well established.[22] In 1769 the first Portuguese fort in the Benguela Highland, that at Caconda, was established, and a few years later a king of Bie was to owe his throne to Portuguese intervention.[23] Trade in slaves had begun with the 175 Jagas; but other items such as beeswax and ivory were bought 177 by the bare-footed Kimbundu traders who came from the 439 Portuguese settlements on the Cuanza (founded between 1582 and 1671); and by 1782 there existed small colonies of Portuguese traders in Bie and Caconda.[24]

Portuguese political influence was weak, and the kings con-

[18] L. Magyar, *Reisen in Süd-Afrika*, Pest and Leipzig, 1859, pp. 266–269.

[19] Childs, p. 173.

[20] A. Serpa Pinto, *How I Crossed Africa*, London, 1881. Vol. I, pp. 156–60.

[21] For Luena and Ndembu chiefs, see C. M. N. White, 'Clan, chieftainship, and slavery in Luvale political organization' (*Africa*, January 1957), and V. W. Turner, *Schism and Continuity in an African Society*, Manchester, 1957. For African attitudes to the recording of the past see J. A. Barnes, 'History in a Changing Society'. *Rhodes-Livingstone Journal* 1951, No. 11, Ian Cunnison, *History on the Luapula*, Rhodes-Livingstone Papers, No. 21, and L. Bohannan, 'A Genealogical Charter', *Africa*, October 1952. Mr. White informs me that the Luena regard the Bie kingdom as being of Northern Lunda origin.

[22] Childs, pp. 167–8.

[23] Ibid., pp. 174, 195.

[24] Ibid., p. 198.

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tinued to engage in warfare. However, trade became increasingly important as the Ovimbundu realized the advantage of their position in between the coastal towns of Benguela and Catumbela, and the tribes of the interior. By the middle of the nineteenth century Ovimbundu were travelling throughout the area bounded by the Congo River, the Great Lakes and the Kalahari, and even transcontinental journeys were made. The Ovimbundu carried with them cloths, guns, and rum which they exchanged for ivory, slaves, and wax, to which must be added corn and palm-oil, these latter, however, obtained not from the far interior but from inside or near Umbundu land. The safety of the Umbundu caravans was preserved by the negotiation of treaties with the local rulers, and by agreements (not always satisfactorily kept) between the different Umbundu kingdoms.[25]

From about 1874 rubber became important in Umbundu trade, and it is in the period from then until 1911,[26] when the caravan trade collapsed, that the Ovimbundu knew a prosperity which they have hardly recovered today.[27] It is in this period too that there occurred both the loss of Umbundu independence and the establishment of the missions. In 1890 Ndunduma, the king of Bie, was defeated and deposed, and in 1896 Numa, the king of Bailundo attacked, disastrously, the fort which his predecessors had allowed to be established near the capital. In 1902–3 a widespread revolt, known as the Bailundo war, broke out against the Portuguese, the traders being killed, and the forts besieged. The reasons for this revolt, whose leader Mutuya-Kevela was a minister of the Bailundo court, seem to have been injustices on the part of the white population, and possibly a fall in rubber prices. After 1903 the remaining parts of Umbundu country were brought under effective European rule,

[25] Magyar, pp. 292–9; Childs, pp. 203–5.

[26] Childs following A. Bastos, *Monografia de Catumbella* (*Bol. Soc. Geog. Lisboa*, 1910, pp. 74–81, 103–9, 141–5, 180–5, 225–8, 251–5, 279–85) divides the rubber trade into three periods: the rise of the trade 1874–86, the boom 1886–1900, and the decline 1900–11.

[27] I have heard it said by old men who had taken part in the caravan journeys, and by a local mulatto trader that the Ovimbundu of that period had more clothes than they have now. For Angolan economics after 1911 see Henrique Galvão and Carlos Selvagem, *Império Ultramarino Português*, Vol. III, pp. 124–33, Lisboa, 1952, and Clement Egerton, *Angola in Perspective*, London, 1957, pp. 106–15.

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and the European population greatly increased.[28] In some areas at this time a confused situation arose, in which 'robber barons', white and black, tyrannized over chiefs and villagers and engaged in the still vigorous slave trade, which now had acquired a few disguises on the coast.[29]

In 1911 the rubber trade ended, and about the same time slavery and the slave trade were effectively suppressed.[30] From this time onwards, too, civil administration began to be effective and the Benguela Railway became the most important link between the coast and the interior.[31] The trade disappeared, powers of the chiefs declined. The missions, both Catholic and Protestant, which had relatively little influence during the rubber trade period, gained more and more converts.[32]

2. *Ethnography*

Between the Ovimbundu and the sea lie the Hanya, the Nganda, and the Tjisanji tribes of whom little is known except that the Hanya and Nganda seem to be culturally related to the Ovimbundu.[33] To the south are the Nyaneka-Humbi group, cattle-keeping peoples who are culturally and linguistically related to the Ovimbundu, but who did not participate in the trade.[34] To the east lie the Ngangela[35], the Luimbi, and the

[28] Childs, pp. 210–11.

[29] For an account of Umbundu country at this time see H. W. Nevison, *A Modern Slavery*, New York, 1906. In Gumba I was told that Mutu-ya-Kevela the leader of the 1902–3 revolt had raided villages for slaves but that Samakaka whom Childs (p. 22) describes as a robber baron was spoken of favourably.

[30] Slavery had been legally suppressed from 1878. The slaves were called by other names but no effective change was made till 1910. See A. Bastos, *Monografia de Catumbella* in *Bol. Soc. Geog. Lisboa*, 1910 (pp. 74–81, 105–9, 141–55, 180–3, 223–8, 251–3, 279–5).

[31] Childs, p. 228.

[32] Ibid., pp. 220–23. Personal information.

[33] Ibid., p. 8.

[34] On these peoples see Estermann, *Etnografia do Sudoeste de Angola*, Vol. II.

[35] A tribe using this word as the root of the tribal name is to be found to the south-east of Umbundu country in the area round Vila Artur de Paiva. Padre A. Van Horrik, formerly of the Missão Católica de Cubango, tells me that the map contained in M. McCulloch, *The Southern Lunda and Related Peoples*, (London, 1951) should show the Ngangela as occupying much of the area actually assigned to the Mbwela and the south-eastern Ovimbundu. Mbwela does not seem to be the name any tribe uses for itself (Private information, Estermann and Van Horrik).

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Chokwe.[36] These people are culturally and linguistically different from the Ovimbundu, whom, however, they have influenced, especially in the fields of ritual; the initiation rituals typical of these people have spread into southern and eastern Umbundu territory.[37] The Ngangela call the Ovimbundu 'Ovimbali', a name used in Angola for Africans who live with or imitate whites.[38] I have heard an Otjimbundu use it for the Kimbundu of northern Angola. The south-western peoples call the Ovimbundu 'Va-Nano—they of the north',[39] but also regard the Ovimbundu as being 'civilized'. Very little is known about the peoples to the north of the Ovimbundu, who are also different in language and culture and who are said to have more rituals than the Ovimbundu. These are known collectively by the Ovimbundu as Olongoya, a term with a rather offensive meaning. Historically they are important for the Ovimbundu since it was here that Andrew Battell knew the Jaga hordes, and Umbundu tradition links a number of the chiefly lines to these northern peoples. The Umbundu language seems to be gaining ground in this area.[40]

All the neighbouring peoples seem to be matrilineal, as regards descent, inheritance, and succession, with the exception of the Hanya and the Nganda, who have (Dr. Childs suggests) a double-descent kinship system, as traditionally the Ovimbundu had. All seem, as far as is known, to have had chiefs,[41] though there were no kingdoms to equal the power of Bie and Bailundo in the nineteenth century. Culturally the Ovimbundu seem to have been ready to take over traits from neighbouring tribes, and the Portuguese, and this particularly in the sphere of ritual.[42]

[36] For the Luimbi, see C. W. Scott. 'A Note on the Luimbi of Central Angola', *Africa*, October 1955. For the Chokwe see M. McCulloch, op. cit.

[37] Childs, pp. 115–16.

[38] A trader said that Otjimbali means a domesticated black. Estermann is preparing a study of a Mbali group of southern Angola descended from Kimbundu slaves.

[39] The Nyaneka-Humbi tribes use it for the southern Ovimbundu, the southern Ovimbundu use it for the northern Ovimbundu.

[40] Childs, pp. 186–7; Baumann, op. cit.

[41] Baumann, op. cit. For the installation of chiefs in the Ambeim area, see Antonio de Silva Maia, 'Ritos e Ceremonias para a Entronização' in *Mensário Administrativo*, July–August 1953.

[42] Childs, p. 220.

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[1874-1911]

THE OVIMBUNDU UNDER TWO SOVEREIGNTIES

The great distinguishing mark of the Ovimbundu was their participation in the caravan trade. Some of the neighbouring people also engaged in trading journeys (e.g. the Chokwe) but in central Angola the dominant traders were the Ovimbundu by reason of their control of the routes to Benguela and Catumbela, a control which as Livingstone's narrative shows they tried for a while to turn into a monopoly.[43] With this must be linked the greater readiness of the Ovimbundu to adopt European ways, marked by the general adoption of cloths for wear by at latest the mid-nineteenth century.[44]

3. *Economics and Social Structure*

This section will describe the economic life and social structure which marked the period of the rubber trade (1874–1911). A genuine currency existed in the form of cloth, and fortunes could be made in it. Serpa Pinto tells us of one Otjimbundu who made £3,500 by trading in the interior and that he had met many men who 'turned over capital of a thousand to twelve hundred pounds sterling',[45] presumably in trade goods since Portuguese currency did not circulate among the Ovimbundu. At the capitals of the kingdoms genuine towns grew up. Magyar in the middle of the nineteenth century estimated that 5,000 people lived at Bailundo[46] and the British explorer Cameron who had crossed Africa from Zanzibar says of Ekovongo, the capital of Bie, 'the town of Kagnombe, the largest I came across during my whole journey, being more than three miles in circumference. On arrival I was met by the Kagnombe's secretary, chamberlain, and captain of the guard who wore red waistcoats as a sign of their dignity. The secretary was more ornamental than useful, being unable to write, but a subordinate, a black man and native of Dondo, was better educated and conducted the trade of Kagnombe with the coast'.[47]

[43] Ibid., p. 205.
[44] Ibid., p. 206, referring to Magyar as evidence.
[45] Serpa Pinto, pp. 161–2.
[46] Magyar, p. 391.
[47] V. L. Cameron, *Across Africa*, London, 1877. Vol. II, pp. 206–7.

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kingdoms of the Ovimbundu, though more frequently perhaps it was made against the non-Umbundu peoples.[89]

The question of the influence of the trade provides interesting opportunities for comparison. The Ovimbundu were the southernmost of the peoples who in the nineteenth century participated in the trade between the Europeans of the West African coast and the peoples of the interior.[90] In some ways the Ovimbundu seem to have been less influenced by it than were some of the peoples further north. The Ovimbundu did not develop genuine patterns of urban life as in Dahomey or Benin.[91]

Three explanations can be offered for the relative failure of associational groups and urban society to develop. Umbundu crafts were much inferior to those found along the coast of the Gulf of Guinea; there was no indigenous weaving industry, for instance, and the goods which the caravans carried to the interior were all of European or American origin, cloths, guns, and rum.[92] For these goods the Ovimbundu were dependent on the Portuguese settled at the coast or in the Highland and this meant that the Ovimbundu were far from economic autonomy. Again the trade had a relatively short time span—the real boom period lasted only from 1886 to 1900, and earlier on in the 1840's when the beeswax, ivory, and slave trade was flourishing, the Ovimbundu had plenty of time for warfare.

It would, however, be a grave mistake to think that trade had only a marginal influence on Umbundu society. It has been suggested that the form of the double-descent system owes its origin to the necessity to isolate economic relations from other social fields. In the sphere of ritual, there are some remarkable copies of European practices—for instance the holding of a feast in honour of the ancestors at Christmas-time.[93] Many ritual concepts are related to the explanation of business

[89] For information on Umbundu warfare see Magyar, pp. 277–80 and Serpa Pinto, pp. 177–9.

[90] See Balandier, *Sociologie Actuelle de l'Afrique Noire*, Paris, 1955, for a discussion of social change in other areas which had experienced a trade of a similar sort.

[91] For Dahomey see M. J. Herskovits, *Dahomey*, New York, 1938. For Benin see R. Bradbury, *The Benin Kingdom* (Ethnographic Survey of Africa), London, 1957.

[92] Childs, p. 206.

[93] Informants.

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[1874-1911]

177 182 success. More generally, it may be suggested that the conditions of the trade in which wealth was dependent on contact with Europeans created not only the Umbundu esteem for 'shrewd behaviour' (*oku lunguka*) and their willingness for social change, but their marked docility and submissiveness towards Europeans.[94]

[94] See O. Mannoni, *Prospero and Caliban*, London, 1956, for an ingenious discussion of a similar set of attitudes.

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meet other Angolan Protestants through such occasions as the Congress of Evangelical Youth, held at Malange in 1955.

While the Catholic missions are not tied to the Ovimbundu in the same way as the Protestants the number of their adherents falls sharply when the Umbundu boundary is reached. Responsiveness to missionary activity is a mark of the Ovimbundu today just as was participation in the caravan trade. Indeed, the main common possession of the Ovimbundu, the Umbundu language, is, as a literary vehicle and object of study, almost a missionary monopoly. Both missions produce a monthly magazine in Umbundu and Portuguese, and several books of a religious or educational nature have been published with Umbundu on one side and Portuguese on the other as legally required. The dictionaries and grammars are almost all of missionary authorship.

Acceptance of Christianity has also significance for Umbundu self-consciousness. The majority of Ovimbundu have come under missionary influence in varying degrees, and conversion to Christianity makes Ovimbundu feel closer to Europeans and superior to other African peoples. I have heard African priests claim that the Ovimbundu are the best people in Angola, largely on this ground, and at Lobito and Luanda tensions have been felt in the Protestant community between Ovimbundu and members of other tribes.[11]

The Ovimbundu live under economic, political, and religious systems introduced and controlled by Europeans. Yet trader, official, and missionary are all dependent on the Ovimbundu. The 'civilized' and the native live in symbiosis, and the two basic problems of this study are the nature of this symbiosis, and its relation to the social system of the native population themselves. To see this symbiosis in perspective it is necessary to describe what occupations and statuses Africans can hold.

The strict segregation of black and white found in South Africa is alien to Portuguese traditions. There is a lack of almost all forms of public segregation between white and non-white.[12]

[11] Personal information.

[12] In the racial discrimination that does exist the mulattoes generally count as whites. It is said to be difficult for a full African to obtain accommodation in a Luanda hotel, but the situation for mulattoes is quite different.

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167 Many of the people in Gumba had come from

Cela, and Cela influences are notable in several ways.[34] In Cassongue Umbundu has relatively recently ousted other 133 speech.[35] Geographically Bimbe generally is rather lower than most of the Highland. Although the railway line and the growth 167 of maize have been influential here, an alternative pull for 361 labour migration is provided by the coffee plantation of Amboim and Seles, and by the coastal towns of Novo Redondo and Porto Amboim.[36] In the days of the caravan trade Novo Redondo was an important trading centre, more important perhaps than Benguela for the people of this area.

464 Work is sought by Ovimbundu in lands far from their home. [162] There are Ovimbundu at Brazzaville; others have settled permanently in the Congo Republic, or work in Rhodesia; the Johannesburg mines have employed many, and some have gone as far as Natal.[37] In Epalanga, the village where I lived, there were two men who had been to Johannesburg—nor was this very exceptional and I am told that among the people south of the railway it is quite common.

82 The world picture of the Ovimbundu is vague, except as regards Angola and the neighbouring countries. The existence of Europe (Putu) composed of different nations Portuguese, French, and English is known, and I was several times asked if there were black people in England. Little or nothing is known of the other continents. The island of S. Tomé in the Atlantic is known, since up to recently Angolan labourers went there, and some convicts are still sent to it. Several people from the neighbourhood had lived in Luanda or worked on coffee [487] plantations in northern Angola. The Belgian Congo was known as Bula Matadi, though people seem little aware of Rhodesia, and Mozambique (Portuguese East Africa) is confused with the southern Angolan port of Moçamedes. The railway lines and [484] the cities along it are of course well known, and some of the people I knew had travelled to Kwanyama country in the far south of Angola to buy cattle. Johannesburg (Zhwaini) and its

[34] Notably in the arm ornaments and hair styles favoured by some women. Cela diviners are often consulted.

[35] Childs (p. 179) suggests that the change came about in the nineteenth century.

[36] For this area of Angola see Egerton, pp. 186–8. Galvão and Selvagem, pp. 378–80, 437–8.

[37] Personal information. Also Childs, p. 213.

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565 Their higher social status limits their contacts with the villagers without giving them positions of direct control. Hence they are not leaders in the native social system. They are significant for
565 the culture of village Ovimbundu since they are one of the
● 177 channels for the communication of European culture traits, and their very existence indicates the possibility of becoming 'equal with the white man"[21]

797 More significant than the *assimilados* as a means of linking the
177 Ovimbundu with the whites, of the transmitting of cultural values, and of the creation of new statuses and groupings at village level, are the missions.

128 In the following chapters, the composition and degree of solidarity of the sub-chiefdom, and village, the network of kinship ties, the choice of marriage partners, and the means of social control will be discussed in their operation among the Ovimbundu who are inescapably tied to Portuguese rule, to world markets, and to the spiritual authority of the missions.

[21] I have the impression that in the cities there is some feeling that the status of *assimilado* does not give real equality but simply exemption from such burdens as road work.

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CHAPTER III

CHIEFS AND HEADMEN IN GUMBA

1. *The History of Gumba*

The historical perspective of Ovimbundu is short. Few, even elders, know of any landmark earlier than the Mutu-ya-Kevela rising of 1902–3, nor even for those who had participated in it did the time of the rubber trade form a Golden Age by which the present is judged. The period about which most was remembered was the reign of Mbati.[1]

Mbati had ruled over both Gumba and Chicunda, a union which had existed only during his lifetime, and which would have given him on present-day population figures 7,500–9,000 subjects.[2] He had managed to keep in his own hands the relations between his people and the government post. Policemen arriving at his capital to recruit labourers were entertained while Mbati's ministers got together the men required. Although an upholder of the traditional rites associated with chieftancy he had been on good terms with the missionaries and allowed a Catholic catechist to settle in his village. One of his sons became a Protestant schoolteacher near the railway line, another entered the Catholic seminary but left and became a policeman in Cela. Many of the numerous progeny provided by his seventeen wives are still living in Gumba.

Mbati's downfall came through his practising the traditional annual ritual cannibalism (*oku lia ekongo*). About 1934–5 he was banished for this to another part of Umbundu country.

[text continues on p. 37]

[1] L. Magyar marks a place called Gumba on his map (opposite to page 1) but puts it to the south of the capital of Bailundo. As he does not seem to have personal knowledge of this area, this does not rule out identification, especially as the Cuvo begins to the south of Bailundo.

[2] For the basis of this estimate see section 2 of this chapter.

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795 confines the pursuit of power to the Native Church with un-
178 fortunate results. It might, on the other hand, be suggested that the Protestants among the Ovimbundu are the section of the population who have come nearest to building up new systems of authority and law. It might also be suggested that Umbundu Protestantism retains certain historical features of Congregationalism—democratic selection of officials with strict discipline binding members of the congregation, industriousness and zeal for education, and a certain consciousness of being a spiritual *élite*.[3]

795 Another factor in the situation is that the Protestants are a minority compared with the Catholics and tend to have the heightened self-consciousness of religious minorities. They also tend to isolate themselves from the pagans much more than the Catholics do, both geographically by moving into separate hamlets and separate villages and by the greater efforts they make to understand and follow European custom. Protestants for instance seem to know more how the Portuguese kinship terms should be used.

797 Ultimately, the position of the catechist, whether Catholic or
177 Protestant, is dependent on his role as a teacher of Christian doctrine, and as being a representative of 'modern' values. It may be said that Christian doctrine and 'modern' values are not necessary identical. It is, however, in this field that the Ovimbundu establish their closest contacts with the Europeans. A Protestant explaining why a kinship usage had been discontinued said: 'We are Christians, we are like the Europeans.'

795 A Catholic catechist arguing the superiority of Catholicism to Protestantism began by saying that the Protestants had no sacraments—then the elder of the school chimed in saying: 'And ours is the religion of the government.' The catechist took up this theme: 'The *chefe de posto* is baptized and married in church, the Governor-General [*sic*] of Nova Lisboa is baptized and married in church.' During my first weeks in Epalanga I was asked by the catechist: 'Are there priests in England?' and replied that in England there were both Catholics and Protestants, on which the catechist commented: 'It's the same

that in Bimbe'

[3] For the history of Congregationalism see E. Troeltsch, *The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches*, London, 1931, Vol. II, p. 661–6.

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thing in Bimbe.' That is, church membership is recognized as giving entry to a world-wide grouping. This sense of being linked to the Europeans by participation in the same sacraments is paralleled on the European side by the custom widespread in Angola of whites standing as godparents to their servants or servants' children. More generally, the missions are regarded as being the cause of that social change which is welcomed by Ovimbundu. Thus the fact that this was 'the time of the school' was given by one of my servants as the reason for such improvements as the decline of sorcery and the increase of cleverness.

Ovimbundu Christians are also aware of the doctrinal significance of baptism—when I asked various people 'Why did you receive baptism?' a general reply would be: 'I want to go to heaven', or some equivalent phrase. The apprehension of Catholic doctrine by the Ovimbundu is a complicated subject. It may be said that the receiving of the sacraments is the aspect of religion that has made most impression on the people. In the conversation previously cited, the catechist began by emphasizing the presence of sacraments as the distinctive mark of Catholicism against Protestantism, and then when the elder of the school pointed to the official associations of Catholicism, the catechist developed this by indicating the receiving of sacraments by those in high office. In the same way a catechist may commend somebody by saying: 'He is baptized and married in Church', as we would say of somebody: 'He is a real Christian'. The contact of the people with the priests, whether at the mission, or in the villages, usually involves the making of confessions and the receiving of communion. Cultural traits particularly characteristic of Portuguese Catholicism are little marked with the exception of the social importance of the godfather-godson tie. Christian ideas of the after-life have penetrated among the pagans, who will say that the soul after death goes to God (Suku) except in the case of bad people who go to hell.

The social relations between Christians and pagans are friendly. The old rites in which the sub-chiefdom as a whole participated have disappeared, and the rites performed at the capital, a liturgy which like other aspects of chieftaincy is a shadow of its former self, arouse little public interest. Christians

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795 and pagans co-operate in weddings and funerals. In certain aspects of funeral rites, and in commemorations of ancestors the Christians participate, justifying themselves by arguing that they are purely social functions and have no religious significance. This differs from their attitude to the major exorcism [255] rites,[4] which are avoided by Christians, who regard them with some horror, and towards consulting diviners. Although visiting [791] diviners is strictly forbidden by both Catholic and Protestant missionaries, a high proportion of their people do this,[5] but clandestinely. Thus I was told that there were no diviners in Gumba; in fact, there were two living in Epalanga. It is important to remember that there exist nowadays no pagan 'congregations', that is, permanent groups associated with the performance of ritual.

797 It is, indeed, through the missions that most of the formal 177 teaching of European culture (apart from the instructions given to labourers and servants) which Ovimbundu receive is given. To the Ovimbundu the missionaries are the Europeans who appear in the most favourable light, and even among pagans the attitude to the missions is without the fear accorded to the post or the suspicion with which the traders are regarded. The missionaries alone run schools, and they provide most of the modern medical services. The missionaries come into far more frequent contact with the people than do the *chefes*, and their relationship with the people is not confined to economics as is that of the traders. The Ovimbundu desire to imitate and learn from Europeans; it is from the missionaries that they have most opportunity of learning, and it is in the African clergy that they have the most clear evidence that this learning from Europeans will bring them results.

797 The organization of the missions is the form of large-scale social structure with which the people are best acquainted, and with which they are most capable of identifying themselves. A

[4] These involve drumming and an open invitation to anybody who wants to turn up. The idea is to persuade the tormenting spirit to pass into a small animal or inanimate object. The minor exorcism (*ola litutilila*) also involves sending the spirit into an inanimate object, but without drumming or the headshaking by the patient which is believed to mark the arrival of the spirit and his acceptance of the offering.

[5] Childs, loc. cit. Personal information.

KINSHIP

Osanto or *esiala* (namesake) is used as a kinship term, both in address and as reference. 601

Oluse and *oluina*, which were formerly the words for the agnatic and matrilineal kin group, now mean the patrikin, that is, all to whom one is paternally related, and the matrikin, all to whom one is matrilaterally related. A man, describing a particular tie, may say that it is 'in the matrikin of my father', that is, the relative is a matrilineal kinsman of his father. The terms *onele yohondji* ('the side of the bow') and *onele yohumba* ('the side of the basket') are equivalents of *oluse* and *oluina*.[15] The term *epata* may be used in a general sense for kin but it has very often a primary reference to the matrikin. *Familia* (from the Portuguese) means kin in general but it may mean 'kinsman with reference to a single individual: 'So-and-so is (or is not) my *Familia*.' *Ngandi* (which also means 'So-and-so,' equivalent to the Portuguese *fulano*) means kinsman and *usitwe* is kinship. 602 [177]

The use of Portuguese terms is now frequent even among those who do not speak Portuguese. The terms most frequently taken into the Umbundu language are *mano* which is used to mean 'elder brother,' and *mana* which is used to mean 'elder sister,' both terms being used by either sex, *primo* (feminine *prima*), cousin, which is used as an equivalent of *epalume* (cross-cousin), *tio* (uncle), which is now used more frequently than *sekulu*, and *cunhado* (feminine *cunhada*) brother-in-law or sister-in-law, used in the same way as is *nawa*. Ovimbundu villagers talking Portuguese will apply the Portuguese terms in Umbundu style. Thus *irmaõ* (brother) will be used as an equivalent of *mandja* (younger sibling of either sex), and *irmaõ mais velho* (older brother) will be used as an equivalent of *huwa* (elder sibling of either sex). Similarly *tia* (aunt) will be used as an equivalent of *apahai*. 601 177

The rules about which term may be used in a particular defined relationship (e.g. my wife's mother's brother) are not clearly and exclusively defined. What is more surprising is that a man may not be certain what is the category in which he should class a kinsman with whom he has frequent contacts. Thus Paulo, the elder of the school at Epalanga, often played 601

[15] As noted previously in the references to Chapter I these terms do not seem to have referred to descent groups.

601 with Adolfo, the small son of Jaime, his wife's brother, but when asked what relation Adolfo was to him, became confused and said, 'My son, my sister's son.'

601 184 There exist marked variations in terminology in Umbundu country.[16] For instance, *sekulu* seems to be used for mother's brother only in north-western Umbundu country. Elsewhere *manu*[17] is used for mother's brother, and *sekulu* is used for grandfather. At Caconda, where there has been strong Portuguese [172] influence since the eighteenth century, only the Portuguese kinship terms are known.[18]

601 621

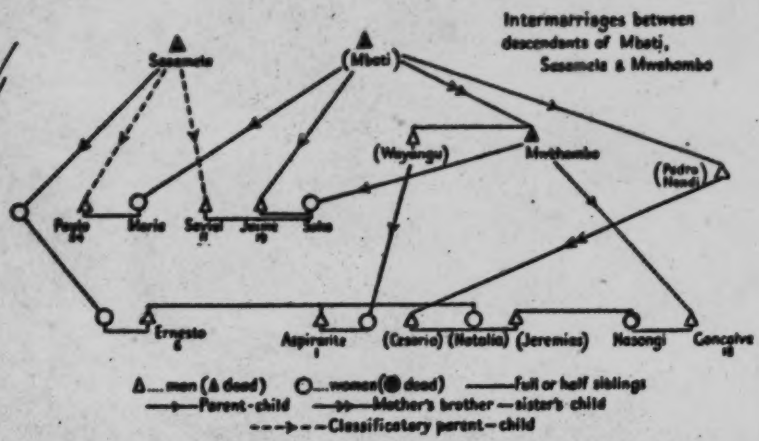

CHART 2. Mbati, Mwehombo and some of their kin. For Mbati (dead, non-member) and Mwehombo (dead, former member) see Chapter III, section 1. For Sassamela (dead, former member) and Cesario, Jeremias, Natalia, Pedro Nendi, and Wayangu (all living non-members) see List II (pp. 55–6). The rest of the individuals named on the chart are members of Epalanga. Paulo and Saviel were 'brothers', both patrilaterally and matrilaterally.

3. *Kinship Norms*

593 In this section I shall describe the relations that existed within the elementary family in the time of the rubber trade. A man

[16] For other lists of kinship terms see Hastings, pp. 83–85. Childs, pp. 47–56. M. Howse, *Umbundu Lessons* (Dondi, 1955), Vol. II, pp. 195–7.
[17] Etymologically, *manu* seems to mean 'mother-person'.
[18] Private information.

[text continues on p. 98]

175 565 Evidently royal persons could then be easily distinguished from the commoners.

565 178 The question naturally arises how far may a similar distinction be observed at the present time. The genealogical tables presented may answer the question. It may be seen that intermarriage of commoners and royalty has proceeded to such a degree that the differences have been greatly dimmed, if not quite erased. Furthermore, the loss of the political power which the royal families formerly held has levelled down distinctions until they have largely lost their meaning. This loss again has hastened the process of intermarriage with commoners. While there are some distinctive practices which persist, they may now pertain to or be practised by certain members of a family only, or in some instances, and not in others. These refer especially to inheritance and to the naming of children.

121 By 'social structure' is meant the more or less permanent framework of relationships between members of a community which manifests itself in an ordered group-life, with reciprocal rights and duties, privileges and obligations, of members, determining behaviour-patterns . . . and moulding the feelings, thoughts, and conduct of members according to these patterns, so that it is only in and through them that the individual can achieve his personal self-realization and participate in the satisfactions offered by the life of his community.

This framework of social organization, or social structure, is permanent compared with the stream of human lives that, in the succession of the generations, flows through it. Each new generation finds it there, as an inheritance from untold generations of his predecessors. Yet the framework of social structure is not absolutely rigid or fixed for all time, but is itself a thing of growth, capable of variation in detail, sometimes giving birth to new developments, at other times undergoing disintegration and decay.[1]

101 [601] The genealogical tables which I have collected are fairly representative of the major divisions or 'tribes' of the Ovimbundu. The only 'tribes' not represented are those of the border regions of Namba, Sanga, Cikomba, and Kalukembe, none of which save the last are numerically important. These border groups themselves offer an interesting field of study and particularly in that they may provide cultural and linguistic bridges between the Ovimbundu and their neighbors.

[1] A. W. Hoernlé in Schapera, *The Bantu-Speaking Tribes of South Africa* (London: Routledge, 1937), p. 67 f.

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they recognize Sekulu Sikīlīlē, the elder of the largest unit, as the village headman. Only in his village is there a dancing floor (*ocīlā*),[1] which is the centre of village life, social, legal, and recreational. As the name indicates, it is first and foremost a place for recreation, but here also religious functions are held since they involve so much dancing and drinking, and here formal cases are tried. The *ocīlā* is the heart of the village.

The Men's Club-House. Ngendo does not have that other important Umbundu institution, the Men's Club House (*onjango*).[2] The *onjango* is, or was, hardly less important than the *ocīlā*. Perhaps before it fell to its present state of disuse, its place was of even greater importance, for in the *onjango* all the men, youths, and boys gathered day by day for the evening meal. From all the kitchens came baskets of stiff corn porridge (*iputa*), and dishes of relish (*ombelela*)[3] which all shared, from the most honoured guest or the village elders, down to the naked, ash-whitened little boys just old enough (say from seven or eight years) to leave the kitchens to their mothers and sisters. In the *onjango* guests were entertained, judicial cases of lesser import were settled, the day's work and gossip discussed, and youth was educated by precept and example in nearly everything from traditional history to etiquette. The *onjango* was dining-room, living-room, court, school, hotel, and club, all in one. For some of the Ovimbundu it continues to function. Upon inquiry I found that in all Kasonge there were hardly ten villages where the *onjango* existed and retained its former functions. The reasons which my informants assigned are that the demands for road work (in the immediate region), for contract labour (involving absences of from six months to two years), and the difficulty of securing tax-money, did not leave the leisure required for the common meal in the *onjango*. When I made wider inquiries as to localities where the *onjango* now exists and retains its former functions, it seems that this institution is widely decadent. According to my information, the regions where it continues to function are chiefly in Ngalangi, in Viye, and

[1] *Ocīlā* comes from the verb *oku cīlā*, to dance.

[2] *Onjango* has been traced to the verb *oku vangula*, to converse, but I am doubtful of this derivation. It has been called 'The Palaver House', but this is an evident misnomer, for the *onjango* is much more than that.

[3] *Ombelela* is a word to cover any dish which may be eaten with the porridge staple. It may be meat, beans, mushrooms, or greens, and is preferred with gravy into which pieces of the stiff porridge may be dipped (*oku miña*).

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perhaps in Ndulu. In Ngendo the Men's Club had taken over the 345
rocks just behind the headman's household for its meeting-place, 178
but the meetings were only occasional and there was no common meal.

The Village Plan

To speak of the plan of an Umbundu village may seem a con- 361
tradiction in terms, so haphazard seems the relation of houses, gardens, &c., to each other. Some houses are circular, but the [342]
majority are more nearly rectangular in shape. There is a palisade [417]
of hardwood sticks surrounding all the village except that side of the headman's household which is adjacent to the rocks used for a club-house. The headman had not bothered to keep up his own part of the fence since his only garden was a small tobacco plot fenced in by itself. The village is itself divided up by the 621
palisades which shut off one compound from another, each com- 343
pound containing the houses of from one to three households. Between the palisades are paths which lead on to the dancing floor [363]
and out of the village. In the village of Sekulu Sikīlīlē there were twenty-five households with thirty-two houses in all. Each house (*onjo*) had its own granary (*onila*), and small chicken-coop built on stilts, and of all the houses only six had separate kitchens (*ociwo*). Nearly every household had separate pens for the pigs, goats, and sheep for the night. At one side of the headman's compound there was a common corral for the nine cattle which the villagers owned. Only the headman had a spirit-hut (*etambo*), [346]
used also for a storehouse, for entertaining a guest, and for his own bedroom should he sleep apart from his wives. Within the several 621
compounds were small gardens of tobacco and of maize and beans, 244
and just outside the village were two separate tobacco gardens. Just a few paces to the west was a small patch of wheat belonging to a man in the smallest ward. There was one household of two houses quite outside the palisades appropriately belonging to a man named *Kulika* (meaning 'Being-alone'). The water-holes [312]
and pounding rocks where meal was ground were between the [252]
several units of the village and were used in common. The fields were off to the east at from thirty minutes' to an hour's [241]
walk. The two smaller wards of Ciyanda and Kanjengo were so small that they were like two or three compounds by themselves. 621
The former had six households with eight houses, and the latter

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593 only by a sister), and *mukãi* (sister, spoken only by a brother). In
[561] a polygynous household each of the wives is mother to all the children and each of the children is *huva* or *manja*[1] to all the others.
848 Illegitimate children are not stigmatized but since they belong to
567 the mother they have a distinct designation.[2] Slaves or former slaves have a status within the household and village which to the ordinary observer does not differ from that of the children: they are treated much as the children and they may carry on in all matters social and economic much as though they were members of the family. I have noticed, however, that when there is a call for labour, the lot falls oftener to one of these 'children-born-by-day'[3] whether he was a war-captive or a pawn.

567 Both slavery and the polygynous household, two institutions
595 manifestly and intimately inter-related, are still a part of the
●178 Umbundu social structure, but neither the one nor the other now has the importance which it formerly had. Neither of these institutions is part of the present and personal experience of the great majority of Umbundu households.

Kinship

596 *Blood Relatives* (*Epata*). The relationships of the wider kinship
602 groups are for the most part extensions of those of the household.
621 The child learns them very early in life owing to the fact that the village community into which he is born is only a part of this larger kinship group. Nearly all of the villagers belong to the same *epata* or extended family, which includes both lines of descent. Most of them belong to the father's family (*oluse*), and the mother's family (*olusina*) may also be represented. The fact is that most of the adults of the village are father or mother to nearly every child and most of the children are brothers or sisters. Those of his coevals who do not bear this relation to him are otherwise related and are also potential spouses or potential relatives-in-law.

[1] This distinction *yesepakal* (lit. 'of the jealousy of women') may be made but it is not applied in ordinary speech.

[2] *Omõlã a ngenda-la-ina* (lit. 'child of goes-with-mother').

[3] *Omãlã-na-citiva-lutanya*. Cf. 'child of my calves', Luganda expression and attitudes, L. P. Mair, *An African People in the Twentieth Century* (London, 1934), p. 32 f.

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613 825 621 *penricei*), and *ovinyama viakasa* (animals having paws, from the lion down). No other *oluse* has any such rules. The chief function of the *oluse* is as a local residence group. Within the *oluse* there is no inheritance of property but only succession to office, which from the king to the village headman is from father to son, or from elder to younger brother, with only as much recognition of primogeniture as belongs to the general idea of the hierarchy of age. Succession to office is further affected by the democratic tendencies already noted with regard to the kingly succession.[1] The character of the *oluse* as a series of local groups is further borne out by the character of its priesthood, which lies wholly with the village headmen.

613 The *oluina* is not a local group, since its members for the most part live in the villages of their several lines of paternal descent—each with his *oluse*. When an Ocimbundu speaks of his family (*epata*) in the sense of a large and widespread organization with a recognized head in some elder, it is generally his *oluina* to which he refers. This family elder (*ukulu wepata*) is generally both the legal and spiritual head of the family. He is the family high-priest in charge of the spirit-hut (*etambo*) of the family guardian spirit (*osande*)[2] of whom there may be more than one and of whom he may become one after death. This family head is generally the eldest in the maternal line. In these days the priestly and the legal functions may be divided considering the advantages of having for legal head one who knows the ways of this world, while the spiritual head needs rather to be acquainted with the spirit-world. [428] Property is inherited through the *oluina* from mother's brother to 613 sister's son.[3] Only the *oluina* is an organization in the wider or 178 more than local sense, and it is to it that the children belong. Formerly the mother's elder brother had great powers over his sister's sons and was even able to pawn them or sell them into slavery to meet his own debts.[4] The patrilocal household is

[1] See *supra*, p. 22 f.

[2] The head of an *oluina* may or may not be a village headman. In case he is, he will be priest of two lines and have two spirit-huts. There may be more than one spirit-hut in a single village.

[3] This fact was noted by A. Bastos, *Traços Geraes sôbre a Ethnografia do Districto de Benguella* (Lisboa, 1909), p. 33 (par. 39°).

[4] This has been noted by a number of writers. Bastos, op. cit., p. 29 (par. 26°) adds that once a father has redeemed his son, the maternal uncle can never sell him again. Cf. *avunculi potestas* among the Ba-Ila, E. W. Smith and A. M. Dale, *The Ila-Speaking Peoples* (London, 1920), vol. i, p. 320.

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responsible for the children, especially during their early years, but they are frequently sent 'to the *oluina*', i.e. to the mother's brother for at least a part of their education. Herein has arisen a conflict between the claims of the paternal household and the maternal kinship group. Economic and other forces seem to have favoured the former so that 'During these days in which we stand, things have changed somewhat so that as between children and their parents, they work for their fathers for they say, "A child is strong with his *oluse* and less so with his *oluina*." Nowadays a man teaches a child work and also looks out for his education that he may advance properly. His mother's brothers (*va inanu*) have no longer much power as of old.'[1]

Bearing in mind their bilateral nature and the fact that every Ocimbundu belongs at the same time to his paternal (*oluse*) and to his maternal (*oluina*) groups, the functions of these kinship groups may be summarized as follows:

Oluse	*Oluina*
SOCIAL	
Consists of local residence units; succession of village and tribal offices from father to son, or elder to younger brother.	Extended family organization; office of family head descends from mother's brother to sister's son; children belong.
Marriage allowed between cross-cousins and other relatives of non-parallel descent; couple lives at groom's father's village.	*Marriage preferred* between cross-cousins and other relatives of non-parallel descent; children belong to mother's *oluina*.
EDUCATIONAL	
Responsibility for education of young children, especially in social usage.	Responsibility sometimes assumed in later childhood, especially for technical phases.
ECONOMIC	
Ownership and inheritance of land. (Passed from father to son or elder to younger brother.)	Ownership and inheritance of more largely negotiable and movable property, as e.g. trade goods, cattle, &c. (passed from mother's brother to sister's son).

[1] Raul Kavita Evambi, op. cit.

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602 the mother who bore me and the consideration naturally expected
592 from her cannot, in the nature of things, be given or received by *all* of the elder and younger mothers in exactly equal degree, but the type of behaviour is similar. The elder sister who carried her younger brother about on her back when she herself could hardly more than walk, or the elder brother who first taught his younger brother to make and set his little traps, has a warmth of regard which he cannot extend with just the same force to fifty or one hundred younger brothers, but nevertheless the pattern will be of the same sort if and when similar opportunity offers. The same may be said for the younger and the elder fathers, and again for the *tatekāi*, the 'female father'. But here elements other than
605 the early household patterns enter as also with *manu*, the mother's
604 brother. Chief of these other elements is the fact that these two classes of relatives, together with the *va cepua*, i.e. cross-cousins (mostly children of the *manu* and *tatekāi* classes), and also the *ovimumba* (plural) (one's own nephews along similar lines of descent), are all potential spouses or potential relatives-in-law.[1] The relations of *ocimumba* (sister's son) and *manu* (mother's brother) in Umbundu society follow a pattern not exactly like any other set of relationships in any society of which I know. Suggestions of this have already been given. The *manu* shares his sister's desire for the advancement of her son, and if the nephew has had a part of his education in the uncle's home or on his trading expeditions, the relationship will have become closer. It may be, however, that the uncle's own difficulties may lead him to exploit his nephew rather than to attend only to his advancement.[2] The
602 ties of the paternal group tend to be strengthened at the expense
178 of the maternal family and it seems that the increasing localization of the Umbundu family with the supplanting of trade by agriculture (as a man's full-time occupation) has furthered this process.

It is very important for one who would understand the Ovi-
602 mbundu to look upon the Umbundu kinship structure with the eyes of an Ocimbundu. If one brought up to other ideas and other relationships finds this difficult, that is all the more reason for making the effort. I cannot better summarize the Umbundu

[1] See *infra*, pp. 52 ff.

[2] This is one of several points where the commercial tendencies seem to come into conflict with the patterns of the kinship group.

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754 attacks also upon the persons or possessions of enemies. This type of sorcery in a very common form involves the enslavement of the spirit of another person, often a child of one's own family or kin.[1] The person whose spirit is used may be killed either by violent or by magical means. Sorcery of this type is much feared, but if wealth supposedly gained by this means is used for the benefit of the kin, the sorcerer may be tolerated or even protected in the exercise of his black art. Beneficiaries do not often have qualms concerning the source of the benefits received. One who, by reason of his family connexions or his own power, has secured a strong position may escape interference. Jealousy or grudges, however, often bring out accusations from within the circle of kin. 754 Accusations may also be made by outsiders. With the decline in 682 influence which the tribal courts have suffered, and their inability to inflict capital punishment, sorcery is less frequently punished than formerly. The consequent reductions in the number of innocent victims is a gain. This same cause has operated, how- [177] ever, to increase dealings in, and fear of, sorcery. Most of the cases brought to European courts, and even to the Church, under the name of 'poisoning' are in reality accusations of sorcery.

178 In the foregoing brief note it has not been possible adequately 754 to treat the subject, but it will be seen that sorcery has long been a divisive influence in Umbundu life. It sometimes seriously affects the cohesion of the household and the larger kinship groups. Economic, political, and other forces now seem to be acting to increase the incidence of sorcery, the influence of which is probably a considerable factor in the present rapid disintegration of the Umbundu social structure.

The Hierarchy of Age

Passing references have been made to associations of coevals. 561 The Ovimbundu recognize very definitely the hierarchy of age and consider orderly society quite impossible without it. One of the keenest criticisms of the European and his ways is contained in the aphorism:

Kundele ka ku li ukulu.
[538] In 'civilization' there is no senior.

To Umbundu wisdom this is an impossible state of affairs;

[1] The Umbundu term is *oku andeka*; *vide* ref. *infra*, p. 107, n. 1.

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182 621 in a somewhat decadent state, the Umbundu village has up to the present maintained its status as a local kinship unit.

182 592 602 The household is not a solitary unit but a part of the village. Since it is constituted by marriage, it embodies the union of at least two kinship groups. The attitudes and behaviour patterns within the Umbundu household are basically those universally recognized. In common with the households of most Bantu cultures, it differs from the European model in that it extends its attitudes and behaviour patterns to the wider kinship groupings by means of a classificatory system of relationship.

613 182 In the wider kinship groupings (*epata*), the Ovimbundu recognize both the maternal (*oluina*) and the paternal (*oluse*) lines of descent. The functions of the latter have been largely local, residential, social, and religious, with succession (of status) in the male line. The function of the former has been cohesive over a larger territory, with a recognized head in whom has been vested both religious and economic functions. Both his office and the inheritance of property descend in the female line. Much of the power, economic and personal, formerly held by the *oluina*, in the person of the mother's brother, seems to be passing at the present time to the *oluse*, in the person of the father. The bilineal kinship system has been a strongly cohesive social force.

182 [582] The form of marriage practised by the Ovimbundu is of the two-way cross-cousin type in both lines of kin and in three generations. It seems to be an individual type developed in the particular social and economic situation of the Ovimbundu. As a contract between two families and as a new venture, the marriage relation demands that great attention be given to attitudes and behaviour patterns which emphasize mutual respect.

[561] The hierarchy of age is a very real factor in the Umbundu social structure. Age-set 'schools' have not existed generally throughout the tribes, but there are associations of coevals. This is largely a cohesive force.

754 Sorcery is the most important disruptive force at work *within* Umbundu society. Working as it does, within kinship groups, and inasmuch as it seems to be on the increase, sorcery embodies a real danger to social cohesion.

184 178 Homogeneity has never been an attribute of the Ovimbundu as regards their racial or cultural make-up. The slave-trade injected other and more diverse elements, and recent movements and

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contacts still other. As regards social and economic status, the 184
course of Umbundu life has seen great changes: great inequalities 178
produced by trade booms; a severe levelling down by effective
European occupation and by the application of direct rule. That
the Umbundu social organism through this entire process has
maintained elements of cohesion and of life speaks well for its
adaptability and for the vitality of its institutions.

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CHAPTER IV

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE

000 THE first and most important factor to be considered with reference to a programme of education or culture change is the social structure of the people among whom the programme is to be set up and carried out. Few writers on missions among the Bantu have considered the significance for the work of the social structure itself. Perhaps the particular social structure and its possible reference to the programme described have been considered too obvious to merit careful consideration. I am reminded of an observation of the late Mr. Justice Holmes that the 'vindication of the obvious is often more important than the elucidation of the obscure'.[1] But formerly it was not considered at all obvious that a mission programme should take into consideration a people's social structure. So great a missionary and anthropologist as the Reverend H. A. Junod concluded with all complacency: 'Bantu collectivism is dying out. In its stead Christianity will promote a healthy and progressive individualism. . . . I see no other way in which it (the race) can escape destruction.'[2] That was written before 1929, since when advocates of individualism have been few, and fewer the students of African life who would wish to 'promote' individualism there.

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000 The majority of missionary writers who have urged the adaptation or adoption of Bantu cultural elements have concerned themselves largely with beliefs, practices, and rites. If they so much as touch upon the social structure of the people under consideration, it is only to lay a basis for description of these other elements.[3] Although a number of writers have urged the desirability of conserving good elements believed to exist in 'Bantu communalism', 'African collectivism', and so on, few have offered concrete suggestions concerning the social structure, as designed to be of immediate or practical value. The one missionary who has

[1] Quoted in mimeographed suggestions concerning the use of *Essentials of Civilization*, by Thomas Jesse Jones (New York, 1929).

[2] Junod, op. cit., 2nd ed., vol. ii, p. 633; 1st ed. (1913), vol. ii, p. 544.

[3] The most recent work of this type which has come to my attention is *The Church and Primitive People* (The Religious Institutions and Beliefs of the Southern Bantu and their Bearing on the Problems of the Christian Missionary), by D. W. T. Shropshire (London: S.P.C.K., 1938).

[p. 63]

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observation, and not in his own house. 'During that time he will not be allowed to *tumisa*. Or again, 'the girl's parents may warn her saying, Should the boy try *to sting*[1] you, do not let him: do not stay, but run away.'[2] All informants stress the point that the chief purpose of the custom is that the two young people may come to know each other as well as possible with marriage in view. There are severe sanctions against premarital pregnancy; fines to be paid by the young man or his family, lessened desirability for the girl in marriage, and a distinction in the ceremony between brides who are virgin and those who are not. Proofs of virginity are required on the marriage morning. Those families and regions which have girls' initiation camps include in the procedure a test of virginity.[3] There are not the periodic tests of virginity which are found among the Zulus, Mpondos, &c.,[4] but the Ovimbundu do not expect that the contact will be as close as these other tribes evidently do.[5] The closest parallel which I know is with the (American) colonial custom of 'bundling'.

It is said that the custom of *uponji* has been in a decadent state for a long time. This is not only because of its having been misunderstood and forbidden by the church or the missions.[6] Although this is partly the case, the chief difficulty came from the time of the rubber trade (1874–1900) when young men began without ceremony to go to the kitchens to sleep with girls instead of properly arranging matters. Whether their affluence made them reckless (i.e. of expected fines, &c.), or whether they were apeing Europeans or the customs of other tribes, is not known. At any rate, it is said that for large numbers of people this put an end to propriety. Numbers of Europeans began to settle in the country from 1891 (Viye) and 1903 (Bailundu and elsewhere), and from then until now casual relations have very greatly increased year by year.[7] That the Ovimbundu have held to their traditional forms

[1] *Lamasa*, euphemism for immission.

[2] From a statement by R. Kavita Evambi of Ciyaka.

[3] A pullet's egg is used for the test (manuscript by R. Kavita Evambi).

[4] Krige in Schapera, 1937, op. cit., p. 110 f.

[5] Among the songs which I have collected are two sung by girls to tease the young men and with references to nights spent in *uponji*.

[6] *Uwaisi* has been used in translations for 'fornication' or 'adultery' and used so persistently that it has now nearly come to have those meanings. The *Umbundu–English Vocabulary* (1911) gave a correct definition for *eponji* but not for *uponji*; its references to *embaisi* and *uwaisi* are likewise in error, while *tumisa* is not listed.

[7] Information from R. Kalupeteka and others.

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178 of marriage through all these changes, whether with or without
936 the trial marriage, is a testimony to the vitality of their culture.

Young people of the same age-groups are thrown constantly
883 more closely together during adolescence in all their activities and in all aspects of their life. Strengthening of the age-groups is therefore to be expected. New names are taken at this time and the names received at birth discarded so far as possible. Boys used to go off together on hunts, on trading expeditions, &c. The girls work more individually in the fields, but are together in such communal labours as harvests. The preparation of food allows them more sociability and they have the additional advantage of congregating in kitchens not only for meals, but for the night as well. Ceremonial and social occasions are always opportunities for those of the same age-groups to get together. There is a limited amount of fagging of the immediately inferior age-group, but it is not institutionalized save where initiation camps have entered the picture.

883 Folk-lore, music, and the dance have very important roles in the
535 education of the young. The Bantu are probably among the most
533 naturally musical of all peoples and the Ovimbundu are perhaps excelled by few other Bantu. Their vocal ability is certainly superior to that of several of their immediate neighbours. Many of their songs are sung in connexion with dances. Other musical forms are road and work songs. Dancing is much enjoyed during adolescence but by no means only at that time, for it is learned in early childhood, very soon after walking, and continued on through life as long as the man or woman can get about unaided. It is a great sight to see toddlers, hardly more than able to walk, climb down off their mothers' backs and try a few steps at dancing; or again, to see a wizened and white-haired old man or woman step out and execute a *pas seul* on some ceremonial occasion. The adolescents, however, enjoy their dancing most, and they are the originators of most of the new steps and new dances which appear from time to time. The dance is of great importance to Umbundu life: social, educational, and ceremonial.

It remains to speak briefly of two institutions, neither of which is practised extensively throughout the country, nor does either seem to be a typical or integral part of Umbundu culture. These are the institutions of initiation at puberty, and the communistic order of the *vakuacisoko* (lit. 'those of the set').

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even earlier. Long before that the forerunners of the Ovimbundu kings, the 'Jagas', had sold their prisoners to the *pombeiros*. The other side of the national lineage had probably bought salt from Cisama[1] even before the white men came to the land.

Dominant Tendencies 1840–74. The next period in which there was great commercial development among the Ovimbundu began with the fourth decade of the nineteenth century, following upon the abolition of the monopoly in ivory and the development of new products as substitutes for the slave-trade, formally prohibited in 1836. This period saw a considerable increase in the number of traders resident in the region. The new régime at the coast may have caused some to go inland.[2] In Bailundu, and especially in Viye, they were well received by kings and by people who saw in the coming of more Europeans to live among them increased commercial opportunities.[3] For various reasons most of these traders established themselves in Viye,[4] and from this time Viye took first place in trade with the interior and with the coast. But since the caravan road to Benguela must pass either through

[1] Lopes de Lima, *Ensaios*, part ii, p. 55.

[2] Some statistics on these older periods are available, but since they are themselves in disagreement and none of them seem to be very reliable I do not include them here. The Report of the Governor of Benguela for 1799 gives the rather optimistic figure of 78 *whites* (including 5 women) resident in the several interior districts (*Annaes Mar. e Col.*, 1844, p. 161), with correspondingly larger numbers for persons of mixed race and (civilized) blacks. In 1838, according to Lopes de Lima (*Ensaios*, part i, p. 4 f.), the number of *whites* in the same districts was only 14, with no women, and the number of 'brown inhabitants' correspondingly small except in Caconda, for which he gives the number of 2,992—more than in all the rest of the colony! J. R. Graça gave a list of 101 names of inhabitants of Viye alone, 'Portuguese or descendants of Portuguese . . . *including 6 Europeans*'. This was probably near the truth for 1846. Magyar (1849–57) gave very interesting calculations of the population and area of the several Umbundu kingdoms, but no figures on European residents.

[3] A very interesting glimpse of Bailundu in 1837 was given by a political exile, Carlos de Almeida Sandoval (*Annaes do Cons. Ultr., Ia Ser.*, p. 519 f.). Very full accounts of life in Viye have been given by Silva Porto, who first reached Viye in 1840, coming from Luanda (see some of his diaries in *Annaes do Cons. Ultr.*, Ser. I; *Boletim Soc. Geog. Lisboa*, Ser. 5, 6. A small volume of excerpts from Silva Porto's diaries was published in 1942 by the Agência Geral das Colónias under the title *Viagens e apontamentos de um portuense em África*.)

[4] The early continuous connexion of the dynasty with the Luanda government has been mentioned, as also the continuous appointment of a *capitão mor*. The incumbent at the time (appointed 1838) was Francisco José Coimbra, of mixed race from Caconda (*Annaes Mar. e Col.*, 1846, p. 118; *Annaes do Cons. Ultr., Ia Ser.*, p. 112 f.). Both Cameron and the early missionaries mention dealings with his sons. Some of his grandsons and great-grandsons, now reincorporated with the Ovimbundu, still tell of their descent.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

175 178 439 [643] Bailundu (and its dependent states), or through Wambu and Ciyaka, while the road to Luanda lay either through Ndulu or Bailundu, these other kingdoms were not slow in following along the path of commercial success. In Ngalangi the king himself took a very active interest in trade and annually sent a royal caravan to Benguela, taking care to get a pass from the captain of the fort at Caconda. Other kings also adopted the practice of the royal caravan,[1] but the kings of the principal kingdoms were slow to give up raiding, plunder, and warfare as a manner of life[2]—a custom which became distasteful to their subjects in proportion as trade became more profitable and attractive.

In addition to those already named, there were other historical events and policies which contributed toward the development of trade during this period. The abolition in 1834 of the monopoly [567] in ivory,[3] which the royal treasury had held since the beginning, was of great importance, and this, in turn, abetted in perpetuating the slave-trade, now a contraband, for ivory always had been brought from the interior on the backs of slaves, and it must not be supposed that this would suddenly be stopped, especially since ivory had just become much more valuable. According to Bastos,[4] slaves for this contraband trade continued to be cheap and plentiful until the eighties, which was probably due in part to the large supply offered. Another reason was perhaps that the contraband oversea trade was largely in the hands of foreigners—Brazilians, Spaniards, and Americans, who were not always reliable in the matter of paying for their cargoes.[5]

[1] *Omaka*, which had special routines and prerogatives. Other types of caravans were named from the products which they carried or conducted.

[2] See Lopes de Lima, *Ensaios*, part ii, p. 54: 'Bailundo . . . a warlike people, of the race of "Jagas", whose chief is always on a campaign'; Magyar, *Reisen*, many references, but especially pp. 290 ff., 383–420; Silva Porto, op. cit., p. 82 f., 160; *Missionary Herald*, 1883, p. 339; 1884, pp. 145 f., 504 f.; 1885, pp. 279, 375 f.; 1886, p. 228 f.; 1887, p. 106; 1889, pp. 67, 535; 1890, p. 292, &c.

[3] From 1618 (B. Rebello de Aragão, p. 14) until 1834 (Saldanha da Gama, p. 86), all critics agreed that this monopoly even defeated its own purpose, i.e. revenue; for, they said, the conditions and regulations were so onerous that the natives could not afford to bring ivory to the coast. Available statistics show that there was very little export of ivory until 1835 (Lopes de Lima, *Ensaios*).

[4] A. Bastos, *Monographia de Catumbella*, pp. 18, 25. He gives prices varying from 5$000 to 18$000 or even 20$000, and remarks that slaves were later designated as servants, redeemed ones, contracted labourers, &c. The milreis (1$000) was then worth about $1.10. Monteiro (*vide infra*) says that in the sixties 'a little nigger' could be had for 5s.

[5] J. J. Monteiro, *Angola and the River Congo*, pp. 181–4. Monteiro attributes

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

were from Viye,[1] since Viye was nearest to what was then the source of supply—Luva, Katanga, Barotze, &c. Caravans from other regions could and did pass through Viye, but they found it more economical and advantageous to go to other regions for other commodities. Bees-wax was to be found in most of the neighbouring regions and was brought to the coast by traders of all the Umbundu kingdoms. The same may be said of the 'first-class' rubber.[2] It was found chiefly in the forest regions of the interior, and the distance and consequent time involved made it a product hardly more profitable than bees-wax. Rubber was then simply one product along with the others, and until 1886 its export had its ups and downs.

Red Rubber, 1886–1900. In 1886 a caravan of Ovimbundu came down to Catumbela with loads of 'red rubber' for the first time. They had gotten it in the sandy country to the east of the Kuanza River, and a great deal nearer than the region of the 'first-class' rubber. At first, the price paid for this 'red rubber' was lower than for the other, but whereas a caravan could not procure loads of the first in less than eight months, the 'red rubber' could be gotten within three months.[3] Subsequently the red rubber was found to have certain superior qualities so that the higher price came to be paid for it. Immediately the export of rubber from Benguela increased enormously and reached undreamed-of totals.[4] Beeswax

[1] *Boletim Soc. Geog. Lisboa*, 5a Ser., pp. 5, 6, 10, 16.

[2] There are very interesting summaries and descriptions of the commercial activities of the period—both native and European—in the *Relatorios do Districto de Benguella*, 1887, 1891 (Ministerio da Marinha e Ultramar, Lisboa, 1888, 1894).

[3] See a note in *Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society*, 1888, p. 450 f.

[4] The values of the three leading products exported from Benguela from 1886 to 1891 were as follows (from *Relatorios do Districto de Benguella*, 1887, 1891):

Product	*1886*	*1887*	*1888*
Rubber . . .	65,210 $153	286,937 $018	664,786 $870
Wax . . .	187,483 $064	158,945 $996	109,734 $140
Ivory . . .	37,692 $536	36,923 $042	29,997 $968

Product	*1889*	*1890*	*1891*
Rubber . . .	665,746 $352	781,057 $860	1,042,112 $070
Wax . . .	133,436 $344	93,680 $580	123,645 $876
Ivory . . .	31,701 $133	11,298 $782	45,392 $534

For further statistical reports of this period, see also *Portugal, Ministerio da Marinha e Ultramar, Relatorio, Propostas de Lei, &c.* (Lisboa, 1899), p. 266 f.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

dropped off; of ivory there was no more. From 1893 on, says Bastos, rubber was practically the sole export of the District of Benguela and of its hinterland.[1] In 1891 more than one million milreis' worth of rubber was exported from Benguela, sixteen times as much as was exported only five years before, and three and one-half times the value of the *three* leading exports in 1886. Until 1891 this increase was not at the expense of other exports, but rather in addition to them.

All of this rubber, and the other exports as well, came to the coast in caravans of the Ovimbundu or their neighbours. In its inception and its great development it was an enterprise of the Ovimbundu. Everyone who was able to carry a load joined a caravan. It had always been the custom to take boys on trading expeditions, as young as they could go—say, from their tenth year—as a part of their education. Now girls were also taken and hardly any but the women stayed at home to raise the crops and provide rations for the caravans. European residents experienced great difficulty in securing necessary porters,[2] and this was one reason for finally putting through the wagon-road from Benguela to Caconda.[3] It was extended to Viye during the military campaign of 1890. The fever of the rubber trade reached into all the villages of the land and took in everyone able to travel. Mission schools had been established since 1881, but they had but few pupils until 1900. There were also other reasons for this, but a principal one was the attractiveness of the rubber trade.[4] Even the kings found it more difficult to gather armies for their wars: trade had become more attractive than the possibility of plunder.

Of all the kings who ruled the various Umbundu kingdoms during this time, the one who is best remembered is Ekuikui (II) of Bailundu (1876–93). Tradition has begun to ascribe to him and to his reign some things which properly belong to earlier

[1] Bastos, op. cit., p. 34. He does not include *sertãoes* in the exports, since they all went to the mainland or island plantations, but he remarks that at this time the price rose to even 90$000 (p. 33). The rise in price was perhaps due to the smaller supply owing to the preoccupation of the Ovimbundu with the rubber trade.

[2] See *Missionary Herald*, 1889, p. 350.

[3] *Benguella*, 1891, op. cit., p. 10.

[4] The reports of the governor of Benguela, to which reference has been made, also mentioned this fact, saying that although the American missions were intelligently directed, their results were small, since parents would not send their children to learn while they could pick up loads of rubber (1887, p. 19; 1891, p. 20).

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

and the country settled down to the rule of 'the Fort' with Ndunduma's successor named by the captain-major. The occupation of Bailundu was effected at that same time,[1] while Ekuikui yet ruled, but for several years only a nominal force was employed.[2] In 1896 Ekuikui's successor, Numa II, attacked the fort, and the captain-major burned the *ombala*[3] in retaliation. From 1890 European traders settled in both Viye and Bailundu in ever-increasing numbers.[4] Then came the 'Bailundu War' of 1902,[5] after which the occupation of the whole Umbundu country was quickly completed.

175x 648 726

The operations of 1890 had only interrupted the ivory trade. The campaign of 1902 completely paralysed trade in and with the interior, and greatly aggravated a depression which the District of Benguela was feeling because of a fall from the high prices which rubber had enjoyed in 1898–9.[6] After the war it seemed that trade would soon regain its former levels, and the export statistics show that for a time it did so, but closer inspection and a consideration of other factors which entered into the situation show that this was the beginning of the end. The price of rubber never regained its former level, so that the high value of exports reported represents an even larger quantity than before. The increased quantity largely represented a greatly debased product, for the native traders and producers understood nothing

175x 439 178 727

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and Garenganze, pp. 19–23) also wrote of these incidents but with more of the personal element and perhaps less accuracy.

[1] *Relatorio, Benguella*, 1892, p. 13 f.

[2] In 1892 there were 2 soldiers in Bailundu, 135 in Viye, 21 in Caconda (*Benguella*, op. cit., 1891, p. 15). Bailundu tradition says that (native) soldiers were first brought in disguised as porters with loads of goods.

[3] *Ombala*, capital village.

[4] A. Bastos, op. cit., pp. 36, 43.

[5] This war was named in Umbundu after the Bailundu war leader, *Mutu ya Kevela*. He is named among the kings, but it was only during the war that he assumed power. The immediate causes were excesses on the part of European residents against the natives, especially in connexion with 'the recruiting of contract labour'. The best work on the subject is in the nature of a report written by the man who was then governor, Cabral Moncada, *A Campanha do Bailundo* (Luanda 1903). General ideas may be had from *Missionary Herald*, 1902, pp. 353, 400, 452 f., 520 f.; 1903, pp. 22 f., 69 f., 122, 211 f.; H. W. Nevinson, op. cit., p. 157 f.; and J. T. Tucker, *Drums in the Darkness*, p. 122 f. The account given by Keiling (*Quarenta Anos de Africa*) is of interest for certain details of this war, but its statements are inaccurate and its judgements unreliable. The missionaries sought to dissuade the natives from taking up arms, and once the fighting had begun they provided medical services for both sides and sent food-supplies to the garrison of the beleaguered Portuguese fort.

[6] A. Bastos, op. cit., p. 39 f.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

797 795 produced an Umbundu grammar,[1] but does not seem to have published material of an ethnological nature. Père Keiling (who died in 1937) and Père Batteix were both listed in *Le Répertoire Africain* as specializing in the 'Ganguella' language.[2] The Umbundu missions of this Diocese date from 1890 (Caconda), 1896 (Bailundo), 1912 (Cuando), and later. From early days this mission has had quite evident political aspects—from 1889 when a military expedition was sent against the 'Ganguella Soba[3] Tchiuaco' to re-establish Père Lecomte and the Cubango mission station which had been attacked and expelled,[4] up to the recent government charters and mission statutes, which heavily subsidize the religious work of the Roman Catholic missions in Angola. The constitution of the Portuguese Republic decrees the separation of Church and State and full religious liberty. The large subsidies and other special privileges given to the Roman Catholic Church in Angola, however, create difficulties beyond the mere allocation of tax-money. In other parts of Africa the Roman Catholic missions co-operate with the Protestant in many spheres of action. It is to be regretted that such co-operation seems not to be desired in Angola. Is it a sort of monopolistic political aim which keeps the Roman Catholic missionaries of Angola aloof? The rare instances in which a more friendly spirit has been manifested only add point to the question. The appreciative and co-operative spirit shown by Padre J. Alves Correia[5] may be cited.

797 178 754 Roman Catholics and Protestants have both been very successful from a numerical standpoint.[6] Success in building a truly indigenous Church, or in providing it with suitable and capable leadership from its own ranks, is another question hardly to be judged from statistics. More elusive still is the question whether,

[1] *Boletim Soc. Geog. Lisboa*, 1897. This grammar has gone through several editions and is still in use. The orthography is evidently intended to facilitate the use of the language by one whose native tongue is French and rather complicates matters for an African, and, indeed, for anyone whose language is other than French.

[2] H. Dubois, op. cit., p. 340.

[3] *Soba*, a native chief (from *Soma*).

[4] *Benguella*, op. cit., 1891, pp. 10 ff.

[5] See his books, *A Largueza do Reino de Deus* (Lisboa, 1932); *A Vida Mais Alta*, &c.

[6] Roman Catholics have about 280,000 and Protestants about 140,000 adherents among the Ovimbundu, according to the census taken in 1940 (Colónia de Angola, *Censo Geral da População*, vol. ix; Luanda, Imprensa Nacional, 1943).

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

or how far, Umbundu life may have been actually penetrated by a Christian spirit in matters of faith and morals. It is not surprising that after less than seventy years, or very much less in most regions, belief in witchcraft should still have a strong hold upon the minds of the Ovimbundu. Somewhat disturbing, however, is the fact that according to the latest observations, belief in and the hold of witchcraft seem at the present time to be increasing. These observations tally with what seems to be taking place in other parts of Africa.[1] According to observers in Africa and in other parts of the world the hold of witchcraft upon a people seems to increase with a decrease of security, whether relating to the economic basis of life, to health and disease, or to life's religious undergirding. In such a case, it is clearly the duty of all agencies concerned to co-operate for the removal of the cause of insecurity. Here the chief agencies are government, commerce, and missions. It is to be hoped that for the good of the Ovimbundu they may be brought together.

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[1] See *Africa*, vol. viii, no. 4, which number is devoted to studies of witchcraft. See especially the article, 'A Modern Movement of Witch Finders', by A. I. Richards, pp. 418 ff.

602 ocimumbo (since Childs states (p.55) that it includes every relative of the generation of the spouse's parents.) *Ndatembo* must avoid: (i) speaking each other's names. This may be accomplished by using the names compounded from those of children (thus *Nakambotia* and *Sakambotia* are the father and mother of Kambotia) or by using the terms which one's spouse uses, i.e. *mai, tate, nanu* etc. (ii) seeing each other, if they are of opposite sex; if it is necessary to converse, it must be done out of sight, or with gaze averted. (iii) eating with each other. (This applies only to regular meals and not to casual refreshment.)

607 (c) The term *nawa* is used reciprocally for all the spouse's relatives of one's own generation, including those classed as "sister", "brother" and "cross-cousin". Between the *nawa* the only avoidance enjoined is that they may not eat regular meals in each other's presence; otherwise they are on "free and easy" terms".

"Avoidance of meeting ... is especially difficult for the bride who comes to live in a village of her husband's people, a large proportion of the men of which may be *ndatembo* to her. The prohibition may be lifted by .. a simple ceremony, in which each rubs a little oil on the other ... Avoidance of eating in each other's presence may be done away with after some months by sacrificing a chicken and feeding it ceremonially .. to the *ndatembo* or *nawa* ... It is especially important that the ceremonies be carried through with respect *(esumbilo)*."(1)

A note on the kinship system

613 421 178 There is a tendency today for the claims of the *oluse*, the land-owning group, to supplant those of the property-owning *oluina*; one important reason for this is the change from trade to agriculture as the most important economic activity. With European influence also conflicts have arisen over rights to children. Childs states(2) that the bilineal kinship system has been a factor leading to social stability, especially stability of marriage, but he does not elaborate this statement.

LOCAL GROUPS(3)

The "household", consisting of a man, his wife or wives and children, and such other related or unrelated dependants as may be attached to this basic group, is the basis of the village. The word *onjo* (house) may be used for this group, i.e. to include the various houses which a man may have established by marriage, or it may be used for the house of any one of his wives. Each wife has her own hut, granary, chickens, and fields for her children and herself, and the husband has no house of his own unless he is village headman or the head of an *oluina*, in which case he has a spirit-hut *(etambo)* in which he may sometimes pass the night. Sons when they marry form their own households, usually in their father's village. The size of the household varies greatly according to wealth and status. Some recent kings have had as many as 12 wives. But it has been noted above that, in Childs' typical village, out of 48 households only 10

592 595 [591] [554]

(1) Childs, p.52.
(2) Ibid., p.56; see also ibid. pp.70, 45, 50 etc.
(3) This section is based on Childs, 1949, pp.21-41.

were polygynous and only one of these contain more than two wives.[1] 592 595

The village or ombo (plural *ovoimbo*) may consist of from 5 to 500 such households, the heads of which are usually related agnatically to each other. Most, but not all, of the larger villages are *olombala* (villages of chiefs or sub-chiefs). These are said to have had formerly as many as 5,000 inhabitants,[2] but today few have as many as 3,000, and there is a general tendency towards smaller villages and even isolated households.[3] There are in general two quite different types of Umbundu village according to the terrain on which they are built. Those on the plains, where there is room to spread out, tend towards a circular shape, with the *ocila* and *onjango* (see below) near the centre. The various sections of the village may appear as quarters of a single whole, or they may be spread out haphazardly. Mountain villages[4] may have houses built on ledges almost one on top of the other. Here there is often no room or no suitable soil within the palisades for gardens or for the dancing-floor *(ocila)*, which are found outside the palisade. Different sections of the village tend to string themselves out horizontally along the mountain-side, or to find successive ledges. 621 [178] 621 361

The typical village of Ngendo described by Childs, in Kasongi chiefdom, *etumbu* (sub-chiefdom) of Ekongo, is of an intermediate type, built on a slope. Ngendo has 196 inhabitants, of whom 42 are men, 60 are women, and 94 children. The village is divided into four smaller sections or wards (*ovitawila* pl.), of which the largest, that of the village headman *(sekulu)* has 127 inhabitants, while the other three have 19, 13 and 37 inhabitants respectively. The word ombo (village) may also be used for either of the two larger sections by themselves. Each section has its own elder, but the dancing-floor *(ocila)*, which is the centre of village life, is in the headman's section. The *ocila* is primarily a place for recreation, but religious functions also are held in it, and formal cases tried. Formerly most villages had a second communal building, the *onjango* or "Men's Club House",[5] whose importance was almost as great as that of the *ocila*. Here all the men, youths and boys gathered for the evening meal, and here guests were entertained, lesser judicial cases settled, and the day's work and gossip discussed, while young boys, sitting in the background, gained much of their knowledge of tribal history and custom.[6] Today the *onjango* exists and maintains its former function chiefly in parts of Ngalangi, Viye and possibly Ndulu. It does not exist in Childs' typical village, where the "Men's Club" holds only occasional meetings on the rocks behind the headman's house, and where the common evening meal no longer takes place. The reason suggested for the disappearance of the *onjango* is lack of leisure owing to demands for road work (in the immediate vicinity of Ngendo), for contract labour, involving absences of from six months to a year,[7] and the difficulty of securing tax-money. 621 [344] [461]

(1) And polygyny is thought to be more frequent here than in other areas. See above, p.23.
(2) According to Magyar, 1851.
(3) Childs, op.cit., p.25, fn.1. Childs does not suggest any reason for this tendency.
(4) Formerly many villages were built on mountains for defence, and capital villages of this type may still be seen.
(5) The "Men's Club" seems to be simply a gathering of all the adult men (and possibly also the juveniles) of the village.
(6) Childs, op.cit.; Cushman, 1944; Hambly, (2) 1934.
(7) Most of the labour on the Benguella Railway is Umbundu, and many Ovimbundu travel to the Union of South Africa for work. (Childs, op.cit., p.10, et.al.)

time to the village of the paramount chief. These periods spent away from home continue into adolescence. Not only relatives, but also friends, blood-brothers and *vakuacisoko* (see below) exchange children in this way. 604 857

Later childhood

No definite time marks the transition from early to later childhood, but there are marked differences between the two stages. As soon as the child is physically able, he begins to assume a definite role in the community. Soon after a child gets his permanent teeth, a notch in the form of an inverted V is chipped between the two upper front incisors. Formerly the beginning of the period was marked for the boy by his first trip with a trading caravan; today a boy of this age may begin to work in the fields with his father, or begin to learn a trade, or be sent to school. A girl starts to learn field-work and housework. 852 858

Professions

A boy is expected to learn the profession or *ocipinduko* in which his father or his mother's brother is expert, and after that, should he wish to learn some other side-line profession, he may apprentice himself. All children, both boys and girls, are expected to learn to cultivate; but that is not counted as a profession. The principal *ovipinduko* (professions) listed by Childs are: for girls, basket-making, pottery-making, medical practice and divination; for boys, mat-making, wood-working, rope-making, thatching, fishing, apiculture, hunting, smithing, and medical practice and divination. The last three, as has been mentioned above, are "sacred" and entered under special conditions. 462 828 [463]

"Later childhood, then, is the period of technical training during which it is expected that a large amount of economic responsibility will be assumed. A child begins to own property even before this, and from the beginning of childhood will be accounted legally responsible for his actions. It is recognised, however, that he should not be set tasks beyond the experience or ability of his age and that the full responsibility of adulthood will come only with marriage."(1) 866 [672]

The coming of European commerce, industry, and government has created new types of employment for boys and men, some of which cause a prolonged absence from the village and a loosening or severing of kinship ties. There are no estimates of the number of persons employed by Europeans, or the average length of their absence from home. 178 466

ADOLESCENCE(2)

Childs found that the onset of puberty was late among the Ovimbundu, coming between fourteen and sixteen years for girls and between fifteen and seventeen years for boys. Soon after puberty young people generally stop sleeping in the parents' house. The girls congregate in kitchens and each boy builds himself a house, in which he will live through adolescence 882

(1) Childs, op.cit., p.110.
(2) Based on Childs, op.cit., pp.58-9 and 111-18.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

In northern Angola the Ovimbundu could not have had other than a warlike existence, which trained them in military tactics and the building up of an aggressive confederacy. In this they were aided by contact with the Portuguese, who supplied guns and powder in exchange for slaves and ivory from the interior. This accumulated wealth further stimulated the building up of Umbundu tribal life. 174 178

Introduction of maize by the Portuguese gave the Ovimbundu a knowledge of this grain, which later became their staple wealth and food supply. 177

The cultural pattern of the northern Congo was the same in the year 1600 as it is today, and consideration of the ethnology of the Congo region reveals numerous similarities with Umbundu culture of the present time. 174

Writings of explorers in Angola from A.D. 1800 to the present day bring out many points which are in agreement with my field observations. There are no discrepancies which would make me question the validity of information given by my informants.

In early records, Battell's observation of cattle in the hinterland of Benguela (1600), is important in showing that at such an early date the Ovimbundu had access to cattle when raiding from their home in the Benguela Highlands. [231]

From these fundamentals of geography and history the inquiry turns to a detailed account of my observations among the Ovimbundu and surrounding tribes.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

A principal wife builds up her
302 hair into five high cones. Vachokue women mass their hair into
[595] separate balls shaped and held by clay and red coloring matter.
171 I know of no hairdressing for Vachokue men, but ornamental wooden combs are sometimes used.

304 In only one place have I seen a nose pin worn, namely, the Esele country of Vila Nova de Selles. The fashion is out of date, but women of only twenty-five years of age have the septum of the nose bored; evidently the custom has not been obsolete for a long period (Plate LXXV, Fig. 1).

177 The most popular European importations are blue cloth with
439 white spots, metal hair combs, beads, and bright metal crosses
301 bearing a figure of the Virgin Mary with the infant Jesus. This ornament has penetrated to districts far away from Christian missions, and its wide dispersal shows that a newly introduced and attractive ornament from a foreign source may readily be accepted by tribes of different cultures.

517 There are interesting points of psychology in the attitude of the
301 Ovimbundu toward European importations. Only a few patterns of cloth are favored, and there is no sale for any other design. Some designs are thought to be appropriate for young girls while others are favored by older women. The same may be said of colored beads, for whereas both blue and white beads are the usual decoration for young women and immature girls, red beads are worn chiefly by the elderly women.

178 A consideration of personal ornament establishes the general truth that in scarification, hairdressing, tooth mutilation, the use of red powder and grease, the anointing of the hair with palm oil, and the wearing of trade cloth, leather, or bark cloth, there is little exchange of styles. There are diffusions in language and other cultural traits, but decorative elements which have for a long period been regarded as distinctive of tribal life are rigidly preserved.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

[1874-1911]

THE OVIMBUNDU UNDER TWO SOVEREIGNTIES

178 The great distinguishing mark of the Ovimbundu was their participation in the caravan trade. Some of the neighbouring people also engaged in trading journeys (e.g. the Chokwe) but in central Angola the dominant traders were the Ovimbundu by reason of their control of the routes to Benguela and Catumbela, a control which as Livingstone's narrative shows they tried for a while to turn into a monopoly.[43] With this must be linked
177 the greater readiness of the Ovimbundu to adopt European ways, marked by the general adoption of cloths for wear by at latest the mid-nineteenth century.[44]

3. *Economics and Social Structure*

101 This section will describe the economic life and social structure which marked the period of the rubber trade (1874–1911).
436 A genuine currency existed in the form of cloth, and fortunes
439 could be made in it. Serpa Pinto tells us of one Otjimbundu who made £3,500 by trading in the interior and that he had met many men who 'turned over capital of a thousand to twelve hundred pounds sterling',[45] presumably in trade goods since Portuguese currency did not circulate among the Ovim-
361 bundu. At the capitals of the kingdoms genuine towns grew up. Magyar in the middle of the nineteenth century estimated that
[162] 5,000 people lived at Bailundo[46] and the British explorer Cameron who had crossed Africa from Zanzibar says of Ekovongo, the capital of Bie, 'the town of Kagnombe, the largest I came across during my whole journey, being more than three miles in circumference. On arrival I was met by the
644 Kagnombe's secretary, chamberlain, and captain of the guard who wore red waistcoats as a sign of their dignity. The secretary was more ornamental than useful, being unable to write, but a subordinate, a black man and native of Dondo, was better educated and conducted the trade of Kagnombe with the coast'.[47]

[43] Ibid., p. 205.
[44] Ibid., p. 206, referring to Magyar as evidence.
[45] Serpa Pinto, pp. 161–2.
[46] Magyar, p. 391.
[47] V. L. Cameron, *Across Africa*, London, 1877. Vol. II, pp. 206–7.

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439 484 journeys diminished in distance as they increased in profitability.[53]

My informants, however, gave a somewhat different picture. Long trading journeys were still being undertaken in the last decade of the trade (1901–11). Some men whom I met had travelled to the kingdom of the Mwata Yamvo and beyond to Luba country; one man had made a journey into what is now the Congo Republic which took a year to go and a year to return; another had visited Barotseland. It should be said that these seem to have been unusually long journeys; journeys totalling six to eight months were common.[54]

182 829 [77] [254] The significance of the trade in social life is reflected in the mystical explanations of success in business found in Umbundu religion. Prosperity might be explained either by the favour of spirits such as Kandundu and Otjipukû, who received at their shrines libations of wine, or by malevolent sorcery involving the sacrifice of relatives in exchange for wealth.[55] The existence of these two explanations probably reflects the existence of some rich men who satisfied the expectations of their relatives and others who did not.

567 120 Apart from the rubber trade, the older slave trade continued until its vigorous suppression in the period 1910–12, and indeed seems, as regards the Ovimbundu, to have become intensified in the period after 1890. The slaves went to S. Tome and Principe, or to coastal plantations. Up to that time the Ovimbundu had sold few of their own people, with the exception of criminals or people who had become generally unpopular with their kin. The collapse of the old political system played into the hands of adventurers who unscrupulously exploited the Umbundu custom of debt slavery or conducted raids for this purpose.[56]

604 439 It was then the 'trade' which was the common factor in the life of all Ovimbundu, and which was so to speak the factor,

[53] Childs, p. 208.

[54] Informants.

[55] Although some old men still have shrines to the luck-giving spirits it is not possible to see how their cult functioned in the social structure then existing. It is, however, notable that success could be interpreted mystically in two ways by benevolent spirits or by sorcery.

[56] Childs, p. 213. I was told that Gumba had been raided from Bailundo.

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613 could be resolved in the matrilineal group.[78] Hastings, who gives the most detailed account of the matrilineal groups, which he calls sibs, tells us, 'There can be no exaction of fines or taking of slaves between the members of a sib group—the group members are supposed to pay each other's debts, and one who has wealth and refuses so to communicate may be secretly poisoned by the others. It is within the group of matrilineal sibs that most compacts, whether social or economic, are formed and operate. The same is true even of malevolent plots and anti-
[759] social practices, such as killing by witchcraft.'[79]

182 Clearly, the matrilineal groups in which the rich had to pool
613 their wealth with poorer kinsfolk and in which trading arrange-
437 ments[80] were made indicate the adaptation of the kinship system to the needs of the trade. It may be suggested that one of the functions of the double descent system was to separate the fields of village and chiefdom relations, established through patrilineal ties, from the field of commerce, credit, and the inheritance of wealth gained by trade. Thus the conflicts in which a man would be involved in one set of relations would not involve his other set of ties, and this distribution of stresses must have limited the strains set up by disputes. The distinction between the local group and the commercial group would also prevent heavy losses from trade striking a whole village simultaneously.[81] The credit institutions demanded by a trading
[452] system in which debt was frequently incurred were fitted into the kinship system, and associated with a device for levelling those who had become prosperous in the trade.

613 Unhappily the disintegration of the traditional social struc-
[170] ture, and the accompanying loss of knowledge of it, prevented me from adding to, or even corroborating entirely, the written material on the form of the matrilineal groups.[82] It is not at all evident how the groups maintained integration, or how new

[78] Hambly, p. 200.

[79] Ibid., p. 92.

[80] Dr. Childs suggested to me that the core of the caravans might be composed of kin. However, the caravans were so large that they clearly could not be organized on a kinship basis. See also Serpa Pinto, p. 165.

[81] This point was suggested to me by Dr. Mary Douglas.

[82] I did not obtain any information on the size of the matrilineal group, the existence of heads of the groups, and the degree to which it was a congregation.

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kingdoms of the Ovimbundu, though more frequently perhaps it was made against the non-Umbundu peoples.[89]

The question of the influence of the trade provides interesting opportunities for comparison. The Ovimbundu were the southernmost of the peoples who in the nineteenth century participated in the trade between the Europeans of the West African coast and the peoples of the interior.[90] In some ways the Ovimbundu seem to have been less influenced by it than were some of the peoples further north. The Ovimbundu did not develop genuine patterns of urban life as in Dahomey or Benin.[91]

Three explanations can be offered for the relative failure of associational groups and urban society to develop. Umbundu crafts were much inferior to those found along the coast of the Gulf of Guinea; there was no indigenous weaving industry, for instance, and the goods which the caravans carried to the interior were all of European or American origin, cloths, guns, and rum.[92] For these goods the Ovimbundu were dependent on the Portuguese settled at the coast or in the Highland and this meant that the Ovimbundu were far from economic autonomy. Again the trade had a relatively short time span—the real boom period lasted only from 1886 to 1900, and earlier on in the 1840's when the beeswax, ivory, and slave trade was flourishing, the Ovimbundu had plenty of time for warfare.

It would, however, be a grave mistake to think that trade had only a marginal influence on Umbundu society. It has been suggested that the form of the double-descent system owes its origin to the necessity to isolate economic relations from other social fields. In the sphere of ritual, there are some remarkable copies of European practices—for instance the holding of a feast in honour of the ancestors at Christmas-time.[93] Many ritual concepts are related to the explanation of business

[89] For information on Umbundu warfare see Magyar, pp. 277–80 and Serpa Pinto, pp. 177–9.

[90] See Balandier, *Sociologie Actuelle de l'Afrique Noire*, Paris, 1955, for a discussion of social change in other areas which had experienced a trade of a similar sort.

[91] For Dahomey see M. J. Herskovits, *Dahomey*, New York, 1938. For Benin see R. Bradbury, *The Benin Kingdom* (Ethnographic Survey of Africa), London, 1957.

[92] Childs, p. 206.

[93] Informants.

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bought in the towns, and men returning from South Africa are said to bring all sorts of goods including typewriters. The traders do not lend money though they sometimes give credit. The living standards of the traders are often low, some being unable to buy a truck, and having therefore to come to terms with someone who has one. I have even heard of traders having to eat the staple Umbundu mush (*pirão* in Portuguese).

While the traders play an extremely important role in the local economy they do not establish any permanent face-to-face relationship with the natives outside their household and store, because they are not interested in them and have no reason to be. This does not apply in the same way to African *assimilados*,[1] actual or self-styled, of whom there were a few in the neighbourhood, who lived more or less in Portuguese style. Of these one in particular, Justino, made a hobby of settling disputes, and will therefore re-appear later on. Their main source of revenue was coffee-growing, and they would occasionally have local labour working for them. As they tend to identify themselves with the 'civilized' population, their attitude to the natives is not unlike that of the traders, but culturally and linguistically they are linked to the Ovimbundu villagers, and if of local origin will have kinship links too.

This group is significant because it is in the total social structure of Angola a link between the 'civilized' and 'non-civilized' communities. Both the *assimilados* and those pseudo-*assimilados* who have persuaded the natives that they are *assimilados*, identify themselves with the whites but are also linked much more closely with the natives than any other group. As the division into 'civilized' and 'non-civilized' is legally sanctioned on the grounds of culture not race, a group which participates to some degree in the cultures of both sections must be of great significance in the study of the means by which the whole society is integrated. In the neighbourhood where I worked this group of Europeanized Africans were few in numbers,[20] both absolutely and in relation to other parts of Angola.

[20] I only know of one genuine *assimilado* in the neighbourhood though there were others who claimed to be such. Galvão and Selvagem (p. 408) remark of the Casengo concelho of northern Angola, 'The great number of civilised negroes, some planters incorporated in the European economic system, hastened the disintegration and confusion of the tribal institutions.'

[1] [assimilados are Africans possessing Portuguese citizenship -- Analyst]

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does not give them any claim to financial assistance from the 634
people, or control over natural resources, such as land rights. 622
The only prerogative of this sort that the chief has is the right to the leg of an antelope killed in a hunt or a bull killed in a commemoration rite—and this is of symbolic rather than economic importance.

Nor, finally, does the post give the chiefs prestige and 640
support.[11] Five successive chiefs of Gumba had been deposed 634
by the post, and it is not uncommon for chiefs and government 622
headmen to be beaten or otherwise punished (for instance by being made to work for a fortnight at the post) for their shortcomings. They have in fact just sufficient power to carry out the commands of the *chefe* and to do nothing more. They are not disliked by the local people for doing what the *chefe* tells them to do, but any attempt at dictatorial behaviour on their part will stir up opposition which may lead to their downfall.

The relations between white *chefe* and black chief vary 648
according to individuals and neighbourhoods. Sometimes the 634
chefe will allow the chief to be chosen according to tradition; at other times he will impose a candidate of his own. A *chefe* may hear any cases that are brought to the post, or he may delegate the power of hearing minor cases to the chiefs. Some *chefes* will regard the chiefs with hostility as being enemies of their own people; others will abstain under any circumstances from beating a chief, as they feel their power should be supported. Here I describe the situation as it was in Gumba and in Bimbe generally.

A visit to a chief's village in Gumba or elsewhere will give an 634
opportunity of meeting those residents who hold the ministerial 178
titles, of gazing under overshadowing trees at the enclosure in 769
which are kept the skulls of former chiefs, and perhaps of seeing the chief and some of his cronies dance to a drum in commemoration of one of his predecessors. Ministers, skulls, dances, and drum are symbols of chiefly nostalgia rather than of political power. The ceremonies have little interest for the people in general, and many of them have been abandoned by the chief. Lusase's first wife had not, as custom demanded,

[11] For criticism of this policy by two Portuguese with administrative experience see Galvão and Selvagem, p. 213.

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634 178 769 [775] become *inakulu* (queen) because she feared the unpleasant haunting by the spirits of former queens which is traditionally experienced by the holder of this office.[18] On one occasion Lusase himself offered to let me into the *akokoto* (the enclosure where the skulls of dead chiefs were kept) for the payment of five or ten escudos (1s. 3d. or 2s. 6d.) although the entry of anybody except the chief and possibly certain of his courtiers appears traditionally to have been forbidden under the penalty of death sent by the spirits. Even the surviving rites are confined to the chief's village; the first-fruits ceremony in which the [796] whole chiefdom was involved disappeared a number of years ago. The association general in Umbundu country between 634 the chiefs and paganism does not provide an added ritual 771 sanction to the chief's power, but rather links him with what is felt to be a dying past, essentially unimportant, at the present day.

692 The chief may also have some of his time occupied with hearing cases. A good many minor disputes are solved by local adjudication, but there seems to be no specific division between cases that ought to come to the chief and those which can be arbitrated by somebody else. Elders from outside a chiefdom may be invited to adjudicate on a particular case. The old formality of legal procedure has largely disappeared, probably because all disputes at a local level can be carried to the post—hence any ruling by chief or elders is essentially dependent on its acceptance by the disputants.

754 Accusations of sorcery are rather different from other cases since the post does not believe them, although such an accusation is not in itself punishable. Sometimes suspected sorcerers are accused at the post of 'poisoning'.[19] Lusase told me that convicted sorcerers were fined a chicken, a goat and a pig. Gregorio, the chief of Menga, at first said, when I asked about this, that it was not possible to know who was a sorcerer. When, rather to his surprise, I mentioned the traditional basket test, he agreed and explained that people convicted by this test were sent as labourers to the post to satisfy whatever demand was being made for workers.

[18] Informants. See also Hastings, p. 49.

[19] Childs, p. 58.

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government headman is not the same person as the traditional headman he may become involved in quarrels unless he is careful to accept the position of the traditional headman; and both government headman and traditional headman may find it wise to be on good terms with the catechist and the elder of the school. 622

It is fairly simple to define the obligations of the government headman. Discussing the position of the traditional headman vague words such as 'influence' and 'prestige' must be used to describe a vague position. Indeed a purely synchronic picture would be inadequate, since the present position of the traditional headmen and the contemporary village organization must be understood against a historical background.

3. *Headmen and Their Villages*

In the time of the rubber trade the village headman was both the leader of a body of agnatic kinsmen and the representative of his village in the wider political system, the village headmen sitting with the chief to judge cases. Both Childs and Hambly emphasize the importance of the judicial role of the village headmen. Childs states that the village headman was also a ritual leader, being responsible for 'regular village worship including agricultural festivals'.[16] I have found no evidence of such ceremonies on a village basis. The only ritual which, according to my older informants, the village headman should perform for his people is communing with his ancestor spirits in the spirit hut during a village hunt, and this information was not confirmed by all my older informants. It may be added that I found no evidence of any installation rite for a new headman.

It may be assumed that a good deal of the old village structure survived till the middle or end of the 1990's. Dr. Childs in his description of the village of Ngendo (Cassongue) as it was in 1935–6 indicated that agnatic kinship was the main principle of village recruitment, and that this was typical of other Umbundu villages.[17] In Gumba it was still possible at this time 178 621

[16] Childs, p. 48.

[17] Ibid., pp. 25–27.

178 621 for individuals to build up large villages—thus Simbwyikoka encouraged people to settle at Mwekalia to make it a large village. It may also be suggested that the power of the village 622 headmen was to some extent linked with the power of the chief, since the headmen were associated politically with the chief, and would from this, tend to gain authority in their dealings with their fellow villagers. The village headmen also lacked any real competition from other types of leadership. Mbati had kept relations with the post in his own hands, and there were therefore no government headmen. The first catechist had [799] arrived in Mbati's village in 1928, but cannot have met with much lasting success as there are few baptized Christians over thirty-five in Gumba.

622 554 Other factors at the time strengthening the position of the village headmen were the low rate of labour migration[10] and the fact that practically every man over forty at the time of Simbwyikoka's accession had participated in the rubber trade. This meant that many of the best known caravan leaders were still in full vigour, and enjoyed a prestige based on the first-hand knowledge of the middle-aged and older men.

178 Between this period of the middle thirties and the beginning of my own fieldwork twenty years had passed and many changes had taken place. The status of the chief had sharply (634) declined and he was now assisted by the four government headmen. Every village except the chief's village had a Catholic or Protestant catechist, and there had been a marked trend [799] towards learning catechism in preparation for baptism, which had begun about 1946. Hence the catechetical school was usually attended by the majority of under twenty-five's in the village.

621 Agnatic kinship had ceased to be the principle of village membership. Nor can it be said that headmen build up villages by getting people to settle at a particular spot. It is not always easy even to find the headman, village population is not very stable, and a man can settle with any category of kin.

622 124 To discover the traditional headman required careful phrasing of questions. When I visited a village and asked for the *ambala yimbo* (the traditional phrase for the village headman) I

[10] Ibid., p. 214.

604 621 On the village level, however, the importance of the mother's brother tie and of the tie between matrilateral 'brothers' becomes very apparent. None of Sapapula's four sons had settled in Epalanga, and his only classificatory 'son' was Gonçalve, own son to Mwehombo, Sapapula's matrilateral 'brother'. Seven household heads were sister's sons of Sapapula. This trend for matrilateral ties to predominate is marked also in Katembo and Mbunga, but less evident at Belem. Indeed, 'neo-matrilinearity' as a principle of village structure may be a general and not simply a local feature of Umbundu society, since Mr. C. M. N. White[18] has found that the settlements of Ovimbundu within Northern Rhodesia are marked by a predominance of matrilateral ties. This is referable to the contemporary kinship system in which the father-son tie is predominantly a personal one, with a limited extension of attitudes to classificatory fathers, whereas a man's relation with a mother's brother seems little affected by the question of genealogical distance. Perhaps the relations between the group of agnatic kin were so closely tied to the old village structure that when it broke up it disintegrated also the wider agnatic ties. Yet at the same time such matrilineal institutions as matrilineal inheritance and the non-repayment of loans among matrikin have weakened or disappeared.

[593] 602 178

591 Running counter to this principle of settling in the village of a senior kinsman who is likely to belong to one's matrikin, is the principle of cross-cousin marriage. 'If you have married your cross-cousin when your son grows up he will see a cross-cousin here, a cross-cousin there, and so he will stay.' That is, a man will stay in his father's village not simply by virtue of the father-son tie but because he will be surrounded by kinsmen. The relation between cross-cousins is one of equality and solidarity, expressed in joking and in burial services. To say that one stays in a place because one has cross-cousins at hand is to indicate an ideal of equal relations with a circle of kinsmen rather than attachment to the following of an important kinsman.

[582] [605] [602]

591 602 These two principles co-exist in actual social life. A man will recognise and respect a number of senior kinsmen living in his

[18] In letters.

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neighbourhood and will explain his choice of residence by quoting the names of one or more of these; yet the weaving together of so many strands of kinship and affinity, ultimately through marriage links, is what gives the local population its relative degree of stability. It should be emphasized that the integration established within a village by the network of kinship and affinal ties is dependent on the integration created by the same amorphous network which runs through and beyond the sub-chiefdom. It is this network into which the individual is woven by multiple ties that absorbs the neo-matrilineal pull apparent to some degree in choice of residence and keeps the system essentially cognatic.

The use of the word *familia* reflects this situation. A man may say of a particular senior kinsman 'He is my *familia*', that is, my kinsman, my most important kinsman with whom I have settled, yet also he may say 'My *familia* is in Cela', that is, the greater part of my kinsmen live in Cela. When Bartolomeu explained that he had settled where he did because of Lusase, he was perhaps combining the two kinds of references. He had settled in Gumba because he had a large number of kinsmen there among whom Lusase was pre-eminent. A man explaining the locality of his *familia* in the wider sense will associate it with a particular sub-chiefdom—'My family is all in Menga'—when he is outside it; when he is in it he is more likely to refer to a particular village.

Although individuals living in a village may have come there through several kinship sources yet the majority of them will probably have some kinship or affinal tie with the traditional headman. This collection of individual ties does not provide the headman with a body of followers, nor is having a large number of dependants a value of contemporary Umbundu culture. If it were felt that the best thing to be in life is the patron of a body of kinsmen and followers, headmanship would survive as a predominant influence in local life despite the collapse of its political and legal responsibilities. In fact not even old men feel this way.

The idea of the village as a corporate group with a jural and political personality rather than a residential unit has not survived the break-up of agnatic solidarity, the disappearance

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621/178 of the men's house, and the headman's loss of status. The new institution of the catechetical school does not revive village solidarity in this form. The contemporary Ovimbundu do not live in a 'village headman society' comparable to those of British Central Africa,[13] since the concept and manifestations of village solidarity around a headman are so notably deficient. 356 Reference may also be made to the economic ethics of the Ovimbundu with their approval of making money and the [424] belief that all loans even within the circle of the elementary family should be repaid, that is, wealth is seen by all as an end in itself rather than a means of obtaining personal loyalties.

622/178 In the previous chapter it was shown how the traditional headmanship is no longer a significant legal and political institution. In this chapter I have tried to indicate that it lacks sources of authority and prestige within the village.

The line of argument has involved reference to the contemporary kinship system of which an outline has been given. 128 This will be more fully discussed in later chapters, when a more detailed comparison of present institutions with the traditional kinship system will be made.

[13] For an example of these societies see J. C. Mitchell, *The Yao Village*, Manchester 1956.

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181 Making money and being rich are regarded with

unambiguous approval, though there is a certain undertone suggesting cunning in the verb *oku lunguka* (to be shrewd) used about prosperous people. The old suspicion of sorcery [259] attaching to people who were more successful farmers than their neighbours[6] seems to have disappeared. While a prosperous 602 villager would be expected to lend money to a poorer kinsman (provided the latter was not known as a bad debtor) yet, 431 the situation which occurs in other parts of Africa, where, as Dr. V. W. Turner notes of the Mwinilunga Ndembu, prosperous Africans 'find themselves increasingly embarrassed by the demands of their kin for presents in cash and kind'[7], would not arise among the Ovimbundu, who would regard such demands as being unjustified, even outrageous.

511 Wealthy Ovimbundu may spend some of their wealth on clothing and on drink. Cattle-buying has been noted as a form [454] of capital investment and the same term may be used of small stock buying. Another way of disposing of money is by building a house of bricks with the assistance of a bricklayer. A plough may be, but rarely is, bought by two men joining together to pool their money. Generally speaking, the agricultural 178 technology of the Ovimbundu has been little changed 241 since 1911 except for the spread of the techniques of coffee-growing.

648 It has been noted earlier that the Ovimbundu play an important part in the economic life of Angola both as cultivators and labourers. In this chapter an attempt has been made to show how at the local level it is the cultivation of cash crops, rather than migration for wage labour, which incorporates villagers into the commercial economy of modern Angola. The main source of money in rural areas is the trader's store, which is also the main recipient of money, apart from the administration. While trade both between Ovimbundu and 178 between Ovimbundu and other tribes survives on a minor scale, 182 the social institutions associated with the rubber trade, the large caravans, the non-repayable loans within the matrilineal group, and the obligations of wealthy traders to assist their kin, have disappeared. The contemporary social structure with the

[6] Childs, pp. 106-8.

[7] V. W. Turner, op. cit., p. 135.

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instability of village sites and village populations, the marked emergence of the elementary family, and the non-existence of economic activities and rights associated with corporate groups, is consistent with the growth of cash crops by shifting cultivation.

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of the school seems considerably stronger than that of their Catholic counterparts. This impression is gained by visits to Protestant villages and to episodes like that just quoted, where the Protestant catechist had more success than the Catholic in recruiting volunteers for work on the bridge. The reasons for this lie in the organization of the Protestant Church, which owes its origin to Congregationalist missionaries, and in which the distribution of power differs from that in the Catholic Church. The white missionaries exercise only a supervisory role over the work of the Native Church which is responsible for pastoral activity in the villages. The African clergy of the Native Church are entirely dependent financially on their people.

Compared with Catholicism, Protestantism lays much less stress on the sacraments of baptism and communion and much more on Bible-reading and the religious knowledge of the individual. Hence the teaching role of the catechist is more strongly stressed among the Protestants. For example, the Protestant catechists teach girls as well as boys to read and write. His dependence on the clergy is reduced; indeed, owing to the lay participation in the Umbundu Native Church he exercises some control over them. Among the Ovimbundu, as elsewhere in the world, the 'pyramidal' form of Catholicism is absent in Protestantism in which the position of the clergy is weaker and that of the lay leaders strengthened.

The relative autonomy of the Umbundu Native Church *vis-à-vis* the white missionaries and the disintegration of the traditional system of authority have given judicial powers to its officials. Dr. Childs has written in a recent article:[1] 'In Angola . . . the breakdown of traditional authority has been so rapid that the social life of the villages is now very near to complete anarchy . . . the missions and churches have been compelled to take over. Church leaders—catechists, deacons, and pastors—have taken on judicial functions. Church meetings, both local and regional, have become courts and councils.' He goes on to describe the legalistic attitudes and casuistical morality which is associated with these developments, and suggests that the lack of opportunity for political activity

[1] G. M. Childs, *International Review of Missions*, April 1958.

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confines the pursuit of power to the Native Church with unfortunate results. It might, on the other hand, be suggested that the Protestants among the Ovimbundu are the section of the population who have come nearest to building up new systems of authority and law. It might also be suggested that Umbundu Protestantism retains certain historical features of Congregationalism—democratic selection of officials with strict discipline binding members of the congregation, industriousness and zeal for education, and a certain consciousness of being a spiritual *élite*.[3]

Another factor in the situation is that the Protestants are a minority compared with the Catholics and tend to have the heightened self-consciousness of religious minorities. They also tend to isolate themselves from the pagans much more than the Catholics do, both geographically by moving into separate hamlets and separate villages and by the greater efforts they make to understand and follow European custom. Protestants for instance seem to know more how the Portuguese kinship terms should be used.

Ultimately, the position of the catechist, whether Catholic or Protestant, is dependent on his role as a teacher of Christian doctrine, and as being a representative of 'modern' values. It may be said that Christian doctrine and 'modern' values are not necessary identical. It is, however, in this field that the Ovimbundu establish their closest contacts with the Europeans. A Protestant explaining why a kinship usage had been discontinued said: 'We are Christians, we are like the Europeans.' A Catholic catechist arguing the superiority of Catholicism to Protestantism began by saying that the Protestants had no sacraments—then the elder of the school chimed in saying: 'And ours is the religion of the government.' The catechist took up this theme: 'The *chefe de posto* is baptized and married in church, the Governor-General [*sic*] of Nova Lisboa is baptized and married in church.' During my first weeks in Epalanga I was asked by the catechist: 'Are there priests in England?' and replied that in England there were both Catholics and Protestants, on which the catechist commented: 'It's the same

[3] For the history of Congregationalism see E. Troeltsch, *The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches*, London, 1931, Vol. II, p. 661–6.

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thing in Bimbe.' That is, church membership is recognized as giving entry to a world-wide grouping. This sense of being linked to the Europeans by participation in the same sacraments is paralleled on the European side by the custom widespread in Angola of whites standing as godparents to their servants or servants' children. More generally, the missions are regarded as being the cause of that social change which is welcomed by Ovimbundu. Thus the fact that this was 'the time of the school' was given by one of my servants as the reason for such improvements as the decline of sorcery and the increase of cleverness.

Ovimbundu Christians are also aware of the doctrinal significance of baptism—when I asked various people 'Why did you receive baptism?' a general reply would be: 'I want to go to heaven', or some equivalent phrase. The apprehension of Catholic doctrine by the Ovimbundu is a complicated subject. It may be said that the receiving of the sacraments is the aspect of religion that has made most impression on the people. In the conversation previously cited, the catechist began by emphasizing the presence of sacraments as the distinctive mark of Catholicism against Protestantism, and then when the elder of the school pointed to the official associations of Catholicism, the catechist developed this by indicating the receiving of sacraments by those in high office. In the same way a catechist may commend somebody by saying: 'He is baptized and married in Church', as we would say of somebody: 'He is a real Christian'. The contact of the people with the priests, whether at the mission, or in the villages, usually involves the making of confessions and the receiving of communion. Cultural traits particularly characteristic of Portuguese Catholicism are little marked with the exception of the social importance of the godfather-godson tie. Christian ideas of the after-life have penetrated among the pagans, who will say that the soul after death goes to God (Suku) except in the case of bad people who go to hell.

The social relations between Christians and pagans are friendly. The old rites in which the sub-chiefdom as a whole participated have disappeared, and the rites performed at the capital, a liturgy which like other aspects of chieftaincy is a shadow of its former self, arouse little public interest. Christians

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servant of mine explaining how the Mwekalia chose the chief said, giving me a comparison: 'The Bishop of Nova Lisboa thinks "This priest has sense" and so makes him the superior of a mission'.[6] The disintegration of the old political system, and the association of its representatives with the ritual values which are no longer very significant for the mass of Ovimbundu, has destroyed the old pyramid of authority and prestige. The people associate demands and punishment, for which they seem to receive very little in return, with the post. Many draw a distinction between the actual *chefe* and the government, which they regard as benevolent and ignorant of the behaviour of its representatives. Despite such expressions of loyalty as the singing of the Portuguese national anthem at village parties the 'government' is too distant and shadowy for the Ovimbundu to have much knowledge of it. Nor has the post tried effectively to build up new types of bureaucratic authority in the villages—the government headmen are not given sufficient backing or responsibility by the post to do more than execute its orders.

Hence, the establishment of new types of grouping and leadership at the local level has been the work of the missions, and it is through the missions that these new groupings are articulated on to the total Angolan social system. The missionaries, who provide this articulation between the 'civilized' society and the local organization of the natives, form the section of the 'civilized' population which most satisfies, in its relations with the people, the expectations of the Africans.

To use another term, it is within the Catholic and Protestant Churches that Ovimbundu most clearly identify themselves. Baptism identifies an individual by giving him a name, hence Christians object to non-baptized people identifying themselves in this way. To an individual baptism is significant since it is concerned with his destiny. By it also he identifies himself with the 'civilized' population and achieves a new status superior to that of the pagans. The newly-born child of Christian parents will be given a Christian name and also an Umbundu name from one already held by a dead kinsman.[7] A few villagers

[6] Actually responsibility for appointing superiors of missions largely belongs to the superior of the Nova Lisboa district of the Congregação do Espírito Santo.

[7] For Umbundu names, see Elizabeth Ennis, *African Studies* (Johannesburg) March 1945.

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catechist or missionary for support at the post. There is no tendency to confine government appointments to chiefdoms and headmanships to Catholics.[8] However, the Protestant catechists are, unlike the Catholic catechists, not exempt from taxes.[9]

The Ovimbundu no longer possess a coherent political system of their own. They cannot, owing to the nature of their relations with the post and their ignorance of the higher administration, regard the Government as being their representative; the only wide-range systems with which they can identify themselves are the missions. It is through them that the individual is promised eternal life, that the village receives a new type of identity and unity, and that the Ovimbundu as a people participate with the 'civilized' population in ritual communities cutting across the boundaries of culture and geography.

The objection may be made that it is only the Christians who could effectively be represented by the missions and that in Epalanga and Gumba generally baptized Christians formed a minority. It has, however, been previously noted how the school may give its name to a village of mixed population. The catechist will represent both Christians and pagans when he is concerned with the post or with the mission. Moreover, the percentage of pagans in Gumba is far higher than in the rest of Bimbe to which they are linked by the Umbundu language and culture, by administrative divisions, and by a wide range of personal contacts.

It may, then, be asserted, that the catechetical schools and the wider groupings which they build up are the social groups most significant for Umbundu integration on any scale wider than that of the household.

[8] In Gumba the chief and government headman were pagan. There are government-recognised Protestant chiefs elsewhere in Umbundu country.

[9] In some parts of Angola the Catholic catechists are not automatically granted exemption but have to have obtained certain other qualifications, e.g. a certain degree of literacy.

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slave. Once ransomed a boy could not be sold again. If, however, the father was displeased with his son's behaviour he could refuse to ransom him. When a man died, his adolescent sons would go to the household of a classificatory father and the children who did not yet 'have sense' would go with the widow to her kin, returning to their agnatic kin when they were older. 593 768

4. *Analysis of the Old Kinship System*

The ethnography of the Ovimbundu does show that there existed a double-descent kinship system, each individual belonging to both a local patrilineal group, and a dispersed matrilineal group, in which movable property is inherited. So great has been the impact of social change that not only have these groups disappeared but it is practically impossible to gain additional information on them by direct questions about their nature and functions. The information on kinship norms does give a somewhat clearer picture. 611 613 [422] 613 128

Within the village there was a very strong emphasis on the unity and solidarity of the men of the village. The men's house was the main social centre of the village where the men ate, received guests, and listened to cases. It was about it rather than about the person of the headman that ritual clustered.[20] The elementary family was not the unit of domestic consumption, and it is clear, from the taboos regarding contact with women kin, and the evidence as to the social life of the man's house that there was little recreational contact between the sexes. The concept of *ondjamba*[21] shows that the elementary family of husband, wife, and children, was morally and ritually significant, but many of the educational, nutritive, and recreational functions frequently associated with it were here attached to the men's house. 575 594 575

The strength of the agnatic ties in this society seems to have lain in the solidarity of the men of the village rather than in the patriarchal authority of fathers over sons. A son was economically independent of his father since he could trade on his own while his father was still living; the most powerful social sanction in the hands of kinsmen, that of being sold as a slave, was 593 [602] [604]

[20] For these rituals see Hastings, pp. 73–76, and Childs, p. 39.
[21] *Ondjamba* will be discussed more fully in the next chapter.

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593 604 in the hands of the mother's brother, though the father could, if he wished, intervene; and a man could establish a shrine of his own while his father lived.

613 It is not altogether easy to see how the matrilineal group maintained its cohesion. It was not the working team on which the caravan trade operated since a man's father had first claim on his services, and he could travel with other relatives. Within it alone loans need not be repaid and accusations of sorcery were made; with this in mind, it is evident why, as Dr. Hastings tells us, people tended to avoid the company of their matrikin, [578] and why most disputes arose in the matrilineal groups.[22] It 613 seems that probably the key to the functioning of the matri- 437 lineal groups lies in the details, not now recoverable, of the economy of the caravan trade. As everybody, however successful, was in danger at some time or another of incurring heavy losses,[23] an arrangement by which anybody who was in difficulties could call on his kin for help would be generally acceptable. The association of mutual aid of this sort with matrilineal rather than patrilineal kin would spread losses geographically and would exclude conflicts over currency and movable property from village life. Moreover, the dispersal of the matrilineal kin would provide an individual with business contacts over a considerable area.

5. *Contemporary Kinship Norms*

593 Much of this has disappeared. The men's house is no longer 264 the dining-room of the village male population. Men now often 178 eat with their wives and children though attitudes and practice of this vary between households. People in their twenties knew of the existence of these avoidance rules but it seems that the rules forbidding sons to eat with their mother and eldest sons and daughters to eat with their father are now generally ignored.

[692] [22] Hastings, pp. 18, 87. Disputes within the matrilineal group could be, and very often were, referred to the sub-chief and king. The account of legal proceedings in Hastings (pp. 139–51) suggests that a high proportion of the cases heard by the kings were to do with sorcery. In such cases the social extension of the matrilineal group beyond the area of the sub-chiefdom and the wider political integration achieved by the kingdoms 'co-operated' in preserving a range of social relations beyond the sub-chiefdom.

[23] Apropos of losses Childs quotes Magyar as saying that the Ovimbundu traded for excitement rather than gain (p. 204).

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602 leaning towards matrilateral rather than patrilateral brothers. The classificatory kinship terminology, and the lack of genealogies and kinship groups, means that a man knows a great many classificatory brothers living in his neighbourhood of whom he vaguely recognizes some as 'close' others as 'distant', but with whom his relations are not especially significant. A boy or girl who loses his or her parents is fairly likely, judging from the [268] evidence of Epalanga households, to settle with a full- or half-brother or sister.

602 Formerly, owing to virilocal marriage, a sister was geographically separated from her brother, and even if widowed or 591 divorced would not necessarily return to his village, but might 178 go to her mother's brother.[24] With this geographical separation went a situation of possible conflict, since the brother could sell his sister's children to recoup his own debts, and the shadow of sorcery fears seems to have touched this relationship.[25] The suppression of the rubber and slave trades and the subsequent disintegration of the kinship groups have removed the economic pressures which made for conflict between matrilineal kin and the residence rules which divided people locally into groups of agnates and their wives. The brother-sister tie has therefore [593] changed its content, since it is released from the heavy pressures formerly active in the matrilineal kin groups.

562 It would be wrong to produce any such generalization as 'a woman must always be under the guardianship of a male relative'. A woman who is widowed or divorced or whose husband is away working will tend, however, to develop a particular link with the male head of some household, her own kinsman usually, except in the case of a labour migrant's wife, when it may be a kinsman of her husband. Thus in Epalanga, Augusto (25) aided the household of his absent full brother Julio (29).

602 Aid is most likely to be given to a kinsman's wife when the two households are close together. The underlying idea seems to be to keep the kinsman's household together rather than any duty of aiding an affine. For a widow or divorced woman or the

[24] Childs, pp. 25–37.

[25] H. W. Nevinson (*A Modern Slavery*) gives a complicated story which sug[illegible] this possibility (p. 101).

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6. *Descent, Inheritance and Succession*

There is little interest in genealogical detail among contemporary Ovimbundu, which is not surprising since there exists no system of descent groups in which the position of the individual may be genealogically defined nor does affiliation to a particular line of descent give status *vis-à-vis* people of less eminent descent. Pedigrees are traced (in either line) for only two to four ascending generations though one man I met could name ancestors for nine ascending generations. 602

Despite this vagueness and lack of interest in the articulation of relationships, Ovimbundu will say that such-and-such a kinsman is 'close' and such-and-such is 'distant' even though they cannot fit this into a genealogical framework. 'Closeness' and 'nearness' are not simply used to refer to geographical proximity or social co-operation, since there may be much mutual assistance between kinsmen who are 'distant'. One might speak of a blurred edge of kinship not clearly defined in categories of kin but not non-kinsmen. A man may speak of somebody on this 'blurred edge' thus: 'He must be a kinsman but I don't know how.' Similarly the *vakwatjisoko*[1] are a class of people who are not definitely kin, and not non-kin. [608]

There is little formalized distinction between patrikin and matrikin. There is a certain matrilateral pull in the choice of residence, a man being, as has been noted, more likely to settle with a mother's brother than with a 'father'. I had the impression that a man is more likely to settle with a matrilateral 'brother' than with a patrilateral one, but it would be very difficult to establish this by quantitative methods owing to the complexity of the factors affecting residence. As a man tends to settle where he has a number of kin rather than in the shelter of one particular kinsman, this trend does not lead to the formation of matrilineal clusters of kin. The majority of informants still consider that sorcery can only be practised among matrilineal kin but for various reasons it may be said that the fear of sorcery is not significant in kinship relations.[28] 602 591 602 754

[28] It may be suggested that the disappearance of the matrilineal groups which imposed a co-operation involving exacting demands has been paralleled by the decline of sorcery, the mystical reflection of underlying tensions. How is the fact that several informants told me that sorcery had declined since the days of the [178]

[1] [ie., funeral friends -- Analyst]

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Inheritance of movable goods was traditionally entirely matrilineal. Today informants are confused as to what ought to be done. Inquiry about particular cases will reveal that often no movable property was left by the deceased, it having been used to pay for such expenses of the illness and funeral as the purchase of medicines and the buying of animals to be slaughtered at the feasts.

Where there is movable property, the transmission of it to the heirs is carried out in a rather informalized way, as so often happens in Umbundu social activities. The actual division of property is undertaken by a kinsman of the deceased. This should apparently be the most senior kinsman. It may be a cross-cousin or 'brother' or a sister's son.[29] How it is decided who is the senior kinsman, and who are fitted to participate in the share-out is not very clear. Nor does it seem that there is any effective device against the sharer-out giving himself the lion's share, except the general pressures and reciprocities of kinship. The principle accepted in the share-out is that inheritance should be a reflection of the relations which existed with the dead man, and also be a reward of funeral services. Nothing is kept for kin who are away working, and a son who did not keep in contact with his father would be omitted from the share-out.

By inheritance a man can increase his small stock of possessions. He is unlikely to receive anything much in the way of money, and since there is no land shortage, and, as yet, little in the way of valuable immovable property such as brick

rubber trade to be reconciled with the statement by Childs that fear of sorcery was increasing (Childs pp. 57–58)? I suggest that the final disintegration of the old kinship groups may have been marked by particularly sharp social tensions, but that once these groups were in fact dissolved and a new form of social relations established the fear of sorcery may have declined. It should also be remembered that as indicated in Chapter V the present-day economic values of the Ovimbundu do not lead to expectations that a prosperous individual will share his wealth with poorer kinsmen, as was the case in the time of the rubber trade. Hence accusations of sorcery based on disappointed expectations of generosity are unlikely to arise.

Another aspect of the question which cannot be explored here in detail is the lack of agreement on the causality of classes of happenings or individual events. Thus one informant will say that a woman's pains in childbirth are due to sorcerers among her kin, another will say that they are caused by God (as we would say, are natural).

[29] Hambly, pp. 199–200.

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602 the same time clearly an important part of social life. Kinship
183 norms are confused, as is the correct term to use in a particular relationship. Ritual and jural sanctions are lacking, as are institutions based on the regular co-operation of groups of kinsmen. Yet a man likes to live with kinsfolk and there is a tendency for kin to cluster together in a neighbourhood.

602 By the very facts, that so many of a man's neighbours are his
621 kinsmen, and that there is very little marked differentiation between the behaviour towards different categories of kin, kinship is robbed of any great specificity of content. It might be said that it is the quantity rather than the quality of kinship ties that makes kinship significant in establishing a 'sense of community' in a neighbourhood, in that the multiplicity of local kin ties creates some identification between a man's range of kin and his neighbourhood. At the same time a kinship tie provides a basis on which a closer relationship may be built by reciprocal services. It appears that the inheritance of property
602 recognizes kinship in this way by recognizing claims not on the
428 basis of strict genealogical proximity but on the quality of the relationship.

128 A discussion of marriage and the household must be left to the next chapter. The outline given of the present kinship system is sufficiently clear to begin an examination of the reasons for the changes. This must rely to some extent on speculation, owing to a lack of information on the actual working of the kinship system while it was in transition to its present form.

613 The key change is the disappearance of the kinship groups.
178 These, it seems, disappeared because of their high degree of dependence on the particular type of economy existing before 1911. It has already been argued that the distinction between the patrikin and the matrikin is an attempt to isolate economic claims and conflicts from village and political relationships, and that the giving of loans without right of repayment within the matrikin was called for by a trading system in which credit played an important part. With the end of the trade the wealth passing through Umbundu hands declined sharply, and there was neither need for funds to meet trading losses nor currency to provide them. A man obtained money either by growing crops

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helped by his wife and children or by going out to work. Neither means of making money involves regular co-operation with a body of kinsmen. The occasional co-operation needed in situations of financial crisis or mutual help for some particular job can be provided by those of a man's numerous kinsfolk with whom he has established ties of amity above the mere recognition of relationship.[32]

The disappearance of the matrilineal group was a logical consequence of the disappearance of its *raison d'être*. With the disappearance of the matrilineal group, there was no longer any need to preserve the distinctive nature of the agnatic group. It is quite possible to suppose that the village might have preserved its patrilineal base if other factors had come into play. Such possible factors would be a shortage of land, danger of attack from enemies, or the use by the headman of his political power to keep control over his patrikin.[33]

A question of some significance arises from the differences of attitude to a man's 'fathers' and to his 'mother's brothers' which has been noted earlier on. From the literature it might seem that the link between agnates was very strong, and that it is surprising that it should have broken up so completely. It may be suggested that the unity of agnatic kin was expressed in the idiom of relations between villagers rather than of relations between kin, and that within the village there was not necessarily much greater solidarity between siblings than between distant agnates. The solidarity of paternal siblings was then, granting this hypothesis, a reflection of the wider solidarity of the village. When the village disintegrated the close ties between brothers disintegrated also.

The unity of the matrikin was perhaps expressed to a much greater degree in a kinship idiom.[34] This is perhaps one of the

[32] The amount of aid an individual can mobilize in case of need depends to a very great extent on personal factors. It should be emphasised that it is personal co-operation over a number of years rather than any genealogical nearness that inclines a man to be helpful. While helpfulness to kinsfolk is a norm of Umbundu ethics, it is possible in practice to provide excuses for non-co-operation.

[33] The rapid disintegration of the indigenous system of authority after the middle thirties may reasonably be linked with the decay of agnatic ties of residence.

[34] 'When an Ocimbundu speaks of his family (epata) in the sense of a large and widespread organisation with a recognised head in some elder, it is generally his ekina to which he refers.' Childs, p. 44.

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reasons behind the 'neo-matrilineal' pull in residence, the other being the new relationship between brother and sister, with its consequent influence on the mother's brother—sister's son relationship.

In this chapter on the kinship system the preferential marriages have not been discussed at length, but without them the contemporary kinship system would not tie up as it does with the local organization. The next chapter complements this one.

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582 husband. Another explanation is that this is a northern practice which has spread into Gumba.[9]

584 A young man who wishes to marry approaches the girl of his choice and asks her to marry him. He then asks her parents for their permission. The consent of both partners and of their parents is required now as in the past, though parental consent may often be evaded by running off to the towns and getting married there. After that negotiations are conducted with a senior kinsman as intermediary. Before the marriage can take 583 place, bridewealth must be paid over. It is this that gives the right to claim damages for adultery. When asked why bridewealth is paid, informants are likely to say that it compensates the father for the expense of the bringing up of his daughter.

[178] The amount of bridewealth paid has been rising. Two informants said that four yards (metres) of cloth and a bottle of rum formed the bridewealth in the time of the rubber trade. Others suggested as the bridewealth of that period a hoe and a few sleeping-mats. Alternatively seashells or even Portuguese coins, which were not then used in transactions among the Ovimbundu, were employed. These bridewealth objects were obtained from outside Umbundu country and had a certain rarity value, unlike the other objects which were very common. In the early thirties Hastings also mentioned the bridewealth as consisting of four yards of cloth, a bottle of rum, plus a kerchief given to her father's sister.[10] Money seems to have come in as a regular part of bridewealth about 1940.

When Cypriano married in 1949 Rosa, a sister's daughter, he paid 200 escudos (about £2. 10s.), a black cloth to her mother, and a small pig to her father. When Pedro Epalanga Chimbalanya married, near the Bimbe mission, in 1953 he paid 400 escudos, one cloth of six metres, a head cloth, a woman's blouse, and a bottle of rum. When in 1956 Daniel married Feliciana, a sister's daughter of Ndjoleya and his cross-cousin, he paid 400 escudos, whereas when Jose the son of Paulo married in the same year he paid 300 escudos also for a cross-cousin.

The bridewealth should be paid to the father. If however, a

[9] Explanation given by Pedro Pitão.
[10] Hastings, p. 39.

for the bride's village. Here they may be greeted with formal speeches of welcome in Portuguese, a usage copied from the reception of missionaries. 585

One only turns up to a wedding if one has been invited, and not everybody who is a kinsman living in the neighbourhood is invited. Nor is there any marked distinction between kin and non-kin in the ceremony, except for the ending of avoidances and the recognition of the father's sister, who is recompensed for her services as nursemaid. Village membership is significantly recognized in the distribution of food, and the sending of the party to the bride's home to represent the bridegroom's village.

Umbundu marriage is virilocal, although a certain number of marriages are within the village. Apart from such marriages, it seems to be rare to find a man settling in a village because his wife has kin there. 591

Although during the early months of the marriage the bridegroom's mother may supervise the bride's work, the individual household is essentially an independent unit[13] and was not even in the past merged with other household units to form a 'grandfamily'. This independence is not isolation. I have only a very few times seen houses with any sort of compound about them. Much of domestic life, eating, working, resting, talking, may be done out of doors in front of the house. Paying visits is a great feature of village life especially when the day's work is over, although there is also a term *ola pauala*, to visit in the morning, referring to what are usually just short calls, involving the exchange of greetings. Perhaps the opportunity of calling and being called on is one of the factors maintaining the village as a social unit. The idea that a man should not eat with his wife still survives to some extent so that questions on this topic receive contradictory answers. Observation shows that even among the men who travelled on the caravans, eating with one's wife is the general practice. 592 574 284

One of the most striking features of Umbundu domestic life is the close companionship which exists between husband and wife and which is unquestionably a modern development.[14] 593 178

[13] See Magyar, pp. 281–5.

[14] The role of the *Ondjaqui* as described by Childs and Hastings indicates that a man's normal companions both for eating and recreation were other men.

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Going round the houses at night one meets in one house a man and his wife sitting together talking, in another a group of men and women sitting round a fire. This is a very definite change from traditional pattern of social life in which men and women sat in separate groups, a pattern which is still observed at funerals.[14] A man who has a case at the post is likely to take with him his wife as a witness. A husband has the right to beat his wife, and she should show respect to him. In fact wife-beating is rare, and the relationship seems from observation to be often one of mutual affection and close companionship. Informants were divided as to whether one can joke with one's wife—some people may fear that she will cease to respect her husband if he jokes with her—but conversationally an Umbundu wife often seems to enjoy an easy familiarity with her husband. A wife may occasionally go and stay with her relatives, and in the neighbourhood she may pay calls on kinsfolk, friends, or co-villagers, without her husband. This contrasts with the way the white and mulatto wives of traders follow the custom of rural Portugal by staying more or less permanently in the house.

The wife has her own fields, and her own granary. If the marriage is polygamous, each wife has her field and granary. Her husband may help her in her fields, although he also has fields of his own. The maize in the husband's granary is sold to produce money to pay tax and to buy clothing for both husband and wife, and the maize in the wife's granary is used for food. If her husband is away a woman will buy her clothes from her own granary. The cooking of maize has not only a nutritive importance but also a social one since it is considered the service, which is specifically wifely. Thus, the explanation I was given for the lower age of marriage emphasizes this—I should explain that people returning from contract labour are sent first to the post at which they were recruited and may have to do an additional fortnight's work there. 'It is because of the hardship.[15] In the past one married only when one was fully grown. Now it is necessary to have somebody who will send food to the post when you come back.' 'Perhaps,' I suggested, 'your mother

[14] Childs, pp. 32, 33.
[15] Chuli, a word often used with regard to administrative demands.

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ended by her death, and can rely on her testimony in a case. Even though adultery is reputedly frequent it is deplored and, as will be shown in a discussion of disputes, a man's hostility to another will be ascribed to thwarted lust for the latter's wife. The conjugal bond is the closest social relation that can exist between adults, and therefore the very type of personal enmity is provided by the adulterer or would-be adulterer.

I am here emphasizing the factors which strengthen the conjugal bond; at the end of the previous chapter I emphasized the strength which the brother-sister tie possessed under changed conditions. The balance between these two ties is to be seen in the way in which a man and his wife's brother are often next door neighbours and the best of friends. It may be suggested that this balance reflects the part-peasant part-proletarian condition of the Ovimbundu, the emergence of the conjugal family with its importance as the working team for the cultivation of cash crops, and the 'reshaping of' the brother-sister tie with the absence of husbands as labourers. It seems probable from the example of the substantial coffee-growers that had the Ovimbundu become full-time cultivators there would have been a strong trend towards isolated households and the weakening of the 'neo-matrilineal' pull which operates in the villages.

It is then the marriage tie which holds the vague, amorphous, kinship system together; it is against this vagueness that the marriage bond appears as the closest and most definite relation that can exist between two adults; and the change-over from trade to an economy based on wage-labour and cash agriculture has been accompanied by a transition from a double-descent kinship system to one in which the emergence of the elementary family co-exists with a certain pull towards matrilineal kin.

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CHAPTER IX

SOCIAL CONTROL

1. *Introduction*

121 626 In this chapter I shall describe and analyse three disputes which reveal the working of social control in present-day Umbundu society. The first dispute is between an elder of the school and a government headman, the second is between a traditional headman and a villager with the intervention of a local self-styled *assimilado*[1], and the third arose from a quarrel between an irregularly installed chief and a traditional headman.

The points which it is hoped will arise from the analysis of the material are the disappearance or extreme weakness of the traditional institutions of social control, the way in which the Ovimbundu appeal to the members of the 'civilized' community for decisions or support in cases, and how kinship ties affect the relations between persons involved in a dispute. [178]

2. *Guilherme and Paulo*

578 The parties principally involved in the first dispute were Paulo (24. See List of Epalanga residents), the elder of the school at Epalanga, and his cross-cousin Guilherme (see List II, p. 55), a government headman then living in Epalanga, Francisco, a son of the former chief Mbati and wife's brother to Paulo, and Sapapula (10), the headman and reputed founder of Epalanga. The sequence of the dispute is first a quarrel between Paulo and Guilherme. Guilherme then attacks Paulo through his wife's brother Francisco. This brings about a general attack

[1] The fact that Justino was not actually an assimilado is not relevant, since he used the belief of the local people that he was.

[assimilado is an African possessing Portuguese citizenship -- Ed/pt]

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like his accusation that Sapapula had incited Jaime to kill him, an attempt to portray himself not as an ungrateful recipient of Sapapula's goodness but a much suffering victim of his malevolence.

Although the moot reflects the existing social structure and values there are occasional reminiscences of the former social system. Thus Ngombe seems to have been acting according to a traditional but non-effective pattern in giving a long, judicial, summing up, which had no practical effect. Again, when Sapapula accused Kapapelo of wishing to break up the village it is probable that he was thinking of the old villages socially defined by the agnatic tie and physically enclosed by a stockade rather than the physically and socially amorphous villages of the present day. Values such as these survive in the minds of individuals when the associated social forms have disintegrated. They are brought out on occasions analogous to those in which they were formerly used, but are not nowadays decisive in the way they would have been.

The quarrel between Kapapelo and Sapapula is different from the other cases, since the meeting held to discuss it is held without the presence of a 'civilized' person and it pivots about a question of adultery or rather attempted adultery, a subject which has hitherto appeared marginally as a subject for insults. The case is held without the presence of a 'civilized' person, and this is from necessity, not from choice. Sapapula had tried to have the case heard by Justino, and Kapapelo was eventually brought to terms by Sapapula's threat to refer the matter to the post. While the moot shows us the community acting to uphold social control, such action is regarded as an unsatisfactory substitute for a decision by somebody who could, as Gonçalve said of Antonio Pires, 'leave with the words', that is, settle the case.

Adultery has previously occurred as an accusation thrown in during a squabble that has begun with something else. Thus Guilherme accused Paulo and Wasuka accused Kapapelo of adultery because they were angry with them; they were not angry with them because they thought they had committed adultery with their wives. It is parallel to the suggestions that Kapapelo was a sorcerer, an insult not an accusation. It now

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mission to give Sapapula's case, and, as things worked out, it was the anthropologist who was made the 'civilized' focus for the opposition to Lusase as Antonio Pires had been made the focus of the opposition to Guilherme. Lusase, like Guilherme, reacted by saying that he owed allegiance only to the *chefe de posto*, and running off to the post.

Luanga's case shows how desire to get out of contract labour may give a new reason for taking a ministerial title, and also once again how sending someone to contract labour is regarded as a means of injuring those whom one dislikes.

I have spoken of the conflict between Lusase and Sapapula as being a conflict between a chief and his people, and this is true in so far as it shows how opposition forms against a chief and how he can be checked. It is therefore of importance as indicating the position of the chief in the contemporary social system. The people themselves interpreted the dispute as being essentially one between individuals—Lusase's behaviour was attributed to his lust for Nahoka, and Gregorio entered the dispute not as the ruler of the neighbouring chiefdom of Menga but as a friend of Sapapula. The interpretation of what is a political conflict as a quarrel between individuals may be explained as being due to the relatively limited nature of the role of chief (Lusase) and of traditional headman (Sapapula) which therefore do not predominate in the social status of the individual. (In this particular case, had I got Lusase's viewpoint he would probably have said that he was defending his dignity as chief, whereas Sapapula did not regard Lusase as being really chief.) The lack of a formal court system or even of an articulated political system at the local level has brought into desuetude the old legal and political idioms and the Ovimbundu have not yet learnt new terms from the Portuguese.

5. *Social Control and Social Structure in the Dispute*

I now return to the points mentioned at the beginning of this chapter. It is hardly necessary to underline the decayed state of the traditional system of authority. Lusase had, at the time of the quarrel between Guilherme and Paulo, expressed his

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intention of staying out of the dispute, just in the same way as he said, when Ndonga's action was reported to him, that he did not know what went on in the villages. That is, Lusase disclaimed any general responsibility for maintaining law and order in the sub-chiefdom. He had turned up at the case before Justino and at the moot by Kapapelo's house, when Nahoka had pointed out that it was he, and not Kafelo, who was effectively chief. The very fact that such a remark could be made indicates a weakness in Lusase's position, and his lack of authority is further illustrated by his being but one of a crowd of would-be conciliators.

It was, indeed, Lusase's position with relation to Kafelo that brought about his quarrel with Sapapula. Lusase, on meeting Kafelo at Kapapelo's, had bowed to him, and must have been uneasily aware that public opinion held that Kafelo 'had finished', had completed the cycle of chiefly rites, whereas Lusase was just 'the *chefe de posto's* boy'. It is unlikely that there would be among the Ovimbundu developed forms of the situation reported from some colonial areas by which one person acts as chief or headman *vis-à-vis* the government while another is the real chief or headman with effective power over the people, if only because so much of the content of chieftancy today is simply post work. Yet a chief differs from a government headman precisely because of the surviving prestige which clings to the capital village, the skulls of the dead chiefs, the titled ministers, and the drums, and it was such an expression of prestige which Sapapula gave to Kafelo and denied to Lusase. Not surprisingly Lusase reacted to this sharp evidence of the weakness of his position. In acting as he did, he made things worse; since he lacked any local means of imposing his will by force, or mobilizing moral support, he had to fall back on the post.

This weakening of the chieftancy is, of course, only part of the general disintegration of the old social system. Sapapula, in personality and prestige, was the equal of any traditional headman in the neighbourhood, and was consulted by the chief and government headmen when fines or roadworkers were required from Epalanga. Yet it was Paulo and not Sapapula who launched the attack on Guilherme, an attack speedily supported

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by other villagers. Nor does residence in a village or sub-chiefdom compel or limit participation in a dispute. Neither Ndjoleya nor any of his kin participated in the dispute between Paulo and Guilherme. Gregorio came from Menga to support his friend Sapapula against Lusase, acting as a private individual, and not as the chief of Menga intervening in the internal politics of a neighbouring sub-chiefdom.

The social institutions participated in exclusively by Ovimbundu (i.e. the system of kinship and marriage and the local organization) do not provide machinery for resolving disputes. Therefore, binding decisions must be obtained from a representative of the 'civilized' society, and much importance attaches to setting out the details of the case in such a way as to gain the interest of this representative. It would seem likely from this that all cases will pass into the hands of the *chefe*, and that those 'natives' who are most closely linked to the post—the chief and the government headmen—will therefore be the most influential people in indigenous society. In fact, as the disputes show, this does not happen. Cases are taken to other 'civilized' persons—the priest Antonio Pires and the *sui-disant assimilado* Justino—and Lusase, instead of making up on the bureaucratic roundabouts what he has lost on the traditional swings, falls heavily off both.

The willingness of villagers to submit their cases to Justino and the mission rather than to the post is a result of the much closer personal contact which exists with them, and their lack of direct punitive sanctions. Any case referred to the *chefe* is thought liable to produce uncertain consequences. It was because of this that the people of Gumba did not dare to complain to the post about Lusase's usurpation; for this reason, too, Guilherme, knowing the *chefe* trusted him no more than any other native, sought reconciliation before getting to the post. The chief and government headman neither enjoy official confidence nor control access to the post.

On the level of the total Angolan society the State is obviously more powerful than the Church. On the local level the chief and government headmen have more executive power[11]

[11] The capacity to give orders backed by force; but this only applies to orders received from the post.

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on good terms with Guilherme, who was a 'father' of his, and even earlier in June part of the celebrations which marked the marriage of Paulo's son Jose to Pungu, a girl from Namba, whose mother had at one time been married to Kapapelo, took place at the latter's house. Most strikingly of all, as has been noted, Guilherme could borrow money from Bartolomeu and Paulo at the height of their quarrel. The kinship bond exists outside of and, it might be said, at a deeper level than, the quarrel, and the rebukes hurled at an adversary reflect this. Paulo did not complain that Guilherme was a bad cross-cousin; instead he complained that Guilherme was not grateful to him for having baptized his dying child. The motive for co-operation or conflict in everyday life is to be found not in the tracing of genealogies but in the tally of reciprocal services and grievances between two individuals.

It may be claimed that this portrait of the kinship system which emerges from the disputes as being loosely structured and lacking defined obligations, but providing an underlying continuity, is very similar to that given in Chapter VII, which was based on questioning and the observation of everyday life.

The significance of the conjugal bond appears both positively in the way Luanga and Sapapula both take their wives to the post as witnesses, and negatively in the way the hostility of Kapapelo and Lusase to Sapapula is interpreted as being inspired by lust for his wife. Even the accusations of adultery so readily hurled about in disputes reflect the stereotype of the adulterer as the arch-enemy, and likewise the arch-enemy of the moment as at least a potential adulterer.

One question remains to be answered. Was Epalanga a particularly rebellious, squabbling, divided, village, because of the presence of an unusual number of aggressive individuals? It is not possible to estimate the number of disputes per village, and the disputes which have been described were the most important of which I had personal knowledge. They were touched off by personal antagonisms rather than by structural contradictions. Yet they tie in with what has been said of the Umbundu social structure in earlier chapters to such a degree that they seem to reflect the lines along which any case of the sort would proceed. The weakness of the chiefs, stripped of

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traditional sanctions and lacking official confidences, the powerless prestige of the traditional headman, the lack of defined village unity, the role of the catechetical school and its officials, who have come to represent the village as a whole, the loosely structured yet stabilizing kinship system, all described in earlier chapters, have re-emerged as parts of a reasonably effective system of social control within which people quarrel and by which their quarrels are settled. It is possible for the villagers by appealing to patrons to check tyrannical behaviour on the part of chief and headmen and to get a fair hearing at the post. Within the local community disputants, once their anger has blown over, may be reunited by the ties of kinship and affinity.

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CONCLUSIONS

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The phrase 'A Study of Social Control and Social Change among the Ovimbundu' implies an analysis of the working of the social maintenance mechanism in a period of social change. The concept appears almost paradoxical since it seems that effective maintenance machinery[1] would prevent social change, and rapid social change is often associated by anthropologists with a situation of individual and social demoralization and disintegration.[2] At the present time the Ovimbundu of the area where fieldwork was done have undergone very rapid social change and have a reasonably effective system of social control, which, however, differs considerably from the traditional system. To confirm these statements, I briefly summarize the material provided in previous chapters.

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In the time of the rubber trade (1874–1911) there existed a number of Umbundu kingdoms. The king, assisted and checked, as elsewhere in Africa by titled ministers, was responsible for external relations, undertook certain rituals, and provided a supreme court of appeal where trials were conducted by set rules of procedure. The real unit of law, as regards Gumba at least, seems to have been the sub-chiefdom, with its few thousand inhabitants, governed by a chief who like the king had to administer justice together with his councillors.

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This body of councillors included the village headmen who were the heads of bodies of agnatic kin. They had general legal and political responsibility for the village. While the disputes arising in village relations were kept within the patrilineal kin group, the problems arising from the inheritance of movable goods and particularly from the highly important caravan trade were dealt with in the matrilineal group. Owing to the dispersed nature of this group and to its commercial preoccupations the sanctions operating within it must have differed somewhat from those found at the chief's court or village men's

[1] For this term see S. F. Nadel, *Theory of Social Structure*, London, 1957, p. 55.
[2] e.g. G. and M. Wilson, *Analysis of Social Change*, Cambridge, 1945.

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105 175 house. Wealthy members who did not assist their kin were liable to be accused of sorcery. A mother's brother had the right to sell his sister's son as punishment for the latter's misconduct or to pay his own debts, a sanction counterbalancing the rights of the poorer matrilineal kin to receive loans without the obligation of repayment. As the matrilineal groups existed apparently across sub-chiefdom boundaries they formed a means of social control in those trading activities which provided the major focus of Umbundu interests and which flowed over the boundaries of the political groupings whose smallest unit was the patrilineally based village.

105 178 The disappearance of the matrilineal kin groups must be associated with the collapse of the old economy, and to judge from my difficulty in getting information about them their disintegration must have come about fairly rapidly after the end of the trade. Authority within the sub-chiefdom and village remained at a level fairly near the traditional norm till about 1935. After that social change has rapidly dissolved most of the traditional institutions.

The existing system of social control depends on political, local, and kinship systems very different from those previously operative. Cases are very often taken to the post without being previously taken to the chief. The latter's position is a combination of executive of the orders of the post (a role he shares with the government headman) with the surviving prestige represented by the skulls of his predecessors and the ministerial titles allocated to his kinsmen and associates. While the chief and government headmen may settle minor cases, they do not operate any system of courts by which disputes can be regularly and satisfactorily settled.

Judicial power has been effectively transferred from the indigenous society to the 'civilized' community and for a dispute to be brought to a settlement a decision must be obtained from some 'civilized' person or a negotiated arrangement may be made under threat of referring the matter to the post. Considerable importance therefore attaches to the mobilization of ties with some 'civilized' person who may be an employer but is most frequently the mission, which to some degree acts as a patron for all natives. Hence the local

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representatives of the mission, the catechist and elder of the school, tend to become the guardians of the public interest against arrogance on the part of the chief and government headmen.

In the conflict between the local representatives of the post and of the mission the latter are likely, if they have a good case, to win since they have a closer link with the mission than the chief and government headmen have with the post. While the policy of the administration of dissolving the indigenous political system has been highly successful it has not created new bureaucratic institutions at the local level, and the chief and government headmen have just sufficient power to do what the post tells them to do. The traditional headmen, while they still act as focuses of kin ties in a village have prestige rather than power; a prestige, however, sufficient to rally considerable support for them in a dispute. The catechetical school and its officials, represent the village to the outside world and provide what is nowadays the only institutional grouping on a village basis.

The role of the missions in social control is threefold; the establishment of new social groupings and forms of leadership at village level, the decision of disputes and the influencing of the *chefe's* decisions, and the giving of a feeling of approximation to the 'civilized' population. It is the missions rather than the chiefs and headmen who provide the main social bridges between the 'civilized' and native populations, since both groups participate in their institutions and values.[3]

The kinship system, whose operation must form an important part of any system of social control, has also undergone very great changes. The old kinship groups have disappeared, and the system is now cognatic, with little distinction between patrilateral and matrilateral kin although there is a certain matrilineal pull in choice of residence. Kinship norms have

[3] This does not deny the importance of the administration and the economy in linking the 'civilised' and natives together; yet this administrative and economic integration does not provide the sense of community which to a limited degree is given through the missions, which also provide the only opportunity for individual natives to have influence in a social sphere beyond the range of kin and neighbours; in the Catholic missions by the provision of an influential patron, in the Protestant Native Church by participation in Church councils and courts.

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105 178 become confused and vague; the existence of a kinship tie provides an opportunity to build a social relation rather than a jural obligation to fulfil certain duties. With the disappearance of the commensality which marked the patrilineal kin, and the economic co-operation characteristic of the matrilineal groups, the elementary family has emerged as the primary domestic and economic grouping.

In this rather amorphous system, coherence is given by the marriage tie. The very high rate of preferential marriages creates a great number of affinal (and subsequently kinship) ties within a limited area, and it seems to be from this that the neighbourhood community derives its cohesion. At the level of the individual marriage (as opposed to that of the total structure) the relation between husband and wife is a very close one, with, conversely, the relation between a man and his wife's lover being the archetype of hostility.

It is now necessary to see how the description of the two systems of social control relate to the problems of the social changes which have intervened to turn into the other. Obviously social change has been very great. It is not perhaps possible to point to any one factor responsible for the speed of the process. The old political system would not have disintegrated if the administration had used it as the intermediary between it and the natives. However, the hostility of the administration to the chiefs has not succeeded in all parts of Angola in breaking down traditional authority.[4]

Economic change has certainly affected very considerably the social structure. In other parts of Africa a cash economy gained by selling crops and working for wages has replaced a subsistence economy where exchanges were made by barter and gift exchanges. The Ovimbundu were experienced traders used to a currency and with a business-like, rather grasping outlook.[5] Through the matrilineal groups this commercial activity was fitted into the kinship system. The disappearance of the trade brought a sharp fall in the Umbundu standard of living and destroyed the need for developed credit facilities. Instead of the

[4] Among the Ngangela of the area round Vila Artur de Paiva the chiefs retain their authority.

[5] See Serpa Pinto, pp. 169–71 and F. S. Arnot, *Garenganze*, London, 1889, p. 116.

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gaining of wealth by means involving extensive economic co-operation among the Ovimbundu themselves, money was earned in an individual relation to a particular European whether planter or trader. 105 178

It must be recognized that the relation between economic change and the continuation or disintegration of kinship groups is a yet unsolved problem of anthropology,[6] particularly as it is seldom possible to isolate the economic pressure. I emphasize the readiness of the Ovimbundu for change, their willing acceptance of the role of clients to the whites.[7] It may be suggested that this attitude was established in the period of the trade when the Ovimbundu were ultimately dependent on the whites for trade goods and that this attitude of imitation and receptivity lies behind the disappearance of so much of the old social structure and the lack of any myth of, or even interest in, the past.[8] [121]

I have claimed that the present system of social control is effective.[9] This may be granted empirically for the reasons already given, the absence of serious crime or prolonged conflict involving the whole community, the effective checks on the functionaries of the post, and the failure of squabbles to tear the network of kin and affinal ties. If a working social system is a proof of an integrated society, then contemporary Umbundu society qualifies for this description. This is not the only possible way of looking at it. It may be claimed that under present circumstances the Ovimbundu are no longer integrated by their tribal system but are held together by the Angolan 105 182

[6] For various comments on this problem see A. I. Richards, in *African Systems of Kinship and Marriage*, p. 251, M. Fortes, 'Structure of Unilineal Descent Groups', in *American Anthropologist*, Feb. 1953, M. Douglas (review of Mitchell's *The Yao Village*) in *Africa*, July 1957.

[7] Cf. the Ngangela name for the Ovimbundu, the Ovimbali, a term traditionally applied to Africans living in close contact with the whites. The Ovimbundu accept this stereotype.

[8] 'A lack of history is correlated with the amorphous character of the society.' E. Colson in Colson and Gluckman (ed.) *Seven Tribes of British Central Africa*, Oxford, 1951, p. 100.

[9] Other quarrels of which I heard while in Epalanga: a messenger from the mission sent to intervene in a marriage dispute was attacked; the chief of Chicunda summoned to the mission for a telling-off after beating up one of his people; a man from Gumba refusing to go to a funeral in Cassongue of a man whose death he was thought to have caused by sorcery.

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105 182 Government,[10] which has deprived them of all legal and political autonomy. The present Umbundu social system deprived of any form of public life ticks over, as a man who has been paralysed may continue to live. The cultural barriers and structural gulf between the post, the basic unit of the administration, and the people, are to a certain extent bridged by the mission. This task throws a considerable strain on the organizations set up by the missions, to which they are far from equal.[11] The common values shared by 'civilized' and native, whose introduction was ascribed to the missions, give the Ovimbundu psychological compensation rather than a genuine participation in the culture of the ruling group. The stability which marks social relations in the area is passivity rather than integration.

105 178 182 The most truthful approach would seem to be a synthesis of the two arguments. The disintegration of the old legal and political institutions and the attitude of dependence and passivity towards Europeans cohere with a stability provided by the pattern of kin and affinal ties and the continuity of local relations. It has been argued that the range of marriages (and hence the range of kinship ties) has not noticeably expanded in recent years, and that the links which orient Gumba to the north and west rather than to the south and east date back to the nineteenth century. Such other factors as the poor local communications, the limited economic development of the area, and the absence of resident whites in Gumba may also have helped to preserve the continuity and security of the 'private' life of individuals.[12] In other areas of Umbundu country, especially near the railway line, where communications are easy, Europeans and *assimilados* are numerous, and there are more marked differences of wealth, this 'coherence' of change and continuity may have very much less empirical efficiency.

In one part of Umbundu country in 1955, a contra-acculturá-

[10] Putting it another way; there is no Umbundu political system, and hence the nearest approach to Umbundu politics are the squabbles of Chapter IX.

[11] The missionaries complain of the poor calibre of many catechists, and the catechists complain of the lack of obedience of their people.

[12] The relations between two individuals may remain friendly, even though the form of their relations changes.

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In one part of Umbundu country in 1955, a contra-acculturative movement arose which combined features found in cargo-cults and anti-witchcraft campaigns,[13] social activities usually regarded as products of a malaise in the relations between Europeans and an indigenous society.[14] The Ovimbundu whom I knew were not ready to take the initiative in their dealings with the 'civilized' population; but it would be wrong to regard the system of social control that I have tried to describe as being true for much more than a very small area of Umbundu country and a very limited extent of time.

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[13] The movement began at Bela Vista on the railway line and spread over south-eastern Umbundu country into the Ngangela area. Its leaders were men and women who called themselves saints and claimed to have died and come to life again. They announced that all sorcery would cease, and those who continued it would die in an unusual way. They forbade the wearing of black clothes and ordered the killing of black livestock (fowls and pigs). They also forbade the growing of maize for sale. It was stated that rain would come from heaven to kill the whites (according to some accounts only the bad whites) and the blacks would then have their goods. This movement was spread through the catechetical schools. It was eventually repressed by administrative action. Private information. Also article in *O Apostolado*, Luanda, Oct. 27, 1956.

[14] See A. I. Richards, 'A Modern Movement of Witchfinders', *Africa*, Oct. 1935.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

621 common meal was formerly a great bond of village unity. Mutual
476 help within the village and the family group is practised on many occasions. There are a number of folk-tales designed to show the evil consequences of refusing to lend, whether beer-pots or more valued assistance. Many proverbs enjoin the necessity of prompt and effectual mutual helpfulness and co-operation, as e.g.

U o popela ukuavo ongandu ha lula.

[538] (He who saves another (from) a crocodile does not undress.)

476 The mechanism of co-operation, the round of daily life in village and field, together with the cycles of food and of work, are properly subjects of further study. Here the purpose is to show the definitely family nature of the village and of its life. To the
[181] casual observer the Ovimbundu appear as severe individualists. Indeed, they are individualistic to a degree, but they have worked out mechanisms of mutual helpfulness and co-operation which functioned both on political lines under the aegis of the king and within the kinship units.

Social Life of the Village

517 The two foci of the village life are the Men's Club and the
521 Dancing Floor. Even though no *onjango* may have been built, the
562 Men's Club will find a place in which to carry on, at least when there may be fine weather. Leisure may be limited, but time for conversation will be found. Europeans often express wonder at the amount of conversation which goes on between Africans, for they cannot understand what people of apparently such limited opportunities and with what seems like so narrow an outlook may have to discuss at such great length. As for the Ovimbundu, there is nothing which is a greater hardship than lack of opportunity for conversation with their fellows. Under primitive conditions this is more especially true of the men, who, in their villages, are always surrounded by members of their own family group. Owing to their peculiar position in the village and their household pre-occupations, the women's social propensities may find less outlet in these public gatherings. When the villagers gather on the dancing floor and the gourds of beer go round, they always separate according to sex. Whether the occasion be formal or informal, I have seen the discussion carried to great lengths, with the pipe passed between the men, while the women sat silently by,

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

572 expeditions. Many blood-brotherhoods were doubtless under-
[48] taken purely from motives of friendship.[1] The *vakuacisoko* is a
[181] friendly institution. The Ovimbundu are a friendly people.

Identification is a strikingly important feature of Umbundu
156 social adjustments and of the whole learning process. Children overtly identify themselves with older siblings, with parents, with other older relatives both living and dead, with friends of their parents, with the village headman, or even the king.[2] This perhaps is the process involved in that which the Ovimbundu name reincarnation. It is largely through identification that character appears to run in families. This is why boys are so keen to learn the professions of their fathers or their mother's brothers. Identification with their seniors in social position and economic activity more closely cements the unity of the child–adult sphere and gives the children yet another urge to enter into adult life and assume complete responsibility as quickly as possible.

158 'Inferiority Conflict' has probably been present in Umbundu life for a long time, perhaps since the rubber trade (1874), perhaps even longer. When a people's activity is keyed to so high a pitch there will be some individuals who find themselves inadequate. There are a number of proverbs which ridicule the stay-at-homes or those 'too lazy' to undertake the exceedingly arduous trading
[177] expeditions. European domination has set new paces and created new frustrations, with one result, that 'inferiority conflicts' are probably on the increase. Many individual instances could be cited. A particularly striking one of my observation is of a man whose suffering from epileptic seizures had induced attitudes of inferiority. The conflict was exacerbated by his selection as a hospital assistant, in which position the responsibility required was plainly beyond his ability.[3] Individuals suffering from any physical disability find life difficult among such an aggressive people.

[732] If the disability is great the handicapped individual generally finds the adjustment beyond his powers. I have observed a number of severely crippled individuals brought up in traditional kinship groups, and all of them were suffering from overt inferiority conflicts. All of these individuals had adopted compensatory

[1] Although the rite seems to have connotations of sorcery.

[2] Among the Tallensi, according to Fortes, identification is only with older siblings, with parents, and with 'the clan' (op. cit., pp. 46 ff.).

[3] Epilepsy (*ocinonya*) is considered by the Ovimbundu as a visitation of the spirits and is much feared.

1: Childs M-S (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

156 tenderness towards and consideration for those weaker than one-
183 self, for women, for children, and for the aged may be seen among Ovimbundu who are quite untouched by Christianity or Christian teachings in any form. This was often noticed and remarked upon by the early missionaries.[1] Umbundu treatment of children, the habitually respectful form of address used in speaking to them, and respect for their personalities[2] is further evidence of this tender side of Umbundu character, as is also their banning of angry behaviour from the relations of the home.[3]

141 Such a combination of aggressive, dignified, and tender behaviour makes for character worthy of admiration. It is a heritage worth conserving and passing on to succeeding generations.

Description and analysis now hands the problem to education.
000 I cannot find a more fitting close for this chapter than the following statement of the problem:

> From the obscurities that for us still hang about African childhood, the fact emerges that Africans do educate their children. It is a genuine education. . . . What the African sets out to do, namely, to prepare the new generation to take its place in the community and carry on the tribal tradition, he accomplishes with a very considerable measure of success. . . . What Mr. Bryant has said of the Zulus may be said of some other African tribes: 'Through the ages, this admirable system of forming character and imparting knowledge continued, until at length was evolved a Zulu race noble of heart, dignified of bearing, refined of manners, and learned in natural science—qualities, alas! rapidly dying out before the destructive and demoralizing advance of European civilization!' The concluding sentence applies to many a tribe. No small part of the demoralization is caused by the disturbance of family life through the prolonged absence of the senior males at work on European mines and plantations and through the flocking of boys to European towns; it is in the family life, as we have seen, that the most

[1] 'We saw a party crossing the Kulili (*Kalili*) River on a bridge of the frailest construction. The young men went first, deposited their loads on the bank, and returned for the loads of the old men, who carefully crept over unburdened. Then some of the young men recrossed and took their baskets from the women, and their babies as well. Last of all, two strong youths assisted the women themselves to cross. Nothing could be more tenderly considerate.

'Whatever customs may prevail in other parts of Africa, here it is entirely false to say that women are ill-treated. No one of either sex does any great amount of work, but such as it is is fairly divided. . . . They are certainly as well-treated as the wives of the poorer classes at home, and do infinitely less drudgery.' From a letter of Dr. Nichols in the *Missionary Herald* for 1883, p. 229.

[2] See *supra*, p. 120 f.

[3] See *supra*, p. 124 f.

I: Childs M-S (1924-1940) 1940 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

for tribute and other exactions of King Konya Cilemo, successor to the stool of Viye, decided to leave his place at Belmonte (Viye) for Benguela,[1] where he remained for ten years. A year later Guilherme Gonçalves left to his sons his flourishing settlement near Kamundongo (Viye), and sailed for Lisbon, intending to stay indefinitely.[2] These two men were the leading traders established in the Highland, but little idea had they that the small trickle of rubber exports begun in 1869 would so soon inaugurate a new era in Central African trade. It was only in 1882 that rubber took even second place in the exports (after bees-wax),[3] but already in 1872[4] its importance was becoming evident, and by 1877 individual Ovimbundu of Viye had already turned over considerable fortunes in the trade.[5] Bastos seems to be correct in taking 1874 as the beginning of this new era in the trade of the region.[6] For the Ovimbundu, the preceding decades, indeed the preceding century or even centuries, had been a period of preparation for the trade which was now beginning. For them the rubber trade, from 1874 until its close in 1916, was the classical period of commercial activity.

175 314 439

The time of preparation had necessarily developed in the Ovimbundu the intellectual acumen, venturesomeness, a technique of co-operation both within their own social groupings and with outsiders, a knowledge of people, places, and things of their Central African world, together with the other qualities which enabled them to carry on their far-flung trading activities. These qualities merit a fuller description (q.v. *infra*, p. 206 f.). During this earlier period, since many of their travels were naturally exploratory, the Ovimbundu probably travelled more widely than during the time of the rubber trade. There were hardly any territories within the bounds of the Congo River, the Lakes, and the Kalahari Desert which they had not penetrated.[7] Some Ovimbundu went even farther afield as employees of European traders or on their own account. A ready example is Domingos Cakahanga and his companions who, in the employ of Silva Porto during the years

[181]

175 484 439

[1] *Boletim Soc. Geog. Lisboa*, 5a *Ser.*, p. 20.
[2] See Cameron, op. cit., p. 400.
[3] *Benguella*, op. cit., 1887, pp. 24 ff.
[4] *Benguella*, op. cit., 1892, p. 29.
[5] Serpa Pinto, op. cit., p. 161 f.
[6] Bastos, op. cit., p. 24.
[7] Serpa Pinto, op. cit., p. 164; L. Magyar, op. cit., pp. 298, 299. The best proof, however, is the fact of the geographical and tribal names found in the Umbundu language.

174 principal focus of the cattle-keeping areas. The king's death is not announced by the Ovimbundu. There is a special hut for burial, and part of the head is later removed for decoration and separate interment. This part of the royal corpse is subsequently brought out for worship and supplication. The Ovimbundu never admit the death of a king until a successor has been chosen. The king's body is buried in oxhide, but the head is severed by suspending the corpse with a rope round the neck, then twisting the body. The head is sewn in oxhide and kept in a box. In time of drought or before a journey a chief or medicine-man visits the head to make a sacrifice and ask for help. Oxen are killed at funeral feasts of the wealthy and the horns are mounted over the grave. Mourners for the king wear strips of oxhide round their wrists.

There can be no doubt that the Ovimbundu received the above traits, also their knowledge and use of the sacred fire, from the cattle-keeping area. The use of sacred fire has been shown to be a primary trait associated with the keeping of cattle. Reference to field work among the Ovimbundu indicates that the usages connected with sacred fire agree in detail with those of the pastoral area. The Ovimbundu keep the sacred fire burning in the burial place of kings; for instance at Ngalangi, as described. The Ovimbundu create new fire by twirling when a new village site is opened, and the fire is distributed from the chief's home. Lustration after an epidemic of sickness is always ceremonially carried out by creation of new fire on which the blood of sacrificed animals is sprinkled. Therefore, in general outline and considerable detail the factors associated with cattle-keeping among the Ovimbundu are those of the pastoral areas of east, south, and southwest Africa.

In summarizing we may say that contacts of the Ovimbundu with southwest Africa have arisen from occupation of contiguous territory, along with trading and raiding. The acquisitions made by the Ovimbundu from pastoral tribes include several artifacts such as sandals, the assagai, and the throwing club. More important than the diffusion of these objects into Umbundu culture has been the reception of the cattle themselves, along with the social values, usages, and religious beliefs which are the usual concomitants of the African pastoral culture.

174 181 A study of the culture contacts of the Ovimbundu conclusively shows that they are not an isolated people whose artifacts, religious beliefs, and social life stand out distinctively from the culture patterns around them. On the contrary the Ovimbundu have,

S. Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

through trade and warfare, been an absorbent people, reaching out in all directions and assimilating all cultural traits which were of service. 174 181

Up to this point, only the immediate culture contacts of the Ovimbundu have been considered. Yet it is evident that some of the cultural traits which have been discussed are widely diffused in Africa. Consequently, some further inquiry is needed if the tribal life of the Ovimbundu is to be considered against a broad ethnological background of African culture.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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could be observed. Eventually I decided to work in the Bimbe area, in the extreme north-western corner of Umbundu country. The census[10] indicated that Bimbe had a smaller white population than any comparable area of Umbundu country, and people who knew it considered that it was one of the areas most likely to retain a relatively conservative social life.

In Bimbe I settled in the village of Epalanga in the chiefdom of Gumba. The advantage of Gumba lay in the conservatism for which its people were noted in other chiefdoms; its disadvantage lay in its proximity to the northern boundary of Umbundu speech and culture, which led me to collect some items of ethnographic information not typical of Umbundu country.[11] On the whole, I am satisfied that the people of Gumba were in the past as in the present Ovimbundu in both speech and way of life.[12]

Many of my discoveries were at first negative ones. I could not find any evidence that there was a double system of kinship groups actually in existence; the villages were not composed of agnatic kin; the chief seemed lacking in power. Nor was it easy to obtain detailed information about the past even from old men. There is little interest nowadays in history, nor are the old social institutions regarded, even by those who once participated in them, as being necessarily better than those of the present day. The reason for this attitude seems to lie in Umbundu social psychology with its readiness to accept European authority and values. Interesting as the motivations behind this attitude are, this 'cultural amnesia' caused me much disappointment. I found it much easier to get texts on the caravan trade, and on ceremonial practices and proverbs, than on the political and kinship systems. The inadequacies of the information I received on the political system may be explained by the fact that Gumba is on the fringe of the area tributary to the old kingdom of

[10] Of 1950.

[11] The payment of fines by a man to his dead wife's kin had been formerly practised in Gumba, and still is further north. It does not seem to have been known in living memory elsewhere in Umbundu country.

[12] The northern limit of Umbundu speech is now somewhere to the north of the administrative post of Cela. As there has not been substantial migration from the south, it is reasonable to assume that it is many years since the Gumba–Cela boundary was also the language boundary.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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[1874-1914]

rather than any political alliance or opposition, which related the Ovimbundu as a whole to the Portuguese and the other tribes. Informants who remember 'the time of the rubber' talk about it with much more interest and much more detail than about any other aspect of the past, and it is far easier to make an ordered picture out of the narratives of the caravan journeys than to fill in the gaps in the descriptions of the political and kinship systems provided by Childs and Hastings.[57]

Politically the Ovimbundu were divided, as has been said, into several kingdoms. Bailundo, the largest of the kingdoms was divided, according to Childs into about 200 sub-chiefdoms. As it had about half a million inhabitants this would give an average population of about 2,500. While the kingdoms seem to have been more or less stable in number and boundaries from the end of the eighteenth century, the number of sub-chiefdoms seems to have increased. Thus an official Portuguese estimate made in 1799 gives Bailundo as having only 82 sub-chiefdoms, and Galangue, where Childs counted 112 sub-chiefdoms, as having 78. The sub-chiefdom paid tribute to the king, sent men for his armies, and recognized his court as the supreme arbitrator. Some sub-chiefdoms were held by ministers or relatives of the king.[58]

It is, however, not easy on the sparse detail available to decide how much autonomy the sub-chiefdoms really had. Gumba, the area where I worked, was a sub-chiefdom of the Bailundo kingdom, albeit on the north-western frontier, neighbouring Cassongue and Cela, where the people did not call themselves Va-Mbailundu, though their rulers acknowledged the suzerainty of the king of Bailundo. Old men told me of raids from Bailundo for slaves, but I cannot say if this was the result of the period of disorder mentioned, or whether sub-chiefdoms on the border of a kingdom gave only nominal submission and received only nominal protection. In the area where I worked,

[57] This is not intended as a personal reflection on Dr. Childs and the late Dr. Hastings, both of whom deserve the highest praise for their work and for their obvious devotion to the Ovimbundu. Hastings devoted far more space to the magico-religious field than to the kinship system. Likewise Childs's description of kinship is much shorter, much less detailed, and much less satisfactory than his account of childhood and adolescence, or the really outstanding historical chapter.

[58] Magyar, pp. 385–91; Childs, pp. 23–24.

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meet other Angolan Protestants through such occasions as the Congress of Evangelical Youth, held at Malange in 1955.

While the Catholic missions are not tied to the Ovimbundu in the same way as the Protestants the number of their adherents falls sharply when the Umbundu boundary is reached. Responsiveness to missionary activity is a mark of the Ovimbundu today just as was participation in the caravan trade. Indeed, the main common possession of the Ovimbundu, the Umbundu language, is, as a literary vehicle and object of study, almost a missionary monopoly. Both missions produce a monthly magazine in Umbundu and Portuguese, and several books of a religious or educational nature have been published with Umbundu on one side and Portuguese on the other as legally required. The dictionaries and grammars are almost all of missionary authorship.

Acceptance of Christianity has also significance for Umbundu self-consciousness. The majority of Ovimbundu have come under missionary influence in varying degrees, and conversion to Christianity makes Ovimbundu feel closer to Europeans and superior to other African peoples. I have heard African priests claim that the Ovimbundu are the best people in Angola, largely on this ground, and at Lobito and Luanda tensions have been felt in the Protestant community between Ovimbundu and members of other tribes.[11]

The Ovimbundu live under economic, political, and religious systems introduced and controlled by Europeans. Yet trader, official, and missionary are all dependent on the Ovimbundu. The 'civilized' and the native live in symbiosis, and the two basic problems of this study are the nature of this symbiosis, and its relation to the social system of the native population themselves. To see this symbiosis in perspective it is necessary to describe what occupations and statuses Africans can hold.

The strict segregation of black and white found in South Africa is alien to Portuguese traditions. There is a lack of almost all forms of public segregation between white and non-white.[12]

[11] Personal information.

[12] In the racial discrimination that does exist the mulattoes generally count as whites. It is said to be difficult for a full African to obtain accommodation in a Luanda hotel, but the situation for mulattoes is quite different.

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181 Making money and being rich are regarded with

unambiguous approval, though there is a certain undertone suggesting cunning in the verb *ola langula* (to be shrewd) used about prosperous people. The old suspicion of sorcery [259] attaching to people who were more successful farmers than their neighbours[8] seems to have disappeared. While a prosperous 602 villager would be expected to lend money to a poorer kinsman (provided the latter was not known as a bad debtor) yet, 431 the situation which occurs in other parts of Africa, where, as Dr. V. W. Turner notes of the Mwinilunga Ndembu, prosperous Africans 'find themselves increasingly embarrassed by the demands of their kin for presents in cash and kind'[9], would not arise among the Ovimbundu, who would regard such demands as being unjustified, even outrageous.

511 Wealthy Ovimbundu may spend some of their wealth on clothing and on drink. Cattle-buying has been noted as a form [456] of capital investment and the same term may be used of small stock buying. Another way of disposing of money is by building a house of bricks with the assistance of a bricklayer. A plough may be, but rarely is, bought by two men joining together to pool their money. Generally speaking, the agricultural 178 technology of the Ovimbundu has been little changed 241 since 1911 except for the spread of the techniques of coffee-growing.

It has been noted earlier that the Ovimbundu play an 648 important part in the economic life of Angola both as cultivators and labourers. In this chapter an attempt has been made to show how at the local level it is the cultivation of cash crops, rather than migration for wage labour, which incorporates villagers into the commercial economy of modern Angola. The main source of money in rural areas is the trader's store, which is also the main recipient of money, apart from the administration. While trade both between Ovimbundu and 178 between Ovimbundu and other tribes survives on a minor scale, 182 the social institutions associated with the rubber trade, the large caravans, the non-repayable loans within the matrilineal group, and the obligations of wealthy traders to assist their kin, have disappeared. The contemporary social structure with the

[8] Childs, pp. 106-8.

[9] V. W. Turner, op. cit., p. 135.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

601 III. TABLES OF RELATIVES WITH WHOM MARRIAGE IS PREFERRED

A. *Of Ego's Generation: Either Man or Woman*

Term	*Relationship*	*Reciprocal term*
Epalume or *cepua*	cross-cousins of all degrees (see list Table I. A. 4, p. 47)	*epalume* or *cepua*

B. *Of First Ascendant Generation: Man Speaking*

Tatekãi	father's 'sister' (see list Table I. D. 4, p. 48)	*ocimumba*

C. *Of First Ascendant Generation: Woman Speaking*

Mamu	mother's 'brothers' (see list Table I. D. 3, p. 48)	*ocimumba*

D. *Of First Descendant Generation: Man or Woman Speaking*

Ocimumba	mother's 'brother's' or father's 'sister's grandchild'	*mamu* or *tatekãi*

591 582 Many writers have noted that, among other purposes, the financial arrangements serve to give the bride a status in the village of her husband. In a system of preferential kinship marriage, this is a desideratum, although for other reasons than those operating in a system where the wife comes as a comparative stranger. In a system such as this of the Ovimbundu, it is evident that many of the relatives by marriage are already blood relatives. This is perhaps one reason why the avoidances with regard to 'in-laws' are less rigidly held to than in a society such as the Zulu, which holds strictly to exogamous marriage.[1]

182 601 Another factor which makes for stability of marriage is the bilineal kinship system (*epata*). This system offers to the wife an initial security not usually found where descent is unilineal, or even where there has been a one-sided development of one line of descent at the expense of the other. The bilineal system is an important factor in the preservation of social stability. Through it the household and the village are links in the chain which even yet binds the Ovimbundu into a social whole.

Sorcery

182 794 Umbundu society is subject to various forces which threaten its cohesion and stability both from without and from within. Some of the external forces have been touched upon.[2] Chief of the

[1] Krige, op. cit., p. 29 f.

[2] *Supra*, pp. v, 26.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

internally disruptive forces is sorcery. It is apparently on the 182
increase among the Ovimbundu, a tendency which has also been 754
reported from other parts of Africa.[1] The extent to which sorcery operates within the kinship groups themselves makes its influence even more dangerous to social cohesion.

Any marked success achieved by an individual, especially when 754
such success has been achieved by an individual alone or in 578
partnership, but not in co-operation with a number of persons, often brings on suspicion of sorcery.[2] Should the results of such success be distributed widely and freely within the family or kinship group, suspicion of sorcery is less likely to arise and open accusation may be avoided. Grudges, however, whether newly built up or inherited, often find expression in suspicion or in open accusation of sorcery.[3] An open accusation of sorcery (*oku sunga ovanga*) is a very serious matter and will not often be made lightly.

Such accusations are made both within and across kinship lines. Affinal relatives are quite often accused of sorcery, and suspicion frequently rests upon wives whose kinship connexions are in distant regions. Predilection for and skill in the use of sorcery is supposed to be inherited. A reputation for sorcery may be imputed to a family through a number of generations.

Somewhat less overt accusations of sorcery are made at the 764
inquest during a funeral. The corpse in its coffin slung to a pole 754
between two carriers responds to questions as to who 'ate him' by forward (affirmative), or backward (negative) movements. It may also cause its carriers to stop in front of a certain house during the procession through the village, meaning that one of the occupants of the house is thereby accused of having caused the death. Traditionally such accusations during inquests were exceedingly common, perhaps even usually expected.[4] Should the corpse not [787]
give a clear answer, then subsequent divination would often bring out an accusation of sorcery. Accusations such as these, involving responsibility for the death of a person, are usually made *within* the body of blood or affinal kin.

When sorcery is consciously taken up and employed, the pur- 754
pose is usually economic advancement, but it often involves overt

[1] Cf. B. Malinowski, in *Africa*, 1939, p. 39.
[2] *Vide infra*, pp. 107 ff.
[3] *Vide infra*, p. 185.
[4] For an early observation of this (c. 1790) *vide Annaes Mar. e Col.*, 5a Ser., p. 489 f.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

there must be a responsible senior and, hence as a matter of course, 561
the following is accepted:

Ndalu hokuko la Vava: [538]
Fire is not older than water:

Ciyo wa pindihapo.
Potsherd (or frying-pan) passes between (i.e. keeps the peace).

As potsherd (or frying-pan) keeps water from putting out fire and fire from consuming water, so the elder keeps the peace between the young of relatively equal status.

The hierarchy of age is taken as a matter of course and circum- 561
cision camps or other formal 'schools' are not considered necessary 881
to reinforce an attitude which no one would dream of disputing. At the present time there is quite a vogue for circumcision camps (*vakuevamba*) in the southern or south-eastern half of the country. Some affirm that these are new-fangled notions coming in from neighbouring tribes. Others declare the institution to be very old. The Ngalangi people say that they have always had both *evamba* for the boys and *uso wakāi* for the girls. Some tribes require *evamba* [643]
of the king before he may rule. Even where the institution is not in vogue, there are associations of coevals (*vakuacisoko*) whose members have definite rights and duties toward each other. These matters are treated more fully in a later chapter. Inasmuch 561
as these age-grade sets are both age and sex divisions, they contain 182
some elements of social cleavage, but their association with the economic and political sides of life makes them a strongly cohesive force for society.

Umbundu Social Structure: Summary

Summarizing the evidence of the present chapter, I wish only to 182
tie in a few of the more important threads so that the pattern of the 621
Umbundu social structure may be seen at a glance.

Although the Ovimbundu no longer maintain the political life which formerly existed, there are elements of cohesion which still give reality to their social organism. These elements all centre in or spring from the kinship group.

With regard to the village, two facts stand out:

1. The Umbundu village is a local kinship unit, with the villagers quite literally the children of the headman-patriarch.
2. Although its political, religious, and social functions may be

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

182 621 in a somewhat decadent state, the Umbundu village has up to the present maintained its status as a local kinship unit.

182 592 602 The household is not a solitary unit but a part of the village. Since it is constituted by marriage, it embodies the union of at least two kinship groups. The attitudes and behaviour patterns within the Umbundu household are basically those universally recognized. In common with the households of most Bantu cultures, it differs from the European model in that it extends its attitudes and behaviour patterns to the wider kinship groupings by means of a classificatory system of relationship.

613 182 In the wider kinship groupings (*epata*), the Ovimbundu recognize both the maternal (*oluina*) and the paternal (*oluse*) lines of descent. The functions of the latter have been largely local, residential, social, and religious, with succession (of status) in the male line. The function of the former has been cohesive over a larger territory, with a recognized head in whom has been vested both religious and economic functions. Both his office and the inheritance of property descend in the female line. Much of the power, economic and personal, formerly held by the *oluina*, in the person of the mother's brother, seems to be passing at the present time to the *oluse*, in the person of the father. The bilineal kinship system has been a strongly cohesive social force.

182 [582] The form of marriage practised by the Ovimbundu is of the two-way cross-cousin type in both lines of kin and in three generations. It seems to be an individual type developed in the particular social and economic situation of the Ovimbundu. As a contract between two families and as a new venture, the marriage relation demands that great attention be given to attitudes and behaviour patterns which emphasize mutual respect.

[561] The hierarchy of age is a very real factor in the Umbundu social structure. Age-set 'schools' have not existed generally throughout the tribes, but there are associations of coevals. This is largely a cohesive force.

754 Sorcery is the most important disruptive force at work *within* Umbundu society. Working as it does, within kinship groups, and inasmuch as it seems to be on the increase, sorcery embodies a real danger to social cohesion.

184 178 Homogeneity has never been an attribute of the Ovimbundu as regards their racial or cultural make-up. The slave-trade injected other and more diverse elements, and recent movements and

V. ECONOMIC LIFE

The words "economic life" are here used with a wide connotation 182
including nature lore, food supply, trade, transport, and industries; all these are combined to form a foundation for every aspect of the social life of the tribe.

The truth of this is realized if one pays attention to the rites 788
connected with occupations. For the hunter there is special training, 782
ritual, and a peculiar mode of burial. Final ceremonies in the initiation of a young blacksmith are associated with sacred acts such as sacrifice of animals and the sprinkling of the tools with their blood. Even the simple occupation of pounding corn requires that the rock shall be dedicated to this purpose by sprinkling the blood of a chicken on the surface. Similarly, a clay pit has to be consecrated before the raw material may be taken for making pottery. A caravan [787]
journey is not merely a commercial undertaking; the accompanying medicine-man carries a wooden figure which he consults with regard to the route (Plate XXI, Fig. 5).

Division of labor according to sex is one of the most important 462
principles involved in the economic life, more particularly in occupational groupings, which are strictly observed. Moreover, within any one activity, such as house-building, there are tasks for men only, while other parts of the work are performed exclusively by women or children.

The study of industries is of great importance when a comparison 322
of Umbundu and adjacent cultures is being made. This is particu- 177
larly true in the instance of wood-carving, an occupation yielding highly specialized products some of which are connected with religious [778]
belief and ritual. All artifacts are valuable as criteria of cultural contacts, though their reliability as evidence of trait diffusion naturally varies with their degree of complexity. Study of native industries in relation to European contacts illustrates a cultural process which may result in acceptance, rejection, or ingenious adaptation of new ideas.

That a study of the economic life of a tribe is not merely a record- 182
ing of material processes and artifacts, is illustrated by observation 231
of the treatment of cattle. This pastoral pursuit naturally falls under a heading "Domestic Animals," but the ideas associated with cattle, including funeral feasts, use of horns on graves, and the wrapping of the royal corpse in oxhide, lead directly into important matters of belief and ritual.

576 *konyimo oko* are spoken. The literal interpretation of these words is "back there." Ngonga says the words actually mean "excuse my back."

827 576 Spitting in the vicinity of the house of the king or of the chief is not allowed. "If you did that in the old days, you would have to pay something." Some people spit near the hearth in their own houses. A man who spits in the road is expected to cover the spittle. No person would spit in the presence of the chief or of the king. A hand should be placed in front of the mouth by a person who is coughing or sneezing.

576 [851] Shortly after the birth of a boy or girl all who are on good terms with the parents greet them by saying *kalunga*. The word is repeated four times with clapping of the palms. When words have been imperfectly heard and the listener desires repetition it is customary to say *kuku* in an interrogative tone.

[264] No particular etiquette is observed when eating. Two or three children eat from one platter, helping themselves with their fingers to the mush or sweet potatoes.

Rules forbidding the preparation of food by menstruating women, likewise prohibitions relating to stepping over a person, are mentioned in discussing taboos and omens.

EDUCATIONAL VALUE OF PLAY, MUSIC, AND DANCING

524 182 533 The educational value of play lies in its imitation of the pursuits of adult life. Though there are specialists in music, dancing, and singing, these exercises are indulged in by everyone. Music, singing, and dancing are more than amusements, they are fundamental as coordinating forces in tribal life at all levels of culture (W. D. Hambly, Tribal Dancing and Social Development, London, 1926). [113]

Among the Ovimbundu *Cimbamba Co Lia* is a popular game for girls, who form a circle, join hands, and sing:

PART I

524 [535] *Omola una, ndo sile vekango, Cimbamba co lia* ("That little child was left in the desert, the nighthawk ate it"). At the word *Cimbamba* they begin to dance, facing from side to side in such a manner that they meet and bow. Some sing, *Cimbamba co lia* ("The nighthawk ate him"), and others respond, *Kalikisi* ("'tis the goblins"), as many times as they wish. Finally a return is made to the first words which are sung again. All musical transcriptions have been made by Dr. G. Herzog from my phonographic records.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

Cattle-keepers of southern Angola make butter in calabash churns which are gently swung on a pole. The Ovimbundu have taken cattle from the south and west, but have not adopted dairy products. The cattle of the Ovimbundu are valued as a standard of wealth; have great purchasing power; are used to pay taxes and fines; and, in addition to these social and economic values, are the most important sacrificial animals. This is an instance of the arbitrary selection of some traits of a culture complex, while other factors, even those of economic importance, are ignored. 177

Cultural losses, and failures to utilize factors which were accessible are, according to the foregoing examples, due to change of habitat from northern Angola to the Benguela Highlands; European contacts; long-established agricultural habit; and conservatism, which to some extent is a characteristic of tribes at all cultural levels.

INTEGRATION OF TRAITS

A study which is concerned with growth of culture, demands more than a historical, geographical, and mechanistic interpretation. Morphological and historical research assists in tracing origins and in forming hypotheses respecting the order in which the traits were brought together. But such inquiries are static rather than dynamic, and they are a necessary prelude to anthropological work rather than an ultimate aim. 121

To the methods of research already followed there should be added a psychological approach with the object of showing the way in which various elements of culture are blended and are made to function.

The following pages illustrate the way in which a field investigation is brought into contact with the welding of cultural elements, and the examples chosen call attention to principles that are responsible for the process of integration. This assimilation of cultural elements renders the study of an isolated trait impossible, as the following instances indicate. These illustrations are chosen from field notes, and are grouped in such a way as to emphasize the pivotal elements of Umbundu culture around which minor traits revolve.

Some of the examples given are intended to illustrate a relationship between language (which includes folklore, proverbs, and riddles) and nature knowledge. The latter is closely connected with hunting, food-gathering, and the selection of materials for handwork. 105 182

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The inquiry then turns to occupations which indicate that sex dichotomy of labor is a fundamental principle of tribal life. In connection with the details of food supply and occupation, ritual acts are prominent, and in association with these the functions of the medicine-man are important.

Cultural liaisons are again illustrated when studying domestic animals, for this inquiry leads to a consideration of the social and economic importance of cattle, which are used in ritual connected with the death and burial of kings.

These are but a few instances indicating the way in which lines of investigation converge, though they may appear to be distinct. In fact the very division of a monograph into chapters is misleading in its suggestion of distinct divisions of tribal life, whose parts are actually a psychological unity.

When accompanying boys and men during their food-collecting and hunting expeditions a wealth of nature lore and a richness of vocabulary were discovered, and a vocabulary of one hundred and thirty words comprising names of birds, reptiles, mammals, and plants was prepared. Species are carefully distinguished, to such a degree that discussions respecting the correct native names for similar species tend to be prolonged and humorous.

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When I realized the closeness with which the native observes the habits of animals, there was no difficulty in understanding why folklore stories of animals are so popular and so amusing in their descriptions of animal behavior. In addition to its associations with nature study, folklore reveals standards of conduct and processes of rationalization.

In collecting names of birds and their cries, and while recording hunting customs, I was informed of the bird Onjimbi which flies at night to give the sound of death to those who will not see the morning. Then there is a nocturnal bird called Esuvi which is able to catch spirits of the dead who are active at night. A spirit so caught dies a second death, but what this means I could not immediately discover. Later a man said he was sick because Esuvi had caught the spirit of his grandfather. This implies the belief that an ancestral spirit is a guardian whose function ends when a second death is experienced.

Study of natural history sometimes leads to a point of importance in social procedure. There is a bird Onduva whose feathers are used for decorating the head of a dead king and for embellishing the person of a medicine-man; the feathers may not be used in any other

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

way. Such instances as these came to light when my primary intention was a study of the use of wooden arrows for killing birds. 105 182 825

An inquiry about the names of trees and the use of timbers led to the topic of making and using wooden figures for magical purposes. Woodcraft, wood-carving, and religion are associated.

There is no fallacy so great as that of supposing that data may be collected and retained in mutually exclusive divisions. For example, a study of proverbs leads to native ideas concerning government, succession to office, and standards of conduct. The Ovimbundu say, "A turtle cannot climb on a tree stump, some one has to place it there." What is the meaning of this proverb? There are some men who occupy positions for which they have no ability; such men have been chosen through influence. The normal successor to chieftainship and kingship is the eldest son of the deceased man's principal wife, but if this rightful successor is stupid, some other son will be chosen. Yet the foolish youth may have friends who see their own advantage in having a weak ruler; they therefore combine to place him in office. The turtle has been placed on the tree stump, since it could not climb there.

In addition, folklore shows projection of the mentality of human beings into the lives of animals. Bird cries, with their supposed calls and answers, indicate that the birds have their family relationships involving strife, love, jealousy, and generosity. To the Ovimbundu, birds are a feathered human community.

Proverbs reveal a philosophy which is expressed by the German *Weltanschauung*. "If you are full of food, do not climb on a leopard's back; the leopard may be hungry." This means that one should not be foolishly exalted through good fortune. "You cannot tie a buck's head in a cloth; the horns will stick out," expresses the idea that crime cannot be concealed. "Hot water does not burn a house, and cold water does not make mush," is a sarcastic reply to one who boasts of things he cannot do. A riddle may express a philosophical train of thought. "What is it that lives while it dies and dies while it lives?" This is the log of wood the end of which is from time to time pushed farther into the fire. Like a human life, the log is being slowly consumed while yet living. Such examples as these call attention to a welding of thought, language, nature lore, and ideas that regulate conduct. 538 829 182

In considering food supply and occupations, division of labor on a sex basis is clear. Social sanctions have determined the appro- 183 462 105

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

I cannot find in the life of the Ovimbundu anything to support the opinion of W. C. Willoughby. This writer sees in the soul of every race an instinct for god that tells upon behavior, an upward urge that makes for betterment, due to the unwearied play of the spirit of god on the souls of man. The views of E. Torday and R. J. van Wing (Dualism in Western Bantu Religion and Social Organization, *J.R.A.I.*, XLVIII, p. 225) seem to be more applicable to the spiritual beliefs of the Ovimbundu. 105 114 771

The Ovimbundu have standards of conduct, codes of laws, crimes, and punishments. In addition to the *ekandu* (antisocial acts) already noted, *ohembi* is a liar, *okusapa* means to be greedy, and such actions are deprecated; but there is no deistic injunction toward the virtues of truthfulness, hospitality, and fair dealing. 577 105

Standards of conduct and social values are preserved by the educational forces previously mentioned (chapter VII), and in addition to these there are such controls as trial by ordeal, and divination to detect guilt. The satirical song is also a form of correction, though its application may be antisocial, for instance in taunting the sexually impotent.

Music and dancing are adjuncts for the preservation of social customs and the stimulation of collective emotions on which cooperation depends. Music and dancing are also aids to magical practices. For example, a friction drum is played while a medicine-man carries out his divination with the basket, and vigorous drumming takes place during treatment of the sick. Music and dancing were again seen to be of importance at a funeral ceremony. 532 105

These instances, which are chosen from many of like kind reported in the foregoing chapters, serve to indicate an interrelationship among the main aspects of tribal life. I have endeavored to choose from personal experience those facts and incidents which illustrate the mutual dependence of language, folklore, proverbs, nature lore, food supply, and occupations. 182 105

The sexual division of labor, the connection of ceremonial with occupation, the relationship of the sexes, and the position of woman, have all been brought forward as examples of social controls.

The persistence of belief and custom despite foreign influences; the nature of government, including the psychology of prestige and leadership; spiritual beliefs; the training of children; and the value of music and dancing, have likewise been emphasized as coordinating

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182

principles among the religious, social, and economic aspects of tribal life.

In searching for some monism which integrates tribal thought and conduct, I would emphasize the relationship between the sacred and profane. The former is derived from the latter by ritual acts which are frequently, but not exclusively, connected with the medicine-man and spirits of the dead. These departed spirits do not sever their connection with the living. On the contrary, they are concerned with the affairs of men, which they handle benevolently or malevolently according to caprice.

Attention has been called to the importance of fire when ceremonially kindled and distributed; this is but a single instance of the sacred use of an everyday commodity. A woman's belt is an ordinary item of clothing, but it may be something more important. A woman who is the mother of girls only, exchanges belts with the mother of boys only, and in future the mother of female children will give birth to boys, and conversely. This is the simplest instance of transfer from a secular to a magical use without resort to an intermediary person such as the medicine-man.

Bows, mats, and staffs are articles of everyday use until their owners are dead and the articles are deposited in the house of bows. Such a house is then sacred, because the ancestral spirits can be induced to enter it to grant favors after sacrifice has been made. Cowrie shells were normally a medium of exchange, but they may become a charm in order to induce conception. A snake's backbone acquires power when threaded by the medicine-man and placed round the neck of a patient who suffers from rheumatism. A cooking pot of clay is entirely secular until it becomes the property of a hunter, after which no other person may use it. A piece of an ant hill is merely earth. But if the belated traveler takes such a piece from the top of the hill and places it in the fork of a branch there will be an extension of daylight. A ritual element enters in the spell, "O sun, wait for me a little while."

The unifying and binding effect of magical rites, simple or complex, private and public, is the warp of the fabric by which the weft threads of the social pattern are bound together. To vary the metaphor, tribal life is a sphere of action, a universe having principal units around which others revolve. Each unit of the structure has a course and movements peculiar to itself, but there is no actual isolation from the influences of other bodies.

5: Hambly E-5 (1929-30)1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

ing become thin; but avoidance of milk is really one of those deeply rooted 234
food prejudices which even the people themselves could not explain if willing to do so.

The Vakuanyama of south Angola make butter by swinging two large calabashes on a pole, but though this practice is known to the Ovimbundu, they do not imitate the method. The flesh of cattle that have died from dis- 231
ease or accident is eaten, and uses are found for the hide, tail, and horns. But cattle are not slaughtered except at a funeral feast, after which the horns are mounted on a pole over the grave, and perhaps the skulls are preserved near the site of burial.

Cattle serve as fines, sacrifices, and gifts, including a bride's dowry, but the social and religious importance is greater than the economic use. This is in accordance with what might be expected, since the pastoral activities of the Ovimbundu are but an adopted series of traits which can be found among numerous pastoral tribes of southwest, south, and east Africa. Wrapping the head of a king in oxhide which is ceremonially renewed has been mentioned.[1] In addition to this rite, the use of oxhide bracelets by mourners, and the use of an oxhide shroud for chiefs and kings, must be recorded. Use of ceremonial fire which is distributed from the chief's house when a new village is founded, and creation of new fire after epidemic sickness, are Umbundu traits which form part of the typical pastoral culture elsewhere.

Consideration of food supply has indicated the preservation of ritual and 182 ●
belief, not intensively, but with sufficient force to show great tenacity of indigenous culture in the face of prolonged and disturbing intrusions.

HANDICRAFTS

Incomparably important is the craft of the blacksmith. The preservation 326
of ritual and belief was at once suggested by the workers' refusal to sell me any of the tools, especially the large hammer (onjundo), although the sum offered covered the value of the implements and the time lost in making new ones. After three months I acquired a large hammer from the wife of a blacksmith who had not worked at his trade for many years. She parted with the tool in the absence of her husband, but demanded a sum which would have purchased an ox. Other tools were made for me.

Information respecting the blacksmiths' ritual was given in the village of Njongolo in Elende, but I am informed that the beliefs are general, and they are certainly compatible with all that is known of blacksmiths' ritual among Bantu Negroes, Sudanic Negroes, and Hamiticized Negroes of east Africa. I found no mining of iron but saw a site where the ore was for-

[1] [Cf. p. 160, cat. 116. -- Analyst]

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Bailundo.[13] On the kinship system, however, I was even more disappointed. The information which I was given on the matrilineal groups formerly existing was much less than that provided by Hastings,[14] or by Childs,[15] and I have therefore not been able to obtain the detail for which I had hoped on the double-descent system. 121

Like all anthropologists I had a certain number of difficulties in making contact with the people, and to these were added the problems of finding underlying consistencies in a changing society. The Ovimbundu are not interested in genealogies and did not see why I was. My first attempts to take village censuses were regarded with great suspicion, and more than once people refused to give their names. Kinship terms and norms seemed to be and were very confused. Various matters, such as surviving pagan rituals, were concealed from me. My personal relations with the people were very happy, however, and almost everybody who came to know me was prepared to answer my questions at length. 121 123 [122]

My two great problems in the field were to obtain information on the old social structure (which I already knew in outline from the written material), and to see how the present-day society worked. The material in this thesis will be laid out in the following way. The first part will give an outline of Umbundu social structure as it was in the period 1874–1911,[16] that is, the era of the rubber trade. The second part will give a series of chapters on present day Umbundu society, which will provide the information necessary for an understanding of the mechanisms of social control. In the third part a detailed discussion of social control is made, beginning with an examination of a number of disputes. It is shown how the network of kinship and marriage ties in a neighbourhood provide local continuity and stability, while the wider units in which the Ovimbundu now participate are of European origin and control. 121 125

[13] Cassongue and Cela were tributary to Bailundo but were not incorporated into the actual kingdom (Childs, p. 168). Cassongue people say that they are not Va-Mbailundu. [631]

[14] Hastings, Chapter VI.

[15] Hastings gives more information than Childs on the matrilineal kin group.

[16] The period of the rubber trade. Childs, pp. 202–15.

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[1874-1911]

439 journeys diminished in distance as they increased in profit-
484 ability.[53]

My informants, however, gave a somewhat different picture. Long trading journeys were still being undertaken in the last decade of the trade (1901–11). Some men whom I met had travelled to the kingdom of the Mwata Yamvo and beyond to Luba country; one man had made a journey into what is now the Congo Republic which took a year to go and a year to return; another had visited Barotseland. It should be said that these seem to have been unusually long journeys; journeys totalling six to eight months were common.[54]

182 The significance of the trade in social life is reflected in the
829 mystical explanations of success in business found in Umbundu religion. Prosperity might be explained either by the favour of
[976] spirits such as Kandundu and Otjipukú, who received at their
[254] shrines libations of wine, or by malevolent sorcery involving the sacrifice of relatives in exchange for wealth.[55] The existence of these two explanations probably reflects the existence of some rich men who satisfied the expectations of their relatives and others who did not.

567 Apart from the rubber trade, the older slave trade continued
128 until its vigorous suppression in the period 1910–12, and indeed seems, as regards the Ovimbundu, to have become intensified in the period after 1890. The slaves went to S. Tome and Principe, or to coastal plantations. Up to that time the Ovimbundu had sold few of their own people, with the exception of criminals or people who had become generally unpopular with their kin. The collapse of the old political system played into the hands of adventurers who unscrupulously exploited the Umbundu custom of debt slavery or conducted raids for this purpose.[56]

604 It was then the 'trade' which was the common factor in the
439 life of all Ovimbundu, and which was so to speak the factor,

[53] Childs, p. 208.

[54] Informants.

[55] Although some old men still have shrines to the luck-giving spirits it is not possible to see how their cult functioned in the social structure then existing. It is, however, notable that success could be interpreted mystically in two ways by benevolent spirits or by sorcery.

[56] Childs, p. 213. I was told that Gumba had been raided from Bailundo.

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631 564 funerals (though these burials could be undertaken by the cross-cousins of the deceased). When *vakwatjiseko* came to their partner-chiefdom for a funeral they had the right to steal small live-stock, such as chickens, or pigeons, but not cattle, goats, or [837] pigs. An *ukwatjiseko* could sleep with the wives of his *vakwatjiseko* partners without being sued for damages.[68]

631 [602] The ties of kinship and affinity crossed the boundaries of the sub-chiefdoms and even of the kingdoms.[69] The members [463] [574] of the three spirit-protected professions, blacksmithing, divining, and hunting recognized obligations of hospitality to co-professionals from other parts of the country.[70] Again the caravans were so large that they must have involved people [437] from many sub-chiefdoms, which presupposes a wide range of contacts.

●182 It may be said that the picture given here is contradictory and inadequate. How can the existence of large kingdoms be reconciled to the extreme insecurity described by old men? How do the wealthy caravan organizers fit into the political system? What sort of politics were there in the kingdoms? It is not easy to answer these questions owing to the lack of evidence, and, probably, because the kingdoms were already in decline during the latter part of the rubber trade period. Indeed, the impression that accounts of the Ovimbundu in the nineteenth century give is that of adventure, battle, commerce, migration —a vigorous rather than a stable society.[71]

61 114 The kinship system is perhaps the field of Umbundu society which has aroused most interest among anthropologists. Childs and Hastings have written much that is interesting on the old double-descent grouping but as, with the kinship system, the form has been described rather than the functioning and it is

[68] Informants. The account in Childs, pp. 114–15 differs considerably. For this institution elsewhere in Angola see Estermann, 'Clans et alliances de clans', *Anthropos*, 1952.

[69] Childs, p. 54.

[70] Informants.

[71] Magyar describes the king and his courtiers as being extremely despotic towards the villagers, and states that their despotism depended on their having a standing military force called 'Sons of the Elephant' (pp. 278–80). Later accounts do not mention this, and Childs notes (p. 209) that at the height of the rubber trade it was more difficult for the kings to recruit armies for their wars.

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613 could be resolved in the matrilineal group.[78] Hastings, who gives the most detailed account of the matrilineal groups, which he calls sibs, tells us, 'There can be no exaction of fines or taking of slaves between the members of a sib group—the group members are supposed to pay each other's debts, and one who has wealth and refuses so to communicate may be secretly poisoned by the others. It is within the group of matrilineal sibs that most compacts, whether social or economic, are formed and operate. The same is true even of malevolent plots and anti-
[759] social practices, such as killing by witchcraft.'[79]

●182 613 937 Clearly, the matrilineal groups in which the rich had to pool their wealth with poorer kinsfolk and in which trading arrangements[80] were made indicate the adaptation of the kinship system to the needs of the trade. It may be suggested that one of the functions of the double descent system was to separate the fields of village and chiefdom relations, established through patrilineal ties, from the field of commerce, credit, and the inheritance of wealth gained by trade. Thus the conflicts in which a man would be involved in one set of relations would not involve his other set of ties, and this distribution of stresses must have limited the strains set up by disputes. The distinction between the local group and the commercial group would also prevent heavy losses from trade striking a whole village simultaneously.[81] The credit institutions demanded by a trading
[452] system in which debt was frequently incurred were fitted into the kinship system, and associated with a device for levelling those who had become prosperous in the trade.

613 Unhappily the disintegration of the traditional social structure, and the accompanying loss of knowledge of it, prevented
[178] me from adding to, or even corroborating entirely, the written material on the form of the matrilineal groups.[82] It is not at all evident how the groups maintained integration, or how new

[78] Hambly, p. 200.

[79] Ibid., p. 92.

[80] Dr. Childs suggested to me that the core of the caravans might be composed of kin. However, the caravans were so large that they clearly could not be organized on a kinship basis. See also Serpa Pinto, p. 165.

[81] This point was suggested to me by Dr. Mary Douglas.

[82] I did not obtain any information on the size of the matrilineal group, the existence of heads of the groups, and the degree to which it was a congregation.

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THE OVIMBUNDU UNDER TWO SOVEREIGNTIES

593 It was then the father who normally exercised authority over
591 a boy, and on the father's death a child or youth would join the household of a father's brother. Yet the right of a sister's son to
604 the inheritance of the movable property and to grants from his mother's brother was counterbalanced by the latter's right to sell his uterine nephew into slavery, a fate from which the father could save his son by ransoming him, in which case the mother's brother would no longer have this right.[86] In this society, the mother's brother—sister's son relationship was fundamentally an economic one, in which the sister's son received assistance in the trade and inherited his uncle's gains in this trade, but could himself be transformed into a source of capital.

182 I now summarize the evidence on Umbundu social control and its relation with the trading economy. It is clear that the Ovimbundu belonged to the number of those African societies
[642] with pyramidal[87] political systems and formal codes and courts of law, even though there exists uncertainty as to the relative power of the kingdoms and the sub-chiefdoms. Social control
182 also operated through the kinship system, authority at the
613 village level being in the hands of the head of the patrilineal group backed by the public opinion expressed in the men's house, and the dispersed matrilineal groups having sanctions in the right of sale of a sister's son and in the accusations of sorcery brought against those who failed to use wealth to aid
182 their relatives. For the caravan trade to have attained the
631 importance it did there must also have existed something of a *pax Umbunduca* stimulated by the existence of such ties as that between *tjisoko* partners and the 'international' hospitality shown to diviners, hunters, and smiths. Evidence of this *pax Umbunduca* is provided by the organization of caravans, and by the establishment of marriage ties between persons in different kingdoms, and between different royal houses.[88]
[721] However, warfare was not unknown between the different

[86] Childs, p. 44, and my informants.

[87] See Fortes and Evans-Pritchard, Introduction to *African Political Systems*.

[88] Hastings (p. 1) notes a marriage between the daughter of a king of Bie and Ekwikwi, king of Bailundo (1876–93). Childs (p. 171) notes that Kakulukusu, king of Nôulu, was a sister's son of a king of Bailundo.

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kingdoms of the Ovimbundu, though more frequently perhaps it was made against the non-Umbundu peoples.[89]

The question of the influence of the trade provides interesting opportunities for comparison. The Ovimbundu were the southernmost of the peoples who in the nineteenth century participated in the trade between the Europeans of the West African coast and the peoples of the interior.[90] In some ways the Ovimbundu seem to have been less influenced by it than were some of the peoples further north. The Ovimbundu did not develop genuine patterns of urban life as in Dahomey or Benin.[91]

Three explanations can be offered for the relative failure of associational groups and urban society to develop. Umbundu crafts were much inferior to those found along the coast of the Gulf of Guinea; there was no indigenous weaving industry, for instance, and the goods which the caravans carried to the interior were all of European or American origin, cloths, guns, and rum.[92] For these goods the Ovimbundu were dependent on the Portuguese settled at the coast or in the Highland and this meant that the Ovimbundu were far from economic autonomy. Again the trade had a relatively short time span—the real boom period lasted only from 1886 to 1900, and earlier on in the 1840's when the beeswax, ivory, and slave trade was flourishing, the Ovimbundu had plenty of time for warfare.

It would, however, be a grave mistake to think that trade had only a marginal influence on Umbundu society. It has been suggested that the form of the double-descent system owes its origin to the necessity to isolate economic relations from other social fields. In the sphere of ritual, there are some remarkable copies of European practices—for instance the holding of a feast in honour of the ancestors at Christmas-time.[93] Many ritual concepts are related to the explanation of business

[89] For information on Umbundu warfare see Magyar, pp. 277–80 and Serpa Pinto, pp. 177–9.

[90] See Balandier, *Sociologie Actuelle de l'Afrique Noire*, Paris, 1955, for a discussion of social change in other areas which had experienced a trade of a similar sort.

[91] For Dahomey see M. J. Herskovits, *Dahomey*, New York, 1938. For Benin see R. Bradbury, *The Benin Kingdom* (Ethnographic Survey of Africa), London, 1957.

[92] Childs, p. 206.

[93] Informants.

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177 182 success. More generally, it may be suggested that the conditions of the trade in which wealth was dependent on contact with Europeans created not only the Umbundu esteem for 'shrewd behaviour' (*ola lunguka*) and their willingness for social change, but their marked docility and submissiveness towards Europeans.[94]

[94] See O. Mannoni, *Prospero and Caliban*, London, 1956, for an ingenious discussion of a similar set of attitudes.

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439 Axe and hoe blades, blankets, cloths, clothing, cutlery,

drinking-mugs, lanterns, metal plates, pens, pencils, wine, and writing slates are bought from the traders. Axe and hoe handles, 438 buckets, bedsteads, beer, bows and arrows, chairs, fish-traps, mats, mush sticks, pottery, pounding-blocks, stools, tables, and small metal objects such as knives are made by Ovimbundu and may be sold locally. To this local trade may be added the selling of pieces of meat by anyone who has killed a pig, or gone hunting and killed a duiker. Very occasionally somebody who has bought cloths in a town or has some hand-made object superior to the local average may tour villages selling his goods as a pedlar.

439 The only trade which at all recalls the days of the caravan trade is the cattle trade with the Kwanyama Ambo. As in the rubber trade the Ovimbundu make use of their intermediary geographical position. They obtain from Luanda shells called *olomandi* (singular *omande*). One of these shells costs 10 escudos [436] (2s. 6d.) at Luanda and ten of them will buy a beast in Kwanyama country. Alternatively 30 rounds of tobacco will buy a beast there. I knew several men who had made, or planned to make, trips of this nature. The analogy with the caravan trade 433 breaks down, however, when the relative importance of the two 182 is examined. The caravan trade determined the economic standards of the Ovimbundu, absorbed a great part of the time of every able-bodied man and youth, and influenced every aspect of Umbundu life from the foreign policy of the kings to accusations of sorcery; the cattle-keeping is relatively unimportant economically since the Ovimbundu do not drink [262] milk, and eat meat, even chicken or pork, very irregularly, nor does the occasional sale of cattle to traders altogether balance their uncertain survival away from their indigenous grasses. The real importance of cattle in the economy seems to be as a [255] form of capital investment for spare savings, an investment which can be liquidated either by sacrifice on ceremonial occasions or back into money by sale. Socially, it may be thought of as marking the survival of the Umbundu capacity and enthusiasm for trading in an age when the economic situation has closed the old routes. Indeed, perhaps the subconscious motive for the Ovimbundu who trade is to show that they can act outside of that economic framework of cultivation

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and wage labour which I have described as affecting the Ovimbundu as a whole. 433 182

It is not easy to compose budgets of household expenditure and income, partly because they have not yet much of a 'book-keeping' outlook, and partly because they suspect the motives behind questions of this sort. My own opinion is that from agriculture the average household would earn considerably less than 1,000 escudos (£12. 10s.) a year. The Banco de Angola in its Report for 1955[4] gives a budget for an African family at Silva Porto, consisting of father, mother, and two young children, having agriculture as their only source of income. Their total yearly income is given as 7,750 escudos (about £96. 17s. 6d.). Even allowing for the higher prices paid for crops on the railway line, an income of this order is far above anything earned by the average cultivating household, though it might be earned by the few men who cultivated coffee extensively and lived in Portuguese style. 434 [124]

Some details of the economic life of individuals may give depth to this chapter. Kambungo, a kinsman of Sapapula living in Menga, was a man of over sixty who had in his youth travelled on the caravans. He had a large house but lived in a village amongst kinsfolk. In June 1955 he had been in Kwanyama country where, with shells obtained at Luanda, he had bought cattle and for 15 of the *olomande* shells he got a sewing-machine. In the year 1955–6 (very roughly from the end of the dry season in '55 to the same period in '56) he had sold ten sacks of maize at 25 escudos each and six sacks of beans for 60 escudos each. He had, however, concluded that maize did not pay and had started to grow coffee. He had sold one beast for 900 escudos (£10. 15. 0), and had also sold ten sheep for 100 escudos (£1. 5. 0) each. He had also sold a coat for 120 escudos (£1. 10. 0). 511

The principal item of Kambungo's expenditure was a bicycle which he bought for 1,500 escudos (£18. 15s.). He had also bought two beds each 100 escudos, and ten plates 100 escudos altogether. He had bought ten bottles of wine, at 5 escudos each, and had also bought some indigenous rum, price not noted. Ten traditional sleeping mats cost 2½ escudos each, and four

[4] Quoted by Egerton, pp. 124–5.

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181 Making money and being rich are regarded with

unambiguous approval, though there is a certain undertone suggesting cunning in the verb *oku lunguka* (to be shrewd) used about prosperous people. The old suspicion of sorcery attaching to people who were more successful farmers than their neighbours[6] seems to have disappeared. While a prosperous villager would be expected to lend money to a poorer kinsman (provided the latter was not known as a bad debtor) yet, the situation which occurs in other parts of Africa, where, as Dr. V. W. Turner notes of the Mwinilunga Ndembu, prosperous Africans 'find themselves increasingly embarrassed by the demands of their kin for presents in cash and kind'[7], would not arise among the Ovimbundu, who would regard such demands as being unjustified, even outrageous.

Wealthy Ovimbundu may spend some of their wealth on clothing and on drink. Cattle-buying has been noted as a form of capital investment and the same term may be used of small stock buying. Another way of disposing of money is by building a house of bricks with the assistance of a bricklayer. A plough may be, but rarely is, bought by two men joining together to pool their money. Generally speaking, the agricultural technology of the Ovimbundu has been little changed since 1911 except for the spread of the techniques of coffee-growing.

It has been noted earlier that the Ovimbundu play an important part in the economic life of Angola both as cultivators and labourers. In this chapter an attempt has been made to show how at the local level it is the cultivation of cash crops, rather than migration for wage labour, which incorporates villagers into the commercial economy of modern Angola. The main source of money in rural areas is the trader's store, which is also the main recipient of money, apart from the administration. While trade both between Ovimbundu and between Ovimbundu and other tribes survives on a minor scale, the social institutions associated with the rubber trade, the large caravans, the non-repayable loans within the matrilineal group, and the obligations of wealthy traders to assist their kin, have disappeared. The contemporary social structure with the

[6] Childs, pp. 106–8.

[7] V. W. Turner, op. cit., p. 135.

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instability of village sites and village populations, the marked emergence of the elementary family, and the non-existence of economic activities and rights associated with corporate groups, is consistent with the growth of cash crops by shifting cultivation.

CHAPTER VIII

MARRIAGE

1. *The Significance of Preferential Marriage*

Informants say that it is permissible to marry a classificatory cross-cousin, are divided as to the permissibility of marriage with a classificatory sister's daughter, and generally disapprove of marriage with other kin categories, or with true kin of these two categories. Indeed, kinsfolk who marry seem usually not to have any traceable common ancestor.[1] Up to recently,[2] a man marrying a kinswoman had to pay an indemnification of, say, 20 escudos to 'cut the blood'. This changed the kin relationship into an affinal one. 582

It has been previously stated that preferential marriages have an important social role to play in keeping kinsfolk together and multiplying the ties of kinship and affinity. If this is to be proved, it is necessary to show what the people themselves think of preferential marriages, what proportion of the marriages are between kinsfolk, whether this proportion has decreased under modern conditions, and how it relates to the contemporary kinship system. [162]

Several reasons may be given for choosing a cross-cousin bride. The bridewealth is likely to be lower, the girl is more likely to stay and not run away, if one cannot find another girl there will always be a cross-cousin to marry, and, old men point out, one will not be fined if a cross-cousin bride dies.

[1] This statement does not depend simply on my own information. Padre Feltin, superior of the Bimbe mission, who knew of the existence of these marriages told me that very few Umbundu marriages were between kin within the degrees of kinship prohibited (a prohibition removable by a dispensation) by the Catholic Church. Marriage with a first cousin is not infrequent both in Portugal itself and among the white Portuguese in Angola. [115]

[2] About 1949.

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gaining of wealth by means involving extensive economic co-operation among the Ovimbundu themselves, money was earned in an individual relation to a particular European whether planter or trader. 105 178

It must be recognized that the relation between economic change and the continuation or disintegration of kinship groups is a yet unsolved problem of anthropology,[6] particularly as it is seldom possible to isolate the economic pressure. I emphasize the readiness of the Ovimbundu for change, their willing acceptance of the role of clients to the whites.[7] It may be suggested that this attitude was established in the period of the trade when the Ovimbundu were ultimately dependent on the whites for trade goods and that this attitude of imitation and receptivity lies behind the disappearance of so much of the old social structure and the lack of any myth of, or even interest in, the past.[8] [121]

I have claimed that the present system of social control is effective.[9] This may be granted empirically for the reasons already given, the absence of serious crime or prolonged conflict involving the whole community, the effective checks on the functionaries of the post, and the failure of squabbles to tear the network of kin and affinal ties. If a working social system is a proof of an integrated society, then contemporary Umbundu society qualifies for this description. This is not the only possible way of looking at it. It may be claimed that under present circumstances the Ovimbundu are no longer integrated by their tribal system but are held together by the Angolan 105 182

[6] For various comments on this problem see A. I. Richards, in *African Systems of Kinship and Marriage*, p. 251, M. Fortes, 'Structure of Unilineal Descent Groups', in *American Anthropologist*, Feb. 1953, M. Douglas (review of Mitchell's *The Yao Village*) in *Africa*, July 1957.

[7] Cf. the Ngangela name for the Ovimbundu, the Ovimbali, a term traditionally applied to Africans living in close contact with the whites. The Ovimbundu accept this stereotype.

[8] 'A lack of history is correlated with the amorphous character of the society.' E. Colson in Colson and Gluckman (ed.) *Seven Tribes of British Central Africa*, Oxford, 1951, p. 100.

[9] Other quarrels of which I heard while in Epalanga: a messenger from the mission sent to intervene in a marriage dispute was attacked; the chief of Chicunda summoned to the mission for a telling-off after beating up one of his people; a man from Gumba refusing to go to a funeral in Cassongue of a man whose death he was thought to have caused by sorcery.

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105 182 Government,[10] which has deprived them of all legal and political autonomy. The present Umbundu social system deprived of any form of public life ticks over, as a man who has been paralysed may continue to live. The cultural barriers and structural gulf between the post, the basic unit of the administration, and the people, are to a certain extent bridged by the mission. This task throws a considerable strain on the organizations set up by the missions, to which they are far from equal.[11] The common values shared by 'civilized' and native, whose introduction was ascribed to the missions, give the Ovimbundu psychological compensation rather than a genuine participation in the culture of the ruling group. The stability which marks social relations in the area is passivity rather than integration.

105 178 182 The most truthful approach would seem to be a synthesis of the two arguments. The disintegration of the old legal and political institutions and the attitude of dependence and passivity towards Europeans cohere with a stability provided by the pattern of kin and affinal ties and the continuity of local relations. It has been argued that the range of marriages (and hence the range of kinship ties) has not noticeably expanded in recent years, and that the links which orient Gumba to the north and west rather than to the south and east date back to the nineteenth century. Such other factors as the poor local communications, the limited economic development of the area, and the absence of resident whites in Gumba may also have helped to preserve the continuity and security of the 'private' life of individuals.[12] In other areas of Umbundu country, especially near the railway line, where communications are easy, Europeans and *assimilados* are numerous, and there are more marked differences of wealth, this 'coherence' of change and continuity may have very much less empirical efficiency.

In one part of Umbundu country in 1955, a contra-acculturá-

[10] Putting it another way; there is no Umbundu political system, and hence the nearest approach to Umbundu politics are the squabbles of Chapter IX.

[11] The missionaries complain of the poor calibre of many catechists, and the catechists complain of the lack of obedience of their people.

[12] The relations between two individuals may remain friendly, even though the form of their relations changes.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP18

158 behaviour of an anti-social nature.[1] The foregoing analysis refers chiefly to those of the Ovimbundu who now live or were reared within their traditional social structure, with but slight reference to other individuals.

The Umbundu Estimate of Character

156 183 The Umbundu concept of personality as being achieved by a process of social integration is of fundamental importance, bearing in mind that society consists of the whole kinship group—including the living and the dead, men and spirits. The process of achieving integration together with reactions to various cultural elements interestingly reveal the types of character appreciated and those disliked by the Ovimbundu.

Almost everything in Umbundu life and culture reveals them to be a strong and aggressive people. Their history, whether of raiding or of trading, is eloquent testimony to this. The early age at which children participate and assume responsibility in social and economic life has doubtless contributed toward the development of aggressive attitudes. The system of marriage which places the balance of responsibility in all particulars upon the bridegroom and not on his elders, but at the same time requires the willing consent of the bride, is evidently a development of a strongly aggressive people. Their economic life witnesses to the same fact, whether one considers their trade or their agriculture. None but an aggressive (or a very stubborn) people could succeed at farming in a region of such poor soil. Basing his observations only on their pillage and robbery of all their neighbours, and on the submission of the latter, Magyar remarked that the Ovimbundu were the greatest people of South Africa.[2]

In view of these facts it is not difficult to understand that the Ovimbundu appreciate character integration which includes a high degree of self-expression. Such 'traits'[3] as drive, extroversion, insight, ascendance, and expansion[4] are desired and appreciated by the Ovimbundu. Introversion and reclusion, on the other hand, are disliked. In the more extreme forms they are feared and

[1] Stealing is one of the commonest types of behaviour in such cases.

[2] L. Magyar, *Reisen in Süd-Afrika*, p. 265.

[3] The term is used merely for convenience to cover types of behaviour. The specificity of the responses which make up character is assumed; cf. Hugh Hartshorne and Mark May, *Studies in the Nature of Character*, 3 vols. (New York: Macmillan, 1928–30).

[4] After Allport, op. cit., chap. v.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

suspected as indications of sorcery. It would of course be impossible to indicate what proportion achieve the ideal. It would seem that their respective manners of life have favoured its development in the men more largely than in the women. May this perhaps be one reason why women seem to be caught more often in the vicious circle of suspicion of sorcery? 156 183

Fearing anger and ill will as a root-cause of sorcery, yet developing a very aggressive type of character, and achieving in their villages and other social groupings such a large measure of socialized life, the adjustments in anger achieved have been, perhaps, a necessary prerequisite. That does not make the achievement any less important. Note has already been made of the ability to use humour as an outlet for anger, which is held to be an indication of true insight.[1]

Statesmanlike ability, good judgement, and dignity were often noted by the early missionaries as qualities of some of the old kings, councillors, and headmen.[2] After 1900 these qualities were less often observed, owing perhaps to the demoralizing effects of the rum trade. These qualities have, however, survived to the present day and may be observed in pastors, elders, teachers, and other leaders of the church. That shrewd behaviour (*oku lunguka*) is appreciated by this great trading people is easily understood, but it is not as universally or unreservedly admired as are some other types. [554]

There is also a tender side to Umbundu character. It might conceivably be supposed that long-continued and intimate participation in such inhumane occupations as the slave-trade might leave a stamp of callous brutality on the character of the Ovimbundu generally.[3] On second thought a similar question might be raised with regard to Americans because of their participation in the same slave-traffic, or their more recent participation in equally ruthless practices under the banner of modern capitalism.

The rarity or absence among kings of the Ovimbundu of resort to 'revolting and wholesale punishments—so common at African courts' has been noted.[4] On the positive side, a most admirable

[1] Cf. Allport, op. cit., pp. 118, 344.

[2] Cf. *Missionary Herald*, 1883, p. 229; 1886, p. 143; 1887, pp. 26, 530, &c.

[3] H. W. Nevinson alleged some such effect. Cf. *A Modern Slavery*, chap. ii. The references are to people of Viye. The effects noted were more probably due to long association with Europeans.

[4] *Supra*, p. 21 f.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

156 tenderness towards and consideration for those weaker than one-
183 self, for women, for children, and for the aged may be seen among Ovimbundu who are quite untouched by Christianity or Christian teachings in any form. This was often noticed and remarked upon by the early missionaries.[1] Umbundu treatment of children, the habitually respectful form of address used in speaking to them, and respect for their personalities[2] is further evidence of this tender side of Umbundu character, as is also their banning of angry behaviour from the relations of the home.[3]

181 Such a combination of aggressive, dignified, and tender behaviour makes for character worthy of admiration. It is a heritage worth conserving and passing on to succeeding generations.

000 Description and analysis now hands the problem to education. I cannot find a more fitting close for this chapter than the following statement of the problem:

> From the obscurities that for us still hang about African childhood, the fact emerges that Africans do educate their children. It is a genuine education. . . . What the African sets out to do, namely, to prepare the new generation to take its place in the community and carry on the tribal tradition, he accomplishes with a very considerable measure of success. . . . What Mr. Bryant has said of the Zulus may be said of some other African tribes: 'Through the ages, this admirable system of forming character and imparting knowledge continued, until at length was evolved a Zulu race noble of heart, dignified of bearing, refined of manners, and learned in natural science—qualities, alas! rapidly dying out before the destructive and demoralizing advance of European civilization!' The concluding sentence applies to many a tribe. No small part of the demoralization is caused by the disturbance of family life through the prolonged absence of the senior males at work on European mines and plantations and through the flocking of boys to European towns; it is in the family life, as we have seen, that the most

[1] 'We saw a party crossing the Kulili (*Kulēlē*) River on a bridge of the frailest construction. The young men went first, deposited their loads on the bank, and returned for the loads of the old men, who carefully crept over unburdened. Then some of the young men recrossed and took their baskets from the women, and their babies as well. Last of all, two strong youths assisted the women themselves to cross. Nothing could be more tenderly considerate.

'Whatever customs may prevail in other parts of Africa, here it is entirely false to say that women are ill-treated. No one of either sex does any great amount of work, but such as it is is fairly divided. . . . They are certainly as well-treated as the wives of the poorer classes at home, and do infinitely less drudgery.' From a letter of Dr. Nichols in the *Missionary Herald* for 1883, p. 229.

[2] See *supra*, p. 120 f.

[3] See *supra*, p. 124 f.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

way. Such instances as these came to light when my primary intention was a study of the use of wooden arrows for killing birds. 105 182 825

An inquiry about the names of trees and the use of timbers led to the topic of making and using wooden figures for magical purposes. Woodcraft, wood-carving, and religion are associated.

There is no fallacy so great as that of supposing that data may be collected and retained in mutually exclusive divisions. For example, a study of proverbs leads to native ideas concerning government, succession to office, and standards of conduct. The Ovimbundu say, "A turtle cannot climb on a tree stump, some one has to place it there." What is the meaning of this proverb? There are some men who occupy positions for which they have no ability; such men have been chosen through influence. The normal successor to chieftainship and kingship is the eldest son of the deceased man's principal wife, but if this rightful successor is stupid, some other son will be chosen. Yet the foolish youth may have friends who see their own advantage in having a weak ruler; they therefore combine to place him in office. The turtle has been placed on the tree stump, since it could not climb there.

In addition, folklore shows projection of the mentality of human beings into the lives of animals. Bird cries, with their supposed calls and answers, indicate that the birds have their family relationships involving strife, love, jealousy, and generosity. To the Ovimbundu, birds are a feathered human community.

Proverbs reveal a philosophy which is expressed by the German *Weltanschauung*. "If you are full of food, do not climb on a leopard's back; the leopard may be hungry." This means that one should not be foolishly exalted through good fortune. "You cannot tie a buck's head in a cloth; the horns will stick out," expresses the idea that crime cannot be concealed. "Hot water does not burn a house, and cold water does not make mush," is a sarcastic reply to one who boasts of things he cannot do. A riddle may express a philosophical train of thought. "What is it that lives while it dies and dies while it lives?" This is the log of wood the end of which is from time to time pushed farther into the fire. Like a human life, the log is being slowly consumed while yet living. Such examples as these call attention to a welding of thought, language, nature lore, and ideas that regulate conduct. 538 829 182

In considering food supply and occupations, division of labor on a sex basis is clear. Social sanctions have determined the appro- 183 462 105

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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priateness of certain tasks for males and females respectively, and individuals reflect these attitudes in their ideas and conduct.

My interpreter and others who were questioned laughed at the idea that men and women might interchange their occupations in the course of house-building. A woman collects wood for fuel, but not for house-building. Structural work is in the hands of men who dig the foundations, erect the poles, tie the crosspieces and add the roof. Women carry water for mixing the clay which is puddled by children; men, women, and children apply wet clay to the wattle walls. "Suppose a man should carry water?" I asked. "He would be laughed at and people would say that he was a he-woman," came the ready answer.

Women invariably make pottery among the Ovimbundu, but this is not always so in Negro tribes. Women of the Ovimbundu are likewise basket-makers, but they do not make mats, for this occupation is considered suitable for men only. Only women pound corn; before daybreak the heavy wooden pestles are at work and until sunset the rocks reserved for this operation are the centers of female activity, which includes singing and gossip. Only men herd cattle and only males are hunters. Women and children are the collectors of wild fruits and caterpillars, but only men take honey from the hives.

Agriculture and the preparation of food are entirely in the hands of the women. Men never eat with women; the latter have to carry the prepared food to the men's communal house in the middle of the village. Both men and women catch fish, but there are methods appropriate for each sex. There is a sex-division of labor without any implication of the inferiority of women.

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Occupations cannot be studied merely in a formal way, for, although the tasks are performed every day, a ceremonial element is involved. A clay pit is consecrated by the killing of a fowl; so also is the rock which is used as a base for pounding grain. The young blacksmith is initiated after two years of apprenticeship. On this occasion a dog is killed with the hammer which the master made for his pupil and the blood of the sacrificed animal is sprinkled on the tools. The remainder of the ritual and belief has been described in connection with occupations of the Ovimbundu. Study of the blacksmith's work was begun as research in technology; but failure to purchase the large hammer, even for a tempting sum, led to the discovery of considerable ritual.

Abstention from sexual relationships is enjoined on men and women who are going fishing. That copulation would induce the

428 Inheritance of movable goods was traditionally entirely matrilineal. Today informants are confused as to what ought [1P3] to be done. Inquiry about particular cases will reveal that often no movable property was left by the deceased, it having been used to pay for such expenses of the illness and funeral as the purchase of medicines and the buying of animals to be slaughtered at the feasts.

Where there is movable property, the transmission of it to the heirs is carried out in a rather informalized way, as so often happens in Umbundu social activities. The actual division of property is undertaken by a kinsman of the deceased. This should apparently be the most senior kinsman. It may be a cross-cousin or 'brother' or a sister's son.[29] How it is decided who is the senior kinsman, and who are fitted to participate in the share-out is not very clear. Nor does it seem that there is any effective device against the sharer-out giving himself the lion's share, except the general pressures and reciprocities of kinship. The principle accepted in the share-out is that inheritance should be a reflection of the relations which existed with the dead man, and also be a reward of funeral services. Nothing is kept for kin who are away working, and a son who did not keep in contact with his father would be omitted from the share-out.

By inheritance a man can increase his small stock of possessions. He is unlikely to receive anything much in the way of money, and since there is no land shortage, and, as yet, little in the way of valuable immovable property such as brick

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602 rubber trade to be reconciled with the statement by Childs that fear of sorcery
754 was increasing (Childs pp. 57–58)? I suggest that the final disintegration of the old
178 kinship groups may have been marked by particularly sharp social tensions, but that once these groups were in fact dissolved and a new form of social relations established the fear of sorcery may have declined. It should also be remembered that as indicated in Chapter V the present-day economic values of the Ovimbundu do not lead to expectations that a prosperous individual will share his wealth with poorer kinsmen, as was the case in the time of the rubber trade. Hence accusations of sorcery based on disappointed expectations of generosity are unlikely to arise.

Another aspect of the question which cannot be explored here in detail is the [8P11] lack of agreement on the causality of classes of happenings or individual events. Thus one informant will say that a woman's pains in childbirth are due to sorcerers among her kin, another will say that they are caused by God (as we would say, are natural).

[29] Hambly, pp. 199–200.

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houses, coffee plants and so on there is little likelihood of disputes arising about the inheritance of land claims. A woman's property should be given to her sisters, after her children have had their cut. In one case a man inherited his sister's debts but allowed her children to inherit her property, 'lest they be sad'. A wife's fields return to her husband.

Inheritance is then a process by which the relations of certain kin, both sons and sister's sons, with the deceased are recognized by the transmission of his property. As with other aspects of Umbundu kinship, while the existence of the kinship tie provides the basis on which to found a relationship, its content is determined by the nature of the contacts between the individuals involved and the services given.

Although there is a definite tendency for men of chiefly stock to have longer pedigrees than other individuals there is no chiefly genealogy. When Paulo, the elder of the school of Epalanga, told me that had he not been blind he might have been chief of Gumba, he quoted the names of four chiefs to whom he was related. The chieftancy is not tied to a lineage, but can be held by any individual who can claim links with a former chief or chiefs. People 'of the blood of the chiefs' in no sense form a differentiated group of aristocrats significant in social life.

In similar fashion membership of the spirit-linked professions and of certain cults seems to have been a matter of succession of one individual to the role of another.[20] Membership of the hunting and smithing professions descended patrilineally, but if a hunter or smith had no son his position could be succeeded to by a daughter's son.[21]

7. *Kinship in a Changing Society*

From this, and from other chapters, a picture of Umbundu kinship may emerge as something so blurred, confused, and confusing, as hardly to merit the term 'kinship system', yet at

[20] i.e. rather than admission to a corporate group of hunters. A man can inherit his father's hunting spirit before the latter's death; in Epalanga Batista had received the hunting spirit of his father Epalata.

[21] My informants were not agreed as to whether a sister's son could inherit in default of a son.

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the same time clearly an important part of social life. Kinship norms are confused, as is the correct term to use in a particular relationship. Ritual and jural sanctions are lacking, as are institutions based on the regular co-operation of groups of kinsmen. Yet a man likes to live with kinsfolk and there is a tendency for kin to cluster together in a neighbourhood.

By the very facts, that so many of a man's neighbours are his kinsmen, and that there is very little marked differentiation between the behaviour towards different categories of kin, kinship is robbed of any great specificity of content. It might be said that it is the quantity rather than the quality of kinship ties that makes kinship significant in establishing a 'sense of community' in a neighbourhood, in that the multiplicity of local kin ties creates some identification between a man's range of kin and his neighbourhood. At the same time a kinship tie provides a basis on which a closer relationship may be built by reciprocal services. It appears that the inheritance of property recognizes kinship in this way by recognizing claims not on the basis of strict genealogical proximity but on the quality of the relationship.

A discussion of marriage and the household must be left to the next chapter. The outline given of the present kinship system is sufficiently clear to begin an examination of the reasons for the changes. This must rely to some extent on speculation, owing to a lack of information on the actual working of the kinship system while it was in transition to its present form.

The key change is the disappearance of the kinship groups. These, it seems, disappeared because of their high degree of dependence on the particular type of economy existing before 1911. It has already been argued that the distinction between the patrikin and the matrikin is an attempt to isolate economic claims and conflicts from village and political relationships, and that the giving of loans without right of repayment within the matrikin was called for by a trading system in which credit played an important part. With the end of the trade the wealth passing through Umbundu hands declined sharply, and there was neither need for funds to meet trading losses nor currency to provide them. A man obtained money either by growing crops

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587 patrilateral cross-cousin, the reason for this being apparently to enable him to look after the children. Other marriages of a widow with her dead husband's kin were and are forbidden under pain of mystical sanctions. Thus, marriage with one's [684] dead wife's sister would lead to the latter's death through her sister's spirit. Illness or death was suggested as the penalty for marriage with a mother's brother's widow, although I know of two cases of such marriages happening. The reason for this prohibition against any marriage by a widow or widower with the kin of a deceased spouse is given as being that it is wrong to mix the blood.

684 Adultery is subject to mystical sanctions in the illness called *ondjamba* which seems to involve swelling of the legs. This afflicts not the guilty party but the other spouse (whether husband or wife) and the children.[18] I was also told by some informants that this illness affected the other spouse if there were no children; if there were children adultery would endanger their lives and the life of the innocent spouse. Some people do not believe in this nowadays; however the line [183] between believers and non-believers cannot be equalled with that between pagan and Christian or old and young. It is of course impossible to say how frequent adultery is in any community. Informants complain of the frequency of adultery. It should be noted that public opinion seems to condemn it strongly, and men who have discovered their wives being unfaithful usually send them away. The adulterer has to pay a heavy fine, assuming that he does not move away. The usual figure given for a fine was two cattle and a big pig, though in practice the fine would be smaller; in one case in 1948 it was 200 escudos (£2 10s.) and a pig. The word for the man who commits adultery with one's wife, or who marries one's ex-wife, is *tjikwelume* (he of jealousy) a word already referred to in the account of the kinship terminology. There is a rule against eating with him and if one goes to his funeral it is said that one's own death will soon follow. There is a similar rule against a woman eating with the wife of a man with whom she has committed adultery.

[18] For a detailed discussion of this concept, see Hastings, pp. 111–25. It is not nowadays believed that it afflicts people guilty of pre-marital sexual relations.

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do not know how Kafelo and Lusase came to hear of the case). 627
In practice, their role was that of any other spectator in trying to bring about a settlement, although a chief has, as was noted, the right to a commission on any indemnification. The right of spectators to intervene is not based on any particular relationship to those involved nor on any reputation for wisdom. There is in fact no organized routine for determining who may and who must turn up and who may and who must speak. Spectators and speakers are simply members of the neighbourhood community, some related to Sapapula, some simply fellow-villagers, and it is natural that in present Umbundu society, [571] lacking clearly-defined social groups, the crowd that assembles on such an occasion should look like a chance gathering. Its lack of recognized procedure, of accepted leadership, and of specific criteria of recruitment are all typical of the neighbourhood community among the contemporary Ovimbundu.

Despite the 'unorganized' character of this gathering, there 627
exists evidently a set of generally accepted symbolic values, 183
which are accepted by Christian and pagan, by young and old. 837
Thus Nahoka claimed as evidence that she had not committed adultery her meal with Kapapelo's wife, and the latter in turn offered as evidence that adultery had been committed a statement that her husband had made a gift of soap to Nahoka. These actions provide presumptive evidence of innocence or guilt since an adulterer or adulteress may not eat under apparently mystical sanctions with the spouse of the person with whom he or she has committed adultery, and the giving of gifts by a man to a woman implies a sexual relationship. These actions were presumably recognized as convincing evidence in the days when there existed a formal court system, and continue to be recognized as such at the present day.

The nature of contemporary social relations, as being the 578
end-product of a series of acts between individuals rather than 571
as the content of jural norms defined by status, is also revealed in [671]
the dispute, particularly in the episode at Justino's. Sapapula does not complain that Kapapelo had not behaved as a villager should to his headman, but that he had not been grateful for having been given land. Kapapelo's complaint that Saviel, Sapapula's sister's son, had attempted to seduce his wife was,

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Ovimbundu and their neighbours. I have no tables representative of the Umbundu-speaking *diaspora* at the coast and in other outlying regions. There is an interesting and significant article in *Africa*[1] on those of these *diaspora* which are settled in the Mossamedes–Lubango area. The author has done all that could be expected within the limits of an article necessarily short, and it is to be hoped that subsequent writings may clear up matters left in doubt, especially with regard to the present social structure of the groups described.[2]

The social structure described in this chapter is that of the main body of the Ovimbundu. I may say that from observations and from a study of the genealogical tables collected, I have concluded that the structure of kinship and of social life is fairly homogeneous throughout the several tribes.

The Tribe

A complete enumeration of the Umbundu-speaking tribes or kingdoms with descriptions of their reciprocal relations is included in Chapter XII. Almost half of the twenty-two kingdoms were generally tributaries of one of the larger or more powerful kings, so that for practical purposes the Ovimbundu may be divided into eight or ten tribal groups. Although more than half of the Umbundu kingdoms may be said to be feudatories of the larger ones, it is nevertheless true that each of them had its own separate

[1] C. Estermann, 'Coutumes des Mbali du Sud d'Angola', *Africa*, Jan. 1939, pp. 74–86. The author states that their language is Kimbundu (of Luanda-Malange), but the examples which he gives show that although there are words borrowed from Kimbundu, from Portuguese, and from other sources, the structure both of verbs and of nouns and the method of 'Bantuization' of Portuguese words belong to Umbundu. These people may declare their language to be 'Kimbundu' in imitation of the European usage. So did the native 'Mohongo' taken to Paris by the Mission Rohan-Chabot (*Angola et Rhodesie*, Paris, 1914). I have personally ascertained that Umbundu is commonly spoken in Mossamedes and may also say that the samples of the language given in this article show it to be much the same as that spoken in the cities of Benguela, Lobito, &c. It would be better if an orthography more nearly like that recommended by the International African Institute were used. The term 'Mbali' (va Mbali, Mambari, Ovimbali) is an Umbundu term used for nearly one hundred years to designate those who imitate the Europeans or who live at or near the European towns which are collectively designated by the cognate term—*Lupali*. (For 'Mambari', &c., *vide* Livingstone, *Missionary Travels and Researches in South Africa*, pp. 91 f., 371, 384, &c.)

[2] e.g., who is the '*tante* de la jeune mariée ou la "marraine" des noces'? (op. cit., p. 78).

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

631 life and each could be taken as a unit complete in itself. Individual studies and comparisons of one with another would provide much valuable material. Familiarity with individuals and groups belong-
[184] ing to all the major tribal groups, and study of their folk-lore and customs has led me to conclude that as in language, so in social structure and in culture, the differences are of small account. In offering illustrative material, I shall give its tribal source.

The King

643 To describe the royal office and functions it would be necessary
177 to use the past tense. That reason, along with others, leads me to exclude this subject from the present study. Effective European occupation of the country and government by direct rule[1] have atrophied the royal office among the Ovimbundu until to-day kings survive as hardly more than living museum pieces. This being the case, I shall only enumerate the royal functions, very briefly characterize them, and pass on to describe other and living parts of the Umbundu social organism.

643 The principal functions of the royal office were:

776 1. *Religious*. The spirits of the king's ancestors were the principal national deities. The king was not only high priest but also the visible vice-regent and incarnation of the spirits. The
[778] sacrifices at the royal shrine, *kakokoto* (literally, at the skulls), the place of the royal skulls, were for the nation in order:

643 (*a*) *To control the elements*, i.e. to ensure a sufficient supply of
372 rain and avoid the dangers caused by hail, by lightning, &c. Also to control fire by providing a new fire properly (ceremonially)
789 kindled from which everyone took his fire. A king's reign was spoken of as 'during the Water of Lord So-and-so' (*Kovava a Ñalã Ngandi*), or 'during the Fire of Lord So-and-so' (*Kondalu ya Ñalã Ngandi*).

241 (*b*) *To ensure fertility*, toward which desideratum the royal
644 marriage had great influence. The queen's special province was agriculture and her kitchen was sanctified by human sacrifice to
[782] guarantee the national food supply. Ceremonially treated seed was distributed to be mixed with the seed of each granary.

[1] 'Direct rule' is applied in most parts of Africa where European settlement is the predominant consideration and also where centralized government is the ideal. 'Indirect rule' is best illustrated in the Gold Coast, Nigeria, Uganda, and Tanganyika Territory.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

182 621 in a somewhat decadent state, the Umbundu village has up to the present maintained its status as a local kinship unit.

182 592 602 The household is not a solitary unit but a part of the village. Since it is constituted by marriage, it embodies the union of at least two kinship groups. The attitudes and behaviour patterns within the Umbundu household are basically those universally recognized. In common with the households of most Bantu cultures, it differs from the European model in that it extends its attitudes and behaviour patterns to the wider kinship groupings by means of a classificatory system of relationship.

613 182 In the wider kinship groupings (*epata*), the Ovimbundu recognize both the maternal (*oluina*) and the paternal (*oluse*) lines of descent. The functions of the latter have been largely local, residential, social, and religious, with succession (of status) in the male line. The function of the former has been cohesive over a larger territory, with a recognized head in whom has been vested both religious and economic functions. Both his office and the inheritance of property descend in the female line. Much of the power, economic and personal, formerly held by the *oluina*, in the person of the mother's brother, seems to be passing at the present time to the *oluse*, in the person of the father. The bilineal kinship system has been a strongly cohesive social force.

182 [582] The form of marriage practised by the Ovimbundu is of the two-way cross-cousin type in both lines of kin and in three generations. It seems to be an individual type developed in the particular social and economic situation of the Ovimbundu. As a contract between two families and as a new venture, the marriage relation demands that great attention be given to attitudes and behaviour patterns which emphasize mutual respect.

[561] The hierarchy of age is a very real factor in the Umbundu social structure. Age-set 'schools' have not existed generally throughout the tribes, but there are associations of coevals. This is largely a cohesive force.

754 Sorcery is the most important disruptive force at work *within* Umbundu society. Working as it does, within kinship groups, and inasmuch as it seems to be on the increase, sorcery embodies a real danger to social cohesion.

184 178 Homogeneity has never been an attribute of the Ovimbundu as regards their racial or cultural make-up. The slave-trade injected other and more diverse elements, and recent movements and

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

contacts still other. As regards social and economic status, the 184
course of Umbundu life has seen great changes: great inequalities 178
produced by trade booms; a severe levelling down by effective European occupation and by the application of direct rule. That the Umbundu social organism through this entire process has maintained elements of cohesion and of life speaks well for its adaptability and for the vitality of its institutions.

VIII. LANGUAGE

Affinities of Umbundu

197 The Umbundu language is widely understood in Angola owing to the journeys of the Ovimbundu as raiders and traders in large caravans. Umbundu is as important for communication in Angola as Hausa is for Nigeria, or Swahili for the east coast of Africa.

Notwithstanding this use of Umbundu as a lingua franca it is necessary to note that tribes surrounding the Ovimbundu have their own distinctive Bantu languages; moreover, the Umbundu language itself has several dialects.

For example, the Vasele tribe living in rugged country in the hinterland of Novo Redondo have a dialect of Umbundu (Usele) so distinctive that a competent Ocimbundu interpreter has difficulty in making himself understood, or interpreting what is said. Isolation of the Vasele from the Ovimbundu has led to the formation of a cultural pocket in which linguistic developments have shared in [184] a specialization of culture. The differences between the Umbundu of Elende and that of the Ambundu tribes may be noted by comparing this brief outline of Umbundu, recorded at Elende, with the records of Amandus Johnson, whose research relates to the language spoken in the hinterland of Loanda. The present chapter will deal only with notes on vocabulary, phonetics, an outline of grammar, sign language, folklore and proverbs, all of which are briefly treated. In the field phonographic records of the Umbundu language were taken, and for the analysis of tonal values and other aspects of phonetics I am indebted to Dr. M. H. Watkins, a student of Professor E. Sapir, formerly of the University of Chicago, now at Yale.

The section on Umbundu grammar conclusively shows Umbundu to be a representative language of the Bantu family of languages. Umbundu possesses all the fundamental characteristics of Bantu [113] speech. The truth of this may be seen by comparing this outline of Umbundu with the analysis of Bantu languages given by A. Werner (Language Families of Africa, London, 1925). Moreover, Carl Meinhof (Grundzüge einer vergleichenden Grammatik der Bantu Sprachen, Berlin, 1906, pp. 112-115, and translation by A. Werner and N. J. von Warmelo, London, 1932) indicates the degree of relationship of Umbundu to other Bantu tongues by giving comparisons of the stems of personal and possessive pronouns, along with other comparative data.

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INTRODUCTION

The Ovimbundu[1] of central Angola appear under various 101
names[2] in narratives by nineteenth and early twentieth century
travellers in West Central Africa. In the present century three 121
anthropological studies have been written about them by
Childs,[3] Hambly,[4] and Hastings,[5] as well as two shorter studies
by Bastos[6] and Santos Brandao,[7] and a large number of
articles.[8] Despite the large amount of documentation available
there existed a considerable number of gaps, especially as [114]
regards the political system and the kinship system.[9] In pro-
posing to work among the Ovimbundu, I hoped to be able to
fill in these gaps, and in particular to provide a study of what
appeared to be a double-descent kinship system. I also hoped
to study the reactions of an African society to Portuguese
rule.

I arrived at Nova Lisboa in roughly the centre of Umbundu 114
country in October 1955. Here, as in Lisbon, I was told that it 121
would be very difficult to find an area where the traditional 104
social life of the Ovimbundu as described in the literature

[1] A plural from the singular Otjimbundu. The adjective and the name of the language is Umbundu. The Ovimbundu people are entirely distinct from the Kimbundu people of northern Angola and the two languages are not mutually intelligible. However, the confusion between the two has gone so far that both Europeans and Africans speak of the Ovimbundu people and language as Kimbundu and of the true Kimbundu as Kamundongo.

[2] Mambari, Nano, Ovimbali, and so on.

[3] G. M. Childs, *Umbundu Kinship and Character*, Oxford, 1949.

[4] W. D. Hambly, *The Ovimbundu of Angola*, Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago, 1934.

[5] *Ovimbundu Customs and Practices* (unpublished thesis) 1933, D. A. Hastings.

[6] Traçaos Geraes sobre a Etnografia do Districto de Benguella in *Boletim da Sociedade de Geografia de Lisboa*, 1908, pp. 5–15, 44–56, 81–99, 135–40, 169–76, 197–207.

[7] Articles in *Mensário Administrativo* (Luanda) March–April, July–August 1950, and Sept.–Oct., Nov.–Dec. 1952.

[8] See Bibliography.

[9] For an examination of the ethnographic material as it then was, see Merran McCulloch, *The Ovimbundu of Angola*, Ethnographic Survey of Africa. International African Institute, London, 1952.

[p. xiv is blank – Analyst]

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could be observed. Eventually I decided to work in the Bimbe area, in the extreme north-western corner of Umbundu country. The census[10] indicated that Bimbe had a smaller white population than any comparable area of Umbundu country, and people who knew it considered that it was one of the areas most likely to retain a relatively conservative social life.

In Bimbe I settled in the village of Epalanga in the chiefdom of Gumba. The advantage of Gumba lay in the conservatism for which its people were noted in other chiefdoms; its disadvantage lay in its proximity to the northern boundary of Umbundu speech and culture, which led me to collect some items of ethnographic information not typical of Umbundu country.[11] On the whole, I am satisfied that the people of Gumba were in the past as in the present Ovimbundu in both speech and way of life.[12]

Many of my discoveries were at first negative ones. I could not find any evidence that there was a double system of kinship groups actually in existence; the villages were not composed of agnatic kin; the chief seemed lacking in power. Nor was it easy to obtain detailed information about the past even from old men. There is little interest nowadays in history, nor are the old social institutions regarded, even by those who once participated in them, as being necessarily better than those of the present day. The reason for this attitude seems to lie in Umbundu social psychology with its readiness to accept European authority and values. Interesting as the motivations behind this attitude are, this 'cultural amnesia' caused me much disappointment. I found it much easier to get texts on the caravan trade, and on ceremonial practices and proverbs, than on the political and kinship systems. The inadequacies of the information I received on the political system may be explained by the fact that Gumba is on the fringe of the area tributary to the old kingdom of

[10] Of 1950.

[11] The payment of fines by a man to his dead wife's kin had been formerly practised in Gumba, and still is further north. It does not seem to have been known in living memory elsewhere in Umbundu country.

[12] The northern limit of Umbundu speech is now somewhere to the north of the administrative post of Cela. As there has not been substantial migration from the south, it is reasonable to assume that it is many years since the Gumba–Cela boundary was also the language boundary.

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[1874-1911]

439 484 journeys diminished in distance as they increased in profitability.[53]

My informants, however, gave a somewhat different picture. Long trading journeys were still being undertaken in the last decade of the trade (1901–11). Some men whom I met had travelled to the kingdom of the Mwata Yamvo and beyond to Luba country; one man had made a journey into what is now the Congo Republic which took a year to go and a year to return; another had visited Barotseland. It should be said that these seem to have been unusually long journeys; journeys totalling six to eight months were common.[54]

182 829 [576] [754] The significance of the trade in social life is reflected in the mystical explanations of success in business found in Umbundu religion. Prosperity might be explained either by the favour of spirits such as Kandundu and Otjipuku, who received at their shrines libations of wine, or by malevolent sorcery involving the sacrifice of relatives in exchange for wealth.[55] The existence of these two explanations probably reflects the existence of some rich men who satisfied the expectations of their relatives and others who did not.

567 178 Apart from the rubber trade, the older slave trade continued until its vigorous suppression in the period 1910–12, and indeed seems, as regards the Ovimbundu, to have become intensified in the period after 1890. The slaves went to S. Tome and Principe, or to coastal plantations. Up to that time the Ovimbundu had sold few of their own people, with the exception of criminals or people who had become generally unpopular with their kin. The collapse of the old political system played into the hands of adventurers who unscrupulously exploited the Umbundu custom of debt slavery or conducted raids for this purpose.[56]

604 439 It was then the 'trade' which was the common factor in the life of all Ovimbundu, and which was so to speak the factor,

[53] Childs, p. 208.

[54] Informants.

[55] Although some old men still have shrines to the luck-giving spirits it is not possible to see how their cult functioned in the social structure then existing. It is, however, notable that success could be interpreted mystically in two ways by benevolent spirits or by sorcery.

[56] Childs, p. 213. I was told that Gumba had been raided from Bailundo.

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[1874-1911]

rather than any political alliance or opposition, which related the Ovimbundu as a whole to the Portuguese and the other tribes. Informants who remember 'the time of the rubber' talk about it with much more interest and much more detail than about any other aspect of the past, and it is far easier to make an ordered picture out of the narratives of the caravan journeys than to fill in the gaps in the descriptions of the political and kinship systems provided by Childs and Hastings.[57]

Politically the Ovimbundu were divided, as has been said, into several kingdoms. Bailundo, the largest of the kingdoms was divided, according to Childs into about 200 sub-chiefdoms. As it had about half a million inhabitants this would give an average population of about 2,500. While the kingdoms seem to have been more or less stable in number and boundaries from the end of the eighteenth century, the number of sub-chiefdoms seems to have increased. Thus an official Portuguese estimate made in 1799 gives Bailundo as having only 82 sub-chiefdoms, and Galangue, where Childs counted 112 sub-chiefdoms, as having 78. The sub-chiefdom paid tribute to the king, sent men for his armies, and recognized his court as the supreme arbitrator. Some sub-chiefdoms were held by ministers or relatives of the king.[58]

It is, however, not easy on the sparse detail available to decide how much autonomy the sub-chiefdoms really had. Gumba, the area where I worked, was a sub-chiefdom of the Bailundo kingdom, albeit on the north-western frontier, neighbouring Cassongue and Cela, where the people did not call themselves Va-Mbailundu, though their rulers acknowledged the suzerainty of the king of Bailundo. Old men told me of raids from Bailundo for slaves, but I cannot say if this was the result of the period of disorder mentioned, or whether sub-chiefdoms on the border of a kingdom gave only nominal submission and received only nominal protection. In the area where I worked,

[57] This is not intended as a personal reflection on Dr. Childs and the late Dr. Hastings, both of whom deserve the highest praise for their work and for their obvious devotion to the Ovimbundu. Hastings devoted far more space to the magico-religious field than to the kinship system. Likewise Childs's description of kinship is much shorter, much less detailed, and much less satisfactory than his account of childhood and adolescence, or the really outstanding historical chapter.

[58] Magyar, pp. 383–92; Childs, pp. 23–24.

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meet other Angolan Protestants through such occasions as the Congress of Evangelical Youth, held at Malange in 1955.

While the Catholic missions are not tied to the Ovimbundu in the same way as the Protestants the number of their adherents falls sharply when the Umbundu boundary is reached. Responsiveness to missionary activity is a mark of the Ovimbundu today just as was participation in the caravan trade. Indeed, the main common possession of the Ovimbundu, the Umbundu language, is, as a literary vehicle and object of study, almost a missionary monopoly. Both missions produce a monthly magazine in Umbundu and Portuguese, and several books of a religious or educational nature have been published with Umbundu on one side and Portuguese on the other as legally required. The dictionaries and grammars are almost all of missionary authorship.

Acceptance of Christianity has also significance for Umbundu self-consciousness. The majority of Ovimbundu have come under missionary influence in varying degrees, and conversion to Christianity makes Ovimbundu feel closer to Europeans and superior to other African peoples. I have heard African priests claim that the Ovimbundu are the best people in Angola, largely on this ground, and at Lobito and Luanda tensions have been felt in the Protestant community between Ovimbundu and members of other tribes.[11]

The Ovimbundu live under economic, political, and religious systems introduced and controlled by Europeans. Yet trader, official, and missionary are all dependent on the Ovimbundu. The 'civilized' and the native live in symbiosis, and the two basic problems of this study are the nature of this symbiosis, and its relation to the social system of the native population themselves. To see this symbiosis in perspective it is necessary to describe what occupations and statuses Africans can hold.

The strict segregation of black and white found in South Africa is alien to Portuguese traditions. There is a lack of almost all forms of public segregation between white and non-white.[12]

[11] Personal information.

[12] In the racial discrimination that does exist the mulattoes generally count as whites. It is said to be difficult for a full African to obtain accommodation in a Luanda hotel, but the situation for mulattoes is quite different.

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catechist or missionary for support at the post. There is no tendency to confine government appointments to chiefdoms and headmanships to Catholics.[8] However, the Protestant catechists are, unlike the Catholic catechists, not exempt from taxes.[9]

The Ovimbundu no longer possess a coherent political system of their own. They cannot, owing to the nature of their relations with the post and their ignorance of the higher administration, regard the Government as being their representative; the only wide-range systems with which they can identify themselves are the missions. It is through them that the individual is promised eternal life, that the village receives a new type of identity and unity, and that the Ovimbundu as a people participate with the 'civilized' population in ritual communities cutting across the boundaries of culture and geography.

The objection may be made that it is only the Christians who could effectively be represented by the missions and that in Epalanga and Gumba generally baptized Christians formed a minority. It has, however, been previously noted how the school may give its name to a village of mixed population. The catechist will represent both Christians and pagans when he is concerned with the post or with the mission. Moreover, the percentage of pagans in Gumba is far higher than in the rest of Bimbe to which they are linked by the Umbundu language and culture, by administrative divisions, and by a wide range of personal contacts.

It may, then, be asserted, that the catechetical schools and the wider groupings which they build up are the social groups most significant for Umbundu integration on any scale wider than that of the household.

[8] In Gumba the chief and government headman were pagan. There are government-recognised Protestant chiefs elsewhere in Umbundu country.

[9] In some parts of Angola the Catholic catechists are not automatically granted exemption but have to have obtained certain other qualifications, e.g. a certain degree of literacy.

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601 with Adolfo, the small son of Jaime, his wife's brother, but when asked what relation Adolfo was to him, became confused and said, 'My son, my sister's son.'

601 There exist marked variations in terminology in Umbundu
1&4 country.[16] For instance, *sekulu* seems to be used for mother's brother only in north-western Umbundu country. Elsewhere *manu*[17] is used for mother's brother, and *sekulu* is used for grandfather. At Caconda, where there has been strong Portuguese
[172] influence since the eighteenth century, only the Portuguese kinship terms are known.[18]

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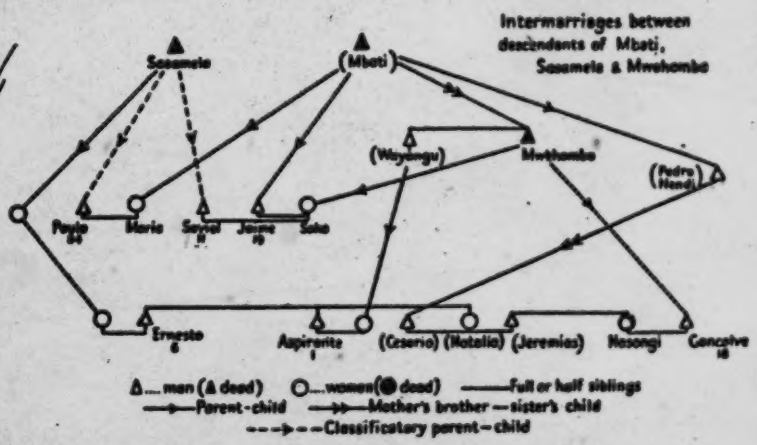

Δ ... man (▲ dead) ○ ... woman (● dead) ——— full or half siblings
——▸ Parent-child ——▸▸ Mother's brother—sister's child
- - - ▸ - - Classificatory parent—child

CHART 2. Mbati, Mwehombo and some of their kin. For Mbati (dead, non-member) and Mwehombo (dead, former member) see Chapter III, section 1. For Sasamela (dead, former member) and Cesario, Jeremias, Natalia, Pedro Nendi, and Wayangu (all living non-members) see List II (pp. 55–6). The rest of the individuals named on the chart are members of Epalanga. Paulo and Saviel were 'brothers', both patrilaterally and matrilaterally.

3. *Kinship Norms*

593 In this section I shall describe the relations that existed within the elementary family in the time of the rubber trade. A man

[16] For other lists of kinship terms see Hastings, pp. 83–85. Childs, pp. 47–56. M. Howse, *Umbundu Lessons* (Dondi, 1955), Vol. II, pp. 195–7.
[17] Etymologically, *manu* seems to mean 'mother-person'.
[18] Private information.

[text continues on p. 98]

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man has four daughters he will receive the bridewealth only for the two oldest. The mother's brother will receive the bridewealth for the third sister and a brother for the fourth. If the father is dead, the payment is made to a mother's brother or a brother real or classificatory. To some extent the size of the bridewealth is a reflection of the status of the girl—thus on the railway line 1,000 escudos (£12. 10s.) might be paid for a girl who could read and write. In my own area a Gumba man might pay more for a girl from Ndjandju than for a Cela girl because Ndjandju is regarded, owing to its proximity to the mission, as being more civilized. There exist also counter-gifts. Ndjoleya, who as mother's brother received the bridewealth for Feliciana, gave a pig to Daniel, and it is customary for a pig to be given to the husband by his wife's father on the birth of their first child.[11]

The Umbundu word for marriage *oku kwela* is applied both to customary marriage and to Christian marriage. To distinguish between the two, Portuguese words are taken over, *amigar* (originally, to live in concubinage) being used for the customary marriage, and *casar* (to marry) being used for marriage in church. The use of *amigar* of a particular marriage implies that the people making it are pagans, or Christians who have omitted the church ceremony for one reason or another. In Gumba the church marriage, while it gives status among Christians is not an important occasion in the local milieu, and people who have been through the church marriage but who have not made the *uvala*, the traditional wedding feast, are not permitted by their senior kin to cohabit. Around the mission the church ceremony is regarded as the important thing, and the *uvala* seems to be thought of simply as a party. Traditionally and usually at the present day the *uvala* is held in the dry season.

In the wedding feast there are a number of variations between one occasion and another, but a general outline can

[11] Hastings, p. 110, states that a year or two after the birth of the first child another pig is given which is called the pig of cutting off. The giving and the accepting of this severes all responsibilities between the families. The women can no more be returned to her father's people for misdemeanour—only in the case of the death of her husband will she be taken back.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

643 times, which is a sure sign of his greatness in Umbundu estimation. Ekuikui's reign marked the end of an era and the beginning
173 of another, not only for the people of Bailundu, but for all the Ovimbundu. The rubber trade had begun just before he came to
[185] the stool and his reign saw its intensive development. Tradition is probably right in placing the beginning of intensive agricultural pursuits during Ekuikui's time, for the great development of trade, need for rations for the long journeys, and a market for foodstuffs at the coast provided the necessary stimulus to cultivate beyond immediate seasonal need. Ekuikui carried on the tradition of
[648] warfare[1] which was so large a part of his ancestral heritage, but he had the good sense to attempt no large-scale operations either against his relatively powerful Ovimbundu confrères, or against European establishments. There was plenty of provocation[2] and no lack of warlike counsel, but he probably realized that the tenor of the times was against such operations. Had his contemporaries of Viye and his own successors been possessed of equal good sense, the Ovimbundu might have been saved some very difficult times
x 175 and not a little bloodshed. The military occupation of Viye came
648 about in 1890, after a disastrous war brought on by foolishly high-
726 handed treatment on the part of King Ndúnduma[3] and his counsellors of a little expedition bound for the interior under Captain Paiva Couceiro, and of Silva Porto,[4] resulting in the suicide of the latter. The ruler and people of Viye relied on a largely magical defence against Boer sharpshooters and Portuguese field artillery with Krupp guns. When finally Ndunduma came in and gave himself up[5] he was exiled to São Tiago in the Cape Verde Islands,

[1] For King Ekuikui's wars see *Missionary Herald*, 1882, p. 225; 1883, p. 339; 1884, pp. 145 f., 504; 1885, pp. 279, 355, 375; 1889, p. 67; 1890, p. 292.

[2] See op. cit., 1886, pp. 228 f., 452, 508.

[3] *Ndunduma* (Thunderer) was the name assumed by Cikunyu when he took office after a *coup d'état* in 1888 (see *Missionary Herald*, 1889, p. 242 f.).

[4] Antonio Francisco Ferreira da Silva Porto, appointed 'Captain-major and exterior judge' of Bihe in 1885. He had authority only over the European residents, but he knew the country and people well and had tried to bring about a peaceful occupation of the country; neither the Government in Benguela nor the native authorities, however, would take his advice. His suicide brought the importance of the Umbundu country to the fore, and he became a Portuguese national hero.

[5] It was the Rev. W. H. Sanders, in charge of Kamundongo Mission Station, who sought Ndunduma and got him to surrender in order to avoid further slaughter. For a report of this 'war' see *Relatorio do Districto de Benguella*, 1891, pp. 12–14; also *Missionary Herald*, 1891, pp. 47, 63 f., 88, 108 f.; Dr. J. Johnston, *Romance versus Reality in South Central Africa*, pp. 59–63. F. S. Arnot (*Bihe*

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

with that which has already been reviewed, might make it possible 103
to determine the demography of the Benguela Highland prior to 167
the formation of the Umbundu kingdoms. It is also further evidence as to the demographic make-up of the Ovimbundu. Some of these recurring place-names evidently represent elements which now constitute separate entities outside the Umbundu kingdoms, although they probably made contributions to the formation of those kingdoms. Others represent elements which probably moved away from the earlier invasions from the north but stayed in their new sites to amalgamate with later arrivals. Some may represent successive splittings-off from a stock which thus settled at various places. Many recurrent place-names could be shown both in this region and outside the language-grouping.

Attitudes toward Other Tribes. Attitudes of the Ovimbundu 619
towards the various neighbouring tribes are instructive. Mention 186
has already been made of the attitude of the southern 'Bangala' 101
people in their inclusion of the Ovimbundu of Kalukembe within their own system of exogamy. The Ovimbundu recognize a common humanity with the peoples who are their neighbours both on the south and on the north. They are all *omanu*,[1] people, or even *vakuetu*, comrades. Similar recognition is not extended to the eastern and south-eastern neighbours who are lumped together under the derogatory term of 'va Ngangela' or *ovingangela*.[2] This eastern region as far as the Great Lakes was the happy hunting-ground of the slave-traders from Viye and from Bailundu. There is a term *olongoya* which is applied to the northern neighbours, but without the derogatory connotation of 'Ngangela'. *Olongoya* has a linguistic connotation as did *barbaroi* in the Greek, and refers to the fact that these neighbours speak what is to the Ovimbundu an unintelligible language. How much of rationalization there may be in these attitudes and prejudices one cannot say, but it seems that in them there is some recognition of tribal origins and relationships, of the fact that across the Benguela Highland migrations have swept from north to south.

Conclusion. In consideration of the above evidence, it is now 174
possible to draw conclusions concerning the origin of the Ovi- 167

[1] *Omanu* is the Umbundu equivalent for the Nguni *abantu*, which has come to be applied to the whole language family.

[2] This Umbundu attitude is best illustrated by the proverb 'As a grass hut is not a house, so an *ocingangela* (singular) is not a person (*omanu*).'

3

an elevation of 4,000 feet or more, and the boundaries of Ovimbundu territory closely correspond with this area.(1) Ovimbundu are found also in regions adjoining the Highland, and Umbundu-speaking groups stretch as far as the Atlantic coast-line, between the towns of Loanda and Benguella. Ovimbundu country is divided between the Administrative Provinces of Bie, Benguella, and Huila, in the Districts of Benguella, Huambo, Cuanza Sul, Bie and Huila. 101 631

NEIGHBOURING TRIBES

To the east and south-east of the Ovimbundu are the Luimbe, Luchaze, Mbunda, Mbwela, etc., for all of whom the Ovimbundu use the derogatory term *Ngangela*, or *Ganguella* in the Portuguese version.(2) The Ovimbundu attitude towards these people is illustrated in the proverb "as a grass hut is not a house, so an *ocingangela* is not a person".(3) This eastern region was a favourite hunting-ground for slave-traders from Viye and Bailundu. 161 [186]

To the north-east are the Chokwe, Bangala and Songo peoples, who are related to the Lunda group.(4)

To the west and south of the Ovimbundu are cattle-keeping peoples - the Nganda, Ndombe, Hanya, Cilenge, Cipungu, Muila, Nyaneka, Mulondo and Khumbi. These form a fairly homogeneous cultural group, and are in certain respects similar to the southern Ovimbundu.(5) Childs, following Estermann,(6) uses the collective name *"Bangala"* in referring to them, but in order to avoid confusion with the Bangala tribe to the north-east, this usage is not adopted here. Still further south are the Ambo and Herero, also cattle-keepers.

The tribes to the north of the Ovimbundu - Esela, Cipala, Lupolo, Ndongo or Kimbundo etc. - belong to the western or Angola 'cluster' of the Congo people.(7) The Esele (Vesele) and Mbui (Amboim) may also belong to this group, but have not yet been surely classified.(8) The northern tribes are sometimes collectively called by the Ovimbundu *Olongoya*, a term which implies that they speak a language unintelligible to the Ovimbundu, but which has not the derogatory sense of *"Ngangela"*.(9) Unlike the eastern peoples, the peoples to the south and north of the Ovimbundu are recognised as *omanu* (people), or even *vakuetu* (comrades).(10) [186]

DEMOGRAPHY

The 1940 Angola Census(11) estimates the number of Ovimbundu (Mbundo) as 1,331,087, of whom 694,504 are females, 636,583 males. Childs(12) points out that this number should be decreased by at least 150,000 owing to the erroneous inclusion of several small non-Ovimbundu tribal groups. 161

(1) See map. (2) See McCulloch, 1951, p.52.
(3) The term used for "person" in the proverb is *omanu*, a "potential" person - a word used for adolescents. See pp. below.
(4) The Bangala are sometimes held to be related to the Congo rather than the Lunda group.
(5) See below, p. (6) 1935, pp.45-69.
(7) Childs, 1945, p.8. (8) Ibid.
(9) Ibid., p.189. (10) Ibid. p.x.
(11) Quoted by Mendes Correia, 1943, p.423, and Sarmento, 1948.
(12) 1949, p.9.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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meet other Angolan Protestants through such occasions as the Congress of Evangelical Youth, held at Malange in 1955.

While the Catholic missions are not tied to the Ovimbundu in the same way as the Protestants the number of their adherents falls sharply when the Umbundu boundary is reached. Responsiveness to missionary activity is a mark of the Ovimbundu today just as was participation in the caravan trade. Indeed, the main common possession of the Ovimbundu, the Umbundu language, is, as a literary vehicle and object of study, almost a missionary monopoly. Both missions produce a monthly magazine in Umbundu and Portuguese, and several books of a religious or educational nature have been published with Umbundu on one side and Portuguese on the other as legally required. The dictionaries and grammars are almost all of missionary authorship.

Acceptance of Christianity has also significance for Umbundu self-consciousness. The majority of Ovimbundu have come under missionary influence in varying degrees, and conversion to Christianity makes Ovimbundu feel closer to Europeans and superior to other African peoples. I have heard African priests claim that the Ovimbundu are the best people in Angola, largely on this ground, and at Lobito and Luanda tensions have been felt in the Protestant community between Ovimbundu and members of other tribes.[11]

The Ovimbundu live under economic, political, and religious systems introduced and controlled by Europeans. Yet trader, official, and missionary are all dependent on the Ovimbundu. The 'civilized' and the native live in symbiosis, and the two basic problems of this study are the nature of this symbiosis, and its relation to the social system of the native population themselves. To see this symbiosis in perspective it is necessary to describe what occupations and statuses Africans can hold.

The strict segregation of black and white found in South Africa is alien to Portuguese traditions. There is a lack of almost all forms of public segregation between white and non-white.[12]

[11] Personal information.

[12] In the racial discrimination that does exist the mulattoes generally count as whites. It is said to be difficult for a full African to obtain accommodation in a Luanda hotel, but the situation for mulattoes is quite different.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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that the Government is benevolent even if its agents are not, and men say that they like the Europeans. There are other opposed currents of feeling, though; thus a cook to a European family said to me, 'The Portuguese do not wish us to learn' and a villager declared, 'The Portuguese say to the English that the Ovimbundu have tails.'[39] The great mass of the Ovimbundu seemed to be without political consciousness, or desire for independence; there is little nostalgia for the days of the caravans, and it is widely felt that the present is better than the past, since there is more contact with Europeans.

Traders in the neighbourhood were relatively few, compared to other parts of Umbundu country. At Chicunda there were three trading stores and people who did not like them went across the river to Cassongue. Traders try to prevent natives who live in their neighbourhood from dealing at other stores where they can get better prices, but this is not always effective. Some Ovimbundu realize that variations of price levels are related to such factors as proximity to the railway line. The traders are criticized for paying their servants low wages as compared with those paid in the coastal cities. Although there is a great deal of mutual suspicion between the traders and the Ovimbundu which is expressed in the arguing and haggling that takes place in the stores, there is none of the fear so noticeable in the people's attitudes to the *chefes*. Many traders have a smattering of Umbundu, and have a certain affection for the local people. Economically, the role of the traders is to receive the maize and other products grown locally for transport to the railway line, and to distribute trade goods to the villages. Their presence is also important in preventing the rise of any other system of trading by markets or pedlars.

The principal goods sold are blankets, cloths, and clothing of all sorts, including fancy items such as sun-glasses. There are also a good many bottles of wine, and also oil-lamps and kerosene tins, and electric torches. For literates or would-be literates, there are pens, pencils, writing-papers and slates. Such goods as bicycles, gramophones, and sewing-machines are generally

[39] i.e. The Portuguese say the Ovimbundu are savages and keep them from contact with other Europeans. The Bailundo area had not (up to September 1961) been affected by the revolt. However, a marked change in this attitude of submissiveness seems to have taken place.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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795 551 attempt to take on European surnames. Alternatively, a man may take his father's name and attempt to use it as a surname. Thus Joaõ Batista Tjindandi, a resident of Epalanga, had received Joaõ Batista in baptism, and had taken Tjindandi, his father's name, as a surname. This is, however, not at all a general trend. Even a village of mixed Christian-pagan population may be known by the name of its school, identifying itself by its Christian name.

795 554 A man identifies himself also with social change and with progress by 'entering the school'. When a small girl, whom I asked if she had 'entered into the school' replied 'Not at all', her elder sister's husband remarked: 'She is asleep'. In the general Angolan society the religious referent is the most status-giving type of reference that most Ovimbundu can give. 186 554 There is no very marked feeling in the superiority of one area of Umbundu country to another nor even is there a marked sense of the superiority of Ovimbundu to other tribes—thus the Kimbundu will be highly praised for the degree of European culture they have acquired. The very word Ovimbundu is used as an equivalent of '*pretos*' (blacks) a word not used of 'civilized' Africans, since it is indicative of the lowest colour-class. As a Christian, a man has a status which he shares with Europeans.

797 648 He can also identify himself not only in a general way with the Europeans but more particularly with the general church organization. There is much closer contact between the authority-figures of the church organization and the people than between the authority-figures of the administration and the natives. Thus all Catholics in the Nova Lisboa diocese are confirmed by the Bishop of Nova Lisboa, and have seen him—similarly many of the Protestant Ovimbundu know of Dr. Childs, the headmaster of the Protestant secondary school at Dondi, through having heard him preach at a conference. Some Christian villagers would know the names of pioneer missionaries. Little is known by the people about the personalities or duties of the senior members of their administration, and even their titles are not properly understood.

795 648 The religious differences which exist at local level have no marked significance in the relations of natives to the post. In certain circumstances a pagan may appeal to a Christian

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

teachers who have themselves had traditional training and have maintained their own kinship ties, then we can work out with them sound social methods.

Language teaching is of great importance in the field under consideration. The mission schools have produced remarkable results in their teaching of the Portuguese language, results probably unequalled by schools similarly situated and conditioned elsewhere. Regulations prohibiting the vernacular except in religious instruction, and requiring the use of Portuguese in all schools from the start,[1] have created great difficulties. No responsible person in touch with the situation questions the utility of teaching the language of the European colonial power, but the educational soundness of attempting to use, as a medium from the start, a language which is not used in the home is open to serious question. It is obvious that such a policy must seriously curtail the effectiveness of the school. The vernacular is still allowed for 'religious instruction' but beyond this, almost nothing but instruction in the Portuguese language can be accomplished. This policy compartmentalizes the school work to an unfortunate degree and places such emphasis on the mere acquiring of a language that the whole programme is warped. It is even inefficient as regards the teaching of the language itself, for pupils who have first had systematic instruction in their mother tongue are by that fact better equipped to acquire a European language.[2]

The French colonial authorities, who first applied language regulations of this sort in Africa, have come to realize the necessity for some modifications in practice. Gouverneur-Général Brévié, of Afrique Occidentale Française, in December 1931 stated:

> . . . In order that this system of education may produce the best results immediately, we must not hesitate to have recourse to the local

[1] Enforced since 1922 under the provisions of Decree 77 of 9 Dec., 1921 (*Boletim Oficial* No. 50, 1921). The text with an English translation may be found in *Treaties, Acts, and Regulations relating to Missionary Freedom* (London: International Missionary Council, 1923). A law of April 1938 lays down still more difficult regulations regarding the teaching of Portuguese and includes certain provisions which frankly discriminate between Protestant and Roman Catholic mission schools.

[2] 'in Achimota (Gold Coast) . . . by means of convincing tests it has been established that a child educated in his mother tongue in one year obtains a knowledge of English which otherwise would take him six years to acquire' (Gouverneur-Général Olivier, *Six Ans de Politique Sociale à Madagascar*, chap. v, quoted by Paul Crouzet in the *Educational Yearbook 1931*, p. 472).

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

I have seen an Ocimbundu male riding an ox without saddle. A 492
cord was passed through the animal's nose to serve as reins.

The Portuguese name for horse is *cavalo*, a word which the Ovim- 192
bundu use in the form *okavalu*, though there is an Umbundu word *ocingongovala*, which means "going with his neck up." The Umbundu words for donkey and mule are *ocimbulu* and *omulá*, respectively.

Generally speaking, the ears of animals are not clipped, neither 231
are cattle branded or otherwise marked to indicate ownership, but sometimes the ears of pigs and goats are cut to aid identification. When asked why the tips of the ears of dogs are mutilated an Ocimbundu will say that a dog with uncut ears does not hear when called (Plate LVI, Fig. 2).

Not many families own large herds of cattle among the Ovim- 233
bundu, and I did not see a big kraal until I was in southwest Angola. 556
Cattle, which are a measure of wealth, are used for paying fines, making funeral feasts, paying debts, and securing wives. The cattle throughout Angola are well-developed, handsome animals (Plate LVII, Fig. 1). The bull remains with the herd the entire year; there is therefore no particular season for the birth of calves. Usually cows are not milked by the Ovimbundu, consequently these people have no milk, butter, or cheese. The Vakuanyama of the south milk their [171]
cows and churn butter in calabashes slung on a pole.

The Ovimbundu say that milking the cow makes the calf thin, 234
but where the idea of milking the cow is borrowed from the Portu- [177]
guese the Ovimbundu have a procedure which is as follows: The calf is allowed to suck for a few minutes in order to deceive the cow; then the milker begins his work. At intervals of a few minutes the calf is allowed to suck in order to continue the deception.

Cattle are killed at the funeral feasts of the rich, and the horns [765]
of the slaughtered animals are generally mounted on a pole in the vicinity of the grave (Plate XLVI, Fig. 2).

The horns of the cow may be used for making water-pipes in 237
which tobacco is smoked, or they may be employed as magical horns when filled with medicine. The hide is pegged out in the sunlight 281
for one day after it has been scraped; it is then rolled and kept until required. When about to be used, the skin is soaked in water for one day. The hide is used to cover the tops of stools, to make pouches and to manufacture bags for carrying corn. In bygone days each king had a wooden box covered with hide, which contained his powder and metal when he went to war. The cow's tail is used

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

197 cattle and a few other traits from the Vakuanyama of southern Angola, and there seems to be no doubt that the vocabularies of the Ovimbundu and the Vakuanyama have been influenced by these southern contacts. Yet structure will prove the final arbiter in deciding linguistic relationships, for the Ovimbundu as extensive travelers have widely distributed their vocabulary.

Caution is necessary in making comparisons of Umbundu with surrounding languages; for, although Kuanyama has received careful attention, and the researches of Meinhof have given a reliable background for Ovambo and Herero speech, the language of the Vacholue of eastern Angola and the speech of the Mussurongo of northern Angola, call for a comprehensive work. Moreover, there yet remains the task of providing a standard Umbundu dictionary and grammar, and pending the collation of this linguistic material there are no means of determining the exact syntactical, phonetic, and other relationships of Umbundu.

VOCABULARY

192 Apart from a broad question of the linguistic evidence of culture contacts, there are points of interest connected with the recording of vocabularies in a restricted area. Under the heading "Nature Lore" attention was called to an extensive Umbundu vocabulary connected with those activities which underlie the economic structure. The vocabulary showed that the Ovimbundu are keen observers whose activities have resulted in the formation of a large vocabulary arising from trades and occupations. In nature study many fine distinctions are made; thus, there are words to distinguish not only trees and plants of economic importance, but varieties of snakes and lizards which are of no great economic interest.

[868] In order to test further mental activity and the acquisition of vocabulary, an Ocimbundu girl of about twelve years of age was asked to name some of the objects in my collection. Without hesitation she made the following list. The object was indicated, then the child gave the name. This information was checked by an adult interpreter who found that the child was correct in every instance, although the objects do not specially appeal to the interests of a young girl.

The objects named by this girl are as follows:

Ocimonda. Wooden dish.
Omutopa. Tobacco-pipe made from a horn.
Elenga. Pipe for smoking hemp.
Ocinenga. Brass bracelet.
Ukinda. Switch made from the tail of an ox.
Opatalonga. Leather pouch for belt.
Upi. Pounding stick.
Ombanja. Gourd with a long neck.

Onganja. Large round gourd.
Onguwa. Net in which gourd is carried.
Ohonji. Bow.
Usongo. Arrow.
Olundosi (plural *olondosi*). Bark rope.
Ombulumbumba. Musical bow.
Ohoma. Drum.
Ohuñya. Throwing stick.
Ohanyanga. Drill for boring wood.
Ongombo. Basket used in divination.
Esanga. Water jar.
Ocipupu. Jar for palm oil.
Ocimbangu. Skin-covered box carried to war by a king.
Omusaka (diminutive, *okamisaka*). Flour-sifter.
Opesi. Tobacco-pipe.
Embungumbungu. Bull-roarer. 192
Olosangu (singular, *olusangu*). Rattles for tying on the legs when dancing.
Olumbendo. Wooden flute.
Opendu or ocifuamulo. Wooden hair-comb.
Osinja. Long needle used in making mats.
Onende. Wooden pigeon and dove.
Osala. Head-dress worn by kings, warriors, medicine-men and hunters. Small brush used by medicine-man.
Ociñumañuma. Wooden image of human figure.
Olupunla. Rat trap of cane.
Ombuisa. Snuff box.

The names for colors are restricted to a few words; but in all other respects the Umbundu vocabulary is extensive.

My interpreter said, "When I was learning colors, the women at the school told me many names, but I could see no difference at all." Ngonga contended that there was no difference between the color of a dark blue book and the black box on which it was resting. [151]

The following colors have names. Black is *tekāva.* White is *yela.* Yellow is *ondunga.* Red is *kusukā.* Greens and blues are not well distinguished linguistically, but green is *aniñamboto.* The word *tekāvisa* is used to indicate that a color is not distinctly green or blue. The word *yelisa* is used to describe gray, and all dark reds. *Wumbula* is the term which describes a greenish-blue shade.

A further study of vocabulary was made by asking Ngonga to speak into the dictaphone. In doing so he gave lists of words including nouns in their singular and plural forms, together with many examples of other parts of speech and illustrations of syntax. These records have been transcribed by Dr. M. H. Watkins. (This section was prepared with use of phonetic symbols that were easily available. For the most recent system, see "Practical Phonetics for Students of African Languages," by D. Westermann and I. C. Ward, London, 1933.) 194 113

PHONETICS

VOWELS

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The vowels are *a, e, i, o, u,* and perhaps *ɔ.* They seem to be somewhat lower than the cardinal vowels. There was only one word in which the vowel *ɔ* was heard, *ɔpɔtɔlóñd* (leather pouch for a belt). This word, however, appears in the field notes as *opataloña* (*opata-*

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

194 tions of folklore texts tonal behavior will be seen to be less consistent. Discrepancies in the incidence of tones may be due to different speeds at which words are spoken. The placing of tones is perhaps most reliable when transcriptions are made from free, continuous speech, as in the case of fluent reading, or talking in continuous sentences.

Many words received a definite stress on the last syllable, and in others the penultimate syllable received a light stress. The majority, however, received slight, if any, stress, hence no definite conclusions could be reached on this subject. In several instances it is obvious that the informant was striving to be clear and distinct in pronouncing each syllable; therefore he possibly sacrificed certain characteristics of his intonation.

THE SYLLABLE

Every syllable ends in a vowel, consequently a vowel terminates each word, and consonants are pronounced with the following vowel, or with a consonant plus the vowel. The vowel of the penultimate syllable is long when the word stands alone, and in larger sound-groups the vowel is long in the penultimate syllable of the last word, while in the preceding word, or words, the corresponding vowel seems to be only half the length. Vowel length is not indicated in these transcriptions.

GRAMMAR

THE CLASS SYSTEM

193 The data available were sufficient to establish the following classes of nouns, on the basis of their prefixes in the singular and plural; the formation of the adjectival or relative concords was likewise noted. There is no assurance that this list is exhaustive.

Class	Prefix		Relative	
	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
1.	omu-, omo-	oma-	u-	va-
1a.	u-	a-, ova-	u-	va-
2.	u-, oku-	ovo-	u- (ku-)	a-
3.	u[y]	ovi-, i-	u-	vi-
4.	o-	olo-	yi-	vi-
5.	olu-	olo-, a-	lu-	vi-, a-
6.	otci-	ovi-, i-	tci-	vi-
7.	e-	a-, ova-	li-	a-
7a.	-, i-	ova-	li-	a-
8.	oka-	otu-	ka-	tu-

According to the principle of concord, the noun prefix is the governing element which determines the concordial agreement of parts of speech when these are brought into relationship with the noun. The prefixes also indicate number and, together with the

concordial agreement as stated above, divide the nouns into several classes or class genders. We need not enter upon a general discussion of concord, which in the Bantu languages is a method of expressing grammatical relations that are of fundamental importance. Concord need not always appear in the form of perfect alliteration, although it frequently does so, for the essential fact is that all nouns of the same class are recognizable as such, and other elements of speech when brought into syntactic agreement with these nouns must carry similar distinctions. 193

Students of Bantu have suggested that the various noun classes probably represent a proto-Bantu classification which formerly betokened a grouping based on common characteristics (A. Werner, Some Bantu Linguistic Problems, *Jour. Afr. Soc.*, XXVIII, 1928–29, pp. 155–165). The nouns listed here under Class 1 may accordingly be recognized as belonging to the so-called personal class, and the prefixes of Class 8 indicate a diminutive class. [113]

CLASS 1

SINGULAR PREFIX: *omu-*, *omo-*	RELATIVE: *u-*
PLURAL PREFIX: *oma-*	RELATIVE: *va-*
ɔmánù, person	*ɔmǫ́lǫ*, child
ɔmánù, people	*ɔmǫ́lǫ*, children

Illustrations of concordial agreement with these nouns:

ɔmáná ùtíto, small person	*ɔmǫ́lǫ́ ùtíto*, small child
ɔmáná vàtíto, small people	*ɔmǫ́lǫ́ vàtíto*, small children

CLASS 1A

SINGULAR PREFIX: *u-*	RELATIVE: *u-*
PLURAL PREFIX: *a-*, *ova-*	RELATIVE: *va-*
ulume, man	*ufeko*, girl
alume, men	*afeko*, girls
ɔválume, men	*ɔvǎfeko*, girls
ukǫi, woman	*umaleke*, lad
akǫi, women	*amaleke*, lads
ɔvǎkǫi, women	

The following forms show the concordial agreement for Class 1A:

ulume ùtíto, small man	*akǫi vàtíto*, small women
alume vàtíto, small men	*ɔvǎkǫi vàtíto*, small women
ɔvǎlume vàtíto, small men	*afeko vene* (*va-ene*), your (pl.) girls
ukǫi ùtíto, small woman	*amaleke vǎvò*, their lads

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CLASS 2

SINGULAR PREFIX: *u-, oku-*	RELATIVE: *u-, ku-*
PLURAL PREFIX: *ovo-*	RELATIVE: *a-*
ulá, bed	*ɔkúlù*, leg
ɔvólá, beds	*ɔvólù*, legs
uta, gun	*okwókwó*, arm
ɔvóta, guns	*ovókwó*, arms

Concordial agreement for Class 2:

ulá ùnénè, large bed	*ovótá ɔtìto*, small guns
ovólá ɔnénè, large beds	*ɔkúlú kùtìto*, small leg
uta ùtìto, small gun	*ɔvólú ɔtìto*, small legs

CLASS 3

SINGULAR PREFIX: *u-*	RELATIVE: *u-*
PLURAL PREFIX: *ovi-, i-*	RELATIVE: *vi-*
úti, tree	*útima*, heart
oviti, trees	*ɔvitima*, hearts
úpi, handle	*itima*, hearts
ovipi, handles	

Concordial agreement for Class 3:

úti ùnénè, large tree	*útima ùtìto*, small heart
oviti vinénè, large trees	*ɔvitimá vitìto*, small hearts

CLASS 4

SINGULAR PREFIX: *o-*	RELATIVE: *yi-*
PLURAL PREFIX: *olo-*	RELATIVE: *vi-*
ɔndjo, house	*ɔŋgómbè*, ox
olóndjo, houses	*ɔlóŋgómbè*, oxen
ɔmángu, chair	*ɔŋgúlù*, pig
ɔlómángu, chairs	*ɔlóŋgúlù*, pigs

Concordial agreement for Class 4:

ɔndjó yiwa, good house	*ɔlomáŋgú vìtìto*, small chairs
olóndjó viwa, good houses	*ɔŋgúlú yìnénè*, large pig
ɔmáŋgú yìtìto, small chair	*ɔloŋgúlú vìnénè*, large pigs

CLASS 5

SINGULAR PREFIX: *olu-*	RELATIVE: *lu-*
PLURAL PREFIX: *olo-, a-*	RELATIVE: *yi-, a-*
ɔlóñi, fly	*olwí (olu-i)*, stream
ɔlóñi, flies	*olóndwí*, streams
ɔluhéŋgo, wild plum	*ɔlwéyò*, broom
ɔlohéŋgo, wild plums	*ɔlóndwéyò*, brooms
	ɔlwéyò, brooms

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Concordial agreement for Class 5:

ɔlúñí lùtìto, small fly
ɔlóñí vìtìto, small flies
olwí lùnénè, large stream
olónduí vìnénè, large streams
ɔlwéyó lìwa, good broom
ɔlòndwéyó vìwa, good brooms
ɔlwéyó ɔwa, good brooms

CLASS 6

SINGULAR PREFIX: *otci-* RELATIVE: *tci-*
PLURAL PREFIX: *ovi-*, *i-* RELATIVE: *vi-*

ɔtcìnúnù, thief
ɔvìmúnù, thieves
imúnù, thieves
ɔtcìtúñù, pit
ɔvìtúñù, pits
itúñù, pits
ɔtcitá, one hundred
ɔvitá, hundreds
ɔtcípɔ̀, skin
ɔvípɔ̀, skins

Concordial agreement for Class 6:

ɔtcìtúñú tcìnénè, large pit
ɔvìtúñú vìnénè, large pits
ɔtcípá tcìwa, good skin
ɔvípá vìwa, good skins

CLASS 7

SINGULAR PREFIX: *e-* RELATIVE: *li-*
PLURAL PREFIX: *a-*, *ova-* RELATIVE: *a-*

ekɔ́, hand
ɔvákɔ́, hands
epɨá, field
ɔvápɨá, fields
ewé, stone
ɔváwé, stones
ɔpákɔ̀, fruit
ɔvàpákɔ̀, fruits
ɔpákɔ̀, fruits
ɔkándu, wrong
ɔvɔkándu, wrongs
ɔkándu, wrongs
ɔpúmù, corncob
ɔpúmù, corncobs

Concordial agreement for Class 7:

ekɔ́ lìtìto, small hand
ɔvákɔ́ ɔtìto, small hands
epɨá lìwa, good field
ɔvápɨá ɔwa, good fields

CLASS 7A

SINGULAR PREFIX: -, *i-* RELATIVE: *li-*
PLURAL PREFIX: *ova-* RELATIVE: *a-*

ímbɔ̀, belly
ɔvájmbɔ̀, bellies
isó, eye
ɔvásó, eyes

Concordial agreement for Class 7A:

ímbó lìnénè, large belly
ɔvájmbó ɔnénè, large bellies
isó lìtìto, small eye
ɔvásó ɔtìto, small eyes
ímbó lìɔ̀ngómbè, belly of ox
ɔvájmbó ɔlóngómbè, bellies of oxen

CLASS 8

193 As previously stated, the prefixes of this class signify diminutive forms. In Chewa, one of the languages spoken in Nyasaland Protectorate, these prefixes and the augmentative prefixes when used with the personal nouns convey a somewhat derogatory meaning. In Zulu the diminutive and augmentative suffixes, although not determining classes, are likewise of this nature when employed with nouns of the personal class. The records upon which this brief description of Umbundu is based were not clear on this point, but I note that *-tito* means "small," so that the distinction between *ɔkalume* ("little man") and *ulume ùtito*, translated in the field notes as "small man," may be of considerable importance. Likewise, *ɔtcìmúnù* ("thief"), Class 6, may be an augmentative-derogatory form in origin, provided that there is an augmentative class and that it coincides with Class 6.

SINGULAR PREFIX: *oka-*	RELATIVE: *ka-*
PLURAL PREFIX: *otu-*	RELATIVE: *tu-*
ɔkándjo, little house	*ɔtwalume*, little men
ɔtándjo, little houses	*ɔkatcípà*, little skin
ɔkalume, little man	*ɔtuvípà*, little skins

Concordial agreement for Class 8:

ɔkamɔ́lá kàwa, good little child
ɔtumɔ́lá tɔwa, good little children
ɔkándjó kɔ̀ŋgúlù, little house of (the) pig
ɔtándjó twɔ̀lɔ́ŋgúlù, little houses of the pigs

PRONOUNS

The personal pronouns are given below. Those for the third person are obviously Class 1 pronouns. Pronouns for the other classes were not obtained. These forms are of the independent or absolute type.

	Singular	Plural
FIRST PERSON	*ámè*	*étù*
SECOND PERSON	*ɔ́vè*	*ɔ́nè*
THIRD PERSON, Class 1	*eyé*	*ɔ́vɔ̀*

The possessive pronominal stems are to a great extent identical with the absolute forms, but follow the nouns which they qualify, and are preceded by the concord of the thing possessed and the qualificative formative (a). In some instances this formative is

elided. Again, for the third person we can give only the forms of Class 1. 193

	Singular	Plural
FIRST PERSON	*-ŋgè*	*-etu* (ç)
SECOND PERSON	*-óvè*	*-ene* (ç)
THIRD PERSON, Class 1	*-hè*	*-vò*

(ç) Note that the tone differs from that of the "absolute" forms.

Examples of the use of the possessive:

ɔtcitúñá tcáŋgè, my pit
ɔtcitúñá tcóvè, your pit
ɔtcitúñá tcáhè, his (Class 1) pit
ɔtcitúñá tcetu, our pit
ɔtcitúñá tcene, your (pl.) pit
ɔtcitúñá tcávò, their (Class 1) pit
ɔvitúñá vjáŋgè, my pits
ɔvitúñá vjávò, their (Class 1) pits
ɔmúná wáŋgè, my slave
ɔmúná wóvè, your slave
ɔmúná wáhè, his (Class 1) slave
ɔmúná váŋgè, my slaves
ɔmúná wóvè, your slaves
ɔmúná wáhè, his (Class 1) slaves
ɔmúná vetu, our slaves
ɔmúná vene, your (pl.) slaves
ɔmúná wávò, their (Class 1) slaves
ukçi wáŋgè, my woman (my wife)
ukçi wóvè, your woman
ukçi vetu, our women
úti wóvè, your tree
oviti vjene, your (pl.) trees
úti wáhè, his (Class 1) tree
úti wávò, their (Class 1) tree
oviti vjávò, their (Class 1) trees
óndjó yetu, our house
óndjó yene, your (pl.) house
óndjó yávò, their (Class 1) house
olóndjó vjetu, our houses
ɔluhéŋgó lwáŋgè, my wild plum
ɔluhéŋgó lwóvè, your wild plum
ɔluhéŋgó lwáhè, his (Class 1) wild plum
ɔkamçlá káŋgè, my little child
ɔkándjó kóvè, your little house
ɔtúndjó twóvè, your little houses

The following examples of syntax were not recorded on the dictaphone, therefore they have not been phonetically analyzed.

The verb stem is seen in the imperative singular:

tuŋga, build (thou) *tila*, flee (thou)
tuŋga ondjo, build the house

Example of imperative plural ending with *i*:

tuŋgi, build ye *tili*, flee ye

PRINCIPAL TENSES

FUTURE

The following examples suggest that there is no formal distinction between the present and the future:

ndi tuŋga onjo or *nunga onjo*, I shall build the house
o tuŋga onjo, you will build the house

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

193 *o tuŋga onjo*, he will build the house
tu tuŋga onjo, we shall build the house
vu tuŋga onjo, you will build the house
va tuŋga onjo, they will build the house
omunu o tuŋga,[1] a person builds
omanu va tuŋga, the people build
omiapia yi tuŋga, a swallow builds
olomiapia vi tuŋga, swallows build
eveke li tuŋga, the fool will build
ocimunu ci tuŋga, the thief will build
ovimunu vi tuŋga, the thieves will build
okamola ka tila, the little child will flee
otumala tu tuŋga, the little children will build
olusenge lu tila (monitor lizard), the lizard will flee

PAST

ᵃda tuŋga onjo, I built the house
wa tuŋga onjo, you built the house
wa tuŋga onjo, he built the house
tua tuŋga onjo, we built the house
va tuŋga onjo, they built the house
ocimunu ca tila, the thief fled
ongombe ya tila, the ox fled
eveke lia tila, the fool fled
okamola ka tila, the little child fled
omunu wa tila, the person fled

The pronoun as object comes between the prefix and the verb:

ombua ya ci lumana,[2] the dog bit it
ocimunu co lumana, the thief bit him
cu lumana, it will bite him
olusenge emalanaga lu lilumana, the lizard will bite the cheetah
okamola olunyihi lua ka lumana, the little child, the bee stung him

The perfect tense uses the prefix of the past tense with *-ile* or *-ele* added to the stem of the verb. The perfect is used to indicate an action in some definite past time, or to state a condition which has ceased:

ulume wa solele ukai wahe, the man used to love his wife
helā ombua ya lumanele omunu (ulume), yesterday the dog bit a man

[1] The *o* is not a pronoun but is used to preserve concord.

[2] The letter *y* is part of the concord. The letter *y* survives from the personal pronoun *eye* meaning "he." Letter *a* indicates past tense; *ci* means "it" or "thing." Hence the literal meaning is "dog he thing bit."

enyamuale va tuŋgile olonjo, last year they built the houses 193

The causative is expressed by the suffix *-isa:*

va tuŋgisa onjo, they caused the house to be built
o toŋgisa ombinja, he will cause a shirt to be sewed

The suffix *-ila* has the force of a preposition:

ombua ya tilila konjo, the dog fled to the house
olusenge lua fila vocitunyu, the lizard died in the pit

Illustrations of indirect object:

wa tuŋgila ukai onjo, he built the house for the woman
va tu tongela olombinja, they sewed the shirts for us

The prefix *oku* is the sign of the infinitive:

oku tuŋga, to build
oku tila, to flee
oku lia, to eat

The subjunctive is expressed by changing final *a* to *e:*

a tuŋge onjo, let him build the house
va tile, let them flee
va sia epangu okuti oco ovasa a pite, they left a hole so that the water might pass

The auxiliary *ka* ("to go") is used with all tenses:

o ka tuŋga kimbo, he will go and build at the village
wa ka tuŋga onjo, he has gone to build a house
wa ka tuŋgile onjo, he has been there and built a house

The negative is expressed in the following words:

si tuŋgi, I shall not build
ku tuŋgi, thou wilt not build
ka tuŋgi, he will not build
ka tu tuŋgi, we will not build
ka va tuŋgi, they will not build
ongombe ka yi tuŋgi, the ox will not build
ocimunu ka ci tuŋgi, the thief will not build
olusenge ka lu tila, the lizard will not flee
okamola ka ka tuŋgi, the little child will not build
ukai ka tuŋgi, the woman will not build

The past negative is expressed as follows:

sa tuŋgile, I did not build
kua tuŋgile, you did not build
ka tuŋgile, he did not build
ka tua tuŋgile, we did not build

193 *ka wa tuŋgili*, you did not build
ka va tuŋgile, they did not build
omanu ka va yongola oku tila, the people do not wish to flee
ocimunu ka ci yongola upange, the thief does not wish work
ha ngombe ko, it is not an ox
ha njoko, it is not a house
ha munuko, it is not a person
ha manuko, they are not people
ha ci munuko, he is not a thief
ha meko, it is not I
he yeko, it is not he
ha veko, it is not you
he tuko, it is not we
he neko, it is not you
ha voko, it is not they
si ci munuko, I am not a thief
ku ci munuko, you are not a thief
ha ci munuko, he is not a thief
ka tui munuko, we are not thieves
ka wi munuko, you are not thieves
ha i munuko, they are not thieves

TRANSCRIPTION OF FOLKLORE STORIES

539.

Ombwá *loluwisó* *lwáyo*[1]
Dog with Greed His

Ombwá *kèyaù*, *okásitu* *vómèlá*. *Yi* *li* *lókúyókàyoka*
Dog on bridge little meat in mouth. It is there to cross

òluvi. *Vovává* *yi* *letemo* *ómbwá* *yekwávò* *lonumbá*
stream. In water it sees dog another with piece

yinénè *yósitù*. *Ombwá* *yá lólá* *okásitu* *káhè*; *yá* *wilá*
big of meat. Dog dropped little meat his; it threw itself

vovává *hà yi* *kwátà* *ósitù* *yinénè* *yikwávò*. *Omó* *yá*
in water in order to catch meat large other. Thus it

ñelisá *òlònúmbá* *viváli*, *yikwávò* *ya* *kàŋlè* *láyò*,
lost pieces two, the other it was with him,

yikwávò *yi* *léte* *póluvi*. *Yà vi* *ñelisá* *momo* *o kwete*
(the) other it saw in stream. It then lost because he had

olúŋgòŋgò. *Isó* *lilmólá mólá* *ondjámba*, *òkù liénda* *ka li ká*
greed. Eye sees (continuously) elephant, in going it is not

velèla *ohatù*.
increased meat-hunger.

[177] [1]Presumably an adoption of the well-known European fable of the dog and his reflection.

Ongunja. Large round gourd.
Ongunu. Net in which gourd is carried.
Ohuji. Bow.
Uzunge. Arrow.
Olundosi (plural *elondosi*). Bark rope.
Ombulumbumbu. Musical bow.
Ohoma. Drum.
Ohuñya. Throwing stick.
Ohungunga. Drill for boring wood.
Ongomba. Basket used in divination.
Ensuga. Water jar.
Ocipupu. Jar for palm oil.
Ocimbangu. Skin-covered box carried to war by a king.
Omusaku (diminutive, *ekamisaku*). Flour-sifter.
Opasi. Tobacco-pipe.
Embungumbungu. Bull-roarer. 192
Olosangu (singular, *olusangu*). Rattles for tying on the legs when dancing.
Olumbendo. Wooden flute.
Opanda or ocifuamulo. Wooden hair-comb.
Osixja. Long needle used in making mats.
Onenda. Wooden pigeon and dove.
Osala. Head-dress worn by kings, warriors, medicine-men and hunters. Small brush used by medicine-man.
Ocifumañuma. Wooden image of human figure.
Olupanda. Rat trap of cane.
Ombutesa. Snuff box.

The names for colors are restricted to a few words; but in all other respects the Umbundu vocabulary is extensive.

My interpreter said, "When I was learning colors, the women at the school told me many names, but I could see no difference at all." Ngonga contended that there was no difference between the color of a dark blue book and the black box on which it was resting. [151]

The following colors have names. Black is *tekāsa.* White is *pela.* Yellow is *onduñga.* Red is *kusukā.* Greens and blues are not well distinguished linguistically, but green is *aniñamboto.* The word *tekāsia* is used to indicate that a color is not distinctly green or blue. The word *pelisa* is used to describe gray, and all dark reds. *Wumbula* is the term which describes a greenish-blue shade.

A further study of vocabulary was made by asking Ngonga to speak into the dictaphone. In doing so he gave lists of words including nouns in their singular and plural forms, together with many examples of other parts of speech and illustrations of syntax. These records have been transcribed by Dr. M. H. Watkins. (This section was prepared with use of phonetic symbols that were easily available. For the most recent system, see "Practical Phonetics for Students of African Languages," by D. Westermann and I. C. Ward, London, 1933.) 194 113

PHONETICS

VOWELS

194

The vowels are *a, e, i, o, u,* and perhaps *ə.* They seem to be somewhat lower than the cardinal vowels. There was only one word in which the vowel *ə* was heard, *əpātslōñd* (leather pouch for a belt). This word, however, appears in the field notes as *opataloña* (*opata-*

• 194 *longa*) and the obscure vowel heard might have been a result of imperfection in the record. These vowels are fairly close to the European vowels, their nearest equivalents in the European languages being approximately as represented below:

a, as in German *Masse*.
e, as in French *été*.
i, as in English *machine*.
o, as French *eau*.
u, as in German *Buch*.
ə, as *e* in German *Klasse*, and *a* in *about*.

The nasal vowel *ą* appears in a fairly large number of words, and the nasal *ǫ* is occasionally heard. Before another vowel, *u* takes the sound of *w*: *ɔ̀lwɛ́gò* (*ɔ̀lu-ɛgo*), "broom"; *ɔ̀tumą́lą́ twɛ́ŋgì* (*tu-aŋge*), "my little children."

The rising diphthongs *ja*, *je*, *ju*, and *jo* and the falling diphthong *ai* appear in the material, but every combination of two vowels does not make a diphthong. In several instances, when a word terminating in a vowel was followed by another word, the initial letter of which was also a vowel, the final vowel was elided. Final vowels on the low tone tend to vanish; that is, they are only slightly voiced, as in *ɔ̀sɔ́ŋgɔ̀ɔ̀kɔ́lɔ́ŋgì* (*ɔ̀sɔ́ŋgɔ̀ ɔ̀kɔ́lɔ́ŋgì*), "he found (a) little hole"; *ⁿdɔ́vɛ́lɛ́nɛ́nɛ̀* (*ⁿdɔ́vɛ́lɛ̀ ɛ̀nɛ́nɛ̀*), "I am big sick." (I am very sick.)

CONSONANTS

The table of consonants is as follows:

		Bilabial	Dentilabial	Alveolar	Palatal	Palatal	Glottal
Stops	Voiced	*b*		*d*, *ⁿd*		*g*	
	Voiceless	*p*		*t*		*k*	
Spirants	Voiced		*v*				
	Voiceless		*f*	*s*			*h*
Affricatives	Voiced			*dj*, *ⁿdj*			
	Voiceless			*tc*			
Nasals		*m*		*n*	*ɲ*	*ŋ*	
Lateral				*l*			
Semivowels		*w* and *y*					

The symbols *ⁿd* and *ⁿdj* indicate "nasal attack" consonants, i.e., the fully pronounced consonants *d*, *dj*, and *g* are preceded by their homo-organic nasals not completely formed. It is as if one prepared to make the sound of *n* but before its completion changed to *d* or *dj*; likewise the change is made from *ŋ* to *g*. Letter *c* is *ch* as in *church*.

TONE AND STRESS

Apparently there are three tones in this language, but one cannot be quite sure, since under the somewhat unusual condition of attempting to record his voice on the dictaphone the informant might have distorted the pitch of certain syllables. That three tones can be distinguished when listening to the records, and that these tones tend to follow a definite pattern, for example, in the singular and plural forms of the same word, can be asserted with satisfaction; but there is less assurance in trying to understand all the nuances of these tones and in assigning them, without reservation, a definite place in the phonetics of the language. Nothing short of field work aided by delicate instruments can afford any satisfactory conclusions on this point. 194

The data did not present any clear instance in which tone had semantic value. That is, there were no examples of two or more words, which, otherwise identical, differed only in tone and meaning.

The field notes state that the difference between cardinal and ordinal numbers is one of tone only, and this was partially verified from the phonographic records, but the words were not clear enough for transcription.

The following words have tones of semantic value, but the phonographic record was not clear. *Kalunga*, according to tone, can mean "god," "sea," "death," or "greeting." *Ombambi* can mean a "fever" (low tone) or a "bush buck" (high tone). *Onjila* means "bird" or "path." *Ombundi* means "gateway" or the root which is commonly used in brewing beer. *Ongongo* means "earth" (middle tone), or "hardship" (high tone).

In this chapter tones are indicated by placing a grave accent (*à*) to indicate a low tone, and an acute accent (*á*) to show the occurrence of a high tone. The middle tone is left unmarked.

The tones are not fixed, and they will be shown to shift in context. For example, a high tone on the penultimate syllable tends to be carried along to the last syllable also. This shifting of tone is especially noticeable when a noun is brought into concord with its qualifying adjective or relative, or when a noun is the subject of a verb. The following are instances in which tones do not maintain their original positions as found in isolated words: *úti*, "tree," *úti ùnénè*, "large tree"; *ɔlwéyò*, "broom," *ɔlwéyó lùwa*, "good broom"; *ɔmúnù*, "person," *ɔmúnú ùtìto*, "small person."

This kind of tonal behavior was clearly indicated in five records of single words, and expressions of two words. But in the transcrip-

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

194 tions of folklore texts tonal behavior will be seen to be less consistent. Discrepancies in the incidence of tones may be due to different speeds at which words are spoken. The placing of tones is perhaps most reliable when transcriptions are made from free, continuous speech, as in the case of fluent reading, or talking in continuous sentences.

Many words received a definite stress on the last syllable, and in others the penultimate syllable received a light stress. The majority, however, received slight, if any, stress, hence no definite conclusions could be reached on this subject. In several instances it is obvious that the informant was striving to be clear and distinct in pronouncing each syllable; therefore he possibly sacrificed certain characteristics of his intonation.

THE SYLLABLE

Every syllable ends in a vowel, consequently a vowel terminates each word, and consonants are pronounced with the following vowel, or with a consonant plus the vowel. The vowel of the penultimate syllable is long when the word stands alone, and in larger sound-groups the vowel is long in the penultimate syllable of the last word, while in the preceding word, or words, the corresponding vowel seems to be only half the length. Vowel length is not indicated in these transcriptions.

GRAMMAR

THE CLASS SYSTEM

193 The data available were sufficient to establish the following classes of nouns, on the basis of their prefixes in the singular and plural; the formation of the adjectival or relative concords was likewise noted. There is no assurance that this list is exhaustive.

Class	Prefix		Relative	
	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
1.	omu-, omo-	oma-	u-	va-
1a.	u-	a-, ova-	u-	va-
2.	u-, oku-	ovo-	u- (ku-)	a-
3.	u'	ovi-, i-	u-	vi-
4.	o-	olo-	yi-	vi-
5.	olu-	olo-, a-	lu-	vi-, a-
6.	otci-	ovi-, i-	tci-	vi-
7.	e-	a-, ova-	li-	a-
7a.	-, i-	ova-	li-	a-
8.	oku-	otu-	ku-	tu-

According to the principle of concord, the noun prefix is the governing element which determines the concordial agreement of parts of speech when these are brought into relationship with the noun. The prefixes also indicate number and, together with the

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

241 The Highland is evidently well suited to the particular type of
221 agriculture which the Ovimbundu carry on with upland fields for the principal crops of maize and beans growing in the rainy season and with river gardens for secondary cultures in the dry season. The purpose of the latter is to piece out between the principal harvests. The situation of the Highland across principal watersheds and therefore on convenient trade routes has been noted. This is doubtless one factor in commercial development among the
231 Ovimbundu. Cattle-keeping with them seems to be largely a commercial development. While cattle may live on the Highland, they thrive better in the less well-watered lands to the west and the south where the neighbouring peoples are cattle-keepers.

Neighbouring peoples

101 The cattle-keeping peoples who live just west and south of the
197 Ovimbundu are the Nganda, the Ndombe, the Hanya, the Cilenge, the Cipungu, the Muila, the Nyaneka, the Mulondo, and the Khumbi.[1] These peoples all seem to be related to each other and in some way to some, at least, of the Ovimbundu.[2] Still further south beyond these peoples are the Ambo and the Herero, also cattle-keepers. All these, together with the Ovimbundu, have been classified linguistically as making up the 'Western Province' of the Southern Bantu.[3] There are also a few Bushmen on the southern borders.

The peoples to the east and south-east of the Umbundu country are probably Lunda emigrants and so belong to the Congo group (Cokue and Songo) and to the Zambezi or Central group (Luimbi, Lucazi, Nyemba, Ngonzelo, &c.).[4] These people are lumped together by the Ovimbundu under the somewhat deprecatory term of *va Ngangela*.

The northern neighbours belong to the Western or Angola 'cluster' of the Congo group (Esela, Cipala, Lupolo, Ndongo or

[1] See C. Estermann, 'Notas Etnográficas sôbre os povos indígenas do Distrito da Huila' (*Boletim Geral das Colónias*, Fev. 1935, pp. 41–69). He groups some of these people together under the name 'Bangala' or 'Ovambangala'.

[2] Information from Nganda, Mulondo, Cilenge, and Ovimbundu individuals.

[3] See R. A. Dart, 'Racial Origins', p. 23, in Schapera, op. cit., 1937; C. M. Doke, *Bantu Linguistic Terminology* (London: Longmans, 1935); Sir H. H. Johnston, *Comparative Vocabulary of the Bantu and Semi-Bantu Languages*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1919, 1922).

[4] Johnston, op. cit.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13
Angola FP1

M 101 197

'Kimbundu', Imbangala, &c.). The Esele and the Mbui, on the north-west, may belong to the Western Province but they have not yet been surely classified.[1]

These neighbouring peoples have been listed only as background for studying the Ovimbundu. Linguistically the Ovimbundu belong to South Africa even as their country geographically is a part of it. 'In respect of climate and vegetation Angola is essentially a borderland and may be regarded as the area of mergence of several distinct zones which attain their fullest development outside the Colony.'[2] Since the Benguela Highland comprises the north-western ridges of the South African sub-continental plateau, it is not surprising that its inhabitants should be the northernmost of the Southern Bantu.[3]

European Administration, Communications, Missions

A 631

As a Portuguese colony, Angola is governed under the Ministry of Colonies in Lisbon by a Governor-General whose residence is Luanda, the capital of the colony since 1576. For administrative purposes the colony is divided into five provinces, each with a governor in charge. These are divided into thirteen districts which in turn are divided into circumscriptions and these again into administrative areas. The country of the Ovimbundu is divided between the provinces of Benguela, Bié, and Huila in the districts of Benguela, Huambo, Cuanza-Sul, Bié, and Huila. 'Direct rule' is the method of administration and native political

A M 631

[1] Ibid.

[2] Walter Fitzgerald, *Africa, a Social, Economic and Political Geography of its Major Regions* (London: Methuen, 1934).

A M 162

[3] The general census of 1940 (*vide supra*, p. 7, note 2) showed the population as follows:

Whites . .	44,083
Mixed . .	28,035
Blacks . .	3,665,829
Others . .	63
	3,738,010 (op. cit., vol. i, p. 78 f.)

Of the various tribal divisions, the Ovimbundu ('Mbundo') are listed with 1,331,087 (op. cit., vol. ix, p. 23). Owing to the mistaken inclusion of several small tribal groups, this number should probably be reduced by at least 150,000, but on the other hand there are without doubt more Ovimbundu than this last number who have emigrated to neighbouring colonies and to the Union of South Africa.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

Widespread use of Umbundu

While the home of the Ovimbundu is in the Benguela Highland, the use of their language is now more widespread. The va Nganda and the va Hanya are increasingly using Umbundu. The mixed populations at the coast towns of Lobito, Catumbela, and Benguela use it almost exclusively. It is also used in Novo Redondo, in Mossamedes, and along the Benguela Railway to the interior. There is a considerable *diaspora* of Ovimbundu at widely separated points owing to very recent movements. 197

For more extensive treatment of the various aspects of the problems touched upon in this introductory chapter, works listed in the bibliography may be consulted. A complete description of the habitat has not been attempted but only sufficient to provide the necessary background for the study as a whole.

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Ovimbundu and their neighbours. I have no tables representative of the Umbundu-speaking *diaspora* at the coast and in other outlying regions. There is an interesting and significant article in *Africa*[1] on those of these *diaspora* which are settled in the Mossamedes–Lubango area. The author has done all that could be expected within the limits of an article necessarily short, and it is to be hoped that subsequent writings may clear up matters left in doubt, especially with regard to the present social structure of the groups described.[2]

The social structure described in this chapter is that of the main body of the Ovimbundu. I may say that from observations and from a study of the genealogical tables collected, I have concluded that the structure of kinship and of social life is fairly homogeneous throughout the several tribes.

The Tribe

A complete enumeration of the Umbundu-speaking tribes or kingdoms with descriptions of their reciprocal relations is included in Chapter XII. Almost half of the twenty-two kingdoms were generally tributaries of one of the larger or more powerful kings, so that for practical purposes the Ovimbundu may be divided into eight or ten tribal groups. Although more than half of the Umbundu kingdoms may be said to be feudatories of the larger ones, it is nevertheless true that each of them had its own separate

[1] C. Estermann, 'Coutumes des Mbali du Sud d'Angola', *Africa*, Jan. 1939, pp. 74–86. The author states that their language is Kimbundu (of Luanda-Malange), but the examples which he gives show that although there are words borrowed from Kimbundu, from Portuguese, and from other sources, the structure both of verbs and of nouns and the method of 'Bantuization' of Portuguese words belong to Umbundu. These people may declare their language to be 'Kimbundu' in imitation of the European usage. So did the native 'Mohongo' taken to Paris by the Mission Rohan-Chabot (*Angola et Rhodesie*, Paris, 1914). I have personally ascertained that Umbundu is commonly spoken in Mossamedes and may also say that the samples of the language given in this article show it to be much the same as that spoken in the cities of Benguela, Lobito, &c. It would be better if an orthography more nearly like that recommended by the International African Institute were used. The term 'Mbali' (va Mbali, Mambari, Ovimbali) is an Umbundu term used for nearly one hundred years to designate those who imitate the Europeans or who live at or near the European towns which are collectively designated by the cognate term—*Lupali*. (For 'Mambari', &c., *vide* Livingstone, *Missionary Travels and Researches in South Africa*, pp. 91 f., 371, 384, &c.)

[2] e.g., who is the '*tante* de la jeune mariée ou la "marraine" des noces'? (op. cit., p. 78).

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Kinship groupings: *oluse* and *oluina*.[1] Every Ocimbundu 613
belongs to an *oluse*, i.e. his father's kin, and to an *oluina*, i.e. his mother's kin. Each of these family groupings is divided into male and female lines (*onēlē yohonji*, 'the side of the bow'; *onēlē yohumba*, 'the side of the basket'). Uterine brothers and sisters belong to the same *oluse* and *oluina*, and to the male or female 'side' respectively, according to sex. It is of great importance to get a clear idea of this bilateral nature of these kinship groupings. Every student of [171]
ethnology will note the similarity of this division to the Herero [197]
oruzo and *eanda*.[2] Considering the affinities between the Herero and Umbundu languages, I think that these conceptions are probably related. Further study of other peoples of this Western Bantu zone may reveal cultural and racial as well as linguistic affinities.[3] The *oluse* and *oluina* of the Ovimbundu follow their own pattern.

The *oluse* consists of a large number of local village groups, 613
some of which recognize mutual relationships, but with no recog- 825
nized headship save in the case of the several royal families. The 621
only suggestion of any totemic relation or origin is with the royal families which have in common several taboos with regard to certain animals the flesh of which may not be eaten, nor the skins used, &c. Chief of these animals are the *ongulungu* (bushbuck, *Tragelaphus scriptus*), the *ocisema*[4] (the waterbuck, *Cobus defessa*

[1] *Olu-se*, perhaps 'the place of father', the root *se* being equivalent to the forms *sa*, *so*, *isia*; *olu-ina*, perhaps 'the place of mother'.

[2] See Vedder, pp. 185 ff. (in *The Native Tribes of South West Africa*): 'The Herero nation is divided into 2 large family groups . . . the Herero belongs to the *oruzo* of his father and also to the *eanda* of his mother.' J. Irle, *Die Herero* (Gutersloh, 1906), pp. 87–93.

[3] An interesting study of the VaNyaneka, one of the cattle-rearing people living between Ambo and Umbundu territory, was recently published: A. Lang et C. Tastevin, *La Tribu des Va-Nyaneka* (Mission Rohan-Chabot, Tome V), Corbeil: Impr. Créto. This volume was not available in England or the U.S.A. until 1940, and could not therefore have been used in the present study. I may now say, however, that the authors' treatment of the social structure is not such that it would help to solve the problem in question. The clans are described only from the standpoint of totemism. The maternal line of descent (*e-anda*) is briefly mentioned (p. 45), but not the corresponding paternal line. The authors' evident lack of familiarity with other Bantu material is a great drawback. The system used for the transcription of the vernacular is most confusing, owing to an evident lack of understanding of the Bantu phonetic and grammatical genius with consequent procrustean attempts to force it into foreign forms.

[4] The king's sons may not eat flesh of the *ocisema* lest they should *sema sema*, 'have an impediment of speech'. This may be simply a taboo on grounds of *similia similibus* (or the obverse).

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that question concerning the Ovimbundu. Rather, whence did they come and when? Can the lines of their migrations now be ascertained? Can their racial origins be determined with even approximate certainty? 167 174

The available evidence regarding origins and migrations of the Ovimbundu is mainly of five sorts: (1) linguistic; (2) legendary, whether of the several groups of the Ovimbundu or of the tribes from which they seem to have sprung; (3) historical; (4) evidence from place-names; and (5) evidence of comparative attitudes and culture-traits as between the Ovimbundu and their neighbours. In addition, we might list evidence of physical measurements and blood-group tests, but such evidence is not yet available for the Ovimbundu.

Tribal Origins

Language Affinities. As I pointed out in the introductory chapter, by linguistic classification the Ovimbundu belong to the western 'province' or group of the Southern Bantu. Linguistically, the Ovimbundu belong with their southern neighbours, the so-called 'Bangala'[1] and with the Ambo and Herero. The northern and eastern neighbours all belong to other language groups. This is a fact that must not be lost sight of, especially since Umbundu has been so often confused with the so-called 'Kimbundu' of the Ndongo or Angola kingdom. We are not surprised to find an author of 1846 declare that 'From the Congo to Cabo Negro (Alexander Bay) these black natives all speak the same language (*bunda*) with small changes of dialect';[2] but when this confusion is compounded in works laying claim to considerable value as linguistic and ethnological studies, as, for example, one which was published by a well-known museum in 1930,[3] a protest is in order. 197 114

[1] The Ndombe, Nganda, Cilengi, Cipungo, Muila, Mulondo, Humbi, Gambue, &c. I do not know that the term 'Bangala' may be applied with correctness to these people. I only use it for convenience. See 'Notas Etnográficas sôbre os povos indígenas do Distrito da Huila', *Boletim Geral das Colónias*, fev. 1935, p. 41.

[2] Lopes de Lima, *Ensaios sôbre a Statistica d'Angola e Benguella*, part i, p. 196.

[3] See F. u. W. Jaspert, *Die Völkerstämme Mittel-Angolas* (Frankfort, 1930). It is reported that the spurious nature of the works of these writers has been exposed by Baumann and others, but although I have searched, apart from a rather ambiguous footnote in Baumann's *Lunda*, I have found no such references, and am unable to say whether this has been done. The origin of the erroneous concept of a Bunda language (also called Bundu, or Mbundu), has been traced, and correctly I think on the whole, by Max Buchner, 'Die Ambakisten' (in

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197 Sir Harry Johnston made this classification abundantly clear in his
114 monumental work published in 1919,[1] and the recent translation and revision of Carl Meinhof's important work on Bantu phonology[2] has used Umbundu extensively for illustrative material. It should now be abundantly clear to all that Umbundu is the northernmost of the Southern Bantu languages, and that in their language the Ovimbundu have elements in common with their southern neighbours.

167 *Traditional Histories.* Each of the principal groups among the
173 Ovimbundu has legends with regard to the migrations of their forefathers and the country from which they came. For the most part these legends refer to ancestors of the respective royal families, but some references are also made to the people whom these new-comers found in the country which they came to occupy. All of these legends point to countries of origin in the north or north-east. Several writers have noted this as a fact,[3] but it is necessary to take more explicit notice of each of several legends.

Ndulu has not received as much notice as have some of the other Umbundu kingdoms, but I have come to the conclusion that it is perhaps one of the oldest. The tradition runs that the progenitor of the dynasty, Katekula-Mengo, was an elephant-hunter and that he came with his wife, Ukungu (also called Mbala) from the region of the confluence of the Luandu and the Kuanza rivers. Following elephant-herds down the course of the Kuanza they passed the famous rocks of Pungu-a-Ndongo and in them left the imprints of Katekula-Mengo's bow and of Ukungu's basket, which, it is said, may be seen to this day; for in that early day the rocks had not yet hardened but were like fresh concrete. This couple

Zeitschr. f. Ethnol., 1915, pp. 398 ff.). This writer also interestingly and properly shows how the name Kimbundu came to be mistakenly applied to the Ngola or Ndongo language. The error, however, still continues to be propagated (e.g. *vide* A. Miranda Magalhães, 'Os Ambundus de Angola', &c., in *Trabalhos do I° Congresso Nacional de Antropologia Colonial*, Pôrto, 1934, vol. ii, pp. 536–55). This article contains so little of value that a systematic refutation would not be worth while. The writer's notions on the Bantu migrations seem especially fantastic.

[1] *A Comparative Vocabulary of Bantu and Semi-Bantu Languages*, vol. i.

[2] Meinhof, *An Introduction to the Phonology of the Bantu Languages*, translated, revised, and enlarged (Berlin and London, 1932).

[3] J. T. Tucker, *Drums in the Darkness*, p. 34 f. W. D. Hambly (*The Ovimbundu of Angola*) notes this fact at the beginning of his otherwise rather confused chapter on 'Historical Sources'.

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p.179

had Portuguese names, and tradition speaks of a great accession 167
of mulatto stock, which also is confirmed by observation. 173

The Umbundu-speaking border groups are interesting. Ngamba 174
was formerly occupied by the Songo and has been peopled by 173
Ovimbundu coming from near the capital of Viye only within 167
the past forty years. Cengi, Sanga, Namba, and Kasongi on the northern flank of Bailundu have probably all only recently become Umbundu-speaking groups. Kasongi is one of the largest groups which paid tribute to Bailundu, and has had a line of Umbundu-speaking kings for more than a hundred years; but judging from genealogical evidence the bulk of the people have not been Ovimbundu that long. Civula is another large group and its uncertain feudal status has been noted. Perhaps the most interesting of the border groups, at least from a linguistic standpoint, is Kalukembe. The royal house seems to have come from Ciyaka and it has been [643] claimed that in Kalukembe the kingship is inherited by the mother's brother's son. This is not supported by the only local traditional history which I have been able to secure and requires further investigation. At any rate it is through the maternal line that the commoners of all the Umbundu-speaking groups inherit, and it is noteworthy that this is also true of the kingship among the 'Bangala' and the Ambo tribes.[1] The 'Bangala' people have clan [582] organizations and are exogamous, so that they may marry in any of the related 'Bangala' groups, and for this purpose they include the Kalukembe but not others of the Ovimbundu.[2] Finally, the variations with which Umbundu is spoken in Kalukembe[3] point to closer connexions with the language-group of the 'Bangala'. There are certain areas which at the present day seem to be under- 197 going a linguistic 'Umbundu-ization'. This is most evident in the coast towns such as Novo Redondo, Lobito, Catumbela, Benguela,

[1] See Estermann, 'Notas Etnográficas sôbre os povos do Distrito da Huila' in *Boletim Geral das Colónias*, fev. 1935, p. 63; Hahn, *et al.*, *The Native Tribes of South West Africa*, p. 8.

[2] This last item was learned from Mulondo people. The above-cited article deals only with the people of the District of Huila, while 'Bangala' people live also in other adjoining districts.

[3] Compare Umbundu language work of H. Chatelain and others of the 'Mission Philafricaine' in Kalukembe, as versus illustrations of Umbundu used by Johnston, Meinhof, *et al.* Evidently the native 'Mohongo' taken to Paris by Homburger of the Mission Rohan-Chabot, was a native of Kalukembe, for the 'Bailoundou' vocabulary taken from him is of the Kalukembe variation. (See *Mission Rohan-Chabot*, t. III, f. 1.)

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197 and Mossamedes. The region of Catumbela, and perhaps of Benguela, seems to have been subjected to migrations of Ovimbundu, or of proto-Ovimbundu, between the sixteenth and the nineteenth centuries, and it is probable that some of these groups early established themselves there permanently.[1] At the present time peoples of many tribes make up the population of these towns and of the surrounding regions, but Umbundu is already the dominant speech, and in Lobito and Catumbela almost no other Bantu language is heard. Certain other areas on the fringe of the Umbundu lands now seem to be in process of 'Umbunduization', at least as regards language. This does not seem to have taken place in Musende, in Cipala (Quibala), or in Sela, in spite of the long time during which they owned the king of Bailundu as their overlord. Just now, however, such a process seems to be taking place in Mbuiva (Amboiva), in Cisanji (area of Bocoio), in Nganda, and in Cikomba (Chicomba, south of Caconda).

173 101 174 167 Some of the neighbouring peoples have traditions of migrations which corroborate the traditions of the Ovimbundu. The Nganda say that they formerly lived in the region of Wambu, around the rocks of Nganda-la-Kawe, and that they moved down-country for two reasons: (1) to escape Wambu-Kalunga and his penchant for eating their children; (2) to be by themselves to practise the rite of circumcision. When they migrated to their present home, the kingdom of Ciyaka, they say, was not yet established.

Traditions of the Herero and Ambo peoples may have bearing on the problem of the migrations of the Ovimbundu. Dr. Vedder concludes from tradition and genealogical evidence that the Herero must have crossed the Kunene 'about the year 1700'.[2] Some of the tribes of Angola with which the Njimba-Herero claim relationship[3] may easily be identified as belonging to the 'Bangala' group, as, for example, the Ovangambue, the Ovangumbi, and the Ovatjerenge, which are plainly the va Ngambue, the va Khumbi (or Nkhumbi), and the va Cilengi, respectively. Other names in the list are very much like some place-names in the Umbundu country.

Traditions of the Songo and Lunda people have already been

[1] According to a Ciyaka tradition. Also see A. Bastos, *Monographia de Catumbella*, pp. 6, 7; L. Cordeiro (ed.), *Benguella e seu sertão*, 1617–22; Ravenstein (ed.), op. cit., p. 19 f.

[2] Hahn *et al.*, op. cit., p. 157.

[3] Loc. cit.

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The Ovimbundu are not ordinary cannibals, if indeed that term may be applied to any people in Africa, nor do the commoners of the Ovimbundu ever eat human flesh on their own account, but no king may ever reign or be considered as regularly enthroned until he has 'eaten Ekongo'.[1] The cannibalism traditionally ascribed to Wambu-Kalunga is also a case in point.[2] Other human sacrifices practised by the 'Jagas' and described by Battell also have their counterparts in the practices of the Umbundu kingdoms.[3] The mode of the burial of the dead described by Battell[4] is essentially that which has been used, at least until the last few years, for the kings and the other 'holy'[5] men of the Ovimbundu, except that where rock caves are available the use of them has been adopted and in Kasongi cairns were used. The sitting posture and the sacrifice of wives or slaves and cattle (or of substitutes) are the important points, and these have everywhere been used for the classes mentioned, until quite recently.

The custom of keeping boys captured from the enemy and training them to be fearless warriors amid the terrors of the country has a parallel in the Umbundu custom of the king's slaves,[6] who came from another land[7] and would therefore do the king's bidding without fear, favour, or consideration of family feeling. They often reached high position and certain of the king's ministers always came from among them. There seem to be many recollections of the 'Jagas' in the customs of the kings' sons.[8] Names of certain of the officials seem to have survived, as, for example, Mani (*muēlē*) Lumbo, Mani-Curio (*Muēkalia*), Golambolo (*Ngalamboli*), Tendala (*Candala*), Ukuetambo,[9] &c. Careful linguistic studies would doubtless reveal many remains of the speech

[1] *Oku lia Ekongo*—lit. 'to eat the Old One'. This is a ritual feast in which the flesh of a specially fattened slave is eaten mixed with the flesh of various animals. See Ravenstein, op. cit., p. 33, note 3. Magyar described this custom, calling it '*Ouri-Kongo*', op. cit., pp. 275 ff.

[2] See *supra*, p. 176.

[3] Compare Ravenstein, op. cit.

[4] Op. cit., p. 34 f.

[5] 'Holy' in the sense of spirit possessed—the king, the hunter, the medical practitioner, and the smith.

[6] *Ocinduli cossoma*, singular. May there be some recollection of 'Kinguri' (=Cinguli) in this word?

[7] In Bailundu the *ovinduli viossoma* (plural) came mostly from Luandu, i.e. the Songo country across the Kuanza—further evidence of connexion with Lunda emigrants.

[8] *Omālā volossoma*, used collectively of all the royal families of the Ovimbundu.

[9] Cavazzi, op. cit., pp. 206 f., 211.

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which the 'Jagas' had, although they soon adopted the language of the people whom they conquered. As recently as fifty years ago the mother of the king of Bailundu spoke Umbundu brokenly, since she came from Cipala, and her sons were sent to complete their education with her people where later they were often called to rule.[1]

Recognition by the Ciyaka people that their forefathers came from the region where the Imbangala now live has been noted. It may have been a similar tradition heard in Viye which started Magyar to find out the tradition of 'Kinguri'. Such a tradition was mentioned in Viye as late as 1898.[2] This relation between the Umbundu ruling families and either the 'Jagas' or the Imbangala has been noted by several of the Portuguese writers. Lopes de Lima, in his History of the Discovery of the Congo, adds a footnote on the 'Jagas' as follows: 'The Jagas are almost nomadic peoples . . . coming from the interior of Africa, . . . there are some on the frontiers of the Congo, Angola, and Benguella, where some have fixed their habitations (as those of Cassange, and Bailundo).'[3] Writing in 1797 a certain Col. Pinheiro de Lacerda said of the inhabitants of Ngalangi, Kakonda, Wambu, Bailundu, &c.: 'These are they of the uplands, who are divided into two groups, those of one are called "Quinbundos",[4] (these do not eat human flesh); the others are called "Quimbangalas", who eat it, and when they make their sacrifice, which all attend, all eat the "Macongo".'[5] At that period the diversity of these two component parts of the Ovimbundu people was so apparent that they were even spoken of as separate and distinct peoples.

Place-names. Before leaving the subject of migratory movements a word should be said on the evidence of place-names. There is nothing to prove, except in a few instances where traditions have been collected, that the recurrence of identical or similar names at different places indicates the actual lines of migration followed by the several tribal groups represented. It may be said, however, that this line of evidence, taken together

[1] See *Missionary Herald*, 1888, p. 70.

[2] *Missionary Herald*, 1898, p. 108.

[3] *Annaes Mar. Col.*, 1845, p. 93.

[4] Taken from the singular form *ocimbundu*. As already explained, the change of *chi* to *qui* is a commonly met mutilation of the Bantu forms.

[5] *Annaes Mar. Col.*, 1845, p. 488. There follows a circumstantial account of the ceremony of *Oku lia Ekongo*, to which reference has already been made.

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174 mbundu. They are the result of a fusion of diverse stocks, chiefly of
167 the Southern Bantu and of the Congo or Central Bantu peoples. The ruling families probably were Lunda emigrants for the most part,[1] at least in their origin. It was probably during the seventeenth century that these people entered the Benguela Highland and began to found their respective dynasties. The people whom they encountered in these lands were mostly of Southern Bantu stock, with some 'Ngangela' people in Ndulu, Viye, and Ngalangi. The upper strata of these local populations seem to have moved on with their cattle to join related stocks in the border regions, while the masses seem to have stayed behind to form the nucleus of the Ovimbundu. Especially does this appear to have been the case with the original Southern Bantu stock, for many who were cattle-owners seem to have fled to the drier and more suitable lands in the south and west, while those who stayed must have lost to the invaders such cattle as they had. Only in the south-west (especially Kalukembe) was the Southern Bantu influence of sufficient strength to preserve any semblance of the cattle-culture complex, together with a recognition of kinship from their southern neigh-
[197] bours. Everywhere, it seems, the Southern Bantu nucleus was of sufficient strength to exert a dominant linguistic influence. It is certainly noteworthy that over the whole region a single language has developed with only small dialectic differences[2]—and that without benefit of political union. Commercial intercourse has probably largely supplied the place of the latter.

Historical Development

175 *Dominant Tendency*. The origins of the principal groups of the Ovimbundu have been traced in outline from both native and European sources. It now remains to sketch the main lines of

[1] But Viye and Ngalangi traditions *in re* the origin of their ruling families must be borne in mind—traditions also supported by other evidence.

[2] Retention of peculiarities of the parent stock by Kalukembe has been noted. There are certain noticeable differences as between 'up-country' and 'down-country'—roughly divided by the Keve and Kunene Rivers. Each of the outlying regions has its own peculiarities due to local foreign influences. In Kasongi, in Ngalangi, and in Viye these are quite noticeable but can hardly be called separate dialects. Regions of older European occupation—Kakonda and Viye—have taken more from the Portuguese. In consideration of these facts and the further fact that the Viye racial stock had a larger 'Ngangela' element than had other regions, the recent linguistic influence of Viye has been out of all proportion to reality and may be explained by the relatively larger number of missions and missionaries working in that region.

174 167 families, probably for the most part of Lunda origin, entered the Benguella Highlands during the seventeenth century and began to found their respective kingdoms. The tribes whom they encountered appear to have belonged to the cattle-keeping Ndombe-Nganda or to the Ngangela group.(1) Childs suggests that the upper strata of these local populations must have moved on southwards with their cattle to join related stocks in the border regions, while the masses stayed behind to form the nucleus of the Ovimbundu. The cultural influence of these early inhabitants on the Ovimbundu seems to have been slight, except in the south-west, particularly in Kalukembe, where a semblance of the cattle-culture complex remains, together with a recognition of kinship ties with southern neighbours (see below). The linguistic [197] influence of the Southern Bantu (Ndombe-Nganda) group in the south and west has however been considerable. It is noteworthy that over the whole Ovimbundu region a single language has developed with only small dialectal differences, and that although commercial contact has assisted this development, it has not been fostered by political union between the various segments of the Ovimbundu.

TRADITIONS

173 166 Each of the principal groups listed above (page 2) has separate legends of origin. Usually these traditions refer to the birthplace and adventures of the ancestors of the chiefly families, and only mention the indigenous inhabitants. Childs has made a careful and lucid summary of the traditions of the various groups;(2) these are therefore only very briefly outlined below.

Ndulu. There is evidence that Ndulu may be one of the oldest Ovimbundu kingdoms. The progenitor of the ruling dynasty is said to have come from the region near the confluence of the Kwanza and Lundo rivers, and to have conquered and expelled the Luimbe, who live today to the east of Ndulu. This migration may have been a result of the prolonged wars between the Portuguese and the Kingdom of Angola,(3) which ended in 1671.

Bailundu. The Bailundu dynasty is said to have its origin in Cipala, a region which remained subject to Bailundu until the end of the nineteenth century, and from which, according to tradition, the king's principal wife comes. Childs estimates the date of the foundation of the dynasty at not earlier than about 1700. The Sambu ruling family is said to descend either from a woman of Bailundu stock or from common stock with the Bailundu.

Viye. Versions of the Viye legend are recorded by Tucker,(4) Serpa Pinto,(5) Silva Porto,(6) and Magyar,(7) and these do not all agree. According to the most widely-known version today, Viye, an elephant-hunter of the Humbi people, tracking game down the Kwanza valley, met and married a princess of the Songo people; their son, Ulundu, founded the Viye chiefdom. From documentary evidence Childs estimates that this must have been in about 1750. This version also suggests that the original inhabitants were of the Ngangela group of tribes.

(1) See above, p.3.
(2) Op.cit., pp.170-81.
(3) To the north of the present Ovimbundu country.
(4) 1927, pp.34f.
(5) 1881, vol.I, pp.156f.
(6) 1942, pp.165-71.
(7) 1859, pp.266f.

known throughout the territory bounded by the Congo river, the Great Lakes, and the Kalahari desert. Most other Ovimbundu kingdoms fell into line with the trading activities of Bailundu and Viye. By the middle of the century this had resulted in a loose system of alliances and mutual understandings to the effect that the traders and caravans of each kingdom would be permitted to enter or travel through the others. At time these "trade-agreements" seem to have embraced all the Umbundu-speaking peoples, but violations were frequent, especially between Viye and the Ciyaka-Cingola-Citata group. Trade-agreements were also made beyond the Umbundu-speaking area, e.g. with the Mwata Yamvo of the Lunda.(1) 175 439 [484]

From roughly the turn of the twentieth century the large-scale trading activities of the Ovimbundu declined. Military occupation of Viye and Bailundu took place in 1890, and from that date European traders began to settle in Viye and Bailundu in ever-increasing numbers. In 1902 the Bailundu war occurred, after which the occupation of the whole of Umbundu country was quickly completed. This campaign paralysed trade, which was already suffering because of a great fall in rubber prices. Other factors which hastened the decline of Ovimbundu trading activities(2) include the famine in Ngangela country in 1911, the disappearance of illicit slave-traffic, and, finally, the building of the Benguella Railway (commenced in 1904), which put an end to the porterage and trading caravans of former days.(3) [721] [456]

LANGUAGE

"Umbundu is usually(4) associated with Ambo, Herero and kindred languages. It would however seem that more comparative study is required to show how real this apparent relationship is: it appears to be especially based on the fact that Umbundu uses prefixial o- with many of its noun classes. In general structure, however, Umbundu shows remarkable similarity in grammar and vocabulary to Luena, Luchazi and other languages of the Ganguella [Ngangela] group. 197 ●

Features of Umbundu which are worthy of note are:-

i. Presence of nasal vowels before and after 'l', 'h', 'v' and 'w'.

ii. In certain nasal compounds, subtraction occurs, involving the second consonant, but not the nasal, e.g. sunta is realised as ossuu.

iii. Compared with the Lunda-Luena languages Umbundu exhibits an unusually large number of defective verbs.

iv. A vowel system of five vowels.

(1) These were at first one-way agreements, allowing Ovimbundu to trade in many lands, since it was to the advantage of the rulers of these countries. The Ovimbundu are said in fact to have discouraged the tribes to the east from venturing out on their own account. See Livingstone 1857, p.394, Cameron 1877, p.406.
(2) For much greater detail concerning the rise and fall of Ovimbundu trade see Childs op.cit., pp.191-215.
(3) Ibid.
(4) Doke 1945, p.101; Guthrie 1948, p.64; Childs 1949, p.8.

199 v. Two significant tones on radicals; no tonal alternance on nominal suffixes. In this Umbundu resembles the Lunda-Luena languages."[1]

Childs[2] classifies Umbundu with the Ambo-Herero group as belonging to the Western Province of Southern Bantu. He suggests[3] that the similarity of Umbundu to the Ngangela languages is due to the dominating influence of the Umbundu spoken in Viye (where the racial stock had a greater Ngangela element) over that spoken in other regions. This dominating influence may be explained by the relatively large number of missions in the Viye region, and presumably also by the activities of Viye traders.[4]

197 177

Dialectal differences in Umbundu speech are very small. There are certain noticeable differences between "up-country" and "down-country", roughly divided by the Keve and Kunene rivers. Each of the outlying regions has its own peculiarities, often due to foreign influences.[5]

It has been mentioned above that while the homeland of the Ovimbundu is in the Benguella Highland, the use of the Umbundu language is now more widespread. The Nganda and the Hanya tribes are increasingly using it, and the mixed populations of the coastal towns of Lobito, Katumbela and Benguella use it almost exclusively. It is also spoken in Nova Redondo, in Mossamedes, and along the Benguella Railway. This process of "Umbundu-ization" does not seem however to be taking place in Cipala, Sela or Musende, in spite of the long period during which they owned the king of Bailundu as their overlord.[6]

PHYSICAL APPEARANCE AND DRESS

142 Among the Ovimbundu two main physical types are distinguished by some writers:[7] one is of brown skin colour and slender build, the other a shorter, darker type with more facial hair. No correlation of these types with chiefly families on the one hand and commoners on the other has been recorded. Hambly[8] gives several good illustrations of physical types among the Ovimbundu, and contrasts them with those found among neighbouring tribes.

301 304 391 The Ovimbundu retain distinctive styles of dress, ornament, tooth mutilation (a V-shaped notch in the upper incisors), scarification and hair-dressing. Women are dressed in trade cloth: unmarried girls wear one piece of cloth which hangs from the armpits to the knees, while a married woman drapes herself with two pieces of cloth, a skirt hanging from her girdle, and an upper piece so folded as to hold her baby tightly on her back. Certain cloth designs are considered appropriate for girls, others only for older women. Men now dress usually in European fashion.

(1) This linguistic note has been written by C.M.N. White.
(2) Op.cit., p.169. (3) p.190, fn.2.
(4) See above, pp.8-9.
(5) Childs op.cit., p.190, fn.2. See also Kalukembe, p.7 above.
(6) Childs, op.cit., pp.11, 179-80.
(7) See Hambly 1934, p.128; Cashmore 1944, p.36.
(8) Op.cit., plates XLIX-LIV.

121 Geographical study is valuable in showing that physical factors such as position, topography, soil, and climate have had not only a permissive but a stimulating effect on the development of certain cultural traits.

127 Historical documents dating from the year A.D. 1500 present valuable evidence for tribal movements, the effect of early European contacts, and the existence of certain beliefs and ceremonies. The facts adduced in chapter III are used in chapters X–XII in discussing culture contacts and cultural processes.

197 Inquiry respecting relationships of the Ovimbundu to other African tribes is aided by a study of the Umbundu language, which is shown to be of pure Bantu structure and vocabulary (chapter VIII). The characteristic features of the Umbundu language are those which form the basic elements of Bantu speech in general. These characteristics are alliterative concord (that is, repetition of the prefix before every word in agreement with the noun); absence of grammatical gender; and a position of the genitive in which the name of the thing possessed comes before the possessor. Umbundu, though structurally assignable to the Bantu group, has its own vocabulary, whose degree of relationship to that of surrounding peoples may to some extent be judged by the vocabularies of F. and W. Jaspert (Die Völkerstämme Mittel Angolas, Frankfort, 1930, pp. 144–150). The fact that the language of the Ovimbundu has become the lingua franca of Angola, still further testifies to the thoroughness of the contacts, which from historical sources are known to have been made in the period 1500–1900.

104 The spelling of proper names leaves a wide margin for individual preference. The Umbundu language requires "M" before "B," yet custom has sanctioned the form Bailundu. Nevertheless I have retained "N" in Ngalangi despite the form Galangi on several maps. Maps show great diversity of spelling, but I have adhered throughout to Kipungo (Quipungo) and Kwanza (Quanza). Among tribal names I prefer Vakuanyama to OvaKwanyama and Vachokue to BaKioko or BaDjokue; in making the choice I have tried to imitate the sounds I heard from the natives themselves. In referring to the papers of E. Torday, who knew the southwest Congo well and spoke several Congo languages fluently, I note that he sometimes prefers to recognize the prefix as in BaMbala and BaYaka, but he also writes Badjokue and Bayaka. J. H. Weeks writes Bangala (BaNgala). C. H. L. Hahn uses the form Ovambo (OvaMbo). Ovimbundu I have preferred throughout; the accent is on the

VIII. LANGUAGE

Affinities of Umbundu

197 The Umbundu language is widely understood in Angola owing to the journeys of the Ovimbundu as raiders and traders in large caravans. Umbundu is as important for communication in Angola as Hausa is for Nigeria, or Swahili for the east coast of Africa.

Notwithstanding this use of Umbundu as a lingua franca it is necessary to note that tribes surrounding the Ovimbundu have their own distinctive Bantu languages; moreover, the Umbundu language itself has several dialects.

For example, the Vasele tribe living in rugged country in the hinterland of Novo Redondo have a dialect of Umbundu (Usele) so distinctive that a competent Ocimbundu interpreter has difficulty in making himself understood, or interpreting what is said. Isolation of the Vasele from the Ovimbundu has led to the formation of a cultural pocket in which linguistic developments have shared in [184] a specialization of culture. The differences between the Umbundu of Elende and that of the Ambundu tribes may be noted by comparing this brief outline of Umbundu, recorded at Elende, with the records of Amandus Johnson, whose research relates to the language spoken in the hinterland of Loanda. The present chapter will deal only with notes on vocabulary, phonetics, an outline of grammar, sign language, folklore and proverbs, all of which are briefly treated. In the field phonographic records of the Umbundu language were taken, and for the analysis of tonal values and other aspects of phonetics I am indebted to Dr. M. H. Watkins, a student of Professor E. Sapir, formerly of the University of Chicago, now at Yale.

The section on Umbundu grammar conclusively shows Umbundu to be a representative language of the Bantu family of languages. Umbundu possesses all the fundamental characteristics of Bantu [113] speech. The truth of this may be seen by comparing this outline of Umbundu with the analysis of Bantu languages given by A. Werner (Language Families of Africa, London, 1925). Moreover, Carl Meinhof (Grundzüge einer vergleichenden Grammatik der Bantu Sprachen, Berlin, 1906, pp. 112–115, and translation by A. Werner and N. J. von Warmelo, London, 1932) indicates the degree of relationship of Umbundu to other Bantu tongues by giving comparisons of the stems of personal and possessive pronouns, along with other comparative data.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

H. H. Johnston (A Comparative Study of the Bantu and Semi-Bantu Languages, Oxford, 1919, vol. I, p. 350) places Umbundu in his Group X; that is, the southwestern group of Bantu languages. Johnston's map indicates that throughout Angola there is a gradual transition from the southwestern Bantu group to that of the southwest Congo, which is exactly what might be expected from a consideration of the geographical position of Angola. Johnston's grouping is based on root forms and vocabulary. 197 114

This difficulty of making a comparison of the affinities of Umbundu does not preclude the possibility of recording some preliminary observations, especially with regard to vocabulary.

F. and W. Jaspert have prepared a comparative vocabulary of 250 words in the languages of the Ovimbundu, the Luena, the Basongo, the Luchazi, the Luimbi, and the Vachokue tribes. Inspection of the columns indicates a close connection of Songo, Luchazi, and Luimbi; in fact, the vocabularies of the two latter are almost identical. The vocabularies of the Vachokue and the Luena have much in common with those mentioned, but the Umbundu vocabulary has only a minor agreement with the vocabularies of these eastern and northeastern tribes. There are, however, some words which are identical in all these languages mentioned by F. and W. Jaspert. Examples of identity, or very close similarity, are found in the words for "bow," "elephant," "to eat," "firestick," "finger," and a few other forms, but the principal deduction from inspection of the columns is the distinctiveness of the Umbundu vocabulary.

On the contrary, examination of the vocabularies of the Ovimbundu and the Vakuanyama, of the south of Angola, appears to justify Johnston's inclusion of Umbundu with southwestern Bantu in so far as similarity of vocabulary is a criterion. The correspondence is further borne out by P. H. Brincker's "Lehrbuch des Oshikuanyama." In the light of these comparisons the relationship of Umbundu vocabularies is readily seen, for instead of searching for similarities the numerous identities are at once evident. At a glance one sees that the Umbundu and Kuanyama words for "arm," "arrow," "ax," "banana," "beard," "bird," "blood," "bone," "breast," "charcoal," "guinea fowl," "hand," and "hoe," are either identical or closely related. I noted the easy communication of my Ocimbundu interpreter with the Vakuanyama of Mongua.

Some of the following chapters show that the Ovimbundu have an undeniable southwest Congo culture; they have, however, taken 197

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

197 cattle and a few other traits from the Vakuanyama of southern Angola, and there seems to be no doubt that the vocabularies of the Ovimbundu and the Vakuanyama have been influenced by these southern contacts. Yet structure will prove the final arbiter in deciding linguistic relationships, for the Ovimbundu as extensive travelers have widely distributed their vocabulary.

Caution is necessary in making comparisons of Umbundu with surrounding languages; for, although Kuanyama has received careful attention, and the researches of Meinhof have given a reliable background for Ovambo and Herero speech, the language of the Vachokue of eastern Angola and the speech of the Mussurongo of northern Angola, call for a comprehensive work. Moreover, there yet remains the task of providing a standard Umbundu dictionary and grammar, and pending the collation of this linguistic material there are no means of determining the exact syntactical, phonetic, and other relationships of Umbundu.

VOCABULARY

192 Apart from a broad question of the linguistic evidence of culture contacts, there are points of interest connected with the recording of vocabularies in a restricted area. Under the heading "Nature Lore" attention was called to an extensive Umbundu vocabulary connected with those activities which underlie the economic structure. The vocabulary showed that the Ovimbundu are keen observers whose activities have resulted in the formation of a large vocabulary arising from trades and occupations. In nature study many fine distinctions are made; thus, there are words to distinguish not only trees and plants of economic importance, but varieties of snakes and lizards which are of no great economic interest.

[868] In order to test further mental activity and the acquisition of vocabulary, an Ocimbundu girl of about twelve years of age was asked to name some of the objects in my collection. Without hesitation she made the following list. The object was indicated, then the child gave the name. This information was checked by an adult interpreter who found that the child was correct in every instance, although the objects do not specially appeal to the interests of a young girl.

The objects named by this girl are as follows:

Ocimenda. Wooden dish.
Omulopa. Tobacco-pipe made from a horn.
Elenga. Pipe for smoking hemp.
Ocimenga. Brass bracelet.
Ulinda. Switch made from the tail of an ox.
Ongulenga. Leather pouch for belt.
Upi. Pounding stick.
Ombenja. Gourd with a long neck.

177 [197] The Ovambo include eight kindred tribes, all of whom are branches of the Bantu linguistic family to which the Ovimbundu belong. The Vakuanyama, who inhabit large tracts of southern Angola, are a numerous, warlike, pastoral branch of the Ovambo. The Vakuanyama are the only section of the cattle-keeping peoples of the southwest of Africa with whom I have made personal contact; but their culture is generally representative of that of the Ovambo and the Herero.

171 233 When making a journey southward from the country of the Ovimbundu in central Angola, there is a noticeable increase in the size of the kraals as the journey is continued. The first large kraal was observed near Kipungo, and when as far south as Mongua the wealthy cattle-keeping Vakuanyama were by far the most numerous people. Their total strength is probably about 55,000. I journeyed through the Kuanyama country in July, halfway through the dry season, but found that cattle were watered at deep wells from which men and women were constantly drawing water for the herds. Near Ondjiva, only a few miles from British South West Africa, the ruler of the Vakuanyama owned at that time 14,000 head of cattle.

After examining 1,200 objects collected in Angola, I feel sure that cultural contact between the Ovimbundu and the Vakuanyama is unimportant, so far as artifacts are concerned; but, if the inquiry turns to other aspects of culture, there is a more fruitful line of investigation.

Many beliefs and customs center in the keeping of cattle in east and south Africa. The typical cattle-keeping area begins with the Bahima in the vicinity of Lake Victoria Nyanza. The region extends down the eastern side of the continent, through the south and southwest into Damaraland. The Vakuanyama of southern Angola should be included in this area, which has homologies in respect to certain laws, ceremonies, economic customs, and religious beliefs.

The true pastoral area of the south of Angola extends at least as far north as Huila, where there is sufficient rainfall to produce good pasture in open country which is well adapted for raising stock. All the traditions of the Ovimbundu, along with the writings of Battell, suggest this southwest part of Angola as the line of entry for cattle. The Congo basin is not a pastoral country, and transportation of cattle from Rhodesia would necessitate the crossing of hundreds of miles of arid country in Moxico, eastern Angola. There remains, therefore, the cattle-keeping area of south and southwest

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

heavy torso, disproportionately long arms, a dark skin, prognathous jaws, broad nostrils, thick everted lips, and woolly hair. But usually a modification of these features occurs in Bantu-speaking Negroes. How did this modification of physique arise?

A. C. Haddon (Wandering of Peoples, p. 54) expresses a generally accepted view when he states that Bantu-speaking Negroes are a mixture of true Negroes with Hamites. Seligman (Races of Africa, p. 181) refers to an infusion of Hamitic blood which has differentiated the Bantu Negroes from true Negroes, and this is a generally accepted hypothesis. But Torday (H. Spencer, Descriptive Sociology of African Races, preface, p. iii) questions whether the physical and linguistic cleavage between Bantu-speaking and Sudanic-speaking Negroes is due to an admixture of Hamitic blood. He attributes the physical differences of the two great linguistic divisions of Negroes to disparity of environmental conditions. But at present no physical anthropologist could say to what extent climatic factors, nutrition, and other environmental conditions can be held responsible for the physical differences of Negroes.

The question of a mingling of Hamite and true Negro to produce a modified type of Negro is not the only difficulty. How does one account for aberrant Negroid types such as the Pygmies of the Ituri forest and the Bushmen? They have a phylogenetic relationship, but what is the racial affinity? Again, will change of environmental conditions account for the Pygmy and Bushman types? Or are we to form a hypothesis of origins by assuming establishment of new species by variation or mutation?

In the absence of certain knowledge science accepts a hypothesis which best explains the known facts. And in this matter of a modified Negro type speaking Bantu languages, the idea of a mingling of the blood of Negroes and Hamites best explains the gradation of physical types from west African, Sudanic-speaking Negroes, through various types of Bantu Negroes, to Hamites, as exemplified by the Somali, Beja, and Hadendoa.

The main characters of linguistic families of Africa are clearly defined by A. Werner (Language Families of Africa, pp. 20–23) who refers to the works of D. Westermann and C. Meinhof. The distinguishing features of Hamitic, Semitic, Bantu, Sudanic, and Bushman speech are known, yet the task of placing a particular language in its appropriate family is not always simple. The classification may depend on the particular facet of the language which is under examination. Hausa (Hamitic), is difficult to classify

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

197 since the language has Sudanic and Hamitic elements with some Semitic roots. The earliest relationships of African linguistic families, for instance Hamitic and Semitic, also Sudanic, Bantu, and Bushman, is a field for further research. To take only one instance of complexity, Bantu is divided into more than two hundred languages and innumerable dialects, whose origin, structure, and evolution have been treated by C. Meinhof (Introduction to the Phonology of the Bantu Languages, London, 1932; a translation, by A. Werner and N. J. von Warmelo, of Meinhof's Grundriss eine Lautlehre der Bantusprachen).

174 114 In conclusion of this summary of the background of African history, there arises the difficulty of ascribing to each of the races those cultural elements for which the race is responsible, either by primary invention within Africa, or by introduction from some source outside Africa. The difficulty may be illustrated by quotations relating to the iron industry of African Negroes. Rival theories claim origin of the craft in Asia, in Egypt, and among African Negroes themselves.

Seligman (Races of Africa, p. 158) states, "We may believe that the Negro, who is now an excellent iron worker, learnt this art from the Hamite." Torday writes (H. Spencer, Descriptive Sociology of African Races, preface, p. iii), "To state that Bantu civilization—or any civilization whatever—is due to the ancestors of such absolutely primitive tribes as the Hadendoa and Beja (identified by some with the enigmatic Hamites) presupposes that these people who were ignorant of agriculture, or the production of iron, and of all arts and crafts denoting a higher culture, who, as we know, have not progressed a step within the past five hundred years and considered all manual labor degrading, had the power to give that which they never possessed."

The complexity of argument relating to the origin of just one cultural trait, iron-working, can be judged by consulting the writings of W. Gowland (The Metals in Antiquity, *J.R.A.I.*, XLII, pp. 235–287), W. M. F. Petrie (The Arts and Crafts of Ancient Egypt), W. Belck (Die Erfinder der Eisentechnik, *Zeitsch. Ethn.*, XXXIX, pp. 335–381; XL, pp. 45–69; XLII, pp. 15–30), and F. Luschan (Eisentechnik in Afrika, *ibid.*, XLI, pp. 23–59).

Even with these reservations and disputed points in mind, it is yet possible to speculate with some accuracy respecting the origin and assembly of traits which, welded together, form the culture of the Ovimbundu.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

ASSEMBLING OF TRAITS

The data which have been assembled in relation to the Ovimbundu, if considered in conjunction with the analysis of African cultures made in the foregoing chapter, lead to the following historical reconstruction. 174

When somatic traits of the Ovimbundu are considered it is clear that the general type is removed from that of true Negroes. Among the Ovimbundu are persons of a slender, brown-skinned type, with some refinement of lips and nasal width; while other persons possess the opposites of these features, but in no instance as intensely as do true Negroes. I accept the view of physical admixture of Hamites with true Negroes and believe that types like the Ovimbundu and the Vakuanyama have resulted from infusion of Hamitic blood which has modified Negro somatic traits in the way mentioned. [142]

Linguistically the Ovimbundu have a pure form of Bantu speech. The Umbundu language is tonal, but there are few semantic words whose meaning depends on a high, middle, or low tone. Probably Umbundu should be classified with the southwestern Bantu languages, but further research may show that on structural grounds Umbundu has to be accorded an intermediate position between the southwestern and the central Bantu languages. Study of vocabulary definitely links Umbundu with the Ukuanyama language of the southwestern Bantu group, but conclusions based on comparison of vocabularies are hazardous because of the dissemination of Umbundu words by extensive caravan trade of the Ovimbundu. We may therefore be dealing with loan words and not with bifurcation from the same matrix. 174 197

When comparing the social pattern of the Ovimbundu with that of other African tribes the following elements of culture should be borne in mind. 174

(1) Traits associated with an archaic hunting culture.

(2) Factors typical of the culture of Negroes, both Bantu and Sudanic.

(3) Cultural traits from pastoral tribes of south and southwest Angola. These tribes speak Bantu languages but have somatic traits which are Hamitic, while their culture exhibits some main features of the Hamitic pastoral pattern.

Among the earliest elements of Umbundu culture would probably be the traits of hunting and food-gathering. The antiquity of hunting has been indicated by considering the wide distribution of appliances

539

kùvélò	*vèlèvà.*	*Wà púla*	*hósi*	*háti,*	*wàkólápó.*	*Hósi*	*hátì,*	
at opening	of the cave.	He asked	lion,	saying,	"Are you well?"	Lion	said,	

ⁿdá	*vélà*	*ènénè.*	*Wà*	*láleka*	*bíndji*	*òku ìyílà*	*vèlèva*	*òkù*
"I am	sick	very."	He	invited	wild dog	to enter	into the cave	to

vàŋgula	*láhè.*	*Bíndji*	*wà*	*kúmbúlúlá*	*hátì,*	*ⁿda*	*távà,*	*pwàí*
talk	with him.	Wild dog	he	replied	saying,	"I should have agreed		but

ⁿda	*lìmbúka*	*àkàsà*	*ósi*	*àìmbà*	*òvásò*	*kèlèvà.*	*Kà*	*kúlì*	
I	noticed	tracks	all	go	toward	the cave.	There	are	

àkàsà	*àìmbà*	*òvásò*	*pòsámwà.*	*Tcà*	*líŋguá*	*mbwí*	*tcà*	
no tracks	going	toward	the outside."	That which	goes	down? (sinks)	it	

lùŋgísá	*avá*	*và*	*ŋwà.*
warns	those	who	swim.

SIGN LANGUAGE

201 Various language signs are in use. The action of throwing a mat on the ground and laying the head on the hands indicates sleep. Inquiry about the health of a father may be made by stroking an imaginary beard. If the father is strong and well the reply will be a flection of the forearm to harden the biceps.

There are dumb signs for numbers:

(1) The right hand is used to bend the little finger of the left hand into the left palm.

(2) The little finger and the one next to it on the left hand are turned over into the palm.

(3) Three fingers are turned inward.

(4) Four fingers are turned inward.

(5) Four fingers and the thumb are turned inward. The thumb is then tapped with the index finger of the right hand.

(6) The right hand is extended and the thumb of the left hand is placed on the little finger of the right hand. This action adds one to five.

(7) The right hand is extended, then the thumb of the left hand is placed on the little finger and the one next to it. This adds two to five.

(8) The thumb of the left hand is placed on the extended little finger, middle finger, and third finger of the left hand.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

(9) Four fingers of the right hand are placed on the thumb of the extended left hand. 201

(10) The hands are placed together palm to palm.

A very insulting sign is made in this way. The left arm is held up with the fist closed. The left wrist is grasped with the right hand. The left fist is then shaken while the right hand is still grasping the left wrist. "This is done when a man is very angry, and he cannot find words."

A bending forward of the head accompanied by wide opening of the eyes and protrusion of the tongue means "you're a fool."

Shaking the head means "no." If the right hand is shaken in front of the face with the index finger extended, a negative is implied. Nodding the head is an affirmative sign. To indicate absence of anything, or the completion of something, the index finger of the right hand is drawn across the mouth. Rubbing the palms together rapidly has the same significance. In order to call some one the right arm is extended with the palm down. If they summon some one from a distance the arm is lowered, while a scratching movement is made with the fingers. The sign indicating "go away" is a flipping of the hand outwardly, while the arm is extended.

RIDDLES AND PROVERBS

[538] 524

"There is a red belt round our field. What is it?" The answer is, "red ants." 539

"We have somebody who lies all his life in our field. He always lies on one side." The answer is, "a squash."

"We have a stump in the house that is always burning and always moving." This is a metaphor rather than a riddle. The stump is the log which is pushed forward into the fire. It is always alive yet is gradually dying. The saying is intended to refer to human lives. People are alive but their lives are becoming shorter each day.

"What is it that we eat above and below the ground?" The answer is, "manioc, because the leaves and roots are eaten."

"The turtle cannot climb up on a stump, some one has to put it there." This is said in reference to some person who gains a high position which he could attain only by influence and not through merit. 539

When a person makes threats without being able to fulfil them the following expressions are appropriate: "Hot water does not

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

114 trative posts. I agree that people between Caconda and Huila
101 represent a racial mixture of the Ovimbundu and the Ovambo. The record speaks of painting-houses for girls at Cabinda, an item which agrees with reports from other sources. The jottings concerning tribes from Cabinda to the far south of Angola are too vague to be used in ethnological work with confidence.

There are many points on which the work of A. Schachtzabel should be consulted for the purpose of making comparisons with my
[621] own observations. The chief of these are a note and photograph on
[281] village construction (p. 130); the musical bow (p. 32); the loom
[175] (plate VI); transmigration of the soul of a chief into an animal (p. 51);
[524] and the game of mancala (p. 52). My observations of initiation at
[881] Katoko, Ngalangi, and Cangamba agree well with that of Schachtzabel at Katoko, but I was able to obtain more detail and more
[283] numerous photographs of the ritual of initiation. The spinning of cotton (p. 143) is exactly the process so frequently witnessed now at Elende. Iron-working (p. 111) appears to be comparable with the technique at Elende, but Schachtzabel seems to have missed the ritual. I was not so fortunate as this author in finding the old type of iron-smelting furnace in use.

114 The work of Statham is devoted primarily to hunting and descrip-
136 tions of plant and animal life. The chapter given to a casual description of people among whom he passed is not useful as ethnology; but the book is of service in providing a background of natural history. Information on the tsetse fly in Angola (p. 294) assists ethnological work by showing the determining effect of this biological factor.
[231] Presence of the fly is prohibitive to cattle-keeping, therefore cattle are not kept along the river courses which are infested with this pest.

114 Alexander Barns made no pretence of writing more than a travel book; nevertheless he publishes photographs of ethnological value, gives useful historical summaries, and deals with economic problems of production and transportation.

114 Tucker's book "Drums in the Darkness," though written to
175 interest the American public in mission work, contains many ethnological statements. The chief of these relate to the structure of the compound (p. 37); the dress of women (p. 39); naming of twins and triplets; and other items which agree well with data from the district in which I worked. There are notes on drum signals (p. 74) and
[202] cannibalism (p. 77). Apparently drum signals were in use at Bihé half a century ago. Forty years ago a slave was killed and eaten
[266] at the installation ceremonies for a new king, a point that was noted

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu
Angola FP1

Men can go out to work in three ways. By going to look for work in a city or on a plantation, by being recruited in his village by a travelling labour recruiter (*angariador*), or by being recruited through the post for military service or for contract labour (a period of a year's non-voluntary work). 464

Men who are away at work may keep in touch with their kin by letters. These are sent to the nearest Catholic or Protestant mission station according to the religious sympathies of the sender and his kin and are sent from there to the villages. 205

Angola forms an Overseas Province of Portugal, and is therefore subject to the Overseas Ministry in Lisbon. The Overseas Provinces of Portugal are officially declared to be integral parts of Portugal, which is regarded as a nation existing in Europe, Africa, and Asia. The expression 'Here also is Portugal' is often heard in Angola. 648

The inhabitants of Angola are in legal status divided into 'civilized' persons, whether white, mulatto, or black, with Portuguese citizenship, and Portuguese 'natives' or 'uncivilized' persons,[7] this latter category including some 3,000 'uncivilized' mulattoes. The 1950 census gave Angola a total population of 4,145,266 of whom 135,355 were 'civilized'. This category was composed of 78,826 whites, 26,335 mulattoes, and 30,089 Africans, plus a balance of 105 presumably Goans. 641 162

The 'natives' are, unlike the 'civilized', subject to the Labour Code. There is no Native Legal Code, nor does Portuguese law apply to 'natives'. Administrative officers may apply Portuguese law, or native custom as known to them, or their own judgement. 641

The administration is headed by the Governor-General who resides at Luanda. The province of Angola is divided into districts each headed by a district governor. Both the governors-general and the district governors have usually distinguished themselves in the Services or in a legal career. Members of the administrative service are not usually promoted to these posts, although they may attain such positions as that of Secretary of Native Affairs. 631

The districts are in turn sub-divided into *concelhos* (a term

[7] By a law of 1961 Portuguese citizenship has been made universal.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13
Angola FP1

A M 162 A 496 M 496 177 A 505 M A 206 487 494 M 797

institutions or divisions have had little consideration in drawing administrative boundaries.

Systems of communications have been developed during the last forty years. The Benguela Railway, built by Sir Robert Williams and the Tanganyika Concessions, Ltd., was completed in 1931 from Lobito to Elisabethville in the Katanga region, where direct connexion is made with the South, Central, and East African systems of rail and water transport. This railway serves as the most direct outlet for the mines of the Congo and Northern Rhodesia. The great majority of native employees of the railway are Ovimbundu and it has also brought this people their first contact with the mines and with industrialized South Africa. Regular steamship connexion between Lobito and Europe includes Portuguese, Belgian, German, and British lines with occasional calls from American, Japanese, and Scandinavian ships.[1] Recent years have seen considerable extensions of telegraphic and radio service throughout the colony. Motor roads have been built extensively, especially on the plateau and along the watersheds. In addition there are many wagon-tracks for ox-wagons which were introduced by the voortrekkers almost seventy years ago. In many cases the routes followed are those first used by native caravans.

There are eleven missionary societies at work among the Ovimbundu: five Protestant and six Roman Catholic.[2] There is only one fully organized Umbundu Church. It includes the work of three Protestant societies. It is the work of this Church and of the Missions of the A.B.C.F.M.[3] and of the United Church of Canada with which the evaluations of this study are concerned. The Mission of the A.B.C.F.M. was founded in 1880, as the first Christian work undertaken among the Ovimbundu.[4]

[1] This was the situation in 1939. During the period of the war the Portuguese services were maintained, although with less regularity than before. The U.S. Maritime Commission maintained a cargo service. There were occasional calls by cargo vessels of various nationalities. The Belgian line is reopening its service (1946) and the Portuguese lines have acquired additional vessels.

[2] Pères du Saint-Esprit began work among the Ovimbundu in 1890; the Padres Seculares have been working in the towns; the Benedictines and several orders of nuns also have stations.

[3] American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions.

[4] The two missions mentioned conduct their work in most respects as a single mission. The other Protestant societies do not have very extensive work among the Ovimbundu.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

The tasks of recruiting contract labourers and road-workers and of getting fines and taxes paid, and such other duties as the arranging of compulsory purchase of tickets for the travelling cinema (showing patriotic films) are carried out through a long process of argument, attempted evasion, and pressure, between the chief, the government headmen, and the locally influential people, traditional headmen, catechists, and anyone else who can get himself listened to. Persons actually picked for contract labour or road work may make quite a fuss about it, but as such numbers are recruited it is ultimately accepted resignedly. It is not really practicable for a chief to discriminate in favour of his kinsman owing to the heavy demands for labour and the likelihood of such discrimination being reported at the post, as happened to Simbwyikoka. Demands for labour may fall heavily on some households. Thus one Epalanga household consisted of a man, his daughter by an earlier marriage, his wife and her baby daughter. The man had been taken for contract labour, his wife had been called to road work, and the adolescent daughter was carrying sisal[14] to the post. A kinsman of the household head attempted to arrange for some watch to be kept over the gardens lest animals should get in.

There were four government headmen in Gumba during my stay. Theoretically they are village headmen. The villages in which official records group Ovimbundu do not conform to the actual villages in which Ovimbundu live. Anybody moving from one village to another has to pay a fee; as the Ovimbundu move about quite frequently and no attempt is made to enforce this rule locally, the result is this discrepancy between paper and real villages.

The government headman's duties are those already described for the chief. As with the chief, there is only sufficient backing from the post for him to carry out the orders he receives; he does not receive power to enable him to exercise political leadership and judicial authority at the local level, nor is he a representative of the post in the villages. His interests and values are linked to those of his neighbours rather than to the post. It is through the chief and the government headmen

[14] Some villages are obliged to grow sisal and take it to the post without payment.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

797 usually come to the school but say they want to be baptized. Many people who would have to be classified as pagans are people with Christian names who at one time attended catechism classes and prayers, and who may very occasionally turn up to some service, for instance the Corpus Christi procession at the Mission.

Adult and adolescent converts may only receive baptism at the mission. The children of Christian parents are baptized by priests on their visits to the villages; it is the catechists' duty to teach them catechism in preparation for their first confession and communion which should take place when they are about seven to ten years old. The missionaries frequently complain of the inadequacies of the catechists as teachers of doctrine. Few of the old pupils of the elementary school at the Bimbe mission become catechists, as there is no pay attached to it. Some, certainly, of the catechists are devoted and intelligent men, and a few have a real gift for speaking in public.

Some catechists attempt to teach their pupils the three Rs; and a catechist ready to teach reading, writing and counting will find a number of boys eager to learn. There are about half a dozen 'rudimentary', that is pre-primary, schools dependent on the Bimbe mission, none of which is in Gumba or Chicunda, and a primary school at the mission itself. Learning to read and write is not confined to Christians; some pagans in [212] Epalanga could write their names, and I was told that among contract labourers on plantations those who were literate would teach those who were not in the dormitories at night.

Apart from religious instruction, the catechists have the duty of leading the people in morning and evening prayers at the school. These prayers are in Umbundu with occasionally a hymn in Portuguese. On Sunday mornings there is a longer set of prayers and hymns, some in Latin taken from the Mass, held about ten o'clock. Only a few people turn up for morning prayers, considerably more to evening prayers, and nearly everybody who can be considered a 'school person' comes to the Sunday gathering.

The evening gatherings for prayers may be used as opportunities for announcing news—e.g. the approaching visit of a missionary. More usually they are followed and sometimes

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

241 The Highland is evidently well suited to the particular type of
221 agriculture which the Ovimbundu carry on with upland fields for the principal crops of maize and beans growing in the rainy season and with river gardens for secondary cultures in the dry season. The purpose of the latter is to piece out between the principal harvests. The situation of the Highland across principal watersheds and therefore on convenient trade routes has been noted. This is doubtless one factor in commercial development among the
231 Ovimbundu. Cattle-keeping with them seems to be largely a commercial development. While cattle may live on the Highland, they thrive better in the less well-watered lands to the west and the south where the neighbouring peoples are cattle-keepers.

Neighbouring peoples

101 The cattle-keeping peoples who live just west and south of the
197 Ovimbundu are the Nganda, the Ndombe, the Hanya, the Cilenge, the Cipungu, the Muila, the Nyaneka, the Mulondo, and the Khumbi.[1] These peoples all seem to be related to each other and in some way to some, at least, of the Ovimbundu.[2] Still further south beyond these peoples are the Ambo and the Herero, also cattle-keepers. All these, together with the Ovimbundu, have been classified linguistically as making up the 'Western Province' of the Southern Bantu.[3] There are also a few Bushmen on the southern borders.

The peoples to the east and south-east of the Umbundu country are probably Lunda emigrants and so belong to the Congo group (Cokue and Songo) and to the Zambezi or Central group (Luimbi, Lucazi, Nyemba, Ngonzelo, &c.).[4] These people are lumped together by the Ovimbundu under the somewhat deprecatory term of *ea Ngangela*.

The northern neighbours belong to the Western or Angola 'cluster' of the Congo group (Esela, Cipala, Lupolo, Ndongo or

[1] See C. Estermann, 'Notas Etnográficas sôbre os povos indígenas do Distrito da Huíla' (*Boletim Geral das Colónias*, Fev. 1935, pp. 41–69). He groups some of these people together under the name 'Bangala' or 'Ovambangala'.

[2] Information from Nganda, Mulondo, Cilenge, and Ovimbundu individuals.

[3] See R. A. Dart, 'Racial Origins', p. 23, in Schapera, op. cit., 1937; C. M. Doke, *Bantu Linguistic Terminology* (London: Longmans, 1935); Sir H. H. Johnston, *Comparative Vocabulary of the Bantu and Semi-Bantu Languages*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1919, 1922).

[4] Johnston, op. cit.

Olungunga is not a sweet manioc, so is not eaten raw. The roots are placed to soak in a stream for three or four days before they are roasted on a fire, after which they may be eaten with impunity. As an alternative the roots may be dried in the sun; they are then pounded into meal which is scattered into boiling water so that a mush is formed. The Umbundu name for this preparation is *iputa riatombo*, meaning "mush of manioc." The leaves of *olungunga* are not soaked in water; on the contrary, they may be cooked as soon as they are gathered, but they must not be eaten when warm. There is no danger in eating them after they have been boiled and have been allowed to become cold. The leaves are served with salt or fat. 252 [263]

All the manioc, with the exception of *olungunga*, is sweet. *Kandona* has roots which may be eaten uncooked, but both leaves and roots are sometimes cooked in water. Other varieties of manioc known as *otetu*, *elemba*, and *esela* are eaten in the same way as *kandona*. Manioc is in use all the year, but the greatest quantity is consumed in November and December, a period when the growing corn is not ripe and the storage supplies have dwindled. [221]

Sweet potatoes are plentiful all the year with the exception of the months of November and December. They are placed in the pot, without removal of the skin, and boiled for a period of twenty or thirty minutes. They are taken out, peeled, and eaten. European potatoes are sometimes peeled and made into a mush. The variety of garden produce naturally depends on proximity to a trading post, a mission, or some other European settlement. [171]

In propagating manioc a stem is cut off from the parent plant which is about three feet high; but probably two or three years pass before the tubers are considered large enough for use. Sweet potatoes are planted in January, but there is very little of this food available in February and March. Toward the end of March or early in April a few potatoes may be ready for consumption. 244 [221]

Peanuts (*Arachis hypogaea*, Leguminosae) are planted in October by women who prepare patches of ground which are drilled with holes one inch deep and eight inches apart. One nut is placed in each hole after the shell has been removed. Above the ground small leaves appear. After the flower-stalk withers it has the peculiarity of elongating and bending down. In this way the young pod is forced underground, and the seeds mature a little way below the surface.

Some natives employ irrigation by leading small channels of water from a hillside stream to a garden containing maize and 312

3. Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

436 804 Balls of wax and tobacco were, and are now, definite standar of trade. To some extent rubber as a medium of exchange has be used through contact with eastern Angola. The Umbundu wo *ocilila* expresses a weight of about thirty kilos.

805 221 There is no measure for minutes or hours. I have seen a ma of the Luchazi tribe keep account of the number of days taken on journey by cutting notches on a stick. Ngonga says that the Ovim bundu reckon by cutting notches, also by knotting a piece of strin Three days would be expressed by the words *akumbi atatu* ("thre suns"). The word day or sun is used in fixing a time. There is n word for week. A month is *ceci*, which is the word for moon. Whe the corn is ripe the people say, "We are in a new year." Anothe yearly time mark is the arrival of the first rains, probably in th middle of September.

The words *oku lima* ("to cultivate") yield the word *ulima*, whic designates the period between the beginnings of two rainy season Corn is planted about the time of the first heavy rains, which occu in late September or early October. Naturally, this important occa sion forms a somewhat uncertain time base; nevertheless it is th one used to express the lapse of years up to five in number. Afte such a period the estimation of time is unreliable.

INDUSTRIES

IRON-WORK

326 Among occupations of primary importance is that of the black smith (*ociriada*). Owing to the increasing importation of hoe blade and other iron goods, together with the facilities for collecting scrap iron, the winning and smelting of iron is increasingly rare. There are probably very few places where the old type of conical clay furnace now exists. Almost any fragments of iron are melted at the forge where a box is kept to hold nails, hoop iron from packing cases, and other fragments resulting from proximity to a European culture.

Nothing is mixed with the iron, neither is there any casting in molds. The only process is the forging of red-hot iron. The Ovimbundu do not draw iron wire, although they know of the process which is practised by the Vacholue.

The work of the blacksmith was studied at the village of Njongolo in Elende. The men were for a time reticent respecting the nature of their training and the ceremony of initiation, but the chief of the village helped considerably by persuading the men to speak freely.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

CHAPTER V

VILLAGE ECONOMICS

The homeland of the Ovimbundu, the Benguela Highland, is mostly over 4,000 feet above sea-level. Rainfall is 50–60 inches a year, and the rainy season is from September to April.[1] In this season after a downpour there is frequently a cooling of the air, and the most intense heat comes just before the rainy season, during the dry spell that occurs in or about February, and just after the rains. Between the middle of May and the middle of July the nights and early mornings are bitterly cold but the days are pleasantly cool. After the middle of July the temperature gradually rises.

The soil of the Highland is poor; the Ovimbundu industriously cultivate beans, manioc, maize, potatoes, and tobacco. Less frequently they have coffee plants, fruit trees, and sisal. Occasionally wheat is grown but the ground is not really suitable. I am told that rice could be grown in the stream valleys. Four field types are recognized by the Ovimbundu—*etjumbo* (garden), *onaka* (stream-valley garden), *embanda* (in ground sloping up from a stream), and *ejya* (a field away from the streams on level ground).[2]

Umbundu country is well supplied with water in streams and rivers, and the Ovimbundu have built irrigation channels wherever possible. Cultivation in the stream valleys, that is, of the *onaka* type of garden, has only been practised since the 1870's or 80's.[3] They are planted in August or the beginning of September, and give crops in December and January. The

[1] For an excellent account of Umbundu habitat see Childs, pp. 1–11.

[2] Albino Alves, *Dicionário Etimológico Bundo-Português*, Lisboa, 1951, Vol. I, p. 659 gives *embanda* as a synonym of *onaka*.

[3] Private information.

maize from these beds is for home consumption, and it comes at a time when maize supplies are running low, and some people have to rely on manioc. The *ombanda* type is sown in September and early October. Then the main fields (*ovapya*, plural of *epya*) are sown in October and November, and only after this is maize sown in the gardens round the houses. In December and January the people are busy hoeing the fields and in February the sowing of beans takes place, continuing into March. This is followed by the harvesting of the gardens in the village, and by the gathering of the maize in the fields, the maize then being placed in field huts to dry. This takes place in March and April, and with its ending the dry season has come.

The dry season is the time for travelling to see relatives and for getting married, since the burden of work is much reduced. May is a good time to clear the bush and then and in later months there is time to build houses. During the dry season there was much more chance of finding people at home, and there were far more festive occasions. This is also a time when men and women can practise crafts such as basketry, fish-trap making, pottery, and so on. In July, the maize dried in the field hut is pounded and brought back to the village, whence it is taken to the traders for sale. The pounding and carrying is often the work of parties of friends and relatives who are rewarded with beer. Occasionally somebody's maize is collected like this well into September, but most people finish in August. By August the grass has grown very high, and the firing of it is the beginning of large-scale hunts in which men and boys from several villages may join together. Hunts may be undertaken by individuals or by groups at other times of the year either as a hobby or to kill a destructive wild pig (in which case the hunt will be undertaken by a group of people). September is a good month for fishing. The fire has cleared the stream valleys which can now be sown, thus starting off the year's cycle again.

There is no shortage of land, and hence questions of land rights seldom come up in social relations. A village headman has no rights over land outside his village, and even within a village there are strips of bush from which a new garden can be cut. Land is very occasionally sold. For instance a man return-

824 *Okololulaka.* This tree has leaves which are used in treating a skin disease.
813 *Usendongalume.* This small tree, only three feet in height, gives straight twigs which are used in making arrow shafts.

FOOD SUPPLY

COLLECTING AND HUNTING

222 Collecting of natural products which serve as food substances is
462 chiefly in the hands of women and children, though an exception has to be made in the instance of honey, which is gathered by men and boys.

Boys diligently search for nests, noting their location so as to be able to visit them again when the fledglings are large enough to serve as food. Large numbers of women and children may be seen
252 gathering caterpillars in gourds. The insides of the caterpillars are
222 squeezed into boiling water to make soup.

When a cloud of locusts appears, as in 1925, the creatures are gathered. They are sometimes fried, or they may be boiled in water, dried, and preserved with salt in earthenware pots.

A number of miscellaneous items of the food supply were mentioned in connection with names of trees whose fruits are gathered.

223 Boys engaged in food-gathering usually carry small bows and
[411] blunt wooden arrows (*ocilovi*). One type of bird arrow is fixed to the bowstring. The forward end of the arrow is split so that it may contain small stones that are ejected when the string is released. From the wild fig tree mucilage is obtained and this is boiled until it forms a thick paste which is smeared on the boughs of trees.
[231] Some of the small birds captured in this way are eaten, others are kept in wicker cages made by children.

343 In all parts of Angola large cylindrical beehives may be seen
171 fixed high in the trees (Plate XC, Fig. 2). Two types of hive have been noted in particular. In the Elende district a hive is made by opposing two half cylinders of wood each about three feet long, so forming a hive which has a diameter of one foot. The ends are covered, with the exception of a small round hole. The whole structure is bound round with grass which is kept in position by lashings of bark. In the neighborhood of Cassanga a difference in the structure of the hives was noticed. This type of hive is made from a cylinder of strong reddish bark, the edges of which are fastened together with stout wooden pegs. The dimensions are the same as for the hive used in Elende, but the hive of bark is uncovered.

231 In the Elende district honey of wild bees is removed from the hives in the months of August and December. One man ascends
[see pp. 138-140, category 116]

825 Observation of reptiles is a necessary self-protection as there are many poisonous snakes. The flesh of the python is eaten. Snake-
[524] skin and lizard-skin are occasionally used; for example, in covering a round, hard fruit in order to make a ball for playing a game.

When collecting lizards and snakes I found that each kind had a well-known name, though there was occasional disagreement among the men consulted.

Ocivangoko is a lizard (*Agama planiceps*) about ten inches long whose tail is covered with sharp spines. This reptile has colors of bright blue, red, and orange. *Ovangu* is a large spinous gray lizard (*Agama atricoll*). *Ekangala* (*Gerrhosaurus nigrolineatus*) is a brilliantly colored lizard which burrows deeply into the ground.

Olutanjila is a long slender green snake which hides in trees to capture birds. *Ombandanjila* is a long gray-backed snake with a light green belly. The generic name for snake is *onyoha*. The python is *omoma*. The chameleon (*eloñailo*) seems to be feared, as the men and boys refuse to touch a dead one but always move it with sticks. There is a proverb to the effect that the chameleon though slow always gets there. The refusal to touch even dead reptiles is due to an exaggerated fear of being bitten. I could find no other reason.

824 Trees are of importance in connection with building houses and
313 wood-carving. The qualities of different timbers are well known to the Ovimbundu. For the main part, the collection of medicinal plants and their uses will be described in connection with the medicine-man. The following are the most common trees which are of economic importance.

Usia (pronounced *oosha*). This tree has an edible fruit the size of a walnut. The kernel is valued as a food.

Ombula. This tree provides wood which burns readily. The small skin-covered stools to be found in every hut are often made from this wood.

Ukengo. The fruit has a hard rind.

[757] *Owindo*. This tree has a small acid fruit from which a medicine is made for the cure of painful menstruation.

Usilosilo. The leaf is compound and palmate. The fruit is black.

Usiambiambia. Bears a little red, oval fruit.

Usole. Has a large red fruit.

Usombo. Grows near streams. It has a fruit like that of *okulokula*, but smaller.

• [223] *Ukulisungu*. Has a fruit like the berry of a coffee plant. The fruit is used for making mucilage which is used for capturing small birds.

Omanda. When this tree is small, the wood is springy, and is therefore useful for making bows. The wood of the older trees is burned for preparing charcoal which is used in the blacksmith's fire.

Ozanda. This is an erect tree having no branches on the lower part. The wood is extensively used in building native huts.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

Omuo. A large tree having clusters of small white flowers which are visited by bees on account of their content of honey. The tree yields a hard wood from which charcoal is prepared. The bark and leaves yield a pigment which is used for dyeing cloth a yellowish brown. 824 313

Osui is valuable because it gives a hard wood used for the corner posts of houses. White ants do not attack this wood, which is therefore useful for making the uprights on which granaries are erected.

Okapolongalo. A tree from which planks of hard red wood are obtained. These are used for making doors in village fences.

Osau or *ekenge* or *usambu.* These trees have small compound leaves which are very similar. The bark of the latter two is used as rope for binding the uprights and the crosspieces in the framework of native houses. *Ekenge* and *usambu* also yield a bark which is beaten into bark cloth in the Ngalangi district.

Ocipalo. The bark is used for binding posts, also for the fabrication of bark cloth.

Ungolo. The roots of this tree yield a dye for cloth. The leaves are said to have a value for curing sore eyes. The mother of a child afflicted with sore eyes chews the leaves, then spits into the child's eyes. [757]

Ongaya. Yields a wood used for making pestles and pounding sticks.

Omako ("iron wood"). This tree has a hard wood which is used for the same purpose.

Onjunge. Gives a wood used in the making of houses, doors, and beehives.

Omone. A large tree which gives planks for building purposes.

Usanje. Yields a useful red timber.

Ulondongawalu. A tree with very rough bark. The word *ongandu* means a crocodile. This is the tree which even a crocodile can climb. [75]

Onganja. A tree which yields a fruit having a value as a purgative. The antelope is said to be fond of the fruits of this tree.

Ocikumbeolomba. Gives a resinous fluid which is used in the preparation of lime for snaring birds. [223]

Ulomba. This word is derived from the word *ulombo*, meaning shade. The *ombala* (native capital) of Ngalangi is surrounded by such trees.

Omia. A tree which produces yellow flowers in September. The fruit is not edible but oil is made from it.

Okuku. A tree having fragrant flowers like those of honeysuckle. The thick bark is used in making mats.

Osau. A soft wood which is easily whittled with a knife. The figures from Ballundu (Plate XXI, Fig. 5) are often carved from this wood.

Umbolombolo. A soft wood which is not very strong.

Umbongalunda. A small tree which produces bright red fruits. These are used by women for the manufacture of bead necklaces.

Ocilasi. The wood is used for the heads of arrows for shooting birds. This timber is used in the building of pigpens. The branches have projections which are said to guard (*okulasa*, to guard) the occupants of the pen.

Ilala. From the roots of this tree a medicine for pulmonary complaints is made.

Ulua. This is the baobab, whose habitat is the dry regions. Some of the trees have enormous girth. They are leafless for a great part of the year. The long fruits make gourds. The seeds in the fruits are bitter.

Utunuo (pronounced *otutilual*). From the wood the Ovimbundu make wooden platters and spoons used for serving mush from the large cooking pot.

Ocifilili. This tree yields a hard red wood which takes a lustrous polish. For this reason the wood is employed for making ornamental sticks and clubs.

Upondanjamba. This small tree has roots which girls use for making anklebands.

824 *Okalaluluka*. This tree has leaves which are used in treating a skin disease.
813 *Uvendanguluve*. This small tree, only three feet in height, gives straight twigs which are used in making arrow shafts.

FOOD SUPPLY

COLLECTING AND HUNTING

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[1] [see pp. 138-140, category 116]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

The foregoing description applies to all bows collected in Elende, an Umbundu center; neither is there any appreciable difference between these bows and those of the Vachokue of the area from Cangamba to Saurimo in Lunda. The bows collected in the Vachokue region are on the average 10 cm longer than those collected at Elende, a structural difference probably connected with the heavier arrowheads used by the Vachokue (Plate XVII, Figs. 1–9). 411 171

The Vakuanyama of southern Angola make and use a bow which bears very little resemblance to those already described. The arrows, too, are entirely different from those used by the Ovimbundu and Vachokue.

The lengths of three bows collected at Mongua, a typical Kuanyama center, are 111, 123, and 123 cm. The bow stave, which is made from a monocotyledonous wood, is 5 cm broad in the widest part, while the cross section is a flattened ellipse. The bowstring is of twisted leather, looped at each end for slipping over the ends of the bow shaft (Plate XVII, Fig. 8).

According to L. S. B. Leakey (A New Classification of the Bow and Arrow in Africa, *J.R.A.I.*, LVI, 1926, pp. 259–294), the bows and arrows of Angola have not been studied. I am inclined to place the bows of the Ovimbundu and Vachokue with Leakey's "knotted string bows" (pp. 266–269). [114]

Leakey states that the technique employed in stabilizing flight forms the best basis of classification of arrows, but so far as Angola is concerned, the shapes of arrowheads form a basis of classification according to locality. Ovimbundu, Vachokue, Vakuanyama, and Vasele, have distinctive patterns. Naturally there is borrowing of patterns where Ovimbundu and Vachokue intermingle, but, even so, there are distinguishing signs of Vachokue workmanship. The information respecting bows and arrows of Angola is best presented in paragraph form, and comparison of types is facilitated by reference to Plate XVII, Figs. 1–9.

The following arrows are used for killing birds: 411

(1) Elende. Ovimbundu boys use a wooden arrow with a heavy blunt head which is carved into five nodules (Plate XVII, Fig. 3). The head is tanged into a reed shaft and bound there with fine fiber covered with wax. The feathers are whole, bent over, and tied. The number of feathers varies considerably in different examples. 223

(2) Kipungo. The Vakipungo have a wooden-headed arrow with nine well-carved barbs (Plate XVII, Fig. 7). The head is socketed

S: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

223 fairly tightly into a reed shaft bound at the junction to prevent
411 further splitting of the shaft. There are four whole, untrimmed feathers at the butt; these feathers are bent over and bound.

(3) Vakuanyama. Wooden arrows having eleven sets of barbs are in use. The head is bound into a reed shaft with strong gut. Another type of wooden arrow has three sets of barbs with three barbs in each set. There are four whole feathers at the butt.

(4) Vasele. The Vasele use an arrow, pointed with fine pieces of sharp bamboo, for shooting lizards (Plate XVII, Fig. 9).

411 The foregoing information (1–4) relates only to wooden arrows
171 which are used by boys when hunting birds. The following paragraphs summarize the structural details of arrows used by men, and the data are arranged to call attention to differences in the patterns of arrows used by several principal tribes of Angola.

The Vasele make the arrow shafts of hollow reeds, and into these the narrow, ovate, iron heads are tanged and bound in position with fine bark which is not waxed. Three unsplit feathers are bent and tied to the shaft with fine bark fiber. The nock at the butt of the arrow is rectangular in shape and 0.3 cm deep. No quiver was observed.

The Ovimbundu form arrow shafts from hollow reeds, the average length of which is 76 cm. All arrowheads of iron are tanged and the tangs are inserted in the hollow reeds. A binding of fine bark fiber is given, and this is covered with wax. From five to ten feathers are used for each arrow. The feathers may be split or they may be left in the natural state. The trimming of the feathers is roughly executed. The depth of the rectangular nocks is 0.5 cm, and splitting of the shaft is prevented by binding the nock with fine bark. No quiver was observed.

The Vachokue of Cangamba, and thence northward to Saurimo, make arrow shafts of hollow reeds whose average length (79 cm) is a little in excess of those made by the Ovimbundu. The shapes of the iron heads are shown in comparison with those of the Ovimbundu (Plate XVII, Fig. 1). All arrowheads are tanged and bound into the hollow shaft with bark fiber which is then waxed. The feathers are split and bent with a neatness much greater than that shown in examples of Umbundu arrows. The rectangular nocks are 1 cm deep. No quiver was observed.

The Vakuanyama make solid wooden arrow shafts having an average length of 65 cm. The arrowheads of iron are socketed.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

(*c*) *In hunting*, deities other than the king's ancestors were invoked, especially *Hũtĩ*, the hunters' god, and *Kuanja*, a goddess, both of which had their own shrines and priests. These may have been connected with the country or with its earlier inhabitants (the kings being recognized as late comers). At the inaugural hunt the offices were assigned. The king's character was supposedly revealed by the sex of the animal killed at this hunt: 'If the duiker[1] is a female, then it is good indeed, but if a male, then the king is a real person but he habitually will become angry to excess' (*Nda ombambi yaco omange ciwa muĕlĕ, puaĭ nda ulume, Soma omunu puaĭ o tema tema enene*).

2. *To represent the nation in its external relations*, i.e. (*a*) *To make agreements with other kings to promote trade*, and (*b*) *To make war on other peoples* in order to provide his court with tribute and his warriors with plunder. The war leader (*Kesongo*) had his own residence and establishment entirely separate from that of the king, whom he must not meet face to face except on certain state occasions. In Bailundu he, with certain other officials, was of the stock of the slaves of the state (*ovinduli viosoma*) who came from Luandu in the Songo country. Each king must inaugurate his reign with a war, during or after which he must ceremonially 'eat the old one' (*oku lia ekongo*)—a feast consisting of the flesh of a specially fattened slave cooked with the flesh of the principal animals commonly eaten.

3. *To dispense justice*. In point of time consumed, this question was very important, for it occupied much of the time of both rulers and ruled. Good evidence of this is in the number of proverbs used at court, second only in number to those used for the education of the young. The king's court (*olusenje*) was the supreme court of the nation where cases were continually heard and 'fines eaten' (*oku lia ovimbu*). Cases might be settled either by ordeal or by decision of the king, and there was therefore room for appeal and re-trial. The king's word, however, was final, as the proverb has it: *O popia onganji, o mãlãpo osoma*. (The advocate speaks, the king finishes [decides].) The king was not generally arbitrary in his decisions but was bound not only by the customs of his people, but also by the desires of his councillors. Among the legitimate kings of the Ovimbundu there were comparatively few of the revolting and wholesale punishments which were so

[1] The duiker, *ombambi* (*Silvicapra grimmii leucoprosopus*).

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

463 *Wood-working*, including the following specializations:
462 Doors, windows, and their frames; coffins.
[322] Beds, tables, chairs, &c.
Mortars, pestles, grinding-handles, and handles for various iron implements.
Stools, household utensils, carved images, staves, knobkerries, &c.
Drums and other musical instruments.
Canoes (dug-outs and coracles).
Rope-making, nets, and rudimentary weaving.
Thatching has its specialists although all men can thatch.
Fishing.
Bee-hunting, including the making of hives.
224 *Hunting*.
326 *Iron-smelting and smithing*.
791 *Medical-practice and Divination*.

The last three professions of the list are sacred and are entered under special conditions. They are often passed on by inheritance, but not always. All of them require sacrifice at certain stages, and when the enslavement of a spirit (*oku andeka*) is required, it is socially allowable. This seems to be the case with these offices as with those of the king and his ministers, both because of benefits accruing to the community in their exercise and also because of inherent danger to the individuals who exercise these functions.

177 The advent of European commerce, industry, and government
463 has created a number of types of employment for boys and young men, some of which entail prolonged absence from the village and a loosening or severing of kinship ties. Church and mission have
[791] also offered employment and have opened new opportunities for advance in place and in position.

861 Later childhood, then, is the period of technical training during which it is expected that a large amount of economic responsibility will be assumed. A child begins to own property even before this, and from the beginning of later childhood will be accounted legally responsible for his actions. It is recognized, however, that he should not be set tasks beyond the experience or ability of his age and that the full responsibility of adulthood will only come with marriage.

[538] *Umālihē ka tonyōlā ongulu yweala*;
A youth does not scrape the pig for the wedding feast;
pekonjo pa siala (ovonya).
on the hoof there remain (bristles).

1; Childs M-S (1924-1940) 1949 FF13 Mbundu FF13

PLATE X

136
224

Photo. M. W. Bond

a. Wounded bull eland (Mainlo)

Photo. S. A. Wolf

b. Head of wart hog (Bailundu)

[Facing p. 129]

242 When a field is wearing out, the corn growing shorter and bearing
241 fewer ears to the stalk,[1] the woman makes a final planting of corn, sticking cuttings of manioc between the rows. Most of these cuttings take root and grow. It takes two or three years for the tubers of this plant to mature in an old field, but in some parts of the country where manioc is set in new land it matures within a year. The leaves of the plant are used as a vegetable with corn-meal, and manioc meal is used as a basic substitute when corn is short.

The onako or river-garden

241 In August a woman plants her onako, near a stream in the alluvial soil, or in some river bed. Here she plants corn which will be ready for eating during the January period of food shortage, as well as cabbage and other vegetables.

Organisation of labour

[462] Formerly men did the heavier work of clearing new fields, although, as has been noted above, since the introduction of wage labour much of the work is left to the women. Men may also have their own fields, the produce of which is sold to provide ready cash to clothe the family, pay taxes etc. The women's fields are intended to feed the family. Children help their parents in the fields, but also have their own plots. Gardens are made by each household, i.e. by each wife where there are a number of wives. Neighbours often co-operate during the harvesting
[414] period, after which beer is supplied by the owner of the field which has been harvested.[2]

HUNTING[3]

Most men and boys hunt, and women and children may help in burning
796 the grass and driving the game during the annual communal fire-hunts.
● 234 But the professional hunter or ahonga is a recognised specialist, quali-
[463] fied by specific training and dependent on his knowledge of hunting magic
[464] and ritual for his success. A boy becomes a ahonga by an apprenticeship of about two years to an older hunter. This period culminates in a ceremony of inauguration, which may be attended by all the villagers but at which only the professional hunters dance. Several ahonga provide game, which is cooked for the feast; the dancing commences but the novice remains still and silent until he feels the "spirit of the head"; he then rises and distributes game to the villagers. Blood from the animals killed is sprinkled over his weapons, which have been made by the ahonga who has trained him. From now on his daily life is subject to certain ritual prohibitions: he must not sleep with his wife on the night before going on a hunt, special food and cooking-pots must be used for him, etc.

459 A professional hunter usually works alone, using bows and arrows,

(1) There is no information concerning the length of the farming-cycle.
(2) Childs, personal communication.
(3) See Hambly, *Bantu Studies*, 1934, and Ovimbundu, 1934, pp.180-2; Cashmore, 1944, pp.113-29.

A professional hunter usually works alone, using bows and arrows, clubs, spears, and several kinds of trap.[1] Nets and poison are not used. Every hunter makes his own arrow-shafts and feathers; the points are made by a blacksmith. On the night before leaving for a hunt, the ukongo calls in his fellow hunters to share a ceremony which includes dancing and the re-anointing of the weapons with beer and palm-oil. 224 411

Communal hunts usually take place in June-July, in the middle of the dry season, when large tracts of land are covered with grass ten or more feet high. The day for the hunt is set by the village headman; spears and arrows are prepared and, when the word is given, a party of about 30 men and boys move off to the assigned area of tall grass. A ring is formed round about two square miles of land, the hunters standing just within sight of each other. The grass is trodden down, fires started, and the animals killed as they rush from the flames. Antelope of many kinds, snakes, foxes, wolves, hyenas, mice and rabbits and occasionally leopards are killed in this way. 224

FISHING

In the Kasanje and some of the other larger rivers fish are large and plentiful, and men go on communal fishing expeditions, and return with fish to sell.[2] Men usually fish with bark lines, women use basket-traps[3] and poisons. Poison is used, usually in the dry season, when the rivers are shallow. Both men and women use nets, and sometimes a fish-weir or olanja may be employed; this has an opening in the middle, in the lower side of which is placed a basket-trap. At the coast and along the Kwanza river dug-out canoes, about 20-30 feet long, are sometimes used for fishing.[4] 226 462 [501]

DOMESTIC ANIMALS

The principal domestic animals are the cow (*ngi'ndi*), ox (*ongombe*, which is also the generic name for cattle), bull (*onzi*), sheep (*ngwe*), goat (*ohombo*), pig (*ongulu*), dog (*ombua*), and chicken (*ocwyi*).[5] The only transport animal is the ox, used both for riding and for drawing carts.[6] 231 [492]

Cattle are a measure of wealth, but few families own large herds. Childs lists the domestic animals in a typical village of 196 inhabitants as: 9 head of cattle, 13 goats, 20 sheep, 100 pigs, and about 100 chickens. Cattle are used for paying fines and debts, for funeral feasts, and for marriage payments. Cows are not usually milked, and cattle are killed for food only when they are aged or injured, or occasionally during the June-July period of food shortage. Treated hides are used to cover stools, and for making pouches and corn-bags.[7] 231 436 [282]

The cattle herd obtains most of its food by grazing, but in the dry 550

(1) Some hunters have guns, but the use of gunpowder is restricted by the Portuguese.
(2) Cadenas, op.cit., p.143.
(3) See Cadenas, loc.cit., for a brief description of the basket-trap.
(4) Bentley, (1) 1904, p.145.
(5) Ibid., pp.153-6.
(6) Childs, personal communication. Cf. Bentley, op.cit., p.152.
(7) Bentley, op.cit., p.152.

769 They intimate their wishes to their descendants only through slight illness, usually asking for honour to be paid to them by a feast, or by some descendant carrying on their profession.

Ocande is the spirit of the much-honoured founder of the family,(1) and is always beneficent, bringing good fortune and warning his descendants of danger. Hambly and Tucker agree that *Ekisi* is the same kind of
776 spirit as *Ocande* (although Hambly does not give *Ocande* this special mean-
769 ing). Tucker writes that *Ekisi* is a benevolent spirit who calls the villagers together at night, and gives them advice through a medium (?), whom he enters without the latter's going into the usual trance. *Kandundu* according to Tucker is an *ekisi* who holds the leading position among the ancestral spirits owing to his seniority. Hambly describes a shrine to
[778] *Kandundu* at Bailundu; anyone who sees the contents of the shrine is supposed to become blind. He writes that *Kandundu* is thought of as "the spirit of dreaming who makes swellings on the body", but gives no further explanation. According to Tucker *Kandundu* is an especially powerful *ondele*, and ceremonies performed for him have many distinctive features.

224 *Suvi*, the spirit of the hunt, has his own shrine and priest in the
776 village of the (permanent?) chief. His hut is very large, since all the
778 meat of the hunts is placed in it. In front of it dances are held, and poles are decorated with skulls and other trophies of hunting. Before the door there is a carved figure of *Samaba*, the spirit who chases the game towards the hunter. A man whose ritual name is *Kapila*, and a woman called *Kanyo*(2) are in charge of the spirit-hut of *Suvi*, and make supplication to him for success in hunting. Hunters living elsewhere but in
[553] an *ombala* or head village do not have persons bearing these ritual names, but their dogs are often called *Suvi*, *Samaba*, *Kapila* or *Kanyo*.

775 The most dreaded spirits are the *otalopakopako*, who may be spirits
759 of still-born babies or foetuses, mental defectives, maltreated slaves, or persons, especially children, killed by sorcery. When a person has been found guilty of killing a child by sorcery or witchcraft, he is sentenced to "restore life" to it, which he does by substituting for it a child from his own family: if the deceased child is a girl, he must give an ox as well. The child is treated with great respect by his new family. If however the parents do not ask the sorcerer or witch for restitution, the child becomes an *otalopakopako*, and may return to "eat" other children, at the command of the sorcerer who has killed it.

RITUAL

793 It has been noted that the village headman acts as priest for the
613 *olusa*, the group of paternally-related persons who form the basis of the village group, while the head of the *olusa* acts as priest for his dispersed, maternally-related group.(3) There is little detailed information on the religious duties of these priests. Cushman(4) describes the village headman as making public prayers each morning to Suku. Childs however points out(5) that it is more usual for the headman to spend a

(1) i.e. of either the *olusa* or the *olusa*. (Childs, personal communication)
(2) According to Childs, (1949, p.22) *Kanyo* is a hunting goddess.
(3) See above, p.29.
(4) 1944, p.51. (5) Personal communication.

885 and stability of his personality (ana - lit. the quality of being a person) is only proved when he enters the state of adulthood at marriage.

DEATH

361 764 Each village has its own burial ground about a mile or so away. The grave is usually dug by the children of the father's sister.[1] The corpse of a commoner is bound in a supine position and placed in a box before interment. It is usual during the funeral to find out the cause of death, i.e. whether it is the work of spirits or of some living enemy. Accusations of sorcery are frequently made. The corpse in its coffin, slung to a pole between two carriers, responds to questions as to who 'ate him' by forward (affirmative) or backward (negative) movements.[2] In the case described by Hambly,[3] the questions were put by the father's sister. The corpse may also cause its bearers to stop in front of a certain house during the procession through the village, thereby indicating that one of the occupants has caused its death.[4] Should the corpse not give a clear answer, the diviner might be called in to discover the cause of the death. Accusations of sorcery, as has been noted above, are often made within the circle of kin.[5]

[859]

Special cases

766 For children the same ceremony was carried out if they were old enough to walk and talk. Otherwise the diviner's services were called upon by the parents. At the death of twins, the mother has to shake a rattle or blow a horn instead of giving the usual greetings to passers-by, as she had to do also while the children were alive.[6]

766 791 At the death of *diviners* and *medicine-men* other members of the profession take charge of the ceremonies. The corpse is tied in a sitting posture and kept thus for three days before burial. No coffin is used. The questioning ceremony is carried out as for a commoner. After the interment the other medicine-men dance "because they have spirit in their heads", and during the dance each eats a living chicken that he carries in his hand. At the side of the grave a dog, a chicken and a goat are killed, and eaten by the mourners. The ocimbundu's power is apparently thought to linger round the grave, which the chief or village-headman may visit to ask for rain and other favours.[7]

● 227 766 *Hunters* at death are buried in rock tombs (*ombilia* or *ocunjo*), which are usually placed in commanding positions. The skulls of animals which the hunter has killed are piled on top of the tomb. The bows of the deceased hunter are kept in his successor's "house of bows".

766 698 *Chiefs*, and possibly also *village headmen*, are buried in specially-constructed enclosures in the villages over which they ruled. The tomb is a small hut with a substantial wooden door, which is surrounded by a strongly-built wooden fence, or it may be a cave. The wives of the chief are buried in the same enclosure. The head of a specially selected

(1) Hambly, (2) 1934, p.368.
(2) Childs, 1949, p.57.
(3) Op.cit., p.366.
(4) Childs, loc.cit.
(5) Ibid.
(6) Hambly, op.cit., p.369.
(7) Ibid., p.370.

175 Serpa Pinto saw shafts for the working of iron ore in the neighbor-
[316] hood of Cubango. The ore was mixed with charcoal and smelted in
[325] shallow pits. It is stated that the iron was sometimes tempered with ox-grease and salt. The bellows are of the type made at Elende (I, p. 128). Of the tempering process I have no confirmation.

175 Somewhere near Bihé Serpa Pinto saw the ceremony of question-
787 ing a corpse which was made to sway to and fro, the people believing
[764] all the while that it does so without human intervention. The diviner declared that the soul of a dead person will tell who caused the death (I, p. 130). I observed and photographed this ceremony (Plate XLV, Fig. 1).

[695] The ordeal of the poison cup is described; blood-letting, and divination by shaking articles in a basket are also mentioned. Pinto says that in the articles that appear uppermost the diviner reads what his hearers are desirous of learning of the past, present, or future. Sorcery and rain-making are likewise briefly mentioned (I, p. 132). The divination basket, the poison ordeal, and rain-making, are Umbundu cultural traits today.

171 Here Pinto illustrates the existing practice of mounting the
224 skulls of animals killed by a hunter on a pole in the village. There is a further reference to this custom among the Ambuellas (I, p. 333). These instances, combined with those personally noted, give a wide distribution for the practice (I, p. 177).

175 Pinto saw the operation of tooth mutilation among the Luimba.
[304] The operation was performed with a knife which was struck by repeated light blows (I, p. 209).

[711] Pinto illustrates arrowheads in use in 1879 (I, pp. 277, 346). These are exactly the same as those made and used in 1929 (Plate XVII, Figs. 1–9).

[412] Axes used by the Luchazi are sketched with a detail that shows the old forms to persist without alteration (II, p. 36).

[321] Water-pipes made from horns and gourds by the Luina of eastern Angola are of the forms now used in that region, also by the Ovimbundu of the present day (II, pp. 33, 37).

175 For use in checking and supplementing my observations Serpa
114 Pinto's book was found to be of the greatest service, though the precise locality was sometimes difficult to identify. This explorer, in common with others, scattered his ethnological observations among descriptions of the route and botanical, zoological, and other notes.

Lux traveled from Loanda due east, following the Kwanza on the northern bank between 9° and 10° S. Lat., and so into Lunda.

114 Umbundu language. The illustrations in photogravure are excellent,
126 but the small-scale map is difficult to follow.

114 As might be expected in a work covering an enormous tract of
241 country, the information is of a very general kind; I have nowhere been able to check in any detail on my own observations. F. and W.
224 Jaspert recognize that Umbundu culture is primarily based on agriculture, maize being the most important crop, but they do not admit the importance of hunting (p. 16).

I saw many successful parties of Umbundu hunters, tested their precision with the bow and arrow, and was able to record the ritual connected with the initiation of a professional hunter. There is also a ceremony before the hunter sets out. It would be more accurate to say that, although Umbundu culture is based primarily on agriculture, hunting still retains some of its earlier importance.

114 The diagrams of houses in different parts of Angola are a useful feature of the work. I made many photographs but did not record details of planning.

114 The masks I obtained are exactly like those pictured, but my
881 observations were carried out a long way to the southeast of the point where the Jasperts touched the Vacholue culture. I do not understand from their description whether the writers saw an initiation ceremony. They state that boys are circumcised and girls are excised when very young, even at the age of five or six years. I observed initiation camps and dances at three centers, Ngalangi, Katoko, and Cangamba; the last named is the main center of Vacholue culture. The male novices varied in age from twelve to sixteen years hence they were older than the novices mentioned by the Jasperts. I was informed that there were no excision operations for girls, though at Ngalangi, Vanyemba girls were secluded in the bush during initiation rites lasting for a month.

Bibliographical references to the research of H. Baumann will be found useful for comparative study. His detailed record of initiation among the Vacholue is valuable as a check on my observation, as we worked independently in areas separated by several hundred miles.

Consultation of historical sources gives the following answers to questions which were asked as an introduction to this chapter.

174 On the grounds of tribal tradition, historical evidence, and cultural affinities, the original home of the Ovimbundu was likely to have been in the southwest Congo. The Ovimbundu undoubtedly possess important cultural traits that have been characteristic of the southern Congo region from the earliest time for which a record exists.

B: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

maker's dance seen at Ngongo, a village of Ngalangi in east-central Angola, will be described in dealing with the *ocimbanda* (chapter IX). 821

No man thinks that the course of the sun can be altered, but there seems to be a hope that the setting of the sun may be delayed. A man who is likely to be overtaken by darkness breaks a piece from an ant hill. This fragment is placed in the forked branch of a tree while the supplicant says, "Sun, wait a little while for me." (766)

Months are reckoned by observation of the moon. The new moon is *ceni* ("moon") *yokolipe* ("new"). There is no word for half moon. The phrase for full moon is *ceni ya tunga okumbo*. *Okumbo* means "basket"; therefore the idea appears to be that the full moon is round like the big basket used for field work.

A star is called *okumbunguilulu*. To describe a shooting star, the word *lunda* ("it goes") is added. The large bright morning star is *tanda*. Another bright star is *tielele*. Three bright stars in a line are the hunter, the dog, and the quarry. The three stars are *ukongo* ("hunter"), *lombua* ("the dog"), *lacinyama* ("the animal").

An eclipse of the sun is *utiele vutanga*. The former word means "night," the latter word means "daylight." Hence the meaning is "night in daylight."

Small mammals are captured in cane traps or stunned with blunt wooden arrows. The pursuit of such animals is a pastime for boys who thereby receive their early training in hunting. Rats are used as food after being boiled and roasted. This fact accounts for interest in the following small mammals. 224 825 [262]

Umbili. This is a big black river rat, the largest of the water rats.

Ocifolofolo. A big gray water rat (*Cricetomys?*), not so large as *umbili*.

Kalele. A river rat something like the preceding one in appearance. *Kalele* can stay in the water for a longer period than that endured by *ocifolofolo*.

Epulu. This is a bush rat which is light gray in color.

Ekolongwajo. This rat stays in the bush. It builds a nest in an ant hill from which it comes out only at night. The color is gray.

Elima (*Epomophorus*). This is the name given to the fruit bat. The word *elima* means "not one thing and not another." Thus *elima* is the word applied to a mulatto; he is not a Negro, not a white man.

Ocili (*Rhabdomys*). This is a large light brown mouse having white stripes on his back.

Ongongo. A mouse.

Epungwe. A black rat.

Ocipili. A mouse with a long thin nose; probably a shrew.

Ocinge. This is a very fat mouse.

Nakolongulu. This very small mouse makes a hole around which he piles grass to conceal the entrance.

Ocipundululu (*Lemniscomys*). A mouse with a stripe on his back.

Kandeti (*Dendromus*). A very little mouse something like *nakolongulu*.

the tree in order to lower the hive with a long rope of bark or plaited 231
fiber, while beneath the tree men are prepared to take the hive, which is opened over a smoky fire. The men wear no protection, consequently they are badly stung. Boys are encouraged to help, and those who run away receive no honey. Honey may be eaten 263
alone or with manioc. No drink is made from honey only, but 273
ochaas is the name given to beer with honey in it. Ovingundu is a drink made from pounded corn which has been soaked in water to which a little honey has been added. The drink is allowed to remain untouched over night; thus it becomes sweet and is mildly intoxicating.

Wax is a very important item of trade. In the remote places 439
natives bring to small trading posts balls of wax which are about 257
two pounds in weight. These in former days were a standard of [430]
exchange in terms of which other values could be measured. These balls of wax are made into large cakes for foreign export. In the Easie country a fiber strainer is used for cleaning the wax. Honey is sometimes dried in very large baskets which are three feet in diameter and two inches deep. These baskets were not observed among the Ovimbundu, but they are used in the region of Cassanga in southern Angola. The honey of wild bees when eaten in the comb is palatable; it would be more so if one could disregard the presence of numerous dead bees.

The bow is the chief weapon of the hunter. The release of the 411
arrow is made with the index and middle fingers (Plate XXXIX, 171
Fig. 1). I have observed this method among the Ovimbundu of 224
the Benguela Highlands, in the region of Kipungo, in the far south among the Vakuanyama, and among the Vaasie of the Novo Redondo hinterland. Arrows differ considerably in pattern as the illustrations show (Plate XVII, Figs. 1-8); the Ovimbundu have arrow-points of excellent workmanship. The manufacture of these arrow-points is [326]
one of the most skilled occupations of the blacksmith. Each man makes his own shafts and feathers them. The arrows of the Vaasie have leaf-shaped iron points; so also have those used by the Vakuanyama.

Among the Ovimbundu are specialists who make bows from [463]
elastic woods called usia and ocambia. The bow itself is ohonji and the arrow is usongo. At the third shot I saw a young Ovimbundu boy split a cane which was placed upright at a distance of thirty-three feet. The throwing club (ohungu) is used for killing small game such as hares.

411 [237] The only spear (*unga*) that I have seen is made entirely of iron. The shaft is covered with the tail of an ox to which the tuft of hair remains attached. This is the spear formerly used in warfare. The distribution is wide. Such spears were purchased from the Ovimbundu of Elende and Bailundu and also from the Vakuanyama living in the far south of Angola, but I do not think that the Ovimbundu make these spears, which are probably traded from the south. [439]

229 [411] A hunter is considered exceptionally fortunate if he possesses an old muzzle-loading gun (*uta*). I have seen only two hunters who owned such a weapon. In one instance the barrel was bound to the stock with hide thongs, while the woodwork was decorated with brass tacks. Powder and fragments of metal are carried in a leather pouch which is attached to a broad, leather waist belt (Plate XIII, Fig. 6). There is certainly a feeling among hunters that the sale of a well-tried weapon will be followed by bad luck. The gun is sometimes fixed to form a trap in such a way that an antelope may tread on the string and so discharge the gun. Sometimes a piece of meat is attached to a string which is fastened to the trigger. A heavy beam of wood into which an iron spike is fastened was used in districts where the hippopotamus and elephant were hunted. Such a trap was fixed over a path known to be frequented by these animals. Big game of this type is now rare.

In the Esele country the following traps are in use: (1) A deep, narrow, grass-covered pit from the bottom of which sharp stakes project upward; this trap is known as *okuese*. (2) A simple trap consisting of four long sharp stakes which are fixed in the ground so that they incline toward a gap through which a buck is likely to jump (Plate LXXIII, Fig. 2). (3) The trap (*ocisonga*) for lions and leopards. This is a heavily built structure provided with a panel-like door which slides down when the entering animal releases a cord fastened to the bait (Plate XCII, Fig. 2). (4) A heavy trap triangular in form. This trap is not an enclosure, but a covering under which the animal has to go in order to reach the bait. In addition to the foregoing examples there is a trap (*onjanjo*) which is used for snaring antelope. The essential of the device is a loop which is bound to the end of a supple branch lightly fastened to the ground. This, however, did not come under my observation.

Long, cone-shaped, cane structures are placed in the grass, which is then fired. Animals disturbed and frightened by the fire rush into the wide end of the trap, then make their way to the narrow end (Plate XV, Fig. 5). One such trap is modified to form a snare with

a noose which hangs over the entrance. From Ngalangi I obtained 224
a trap formed by suspending a heavy block of wood inside a box. The animal enters a small circular hole, passes under the heavy block and begins to nibble the grain which is strewn on the bottom of the box. Presently he releases a fine string which brings down the block in such a way that he is pinned underneath. I am informed that this trap is used at Elende, but I have not seen it there.

Some hunters note the feeding and drinking places of their quarry, which is shot from a hiding place in a tree. Young animals may be run down by a hunter in open chase. Screens are not carried in front of a hunter, but he does sometimes dress in the skins of animals. His disguise is completed by wearing a tuft of the animal's hair on his head.

Dogs are used for tiring out young animals in the chase, and also for catching hares. There is a tendency at the present time to improve the breed of native dog by crossing with a large hunting [232]
dog from South Africa. In the Esele country I have seen, high on a granite rock, a small cairn of stones which covered the skull of a famous hunting dog. Dogs are used most commonly when the hunt is communal (Plate XXIII, Fig. 1), but the best hunters work alone without the aid of dogs. In the general hunt women and children may take part in driving the game; often a fire is started in the grass, which is very dry in the months of June and July. A hunter who works alone may excite the curiosity of an animal by blowing through a horn of an antelope. Spider's web covers the wide end of the horn.

I have observed a general hunt in which thirty men and boys participated, each carrying a bow and arrows. The party was accompanied by many dogs. The antelope which had been killed was carried on a pole slung on the shoulders of two men. There was intense excitement as the troop advanced toward their village, shouting and jumping. In another hunt of this kind muzzle-loading guns were carried. The Ovimbundu do not use nets in hunting, neither do they poison animals. Decoy animals are not used, but in the large wooden trap (*ocisonga*) a living goat or pig is placed.

It is necessary to distinguish between hunting as a general pastime, in which all males, and even women and children join to a [463]
certain extent, and the hunting of animals by a professional hunter. The professional hunter is usually called *ukongo* (less frequently *ongonga*); but there is no name for the non-professional hunter. A 874
boy who wishes to become a professional hunter has to serve for a 224
time with an *ukongo* before he himself receives this title. There is

224 874 an initiation feast when the training is ended. At the feast all people of the village may be present but they do not dance; only the professional hunters may do so. The boy who is to be initiated must not speak or move until he "feels the spirit on his head"; then he gives meat to the people. After hunters have captured game for the feast, the blood from these animals is used to smear over the bow, arrows, and spear which have been made for the novice by his tutor. [326] This is analogous to the initiation of the young blacksmith who receives blood-sprinkled tools made by the master blacksmith.

224 788 There is in connection with the life and death of the professional hunter a certain amount of ritual and precaution. The night before setting out to hunt is a time of dancing and renewal of the implements of the chase, which are kept in a house specially prepared for them. A hunter who is on the eve of departure calls in other professional hunters to share the ceremony, which includes the rubbing of the bows and other implements with palm oil. A libation of beer is poured on the bows, spears, and arrows, but no medicine-man is present. Some of the bows are never used, because they are merely the symbols of the personality and prowess of dead hunters whose names they have taken. The food and cooking pots of a hunter must never be associated with those of ordinary household use. If a hunter is following the tracks of an animal he must not point with his finger as this action will drive the animal away. The correct way to point is by use of the feathered end of an arrow. The hunter [804] must not sleep with his wife the night before setting out in quest of game.

224 782 I have frequently seen in front of the hut of a hunter a number of skulls of antelope and other animals mounted on poles arranged in circular formation (Plate XXXII, Fig. 2). These skulls seem to be trophies, which are invariably taken away by the hunter if he finds a new home. There is no reason to doubt the statement that these skulls are an offering to the spirits who give good luck in hunting, because such a belief would be in harmony with the general respect for ancestral ghosts, which are thought to influence the affairs of the living.

764 224 On several occasions, notably near Ganda and in the Cassonge country, I have seen the tombs of hunters. These are large structures built of slabs of granite laid with some symmetry. The rock tomb is invariably placed on the top of a commanding eminence of granite. The skulls of animals which the hunter has killed are piled on the top of the cairn, but I do not know whether these are the trophies

which are fixed on poles in front of the hunter's home during his lifetime (Plate XXXII, Figs. 1, 2). 764 224

There are at the funeral of a hunter special observances which will be mentioned under the heading of funeral rites.

FISHING

In the region of Elende there is fishing with both basket and line; a method of poisoning fish is also practised. Usually a male fishes with a bark line. Women catch fish by the poisoning method, and in addition to this they generally follow the procedure in which baskets are held or weighted in the stream. If the water flows swiftly men may take charge of the fishing operations. At times both men and women fish with nets. Husband and wife may not sleep together the night before fishing, as this is believed to make the male and female fish stay together at the bottom of the river. 226 462 [534]

The fishing line consists of tough green bark which is cut into strips whose length depends on the height of the river's bank. A hole is bored through the body of a grasshopper, a worm, or a grub taken from under the bark of a tree. Through this hole is passed a short stiff piece of grass about half an inch long, to which the line is attached. The fish is caught when the crosspiece of sharp grass becomes fast in its throat. [283]

When the fisher throws the line he sings: "O fish, come and take your good thing. Do not send the little fish to spoil the good thing. Better you come and take the good thing with all your strength."

In order to make fish poison the tuberous roots of a plant are taken and soaked in water until a scum rises to the top. The solid part of the poison is not given, because it would sink and the fish which ate it would remain at the bottom of the river. Therefore only the scum of this poisonous infusion is thrown in the water. The stupefied, gasping fish remain at the surface, whereupon they are seized by women who transfer them to gourds or baskets worn around their necks. Usually poison is used only in the dry season when the rivers are shallow.

Sometimes there is fishing by means of a weir (*olunja*) which has an opening in the middle. On the lower side of this gap a basket trap is placed.

There is no fishing by torchlight. At the coast, and along the river Kwanza I have seen heavy dugout canoes in use; these were about twenty to thirty feet long and hollowed from single trees (Plate LXXII, Figs. 1, 2). At Ambrizette I noted the use of a fishing [501]

VII. EDUCATION

Industrial Training and Division of Labor

871 Usually there is no formality connected with the industrial and occupational training of Ovimbundu children. The section dealing with play shows that boys and girls learn by spontaneous imitation of their elders.

874 There are, however, exceptions to this general truth. Special rites connected with the training and inauguration of blacksmiths and hunters have been described. The training of medicine-men and women will be dealt with in chapter IX, "Religion."

462 463 In describing economic life in chapter V, division of labor on a sex basis; also specialization in industry because of peculiar tastes and aptitudes, were noted. There is clearly a twofold division in industrial life. In the first place sex determines occupation, and within this primary grouping there is a secondary grouping depending [467] on personal preference and individual ability. I have found no instance of exclusive hereditary right to any occupation or industry.

462 The net result of the Umbundu system of division of labor is indicated by the following summary:

[342] When building houses, men dig the rectangular trench, cut the poles for the framework, lash the crosspieces, cut grass and lay the thatch, then place clay over the wattle walls. Women carry water for mixing the clay and convey the moist clay to the plasterers. [224] Children puddle the clay with their feet. Males are hunters both professional and general. During a communal hunt women and children assist in driving game, which is frightened by the firing of [857] grass. Boys organize games in which they imitate these activities. [226] Men fish with a line and bait, whereas women use baskets and [231] narcotic poison. Men and boys take care of cattle and have charge of dogs. Women and girls give what slight attention is afforded to other domestic animals. Male specialists castrate bulls and goats.

[241] During agricultural operations men clear the ground and burn the bush. Women carry on hoe cultivation without assistance from [482] men. Men are the chief carriers in caravans, but women and children may sometimes be seen carrying loads. They march in line with the men but have smaller burdens. Males are employed in blacksmith's work, wood-carving, making weapons and tools, weaving mats, dressing hides, spinning cotton, and formerly in weaving on an upright loom. Men are exclusively the makers of

535 Almost every evening one may hear the tapping of drums and the songs of dancers, because in addition to dances for a funeral or other special occasion there are ordinary dances of amusement in which lines of men and women advance and retreat, or men and women circle round the drums making arm movements accompanied by a swaying rhythm.

[243] The dance *onyaco*, performed in June when the corn is ripe, may have an ancient history and special significance as part of an agricultural rite. When corn is being stored the people sing, "There is grain in the house, may it never be out." There is no dance in [226] connection with fishing.

224 There is mimicry of animals in the hunting game played by boys. The frog, the leopard, and other animals are imitated in certain games, but I have no evidence of the performance of mimetic dances in relation to any cult for increasing the supply of animal life.

535 The use of the small ball *ombunje* illustrates the way in which [534] an apparent toy can be used in rites of a religious kind. *Ombunje* consists of a hard spherical fruit about six centimeters in diameter, in which several hard seeds rattle. The sphere is covered with a layer of cloth over which lizard skin is stretched and sewn.

[769] When the people wish to commemorate the death of a king, or [789] when the king is sick, the medicine-man (*ocimbanda*) says that there must be *osaka* dancing. A strong man dances for many hours while holding this little ball in his outstretched hand. Other men who are dancing use their fists to hit the muscles of the outstretched arm in an attempt to make the holder drop the ball (*ombunje*). If he does so another man will promptly take hold of it. The precise nature of the endurance test is unexplained, but there is possibly the idea of giving strength to a sick king by this tension and endurance. My interpreter thought this was so, but could not explain why the dance should be performed to commemorate the death of a king. It would seem natural, however, to transfer the *ombunje* rite to a commemorative festival, if in the first place it was part of the last rites of a dying king.

534 There are among the Ovimbundu specialists in dancing, singing, 463 and the playing of musical instruments. *Onjimbi* is the word for a singer of merit who starts the choruses. *Ocili* is a dancer of more than ordinary skill. When a man is required to play a drum or other instrument I have noticed that it is thought necessary to bring a specialist. There is no doubt that drumming requires special aptitude and practice. The man who plays the long drum is *usiki*, the drum

766 643 of a dead king would in former times be taken at night by chiefs and interred in one of the caves which are numerous in the rugged hills of the Benguela Highlands. The burial posture for a king is the same as that described for a medicine-man. The severed head is eventually kept in a box, but primarily both head and body are buried, though in separate places. At the end of a year the head is dug up and transferred to its casket.

765 643 Mourning for a king lasts for seven days, during which his children and wives wear strips of oxhide on their left wrists. The village chiefs gather to choose a king from the "blood of kings," though "sometimes a bad man will make himself king without waiting to be chosen." The choice should be in favor of the oldest son of the chief wife, "but if she has stupid sons, a son of another wife of the king will be chosen."

769 643 Sometimes during drought chiefs and their wives go to the grave of a chief where they say, "If you are angry tell us what you want. If you want an ox we will kill one." If they visit the tomb of a king, the king's corpse is asked, "Do you want a new box for your head? We will make one." The oldest chief takes from the tomb the box which contains the head. This is slung on a pole supported on the shoulders of two boys. The head is then questioned in the way described for the funeral of a commoner. The oldest chief offers a sacrifice, if such procedure is demanded by a forward swing of the pole which supports the casket containing the king's head.

768 643 The house is not burned after a death has occurred within, but it is still customary to take down the surrounding fence and to build a new one. The house in which death took place is then used as before. I was informed at the capital of Ngalangi, and by the king himself, that he must continue to use the house of former kings until the structure collapses. No repair work may be done; consequently the house was in a dilapidated condition. Some months after receiving this account at Elende I was in Moxico, several hundred miles away, and learned that at Cangamba the custom of severing the head of a king by suspension and friction prevails in the manner described above.

HUNTERS

224 766 While traveling in the district of Ganda, likewise in the Vasele country in the hinterland of Novó Redondo, one cannot fail to notice the presence of rock tombs (*ombilia* or *osonjo*) which are mausoleums of hunters. These are invariably placed in commanding

positions on domes of rock. The first tomb examined was in Ganda 224
(Plate LXXIV, Fig. 1). This tomb is carefully built up from pieces 766
of granite detached from the rocks which serve as a base. Horns of animals are placed on the cairn which is further decorated by a stick bearing the tail of an animal. Plate XXXII, Fig. 1, shows a tomb of similar structure in the country of the Vasele. From one such tomb it was possible to detach a slab so that the interior could be seen. There were two male skeletons; one lay supine while the bones of the other were in disorder.

In a hunter's house of bows there are implements of deceased hunters, whose ceremonies centering in these relics have been described under the heading of hunting.

TRAINING OF MEDICINE-MEN

Training for the position of male or female magician (*ocimbanda*) 756
is not carried out with formality ending in initiatory rites, neither is the position hereditary; but the boy or girl who wishes to become an *ocimbanda* must have "spirit in the head." This choice of children of peculiar neurotic temperament for the positions of medicine-men and medicine-women is widely distributed, as I have shown in some detail (Origins of Education, 1926, pp. 256–259).

Among the Ovimbundu there does not appear to be an inten- [158]
sifying of natural psychoses by seclusion, starvation, or beating. When a boy is sick, the medicine-man says, "You have a spirit who wants you to be *ocimbanda*." The medicine-man kills a dog, a goat, and four chickens, then the boy has to accompany his master, carrying his apparatus and obeying him in every way. The medicine-man says, "Your father was an *ocimbanda* and the spirit wants you." The female *ocimbanda* is called *cambula* by other women, and her [845]
services are preferred to those of the male *ocimbanda* in cases of difficult childbirth.

In Ngalangi I was informed that the Ovimbundu have great faith in the medicine-men of the Vangangella, a name vaguely applied by the Ovimbundu to several tribes of east-central Angola. An Ocimbundu will make a journey of several days in order to visit a distant medicine-man of another tribe.

FUNCTIONS OF MEDICINE-MEN

Magical practices are of two kinds, social and anti-social. The man who carries out divination, rain-making, healing the sick, and [791]
many other functions is *ocimbanda*, while the secret worker of evil, the witch or wizard, is *onganga*. In one village there may be several

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

171 411 The question of arrow release is important in this connection. R. B. Dixon (The Building of Cultures, p. 131), while discussing evidence from Wissler, Kroeber, and Morse, has plotted a map showing the distribution of types of arrow release in all parts of the world. The Ovimbundu (Plate XXXIX, Fig. 1) use the Mediterranean release, which is shown by Kroeber (Univ. Calif. Pub., XXIII, p. 286) to occur in the southwest Congo region along with the tertiary release. My illustration and Kroeber's description of the Mediterranean release show that the thumb is kept entirely out of the way. The string is engaged by the inner surfaces of the tips of the index and middle fingers. The engaging finger-ends are at right angles to the string.

Young boys often use the primary release when shooting blunt wooden arrows at birds. In this release the butt of the arrow is clasped between the end of the thumb and the middle knuckle of the index finger. Kroeber remarks that the primary release is almost invariably attempted by children and uninstructed novices, which accords with my observations made in Angola. Presumably boys of the Ovimbundu change their method of release from the primary to the Mediterranean when they handle a man's bow and arrows. The Mediterranean release was observed throughout Angola, with the exception of the primary release employed by boys.

G. Lindblom (I, Part I) assists in comparing hunting apparatus of the Ovimbundu with a large number of African forms.

The throwing clubs of the Ovimbundu are definitely like those of the Hottentots, Barotse, and Bushmen (pp. 120–126).

224 171 In Part II of his leaflet Lindblom discusses many kinds of traps. The trap built of heavy poles, which is used for catching lions, leopards, and hyenas, is used all over Negro Africa; there is nothing distinctive in the form and use of the Umbundu pattern. The cane rat trap of conical form is described and its distribution is plotted (pp. 52, 53, 56). Lindblom's map shows a clustering round the mouth of the Congo, also again at Long. 30° E. and Lat. 10° S. The blank for Angola can now be filled. These traps are used in many parts of Angola, notably among the Vasele of the northwest, at Elende, Ngalangi, and Cangamba. The use of this trap in Angola explains its presence among the Vakuanyama. On Lindblom's map the occurrence of the trap in south Angola is isolated from the general African distribution, but use of the trap is really continuous from the Congo estuary through Angola to the Vakuanyama.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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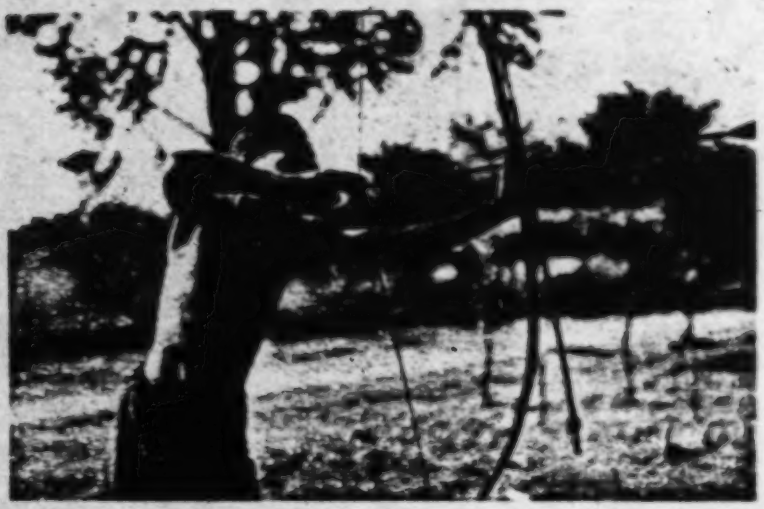

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OVIMBUNDU, ELENDE

Fig. 1. Hunter. Fig. 2. Woman making coiled basket

[p.393]

[124.d]

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FISHING AND HUNTING

Fig. 1. Fishing spear, Ambriselta, northwest Angola. Fig. 2. Stakes for impaling antelope, Vasale, west-central Angola

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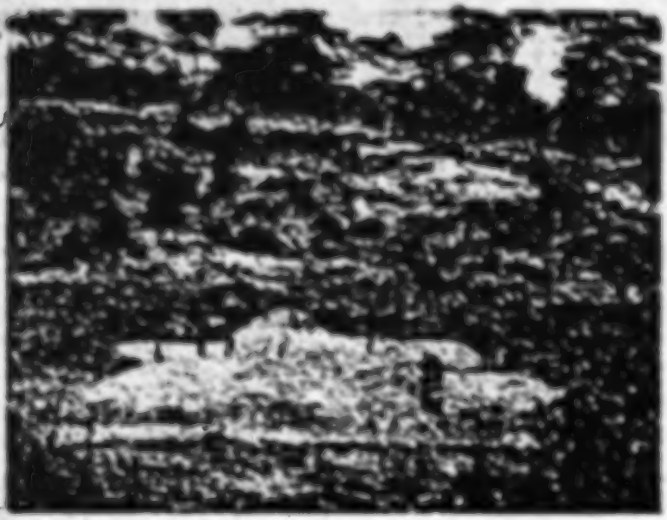

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MAGIC AND HUNTING, CENTRAL ANGOLA

Fig. 1. Mound where children women are covered with sand to give healthy, Vangangela, Ngalangi

Fig. 2. Trap for leopards, Ganguela

[p.446]

5: Hambly E-5 (1929-30) 1934 FP 13 Mbundu FP13

824 825 resemblance for a time caused confusion in my mind, were well known to be distinct; though occasionally a prolonged and serious argument would arise among the old men respecting the correct Umbundu names for two similar snakes.

The cries of birds are interpreted in terms of human conversation: thus the female hornbill says to her mate, "I'm going; I'm going; I'm going to our village;" to which the male replies, "Don't go. The rain has come; let us plant." Another bird says, "Where will the guests stay? where? where? where?" This is an intimation that strangers will visit the village. All animals play a part in folk stories: human beings when introduced are usually of secondary importance.

Nature lore is, of course, fundamental to industries, since the artisans must know the best timbers for particular purposes. Thus certain woods yield the best charcoal for a blacksmith's forge; other woods are essential for house building because the timbers resist attacks of termites; again certain trees yield bark for making rope; while other woods are used for carving animals and household utensils.

[462] I am not sure of the extent to which women participate in nature lore; but certainly their knowledge cannot equal that of the men, since women are concerned chiefly with agriculture, domestic work, care of children, and collection of firewood. Yet women and little children are collectors. I have seen many of them together gathering caterpillars which are to be made into soup. Women know the plants that will yield dyes for basketry, and from women some of the bird calls were obtained. The conversation of men bears on their occupations and the nature lore fundamental to these; therefore women must learn, though perhaps only by unconscious absorption.

224 In connection with a study of food supply the occupation of hunting comes most closely to the general nature lore mentioned above. Here a distinction should be made between hunting as a general occupation for males, and hunting by a professional who gives his life to the work. The only occasion on which women and children assist hunters is during a communal hunt, when all the inhabitants of a village fire the dry grass and aid in the capture of game by shouting and driving the frightened animals.

A professional hunter is usually called ukongo, more rarely onyanga. The occupation is not hereditary. A boy has to serve two years with a professional hunter before his initiation. The principal guests at the initiation feast are professional hunters, who alone may dance, though a miscellaneous company is present. The boy who seeks initiation is required to keep quite still until he feels the "spirit on his head;" then he distributes meat to the people present. The meat used at the feast is that of antelope shot by

5: Hambly E-5 (1929-30)1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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A. Rock tomb of a hunter near Cuando, west-central Angola. The entrance to the tomb is on the right. B. Tomb of a hunter near Luimbale, west-central Angola. Trophies of the chase are on the parabolic. (Photographs by courtesy of Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago.)

[Facing p. 158]

S: Hambly E-5 (1929-30)1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

professional hunters, and the smearing of the novice's bow and arrows with 224
blood from the meat is an important point of ritual. The bow and arrows
are made by the master for his pupil; a practice strictly analogous to the [326]
making of tools for a young blacksmith by the master who has trained
him.

In connection with the life and death of a hunter a certain amount of 177
ritual survives, and this despite long European contacts, game laws, and 224
the development of an economic system based primarily on extensive cul- [241]
tivation of maize and beans. But though these circumstances might tend to
discourage hunting and its attendant ritual, other facts have contributed
to survival. An embargo on guns and powder has led to prolonged use of
bows and arrows, with which all hunters are expert, though some, despite
official prohibition, have muzzle loading guns. Bows are in general use, and
their continuance has no doubt aided survival of ritual, since the rites
themselves are closely associated with the bows.

The night before a professional hunter sets out is an occasion for re- 224
newal of implements of the chase, that is, renewal in a spiritual sense, by a
ceremony designed to transfer power in a magical way from the disused
weapons of deceased hunters to the weapons in use. Weapons of dead
hunters are kept in a small hut to which a hunter repairs on the eve of de-
parture. He rubs the old weapons (bows, clubs, and spears) with palm-oil;
then pours over them a libation of beer. No medicine-man is present, so for
the occasion a hunter functions as his own priest.

It is hazardous and perhaps unprofitable to attempt an analysis of the
philosophy behind these ritual acts. Yet the weapons are symbols of the
personality and prowess of dead hunters whose names they have received.
Therefore the suggestion that the hunter is acquiring power from the dead
is reasonable, and the idea harmonizes with all that is known of ancestor
worship among Bantu tribes.

The food and cooking pots of a hunter must never be associated with
those of ordinary household use. If a hunter is following the tracks of an
animal he may not point with his finger, since this action will drive the
animal away. He may, however, point with the feathered end of an ar-
row. A dog must have his ears clipped in a peculiar way or he will not hear
and obey. A hunter may not sleep with his wife the night before setting out
in quest of game. Before leaving home a hunter washes his eyes with a con-
coction of herbs to give greater acuity of vision.

In any village the hut of a professional hunter can be readily distin- 224
guished by a number of poles erected near the entrance. On these supports 764
are placed the skulls of animals killed in the chase. A traveler cannot fail
to notice the tombs of hunters, which consist of rains
of stones enclosing a

5: Hambly E-5 (1929-30) 1934 FP 13 Mbundu FP13

224 764 hollow chamber. I removed a thin slab of stone which formed an entrance to a tomb of this kind and observed within two skeletons lying supine. On the top of the cairns were skulls of animals killed by the hunter. I noted one instance of the burial of a hunter's dog under a cairn of stones.

825 794 Three birds are protected by a prohibition. Esuvi is a bird which has power to steal the souls of the dead, so making them die a second death. As usual, no direct explanation was given concerning this second death, but an explanation came later, quite fortuitously. For instance, an old man said he was sick because esuvi had stolen the spirit of his grandfather. This statement is logical, since welfare depends on a beneficent interest of dead ancestors, and it is evident that dying a second death prevents a spirit from exercising a benign influence over the living. Other protected birds are one which supplies feathers from which the decorations of kings and medicine-men are made, and one whose night cry is a warning of death in a village.

226 In fishing, a division of labor is recognized: men use a rod and line, while women drag baskets against the stream or use poison in slow, shallow water. The night before poison is to be used for fishing, husband and wife must avoid intercourse, since intimacy of this kind would make the fish stay together at the bottom of the river. A man who has prepared his rod and line, by transfixing a grasshopper and attaching it to a thin piece of bark, [339] sings a song which is of the nature of a spell. He says:

> "O fish come and take your good thing.
> Do not send the little fish to spoil the good thing.
> Better you come and take the good thing with all your strength."

439 Up to half a century ago the Ovimbundu were renowned traders whose caravans penetrated deeply into the Congo region and even to the east side of Africa. It is natural, therefore, that some ritual should be connected with such an important enterprise. At the present day caravans may be seen, but [443] these are local, and most of the carriers are found to be taking their maize, beans, and beeswax to traders' stores. I believe women did not accompany the transcontinental caravans of early days, but today women may be seen in line with the other carriers. Their loads are lighter, being on the average thirty pounds as compared with sixty pounds for a man. Children also carry small loads in the caravan.

439 787 Ngonga, my chief informant, said that in former times no caravan leader would set out without having consulted the preserved head of a deceased king. Even at present the corpse of a king is suspended by the neck [643] and twisted until the head is severed. The head is sewn in oxhide and preserved in a box. The ancient caravan custom consisted of taking the box

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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might be told that he lived elsewhere. This would turn out to be a reference to the government headman. A request for the *sekulu* (literally elder father, hence elder or headman) might also bring me in contact with the 'elder of the school', the representative of the local Christians. I therefore began to ask for 'the old one' (*akulu*), or to inquire 'Who built first?' or 'Who settles disputes?', when I wanted to find out who was the traditional headman.

Even these questions did not necessarily get a clear answer. Thus the village of Kamupa had been founded by Lusase, its government headman was Guilherme, and, as neither of these was living near, minor disputes were referred to two old men who lived in the village. Apart from the government headmen, there are also traditional headmen recognized by the post, who did not have the privileges and the duties of the former. It may happen in a particular village that the man recognized as traditional headman by the post is not the same person as the real traditional headman recognized by the village. This was the case in Epalanga, where Sapapula was unquestionably the headman recognized by the villagers but the duties of dealing with policemen fell to Luanga. In the local discussions as to the recruitment of road-workers, and so on, Sapapula had much more influence than Luanga.

The position of the traditional headman nowadays lacks clearly defined powers, or symbolic value. A village is frequently known by its founder's name. The headman is the only person who can speak of 'my village' as opposed to 'our village'.[19] The firing of the long grass in the dry season which marks the beginning of the great communal hunts is theoretically begun by the village headman, though this is not always adhered to in practice. The headman does not take any active part in leading the hunt, nor are the people who go on a communal hunt necessarily confined to the inhabitants of one village. He has 'to show land' to new-comers to the village. This reflects a moral responsibility to his people rather than control of land tenure, since there is always spare land away from the villages which anybody can cultivate. He also has the responsibility of hearing minor disputes. He receives from the

[19] Ibid., pp. 36-37.

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maize from these beds is for home consumption, and it comes at a time when maize supplies are running low, and some people have to rely on manioc. The *embanda* type is sown in September and early October. Then the main fields (*ovapya*, plural of *epya*) are sown in October and November, and only after this is maize sown in the gardens round the houses. In December and January the people are busy hoeing the fields and in February the sowing of beans takes place, continuing into March. This is followed by the harvesting of the gardens in the village, and by the gathering of the maize in the fields, the maize then being placed in field huts to dry. This takes place in March and April, and with its ending the dry season has come.

The dry season is the time for travelling to see relatives and for getting married, since the burden of work is much reduced. May is a good time to clear the bush and then and in later months there is time to build houses. During the dry season there was much more chance of finding people at home, and there were far more festive occasions. This is also a time when men and women can practise crafts such as basketry, fish-trap making, pottery, and so on. In July, the maize dried in the field hut is pounded and brought back to the village, whence it is taken to the traders for sale. The pounding and carrying is often the work of parties of friends and relatives who are rewarded with beer. Occasionally somebody's maize is collected like this well into September, but most people finish in August. By August the grass has grown very high, and the firing of it is the beginning of large-scale hunts in which men and boys from several villages may join together. Hunts may be undertaken by individuals or by groups at other times of the year either as a hobby or to kill a destructive wild pig (in which case the hunt will be undertaken by a group of people). September is a good month for fishing. The fire has cleared the stream valleys which can now be sown, thus starting off the year's cycle again.

There is no shortage of land, and hence questions of land rights seldom come up in social relations. A village headman has no rights over land outside his village, and even within a village there are strips of bush from which a new garden can be cut. Land is very occasionally sold. For instance a man return-

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ing home from labour in October wants cleared fields to sow. If he cannot find any kinsman who would give him a cleared field he will have to buy one, and will have perhaps to pay 200 escudos (£2 10s.). A man retains his rights to fields in a village he no longer inhabits.

The Ovimbundu keep cattle, sheep, goats, pigs, and fowls. The cattle are not milked but are used in sacrifices, and for fines; some have been brought by Ovimbundu from Kwanyama Ambo country but they do not seem to thrive in this neighbourhood. Sheep are few. In my village goats were much less numerous than chickens or pigs. The traders and European residents buy cattle, chickens, and pigs.

Fishing and hunting are practised, but despite the ingenious fish-traps, nets, poisons and weirs used for the first, and the popular enthusiasm for, and ritual associations of the second, neither dominates the actual food supply and ecological background in the way that maize does.

The Ovimbundu believe that the dry-season grass fires also help to fertilize the soil by leaving ashes. Ashes are sometimes spread in a village garden, and dry grass may also be left in a field for this purpose. Soil beside trees is considered to be especially rich, as to some extent are the sites of former villages. There is no idea of crop rotation and a field is worked for as long as it is fertile, that is indefinitely for an *onaka* and from three to six years, sometimes more, for a field of the *ofya* type. The hoe is still the standard means of cultivation and the plough is a rarity.

Coffee-growing on any scale is usually undertaken by people living away from the villages, except for the Protestants who have been encouraged by their missionaries to plant coffee in their villages. Coffee, like maize, is bought by the traders. However, at least two local coffee-growers sold their coffee at Porto Amboim on the coast to get a better price. Basically, the agricultural economy of the neighbourhood is based on maize, grown by methods of shifting cultivation. The frequency with which villages rise and fall and individuals change from one village to another is entirely consistent with this type of agriculture.

Axe and hoe blades, blankets, cloths, clothing, cutlery,

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1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

they came to call it *ofeka yonjala*, 'The Hungry Country' or better 133
'The Country of Hunger', since it was without inhabitants and 167
consequently without the possibility of purchasing provisions.[1]
Much of the soil in all three of these adjoining regions is very [134]
sandy and comparatively unproductive.

Many rivers find in the Benguela Highland a great catchment 133
basin. The two largest are the Kuanza (Kuanja) and the Cunene (Kunene), both flowing into the Atlantic. Between them are the Queve (Keve, also marked 'Cuvo'), the Balombo, and the Catumbela (Katombela), which also reach the ocean. A peculiar stream is the Cubango (Kuvango or Okavango), which rises near the source of the Cunene, and after becoming a great and free-flowing river loses itself in the Kalahari desert. Some authorities hold that through the Chobe swamp it maintains a seasonal connexion with the Zambezi. In this event the springs of the Benguela Highland feed the waters of both oceans. The part played by the Mbuluvulu plain in Bié (Viye) has often been noted by travellers and writers, for it drains into the Kuanza and also into the Cubango. As with most of the Southern Bantu,[2] rivers have had little directly to do with building the material culture of the Ovimbundu. Watersheds have furnished trade-routes, and fishing has become [226]
a side-line occupation for those who live conveniently near the streams. The rivers themselves, however, have always been of the greatest importance to the mass of the people who are dependent upon them for water, whether it comes in the form of rainfall or is taken more directly from the streams.

Climate

The regions under consideration in this study belong to the 132
South Central African zone of summer rains. Coming on the monsoon from the Indian Ocean, the rains are precipitated by cold winds from the south-western antarctic current.[3] The Benguela Highland constitutes a distinct climatic zone, as the fact of the altitude would lead one to infer. The adjoining and coastal regions

[1] Cf. H. W. Nevinson, *A Modern Slavery*, chap. vi (New York: Harpers, 1906); also M. Burr, *A Fazicher in Angola* (London: Adelphi, 1933).

[2] A. J. H. Goodwin, 'Habitat', p. 34, in Schapera, *The Bantu-Speaking Tribes of South Africa* (London: Routledge, 1937).

[3] See C. E. P. Brooks and S. T. A. Mirrlees, *A Study of the Atmospheric Circulation over Tropical Africa*. Meteorological Office. Geophysical memoirs no. 55 (London: H.M.S.O., 1932).

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

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Photo. M. W. Ennis

a. Communal fishing party (Talange River, Elende)

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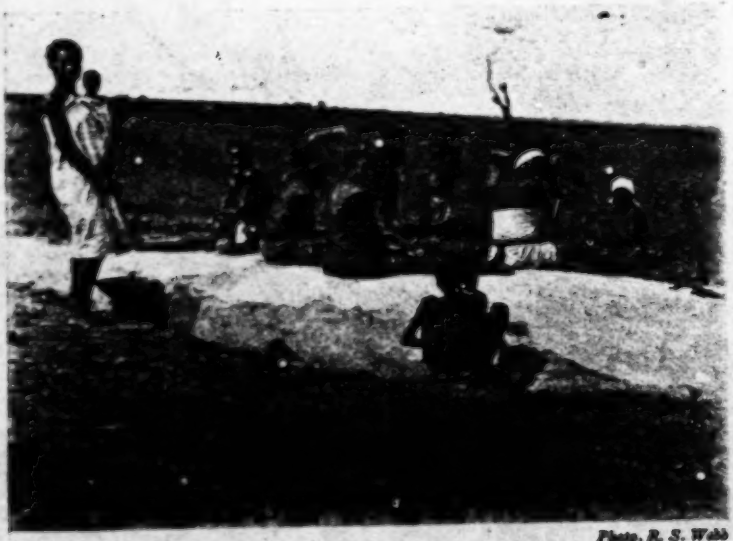

Photo. R. S. Webb

b. Women grinding meal (Bailundu)

[Facing p. 64]

A professional hunter usually works alone, using bows and arrows, clubs, spears, and several kinds of trap.(1) Nets and poison are not used. Every hunter makes his own arrow-shafts and feathers; the points are made by a blacksmith. On the night before leaving for a hunt, the *ukongo* calls in his fellow hunters to share a ceremony which includes dancing and the re-anointing of the weapons with beer and palm-oil. 224 411

Communal hunts usually take place in June-July, in the middle of the dry season, when large tracts of land are covered with grass ten or more feet high. The day for the hunt is set by the village headman; spears and arrows are prepared and, when the word is given, a party of about 30 men and boys move off to the assigned area of tall grass. A ring is formed round about two square miles of land, the hunters standing just within sight of each other. The grass is trodden down, fires started, and the animals killed as they rush from the flames. Antelope of many kinds, snakes, foxes, wolves, hyenas, mice and rabbits and occasionally leopards are killed in this way. 224

FISHING

In the Kunene and some of the other larger rivers fish are large and plentiful, and men go on communal fishing expeditions, and return with fish to sell.(2) Men usually fish with bark lines, women use basket-traps(3) and poisons. Poison is used, usually in the dry season, when the rivers are shallow. Both men and women use nets, and sometimes a fish-weir or *olunja* may be employed; this has an opening in the middle, in the lower side of which is placed a basket-trap. At the coast and along the Kwanza river dug-out canoes, about 20-30 feet long, are sometimes used for fishing.(4) 226 462 [501]

DOMESTIC ANIMALS

The principal domestic animals are the cow *(onjindi)*, ox *(ongombe*, which is also the generic name for cattle), bull *(onui)*, sheep *(omene)*, goat *(ohombo)*, pig *(ongulu)*, dog *(ombua)*, and chicken *(osanji)*.(5) The only transport animal is the ox, used both for riding and for drawing carts.(6) 231 [492]

Cattle are a measure of wealth, but few families own large herds. Childs lists the domestic animals in a typical village of 196 inhabitants as: 9 head of cattle, 13 goats, 20 sheep, 100 pigs, and about 100 chickens. Cattle are used for paying fines and debts, for funeral feasts, and for marriage payments. Cows are not usually milked, and cattle are killed for food only when they are aged or injured, or occasionally during the June-July period of food shortage. Treated hides are used to cover stools, and for making pouches and corn-bags.(7) 231 436 [282]

The cattle herd obtains most of its food by grazing, but in the dry 880

(1) Some hunters have guns, but the use of gunpowder is restricted by the Portuguese.
(2) Cushman, op.cit., p.143.
(3) See Cushman, loc.cit. for a brief description of the basket-trap.
(4) Hambly, (2) 1934, p.145.
(5) Ibid., pp.152-6.
(6) Childs, personal communication. Cf. Hambly, op.cit., p.152.
(7) Hambly, op.cit., p.153.

growth is under examination. This central plateau, the Benguela 131
Highlands, rises in places to a height of 6,000 feet, an altitude which [133]
reduces the heat of the tropics and so modifies the flora, discouraging
some types of vegetation and encouraging others. Hostility of the
highlands to palm trees and the banana is appropriately discussed [241]
when dealing with cultural losses; while the fostering effect of reduced
temperature and the presence of wide expanses of open country on
the growth of maize and the keeping of cattle is a cultural gain.

The prevailing rains of Angola are from the northeast to the 132
southwest; consequently the high plateau intercepts rain clouds which
give an annual fall of sixty inches. This adequate rainfall is another
factor which has affected economic life, density of population, com-
munal welfare, and powers of expansion.

The villages of the Ovimbundu are built on hillsides having a 361
commanding view of the surrounding country. There is in the
nature of the land a natural protection from enemies. In addition
to this the Benguela Highlands are an admirable base from which
expeditions both predatory and commercial might, and actually did
set out eastward to the interior of Africa, and southwest to the
cattle-keeping country.

It is important to note that this central plateau is the watershed 133
for four large river systems; the Kwanza to the northwest; the Cunene
to the southwest; the tributaries of the Kasai to the northeast; and
the Zambezi and its affluents to the southeast. Fishing, with attend- [226]
ant beliefs of a ritualistic kind, is of local importance; so also is the
making of canoes. Moreover, the river valleys have marked out a
natural means of communication in several directions.

In connection with the river system the biological factor of the 136
tsetse fly is important, because the presence of the fly locally dis- 231
courages human habitation and prevents the keeping of cattle. The
exact distribution of the fly is imperfectly known, but *Glossinia* [164]
palpalis, the cause of sleeping sickness in human beings, also *Glos-*
sinia morsitans, which carries disease to cattle, are both present along
the Kwanza and parts of the other rivers (J. C. B. Statham, Through
Angola, p. 294).

The western coastal strip is a region of great aridity which has in 132
some years no rainfall whatever, because the northeasterly rains have 137
expended themselves on the high plateau. This region displays
vegetation of the semi-desert type; namely, baobab trees, prickly
acacias, euphorbias, and aloes. Population in this area is sparse, [162]
always nomadic, and in some places non-existent. The coastal strip 000

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

which are fixed on poles in front of the hunter's home during his lifetime (Plate XXXII, Figs. 1, 2). 764 224

There are at the funeral of a hunter special observances which will be mentioned under the heading of funeral rites.

FISHING

In the region of Elende there is fishing with both basket and line; a method of poisoning fish is also practised. Usually a male fishes with a bark line. Women catch fish by the poisoning method, and in addition to this they generally follow the procedure in which baskets are held or weighted in the stream. If the water flows swiftly men may take charge of the fishing operations. At times both men and women fish with nets. Husband and wife may not sleep together the night before fishing, a. this is believed to make the male and female fish stay together at the bottom of the river. 226 462 [534]

The fishing line consists of tough green bark which is cut into strips whose length depends on the height of the river's bank. A hole is bored through the body of a grasshopper, a worm, or a grub taken from under the bark of a tree. Through this hole is passed a short stiff piece of grass about half an inch long, to which the line is attached. The fish is caught when the crosspiece of sharp grass becomes fast in its throat. [283]

When the fisher throws the line he sings: "O fish, come and take your good thing. Do not send the little fish to spoil the good thing. Better you come and take the good thing with all your strength."

In order to make fish poison the tuberous roots of a plant are taken and soaked in water until a scum rises to the top. The solid part of the poison is not given, because it would sink and the fish which ate it would remain at the bottom of the river. Therefore only the scum of this poisonous infusion is thrown in the water. The stupefied, gasping fish remain at the surface, whereupon they are seized by women who transfer them to gourds or baskets worn around their necks. Usually poison is used only in the dry season when the rivers are shallow.

Sometimes there is fishing by means of a weir (*olunja*) which has an opening in the middle. On the lower side of this gap a basket trap is placed.

There is no fishing by torchlight. At the coast, and along the river Kwanza I have seen heavy dugout canoes in use; these were about twenty to thirty feet long and hollowed from single trees (Plate LXXII, Figs. 1, 2). At Ambrizette I noted the use of a fishing [501]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

226 462 spear eight feet long, the end of which consisted of ten sharp prongs of palm stem (Plate LXXIII, Fig. 1).

[171] Near Cangamba in eastern Angola, fishing in the Kwando River occupied numerous men and women of the mixed tribes in the district, namely, Vachokue, Luchazi, and Babunda. Men paddled into midstream in small bark canoes from which fishing operations were directed. The fishermen carried small conical string nets, which were attached to stakes in such a way that the openings of the nets faced upstream. Vachokue women, working in pairs, dragged baskets against the current (Plate LXXXV, Figs. 1, 2).

AGRICULTURE AND COOKING

343 243 *Osila* is the Umbundu word for the granary which stands on wooden supports (Plate XLIV, Fig. 1); this *osila* is for the restricted family, and there is one *osila* for every house. The Ovimbundu store their corn in bulk, but in the Esele country I noted that the cobs themselves were carefully packed. Each Ocimbundu girl cultivates a small patch of ground, the produce of which she is at liberty to sell in order to buy brass ornaments, beads, and palm oil. [432]

241 In addition to maize, barley, oats, and wheat, with here and there a little rye, are occasionally grown. There are three colors of beans, red, white, and black. There is no attempt to keep the varieties separate, so they cross-fertilize freely. The Ovimbundu try to cultivate a surplus of beans and maize which they use to pay their taxes to the Portuguese, likewise to sell at the stores of traders. [651] [438]

252 512 Corn is pounded on the rock which has been used for generations after it has been consecrated by sprinkling the blood of a chicken. Pounding begins as early as five o'clock in the morning, before sunrise, and from that time to sunset the pounding-rock is in use. The rock is evidently regarded as a meeting place for social intercourse; it is undoubtedly the center of village gossip so far as the women are concerned (Plate XXXVI, Fig. 2). [521]

As corn alone is considered a poor food, it is sprinkled on boiling water to which beans are added. Cooking goes on from early morning to sunset over a slow fire. Children sometimes receive as their evening meal a thick plastic cake of mushed corn to which green leaves of a squash are added.

252 There are five kinds of manioc resembling one another in general appearance, but the Ovimbundu distinguish the plants, and reserve for each what they consider to be appropriate preparation. The method varies for sweet and bitter varieties of manioc.

VII. EDUCATION

Industrial Training and Division of Labor

871 Usually there is no formality connected with the industrial and occupational training of Ovimbundu children. The section dealing with play shows that boys and girls learn by spontaneous imitation of their elders.

874 There are, however, exceptions to this general truth. Special rites connected with the training and inauguration of blacksmiths and hunters have been described. The training of medicine-men and women will be dealt with in chapter IX, "Religion."

462 463 In describing economic life in chapter V, division of labor on a sex basis; also specialization in industry because of peculiar tastes and aptitudes, were noted. There is clearly a twofold division in industrial life. In the first place sex determines occupation, and within this primary grouping there is a secondary grouping depending [467] on personal preference and individual ability. I have found no instance of exclusive hereditary right to any occupation or industry.

462 The net result of the Umbundu system of division of labor is indicated by the following summary:

[342] When building houses, men dig the rectangular trench, cut the poles for the framework, lash the crosspieces, cut grass and lay the thatch, then place clay over the wattle walls. Women carry water for mixing the clay and convey the moist clay to the plasterers. [224] Children puddle the clay with their feet. Males are hunters both professional and general. During a communal hunt women and children assist in driving game, which is frightened by the firing of [857] grass. Boys organize games in which they imitate these activities. [226] Men fish with a line and bait, whereas women use baskets and [231] narcotic poison. Men and boys take care of cattle and have charge of dogs. Women and girls give what slight attention is afforded to other domestic animals. Male specialists castrate bulls and goats.

[241] During agricultural operations men clear the ground and burn the bush. Women carry on hoe cultivation without assistance from [482] men. Men are the chief carriers in caravans, but women and children may sometimes be seen carrying loads. They march in line with the men but have smaller burdens. Males are employed in blacksmith's work, wood-carving, making weapons and tools, weaving mats, dressing hides, spinning cotton, and formerly in weaving on an upright loom. Men are exclusively the makers of

535 Almost every evening one may hear the tapping of drums an the songs of dancers, because in addition to dances for a funeral o other special occasion there are ordinary dances of amusement i which lines of men and women advance and retreat, or men an women circle round the drums making arm movements accom panied by a swaying rhythm.

[243] The dance *onyaco*, performed in June when the corn is ripe, ma have an ancient history and special significance as part of an agri cultural rite. When corn is being stored the people sing, "There i grain in the house, may it never be out." There is no dance i [226] connection with fishing.

224 There is mimicry of animals in the hunting game played by boys The frog, the leopard, and other animals are imitated in certai games, but I have no evidence of the performance of mimetic dance in relation to any cult for increasing the supply of animal life.

535 [534] The use of the small ball *ombunje* illustrates the way in which an apparent toy can be used in rites of a religious kind. *Ombunj* consists of a hard spherical fruit about six centimeters in diameter in which several hard seeds rattle. The sphere is covered with a layer of cloth over which lizard skin is stretched and sewn.

[769] [789] When the people wish to commemorate the death of a king, o when the king is sick, the medicine-man (*ocimbanda*) says that there must be *osaka* dancing. A strong man dances for many hours while holding this little ball in his outstretched hand. Other men who are dancing use their fists to hit the muscles of the outstretched arm in an attempt to make the holder drop the ball (*ombunje*). If he does so another man will promptly take hold of it. The precise nature of the endurance test is unexplained, but there is possibly the idea of giving strength to a sick king by this tension and endurance. My interpreter thought this was so, but could not explain why the dance should be performed to commemorate the death of a king. It would seem natural, however, to transfer the *ombunje* rite to a commemorative festival, if in the first place it was part of the last rites of a dying king.

534 463 There are among the Ovimbundu specialists in dancing, singing, and the playing of musical instruments. *Onjimbi* is the word for a singer of merit who starts the choruses. *Ocili* is a dancer of more than ordinary skill. When a man is required to play a drum or other instrument I have noticed that it is thought necessary to bring a specialist. There is no doubt that drumming requires special aptitude and practice. The man who plays the long drum is *usiki*, the drum

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2

FISHING AND HUNTING

Fig. 1. Fishing spear, Ambrizette, northwest Angola. Fig. 2. Stakes for impaling antelope, Vande, west-central Angola

[p. 427]

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3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FR18

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2

VACHOKUE FISHING AT CANGAMBA

Fig. 1. Women dragging basket. Fig. 2. Man in bark canoe, holding net

[p.439]

5: Hambly E-5 (1929-30) 1934 FP 13 Mbundu FP13

224 764 hollow chamber. I removed a thin slab of stone which formed an entrance to a tomb of this kind and observed within two skeletons lying supine. On the top of the cairns were skulls of animals killed by the hunter. I noted one instance of the burial of a hunter's dog under a cairn of stones.

825 794 Three birds are protected by a prohibition. Esuvi is a bird which has power to steal the souls of the dead, so making them die a second death. As usual, no direct explanation was given concerning this second death, but an explanation came later, quite fortuitously. For instance, an old man said he was sick because esuvi had stolen the spirit of his grandfather. This statement is logical, since welfare depends on a beneficent interest of dead ancestors, and it is evident that dying a second death prevents a spirit from exercising a benign influence over the living. Other protected birds are one which supplies feathers from which the decorations of kings and medicine-men are made, and one whose night cry is a warning of death in a village.

•226 In fishing, a division of labor is recognized: men use a rod and line, while women drag baskets against the stream or use poison in slow, shallow water. The night before poison is to be used for fishing, husband and wife must avoid intercourse, since intimacy of this kind would make the fish stay together at the bottom of the river. A man who has prepared his rod and line, by transfixing a grasshopper and attaching it to a thin piece of bark, [339] sings a song which is of the nature of a spell. He says:

> "O fish come and take your good thing.
> Do not send the little fish to spoil the good thing.
> Better you come and take the good thing with all your strength."

439 Up to half a century ago the Ovimbundu were renowned traders whose caravans penetrated deeply into the Congo region and even to the east side of Africa. It is natural, therefore, that some ritual should be connected with such an important enterprise. At the present day caravans may be seen, but [443] these are local, and most of the carriers are found to be taking their maize, beans, and beeswax to traders' stores. I believe women did not accompany the transcontinental caravans of early days, but today women may be seen in line with the other carriers. Their loads are lighter, being on the average thirty pounds as compared with sixty pounds for a man. Children also carry small loads in the caravan.

439 987 Ngonga, my chief informant, said that in former times no caravan leader would set out without having consulted the preserved head of a deceased king. Even at present the corpse of a king is suspended by the neck [643] and twisted until the head is severed. The head is sewn in oxhide and preserved in a box. The ancient caravan custom consisted of taking the box

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ing home from labour in October wants cleared fields to sow. If he cannot find any kinsman who would give him a cleared field he will have to buy one, and will have perhaps to pay 200 escudos (£2 10s.). A man retains his rights to fields in a village he no longer inhabits.

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Fishing and hunting are practised, but despite the ingenious fish-traps, nets, poisons and weirs used for the first, and the popular enthusiasm for, and ritual associations of the second, neither dominates the actual food supply and ecological background in the way that maize does.

The Ovimbundu believe that the dry-season grass fires also help to fertilize the soil by leaving ashes. Ashes are sometimes spread in a village garden, and dry grass may also be left in a field for this purpose. Soil beside trees is considered to be especially rich, as to some extent are the sites of former villages. There is no idea of crop rotation and a field is worked for as long as it is fertile, that is indefinitely for an *onaka* and from three to six years, sometimes more, for a field of the *ofya* type. The hoe is still the standard means of cultivation and the plough is a rarity.

Coffee-growing on any scale is usually undertaken by people living away from the villages, except for the Protestants who have been encouraged by their missionaries to plant coffee in their villages. Coffee, like maize, is bought by the traders. However, at least two local coffee-growers sold their coffee at Porto Amboim on the coast to get a better price. Basically, the agricultural economy of the neighbourhood is based on maize, grown by methods of shifting cultivation. The frequency with which villages rise and fall and individuals change from one village to another is entirely consistent with this type of agriculture.

Axe and hoe blades, blankets, cloths, clothing, cutlery,

241 The Highland is evidently well suited to the particular type of
221 agriculture which the Ovimbundu carry on with upland fields for the principal crops of maize and beans growing in the rainy season and with river gardens for secondary cultures in the dry season. The purpose of the latter is to piece out between the principal harvests. The situation of the Highland across principal watersheds and therefore on convenient trade routes has been noted. This is doubtless one factor in commercial development among the
231 Ovimbundu. Cattle-keeping with them seems to be largely a commercial development. While cattle may live on the Highland, they thrive better in the less well-watered lands to the west and the south where the neighbouring peoples are cattle-keepers.

Neighbouring peoples

101 The cattle-keeping peoples who live just west and south of the
197 Ovimbundu are the Nganda, the Ndombe, the Hanya, the Cilenge, the Cipungu, the Muila, the Nyaneka, the Mulondo, and the Khumbi.[1] These peoples all seem to be related to each other and in some way to some, at least, of the Ovimbundu.[2] Still further south beyond these peoples are the Ambo and the Herero, also cattle-keepers. All these, together with the Ovimbundu, have been classified linguistically as making up the 'Western Province' of the Southern Bantu.[3] There are also a few Bushmen on the southern borders.

The peoples to the east and south-east of the Umbundu country are probably Lunda emigrants and so belong to the Congo group (Cokue and Songo) and to the Zambezi or Central group (Luimbi, Lucazi, Nyemba, Ngonzelo, &c.).[4] These people are lumped together by the Ovimbundu under the somewhat deprecatory term of *va Ngangela*.

The northern neighbours belong to the Western or Angola 'cluster' of the Congo group (Esela, Cipala, Lupolo, Ndongo or

[1] See C. Estermann, 'Notas Etnográficas sôbre os povos indígenas do Distrito da Huila' (*Boletim Geral das Colónias*, Fev. 1935, pp. 41–69). He groups some of these people together under the name 'Bangala' or 'Ovambangala'.

[2] Information from Nganda, Mulondo, Cilenge, and Ovimbundu individuals.

[3] See R. A. Dart, 'Racial Origins', p. 23, in Schapera, op. cit., 1937; C. M. Doke, *Bantu Linguistic Terminology* (London: Longmans, 1935); Sir H. H. Johnston, *Comparative Vocabulary of the Bantu and Semi-Bantu Languages*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1919, 1922).

[4] Johnston, op. cit.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

the household of the headman Sikīlīlē, who had had four wives and one young Esele concubine. At the time of my last visit (1936), however, there were only two wives and the concubine, one wife having died, and another having gone to her people. 595 592

To complete the picture of the villagers, their numbers were as follows: 621

Village	Men	Women	Children		Total
			Male	Female	
In Sikīlīlē's village	24	35	31	37	127
In Ciyanda	5	8	2	4	19
In Kanjengo	3	6	3	1	13
At the School	10	11	10	6	37
Total	42	60	46	48	
	Adults: 102		Children: 94[1]		196

In Sikīlīlē's village there were domestic animals as follows: 9 head of cattle, 13 goats, 20 sheep, 100 pigs, and about 100 chickens. There was practically no professional specialization; there were almost no specialists living in the village: no blacksmith or carpenter, no mat-maker, but only one 'hunter of meat', and three 'hunters of (bee-) hives'. As to the women, all could make baskets, and there were several who had made pottery, but were not doing so at the time. 621 463 [231]

Pigs, chickens, and dogs roamed the village, functioning as a D.S.C. and a sewer system combined. Were it not for these scavengers the villages of the Ovimbundu would present an even more untidy spectacle than is the case. There is no other regular disposal of refuse, nor are there any latrines or privies.[2] 364 [514]

It will be seen that there is practically no division of labour as between households: each is practically a self-contained unit. The 621 476

[1] It was reported that in addition to the children then living, these same households had lost 57 by death (29 males and 28 females).

[2] At Ngendo the school village had two or three enclosed pit privies. The Umbundu euphemism for defecate, 'go to the bush' (*oku enda kusenge*), is revealing. Even more revealing is a proverb which advises one not to burn his bridges behind him, but literally it runs as follows:

Nda wa lisinga hutiʼ Si endi hanyima ongo,
Nda o ha sūtīlā pi?

If you forswear yourself saying, I shall not go behind the house,
Then will you go (to) urinate where?

There is a more shocking version which, however, may not be really authentic. 538

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

heavy tasks and the close and constant routine of housework, on the other hand, sometimes require more than casual urging by the mother. Biographical evidence agrees with observation on this point, but nevertheless few girls reach puberty without attaining proficiency in the various household tasks. The decline of polygyny has probably hastened the girl's education in the household arts. When there is only one wife in the household, not only must she have more regular help from her daughters, but also it is more likely that the daughters will have to take on full responsibility at those times when the mother is unable for ritual reasons to take part in the preparation of her husband's food.[1] Biographical sources indicate that this tendency was already operating at least fifty or sixty years ago.

Every Ocimbundu assumes that his sustenance will come from cultivation of the soil. The 'professions' which a child may learn are therefore in the nature of side-lines. Although the Ovimbundu are not a true cattle-rearing people, they possess many domestic animals, especially dogs, pigs, sheep, goats, and chickens. Chickens are owned and looked after by both men and women, but the other animals only by the men. Boys may have small stock of their own, and a boy's economic independence most frequently begins with owning a chicken. Herding has been a function of the sister's son and even now there is reluctance on the part of boys to herd for their fathers. Animal husbandry is largely a commercial enterprise, save in the extreme southern tribes of Kalukembe, Ngalangi, &c.

The principal side-line 'professions' (*ovipinduko*) may be listed as follows:

For Girls

Basket-making, which is practised by all to a limited extent, but excelled in by relatively few.

Pottery-making.

Medical-practice and Divination (for conditions, see *infra*).

For Boys

Mat-making, which includes the making of four distinct types of mats each of which has its specialist; the making of trays and large baskets for granaries.

[1] i.e. at the times of her menstrual periods, after the birth of a child, &c.

A professional hunter usually works alone, using bows and arrows, clubs, spears, and several kinds of trap.(1) Nets and poison are not used. Every hunter makes his own arrow-shafts and feathers; the points are made by a blacksmith. On the night before leaving for a hunt, the ukongo calls in his fellow hunters to share a ceremony which includes dancing and the re-anointing of the weapons with beer and palm-oil. 224 411

Communal hunts usually take place in June-July, in the middle of the dry season, when large tracts of land are covered with grass ten or more feet high. The day for the hunt is set by the village headman; spears and arrows are prepared and, when the word is given, a party of about 30 men and boys move off to the assigned area of tall grass. A ring is formed round about two square miles of land, the hunters standing just within sight of each other. The grass is trodden down, fires started, and the animals killed as they rush from the flames. Antelope of many kinds, snakes, foxes, wolves, hyenas, mice and rabbits and occasionally leopards are killed in this way. 224

FISHING

In the Kunene and some of the other larger rivers fish are large and plentiful, and men go on communal fishing expeditions, and return with fish to sell.(2) Men usually fish with bark lines, women use basket-traps(3) and poisons. Poison is used, usually in the dry season, when the rivers are shallow. Both men and women use nets, and sometimes a fish-weir or *olunja* may be employed; this has an opening in the middle, in the lower side of which is placed a basket-trap. At the coast and along the Kwanza river dug-out canoes, about 20-30 feet long, are sometimes used for fishing.(4) 226 462 [501]

DOMESTIC ANIMALS

The principal domestic animals are the cow *(onjindi)*, ox (ongombe, which is also the generic name for cattle), bull *(onui)*, sheep *(ousue)*, goat *(ohombo)*, pig *(ongulu)*, dog *(ombua)*, and chicken *(osanji)*.(5) The only transport animal is the ox, used both for riding and for drawing carts.(6) 231 [492]

Cattle are a measure of wealth, but few families own large herds. Childs lists the domestic animals in a typical village of 196 inhabitants as: 9 head of cattle, 13 goats, 20 sheep, 100 pigs, and about 100 chickens. Cattle are used for paying fines and debts, for funeral feasts, and for marriage payments. Cows are not usually milked, and cattle are killed for food only when they are aged or injured, or occasionally during the June-July period of food shortage. Treated hides are used to cover stools, and for making pouches and corn-bags.(7) 231 436 [282]

The cattle herd obtains most of its food by grazing, but in the dry 680

(1) Some hunters have guns, but the use of gunpowder is restricted by the Portuguese.
(2) Cashman, op.cit., p.143.
(3) See Cashman, loc.cit. for a brief description of the basket-trap.
(4) Hambly, (2) 1934, p.145.
(5) Ibid., pp.152-6.
(6) Childs, personal communication. Cf. Hambly, op.cit., p.152.
(7) Hambly, op.cit., p.153.

233 The cattle herd obtains most of its food by grazing, but in the dry season the grass withers. Childs states[1] that "Herding has been a [609] function of the sister's son, and even now there is a reluctance on the part of the boys to herd for their fathers."

235 462 [844] Chickens are owned and looked after by both men and women, but other animals only by men. Boys may have small stock of their own, and a boy's economic independence most frequently begins with his owning a chicken.

231 Hambly states that goats are more common than any other animal, and that every family has one or more. These animals are not fed or watered, but are allowed to wander to find their own sustenance. Goats are not milked. Young males are castrated. The goat is frequently used in sacrifices. Sheep also are allowed to find their own food; the males are not castrated. Pigs are cared for comparatively carefully, receiving water and a daily supply of sweet potatoes and their leaves, together with some corn. Male pigs are castrated.[2]

APICULTURE[3]

[439] Beeswax was an important item of trade in the caravan days, and is still sold to Portuguese traders' stores, where it is massed into large rectangular cakes for export. Honey is eaten alone or with manioc, and [262] a fermented beer called *ochesa* is made by adding honey to corn-beer. [273] Fibre strainers are used for cleaning the wax, and large shallow baskets [252] are employed for drying the honey in the sun.

Large cylindrical hives, which are private property, are placed high in the trees. These are made by removing a cylinder of bark and lashing the halves together with strands of bark, forming a hive which has a diameter of one foot.

In Elende honey is removed from the hives during the months of August and December. One man ascends the tree in order to lower the hive with a long rope of bark or plaited fibre, while beneath the tree men are prepared to take the hive, which is opened over a smoky fire.

ARTS AND CRAFTS

326 782 *Smithing.* The profession of blacksmith or *ocivinda* is an important one, and, like hunting and divining, is sacred and is entered with special ritual. Often, but not always, these three professions are passed on by inheritance. For smithing two years' apprenticeship to a member of the profession is necessary, and is usually entered upon at the age of eighteen. At the end of this period the master examines his pupil, and makes tools for him, especially the heavy hammer or *onjundo* which is regarded as symbolic of his craft. For the inauguration ceremony the boy provides four chickens (2 male, 2 female), a dog, and a goat; the blood of these animals is sprinkled on his tools, and their flesh is eaten at a feast [553] attended by the villagers. Throughout the procedure the boy remains standing on the small anvil. Finally he is asked to choose his professional name; he then steps down from the anvil a qualified blacksmith.

(1) Childs, 1949, p.109. (2) Hambly, op.cit., p.154.
(3) Hambly, (4) 1934.

growth is under examination. This central plateau, the Benguela 131
Highlands, rises in places to a height of 6,000 feet, an altitude which [133]
reduces the heat of the tropics and so modifies the flora, discouraging
some types of vegetation and encouraging others. Hostility of the
highlands to palm trees and the banana is appropriately discussed [241]
when dealing with cultural losses; while the fostering effect of reduced
temperature and the presence of wide expanses of open country on
the growth of maize and the keeping of cattle is a cultural gain.

The prevailing rains of Angola are from the northeast to the 132
southwest; consequently the high plateau intercepts rain clouds which
give an annual fall of sixty inches. This adequate rainfall is another
factor which has affected economic life, density of population, com-
munal welfare, and powers of expansion.

The villages of the Ovimbundu are built on hillsides having a 361
commanding view of the surrounding country. There is in the
nature of the land a natural protection from enemies. In addition
to this the Benguela Highlands are an admirable base from which
expeditions both predatory and commercial might, and actually did
set out eastward to the interior of Africa, and southwest to the
cattle-keeping country.

It is important to note that this central plateau is the watershed 133
for four large river systems; the Kwanza to the northwest; the Cunene
to the southwest; the tributaries of the Kasai to the northeast; and
the Zambezi and its affluents to the southeast. Fishing, with attend- [226]
ant beliefs of a ritualistic kind, is of local importance; so also is the
making of canoes. Moreover, the river valleys have marked out a
natural means of communication in several directions.

In connection with the river system the biological factor of the 136
tsetse fly is important, because the presence of the fly locally dis- 231
courages human habitation and prevents the keeping of cattle. The
exact distribution of the fly is imperfectly known, but *Glossinia* [164]
palpalis, the cause of sleeping sickness in human beings, also *Glos-*
sinia morsitans, which carries disease to cattle, are both present along
the Kwanza and parts of the other rivers (J. C. B. Statham, Through
Angola, p. 294).

The western coastal strip is a region of great aridity which has in 132
some years no rainfall whatever, because the northeasterly rains have 137
expended themselves on the high plateau. This region displays
vegetation of the semi-desert type; namely, baobab trees, prickly
acacias, euphorbias, and aloes. Population in this area is sparse, [162]
always nomadic, and in some places non-existent. The coastal strip 000

131 was at times traversed by the Ovimbundu who know of the sea and
484 call it *kalunga*. Bihéan caravans crossed to the coast with slaves, as history shows, but the nature of the coastal strip marks it as a western barrier limiting the expansion of the Ovimbundu in that direction. The coast line itself is of the greatest moment in the consideration of historical factors. From Loanda, Benguela, and
[177] Mossamedes on the coast, the Portuguese penetrated the interior, so making contacts with the Ovimbundu to the encouragement of caravan trade. The importance of this European contact will be seen in subsequent chapters.

The south and southwest parts of Angola are of particular importance in studying the contacts of the Ovimbundu, but to give here the details of the wealthy cattle-keeping culture of these regions, which were accessible through peaceful proximity, trade, and occasional raiding, would be an anticipation of chapter X, "Culture Contacts."
[123] One topographical point is of primary importance; namely, the ease with which the Ovimbundu could descend from their strongholds to the low-lying land of the west and south, whereas the reverse journey is much more difficult for a people unaccustomed to manoeuvring and finding their way among hills.

101 Having described the northern, central, western, and southern areas, there remains only the eastern section to consider; this presents several features of peculiar geographical and ethnological interest.
[133] The eastern section of Angola is either slightly undulating or flat, the general characteristic is dryness, and vegetation is somewhat
[136] sparse though sufficient to shelter many kinds of antelope.

The major population is the Vachokue, a warlike, hunting people, who follow agricultural pursuits but slightly, and do not keep cattle. Examination of the literature describing early exploration indicates
[126] the truculent nature of these eastern people with whom caravans of Ovimbundu were in frequent conflict. Umbundu caravans crossed this country when making their way to Rhodesia, culture contacts with which are discussed in chapter X.

The results of contact of Ovimbundu and Vachokue tribes, so far as physical miscegenation is concerned, are mentioned in chapter "Physical Appearan[illegible] while the social effects of slavery resulting from hostilities are described in chapter VI, "Social Life."

174 Rhodesia is a cattle-raising country, but the hostility of the
231 Vachokue, the great distance from central Angola to Rhodesia, and the general dryness of the country to be crossed, discourage the idea that the Ovimbundu obtained their cattle from Rhodesia. If it is

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

argued that the cattle might have been brought along the course of the Zambezi and Kwando there is the objection that there are here several tsetse fly belts. On the contrary, cattle-producing country in the southwest and south of Angola is far more accessible than the Rhodesian plateau. 174 231

In the south there is the cultural habit of digging wells, especially among the Vakuanyama; but the Vachokue have not developed this trait. The substrata underlying the sand of southern Angola hold water which serves through the dry season, a fact which is advantageously employed by the cattle-keepers. The Vachokue lack this well-digging habit, and, even if subsurface water were present, the transient Ovimbundu would have lacked opportunity to dig for it when passing through hostile country. 312 171

The acquisition of cattle by the Ovimbundu is of great importance, because it is concerned with the grafting of a series of pastoral traits on a culture in no way originally associated with pastoral pursuits. The truth of this will later be made clear by examination of historical and ethnological evidence. 233

Geographical considerations give a picture of the Ovimbundu situated in naturally fortified country from which they had access to four surrounding areas, whose cultural characters agree well with the determinism of topography and climate. The natural advantages of the central highlands, and the results of contact with each of the adjacent areas, are points which will be developed in appropriate sections throughout the ensuing chapters. 133

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

114 trative posts. I agree that people between Caconda and Huila
101 represent a racial mixture of the Ovimbundu and the Ovambo. The record speaks of painting-houses for girls at Cabinda, an item which agrees with reports from other sources. The jottings concerning tribes from Cabinda to the far south of Angola are too vague to be used in ethnological work with confidence.

There are many points on which the work of A. Schachtzabel should be consulted for the purpose of making comparisons with my [621] own observations. The chief of these are a note and photograph on [281] village construction (p. 130); the musical bow (p. 32); the loom [775] (plate VI); transmigration of the soul of a chief into an animal (p. 51); [524] and the game of mancala (p. 52). My observations of initiation at [881] Katoko, Ngalangi, and Cangamba agree well with that of Schachtzabel at Katoko, but I was able to obtain more detail and more [283] numerous photographs of the ritual of initiation. The spinning of cotton (p. 143) is exactly the process so frequently witnessed now at Elende. Iron-working (p. 111) appears to be comparable with the technique at Elende, but Schachtzabel seems to have missed the ritual. I was not so fortunate as this author in finding the old type of iron-smelting furnace in use.

114 The work of Statham is devoted primarily to hunting and descrip-
136 tions of plant and animal life. The chapter given to a casual description of people among whom he passed is not useful as ethnology; but the book is of service in providing a background of natural history. Information on the tsetse fly in Angola (p. 294) assists ethnological work by showing the determining effect of this biological factor. [231] Presence of the fly is prohibitive to cattle-keeping, therefore cattle are not kept along the river courses which are infested with this pest.

114 Alexander Barns made no pretence of writing more than a travel book; nevertheless he publishes photographs of ethnological value, gives useful historical summaries, and deals with economic problems of production and transportation.

114 Tucker's book "Drums in the Darkness," though written to
175 interest the American public in mission work, contains many ethnological statements. The chief of these relate to the structure of the compound (p. 37); the dress of women (p. 39); naming of twins and triplets; and other items which agree well with data from the district in which I worked. There are notes on drum signals (p. 74) and [202] cannibalism (p. 77). Apparently drum signals were in use at Bihé half a century ago. Forty years ago a slave was killed and eaten [266] at the installation ceremonies for a new king, a point that was noted

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

In northern Angola the Ovimbundu could not have had other than 174
a warlike existence, which trained them in military tactics and the 178
building up of an aggressive confederacy. In this they were aided by contact with the Portuguese, who supplied guns and powder in exchange for slaves and ivory from the interior. This accumulated wealth further stimulated the building up of Umbundu tribal life.

Introduction of maize by the Portuguese gave the Ovimbundu a 177
knowledge of this grain, which later became their staple wealth and food supply.

The cultural pattern of the northern Congo was the same in the 174
year 1600 as it is today, and consideration of the ethnology of the Congo region reveals numerous similarities with Umbundu culture of the present time.

Writings of explorers in Angola from A.D. 1800 to the present day bring out many points which are in agreement with my field observations. There are no discrepancies which would make me question the validity of information given by my informants.

In early records, Battell's observation of cattle in the hinterland [231]
of Benguela (1600), is important in showing that at such an early date the Ovimbundu had access to cattle when raiding from their home in the Benguela Highlands.

From these fundamentals of geography and history the inquiry turns to a detailed account of my observations among the Ovimbundu and surrounding tribes.

V. ECONOMIC LIFE

The words "economic life" are here used with a wide connotation 182
including nature lore, food supply, trade, transport, and industries;
all these are combined to form a foundation for every aspect of the
social life of the tribe.

The truth of this is realized if one pays attention to the rites 788
connected with occupations. For the hunter there is special training, 782
ritual, and a peculiar mode of burial. Final ceremonies in the initiation of a young blacksmith are associated with sacred acts such as sacrifice of animals and the sprinkling of the tools with their blood. Even the simple occupation of pounding corn requires that the rock shall be dedicated to this purpose by sprinkling the blood of a chicken on the surface. Similarly, a clay pit has to be consecrated before the raw material may be taken for making pottery. A caravan [787]
journey is not merely a commercial undertaking; the accompanying medicine-man carries a wooden figure which he consults with regard to the route (Plate XXI, Fig. 5).

Division of labor according to sex is one of the most important 462
principles involved in the economic life, more particularly in occupational groupings, which are strictly observed. Moreover, within any one activity, such as house-building, there are tasks for men only, while other parts of the work are performed exclusively by women or children.

The study of industries is of great importance when a comparison 322
of Umbundu and adjacent cultures is being made. This is particu- 177
larly true in the instance of wood-carving, an occupation yielding highly specialized products some of which are connected with religious [778]
belief and ritual. All artifacts are valuable as criteria of cultural contacts, though their reliability as evidence of trait diffusion naturally varies with their degree of complexity. Study of native industries in relation to European contacts illustrates a cultural process which may result in acceptance, rejection, or ingenious adaptation of new ideas.

That a study of the economic life of a tribe is not merely a record- 182
ing of material processes and artifacts, is illustrated by observation 231
of the treatment of cattle. This pastoral pursuit naturally falls under a heading "Domestic Animals," but the ideas associated with cattle, including funeral feasts, use of horns on graves, and the wrapping of the royal corpse in oxhide, lead directly into important matters of belief and ritual.

824 *Okalalūluka*. This tree has leaves which are used in treating a skin disease.
813 *Uvendanguluve*. This small tree, only three feet in height, gives straight twigs which are used in making arrow shafts.

FOOD SUPPLY

COLLECTING AND HUNTING

222 Collecting of natural products which serve as food substances is
462 chiefly in the hands of women and children, though an exception has to be made in the instance of honey, which is gathered by men and boys.

Boys diligently search for nests, noting their location so as to be able to visit them again when the fledglings are large enough to serve as food. Large numbers of women and children may be seen
252 gathering caterpillars in gourds. The insides of the caterpillars are
222 squeezed into boiling water to make soup.

When a cloud of locusts appears, as in 1925, the creatures are gathered. They are sometimes fried, or they may be boiled in water, dried, and preserved with salt in earthenware pots.

A number of miscellaneous items of the food supply were mentioned in connection with names of trees whose fruits are gathered.

223 Boys engaged in food-gathering usually carry small bows and
[411] blunt wooden arrows (*ocilavi*). One type of bird arrow is fixed to the bowstring. The forward end of the arrow is split so that it may contain small stones that are ejected when the string is released. From the wild fig tree mucilage is obtained and this is boiled until it forms a thick paste which is smeared on the boughs of trees.
[231] Some of the small birds captured in this way are eaten, others are kept in wicker cages made by children.

343 In all parts of Angola large cylindrical beehives may be seen
171 fixed high in the trees (Plate XC, Fig. 2). Two types of hive have been noted in particular. In the Elende district a hive is made by opposing two half cylinders of wood each about three feet long, so forming a hive which has a diameter of one foot. The ends are covered, with the exception of a small round hole. The whole structure is bound round with grass which is kept in position by lashings of bark. In the neighborhood of Cassanga a difference in the structure of the hives was noticed. This type of hive is made from a cylinder of strong reddish bark, the edges of which are fastened together with stout wooden pegs. The dimensions are the same as for the hive used in Elende, but the hive of bark is uncovered.

231 In the Elende district honey of wild bees is removed from the hives in the months of August and December. One man ascends

[see pp. 138-140, category 116]

the tree in order to lower the hive with a long rope of bark or plaited 231
fiber, while beneath the tree men are prepared to take the hive, which is opened over a smoky fire. The men wear no protection, consequently they are badly stung. Boys are encouraged to help, and those who run away receive no honey. Honey may be eaten 263
alone or with manioc. No drink is made from honey only, but 273
ochasa is the name given to beer with honey in it. *Ovingundu* is a drink made from pounded corn which has been soaked in water to which a little honey has been added. The drink is allowed to remain untouched over night; thus it becomes sweet and is mildly intoxicating.

Wax is a very important item of trade. In the remote places 439
natives bring to small trading posts balls of wax which are about 257
two pounds in weight. These in former days were a standard of [436]
exchange in terms of which other values could be measured. These balls of wax are made into large cakes for foreign export. In the Easle country a fiber strainer is used for cleaning the wax. Honey is sometimes dried in very large baskets which are three feet in diameter and two inches deep. These baskets were not observed among the Ovimbundu, but they are used in the region of Cassanga in southern Angola. The honey of wild bees when eaten in the comb is palatable; it would be more so if one could disregard the presence of numerous dead bees.

The bow is the chief weapon of the hunter. The release of the 411
arrow is made with the index and middle fingers (Plate XXXIX, 171
Fig. 1). I have observed this method among the Ovimbundu of 224
the Benguela Highlands, in the region of Kipungo, in the far south among the Vakuanyama, and among the Vasele of the Novo Redondo hinterland. Arrows differ considerably in pattern as the illustrations show (Plate XVII, Figs. 1-9); the Ovimbundu have arrow-points of excellent workmanship. The manufacture of these arrow-points is [326]
one of the most skilled occupations of the blacksmith. Each man makes his own shafts and feathers them. The arrows of the Vasele have leaf-shaped iron points; so also have those used by the Vakuanyama.

Among the Ovimbundu are specialists who make bows from [463]
elastic woods called *usia* and *osambia*. The bow itself is *ohonji* and the arrow is *usongo*. At the third shot I saw a young Ovimbundu boy split a cane which was placed upright at a distance of thirty-three feet. The throwing club (*ohunya*) is used for killing small game such as hares.

273 ant said, "Sometimes a man who has drunk this beer will sleep on the ground all day and say nothing."

263 438 Salt is a welcome gift in all parts of Angola. Native tribes appreciate its culinary value but show no eagerness to barter for the commodity. At the present time salt is sold in every trader's store, but in earlier times the substance had to be obtained along caravan routes from the coast and was therefore more highly prized than it is today. 317 The Ovimbundu realize the value of salt in the diet of cattle; therefore the animals are occasionally driven to a salt lick in the hills. [231] The Ovimbundu do not use this salt for their own diet, possibly because the salt enjoyed by the cattle is some form of potash and not sodium chloride.

[171] The Vachokue extract salt from the leaves of a river plant by burning it to ashes which are soaked and strained. This is a common African method, but I did not hear of it among the Ovimbundu. The probability is that the Ovimbundu have always obtained salt from the coast.

372 In connection with cooking and brewing beer, methods of making fire are of importance.

Matches are coming into use among the Ovimbundu, but the necessity for them is not great as the hearth fire is not extinguished. [354] In the center of each hut is a fireplace made of three hearth-stones over which logs of wood are placed with their ends in the fire which is kept alight by pushing the logs forward from time to time. A blaze is made by breaking off bark from the logs, placing it on the center of the fire and blowing. Fire is carried from one place to another by conveying a smoldering log. In the Esele country boys may be seen setting off at dawn to scare birds in the corn field, each carrying fire with him.

Usually the children or some other members of the family sleep on mats close to the fire, which requires no attention other than a pushing forward of the logs.

372 171 The Vasele make fire by the twirling method, and at Ngalangi the same procedure was witnessed. In the twirling method two different kinds of wood are used, soft wood for the base and hard wood for the twirling stick. The twirler used at Ngalangi was a piece of cane into the end of which a piece of hard white wood was secured by binding. Ngonga, my interpreter and informant, thinks that any man of the Ovimbundu could make fire by the twirling method if the necessity arose, but the performance witnessed at Ngalangi led me to doubt the truth of this statement. The operator

276 The snuff is pounded and placed in a small wooden box of cylindrical
[531] shape. Usually the box is ornamented with incised, burned patterns. The Ovimbundu of Bihé add ashes of wood to their snuff, so producing a mixture called *ulelemo*. The Ovimbundu of Elende usually use the
[549] snuff without adulteration. Two main species of tobacco plants are grown.

Women smoke in all parts of Angola. The Ovimbundu do not chew tobacco, neither have I seen it so used elsewhere in Angola. Boys and girls are not allowed to smoke before the age of thirteen years.

576 In the *ombala* of the Vangangella near Ngalangi, I asked a girl
[834] for her pipe which I desired for my collection. The interpreter took the pipe when she proffered it, explaining that, according to local custom, I had asked for the girl. If I took the proffered pipe *from her hand* I accepted her. Another social custom associated with tobacco is the passing of the communal pipe from hand to hand in the men's council house.

276 Ngonga, my interpreter, says that he has never seen an Ocimbundu
171 woman smoke hemp, but he has seen a woman of the Vangangella (people to the east of the Ovimbundu) smoking hemp. Hemp (*epangue*) is cultivated only by the Ovimbundu men who smoke it. Pure hemp is smoked in the water-pipe which is not passed from hand to hand. Only tobacco is used in communal smoking. Smoking of hemp or tobacco consists of a few deep inhalations; there is not usually a prolonged placid smoking. When hemp is placed in the bowl of the water-pipe it is covered with large grains of sand or a piece of tin. This intervening substance prevents the hot coals from coming into contact with the hemp. The object is to secure slow ignition.

DOMESTIC ANIMALS

231 The principal domestic animals are cow (*onjindi*), ox (*ongombe*, which is also the generic name for cattle), bull (*onui*), sheep (*omeme*), goat (*ohombo*), pig (*ongulu*), dog (*ombua*), chicken (*osanji*) (Plates LV, LVI, LVII).

492 The transport animals, donkey, horse, and mule, are not used by the Ovimbundu of Elende and not to any extent by Ovimbundu of other parts; but in the south of Angola the Vakuanyama have sturdy ponies and well-kept mules. The ox when ridden by Portuguese is provided with a leather saddle which is very comfortable if covered with a blanket. The brass stirrups are broad and massive. Through the septum of the bullock's nostrils there is a short brass rod to the ends of which the reins are attached (Plate XXX, Fig. 1).

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

I have seen an Ocimbundu male riding an ox without saddle. A 492
cord was passed through the animal's nose to serve as reins.

The Portuguese name for horse is *cavalo*, a word which the Ovim- 192
bundu use in the form *okavalu*, though there is an Umbundu word *ocingongovala*, which means "going with his neck up." The Umbundu words for donkey and mule are *ocimbulu* and *omula*, respectively.

Generally speaking, the ears of animals are not clipped, neither 231
are cattle branded or otherwise marked to indicate ownership, but sometimes the ears of pigs and goats are cut to aid identification. When asked why the tips of the ears of dogs are mutilated an Ocimbundu will say that a dog with uncut ears does not hear when called (Plate LVI, Fig. 2).

Not many families own large herds of cattle among the Ovim- 233
bundu, and I did not see a big kraal until I was in southwest Angola. 556
Cattle, which are a measure of wealth, are used for paying fines, making funeral feasts, paying debts, and securing wives. The cattle throughout Angola are well-developed, handsome animals (Plate LVII, Fig. 1). The bull remains with the herd the entire year; there is therefore no particular season for the birth of calves. Usually cows are not milked by the Ovimbundu, consequently these people have no milk, butter, or cheese. The Vakusanyama of the south milk their [171]
cows and churn butter in calabashes slung on a pole.

The Ovimbundu say that milking the cow makes the calf thin, 234
but where the idea of milking the cow is borrowed from the Portu- [177]
guese the Ovimbundu have a procedure which is as follows: The calf is allowed to suck for a few minutes in order to deceive the cow; then the milker begins his work. At intervals of a few minutes the calf is allowed to suck in order to continue the deception.

Cattle are killed at the funeral feasts of the rich, and the horns [765]
of the slaughtered animals are generally mounted on a pole in the vicinity of the grave (Plate XLVI, Fig. 2).

The horns of the cow may be used for making water-pipes in 237
which tobacco is smoked, or they may be employed as magical horns when filled with medicine. The hide is pegged out in the sunlight 281
for one day after it has been scraped; it is then rolled and kept until required. When about to be used, the skin is soaked in water for one day. The hide is used to cover the tops of stools, to make pouches and to manufacture bags for carrying corn. In bygone days each king had a wooden box covered with hide, which contained his powder and metal when he went to war. The cow's tail is used

The cow's tail is used
237 as a sheath for covering the iron shafts of assagais, and it is sometimes made into a switch which the rain-maker uses during his performances.

233 Bulls are castrated when two years old. The wound is rubbed
[232] with ashes, salt, soot, and palm oil. Bullocks are used for riding, also
[492] for pull-carts introduced by the Boers. The herd obtains most of its food by grazing. In the dry season grass withers, with the result that the animals become thin and stall-feeding is necessary. In former days cattle-raiding was a practice of the Ovimbundu, who
233 robbed the Vacilenge. It is certain that the Ovimbundu did not own
174 cattle when they entered Angola. If the general tradition is correct the Ovimbundu came into Angola from a northeasterly direction, from the borders of the Belgian Congo as it is called today; this is not a cattle-raising region.

The Ovimbundu of Elende have a joke against the people of Bailundu, because the latter on first seeing a cow offered the animal some food on a wooden platter. This story suggests that the Bailundu people, who are of the Ovimbundu confederacy, did not know the animal and its habits as early as did the Ovimbundu themselves.

233 Although the Ovimbundu do not usually kill their cattle they may do so in the months of June and July, because at this time pasture is withered and food is scarce. Animals which are diseased, aged, or injured, are killed and eaten.

231 The native pig is distinguishable from European breeds by its long thin snout and slender development. This breed is said by the Director of Animal Husbandry, Humpata, to be the Keltic breed (Plate LV). There is, he says, no evidence to prove that the
[176] Ovimbundu have at any time domesticated pigs from the wild hogs which are to be found in Angola. There is no family which does not own a pig, and on the whole the pig fares much better than the sheep or the goat. The pig receives water and a daily ration of food, which is usually sweet potatoes and their leaves, together with some
232 corn. Male pigs are castrated at any time between the ages of six
[463] months and one year by an operator who is a paid specialist. The fee for castrating a bull is four yards of cloth, but a small gift is considered sufficient reward for performing the operation on a pig.
[282] If a pig is thin, the leather is said to be of good quality and therefore
252 suitable for making sheaths for knives. Usually the flesh of the pig is eaten shortly after the animal has been killed, but the meat of the bullock, on the contrary, is sometimes dried over a fire and preserved. But this is not a general practice as the animals are too valuable to be slaughtered.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

Goats are more common than any other animal; there are few, 231
if any, families which do not own one or more goats. These animals are not fed or watered. Goats are able to exist on almost any kind of vegetation; consequently these animals are, almost without exception, well nourished. Goats are not milked. Kids are born at any time of the year, and the young males are castrated. The hides are used for making bags. The goat has the misfortune to be the most [782]
desirable sacrificial animal. This is not entirely due to the fact that it is cheap and easily obtainable. The sheep is said to be unsuitable as a sacrifice, because it does not make a noise when killed. The [237]
hair of the goat is used for making an ornament named *osala*, which is worn by medicine-men.

Sheep are of the long-tailed Syrian breed. Like the goats, the sheep are not cared for in any way; they find their own pasture and water, and in doing so may wander for a considerable distance, though they always return to the village at sunset. The males are not castrated. Sheep are not so frequently kept as are goats and pigs. The skin is used for making bags. Twin births of calves, kids, or lambs are not regarded with awe; on the contrary, such births are welcome.

Almost every man keeps one or more dogs, and I have rarely seen a hut in which there were no dogs. Usually young puppies are near the fire, and on the whole dogs are well treated because they are valuable in hunting. They also give warning of the approach of hyenas, lions, and leopards. I have frequently seen a person run into the road to pick up a dog when an automobile is approaching. A tendency to improve the breed of dogs by crossing the lean native animal with a breed of large dogs from South Africa has been mentioned. In contrast with the generally considerate treatment of dogs by the Ovimbundu one has to note the very emaciated and diseased condition of dogs in the Esele country. Among the Ovimbundu dogs [262]
are regarded as desirable food.

Sacrifice of a dog at the inauguration of a blacksmith will presently be described. A medicine-man who is about to perform a ceremony for curing the sick has to make a meal of dog's flesh, but otherwise the flesh of the dog is taboo to him. These points of ceremony, taken in conjunction with the food value of the animal, and its use in hunting, show that the dog is highly esteemed.

Poultry are of very mixed breeds. The standards of size and 235
weight are higher than is usual in African chickens, a fact which is perhaps attributable to contact of the Ovimbundu with the Portu-

235 guese for a long period. The chicken is highly esteemed as a sacrificial
[242] animal, but it could not be said that the flesh is in common use. This failure to develop and utilize to the full, again raises the point of social custom and economic habit. Chickens are cared for, as may be seen in the way they are cooped at night. Sometimes a hen may be seen sitting on her clutch of eggs in a dark corner of a hut, unmolested by people and dogs; yet it is certain that there is no concentration on the rearing of poultry.

Eggs are laid, and chickens are hatched throughout the year except in the months of November and December when corn supplies
[252] are at their lowest ebb. Eggs are boiled, or fried on a fragment of
[264] pottery, but they are not sucked.

231 The domestic cat is not raised by the Ovimbundu. Wild cats are common, but there is no evidence of their domestication. Small birds and monkeys are sometimes kept as pets.

TRADE AND TRANSPORT

438 Caravan trade, which was at one time an important factor of tribal life, is now confined to short journeys for transporting corn, beans, and beeswax to traders' stores. But in spite of present-day
439 decline of transportation the memory of more prosperous times still exists.

Names of distant places survive in the Umbundu language; thus Tanganyika is called Nakandundu, while the name for far eastern Angola is Muacimbundu, the name of a one-time important chief. The Umbundu language is understood in all parts of Angola, far away from typical Umbundu centers of culture.

484 In the old days there were professional leaders of caravans, and a
788 ceremony was conducted before starting. The medicine-man and the
778 village chief were the principal performers in a rite which consisted
787 of bringing from its box the head of a former chief, sewn in oxhide. An animal was sacrificed so that the blood could be used for sprinkling on the chief's head, and on some occasions of this kind the head was sewn up in a new piece of oxhide. Direct appeal was made to the preserved head by the reigning chief, who asked for good fortune on the journey.

The medicine-man who accompanied a caravan carried with him a female wooden figure decorated with feathers (Plate XXI, Fig. 5). When a branching of the paths gave rise to doubts concerning the correct way the wooden figure was consulted by the medicine-man.

VII. EDUCATION

Industrial Training and Division of Labor

871 Usually there is no formality connected with the industrial and occupational training of Ovimbundu children. The section dealing with play shows that boys and girls learn by spontaneous imitation of their elders.

874 There are, however, exceptions to this general truth. Special rites connected with the training and inauguration of blacksmiths and hunters have been described. The training of medicine-men and women will be dealt with in chapter IX, "Religion."

462 463 In describing economic life in chapter V, division of labor on a sex basis; also specialization in industry because of peculiar tastes and aptitudes, were noted. There is clearly a twofold division in industrial life. In the first place sex determines occupation, and within this primary grouping there is a secondary grouping depending [467] on personal preference and individual ability. I have found no instance of exclusive hereditary right to any occupation or industry.

462 The net result of the Umbundu system of division of labor is indicated by the following summary:

[342] When building houses, men dig the rectangular trench, cut the poles for the framework, lash the crosspieces, cut grass and lay the thatch, then place clay over the wattle walls. Women carry water for mixing the clay and convey the moist clay to the plasterers. [224] Children puddle the clay with their feet. Males are hunters both professional and general. During a communal hunt women and children assist in driving game, which is frightened by the firing of [857] grass. Boys organize games in which they imitate these activities. [226] Men fish with a line and bait, whereas women use baskets and [231] narcotic poison. Men and boys take care of cattle and have charge of dogs. Women and girls give what slight attention is afforded to other domestic animals. Male specialists castrate bulls and goats.

[241] During agricultural operations men clear the ground and burn the bush. Women carry on hoe cultivation without assistance from [482] men. Men are the chief carriers in caravans, but women and children may sometimes be seen carrying loads. They march in line with the men but have smaller burdens. Males are employed in blacksmith's work, wood-carving, making weapons and tools, weaving mats, dressing hides, spinning cotton, and formerly in weaving on an upright loom. Men are exclusively the makers of

S: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

231

PIGS OWNED BY OVIMBUNDU, ELENDE, KELTIC BREED

[P. 409]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP1.

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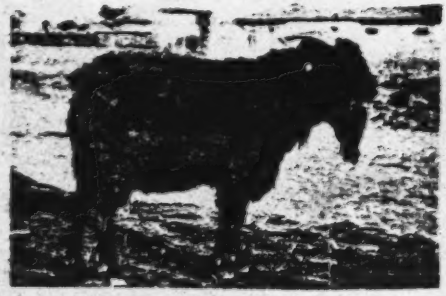

3

DOMESTIC ANIMALS, OVIMBUNDU

Fig. 1. Sheep and lamb, Elende. Fig. 2. Dog, Elende, ears clipped "to make him hear well." Fig. 3. Goat, Ballundu

[P. 410]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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2

DOMESTIC ANIMALS, OVIMBUNDU, ELENDE

Fig. 1. Cattle. Fig. 2. Goats

[p. 411]

5: Hambly E-5 (1929-30) 1934 FP 13 Mbundu FP13

595 of the village. The meals are brought there by those wives who are at the
562 time cohabiting with their husbands. But an exception is made in case of menstruation, for a woman is not allowed to cook or handle food during her period. At such times the preparation and transfer of food is carried out by another wife, and of course the time comes when such a service can be
241 requited. I found no survival of agricultural rites such as offering first fruits or other similar ceremony.

In some tribes of Sudanic and Bantu Negroes agricultural rites are important in relation to sowing and harvest, since land is in the first place the property of dead ancestors, but so far as my inquiries go such rites are not now known to the Ovimbundu. Maize may be pounded only on rocks that have been consecrated by the medicine-man: he kills a chicken and sprinkles
[462 the surface of the rock with its blood. Only women may pound corn, and a
838] youth who persisted in dressing as a woman and pounding on the rocks was beaten by his relatives. This information gave a clue to homosexual practices, but the information obtained was meager.

● 231 In connection with the care of domestic animals many tempting digressions present themselves, but I am concerned only with beliefs, ritual, and division of labor. Chickens are of ritual importance since they provide the least expensive sacrifice, and in connection with industries the piacular use of chickens will presently be mentioned. For sacrificial purposes a goat is preferred to a sheep since it makes more noise; but the reason for this is not clear, though making a surmise I would say that the noise better appeases ancestral spirits to whom most sacrifices are made. Pigs are kept, but I did not hear of them being used for sacrifice. The animals so far mentioned have little or no attention. Goats fend entirely for themselves; so also do sheep. Chickens receive maize from women and children, who also gather the eggs. Pigs receive maize and mush from cooking pots or that discarded in making beer, but they depend largely on foraging in refuse pits.

The castration of pigs and bulls is the work of a male specialist who receives a fee of four yards of cloth for operating on the latter animal, but only a small gift of tobacco or similar recognition for castrating a pig.

The Ovimbundu have acquired cattle of the long-horned Damara breed, and in connection with the care of these some important points of
[462] ritual and division of labor should be recorded. The herding of cattle is exclusively the work of males, and I am not aware that women have any
234 tasks connected with cattle. Only in recent times have some male owners of cattle begun to milk the cows. This they do somewhat stealthily, deceiving the cow from time to time by allowing the calf to suck for a few moments. If asked why milk is not used, the owners say that calves deprived of suck-

5: Hambly E-5 (1929-30)1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

ing become thin; but avoidance of milk is really one of those deeply rooted 234
food prejudices which even the people themselves could not explain if willing to do so.

The Vakuanyama of south Angola make butter by swinging two large calabashes on a pole, but though this practice is known to the Ovimbundu, they do not imitate the method. The flesh of cattle that have died from disease or accident is eaten, and uses are found for the hide, tail, and horns. 231
But cattle are not slaughtered except at a funeral feast, after which the horns are mounted on a pole over the grave, and perhaps the skulls are preserved near the site of burial.

Cattle serve as fines, sacrifices, and gifts, including a bride's dowry, but the social and religious importance is greater than the economic use. This is in accordance with what might be expected, since the pastoral activities of the Ovimbundu are but an adopted series of traits which can be found among numerous pastoral tribes of southwest, south, and east Africa. Wrapping the head of a king in oxhide which is ceremonially renewed has been mentioned.[1] In addition to this rite, the use of oxhide bracelets by mourners, and the use of an oxhide shroud for chiefs and kings, must be recorded. Use of ceremonial fire which is distributed from the chief's house when a new village is founded, and creation of new fire after epidemic sickness, are Umbundu traits which form part of the typical pastoral culture elsewhere.

Consideration of food supply has indicated the preservation of ritual and 182
belief, not intensively, but with sufficient force to show great tenacity of indigenous culture in the face of prolonged and disturbing intrusions.

HANDICRAFTS

Incomparably important is the craft of the blacksmith. The preservation 326
of ritual and belief was at once suggested by the workers' refusal to sell me any of the tools, especially the large hammer (onjundo), although the sum offered covered the value of the implements and the time lost in making new ones. After three months I acquired a large hammer from the wife of a blacksmith who had not worked at his trade for many years. She parted with the tool in the absence of her husband, but demanded a sum which would have purchased an ox. Other tools were made for me.

Information respecting the blacksmiths' ritual was given in the village of Njongolo in Elende, but I am informed that the beliefs are general, and they are certainly compatible with all that is known of blacksmiths' ritual among Bantu Negroes, Sudanic Negroes, and Hamiticized Negroes of east Africa. I found no mining of iron but saw a site where the ore was for-

[1] [Cf. p.160, cat. 116. -- Analyst]

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

ing home from labour in October wants cleared fields to sow. 423
If he cannot find any kinsman who would give him a cleared 425
field he will have to buy one, and will have perhaps to pay 200 escudos (£2 10s.). A man retains his rights to fields in a village he no longer inhabits.

The Ovimbundu keep cattle, sheep, goats, pigs, and fowls. 231
The cattle are not milked but are used in sacrifices, and for [782]
fines; some have been brought by Ovimbundu from Kwanyama Ambo country but they do not seem to thrive in this neighbourhood. Sheep are few. In my village goats were much less numerous than chickens or pigs. The traders and European residents buy cattle, chickens, and pigs.

Fishing and hunting are practised, but despite the ingenious 226
fish-traps, nets, poisons and weirs used for the first, and the 224
popular enthusiasm for, and ritual associations of the second, [262]
neither dominates the actual food supply and ecological background in the way that maize does.

The Ovimbundu believe that the dry-season grass fires also 241
help to fertilize the soil by leaving ashes. Ashes are sometimes spread in a village garden, and dry grass may also be left in a field for this purpose. Soil beside trees is considered to be especially rich, as to some extent are the sites of former villages. There is no idea of crop rotation and a field is worked for as long as it is fertile, that is indefinitely for an *onaka* and from three to six years, sometimes more, for a field of the *epya* type. The hoe is still the standard means of cultivation and the plough is a rarity.

Coffee-growing on any scale is usually undertaken by people 245
living away from the villages, except for the Protestants who have been encouraged by their missionaries to plant coffee in their villages. Coffee, like maize, is bought by the traders. However, at least two local coffee-growers sold their coffee at Porto Amboim on the coast to get a better price. Basically, the 241
agricultural economy of the neighbourhood is based on maize, 361
grown by methods of shifting cultivation. The frequency with which villages rise and fall and individuals change from one village to another is entirely consistent with this type of agriculture.

Axe and hoe blades, blankets, cloths, clothing, cutlery, 000

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

occurs, whether in intention as declared by Sapapula and Nahoka, as accomplished as claimed by Kapapelo, as the substance of the conflict between the two men. 578 837

To sum up, Kapapelo had originally been aligned with his kinsman Guilherme against Sapapula, who had then shown hostility to Kapapelo, and especially to his wife's brother Kusumula. The latter had counter-attacked by accusing Sapapula before Justino, and there the matter might have rested if Kapapelo had not tried to attack Sapapula again, by making the threat to commit suicide at his kitchen door. This led to the moot at which the charge of attempted adultery was made, and at which Sapapula intended to, and succeeded in, taming Kapapelo. 578 627

4. *Lusase, Sapapula, and Luanga*

In this case, individuals previously met, notably Sapapula, and Lusase reappear, this time as enemies. The principal scenes are first an attempt by a kinsman of Lusase's to recover a debt from Sapapula, secondly an attack by Lusase on Sapapula, thirdly a decision by the *chefe de posto* in favour of Sapapula, fourthly a fresh complaint to the post by Luanga against Lusase, fifthly a post decision in favour of Luanga, sixthly and finally reconciliation of Luanga and Lusase.

This chain of disputes had begun actually before the episodes mentioned in the last case. On the 19th February, Ndonga a kinsman of Lusase (whom he had helped to power), arrived in Epalanga and tied up Sapapula, as a result of the latter not paying a debt. I produced the money and for the present no more was heard of it. Lusase said that he did not know what went on in the villages, when the matter was mentioned to him.

On 13th May, Simbwyikoka, a former chief whose village was near Sapapula's, was holding a ceremony in which a bull had been killed. Sapapula had taken part in the ceremony and had been responsible for sending a leg of the bull (the chief's traditional prerogative) not to Lusase but to Kafelo, who, although he had been deposed in 1954, had the advantage over Lusase of having passed through the royal rituals, and 578 631 [231]

a noose which hangs over the entrance. From Ngalangi I obtained 224
a trap formed by suspending a heavy block of wood inside a box. The animal enters a small circular hole, passes under the heavy block and begins to nibble the grain which is strewn on the bottom of the box. Presently he releases a fine string which brings down the block in such a way that he is pinned underneath. I am informed that this trap is used at Elende, but I have not seen it there.

Some hunters note the feeding and drinking places of their quarry, which is shot from a hiding place in a tree. Young animals may be run down by a hunter in open chase. Screens are not carried in front of a hunter, but he does sometimes dress in the skins of animals. His disguise is completed by wearing a tuft of the animal's hair on his head.

Dogs are used for tiring out young animals in the chase, and also for catching hares. There is a tendency at the present time to improve the breed of native dog by crossing with a large hunting [232] ● dog from South Africa. In the Esele country I have seen, high on a granite rock, a small cairn of stones which covered the skull of a famous hunting dog. Dogs are used most commonly when the hunt is communal (Plate XXIII, Fig. 1), but the best hunters work alone without the aid of dogs. In the general hunt women and children may take part in driving the game; often a fire is started in the grass, which is very dry in the months of June and July. A hunter who works alone may excite the curiosity of an animal by blowing through a horn of an antelope. Spider's web covers the wide end of the horn.

I have observed a general hunt in which thirty men and boys participated, each carrying a bow and arrows. The party was accompanied by many dogs. The antelope which had been killed was carried on a pole slung on the shoulders of two men. There was intense excitement as the troop advanced toward their village, shouting and jumping. In another hunt of this kind muzzle-loading guns were carried. The Ovimbundu do not use nets in hunting, neither do they poison animals. Decoy animals are not used, but in the large wooden trap (*ocisonga*) a living goat or pig is placed.

It is necessary to distinguish between hunting as a general pas- [463]
time, in which all males, and even women and children join to a certain extent, and the hunting of animals by a professional hunter. The professional hunter is usually called *ukongo* (less frequently *enyanga*); but there is no name for the non-professional hunter. A 874
boy who wishes to become a professional hunter has to serve for a 224
time with an *ukongo* before he himself receives this title. There is

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

The flesh of goats, sheep, and pigs might be more frequently 262
used if these animals were bred and cared for under some system [232]
of animal husbandry. The Ovimbundu are familiar with the preser- 251
vation of meat by smoking and drying it, because flesh of animals killed in the chase is sometimes preserved in this way by hunters, yet the method is not widely and constantly applied in order to assure a regular supply of meat.

Failure to utilize the milk of cattle and goats is another example 234
of the neglect of useful commodities. The Vacilenge, who are near 171
neighbors of the Ovimbundu, milk their cows as do the Ovimbundu themselves in some districts, though the practice is by no means general. Even where cows are milked, butter and cheese are not made, though the Ovimbundu know of the process, which is practised by the Vakuanyama of southern Angola.

There are three kinds of beer. *Ocisangua* is a sweet beer which 272
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233 The cattle herd obtains most of its food by grazing, but in the dry season the grass withers. Childs states[1] that "Herding has been a [604] function of the sister's son, and even now there is a reluctance on the part of the boys to herd for their fathers."

235 462 [844] Chickens are owned and looked after by both men and women, but other animals only by men. Boys may have small stock of their own, and a boy's economic independence most frequently begins with his owning a chicken.

231 Hambly states that goats are more common than any other animal, and that every family has one or more. These animals are not fed or watered, but are allowed to wander to find their own sustenance. Goats are not milked. Young males are castrated. The goat is frequently used in sacrifices. Sheep also are allowed to find their own food; the males are not castrated. Pigs are cared for comparatively carefully, receiving water and a daily supply of sweet potatoes and their leaves, together with some corn. Male pigs are castrated.[2]

APICULTURE[3]

[439] Beeswax was an important item of trade in the caravan days, and is still sold to Portuguese traders' stores, where it is massed into large rectangular cakes for export. Honey is eaten alone or with manioc, and [262] a fermented beer called *ochasa* is made by adding honey to corn-beer. [273] Fibre strainers are used for cleaning the wax, and large shallow baskets [252] are employed for drying the honey in the sun.

Large cylindrical hives, which are private property, are placed high in the trees. These are made by removing a cylinder of bark and lashing the halves together with strands of bark, forming a hive which has a diameter of one foot.

In Elende honey is removed from the hives during the months of August and December. One man ascends the tree in order to lower the hive with a long rope of bark or plaited fibre, while beneath the tree men are prepared to take the hive, which is opened over a smoky fire.

ARTS AND CRAFTS

326 782 *Smithing.* The profession of blacksmith or *ocivinda* is an important one, and, like hunting and divining, is sacred and is entered with special ritual. Often, but not always, these three professions are passed on by inheritance. For smithing two years' apprenticeship to a member of the profession is necessary, and is usually entered upon at the age of eighteen. At the end of this period the master examines his pupil, and makes tools for him, especially the heavy hammer or *onjundo* which is regarded as symbolic of his craft. For the inauguration ceremony the boy provides four chickens (2 male, 2 female), a dog, and a goat; the blood of these animals is sprinkled on his tools, and their flesh is eaten at a feast [553] attended by the villagers. Throughout the procedure the boy remains standing on the small anvil. Finally he is asked to choose his professional name; he then steps down from the anvil a qualified blacksmith.

(1) Childs, 1949, p.109. (2) Hambly, op.cit., p.154.
(3) Hambly, (4) 1934.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

argued that the cattle might have been brought along the course of the Zambezi and Kwando there is the objection that there are here several tsetse fly belts. On the contrary, cattle-producing country in the southwest and south of Angola is far more accessible than the Rhodesian plateau. 174 231

In the south there is the cultural habit of digging wells, especially among the Vakuanyama; but the Vachokue have not developed this trait. The substrata underlying the sand of southern Angola hold water which serves through the dry season, a fact which is advantageously employed by the cattle-keepers. The Vachokue lack this well-digging habit, and, even if subsurface water were present, the transient Ovimbundu would have lacked opportunity to dig for it when passing through hostile country. 312 171

The acquisition of cattle by the Ovimbundu is of great importance, because it is concerned with the grafting of a series of pastoral traits on a culture in no way originally associated with pastoral pursuits. The truth of this will later be made clear by examination of historical and ethnological evidence. 233

Geographical considerations give a picture of the Ovimbundu situated in naturally fortified country from which they had access to four surrounding areas, whose cultural characters agree well with the determinism of topography and climate. The natural advantages of the central highlands, and the results of contact with each of the adjacent areas, are points which will be developed in appropriate sections throughout the ensuing chapters. 133

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Not many families own large herds of cattle among the Ovimbundu, and I did not see a big kraal until I was in southwest Angola. Cattle, which are a measure of wealth, are used for paying fines, making funeral feasts, paying debts, and securing wives. The cattle throughout Angola are well-developed, handsome animals (Plate LVII, Fig. 1). The bull remains with the herd the entire year; there is therefore no particular season for the birth of calves. Usually cows are not milked by the Ovimbundu, consequently these people have no milk, butter, or cheese. The Vakuanyama of the south milk their cows and churn butter in calabashes slung on a pole. 233 556 [171]

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Cattle are killed at the funeral feasts of the rich, and the horns of the slaughtered animals are generally mounted on a pole in the vicinity of the grave (Plate XLVI, Fig. 2). [765]

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177 [197] The Ovambo include eight kindred tribes, all of whom are branches of the Bantu linguistic family to which the Ovimbundu belong. The Vakuanyama, who inhabit large tracts of southern Angola, are a numerous, warlike, pastoral branch of the Ovambo. The Vakuanyama are the only section of the cattle-keeping peoples of the southwest of Africa with whom I have made personal contact; but their culture is generally representative of that of the Ovambo and the Herero.

171 233 When making a journey southward from the country of the Ovimbundu in central Angola, there is a noticeable increase in the size of the kraals as the journey is continued. The first large kraal was observed near Kipungo, and when as far south as Mongua the wealthy cattle-keeping Vakuanyama were by far the most numerous people. Their total strength is probably about 55,000. I journeyed through the Kuanyama country in July, halfway through the dry season, but found that cattle were watered at deep wells from which men and women were constantly drawing water for the herds. Near Ondjiva, only a few miles from British South West Africa, the ruler of the Vakuanyama owned at that time 14,000 head of cattle.

After examining 1,200 objects collected in Angola, I feel sure that cultural contact between the Ovimbundu and the Vakuanyama is unimportant, so far as artifacts are concerned; but, if the inquiry turns to other aspects of culture, there is a more fruitful line of investigation.

Many beliefs and customs center in the keeping of cattle in east and south Africa. The typical cattle-keeping area begins with the Bahima in the vicinity of Lake Victoria Nyanza. The region extends down the eastern side of the continent, through the south and southwest into Damaraland. The Vakuanyama of southern Angola should be included in this area, which has homologies in respect to certain laws, ceremonies, economic customs, and religious beliefs.

The true pastoral area of the south of Angola extends at least as far north as Huila, where there is sufficient rainfall to produce good pasture in open country which is well adapted for raising stock. All the traditions of the Ovimbundu, along with the writings of Battell, suggest this southwest part of Angola as the line of entry for cattle. The Congo basin is not a pastoral country, and transportation of cattle from Rhodesia would necessitate the crossing of hundreds of miles of arid country in Moxico, eastern Angola. There remains, therefore, the cattle-keeping area of south and southwest

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233 [171]

Angola as the source of supply for the Ovimbundu, who both traded and made warfare with the south.

174 233

Therefore, reasonable ground exists for believing that the cultural traits that the Ovimbundu associate with the keeping of cattle have been taken over with the cattle themselves. The traits agree in principle and detail with the factors of the African cattle-keeping areas. The characteristics of this pastoral culture have been outlined by M. J. Herskovits (The Cattle Complex in East Africa, *Amer. Anth.*, XXVIII, 1926, pp. 270–272; 424–528; 630–664). I wish, however, to give prominence to the factor of sacred fire which is fundamental in the cattle-keeping culture. The importance of sacred fire in the ritual of the Ovimbundu has been demonstrated, and this trait is a most important link between the typically Negro culture of the Ovimbundu and the Hamitic pastoral culture of east Africa.

A brief summary of the salient facts of the cattle-keeping culture, such as is found in east and south Africa, will be given. This will be followed by a statement of the cultural traits associated with the keeping of cattle among the Ovimbundu in order to demonstrate similarities of custom.

In describing cattle-keeping people of the Lakes region J. Roscoe (VI) outlines a pre-pastoral condition characterized by agricultural pursuits which still survive near Ruwenzori and Elgon. Of the pastoral people the most conservative are the Banyankole of Ankole, among whom all social customs fall into line with the keeping of cattle. Milk is the principal food, and strong purgatives are taken after eating vegetable food, which is regarded as unclean. Agriculturists are a serf class who are not allowed to have milk. A woman of the pastoral class would not accept a husband from the agricultural people, because they are social inferiors. In such a community one finds a strict preservation of customs centering in cattle. Bulls are killed beside the grave of a chief, while cows are dedicated to the dead chief at whose shrine their milk is offered daily (p. 21).

Roscoe's account of the worship of the dead in Uganda (III) further explains customs that are characteristic of pastoral communities in which the connection between cattle-keeping and kingship is important. The death of the king is not announced and the fact of death is kept secret for several days until preparations for the succession have been made. "The fire is extinct" is a euphemism which refers to the death of the king. The king is buried in a hut surrounded by a fence. This hut is later visited by the new king

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

233 who cleans and decorates the jawbone of his predecessor, then
174 preserves it in a case of lion skin. Among the Basoga the skull of the king is cleaned and stitched in cowhide. It is then placed in a temple where a medium lives in order to converse with the ghost of the king (p. 43). The Bunyoro line the grave of a king with cowhide, and the slaughtered cows are said to serve the dead king with milk in a spirit world.

Roscoe (I, p. 101) states that the Bahima wrap the body of a king in the skin of a freshly killed cow; the deities are not often invoked, but attention is paid to ancestral ghosts (p. 109). There is a Bahima custom of making blood brotherhood by drinking blood mixed with milk (p. 117). The Banyankole (Roscoe, V, p. 32), institute a blood brotherhood by rubbing each other with blood drawn from their navels by an arrow. The body of a king is sewn in cowhide (p. 58). A cow is killed and eaten at the grave of a chief (p. 146).

171 A further examination of Roscoe's observations (IV) adds corroborative information. The Bakitara have rain-makers for each district (p. 28). There is a ritual for establishing blood brotherhood (p. 46). At the king's death all fires in the royal enclosure are extinguished; so also are the fires in each royal cow kraal. Fresh fires are made by friction in the new royal enclosure from which fire is distributed to the kraals (p. 47). The Bakitara test two litigants or accused persons by asking each to provide chickens which are made to take poison (p. 70). The death of the king is not announced for some days; he is said to be asleep. A young bull is killed to provide a shroud for the king's body (p. 121). The king's spear and walking stick are kept in the tomb (p. 126). At the death of a king of the Baganda the guardian of the king's sacred fire is strangled. A war leader rubs himself with ashes from the sacred fire in order to increase his strength and courage (Roscoe, II, pp. 103, 349).

The concept of the sacred fire has spread, not only down the east side of Africa and into Angola, but northeastward to the Lotuko-speaking peoples. Here a new fire has to be kindled at the initiation of a member of the drum-house. At puberal initiation ceremonies for boys, the rain-maker creates new fire with twirling sticks, which are never again used, though they are preserved. All fires in the village are extinguished before the new fires are made. The freshly ignited fire is distributed first to drum-houses then to the homes (C. G. and B. Z. Seligman, Sudan Notes and Records, VIII, pp. 12,

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The foregoing facts, when compared with field work among the Ovimbundu, indicate that the old culture of the Congo and northern Angola bears a strong resemblance to Umbundu culture at the present day. A more detailed analysis of this resemblance is made in chapter X. 174

The following notes dealing with exploration in Angola (1800–1930) are adduced for critical comparison with my own observations among the Ovimbundu. 175 171

The work of Sir R. F. Burton describing the exploration of Lacerda and other Portuguese pioneers, is more useful for geographical than for ethnological information. Lacerda's journey to Czambe, south of Lake Moero, was performed in 1798. A mention of veneration for the dead and consultation of the deceased on all occasions of war or of good fortune, is made (p. 127). These are important points in the present tribal life of the Ovimbundu. [114] [769]

Bowditch (1824) writes from information given to him by Almeida and Saldanha. There are valuable references to the Vacilenge, a people adjacent to the Ovimbundu, who refused to kill their cattle, "rather than do which they will endure famine to extremity." This note was made about Long. 15° E. and Lat. 15° S. (p. 34). The cattle were milked, and cattle-raiding by the Ovimbundu was common at this time. Many present-day Ovimbundu do not milk their cattle, but the Vacilenge still follow their milking custom observed before 1824. 175 101 234

Livingstone's journey through northeast and northern Angola in 1853 contains references to the Vachokue who seemed bent on plunder (I, p. 370). Livingstone noted cotton spinning, which I recorded as an occupation of males of the Ovimbundu at Elende. Livingstone, like other early travelers, encountered caravans of Bihéans (Ovimbundu) bearing elephants' tusks and beeswax, commodities, which, along with slaves, formed the chief merchandise of these caravans from the Benguela Highlands (p. 466). Livingstone notes and sketches (Plate XIII, Fig. 10) the double-handled hoe (p. 442) which is still used. 175 171 [283] [439] [412]

J. J. Monteiro (I, p. 61) saw the poison ordeal administered. The poison itself was prepared from the thick hard bark of a large tree (*Erythrophlaeum guineense*). The place of observation was Mongue Grande, just south of the Congo estuary, and again Monteiro was present when the poison cup was given to two women at Ambrizette. Of this ordeal there is more to be said when discussing the culture contacts of the Ovimbundu, because the ordeal is a basic factor of [695] [824]

The flesh of goats, sheep, and pigs might be more frequently 262
used if these animals were bred and cared for under some system [232]
of animal husbandry. The Ovimbundu are familiar with the preser- 251
vation of meat by smoking and drying it, because flesh of animals killed in the chase is sometimes preserved in this way by hunters, yet the method is not widely and constantly applied in order to assure a regular supply of meat.

Failure to utilize the milk of cattle and goats is another example 234 ●
of the neglect of useful commodities. The Vacilenge, who are near 171
neighbors of the Ovimbundu, milk their cows as do the Ovimbundu themselves in some districts, though the practice is by no means general. Even where cows are milked, butter and cheese are not made, though the Ovimbundu know of the process, which is practised by the Vakuanyama of southern Angola.

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5: Hambly E-5 (1929-30) 1934 FP 13 Mbundu FP13

595 of the village. The meals are brought there by those wives who are at the
562 time cohabiting with their husbands. But an exception is made in case of menstruation, for a woman is not allowed to cook or handle food during her period. At such times the preparation and transfer of food is carried out by another wife, and of course the time comes when such a service can be
241 requited. I found no survival of agricultural rites such as offering first fruits or other similar ceremony.

In some tribes of Sudanic and Bantu Negroes agricultural rites are important in relation to sowing and harvest, since land is in the first place the property of dead ancestors, but so far as my inquiries go such rites are not now known to the Ovimbundu. Maize may be pounded only on rocks that have been consecrated by the medicine-man: he kills a chicken and sprinkles
[462 the surface of the rock with its blood. Only women may pound corn, and a
838] youth who persisted in dressing as a woman and pounding on the rocks was beaten by his relatives. This information gave a clue to homosexual practices, but the information obtained was meager.

231 In connection with the care of domestic animals many tempting digressions present themselves, but I am concerned only with beliefs, ritual, and division of labor. Chickens are of ritual importance since they provide the least expensive sacrifice, and in connection with industries the piacular use of chickens will presently be mentioned. For sacrificial purposes a goat is preferred to a sheep since it makes more noise; but the reason for this is not clear, though making a surmise I would say that the noise better appeases ancestral spirits to whom most sacrifices are made. Pigs are kept, but I did not hear of them being used for sacrifice. The animals so far mentioned have little or no attention. Goats fend entirely for themselves; so also do sheep. Chickens receive maize from women and children, who also gather the eggs. Pigs receive maize and mush from cooking pots or that discarded in making beer, but they depend largely on foraging in refuse pits.

The castration of pigs and bulls is the work of a male specialist who receives a fee of four yards of cloth for operating on the latter animal, but only a small gift of tobacco or similar recognition for castrating a pig.

The Ovimbundu have acquired cattle of the long-horned Damara breed, and in connection with the care of these some important points of ritual and division of labor should be recorded. The herding of cattle is
[462] exclusively the work of males, and I am not aware that women have any tasks connected with cattle. Only in recent times have some male owners of
234 cattle begun to milk the cows. This they do somewhat stealthily, deceiving the cow from time to time by allowing the calf to suck for a few moments. If asked why milk is not used, the owners say that calves deprived of suck-

5: Hambly E-5 (1929-30)1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

ing become thin; but avoidance of milk is really one of those deeply rooted 234
food prejudices which even the people themselves could not explain if willing to do so.

The Vakuanyama of south Angola make butter by swinging two large calabashes on a pole, but though this practice is known to the Ovimbundu, they do not imitate the method. The flesh of cattle that have died from disease or accident is eaten, and uses are found for the hide, tail, and horns. 231
But cattle are not slaughtered except at a funeral feast, after which the horns are mounted on a pole over the grave, and perhaps the skulls are preserved near the site of burial.

Cattle serve as fines, sacrifices, and gifts, including a bride's dowry, but the social and religious importance is greater than the economic use. This is in accordance with what might be expected, since the pastoral activities of the Ovimbundu are but an adopted series of traits which can be found among numerous pastoral tribes of southwest, south, and east Africa. Wrapping the head of a king in oxhide which is ceremonially renewed has been mentioned.[1] In addition to this rite, the use of oxhide bracelets by mourners, and the use of an oxhide shroud for chiefs and kings, must be recorded. Use of ceremonial fire which is distributed from the chief's house when a new village is founded, and creation of new fire after epidemic sickness, are Umbundu traits which form part of the typical pastoral culture elsewhere.

Consideration of food supply has indicated the preservation of ritual and 182
belief, not intensively, but with sufficient force to show great tenacity of indigenous culture in the face of prolonged and disturbing intrusions.

HANDICRAFTS

Incomparably important is the craft of the blacksmith. The preservation 326
of ritual and belief was at once suggested by the workers' refusal to sell me any of the tools, especially the large hammer (onjundo), although the sum offered covered the value of the implements and the time lost in making new ones. After three months I acquired a large hammer from the wife of a blacksmith who had not worked at his trade for many years. She parted with the tool in the absence of her husband, but demanded a sum which would have purchased an ox. Other tools were made for me.

Information respecting the blacksmiths' ritual was given in the village of Njongolo in Elende, but I am informed that the beliefs are general, and they are certainly compatible with all that is known of blacksmiths' ritual among Bantu Negroes, Sudanic Negroes, and Hamiticized Negroes of east Africa. I found no mining of iron but saw a site where the ore was for-

1 [Cf. p.160, cat. 116. -- Analyst]

233 The cattle herd obtains most of its food by grazing, but in the dry season the grass withers. Childs states[1] that "Herding has been a [609] function of the sister's son, and even now there is a reluctance on the part of the boys to herd for their fathers."

235 462 [866] Chickens are owned and looked after by both men and women, but other animals only by men. Boys may have small stock of their own, and a boy's economic independence most frequently begins with his owning a chicken.

231 Hambly states that goats are more common than any other animal, and that every family has one or more. These animals are not fed or watered, but are allowed to wander to find their own sustenance. Goats are not milked. Young males are castrated. The goat is frequently used in sacrifices. Sheep also are allowed to find their own food; the males are not castrated. Pigs are cared for comparatively carefully, receiving water and a daily supply of sweet potatoes and their leaves, together with some corn. Male pigs are castrated.[2]

APICULTURE[3]

[439] Beeswax was an important item of trade in the caravan days, and is still sold to Portuguese traders' stores, where it is massed into large rectangular cakes for export. Honey is eaten alone or with manioc, and [262] a fermented beer called *ochasa* is made by adding honey to corn-beer. [273] Fibre strainers are used for cleaning the wax, and large shallow baskets [252] are employed for drying the honey in the sun.

Large cylindrical hives, which are private property, are placed high in the trees. These are made by removing a cylinder of bark and lashing the halves together with strands of bark, forming a hive which has a diameter of one foot.

In Elende honey is removed from the hives during the months of August and December. One man ascends the tree in order to lower the hive with a long rope of bark or plaited fibre, while beneath the tree men are prepared to take the hive, which is opened over a smoky fire.

ARTS AND CRAFTS

326 782 *Smithing.* The profession of blacksmith or *ocivinda* is an important one, and, like hunting and divining, is sacred and is entered with special ritual. Often, but not always, these three professions are passed on by inheritance. For smithing two years' apprenticeship to a member of the profession is necessary, and is usually entered upon at the age of eighteen. At the end of this period the master examines his pupil, and makes tools for him, especially the heavy hammer or *onjundo* which is regarded as symbolic of his craft. For the inauguration ceremony the boy provides four chickens (2 male, 2 female), a dog, and a goat; the blood of these animals is sprinkled on his tools, and their flesh is eaten at a feast [553] attended by the villagers. Throughout the procedure the boy remains standing on the small anvil. Finally he is asked to choose his professional name; he then steps down from the anvil a qualified blacksmith.

(1) Childs, 1949, p.109. (2) Hambly, op.cit., p.154.
(3) Hambly, (4) 1934.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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if any, families which do not own one or more goats. These animals are not fed or watered. Goats are able to exist on almost any kind of vegetation; consequently these animals are, almost without exception, well nourished. Goats are not milked. Kids are born at any time of the year, and the young males are castrated. The hides are used for making bags. The goat has the misfortune to be the most [782]
desirable sacrificial animal. This is not entirely due to the fact that it is cheap and easily obtainable. The sheep is said to be unsuitable as a sacrifice, because it does not make a noise when killed. The [237]
hair of the goat is used for making an ornament named *osala*, which is worn by medicine-men.

Sheep are of the long-tailed Syrian breed. Like the goats, the sheep are not cared for in any way; they find their own pasture and water, and in doing so may wander for a considerable distance, though they always return to the village at sunset. The males are not castrated. Sheep are not so frequently kept as are goats and pigs. The skin is used for making bags. Twin births of calves, kids, or lambs are not regarded with awe; on the contrary, such births are welcome.

Almost every man keeps one or more dogs, and I have rarely seen a hut in which there were no dogs. Usually young puppies are near the fire, and on the whole dogs are well treated because they are valuable in hunting. They also give warning of the approach of hyenas, lions, and leopards. I have frequently seen a person run into the road to pick up a dog when an automobile is approaching. A tendency to improve the breed of dogs by crossing the lean native animal with a breed of large dogs from South Africa has been mentioned. In contrast with the generally considerate treatment of dogs by the Ovimbundu one has to note the very emaciated and diseased condition of dogs in the Esele country. Among the Ovimbundu dogs [262]
are regarded as desirable food.

Sacrifice of a dog at the inauguration of a blacksmith will presently be described. A medicine-man who is about to perform a ceremony for curing the sick has to make a meal of dog's flesh, but otherwise the flesh of the dog is taboo to him. These points of ceremony, taken in conjunction with the food value of the animal, and its use in hunting, show that the dog is highly esteemed.

Poultry are of very mixed breeds. The standards of size and 235
weight are higher than is usual in African chickens, a fact which is perhaps attributable to contact of the Ovimbundu with the Portu-

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

235 guese for a long period. The chicken is highly esteemed as a sacrificial
[262] animal, but it could not be said that the flesh is in common use. This failure to develop and utilize to the full, again raises the point of social custom and economic habit. Chickens are cared for, as may be seen in the way they are cooped at night. Sometimes a hen may be seen sitting on her clutch of eggs in a dark corner of a hut, unmolested by people and dogs; yet it is certain that there is no concentration on the rearing of poultry.

Eggs are laid, and chickens are hatched throughout the year except in the months of November and December when corn supplies
[252] are at their lowest ebb. Eggs are boiled, or fried on a fragment of
[264] pottery, but they are not sucked.

231 The domestic cat is not raised by the Ovimbundu. Wild cats are common, but there is no evidence of their domestication. Small birds and monkeys are sometimes kept as pets.

TRADE AND TRANSPORT

438 Caravan trade, which was at one time an important factor of tribal life, is now confined to short journeys for transporting corn, beans, and beeswax to traders' stores. But in spite of present-day
439 decline of transportation the memory of more prosperous times still exists.

Names of distant places survive in the Umbundu language; thus Tanganyika is called Nakandundu, while the name for far eastern Angola is Muacimbundu, the name of a one-time important chief. The Umbundu language is understood in all parts of Angola, far away from typical Umbundu centers of culture.

484 In the old days there were professional leaders of caravans, and a
788 ceremony was conducted before starting. The medicine-man and the
778 village chief were the principal performers in a rite which consisted
787 of bringing from its box the head of a former chief, sewn in oxhide. An animal was sacrificed so that the blood could be used for sprinkling on the chief's head, and on some occasions of this kind the head was sewn up in a new piece of oxhide. Direct appeal was made to the preserved head by the reigning chief, who asked for good fortune on the journey.

The medicine-man who accompanied a caravan carried with him a female wooden figure decorated with feathers (Plate XXI, Fig. 5). When a branching of the paths gave rise to doubts concerning the correct way the wooden figure was consulted by the medicine-man.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

physical composition of the Ovimbundu themselves, and also their 175x
character and accepted attitudes. Livingstone told of the begin- 439
ning of their trade with the Makololo in 1850, and how they had 567
visited the Barotse 'in ancient times'.[1] These items fit into the picture of that early period of trading activities which is had from studying Umbundu traditional history in the light of documents such as Silva Porto's diaries, Magyar's account,[2] the historical monograph of Augusto Bastos, the comments of travellers,[3] and of the early missionaries.

Period of the Rubber Trade, 1874–1911. Turning now to the 439
rubber trade, that time may conveniently be divided into three 314
periods: from 1874 until 1886, during which only 'first-class' 175x
rubber (from the plants themselves)[4] was exported; from 1886, when the discovery of 'second-class' or 'red rubber' (from a root)[5] caused a great boom which lasted until 1900; and, finally, the period of decline until the rubber export stopped in 1916, though for the Ovimbundu it had already practically stopped several years earlier.

Of the older exports only bees-wax and ivory survived along 237 ●
with rubber. The former of these was somewhat neglected, while 439
the importance of the latter continued in Benguela only until 175x
about 1893 when the frontier of the Congo was closed. Bastos remarks that after 1900 not a single tusk appeared.[6] Already in 1880 Silva Porto had to go beyond Lunda to the middle Kasai before he found ivory.[7] At that time most of the ivory trade was in the hands of Viye traders. Between 2 November 1879, when Silva Porto left Catumbela, and 26 November when he reached Belmonte (Viye), there passed him about forty caravans on their way to the coast. Of these, ten carried ivory, practically all of which

[1] D. Livingstone, op. cit., p. 91 f. The business-like methods of the Ovimbundu were commented upon later, see op. cit., p. 271.

[2] The picture which Magyar (*Reisen in Süd-Afrika*) gives of Umbundu life in that early period is very good, but for an understanding of many terms used a knowledge of Portuguese and Umbundu is quite necessary. His truthfulness with regard to the slave-trade must be questioned when confronted by evidence from Valdez, Monteiro, and especially from Bastos.

[3] Valdez, op. cit.; Monteiro, op. cit.; Graça, op. cit.; Serpa Pinto, op. cit.; Capello and Ivens, *From Benguella to the Territory of Yacca.*

[4] Principally *Landolphia*, which are big woody climbers; also the tall and stately *Funtumia elastica.* [5] Especially the *Carpodinus chylorrhiza.*

[6] Bastos, op. cit., p. 39. From this time until 1913 Angola continued to export ivory in ever-decreasing quantities, but from the port of Mossamedes and therefore not from the Umbundu country.

[7] *Boletim Soc. Geog. Lisboa, 6a Ser.*, pp. 189 f., 256.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

were from Viye,[1] since Viye was nearest to what was then the source of supply—Luva, Katanga, Barotze, &c. Caravans from other regions could and did pass through Viye, but they found it more economical and advantageous to go to other regions for other commodities. Bees-wax was to be found in most of the neighbouring regions and was brought to the coast by traders of all the Umbundu kingdoms. The same may be said of the 'first-class' rubber.[2] It was found chiefly in the forest regions of the interior, and the distance and consequent time involved made it a product hardly more profitable than bees-wax. Rubber was then simply one product along with the others, and until 1886 its export had its ups and downs.

Red Rubber, 1886–1900. In 1886 a caravan of Ovimbundu came down to Catumbela with loads of 'red rubber' for the first time. They had gotten it in the sandy country to the east of the Kuanza River, and a great deal nearer than the region of the 'first-class' rubber. At first, the price paid for this 'red rubber' was lower than for the other, but whereas a caravan could not procure loads of the first in less than eight months, the 'red rubber' could be gotten within three months.[3] Subsequently the red rubber was found to have certain superior qualities so that the higher price came to be paid for it. Immediately the export of rubber from Benguela increased enormously and reached undreamed-of totals.[4] Beeswax

[1] *Boletim Soc. Geog. Lisboa*, 5*a* Ser., pp. 5, 6, 10, 16.

[2] There are very interesting summaries and descriptions of the commercial activities of the period—both native and European—in the *Relatorios do Districto de Benguella*, 1887, 1891 (Ministerio da Marinha e Ultramar, Lisboa, 1888, 1894).

[3] See a note in *Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society*, 1888, p. 450 f.

[4] The values of the three leading products exported from Benguela from 1886 to 1891 were as follows (from *Relatorios do Districto de Benguella*, 1887, 1891):

Product	*1886*	*1887*	*1888*
Rubber . .	65,210$153	286,937$018	664,786$870
Wax . . .	187,483$964	158,945$996	109,734$140
Ivory . . .	37,692$536	36,923$042	29,997$968

Product	*1889*	*1890*	*1891*
Rubber . .	665,746$552	781,057$860	1,042,112$070
Wax . . .	133,436$344	93,680$580	123,645$876
Ivory . . .	31,708$133	11,298$782	45,392$534

For further statistical reports of this period, see also *Portugal, Ministerio da Marinha e Ultramar, Relatório, Propostos de Lei*, &c. (Lisboa, 1899), p. 266 f.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

As early as 1600 there were cattle as far north as Benguela, and the Jaggas regarded these as a most valuable part of their plunder. Palms are a characteristic part of the vegetation of Angola north of the Benguela Highlands. Evidently the Jaggas moved extensively in northern Angola because they cut down palms for making wine (Battell, p. 30). The usual method is to tap the top of a standing tree, but the Jaggas were an itinerant people who did not cultivate palms. 175 171 [829]

Sprinkling the blood of sacrificed animals on a newly kindled fire I have mentioned in connection with Umbundu rites celebrating the founding of a new village. The Jaggas carried out this ceremony before a raiding expedition, when cows and other animals were sacrificed (Battell, p. 33). Battell mentions the use of red *tukula* wood for personal decoration. This wood (*Pterocarpus tinctorius*) is used in many parts of Angola at the present time. [824]

Reference to Battell confirms the information given to me in relation to an old iron gong obtained at Ngalangi. He says (p. 20), "The general did strike his gong, which is an instrument of war that soundeth like a bell, and presently made an oration with a loud voice." [534]

Battell reported that the Jaggas wore beads of ostrich eggshell. Ravenstein, the editor of this volume in the Hakluyt Series, seems to doubt this statement, saying, "There are no ostriches in Angola, and as to beads made of ostrich eggs I can give no explanation." I noted the presence of captive ostriches in southern Angola as far north as Gambos. The Vakuanyama women greatly value their long necklaces of ostrich-eggshell beads. Necklaces made in the north of Angola are traded to the south and conversely, each kind of necklace having a high value due to remoteness of origin. This instance, like many other points, confirms the reliability of Battell's observations in Angola. [237] [114]

Father Jerome Merolla (1682) describes the poison ordeal which was used from the Congo estuary to San Salvador (Churchills' Voyages, II, p. 675). "The aforesaid oath is administered to the supposed traitor by a sort of wizard, who, making a certain composition out of the juices of herbs, serpent's flesh, pulp of fruits, and divers other things, gives it to the supposed delinquent to drink. If guilty (as they tell you) he will immediately fall down in a swoon or trembling to the ground." The marimba was used, and a double iron gong was carried before a chief and struck by an attendant. [695]

301 The new ornaments had acquired no sentimental value, therefore
321 their price was moderate.

[171] *Omba* shells are to be seen in use from Kipungo southward through Huila, among the Luvando, and among the Vakuanyama of southern Angola. In the places mentioned one may judge the social status
[554] of a woman by the number of *omba* shells she wears. A principal wife is usually well supplied with these ornaments.

302 In this southern journey it was noticeable that there was an
171 increasing use of red pigment which is lavishly employed for smearing
[294] every kind of ornament, the body, and the hair. Leather belts and skirts of Vakuanyama women are thickly coated with red pigment which is invariably mixed with grease. The red powder is prepared
[824] by desiccating a red wood called *tukula* by the Vakuanyama, a name which is used through Angola and the southern Congo area.

412 From Kipungo southward through the Vakuanyama country
171 there is a notable absence of decorative wooden hair combs. On the contrary, delicately carved combs are used by both men and women of the Ovimbundu. The Vasele make such combs, but by far the best
[532] examples are made and used by the Vachokue tribe of eastern Angola. Here the decorative design usually includes a well-carved human figure at the top of the comb.

301 Among the Vakuanyama, necklaces of disks made from ostrich
[237] eggshell are worn by the women only. A woman of importance has a dozen loops of such necklaces, each loop being about 125 cm long.
[554] These necklaces are so greatly esteemed that only after much persuasion can a woman be induced to part with a single link. Perhaps, as is the case with *omba* shell, there is more than the intrinsic value to be considered. One point is constantly noticed in considering social status and ornament. All the wives of a wealthy man, especially among the Vakuanyama, are made to advertise their husband's position by the profusion of their ornaments and the quality of their leather skirts and belts.

[321] There is, in addition to the necklaces of ostrich-eggshell beads, a highly prized necklace made from small perforated disks of shell having a diameter of about a centimeter. The Vakuanyama women smear a necklace of this kind with grease and *tukula* powder; the
[435] value of a necklace 125 cm long is equivalent to that of an ox. In describing these necklaces there is interest in noting that they are traded to the south of Angola from places six hundred miles to the
[439] north; therefore their value is to some extent dependent on rarity and distant origin.

411 [237] The only spear (*unga*) that I have seen is made entirely of iron. The shaft is covered with the tail of an ox to which the tuft of hair remains attached. This is the spear formerly used in warfare. The distribution is wide. Such spears were purchased from the Ovimbundu of Elende and Bailundu and also from the Vakuanyama living in the far south of Angola, but I do not think that the Ovimbundu make these spears, which are probably traded from the south. [439]

224 [411] A hunter is considered exceptionally fortunate if he possesses an old muzzle-loading gun (*uta*). I have seen only two hunters who owned such a weapon. In one instance the barrel was bound to the stock with hide thongs, while the woodwork was decorated with brass tacks. Powder and fragments of metal are carried in a leather pouch which is attached to a broad, leather waist belt (Plate XIII, Fig. 6). There is certainly a feeling among hunters that the sale of a well-tried weapon will be followed by bad luck. The gun is sometimes fixed to form a trap in such a way that an antelope may tread on the string and so discharge the gun. Sometimes a piece of meat is attached to a string which is fastened to the trigger. A heavy beam of wood into which an iron spike is fastened was used in districts where the hippopotamus and elephant were hunted. Such a trap was fixed over a path known to be frequented by these animals. Big game of this type is now rare.

In the Esele country the following traps are in use: (1) A deep, narrow, grass-covered pit from the bottom of which sharp stakes project upward; this trap is known as *okueve*. (2) A simple trap consisting of four long sharp stakes which are fixed in the ground so that they incline toward a gap through which a buck is likely to jump (Plate LXXIII, Fig. 2). (3) The trap (*ocisonga*) for lions and leopards. This is a heavily built structure provided with a panel-like door which slides down when the entering animal releases a cord fastened to the bait (Plate XCII, Fig. 2). (4) A heavy trap triangular in form. This trap is not an enclosure, but a covering under which the animal has to go in order to reach the bait. In addition to the foregoing examples there is a trap (*onjanjo*) which is used for snaring antelope. The essential of the device is a loop which is bound to the end of a supple branch lightly fastened to the ground. This, however, did not come under my observation.

Long, cone-shaped, cane structures are placed in the grass, which is then fired. Animals disturbed and frightened by the fire rush into the wide end of the trap, then make their way to the narrow end (Plate XV, Fig. 5). One such trap is modified to form a snare with

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

I have seen an Ocimbundu male riding an ox without saddle. A 492
cord was passed through the animal's nose to serve as reins.

The Portuguese name for horse is *cavalo*, a word which the Ovim- 192
bundu use in the form *okavalu*, though there is an Umbundu word *ocingongovala*, which means "going with his neck up." The Umbundu words for donkey and mule are *ocimbulu* and *omula*, respectively.

Generally speaking, the ears of animals are not clipped, neither 231
are cattle branded or otherwise marked to indicate ownership, but sometimes the ears of pigs and goats are cut to aid identification. When asked why the tips of the ears of dogs are mutilated an Ocimbundu will say that a dog with uncut ears does not hear when called (Plate LVI, Fig. 2).

Not many families own large herds of cattle among the Ovim- 233
bundu, and I did not see a big kraal until I was in southwest Angola. 556
Cattle, which are a measure of wealth, are used for paying fines, making funeral feasts, paying debts, and securing wives. The cattle throughout Angola are well-developed, handsome animals (Plate LVII, Fig. 1). The bull remains with the herd the entire year; there is therefore no particular season for the birth of calves. Usually cows are not milked by the Ovimbundu, consequently these people have no milk, butter, or cheese. The Vakuanyama of the south milk their [171]
cows and churn butter in calabashes slung on a pole.

The Ovimbundu say that milking the cow makes the calf thin, 234
but where the idea of milking the cow is borrowed from the Portu- [177]
guese the Ovimbundu have a procedure which is as follows: The calf is allowed to suck for a few minutes in order to deceive the cow; then the milker begins his work. At intervals of a few minutes the calf is allowed to suck in order to continue the deception.

Cattle are killed at the funeral feasts of the rich, and the horns [765]
of the slaughtered animals are generally mounted on a pole in the vicinity of the grave (Plate XLVI, Fig. 2).

The horns of the cow may be used for making water-pipes in 237
which tobacco is smoked, or they may be employed as magical horns when filled with medicine. The hide is pegged out in the sunlight 281
for one day after it has been scraped; it is then rolled and kept until required. When about to be used, the skin is soaked in water for one day. The hide is used to cover the tops of stools, to make pouches and to manufacture bags for carrying corn. In bygone days each king had a wooden box covered with hide, which contained his powder and metal when he went to war. The cow's tail is used

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237 as a sheath for covering the iron shafts of assagais, and it is sometimes made into a switch which the rain-maker uses during his performances.

233 Bulls are castrated when two years old. The wound is rubbed
[232] with ashes, salt, soot, and palm oil. Bullocks are used for riding, also
[492] for pull-carts introduced by the Boers. The herd obtains most of its food by grazing. In the dry season grass withers, with the result that the animals become thin and stall-feeding is necessary. In former days cattle-raiding was a practice of the Ovimbundu, who
233 robbed the Vacilenge. It is certain that the Ovimbundu did not own
174 cattle when they entered Angola. If the general tradition is correct the Ovimbundu came into Angola from a northeasterly direction, from the borders of the Belgian Congo as it is called today; this is not a cattle-raising region.

The Ovimbundu of Elende have a joke against the people of Bailundu, because the latter on first seeing a cow offered the animal some food on a wooden platter. This story suggests that the Bailundu people, who are of the Ovimbundu confederacy, did not know the animal and its habits as early as did the Ovimbundu themselves.

233 Although the Ovimbundu do not usually kill their cattle they may do so in the months of June and July, because at this time pasture is withered and food is scarce. Animals which are diseased, aged, or injured, are killed and eaten.

231 The native pig is distinguishable from European breeds by its long thin snout and slender development. This breed is said by the Director of Animal Husbandry, Humpata, to be the Keltic breed (Plate LV). There is, he says, no evidence to prove that the
[176] Ovimbundu have at any time domesticated pigs from the wild hogs which are to be found in Angola. There is no family which does not own a pig, and on the whole the pig fares much better than the sheep or the goat. The pig receives water and a daily ration of food, which is usually sweet potatoes and their leaves, together with some
232 corn. Male pigs are castrated at any time between the ages of six
[463] months and one year by an operator who is a paid specialist. The fee for castrating a bull is four yards of cloth, but a small gift is considered sufficient reward for performing the operation on a pig.
[282] If a pig is thin, the leather is said to be of good quality and therefore
252 suitable for making sheaths for knives. Usually the flesh of the pig is eaten shortly after the animal has been killed, but the meat of the bullock, on the contrary, is sometimes dried over a fire and preserved. But this is not a general practice as the animals are too valuable to be slaughtered.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

was too light to make it effective as a tool or weapon (Plate XIII, Fig. 4). At Bailundu I was informed that an ax of this kind is used in a medicine-man's dance which is intended to cure a man who is sick because a spirit has entered into him. The sickness may have occurred because the man has broken a promise. 755

The medicine-man, or sometimes the patient himself, dances violently, meanwhile cutting about him with the ax (*omutaka*), which is finally used for killing a little pig whose blood is drunk by the sick man. This is the ritual that was previously mentioned in describing divination.

The following are important ceremonial objects: The ax *ekuva* (Plate XIII, Fig. 5) was the one used for killing slaves who were eaten at the death of a king. This object was secured in the Vasele country near Vila Nova de Selles. It is of handsome appearance, having a copper circle inlaid into the iron blade. A spear from Bailundu is likewise important because of its use in ritual (Plate XIII, Fig. 8). Before war and hunting this spear was thrust first into an ox then into a slave. The human and animal flesh were cooked together and eaten from the same pot. The female figure used by the medicine-man for consultation with regard to the correct path for a caravan has been described. A carved wooden post obtained from Bailundu was set up at cross-paths so that it might be visited by a sick person or his representative who would make sacrifice there. 411 [266] 782

Without parallel among ceremonial objects used by the Ovimbundu is a small wooden cloth-covered box from Bailundu. This contains a piece of root of cylindrical form tightly bound with cloth having at one end a cowrie shell. The box is the shrine of *Kandundu*, for whom a small hut is built in order to contain the box. Any one who sees the contents of the shrine is said to become blind. *Kandundu* is believed to be the "spirit of dreaming who makes swellings come on the body." 778

Antelope horns are in general use as containers of magical potions. One horn from Bailundu is used for holding sweet beer which is drunk by a person afflicted by bad dreams. A large horn with a piece of fur attached, also from Bailundu, is named *ocindiko*. The horn contains a mixture of fat and charcoal which is heated near camp after sunset, when men are on the march. The spreading fumes keep away lions and thieves. It was said that a thief is deterred because the fumes make him cough. 789 237

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

763 Mwehombo, and elder of the school, a post he would certainly have lost had this come to the ears of the missionaries. Attitudes to the verdict are interesting. Sapapula assured me that [754] Mwehombo had killed many people by sorcery both sons and sisters' sons; Luanga did not see the contradiction which I pointed out to him of his saying both that Mwehombo was good and that he had practised sorcery; Gonçalve, Mwehombo's son, appeared sceptical of the verdict, as did Aspirante, Sapapula's sister's son who was married to a daughter of Mwehombo's half-brother, Wayangu.

764 The verdict did not prevent Mwehombo having an impressive funeral. He was buried according to his wishes in the traditional hammock placed in the circular grave, instead of the modern coffin placed in the modern oblong grave. As a caravan-leader he was buried by the track to Chicunda at the point where the path to Epalanga branched off. A low thatched [237] covering was erected over his grave with the horns of the beast killed at the funeral on it. In 1956 Gonçalve and Pedro Nendi, son of Mbati and therefore a cross-cousin of Mwehombo, replaced this by a concrete memorial in the form of a cross with the base inscribed in Portuguese 'Simon Mwehombo Native of Gumba Great Man died 13th January 1955.'

797 Thus Mwehombo had twice undergone conversion from pagan to Christian, once as he lay dying and once after death. 754 His posthumous conviction for sorcery affected neither the form of funeral, nor the continued residence of his kin in the village. His conviction for sorcery was a reflection of the social strains in which he had been involved, not the opening of another cycle 621 of conflict. The kinship cores are not segments opposing one 571 another as in a lineage system; they possess no clearly defined boundaries[10] or continuing existence in time. Their existence is dependent on the persons around whom the cores have formed, and on their deaths they lack any integrating principles. Mwehombo dead, his kinsfolk mostly found no objection in continuing to live in the village where his rival now lived as undisputed traditional headman.

621 There is no word in Umbundu for these groupings. The

[10] For example I have included João in the Mwehombo-Mbati kinship core, on the basis of association, but he came to the village through a tie with Sapapula.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

241 The Highland is evidently well suited to the particular type of
221 agriculture which the Ovimbundu carry on with upland fields for the principal crops of maize and beans growing in the rainy season and with river gardens for secondary cultures in the dry season. The purpose of the latter is to piece out between the principal harvests. The situation of the Highland across principal watersheds and therefore on convenient trade routes has been noted. This is doubtless one factor in commercial development among the
231 Ovimbundu. Cattle-keeping with them seems to be largely a commercial development. While cattle may live on the Highland, they thrive better in the less well-watered lands to the west and the south where the neighbouring peoples are cattle-keepers.

Neighbouring peoples

101 The cattle-keeping peoples who live just west and south of the
197 Ovimbundu are the Nganda, the Ndombe, the Hanya, the Cilenge, the Cipungu, the Muila, the Nyaneka, the Mulondo, and the Khumbi.[1] These peoples all seem to be related to each other and in some way to some, at least, of the Ovimbundu.[2] Still further south beyond these peoples are the Ambo and the Herero, also cattle-keepers. All these, together with the Ovimbundu, have been classified linguistically as making up the 'Western Province' of the Southern Bantu.[3] There are also a few Bushmen on the southern borders.

The peoples to the east and south-east of the Umbundu country are probably Lunda emigrants and so belong to the Congo group (Cokue and Songo) and to the Zambezi or Central group (Luimbi, Lucazi, Nyemba, Ngonzelo, &c.).[4] These people are lumped together by the Ovimbundu under the somewhat deprecatory term of *va Ngangela*.

The northern neighbours belong to the Western or Angola 'cluster' of the Congo group (Esela, Cipala, Lupolo, Ndongo or

[1] See C. Estermann, 'Notas Etnográficas sôbre os povos indígenas do Distrito da Huila' (*Boletim Geral das Colónias*, Fev. 1935, pp. 41–69). He groups some of these people together under the name 'Bangala' or 'Ovambangala'.

[2] Information from Nganda, Mulondo, Cilenge, and Ovimbundu individuals.

[3] See R. A. Dart, 'Racial Origins', p. 23, in Schapera, op. cit., 1937; C. M. Doke, *Bantu Linguistic Terminology* (London: Longmans, 1935); Sir H. H. Johnston, *Comparative Vocabulary of the Bantu and Semi-Bantu Languages*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1919, 1922).

[4] Johnston, op. cit.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

631 life and each could be taken as a unit complete in itself. Individual studies and comparisons of one with another would provide much valuable material. Familiarity with individuals and groups belong-
184] ing to all the major tribal groups, and study of their folk-lore and customs has led me to conclude that as in language, so in social structure and in culture, the differences are of small account. In offering illustrative material, I shall give its tribal source.

The King

643 To describe the royal office and functions it would be necessary
177 to use the past tense. That reason, along with others, leads me to exclude this subject from the present study. Effective European occupation of the country and government by direct rule[1] have atrophied the royal office among the Ovimbundu until to-day kings survive as hardly more than living museum pieces. This being the case, I shall only enumerate the royal functions, very briefly characterize them, and pass on to describe other and living parts of the Umbundu social organism.

643 The principal functions of the royal office were:

776 1. *Religious.* The spirits of the king's ancestors were the principal national deities. The king was not only high priest but also the visible vice-regent and incarnation of the spirits. The
[778] sacrifices at the royal shrine, *kakokoto* (literally, at the skulls), the place of the royal skulls, were for the nation in order:

643 (*a*) *To control the elements*, i.e. to ensure a sufficient supply of
372 rain and avoid the dangers caused by hail, by lightning, &c. Also to control fire by providing a new fire properly (ceremonially)
789 kindled from which everyone took his fire. A king's reign was spoken of as 'during the Water of Lord So-and-so' (*Kovava a Ñalã Ngandi*), or 'during the Fire of Lord So-and-so' (*Kondalu ya Ñalã Ngandi*).

241 (*b*) *To ensure fertility*, toward which desideratum the royal
644 marriage had great influence. The queen's special province was agriculture and her kitchen was sanctified by human sacrifice to
[782] guarantee the national food supply. Ceremonially treated seed was distributed to be mixed with the seed of each granary.

[1] 'Direct rule' is applied in most parts of Africa where European settlement is the predominant consideration and also where centralized government is the ideal. 'Indirect rule' is best illustrated in the Gold Coast, Nigeria, Uganda, and Tanganyika Territory.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

perhaps in Ndulu. In Ngendo the Men's Club had taken over the 345
rocks just behind the headman's household for its meeting-place, 178
but the meetings were only occasional and there was no common meal.

The Village Plan

To speak of the plan of an Umbundu village may seem a con- 361
tradiction in terms, so haphazard seems the relation of houses, gardens, &c., to each other. Some houses are circular, but the [342]
majority are more nearly rectangular in shape. There is a palisade [417]
of hardwood sticks surrounding all the village except that side of the headman's household which is adjacent to the rocks used for a club-house. The headman had not bothered to keep up his own part of the fence since his only garden was a small tobacco plot fenced in by itself. The village is itself divided up by the 621
palisades which shut off one compound from another, each com- 343
pound containing the houses of from one to three households. Between the palisades are paths which lead on to the dancing floor [363]
and out of the village. In the village of Sekulu Sikīlīlē there were twenty-five households with thirty-two houses in all. Each house (*onjo*) had its own granary (*osila*), and small chicken-coop built on stilts, and of all the houses only six had separate kitchens (*ociwo*). Nearly every household had separate pens for the pigs, goats, and sheep for the night. At one side of the headman's compound there was a common corral for the nine cattle which the villagers owned. Only the headman had a spirit-hut (*etambo*), [346]
used also for a storehouse, for entertaining a guest, and for his own bedroom should he sleep apart from his wives. Within the several 621
compounds were small gardens of tobacco and of maize and beans, 244
and just outside the village were two separate tobacco gardens. Just a few paces to the west was a small patch of wheat belonging to a man in the smallest ward. There was one household of two houses quite outside the palisades appropriately belonging to a man named *Kulika* (meaning 'Being-alone'). The water-holes [312]
and pounding rocks where meal was ground were between the [252]
several units of the village and were used in common. The fields were off to the east at from thirty minutes' to an hour's [241]
walk. The two smaller wards of Ciyanda and Kanjengo were so 621
small that they were like two or three compounds by themselves. The former had six households with eight houses, and the latter

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

children may have enough food. Therefore while parents have their children with them, they teach them, saying, Let us work that we may have much food, for if a person lacks food he will die of hunger, or perhaps he may steal from another's field and get into trouble. Children must be diligent in working. 868

'But should a parent have a child who does not want to work, the parent may beat that child to teach him sense lest he may be a sluggard (*ocisiãi*). Parents have a proverb saying, [538]

U wa ku vetela[1] *kepia,*
He who you beat in the field
ka ku vetele,
did not you punish
wa ku longisa olondunge.
he you taught sense.

'Before beginning, parents always encourage their children to work. Cultivation, however, is not counted as a profession (*ocipinduko*). Should a person cultivate a great deal so that from his field he has very much food, then people will take notice and say, So-and-so has enslaved a spirit[2] to the seeds, he has spirits (*ilũlũ*) and they are helping him. That causes great fear, for people fear (those who) have spirits.[3] Thus, even though a person should purpose to teach another how to cultivate in order to have much food, the other will only apparently agree[4] because of his fear. Therefore the work of cultivation is not sought after as a profession by children, for they say, Being a farmer (*ongunja*)[5] is the work of sorcerers (*olonganga*) and not of ordinary people.'[6] 461 241

[1] *Vetela* is the relative mood (or form) of the verb *oku veta.* There is a pun in its use here since it is also used with *epia* in the sense of breaking ground for a new field.

[2] The verb used here—*oku andeka, andekela*—means securing the services of a person's spirit by killing the person (whether by witchcraft or by actual violence). The person is often a child and often of one's own family. In some cases parts of the body are said to have been kept for subsequent ritual use, e.g. bones and flesh dried and ground for 'fertilizer', or the skull for a drinking-cup. It will be seen that this is sorcery. The reflexive form of this verb, *oku liandeka,* means to form a blood-brotherhood, but it is a sorcerer's pact involving the sacrifice of a third person. 754

[3] The expression used means either to have or to have the reputation for having.

[4] He agrees with *ocienyo,* a term commonly translated as 'irony' or 'contempt'.

[5] This is the term which we commonly use for 'farmer'. Its connotation should be understood.

[6] This section is translated from a manuscript by Raul Kavita Evambi of Ciyaka.

2: McCulloch E-4 (1945-51)1952 F P13 Mbundu F P13

Ovimbundu women braid their hair neatly in strands across their foreheads, and decorate the braids with small blue and white trade beads.[1] 302

MAIN FEATURES OF ECONOMY

AGRICULTURE[2]

Main crops are maize and several kinds of beans. Subsidiary crops include: sorghum, kaffir corn, emmer wheat, manioc, peanuts, squash, sweet potatoes, garden vegetables, a little rice, cotton, sugar-cane and tobacco. Fruit-trees such as the papaya, banana, loquat, tangerine, lemon, peach and apple, are increasingly cultivated, and, to some extent, coffee. Upland fields for the principal crops of maize and beans are cultivated during the rainy season, and, to piece out the harvest, river gardens for secondary crops are used in the dry season. 241

The principal corn-gardens

Traditionally men work with their wives in the heavier labour of clearing new fields, but today the demands of contract labour are such that few are able to help.[3] Before the rains begin in early September, women prepare the fields for planting. If a new plot is to be used, it is first cleared with a small hatchet. Tree stumps are left two or three feet high; after the field has been cultivated for a year or two and the tree-stumps have dried and rotted, they are burned off and cleared away. When the rainy season has set in and the ground is thoroughly wet, the main corn-fields are planted. The ground is dug with a hoe and ridged slightly, the ridges following the contour of the land, so that the rain will not wash away the soil, and so that the moisture will be held. Occasionally irrigation is used, small channels being led from hillside streams to the gardens. Maize is dropped by hand on the ridges, and the seeds covered with the foot. Beans and squash are planted with the corn. In January there is usually a break in the rains, and this is the time when the bean crop ripens. (This is a critical period, since if the dry spell lasts too long the corn crop is blighted, but if it is too short the beans will not ripen.) The vines are pulled up and put in the field hut to dry. Later the beans are beaten out of the pods and stored. 241 [462] [312]

In each field there is a grass hut, which is used as a shelter from showers, as a place for drying beans or corn, and as living quarters when the corn is sprouting. (When a woman decides that it would be more convenient to live by her field, which requires constant guarding against birds, she may live in her field hut with her children for several weeks.) 241 343

As the dry season commences, the corn crop ripens. When it is ripe, it is plucked, dried and shelled, and stored in the *osila*, a granary on posts, for future use. One *osila* is used for each household. When required, the corn is hulled and pounded into the meal which forms the staple food.[4] [257] [252]

(1) Hambly pp.129-32, and illustrations; Childs, personal communication.
(2) Cushman, 1944, pp.72-8; Hambly, (2) 1934, pp.146-8, and Childs, personal communication. (3) Childs, personal communication.
(4) For a good description of the preparation of corn-meal, see Cushman, pp.77-8.

242 When a field is wearing out, the corn growing shorter and bearing fewer ears to the stalk,[1] the woman makes a final planting of corn,
244 sticking cuttings of manioc between the rows. Most of these cuttings tak root and grow. It takes two or three years for the tubers of this plant to mature in an old field, but in some parts of the country where manioc is set in new land it matures within a year. The leaves of the plant are used as a vegetable with corn-meal, and manioc meal is used as a basic substitute when corn is short.

The onaka, or river-garden

● 241 In August a woman plants her *onaka*, near a stream in the alluvial soil, or in some river bed. Here she plants corn which will be ready for eating during the January period of food shortage, as well as cabbage and other vegetables.

Organisation of labour

[462] Formerly men did the heavier work of clearing new fields, although, as has been noted above, since the introduction of wage labour much of the work is left to the women. Men may also have their own fields, the produce of which is sold to provide ready cash to clothe the family, pay taxes etc. The women's fields are intended to feed the family. Children help their parents in the fields, but also have their own plots. Gardens are made by each household, i.e. by each wife where there are a number of wives. Neighbours often co-operate during the harvesting
[476] period, after which beer is supplied by the owner of the field which has been harvested.[2]

HUNTING[3]

796 Most men and boys hunt, and women and children may help in burning the grass and driving the game during the annual communal fire-hunts.
224 But the professional hunter or *ukongo* is a recognised specialist, qualified by specific training and dependent on his knowledge of hunting magic
[463] and ritual for his success. A boy becomes a *ukongo* by an apprenticeship
[868] of about two years to an older hunter. This period culminates in a ceremony of inauguration, which may be attended by all the villagers but at which only the professional hunters dance. Several *ukongo* provide game, which is cooked for the feast; the dancing commences but the novice remains still and silent until he feels the "spirit of the head"; he then rises and distributes game to the villagers. Blood from the animals killed is sprinkled over his weapons, which have been made by the *ukongo* who has trained him. From now on his daily life is subject to certain ritual prohibitions: he must not sleep with his wife on the night before going on a hunt, special food and cooking-pots must be used for him, etc.

660 A professional hunter usually works alone, using bows and arrows,

(1) There is no information concerning the length of the farming-cycle.
(2) Childs, personal communication.
(3) See Hembly, *Bantu Studies*, 1934, and *Ovimbundu*, 1934, pp.140-5; Cushman, 1944, pp.113-20.

880 regent and incarnation" of the spirits. Sacrifices were made at the royal
643 shrine or *kokoloto* ("at the skulls"), where the skulls of past chiefs were
769 kept, in order to:-
782

(i) control the elements i.e. to ensure a sufficient supply of rain and avoid the dangers caused by storms; also to control fire by
[372] providing a new fire ceremonially kindled[1] from which everyone took his fire.

[842] (ii) to ensure fertility, towards which the royal marriage had great influence. The queen's special province was agriculture and her
[241] kitchen was sanctified by human sacrifice to guarantee the national food supply. Ceremonially treated seed was distributed to be mixed with the seed of each granary.

643 (b) *To represent the country in its external relations*, principally to make
648 trade agreements with other chiefs, or to make war on other peoples in order
721 to get tribute and plunder. The war leader *(Kesongo)* has his own residence
[701] entirely separate from that of the king, whom he must not meet face to face except on certain ceremonial occasions.[2] Each king must inaugurate his reign with a war, during which or after which he must ceremonially "eat the old one" *(oku lia ekongo)* - who was usually a specially fattened slave
[266] cooked with the flesh of the principal animals commonly eaten.[3]

643 (c) *To dispense justice.* The chief's court or *olusenje* was the supreme
692 court of the chiefdom. The chief had the final word in any case, but most chiefs acted according to custom.

(d) *To protect himself and the chiefdom*, the chief could use "magic" (?)
644 which might have been accounted witchcraft or murder if practised without
[882] authority: e.g. the ritual murder of a pregnant woman, or of the children whose lives were required for building and furnishing the queen's kitchen.

(e) The chief made much use of divination in order to carry out his
643 office. For this purpose he had his own diviner *(citue cosoma)*, who was
791 of the blood royal; but he also consulted diviners of other regions and types.

Succession to chiefship is in the male line,[4] from father to son,
643 elder brother to younger brother or brother's son, or sometimes to one more distantly related. The election is made by the councillors whose duty it is (?), ordinarily before the old chief's death is announced. These same councillors may depose an unpopular chief, and there have been many such
[642] depositions. This "democratic" tendency of the Ovimbundu has been noted by most writers. Childs points out that it is attested by the fact that a chief (formerly as well as today) works in his own fields, and by folk-tales which give incidental and intimate pictures of petty details in the lives of the chiefs†

(1) See above, p.26.
(2) In Bailundu he, with certain other officials, was of the stock of slaves of the state *(ovindili viosoma)*.
(3) Childs, p.21. Many early writers refer to the cannibalism of the "Jagas" or "Imbangalas" who are thought to have been the Ovimbundu chiefs. (See above, p.8, and also Lacerda and Ravenstein, quoted by Childs, pp.17ff.)
(4) But inheritance is said to follow a different line among chiefs from among commoners; possibly inheritance is also in the paternal line. See Childs p.18.

† See footnote 1, p. 31

night in the *etombo* praying to or communing with ancestral spirits, when the occasion arises; Suku is regarded as too remote to receive prayers. 693 613

While cooking, a woman may spill a little meal on the ground for the spirits; at a meal, a person may spill a little food or beer for the same purpose. A portion of the meat at a feast may likewise be sacrificed, but it is often a less desirable portion, such as the intestines.[1] 782

Agricultural rituals were held before planting, at which time the headman and his wife had intercourse in their field and sacred seed from the chief's granary was distributed, a few grains to be mixed with the seed to be planted on each plot. When the maize began to ripen a few ears were sent to the chief before any were eaten.[2] 241 789

DIVINERS[3]

The word *ocimbanda* is used both for a diviner and for a maker of medicines. To distinguish the two, the diviner may be called *ocimbanda congombo* ("of the basket"), the herbalist *ocimbanda coviti* ("of trees or sticks"). Some practitioners are both diviner and herbalist. A female diviner is called *combula*.[4] An *ocimbanda* frequently specialises in a certain kind of case;[5] and among the members of the profession there are many degrees of proficiency. One may work only in his own village, another may be consulted on matters of concern to the whole district or chiefdom; others go on professional journeys carrying their baskets, and accumulate profits in animals and cloth. The greater the reputation of the diviner, the greater the charges he makes for his services. 791 759

The tasks of the *ocimbanda* are:-

(a) To discover the cause of sickness, death, or any evil which has befallen the individual or the community. Sickness and death are always believed to be due either to the workings of spirits who are demanding sacrifices, or to living enemies who have malicious spirits under their control or who have bought potent charms. The diviner, after consulting the spirit who speaks in and through his basket, names the spirit who is causing the trouble and tells the victim what its demands are, or, if the enemy is a living person, indicates in a general manner from whence the trouble comes, e.g. to a woman "Your baskets are too well made; you are hated because of them", or, to a man, "This illness was found on a journey taken to collect a debt". If requested, the diviner makes a countercharm to offset that which has caused the ill. 787 753

(b) To interpret omens and dreams.

(c) To give advice on personal problems.

(d) To dispense medicines and charms.

(e) To bring or withhold rain, or to see who is guilty of withholding it. [789]

(1) Ibid., see also Cashman, loc.cit.
(2) Childs, personal communication.
(3) Based on Tucker, 1940.
(4) Hambly, (3) 1934.
(5) Ibid.

growth is under examination. This central plateau, the Benguela 131
Highlands, rises in places to a height of 6,000 feet, an altitude which [133]
reduces the heat of the tropics and so modifies the flora, discouraging
some types of vegetation and encouraging others. Hostility of the
highlands to palm trees and the banana is appropriately discussed [241]
when dealing with cultural losses; while the fostering effect of reduced
temperature and the presence of wide expanses of open country on
the growth of maize and the keeping of cattle is a cultural gain.

The prevailing rains of Angola are from the northeast to the 132
southwest; consequently the high plateau intercepts rain clouds which
give an annual fall of sixty inches. This adequate rainfall is another
factor which has affected economic life, density of population, com-
munal welfare, and powers of expansion.

The villages of the Ovimbundu are built on hillsides having a 361
commanding view of the surrounding country. There is in the
nature of the land a natural protection from enemies. In addition
to this the Benguela Highlands are an admirable base from which
expeditions both predatory and commercial might, and actually did
set out eastward to the interior of Africa, and southwest to the
cattle-keeping country.

It is important to note that this central plateau is the watershed 133
for four large river systems; the Kwanza to the northwest; the Cunene
to the southwest; the tributaries of the Kasai to the northeast; and
the Zambezi and its affluents to the southeast. Fishing, with attend- [226]
ant beliefs of a ritualistic kind, is of local importance; so also is the
making of canoes. Moreover, the river valleys have marked out a
natural means of communication in several directions.

In connection with the river system the biological factor of the 136
tsetse fly is important, because the presence of the fly locally dis- 231
courages human habitation and prevents the keeping of cattle. The
exact distribution of the fly is imperfectly known, but *Glossinia* [164]
palpalis, the cause of sleeping sickness in human beings, also *Glos-*
sinia morsitans, which carries disease to cattle, are both present along
the Kwanza and parts of the other rivers (J. C. B. Statham, Through
Angola, p. 294).

The western coastal strip is a region of great aridity which has in 132
some years no rainfall whatever, because the northeasterly rains have 137
expended themselves on the high plateau. This region displays
vegetation of the semi-desert type; namely, baobab trees, prickly
acacias, euphorbias, and aloes. Population in this area is sparse, [162]
always nomadic, and in some places non-existent. The coastal strip 000

114 Umbundu language. The illustrations in photogravure are excellent,
126 but the small-scale map is difficult to follow.

114 As might be expected in a work covering an enormous tract of
country, the information is of a very general kind; I have nowhere
241 been able to check in any detail on my own observations. F. and W.
224 Jaspert recognize that Umbundu culture is primarily based on agriculture, maize being the most important crop, but they do not admit the importance of hunting (p. 16).

I saw many successful parties of Umbundu hunters, tested their precision with the bow and arrow, and was able to record the ritual connected with the initiation of a professional hunter. There is also a ceremony before the hunter sets out. It would be more accurate to say that, although Umbundu culture is based primarily on agriculture, hunting still retains some of its earlier importance.

114 The diagrams of houses in different parts of Angola are a useful feature of the work. I made many photographs but did not record details of planning.

114 The masks I obtained are exactly like those pictured, but my
881 observations were carried out a long way to the southeast of the point where the Jasperts touched the Vachokue culture. I do not understand from their description whether the writers saw an initiation ceremony. They state that boys are circumcised and girls are excised when very young, even at the age of five or six years. I observed initiation camps and dances at three centers, Ngalangi, Katoko, and Cangamba; the last named is the main center of Vachokue culture. The male novices varied in age from twelve to sixteen years hence they were older than the novices mentioned by the Jasperts. I was informed that there were no excision operations for girls, though at Ngalangi, Vanyemba girls were secluded in the bush during initiation rites lasting for a month.

Bibliographical references to the research of H. Baumann will be found useful for comparative study. His detailed record of initiation among the Vachokue is valuable as a check on my observation, as we worked independently in areas separated by several hundred miles.

Consultation of historical sources gives the following answers to questions which were asked as an introduction to this chapter.

174 On the grounds of tribal tradition, historical evidence, and cultural affinities, the original home of the Ovimbundu was likely to have been in the southwest Congo. The Ovimbundu undoubtedly possess important cultural traits that have been characteristic of the southern Congo region from the earliest time for which a record exists.

226 462 spear eight feet long, the end of which consisted of ten sharp prongs of palm stem (Plate LXXIII, Fig. 1).

[171] Near Cangamba in eastern Angola, fishing in the Kwando River occupied numerous men and women of the mixed tribes in the district, namely, Vachokue, Luchazi, and Babunda. Men paddled into midstream in small bark canoes from which fishing operations were directed. The fishermen carried small conical string nets, which were attached to stakes in such a way that the openings of the nets faced upstream. Vachokue women, working in pairs, dragged baskets against the current (Plate LXXXV, Figs. 1, 2).

AGRICULTURE AND COOKING

343 243 *Osila* is the Umbundu word for the granary which stands on wooden supports (Plate XLIV, Fig. 1); this *osila* is for the restricted family, and there is one *osila* for every house. The Ovimbundu store their corn in bulk, but in the Esele country I noted that the cobs themselves were carefully packed. Each Ocimbundu girl cultivates a small patch of ground, the produce of which she is at liberty to sell in order to buy brass ornaments, beads, and palm oil. [432]

In addition to maize, barley, oats, and wheat, with here and there a little rye, are occasionally grown. There are three colors of beans, red, white, and black. There is no attempt to keep the varieties separate, so they cross-fertilize freely. The Ovimbundu try to cultivate a surplus of beans and maize which they use to pay their taxes to the Portuguese, likewise to sell at the stores of traders. 241 [651] [438]

252 512 Corn is pounded on the rock which has been used for generations after it has been consecrated by sprinkling the blood of a chicken. Pounding begins as early as five o'clock in the morning, before sunrise, and from that time to sunset the pounding-rock is in use. The rock is evidently regarded as a meeting place for social intercourse; it is undoubtedly the center of village gossip so far as the women are concerned (Plate XXXVI, Fig. 2). [521]

As corn alone is considered a poor food, it is sprinkled on boiling water to which beans are added. Cooking goes on from early morning to sunset over a slow fire. Children sometimes receive as their evening meal a thick plastic cake of mushed corn to which green leaves of a squash are added.

252 There are five kinds of manioc resembling one another in general appearance, but the Ovimbundu distinguish the plants, and reserve for each what they consider to be appropriate preparation. The method varies for sweet and bitter varieties of manioc.

283 In the beginning a thread from the fluffy mass on the stick is fastened to a corncob or to a potato, the weight of which keeps the thread taut (Plate XXXVI, Fig. 1).

[462] I have never seen a woman spinning and am informed that in former days the working of the loom was a task for men only.

463 In presenting facts bearing on the economic life of the Ovimbundu attention has been paid to the importance of ritual, specialization 791 in industry, and division of labor on a sex basis. Clearly, the economic life is one of the fundamentals of social structure, while at many points it is a field in which the magician works.

132 Topography and climate have fixed certain conditions which, so far as the Benguela Highlands are concerned, favor agriculture on 241 an extensive scale, also the keeping of cattle. In the Benguela Highlands a moderate temperature, combined with sufficient rainfall, has produced a type of vegetation which provides timbers serviceable to the craftsman, together with bush that affords shelter for game.

128 The bearing of these economic facts on the probable origins of traits, and their assembly to form the tribal life of the Ovimbundu, is reserved for discussion in chapters dealing with culture contacts and cultural processes. In chapters X–XII the factual material presented here under "Economic Life" is correlated with what is known of similar activities in cultures surrounding that of the Ovimbundu.

VII. EDUCATION

Industrial Training and Division of Labor

871 Usually there is no formality connected with the industrial and occupational training of Ovimbundu children. The section dealing with play shows that boys and girls learn by spontaneous imitation of their elders.

874 There are, however, exceptions to this general truth. Special rites connected with the training and inauguration of blacksmiths and hunters have been described. The training of medicine-men and women will be dealt with in chapter IX, "Religion."

462 463 In describing economic life in chapter V, division of labor on a sex basis; also specialization in industry because of peculiar tastes and aptitudes, were noted. There is clearly a twofold division in industrial life. In the first place sex determines occupation, and within this primary grouping there is a secondary grouping depending [467] on personal preference and individual ability. I have found no instance of exclusive hereditary right to any occupation or industry.

462 The net result of the Umbundu system of division of labor is indicated by the following summary:

[342] When building houses, men dig the rectangular trench, cut the poles for the framework, lash the crosspieces, cut grass and lay the thatch, then place clay over the wattle walls. Women carry water for mixing the clay and convey the moist clay to the plasterers. [224] Children puddle the clay with their feet. Males are hunters both professional and general. During a communal hunt women and children assist in driving game, which is frightened by the firing of [857] grass. Boys organize games in which they imitate these activities. [226] Men fish with a line and bait, whereas women use baskets and [231] narcotic poison. Men and boys take care of cattle and have charge of dogs. Women and girls give what slight attention is afforded to other domestic animals. Male specialists castrate bulls and goats.

[241] During agricultural operations men clear the ground and burn the bush. Women carry on hoe cultivation without assistance from [482] men. Men are the chief carriers in caravans, but women and children may sometimes be seen carrying loads. They march in line with the men but have smaller burdens. Males are employed in blacksmith's work, wood-carving, making weapons and tools, weaving mats, dressing hides, spinning cotton, and formerly in weaving on an upright loom. Men are exclusively the makers of

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

says, "Here's your mother." The children look and sing, "She's not 524
there." They throw sand in that direction. The leopard repeatedly leads to places where the mother is not hidden, while each time the same words are repeated and sand is thrown. Finally the leopard leads the children to the place where the mother is hidden. Then the mourning song is changed to a glad dance. The children clap hands and sing, *Mai Cisangu weya. Mai Cisangu weya* ("Mother Cisangu has come").

After transcribing the music of this song Dr. Herzog reported, 533
"The melodies are rather simple, moving within a restricted range, with a plain rhythm, the same short unassuming melodic fragment being repeated as long as the game may require it, or changed slightly to suit the words. It should be kept in mind that these are children's songs; other songs of the Ovimbundu are probably much more elaborate. The manner of singing songs by a solo and a responding choir is highly characteristic of African singing. Thirds as seen in the transcriptions on page 218 are often used in the music of west Africa.

"In the musical notations, *S* stands for Solo, *Ch* for the Choir. *A* as a sign above a note indicates that the tone is sung approximately a quartertone higher than noted. It indicates a short transitional tone of slight rhythmic or melodic significance and of uncertain pitch."

There is but one example of children's dolls in Field Museum's 524
collection. This was obtained from a little Ocimbundu girl of Elende. The doll is made from a corncob which is draped in blue cloth of European origin such as women wear. My interpreter said that the dressing of dolls made from corncobs is a general custom at the time of cutting the corn. In view of the frequent occurrence of [241]
agricultural rites among Bantu Negroes, the use of dolls led me to inquire into the possibility of there being some kind of fertility cult associated with a corn-mother concept, but my inquiries met with negative results.

There is an Umbundu word for game (*omapalo;* plural, *olomapalo*) which is used for games in general. The verb *oku papala* means "to play." As a rule, male adults do not play games, but they have the game of mancala which is called *ocela*. This is difficult because it involves quick counting. Mancala has a wide distribution as [171]
shown by the fact that it occurs in Africa, Syria, the Malay Archipelago, South America, and the West Indies. At Dom Manuel in the southeast of Angola I saw an arrangement of holes in the ground which was used for this game. There were four rows of fourteen holes in each row. The counters were nuts from an oil palm.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

171 428 this method is characteristic of many pastoral tribes of south and east Africa.

171 611 The Ovimbundu are situated between two systems of reckoning descent, succession, and inheritance; namely, the Negro system of the Congo region, and that of the eastern and southern cattle-keeping people. In view of the culture contacts described in Chapter X, the mixed system of the Ovimbundu is intelligible.

On the one hand the Ovimbundu emphasize the rights of the mother's brother while denying inheritance to a wife and her children, but in royal families the eldest son of the principal wife succeeds to kingship. Among commoners descent is reckoned through both the father and the mother. Therefore the inference is that the [174] Ovimbundu have, by virtue of their position and contacts, made a blending of two distinct social systems, one of which gives succession to office in the male line, while the other gives inheritance in the female line. In their system of burial rites for kings the Ovimbundu follow the usages of the pastoral area.

171 608 Exchange of blood is an Umbundu custom resembling that which occurs widely in Negro Africa. This exchange of blood is the typical Negro form of the blood brotherhood. Another rite is the Hamitic custom of drinking a mixture of blood and milk; this the Ovimbundu do not practise.

171 241 The hoe-cultivation practised by Ovimbundu women is in agreement with Baumann's association of hoe-culture and matriarchal conditions, the latter being indicated by the importance of the mother's brother. These concomitant factors are shown by Baumann (II, p. 292) to be characteristic of a wide area in the Congo basin. To this area may be added the whole of central Angola.

171 567 The factors of slavery among the Ovimbundu are in agreement with all that is known of the treatment of slaves in the Congo area and farther west Africa. Slaves of the Ovimbundu taken in warfare were treated with less consideration than those who passed into slavery to redeem a debt. There was also discrimination in favor of slaves taken in local quarrels among the Ovimbundu themselves. The killing and eating of slaves in north Angola is a custom whose early occurrence has already been noted.

AFRICAN PUBERTY RITES

171 881 Initiation ceremonies for boys and girls are at present well preserved among the Vacholue of eastern Angola; for a period such ceremonies declined among the Ovimbundu, but there is now a

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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AGRICULTURE NEAR GANDA

Fig. 1. Tobacco plants on ant hill. Fig. 2. Clearing the bush

[p. 383]

5: Hambly E-5 (1929-30)1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

professional hunters, and the smearing of the novice's bow and arrows with blood from the meat is an important point of ritual. The bow and arrows are made by the master for his pupil; a practice strictly analogous to the making of tools for a young blacksmith by the master who has trained him. 224 [326]

In connection with the life and death of a hunter a certain amount of ritual survives, and this despite long European contacts, game laws, and the development of an economic system based primarily on extensive cultivation of maize and beans. But though these circumstances might tend to discourage hunting and its attendant ritual, other facts have contributed to survival. An embargo on guns and powder has led to prolonged use of bows and arrows, with which all hunters are expert, though some, despite official prohibition, have muzzle loading guns. Bows are in general use, and their continuance has no doubt aided survival of ritual, since the rites themselves are closely associated with the bows. 177 224 [241]

The night before a professional hunter sets out is an occasion for renewal of implements of the chase, that is, renewal in a spiritual sense, by a ceremony designed to transfer power in a magical way from the disused weapons of deceased hunters to the weapons in use. Weapons of dead hunters are kept in a small hut to which a hunter repairs on the eve of departure. He rubs the old weapons (bows, clubs, and spears) with palm-oil, then pours over them a libation of beer. No medicine-man is present, so for the occasion a hunter functions as his own priest. 224

It is hazardous and perhaps unprofitable to attempt an analysis of the philosophy behind these ritual acts. Yet the weapons are symbols of the personality and prowess of dead hunters whose names they have received. Therefore the suggestion that the hunter is acquiring power from the dead is reasonable, and the idea harmonizes with all that is known of ancestor worship among Bantu tribes.

The food and cooking pots of a hunter must never be associated with those of ordinary household use. If a hunter is following the tracks of an animal he may not point with his finger, since this action will drive the animal away. He may, however, point with the feathered end of an arrow. A dog must have his ears clipped in a peculiar way or he will not hear and obey. A hunter may not sleep with his wife the night before setting out in quest of game. Before leaving home a hunter washes his eyes with a concoction of herbs to give greater acuity of vision.

In any village the hut of a professional hunter can be readily distinguished by a number of poles erected near the entrance. On these supports are placed the skulls of animals killed in the chase. A traveler cannot fail to notice the kraals of hunters, which consist of rings of stones enclosing a 224 764

5: Hambly E-5 (1929-30)1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

containing the head and attaching it to a pole by which it was supported 439
on the shoulders of two bearers. Then followed a series of questions from 787
the village chief (sekulu), and answers were supposed to be given through forward or backward swinging of the pole. A forward swing was affirmative, and a backward swing was negative. I have seen this procedure followed with a coffin supported as described, and the questions related to the cause of death.

The head of a king would be asked, "Do you want an ox for sacrifice? We will give you one." "Do you want a new skin for your head? We will give you one." Such was the ceremony for bringing spiritual aid to what was otherwise a commercial undertaking.

A wooden figure of a female decorated with black feathers was an indispensable part of the equipment of a medicine-man who accompanied a caravan. When in doubt with regard to the path he knelt at the parting of the ways and consulted the figure. Replies came in a falsetto voice attained by plugging his nostrils. Horns containing a mixture of fat, charcoal, and other substances were carried so that they might be planted near a camping ground to drive away thieves and leopards. These horns are still used and are obtainable.

At the present day a belated Ocimbundu, who fears the sun may set 789
before he reaches the next village, will take some earth from an ant hill. This earth he places in the fork of a tree saying, "O sun wait for me a little while."

Examination of the culture of the Ovimbundu, combined with observa- 101
tions on the Umbundu language and somatic traits, indicate that the Ovim- 246
bundu are a part of the Bantu peoples of southwest Africa. They have, however, taken advantage of the open Benguela highlands to develop their system of agriculture far beyond that which is usually carried on by Negroes in forest clearings.

In agricultural work a clear division of labor is observed. Men clear 241
timber and burn the bush, after which hoe cultivation is in the hands of 562
women, though men assist with the harvest. Unmarried girls help in the fields and each has a piece of ground whose products are the cultivator's personal property. This gives unmarried girls a measure of economic independence. Usually a girl spends the proceeds of her work in buying trinkets and palm-oil for personal decoration. Under their system of poly- 595
gyny each wife has her own field, utensils, and a separate hut with its fire 562
and cooking arrangements. The husband visits each hut for four consecutive nights, though in some districts there is a seven night cycle. Men always take evening meals in the mens' council house (onjango) in the center (to notice the tombs of hunters, which consist of cairns of stones enclosing a) 1/k

1/k [Printer's error: This sentence refers to p. 159. -- Analyst]

5; Hambly E-5 (1929-30) 1934 FP 13 Mbundu FP13

595 562 of the village. The meals are brought there by those wives who are at the time cohabiting with their husbands. But an exception is made in case of menstruation, for a woman is not allowed to cook or handle food during her period. At such times the preparation and transfer of food is carried out by another wife, and of course the time comes when such a service can be 241 requited. I found no survival of agricultural rites such as offering first fruits or other similar ceremony.

In some tribes of Sudanic and Bantu Negroes agricultural rites are important in relation to sowing and harvest, since land is in the first place the property of dead ancestors, but so far as my inquiries go such rites are not now known to the Ovimbundu. Maize may be pounded only on rocks that have been consecrated by the medicine-man: he kills a chicken and sprinkles [462 838] the surface of the rock with its blood. Only women may pound corn, and a youth who persisted in dressing as a woman and pounding on the rocks was beaten by his relatives. This information gave a clue to homosexual practices, but the information obtained was meager.

231 In connection with the care of domestic animals many tempting digressions present themselves, but I am concerned only with beliefs, ritual, and division of labor. Chickens are of ritual importance since they provide the least expensive sacrifice, and in connection with industries the piacular use of chickens will presently be mentioned. For sacrificial purposes a goat is preferred to a sheep since it makes more noise; but the reason for this is not clear, though making a surmise I would say that the noise better appeases ancestral spirits to whom most sacrifices are made. Pigs are kept, but I did not hear of them being used for sacrifice. The animals so far mentioned have little or no attention. Goats fend entirely for themselves; so also do sheep. Chickens receive maize from women and children, who also gather the eggs. Pigs receive maize and mush from cooking pots or that discarded in making beer, but they depend largely on foraging in refuse pits.

The castration of pigs and bulls is the work of a male specialist who receives a fee of four yards of cloth for operating on the latter animal, but only a small gift of tobacco or similar recognition for castrating a pig.

The Ovimbundu have acquired cattle of the long-horned Damara breed, and in connection with the care of these some important points of ritual and division of labor should be recorded. The herding of cattle is [462] exclusively the work of males, and I am not aware that women have any tasks connected with cattle. Only in recent times have some male owners of 234 cattle begun to milk the cows. This they do somewhat stealthily, deceiving the cow from time to time by allowing the calf to suck for a few moments. If asked why milk is not used, the owners say that calves deprived of suck-

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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CHAPTER V

VILLAGE ECONOMICS

The homeland of the Ovimbundu, the Benguela Highland, is mostly over 4,000 feet above sea-level. Rainfall is 50–60 inches a year, and the rainy season is from September to April.[1] In this season after a downpour there is frequently a cooling of the air, and the most intense heat comes just before the rainy season, during the dry spell that occurs in or about February, and just after the rains. Between the middle of May and the middle of July the nights and early mornings are bitterly cold but the days are pleasantly cool. After the middle of July the temperature gradually rises.

The soil of the Highland is poor; the Ovimbundu industriously cultivate beans, manioc, maize, potatoes, and tobacco. Less frequently they have coffee plants, fruit trees, and sisal. Occasionally wheat is grown but the ground is not really suitable. I am told that rice could be grown in the stream valleys. Four field types are recognized by the Ovimbundu—*otjumbo* (garden), *onaka* (stream-valley garden), *ombanda* (in ground sloping up from a stream), and *epya* (a field away from the streams on level ground).[2]

Umbundu country is well supplied with water in streams and rivers, and the Ovimbundu have built irrigation channels wherever possible. Cultivation in the stream valleys, that is, of the *onaka* type of garden, has only been practised since the 1870's or 80's.[3] They are planted in August or the beginning of September, and give crops in December and January. The

[1] For an excellent account of Umbundu habitat see Childs, pp. 1–11.

[2] Albino Alves, *Dicionário Etimológico Bundo-Português*, Lisbon, 1951, Vol. I, p. 659 gives ombanda as a synonym of onaka.

[3] Private information.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

maize from these beds is for home consumption, and it comes at a time when maize supplies are running low, and some people have to rely on manioc. The *ombanda* type is sown in September and early October. Then the main fields (*ovapya*, plural of *epya*) are sown in October and November, and only after this is maize sown in the gardens round the houses. In December and January the people are busy hoeing the fields and in February the sowing of beans takes place, continuing into March. This is followed by the harvesting of the gardens in the village, and by the gathering of the maize in the fields, the maize then being placed in field huts to dry. This takes place in March and April, and with its ending the dry season has come.

The dry season is the time for travelling to see relatives and for getting married, since the burden of work is much reduced. May is a good time to clear the bush and then and in later months there is time to build houses. During the dry season there was much more chance of finding people at home, and there were far more festive occasions. This is also a time when men and women can practise crafts such as basketry, fish-trap making, pottery, and so on. In July, the maize dried in the field hut is pounded and brought back to the village, whence it is taken to the traders for sale. The pounding and carrying is often the work of parties of friends and relatives who are rewarded with beer. Occasionally somebody's maize is collected like this well into September, but most people finish in August. By August the grass has grown very high, and the firing of it is the beginning of large-scale hunts in which men and boys from several villages may join together. Hunts may be undertaken by individuals or by groups at other times of the year either as a hobby or to kill a destructive wild pig (in which case the hunt will be undertaken by a group of people). September is a good month for fishing. The fire has cleared the stream valleys which can now be sown, thus starting off the year's cycle again.

There is no shortage of land, and hence questions of land rights seldom come up in social relations. A village headman has no rights over land outside his village, and even within a village there are strips of bush from which a new garden can be cut. Land is very occasionally sold. For instance a man return-

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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ing home from labour in October wants cleared fields to sow. If he cannot find any kinsman who would give him a cleared field he will have to buy one, and will have perhaps to pay 200 escudos (£2 10s.). A man retains his rights to fields in a village he no longer inhabits.

The Ovimbundu keep cattle, sheep, goats, pigs, and fowls. The cattle are not milked but are used in sacrifices, and for fines; some have been brought by Ovimbundu from Kwanyama Ambo country but they do not seem to thrive in this neighbourhood. Sheep are few. In my village goats were much less numerous than chickens or pigs. The traders and European residents buy cattle, chickens, and pigs.

Fishing and hunting are practised, but despite the ingenious fish-traps, nets, poisons and weirs used for the first, and the popular enthusiasm for, and ritual associations of the second, neither dominates the actual food supply and ecological background in the way that maize does.

The Ovimbundu believe that the dry-season grass fires also help to fertilize the soil by leaving ashes. Ashes are sometimes spread in a village garden, and dry grass may also be left in a field for this purpose. Soil beside trees is considered to be especially rich, as to some extent are the sites of former villages. There is no idea of crop rotation and a field is worked for as long as it is fertile, that is indefinitely for an *onaka* and from three to six years, sometimes more, for a field of the *epya* type. The hoe is still the standard means of cultivation and the plough is a rarity.

Coffee-growing on any scale is usually undertaken by people living away from the villages, except for the Protestants who have been encouraged by their missionaries to plant coffee in their villages. Coffee, like maize, is bought by the traders. However, at least two local coffee-growers sold their coffee at Porto Amboim on the coast to get a better price. Basically, the agricultural economy of the neighbourhood is based on maize, grown by methods of shifting cultivation. The frequency with which villages rise and fall and individuals change from one village to another is entirely consistent with this type of agriculture.

Axe and hoe blades, blankets, cloths, clothing, cutlery,

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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181 Making money and being rich are regarded with

unambiguous approval, though there is a certain undertone suggesting cunning in the verb *oku lunguka* (to be shrewd) used about prosperous people. The old suspicion of sorcery attaching to people who were more successful farmers than their neighbours[6] seems to have disappeared. While a prosperous villager would be expected to lend money to a poorer kinsman (provided the latter was not known as a bad debtor) yet, the situation which occurs in other parts of Africa, where, as Dr. V. W. Turner notes of the Mwinilunga Ndembu, prosperous Africans 'find themselves increasingly embarrassed by the demands of their kin for presents in cash and kind'[7], would not arise among the Ovimbundu, who would regard such demands as being unjustified, even outrageous.

Wealthy Ovimbundu may spend some of their wealth on clothing and on drink. Cattle-buying has been noted as a form of capital investment and the same term may be used of small stock buying. Another way of disposing of money is by building a house of bricks with the assistance of a bricklayer. A plough may be, but rarely is, bought by two men joining together to pool their money. Generally speaking, the agricultural technology of the Ovimbundu has been little changed since 1911 except for the spread of the techniques of coffee-growing.

It has been noted earlier that the Ovimbundu play an important part in the economic life of Angola both as cultivators and labourers. In this chapter an attempt has been made to show how at the local level it is the cultivation of cash crops, rather than migration for wage labour, which incorporates villagers into the commercial economy of modern Angola. The main source of money in rural areas is the trader's store, which is also the main recipient of money, apart from the administration. While trade both between Ovimbundu and between Ovimbundu and other tribes survives on a minor scale, the social institutions associated with the rubber trade, the large caravans, the non-repayable loans within the matrilineal group, and the obligations of wealthy traders to assist their kin, have disappeared. The contemporary social structure with the

[6] Childs, pp. 106-8.

[7] V. W. Turner, op. cit., p. 133.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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593 178 Going round the houses at night one meets in one house a man and his wife sitting together talking, in another a group of men and women sitting round a fire. This is a very definite change from traditional pattern of social life in which men and women sat in separate groups, a pattern which is still observed at funerals.[15] A man who has a case at the post is likely to take with him his wife as a witness. A husband has the right to beat 593 his wife, and she should show respect to him. In fact wife-beating is rare, and the relationship seems from observation to be often one of mutual affection and close companionship. Informants were divided as to whether one can joke with one's wife—some people may fear that she will cease to respect her husband if he jokes with her—but conversationally an Umbundu wife often seems to enjoy an easy familiarity with her husband. A wife may occasionally go and stay with her relatives, and in the neighbourhood she may pay calls on kinsfolk, friends, or co-villagers, without her husband. This contrasts with the way the white and mulatto wives of traders follow the custom of rural Portugal by staying more or less permanently in the house.

The wife has her own fields, and her own granary. If the marriage is polygamous, each wife has her field and granary. [434] Her husband may help her in her fields, although he also has fields of his own. The maize in the husband's granary is sold to [434] produce money to pay tax and to buy clothing for both husband and wife, and the maize in the wife's granary is used for food. If her husband is away a woman will buy her clothes from her own granary. The cooking of maize has not only a nutritive importance but also a social one since it is considered the service, which is specifically wifely. Thus, the explanation I was given 582 for the lower age of marriage emphasizes this—I should explain that people returning from contract labour are sent first to the post at which they were recruited and may have to do an additional fortnight's work there. 'It is because of the hardship.[16] In the past one married only when one was fully grown. Now it is necessary to have somebody who will send food to the post when you come back.' 'Perhaps,' I suggested, 'your mother

[15] Childs, pp. 32, 55.
[16] Okali, a word often used with regard to administrative demands.

242 When a field is wearing out, the corn growing shorter and bearing fewer ears to the stalk,[1] the woman makes a final planting of corn,
244 sticking cuttings of manioc between the rows. Most of these cuttings take root and grow. It takes two or three years for the tubers of this plant to mature in an old field, but in some parts of the country where manioc is set in new land it matures within a year. The leaves of the plant are used as a vegetable with corn-meal, and manioc meal is used as a basic substitute when corn is short.

The onaka or river-garden

241 In August a woman plants her onaka, near a stream in the alluvial soil, or in some river bed. Here she plants corn which will be ready for eating during the January period of food shortage, as well as cabbage and other vegetables.

Organisation of labour

[462] Formerly men did the heavier work of clearing new fields, although, as has been noted above, since the introduction of wage labour much of the work is left to the women. Men may also have their own fields, the produce of which is sold to provide ready cash to clothe the family, pay taxes etc. The women's fields are intended to feed the family. Children help their parents in the fields, but also have their own plots. Gardens are made by each household, i.e. by each wife where there are a number of wives. Neighbours often co-operate during the harvesting
[476] period, after which beer is supplied by the owner of the field which has been harvested.[2]

HUNTING[3]

796 Most men and boys hunt, and women and children may help in burning the grass and driving the game during the annual communal fire-hunts.
224 But the professional hunter or ukongo is a recognised specialist, qualified by specific training and dependent on his knowledge of hunting magic
[463] and ritual for his success. A boy becomes a ukongo by an apprenticeship
[868] of about two years to an older hunter. This period culminates in a ceremony of inauguration, which may be attended by all the villagers but at which only the professional hunters dance. Several ukongo provide game, which is cooked for the feast; the dancing commences but the novice remains still and silent until he feels the "spirit of the head"; he then rises and distributes game to the villagers. Blood from the animals killed is sprinkled over his weapons, which have been made by the ukongo who has trained him. From now on his daily life is subject to certain ritual prohibitions: he must not sleep with his wife on the night before going on a hunt, special food and cooking-pots must be used for him, etc.

600 A professional hunter usually works alone, using bows and arrows,

(1) There is no information concerning the length of the farming-cycle.
(2) Childs, personal communication.
(3) See Hambly, *Bantu Studies*, 1934, and Ovimbundu, 1934, pp.140-5; Cushman, 1944, pp.113-20.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

made, there as elsewhere throughout the Umbundu-speaking territory, their wholesale manufacture was only carried on in Ndulu. This was a natural specialization, for the best and most easily accessible deposits of iron ore are in the Ndulu country,[1] whose smiths have become justly famous. In exchange for hoes they received palm-oil or cattle from other regions, or salt, rum, or goods from the coast. Other regional specializations were—Kasongi and the Sele country for palm-oil, Cikuma for bees-wax (also obtained from the interior), cattle from Ngalangi, Kalukembe, Cilengi, and farther south. Ciyaka, Civula, and Bailundu took much corn-meal to the coast in those early days. 'Trade-agreements' were also made beyond the Umbundu-speaking area. At first these were strictly one-way affairs, allowing the Ovimbundu traders to operate in many lands, near and far, since this was to the advantage of the rulers of those lands. At the same time, the men from Bailundu and Viye did and said everything possible to discourage the interior peoples from venturing out on their own account.[2] Later, when the trade, as well as knowledge of the whites and their trade, spread, arrangements were made between the king of Viye and various interior chiefs allowing them to send their own caravans through to the coast, and gifts were exchanged periodically.[3]

Their very early introduction to articles of European use and manufacture has undoubtedly had great influence upon the development of the Ovimbundu. Their early and thorough familiarity with fire-arms certainly played a decisive role in their national formation and subsequent history. The introduction of domestic plants and animals from abroad is an important subject, but too broad for treatment at this time. The early introduction of European-manufactured goods has had profound influences.

[1] See article on smelting and smithing in Ndulu by F. W. Read in *Journal of the African Society*, 1902, pp. 44–9.

[2] Livingstone tells of the displeasure of the Ovimbundu ('Mambari') at meeting the Makololo near Luanda. The Ovimbundu tried to frighten them from trading with the whites with tall tales, making the whites out as impossibly clever magicians and wizards (op. cit., p. 384). Cameron and his east-coast carriers experienced the displeasure of Viye people owing to jealousy of the same sort, but no longer so openly expressed (op. cit., p. 406).

[3] The Musta-Yanvo of Lunda was one of those who had such a 'trade-agreement' with Viye. Silva Porto notes in his diary on 14 Jan. 1880 that an embassy from the Musta-Yanvo had arrived with a tusk of ivory for Cilemo (*Boletim Soc. Geog. Lisboa*, 5a Ser., p. 148).

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

175 171 [412] O. Dapper (Description de l'Afrique, 1732, p. 369) shows a scene in which an ax, such as I obtained from the Vasele country, is being used for beheading a slave.

Cavazzi (Istorica descrizione, etc., Bologna, 1687) describes the three kingdoms of Congo, Matamba, and northern Angola. The [325] poison ordeal, the scapegoat, the blacksmith's bellows (pp. 101, 170) [534] are all traits known to the Ovimbundu. The musical instrument made from a large gourd, which has a ridged board attached for rubbing with a stick, is the type I collected. Cavazzi pictures the double iron gong and the long drum held between the knees. He [782] also shows a rain-maker (p. 214) and the sacrifice of two hundred victims at the accession of a king (p. 210).

174 •243 Consideration of the history of maize in Africa is of importance in connection with these early writings, as this grain is the staple agricultural product of the Ovimbundu. I am indebted to Dr. [113] Berthold Laufer for access to his unpublished research on this subject. From the following facts one may assume that, in all probability, the maize culture of the Ovimbundu was derived from the Congo region before their migration into the Benguela Highlands.

175 243 Father Jerome Merolla remarks that maize was growing in the neighborhood of San Salvador (1683–92). The native names were *mampunni* and *massambuta;* from this corn an alcoholic beverage was prepared. According to Cavazzi (Ehrmann, Geschichte der merkwürdigsten Reisen, XIII, 1794) maize was not intensively cultivated by the Negroes of lower Guinea, though it thrives well and may be harvested twice or thrice a year. The natives said that the grain [177] was brought by the Portuguese, but they did not esteem it highly, and were accustomed to use it as food for pigs.

Bosman (p. 312) records that prior to the arrival of the Portuguese, Negroes were entirely ignorant of *milho* ("maize"). The account of Duarte Lopez preserved by Filippo Pigafetta states that the Negroes consider maize the vilest of all grains, so that it is given to swine. This contempt and lack of knowledge of the food value, combined with ignorance of methods of preparation, suggest a recent introduction (Pigafetta, translation by M. Hutchinson, 1881, p. 40). Dapper (Description de l'Afrique, 1732, p. 345) also mentions the cultivation of maize. Battell lived as prisoner in northern Angola about the year 1600, consequently his records of the use of the great Guinea wheat (maize), which the natives call *mas-importo*, give early evidence for the use of this grain (Hakluyt Soc., 1901, pp. 9, 11, 67).

226 462 spear eight feet long, the end of which consisted of ten sharp prongs of palm stem (Plate LXXIII, Fig. 1).

[171] Near Cangamba in eastern Angola, fishing in the Kwando River occupied numerous men and women of the mixed tribes in the district, namely, Vachokue, Luchazi, and Babunda. Men paddled into midstream in small bark canoes from which fishing operations were directed. The fishermen carried small conical string nets, which were attached to stakes in such a way that the openings of the nets faced upstream. Vachokue women, working in pairs, dragged baskets against the current (Plate LXXXV, Figs. 1, 2).

AGRICULTURE AND COOKING

343 243 *Osila* is the Umbundu word for the granary which stands on wooden supports (Plate XLIV, Fig. 1); this *osila* is for the restricted family, and there is one *osila* for every house. The Ovimbundu store their corn in bulk, but in the Esele country I noted that the cobs themselves were carefully packed. Each Ocimbundu girl cultivates a small patch of ground, the produce of which she is at liberty to sell in order to buy brass ornaments, beads, and palm oil. [432]

241 In addition to maize, barley, oats, and wheat, with here and there a little rye, are occasionally grown. There are three colors of beans, red, white, and black. There is no attempt to keep the varieties separate, so they cross-fertilize freely. The Ovimbundu try to cultivate a surplus of beans and maize which they use to pay their taxes to the Portuguese, likewise to sell at the stores of traders. [651] [438]

252 512 Corn is pounded on the rock which has been used for generations after it has been consecrated by sprinkling the blood of a chicken. Pounding begins as early as five o'clock in the morning, before sunrise, and from that time to sunset the pounding-rock is in use. The rock is evidently regarded as a meeting place for social intercourse; it is undoubtedly the center of village gossip so far as the women are concerned (Plate XXXVI, Fig. 2). [521]

As corn alone is considered a poor food, it is sprinkled on boiling water to which beans are added. Cooking goes on from early morning to sunset over a slow fire. Children sometimes receive as their evening meal a thick plastic cake of mushed corn to which green leaves of a squash are added.

252 There are five kinds of manioc resembling one another in general appearance, but the Ovimbundu distinguish the plants, and reserve for each what they consider to be appropriate preparation. The method varies for sweet and bitter varieties of manioc.

535 Almost every evening one may hear the tapping of drums and the songs of dancers, because in addition to dances for a funeral or other special occasion there are ordinary dances of amusement in which lines of men and women advance and retreat, or men and women circle round the drums making arm movements accompanied by a swaying rhythm.

[243] The dance *onyaco*, performed in June when the corn is ripe, may have an ancient history and special significance as part of an agricultural rite. When corn is being stored the people sing, "There is grain in the house, may it never be out." There is no dance in [226] connection with fishing.

224 There is mimicry of animals in the hunting game played by boys. The frog, the leopard, and other animals are imitated in certain games, but I have no evidence of the performance of mimetic dances in relation to any cult for increasing the supply of animal life.

535 The use of the small ball *ombunje* illustrates the way in which [534] an apparent toy can be used in rites of a religious kind. *Ombunje* consists of a hard spherical fruit about six centimeters in diameter in which several hard seeds rattle. The sphere is covered with a layer of cloth over which lizard skin is stretched and sewn.

[769] When the people wish to commemorate the death of a king, or [789] when the king is sick, the medicine-man (*ocimbanda*) says that there must be *osaka* dancing. A strong man dances for many hours while holding this little ball in his outstretched hand. Other men who are dancing use their fists to hit the muscles of the outstretched arm in an attempt to make the holder drop the ball (*ombunje*). If he does so another man will promptly take hold of it. The precise nature of the endurance test is unexplained, but there is possibly the idea of giving strength to a sick king by this tension and endurance. My interpreter thought this was so, but could not explain why the dance should be performed to commemorate the death of a king. It would seem natural, however, to transfer the *ombunje* rite to a commemorative festival, if in the first place it was part of the last rites of a dying king.

534 There are among the Ovimbundu specialists in dancing, singing, 463 and the playing of musical instruments. *Onjimbi* is the word for a singer of merit who starts the choruses. *Ocili* is a dancer of more than ordinary skill. When a man is required to play a drum or other instrument I have noticed that it is thought necessary to bring a specialist. There is no doubt that drumming requires special aptitude and practice. The man who plays the long drum is *usiki*, the drum

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

perhaps in Ndulu. In Ngendo the Men's Club had taken over the 345
rocks just behind the headman's household for its meeting-place, 178
but the meetings were only occasional and there was no common meal.

The Village Plan

To speak of the plan of an Umbundu village may seem a con- 361
tradiction in terms, so haphazard seems the relation of houses,
gardens, &c., to each other. Some houses are circular, but the [342]
majority are more nearly rectangular in shape. There is a palisade
of hardwood sticks surrounding all the village except that side of [417]
the headman's household which is adjacent to the rocks used for a club-house. The headman had not bothered to keep up his own part of the fence since his only garden was a small tobacco plot fenced in by itself. The village is itself divided up by the 621
palisades which shut off one compound from another, each com- 343
pound containing the houses of from one to three households.
Between the palisades are paths which lead on to the dancing floor [363]
and out of the village. In the village of Sekulu Sikillē there were twenty-five households with thirty-two houses in all. Each house (*onjo*) had its own granary (*osila*), and small chicken-coop built on stilts, and of all the houses only six had separate kitchens (*ocimo*). Nearly every household had separate pens for the pigs, goats, and sheep for the night. At one side of the headman's compound there was a common corral for the nine cattle which the villagers owned. Only the headman had a spirit-hut (*etambo*), [346]
used also for a storehouse, for entertaining a guest, and for his own bedroom should he sleep apart from his wives. Within the several 621
compounds were small gardens of tobacco and of maize and beans, 244
and just outside the village were two separate tobacco gardens. Just a few paces to the west was a small patch of wheat belonging to a man in the smallest ward. There was one household of two houses quite outside the palisades appropriately belonging to a man named *Kuliha* (meaning 'Being-alone'). The water-holes [312]
and pounding rocks where meal was ground were between the [252]
several units of the village and were used in common. The fields were off to the east at from thirty minutes' to an hour's [241]
walk. The two smaller wards of Ciyanda and Kanjengo were so small that they were like two or three compounds by themselves. 621
The former had six households with eight houses, and the latter

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

PLATE VI

294

Photo. R. S. Webb

a. Harvesting peanuts (Bailundu)

466

Photo. M. W. Smith

b. Road workers

[Facing p 49]

242 When a field is wearing out, the corn growing shorter and bearing fewer ears to the stalk,[1] the woman makes a final planting of corn, 244 sticking cuttings of manioc between the rows. Most of these cuttings take root and grow. It takes two or three years for the tubers of this plant to mature in an old field, but in some parts of the country where manioc is set in new land it matures within a year. The leaves of the plant are used as a vegetable with corn-meal, and manioc meal is used as a basic substitute when corn is short.

The onaka or river-garden

241 In August a woman plants her *onaka*, near a stream in the alluvial soil, or in some river bed. Here she plants corn which will be ready for eating during the January period of food shortage, as well as cabbage and other vegetables.

Organisation of labour

[462] Formerly men did the heavier work of clearing new fields, although, as has been noted above, since the introduction of wage labour much of the work is left to the women. Men may also have their own fields, the produce of which is sold to provide ready cash to clothe the family, pay taxes etc. The women's fields are intended to feed the family. Children help their parents in the fields, but also have their own plots. Gardens are made by each household, i.e. by each wife where there are a number of wives. Neighbours often co-operate during the harvesting [476] period, after which beer is supplied by the owner of the field which has been harvested.[2]

HUNTING[3]

796 Most men and boys hunt, and women and children may help in burning the grass and driving the game during the annual communal fire-hunts. 224 But the professional hunter or *ukongo* is a recognised specialist, qualified by specific training and dependent on his knowledge of hunting magic [463] and ritual for his success. A boy becomes a *ukongo* by an apprenticeship [868] of about two years to an older hunter. This period culminates in a ceremony of inauguration, which may be attended by all the villagers but at which only the professional hunters dance. Several *ukongo* provide game, which is cooked for the feast; the dancing commences but the novice remains still and silent until he feels the "spirit of the head"; he then rises and distributes game to the villagers. Blood from the animals killed is sprinkled over his weapons, which have been made by the *ukongo* who has trained him. From now on his daily life is subject to certain ritual prohibitions: he must not sleep with his wife on the night before going on a hunt, special food and cooking-pots must be used for him, etc.

100 A professional hunter usually works alone, using bows and arrows,

(1) There is no information concerning the length of the farming-cycle.
(2) Childs, personal communication.
(3) See Heanly, *Bantu Studies*, 1934, and Ovisbands, 1934, pp.140-5; Cushman, 1944, pp.113-20.

Olungunga is not a sweet manioc, so is not eaten raw. The roots are placed to soak in a stream for three or four days before they are roasted on a fire, after which they may be eaten with impunity. As an alternative the roots may be dried in the sun; they are then pounded into meal which is scattered into boiling water so that a mush is formed. The Umbundu name for this preparation is *iputa riutombo*, meaning "mush of manioc." The leaves of *olungunga* are not soaked in water; on the contrary, they may be cooked as soon as they are gathered, but they must not be eaten when warm. There is no danger in eating them after they have been boiled and have been allowed to become cold. The leaves are served with salt or fat. 252 [263]

All the manioc, with the exception of *olungunga*, is sweet. *Kandona* has roots which may be eaten uncooked, but both leaves and roots are sometimes cooked in water. Other varieties of manioc known as *otetu*, *elemba*, and *esela* are eaten in the same way as *kandona*. Manioc is in use all the year, but the greatest quantity is consumed in November and December, a period when the growing corn is not ripe and the storage supplies have dwindled. [221]

Sweet potatoes are plentiful all the year with the exception of the months of November and December. They are placed in the pot, without removal of the skin, and boiled for a period of twenty or thirty minutes. They are taken out, peeled, and eaten. European potatoes are sometimes peeled and made into a mush. The variety of garden produce naturally depends on proximity to a trading post, a mission, or some other European settlement. [177]

In propagating manioc a stem is cut off from the parent plant which is about three feet high; but probably two or three years pass before the tubers are considered large enough for use. Sweet potatoes are planted in January, but there is very little of this food available in February and March. Toward the end of March or early in April a few potatoes may be ready for consumption. 244 [221]

Peanuts (*Arachis hypogaea*, Leguminosae) are planted in October by women who prepare patches of ground which are drilled with holes one inch deep and eight inches apart. One nut is placed in each hole after the shell has been removed. Above the ground small leaves appear. After the flower-stalk withers it has the peculiarity of elongating and bending down. In this way the young pod is forced underground, and the seeds mature a little way below the surface.

Some natives employ irrigation by leading small channels of water from a hillside stream to a garden containing maize and 312

312 bananas, but one could not say that irrigation is generally practised, even when circumstances permit.

245 The papaya and the banana are increasingly cultivated, but they are by no means generally distributed. Here and there I [249] have seen a little sugar-cane cultivated by natives for their own use. Near the main railway natives may be seen selling their [244] products, which include cabbages and tomatoes. Some natives are today planting the guava tree which yields sweet palatable fruits. The fruits *olosia* are collected from the *usia* tree. When ripe, the fruit is yellow, round, and about two inches in diameter. These fruits are gathered in September, and the kernels, which are about the size of walnuts, are eaten uncooked. No fruits are collected for storage. *Olombula* fruits ripen in October, when they are eaten raw.

264 Each wife sends the food which she has cooked in her own kitchen to the *onjango* ("council house"). After carrying the food to this house of assembly, where the men meet each evening, the women return to their houses to eat alone, or with the young children.

343 252 [995] When there is a plurality of wives each has her own house and kitchen. Ngonga states that separate kitchens built outside the living houses are becoming more rare. The poor have their kitchens in the living room because they cannot provide separate structures for living and cooking.

264 262 252 The first meal is taken between five and six o'clock in the morning, the most usual food being meal sprinkled on boiling water to form a paste which is eaten with sweet potatoes. A mush of beans is eaten at night; generally there is no meal at midday. Three pounds of cooked beans are eaten by a person for one meal. Over the cooking pots leaves are placed to keep in the steam, especially when the pot contains sweet potatoes. I have made a meal from the sticky, gluey paste which results from sprinkling meal on boiling water. The chief objection to this food is the unpleasant quantity of grit in the meal, owing to the fact that it is pounded on the rocks. Manioc and sugar-cane are chewed at irregular intervals of the day.

262 The amount of meat consumed by the Ovimbundu is small in comparison with the quantity of vegetable food used. This adoption of diet of a particular kind is largely a matter of habit, and there is no good reason why meat should not form a larger proportion of the food supply. The Ovimbundu do not kill their cattle for food though they will eat the meat of oxen which have died from natural causes.

Not only the carpenter, but almost every Ocimbundu man possesses an implement which may be readily adapted as ax or adze (Plate XIII, Fig. 2). The wooden shaft, from 50 to 70 cm in length, terminates in a narrow grip at one end, while the other end expands into a large oval knob into which a circular hole is bored. The strong iron blade, one of the main products of the local forge, can be removed. If the round tang of the blade is inserted so that the cutting edge is in the same plane as the shaft, the implement is an ax. On the contrary, insertion so that the cutting edge is at right angles to the shaft converts the implement into an adze. When placed over the shoulder this implement is used for carrying utensils in a fiber bag (Plate XXVIII, Fig. 1). 412 [482]

Gourds are of three main kinds, which may be found growing on the ground or resting on the roofs of houses at the ends of the climbing stems that bear them. *Ombenge* is a gourd which is narrow in the middle. It is often converted into a dipper for ladling liquids. The narrow neck is the handle, while a round hole is cut in the larger part so that the dipper can be filled with liquid. *Ongonja* is round, or perhaps oval in form. There is a size used as a measure of capacity. *Ongonja* can be used as a ladle by fixing it at the end of a stick. *Olukuembo* has a round body and a narrow hook-shaped neck; like the gourd *ombenge*, it is used as a ladle. 415 [244]

Gourds are elaborately decorated with incised and burned designs (Plate XII, Figs. 1–6). Usually these patterns are geometrical, but human figures and animals are sometimes included. Decorated gourds from Bailundu, used for containing beer at a wedding, are among the best examples of their kind (Plate XII, Fig. 6). The owner of a decorated gourd takes great pains to repair a crack with rattan, which is threaded through holes bored in the edges of the fracture. A large gourd is sometimes carried in a native-made net of vegetable fiber. 531 415

POTTERY

A large and varied collection of pottery has been acquired from the Ovimbundu, the Vachokue, and the Vasele. The shapes and styles are best indicated by the illustrations in Plate XIV, Figs. 1–5. 323 171

Among the Ovimbundu, only women make pots, which are inferior in workmanship to those of the Vachokue and the Vasele. At Elende, among the Ovimbundu, I was surprised to find a man making pottery. Further inquiry showed that he had learned his craft when young in the Vachokue country of eastern Angola. This man, whose work was not copied at all by Ovimbundu women, was regarded as a specialist whose products were in great demand. [462]

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

245

Photo. R. S. Webb

b. Hulling coffee (Bailundu Mission)

341

Photo. R. S. Webb

a. An Ecele village

[Facing p. 48]

312 bananas, but one could not say that irrigation is generally practised even when circumstances permit.

● 245 The papaya and the banana are increasingly cultivated, but they are by no means generally distributed. Here and there I [249] have seen a little sugar-cane cultivated by natives for their own [244] use. Near the main railway natives may be seen selling their products, which include cabbages and tomatoes. Some natives are today planting the guava tree which yields sweet palatable fruits. The fruits *olosia* are collected from the *usia* tree. When ripe, the fruit is yellow, round, and about two inches in diameter. These fruits are gathered in September, and the kernels, which are about the size of walnuts, are eaten uncooked. No fruits are collected for storage. *Olombula* fruits ripen in October, when they are eaten raw.

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6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

bought in the towns, and men returning from South Africa are said to bring all sorts of goods including typewriters. The traders do not lend money though they sometimes give credit. The living standards of the traders are often low, some being unable to buy a truck, and having therefore to come to terms with someone who has one. I have even heard of traders having to eat the staple Umbundu mush (*pirão* in Portuguese).

While the traders play an extremely important role in the local economy they do not establish any permanent face-to-face relationship with the natives outside their household and store, because they are not interested in them and have no reason to be. This does not apply in the same way to African *assimilados*, actual or self-styled, of whom there were a few in the neighbourhood, who lived more or less in Portuguese style. Of these one in particular, Justino, made a hobby of settling disputes, and will therefore re-appear later on. Their main source of revenue was coffee-growing, and they would occasionally have local labour working for them. As they tend to identify themselves with the 'civilized' population, their attitude to the natives is not unlike that of the traders, but culturally and linguistically they are linked to the Ovimbundu villagers, and if of local origin will have kinship links too.

This group is significant because it is in the total social structure of Angola a link between the 'civilized' and 'non-civilized' communities. Both the *assimilados* and those pseudo-*assimilados* who have persuaded the natives that they are *assimilados*, identify themselves with the whites but are also linked much more closely with the natives than any other group. As the division into 'civilized' and 'non-civilized' is legally sanctioned on the grounds of culture not race, a group which participates to some degree in the cultures of both sections must be of great significance in the study of the means by which the whole society is integrated. In the neighbourhood where I worked this group of Europeanized Africans were few in numbers,[80] both absolutely and in relation to other parts of Angola.

[80] I only know of one genuine *assimilado* in the neighbourhood though there were others who claimed to be such. Galvão and Selvagem (p. 408) remark of the Cazengo concelho of northern Angola, 'The great number of civilized negroes, some planters incorporated in the European economic system, hastened the disintegration and confusion of the tribal institutions.'

[assimilados are Africans possessing Portuguese citizenship -- Analyst]

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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ing home from labour in October wants cleared fields to sow. 423
If he cannot find any kinsman who would give him a cleared 425
field he will have to buy one, and will have perhaps to pay 200 escudos (£2 10s.). A man retains his rights to fields in a village he no longer inhabits.

The Ovimbundu keep cattle, sheep, goats, pigs, and fowls. 231
The cattle are not milked but are used in sacrifices, and for [212]
fines; some have been brought by Ovimbundu from Kwanyama Ambo country but they do not seem to thrive in this neighbourhood. Sheep are few. In my village goats were much less numerous than chickens or pigs. The traders and European residents buy cattle, chickens, and pigs.

Fishing and hunting are practised, but despite the ingenious 226
fish-traps, nets, poisons and weirs used for the first, and the 224
popular enthusiasm for, and ritual associations of the second, [242]
neither dominates the actual food supply and ecological background in the way that maize does.

The Ovimbundu believe that the dry-season grass fires also 241
help to fertilize the soil by leaving ashes. Ashes are sometimes spread in a village garden, and dry grass may also be left in a field for this purpose. Soil beside trees is considered to be especially rich, as to some extent are the sites of former villages. There is no idea of crop rotation and a field is worked for as long as it is fertile, that is indefinitely for an *ensala* and from three to six years, sometimes more, for a field of the *ejya* type. The hoe is still the standard means of cultivation and the plough is a rarity.

Coffee-growing on any scale is usually undertaken by people 245
living away from the villages, except for the Protestants who have been encouraged by their missionaries to plant coffee in their villages. Coffee, like maize, is bought by the traders. However, at least two local coffee-growers sold their coffee at Porto Amboim on the coast to get a better price. Basically, the 241
agricultural economy of the neighbourhood is based on maize, 361
grown by methods of shifting cultivation. The frequency with which villages rise and fall and individuals change from one village to another is entirely consistent with this type of agriculture.

Axe and hoe blades, blankets, cloths, clothing, cutlery, 000

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

The tasks of recruiting contract labourers and road-workers and of getting fines and taxes paid, and such other duties as the arranging of compulsory purchase of tickets for the travelling cinema (showing patriotic films) are carried out through a long process of argument, attempted evasion, and pressure, between the chief, the government headmen, and the locally influential people, traditional headmen, catechists, and anyone else who can get himself listened to. Persons actually picked for contract labour or road work may make quite a fuss about it, but as such numbers are recruited it is ultimately accepted resignedly. It is not really practicable for a chief to discriminate in favour of his kinsman owing to the heavy demands for labour and the likelihood of such discrimination being reported at the post, as happened to Simbwyikoka. Demands for labour may fall heavily on some households. Thus one Epalanga household consisted of a man, his daughter by an earlier marriage, his wife and her baby daughter. The man had been taken for contract labour, his wife had been called to road work, and the adolescent daughter was carrying sisal[14] to the post. A kinsman of the household head attempted to arrange for some watch to be kept over the gardens lest animals should get in.

There were four government headmen in Gumba during my stay. Theoretically they are village headmen. The villages in which official records group Ovimbundu do not conform to the actual villages in which Ovimbundu live. Anybody moving from one village to another has to pay a fee; as the Ovimbundu move about quite frequently and no attempt is made to enforce this rule locally, the result is this discrepancy between paper and real villages.

The government headman's duties are those already described for the chief. As with the chief, there is only sufficient backing from the post for him to carry out the orders he receives; he does not receive power to enable him to exercise political leadership and judicial authority at the local level, nor is he a representative of the post in the villages. His interests and values are linked to those of his neighbours rather than to the post. It is through the chief and the government headmen

[14] Some villages are obliged to grow sisal and take it to the post without payment.

312 bananas, but one could not say that irrigation is generally practised even when circumstances permit.

245 The papaya and the banana are increasingly cultivated, but they are by no means generally distributed. Here and there I [249] have seen a little sugar-cane cultivated by natives for their own [244] use. Near the main railway natives may be seen selling their products, which include cabbages and tomatoes. Some natives are today planting the guava tree which yields sweet palatable fruits. The fruits *olosia* are collected from the *usia* tree. When ripe, the fruit is yellow, round, and about two inches in diameter. These fruits are gathered in September, and the kernels, which are about the size of walnuts, are eaten uncooked. No fruits are collected for storage. *Olombula* fruits ripen in October, when they are eaten raw.

264 Each wife sends the food which she has cooked in her own kitchen to the *onjango* ("council house"). After carrying the food to this house of assembly, where the men meet each evening, the women return to their houses to eat alone, or with the young children.

343 When there is a plurality of wives each has her own house and 252 kitchen. Ngonga states that separate kitchens built outside the [575] living houses are becoming more rare. The poor have their kitchens in the living room because they cannot provide separate structures for living and cooking.

264 The first meal is taken between five and six o'clock in the morning, 262 the most usual food being meal sprinkled on boiling water to form 252 a paste which is eaten with sweet potatoes. A mush of beans is eaten at night; generally there is no meal at midday. Three pounds of cooked beans are eaten by a person for one meal. Over the cooking pots leaves are placed to keep in the steam, especially when the pot contains sweet potatoes. I have made a meal from the sticky, gluey paste which results from sprinkling meal on boiling water. The chief objection to this food is the unpleasant quantity of grit in the meal, owing to the fact that it is pounded on the rocks. Manioc and sugar-cane are chewed at irregular intervals of the day.

262 The amount of meat consumed by the Ovimbundu is small in comparison with the quantity of vegetable food used. This adoption of diet of a particular kind is largely a matter of habit, and there is no good reason why meat should not form a larger proportion of the food supply. The Ovimbundu do not kill their cattle for food though they will eat the meat of oxen which have died from natural causes.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

undoubtedly knew the apparatus and the method, but he appeared to have lost the dexterity which is necessary for a rapid moving of the hands from the bottom of the twirler to the top. There was consequently a long period of smoldering before the flame appeared. 372 171

Among the Vachokue a little wooden box of tinder, a piece of quartz, and an iron blade are carried for fire-making. From an Esele man a bag containing tinder and quartz was obtained.

The making of fire ceremonially in connection with ritual and sacrifice is described among the functions of the medicine-man, because the sacred and profane uses of fire are quite distinct.

Tobacco is a very important item of trade. The cultivation is a domestic industry followed usually by women but to some extent by men. In former days when the Ovimbundu traded extensively in Africa every man had a field of tobacco which he himself cultivated. At the present time each man is likely to have a mound of tobacco plants in the middle of a corn field (Plate XXIX, Fig. 1). Women do sometimes cultivate tobacco near their huts, but in this case the little plantation must be strongly fenced. Goats are numerous, and they eat the leaves of the tobacco plant with avidity. 249 462

Toward the end of September, when the rains begin, tobacco seed is sown on a patch of ground a yard square to raise seedlings which are planted out in October. A few flowers only are left to produce seed. As a further effort to improve the quality of the tobacco many of the lower leaves are removed. The cutting of leaves intended for use as tobacco is done by men in the months of February and March; women and children assist if the field is large.

After the midrib has been removed from each leaf, the leaves are suspended from the roof in a bundle. At the end of five days, when the leaves have turned brown, they are twisted into a long straight roll which is hung in the sun for three days. At intervals the roll is twisted in another direction. This gradually exposes all parts of the leaves, so that the drying is thorough. There are three methods of making up the rolls: *ombola* is an oval roll; *ongalo* is the round coil; *ocine* is the name given to tobacco which has been dried and twisted round a stick. Tobacco-pipes are varied in size and design (Plate XV, Figs. 1–3); those for men are larger than those used by women. A mixture of tobacco and hemp is smoked in a water-pipe made from the horn of a cow. Details of structure and ornament are given under "Wood-carving." 276

In order to make snuff a piece of dried tobacco is slowly baked near the fire on the end of a pointed stick which is turned frequently.

276 The snuff is pounded and placed in a small wooden box of cylindrical
[531] shape. Usually the box is ornamented with incised, burned patterns. The Ovimbundu of Bihé add ashes of wood to their snuff, so producing a mixture called *ulelemo*. The Ovimbundu of Elende usually use the
● [749] snuff without adulteration. Two main species of tobacco plants are grown.

Women smoke in all parts of Angola. The Ovimbundu do not chew tobacco, neither have I seen it so used elsewhere in Angola. Boys and girls are not allowed to smoke before the age of thirteen years.

576 In the *ombala* of the Vangangella near Ngalangi, I asked a girl
[834] for her pipe which I desired for my collection. The interpreter took the pipe when she proffered it, explaining that, according to local custom, I had asked for the girl. If I took the proffered pipe *from her hand* I accepted her. Another social custom associated with tobacco is the passing of the communal pipe from hand to hand in the men's council house.

276 Ngonga, my interpreter, says that he has never seen an Ocimbundu
171 woman smoke hemp, but he has seen a woman of the Vangangella (people to the east of the Ovimbundu) smoking hemp. Hemp (*epangue*) is cultivated only by the Ovimbundu men who smoke it. Pure hemp is smoked in the water-pipe which is not passed from hand to hand. Only tobacco is used in communal smoking. Smoking of hemp or tobacco consists of a few deep inhalations; there is not usually a prolonged placid smoking. When hemp is placed in the bowl of the water-pipe it is covered with large grains of sand or a piece of tin. This intervening substance prevents the hot coals from coming into contact with the hemp. The object is to secure slow ignition.

DOMESTIC ANIMALS

231 The principal domestic animals are cow (*onjindi*), ox (*ongombe*, which is also the generic name for cattle), bull (*onui*), sheep (*omeme*), goat (*ohombo*), pig (*ongulu*), dog (*ombua*), chicken (*osanji*) (Plates LV, LVI, LVII).

492 The transport animals, donkey, horse, and mule, are not used by the Ovimbundu of Elende and not to any extent by Ovimbundu of other parts; but in the south of Angola the Vakuanyama have sturdy ponies and well-kept mules. The ox when ridden by Portuguese is provided with a leather saddle which is very comfortable if covered with a blanket. The brass stirrups are broad and massive. Through the septum of the bullock's nostrils there is a short brass rod to the ends of which the reins are attached (Plate XXX, Fig. 1).

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

249

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2

AGRICULTURE NEAR GANDA

Fig. 1. Tobacco plants on ant hill. Fig. 2. Clearing the bush

[p. 383]

The flesh of goats, sheep, and pigs might be more frequently 262
used if these animals were bred and cared for under some system [232]
of animal husbandry. The Ovimbundu are familiar with the preser- 251
vation of meat by smoking and drying it, because flesh of animals killed in the chase is sometimes preserved in this way by hunters, yet the method is not widely and constantly applied in order to assure a regular supply of meat.

Failure to utilize the milk of cattle and goats is another example 234
of the neglect of useful commodities. The Vacilenge, who are near 171
neighbors of the Ovimbundu, milk their cows as do the Ovimbundu themselves in some districts, though the practice is by no means general. Even where cows are milked, butter and cheese are not made, though the Ovimbundu know of the process, which is practised by the Vakuanyama of southern Angola.

There are three kinds of beer. *Ocisangua* is a sweet beer which 272
even children may drink because it is not intoxicating. Water is heated slowly in the pot but not boiled; meanwhile meal of Kafir corn or maize is added. Pounded sweet potato is strained in such a way that the liquid part goes into the beer pot; the residual mush is given to pigs. After the beer has cooled out of doors, it is transferred to a large gourd and allowed to stand over night. Next day it is considered a fit drink to consume or to offer to visitors (Plate XXIII, Fig. 3).

The making of an intoxicating beer *ekundi* proceeds as for 273
ocisangua, but instead of adding strained liquid from sweet potatoes a root called *ombundi* is included in the brew. The large pot containing this beer is covered tightly and allowed to stand untouched for twenty-four hours, at the end of which time it is a potent drink. It is important to note that the corn is allowed to sprout in the ground before it is made into the infusion to which the root *ombundi* is added.

Ocimbombo is a strongly intoxicating drink. In order to prepare this brew, corn is soaked for a week; then it is left in the ground for the same length of time until it has germinated. It is then pounded on the rocks and placed in large pots filled with water to which sweet meal of corn is added. Simmering over the fire is continued for two days with constant stirring. This brew differs from *ekundi* in the longer germination of the corn and the longer period of simmering. On the fourth day after the simmering is completed the drink is said to be ready for consumption. If the people have honey, they add some to the brew on the third day of standing. My inform-

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

perhaps in Ndulu. In Ngendo the Men's Club had taken over the 345
rocks just behind the headman's household for its meeting-place, 178
but the meetings were only occasional and there was no common meal.

The Village Plan

To speak of the plan of an Umbundu village may seem a con- 361
tradiction in terms, so haphazard seems the relation of houses, gardens, &c., to each other. Some houses are circular, but the [342]
majority are more nearly rectangular in shape. There is a palisade [417]
of hardwood sticks surrounding all the village except that side of the headman's household which is adjacent to the rocks used for a club-house. The headman had not bothered to keep up his own part of the fence since his only garden was a small tobacco plot fenced in by itself. The village is itself divided up by the 621
palisades which shut off one compound from another, each com- 343
pound containing the houses of from one to three households. Between the palisades are paths which lead on to the dancing floor [363]
and out of the village. In the village of Sekulu Sikilile there were twenty-five households with thirty-two houses in all. Each house (*ongo*) had its own granary (*onila*), and small chicken-coop built on stilts, and of all the houses only six had separate kitchens (*ociwo*). Nearly every household had separate pens for the pigs, goats, and sheep for the night. At one side of the headman's compound there was a common corral for the nine cattle which the villagers owned. Only the headman had a spirit-hut (*etambo*), [346]
used also for a storehouse, for entertaining a guest, and for his own bedroom should he sleep apart from his wives. Within the several 621
compounds were small gardens of tobacco and of maize and beans, 244
and just outside the village were two separate tobacco gardens. Just a few paces to the west was a small patch of wheat belonging to a man in the smallest ward. There was one household of two houses quite outside the palisades appropriately belonging to a man named *Kulika* (meaning 'Being-alone'). The water-holes [312]
and pounding rocks where meal was ground were between the [252]
several units of the village and were used in common. The fields were off to the east at from thirty minutes' to an hour's [241]
walk. The two smaller wards of Ciyanda and Kanjengo were so small that they were like two or three compounds by themselves. 621
The former had six households with eight houses, and the latter

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

226

Photo. M. W. Ennis

a. Communal fishing party (Talange River, Elende)

252

Photo. R. E. Wilds

b. Women grinding meal (Bakundu)

[Facing p. 64]

Z: McCulloch E-4 (1945-51) 1952 FP13 Mbundu FP13

Ovimbundu women braid their hair neatly in strands across their foreheads, and decorate the braids with small blue and white trade beads.[1] 302

MAIN FEATURES OF ECONOMY

AGRICULTURE[2]

Main crops are maize and several kinds of beans. Subsidiary crops include: sorghum, kaffir corn, emmer wheat, manioc, peanuts, squash, sweet potatoes, garden vegetables, a little rice, cotton, sugar-cane and tobacco. Fruit-trees such as the papaya, banana, loquat, tangerine, lemon, peach and apple, are increasingly cultivated, and, to some extent, coffee. Upland fields for the principal crops of maize and beans are cultivated during the rainy season, and, to piece out the harvest, river gardens for secondary crops are used in the dry season. 241

The principal corn-gardens

Traditionally men work with their wives in the heavier labour of clearing new fields, but today the demands of contract labour are such that few are able to help.[3] Before the rains begin in early September, women prepare the fields for planting. If a new plot is to be used, it is first cleared with a small hatchet. Tree stumps are left two or three feet high; after the field has been cultivated for a year or two and the tree-stumps have dried and rotted, they are burned off and cleared away. When the rainy season has set in and the ground is thoroughly wet, the main corn-fields are planted. The ground is dug with a hoe and ridged slightly, the ridges following the contour of the land, so that the rain will not wash away the soil, and so that the moisture will be held. Occasionally irrigation is used, small channels being led from hillside streams to the gardens. Maize is dropped by hand on the ridges, and the seeds covered with the foot. Beans and squash are planted with the corn. In January there is usually a break in the rains, and this is the time when the bean crop ripens. (This is a critical period, since if the dry spell lasts too long the corn crop is blighted, but if it is too short the beans will not ripen.) The vines are pulled up and put in the field hut to dry. Later the beans are beaten out of the pods and stored. 241 [462] [312]

In each field there is a grass hut, which is used as a shelter from showers, as a place for drying beans or corn, and as living quarters when the corn is sprouting. (When a woman decides that it would be more convenient to live by her field, which requires constant guarding against birds, she may live in her field hut with her children for several weeks.) 241 343

As the dry season commences, the corn crop ripens. When it is ripe, it is plucked, dried and shelled, and stored in the ostile, a granary on posts, for future use. One ostile is used for each household. When required, the corn is hulled and pounded into the meal which forms the staple food.[4] [251] [252]

(1) Hambly pp.129-32, and illustrations; Childs, personal communication.
(2) Cushman, 1944, pp.72-8; Hambly, (2) 1934, pp.146-8, and Childs, personal communication. (3) Childs, personal communication.
(4) For a good description of the preparation of corn-meal, see Cushman, pp.77-8.

233 The cattle herd obtains most of its food by grazing, but in the dry
season the grass withers. Childs states[1] that "Herding has been a
[109] function of the sister's son, and even now there is a reluctance on the
part of the boys to herd for their fathers."

235 Chickens are owned and looked after by both men and women, but other
462 animals only by men. Boys may have small stock of their own, and a boy's
[344] economic independence most frequently begins with his owning a chicken.

Hambly states that goats are more common than any other animal, and
231 that every family has one or more. These animals are not fed or watered,
but are allowed to wander to find their own sustenance. Goats are not
milked. Young males are castrated. The goat is frequently used in
sacrifices. Sheep also are allowed to find their own food; the males
are not castrated. Pigs are cared for comparatively carefully, receiving
water and a daily supply of sweet potatoes and their leaves, together with
some corn. Male pigs are castrated.[2]

APICULTURE[3]

[439] Beeswax was an important item of trade in the caravan days, and is
still sold to Portuguese traders' stores, where it is moulded into large
rectangular cakes for export. Honey is eaten alone or with manioc, and
[264] a fermented beer called ochoco is made by adding honey to corn-beer.
[27] Fibre strainers are used for cleaning the wax, and large shallow baskets
[255] are employed for drying the honey in the sun.

Large cylindrical hives, which are private property, are placed high
in the trees. These are made by removing a cylinder of bark and lashing
the halves together with strands of bark, forming a hive which has a
diameter of one foot.

In Elende honey is removed from the hives during the months of
August and December. One man ascends the tree in order to lower the
hive with a long rope of bark or plaited fibre, while beneath the tree
men are prepared to take the hive, which is opened over a smoky fire.

ARTS AND CRAFTS

326 Smithing. The profession of blacksmith or ovivimbe is an important
982 one, and, like hunting and divining, is sacred and is entered with special
ritual. Often, but not always, these three professions are passed on by
inheritance. For smithing two years' apprenticeship to a member of the
profession is necessary, and is usually entered upon at the age of eight-
een. At the end of this period the master examines his pupil, and makes
tools for him, especially the heavy hammer or onjundu which is regarded
as symbolic of his craft. For the inauguration ceremony the boy provides
four chickens (2 male, 2 female), a dog, and a goat; the blood of these
animals is sprinkled on his tools, and their flesh is eaten at a feast
[553] attended by the villagers. Throughout the procedure the boy remains
standing on the small anvil. Finally he is asked to choose his profes-
sional name; he then steps down from the anvil a qualified blacksmith.

(1) Childs, 1949, p.100. (3) Hambly, op.cit., p.154.
(2) Hambly, (4) 1954.

3. Hambly E-3 (1929-1930) 1934 FF13 Mbundu FF13

824 Otulilulaka. This tree has leaves which are used in treating a skin disease.
815 Uwandongulaso. This small tree, only three feet in height, gives straight twigs which are used in making arrow shafts.

FOOD SUPPLY

COLLECTING AND HUNTING

222 462 Collecting of natural products which serve as food substances is chiefly in the hands of women and children, though an exception has to be made in the instance of honey, which is gathered by men and boys.

Boys diligently search for nests, noting their location so as to be able to visit them again when the fledglings are large enough to serve as food. Large numbers of women and children may be seen 252 gathering caterpillars in gourds. The insides of the caterpillars are 222 squeezed into boiling water to make soup.

When a cloud of locusts appears, as in 1925, the creatures are gathered. They are sometimes fried, or they may be boiled in water, dried, and preserved with salt in earthenware pots.

A number of miscellaneous items of the food supply were mentioned in connection with names of trees whose fruits are gathered.

223 [411] Boys engaged in food-gathering usually carry small bows and blunt wooden arrows (ocilasi). One type of bird arrow is fixed to the bowstring. The forward end of the arrow is split so that it may contain small stones that are ejected when the string is released. From the wild fig tree mucilage is obtained and this is boiled until it forms a thick paste which is smeared on the boughs of trees. [231] Some of the small birds captured in this way are eaten, others are kept in wicker cages made by children.

343 171 In all parts of Angola large cylindrical beehives may be seen fixed high in the trees (Plate XC, Fig. 2). Two types of hive have been noted in particular. In the Elende district a hive is made by opposing two half cylinders of wood each about three feet long, so forming a hive which has a diameter of one foot. The ends are covered, with the exception of a small round hole. The whole structure is bound round with grass which is kept in position by lashings of bark. In the neighborhood of Cassanga a difference in the structure of the hives was noticed. This type of hive is made from a cylinder of strong reddish bark, the edges of which are fastened together with stout wooden pegs. The dimensions are the same as for the hive used in Elende, but the hive of bark is uncovered.

231 In the Elende district honey of wild bees is removed from the hives in the months of August and December. One man ascends

[see pp. 138-140, category 116]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

226 962 spear eight feet long, the end of which consisted of ten sharp prongs of palm stem (Plate LXXIII, Fig. 1).

[171] Near Cangamba in eastern Angola, fishing in the Kwando River occupied numerous men and women of the mixed tribes in the district, namely, Vachokue, Luchazi, and Babunda. Men paddled into midstream in small bark canoes from which fishing operations were directed. The fishermen carried small conical string nets, which were attached to stakes in such a way that the openings of the nets faced upstream. Vachokue women, working in pairs, dragged baskets against the current (Plate LXXXV, Figs. 1, 2).

AGRICULTURE AND COOKING

343 243 *Osila* is the Umbundu word for the granary which stands on wooden supports (Plate XLIV, Fig. 1); this *osila* is for the restricted family, and there is one *osila* for every house. The Ovimbundu store their corn in bulk, but in the Esele country I noted that the cobs themselves were carefully packed. Each Ocimbundu girl cultivates a [432] small patch of ground, the produce of which she is at liberty to sell in order to buy brass ornaments, beads, and palm oil.

241 In addition to maize, barley, oats, and wheat, with here and there a little rye, are occasionally grown. There are three colors of beans, red, white, and black. There is no attempt to keep the varieties [651] separate, so they cross-fertilize freely. The Ovimbundu try to [438] cultivate a surplus of beans and maize which they use to pay their taxes to the Portuguese, likewise to sell at the stores of traders.

252 512 Corn is pounded on the rock which has been used for generations after it has been consecrated by sprinkling the blood of a chicken. Pounding begins as early as five o'clock in the morning, before sunrise, and from that time to sunset the pounding-rock is in use. The [521] rock is evidently regarded as a meeting place for social intercourse; it is undoubtedly the center of village gossip so far as the women are concerned (Plate XXXVI, Fig. 2).

As corn alone is considered a poor food, it is sprinkled on boiling water to which beans are added. Cooking goes on from early morning to sunset over a slow fire. Children sometimes receive as their evening meal a thick plastic cake of mashed corn to which green leaves of a squash are added.

252 There are five kinds of manioc resembling one another in general appearance, but the Ovimbundu distinguish the plants, and reserve for each what they consider to be appropriate preparation. The method varies for sweet and bitter varieties of manioc.

Olungunga is not a sweet manioc, so is not eaten raw. The roots are placed to soak in a stream for three or four days before they are roasted on a fire, after which they may be eaten with impunity. As an alternative the roots may be dried in the sun; they are then pounded into meal which is scattered into boiling water so that a mush is formed. The Umbundu name for this preparation is *iputo viatombo*, meaning "mush of manioc." The leaves of *olungunga* are not soaked in water; on the contrary, they may be cooked as soon as they are gathered, but they must not be eaten when warm. There is no danger in eating them after they have been boiled and have been allowed to become cold. The leaves are served with salt or fat. 252 [263]

All the manioc, with the exception of *olungunga*, is sweet. *Kandosa* has roots which may be eaten uncooked, but both leaves and roots are sometimes cooked in water. Other varieties of manioc known as *otetu*, *elembo*, and *esela* are eaten in the same way as *kandosa*. Manioc is in use all the year, but the greatest quantity is consumed in November and December, a period when the growing corn is not ripe and the storage supplies have dwindled. [221]

Sweet potatoes are plentiful all the year with the exception of the months of November and December. They are placed in the pot, without removal of the skin, and boiled for a period of twenty or thirty minutes. They are taken out, peeled, and eaten. European potatoes are sometimes peeled and made into a mush. The variety of garden produce naturally depends on proximity to a trading post, a mission, or some other European settlement. [171]

In propagating manioc a stem is cut off from the parent plant which is about three feet high; but probably two or three years pass before the tubers are considered large enough for use. Sweet potatoes are planted in January, but there is very little of this food available in February and March. Toward the end of March or early in April a few potatoes may be ready for consumption. 244 [221]

Peanuts (*Arachis hypogaea*, Leguminosae) are planted in October by women who prepare patches of ground which are drilled with holes one inch deep and eight inches apart. One nut is placed in each hole after the shell has been removed. Above the ground small leaves appear. After the flower-stalk withers it has the peculiarity of elongating and bending down. In this way the young pod is forced underground, and the seeds mature a little way below the surface.

Some natives employ irrigation by leading small channels of water from a hillside stream to a garden containing maize and 312

312 bananas, but one could not say that irrigation is generally practised, even when circumstances permit.

245 The papaya and the banana are increasingly cultivated, but they are by no means generally distributed. Here and there I [249] have seen a little sugar-cane cultivated by natives for their own [244] use. Near the main railway natives may be seen selling their products, which include cabbages and tomatoes. Some natives are today planting the guava tree which yields sweet palatable fruits. The fruits *olosia* are collected from the *usia* tree. When ripe, the fruit is yellow, round, and about two inches in diameter. These fruits are gathered in September, and the kernels, which are about the size of walnuts, are eaten uncooked. No fruits are collected for storage. *Olombula* fruits ripen in October, when they are eaten raw.

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The cow's tail is used
237 as a sheath for covering the iron shafts of assagais, and it is sometimes made into a switch which the rain-maker uses during his performances.

233 Bulls are castrated when two years old. The wound is rubbed
[232] with ashes, salt, soot, and palm oil. Bullocks are used for riding, also
[492] for pull-carts introduced by the Boers. The herd obtains most of its food by grazing. In the dry season grass withers, with the result that the animals become thin and stall-feeding is necessary. In former days cattle-raiding was a practice of the Ovimbundu, who
233 robbed the Vacilenge. It is certain that the Ovimbundu did not own
174 cattle when they entered Angola. If the general tradition is correct the Ovimbundu came into Angola from a northeasterly direction, from the borders of the Belgian Congo as it is called today; this is not a cattle-raising region.

The Ovimbundu of Elende have a joke against the people of Bailundu, because the latter on first seeing a cow offered the animal some food on a wooden platter. This story suggests that the Bailundu people, who are of the Ovimbundu confederacy, did not know the animal and its habits as early as did the Ovimbundu themselves.

233 Although the Ovimbundu do not usually kill their cattle they may do so in the months of June and July, because at this time pasture is withered and food is scarce. Animals which are diseased, aged, or injured, are killed and eaten.

231 The native pig is distinguishable from European breeds by its long thin snout and slender development. This breed is said by the Director of Animal Husbandry, Humpata, to be the Keltic breed (Plate LV). There is, he says, no evidence to prove that the
[176] Ovimbundu have at any time domesticated pigs from the wild hogs which are to be found in Angola. There is no family which does not own a pig, and on the whole the pig fares much better than the sheep or the goat. The pig receives water and a daily ration of food, which is usually sweet potatoes and their leaves, together with some
232 corn. Male pigs are castrated at any time between the ages of six
(963) months and one year by an operator who is a paid specialist. The fee for castrating a bull is four yards of cloth, but a small gift is considered sufficient reward for performing the operation on a pig.
[282] If a pig is thin, the leather is said to be of good quality and therefore
252 suitable for making sheaths for knives. Usually the flesh of the pig is eaten shortly after the animal has been killed, but the meat of the bullock, on the contrary, is sometimes dried over a fire and preserved. But this is not a general practice as the animals are too valuable to be slaughtered.

235 guese for a long period. The chicken is highly esteemed as a sacrificial
(241) animal, but it could not be said that the flesh is in common use. This
failure to develop and utilize to the full, again raises the point of
social custom and economic habit. Chickens are cared for, as may
be seen in the way they are cooped at night. Sometimes a hen may
be seen sitting on her clutch of eggs in a dark corner of a hut, unmo-
lested by people and dogs; yet it is certain that there is no concen-
tration on the rearing of poultry.

Eggs are laid, and chickens are hatched throughout the year
except in the months of November and December when corn supplies
[262] are at their lowest ebb. Eggs are boiled, or fried on a fragment of
[264] pottery, but they are not sucked.

231 The domestic cat is not raised by the Ovimbundu. Wild cats are
common, but there is no evidence of their domestication. Small
birds and monkeys are sometimes kept as pets.

TRADE AND TRANSPORT

938 Caravan trade, which was at one time an important factor of
tribal life, is now confined to short journeys for transporting corn,
beans, and beeswax to traders' stores. But in spite of present-day
939 decline of transportation the memory of more prosperous times
still exists.

Names of distant places survive in the Umbundu language; thus
Tanganyika is called Nakandundu, while the name for far eastern
Angola is Musimbundu, the name of a one-time important chief.
The Umbundu language is understood in all parts of Angola, far
away from typical Umbundu centers of culture.

1484 In the old days there were professional leaders of caravans, and a
788 ceremony was conducted before starting. The medicine-man and the
778 village chief were the principal performers in a rite which consisted
787 of bringing from its box the head of a former chief, sewn in cuhide.
An animal was sacrificed so that the blood could be used for sprinkling
on the chief's head, and on some occasions of this kind the head was
sewn up in a new piece of cuhide. Direct appeal was made to the
preserved head by the reigning chief, who asked for good fortune on
the journey.

The medicine-man who accompanied a caravan carried with him
a female wooden figure decorated with feathers (Plate XXI, Fig. 5).
When a branching of the paths gave rise to doubts concerning the
correct way the wooden figure was consulted by the medicine-man.

412 fatigue is avoided by the method of holding and swinging so that the work of crushing is done by the weight of the implement.

412 262 Two less usual methods of pulverizing grain are by use of a long pestle, which is worked up and down in a heavy wooden mortar as shown by Plate LXXXIV, Fig. 1, in which Vachokue women are so employed, and the crushing of grain with a cylindrical stone which is rolled on a flat slab. This latter method I judge to be very old, for on a pre-Umbundu site encircled by stone walls I have seen flat slabs of stone and cylindrical rollers. Some of the flat slabs were worn extremely thin in the middle and a few were perforated by the friction.

It is noteworthy that there are rocks especially reserved for the pounding of grain with the wooden mallet. Such rocks are to be [712] found close to every village, and the dedication of a new rock for this purpose requires the killing of a chicken whose blood is sprinkled on the rock.

252 Work of this kind is begun before daybreak. From that time to [512] sunset the pounding of the wooden mallets, accompanied by the singsong of the women, marks the progress of the day's work. At intervals the pounded grain is sifted through the hands and spread out on a basket-work tray, which is shaken to separate the fine meal. The unbroken and partly broken grain is replaced on the rock for further pounding. A small brush of grass is used for bringing together the grain which is dispersed by the blows.

412 The sole implement used in agriculture, which is entirely in the 171 hands of women, is the hoe. Of this implement there are several [862] variations according to locality. The Ovimbundu and others of Ngalangi employ the form illustrated in Plate XIII, Fig. 10. The long handles measuring 85 cm no doubt reduce fatigue by minimizing bending. Both hands are used, and, furthermore, the increased length of the handles must give a greater leverage. The smaller hoe used by Ovimbundu women of Elende has short handles only 51 cm (Plate XIII, Fig. 9), while that from the Esele country is distinguished by a broader blade and still shorter handles only 36 cm in length.

412 Included in the outfit of every Umbundu home is the heavy wooden floor beater. This implement, which is fashioned from a single piece of wood, consists of a narrow handle, round in cross section, and a flat portion for beating the moist, newly made, mud floor of the hut. The total length is about 83 cm.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

338 feet. A trench about eighteen inches deep is dug for the poles (akoso), which form the framework. The wattle work is tied to the uprights with strong strips of red bark before the plastering is begun.
341 The old type of Umbundu house was round, but most of the houses
171 now show a transition to square or rectangular forms (Plate XLIV, Fig. 2).

[531] Exterior wall-painting is found only in the northern districts of Angola (Plate LXXXIX, Fig. 2). Between Saurimo and Malange in the north, rectangular, painted houses are frequently seen. Wall-painting is a cultural trait from the Congo region where that form of decoration is common.

796 The method of forming a village site and the right of the chief to
621 allot land have been described. The house of the chief is the first to be erected. There is drinking of beer to celebrate the completion of the village, and the pots of beer have to be stirred with the claws of chickens; these have been killed to provide blood for sprinkling the walls of the new houses. Village chiefs go through the process of stirring and drinking. The medicine-man drinks first, then he offers the cup to the chief.

344 The communal house is built by the united efforts of all men of
476 the village. Ngonga says, "The king never helps with any of the
[485] building, but he talks very much." The guest house is also built
644 by communal labor. The king of the ombala of Ngalangi told me that a king always uses the house of his predecessor, which must not be pulled down. No repairs are permitted and the house is used until it is absolutely untenable.

359 The interior of a commoner's house has three hearth stones in the
342 middle of the floor, which is of hard mud beaten down with a heavy wooden implement called ocikandalo. The ceremonial placing of the stones has been described in discussing marriage. There is no chimney, consequently the walls and roof are blackened with smoke. The junction of roof and walls provides pockets for the reception of small articles. On the floor near the walls may be several large beer pots. The dark smoky interior is almost intolerable. The sleeping
352 room is sometimes separated from the living room by matting. The bed is made from a cross-work of sticks supported on four Y-shaped posts, one at each corner. On the bed are coarse sleeping mats and possibly a modern blanket.

356 The miscellaneous contents of the hut are gourds, dippers, cooking
252 pots of several sizes, pounders, and baskets. In many of the huts I found cooking going on in the general room, but frequently a sepa-

S: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

rate hut is provided as a kitchen. In some dark corner of the hut there is likely to be a sitting hen or a bitch with pups. Goats and pigs intrude from time to time. Lean dogs scavenge round the doorway. Naked little children whitened with dust play on the floor. A woman crouches over the cooking pot stirring the glutinous mass of corn meal. About sunset men are gathering in the council house to which their meals are sent. 356 252 512

They push forward the logs into the fire, throw their blankets around them and chatter until the women and children arrive with the evening meal. In the vicinity of the village, boys are wandering about with blunt wooden arrows fitted to their bowstrings, to be ready for the homeward flight of birds. Other boys are driving cattle to the kraal.

As darkness falls the long tubular drums are brought out. These are held between the legs and played in compound rhythm (Plate XXVII, Fig. 1). A shuffling dance begins, slowly at first, then with increasing vigor, to be continued far into the night. [535]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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1

2

OCCUPATIONS OF OVIMBUNDU, BLENDE

Fig. 1. Male cotton spinner. Fig. 2. Woman pounding maize

[p. 390]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

252

1

342

2

TYPES OF VACHOKUE, MONA KUIMBUNDU, NORTHEAST ANGOLA

Fig. 1. Woman pounding maize. Fig. 2. Dwelling

[p.438]

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

drinking-mugs, lanterns, metal plates, pens, pencils, wine, and writing slates are bought from the traders. Axe and hoe handles, buckets, bedsteads, beer, bows and arrows, chairs, fish-traps, mats, mush sticks, pottery, pounding-blocks, stools, tables, and small metal objects such as knives are made by Ovimbundu and may be sold locally. To this local trade may be added the selling of pieces of meat by anyone who has killed a pig, or gone hunting and killed a duiker. Very occasionally somebody who has bought cloths in a town or has some hand-made object superior to the local average may tour villages selling his goods as a pedlar.

The only trade which at all recalls the days of the caravan trade is the cattle trade with the Kwanyama Ambo. As in the rubber trade the Ovimbundu make use of their intermediary geographical position. They obtain from Luanda shells called *olomande* (singular *omande*). One of these shells costs 10 escudos (2s. 6d.) at Luanda and ten of them will buy a beast in Kwanyama country. Alternatively 30 rounds of tobacco will buy a beast there. I knew several men who had made, or planned to make, trips of this nature. The analogy with the caravan trade breaks down, however, when the relative importance of the two is examined. The caravan trade determined the economic standards of the Ovimbundu, absorbed a great part of the time of every able-bodied man and youth, and influenced every aspect of Umbundu life from the foreign policy of the kings to accusations of sorcery; the cattle-keeping is relatively unimportant economically since the Ovimbundu do not drink milk, and eat meat, even chicken or pork, very irregularly, nor does the occasional sale of cattle to traders altogether balance their uncertain survival away from their indigenous grasses. The real importance of cattle in the economy seems to be as a form of capital investment for spare savings, an investment which can be liquidated either by sacrifice on ceremonial occasions or back into money by sale. Socially, it may be thought of as marking the survival of the Umbundu capacity and enthusiasm for trading in an age when the economic situation has closed the old routes. Indeed, perhaps the subconscious motive for the Ovimbundu who trade is to show that they can act outside of that economic framework of cultivation

2: McCulloch E-4 (1945-51) 1952 FP13 Mbundu FP13

Ovimbundu women braid their hair neatly in strands across their foreheads, and decorate the braids with small blue and white trade beads.[1] 302

MAIN FEATURES OF ECONOMY

AGRICULTURE[2]

Main crops are maize and several kinds of beans. Subsidiary crops include: sorghum, kaffir corn, emmer wheat, manioc, peanuts, squash, sweet potatoes, garden vegetables, a little rice, cotton, sugar-cane and tobacco. Fruit-trees such as the papaya, banana, loquat, tangerine, lemon, peach and apple, are increasingly cultivated, and, to some extent, coffee. Upland fields for the principal crops of maize and beans are cultivated during the rainy season, and, to piece out the harvest, river gardens for secondary crops are used in the dry season. 241

The principal corn-gardens

Traditionally men work with their wives in the heavier labour of clearing new fields, but today the demands of contract labour are such that few are able to help.[3] Before the rains begin in early September, women prepare the fields for planting. If a new plot is to be used, it is first cleared with a small hatchet. Tree stumps are left two or three feet high; after the field has been cultivated for a year or two and the tree-stumps have dried and rotted, they are burned off and cleared away. When the rainy season has set in and the ground is thoroughly wet, the main corn-fields are planted. The ground is dug with a hoe and ridged slightly, the ridges following the contour of the land, so that the rain will not wash away the soil, and so that the moisture will be held. Occasionally irrigation is used, small channels being led from hillside streams to the gardens. Maize is dropped by hand on the ridges, and the seeds covered with the foot. Beans and squash are planted with the corn. In January there is usually a break in the rains, and this is the time when the bean crop ripens. (This is a critical period, since if the dry spell lasts too long the corn crop is blighted, but if it is too short the beans will not ripen.) The vines are pulled up and put in the field hut to dry. Later the beans are beaten out of the pods and stored. 241 [462] [312]

In each field there is a grass hut, which is used as a shelter from showers, as a place for drying beans or corn, and as living quarters when the corn is sprouting. (When a woman decides that it would be more convenient to live by her field, which requires constant guarding against birds, she may live in her field hut with her children for several weeks.) 241 343

As the dry season commences, the corn crop ripens. When it is ripe, it is plucked, dried and shelled, and stored in the *osila*, a granary on posts, for future use. One *osila* is used for each household. When required, the corn is hulled and pounded into the meal which forms the staple food.[4] [257] [252]

(1) Hambly pp.129-32, and illustrations; Childs, personal communication.
(2) Cushman, 1944, pp.72-8; Hambly, (2) 1934, pp.146-8, and Childs, personal communication. (3) Childs, personal communication.
(4) For a good description of the preparation of corn-meal, see Cushman, pp.77-8.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

the tree in order to lower the hive with a long rope of bark or plaited 231
fiber, while beneath the tree men are prepared to take the hive, which is opened over a smoky fire. The men wear no protection, consequently they are badly stung. Boys are encouraged to help, and those who run away receive no honey. Honey may be eaten 263
alone or with manioc. No drink is made from honey only, but 273
ochaua is the name given to beer with honey in it. *Ovingundu* is a drink made from pounded corn which has been soaked in water to which a little honey has been added. The drink is allowed to remain untouched over night; thus it becomes sweet and is mildly intoxicating.

Wax is a very important item of trade. In the remote places 439
natives bring to small trading posts balls of wax which are about 257
two pounds in weight. These in former days were a standard of [436]
exchange in terms of which other values could be measured. These balls of wax are made into large cakes for foreign export. In the Easle country a fiber strainer is used for cleaning the wax. Honey is sometimes dried in very large baskets which are three feet in diameter and two inches deep. These baskets were not observed among the Ovimbundu, but they are used in the region of Cassanga in southern Angola. The honey of wild bees when eaten in the comb is palatable; it would be more so if one could disregard the presence of numerous dead bees.

The bow is the chief weapon of the hunter. The release of the 411
arrow is made with the index and middle fingers (Plate XXXIX, 171
Fig. 1). I have observed this method among the Ovimbundu of 224
the Benguela Highlands, in the region of Kipungo, in the far south among the Valuanyama, and among the Vasele of the Novo Redondo hinterland. Arrows differ considerably in pattern as the illustrations show (Plate XVII, Figs. 1-9); the Ovimbundu have arrow-points of excellent workmanship. The manufacture of these arrow-points is [326]
one of the most skilled occupations of the blacksmith. Each man makes his own shafts and feathers them. The arrows of the Vasele have leaf-shaped iron points; so also have those used by the Valuanyama.

Among the Ovimbundu are specialists who make bows from [463]
elastic woods called *usia* and *osambia*. The bow itself is *ohonji* and the arrow is *usongo*. At the third shot I saw a young Ocimbundu boy split a cane which was placed upright at a distance of thirty-three feet. The throwing club (*ohunja*) is used for killing small game such as hares.

843 supposed to have intercourse with his wife during her pregnancy, but this custom of continence is declining.

A pregnant woman in particular must not steal. If she does so, her child will refuse to be born until some one present at the confinement goes out and steals something.

Eating the flesh of a hare during pregnancy will give the baby a split lip. If the flesh of the owl is eaten, the baby will have large round eyes.

The expectant mother must not sit on a mortar, a pestle, or a piece of rock; if she does so, labor will be prolonged.

[261] A pregnant woman takes earth from just outside her door. She drinks this in water so that the placenta will be delivered whole.

A pregnant woman is not supposed to carry anything in her cloth. If she does so, the child will have a long head.

A pregnant woman is a potential corpse. A man ought not to quarrel with his pregnant wife and if she says angry things to him he should not reply. He would not speak to a corpse in anger; on the contrary, he would respect a corpse; he must, therefore, respect a pregnant woman. It is a bad omen to see a pregnant woman up in a tree. A man who sees such a woman is expected to shoot her.

[593] If a pregnant woman has scolded her husband and is sorry, she goes out to the fields. There she gets her cloth covered with burrs then returns home. If her husband begins to pick off the burrs there is reconciliation.

842 There are several arrangements whereby a woman who has borne only girls may secure male births, provided she can find a woman who has borne only boys and is anxious to have a girl. The simplest way of reversing the births is for the women to exchange belts. The belt is a string, or possibly a plaited fiber girdle an inch in width which is worn next to the body. From this string depends the woman's lower garment. A second way of reversing the births is for the women to make an exchange of food through a hole in the wall of a hut. The food is handed in on a basket tray. The woman inside the hut receives the food while standing with her back to the hole; she then places the food under the bed. The tray is handed back through the hole by the recipient who still keeps her back to the aperture. There is a third method whereby a woman who has borne boys may be made to bear girls, and *vice versa*. The woman who has borne only boys gives to the woman who has borne only girls, an arrow, a knife, a bow, and an ax. The articles given in return are a pounding stick, a broom, a tray and a basket. The value

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

621 they recognize Sekulu Sikilili, the elder of the largest unit, as the village headman. Only in his village is there a dancing floor [345] (ocili),[1] which is the centre of village life, social, legal, and recreational. As the name indicates, it is first and foremost a place for recreation, but here also religious functions are held since they involve so much dancing and drinking, and here formal cases are tried. The *ocili* is the heart of the village.

345 *The Men's Club-House.* Ngendo does not have that other important Umbundu institution, the Men's Club House (*onjango*).[2] The *onjango* is, or was, hardly less important than the *ocili*. Perhaps before it fell to its present state of disuse, its place was of even greater importance, for in the *onjango* all the men, youths, and boys gathered day by day for the evening meal. From all the [262] kitchens came baskets of stiff corn porridge (*iputa*), and dishes of relish (*ombelela*)[3] which all shared, from the most honoured guest or the village elders, down to the naked, ash-whitened little boys just old enough (say from seven or eight years) to leave the kitchens [574] to their mothers and sisters. In the *onjango* guests were entertained, judicial cases of lesser import were settled, the day's work and gossip discussed, and youth was educated by precept and example in nearly everything from traditional history to etiquette. The *onjango* was dining-room, living-room, court, school, hotel, and club, all in one. For some of the Ovimbundu it continues to function. Upon inquiry I found that in all Kasonge there were hardly ten villages where the *onjango* existed and retained its [466] former functions. The reasons which my informants assigned are that the demands for road work (in the immediate region), for contract labour (involving absences of from six months to two years), and the difficulty of securing tax-money, did not leave the leisure required for the common meal in the *onjango*. When I 345 made wider inquiries as to localities where the *onjango* now exists 178 and retains its former functions, it seems that this institution is widely decadent. According to my information, the regions where it continues to function are chiefly in Ngalangi, in Viye, and

104 [1] *Ocili* comes from the verb *oku cili*, to dance.

[2] *Onjango* has been traced to the verb *oku ungula*, to converse, but I am doubtful of this derivation. It has been called 'The Palaver House', but this is an evident misnomer, for the *onjango* is much more than that.

[3] *Ombelela* is a word to cover any dish which may be eaten with the porridge staple. It may be meat, beans, mushrooms, or greens, and is prefered with gravy into which pieces of the stiff porridge may be dipped (*oku ulika*).

233 The cattle herd obtains most of its food by grazing, but in the dry
[509] season the grass withers. Childs states[1] that "Herding has been a function of the sister's son, and even now there is a reluctance on the part of the boys to herd for their fathers."

235 462 [544] Chickens are owned and looked after by both men and women, but other animals only by men. Boys may have small stock of their own, and a boy's economic independence most frequently begins with his owning a chicken.

231 Hambly states that goats are more common than any other animal, and that every family has one or more. These animals are not fed or watered, but are allowed to wander to find their own sustenance. Goats are not milked. Young males are castrated. The goat is frequently used in sacrifices. Sheep also are allowed to find their own food; the males are not castrated. Pigs are cared for comparatively carefully, receiving water and a daily supply of sweet potatoes and their leaves, together with some corn. Male pigs are castrated.[2]

APICULTURE[3]

[439] Beeswax was an important item of trade in the caravan days, and is still sold to Portuguese traders' stores, where it is moulded into large rectangular cakes for export. Honey is eaten alone or with manioc, and a fermented beer called ochase is made by adding honey to corn-beer. [262] [273] [255] Fibre strainers are used for cleaning the wax, and large shallow baskets are employed for drying the honey in the sun.

Large cylindrical hives, which are private property, are placed high in the trees. These are made by removing a cylinder of bark and lashing the halves together with strands of bark, forming a hive which has a diameter of one foot.

In Elende honey is removed from the hives during the months of August and December. One man ascends the tree in order to lower the hive with a long rope of bark or plaited fibre, while beneath the tree men are prepared to take the hive, which is opened over a smoky fire.

ARTS AND CRAFTS

326 582 Smithing. The profession of blacksmith or ocivinda is an important one, and, like hunting and divining, is sacred and is entered with special ritual. Often, but not always, these three professions are passed on by inheritance. For smithing two years' apprenticeship to a member of the profession is necessary, and is usually entered upon at the age of eighteen. At the end of this period the master examines his pupil, and makes tools for him, especially the heavy hammer or ovjundo which is regarded as symbolic of his craft. For the inauguration ceremony the boy provides four chickens (2 male, 2 female), a dog, and a goat; the blood of these animals is sprinkled on his tools, and their flesh is eaten at a feast [553] attended by the villagers. Throughout the procedure the boy remains standing on the small anvil. Finally he is asked to choose his professional name; he then steps down from the anvil a qualified blacksmith.

(1) Childs, 1949, p.100. (3) Hambly, op.cit., p.154.
(2) Hambly, (4) 1954.

3; Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

171 wide distribution in Africa (C. Wiedemann, 1909) and the ceremony
175 still survives among the Ovimbundu in modified form.

[114] Though an informative writer, Monteiro is sometimes vague; he says (I, p. 278) that circumcision is a universal custom among the blacks of Angola. In view of the extent of Angola, the diversity of tribes, and the fact that Monteiro traveled over only a small part of the country, this information is misleading.

Monteiro is the only writer in whose works I have found a reference to the Vasele tribe; probably no part of Angola has been so neglected as the Esele country in the hinterland of Novo Redondo. At the present day the Vasele have a reputation for cannibalism.
[266] Monteiro saw human flesh eaten at Cuacra, while the skulls of the victims were placed on adjacent trees. Monteiro states (II, p. 167) that on the death of a king the Mucelis (Vasele) put out all the fires in the kingdom; these were relighted by the succeeding king who
[321] used fire produced by rubbing two sticks together. The flat beads of shell called *dongos*, made from *Achatina monsteria* (II, p. 168), are made today and traded to the far south of Angola, where their novelty assures them a value far beyond their intrinsic worth. I was fortunate in obtaining an example of the old beheading ax mentioned by Monteiro (II, p. 157) and sketched by Cavazzi (p. 210). Par-
[262] boiled and roasted rats were offered to me as food; Monteiro mentions the offering of a roasted rat on a skewer (I, p. 99).

The account of Commander V. L. Cameron, who left Zanzibar for his journey across Africa in 1873, mentions several points of anthropological importance in relation to the Angolan section of his
[756] journey. Cameron saw a net-covered medicine-man of the Kibokue (Vachokue) wearing a mask and a kilt of grass (p. 384). The function
[524] of this man was to frighten devils from the woods. The contest in which boys discharge their arrows at a rolling root was seen by Cameron near Kagnombe (Cangamba?). Skulls of victims killed in
[787] war were spiked on poles (p. 399). The diviner was followed by attendants who struck iron gongs, while the diviner himself shook a rattle made of basket-work in the form of a dumb-bell (p. 404). Cameron gives an accurate description of the divination basket and its use without going into details. These I have been able to supply
[482] (chapter IX). The explorer met caravans of Bihéans, renowned carriers then as they are today. They were usually drunk and abusive; in some instances they attempted to rob the stragglers.
000 The use of caterpillars as food is noted (p. 416): "A man cut open

The use of caterpillars as food is noted (p. 416): "A man cut open [262]
a large cocoon, extracted the contents, and smacked his lips with 171
great gusto." My field notes mention the use of caterpillars as food. 175

Capello and Ivens (1877–80) remark on the burial places of [766]
hunters which are distinguishable by the skulls of antelopes, buffalo, and hippopotamuses, stuck on upright poles, mixed with skulls of oxen killed in honor of the defunct. The writers noted that a heap of stones protected the body. I photographed two types of cairn in the regions of Ganda and Luimbale respectively. Capello and Ivens are not precise in their locality, but I judge it to have been Long. 17° E. and Lat. 13° S., a considerable distance from my own observations (Plates XXXIII, Fig. 1; LXXIV, Fig. 1).

I photographed the stilt-walkers at the final stages of the initiation [481]
ceremonies at Cangamba. These men had no costumes; on the [292]
contrary they were almost naked but were covered with white clay. Capello and Ivens (p. 295), saw a stilt-walker with a feathered mask and a netting costume. Such attire I saw on an Uluchazi medicine-man, but not on the stilt-walkers (Plate LXXXI, Figs. 1, 2).

I was unable to obtain information about the stilt-walkers, but 693
Capello states that they castigated misdemeanants, punished shameless women, and accused criminals. Capello and Ivens were 187 miles to the northwest of my area of observation. The Uluchazi medicine-man, who appeared with the stilt-walkers during my visits, was said to make bad magic for women. The men ignored him but women gathered round in a derisive way; they quickly scattered when he pursued them.

Serpa Pinto, who made his journey across Angola in 1878, has 175
so many references to customs and objects still extant, that I propose 114
to tabulate his observations because of their value in showing the preservation of indigenous traits in spite of Portuguese contacts.

The body of a chief is buried with a covering of oxhide. Many 175
oxen are sacrificed at the death of a king. The heir to the deceased 766
is bound to sacrifice his whole herd in order to regale his people and give peace to the departed (S. Pinto, I, p. 63). The Ovimbundu conform at the present time to similar methods of burial and sacrifice.

Near Huambo, Serpa Pinto saw in every village a kind of "temple 175
for conversation." This is the *onjango*, that I have described and [345]
photographed (Plate XLVIII, Fig. 1). It is the house in which all males foregather for the evening meal, which is brought by their women (I, p. 96).

The gathering and eating of caterpillars is described. This con- [262]
tinues today (I, p. 120).

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

maker's dance seen at Ngongo, a village of Ngalangi in east-central Angola, will be described in dealing with the *ocimbanda* (chapter IX). 821

No man thinks that the course of the sun can be altered, but there seems to be a hope that the setting of the sun may be delayed. A man who is likely to be overtaken by darkness breaks a piece from an ant hill. This fragment is placed in the forked branch of a tree while the supplicant says, "Sun, wait a little while for me." (786)

Months are reckoned by observation of the moon. The new moon is *osoi* ("moon") *yokaliye* ("new"). There is no word for half moon. The phrase for full moon is *osoi ya tunga ohumba*. *Ohumba* means "basket"; therefore the idea appears to be that the full moon is round like the big basket used for field work.

A star is called *olumbungululu*. To describe a shooting star, the word *luenda* ("it goes") is added. The large bright morning star is *tanda*. Another bright star is *tielele*. Three bright stars in a line are the hunter, the dog, and the quarry. The three stars are *ukongo* ("hunter"), *lombua* ("the dog"), *locinyama* ("the animal").

An eclipse of the sun is *uteke vutanya*. The former word means "night," the latter word means "daylight." Hence the meaning is "night in daylight."

Small mammals are captured in cane traps or stunned with blunt wooden arrows. The pursuit of such animals is a pastime for boys who thereby receive their early training in hunting. Rats are used as food after being boiled and roasted. This fact accounts for interest in the following small mammals. 224 825 [262]

Umbili. This is a big black river rat, the largest of the water rats.

Ocifelefele. A big gray water rat (*Cricetomys?*), not so large as *umbili*.

Kalefe. A river rat something like the preceding one in appearance. *Kalefe* can stay in the water for a longer period than that endured by *ocifelefele*.

Epeke. This is a bush rat which is light gray in color.

Ekolongonje. This rat stays in the bush. It builds a nest in an ant hill from which it comes out only at night. The color is gray.

Elima (*Epomophorus*). This is the name given to the fruit bat. The word *elima* means "not one thing and not another." Thus *elima* is the word applied to a mulatto; he is not a Negro, not a white man.

Ocili (*Rhabdomys*). This is a large light brown mouse having white stripes on his back.

Ongenge. A mouse.

Epengue. A black rat.

Ocipili. A mouse with a long thin nose; probably a shrew.

Ozinge. This is a very fat mouse.

Nakalongaku. This very small mouse makes a hole around which he piles grass to conceal the entrance.

Onjombeloko (*Lemniscomys*). A mouse with a stripe on his back.

Kondoti (*Dendromus*). A very little mouse something like *nakalongaku*.

312 bananas, but one could not say that irrigation is generally practised, even when circumstances permit.

245 The papaya and the banana are increasingly cultivated, but they are by no means generally distributed. Here and there I [249] have seen a little sugar-cane cultivated by natives for their own use. Near the main railway natives may be seen selling their [244] products, which include cabbages and tomatoes. Some natives are today planting the guava tree which yields sweet palatable fruits. The fruits elaeis are collected from the ussis tree. When ripe, the fruit is yellow, round, and about two inches in diameter. These fruits are gathered in September, and the kernels, which are about the size of walnuts, are eaten uncooked. No fruits are collected for storage. *Olombala* fruits ripen in October, when they are eaten raw.

264 Each wife sends the food which she has cooked in her own kitchen to the *ongango* ("council house"). After carrying the food to this house of assembly, where the men meet each evening, the women return to their houses to eat alone, or with the young children.

343 When there is a plurality of wives each has her own house and 252 kitchen. Ngonga states that separate kitchens built outside the [595] living houses are becoming more rare. The poor have their kitchens in the living room because they cannot provide separate structures for living and cooking.

264 The first meal is taken between five and six o'clock in the morning, ● 262 the most usual food being meal sprinkled on boiling water to form 252 a paste which is eaten with sweet potatoes. A mush of beans is eaten at night; generally there is no meal at midday. Three pounds of cooked beans are eaten by a person for one meal. Over the cooking pots leaves are placed to keep in the steam, especially when the pot contains sweet potatoes. I have made a meal from the sticky, gluey paste which results from sprinkling meal on boiling water. The chief objection to this food is the unpleasant quantity of grit in the meal, owing to the fact that it is pounded on the rocks. Manioc and sugar-cane are chewed at irregular intervals of the day.

262 The amount of meat consumed by the Ovimbundu is small in comparison with the quantity of vegetable food used. This adoption of diet of a particular kind is largely a matter of habit, and there is no good reason why meat should not form a larger proportion of the food supply. The Ovimbundu do not kill their cattle for food though they will eat the meat of oxen which have died from natural causes.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FF13 Mbundu FF13

The flesh of goats, sheep, and pigs might be more frequently used if these animals were bred and cared for under some system of animal husbandry. The Ovimbundu are familiar with the preservation of meat by smoking and drying it, because flesh of animals killed in the chase is sometimes preserved in this way by hunters, yet the method is not widely and constantly applied in order to assure a regular supply of meat. 262 (33) 251

Failure to utilize the milk of cattle and goats is another example of the neglect of useful commodities. The Vacilenge, who are near neighbors of the Ovimbundu, milk their cows as do the Ovimbundu themselves in some districts, though the practice is by no means general. Even where cows are milked, butter and cheese are not made, though the Ovimbundu know of the process, which is practised by the Vakuanyama of southern Angola. 234 171

There are three kinds of beer. *Ociosagua* is a sweet beer which even children may drink because it is not intoxicating. Water is heated slowly in the pot but not boiled; meanwhile meal of Kafir corn or maize is added. Pounded sweet potato is strained in such a way that the liquid part goes into the beer pot; the residual mush is given to pigs. After the beer has cooled out of doors, it is transferred to a large gourd and allowed to stand over night. Next day it is considered a fit drink to consume or to offer to visitors (Plate XXIII, Fig. 3). 272

The making of an intoxicating beer *ekundi* proceeds as for *ociosagua*, but instead of adding strained liquid from sweet potatoes a root called *embundi* is included in the brew. The large pot containing this beer is covered tightly and allowed to stand untouched for twenty-four hours, at the end of which time it is a potent drink. It is important to note that the corn is allowed to sprout in the ground before it is made into the infusion to which the root *embundi* is added. 273

Ociombombo is a strongly intoxicating drink. In order to prepare this brew, corn is soaked for a week; then it is left in the ground for the same length of time until it has germinated. It is then pounded on the rocks and placed in large pots filled with water to which sweet meal of corn is added. Simmering over the fire is continued for two days with constant stirring. This brew differs from *ekundi* in the longer germination of the corn and the longer period of simmering. On the fourth day after the simmering is completed the drink is said to be ready for consumption. If the people have honey, they add some to the brew on the third day of standing. My inform-

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

Goats are more common than any other animal; there are few, 231
if any, families which do not own one or more goats. These animals are not fed or watered. Goats are able to exist on almost any kind of vegetation; consequently these animals are, almost without exception, well nourished. Goats are not milked. Kids are born at any time of the year, and the young males are castrated. The hides are used for making bags. The goat has the misfortune to be the most [782] desirable sacrificial animal. This is not entirely due to the fact that it is cheap and easily obtainable. The sheep is said to be unsuitable as a sacrifice, because it does not make a noise when killed. The [237] hair of the goat is used for making an ornament named osala, which is worn by medicine-men.

Sheep are of the long-tailed Syrian breed. Like the goats, the sheep are not cared for in any way; they find their own pasture and water, and in doing so may wander for a considerable distance, though they always return to the village at sunset. The males are not castrated. Sheep are not so frequently kept as are goats and pigs. The skin is used for making bags. Twin births of calves, kids, or lambs are not regarded with awe; on the contrary, such births are welcome.

Almost every man keeps one or more dogs, and I have rarely seen a hut in which there were no dogs. Usually young puppies are near the fire, and on the whole dogs are well treated because they are valuable in hunting. They also give warning of the approach of hyenas, lions, and leopards. I have frequently seen a person run into the road to pick up a dog when an automobile is approaching. A tendency to improve the breed of dogs by crossing the lean native animal with a breed of large dogs from South Africa has been mentioned. In contrast with the generally considerate treatment of dogs by the Ovimbundu one has to note the very emaciated and diseased condition of dogs in the Esele country. Among the Ovimbundu dogs [262] are regarded as desirable food.

Sacrifice of a dog at the inauguration of a blacksmith will presently be described. A medicine-man who is about to perform a ceremony for curing the sick has to make a meal of dog's flesh, but otherwise the flesh of the dog is taboo to him. These points of ceremony, taken in conjunction with the food value of the animal, and its use in hunting, show that the dog is highly esteemed.

Poultry are of very mixed breeds. The standards of size and 235
weight are higher than is usual in African chickens, a fact which is perhaps attributable to contact of the Ovimbundu with the Portu-

235 (244) guese for a long period. The chicken is highly esteemed as a sacrificial animal, but it could not be said that the flesh is in common use. This failure to develop and utilize to the full, again raises the point of social custom and economic habit. Chickens are cared for, as may be seen in the way they are cooped at night. Sometimes a hen may be seen sitting on her clutch of eggs in a dark corner of a hut, unmolested by people and dogs; yet it is certain that there is no concentration on the rearing of poultry.

Eggs are laid, and chickens are hatched throughout the year except in the months of November and December when corn supplies [252] are at their lowest ebb. Eggs are boiled, or fried on a fragment of [264] pottery, but they are not sucked.

231 The domestic cat is not raised by the Ovimbundu. Wild cats are common, but there is no evidence of their domestication. Small birds and monkeys are sometimes kept as pets.

TRADE AND TRANSPORT

938 Caravan trade, which was at one time an important factor of tribal life, is now confined to short journeys for transporting corn, beans, and beeswax to traders' stores. But in spite of present-day 939 decline of transportation the memory of more prosperous times still exists.

Names of distant places survive in the Umbundu language; thus Tanganyika is called Nakandundu, while the name for far eastern Angola is Muacimbundu, the name of a one-time important chief. The Umbundu language is understood in all parts of Angola, far away from typical Umbundu centers of culture.

484 In the old days there were professional leaders of caravans, and a 788 ceremony was conducted before starting. The medicine-man and the 778 village chief were the principal performers in a rite which consisted 787 of bringing from its box the head of a former chief, sewn in oxhide. An animal was sacrificed so that the blood could be used for sprinkling on the chief's head, and on some occasions of this kind the head was sewn up in a new piece of oxhide. Direct appeal was made to the preserved head by the reigning chief, who asked for good fortune on the journey.

The medicine-man who accompanied a caravan carried with him a female wooden figure decorated with feathers (Plate XXI, Fig. 5). When a branching of the paths gave rise to doubts concerning the correct way the wooden figure was consulted by the medicine-man.

The hare is not carried over the shoulder, but has a ceremonial conveyance slung on poles (*ewanda*) which are supported on the shoulders of two or even four men. 796 643

Laying the evil of a village on a goat, which is then driven out to die, is an Umbundu custom. The scapegoat ceremony has a cleansing function similar in purpose to the rekindling of fire for the community. Cavazzi pictured and described the scapegoat ceremony in the seventeenth century, and Ngonga informed me that he saw the rite twenty years ago. 783

PROHIBITIONS AND OMENS

There is a taboo against killing *oku kulu*, which is the yellow-backed duiker. When Ngonga was sick he was forbidden to eat the flesh of the duiker (*ombambi*); neither is this flesh to be eaten by people who suffer from dizziness. In former days women were not allowed to eat eggs. The flesh of sheep and goats is said to be indigestible for children between the ages of three and six years. The flesh of the lion, leopard, and hyena is forbidden as food for the king, but other people may eat it. The king is in fact forbidden to eat the flesh of any animal which has paws; neither may he eat flesh of the bush buck. A medicine-man must not eat flesh of a dog except before a ceremony for curing the sick. The taboo against dog's flesh applies also to the diet of a king. 262 ● [693]

A woman must not step over the legs of a male, neither must a man step over the legs of a woman; for to do so causes weakness of the knees. A man or woman may step over the legs of a child. 784

Omens are numerous. It is unfortunate to see a snake holding a frog, and the person who observes this should go to the medicine-man at once. When going to a village to be tried by the chief it is bad to meet some one who is carrying a bark rope, as this indicates binding and punishment. If a person who is setting out from home meets a woman carrying corn meal or any other white substance, he or she must take a little of the meal, whiten the face, and all will be well. A fly in the mouth is a good sign, because the fly knows where meat is to be obtained and is trying to lead the way. 787

A stranger visiting a village is pleased when a dog is the first animal to enter the guest house. Dogs are fed, so the entry of a dog is a sign that the visitor will receive food. On the contrary, the appearance of a goat is a bad omen, because goats are not fed; they pick up a frugal living as best they can. Other prohibitions and omens have been mentioned in discussing the pregnancy of women. [574]

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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ing home from labour in October wants cleared fields to sow. If he cannot find any kinsman who would give him a cleared field he will have to buy one, and will have perhaps to pay 200 escudos (£2 10s.). A man retains his rights to fields in a village he no longer inhabits.

The Ovimbundu keep cattle, sheep, goats, pigs, and fowls. The cattle are not milked but are used in sacrifices, and for fines; some have been brought by Ovimbundu from Kwanyama Ambo country but they do not seem to thrive in this neighbourhood. Sheep are few. In my village goats were much less numerous than chickens or pigs. The traders and European residents buy cattle, chickens, and pigs.

Fishing and hunting are practised, but despite the ingenious fish-traps, nets, poisons and weirs used for the first, and the popular enthusiasm for, and ritual associations of the second, neither dominates the actual food supply and ecological background in the way that maize does.

The Ovimbundu believe that the dry-season grass fires also help to fertilize the soil by leaving ashes. Ashes are sometimes spread in a village garden, and dry grass may also be left in a field for this purpose. Soil beside trees is considered to be especially rich, as to some extent are the sites of former villages. There is no idea of crop rotation and a field is worked for as long as it is fertile, that is indefinitely for an *osaka* and from three to six years, sometimes more, for a field of the *epa* type. The hoe is still the standard means of cultivation and the plough is a rarity.

Coffee-growing on any scale is usually undertaken by people living away from the villages, except for the Protestants who have been encouraged by their missionaries to plant coffee in their villages. Coffee, like maize, is bought by the traders. However, at least two local coffee-growers sold their coffee at Porto Amboim on the coast to get a better price. Basically, the agricultural economy of the neighbourhood is based on maize, grown by methods of shifting cultivation. The frequency with which villages rise and fall and individuals change from one village to another is entirely consistent with this type of agriculture.

Axe and hoe blades, blankets, cloths, clothing, cutlery,

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drinking-mugs, lanterns, metal plates, pens, pencils, wine, and writing slates are bought from the traders. Axe and hoe handles, buckets, bedsteads, beer, bows and arrows, chairs, fish-traps, mats, mush sticks, pottery, pounding-blocks, stools, tables, and small metal objects such as knives are made by Ovimbundu and may be sold locally. To this local trade may be added the selling of pieces of meat by anyone who has killed a pig, or gone hunting and killed a duiker. Very occasionally somebody who has bought cloths in a town or has some hand-made object superior to the local average may tour villages selling his goods as a pedlar.

The only trade which at all recalls the days of the caravan trade is the cattle trade with the Kwanyama Ambo. As in the rubber trade the Ovimbundu make use of their intermediary geographical position. They obtain from Luanda shells called *elomande* (singular *emande*). One of these shells costs 10 escudos (2s. 6d.) at Luanda and ten of them will buy a beast in Kwanyama country. Alternatively 30 rounds of tobacco will buy a beast there. I knew several men who had made, or planned to make, trips of this nature. The analogy with the caravan trade breaks down, however, when the relative importance of the two is examined. The caravan trade determined the economic standards of the Ovimbundu, absorbed a great part of the time of every able-bodied man and youth, and influenced every aspect of Umbundu life from the foreign policy of the kings to accusations of sorcery; the cattle-keeping is relatively unimportant economically since the Ovimbundu do not drink milk, and eat meat, even chicken or pork, very irregularly, nor does the occasional sale of cattle to traders altogether balance their uncertain survival away from their indigenous grasses. The real importance of cattle in the economy seems to be as a form of capital investment for spare savings, an investment which can be liquidated either by sacrifice on ceremonial occasions or back into money by sale. Socially, it may be thought of as marking the survival of the Umbundu capacity and enthusiasm for trading in an age when the economic situation has closed the old routes. Indeed, perhaps the subconscious motive for the Ovimbundu who trade is to show that they can act outside of that economic framework of cultivation

the tree in order to lower the hive with a long rope of bark or plaited 231
fiber, while beneath the tree men are prepared to take the hive, which is opened over a smoky fire. The men wear no protection, consequently they are badly stung. Boys are encouraged to help, and those who run away receive no honey. Honey may be eaten 263
alone or with manioc. No drink is made from honey only, but 273
ochasa is the name given to beer with honey in it. *Ovingundu* is a drink made from pounded corn which has been soaked in water to which a little honey has been added. The drink is allowed to remain untouched over night; thus it becomes sweet and is mildly intoxicating.

Wax is a very important item of trade. In the remote places 439
natives bring to small trading posts balls of wax which are about 257
two pounds in weight. These in former days were a standard of [436]
exchange in terms of which other values could be measured. These balls of wax are made into large cakes for foreign export. In the Esele country a fiber strainer is used for cleaning the wax. Honey is sometimes dried in very large baskets which are three feet in diameter and two inches deep. These baskets were not observed among the Ovimbundu, but they are used in the region of Cassanga in southern Angola. The honey of wild bees when eaten in the comb is palatable; it would be more so if one could disregard the presence of numerous dead bees.

The bow is the chief weapon of the hunter. The release of the 411
arrow is made with the index and middle fingers (Plate XXXIX, 171
Fig. 1). I have observed this method among the Ovimbundu of 224
the Benguela Highlands, in the region of Kipungo, in the far south among the Vakuanyama, and among the Vasele of the Novo Redondo hinterland. Arrows differ considerably in pattern as the illustrations show (Plate XVII, Figs. 1-9); the Ovimbundu have arrow-points of excellent workmanship. The manufacture of these arrow-points is [326]
one of the most skilled occupations of the blacksmith. Each man makes his own shafts and feathers them. The arrows of the Vasele have leaf-shaped iron points; so also have those used by the Vakuanyama.

Among the Ovimbundu are specialists who make bows from [463]
elastic woods called *usia* and *osambia*. The bow itself is *ohonji* and the arrow is *usongo*. At the third shot I saw a young Ocimbundu boy split a cane which was placed upright at a distance of thirty-three feet. The throwing club (*ohunya*) is used for killing small game such as hares.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

Olungunga is not a sweet manioc, so is not eaten raw. The roots are placed to soak in a stream for three or four days before they are roasted on a fire, after which they may be eaten with impunity. As an alternative the roots may be dried in the sun; they are then pounded into meal which is scattered into boiling water so that a mush is formed. The Umbundu name for this preparation is *iputa viutombo*, meaning "mush of manioc." The leaves of *olungunga* are not soaked in water; on the contrary, they may be cooked as soon as they are gathered, but they must not be eaten when warm. There is no danger in eating them after they have been boiled and have been allowed to become cold. The leaves are served with salt or fat. 252 [263]

All the manioc, with the exception of *olungunga*, is sweet. *Kandona* has roots which may be eaten uncooked, but both leaves and roots are sometimes cooked in water. Other varieties of manioc known as *otetu*, *elemba*, and *esela* are eaten in the same way as *kandona*. Manioc is in use all the year, but the greatest quantity is consumed in November and December, a period when the growing corn is not ripe and the storage supplies have dwindled. [221]

Sweet potatoes are plentiful all the year with the exception of the months of November and December. They are placed in the pot, without removal of the skin, and boiled for a period of twenty or thirty minutes. They are taken out, peeled, and eaten. European potatoes are sometimes peeled and made into a mush. The variety of garden produce naturally depends on proximity to a trading post, a mission, or some other European settlement. [177]

In propagating manioc a stem is cut off from the parent plant which is about three feet high; but probably two or three years pass before the tubers are considered large enough for use. Sweet potatoes are planted in January, but there is very little of this food available in February and March. Toward the end of March or early in April a few potatoes may be ready for consumption. 244 [221]

Peanuts (*Arachis hypogaea*, Leguminosae) are planted in October by women who prepare patches of ground which are drilled with holes one inch deep and eight inches apart. One nut is placed in each hole after the shell has been removed. Above the ground small leaves appear. After the flower-stalk withers it has the peculiarity of elongating and bending down. In this way the young pod is forced underground, and the seeds mature a little way below the surface.

Some natives employ irrigation by leading small channels of water from a hillside stream to a garden containing maize and 312

273 ant said, "Sometimes a man who has drunk this beer will sleep on the ground all day and say nothing."

● 263 438 Salt is a welcome gift in all parts of Angola. Native tribes appreciate its culinary value but show no eagerness to barter for the commodity. At the present time salt is sold in every trader's store, but in earlier times the substance had to be obtained along caravan routes from the coast and was therefore more highly prized than it is today. 317 [231] The Ovimbundu realize the value of salt in the diet of cattle; therefore the animals are occasionally driven to a salt lick in the hills. The Ovimbundu do not use this salt for their own diet, possibly because the salt enjoyed by the cattle is some form of potash and not sodium chloride.

[171] The Vachokue extract salt from the leaves of a river plant by burning it to ashes which are soaked and strained. This is a common African method, but I did not hear of it among the Ovimbundu. The probability is that the Ovimbundu have always obtained salt from the coast.

372 In connection with cooking and brewing beer, methods of making fire are of importance.

Matches are coming into use among the Ovimbundu, but the necessity for them is not great as the hearth fire is not extinguished. [354] In the center of each hut is a fireplace made of three hearth-stones over which logs of wood are placed with their ends in the fire which is kept alight by pushing the logs forward from time to time. A blaze is made by breaking off bark from the logs, placing it on the center of the fire and blowing. Fire is carried from one place to another by conveying a smoldering log. In the Esele country boys may be seen setting off at dawn to scare birds in the corn field, each carrying fire with him.

Usually the children or some other members of the family sleep on mats close to the fire, which requires no attention other than a pushing forward of the logs.

372 171 The Vasele make fire by the twirling method, and at Ngalangi the same procedure was witnessed. In the twirling method two different kinds of wood are used, soft wood for the base and hard wood for the twirling stick. The twirler used at Ngalangi was a piece of cane into the end of which a piece of hard white wood was secured by binding. Ngonga, my interpreter and informant, thinks that any man of the Ovimbundu could make fire by the twirling method if the necessity arose, but the performance witnessed at Ngalangi led me to doubt the truth of this statement. The operator

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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585 be described.[18] The bride, if she belongs to another village, will arrive in the evening accompanied by some girls who are kin to her. She sits down on the bed in the house of the bridegroom with her companions. A crowd of people of the village and neighbourhood dance in and about the hut and people come in to talk to the bride. The bridegroom may also come in and sit on the bed with friends, but he will not take any particular notice of his bride. The dancing will go on till well into the night. This usually happens on a Saturday night so that the main part of the festivity will fall on the Sunday which all Ovimbundu, Christian or pagan, observe as a day of rest.

On the Sunday morning little will happen, though there may be some dancing and the bride and her companions will comb one another's hair. In the afternoon (usually about four), the time being told by the sun, comes the procession and the feast. For the procession bride and bridegroom walk together, both dressed in as European style of clothing as can be obtained. The procession advances dancing and singing, with the exception of the bridegroom and bride whose sedateness is striking. On the way an archway may be erected, made of branches. Under this, concealed in a blanket, will be lying the father's sister or other senior kinswoman of the groom to whom he will make a present of money. Continuing, the couple will arrive at an enclosure built for the purpose with a wooden framework covered over on the sides with branches with leaves on and mats, where a table is laid in European style at which the customary Umbu-
[263] ndu food, mush made from maize flour, and relish (that is almost anything, meat or vegetables, which is not mush) is served. Others besides the bride and bridegroom are allowed into the enclosure—this is not a private rite. It is at this point that *oku fwikisa* takes place, that is, the feeding of affines to break down avoidances. Food is served to the guests on basket plates, one plate per village represented. The actual serving will be done by kinsmen or friends of the bridegroom. After the meal will come further dancing.

The next day a party of kin and fellow-villagers may set out

[18] For accounts of the traditional marriage ceremony see Hastings, pp. 94–101 and R. K. Evambi. 'The Marriage Customs of the Ovimbundu', *Africa*, 1958, pp. 342–8.

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788 ceremony was conducted before starting. The medicine-man and the
778 village chief were the principal performers in a rite which consisted
787 of bringing from its box the head of a former chief, sewn in oxhide. An animal was sacrificed so that the blood could be used for sprinkling on the chief's head, and on some occasions of this kind the head was sewn up in a new piece of oxhide. Direct appeal was made to the preserved head by the reigning chief, who asked for good fortune on the journey.

The medicine-man who accompanied a caravan carried with him a female wooden figure decorated with feathers (Plate XXI, Fig. 5). When a branching of the paths gave rise to doubts concerning the correct way the wooden figure was consulted by the medicine-man.

584 you." There is no infant betrothal. There is not and never was any
[567] compulsion of a girl in marriage, but slave girls were disposed of in marriage by their masters.

832 A girl is not allowed to do anything to show that she loves a boy, for it would be a great shame for her to tell the boy that she loves him. Often a girl who prefers a boy will pretend that she does not like him.
[539] The Ovimbundu have a story which states that a man said, "I will bring my cow to the green grass"; he did so, but the cow would not eat. This expresses the idea that a boy would not like a girl who confessed a preference for him.

MARRIAGE

585 The prospective bride chooses one married woman and six unmarried girls to accompany her to the house prepared by her husband. Here a feast consisting of a pig and some chickens is provided by the husband for the relatives of both families. For three nights the girl returns to the house of her parents while the boy sleeps at his home. The married woman and six girls sleep at the house prepared by the bridegroom. During these days beer is provided by the boy's parents. The prospective husband is ironically addressed as *sandombua*. *Ndombua* means bridegroom, *sa* is an abbreviation of *isia* meaning father. The term "father bridegroom" refers to the fact that the youth is a potential husband only; the marriage has not been consummated.

On the fourth day the bride brings her supply of domestic utensils. These are the cooking pots (*olombia*); the wooden spoons (*ovito*); the brush of grass for sweeping (*olueyo*); some meal; also the pounder (*upi*). For the first month the wife is not allowed to cook in her own home; she cooks food in the home of her husband's parents and sends
[264] it to the council house (*onjango*) where her husband takes his meals with other men according to Umbundu custom. At the end of the first month of married life the mother of the husband invites any three old women who have been happily married to lay the hearth
[782] stones in the new home. Each of the old women brings a stone for the hearth. A chicken is killed and its blood is sprinkled on the hearth stones. While the young wife is preparing food at the new hearth, she is helped by the old women. If the girl is stirring with the big wooden spoon, one of the old women places her own hands over those of the girl. There is this kind of guidance in every action.

I understand that at the present day virginity in a bride is not so highly valued as in former days. The old custom was an examination

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbunda FP13

576 *konyimo oko* are spoken. The literal interpretation of these words is "back there." Ngonga says the words actually mean "excuse my back."

827 576 Spitting in the vicinity of the house of the king or of the chief is not allowed. "If you did that in the old days, you would have to pay something." Some people spit near the hearth in their own houses. A man who spits in the road is expected to cover the spittle. No person would spit in the presence of the chief or of the king. A hand should be placed in front of the mouth by a person who is coughing or sneezing.

576 [851] Shortly after the birth of a boy or girl all who are on good terms with the parents greet them by saying *kalunga*. The word is repeated four times with clapping of the palms. When words have been imperfectly heard and the listener desires repetition it is customary to say *kuku* in an interrogative tone.

[269] No particular etiquette is observed when eating. Two or three children eat from one platter, helping themselves with their fingers to the mush or sweet potatoes.

Rules forbidding the preparation of food by menstruating women, likewise prohibitions relating to stepping over a person, are mentioned in discussing taboos and omens.

EDUCATIONAL VALUE OF PLAY, MUSIC, AND DANCING

524 182 533 The educational value of play lies in its imitation of the pursuits of adult life. Though there are specialists in music, dancing, and singing, these exercises are indulged in by everyone. Music, singing, and dancing are more than amusements, they are fundamental as coordinating forces in tribal life at all levels of culture (W. D. Hambly, Tribal Dancing and Social Development, London, 1926). [113]

Among the Ovimbundu *Cimbamba Co Lia* is a popular game for girls, who form a circle, join hands, and sing:

PART I

524 [535] *Omola una, ndo sile vekango, Cimbamba co lia* ("That little child was left in the desert, the nighthawk ate it"). At the word *Cimbamba* they begin to dance, facing from side to side in such a manner that they meet and bow. Some sing, *Cimbamba co lia* ("The nighthawk ate him"), and others respond, *Kalikisi* ("'tis the goblins"), as many times as they wish. Finally a return is made to the first words which are sung again. All musical transcriptions have been made by Dr. G. Herzog from my phonographic records.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

[1874-1911]

not now possible for field work to supply the gaps in the written material.[73]

The traditional kinship system had neither clans nor segmenting lineages. The patrilineal group (*olusu*) was localized in a village, the group head being at the same time a village headman. Patrilineal ties do not seem to have been recognized between villages.[74] This social independence of the agnatically united village was reflected in the surrounding palisade, in the close clustering of the houses (nowadays much more spread out) and in the village institutions of the dancing-floor and the men's house (*ondjango*). It was here that all the men and boys, from seven or eight up, ate. Hastings writes, 'Each woman, after preparing the meal, takes or sends the portion which is for the male members of her family. This food is common property. As soon as enough has arrived some responsible member among the men will have it divided among the boys. For days a man may never taste of the food which is prepared by his wife.'[74] The men's house was also a club, and a court-room, where minor cases were decided. It was through this localized body of patrikin that an individual claimed land and residence rights and through it that he participated in the political system.[75]

The matrilineal group (the *olusiso*) was composed of the descendants of a common great-great-grandmother.[76] According to Childs, it had a head who might also at times be a village headman,[77] and it was presumably the matrilineal group head who settled the disputes over property which Hambly says

[73] For an attempt at reconstructing Umbundu kinship on the basis of Childs's book see J. A. Barnes's review of *Umbundu Kinship and Character* in *Man*, 1950, pp. 126–128. It may be mentioned that the terms 'the side of the bow' and 'the side of the basket' are used simply to mean 'patrilateral kin' and 'matrilateral kin' (Dr. Childs, private information, and my own inquiries).

[74] A rather ambiguous phrase in Childs p. 43 ('The *olusu* consists of a large number of local village groups'), which might be interpreted as meaning that villages were patrilineally grouped into clans, seems really to mean simply that the village is the *olusu* unit.

[75] Hastings, p. 77.

[76] Ibid., p. 18. Childs, pp. 43–44.

[77] Hastings, p. 82, states that the matrilineal group consists of the descendants of a common great-great-great-grandmother (that is, five generations), and on p. 91 says that it consists of a group 'linked by a common great-great-grandmother'.

[77] Childs, p. 44.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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593 604 in the hands of the mother's brother, though the father could, if he wished, intervene; and a man could establish a shrine of his own while his father lived.

613 It is not altogether easy to see how the matrilineal group maintained its cohesion. It was not the working team on which the caravan trade operated since a man's father had first claim on his services, and he could travel with other relatives. Within it alone loans need not be repaid and accusations of sorcery were made; with this in mind, it is evident why, as Dr. Hastings tells us, people tended to avoid the company of their matrikin, [578] and why most disputes arose in the matrilineal groups.[21] It 613 seems that probably the key to the functioning of the matri- 437 lineal groups lies in the details, not now recoverable, of the economy of the caravan trade. As everybody, however successful, was in danger at some time or another of incurring heavy losses,[22] an arrangement by which anybody who was in difficulties could call on his kin for help would be generally acceptable. The association of mutual aid of this sort with matrilineal rather than patrilineal kin would spread losses geographically and would exclude conflicts over currency and movable property from village life. Moreover, the dispersal of the matrilineal kin would provide an individual with business contacts over a considerable area.

5. *Contemporary Kinship Norms*

593 Much of this has disappeared. The men's house is no longer 264 the dining-room of the village male population. Men now often 178 eat with their wives and children though attitudes and practice of this vary between households. People in their twenties knew of the existence of these avoidance rules but it seems that the rules forbidding sons to eat with their mother and eldest sons and daughters to eat with their father are now generally ignored.

[21] Hastings, pp. 18, 87. Disputes within the matrilineal group could be, and [692] very often were, referred to the sub-chief and king. The account of legal proceedings in Hastings (pp. 139–31) suggests that a high proportion of the cases heard by the kings were to do with sorcery. In such cases the social extension of the matrilineal group beyond the area of the sub-chiefdom and the wider political integration achieved by the kingdoms 'co-operated' in preserving a range of social relations beyond the sub-chiefdom.

[22] Apropos of losses Childs quotes Magyar as saying that the Ovimbundu traded for excitement rather than gain (p. 204).

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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for the bride's village. Here they may be greeted with formal speeches of welcome in Portuguese, a usage copied from the reception of missionaries. 585

One only turns up to a wedding if one has been invited, and not everybody who is a kinsman living in the neighbourhood is invited. Nor is there any marked distinction between kin and non-kin in the ceremony, except for the ending of avoidances and the recognition of the father's sister, who is recompensed for her services as nursemaid. Village membership is significantly recognized in the distribution of food, and the sending of the party to the bride's home to represent the bridegroom's village.

Umbundu marriage is virilocal, although a certain number of marriages are within the village. Apart from such marriages, it seems to be rare to find a man settling in a village because his wife has kin there. 591

Although during the early months of the marriage the bridegroom's mother may supervise the bride's work, the individual household is essentially an independent unit[13] and was not even in the past merged with other household units to form a 'grandfamily'. This independence is not isolation. I have only a very few times seen houses with any sort of compound about them. Much of domestic life, eating, working, resting, talking, may be done out of doors in front of the house. Paying visits is a great feature of village life especially when the day's work is over, although there is also a term *oku pasula*, to visit in the morning, referring to what are usually just short calls, involving the exchange of greetings. Perhaps the opportunity of calling and being called on is one of the factors maintaining the village as a social unit. The idea that a man should not eat with his wife still survives to some extent so that questions on this topic receive contradictory answers. Observation shows that even among the men who travelled on the caravans, eating with one's wife is the general practice. 592 574 264

One of the most striking features of Umbundu domestic life is the close companionship which exists between husband and wife and which is unquestionably a modern development.[14] 593 178

[13] See Magyar, pp. 281–3.

[14] The role of the *Ondjango* as described by Childs and Hastings indicates that a man's normal companions both for eating and recreation were other men.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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At the other end of the age-scale it is not easy always to tell to what household a child is attached. Small children may often eat with kin other than their own parents if they like them and thus share in the lives of two households. Children and adolescents may go on visits to kin and this may lead to permanent residence. This familiarity with other households is not confined to children. Although, as has been stated, eating with one's wife is the usual practice, it is by no means uncommon to see two or more men eating together, either because the wife of one of them is away or simply to be sociable. 592 264

This right of children to move about, coupled with such other factors[20] as the relatively high divorce rate, tends to bring about quite a high proportion of children who live with kin other than their own parents. Out of 70 under 20's in Epalanga (out of a total population of 148), 34 had both parents living in Epalanga,[21] 23 had one parent living in Epalanga and 13 had neither parent living in Epalanga. Of the 23 who had only one parent living in Epalanga, 7 lived with their father and 16 with their mother. Those 7 living with their father were all over 14, thus confirming the norm given by informants that young children on the death of the mother go to their mother's kin until they 'have sense', that is, are about 12 or 13, when they return to their father. Of the 13 who were living with neither parent, 2 (boys) were living with a cross-cousin (father's sister's son, for whom the term 'father' can be used), 1 (boy) with a patrilateral 'father,' 2 (1 girl, 1 small boy) with a mother's mother, 4 (3 boys, 1 girl) with a sister's husband, 1 (boy) with a paternal half-brother, 1 with a fiancé's father, 1 (boy) with a mother's brother, and on 1 (girl) I have no information. 591

These figures are too small to base any very strong argument on them. It is, however, notable that only 1 of the 12 children on whom information was obtained was living with a mother's brother, whereas 4 were living with a brother-in-law. This seems to conflict with statements made earlier as to the present-day trend of individuals to settle with their mother's brothers.

[20] Childs notes about the traditional system that the sending of children to stay with kin or friends for a year or two was common (pp. 104–5).

[21] This figure includes one case where although both parents lived in Epalanga they were separated.

PART ONE [p.17]

SOCIAL STRUCTURE

121 *The object of Part One is (1) to describe the present social structure of the Ovimbundu, and (2) to suggest significant elements that this social structure has or may have for the programme of Christian missions among this people.*

CHAPTER II

POLITICAL AND SOCIAL LIFE

127 122 HAD my historical survey revealed a detailed description of Umbundu social structure made at some former time, it would also be useful to make comparisons with the present state of affairs. Since there is no such witness out of the past, it is only possible to describe and analyse that which at present exists. For this purpose some excerpts from Umbundu narratives are presented and references made to certain folk-tales and proverbs. The basis of the analysis and description rests more especially, however, upon notes and impressions gathered in field-work over a period of years and upon a considerable number of genealogical tables and schedules of marriage arrangements.[1] These latter are referred to here only to a certain extent. I hope to treat these more fully later. The subject of marriage properly belongs to the field of social structure, but because of its importance I hope to devote a chapter to it. Only certain of the genealogical tables are presented fully and in their several aspects, while the others have served as basis and background for the whole of this part of the study.

565 175 The most significant historical allusion to the social structure of the Ovimbundu which I have found was an observation of Pinheiro de Lacerda about 1790. 'These are they of the Highlands who are made up of two "systems" the one call themselves [266] "Quimbundos" (i.e. Ovimbundu), (these do not eat human flesh): the others are called "Quimbangalas" (i.e. the royal households of Imbangala stock), who eat it, and when they make their sacrifice, [782] at which all together attend, then all eat the "Makongo".'[2]

[1] I have 192 of the former and 75 of the latter.
[2] *Annaes Maritimos & Coloniaes*, 5a Ser., p. 488.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

(*c*) *In hunting*, deities other than the king's ancestors were invoked, especially *Hūvī*, the hunters' god, and *Kuanja*, a goddess, both of which had their own shrines and priests. These may have been connected with the country or with its earlier inhabitants (the kings being recognized as late comers). At the inaugural hunt the offices were assigned. The king's character was supposedly revealed by the sex of the animal killed at this hunt: 'If the duiker[1] is a female, then it is good indeed, but if a male, then the king is a real person but he habitually will become angry to excess' (*Nda ombambi yaco omange ciwa muēlē, puaī nda ulume, Soma omunu puaī o tema tema enene*).

2. *To represent the nation in its external relations*, i.e. (*a*) *To make agreements with other kings to promote trade*, and (*b*) *To make war on other peoples* in order to provide his court with tribute and his warriors with plunder. The war leader (*Kesongo*) had his own residence and establishment entirely separate from that of the king, whom he must not meet face to face except on certain state occasions. In Bailundu he, with certain other officials, was of the stock of the slaves of the state (*ovinduli viosoma*) who came from Luandu in the Songo country. Each king must inaugurate his reign with a war, during or after which he must ceremonially 'eat the old one' (*oku lia ekongo*)—a feast consisting of the flesh of a specially fattened slave cooked with the flesh of the principal animals commonly eaten.

3. *To dispense justice*. In point of time consumed, this question was very important, for it occupied much of the time of both rulers and ruled. Good evidence of this is in the number of proverbs used at court, second only in number to those used for the education of the young. The king's court (*olusenje*) was the supreme court of the nation where cases were continually heard and 'fines eaten' (*oku lia ovimbu*). Cases might be settled either by ordeal or by decision of the king, and there was therefore room for appeal and re-trial. The king's word, however, was final, as the proverb has it: *O popia onganji, o mālāpo osoma*. (The advocate speaks, the king finishes [decides].) The king was not generally arbitrary in his decisions but was bound not only by the customs of his people, but also by the desires of his councillors. Among the legitimate kings of the Ovimbundu there were comparatively few of the revolting and wholesale punishments which were so

[1] The duiker, *ombambi* (*Silvicapra grimmii leucoprosopus*).

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

Being ready to depart, the great Giaga staid us, and desired our boat to pass his men over the river Cova, for he determined to overrun the realm of Benguele, which was on the north side of the river Cova. So we went with him to his camp, which was very orderly, intrenched with piles of wood; we had houses provided for us that night, and many burthens (loads) of palm-wine, cows, goats, and flour. 175 x 167

In the morning before day, the general did strike his *gongo*, which is an instrument of war that soundeth like a bell, and presently made an oration with a loud voice, that all the camp might hear, that he would destroy the Benguelas, with such courageous and vehement speeches as were not to be looked for among the heathen people. And presently they were all in arms, and marched to the river side, where he had provided Gingados.[1] And being ready with our boat and Gingados, the general was fain to beat them back because of the credit who should be first. We carried over eighty men at once, and with our muskets we beat the enemy off, and landed, but many of them were slain. By twelve of the clock all the Gagas were over. [726]

Then the general commanded all his drums, *tavales*, *petes*, *pongos*, and all his instruments of warlike music to strike up, and gave the onset, which was a bloody day for the Benguelas. These Benguelas presently broke, and turned their backs, and a very great number of them were slain, and were taken captives, man, woman and child. The prince, Hombiangymbe, was slain, which was ruler of this country, and more than one hundred of his chief lords, and their heads presented and thrown at the feet of the great Gaga. The men, women and children that were brought in captive alive, and the dead corpses that were brought to be eaten, were strange to behold. For these Gagas are the greatest cannibals and man-eaters that be in the world, for they feed chiefly upon man's flesh (notwithstanding of their) having all the cattle of that country. [727] [266]

They settled themselves in this country and took the spoil of it. We had great trade with these Gagas, five months, and gained greatly by them. . . .

In these five months' space we made three voyages to the city of San Paul, and coming the fourth time we found them not.[2]

On a subsequent voyage Battell was left by 'the Portugals and Mulattos' as a hostage among the 'Benguelas', whence he escaped to 'the Great Gaga', living in his camp and helping to fight his battles during twenty-one months. His description of the life and customs of which he was a daily witness are of great interest, and

[1] 'Gingado', elsewhere spelt 'Iergado', is evidently a misprint for *Jangada*, Portuguese for 'raft'.

[2] Ravenstein, op. cit., pp. 19 ff.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

175x the origin of this tribal name. It is no less reasonable to suppose that the name has also been preserved in the name of a section of
167 the Ovimbundu—the va Ciyaka,[1] which is an augmentative noun from the same verbal stem.

'He saith they are called . . . by themselves Imbangolas.' This statement has given rise to a great deal of speculation from the time of Purchas to our own. The *Imbangala*, better known as 'the people of Jaga Cassange' or Bangalas, are generally recognized to have been one of the marauding hordes which troubled Angola in the seventeenth century, and it has already been noted that their own traditional history, as given by Dias de Carvalho and by Ferreira Diniz, fits in with this theory. It seems reasonable, therefore, to make this further identification of the 'Jagas' of Battell with the Imbangala of Cassange. There is one more
[173] traditional link to add, and that is that the Ovimbundu of Ciyaka recognize the region of Cassange as the location of the oldest ancestral tombs of which they have any tradition. Once when there was a particularly severe drought, tribal elders were sent from Ciyaka to Cassange to worship at these ancient tombs, to anoint the skulls, and to plead for rain.

When Purchas noted in 1613 that 'Elembe settled himself in Benguele', he meant the hinterland of Benguela Velha,[2] i.e. in the regions of Mbũi (*Amboim*), Cipala (*Quibala*), or Sela (*Cela*). As I have shown, tradition connects the kingdom of Wambu with Sela, and the kingdom of Bailundu with Cipala. Although 'Kelandula, sometime his page, proceeds in that beastly life before mentioned'. we may be reasonably sure that eventually he also, or his followers, settled in the same general region. Both Elembe and Kalandula are common Umbundu names and the latter is found twice among the kings of Bailundu.

175x There is further evidence in the similarity of customs as be-
● 266 tween the 'Jagas' and the royal families of the Ovimbundu, for
566 both Battell and Cavazzi have given fairly full accounts. To show these similarities fully it would be necessary to re-edit Battell, and therefore I shall speak of only a few outstanding points. The cannibalism of the 'Jagas' was perhaps their most striking custom.

[1] The Portuguese transcription of this form would be 'Giaca', but this has become changed to 'Quiaca', as also with many similar names.

[2] See p. 122, n. 4 *supra*. It was only in 1617 that the settlement on the *Baia das Vaccas* was made, and (wrongly) given the name of Benguela.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

The Ovimbundu are not ordinary cannibals, if indeed that term may be applied to any people in Africa, nor do the commoners of the Ovimbundu ever eat human flesh on their own account, but no king may ever reign or be considered as regularly enthroned until he has 'eaten Ekongo'.[1] The cannibalism traditionally ascribed to Wambu-Kalunga is also a case in point.[2] Other human sacrifices practised by the 'Jagas' and described by Battell also have their counterparts in the practices of the Umbundu kingdoms.[3] The mode of the burial of the dead described by Battell[4] is essentially that which has been used, at least until the last few years, for the kings and the other 'holy'[5] men of the Ovimbundu, except that where rock caves are available the use of them has been adopted and in Kasongi cairns were used. The sitting posture and the sacrifice of wives or slaves and cattle (or of substitutes) are the important points, and these have everywhere been used for the classes mentioned, until quite recently.

The custom of keeping boys captured from the enemy and training them to be fearless warriors amid the terrors of the country has a parallel in the Umbundu custom of the king's slaves,[6] who came from another land[7] and would therefore do the king's bidding without fear, favour, or consideration of family feeling. They often reached high position and certain of the king's ministers always came from among them. There seem to be many recollections of the 'Jagas' in the customs of the kings' sons.[8] Names of certain of the officials seem to have survived, as, for example, Mani (*muēlē*) Lumbo, Mani-Cuirio (*Muēkalia*), Golambolo (*Ngalamboli*), Tendala (*Candala*), Ukuetambo,[9] &c. Careful linguistic studies would doubtless reveal many remains of the speech

[1] *Oku lia Ekongo*—lit. 'to eat the Old One'. This is a ritual feast in which the flesh of a specially fattened slave is eaten mixed with the flesh of various animals. See Ravenstein, op. cit., p. 33, note 3. Magyar described this custom, calling it '*Ouri-Kongo*', op. cit., pp. 275 ff.

[2] See *supra*, p. 176.

[3] Compare Ravenstein, op. cit.

[4] Op. cit., p. 34 f.

[5] 'Holy' in the sense of spirit possessed—the king, the hunter, the medical practitioner, and the smith.

[6] *Ocinduli cosoma*, singular. May there be some recollection of 'Kinguri' (=Cinguli) in this word?

[7] In Bailundu the *ovinduli viosoma* (plural) came mostly from Luandu, i.e. the Songo country across the Kuanza—further evidence of connexion with Lunda emigrants.

[8] *Omālā volosoma*, used collectively of all the royal families of the Ovimbundu.

[9] Cavazzi, op. cit., pp. 206 f., 211.

regent and incarnation" of the spirits. Sacrifices were made at the royal shrine or *kokoloto* ("at the skulls"), where the skulls of past chiefs were kept, in order to:-

(i) control the elements i.e. to ensure a sufficient supply of rain and avoid the dangers caused by storms; also to control fire by providing a new fire ceremonially kindled[1] from which everyone took his fire.

(ii) to ensure fertility, towards which the royal marriage had great influence. The queen's special province was agriculture and her kitchen was sanctified by human sacrifice to guarantee the national food supply. Ceremonially treated seed was distributed to be mixed with the seed of each granary.

(b) *To represent the country in its external relations*, principally to make trade agreements with other chiefs, or to make war on other peoples in order to get tribute and plunder. The war leader *(Kesongo)* has his own residence entirely separate from that of the king, whom he must not meet face to face except on certain ceremonial occasions.[2] Each king must inaugurate his reign with a war, during which or after which he must ceremonially "eat the old one" *(oku lia ekongo)* - who was usually a specially fattened slave cooked with the flesh of the principal animals commonly eaten.[3]

(c) *To dispense justice.* The chief's court or *olusenje* was the supreme court of the chiefdom. The chief had the final word in any case, but most chiefs acted according to custom.

(d) *To protect himself and the chiefdom*, the chief could use "magic" (?) which might have been accounted witchcraft or murder if practised without authority: e.g. the ritual murder of a pregnant woman, or of the children whose lives were required for building and furnishing the queen's kitchen.

(e) The chief made much use of divination in order to carry out his office. For this purpose he had his own diviner *(citue cosoma)*, who was of the blood royal; but he also consulted diviners of other regions and types.

Succession to chiefship is in the male line,[4] from father to son, elder brother to younger brother or brother's son, or sometimes to one more distantly related. The election is made by the councillors whose duty it is (?), ordinarily before the old chief's death is announced. These same councillors may depose an unpopular chief, and there have been many such depositions. This "democratic" tendency of the Ovimbundu has been noted by most writers. Childs points out that it is attested by the fact that a chief (formerly as well as today) works in his own fields, and by folk-tales which give incidental and intimate pictures of petty details in the lives of the chiefs.†

(1) See above, p.26.
(2) In Bailundu he, with certain other officials, was of the stock of slaves of the state *(ovindili viosoma)*.
(3) Childs, p.21. Many early writers refer to the cannibalism of the "Jagas" or "Imbangalas" who are thought to have been the Ovimbundu chiefs. (See above, p.8, and also Lacerda and Ravenstein, quoted by Childs, pp.17ff.)
(4) But *inheritance* is said to follow a different line among chiefs from among commoners; possibly inheritance is also in the paternal line. See Childs p.18.

† See footnote 1, p. 31

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

171 wide distribution in Africa (C. Wiedemann, 1909) and the ceremony
175 still survives among the Ovimbundu in modified form.

[114] Though an informative writer, Monteiro is sometimes vague; he says (I, p. 278) that circumcision is a universal custom among the blacks of Angola. In view of the extent of Angola, the diversity of tribes, and the fact that Monteiro traveled over only a small part of the country, this information is misleading.

Monteiro is the only writer in whose works I have found a reference to the Vasele tribe; probably no part of Angola has been so neglected as the Esele country in the hinterland of Novo Redondo. At the present day the Vasele have a reputation for cannibalism.
[266] Monteiro saw human flesh eaten at Cuacra, while the skulls of the victims were placed on adjacent trees. Monteiro states (II, p. 167) that on the death of a king the Mucelis (Vasele) put out all the fires in the kingdom; these were relighted by the succeeding king who
[321] used fire produced by rubbing two sticks together. The flat beads of shell called *dongos*, made from *Achatina monetaria* (II, p. 168), are made today and traded to the far south of Angola, where their novelty assures them a value far beyond their intrinsic worth. I was fortunate in obtaining an example of the old beheading ax mentioned by Monteiro (II, p. 157) and sketched by Cavazzi (p. 210). Par-
[262] boiled and roasted rats were offered to me as food; Monteiro mentions the offering of a roasted rat on a skewer (I, p. 99).

The account of Commander V. L. Cameron, who left Zanzibar for his journey across Africa in 1873, mentions several points of anthropological importance in relation to the Angolan section of his
[756] journey. Cameron saw a net-covered medicine-man of the Kibokue (Vachokue) wearing a mask and a kilt of grass (p. 384). The function
[524] of this man was to frighten devils from the woods. The contest in which boys discharge their arrows at a rolling root was seen by Cameron near Kagnombe (Cangamba?). Skulls of victims killed in
[797] war were spiked on poles (p. 399). The diviner was followed by attendants who struck iron gongs, while the diviner himself shook a rattle made of basket-work in the form of a dumb-bell (p. 404). Cameron gives an accurate description of the divination basket and its use without going into details. These I have been able to supply
[482] (chapter IX). The explorer met caravans of Bihéans, renowned carriers then as they are today. They were usually drunk and abusive; in some instances they attempted to rob the stragglers.
000 The use of caterpillars as food is noted (p. 416): "A man cut open

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

114 trative posts. I agree that people between Caconda and Huila
101 represent a racial mixture of the Ovimbundu and the Ovambo. The record speaks of painting-houses for girls at Cabinda, an item which agrees with reports from other sources. The jottings concerning tribes from Cabinda to the far south of Angola are too vague to be used in ethnological work with confidence.

There are many points on which the work of A. Schachtzabel should be consulted for the purpose of making comparisons with my
[621] own observations. The chief of these are a note and photograph on
[281] village construction (p. 130); the musical bow (p. 32); the loom
[175] (plate VI); transmigration of the soul of a chief into an animal (p. 51);
[524] and the game of mancala (p. 52). My observations of initiation at Katoko, Ngalangi, and Cangamba agree well with that of Schacht-
[881] zabel at Katoko, but I was able to obtain more detail and more
[283] numerous photographs of the ritual of initiation. The spinning of cotton (p. 143) is exactly the process so frequently witnessed now at Elende. Iron-working (p. 111) appears to be comparable with the technique at Elende, but Schachtzabel seems to have missed the ritual. I was not so fortunate as this author in finding the old type of iron-smelting furnace in use.

114 The work of Statham is devoted primarily to hunting and descrip-
136 tions of plant and animal life. The chapter given to a casual description of people among whom he passed is not useful as ethnology; but the book is of service in providing a background of natural history. Information on the tsetse fly in Angola (p. 294) assists ethnological work by showing the determining effect of this biological factor.
[231] Presence of the fly is prohibitive to cattle-keeping, therefore cattle are not kept along the river courses which are infested with this pest.

114 Alexander Barns made no pretence of writing more than a travel book; nevertheless he publishes photographs of ethnological value, gives useful historical summaries, and deals with economic problems of production and transportation.

114 Tucker's book "Drums in the Darkness," though written to
175 interest the American public in mission work, contains many ethnological statements. The chief of these relate to the structure of the compound (p. 37); the dress of women (p. 39); naming of twins and triplets; and other items which agree well with data from the district in which I worked. There are notes on drum signals (p. 74) and
[202] cannibalism (p. 77). Apparently drum signals were in use at Bihé half a century ago. Forty years ago a slave was killed and eaten
[266] at the installation ceremonies for a new king, a point that was noted

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

was too light to make it effective as a tool or weapon (Plate XIII, Fig. 4). At Bailundu I was informed that an ax of this kind is used in a medicine-man's dance which is intended to cure a man who is sick because a spirit has entered into him. The sickness may have occurred because the man has broken a promise. 755

The medicine-man, or sometimes the patient himself, dances violently, meanwhile cutting about him with the ax (*omutaka*), which is finally used for killing a little pig whose blood is drunk by the sick man. This is the ritual that was previously mentioned in describing divination.

The following are important ceremonial objects: The ax *ekuva* (Plate XIII, Fig. 5) was the one used for killing slaves who were eaten at the death of a king. This object was secured in the Vasele country near Vila Nova de Selles. It is of handsome appearance, having a copper circle inlaid into the iron blade. A spear from Bailundu is likewise important because of its use in ritual (Plate XIII, Fig. 8). Before war and hunting this spear was thrust first into an ox then into a slave. The human and animal flesh were cooked together and eaten from the same pot. The female figure used by the medicine-man for consultation with regard to the correct path for a caravan has been described. A carved wooden post obtained from Bailundu was set up at cross-paths so that it might be visited by a sick person or his representative who would make sacrifice there. 411 [266] 782

Without parallel among ceremonial objects used by the Ovimbundu is a small wooden cloth-covered box from Bailundu. This contains a piece of root of cylindrical form tightly bound with cloth having at one end a cowrie shell. The box is the shrine of *Kandundu*, for whom a small hut is built in order to contain the box. Any one who sees the contents of the shrine is said to become blind. *Kandundu* is believed to be the "spirit of dreaming who makes swellings come on the body." 778

Antelope horns are in general use as containers of magical potions. One horn from Bailundu is used for holding sweet beer which is drunk by a person afflicted by bad dreams. A large horn with a piece of fur attached, also from Bailundu, is named *ocindiko*. The horn contains a mixture of fat and charcoal which is heated near camp after sunset, when men are on the march. The spreading fumes keep away lions and thieves. It was said that a thief is deterred because the fumes make him cough. 789 237

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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of ritual cannibalism (*oku lia ekongo*) after which he could not be deposed.[64]

Hastings in describing the principal ministers of the Bailundo court states that the Mwekalia and the Galamboli or Ngambole (whose function was to remember traditions) were representative of the indigenous pre-Jaga stock, the Kesongo who was the war leader was a slave from another tribe, and the Otjinduli was of immigrant stock, and points out that these represent the three sources from which the Ovimbundu sprang.[65]

At the sub-chiefdom level some of the titles found in the kingdoms would be found combined, and the chief's court, where cases were judged, was composed both of titled ministers living at the chief's village and of the village headmen (some of whom were also title-holders). The sub-chief represented his people to the outer world, led them in communal ritual and judged, with his councillors,[66] their disputes. Hastings describes a case thus: 'When all the members of the court are seated in a circle, with an empty space in the centre, the plaintiff's counsel then relates the case, after which the lawyer for the defendant does likewise for his side. The chief in turn makes general comments. Lusenje, the official, whose duty it is to keep order at court and to announce the speakers, then calls on the accuser to come forward and make his statement.'[67]

While the sub-chiefdom was the largest unit in which law and order reigned undisputed, there existed alliances and cross-cutting relationships providing a contact outside its area. There was the *tjisoko* alliance which existed between two sub-chiefdoms which were separated by a third. Gumba sub-chiefdom was thus allied to Ndjandju from which it was separated by Chicunda, and messengers from Gumba and Ndjandju travelled together to Bailundo once a year to carry tribute. Apparently a sub-chiefdom had only one *tjisoko* partner. The relationship was one of funeral friendship; *vakwatjisoko* (*tjisoko* partners) undertook the burial of those who died without kinsfolk and also ordinary

[64] This is based on information from Gumba. See also Magyar, pp. 270–77; Hastings, pp. 43–45; Childs p. 81.

[65] Hastings, p. 60.

[66] Informants.

[67] Hastings, pp. 142–43.

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CHAPTER III

CHIEFS AND HEADMEN IN GUMBA

1. *The History of Gumba*

The historical perspective of Ovimbundu is short. Few, even elders, know of any landmark earlier than the Mutu-ya-Kevela rising of 1902–3, nor even for those who had participated in it did the time of the rubber trade form a Golden Age by which the present is judged. The period about which most was remembered was the reign of Mbati.[1]

Mbati had ruled over both Gumba and Chicunda, a union which had existed only during his lifetime, and which would have given him on present-day population figures 7,500–9,000 subjects.[2] He had managed to keep in his own hands the relations between his people and the government post. Policemen arriving at his capital to recruit labourers were entertained while Mbati's ministers got together the men required. Although an upholder of the traditional rites associated with chieftancy he had been on good terms with the missionaries and allowed a Catholic catechist to settle in his village. One of his sons became a Protestant schoolteacher near the railway line, another entered the Catholic seminary but left and became a policeman in Cela. Many of the numerous progeny provided by his seventeen wives are still living in Gumba.

Mbati's downfall came through his practising the traditional annual ritual cannibalism (*oku lia ekongo*). About 1934–5 he was banished for this to another part of Umbundu country.

[text continues on p. 37]

[1] L. Magyar marks a place called Gumba on his map (opposite to page 1) but puts it to the south of the capital of Bailundo. As he does not seem to have personal knowledge of this area, this does not rule out identification, especially as the Cuvo begins to the south of Bailundo.

[2] For the basis of this estimate see section 2 of this chapter.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

The flesh of goats, sheep, and pigs might be more frequently used if these animals were bred and cared for under some system of animal husbandry. The Ovimbundu are familiar with the preservation of meat by smoking and drying it, because flesh of animals killed in the chase is sometimes preserved in this way by hunters, yet the method is not widely and constantly applied in order to assure a regular supply of meat. 262 [232] 251

Failure to utilize the milk of cattle and goats is another example of the neglect of useful commodities. The Vacilenge, who are near neighbors of the Ovimbundu, milk their cows as do the Ovimbundu themselves in some districts, though the practice is by no means general. Even where cows are milked, butter and cheese are not made, though the Ovimbundu know of the process, which is practised by the Vakuanyama of southern Angola. 234 171

There are three kinds of beer. *Ocisangua* is a sweet beer which even children may drink because it is not intoxicating. Water is heated slowly in the pot but not boiled; meanwhile meal of Kafir corn or maize is added. Pounded sweet potato is strained in such a way that the liquid part goes into the beer pot; the residual mush is given to pigs. After the beer has cooled out of doors, it is transferred to a large gourd and allowed to stand over night. Next day it is considered a fit drink to consume or to offer to visitors (Plate XXIII, Fig. 3). 272

The making of an intoxicating beer *ekundi* proceeds as for *ocisangua*, but instead of adding strained liquid from sweet potatoes a root called *ombundi* is included in the brew. The large pot containing this beer is covered tightly and allowed to stand untouched for twenty-four hours, at the end of which time it is a potent drink. It is important to note that the corn is allowed to sprout in the ground before it is made into the infusion to which the root *ombundi* is added. 273

Ocimbombo is a strongly intoxicating drink. In order to prepare this brew, corn is soaked for a week; then it is left in the ground for the same length of time until it has germinated. It is then pounded on the rocks and placed in large pots filled with water to which sweet meal of corn is added. Simmering over the fire is continued for two days with constant stirring. This brew differs from *ekundi* in the longer germination of the corn and the longer period of simmering. On the fourth day after the simmering is completed the drink is said to be ready for consumption. If the people have honey, they add some to the brew on the third day of standing. My inform-

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

517 521 562 some pulling on their stubby little pipes and watching the men. As the men smoke, they may pass the pipe from mouth to mouth, but not so the women.

517 276 Tobacco (*akaya*) is a great vehicle for sociability whether in the pipe or in the form of snuff. 'Snuffing is held to clear the head, to clarify the thought, to enlighten the eyes, to sharpen the hearing, and comfort the heart.'[1] 'Taking a pinch of snuff, between the forefinger and the thumb, is unknown . . . and would be considered . . . very unsatisfactory. . . . They pour about a teaspoonful into the palm of the hand, and burying their . . . nostrils in the peppery mixture snort it up loudly, aided by a rotary motion of the half-closed hand.'[2]

● 273 Beer (*ocimbombo*) is of even greater importance. Its place has long been threatened by such drinks as the stronger beer made from emmer wheat (*ekundi*), mead (*ingundu* and *ocasa*), and [177] imported rum. Within the past thirty or forty years the Ovimbundu have themselves learned to distil rum (*okacipembe*) from sweet potatoes, sugar-cane, pumpkins, &c., and although the industry is illegal, it has grown to great proportions and nothing now seems able to stop it. It is the widespread use of this strong drink, with its concomitant evils, which is to-day the greatest enemy of the social life.

535 The dance is probably the most important element in the social life of the village. The Ovimbundu have many different dances and they dance on every occasion and on the slightest provocation. I have collected thirty songs to accompany dances. About three-fourths of them are sometimes used at funerals or at other ceremonial occasions, some of them are for more frivolous purposes, and most of those which are used for ceremonies are used at other times also. It is not for nothing that an Umbundu equivalent of [538] the proverb 'Strike while the iron is hot', runs as follows:

Nda wa mōlā oñoma, piluka:
When you see a drum, dance:
Oñoma ka yi muĉwā luwali.
A drum may not be seen twice.

During one of my visits to Ngendo there was an important funeral with much dancing at Ndumba, just across the valley. At

[1] Tucker, *Drums in the Darkness* (Toronto and New York; Doran, 1927), p. 38.
[2] Monteiro, *Angola and the River Congo*, 2 vols. (London: Macmillan, 1875), vol. ii, p. 271.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

175* 177 influences. The stock to which the common people belong were wearers of skins, which is true of many of them to the present time. The people from whom the ruling houses came have a highly developed weaving industry. The 'Ngangela' neighbours, who [565] have also contributed elements to the racial make-up of the Ovi- [287] mbundu, make and use bark-cloth. The Ovimbundu evidently gave up the use of skins for clothing more than a hundred years ago.[1] This fact, and the additional one that they never developed weaving or bark-cloth industries, was probably due to their early and widespread use of trade-cloth. Rum came with the slave-trade 177 from Brazil. They were almost inseparable. The ships which • 273 fetched the slaves came laden with rum distilled in Brazil. The 567 rum was used in buying the slaves, and much more of it was con- 439 sumed by Ovimbundu—traders, chiefs, and retainers—than by 175* the interior people. Thus, while the slave-trade had such a disruptive influence in the life of the interior tribes, rum did much to corrupt the Ovimbundu. Native tradition[2] and the accounts of early travellers agree on this point. Rum continued to come from Brazil and from other countries or oversea colonies all through this early period, but import was partly supplanted by distillation at the coast, and this process was soon learned by the Ovimbundu themselves.

439 The part which the Umbundu trade had in spreading the goods 567 and uses of the outside world is a fascinating subject and one which 175* would repay study. Ethnographical and historical knowledge of Central Africa is not yet so extensive or precise that the dates and places of these movements can be plotted with certainty. Professor C. M. Doke records that Nkumine, who ruled the Lamba sometime before 1840, sold many of his people 'as slaves to the Mbundu traders from the West Coast for calico, guns, and powder'.[3] It is important to remember that throughout this period the Ovimbundu were for all this part of Africa the chief intermediaries in the slave-trade. These activities affected the ultimate

[1] See Magyar, *passim*.

[2] A Ngalangi tradition says that from the time of King Ndumba II (*c.* 1840) rum was so plentiful that it was poured into troughs, whence it was lapped up by all—men, women, and children. A constant difficulty encountered by the early missionaries was the objection of chiefs and their counsellors to the missionaries' refusal to give liberal presents of rum, as did all the traders.

[3] C. M. Doke, *The Lambas of Northern Rhodesia* (London: Harrap, 1931), pp. 36, 37.

233 The cattle herd obtains most of its food by grazing, but in the dry season the grass withers. Childs states[1] that "Herding has been a [609] function of the sister's son, and even now there is a reluctance on the part of the boys to herd for their fathers."

235 462 [844] Chickens are owned and looked after by both men and women, but other animals only by men. Boys may have small stock of their own, and a boy's economic independence most frequently begins with his owning a chicken.

231 Hambly states that goats are more common than any other animal, and that every family has one or more. These animals are not fed or watered, but are allowed to wander to find their own sustenance. Goats are not milked. Young males are castrated. The goat is frequently used in sacrifices. Sheep also are allowed to find their own food; the males are not castrated. Pigs are cared for comparatively carefully, receiving water and a daily supply of sweet potatoes and their leaves, together with some corn. Male pigs are castrated.[2]

APICULTURE[3]

[439] Beeswax was an important item of trade in the caravan days, and is still sold to Portuguese traders' stores, where it is massed into large rectangular cakes for export. Honey is eaten alone or with manioc, and [262] a fermented beer called *ochasa* is made by adding honey to corn-beer. [273] Fibre strainers are used for cleaning the wax, and large shallow baskets [252] are employed for drying the honey in the sun.

Large cylindrical hives, which are private property, are placed high in the trees. These are made by removing a cylinder of bark and lashing the halves together with strands of bark, forming a hive which has a diameter of one foot.

In Elende honey is removed from the hives during the months of August and December. One man ascends the tree in order to lower the hive with a long rope of bark or plaited fibre, while beneath the tree men are prepared to take the hive, which is opened over a smoky fire.

ARTS AND CRAFTS

326 782 *Smithing.* The profession of blacksmith or *ocivinda* is an important one, and, like hunting and divining, is sacred and is entered with special ritual. Often, but not always, these three professions are passed on by inheritance. For smithing two years' apprenticeship to a member of the profession is necessary, and is usually entered upon at the age of eighteen. At the end of this period the master examines his pupil, and makes tools for him, especially the heavy hammer or *onjundo* which is regarded as symbolic of his craft. For the inauguration ceremony the boy provides four chickens (2 male, 2 female), a dog, and a goat; the blood of these animals is sprinkled on his tools, and their flesh is eaten at a feast [553] attended by the villagers. Throughout the procedure the boy remains standing on the small anvil. Finally he is asked to choose his professional name; he then steps down from the anvil a qualified blacksmith.

(1) Childs, 1949, p.109. (2) Hambly, op.cit., p.154.
(3) Hambly, (4) 1934.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

the tree in order to lower the hive with a long rope of bark or plaited 231
fiber, while beneath the tree men are prepared to take the hive, which is opened over a smoky fire. The men wear no protection, consequently they are badly stung. Boys are encouraged to help, and those who run away receive no honey. Honey may be eaten 263
alone or with manioc. No drink is made from honey only, but 273
ochasa is the name given to beer with honey in it. *Ovingundu* is a drink made from pounded corn which has been soaked in water to which a little honey has been added. The drink is allowed to remain untouched over night; thus it becomes sweet and is mildly intoxicating.

Wax is a very important item of trade. In the remote places 439
natives bring to small trading posts balls of wax which are about 257
two pounds in weight. These in former days were a standard of [436]
exchange in terms of which other values could be measured. These balls of wax are made into large cakes for foreign export. In the Easle country a fiber strainer is used for cleaning the wax. Honey is sometimes dried in very large baskets which are three feet in diameter and two inches deep. These baskets were not observed among the Ovimbundu, but they are used in the region of Cassanga in southern Angola. The honey of wild bees when eaten in the comb is palatable; it would be more so if one could disregard the presence of numerous dead bees.

The bow is the chief weapon of the hunter. The release of the 411
arrow is made with the index and middle fingers (Plate XXXIX, 171
Fig. 1). I have observed this method among the Ovimbundu of 224
the Benguela Highlands, in the region of Kipungo, in the far south among the Vakuanyama, and among the Vasele of the Novo Redondo hinterland. Arrows differ considerably in pattern as the illustrations show (Plate XVII, Figs. 1-9); the Ovimbundu have arrow-points of excellent workmanship. The manufacture of these arrow-points is [326]
one of the most skilled occupations of the blacksmith. Each man makes his own shafts and feathers them. The arrows of the Vasele have leaf-shaped iron points; so also have those used by the Vakuanyama.

Among the Ovimbundu are specialists who make bows from [463]
elastic woods called *usia* and *osambia*. The bow itself is *ohonji* and the arrow is *usongo*. At the third shot I saw a young Ocimbundu boy split a cane which was placed upright at a distance of thirty-three feet. The throwing club (*ohunya*) is used for killing small game such as hares.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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273 ant said, "Sometimes a man who has drunk this beer will sleep on the ground all day and say nothing."

263 438 Salt is a welcome gift in all parts of Angola. Native tribes appreciate its culinary value but show no eagerness to barter for the commodity. At the present time salt is sold in every trader's store, but in earlier times the substance had to be obtained along caravan routes from the coast and was therefore more highly prized than it is today. 317 [231] The Ovimbundu realize the value of salt in the diet of cattle; therefore the animals are occasionally driven to a salt lick in the hills. The Ovimbundu do not use this salt for their own diet, possibly because the salt enjoyed by the cattle is some form of potash and not sodium chloride.

[171] The Vachokue extract salt from the leaves of a river plant by burning it to ashes which are soaked and strained. This is a common African method, but I did not hear of it among the Ovimbundu. The probability is that the Ovimbundu have always obtained salt from the coast.

372 In connection with cooking and brewing beer, methods of making fire are of importance.

Matches are coming into use among the Ovimbundu, but the necessity for them is not great as the hearth fire is not extinguished. [354] In the center of each hut is a fireplace made of three hearth-stones over which logs of wood are placed with their ends in the fire which is kept alight by pushing the logs forward from time to time. A blaze is made by breaking off bark from the logs, placing it on the center of the fire and blowing. Fire is carried from one place to another by conveying a smoldering log. In the Esele country boys may be seen setting off at dawn to scare birds in the corn field, each carrying fire with him.

Usually the children or some other members of the family sleep on mats close to the fire, which requires no attention other than a pushing forward of the logs.

372 171 The Vasele make fire by the twirling method, and at Ngalangi the same procedure was witnessed. In the twirling method two different kinds of wood are used, soft wood for the base and hard wood for the twirling stick. The twirler used at Ngalangi was a piece of cane into the end of which a piece of hard white wood was secured by binding. Ngonga, my interpreter and informant, thinks that any man of the Ovimbundu could make fire by the twirling method if the necessity arose, but the performance witnessed at Ngalangi led me to doubt the truth of this statement. The operator

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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maize from these beds is for home consumption, and it comes at a time when maize supplies are running low, and some people have to rely on manioc. The *ombanda* type is sown in September and early October. Then the main fields (*ovapya*, plural of *epya*) are sown in October and November, and only after this is maize sown in the gardens round the houses. In December and January the people are busy hoeing the fields and in February the sowing of beans takes place, continuing into March. This is followed by the harvesting of the gardens in the village, and by the gathering of the maize in the fields, the maize then being placed in field huts to dry. This takes place in March and April, and with its ending the dry season has come.

The dry season is the time for travelling to see relatives and for getting married, since the burden of work is much reduced. May is a good time to clear the bush and then and in later months there is time to build houses. During the dry season there was much more chance of finding people at home, and there were far more festive occasions. This is also a time when men and women can practise crafts such as basketry, fish-trap making, pottery, and so on. In July, the maize dried in the field hut is pounded and brought back to the village, whence it is taken to the traders for sale. The pounding and carrying is often the work of parties of friends and relatives who are rewarded with beer. Occasionally somebody's maize is collected like this well into September, but most people finish in August. By August the grass has grown very high, and the firing of it is the beginning of large-scale hunts in which men and boys from several villages may join together. Hunts may be undertaken by individuals or by groups at other times of the year either as a hobby or to kill a destructive wild pig (in which case the hunt will be undertaken by a group of people). September is a good month for fishing. The fire has cleared the stream valleys which can now be sown, thus starting off the year's cycle again.

There is no shortage of land, and hence questions of land rights seldom come up in social relations. A village headman has no rights over land outside his village, and even within a village there are strips of bush from which a new garden can be cut. Land is very occasionally sold. For instance a man return-

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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578 pass[2] and was sent to contract labour. The *chefe* apparently informed his employer that he could get other carpenters from the post.

Paulo, then acting in his official capacity as elder of the school, had intervened in a projected marriage in which Guilherme had received the bridewealth. Guilherme, acting in his official capacity, had attacked Paulo's wife's brothers Francisco and Pedro. The dispute had now been brought within [792] the sphere of the mission (as represented by the priest Antonio [648] Pires) and of the administration which had ordered the recruitment of the two men. The conflict between Guilherme and Paulo was now to widen out to include several other people.

On the 21st January the strain between Guilherme and Paulo showed itself again in violent quarrelling, from which I learnt about the broken engagement of Anna. Paulo said that he would refer the matter to Antonio Pires when the priest came back.

On the morning of the 24th the question was brought before Antonio Pires, the catechist Pedro Chiquete Santos (35), Paulo, and Guilherme all speaking in turn. Then other people raised their grievances. Sapapula declared that Guilherme was the enemy of everybody in the village. A man called Kasosi (7), a sister's son of Wasuka (15), stepped forward to claim that Guilherme had attacked him and injured him. Apparently [273] Guilherme, while having illicit rum in his own house, had beaten up Kasosi for possessing rum. Both Maria, Paulo's wife, and Nahoka, Sapapula's wife, joined in the argument. The only man who seemed in any way favourable to Guilherme was Kapapelo (see List II, p. 55), a mother's brother of his, who was also a 'brother' of Lusase (see List II, p. 55). Antonio Pires came down heavily against Guilherme, at which the latter declared that he owed obedience only to the post and ran off.

Towards the end of the argument Luciano (the former fiancé of Anna) and Jeremias (the Protestant catechist from Simbwyikoka) came to the priest to ask for the repayment of the bridewealth.

On the 25th Lusase, the chief of Gumba, happened to visit

[648] [2] The legal obligation for natives to possess passes is not enforced with the zeal which applies in South Africa.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

517 521 562 some pulling on their stubby little pipes and watching the men. As the men smoke, they may pass the pipe from mouth to mouth, but not so the women.

517 276 Tobacco (*akaya*) is a great vehicle for sociability whether in the pipe or in the form of snuff. 'Snuffing is held to clear the head, to clarify the thought, to enlighten the eyes, to sharpen the hearing, and comfort the heart.'[1] 'Taking a pinch of snuff, between the forefinger and the thumb, is unknown . . . and would be considered . . . very unsatisfactory. . . . They pour about a teaspoonful into the palm of the hand, and burying their . . . nostrils in the peppery mixture snort it up loudly, aided by a rotary motion of the half-closed hand.'[2]

273 Beer (*ocimbombo*) is of even greater importance. Its place has long been threatened by such drinks as the stronger beer made from emmer wheat (*ekundi*), mead (*ingundu* and *ocasa*), and [177] imported rum. Within the past thirty or forty years the Ovimbundu have themselves learned to distil rum (*okacipembe*) from sweet potatoes, sugar-cane, pumpkins, &c., and although the industry is illegal, it has grown to great proportions and nothing now seems able to stop it. It is the widespread use of this strong drink, with its concomitant evils, which is to-day the greatest enemy of the social life.

535 The dance is probably the most important element in the social life of the village. The Ovimbundu have many different dances and they dance on every occasion and on the slightest provocation. I have collected thirty songs to accompany dances. About three-fourths of them are sometimes used at funerals or at other ceremonial occasions, some of them are for more frivolous purposes, and most of those which are used for ceremonies are used at other times also. It is not for nothing that an Umbundu equivalent of [338] the proverb 'Strike while the iron is hot', runs as follows:

Nda wa mōlā oñoma, piluka:
When you see a drum, dance:
Oñoma ka yi muiwā luvali.
A drum may not be seen twice.

During one of my visits to Ngendo there was an important funeral with much dancing at Ndumba, just across the valley. At

[1] Tucker, *Drums in the Darkness* (Toronto and New York; Doran, 1927), p. 38.
[2] Monteiro, *Angola and the River Congo*, 2 vols. (London: Macmillan, 1875), vol. ii, p. 271.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

undoubtedly knew the apparatus and the method, but he appeared 372
to have lost the dexterity which is necessary for a rapid moving of the 171
hands from the bottom of the twirler to the top. There was consequently a long period of smoldering before the flame appeared.

Among the Vachokue a little wooden box of tinder, a piece of quartz, and an iron blade are carried for fire-making. From an Esele man a bag containing tinder and quartz was obtained.

The making of fire ceremonially in connection with ritual and sacrifice is described among the functions of the medicine-man, because the sacred and profane uses of fire are quite distinct.

Tobacco is a very important item of trade. The cultivation is a 249
domestic industry followed usually by women but to some extent by 462
men. In former days when the Ovimbundu traded extensively in Africa every man had a field of tobacco which he himself cultivated. At the present time each man is likely to have a mound of tobacco plants in the middle of a corn field (Plate XXIX, Fig. 1). Women do sometimes cultivate tobacco near their huts, but in this case the little plantation must be strongly fenced. Goats are numerous, and they eat the leaves of the tobacco plant with avidity.

Toward the end of September, when the rains begin, tobacco seed is sown on a patch of ground a yard square to raise seedlings which are planted out in October. A few flowers only are left to produce seed. As a further effort to improve the quality of the tobacco many of the lower leaves are removed. The cutting of leaves intended for use as tobacco is done by men in the months of February and March; women and children assist if the field is large.

After the midrib has been removed from each leaf, the leaves are suspended from the roof in a bundle. At the end of five days, when the leaves have turned brown, they are twisted into a long straight roll which is hung in the sun for three days. At intervals the roll is twisted in another direction. This gradually exposes all parts of the leaves, so that the drying is thorough. There are three methods of making up the rolls: *ombola* is an oval roll; *ongalo* is the round coil; *ocine* is the name given to tobacco which has been dried and twisted 276
round a stick. Tobacco-pipes are varied in size and design (Plate XV, Figs. 1–3); those for men are larger than those used by women. A mixture of tobacco and hemp is smoked in a water-pipe made from the horn of a cow. Details of structure and ornament are given under "Wood-carving."

In order to make snuff a piece of dried tobacco is slowly baked near the fire on the end of a pointed stick which is turned frequently.

276 The snuff is pounded and placed in a small wooden box of cylindrical
[531] shape. Usually the box is ornamented with incised, burned patterns.
The Ovimbundu of Bihé add ashes of wood to their snuff, so producing
a mixture called *ulelemo*. The Ovimbundu of Elende usually use the
[549] snuff without adulteration. Two main species of tobacco plants
are grown.

Women smoke in all parts of Angola. The Ovimbundu do not chew tobacco, neither have I seen it so used elsewhere in Angola. Boys and girls are not allowed to smoke before the age of thirteen years.

576 In the *ombala* of the Vangangella near Ngalangi, I asked a girl
[834] for her pipe which I desired for my collection. The interpreter took
the pipe when she proffered it, explaining that, according to local
custom, I had asked for the girl. If I took the proffered pipe *from
her hand* I accepted her. Another social custom associated with
tobacco is the passing of the communal pipe from hand to hand in
the men's council house.

276 Ngonga, my interpreter, says that he has never seen an Ocimbundu
171 woman smoke hemp, but he has seen a woman of the Vangangella
(people to the east of the Ovimbundu) smoking hemp. Hemp
(*epangue*) is cultivated only by the Ovimbundu men who smoke it.
Pure hemp is smoked in the water-pipe which is not passed from
hand to hand. Only tobacco is used in communal smoking. Smoking
of hemp or tobacco consists of a few deep inhalations; there is not
usually a prolonged placid smoking. When hemp is placed in the
bowl of the water-pipe it is covered with large grains of sand or a
piece of tin. This intervening substance prevents the hot coals
from coming into contact with the hemp. The object is to secure
slow ignition.

DOMESTIC ANIMALS

231 The principal domestic animals are cow (*onjindi*), ox (*ongombe*,
which is also the generic name for cattle), bull (*onui*), sheep (*omeme*),
goat (*ohombo*), pig (*ongulu*), dog (*ombua*), chicken (*osanji*) (Plates
LV, LVI, LVII).

492 The transport animals, donkey, horse, and mule, are not used by
the Ovimbundu of Elende and not to any extent by Ovimbundu of
other parts; but in the south of Angola the Vakuanyama have sturdy
ponies and well-kept mules. The ox when ridden by Portuguese
is provided with a leather saddle which is very comfortable if
covered with a blanket. The brass stirrups are broad and massive.
Through the septum of the bullock's nostrils there is a short brass
rod to the ends of which the reins are attached (Plate XXX, Fig. 1).

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

787 532 A common type of small figurine, some of which are female, others asexual, is represented by an illustration (Plate XXI, Fig. 2). Such little carvings are a normal part of the miscellaneous contents of a divination basket described in chapter IX. These figures have been obtained from Elende, Bailundu, and Caconda, all of which are centers of Umbundu culture.

322 532 756 In addition to the figurines described, the collection contains many more whose use may be conjectured. The interrogation of Ovimbundu people indicates clearly that there are specific uses of wooden figures which are consulted by the medicine-man. The foregoing explanations illustrate the nature of the beliefs associated with carved wooden figures, but it is not always possible to elicit a clear account of the specific use of each one.

171 532 Consideration of this aspect of the wood-carver's art has an important bearing on the culture contacts of the Ovimbundu. In studying this question I have instituted comparisons between these figures from the Ovimbundu of Angola and similar figures from the Kasai area of the Congo region (chapter X). The publications of the Musée Congo Belge provide illustrations for comparison with the figures in Field Museum's collection.

The carving of animal forms (Plate XIX, Figs. 1–5) is no more than a means of aesthetic expression resulting from accurate observations of animal life as recorded under "Nature Lore." Inquiry failed to show that figures of animals are, or were at any time, used in rites and ceremonies.

[643] The carrying of a carved stick is essential when a chief is visiting, attending a council in his own village, or receiving visitors. The ornamental paddle (Plate XX, Fig. 8) was owned by the chief of the capital village (*ombala*) of the Vangangella, near Ngalangi.

[765] At the death of a chief his staff of office, with his tobacco-pipe and sleeping mat, are placed in a small house where such relics of deceased chiefs are kept permanently (Plate XLVI, Fig. 1). Plate XX, Fig. 6, shows a staff of this kind which was preserved in a sacred house in the capital village of Ngalangi, and on the same plate are drawn short ornamental clubs which French ethnologists call *batons de promenade*, an appropriate name because of their use as part of the full dress equipment.

[276] The Ovimbundu have specialized in the carving of small objects, for, in addition to clubs and staffs, tobacco-pipes and snuff boxes are often elaborately carved (Plate XV, Figs. 2, 4).

The water-pipe of the Ovimbundu consists of the horn of a cow 276
into the side of which a short hollow pipe stem is introduced; at the top of the stem is a clay bowl for the reception of tobacco, or a mixture of tobacco and hemp. The wide end of the horn is plugged with clay, while a hole is made at the tip in order to provide a mouthpiece. A gourd water-pipe, similar to that used by the Vachokue, is also found among the Ovimbundu.

Cylindrical snuff boxes are ornamented with incised, burned, 276
geometrical patterns. The lid is usually attached to the box by a 531
leather thong. One large snuff box is ornamented with three well-carved female figures. The smoker's equipment is sometimes carried in a leather pouch fastened on a waist belt, or the container may be a hollow cylinder of ivory with a leather cap at each end.

To this information respecting the smoking and snuff-taking outfit 276
of the Ovimbundu, some observations on the pipes and snuff boxes 171
of other tribes should be added. When making a journey from Cangamba to Saurimo I seldom met an Ocivokue man who was not carrying a gourd water-pipe for the smoking of tobacco and hemp. Such pipes are usually ornamented with brass nails and are finely bound with thin brass wire (Plate XV, Fig. 3). One long pipe from Ngalangi has a pair of metal tongs attached for taking charcoal from the fire in order to ignite the tobacco (Plate XV, Fig. 1). A pipe with two bowls, closely resembling some Zulu patterns, was smoked by an Ocimbundu woman at Ngalangi. The Vachokue make snuff boxes from a yellow wood, which they ornament by burning portions of the surface in such a way that the yellow color is here and there visible.

Both men and women of the Vakipungo and Vakuanyama tribes carry snuff boxes of conical shape on their leather waist belts. At the top and bottom such snuff boxes are neatly bound with brass or copper wire.

DOMESTIC IMPLEMENTS

At an early age girls become accustomed to the use of the V-shaped 412
pounder which is made from hard heavy wood (Plate XXXVI, Fig. 2). The small end of the shaft is a convenient thickness for grasping in such a way that the knuckles are on the under side of the shaft. This is the very reverse of what appears to be the natural grip. Women use the pounder with an easy, circular swing so that the flat round surface comes into contact with the grain on the rock. Endurance in this work is remarkable, and there is no doubt that

276

[285]

TOBACCO-PIPES, SNUFF BOX, RAT TRAP, AND BASKET

[p. 369]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

755 man, and fastened to the wall, was a strip of bark cloth painted with white circles. These recorded the number of times the patient came for treatment.

278 757 At Ngalangi there was no difficulty in obtaining information respecting plants used medicinally. Each of three medicine-men returned with a number of roots and stems which they readily described. *Okakamba* and *okapelangalo* are roots that cure "big head." This disease, which is rare in white people, begins with blood blisters in the mouth; these may spread to the intestines and cause death. *Okayenje* is a root that induces vomiting; it is also a purgative to free a patient from worms. *Olutikitiki* is given to a woman soon after her baby is born. *Kalungdumona* is a plant having a purple flower. If the root is pounded and drunk in water it acts as an aperient. *Okumbiasoko*, when pounded and placed on the fire, restores a person after fainting; the head of the patient is held in the smoke. To a violent maniac the root *usonge* is given, pounded in water and mixed with maize beer. At Ngalangi a man who had been subject to homicidal mania was sitting on the ground quietly with his hands tied behind his back. I was informed that *usonge* was making him better. *Ocinyeni* is a bark that is chewed to remedy stomachache. *Kosamba* is a plant used to cure people who fall into the fire; it is also a remedy for toothache. The action of this drug *kosamba* causes vomiting and evacuation.

Cilendaluka is pounded in water and smeared on the patient's body as a treatment following the internal application of *kosamba*. *Mbundakataka* is a root that is pounded and applied externally to cure sores on the lips.

278 In addition to the plants just mentioned the following are important:

Ocimbinga. This plant, whose name means "the big horn," is probably *Strophanthus*. It is used in the treatment of worms and chest colds.

Ocipumbulu. This is a trailing herb whose leaves when pulverized are said to be a cure for bad sores.

Ocindiambala and *oluasapa*. These are used to give to women who are suffering in difficult delivery. *Ongolo* sometimes takes the place of these drugs. The bark of *ongolo* is pounded in boiling water which is contained in a basin over which the woman sits. Use of the bark in this way is a protection against injuries resulting from childbirth.

Omondolua. This is good for headaches and whooping cough. The roots are boiled and mixed with sweet beer.

Okalolula-lohala. This is said to be used in cases of dysentery. At Elende it is used for curing skin diseases.

Ohalle. This is used in cases of snake bite, swellings, and stings.

164 In connection with the foregoing study of the native pharmacopoeia it will be of interest to consider some maladies to which the Ovim-

4:Dorsey E-4, 5 (no date)1899 FP13 Mbundu FP13

Still another form of fetish for protection are two small images also 778 known as *ovitekas*. They, like the other *ovitekas* described above[1], are of wood, but are rudely carved from two round pieces of wood about sixteen inches long. No attempt has been made to represent the human form in any detail, only the face, neck, and arms being indicated. The face of both images has been besmeared with some reddish black pigment. These were placed where the path to the village branches off to the caravan road. A small hut before which they stood was built for them, about two feet square, and between two and three feet high, with a thatched grass roof. Within was a shelf on which from time to time was placed food, corn, and a small gourd of beer. This was done to appease certain spirits which were supposed to be angry with the village and were causing sickness.

For the so-called poison test three medicines are employed. The 695 first and most common is known as the *ombambu*, a drug obtained 278 from the country east of the Quanza River, and represented in the collection by a piece of bark. It has the property of a powerful spinal irritant, and it is said that a very small quantity will produce death. There is a current belief among the Ovimbundu that if a bird alights upon the *ombambu* tree it will fall down dead. The second drug, or *ombambu*, employed in the poison test is obtained from the Bihe country, and is represented by several roots. It is taken in the form of a decoction. The third test is known as *onsunga*. This is a mixture of powdered herbs, and is obtained from the country of the Ganguellas. With these three drugs should be mentioned a small gourd, *okopo*, used by the ocimbanda in mixing the medicines, and from which during the poison test the parties drink. The test medicines are stirred with the foot of a small antelope. Occasion for the administering of the poison may arise in various ways. Frequently one person will accuse another of being a witch. The accused may deny it, and appeal to the poison test to prove his innocency. They go to the chief, who calls an ocimbanda, who mixes up a concoction in a gourd, and both the accuser and accused drink. If the draughts make one sick and he vomits, he is acquitted; and if the other one becomes very sick and does not vomit, he is said to be the witch. This same test is often appealed to in other matters where one affirms and another denies. A man may drink by proxy, that is, he may have a friend drink the poison in his stead, or, more frequently, a slave drinks for his master.

Finally, it must be noticed that the ocimbandu is also a medicine- 791 man. He undoubtedly possesses some really valuable remedies, but 757 there is so much of the fetishistic cult bound up in the administering of the remedies that when they do help a person the credit of

[1] [Cf. p. 185. -- Analyst]

Formerly it was believed that a smith owed his skill to the help of the spirit of a person whom he had killed, and wooden effigies of this person were kept by the smith.(1) 326 782

The principal products of a blacksmith's forge are axe-heads, hoe blades,(2) tools for mat-making, arrowheads, knives, and brass bracelets. Iron, which is fairly plentiful, was formerly smelted over charcoal fires.(3) Today smiths use scrap iron. 325 412

Pottery

Pot-making is a part of women's work among the Ovimbundu. A wheel is not used. Clay is mixed with a silicate, usually gravel, rolled out in long ropes, and the pot built by the coiling process.(4) Pots are ornamented when wet by making deep incisions with a piece of gourd; they are then sun-dried, and fired in a kiln of dry grass. Pots are used as water-containers, as cooking vessels and as vessels for storing corn and beans, and, when made in a very large size, for brewing beer.(5) 323 [462]

No ritual attaches to pot-making, except at the opening of a new clay-pit, when, in the presence of both men and women from the village, the medicine-man sacrifices a chicken over the open pit.(6) [782]

Weaving and Spinning

Looms have not been used among the Ovimbundu since they have been a people, although progenitors of the kingly families who came from the Bangala or Congo groups may have done weaving. Trade cloth has been known and used by the Ovimbundu for nearly 300 years.(7) Skins have been used in remote areas; Hambly when he mentions bark-cloth as being worn by the Ovimbundu is probably referring to the Ngangela. Spun cotton, however, is used for repairs, and there is a cotton plant in most gardens. Spinning is done always by men.(8) 286 439 [281] [287] [283] 462

Basketry

All girls learn to make baskets, although some become more proficient than others. Knowledge of basket-making implies also an understanding of dyeing, since coloured strands of grass are interwoven to make geometric patterns.(9) Baskets, and also basket-trays, are usually made by the coiling process.(10) 285 462 [386]

(1) Hambly, (2) 1934, pp.158-60. The ceremony was described from Njongolo village in Elende.
(2) See Cushman, 1944, pp.140-1.
(3) For details of the blacksmith's forge and tools, see Hambly, op.cit., pp.160-1; Cushman, 1944, pp.139, 140, 145-6.
(4) See Hambly, op.cit. Plates XXXIII and XXXIV, and Childs, 1949, Plate VIII.
(5) Hambly, op.cit., p.168; Cushman, op.cit., pp.144-5.
(6) Hambly, op.cit., p.169.
(7) Childs, personal communication. See also Childs, 1949, p.171, note 1.
(8) See Hambly, p.177, and Cushman, 1944, p.136.
(9) Red, yellow, black, and brown dyes are used. For a description of the process, see Hambly, op.cit., pp.170-1.
(10) See Hambly, op.cit., p.171, and Cushman, op.cit., pp.141-2 for details of basket-making. Also for illustrations Hambly, op.cit. and Childs, 1949.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

114 trative posts. I agree that people between Caconda and Huila
101 represent a racial mixture of the Ovimbundu and the Ovambo. The record speaks of painting-houses for girls at Cabinda, an item which agrees with reports from other sources. The jottings concerning tribes from Cabinda to the far south of Angola are too vague to be used in ethnological work with confidence.

There are many points on which the work of A. Schachtzabel should be consulted for the purpose of making comparisons with my [621] own observations. The chief of these are a note and photograph on [281] village construction (p. 130); the musical bow (p. 32); the loom [175] (plate VI); transmigration of the soul of a chief into an animal (p. 51); [524] and the game of mancala (p. 52). My observations of initiation at [881] Katoko, Ngalangi, and Cangamba agree well with that of Schachtzabel at Katoko, but I was able to obtain more detail and more [283] numerous photographs of the ritual of initiation. The spinning of cotton (p. 143) is exactly the process so frequently witnessed now at Elende. Iron-working (p. 111) appears to be comparable with the technique at Elende, but Schachtzabel seems to have missed the ritual. I was not so fortunate as this author in finding the old type of iron-smelting furnace in use.

114 The work of Statham is devoted primarily to hunting and descrip-
136 tions of plant and animal life. The chapter given to a casual description of people among whom he passed is not useful as ethnology; but the book is of service in providing a background of natural history. Information on the tsetse fly in Angola (p. 294) assists ethnological work by showing the determining effect of this biological factor. [231] Presence of the fly is prohibitive to cattle-keeping, therefore cattle are not kept along the river courses which are infested with this pest.

114 Alexander Barns made no pretence of writing more than a travel book; nevertheless he publishes photographs of ethnological value, gives useful historical summaries, and deals with economic problems of production and transportation.

114 Tucker's book "Drums in the Darkness," though written to
175 interest the American public in mission work, contains many ethnological statements. The chief of these relate to the structure of the compound (p. 37); the dress of women (p. 39); naming of twins and triplets; and other items which agree well with data from the district in which I worked. There are notes on drum signals (p. 74) and [202] cannibalism (p. 77). Apparently drum signals were in use at Bihé half a century ago. Forty years ago a slave was killed and eaten [266] at the installation ceremonies for a new king, a point that was noted

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

I have seen an Ocimbundu male riding an ox without saddle: A 492
cord was passed through the animal's nose to serve as reins.

The Portuguese name for horse is *cavalo*, a word which the Ovim- 192
bundu use in the form *okavalu*, though there is an Umbundu word *ocingongovala*, which means "going with his neck up." The Umbundu words for donkey and mule are *ocimbulu* and *omula*, respectively.

Generally speaking, the ears of animals are not clipped, neither 231
are cattle branded or otherwise marked to indicate ownership, but sometimes the ears of pigs and goats are cut to aid identification. When asked why the tips of the ears of dogs are mutilated an Ocimbundu will say that a dog with uncut ears does not hear when called (Plate LVI, Fig. 2).

Not many families own large herds of cattle among the Ovim- 233
bundu, and I did not see a big kraal until I was in southwest Angola. 556
Cattle, which are a measure of wealth, are used for paying fines, making funeral feasts, paying debts, and securing wives. The cattle throughout Angola are well-developed, handsome animals (Plate LVII, Fig. 1). The bull remains with the herd the entire year; there is therefore no particular season for the birth of calves. Usually cows are not milked by the Ovimbundu, consequently these people have no milk, butter, or cheese. The Vakuanyama of the south milk their [171]
cows and churn butter in calabashes slung on a pole.

The Ovimbundu say that milking the cow makes the calf thin, 234
but where the idea of milking the cow is borrowed from the Portu- [177]
guese the Ovimbundu have a procedure which is as follows: The calf is allowed to suck for a few minutes in order to deceive the cow; then the milker begins his work. At intervals of a few minutes the calf is allowed to suck in order to continue the deception.

Cattle are killed at the funeral feasts of the rich, and the horns [765]
of the slaughtered animals are generally mounted on a pole in the vicinity of the grave (Plate XLVI, Fig. 2).

The horns of the cow may be used for making water-pipes in 237
which tobacco is smoked, or they may be employed as magical horns when filled with medicine. The hide is pegged out in the sunlight 281
for one day after it has been scraped; it is then rolled and kept until required. When about to be used, the skin is soaked in water for one day. The hide is used to cover the tops of stools, to make pouches and to manufacture bags for carrying corn. In bygone days each king had a wooden box covered with hide, which contained his powder and metal when he went to war. The cow's tail is used 90

A professional hunter usually works alone, using bows and arrows, 224
clubs, spears, and several kinds of trap.(1) Nets and poison are not used. 411
Every hunter makes his own arrow-shafts and feathers; the points are made by a blacksmith. On the night before leaving for a hunt, the *ukongo* calls in his fellow hunters to share a ceremony which includes dancing and the re-anointing of the weapons with beer and palm-oil.

Communal hunts usually take place in June-July, in the middle of the 224
dry season, when large tracts of land are covered with grass ten or more feet high. The day for the hunt is set by the village headman; spears and arrows are prepared and, when the word is given, a party of about 30 men and boys move off to the assigned area of tall grass. A ring is formed round about two square miles of land, the hunters standing just within sight of each other. The grass is trodden down, fires started, and the animals killed as they rush from the flames. Antelope of many kinds, snakes, foxes, wolves, hyenas, mice and rabbits and occasionally leopards are killed in this way.

FISHING

In the Kunene and some of the other larger rivers fish are large and 226
plentiful, and men go on communal fishing expeditions, and return with 462
fish to sell.(2) Men usually fish with bark lines, women use basket-traps(3) and poisons. Poison is used, usually in the dry season, when the rivers are shallow. Both men and women use nets, and sometimes a fish-weir or *olunja* may be employed; this has an opening in the middle, in the lower side of which is placed a basket-trap. At the coast and along the Kwanza river dug-out canoes, about 20-30 feet long, are sometimes used for fishing.(4) [501]

DOMESTIC ANIMALS

The principal domestic animals are the cow *(onjindi)*, ox *(ongombe*, 231
which is also the generic name for cattle), bull *(onui)*, sheep *(omene)*, goat *(ohombo)*, pig *(ongulu)*, dog *(ombua)*, and chicken *(osanji)*.(5) The [492]
only transport animal is the ox, used both for riding and for drawing carts.(6)

Cattle are a measure of wealth, but few families own large herds. 231
Childs lists the domestic animals in a typical village of 196 inhabitants as: 9 head of cattle, 13 goats, 20 sheep, 100 pigs, and about 100 chickens. 436 Cattle are used for paying fines and debts, for funeral feasts, and for marriage payments. Cows are not usually milked, and cattle are killed for food only when they are aged or injured, or occasionally during the June-July period of food shortage. [282] Treated hides are used to cover stools, and for making pouches and corn-bags.(7)

The cattle herd obtains most of its food by grazing, but in the dry 000

(1) Some hunters have guns, but the use of gunpowder is restricted by the Portuguese.
(2) Cushman, op.cit., p.143.
(3) See Cushman, loc.cit. for a brief description of the basket-trap.
(4) Hambly, (2) 1934, p.145.
(5) Ibid., pp.152-6.
(6) Childs, personal communication. Cf. Hambly, op.cit., p.152.
(7) Hambly, op.cit., p.153.

Mat-making

462 285 [412] The making of mats is a specialised craft for men. Generally elderly men are the mat-makers. Two tools are used, a borer and a needle, both products of the blacksmith's forge. Hambly[1] describes the making of reed sleeping mats, large mats used for partitions, and string bags. There are four distinct types of mats, each of which has its specialist.[2]

Leather-work

282 Leather pouches worn on a broad leather belt are part of the essential equipment of the hunter. The pouch is square, rectangular, or semi-cylindrical in shape, and may be decorated with cross-shaped patterns, or brass-headed nails used for decorative effect. Hide is also used for the seats of four-legged wooden stools. Hides are crudely dressed: they are soaked, the inner surface rubbed with ashes, the hair scraped away, and the hide pegged out.[3]

Wood-carving

323 [463] Wood-carving, which is men's work, includes the following specialisations: doors, windows and their frames; coffins; beds, tables and chairs; mortars, pestles, grinding-handles, and handles for various iron implements; stools, household utensils, carved images etc.; drums and other musical instruments; canoes (dug-outs and coracles).[4] Illustrations are given by Hambly.[5]

TRADE

438 484 791 [482] Caravan trade is now confined to short journeys when corn, beans and beeswax are carried by men and women porters to the traders' stores. Formerly however it was an important feature of tribal life. Each caravan had its professional leader, and was accompanied by a diviner or medicine-man. Before a caravan started out, a ceremony was performed at which the principal performers were the village headman and the medicine-man. The head of the former headman was brought from its box, sewn in oxhide; blood from a sacrificed animal was sprinkled on the head, and invocation was made to the deceased by the village headman, asking for good fortune for the journey.[6]

438 436 Today the Ovimbundu exchange products among themselves both by barter and the use of Portuguese money,[7] but there are no large markets except in the towns.

[439] 438 The "trade-agreements" between the Ovimbundu kingdoms and between the Ovimbundu and other tribes have been mentioned above.[8] Accompanying these, regional industrial and commercial specialisations within Ovimbundu country developed. Thus in the middle of the last century

(1) Hambly, op.cit., pp.169-70.
(2) Childs, 1949, p.109.
(3) Hambly, op.cit., p.176.
(4) Childs, op.cit., p.110.
(5) Op.cit., Plates XIII to XXII.
(6) Hambly, op.cit., p.156.
(7) For details of Ovimbundu units of measurement see Hambly, op.cit., p.157.
(8) p.9.

The cow's tail is used
237 as a sheath for covering the iron shafts of assagais, and it is sometimes made into a switch which the rain-maker uses during his performances.

233 Bulls are castrated when two years old. The wound is rubbed
[232] with ashes, salt, soot, and palm oil. Bullocks are used for riding, also
[492] for pull-carts introduced by the Boers. The herd obtains most of its food by grazing. In the dry season grass withers, with the result that the animals become thin and stall-feeding is necessary. In former days cattle-raiding was a practice of the Ovimbundu, who
233 robbed the Vacilenge. It is certain that the Ovimbundu did not own
174 cattle when they entered Angola. If the general tradition is correct the Ovimbundu came into Angola from a northeasterly direction, from the borders of the Belgian Congo as it is called today; this is not a cattle-raising region.

The Ovimbundu of Elende have a joke against the people of Bailundu, because the latter on first seeing a cow offered the animal some food on a wooden platter. This story suggests that the Bailundu people, who are of the Ovimbundu confederacy, did not know the animal and its habits as early as did the Ovimbundu themselves.

233 Although the Ovimbundu do not usually kill their cattle they may do so in the months of June and July, because at this time pasture is withered and food is scarce. Animals which are diseased, aged, or injured, are killed and eaten.

231 The native pig is distinguishable from European breeds by its long thin snout and slender development. This breed is said by the Director of Animal Husbandry, Humpata, to be the Keltic breed (Plate LV). There is, he says, no evidence to prove that the
[176] Ovimbundu have at any time domesticated pigs from the wild hogs which are to be found in Angola. There is no family which does not own a pig, and on the whole the pig fares much better than the sheep or the goat. The pig receives water and a daily ration of food, which is usually sweet potatoes and their leaves, together with some
232 corn. Male pigs are castrated at any time between the ages of six
[463] months and one year by an operator who is a paid specialist. The fee for castrating a bull is four yards of cloth, but a small gift is considered sufficient reward for performing the operation on a pig.
[282] If a pig is thin, the leather is said to be of good quality and therefore
252 suitable for making sheaths for knives. Usually the flesh of the pig is eaten shortly after the animal has been killed, but the meat of the bullock, on the contrary, is sometimes dried over a fire and preserved. But this is not a general practice as the animals are too valuable to be slaughtered.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

411 171 ment either to the arm or to the belt of the wearer. The crescent-shaped expansion at the tip of the scabbard is sometimes held between the toes while the blade is withdrawn.

A small knife obtained from an Ocivokue man near Saurimo in the province of Lunda, northeast Angola, has a black wooden haft neatly bound with fine brass wire (Plate XVI, Fig. 2). The steel blade of Vachokue workmanship is eminently suitable for the purpose for which it is employed, namely, that of carving pipe bowls and snuff boxes, which are sometimes elaborately incised. The knife has a distribution from Saurimo to Cangamba, an area of intermittent Vachokue culture, but I have never observed it in the possession of an Ocimbundu. Men of the Ovimbundu have knives of somewhat poor quality. The roughly made wooden haft is attached to a blade which is protected by a sheath of lizard skin. More frequently than not, an Ocimbundu does not carry a knife; neither does he appear to have borrowed knives or the art of making them from the expert Vakuanyama or Vachokue, who are reluctant to part with their tools and weapons.

A knife used by Vasele men in the region of Vila Nova de Selles, in the hinterland of Novo Redondo, resembles one used by the Bangala of the Congo (Plate XIII, Fig. 1). The distribution of the implement, which is used for cutting branches from trees, is local in the Esele country. I have never seen such a knife in use among the Ovimbundu or in any other part of Angola. The preservation of this peculiar form, in common with other specialized traits of Esele culture, is due to isolation of the Vasele among hills difficult of access.

LEATHER WORK

282 [411] Leather pouches worn on a broad leather belt are part of the essential equipment of a hunter. The pouch usually contains scrap metal and powder for muzzle-loading guns. This type of firearm is, under present Portuguese regulations, difficult to obtain and still more difficult to furnish with powder, which is forbidden to the native. Consequently such a pouch may contain only a pipe and tobacco.

The pouch itself is either square, rectangular, or semi-cylindrical in shape (Plate XIII, Fig. 6). The hair may or may not have been removed from the hide. Some examples show signs of careful workmanship in stamping cross-shaped patterns. Brass-headed nails are used for decorative effect on these pouches among the Ovimbundu of Elende and as far south as Huila.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbunc..

In addition to pouches, hide is used by the Ovimbundu for the 282
seats of four-legged wooden stools. Before stretching the hide over the wooden frame the edge of the leather is cut into strips which are interlaced on the under side of the stool (Plate XVIII, Fig. 1). There are few evidences of the hide having been dressed; usually the hair is attached. The Ovimbundu understand the dressing of hides in a crude way. The hide is soaked, after which the inner surface is rubbed with ashes. The hair is scraped away and the hide is tightly pegged out. Hide was formerly used for covering wooden boxes [534]
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In only one part of Angola, notably in the south among the 171
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small leather aprons in front and behind. Men only are the leather 462
workers. The hide is soaked and trampled under foot for many hours in order to soften it and make it pliable; the hair is not removed. Before leather clothing is worn it is thickly greased with a mixture of fat and red powder from *tukula* wood (Plates LXV, Figs. 1–3; LXVII, Fig. 1).

SPINNING AND WEAVING

My interpreter Ngonga remembers the use of a heavy upright 286
loom about twenty years ago, but this loom is not used at the present 177
time among the Ovimbundu. The Ovimbundu have been in contact with Europeans for three centuries. This has not been a close and permanent contact, but it has been sufficient to account for the disappearance of a one-time essential art. There are in Elende some 287
very fine raffia palm trees, but no use is made of the leaf fiber for 171
manufacturing clothes. Bark cloth is not made by the Ovimbundu of Elende, but I have seen the Vangangella and Ovimbundu of Ngalangi engaged in stripping, beating, and preparing bark for use as clothing, which is formed of one piece wound round the body. The bark cloth is not dyed or decorated with patterns.

Frequently at Elende men are seen engaged in spinning cotton 283
which is used for repairs, and not for fabricating garments. The 824
cotton is obtained from a shrub which has reddish leaves and yellow flowers. The cotton may be seen protruding from the calyx in the months of June and July. The man who is winding holds high in his left hand a slender stick which is wrapped for a length of two feet with fluffy cotton. All work of pressing and twisting the cotton into a thread is done by the thumb and index finger of the right hand.

Formerly it was believed that a smith owed his skill to the help of the spirit of a person whom he had killed, and wooden effigies of this person were kept by the smith.[1] 326 782

The principal products of a blacksmith's forge are axe-heads, hoe blades,[2] tools for mat-making, arrowheads, knives, and brass bracelets. Iron, which is fairly plentiful, was formerly smelted over charcoal fires.[3] Today smiths use scrap iron. 325 412

Pottery

Pot-making is a part of women's work among the Ovimbundu. A wheel is not used. Clay is mixed with a silicate, usually gravel, rolled out in long ropes, and the pot built by the coiling process.[4] Pots are ornamented when wet by making deep incisions with a piece of gourd; they are then sun-dried, and fired in a kiln of dry grass. Pots are used as water-containers, as cooking vessels and as vessels for storing corn and beans, and, when made in a very large size, for brewing beer.[5] 323 [462]

No ritual attaches to pot-making, except at the opening of a new clay-pit, when, in the presence of both men and women from the village, the medicine-man sacrifices a chicken over the open pit.[6] [782]

Weaving and Spinning

Looms have not been used among the Ovimbundu since they have been a people, although progenitors of the kingly families who came from the Bangala or Congo groups may have done weaving. Trade cloth has been known and used by the Ovimbundu for nearly 300 years.[7] Skins have been used in remote areas; Hambly when he mentions bark-cloth as being worn by the Ovimbundu is probably referring to the Ngangela. Spun cotton, however, is used for repairs, and there is a cotton plant in most gardens. Spinning is done always by men.[8] 286 439 [281] [287] [283] 462

Basketry

All girls learn to make baskets, although some become more proficient than others. Knowledge of basket-making implies also an understanding of dyeing, since coloured strands of grass are interwoven to make geometric patterns.[9] Baskets, and also basket-trays, are usually made by the coiling process.[10] 285 462 [386]

(1) Hambly, (2) 1934, pp.158-60. The ceremony was described from Njongolo village in Elende.
(2) See Cushman, 1944, pp.140-1.
(3) For details of the blacksmith's forge and tools, see Hambly, op.cit., pp.160-1; Cushman, 1944, pp.139, 140, 145-6.
(4) See Hambly, op.cit. Plates XXXIII and XXXIV, and Childs, 1949, Plate VIII.
(5) Hambly, op.cit., p.168; Cushman, op.cit., pp.144-5.
(6) Hambly, op.cit., p.169.
(7) Childs, personal communication. See also Childs, 1949, p.171, note 1.
(8) See Hambly, p.177, and Cushman, 1944, p.136.
(9) Red, yellow, black, and brown dyes are used. For a description of the process, see Hambly, op.cit., pp.170-1.
(10) See Hambly, op.cit., p.171, and Cushman, op.cit., pp.141-2 for details of basket-making. Also for illustrations Hambly, op.cit. and Childs, 1949.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

The foregoing facts, when compared with field work among the Ovimbundu, indicate that the old culture of the Congo and northern Angola bears a strong resemblance to Umbundu culture at the present day. A more detailed analysis of this resemblance is made in chapter X. 174

The following notes dealing with exploration in Angola (1800–1930) are adduced for critical comparison with my own observations among the Ovimbundu. 175 171

The work of Sir R. F. Burton describing the exploration of Lacerda and other Portuguese pioneers, is more useful for geographical than for ethnological information. Lacerda's journey to Czambe, south of Lake Moero, was performed in 1798. A mention of veneration for the dead and consultation of the deceased on all occasions of war or of good fortune, is made (p. 127). These are important points in the present tribal life of the Ovimbundu. [114] [769]

Bowditch (1824) writes from information given to him by Almeida and Saldanha. There are valuable references to the Vacilenge, a people adjacent to the Ovimbundu, who refused to kill their cattle, "rather than do which they will endure famine to extremity." This note was made about Long. 15° E. and Lat. 15° S. (p. 34). The cattle were milked, and cattle-raiding by the Ovimbundu was common at this time. Many present-day Ovimbundu do not milk their cattle, but the Vacilenge still follow their milking custom observed before 1824. 175 101 234

Livingstone's journey through northeast and northern Angola in 1853 contains references to the Vachokue who seemed bent on plunder (I, p. 370). Livingstone noted cotton spinning, which I recorded as an occupation of males of the Ovimbundu at Elende. Livingstone, like other early travelers, encountered caravans of Bihéans (Ovimbundu) bearing elephants' tusks and beeswax, commodities, which, along with slaves, formed the chief merchandise of these caravans from the Benguela Highlands (p. 466). Livingstone notes and sketches (Plate XIII, Fig. 10) the double-handled hoe (p. 442) which is still used. 175 171 [283] [439] [412]

J. J. Monteiro (I, p. 61) saw the poison ordeal administered. The poison itself was prepared from the thick hard bark of a large tree (*Erythrophlaeum guineense*). The place of observation was Mongue Grande, just south of the Congo estuary, and again Monteiro was present when the poison cup was given to two women at Ambrizette. Of this ordeal there is more to be said when discussing the culture contacts of the Ovimbundu, because the ordeal is a basic factor of [695] [824]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

114 trative posts. I agree that people between Caconda and Huila
101 represent a racial mixture of the Ovimbundu and the Ovambo. The record speaks of painting-houses for girls at Cabinda, an item which agrees with reports from other sources. The jottings concerning tribes from Cabinda to the far south of Angola are too vague to be used in ethnological work with confidence.

There are many points on which the work of A. Schachtzabel should be consulted for the purpose of making comparisons with my [621] own observations. The chief of these are a note and photograph on [281] village construction (p. 130); the musical bow (p. 32); the loom [175] (plate VI); transmigration of the soul of a chief into an animal (p. 51); [524] and the game of mancala (p. 52). My observations of initiation at [881] Katoko, Ngalangi, and Cangamba agree well with that of Schachtzabel at Katoko, but I was able to obtain more detail and more [283] numerous photographs of the ritual of initiation. The spinning of cotton (p. 143) is exactly the process so frequently witnessed now at Elende. Iron-working (p. 111) appears to be comparable with the technique at Elende, but Schachtzabel seems to have missed the ritual. I was not so fortunate as this author in finding the old type of iron-smelting furnace in use.

114 The work of Statham is devoted primarily to hunting and descrip-
136 tions of plant and animal life. The chapter given to a casual description of people among whom he passed is not useful as ethnology; but the book is of service in providing a background of natural history. Information on the tsetse fly in Angola (p. 294) assists ethnological work by showing the determining effect of this biological factor. [231] Presence of the fly is prohibitive to cattle-keeping, therefore cattle are not kept along the river courses which are infested with this pest.

114 Alexander Barns made no pretence of writing more than a travel book; nevertheless he publishes photographs of ethnological value, gives useful historical summaries, and deals with economic problems of production and transportation.

114 Tucker's book "Drums in the Darkness," though written to
175 interest the American public in mission work, contains many ethnological statements. The chief of these relate to the structure of the compound (p. 37); the dress of women (p. 39); naming of twins and triplets; and other items which agree well with data from the district in which I worked. There are notes on drum signals (p. 74) and [202] cannibalism (p. 77). Apparently drum signals were in use at Bihé half a century ago. Forty years ago a slave was killed and eaten [266] at the installation ceremonies for a new king, a point that was noted

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

which are fixed on poles in front of the hunter's home during his lifetime (Plate XXXII, Figs. 1, 2). 764 224

There are at the funeral of a hunter special observances which will be mentioned under the heading of funeral rites.

FISHING

In the region of Elende there is fishing with both basket and line; a method of poisoning fish is also practised. Usually a male fishes with a bark line. Women catch fish by the poisoning method, and in addition to this they generally follow the procedure in which baskets are held or weighted in the stream. If the water flows swiftly men may take charge of the fishing operations. At times both men and women fish with nets. Husband and wife may not sleep together the night before fishing, as this is believed to make the male and female fish stay together at the bottom of the river. 226 462 [534]

The fishing line consists of tough green bark which is cut into strips whose length depends on the height of the river's bank. A hole is bored through the body of a grasshopper, a worm, or a grub taken from under the bark of a tree. Through this hole is passed a short stiff piece of grass about half an inch long, to which the line is attached. The fish is caught when the crosspiece of sharp grass becomes fast in its throat. [283]

When the fisher throws the line he sings: "O fish, come and take your good thing. Do not send the little fish to spoil the good thing. Better you come and take the good thing with all your strength."

In order to make fish poison the tuberous roots of a plant are taken and soaked in water until a scum rises to the top. The solid part of the poison is not given, because it would sink and the fish which ate it would remain at the bottom of the river. Therefore only the scum of this poisonous infusion is thrown in the water. The stupefied, gasping fish remain at the surface, whereupon they are seized by women who transfer them to gourds or baskets worn around their necks. Usually poison is used only in the dry season when the rivers are shallow.

Sometimes there is fishing by means of a weir (*olunja*) which has an opening in the middle. On the lower side of this gap a basket trap is placed.

There is no fishing by torchlight. At the coast, and along the river Kwanza I have seen heavy dugout canoes in use; these were about twenty to thirty feet long and hollowed from single trees (Plate LXXII, Figs. 1, 2). At Ambrizette I noted the use of a fishing [501]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP15

285 The name *esisa* is given to the raw material as well as to the mat. The worker begins by laying out the reeds on the ground, side by side; then the slender tool *utomo* is passed through the reeds near their ends. This position is made permanent by sewing, and the process is repeated at intervals along the length of the reeds (Plate XLII, Figs. 1, 2).

Evinda is a large mat, about 120 cm long and 20 cm wide, while each strip of coarse elephant grass is about 3 cm wide. Ability to make the rush mat (*esisa*) is fairly common, but skill in making *evinda* is less usual. The mat *evinda* has several uses; it may be stretched on the floor or bed as a sleeping mat, or possibly it is rolled so that the ends can be fastened together; so treated it forms a cylinder which may be filled with grain when stood upright on the ground. A number of these mats is sometimes used to form a temporary storage place or shelter. The technique is of the twilled variety in which each weft passes over and under two warps.

Ocala is a coarse mat made from long stalks which are called "elephant grass" by the Boers; the agricultural term is "Napier's fodder." The long rods are white and glazed, so forming an artistic contrast to the crossbinding, which is of black bark. The technique is known as check, a term used to describe a structure in which warp and weft pass over and under each other singly.

The large mat (*ocikanga*) which is of soft texture shows neatly woven, diamond-shaped patterns of dark brown grass. The technique of this mat is of the twilled variety in which each weft passes over and then under two warps.

283 String bags, which are used for suspending gourds or hanging them over the shoulder, are made by men only. The root *ombundi*, mentioned in connection with brewing beer, is used for making string bags. Two fibers that have been teased out from the root are rolled tightly together by rubbing them between the palm and the thigh. [462] Strong rope is sometimes made by plaiting coarse grass; this occupation is in the hands of males.

386 In basket-making the preparation of dyes is of great importance [531] because colored strands of grass are inwoven to make named geometrical patterns (Plates IX; X). The Umbundu expression for dyeing is *oku lisa olosovo*.

Red coloring is produced by taking leaves of a plant named *evava* and cooking them in water along with the bark of the tree *ukondo*. [515] *Ukondo* is the "tooth brush" tree because small pieces of its wood are chewed and used for cleaning the teeth. After the grass has

S: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu

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3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

283 In the beginning a thread from the fluffy mass on the stick is fastened to a corncob or to a potato, the weight of which keeps the thread taut (Plate XXXVI, Fig. 1).

[462] I have never seen a woman spinning and am informed that in former days the working of the loom was a task for men only.

463 In presenting facts bearing on the economic life of the Ovimbundu attention has been paid to the importance of ritual, specialization 791 in industry, and division of labor on a sex basis. Clearly, the economic life is one of the fundamentals of social structure, while at many points it is a field in which the magician works.

132 Topography and climate have fixed certain conditions which, so far as the Benguela Highlands are concerned, favor agriculture on 241 an extensive scale, also the keeping of cattle. In the Benguela Highlands a moderate temperature, combined with sufficient rainfall, has produced a type of vegetation which provides timbers serviceable to the craftsman, together with bush that affords shelter for game.

128 The bearing of these economic facts on the probable origins of traits, and their assembly to form the tribal life of the Ovimbundu, is reserved for discussion in chapters dealing with culture contacts and cultural processes. In chapters X–XII the factual material presented here under "Economic Life" is correlated with what is known of similar activities in cultures surrounding that of the Ovimbundu.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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1

2

OCCUPATIONS OF OVIMBUNDU, ELENDE

Fig. 1. Male cotton spinner. Fig. 2. Woman pounding maize

[p. 390]

5: Hambly E-5 (1929-30)1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

sided permanently in the wooden figure. This ritual murder is now impossible, but the wooden figures are still used in the way described. 326 778

Women are never engaged in blacksmiths' work; neither are they employed as wood carvers. Among men wood carving is a specialized occupation, and within the craft itself are men who deal solely with one branch of the work. Thus in a village perhaps only one man is capable of making a drum, while another carves life-like wooden figures of animals, and a third specializes in the fabrication of household implements. [462] 532

Among the Ovimbundu women are the only potters, but I found just one exception in the case of a man who said that he learned the potter's craft in eastern Angola among the Vachokue. No ritual is connected with the making of pottery, but I observed that women always frequented one pit for their clay and in doing so passed better clay which was more accessible. I learned that a clay pit has to be consecrated by a medicine-man who kills a chicken and sprinkles the blood in the pit. All women at some time learn the arts of pottery making and basketry, but by the process of selection the industries become concentrated in the hands of the most skillful. 462 323 [782]

Only women make baskets; a craft in which they are skilled, especially in the gathering of plants and the extraction of dyes of soft shades. Such dyes have considerable endurance even though exposed to bright sunlight. Imported dyes are now competing with indigenous products, but the latter are still preferred in most localities. One might expect that women who are skilled in basket making would be expert weavers of mats, but this is not so. Mat making is in the hands of men who are skilled specialists, and within the mat making industry are at least three principal divisions of the craft, one for each type of mat. 462 285

Men spin cotton for mending clothes, but I have not seen women so engaged. I did not see any looms in use in Angola, but they survived up to a few years ago, and in the youth of my interpreter, who was about thirty years of age, looms worked by men were plentiful. 283 462 286

House building shows a division of labor according to age and sex. Men are responsible for cutting the poles, digging the trench in which these uprights are set, and binding the cross-pieces with bark. Men are likewise responsible for plastering the walls and laying the thatch. Women carry water to the clay pit and transport the puddled clay to the men who are plastering the walls. Children, some of them so young that they have to be rescued from a swampy grave, delight in puddling the clay with their feet. The rectangular pit is always as near the house as possible in order to minimize the labor of transport. I suggested that some of the tasks should 462 331

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

PLATE VIII

323

Photo. R. S. Webb

a. Umbundu pots (before firing), baskets, and hoes

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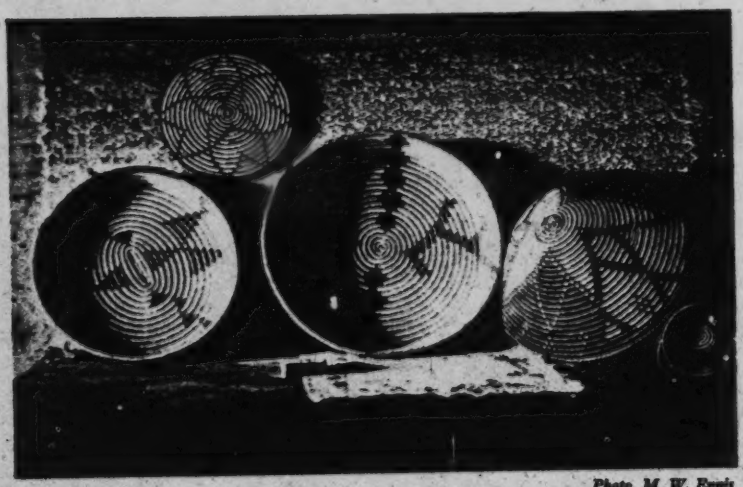

Photo. M. W. Ennis

b. Umbundu basketry with native-woven tapestry

[Facing p. 65]

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

heavy tasks and the close and constant routine of housework, on the other hand, sometimes require more than casual urging by the mother. Biographical evidence agrees with observation on this point, but nevertheless few girls reach puberty without attaining proficiency in the various household tasks. The decline of polygyny has probably hastened the girl's education in the household arts. When there is only one wife in the household, not only must she have more regular help from her daughters, but also it is more likely that the daughters will have to take on full responsibility at those times when the mother is unable for ritual reasons to take part in the preparation of her husband's food.[1] Biographical sources indicate that this tendency was already operating at least fifty or sixty years ago.

Every Ocimbundu assumes that his sustenance will come from cultivation of the soil. The 'professions' which a child may learn are therefore in the nature of side-lines. Although the Ovimbundu are not a true cattle-rearing people, they possess many domestic animals, especially dogs, pigs, sheep, goats, and chickens. Chickens are owned and looked after by both men and women, but the other animals only by the men. Boys may have small stock of their own, and a boy's economic independence most frequently begins with owning a chicken. Herding has been a function of the sister's son and even now there is reluctance on the part of boys to herd for their fathers. Animal husbandry is largely a commercial enterprise, save in the extreme southern tribes of Kalukembe, Ngalangi, &c.

The principal side-line 'professions' (*ovipinduko*) may be listed as follows:

For Girls

Basket-making, which is practised by all to a limited extent, but excelled in by relatively few.

Pottery-making.

Medical-practice and Divination (for conditions, see *infra*).

For Boys

Mat-making, which includes the making of four distinct types of mats each of which has its specialist; the making of trays and large baskets for granaries.

[1] i.e. at the times of her menstrual periods, after the birth of a child, &c.

Formerly it was believed that a smith owed his skill to the help of the spirit of a person whom he had killed, and wooden effigies of this person were kept by the smith.(1) 326 782

The principal products of a blacksmith's forge are axe-heads, hoe blades,(2) tools for mat-making, arrowheads, knives, and brass bracelets. Iron, which is fairly plentiful, was formerly smelted over charcoal fires.(3) Today smiths use scrap iron. 325 412

Pottery

Pot-making is a part of women's work among the Ovimbundu. A wheel is not used. Clay is mixed with a silicate, usually gravel, rolled out in long ropes, and the pot built by the coiling process.(4) Pots are ornamented when wet by making deep incisions with a piece of gourd; they are then sun-dried, and fired in a kiln of dry grass. Pots are used as water-containers, as cooking vessels and as vessels for storing corn and beans, and, when made in a very large size, for brewing beer.(5) 323 [462]

No ritual attaches to pot-making, except at the opening of a new clay-pit, when, in the presence of both men and women from the village, the medicine-man sacrifices a chicken over the open pit.(6) [782]

Weaving and Spinning

Looms have not been used among the Ovimbundu since they have been a people, although progenitors of the kingly families who came from the Bangala or Congo groups may have done weaving. Trade cloth has been known and used by the Ovimbundu for nearly 300 years.(7) Skins have been used in remote areas; Hambly when he mentions bark-cloth as being worn by the Ovimbundu is probably referring to the Ngangela. Spun cotton, however, is used for repairs, and there is a cotton plant in most gardens. Spinning is done always by men.(8) 286 439 [281] [287] [283] 462

Basketry

All girls learn to make baskets, although some become more proficient than others. Knowledge of basket-making implies also an understanding of dyeing, since coloured strands of grass are interwoven to make geometric patterns.(9) Baskets, and also basket-trays, are usually made by the coiling process.(10) 285 462 [386]

(1) Hambly, (2) 1934, pp.158-60. The ceremony was described from Njongolo village in Elende.
(2) See Cushman, 1944, pp.140-1.
(3) For details of the blacksmith's forge and tools, see Hambly, op.cit., pp.160-1; Cushman, 1944, pp.139, 140, 145-6.
(4) See Hambly, op.cit. Plates XXXIII and XXXIV, and Childs, 1949, Plate VIII.
(5) Hambly, op.cit., p.168; Cushman, op.cit., pp.144-5.
(6) Hambly, op.cit., p.169.
(7) Childs, personal communication. See also Childs, 1949, p.171, note 1.
(8) See Hambly, p.177, and Cushman, 1944, p.136.
(9) Red, yellow, black, and brown dyes are used. For a description of the process, see Hambly, op.cit., pp.170-1.
(10) See Hambly, op.cit., p.171, and Cushman, op.cit., pp.141-2 for details of basket-making. Also for illustrations Hambly, op.cit. and Childs, 1949.

Mat-making

462 285 [412] The making of mats is a specialised craft for men. Generally elderly men are the mat-makers. Two tools are used, a borer and a needle, both products of the blacksmith's forge. Hambly[1] describes the making of reed sleeping mats, large mats used for partitions, and string bags. There are four distinct types of mats, each of which has its specialist.[2]

Leather-work

282 Leather pouches worn on a broad leather belt are part of the essential equipment of the hunter. The pouch is square, rectangular, or semi-cylindrical in shape, and may be decorated with cross-shaped patterns, or brass-headed nails used for decorative effect. Hide is also used for the seats of four-legged wooden stools. Hides are crudely dressed: they are soaked, the inner surface rubbed with ashes, the hair scraped away, and the hide pegged out.[3]

Wood-carving

323 [413] Wood-carving, which is men's work, includes the following specialisations: doors, windows and their frames; coffins; beds, tables and chairs; mortars, pestles, grinding-handles, and handles for various iron implements; stools, household utensils, carved images etc., drums and other musical instruments; canoes (dug-outs and coracles).[4] Illustrations are given by Hambly.[5]

TRADE

438 484 791 [482] Caravan trade is now confined to short journeys when corn, beans and beeswax are carried by men and women porters to the traders' stores. Formerly however it was an important feature of tribal life. Each caravan had its professional leader, and was accompanied by a diviner or medicine-man. Before a caravan started out, a ceremony was performed at which the principal performers were the village headman and the medicine-man. The head of the former headman was brought from its box, sewn in oxhide; blood from a sacrificed animal was sprinkled on the head, and invocation was made to the deceased by the village headman, asking for good fortune for the journey.[6]

438 436 Today the Ovimbundu exchange products among themselves both by barter and the use of Portuguese money,[7] but there are no large markets except in the towns.

[439] 438 The "trade-agreements" between the Ovimbundu kingdoms and between the Ovimbundu and other tribes have been mentioned above.[8] Accompanying these, regional industrial and commercial specialisations within Ovimbundu country developed. Thus in the middle of the last century

(1) Hambly, op.cit., pp.169-70.
(2) Childs, 1949, p.109.
(3) Hambly, op.cit., p.176.
(4) Childs, op.cit., p.110.
(5) Op.cit., Plates XIII to XXII.
(6) Hambly, op.cit., p.156.
(7) For details of Ovimbundu units of measurement see Hambly, op.cit., p.157.
(8) p.9.

At the present time a day's march is twenty-five miles, during 481
which a man carries sixty pounds, while the load for a woman is half [482]
that weight. The gait of the Ovimbundu includes a limp at every step, so suggesting that the carrier is lame or tired. This appears to be a method consciously adopted as a protection against fatigue, because all muscles are momentarily relaxed. Loads are carried on the head in a long forked stick to which they are lashed. When the carrier rests, the load is not placed on the ground, but is held upright on the stick (Plate XXX, Fig. 2). Such a method avoids the strain of lifting the load from the ground after each rest pause.

Although the Ovimbundu have an exchange of products among 438
themselves by both barter and the use of Portuguese money, there [436]
are no large markets, with the exception of those at the coastal towns of Loanda, Lobito, and Benguela. There is absolutely nothing in Angola which can be compared with the great markets in Nigeria.

Despite the absence of a system of exchange on a large scale, 804
the Ovimbundu have many terms describing units of measurement. There are native standards of length, area, and capacity, but no measures of weight which are undeniably of Umbundu origin.

The unit of length (*epaluma*) is the distance from the tip of the thumb to the tip of the middle finger when the hand is outstretched. The term for two of these units is *apaluma avali*. These words are the plural of *epaluma; avali* means two. These units are used to measure tobacco before it has been coiled.

Cloth is measured by stretching the arms to their full extent in line with the shoulders; the distance between the tips of the middle fingers is *epeka*. The stride for measuring land is *elianga*.

Onjimba is an area about twenty-five feet square. *Etemo* ("hoe") is an area of land two hundred yards long and thirty feet broad. A large field covers two or three *atemo*.

Measures of capacity are provided by various types of baskets. The large conical basket (*ohumba*) has an interwoven mark which [285]
indicates a measure for corn, meal, and beans. *Ocitenge* is a coarsely made basket used as a unit of capacity. *Uhamba* is a basket two feet long and one foot deep. The basket on a rectangular base is also *uhamba*, but at the present day cans are taking the place of all these old measures. Palm oil is measured in a gourd (*ocitau* or *ombangi*) of definite size. This little gourd is also used for measuring a viscous [314]
substance from trees. The word *ekokoto* is used to describe this mucilage.

When the clay was being mixed an old pot was broken and pulverized so that some of the powder might be added to the new pot. There may be the underlying idea of continuity in the potter's art. The potters said, *Sanga yi pita* ("Lest it leak"). There may be no purpose other than the imparting of stability to the new clay. 323

I was unable to find any trace of ritual except with reference to the opening of a new clay pit. When a pit is first opened both men and women attend. The head of a chicken is twisted off by a medicine-man, then the bird is held over the pit by either a man or a woman. There is no law or ceremony to determine who shall take the first clay from the pit. The art of making pots is in the hands of female specialists so far as the Ovimbundu are concerned. Observation makes clear that women will go for a long distance to obtain clay from the pit which has been opened in a ceremonial manner. On their way to such a pit they pass clay which would serve their purpose well, but they do not use it. Children sometimes amuse themselves by making animals of clay. [462] [782] [857]

The pottery of the Ovimbundu includes cooking vessels of many sizes, water containers, and very large pots for brewing beer (*olombia vi okukela*). [415]

MATS AND BASKETS

This occupation illustrates division of labor on a sex basis. Baskets are made by women, while mat-making is an occupation for males. As with other trades there is specialization. The majority of women are able to make baskets though the skill of individuals varies. All women who have a knowledge of basketry understand the manufacture of dyes. Only a few men make mats; my informant thought that perhaps one man in ten would have the necessary skill. Such specialization is continued into other occupations; for example, only a few men spin cotton thread, while the majority of people buy pottery from expert female potters. 462 285 [463]

The mat-maker, generally an elderly male, uses two tools, a borer and a needle, both products of the native forge. The borer (*utomo*) for piercing the reeds, consists of a long thin blade in a wooden grip. The needle (*osinja*) is threaded with bark fiber and passed through the holes made by the *utomo*. The bark thread is *ombanja* (plural *olombanja*). 285

The sleeping mat (*esisa*) is made of reeds which are gathered in the early morning by a man who wets and binds his material into bundles, each of which contains reeds of the same length. The length of the reeds varies, of course, with the size of mat he intends to make.

285 The name *esisa* is given to the raw material as well as to the mat. The worker begins by laying out the reeds on the ground, side by side; then the slender tool *utomo* is passed through the reeds near their ends. This position is made permanent by sewing, and the process is repeated at intervals along the length of the reeds (Plate XLII, Figs. 1, 2).

Evinda is a large mat, about 120 cm long and 20 cm wide, while each strip of coarse elephant grass is about 3 cm wide. Ability to make the rush mat (*esisa*) is fairly common, but skill in making *evinda* is less usual. The mat *evinda* has several uses; it may be stretched on the floor or bed as a sleeping mat, or possibly it is rolled so that the ends can be fastened together; so treated it forms a cylinder which may be filled with grain when stood upright on the ground. A number of these mats is sometimes used to form a temporary storage place or shelter. The technique is of the twilled variety in which each weft passes over and under two warps.

Ocala is a coarse mat made from long stalks which are called "elephant grass" by the Boers; the agricultural term is "Napier's fodder." The long rods are white and glazed, so forming an artistic contrast to the crossbinding, which is of black bark. The technique is known as check, a term used to describe a structure in which warp and weft pass over and under each other singly.

The large mat (*ocikanga*) which is of soft texture shows neatly woven, diamond-shaped patterns of dark brown grass. The technique of this mat is of the twilled variety in which each weft passes over and then under two warps.

283 String bags, which are used for suspending gourds or hanging them over the shoulder, are made by men only. The root *ombundi*, mentioned in connection with brewing beer, is used for making string bags. Two fibers that have been teased out from the root are rolled tightly together by rubbing them between the palm and the thigh.
[462] Strong rope is sometimes made by plaiting coarse grass; this occupation is in the hands of males.

386 In basket-making the preparation of dyes is of great importance
[531] because colored strands of grass are inwoven to make named geometrical patterns (Plates IX; X). The Umbundu expression for dyeing is *oku lisa olosovo*.

Red coloring is produced by taking leaves of a plant named *evava* and cooking them in water along with the bark of the tree *ukondo*.
[515] *Ukondo* is the "tooth brush" tree because small pieces of its wood are chewed and used for cleaning the teeth. After the grass has

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

simmered in this infusion of *evava* leaves and *ukondo* bark, it is buried 386
in a heap of ashes and earth. These processes produce the red coloring.

Yellow dye is made from the roots of a wild rhubarb (*ocilunguluila*) which has sagittate leaves. The roots are pounded and mixed with cold water, after which the grass is placed in the mixture. A pot containing the mixture is put on the fire and the contents are boiled for half an hour; at the end of this time the grass is an amber-yellow in color.

In order to dye grass black the leaves of *evava*, the plant used for making red dye, are mixed with an iron solution obtained from the mud of stagnant pools. If the grass which has been cooked in this mixture is not sufficiently dark it is reboiled in the *evava*-iron mixture to which the pounded leaves of *ungalo* are added. Brown coloring is made by mixing the red dye with the yellow.

Baskets made by the coiling process are the most common type 285
manufactured by Ovimbundu women (Plate XV, Fig. 6). The large basket *ohumba* is a woman's field basket in which she carries corn, sweet potatoes, and manioc, along with her hoe and pounder (Plate XXVIII, Fig. 2). Each coil consists of a large number of strands of fine grass which are tightly bound. The coils of the better baskets are wrapped with the grass called *osoka;* this wrapping fastens each coil to the preceding coil. Coarser baskets have the coils wrapped with strips from the leaf of the screw pine (*emañalālo*). There is a sewing process in which the coils are bound to one another with the bark *olondovi*, which is kept damp during the process. I have seen a needle, threaded with bast, used for sewing coils together; the needle was rethreaded every time it passed through a coil. Success in basket-making depends largely on the ability of the worker to keep the coils of uniform thickness. There is constant inspection and plucking out of a strand of grass here and there (Plate XXXIX, Fig. 2).

In making basket trays (*ongalo*), the same coiling process is followed, but the work is kept flat. These trays are used for winnowing corn. Wicker-work is used for making conical traps for small game such as hares and rats. Conical fish traps are made of wicker-work. Names of patterns, which are of a simple geometrical kind, [531]
are well known to basket-makers. Sometimes a pattern is woven round the basket at a certain height to indicate a generally accepted standard for measurement of capacity.

285 171 Among the Ovimbundu are to be found baskets which they themselves seldom copy. These examples are from the Vachokue country of eastern Angola. The Vachokue specialize in making winnowing trays and rectangular baskets which are twilled by passing each weft over two or more warps.

By this technique, combined with the use of brown and black weft and warp, a great variety of geometrical patterns is produced. Trays of this kind vary in diameter from 50 to 200 cm. The Vachokue also make large strong trays in which honey is exposed to dry.

In the neighborhood of Cassanga wicker-work baskets are made. The warps or stakes are rigid while the more flexible wefts bend in and out. At this place there are both Ovimbundu and Vachokue inhabitants.

Women of the Vakuanyama in southern Angola make exceptionally neat little conical baskets by lashing coils very tightly. The lashing is done in such a way as to leave the outer surface covered with small chevron-shaped designs.

177 285 There is an intrusion of European influence which tends to mar the work of the Ovimbundu and other native craftswomen. Soft dyes produced by methods described are sometimes replaced by brightly colored, imported dyes; old ribbons from typewriters are soaked in order to extract coloring. The Ovimbundu are imitating European forms of basketry in a few centers, though the native method of coiling is still used.

WEAPONS

411 The bow of the Ovimbundu is made of hard red wood which takes a high polish after use. It is round in cross section and tapers considerably toward the ends. The length is usually 150 cm, not an inconvenient size in view of the fairly open bush through which the hunter has to make his way. The bowstring is made of a thin strip of twisted hide, which is looped over each end of the bow by a slip knot made of two half-hitches. A shoulder at each end of the bow shaft prevents the slip knot from passing down the shaft. In some examples only one end of the bow stave is notched. Usually, after completing the slip knot, the hunter leaves a surplus of bowstring which is wound round the shaft. One bow which is not notched has rattan wound round the stave to prevent the loops from slipping.

The bow for shooting bird arrows is small and is used only by boys; the string is of twisted vegetable fiber.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

The use of bird-arrows with blunt, wooden knobs was common 171
at Elende, and I collected sharp, barbed, wooden arrows from the 411
Vasele, also from the areas of Kipungo and Mongua. This will assist in extending the information given by Lindblom (pp. 94–98). Lindblom's map (p. 99) indicates that bird-arrows are used round Lake Victoria Nyanza, at the junction of the Kasai and the Congo, and likewise among the Bushongo and the Bayaka. My observation of the distribution of wooden arrows in Angola links up these regions shown by Lindblom with the south of Angola. Perhaps a transcontinental diffusion in a southwesterly direction from Victoria Nyanza may be assumed, for it is unlikely that the diffusion would go counter to the generally accepted line of tribal migration which has been from northeast to southwest.

AFRICAN POTTERY, BASKETS, AND MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

171
There is no reason to connect the pottery of the Ovimbundu [323]
with that of any particular region. The coiling method is far too widespread and generic to afford evidence of contacts. The Ovimbundu have evolved their own peculiar designs and forms.

In coiled basketry also the Ovimbundu have made special [285] •
developments from a generic trait known in Egypt before 2000 B.C. Designs and dyes appear to be of local origin. My observation of African basketry does not suggest any particular parent form; moreover, resemblances of design may be misleading, for the nature of the material controls the shapes of the designs to a great extent in coiled basketry.

Wood-carving, on the contrary, links the culture of the Ovim- [532]
bundu very definitely with that of the southwest Congo. Perhaps the work of Angola is most closely allied with that of the Bakuba, who excel in the carving of figurines, cups, and staffs.

H. Balfour's article (III) on the distribution of the friction drum [534]
helps to identify the form used by the Ovimbundu with types of this instrument from other African areas. The type from Elende is like that of Barotseland with which the Ovimbundu caravans were frequently in contact, while the large friction drum from Ngalangi is of the Bayaka pattern. The friction drum is widely used in the southwest Congo among the Bakwese, the Bambala, and the Baluba.

Thus far research has been able to show a large number of cultural traits of the Ovimbundu in relation to immediate culture contacts of the Congo basin, Rhodesia, and South West Africa (chapter X). In addition to this, many traits connected with social

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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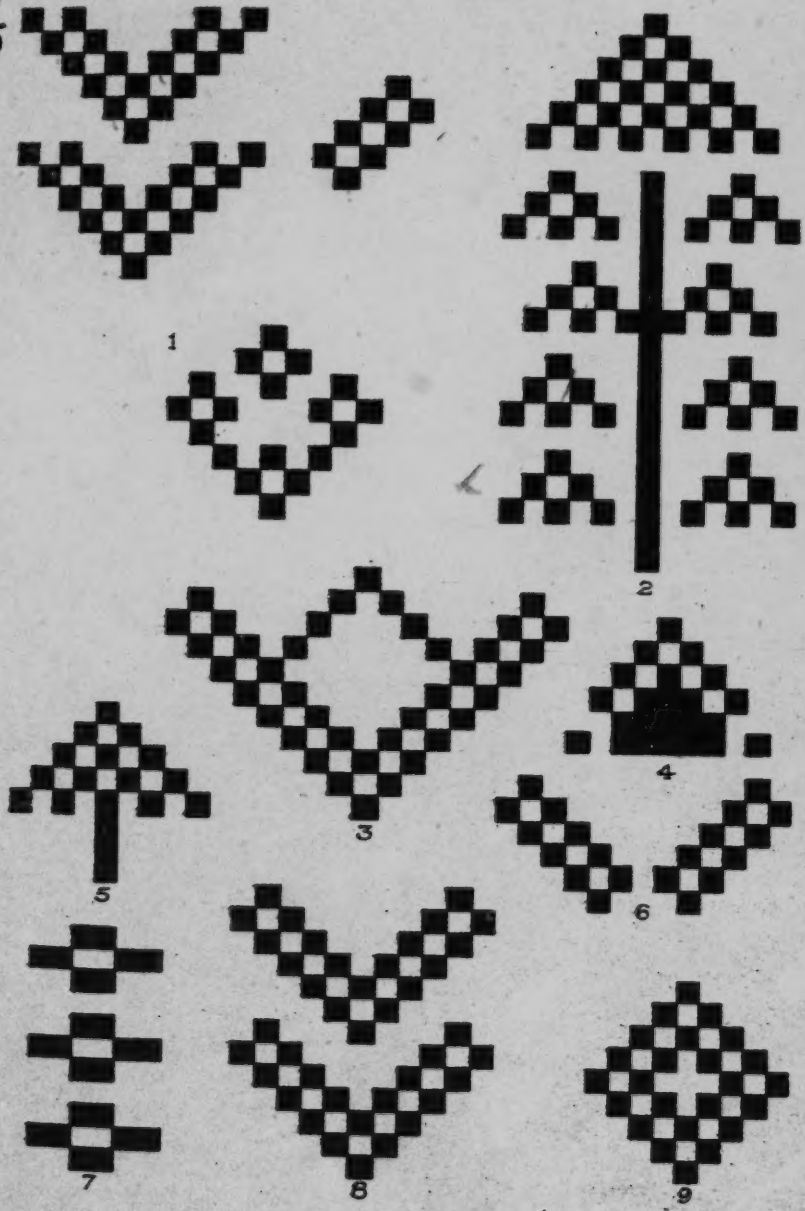

BASKET-WORK PATTERNS

[p. 363

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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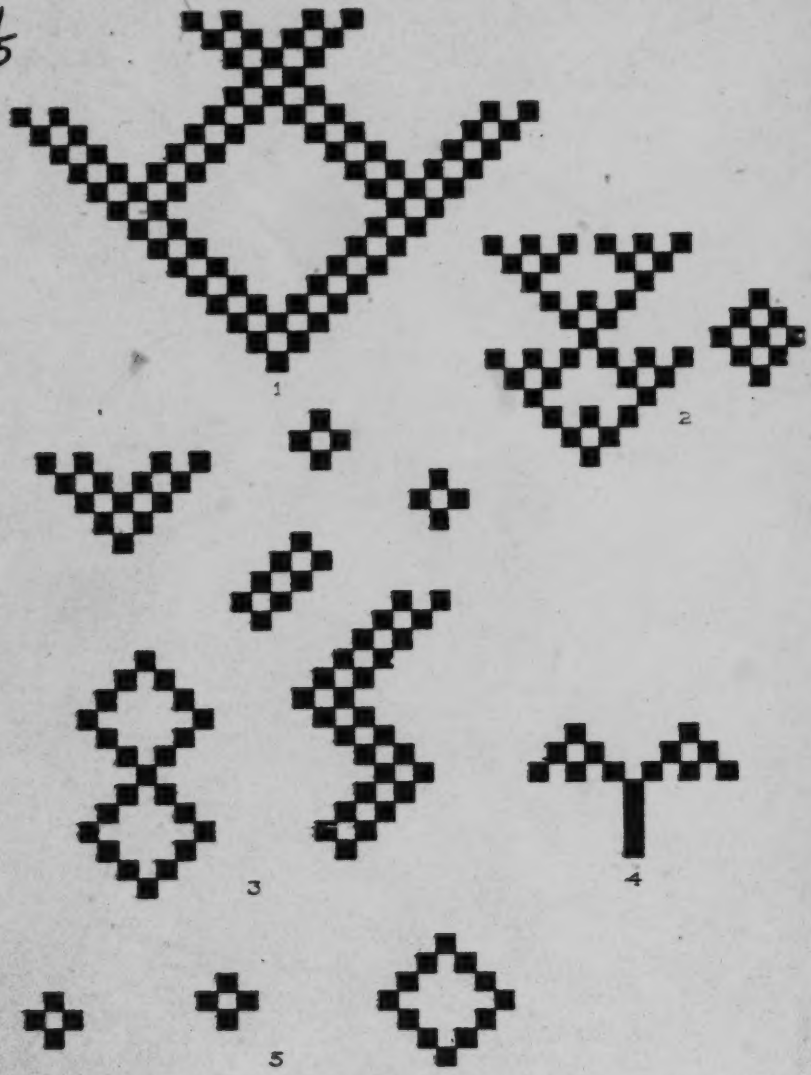
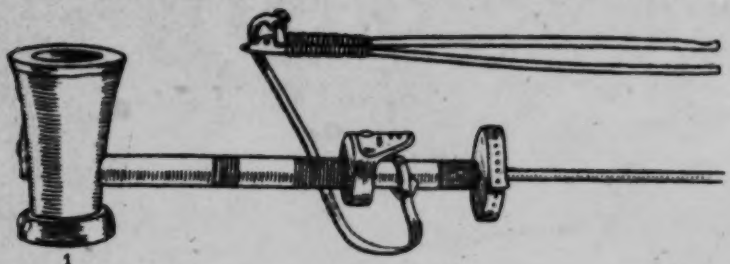


BASKET-WORK PATTERNS

[p. 364]

Field Museum of Natural History Anthropology, Vol. XXI, Plate XV

276



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TOBACCO-PIPES, SNUFF BOX, RAT TRAP, AND BASKET

[p. 369]

:Hambly E-5 (1929-1930)1934 FM3 Mbundu FM3

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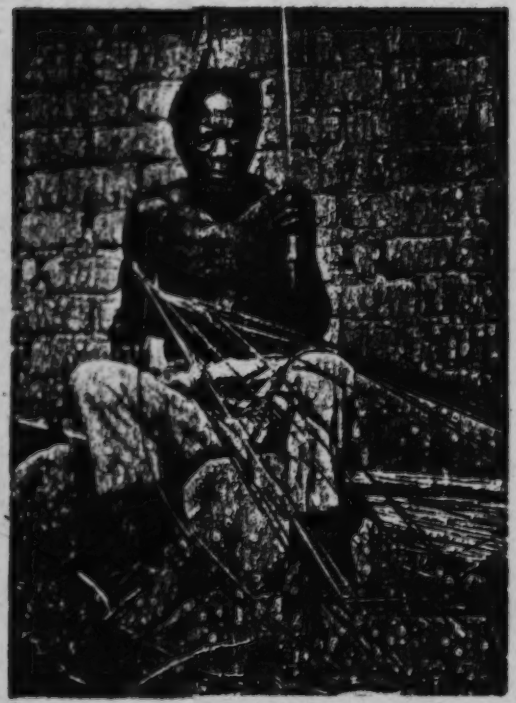

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2

OCIMBUNDU MAKING MATS, ELENDE

Fig. 1. Tool for mat-making. Fig. 2. Threading reeds on tool

[p. 396]

3. Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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343

[p. 420]

1

2

STORAGE OF MAIZE, VAKUANYAMA, SOUTH ANGOLA

Fig. 1. Grain basket. Fig. 2. Shelter for basket

5: Hambly E-5 (1929-30)1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

sided permanently in the wooden figure. This ritual murder is now impossible, but the wooden figures are still used in the way described. 326 798

Women are never engaged in blacksmiths' work; neither are they employed as wood carvers. Among men wood carving is a specialized occupation, and within the craft itself are men who deal solely with one branch of the work. Thus in a village perhaps only one man is capable of making a drum, while another carves life-like wooden figures of animals, and a third specializes in the fabrication of household implements. [462] 532

Among the Ovimbundu women are the only potters, but I found just one exception in the case of a man who said that he learned the potter's craft in eastern Angola among the Vachokue. No ritual is connected with the making of pottery, but I observed that women always frequented one pit for their clay and in doing so passed better clay which was more accessible. I learned that a clay pit has to be consecrated by a medicine-man who kills a chicken and sprinkles the blood in the pit. All women at some time learn the arts of pottery making and basketry, but by the process of selection the industries become concentrated in the hands of the most skillful. 462 323 [782]

Only women make baskets; a craft in which they are skilled, especially in the gathering of plants and the extraction of dyes of soft shades. Such dyes have considerable endurance even though exposed to bright sunlight. Imported dyes are now competing with indigenous products, but the latter are still preferred in most localities. One might expect that women who are skilled in basket making would be expert weavers of mats, but this is not so. Mat making is in the hands of men who are skilled specialists, and within the mat making industry are at least three principal divisions of the craft, one for each type of mat. 462 285

Men spin cotton for mending clothes, but I have not seen women so engaged. I did not see any looms in use in Angola, but they survived up to a few years ago, and in the youth of my interpreter, who was about thirty years of age, looms worked by men were plentiful. 283 462 286

House building shows a division of labor according to age and sex. Men are responsible for cutting the poles, digging the trench in which these uprights are set, and binding the cross-pieces with bark. Men are likewise responsible for plastering the walls and laying the thatch. Women carry water to the clay pit and transport the puddled clay to the men who are plastering the walls. Children, some of them so young that they have to be rescued from a swampy grave, delight in puddling the clay with their feet. The rectangular pit is always as near the house as possible in order to minimize the labor of transport. I suggested that some of the tasks should 462 331

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

PLATE VIII

323

Photo. R. S. Webb

a. Umbundu pots (before firing), baskets, and hoes

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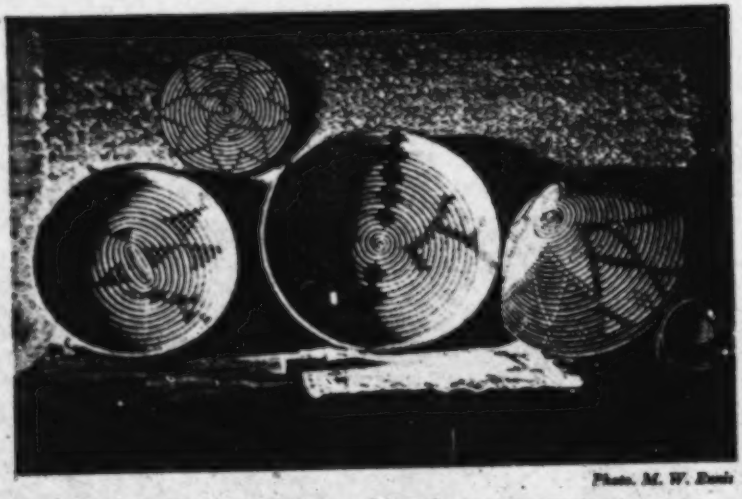

Photo. M. W. Bonds

b. Umbundu basketry with native-woven tapestry

[Facing p. 65]

Formerly it was believed that a smith owed his skill to the help of the spirit of a person whom he had killed, and wooden effigies of this person were kept by the smith.(1) 326 782

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Looms have not been used among the Ovimbundu since they have been a people, although progenitors of the kingly families who came from the Bangala or Congo groups may have done weaving. Trade cloth has been known and used by the Ovimbundu for nearly 300 years.(7) Skins have been used in remote areas; Hambly when he mentions bark-cloth as being worn by the Ovimbundu is probably referring to the Ngangela. Spun cotton, however, is used for repairs, and there is a cotton plant in most gardens. Spinning is done always by men.(8) 286 439 [281] [287] [283] 462

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(1) Hambly, (2) 1934, pp.158-60. The ceremony was described from Njongolo village in Elende.
(2) See Cashman, 1944, pp.140-1.
(3) For details of the blacksmith's forge and tools, see Hambly, op.cit., pp.160-1; Cashman, 1944, pp.139, 140, 145-6.
(4) See Hambly, op.cit. Plates XXXIII and XXXIV, and Childs, 1949, Plate VIII.
(5) Hambly, op.cit., p.168; Cashman, op.cit., pp.144-5.
(6) Hambly, op.cit., p.169.
(7) Childs, personal communication. See also Childs, 1949, p.171, note 1.
(8) See Hambly, p.177, and Cashman, 1944, p.136.
(9) Red, yellow, black, and brown dyes are used. For a description of the process, see Hambly, op.cit., pp.170-1.
(10) See Hambly, op.cit., p.171, and Cashman, op.cit., pp.141-2 for details of basket-making. Also for illustrations Hambly, op.cit. and Childs, 1949.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbunc..

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SPINNING AND WEAVING

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Frequently at Elende men are seen engaged in spinning cotton which is used for repairs, and not for fabricating garments. The cotton is obtained from a shrub which has reddish leaves and yellow flowers. The cotton may be seen protruding from the calyx in the months of June and July. The man who is winding holds high in his left hand a slender stick which is wrapped for a length of two feet with fluffy cotton. All work of pressing and twisting the cotton into a thread is done by the thumb and index finger of the right hand. 283 824

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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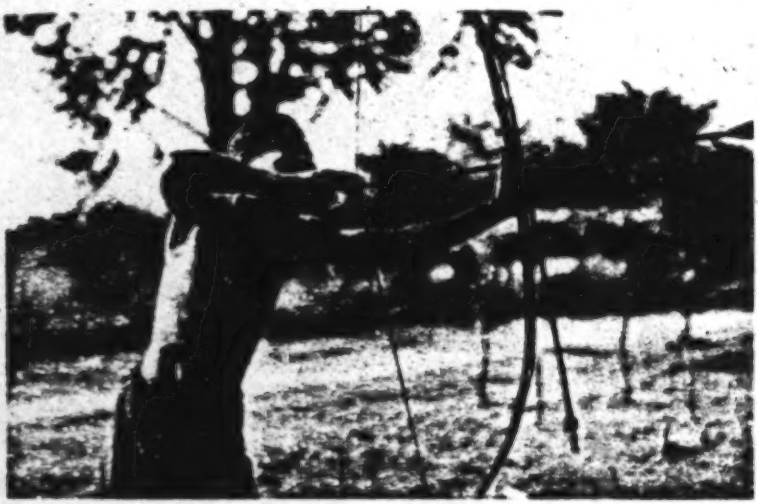

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OVIMBUNDU, ELENDE

Fig. 1. Hunter. *Fig. 2.* Woman making coiled basket

[p.393]

5: Hambly E-5 (1929-30)1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

sided permanently in the wooden figure. This ritual murder is now im- 326 798
possible, but the wooden figures are still used in the way described.

Women are never engaged in blacksmiths' work; neither are they em- [462]
ployed as wood carvers. Among men wood carving is a specialized occupa- 532
tion, and within the craft itself are men who deal solely with one branch of the work. Thus in a village perhaps only one man is capable of making a drum, while another carves life-like wooden figures of animals, and a third specializes in the fabrication of household implements.

Among the Ovimbundu women are the only potters, but I found just 462
one exception in the case of a man who said that he learned the potter's 323
craft in eastern Angola among the Vachokue. No ritual is connected with the making of pottery, but I observed that women always frequented one pit for their clay and in doing so passed better clay which was more accessible. I learned that a clay pit has to be consecrated by a medicine-man [782]
who kills a chicken and sprinkles the blood in the pit. All women at some time learn the arts of pottery making and basketry, but by the process of selection the industries become concentrated in the hands of the most skillful.

Only women make baskets; a craft in which they are skilled, especially 462
in the gathering of plants and the extraction of dyes of soft shades. Such 285
dyes have considerable endurance even though exposed to bright sunlight. Imported dyes are now competing with indigenous products, but the latter are still preferred in most localities. One might expect that women who are skilled in basket making would be expert weavers of mats, but this is not so. Mat making is in the hands of men who are skilled specialists, and within the mat making industry are at least three principal divisions of the craft, one for each type of mat.

Men spin cotton for mending clothes, but I have not seen women so 283
engaged. I did not see any looms in use in Angola, but they survived up to 462
a few years ago, and in the youth of my interpreter, who was about thirty 286
years of age, looms worked by men were plentiful.

House building shows a division of labor according to age and sex. Men 462
are responsible for cutting the poles, digging the trench in which these up- 331
rights are set, and binding the cross-pieces with bark. Men are likewise responsible for plastering the walls and laying the thatch. Women carry water to the clay pit and transport the puddled clay to the men who are plastering the walls. Children, some of them so young that they have to be rescued from a swampy grave, delight in puddling the clay with their feet. The rectangular pit is always as near the house as possible in order to minimize the labor of transport. I suggested that some of the tasks should

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

kingdoms of the Ovimbundu, though more frequently perhaps it was made against the non-Umbundu peoples.[89]

The question of the influence of the trade provides interesting opportunities for comparison. The Ovimbundu were the southernmost of the peoples who in the nineteenth century participated in the trade between the Europeans of the West African coast and the peoples of the interior.[90] In some ways the Ovimbundu seem to have been less influenced by it than were some of the peoples further north. The Ovimbundu did not develop genuine patterns of urban life as in Dahomey or Benin.[91]

Three explanations can be offered for the relative failure of associational groups and urban society to develop. Umbundu crafts were much inferior to those found along the coast of the Gulf of Guinea; there was no indigenous weaving industry, for instance, and the goods which the caravans carried to the interior were all of European or American origin, cloths, guns, and rum.[92] For these goods the Ovimbundu were dependent on the Portuguese settled at the coast or in the Highland and this meant that the Ovimbundu were far from economic autonomy. Again the trade had a relatively short time span—the real boom period lasted only from 1886 to 1900, and earlier on in the 1840's when the beeswax, ivory, and slave trade was flourishing, the Ovimbundu had plenty of time for warfare.

It would, however, be a grave mistake to think that trade had only a marginal influence on Umbundu society. It has been suggested that the form of the double-descent system owes its origin to the necessity to isolate economic relations from other social fields. In the sphere of ritual, there are some remarkable copies of European practices—for instance the holding of a feast in honour of the ancestors at Christmas-time.[93] Many ritual concepts are related to the explanation of business

[89] For information on Umbundu warfare see Magyar, pp. 177–80 and Serpa Pinto, pp. 177–9.

[90] See Balandier, *Sociologie Actuelle de l'Afrique Noire*, Paris, 1955, for a discussion of social change in other areas which had experienced a trade of a similar sort.

[91] For Dahomey see M. J. Herskovits, *Dahomey*, New York, 1938. For Benin see R. Bradbury, *The Benin Kingdom* (Ethnographic Survey of Africa), London, 1957.

[92] Childs, p. 206.

[93] Informants.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

175x 177 influences. The stock to which the common people belong were wearers of skins, which is true of many of them to the present time. The people from whom the ruling houses came have a highly developed weaving industry. The 'Ngangela' neighbours, who [565] have also contributed elements to the racial make-up of the Ovi- [287] mbundu, make and use bark-cloth. The Ovimbundu evidently gave up the use of skins for clothing more than a hundred years ago.[1] This fact, and the additional one that they never developed weaving or bark-cloth industries, was probably due to their early and widespread use of trade-cloth. Rum came with the slave-trade 177 from Brazil. They were almost inseparable. The ships which 273 fetched the slaves came laden with rum distilled in Brazil. The 567 rum was used in buying the slaves, and much more of it was con- 439 sumed by Ovimbundu—traders, chiefs, and retainers—than by 175x the interior people. Thus, while the slave-trade had such a disruptive influence in the life of the interior tribes, rum did much to corrupt the Ovimbundu. Native tradition[2] and the accounts of early travellers agree on this point. Rum continued to come from Brazil and from other countries or oversea colonies all through this early period, but import was partly supplanted by distillation at the coast, and this process was soon learned by the Ovimbundu themselves.

439 The part which the Umbundu trade had in spreading the goods and uses of the outside world is a fascinating subject and one which 567 would repay study. Ethnographical and historical knowledge of 175x Central Africa is not yet so extensive or precise that the dates and places of these movements can be plotted with certainty. Professor C. M. Doke records that Nkumine, who ruled the Lamba sometime before 1840, sold many of his people 'as slaves to the Mbundu traders from the West Coast for calico, guns, and powder'.[3] It is important to remember that throughout this period the Ovimbundu were for all this part of Africa the chief intermediaries in the slave-trade. These activities affected the ultimate

[1] See Magyar, *passim*.

[2] A Ngalangi tradition says that from the time of King Ndumba II (*c.* 1840) rum was so plentiful that it was poured into troughs, whence it was lapped up by all—men, women, and children. A constant difficulty encountered by the early missionaries was the objection of chiefs and their counsellors to the missionaries' refusal to give liberal presents of rum, as did all the traders.

[3] C. M. Doke, *The Lambas of Northern Rhodesia* (London: Harrap, 1931), pp. 36, 37.

Formerly it was believed that a smith owed his skill to the help of the spirit of a person whom he had killed, and wooden effigies of this person were kept by the smith.(1) 326 782

The principal products of a blacksmith's forge are axe-heads, hoe blades,(2) tools for mat-making, arrowheads, knives, and brass bracelets. Iron, which is fairly plentiful, was formerly smelted over charcoal fires.(3) Today smiths use scrap iron. 325 412

Pottery

Pot-making is a part of women's work among the Ovimbundu. A wheel is not used. Clay is mixed with a silicate, usually gravel, rolled out in long ropes, and the pot built by the coiling process.(4) Pots are ornamented when wet by making deep incisions with a piece of gourd; they are then sun-dried, and fired in a kiln of dry grass. Pots are used as water-containers, as cooking vessels and as vessels for storing corn and beans, and, when made in a very large size, for brewing beer.(5) 323 [462]

No ritual attaches to pot-making, except at the opening of a new clay-pit, when, in the presence of both men and women from the village, the medicine-man sacrifices a chicken over the open pit.(6) [782]

Weaving and Spinning

Looms have not been used among the Ovimbundu since they have been a people, although progenitors of the kingly families who came from the Bangala or Congo groups may have done weaving. Trade cloth has been known and used by the Ovimbundu for nearly 300 years.(7) Skins have been used in remote areas; Hambly when he mentions bark-cloth as being worn by the Ovimbundu is probably referring to the Ngangela. Spun cotton, however, is used for repairs, and there is a cotton plant in most gardens. Spinning is done always by men.(8) 286 439 [281] [287] [283] 462

Basketry

All girls learn to make baskets, although some become more proficient than others. Knowledge of basket-making implies also an understanding of dyeing, since coloured strands of grass are interwoven to make geometric patterns.(9) Baskets, and also basket-trays, are usually made by the coiling process.(10) 285 462 [386]

(1) Hambly, (2) 1934, pp.158-60. The ceremony was described from Njongolo village in Elonda.
(2) See Cashman, 1944, pp.140-1.
(3) For details of the blacksmith's forge and tools, see Hambly, op.cit., pp.160-1; Cashman, 1944, pp.139, 140, 145-6.
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3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbunc..

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seats of four-legged wooden stools. Before stretching the hide over the wooden frame the edge of the leather is cut into strips which are interlaced on the under side of the stool (Plate XVIII, Fig. 1). There are few evidences of the hide having been dressed; usually the hair is attached. The Ovimbundu understand the dressing of hides in a crude way. The hide is soaked, after which the inner surface is rubbed with ashes. The hair is scraped away and the hide is tightly pegged out. Hide was formerly used for covering wooden boxes in which a king carried his powder and possessions to war. Scraped [534] hide is used to form the tympanum in tubular wooden drums.

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1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

291 554 The practice and teaching of modesty seem to have been changing considerably for a long time. The influence of Europeans has doubtless had its effect, but more fundamental, it seems, has been the effect of increasingly generalized use of clothing, a process which began perhaps 200 years ago, but is yet far from complete. The time when boy or girl may begin to wear clothing is determined less by age than by the economic status of his family. There seems to be no shame (on the part of the child) connected with late wearing of clothes, but once a child has begun to wear a cloth, he or she is taught that it is shameful to take it off in the presence of those who are older. That this attitude is not of recent origin is attested by its appearance in a biographical narrative which goes back sixty years or more.[1] A large proportion of the women have only enough cloth for workaday wear for a short skirt, so that they leave the torso bare, but once one becomes accustomed to covering the torso always, she would be ashamed not to. This feeling belongs more to the field of economic status than to that of modesty. This shows up clearly in the strong objection to being ragged (*epēlē*), which has nothing to do with modesty but rather with economic status. The narrative concludes the teaching of social usage with this observation: 'From the time that children first enter into the school of understanding (*olondunge*), parents recognize that it is proper to respect them, rather than to revile them or tell them that which is evil.'

868 3. *Training in skills.* Before the age of eight or nine, children acquire few definite skills. Many of their games, however, are in imitation of adult activities, and adults recognize their preparatory nature and value. The little girl in caring for her younger sibling acquires certain skills, but with little or no definite adult guidance. Little boys begin early to make and set traps and snares under the tuition of an elder sibling or cousin. The first rat or bird caught belongs to the tutor. Games of many sorts are played: games with sides, round games, games with an 'It', imaginative games, and competitive games; games demanding skill, especially with dances of some intricacy. Games in imitation of animals are favourites, including 'birdcalls', in which very ingenious words are set to the bird songs.

604 867 4. The Ovimbundu have a custom somewhat comparable to what Vedder calls '*child insurance*' among the Herero,[2] i.e., the

[1] From a manuscript by Daniel Kalei of Bailundu.
[2] In Hahn *et al.*, op. cit., p. 177.

197 v. Two significant tones on radicals; no tonal alternance on nominal suffixes. In this Umbundu resembles the Lunda-Luena languages."[1]

Childs[2] classifies Umbundu with the Ambo-Herero group as belonging to the Western Province of Southern Bantu. He suggests[3] that the similarity of Umbundu to the Ngangela languages is due to the dominating influence of the Umbundu spoken in Viye (where the racial stock had a greater Ngangela element) over that spoken in other regions. This dominating influence may be explained by the relatively large number of missions in the Viye region, and presumably also by the activities of Viye traders.[4]

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Dialectal differences in Umbundu speech are very small. There are certain noticeable differences between "up-country" and "down-country", roughly divided by the Keve and Kunene rivers. Each of the outlying regions has its own peculiarities, often due to foreign influences.[5]

It has been mentioned above that while the homeland of the Ovimbundu is in the Benguella Highland, the use of the Umbundu language is now more widespread. The Nganda and the Hanya tribes are increasingly using it, and the mixed populations of the coastal towns of Lobito, Katumbela and Benguella use it almost exclusively. It is also spoken in Nova Redondo, in Mossamedes, and along the Benguella Railway. This process of "Umbundu-ization" does not seem however to be taking place in Cipala, Sela or Musende, in spite of the long period during which they owned the king of Bailundu as their overlord.[6]

PHYSICAL APPEARANCE AND DRESS

142 Among the Ovimbundu two main physical types are distinguished by some writers:[7] one is of brown skin colour and slender build, the other a shorter, darker type with more facial hair. No correlation of these types with chiefly families on the one hand and commoners on the other has been recorded. Hambly[8] gives several good illustrations of physical types among the Ovimbundu, and contrasts them with those found among neighbouring tribes.

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The Ovimbundu retain distinctive styles of dress, ornament, tooth mutilation (a V-shaped notch in the upper incisors), scarification and hair-dressing. Women are dressed in trade cloth: unmarried girls wear one piece of cloth which hangs from the armpits to the knees, while a married woman drapes herself with two pieces of cloth, a skirt hanging from her girdle, and an upper piece so folded as to hold her baby tightly on her back. Certain cloth designs are considered appropriate for girls, others only for older women. Men now dress usually in European fashion.

(1) This linguistic note has been written by C.M.N. White.
(2) Op.cit., p.189. (3) p.190, fn.2.
(4) See above, pp.8-9.
(5) Childs op.cit., p.190, fn.2. See also Kalukembe, p.7 above.
(6) Childs, op.cit., pp.11, 179-80.
(7) See Hambly 1934, p.128; Cashmore 1964, p.36.
(8) Op.cit., plates XLIX-LIV.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

Young unmarried girls of the Luvando tribe wear a large number 301
of leg-bands which extend from the ankles to the knees as a sign that 124
puberty has not been reached. These leg-bands are somewhat roughly [881]
twisted from fibrous roots and twigs from which the cortex has been removed. Collars of tough, elastic, cane-like substance are worn by Luvando women, and so numerous are these that the neck is entirely covered. These cane neck-bands are ornamented with burned, [531]
incised, geometrical patterns, and, in keeping with other ornaments, are thickly smeared with grease and red powder from *tukula* wood (Plate LIX, Figs. 1, 2).

Women of the Vakipungo and Vakuanyama wear heavy coils of 171
brass or copper wire on their forearms. In southern Angola women 301
wear bracelets of twisted wire which are identical with those worn 439
by Zulu women. Bracelets of beaten trade brass, ornamented with [531]
incised geometrical designs, are worn by women of the Ovimbundu, Vakuanyama, Luvando, and Vakipungo tribes. Ovimbundu women now depend largely on trade goods for personal ornament.

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ried girls wear one piece of cloth which hangs from the armpits to the 171
knees. A married woman drapes herself with two pieces of cloth, a skirt hanging from her girdle, and an upper piece so folded as to hold her baby tightly to her back. Men wear a single piece of cloth as a skirt; the upper part of the body is bare (Plates XLIX–LI). From the region of Kipungo to the southern border, clothing is of leather. The Vachokue wear trade cloth or bark cloth.

Hairdressing is of many styles. Ovimbundu women braid their hair 302
neatly in strands across their foreheads, and small blue and white 171
trade beads are used to decorate the braids. The hairdressing of the Ovimbundu women is different from that in any other part of Angola. At an early age the hair is trained into two long loops at the back of the head. Then these are covered with black cloth which is bound tightly. The two loops are afterwards studded with brass-headed tacks obtained from a store (Plate XL, Fig. 3).

Luvando women in the region of Kipungo dress the hair to form a large triangular projection from the back of the head. Girls of the Vaheneca tribe near Huila mass the hair with clay to form large "cock's combs." Women of Gambos pass each small plait of hair through hollow reeds. Humbe women do not redden or grease their hair which is massed into three high ridges on the top, while at the sides there are hornlike projections. Vakuanyama women dress their hair with grease and *tukula* powder. A principal wife builds up her

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3. Hardy E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13-Mbundu FP13

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FEMALE TYPES, SOUTHWEST ANGOLA

Fig. 1. Girls of Vahumca tribe near Huila. Fig. 2. Woman of Huila

[P. 414]

The use of caterpillars as food is noted (p.416): "A man cut open [262]
a large cocoon, extracted the contents, and smacked his lips with 171
great gusto." My field notes mention the use of caterpillars as food. 175

Capello and Ivens (1877–80) remark on the burial places of [766]
hunters which are distinguishable by the skulls of antelopes, buffalo, and hippopotamuses, stuck on upright poles, mixed with skulls of oxen killed in honor of the defunct. The writers noted that a heap of stones protected the body. I photographed two types of cairn in the regions of Ganda and Luimbale respectively. Capello and Ivens are not precise in their locality, but I judge it to have been Long. 17° E. and Lat. 13° S., a considerable distance from my own observations (Plates XXXII, Fig. 1; LXXIV, Fig. 1).

I photographed the stilt-walkers at the final stages of the initiation [481]
ceremonies at Cangamba. These men had no costumes; on the contrary they were almost naked but were covered with white clay. [292]
Capello and Ivens (p. 295), saw a stilt-walker with a feathered mask and a netting costume. Such attire I saw on an Uluchazi medicine-man, but not on the stilt-walkers (Plate LXXXI, Figs. 1, 2).

I was unable to obtain information about the stilt-walkers, but 693
Capello states that they castigated misdemeanants, punished shameless women, and accused criminals. Capello and Ivens were 187 miles to the northwest of my area of observation. The Uluchazi medicine-man, who appeared with the stilt-walkers during my visits, was said to make bad magic for women. The men ignored him but women gathered round in a derisive way; they quickly scattered when he pursued them.

Serpa Pinto, who made his journey across Angola in 1878, has 175
so many references to customs and objects still extant, that I propose 114
to tabulate his observations because of their value in showing the preservation of indigenous traits in spite of Portuguese contacts.

The body of a chief is buried with a covering of oxhide. Many 175
oxen are sacrificed at the death of a king. The heir to the deceased 766
is bound to sacrifice his whole herd in order to regale his people and give peace to the departed (S. Pinto, I, p. 63). The Ovimbundu conform at the present time to similar methods of burial and sacrifice.

Near Huambo, Serpa Pinto saw in every village a kind of "temple 175
for conversation." This is the *onjango*, that I have described and [345]
photographed (Plate XLVIII, Fig. 1). It is the house in which all males foregather for the evening meal, which is brought by their women (I, p. 96).

The gathering and eating of caterpillars is described. This con- [262]
tinues today (I, p. 120).

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

881 292 During the period of isolation costumes for the dance are made. These consist of clothing of tightly fitting, coarse netting, masks, and girdles which are for the use of only those boys who have been circumcised. The feasts and dances celebrating the conclusion of initiatory rites are of great importance. Women are not supposed to know that the operation of circumcision is taking place, and they are taught that *ovinganji* are supernatural beings who have sprung up from the earth; therefore every effort is made to conceal masks and costumes from the sight of women and the uninitiated. No female is allowed to go near the enclosure where novices are confined.

881 A few days after observing the costumes and dances of the newly initiated boys at Katoko I was in the Ngalangi region at the village of Ngongo, about a hundred miles to the north of Katoko. At Ngalangi two boys of the Ovimbundu were questioned with regard to their experiences in the initiation camp.

It is certain that initiation ceremonies are held at irregular intervals and not more frequently than once in four years. The name given to the ceremonies for boys in the Ngalangi area is *ocinganji* (*oci*, "big"; *nganji*, "judge," or a masked person). When there is a number of boys who have not been circumcised, these approach the oldest men to ask for a circumcision ceremony. The old men visit the *sekulu* ("headman") of the village to request that arrangements shall be made. An *ocimbanda* ("medicine-man"), assisted by other men, prepares a camp in a wooded area. Usually the father of each boy has to arrange that a tutor shall accompany his son to the camp, but sometimes as many as three boys have the same guardian. The guardian receives a small fee, possibly nothing more valuable than a chicken.

The camp is made on the side of a stream remote from the village. Each boy takes a chicken to the camp for the purpose of making a special meal, which is given at the name-changing ceremony which follows initiation. The chicken is eaten soon after the boy has been circumcised. The boy changes his own name for a new one which is announced in the village from which he came. While circumcision is in progress the enclosure is surrounded by male drummers and men who shout, so that any noise made by the boys during circumcision will not be heard.

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The period spent in camp is uncertain, probably from three to six months. The rule is that camp is not disbanded until every boy is healed; which means that the confinement may be greatly

prolonged if even one boy fails to recover. One of the two youths 881
interrogated said that in his camp there were seventy-eight boys, three of whom died. My other informant said that in his camp there were sixty-eight boys, only one of whom died. The informants agreed that the deaths were due to an epidemic of influenza and not to privations or septic conditions arising from the operation.

During the period of seclusion the boys are taught songs and dances used at the ceremony that celebrates the conclusion of their initiation. By privation the boys are taught the value of food and fire. Novices are beaten if they show any disrespect for their guardians, and trifling offences are severely punished. Every boy has to take from the fire a burning stick, which he holds in his hand while running between two lines of men who beat him, and if he drops the stick he has to start his run once more. The boys swear allegiance to one another. A novice thinks that he will die if he gives information to a woman or to a man who has not been initiated.

From his mother, each boy receives food in a gourd which he 763
deposits on the bank of a river near the novices' camp. If a boy 881
dies, a hole is bored in the gourd so that when the mother receives this she will not send more food. Each guardian has a stick which is sent to the mother of his pupil when the ceremony of initiation and seclusion is ended. If the boy has died, bark is cut from both ends of the stick before this symbol of death is sent to his parents.

When the boys come out from their camp at the conclusion of 881
the rites one man and one woman stand on the bank of the river, and the boys pass under the legs of both the man and the woman. When the boys arrive at the village the whole population comes out to welcome them. There is a feast and beer-drinking bout on the day of return.

During seclusion no water is allowed for washing, and the inform- [515]
ants laughed as they spoke of the order "wash hands," whereupon the boys merely rubbed their hands together. When the order, "wash dishes," was given the boys rubbed their platters with their hands. On the day of leaving camp the novices bathe in the river. Ablution consists of three dips, after each of which the boy stands on the bank until he is dry.

For two months the boys wear strips of bark cloth. During this [292]
period all the novices must move together, but there is no objection to their leaving the village provided they do so all in one company. While wearing bark cloth the boys have each day to attend a cere-

881 mony at which the older initiates dance while the novices clap their hands.

I witnessed the dance of initiated boys at Ngongo, where the [292] costumes resembled those I had seen at Katoko. At night a youth brought for me a set of initiation costumes (Plate LXXVIII, Fig. 1), which resembled those worn during the dance; this he did with great secrecy.

While at Ngalangi, the initiation of girls was investigated. After several days of negotiation with a village headman three female guardians of the girls came from the bush. The illustrations (Plate LXXVII, Figs. 1, 2) show the attitudes of these women and their decoration. There were three male drummers in the orchestra and several women, who sang and clapped their hands. On emerging from the bush the females moved toward the orchestra with their backs toward the players. As there were about two hundred yards to cover, this slow backward movement occupied a long time, since the three women did not take more than a few inches at each step. The dance [535] itself was a slow, shuffling, swaying movement, made while the bodies of the performers remained inclined forward and their heads were bent so that it was almost impossible to see their faces. The women wore no clothing except loin cloths. Each female was [302] plastered from head to foot with alternate bands of red and white clay smeared thickly. These three females are the women who act [864] as instructors for the girls during isolation in the bush where they receive sexual and domestic instruction.

881 The seclusion of girls covers a period of one month. During 304 this time the novices suffer no harsh treatment though an operation is performed, possibly excision of the clitoris, but I am not certain on this point. It was also stated that a corncob is introduced into the vagina. The tribe practising this ceremony for girls was the [171] Vanyemba, living close to the Ovimbundu at Ngongo near Ngalangi in central Angola.

881 In order to corroborate further the two accounts of initiation 171 ceremonies for boys I journeyed to Cangamba in Moxico, eastern 304 Angola. The position of the two first centers visited (Katoko and Ngongo) is on the border line where Ovimbundu and Vachokue mingle, and although there is a mixture of these and other tribes at Cangamba, the culture, language, and physique of the Vachokue predominate. A description of the circumcision ceremonies witnessed at Cangamba is given below for comparison with the accounts resulting from visits to Katoko and Ngongo.

881 short fiber skirts worn within this enclosure by the novices, are in
171 agreement with the observations made at Cangamba. There is
304 also a close resemblance between the independent accounts of
[114] H. Baumann and F. and W. Jaspert for the Vachokue, also P. A. Delille and E. de Jonghe for the southwest Congo.

The question of initiation rites, past and present, among people of pure Umbundu culture is important. The matter is more fully dealt with later in discussing cultural contacts and cultural losses, but there are a few points which should not be omitted here.

At Caconda, an Umbundu center of western Angola, Père R. P. Laagel stated that only two years ago he had visited an initiation camp of Ovimbundu boys in the hope of persuading them to return to his mission school at Caconda. My informant stated that the boys were circumcised, beaten, and confined to an enclosure for several weeks. Those who cried out when flogged received a double portion of blows. Poisoning is the fate of a boy who reveals the secrets of the initiation camp to women or uninitiated boys. This is the most direct testimony I have received concerning initiation rites among unmixed Ovimbundu.

881 From Bailundu and Elende I have obtained slight evidence of
•292 initiation rites. At the former place, which, like Elende, is a center
171 of the Ovimbundu tribe, fiber costumes were obtained. The mask from Elende is unlike those used at Cangamba, Katoko, and Ngongo. The fiber suits are, however, no different from costumes used at these places. Initiation ceremonies are not held at Elende today, and beyond Dr. Ennis's statement that circumcision rites have been revived in the past fifteen years of his long residence in the neighborhood of Elende, I have no evidence of ritual.

881 The data relating to initiation of boys in Angola suggest loss
177 of the initiatory rites from Umbundu culture, until only a few old masks and costumes, along with attenuated ritual, remain sporadically. On the contrary, in eastern Angola and particularly among the Vachokue, who are farther than the Ovimbundu from coastal influence, initiation ceremonies flourish. At present there is occurring a penetration of initiation rites from the Vachokue area into east-central Angola, which is a region of cultural admixture.

867 The foregoing pages have described certain institutions and social forces which collectively bring individuals into conformity with tribal standards of conduct. The influences at work in this direction may be direct or indirect.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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VAKUANYAMA WOMEN, MONGUA, SOUTH ANGOLA

Fig. 1. Wearing pleated leather skirts. Figs. 2, 3. Showing headdress which denotes position as principal wife in polygynous family

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COSTUMES WORN IN TRIBAL INITIATION CEREMONIES FOR BOYS

Fig. 1. Costumes of Vinyangalu and Ovimbundu, Mossamedes. Fig. 2. Conventional dress of adult tribes at Kaluko

[p.432]

S. Hambly E-8 (1929-1930) 1934 FF13-Mbundu FF13

TRIBAL INITIATION OF BOYS, VACHOKUR, CAMGAMBA

Fig. 1. Novices in seclusion. Fig. 2. Public appearance after initiation

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6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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5// pairs of shorts cost 70 escudos each. Two kerchiefs for women cost 50 escudos each.

Total income recorded is 2,870 escudos (£35. 17. 6). Total expenditure recorded is 2,255 escudos (£28. 3. 9). It should be noted that Kambungo, while not living in Portuguese style, was considered wealthy for an Otjimbundu and that much of his income, for instance from the sale of the ten sheep, was from exceptional sales which could not be annually repeated. As regards livestock Kambungo had five head of cattle, five chickens, four sheep and two ducks.

More typical would be the year's expenditure of Pedro Musungu, an inhabitant of a Protestant village, who had bought two cloths, each of four metres and each costing 50 escudos (about 12s 6d.) for his wife, and for each of his four children two cloths, one 25 escudos the other 30. He had bought a hoe for 7½ escudos, a book for the same. To this total expenditure should be added the tax (180 escudos) plus the communal [85] fines levied each year for burning the grass and so on which may come to 40 escudos or more. The total expenditure then would be about 555 escudos (£6. 18. 9). It was not possible to calculate his income since he could not remember how many sacks he had sold to the traders. He had, however, raised 200 escudos by selling a pig and had got 40 escudos for two kilos of coffee, though most of the coffee he planted had not produced berries.

A yet poorer household was that of Cypriano, a villager of Epalanga with a wife and two young children. His maize crop in 1956 had gone to pay debts to traders, for the 1955 maize harvest had been very poor. He had got tax-money by making pounding-blocks, and pounding-sticks (for beating out maize), but could not remember how much he had earned thus. Although Cypriano's stock amounted to one sow and one hen, [292] he and his wife had a set of smart clothes for special occasions, like all Ovimbundu.

Much better off was Luvell, who like Cypriano combined a craft with agriculture. He had sold ten kilos of coffee for 20 escudos each, as well as twelve sacks of maize at 25 escudos each and two sacks of potatoes at 20 escudos each, making a total agricultural revenue of 540 escudos, to which must be added

322 The tools used by the wood-carver are the saw, ax, adze, and knife.
532 The products of this craft may be conveniently divided into the following groups:

(1) Figurines of human form (Plate XXI, Figs. 1-6).

(2) Animal forms, chiefly snakes, tortoises, birds, and lizards. The dog is sometimes represented (Plates XIX, Figs. 1-5; XLI, Fig. 1).

[534] (3) Parts of musical instruments, such as drums and the baseboards of sansas. The latter often have the metal keys mounted on boards decorated with elaborately incised patterns (Plates XLI, Fig. 2; XXII, Fig. 5).

[415] (4) Domestic implements and utensils, chief of which are heavy wooden beaters for flattening mud floors of houses, grain pounders, stools, cups, platters, bowls, and a heavy pestle and mortar (Plates XIII, Fig. 3; XVIII, Figs. 1, 2).

[521] (5) Carved sticks and clubs; these often show elaborate incised decorations of geometrical patterns. Frequently the head of the stick is carved to represent a human head or a full-length figure.
[283] The ornamented stick or club is carried as part of the personal dress and artistic equipment. The throwing club is usually a straight stick with an undecorated knob at the end (Plate XX, Figs. 1-10).

(6) Carved wooden posts representing the human form. These are set up at the wayside. One has been obtained from a grave near Bailundu.

(7) Tobacco-pipes and snuff boxes (Plate XV, Figs. 2, 4).

177 Figurines of human form require special consideration, because
532 they have claims other than that of aesthetic expression. The figures representing Europeans, or natives using some article of foreign introduction, illustrate the grafting of foreign ideas on older methods of work.

113 The art of the African Negro has of late years been accorded a place of honor in critical circles of Europe and America (P. Guillaume and T. Munro, Primitive Negro Sculpture, New York, 1926). Usually, however, the formal technique of lines, curves, and the general aesthetic effect have been discussed to the exclusion of the ethnological background which determines style and function.

531 By far the best example of carved human figures collected in Angola was the one from Cangamba (Plate XXI, Fig. 4). This female figure, 60 cm high, is carved from hard, dark, red wood in such a way as to achieve a graceful result by the employment of a few

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STAFFS OF VILLAGE CHIEFS

[p. 374]

301 The new ornaments had acquired no sentimental value, therefore
321 their price was moderate.

[171] *Ombo* shells are to be seen in use from Kipungo southward through Huila, among the Luvando, and among the Vakuanyama of southern Angola. In the places mentioned one may judge the social status [554] of a woman by the number of *ombo* shells she wears. A principal wife is usually well supplied with these ornaments.

302 In this southern journey it was noticeable that there was an
171 increasing use of red pigment which is lavishly employed for smearing every kind of ornament, the body, and the hair. Leather belts and [294] skirts of Vakuanyama women are thickly coated with red pigment which is invariably mixed with grease. The red powder is prepared [824] by desiccating a red wood called *tukula* by the Vakuanyama, a name which is used through Angola and the southern Congo area.

912 From Kipungo southward through the Vakuanyama country
171 there is a notable absence of decorative wooden hair combs. On the contrary, delicately carved combs are used by both men and women of the Ovimbundu. The Vasele make such combs, but by far the best [532] examples are made and used by the Vachokue tribe of eastern Angola. Here the decorative design usually includes a well-carved human figure at the top of the comb.

301 Among the Vakuanyama, necklaces of disks made from ostrich
[237] eggshell are worn by the women only. A woman of importance has a dozen loops of such necklaces, each loop being about 125 cm long. [551] These necklaces are so greatly esteemed that only after much persuasion can a woman be induced to part with a single link. Perhaps, as is the case with *ombo* shell, there is more than the intrinsic value to be considered. One point is constantly noticed in considering social status and ornament. All the wives of a wealthy man, especially among the Vakuanyama, are made to advertise their husband's position by the profusion of their ornaments and the quality of their leather skirts and belts.

[321] There is, in addition to the necklaces of ostrich-eggshell beads, a highly prized necklace made from small perforated disks of shell having a diameter of about a centimeter. The Vakuanyama women smear a necklace of this kind with grease and *tukula* powder; the [435] value of a necklace 125 cm long is equivalent to that of an ox. In describing these necklaces there is interest in noting that they are traded to the south of Angola from places six hundred miles to the [439] north; therefore their value is to some extent dependent on rarity and distant origin.

197 v. Two significant tones on radicals; no tonal alternance on nominal suffixes. In this Umbundu resembles the Lunda-Luena languages."[1]

Childs[2] classifies Umbundu with the Ambo-Herero group as belonging to the Western Province of Southern Bantu. He suggests[3] that the similarity of Umbundu to the Ngangela languages is due to the dominating influence of the Umbundu spoken in Viye (where the racial stock had a greater Ngangela element) over that spoken in other regions. This dominating influence may be explained by the relatively large number of missions in the Viye region, and presumably also by the activities of Viye traders.[4]

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Dialectal differences in Umbundu speech are very small. There are certain noticeable differences between "up-country" and "down-country", roughly divided by the Keve and Kunene rivers. Each of the outlying regions has its own peculiarities, often due to foreign influences.[5]

It has been mentioned above that while the homeland of the Ovimbundu is in the Benguella Highland, the use of the Umbundu language is now more widespread. The Nganda and the Hanya tribes are increasingly using it, and the mixed populations of the coastal towns of Lobito, Katumbela and Benguella use it almost exclusively. It is also spoken in Nova Redondo, in Mossamedes, and along the Benguella Railway. This process of "Umbundu-ization" does not seem however to be taking place in Cipala, Sela or Musende, in spite of the long period during which they owned the king of Bailundu as their overlord.[6]

PHYSICAL APPEARANCE AND DRESS

142 Among the Ovimbundu two main physical types are distinguished by some writers:[7] one is of brown skin colour and slender build, the other a shorter, darker type with more facial hair. No correlation of these types with chiefly families on the one hand and commoners on the other has been recorded. Hambly[8] gives several good illustrations of physical types among the Ovimbundu, and contrasts them with those found among neighbouring tribes.

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The Ovimbundu retain distinctive styles of dress, ornament, tooth mutilation (a V-shaped notch in the upper incisors), scarification and hair-dressing. Women are dressed in trade cloth: unmarried girls wear one piece of cloth which hangs from the armpits to the knees, while a married woman drapes herself with two pieces of cloth, a skirt hanging from her girdle, and an upper piece so folded as to hold her baby tightly on her back. Certain cloth designs are considered appropriate for girls, others only for older women. Men now dress usually in European fashion.

(1) This linguistic note has been written by C.M.N. White.
(2) Op.cit., p.169. (3) p.190, fn.2.
(4) See above, pp.6-9.
(5) Childs op.cit., p.190, fn.2. See also Kalukembe, p.7 above.
(6) Childs, op.cit., pp.11, 179-80.
(7) See Hambly 1934, p.129; Cashmen 1944, p.36.
(8) Op.cit., plates XLIX-LIV.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

The picture of types gathered at Ngalangi (Plate LXXXIX, Fig. 3) shows, reading from left to right along the back row, then along the front row in the same direction: an Ocimbundu; an Ocivokue; a man of the Vangangella; an Uluchazi woman; a Lunda man; and two types of the Vangangella. 142 101

The M'Bunda man and woman photographed at Cangamba display characteristic deformation of the upper central incisors (Plate XCI, Figs. 1, 2). Photographs of a Mussurongo man and two women, taken about a hundred miles east of Malange, show no great difference from the Ovimbundu except in their shorter stature (Plates LXX, Figs. 1, 2; LXXI, Figs. 1, 2). The Bushman (Plate LXIX, Figs. 1, 2) shows a type found wandering in small bands in the south of Angola. These photographs were taken at Cassanga. [304]

The dress and personal ornaments of the tribes dwelling to the south of the Ovimbundu (Plates LIX–LXVIII) are entirely different from the clothing and decorative styles observed in the areas occupied by the Ovimbundu. This statement is true with regard to bodily covering, ornaments, tooth mutilation, use of pigment, scarification, and hairdressing. 171 301 304

In respect of all these factors, males and females of the Ovimbundu have distinctive patterns which do not appear to have influenced, or to have been influenced by the styles around them. [177]

In working southward from Elende I passed through typical Umbundu cultures until the vicinity of Kipungo was reached. At this place the change in physical appearance, ornaments, and hairdressing was remarkable both for its abruptness and distinctiveness. But the change from agricultural to pastoral pursuits is gradual.

A comparison of photographs indicates at once the truth of this statement, which can be further illustrated by a detailed description of the ornaments observed from Kipungo to Mongua.

By far the most important of these is the circular *omba* shell made from the basal part of a gastropod shell of the genus *Conus* Linn; and allied forms. These are highly prized, not because of any intrinsic worth, but on account of strong sentiment arising from their bequest, which is usually in the female line. I have, however, seen a few males of the Valuanyama wearing these shells. For the old *omba* shells monetary offers equal to the earnings of a woman for a period of six months were made, but without success. One woman wavered somewhat, but finally decided that she dared not return to her home without her *omba* shells. From a Portuguese trader I bought, for a small sum, *omba* shells showing stages in manufacture. 301 321 [825] [562]

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[321] There is, in addition to the necklaces of ostrich-eggshell beads, a highly prized necklace made from small perforated disks of shell having a diameter of about a centimeter. The Vakuanyama women smear a necklace of this kind with grease and *tukula* powder; the
[435] value of a necklace 125 cm long is equivalent to that of an ox. In describing these necklaces there is interest in noting that they are traded to the south of Angola from places six hundred miles to the
[439] north; therefore their value is to some extent dependent on rarity and distant origin.

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Young unmarried girls of the Luvando tribe wear a large number of leg-bands which extend from the ankles to the knees as a sign that puberty has not been reached. These leg-bands are somewhat roughly twisted from fibrous roots and twigs from which the cortex has been removed. Collars of tough, elastic, cane-like substance are worn by Luvando women, and so numerous are these that the neck is entirely covered. These cane neck-bands are ornamented with burned, incised, geometrical patterns, and, in keeping with other ornaments, are thickly smeared with grease and red powder from *tukula* wood (Plate LIX, Figs. 1, 2). 301 924 [881] [531]

Women of the Vakipungo and Vakuanyama wear heavy coils of brass or copper wire on their forearms. In southern Angola women wear bracelets of twisted wire which are identical with those worn by Zulu women. Bracelets of beaten trade brass, ornamented with incised geometrical designs, are worn by women of the Ovimbundu, Vakuanyama, Luvando, and Vakipungo tribes. Ovimbundu women now depend largely on trade goods for personal ornament. 171 301 439 [531]

Ovimbundu men and women are dressed in trade cloth. Unmarried girls wear one piece of cloth which hangs from the armpits to the knees. A married woman drapes herself with two pieces of cloth, a skirt hanging from her girdle, and an upper piece so folded as to hold her baby tightly to her back. Men wear a single piece of cloth as a skirt; the upper part of the body is bare (Plates XLIX–LI). From the region of Kipungo to the southern border, clothing is of leather. The Vachokue wear trade cloth or bark cloth. 291 171

Hairdressing is of many styles. Ovimbundu women braid their hair neatly in strands across their foreheads, and small blue and white trade beads are used to decorate the braids. The hairdressing of the Ovimbundu women is different from that in any other part of Angola. At an early age the hair is trained into two long loops at the back of the head. Then these are covered with black cloth which is bound tightly. The two loops are afterwards studded with brass-headed tacks obtained from a store (Plate XL, Fig. 3). 302 171

Luvando women in the region of Kipungo dress the hair to form a large triangular projection from the back of the head. Girls of the Vaheneca tribe near Huila mass the hair with clay to form large "cock's combs." Women of Gambos pass each small plait of hair through hollow reeds. Humbe women do not redden or grease their hair which is massed into three high ridges on the top, while at the sides there are hornlike projections. Vakuanyama women dress their hair with grease and *tukula* powder. A principal wife builds up her

302 A principal wife builds up her
[595] hair into five high cones. Vachokue women mass their hair into separate balls shaped and held by clay and red coloring matter.
171 I know of no hairdressing for Vachokue men, but ornamental wooden combs are sometimes used.

304 In only one place have I seen a nose pin worn, namely, the Esele country of Vila Nova de Selles. The fashion is out of date, but women of only twenty-five years of age have the septum of the nose bored; evidently the custom has not been obsolete for a long period (Plate LXXV, Fig. 1).

177 The most popular European importations are blue cloth with
439 white spots, metal hair combs, beads, and bright metal crosses
301 bearing a figure of the Virgin Mary with the infant Jesus. This ornament has penetrated to districts far away from Christian missions, and its wide dispersal shows that a newly introduced and attractive ornament from a foreign source may readily be accepted by tribes of different cultures.

517 There are interesting points of psychology in the attitude of the
301 Ovimbundu toward European importations. Only a few patterns of cloth are favored, and there is no sale for any other design. Some designs are thought to be appropriate for young girls while others are favored by older women. The same may be said of colored beads, for whereas both blue and white beads are the usual decoration for young women and immature girls, red beads are worn chiefly by the elderly women.

178 A consideration of personal ornament establishes the general truth that in scarification, hairdressing, tooth mutilation, the use of red powder and grease, the anointing of the hair with palm oil, and the wearing of trade cloth, leather, or bark cloth, there is little exchange of styles. There are diffusions in language and other cultural traits, but decorative elements which have for a long period been regarded as distinctive of tribal life are rigidly preserved.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP1

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OVIMBUNDU TRIBE

Fig. 1. Flute players, Bailundu. Fig. 2. Bark removed for making utensils, Humbe
Fig. 3. Girl, hair studded with brass nails, Humbe

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3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13-Mbundu FP13

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PHYSICAL TYPES, SOUTHWEST ANGOLA

Fig. 1. Girls of Lovando tribe. Fig. 2. Woman of Gambos wearing omba ornaments

B. Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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FEMALE TYPES, SOUTHWEST ANGOLA

Fig. 1. Lovundo girls near Kipungo. Fig. 2. Body-view, same types

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VAHEMECA GIRL AT HUILA

Fig. 1. Front view. Fig. 2. Back view

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B. Hamby E-6 (1929-1930) 1936 FPM Minerals FPM

VAKUANYAMA TYPES, MONGUA, SOUTH ANGOLA

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NATIVES OF MULA, SOUTHWEST ASIA.

Fig. 1. Wearing fashioned hand and ankle ornaments. Fig. 2. Wearing beaded collar and ankle shell

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J. Hamm, E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 F/13 Miscellaneous FP13

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FEMALE TYPES OF YAKULE, WEST-CENTRAL ANGOLA

Fig. 1. Wearing nose-pin and cowrie-shell head-band. Fig. 2. Wearing beaded head-band. Note scarification of forehead and cheeks

[p.42f]

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Ovimbundu women braid their hair neatly in strands across their foreheads, and decorate the braids with small blue and white trade beads.[1] 342

MAIN FEATURES OF ECONOMY

AGRICULTURE[2]

Main crops are maize and several kinds of beans. Subsidiary crops include: sorghum, kaffir corn, emmer wheat, manioc, peanuts, squash, sweet potatoes, garden vegetables, a little rice, cotton, sugar-cane and tobacco. Fruit-trees such as the papaya, banana, loquat, tangerine, lemon, peach and apple, are increasingly cultivated, and, to some extent, coffee. Upland fields for the principal crops of maize and beans are cultivated during the rainy season, and, to piece out the harvest, river gardens for secondary crops are used in the dry season. 241

The principal corn-gardens

Traditionally men work with their wives in the heavier labour of clearing new fields, but today the demands of contract labour are such that few are able to help.[3] Before the rains begin in early September, women prepare the fields for planting. If a new plot is to be used, it is first cleared with a small hatchet. Tree stumps are left two or three feet high; after the field has been cultivated for a year or two and the tree-stumps have dried and rotted, they are burned off and cleared away. When the rainy season has set in and the ground is thoroughly wet, the main corn-fields are planted. The ground is dug with a hoe and ridged slightly, the ridges following the contour of the land, so that the rain will not wash away the soil, and so that the moisture will be held. Occasionally irrigation is used, small channels being led from hillside streams to the gardens. Maize is dropped by hand on the ridges, and the seeds covered with the foot. Beans and squash are planted with the corn. In January there is usually a break in the rains, and this is the time when the bean crop ripens. (This is a critical period, since if the dry spell lasts too long the corn crop is blighted, but if it is too short the beans will not ripen.) The vines are pulled up and put in the field hut to dry. Later the beans are beaten out of the pods and stored. 241 [462] [342]

In each field there is a grass hut, which is used as a shelter from showers, as a place for drying beans or corn, and as living quarters when the corn is sprouting. (When a woman decides that it would be more convenient to live by her field, which requires constant guarding against birds, she may live in her field hut with her children for several weeks.) 241 343

As the dry season commences, the corn crop ripens. When it is ripe, it is plucked, dried and shelled, and stored in the coile, a granary on posts, for future use. One coile is used for each household. When required, the corn is boiled and pounded into the meal which forms the staple food.[4] [257] [252]

(1) Bumby pp.129-32, and illustrations; Childs, personal communication.
(2) Cashman, 1944, pp.73-8; Bumby, 1954, pp.126-8, and Childs, personal communication.
(3) Childs, personal communication.
(4) For a good description of the preparation of corn-meal, see Cashman, pp.77-8.

IV. PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

142 Among the Ovimbundu there are two main physical types. One of these is of brown skin color and slender build. In this type the calves and thighs are poorly developed, and the chest girth is slender in keeping with the general development. In general the physical 144 characteristics are distinctly different from those of a typical West African Negro as represented by the Kru and the Ibo tribes.

The Ovimbundu are Bantu Negroes who possibly result from a crossing of Hamites and true Negroes, a hypothesis which would account for both the light-colored slim type and the shorter, darker, more sturdy type. But E. Torday (Herbert Spencer, Descriptive [114] Sociology of African Races, London, 1930, Preface, p. iii) thinks that differences of physique among Sudanic and Bantu Negroes are sufficiently accounted for by isolations and environmental differences. Torday denies the need for postulating an infusion of Hamitic blood, but his opinion is opposed to that which has found general acceptance.

The darker Ovimbundu with more facial hair may represent an infusion of Vachokue blood because there was warfare between the Ovimbundu and the Vachokue of eastern Angola with the result that some of the latter were taken as slaves. Types of the Ovimbundu are shown (Plates LII–LIV).

The Vasele, an Umbundu-speaking people of west-central Angola, 101 form a linguistic and cultural pocket because of their isolation in 142 rugged country. Their physique shows no pronounced differences [304] from that of the Ovimbundu, but the methods of scarification, tooth mutilation, and personal ornament are in distinct contrast with those of the Ovimbundu. The Ovimbundu have only a V-shaped notch in the two upper central incisors, whereas the Vasele chip all their teeth to points (Plate LXXVI, Figs. 1, 2).

[302] The Luvando of southwest Angola resemble the Ovimbundu in general physique, though the great difference in hairdressing and personal ornament is likely to give a contrary impression (Plate LIX, Figs. 1, 2).

The Vabeneca are particularly well developed (Plate LXII, Figs. 1, 2). Not until Mongua is reached does one find a people who are distinctly different from the Ovimbundu in all respects. The Vakuanyama of Mongua are noticeably tall and slim, much taller and slimmer than the Ovimbundu, while their physiognomy is more refined (Plates LXIII; LXVIII, Fig. 2). The Vakuanyama are a pastoral tribe whereas the Ovimbundu are principally agricultural.

301 The new ornaments had acquired no sentimental value, therefore
321 their price was moderate.

[171] *Ombo* shells are to be seen in use from Kipungo southward through Huila, among the Luvando, and among the Vakuanyama of southern Angola. In the places mentioned one may judge the social status
[554] of a woman by the number of *ombo* shells she wears. A principal wife is usually well supplied with these ornaments.

●302 In this southern journey it was noticeable that there was an
171 increasing use of red pigment which is lavishly employed for smearing
[294] every kind of ornament, the body, and the hair. Leather belts and skirts of Vakuanyama women are thickly coated with red pigment which is invariably mixed with grease. The red powder is prepared
[824] by desiccating a red wood called *tukula* by the Vakuanyama, a name which is used through Angola and the southern Congo area.

412 From Kipungo southward through the Vakuanyama country
171 there is a notable absence of decorative wooden hair combs. On the contrary, delicately carved combs are used by both men and women of the Ovimbundu. The Vasele make such combs, but by far the best
[532] examples are made and used by the Vachokue tribe of eastern Angola. Here the decorative design usually includes a well-carved human figure at the top of the comb.

301 Among the Vakuanyama, necklaces of disks made from ostrich
[237] eggshell are worn by the women only. A woman of importance has a dozen loops of such necklaces, each loop being about 125 cm long.
[559] These necklaces are so greatly esteemed that only after much persuasion can a woman be induced to part with a single link. Perhaps, as is the case with *ombo* shell, there is more than the intrinsic value to be considered. One point is constantly noticed in considering social status and ornament. All the wives of a wealthy man, especially among the Vakuanyama, are made to advertise their husband's position by the profusion of their ornaments and the quality of their leather skirts and belts.

[321] There is, in addition to the necklaces of ostrich-eggshell beads, a highly prized necklace made from small perforated disks of shell having a diameter of about a centimeter. The Vakuanyama women smear a necklace of this kind with grease and *tukula* powder; the
[435] value of a necklace 125 cm long is equivalent to that of an ox. In describing these necklaces there is interest in noting that they are traded to the south of Angola from places six hundred miles to the
[439] north; therefore their value is to some extent dependent on rarity and distant origin.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

Young unmarried girls of the Luvando tribe wear a large number of leg-bands which extend from the ankles to the knees as a sign that puberty has not been reached. These leg-bands are somewhat roughly twisted from fibrous roots and twigs from which the cortex has been removed. Collars of tough, elastic, cane-like substance are worn by Luvando women, and so numerous are these that the neck is entirely covered. These cane neck-bands are ornamented with burned, incised, geometrical patterns, and, in keeping with other ornaments, are thickly smeared with grease and red powder from *tukula* wood (Plate LIX, Figs. 1, 2). 301 924 [881] [531]

Women of the Vakipungo and Vakuanyama wear heavy coils of brass or copper wire on their forearms. In southern Angola women wear bracelets of twisted wire which are identical with those worn by Zulu women. Bracelets of beaten trade brass, ornamented with incised geometrical designs, are worn by women of the Ovimbundu, Vakuanyama, Luvando, and Vakipungo tribes. Ovimbundu women now depend largely on trade goods for personal ornament. 171 301 439 [531]

Ovimbundu men and women are dressed in trade cloth. Unmarried girls wear one piece of cloth which hangs from the armpits to the knees. A married woman drapes herself with two pieces of cloth, a skirt hanging from her girdle, and an upper piece so folded as to hold her baby tightly to her back. Men wear a single piece of cloth as a skirt; the upper part of the body is bare (Plates XLIX–LI). From the region of Kipungo to the southern border, clothing is of leather. The Vacholue wear trade cloth or bark cloth. 291 171

Hairdressing is of many styles. Ovimbundu women braid their hair neatly in strands across their foreheads, and small blue and white trade beads are used to decorate the braids. The hairdressing of the Ovimbundu women is different from that in any other part of Angola. At an early age the hair is trained into two long loops at the back of the head. Then these are covered with black cloth which is bound tightly. The two loops are afterwards studded with brass-headed tacks obtained from a store (Plate XL, Fig. 3). 302 171

Luvando women in the region of Kipungo dress the hair to form a large triangular projection from the back of the head. Girls of the Vaheneca tribe near Huila mass the hair with clay to form large "cock's comba." Women of Gambos pass each small plait of hair through hollow reeds. Humbe women do not redden or grease their hair which is massed into three high ridges on the top, while at the sides there are hornlike projections. Vakuanyama women dress their hair with grease and *tukula* powder. A principal wife builds up her

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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[595] hair into five high cones. Vachokue women mass their hair into separate balls shaped and held by clay and red coloring matter.
171 I know of no hairdressing for Vachokue men, but ornamental wooden combs are sometimes used.

304 In only one place have I seen a nose pin worn, namely, the Esele country of Vila Nova de Selles. The fashion is out of date, but women of only twenty-five years of age have the septum of the nose bored; evidently the custom has not been obsolete for a long period (Plate LXXV, Fig. 1).

177 The most popular European importations are blue cloth with
439 white spots, metal hair combs, beads, and bright metal crosses
301 bearing a figure of the Virgin Mary with the infant Jesus. This ornament has penetrated to districts far away from Christian missions, and its wide dispersal shows that a newly introduced and attractive ornament from a foreign source may readily be accepted by tribes of different cultures.

517 There are interesting points of psychology in the attitude of the
301 Ovimbundu toward European importations. Only a few patterns of cloth are favored, and there is no sale for any other design. Some designs are thought to be appropriate for young girls while others are favored by older women. The same may be said of colored beads, for whereas both blue and white beads are the usual decoration for young women and immature girls, red beads are worn chiefly by the elderly women.

178 A consideration of personal ornament establishes the general truth that in scarification, hairdressing, tooth mutilation, the use of red powder and grease, the anointing of the hair with palm oil, and the wearing of trade cloth, leather, or bark cloth, there is little exchange of styles. There are diffusions in language and other cultural traits, but decorative elements which have for a long period been regarded as distinctive of tribal life are rigidly preserved.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

881 mony at which the older initiates dance while the novices clap their hands.

I witnessed the dance of initiated boys at Ngongo, where the [292] costumes resembled those I had seen at Katoko. At night a youth brought for me a set of initiation costumes (Plate LXXVIII, Fig. 1), which resembled those worn during the dance; this he did with great secrecy.

While at Ngalangi, the initiation of girls was investigated. After several days of negotiation with a village headman three female guardians of the girls came from the bush. The illustrations (Plate LXXVII, Figs. 1, 2) show the attitudes of these women and their decoration. There were three male drummers in the orchestra and several women, who sang and clapped their hands. On emerging from the bush the females moved toward the orchestra with their backs toward the players. As there were about two hundred yards to cover, this slow backward movement occupied a long time, since the three women did not take more than a few inches at each step. The dance [535] itself was a slow, shuffling, swaying movement, made while the bodies of the performers remained inclined forward and their heads were bent so that it was almost impossible to see their faces. The women wore no clothing except loin cloths. Each female was [302] plastered from head to foot with alternate bands of red and white clay smeared thickly. These three females are the women who act [864] as instructors for the girls during isolation in the bush where they receive sexual and domestic instruction.

881 The seclusion of girls covers a period of one month. During 304 this time the novices suffer no harsh treatment though an operation is performed, possibly excision of the clitoris, but I am not certain on this point. It was also stated that a corncob is introduced into the vagina. The tribe practising this ceremony for girls was the [171] Vanyemba, living close to the Ovimbundu at Ngongo near Ngalangi in central Angola.

881 In order to corroborate further the two accounts of initiation 171 ceremonies for boys I journeyed to Cangamba in Moxico, eastern 304 Angola. The position of the two first centers visited (Katoko and Ngongo) is on the border line where Ovimbundu and Vachokue mingle, and although there is a mixture of these and other tribes at Cangamba, the culture, language, and physique of the Vachokue predominate. A description of the circumcision ceremonies witnessed at Cangamba is given below for comparison with the accounts resulting from visits to Katoko and Ngongo.

4:Dorsey E-4, 5 (no date)1899 FP13 Mbundu FP13

791 case of sickness. He is also a diviner, reading both the past and
759 future. At all spirit feasts, at the installation of a new chief, in preparation for war, and on almost every occasion the witch-doctor plays a prominent part. He bears an influential position among his people, and his art is the source of a considerable income, for always before he begins operations the pay must be brought and laid down before him. Thus it is that he is loth to part with even a few of his charms, much less a full set.

The ocimbanda does not inherit his power, but must serve a long apprenticeship to some old witch-doctor, whom he pays liberally. He is then given a small basket with a few charms, to which he adds from time to time. His idols and charms are not made by him, but
[778] are purchased one by one. All of these objects are considered powerful, *cikola* or sacred, and the common people are afraid to touch them; even the touch of a white man is sacrilegious. One of the distinguishing features of a witch-doctor's costume is a head-dress, *ekufue*, made of long porcupine quills fastened together at one end, sewn to a cloth disk about two inches in diameter. Many of the quills are over a foot in length. This headdress is only worn when divining. He also occasionally wears about the loins a girdle, *uya*, consisting of a strip of antelope skin sewn together along the two edges, thus forming a pouch which contains medicines. Attached to the girdle are war charms and medicines, of which he eats from time to time. There are also several kinds of small skins in the collection, on which the doctor kneels when about to perform.
[302] Two pigments should also be noticed. The first is a white, clayey substance, *ocikela*, with which the ocimbanda paints himself, and with which he also marks the person whom by his divining he has discovered to be innocent, the sign of acquittal being a mark across the forehead and down the arms. The other pigment is a red clay, *onongo*, with which he also marks his own body and employs as the sign of guilt.

787 Of the various objects of the ocimbanda's outfit proper, the most
415 important is the basket, *uhamba*, in which the outfit is kept. When it is said that so and so has a "uhamba," it means that he is a witch-doctor. The basket is thirteen inches high by nineteen in length, and eight inches in thickness. The ends are rounded, thus giving the basket, as seen from above, an elliptical form. The cover, three inches in height, fits closely down over the basket, after the manner of our telescope bag. The bottom of the basket is made separate, and is fastened by means of an interlacing of grass braid. The sides of the basket are simply one long strip of interlaced reed and bark fibre, the ends overlapping and being fastened together by the grass braid, which passes up continuously from the bottom to

[i.e., diviner. -- Analyst]

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

sending of children to stay with relatives or friends. The Ovimbundu consider it definitely an educational device. From the age of six or seven years children are sent singly or in pairs to spend as much as one or two years in the home of the mother's brother. If conditions are favourable they may also be sent to stay with the father's sister or brother, and girls (other than the first-born) may be sent to the mother's mother. Formerly, prominent families arranged for their sons to stay in the king's capital. These periods spent away from home may continue well into adolescence. Not only relatives but also friends, blood-brothers, and *vakuacisoko* (members of a certain communal order)[1] exchange children for certain periods in this way. This custom is by no means dead. It is now being carried on even within the Christian community. Its educational purpose is obvious.

Later Childhood

(*From about nine years until puberty*)

There is no definite time which marks the transition from early to later childhood, but there are marked differences between the two periods. The chief criterion is one of physical development for as soon as the child is physically able, he will begin to assume a definite role in the work of the adult community. This rarely comes before nine years of age and may be somewhat delayed. Soon after a child gets the permanent teeth, a notch in the form of an inverted V (Λ) is chipped between the two upper front incisors.[2] This is a sort of national mark which many people omit to give their children at present. The line of observance is not sharply drawn as between Christians and non-Christians, as with the Herero.[3]

Formerly, the beginning of the period was well marked for the boy by his first trip with a trading caravan. Most of the present older generation have had this experience and nearly every man of the present middle-aged generation as well. Nowadays the boy of this age may begin to work in the fields with his father, he may begin to learn a trade, or he may be sent to school. Few Ovimbundu put their children in school before this age, and they evidently do not believe that younger children would profit by the instruction

[1] See *infra*, p. 114 f.
[2] See Hambly, op. cit., Plates XLIX and LIV.
[3] Vedder in Hahn *et al.*, op. cit., p. 177 f.

197 v. Two significant tones on radicals; no tonal alternance on nominal suffixes. In this Umbundu resembles the Lunda-Luena languages."[1]

Childs[2] classifies Umbundu with the Ambo-Herero group as belonging to the Western Province of Southern Bantu. He suggests[3] that the similarity of Umbundu to the Ngangela languages is due to the dominating influence of the Umbundu spoken in Viye (where the racial stock had a greater Ngangela element) over that spoken in other regions. This dominating influence may be explained by the relatively large number of missions in the Viye region, and presumably also by the activities of Viye traders.[4]

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Dialectal differences in Umbundu speech are very small. There are certain noticeable differences between "up-country" and "down-country", roughly divided by the Keve and Kunene rivers. Each of the outlying regions has its own peculiarities, often due to foreign influences.[5]

It has been mentioned above that while the homeland of the Ovimbundu is in the Benguella Highland, the use of the Umbundu language is now more widespread. The Nganda and the Hanya tribes are increasingly using it, and the mixed populations of the coastal towns of Lobito, Katumbela and Benguella use it almost exclusively. It is also spoken in Nova Redondo, in Mossamedes, and along the Benguella Railway. This process of "Umbundu-ization" does not seem however to be taking place in Cipala, Sela, or Musende, in spite of the long period during which they owned the king of Bailundu as their overlord.[6]

PHYSICAL APPEARANCE AND DRESS

142 Among the Ovimbundu two main physical types are distinguished by some writers:[7] one is of brown skin colour and slender build, the other a shorter, darker type with more facial hair. No correlation of these types with chiefly families on the one hand and commoners on the other has been recorded. Hambly[8] gives several good illustrations of physical types among the Ovimbundu, and contrasts them with those found among neighbouring tribes.

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The Ovimbundu retain distinctive styles of dress, ornament, tooth mutilation (a V-shaped notch in the upper incisors), scarification and hair-dressing. Women are dressed in trade cloth: unmarried girls wear one piece of cloth which hangs from the armpits to the knees, while a married woman drapes herself with two pieces of cloth, a skirt hanging from her girdle, and an upper piece so folded as to hold her baby tightly on her back. Certain cloth designs are considered appropriate for girls, others only for older women. Men now dress usually in European fashion.

(1) This linguistic note has been written by C.M.N. White.
(2) Op.cit., p.169. (3) p.190, fn.2.
(4) See above, pp.8-9.
(5) Childs op.cit., p.190, fn.2. See also Kalukembe, p.7 above.
(6) Childs, op.cit., pp.11, 179-80.
(7) See Hambly 1934, p.128; Cashmore 1944, p.36.
(8) Op.cit., plates XLIX-LIV.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

175 [316] [305] Serpa Pinto saw shafts for the working of iron ore in the neighborhood of Cubango. The ore was mixed with charcoal and smelted in shallow pits. It is stated that the iron was sometimes tempered with ox-grease and salt. The bellows are of the type made at Elende (I, p. 128). Of the tempering process I have no confirmation.

175 787 [764] Somewhere near Bihé Serpa Pinto saw the ceremony of questioning a corpse which was made to sway to and fro, the people believing all the while that it does so without human intervention. The diviner declared that the soul of a dead person will tell who caused the death (I, p. 130). I observed and photographed this ceremony (Plate XLV, Fig. 1).

[695] The ordeal of the poison cup is described; blood-letting, and divination by shaking articles in a basket are also mentioned. Pinto says that in the articles that appear uppermost the diviner reads what his hearers are desirous of learning of the past, present, or future. Sorcery and rain-making are likewise briefly mentioned (I, p. 132). The divination basket, the poison ordeal, and rain-making, are Umbundu cultural traits today.

171 224 Here Pinto illustrates the existing practice of mounting the skulls of animals killed by a hunter on a pole in the village. There is a further reference to this custom among the Ambuellas (I, p. 333). These instances, combined with those personally noted, give a wide distribution for the practice (I, p. 177).

175 [304] Pinto saw the operation of tooth mutilation among the Luimba. The operation was performed with a knife which was struck by repeated light blows (I, p. 209).

[711] Pinto illustrates arrowheads in use in 1879 (I, pp. 277, 346). These are exactly the same as those made and used in 1929 (Plate XVII, Figs. 1–9).

[412] Axes used by the Luchazi are sketched with a detail that shows the old forms to persist without alteration (II, p. 36).

[321] Water-pipes made from horns and gourds by the Luina of eastern Angola are of the forms now used in that region, also by the Ovimbundu of the present day (II, pp. 33, 37).

175 114 For use in checking and supplementing my observations Serpa Pinto's book was found to be of the greatest service, though the precise locality was sometimes difficult to identify. This explorer, in common with others, scattered his ethnological observations among descriptions of the route and botanical, zoological, and other notes.

Lux traveled from Loanda due east, following the Kwanza on the northern bank between 9° and 10° S. Lat., and so into Lunda.

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3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

The picture of types gathered at Ngalangi (Plate LXXXIX, Fig. 3) shows, reading from left to right along the back row, then along the front row in the same direction: an Ocimbundu; an Ocivokue; a man of the Vangangella; an Uluchazi woman; a Lunda man; and two types of the Vangangella. 142 101

The M'Bunda man and woman photographed at Cangamba display characteristic deformation of the upper central incisors (Plate XCI, Figs. 1, 2). Photographs of a Mussurongo man and two women, taken about a hundred miles east of Malange, show no great difference from the Ovimbundu except in their shorter stature (Plates LXX, Figs. 1, 2; LXXI, Figs. 1, 2). The Bushman (Plate LXIX, Figs. 1, 2) shows a type found wandering in small bands in the south of Angola. These photographs were taken at Cassanga. [304]

The dress and personal ornaments of the tribes dwelling to the south of the Ovimbundu (Plates LIX–LXVIII) are entirely different from the clothing and decorative styles observed in the areas occupied by the Ovimbundu. This statement is true with regard to bodily covering, ornaments, tooth mutilation, use of pigment, scarification, and hairdressing. 171 301 304

In respect of all these factors, males and females of the Ovimbundu have distinctive patterns which do not appear to have influenced, or to have been influenced by the styles around them. [177]

In working southward from Elende I passed through typical Umbundu cultures until the vicinity of Kipungo was reached. At this place the change in physical appearance, ornaments, and hairdressing was remarkable both for its abruptness and distinctiveness. But the change from agricultural to pastoral pursuits is gradual.

A comparison of photographs indicates at once the truth of this statement, which can be further illustrated by a detailed description of the ornaments observed from Kipungo to Mongua.

By far the most important of these is the circular *omba* shell made from the basal part of a gastropod shell of the genus *Conus* Linn; and allied forms. These are highly prized, not because of any intrinsic worth, but on account of strong sentiment arising from their bequest, which is usually in the female line. I have, however, seen a few males of the Vakusanyama wearing these shells. For the old *omba* shells monetary offers equal to the earnings of a woman for a period of six months were made, but without success. One woman wavered somewhat, but finally decided that she dared not return to her home without her *omba* shells. From a Portuguese trader I bought, for a small sum, *omba* shells showing stages in manufacture. 301 321 [825] [562]

3: Hambly E-S (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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301 bearing a figure of the Virgin Mary with the infant Jesus. This ornament has penetrated to districts far away from Christian missions, and its wide dispersal shows that a newly introduced and attractive ornament from a foreign source may readily be accepted by tribes of different cultures.

517 There are interesting points of psychology in the attitude of the
301 Ovimbundu toward European importations. Only a few patterns of cloth are favored, and there is no sale for any other design. Some designs are thought to be appropriate for young girls while others are favored by older women. The same may be said of colored beads, for whereas both blue and white beads are the usual decoration for young women and immature girls, red beads are worn chiefly by the elderly women.

178 A consideration of personal ornament establishes the general truth that in scarification, hairdressing, tooth mutilation, the use of red powder and grease, the anointing of the hair with palm oil, and the wearing of trade cloth, leather, or bark cloth, there is little exchange of styles. There are diffusions in language and other cultural traits, but decorative elements which have for a long period been regarded as distinctive of tribal life are rigidly preserved.

S. Hambly .E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

tribes, for everywhere these rites aim at securing ideas of unity, coop- 867
eration, conformity to tribal law, and admission to adult tribal life. 881

The methods used to achieve these aims are seclusion, circumcision, physical suffering, direct tuition, dancing, hunting, a change of name, and finally a ceremonial return to the tribe with adult status and the right to marry.

The following notes give details of ceremonies witnessed at 114
three centers; namely, Katoko, Ngalangi, and Cangamba. For 171
comparison of these rites with others performed in eastern Angola 881
reference should be made to the books of A. Schachtzabel, and to the papers of H. Baumann (III), and F. and W. Jaspert, whose observations were made independently of each other and of my own investigation.

The dances of the novices at Katoko, where there is a mixed 881
population of Ovimbundu, Vangangella, and Vachokue tribes, are part of the final ceremonies following circumcision and seclusion. The social group formed by this collective circumcision, seclusion, and dancing, is called *ovingonji*, which is the name of the initiatory rites themselves. A boy who has been initiated is not allowed to become friendly with one who has not suffered the ceremony, and all boys who were circumcised at the same time preserve a sense of unity by dancing in a company and moving about together for twelve weeks after their return to the village from which they came.

Circumcision, which is prohibited by the Portuguese govern- 881
ment, is still practised secretly in some regions. When circumcision 304
is carried out by primitive methods serious infection may result from the lack of clean instruments, for the knife is, of course, unsterilized.

After the operation the patients are subjected to harsh treatment during the period of cure that follows. The circumcised are secluded in a wooded area. Food provided by the parents is placed on the bank of a river near which the initiation camp is built, and after the parents have gone away the boys bring their rations from the river to the camp. Before eating, the boys are obliged to give profuse thanks to the men who are acting as tutors. In some regions there is no food ration for the boys, and the rule is that each boy must subsist on what he is able to catch and collect with his hands.

Each boy has a male guardian who takes care of him after the operation. Those who have been operated upon are not permitted to wear clothes, nor are they allowed to warm themselves until quite healed. Any infraction of the rules results in a severe whipping.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

881 mony at which the older initiates dance while the novices clap their hands.

I witnessed the dance of initiated boys at Ngongo, where the [292] costumes resembled those I had seen at Katoko. At night a youth brought for me a set of initiation costumes (Plate LXXVIII, Fig. 1), which resembled those worn during the dance; this he did with great secrecy.

While at Ngalangi, the initiation of girls was investigated. After several days of negotiation with a village headman three female guardians of the girls came from the bush. The illustrations (Plate LXXVII, Figs. 1, 2) show the attitudes of these women and their decoration. There were three male drummers in the orchestra and several women, who sang and clapped their hands. On emerging from the bush the females moved toward the orchestra with their backs toward the players. As there were about two hundred yards to cover, this slow backward movement occupied a long time, since the three women did not take more than a few inches at each step. The dance [535] itself was a slow, shuffling, swaying movement, made while the bodies of the performers remained inclined forward and their heads were bent so that it was almost impossible to see their faces. The women wore no clothing except loin cloths. Each female was [302] plastered from head to foot with alternate bands of red and white clay smeared thickly. These three females are the women who act [364] as instructors for the girls during isolation in the bush where they receive sexual and domestic instruction.

881 The seclusion of girls covers a period of one month. During 304 this time the novices suffer no harsh treatment though an operation is performed, possibly excision of the clitoris, but I am not certain on this point. It was also stated that a corncob is introduced into the vagina. The tribe practising this ceremony for girls was the [171] Vanyemba, living close to the Ovimbundu at Ngongo near Ngalangi in central Angola.

881 In order to corroborate further the two accounts of initiation 171 ceremonies for boys I journeyed to Cangamba in Moxico, eastern 304 Angola. The position of the two first centers visited (Katoko and Ngongo) is on the border line where Ovimbundu and Vachokue mingle, and although there is a mixture of these and other tribes at Cangamba, the culture, language, and physique of the Vachokue predominate. A description of the circumcision ceremonies witnessed at Cangamba is given below for comparison with the accounts resulting from visits to Katoko and Ngongo.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FF13 Mbundu FF13

The compound in which the initiates had been confined for three months was a circular enclosure made of light branches and leafy boughs, at the narrow embrasure of which stood a guardian of the boys, who permitted entrance. In the middle of the large enclosure were seven small cages, each of which was just large enough to allow one boy to lie on his back, and I was informed that the boys lie thus for two weeks after circumcision (Plate LXXX, Fig. 2). 981 304 171

The ages of the boys appeared to be from ten to seventeen years (Plate LXXX, Fig. 1), an observation which agrees well with that made at Katoko and Ngongo. The disparity of age among the novices at each center where initiation was observed bears out the statement that initiation ceremonies are held at irregular intervals, but not more frequently than once in four years.

During confinement in the large enclosure the novices had made masks and costumes (Plate LXXIX, Fig. 1), and when they were pulling on the coarse netting suits, which fit tightly, I observed that circumcision had been performed thoroughly, evidently some weeks ago, for the wounds were healed. Masks were obtained, and these the instructors of the boys were careful to wrap in bark cloth, at the same time requesting me not to show the objects to women.

A few days later these boys returned to their village to dance while wearing the costumes which had been made in the enclosure. At Cangamba the final ceremony lasted twelve hours amid great excitement, including ceaseless drumming and dancing. One boy, who wore a skirt on his fiber costume, lifted this to display an artificial penis of great size (Plate LXXIX, Fig. 2). This organ he grasped in his hand while chasing the women and girls, who ran away screaming and laughing. [522]

At this ceremony there appeared stilt-walkers (Plate LXXXI, Fig. 1) and a medicine-man, a member of the Luchazi tribe (Plate LXXXI, Fig. 2).

Circumcision among the Bdjok (Vachokue) has been witnessed by C. P. Holdredge and described by Kimball Young (*Amer. Anthr.*, XXIX, pp. 661–669). This ceremony took place in the far northeast of Angola. The man described as the *mogiah* of whom women are afraid, but who is known to the initiates, corresponds to the Uluchazi medicine-man seen in the final ceremony at Cangamba. Of this grotesquely dressed person the men and boys took no notice, neither did he pay attention to them. On the contrary he chased women, who ran away screaming. Kimball Young's description of the enclosure where boys are confined, and his account of the [113] [756]

881 short fiber skirts worn within this enclosure by the novices, are in
171 agreement with the observations made at Cangamba. There is
304 also a close resemblance between the independent accounts of
[114] H. Baumann and F. and W. Jaspert for the Vachokue, also P. A. Delille and E. de Jonghe for the southwest Congo.

The question of initiation rites, past and present, among people of pure Umbundu culture is important. The matter is more fully dealt with later in discussing cultural contacts and cultural losses, but there are a few points which should not be omitted here.

At Caconda, an Umbundu center of western Angola, Père R. P. Laagel stated that only two years ago he had visited an initiation camp of Ovimbundu boys in the hope of persuading them to return to his mission school at Caconda. My informant stated that the boys were circumcised, beaten, and confined to an enclosure for several weeks. Those who cried out when flogged received a double portion of blows. Poisoning is the fate of a boy who reveals the secrets of the initiation camp to women or uninitiated boys. This is the most direct testimony I have received concerning initiation rites among unmixed Ovimbundu.

881 From Bailundu and Elende I have obtained slight evidence of
292 initiation rites. At the former place, which, like Elende, is a center
171 of the Ovimbundu tribe, fiber costumes were obtained. The mask from Elende is unlike those used at Cangamba, Katoko, and Ngongo. The fiber suits are, however, no different from costumes used at these places. Initiation ceremonies are not held at Elende today, and beyond Dr. Ennis's statement that circumcision rites have been revived in the past fifteen years of his long residence in the neighborhood of Elende, I have no evidence of ritual.

881 The data relating to initiation of boys in Angola suggest loss
177 of the initiatory rites from Umbundu culture, until only a few old masks and costumes, along with attenuated ritual, remain sporadically. On the contrary, in eastern Angola and particularly among the Vachokue, who are farther than the Ovimbundu from coastal influence, initiation ceremonies flourish. At present there is occurring a penetration of initiation rites from the Vachokue area into east-central Angola, which is a region of cultural admixture.

867 The foregoing pages have described certain institutions and social forces which collectively bring individuals into conformity with tribal standards of conduct. The influences at work in this direction may be direct or indirect.

3; Hambly E-3 (1929-1930) 1934 FF13 Mbundu FF18

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EXAMPLES OF SCARIFICATION

[p. 378]

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PHYSICAL TYPES, OVIMBUNDU, BLENDE

Fig. 1. Boys, showing tooth mutilation on left. Fig. 2. Old with field basket

[p. 403]

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[p.448]

TYPES OF OVIMBUNDU, BUNDE

Fig. 1. Negro type, basis unaltered in tribal manner. Fig. 2. Modified Negro type

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FEMALE TYPES OF VASELE, WEST-CENTRAL ANGOLA

Fig. 1. Wearing nose-pin and cowrie-shell head-band. Fig. 2. Wearing beaded head-band. Note scarification of forehead and cheeks

[p.429]

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3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13-Mbundu FP13

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VACHOKUE WOMEN, NGONGO, NGALANGI

Fig. 1. Showing mutilated teeth. Fig. 2. Showing scarification

[p. 442]

S: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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TYPES OF BABUNDA, CANGAMBA, SHOWING MUTILATED TEETH

Fig. 1. Woman. Fig. 2. Man

[P. 445]

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II. GEOGRAPHICAL FACTORS

121 This chapter is intended to give an outline of the geographical conditions of Angola and to point out the way in which these have influenced the growth of Umbundu culture in all its aspects.

A presentation of geographical data is of primary importance here, and the actual relationship between the facts of geography and culture is a matter for gradual evaluation in the following chapters. The extent to which geographic determinism has entered into the cultural growth of the Ovimbundu is particularly well seen in chapter V, "Economic Life," which deals with industries, agriculture, domestic animals, fishing, and transport.

The area of Angola is a factor of importance, for the greater the extent of any country the more diversified will be the products and the cultural differences. This is particularly true if there are considerable differences in the elevation, because altitude modifies temperature and affects the distribution of rainfall.

131 Angola has an area of almost 500,000 square miles. The greatest length is a distance of about 900 miles from the river Congo in the north to the region of South West Africa. The greatest breadth is about 700 miles from the Atlantic Ocean on the west to the borders of the Rhodesian plateau in the east. This range over twelve degrees of latitude, from 5° S. to 17° S., in association with differences in altitude, have produced ecological regions which are described in the following paragraphs.

132 311 167 The northern part of Angola is ecologically a part of the Congo basin, with conditions of heat and moisture giving rise to a dense tropical flora. Owing to the presence of tsetse fly, the great heat, and the lack of open grasslands, such country is unsuited for the rearing of cattle, while agriculture, including cultivation of maize, is restricted to forest clearings. Manioc, palm trees, peanuts, and sweet potatoes are the chief products serviceable to man. This region was, according to the historical evidence of chapter III, the area in which the Ovimbundu moved before they entered the Benguela Highlands of central Angola. Parts of chapters III and X ("Historical Sources" and "Culture Contacts," respectively) are devoted to an analysis of the cultural factors of the Congo area from the year A.D. 1500 to the present day.

131 The central portion of Angola is the area most important in this research because it is the home of the Ovimbundu, whose cultural

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

might be told that he lived elsewhere. This would turn out to be a reference to the government headman. A request for the *esekulu* (literally elder father, hence elder or headman) might also bring me in contact with the 'elder of the school', the representative of the local Christians. I therefore began to ask for 'the old one' (*ukulu*), or to inquire 'Who built first?' or 'Who settles disputes?', when I wanted to find out who was the traditional headman.

Even these questions did not necessarily get a clear answer. Thus the village of Kamupa had been founded by Lusase, its government headman was Guilherme, and, as neither of these was living near, minor disputes were referred to two old men who lived in the village. Apart from the government headmen, there are also traditional headmen recognized by the post, who did not have the privileges and the duties of the former. It may happen in a particular village that the man recognized as traditional headman by the post is not the same person as the real traditional headman recognized by the village. This was the case in Epalanga, where Sapapula was unquestionably the headman recognized by the villagers but the duties of dealing with policemen fell to Luanga. In the local discussions as to the recruitment of road-workers, and so on, Sapapula had much more influence than Luanga.

The position of the traditional headman nowadays lacks clearly defined powers, or symbolic value. A village is frequently known by its founder's name. The headman is the only person who can speak of 'my village' as opposed to 'our village'.[19] The firing of the long grass in the dry season which marks the beginning of the great communal hunts is theoretically begun by the village headman, though this is not always adhered to in practice. The headman does not take any active part in leading the hunt, nor are the people who go on a communal hunt necessarily confined to the inhabitants of one village. He has 'to show land' to new-comers to the village. This reflects a moral responsibility to his people rather than control of land tenure, since there is always spare land away from the villages which anybody can cultivate. He also has the responsibility of hearing minor disputes. He receives from the

[19] Ibid., pp. 36–37.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

CHAPTER V

VILLAGE ECONOMICS

The homeland of the Ovimbundu, the Benguela Highland, is mostly over 4,000 feet above sea-level. Rainfall is 50–60 inches a year, and the rainy season is from September to April.[1] In this season after a downpour there is frequently a cooling of the air, and the most intense heat comes just before the rainy season, during the dry spell that occurs in or about February, and just after the rains. Between the middle of May and the middle of July the nights and early mornings are bitterly cold but the days are pleasantly cool. After the middle of July the temperature gradually rises.

The soil of the Highland is poor; the Ovimbundu industriously cultivate beans, manioc, maize, potatoes, and tobacco. Less frequently they have coffee plants, fruit trees, and sisal. Occasionally wheat is grown but the ground is not really suitable. I am told that rice could be grown in the stream valleys. Four field types are recognized by the Ovimbundu—*otjumbo* (garden), *onaka* (stream-valley garden), *ombanda* (in ground sloping up from a stream), and *epya* (a field away from the streams on level ground).[2]

Umbundu country is well supplied with water in streams and rivers, and the Ovimbundu have built irrigation channels wherever possible. Cultivation in the stream valleys, that is, of the *onaka* type of garden, has only been practised since the 1870's or 80's.[3] They are planted in August or the beginning of September, and give crops in December and January. The

[1] For an excellent account of Umbundu habitat see Childs, pp. 1–11.

[2] Albino Alves, *Dicionário Etimológico Bundo-Português*, Lisbon, 1951, Vol. I, p. 639 gives ombanda as a synonym of onaka.

[3] Private information.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

perhaps in Ndulu. In Ngendo the Men's Club had taken over the 345
rocks just behind the headman's household for its meeting-place, 178
but the meetings were only occasional and there was no common meal.

The Village Plan

To speak of the plan of an Umbundu village may seem a con- 361
tradiction in terms, so haphazard seems the relation of houses,
gardens, &c., to each other. Some houses are circular, but the [342]
majority are more nearly rectangular in shape. There is a palisade
of hardwood sticks surrounding all the village except that side of [417]
the headman's household which is adjacent to the rocks used
for a club-house. The headman had not bothered to keep up his
own part of the fence since his only garden was a small tobacco
plot fenced in by itself. The village is itself divided up by the 621
palisades which shut off one compound from another, each com- 343
pound containing the houses of from one to three households.
Between the palisades are paths which lead on to the dancing floor [363]
and out of the village. In the village of Sekulu Sikillē there were
twenty-five households with thirty-two houses in all. Each house
(*osjo*) had its own granary (*onila*), and small chicken-coop built
on stilts, and of all the houses only six had separate kitchens
(*ocimo*). Nearly every household had separate pens for the pigs,
goats, and sheep for the night. At one side of the headman's
compound there was a common corral for the nine cattle which
the villagers owned. Only the headman had a spirit-hut (*etambo*), [346]
used also for a storehouse, for entertaining a guest, and for his own
bedroom should he sleep apart from his wives. Within the several 621
compounds were small gardens of tobacco and of maize and beans, 244
and just outside the village were two separate tobacco gardens.
Just a few paces to the west was a small patch of wheat belonging
to a man in the smallest ward. There was one household of two
houses quite outside the palisades appropriately belonging to a
man named *Kulika* (meaning 'Being-alone'). The water-holes [312]
and pounding rocks where meal was ground were between the [252]
several units of the village and were used in common. The
fields were off to the east at from thirty minutes' to an hour's [241]
walk. The two smaller wards of Ciyanda and Kanjengo were so
small that they were like two or three compounds by themselves. 621
The former had six households with eight houses, and the latter

.: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

621 four households with six houses. The school village had been laid
but in rectangular fashion without any palisade and with eucalyptus
[346] trees planted around the sides. The school was at the centre and
the elder's house at the upper corner. These two larger buildings
and one other were built of adobe, while the rest of the twelve
houses were of wattle and daub, identical with those in the other
wards except that all were rectangular. There were a few very
[312] small gardens watered by an irrigation ditch. The people of this
village had river gardens, and their fields were mostly to the south
between the village and the highway. Just to the east of the main
[797] village and beside one of the water-holes, a Roman Catholic
catechist had established himself, but as yet he had neither village
nor school.

The Villagers

602 Turning now to the people living in this village, it was interest-
621 ing to find that all save the households of two former slaves and the
Roman Catholic catechist, were related to each other, either by
blood or by marriage. Sekulu Cipange of Ciyanda summed the
matter up when he said, 'Likuluta Samikanjo (the Protestant elder)
is my younger brother (*manjange*), for in our Umbundu country
(we) people do not build together (i.e. in the same village) unless
we are blood relatives.' In order to determine the exact relation-
ships and other facts regarding the demography of this village,
I took the names of all householders and their wives, and inquired
their relationships to the elders of the respective wards. This
[115] information was supplied by Njomba, a son of Sekulu Sikillé, and
by Sekulu Likuluta Samikanjo. In addition to those of the four
elders, there were twenty-four households. The relationship
of each of the householders to their respective elders may be sum-
marized as follows:

A. *Paternal relatives*		
In Sikillé's village	21	
„ Ciyanda	1	
„ Kanjengo's ward	2	
„ School village	2	
		26
B. *Maternal relatives*		
In Ciyanda	1	
„ Kanjengo's ward	1	
„ School village	4	
		6

2: McCulloch E-4 (1945-51)1952 FP13 Mbundu FP13

Orimbundu women braid their hair neatly in strands across their foreheads, and decorate the braids with small blue and white trade beads.[1] 302

MAIN FEATURES OF ECONOMY

AGRICULTURE[2]

Main crops are maize and several kinds of beans. Subsidiary crops include: sorghum, kaffir corn, emmer wheat, manioc, peanuts, squash, sweet potatoes, garden vegetables, a little rice, cotton, sugar-cane and tobacco. Fruit-trees such as the papaya, banana, loquat, tangerine, lemon, peach and apple, are increasingly cultivated, and, to some extent, coffee. Upland fields for the principal crops of maize and beans are cultivated during the rainy season, and, to piece out the harvest, river gardens for secondary crops are used in the dry season. 241

The principal corn-gardens

Traditionally men work with their wives in the heavier labour of clearing new fields, but today the demands of contract labour are such that few are able to help.[3] Before the rains begin in early September, women prepare the fields for planting. If a new plot is to be used, it is first cleared with a small hatchet. Tree stumps are left two or three feet high; after the field has been cultivated for a year or two and the tree-stumps have dried and rotted, they are burned off and cleared away. When the rainy season has set in and the ground is thoroughly wet, the main corn-fields are planted. The ground is dug with a hoe and ridged slightly, the ridges following the contour of the land, so that the rain will not wash away the soil, and so that the moisture will be held. Occasionally irrigation is used, small channels being led from hillside streams to the gardens. Maize is dropped by hand on the ridges, and the seeds covered with the foot. Beans and squash are planted with the corn. In January there is usually a break in the rains, and this is the time when the bean crop ripens. (This is a critical period, since if the dry spell lasts too long the corn crop is blighted, but if it is too short the beans will not ripen.) The vines are pulled up and put in the field hut to dry. Later the beans are beaten out of the pods and stored. 241 [462] [312]

In each field there is a grass hut, which is used as a shelter from showers, as a place for drying beans or corn, and as living quarters when the corn is sprouting. (When a woman decides that it would be more convenient to live by her field, which requires constant guarding against birds, she may live in her field hut with her children for several weeks.) 241 343

As the dry season commences, the corn crop ripens. When it is ripe, it is plucked, dried and shelled, and stored in the *osila*, a granary on posts, for future use. One *osila* is used for each household. When required, the corn is hulled and pounded into the meal which forms the staple food.[4] [251] [252]

(1) Hambly pp.129-32, and illustrations; Childs, personal communication.
(2) Cushman, 1944, pp.72-8; Hambly, (2) 1934, pp.146-8, and Childs, personal communication. (3) Childs, personal communication.
(4) For a good description of the preparation of corn-meal, see Cushman, pp.77-8.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

argued that the cattle might have been brought along the course of the Zambezi and Kwando there is the objection that there are here several tsetse fly belts. On the contrary, cattle-producing country in the southwest and south of Angola is far more accessible than the Rhodesian plateau. 174 231

In the south there is the cultural habit of digging wells, especially among the Vakuanyama; but the Vachokue have not developed this trait. The substrata underlying the sand of southern Angola hold water which serves through the dry season, a fact which is advantageously employed by the cattle-keepers. The Vachokue lack this well-digging habit, and, even if subsurface water were present, the transient Ovimbundu would have lacked opportunity to dig for it when passing through hostile country. 312 111

The acquisition of cattle by the Ovimbundu is of great importance, because it is concerned with the grafting of a series of pastoral traits on a culture in no way originally associated with pastoral pursuits. The truth of this will later be made clear by examination of historical and ethnological evidence. 233

Geographical considerations give a picture of the Ovimbundu situated in naturally fortified country from which they had access to four surrounding areas, whose cultural characters agree well with the determinism of topography and climate. The natural advantages of the central highlands, and the results of contact with each of the adjacent areas, are points which will be developed in appropriate sections throughout the ensuing chapters. 133

Olungunga is not a sweet manioc, so is not eaten raw. The roots are placed to soak in a stream for three or four days before they are roasted on a fire, after which they may be eaten with impunity. As an alternative the roots may be dried in the sun; they are then pounded into meal which is scattered into boiling water so that a mush is formed. The Umbundu name for this preparation is *iputa viutombo*, meaning "mush of manioc." The leaves of *olungunga* are not soaked in water; on the contrary, they may be cooked as soon as they are gathered, but they must not be eaten when warm. There is no danger in eating them after they have been boiled and have been allowed to become cold. The leaves are served with salt or fat. 252 [263]

All the manioc, with the exception of *olungunga*, is sweet. *Kandona* has roots which may be eaten uncooked, but both leaves and roots are sometimes cooked in water. Other varieties of manioc known as *otetu*, *elemba*, and *esela* are eaten in the same way as *kandona*. Manioc is in use all the year, but the greatest quantity is consumed in November and December, a period when the growing corn is not ripe and the storage supplies have dwindled. [221]

Sweet potatoes are plentiful all the year with the exception of the months of November and December. They are placed in the pot, without removal of the skin, and boiled for a period of twenty or thirty minutes. They are taken out, peeled, and eaten. European potatoes are sometimes peeled and made into a mush. The variety of garden produce naturally depends on proximity to a trading post, a mission, or some other European settlement. [177]

In propagating manioc a stem is cut off from the parent plant which is about three feet high; but probably two or three years pass before the tubers are considered large enough for use. Sweet potatoes are planted in January, but there is very little of this food available in February and March. Toward the end of March or early in April a few potatoes may be ready for consumption. 244 [221]

Peanuts (*Arachis hypogaea*, Leguminosae) are planted in October by women who prepare patches of ground which are drilled with holes one inch deep and eight inches apart. One nut is placed in each hole after the shell has been removed. Above the ground small leaves appear. After the flower-stalk withers it has the peculiarity of elongating and bending down. In this way the young pod is forced underground, and the seeds mature a little way below the surface.

Some natives employ irrigation by leading small channels of water from a hillside stream to a garden containing maize and 312

312 bananas, but one could not say that irrigation is generally practised, even when circumstances permit.

245 The papaya and the banana are increasingly cultivated, but they are by no means generally distributed. Here and there I [249] have seen a little sugar-cane cultivated by natives for their own [244] uses. Near the main railway natives may be seen selling their products, which include cabbages and tomatoes. Some natives are today planting the guava tree which yields sweet palatable fruits. The fruits *olosia* are collected from the *usia* tree. When ripe, the fruiit is yellow, round, and about two inches in diameter. These fruiits are gathered in September, and the kernels, which are about the size of walnuts, are eaten uncooked. No fruits are collected for storage. *Olombala* fruits ripen in October, when they are eaten raw.

264 Each wife sends the food which she has cooked in her own kitchen to the *onjango* ("council house"). After carrying the food to this house of assembly, where the men meet each evening, the women return to their houses to eat alone, or with the young children.

343 When there is a plurality of wives each has her own house and 252 kitchen. Ngonga states that separate kitchens built outside the [595] living houses are becoming more rare. The poor have their kitchens in the living room because they cannot provide separate structures for living and cooking.

264 The first meal is taken between five and six o'clock in the morning, 262 the most usual food being meal sprinkled on boiling water to form 252 a paste which is eaten with sweet potatoes. A mush of beans is eaten at night; generally there is no meal at midday. Three pounds of cooked beans are eaten by a person for one meal. Over the cooking pots leaves are placed to keep in the steam, especially when the pot contains sweet potatoes. I have made a meal from the sticky, gluey paste which results from sprinkling meal on boiling water. The chief objection to this food is the unpleasant quantity of grit in the meal, owing to the fact that it is pounded on the rocks. Mamioc and sugar-cane are chewed at irregular intervals of the day.

262 The amount of meat consumed by the Ovimbundu is small in comparison with the quantity of vegetable food used. This adoption of diiet of a particular kind is largely a matter of habit, and there is no good reason why meat should not form a larger proportion of the ffood supply. The Ovimbundu do not kill their cattle for food though they will eat the meat of oxen which have died from natural causes.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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CHAPTER V

VILLAGE ECONOMICS

The homeland of the Ovimbundu, the Benguela Highland, is mostly over 4,000 feet above sea-level. Rainfall is 50–60 inches a year, and the rainy season is from September to April.[1] In this season after a downpour there is frequently a cooling of the air, and the most intense heat comes just before the rainy season, during the dry spell that occurs in or about February, and just after the rains. Between the middle of May and the middle of July the nights and early mornings are bitterly cold but the days are pleasantly cool. After the middle of July the temperature gradually rises.

The soil of the Highland is poor; the Ovimbundu industriously cultivate beans, manioc, maize, potatoes, and tobacco. Less frequently they have coffee plants, fruit trees, and sisal. Occasionally wheat is grown but the ground is not really suitable. I am told that rice could be grown in the stream valleys. Four field types are recognized by the Ovimbundu—*otjumbo* (garden), *onaka* (stream-valley garden), *ombanda* (in ground sloping up from a stream), and *ojya* (a field away from the streams on level ground).[2]

Umbundu country is well supplied with water in streams and rivers, and the Ovimbundu have built irrigation channels wherever possible. Cultivation in the stream valleys, that is, of the *onaka* type of garden, has only been practised since the 1870's or 80's.[3] They are planted in August or the beginning of September, and give crops in December and January. The

[1] For an excellent account of Umbundu habitat see Childs, pp. 1–11.

[2] Albino Alves, *Dicionário Etimológico Bundo-Português*, Lisbon, 1951, Vol. I, p. 639 gives ombanda as a synonym of onaka.

[3] Private information.

825 Observation of reptiles is a necessary self-protection as there are many poisonous snakes. The flesh of the python is eaten. Snake-
[524] skin and lizard-skin are occasionally used; for example, in covering a round, hard fruit in order to make a ball for playing a game.

When collecting lizards and snakes I found that each kind had a well-known name, though there was occasional disagreement among the men consulted.

Ocisanpoko is a lizard (*Agama planiceps*) about ten inches long whose tail is covered with sharp spines. This reptile has colors of bright blue, red, and orange. *Ocungu* is a large spinous gray lizard (*Agama atricoll*). *Ekanpala* (*Gerrhosaurus nigrolineatus*) is a brilliantly colored lizard which burrows deeply into the ground.

Olutanjila is a long slender green snake which hides in trees to capture birds. *Ombondanjila* is a long gray-backed snake with a light green belly. The generic name for snake is *onyoko*. The python is *omoma*. The chameleon (*elonailo*) seems to be feared, as the men and boys refuse to touch a dead one but always move it with sticks. There is a proverb to the effect that the chameleon though slow always gets there. The refusal to touch even dead reptiles is due to an exaggerated fear of being bitten. I could find no other reason.

824 Trees are of importance in connection with building houses and
313 wood-carving. The qualities of different timbers are well known to the Ovimbundu. For the main part, the collection of medicinal plants and their uses will be described in connection with the medicine-man. The following are the most common trees which are of economic importance.

Usia (pronounced *oosha*). This tree has an edible fruit the size of a walnut. The kernel is valued as a food.

Ombula. This tree provides wood which burns readily. The small skin-covered stools to be found in every hut are often made from this wood.

Ukango. The fruit has a hard rind.

[757] *Ovinde*. This tree has a small acid fruit from which a medicine is made for the cure of painful menstruation.

Usilonilo. The leaf is compound and palmate. The fruit is black.

Usiambiambia. Bears a little red, oval fruit.

Usoia. Has a large red fruit.

Usombo. Grows near streams. It has a fruit like that of *okulokulo*, but smaller.

[223] *Ukuliwapa*. Has a fruit like the berry of a coffee plant. The fruit is used for making mucilage which is used for capturing small birds.

Omunda. When this tree is small, the wood is springy, and is therefore useful for making bows. The wood of the older trees is burned for preparing charcoal which is used in the blacksmith's fire.

Omunda. This is an erect tree having no branches on the lower part. The wood is extensively used in building native huts.

R. Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

Omuat. A large tree having clusters of small white flowers which are visited by bees on account of their content of honey. The tree yields a hard wood from which charcoal is prepared. The bark and leaves yield a pigment which is used for dyeing cloth a yellowish brown. 824 313

Ocui is valuable because it gives a hard wood used for the corner posts of houses. White ants do not attack this wood, which is therefore useful for making the uprights on which granaries are erected.

Okandonpale. A tree from which planks of hard red wood are obtained. These are used for making doors in village fences.

Omen or *ekenge* or *usembe.* These trees have small compound leaves which are very similar. The bark of the latter two is used as rope for binding the uprights and the crosspieces in the framework of native houses. *Ekenge* and *usembe* also yield a bark which is beaten into bark cloth in the Ngalangi district.

Ocipuke. The bark is used for binding posts, also for the fabrication of bark cloth.

Ungolo. The roots of this tree yield a dye for cloth. The leaves are said to have a value for curing sore eyes. The mother of a child afflicted with sore eyes chews the leaves, then spits into the child's eyes. [757]

Ongoye. Yields a wood used for making pestles and pounding sticks.

Omuke ("iron wood"). This tree has a hard wood which is used for the same purpose.

Ongunge. Gives a wood used in the making of houses, doors, and beehives.

Omowe. A large tree which gives planks for building purposes.

Usonje. Yields a useful red timber.

Ulondonpondu. A tree with very rough bark. The word *ongundu* means a crocodile. This is the tree which even a crocodile can climb. [757]

Ongonje. A tree which yields a fruit having a value as a purgative. The antelope is said to be fond of the fruits of this tree.

Ocilumbolombo. Gives a resinous fluid which is used in the preparation of lime for snaring birds. [223]

Ulembe. This word is derived from the word *olembo*, meaning shade. The *ombala* (native capital) of Ngalangi is surrounded by such trees.

Onsia. A tree which produces yellow flowers in September. The fruit is not edible but oil is made from it.

Okalu. A tree having fragrant flowers like those of honeysuckle. The thick bark is used in making mats.

Omue. A soft wood which is easily whittled with a knife. The figures from Ballundu (Plate XXI, Fig. 5) are often carved from this wood.

Umbolombolo. A soft wood which is not very strong.

Umbongolondu. A small tree which produces bright red fruits. These are used by women for the manufacture of bead necklaces.

Ocilosi. The wood is used for the heads of arrows for shooting birds. This timber is used in the building of pigpens. The branches have projections which are said to guard (*okulova*, to guard) the occupants of the pen.

Itala. From the roots of this tree a medicine for pulmonary complaints is made.

Ulua. This is the baobab, whose habitat is the dry regions. Some of the trees have enormous girth. They are leafless for a great part of the year. The long fruits make gourds. The seeds in the fruits are bitter.

Ulusuo (pronounced *oloudoo*). From the wood the Ovimbundu make wooden platters and spoons used for serving mush from the large cooking pot.

Ongilili. This tree yields a hard red wood which takes a lustrous polish. For this reason the wood is employed for making ornamental sticks and clubs.

Upondonjombo. This small tree has roots which girls use for making ankle-bands.

824 *Okalalulaka.* This tree has leaves which are used in treating a skin disease.
813 *Uvendangulure.* This small tree, only three feet in height, gives straight twigs which are used in making arrow shafts.

FOOD SUPPLY

COLLECTING AND HUNTING

222 Collecting of natural products which serve as food substances is
462 chiefly in the hands of women and children, though an exception has to be made in the instance of honey, which is gathered by men and boys.

Boys diligently search for nests, noting their location so as to be able to visit them again when the fledglings are large enough to serve as food. Large numbers of women and children may be seen
252 gathering caterpillars in gourds. The insides of the caterpillars are
222 squeezed into boiling water to make soup.

When a cloud of locusts appears, as in 1925, the creatures are gathered. They are sometimes fried, or they may be boiled in water, dried, and preserved with salt in earthenware pots.

A number of miscellaneous items of the food supply were mentioned in connection with names of trees whose fruits are gathered.

223 Boys engaged in food-gathering usually carry small bows and
[411] blunt wooden arrows (*ocillavi*). One type of bird arrow is fixed to the bowstring. The forward end of the arrow is split so that it may contain small stones that are ejected when the string is released. From the wild fig tree mucilage is obtained and this is boiled until it forms a thick paste which is smeared on the boughs of trees.
[231] Some of the small birds captured in this way are eaten, others are kept in wicker cages made by children.

343 In all parts of Angola large cylindrical beehives may be seen
171 fixed high in the trees (Plate XC, Fig. 2). Two types of hive have been noted in particular. In the Elende district a hive is made by opposing two half cylinders of wood each about three feet long, so forming a hive which has a diameter of one foot. The ends are covered, with the exception of a small round hole. The whole structure is bound round with grass which is kept in position by lashings of bark. In the neighborhood of Cassanga a difference in the structure of the hives was noted. This type of hive is made from a cylinder of strong reddish bark, the edges of which are fastened together with stout wooden pegs. The dimensions are the same as for the hive used in Elende, but the hive of bark is uncovered.

231 In the Elende district honey of wild bees is removed from the hives in the months of August and December. One man ascends

[see pp. 138-140, category 116]

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

175 439 487 this trail along the face of the cliffs behind Catumbela may still be seen to-day.

I have noted how largely Brazil had absorbed the commerce of 648 the colony. This was due in large part, of course, to the slave-439 trade, but it was also due to the fact that all foreign, i.e. non-Portuguese, ships were prohibited from having any part in the colony's trade, or even from entering its ports. This was an effort to keep all colonial trade for the motherland, and was quite in line with early colonial theory and practice. In this instance it served to enrich Brazil at the expense not only of Angola but also of Portugal itself, and it is rather strange that this ruinous policy should have persisted even after the separation of Brazil. In 1844 the two ports of Luanda and Benguela were opened to ships of all the world. Lopes de Lima remarks[1] that not only did foreign commerce flow in, but Portuguese commerce with the colony also increased greatly. It must not be supposed that Angola at once became a great example of Free Trade, for customs duties remained high. Only the first bars in the fence of monopoly were 175 let down, but for that day it was a great step and it attracted trade.

314 439 In 1869 the first experimental export of raw rubber was made: a very small beginning of a very important movement.[2] The imminent importance of this export was not realized by 'the man on the spot'. In 1870 Silva Porto, tired of accusations of witchcraft by his Ovimbundu neighbours and of the increasing demands

a very truthful and realistic picture of conditions, of events, and of trends, errs in supposing that it was only with the opening of this 'new road' by Silva Porto that caravans from the interior began to come to Catumbela. Magyar, who went inland from Benguela in 1849, took the usual road via Catumbela. Even in 1795, when there was no town at Catumbela, but only a few vegetable farms, Teixeira and Mello started for the interior from there (*Annaes Mar. e Col.*, 1844, p. 159). Their itinerary in detail from Catumbela to Viye is not given, but only distances to Cisanji, to Civula, to Bailundu, and to Viye. Since their route was via Civula and Bailundu, rather than via Ciyaka and Wambu (Huambo), and therefore the route of Silva Porto's 'new' road, I am inclined to believe that the latter was probably a return to a route formerly used. Magyar gives a good description of the route via Ciyaka. The route via Bailundu has been described by scores of writers from Silva Porto through Cameron, the early missionaries (of the A.B.C.F.M.), Nevinson, *et al.*, down to 1910, when the road was abandoned for the Benguela Railway. There are now three motor roads from the Highland to the coast, but none of them follows the old slavers' route except in certain short sections.

[1] *Ensaios*, part i, pp. 78, 135.

[2] Bastos, op. cit., p. 24; *Boletim Official*, 1870 (Exports for 1869); *Benguella, Relatório do Districto de*, 1891, p. 29.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

for tribute and other exactions of King Konya Cilemo, successor to the stool of Viye, decided to leave his place at Belmonte (Viye) for Benguela,[1] where he remained for ten years. A year later Guilherme Gonçalves left to his sons his flourishing settlement near Kamundongo (Viye), and sailed for Lisbon, intending to stay indefinitely.[2] These two men were the leading traders established in the Highland, but little idea had they that the small trickle of rubber exports begun in 1869 would so soon inaugurate a new era in Central African trade. It was only in 1882 that rubber took even second place in the exports (after bees-wax),[3] but already in 1872[4] its importance was becoming evident, and by 1877 individual Ovimbundu of Viye had already turned over considerable fortunes in the trade.[5] Bastos seems to be correct in taking 1874 as the beginning of this new era in the trade of the region.[6] For the Ovimbundu, the preceding decades, indeed the preceding century or even centuries, had been a period of preparation for the trade which was now beginning. For them the rubber trade, from 1874 until its close in 1916, was the classical period of commercial activity.

The time of preparation had necessarily developed in the Ovimbundu the intellectual acumen, venturesomeness, a technique of co-operation both within their own social groupings and with outsiders, a knowledge of people, places, and things of their Central African world, together with the other qualities which enabled them to carry on their far-flung trading activities. These qualities merit a fuller description (q.v. *infra*, p. 206 f.). During this earlier period, since many of their travels were naturally exploratory, the Ovimbundu probably travelled more widely than during the time of the rubber trade. There were hardly any territories within the bounds of the Congo River, the Lakes, and the Kalahari Desert which they had not penetrated.[7] Some Ovimbundu went even farther afield as employees of European traders or on their own account. A ready example is Domingos Cakahanga and his companions who, in the employ of Silva Porto during the years

[1] *Boletim Soc. Geog. Lisboa, 5a Ser.*, p. 20.
[2] See Cameron, op. cit., p. 400.
[3] *Benguella*, op. cit., 1887, pp. 24 ff.
[4] *Benguella*, op. cit., 1892, p. 29.
[5] Serpa Pinto, op. cit., p. 161 f.
[6] Bastos, op. cit., p. 24.
[7] Serpa Pinto, op. cit., p. 164; L. Magyar, op. cit., pp. 298, 299. The best proof, however, is the fact of the geographical and tribal names found in the Umbundu language.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

made, there as elsewhere throughout the Umbundu-speaking territory, their wholesale manufacture was only carried on in Ndulu. This was a natural specialization, for the best and most easily accessible deposits of iron ore are in the Ndulu country,[1] whose smiths have become justly famous. In exchange for hoes they received palm-oil or cattle from other regions, or salt, rum, or goods from the coast. Other regional specializations were—Kasongi and the Sele country for palm-oil, Cikuma for bees-wax (also obtained from the interior), cattle from Ngalangi, Kalukembe, Cilengi, and farther south. Ciyaka, Civula, and Bailundu took much corn-meal to the coast in those early days. 'Trade-agreements' were also made beyond the Umbundu-speaking area. At first these were strictly one-way affairs, allowing the Ovimbundu traders to operate in many lands, near and far, since this was to the advantage of the rulers of those lands. At the same time, the men from Bailundu and Viye did and said everything possible to discourage the interior peoples from venturing out on their own account.[2] Later, when the trade, as well as knowledge of the whites and their trade, spread, arrangements were made between the king of Viye and various interior chiefs allowing them to send their own caravans through to the coast, and gifts were exchanged periodically.[3]

Their very early introduction to articles of European use and manufacture has undoubtedly had great influence upon the development of the Ovimbundu. Their early and thorough familiarity with fire-arms certainly played a decisive role in their national formation and subsequent history. The introduction of domestic plants and animals from abroad is an important subject, but too broad for treatment at this time. The early introduction of European-manufactured goods has had profound influences.

[1] See article on smelting and smithing in Ndulu by F. W. Read in *Journal of the African Society*, 1902, pp. 44–9.

[2] Livingstone tells of the displeasure of the Ovimbundu ('Mambari') at meeting the Makololo near Luanda. The Ovimbundu tried to frighten them from trading with the whites with tall tales, making the whites out as impossibly clever magicians and wizards (op. cit., p. 384). Cameron and his east-coast carriers experienced the displeasure of Viye people owing to jealousy of the same sort, but no longer so openly expressed (op. cit., p. 406).

[3] The Muata-Yanvo of Lunda was one of those who had such a 'trade-agreement' with Viye. Silva Porto notes in his diary on 14 Jan. 1880 that an embassy from the Muata-Yanvo had arrived with a tusk of ivory for Cilemo (*Boletim Soc. Geog. Lisboa*, 5a *Ser.*, p. 148).

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

physical composition of the Ovimbundu themselves, and also their character and accepted attitudes. Livingstone told of the beginning of their trade with the Makololo in 1850, and how they had visited the Barotse 'in ancient times'.[1] These items fit into the picture of that early period of trading activities which is had from studying Umbundu traditional history in the light of documents such as Silva Porto's diaries, Magyar's account,[2] the historical monograph of Augusto Bastos, the comments of travellers,[3] and of the early missionaries.

Period of the Rubber Trade, 1874–1911. Turning now to the rubber trade, that time may conveniently be divided into three periods: from 1874 until 1886, during which only 'first-class' rubber (from the plants themselves)[4] was exported; from 1886, when the discovery of 'second-class' or 'red rubber' (from a root)[5] caused a great boom which lasted until 1900; and, finally, the period of decline until the rubber export stopped in 1916, though for the Ovimbundu it had already practically stopped several years earlier.

Of the older exports only bees-wax and ivory survived along with rubber. The former of these was somewhat neglected, while the importance of the latter continued in Benguela only until about 1893 when the frontier of the Congo was closed. Bastos remarks that after 1900 not a single tusk appeared.[6] Already in 1880 Silva Porto had to go beyond Lunda to the middle Kasai before he found ivory.[7] At that time most of the ivory trade was in the hands of Viye traders. Between 2 November 1879, when Silva Porto left Catumbela, and 26 November when he reached Belmonte (Viye), there passed him about forty caravans on their way to the coast. Of these, ten carried ivory, practically all of which

[1] D. Livingstone, op. cit., p. 91 f. The business-like methods of the Ovimbundu were commented upon later, see op. cit., p. 271.

[2] The picture which Magyar (*Reisen in Süd-Afrika*) gives of Umbundu life in that early period is very good, but for an understanding of many terms used a knowledge of Portuguese and Umbundu is quite necessary. His truthfulness with regard to the slave-trade must be questioned when confronted by evidence from Valdez, Monteiro, and especially from Bastos.

[3] Valdez, op. cit.; Monteiro, op. cit.; Graça, op. cit.; Serpa Pinto, op. cit.; Capello and Ivens, *From Benguella to the Territory of Yacca.*

[4] Principally *Landolphia*, which are big woody climbers; also the tall and stately *Funtumia elastica.* [5] Especially the *Carpodimus chylorrhiza.*

[6] Bastos, op. cit., p. 39. From this time until 1913 Angola continued to export ivory in ever-decreasing quantities, but from the port of Mossamedes and therefore not from the Umbundu country.

[7] *Boletim Soc. Geog. Lisboa, 6a Ser.*, pp. 189 f., 256.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

were from Viye,[1] since Viye was nearest to what was then the source of supply—Luva, Katanga, Barotze, &c. Caravans from other regions could and did pass through Viye, but they found it more economical and advantageous to go to other regions for other commodities. Bees-wax was to be found in most of the neighbouring regions and was brought to the coast by traders of all the Umbundu kingdoms. The same may be said of the 'first-class' rubber.[2] It was found chiefly in the forest regions of the interior, and the distance and consequent time involved made it a product hardly more profitable than bees-wax. Rubber was then simply one product along with the others, and until 1886 its export had its ups and downs.

Red Rubber, 1886–1900. In 1886 a caravan of Ovimbundu came down to Catumbela with loads of 'red rubber' for the first time. They had gotten it in the sandy country to the east of the Kuanza River, and a great deal nearer than the region of the 'first-class' rubber. At first, the price paid for this 'red rubber' was lower than for the other, but whereas a caravan could not procure loads of the first in less than eight months, the 'red rubber' could be gotten within three months.[3] Subsequently the red rubber was found to have certain superior qualities so that the higher price came to be paid for it. Immediately the export of rubber from Benguela increased enormously and reached undreamed-of totals.[4] Beeswax

[1] *Boletim Soc. Geog. Lisboa*, 5a Ser., pp. 5, 6, 10, 16.

[2] There are very interesting summaries and descriptions of the commercial activities of the period—both native and European—in the *Relatorios do Districto de Benguella*, 1887, 1891 (Ministerio da Marinha e Ultramar, Lisboa, 1888, 1894).

[3] See a note in *Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society*, 1888, p. 450 f.

[4] The values of the three leading products exported from Benguela from 1886 to 1891 were as follows (from *Relatorios do Districto de Benguella*, 1887, 1891):

Product	*1886*	*1887*	*1888*
Rubber . .	65,210$153	286,937$018	664,786$870
Wax . . .	187,483$964	158,945$996	109,734$140
Ivory . . .	37,692$536	36,923$042	29,997$968

Product	*1889*	*1890*	*1891*
Rubber . .	665,746$552	781,057$860	1,042,112$070
Wax . . .	133,436$344	93,680$580	123,645$876
Ivory . . .	31,701$133	11,298$782	45,392$534

For further statistical reports of this period, see also *Portugal, Ministerio da Marinha e Ultramar, Relatório, Propostos de Lei*, &c. (Lisboa, 1899), p. 266 f.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

dropped off; of ivory there was no more. From 1893 on, says Bastos, rubber was practically the sole export of the District of Benguela and of its hinterland.[1] In 1891 more than one million milreis' worth of rubber was exported from Benguela, sixteen times as much as was exported only five years before, and three and one-half times the value of the *three* leading exports in 1886. Until 1891 this increase was not at the expense of other exports, but rather in addition to them.

All of this rubber, and the other exports as well, came to the coast in caravans of the Ovimbundu or their neighbours. In its inception and its great development it was an enterprise of the Ovimbundu. Everyone who was able to carry a load joined a caravan. It had always been the custom to take boys on trading expeditions, as young as they could go—say, from their tenth year—as a part of their education. Now girls were also taken and hardly any but the women stayed at home to raise the crops and provide rations for the caravans. European residents experienced great difficulty in securing necessary porters,[2] and this was one reason for finally putting through the wagon-road from Benguela to Caconda.[3] It was extended to Viye during the military campaign of 1890. The fever of the rubber trade reached into all the villages of the land and took in everyone able to travel. Mission schools had been established since 1881, but they had but few pupils until 1900. There were also other reasons for this, but a principal one was the attractiveness of the rubber trade.[4] Even the kings found it more difficult to gather armies for their wars: trade had become more attractive than the possibility of plunder.

Of all the kings who ruled the various Umbundu kingdoms during this time, the one who is best remembered is Ekuikui (II) of Bailundu (1876–93). Tradition has begun to ascribe to him and to his reign some things which properly belong to earlier

[1] Bastos, op. cit., p. 34. He does not include *serviçaes* in the exports, since they all went to the mainland or island plantations, but he remarks that at this time the price rose to even 90$000 (p. 33). The rise in price was perhaps due to the smaller supply owing to the preoccupation of the Ovimbundu with the rubber trade.

[2] See *Missionary Herald*, 1889, p. 350.

[3] *Benguella*, 1891, op. cit., p. 10.

[4] The reports of the governor of Benguela, to which reference has been made, also mentioned this fact, saying that although the American missions were intelligently directed, their results were small, since parents would not send their children to learn while they could pick up loads of rubber (1887, p. 19; 1891, p. 20).

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

and the country settled down to the rule of 'the Fort' with Ndunduma's successor named by the captain-major. The occupation of Bailundu was effected at that same time,[1] while Ekuikui yet ruled, but for several years only a nominal force was employed.[2] In 1896 Ekuikui's successor, Numa II, attacked the fort, and the captain-major burned the *ombala*[3] in retaliation. From 1890 European traders settled in both Viye and Bailundu in ever-increasing numbers.[4] Then came the 'Bailundu War' of 1902,[5] after which the occupation of the whole Umbundu country was quickly completed.

175x 648 726

The operations of 1890 had only interrupted the ivory trade. The campaign of 1902 completely paralysed trade in and with the interior, and greatly aggravated a depression which the District of Benguela was feeling because of a fall from the high prices which rubber had enjoyed in 1898–9.[6] After the war it seemed that trade would soon regain its former levels, and the export statistics show that for a time it did so, but closer inspection and a consideration of other factors which entered into the situation show that this was the beginning of the end. The price of rubber never regained its former level, so that the high value of exports reported represents an even larger quantity than before. The increased quantity largely represented a greatly debased product, for the native traders and producers understood nothing

175x 439 178 727

175x 439 314

and Garenganze, pp. 19–23) also wrote of these incidents but with more of the personal element and perhaps less accuracy.

[1] *Relatorio, Benguella*, 1892, p. 13 f.

[2] In 1892 there were 2 soldiers in Bailundu, 135 in Viye, 21 in Caconda (*Benguella*, op. cit., 1891, p. 15). Bailundu tradition says that (native) soldiers were first brought in disguised as porters with loads of goods.

[3] *Ombala*, capital village.

[4] A. Bastos, op. cit., pp. 36, 43.

[5] This war was named in Umbundu after the Bailundu war leader, *Mutu ya Kevela*. He is named among the kings, but it was only during the war that he assumed power. The immediate causes were excesses on the part of European residents against the natives, especially in connexion with 'the recruiting of contract labour'. The best work on the subject is in the nature of a report written by the man who was then governor, Cabral Moncada, *A Campanha do Bailundo* (Luanda 1903). General ideas may be had from *Missionary Herald*, 1902, pp. 353, 400, 452 f., 520 f.; 1903, pp. 22 f., 69 f., 122, 211 f.; H. W. Nevinson, op. cit., p. 157 f.; and J. T. Tucker, *Drums in the Darkness*, p. 122 f. The account given by Keiling (*Quarenta Anos de África*) is of interest for certain details of this war, but its statements are inaccurate and its judgements unreliable. The missionaries sought to dissuade the natives from taking up arms, and once the fighting had begun they provided medical services for both sides and sent food-supplies to the garrison of the beleaguered Portuguese fort.

[6] A. Bastos, op. cit., p. 39 f.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

175 439 314 of price fluctuations and sought by every means to maintain the former level of returns. The European traders aided and abetted this process in order to bolster up their credit, for from 1887, when the boom began, most of them were operating on shoe-strings. The result was almost immediate. Benguela rubber was classified as 'third-class' at a price one-fourth the former rate.[1] This was the end of the rubber trade. With the establishment of plantations in the East Indies, in South America, and on the African west coast, which produced a uniformly high quality, the native-produced wild rubber of Angola ceased to have any quotation whatever.[2]

Export statistics show that the totals in quantity and value of rubber exported were nearly as large in 1916 as in 1888, and that [731] in 1918 and 1919 they fell to almost nothing,[3] but for the Ovimbundu the rubber trade ended in 1911—'the year of the great hunger in the Ngangela country'. They remember that many caravans which went out at the beginning of that year's dry season never did return, or that only a few of their stronger members returned—mere skeletons and shadows. *Ngandi*[4] tried to eat wax and died; *Ngandi* killed and ate his younger brother, saying, 'It is better that one of us should live to return, rather than both die.' [484] The caravans usually carried actual rations for only a few days of the outward journey (to last through the 'Hungry Country'), and relied on buying the food needed for the rest of the time. This experience put an end to a trade which was already passing out of the hands of the Ovimbundu—owing to the multiplication of European trading establishments, not only throughout the Umbundu country but even in the 'Ngangela' regions, and the building of the Benguela Railway, which finally put an end to porterage and the trading caravans of former days.[5]

[1] A. Bastos, op. cit., pp. 40 ff.

[2] In 1942, after the capture of Malaya and the Dutch East Indies by the Japanese and the consequent acute shortage of rubber, the gathering of wild rubber in eastern Angola was resumed, most of the product going to Britain. Some, however, has gone to the national factories at Luanda and in Portugal, and consequently there is a stimulus to maintain the production of wild rubber in the colony, but unless more humane methods are used with the native producers the present limited supply is bound to fall off.

[3] Statistics of export and import are given by F. Trancoso, op. cit. The figures for rubber from 1888 to 1919 are on p. 36.

[4] *Ngandi*, the Umbundu equivalent for 'John Doe' or 'So-and-so'.

[5] The Benguela Railway (*Caminho de Ferro de Benguela*) began construction in 1904; in 1910 it reached Cuma (198 miles) in Ciyaka, well up on the Plateau

At the present time a day's march is twenty-five miles, during 481
which a man carries sixty pounds, while the load for a woman is half [482]
that weight. The gait of the Ovimbundu includes a limp at every step, so suggesting that the carrier is lame or tired. This appears to be a method consciously adopted as a protection against fatigue, because all muscles are momentarily relaxed. Loads are carried on the head in a long forked stick to which they are lashed. When the carrier rests, the load is not placed on the ground, but is held upright on the stick (Plate XXX, Fig. 2). Such a method avoids the strain of lifting the load from the ground after each rest pause.

Although the Ovimbundu have an exchange of products among 438
themselves by both barter and the use of Portuguese money, there [436]
are no large markets, with the exception of those at the coastal towns of Loanda, Lobito, and Benguela. There is absolutely nothing in Angola which can be compared with the great markets in Nigeria.

Despite the absence of a system of exchange on a large scale, 804
the Ovimbundu have many terms describing units of measurement. There are native standards of length, area, and capacity, but no measures of weight which are undeniably of Umbundu origin.

The unit of length (*epaluma*) is the distance from the tip of the thumb to the tip of the middle finger when the hand is outstretched. The term for two of these units is *apaluma avali*. These words are the plural of *epaluma; avali* means two. These units are used to measure tobacco before it has been coiled.

Cloth is measured by stretching the arms to their full extent in line with the shoulders; the distance between the tips of the middle fingers is *epeka*. The stride for measuring land is *elianga*.

Onjimba is an area about twenty-five feet square. *Etemo* ("hoe") is an area of land two hundred yards long and thirty feet broad. A large field covers two or three *atemo*.

Measures of capacity are provided by various types of baskets.
The large conical basket (*ohumba*) has an interwoven mark which [285]
indicates a measure for corn, meal, and beans. *Ocitenge* is a coarsely made basket used as a unit of capacity. *Uhamba* is a basket two feet long and one foot deep. The basket on a rectangular base is also *uhamba*, but at the present day cans are taking the place of all these old measures. Palm oil is measured in a gourd (*ocitau* or *ombangi*)
of definite size. This little gourd is also used for measuring a viscous [314]
substance from trees. The word *ekokoto* is used to describe this mucilage.

The principal products of the forge are axheads, which can be reversed in the shaft so as to form adzes. Hoe blades, tools for mat-making, brass bracelets, knives, and implements for gouging out the pith of gourds or hollowing out a drum, are also made. Arrowheads are likewise an important manufacture. 326

The blacksmith makes a saw blade, 47 cm in length, from hoop iron. The teeth of the saw are turned alternately to the right and left and the serrated blade is roughly hafted in wood (Plate XVI, Fig. 4). Another product of the forge is an iron tool hafted in wood. The pointed blade, which is round in cross section, tapers to a point used for boring holes in wood, after the tool has been made red-hot. Small axes, many of which are used ceremonially in dances, have remarkably well-fashioned blades decorated with punched designs in the form of geometrical patterns.

WOOD-CARVING

A glance over the list of trees named and used by the Ovimbundu indicates a complete knowledge of woodcraft which is in the hands of specialists. To name only a few; there is the *omanda* tree, also the *omue*, which yield charcoal for the smithy. *Ombula* wood is used for stools, while the elastic timber from the *omanda* tree is suitable for bows. The *ekenge*, *usamba*, and *ociyeko* trees supply bark for binding crosspieces to the upright poles when making the framework of a house; the same bark is used by Ovimbundu and Vachokue of eastern Angola for making bark cloth. In addition to the use of bark for these purposes it is made into large cylindrical receptacles for maize, while its use for beehives is general throughout Angola. Beehives are often made by professional hunters. A traveler notices the mutilation of trees from which complete cylinders of bark have been removed (Plate XL, Fig. 2); half of the cylinder makes a receptacle for carrying on the shoulder. 314

When a small pig is to be transported, four holes are bored in the bark container. Through these holes the legs of the animal are placed and tied together on the under side (Plate XXXI, Fig. 1). This is a more humane transportation than that of tying the feet of the animal to a pole which is supported on the shoulders of the two men who are carriers. 482

In the neighborhood of Cangamba fishermen make and use canoes of bark about fifteen feet in length (Plate LXXXV, Fig. 2). This illustration shows a man taking his nets into midstream where they will be pegged to the river bed. 501

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP1

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OVIMBUNDU TRIBE

Fig. 1. Flute players, Bailundu. Fig. 2. Bark removed for making utensils, Elende
Fig. 3. Girl, hair studded with brass nails, Elende

[p.394]

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER I

HABITAT

[p. 1]

Morphology

131 THE homeland of the Ovimbundu is the Benguela Highland in
133 central Angola. Strictly speaking the Highland comprises those regions which have an elevation of 1,500 metres (about 4,920 feet) or more. A glance at the accompanying map will show how closely the territory inhabited by the Ovimbundu corresponds with the extent of the Highland proper. The adjoining regions, in which the Ovimbundu also live, nowhere have an elevation inferior to 1,000 metres (about 3,280 feet). Geographically the region of the Highland is a part of the South African sub-continental plateau. The ridges of the Highland form the plateau's highest north-western portion.

133 Geologically this sub-continental plateau is one of the oldest parts of the earth's surface. The north-western portion, with which this study is concerned, has remained above sea-level from before the time of fossils. The vast slab of primeval crystalline rock which forms the foundation of the plateau often outcrops in the form of isolated rocks of unusual appearance,[1] or in massive peaks, the highest of which, in the western escarpment, reach an elevation of nearly 9,000 feet (2,850 metres).[2] Some of these outcrops remain bare, some are hidden by laterite and some by soil formed from decomposition of rock.

Among the sediments which overlie these primeval rocks there are unfossiliferous sandstones, conglomerates, and others, all of
● [316] which are considered to be of Palaeozoic age. Deposits of iron are numerous, many of which were once worked by the Ovimbundu
000 or by their predecessors. Much of the soil has been greatly im-

[1] Several of these rocks have caught the attention of travellers and writers. *Luvili* (north-west of Bailundu) is perhaps the most striking of all. Cameron said that the natives called it 'The Devil's Finger', a name I have not been able to verify. *Nganda* and *Kawe* are near the railway between Nova Lisboa and Vila Robert Williams. A journalist recently gave them the name of 'Cleopatra's Breasts'.

[2] One of the peaks of the ridge called *Moko* (The Knife) is the highest, but no complete survey has been made.

there was a great metal industry in Viye, where hoes were made for trade with the interior; later the wholesale manufacture of hoes was taken over by Ndulu, where there are the best and most easily accessible deposits of iron. In exchange for hoes they received palm-oil or cattle from other regions, or salt, rum, or goods from the coast. Other regional specialisations were :- Kasongi and the Sele country for palm-oil, Cikuma for beeswax, cattle from Ngalangi, Kalukembe, and, further south, corn-meal from Ciyaka, Civula and Bailundu.(1) 438 [316]

SOCIAL ORGANISATION AND POLITICAL STRUCTURE

KINSHIP AND DESCENT

The Ocimbundu appear to have a system of double descent which has not yet been fully reported and analysed, and whose nature is not very clear from existing accounts. The following outline is based on information given by Childs,(2) who unfortunately details the functions but not the composition of the kin groups concerned. In a review(3) of Childs' book, Barnes has formulated a descent system which would be congruent with Childs' description, and his suggestions are outlined here. 611 114

The epata

Childs translates *epata* as "blood relatives", and his use of the term suggests that it may have either a general or a limited sense. Thus he writes (p.42): "Nearly all of the villagers belong to the same *epata* or extended family, which includes both lines of descent. Most of them belong to the father's family *(oluse)*, and the mother's family *(oluina)* may also be represented." And, in another context, (p.44): "When an Ocimbundu speaks of his *epata* (family) in the sense of a large and widespread organization with a recognized head....it is generally his *oluina* [mother's family] to which he refers." 596

The oluse and the oluina

Every Ocimbundu belongs in the first instance to two distinct kin groupings: the *oluse*, to whom he is related through his father, and the *oluina* to whom he is related through his mother. Uterine brothers and sisters belong to the same *oluse* and *oluina*, but to the male and female side respectively, according to sex. (see below.) A difficulty has arisen because both Hambly(4) and Childs appear to regard *both groups* as bilateral. Hambly states explicitly that the *oluse*, or *epata lia tate* (family of my father) includes *all* relatives on the father's side, and the *oluina* or *epata lia nai* (family of my mother) *all* relatives on the mother's side. Childs writes (p.45) "Bearing in mind *their bilateral nature* ..... the functions of [the *oluse* and the *oluina*] may be summarised...". But from his summary it is obvious that the *oluse* and the *oluina* cannot be bilateral groups, neither can they have parallel descent systems of any kind. Marriage is patrilocal, and the *oluse* forms a local unit while the *oluina* is 611 613 [591]

(1) Childs, 1949, p.205. (2) 1949, pp.42-6.
(3) Man, September 1950, p.127. (4) Op.cit., pp.191-2.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

175 [316] [325] Serpa Pinto saw shafts for the working of iron ore in the neighborhood of Cubango. The ore was mixed with charcoal and smelted in shallow pits. It is stated that the iron was sometimes tempered with ox-grease and salt. The bellows are of the type made at Elende (I, p. 128). Of the tempering process I have no confirmation.

175 787 [764] Somewhere near Bihé Serpa Pinto saw the ceremony of questioning a corpse which was made to sway to and fro, the people believing all the while that it does so without human intervention. The diviner declared that the soul of a dead person will tell who caused the death (I, p. 130). I observed and photographed this ceremony (Plate XLV, Fig. 1).

[695] The ordeal of the poison cup is described; blood-letting, and divination by shaking articles in a basket are also mentioned. Pinto says that in the articles that appear uppermost the diviner reads what his hearers are desirous of learning of the past, present, or future. Sorcery and rain-making are likewise briefly mentioned (I, p. 132). The divination basket, the poison ordeal, and rain-making, are Umbundu cultural traits today.

171 224 Here Pinto illustrates the existing practice of mounting the skulls of animals killed by a hunter on a pole in the village. There is a further reference to this custom among the Ambuellas (I, p. 333). These instances, combined with those personally noted, give a wide distribution for the practice (I, p. 177).

175 [304] Pinto saw the operation of tooth mutilation among the Luimba. The operation was performed with a knife which was struck by repeated light blows (I, p. 209).

[711] Pinto illustrates arrowheads in use in 1879 (I, pp. 277, 346). These are exactly the same as those made and used in 1929 (Plate XVII, Figs. 1–9).

[412] Axes used by the Luchazi are sketched with a detail that shows the old forms to persist without alteration (II, p. 36).

[321] Water-pipes made from horns and gourds by the Luina of eastern Angola are of the forms now used in that region, also by the Ovimbundu of the present day (II, pp. 33, 37).

175 114 For use in checking and supplementing my observations Serpa Pinto's book was found to be of the greatest service, though the precise locality was sometimes difficult to identify. This explorer, in common with others, scattered his ethnological observations among descriptions of the route and botanical, zoological, and other notes.

Lux traveled from Loanda due east, following the Kwanza on the northern bank between 9° and 10° S. Lat., and so into Lunda.

273 ant said, "Sometimes a man who has drunk this beer will sleep on the ground all day and say nothing."

263 438 Salt is a welcome gift in all parts of Angola. Native tribes appreciate its culinary value but show no eagerness to barter for the commodity. At the present time salt is sold in every trader's store, but in earlier times the substance had to be obtained along caravan routes from the coast and was therefore more highly prized than it is today. 317 [231] The Ovimbundu realize the value of salt in the diet of cattle; therefore the animals are occasionally driven to a salt lick in the hills. The Ovimbundu do not use this salt for their own diet, possibly because the salt enjoyed by the cattle is some form of potash and not sodium chloride.

[171] The Vachokue extract salt from the leaves of a river plant by burning it to ashes which are soaked and strained. This is a common African method, but I did not hear of it among the Ovimbundu. The probability is that the Ovimbundu have always obtained salt from the coast.

372 In connection with cooking and brewing beer, methods of making fire are of importance.

Matches are coming into use among the Ovimbundu, but the necessity for them is not great as the hearth fire is not extinguished. [354] In the center of each hut is a fireplace made of three hearth-stones over which logs of wood are placed with their ends in the fire which is kept alight by pushing the logs forward from time to time. A blaze is made by breaking off bark from the logs, placing it on the center of the fire and blowing. Fire is carried from one place to another by conveying a smoldering log. In the Esele country boys may be seen setting off at dawn to scare birds in the corn field, each carrying fire with him.

Usually the children or some other members of the family sleep on mats close to the fire, which requires no attention other than a pushing forward of the logs.

372 171 The Vasele make fire by the twirling method, and at Ngalangi the same procedure was witnessed. In the twirling method two different kinds of wood are used, soft wood for the base and hard wood for the twirling stick. The twirler used at Ngalangi was a piece of cane into the end of which a piece of hard white wood was secured by binding. Ngonga, my interpreter and informant, thinks that any man of the Ovimbundu could make fire by the twirling method if the necessity arose, but the performance witnessed at Ngalangi led me to doubt the truth of this statement. The operator

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

171 wide distribution in Africa (C. Wiedemann, 1909) and the ceremony
175 still survives among the Ovimbundu in modified form.

[114] Though an informative writer, Monteiro is sometimes vague; he says (I, p. 278) that circumcision is a universal custom among the blacks of Angola. In view of the extent of Angola, the diversity of tribes, and the fact that Monteiro traveled over only a small part of the country, this information is misleading.

Monteiro is the only writer in whose works I have found a reference to the Vasele tribe; probably no part of Angola has been so neglected as the Esele country in the hinterland of Novo Redondo. At the present day the Vasele have a reputation for cannibalism. [266] Monteiro saw human flesh eaten at Cuacra, while the skulls of the victims were placed on adjacent trees. Monteiro states (II, p. 167) that on the death of a king the Mucelis (Vasele) put out all the fires in the kingdom; these were relighted by the succeeding king who [321] used fire produced by rubbing two sticks together. The flat beads of shell called *dongos*, made from *Achatina monetaria* (II, p. 168), are made today and traded to the far south of Angola, where their novelty assures them a value far beyond their intrinsic worth. I was fortunate in obtaining an example of the old beheading ax mentioned by Monteiro (II, p. 157) and sketched by Cavazzi (p. 210). Par- [262] boiled and roasted rats were offered to me as food; Monteiro mentions the offering of a roasted rat on a skewer (I, p. 99).

The account of Commander V. L. Cameron, who left Zanzibar for his journey across Africa in 1873, mentions several points of anthropological importance in relation to the Angolan section of his [756] journey. Cameron saw a net-covered medicine-man of the Kibokue (Vachokue) wearing a mask and a kilt of grass (p. 384). The function [524] of this man was to frighten devils from the woods. The contest in which boys discharge their arrows at a rolling root was seen by Cameron near Kagnombe (Cangamba?). Skulls of victims killed in [787] war were spiked on poles (p. 399). The diviner was followed by attendants who struck iron gongs, while the diviner himself shook a rattle made of basket-work in the form of a dumb-bell (p. 404). Cameron gives an accurate description of the divination basket and its use without going into details. These I have been able to supply [482] (chapter IX). The explorer met caravans of Bihéans, renowned carriers then as they are today. They were usually drunk and abusive; in some instances they attempted to rob the stragglers. 000 The use of caterpillars as food is noted (p. 416): "A man cut open

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

The picture of types gathered at Ngalangi (Plate LXXXIX, Fig. 3) shows, reading from left to right along the back row, then along the front row in the same direction: an Ocimbundu; an Ocivokue; a man of the Vangangella; an Uluchazi woman; a Lunda man; and two types of the Vangangella. 142 101

The M'Bunda man and woman photographed at Cangamba display characteristic deformation of the upper central incisors (Plate XCI, Figs. 1, 2). Photographs of a Mussurongo man and two women, taken about a hundred miles east of Malange, show no great difference from the Ovimbundu except in their shorter stature (Plates LXX, Figs. 1, 2; LXXI, Figs. 1, 2). The Bushman (Plate LXIX, Figs. 1, 2) shows a type found wandering in small bands in the south of Angola. These photographs were taken at Cassanga. [304]

The dress and personal ornaments of the tribes dwelling to the south of the Ovimbundu (Plates LIX–LXVIII) are entirely different from the clothing and decorative styles observed in the areas occupied by the Ovimbundu. This statement is true with regard to bodily covering, ornaments, tooth mutilation, use of pigment, scarification, and hairdressing. 171 301 304

In respect of all these factors, males and females of the Ovimbundu have distinctive patterns which do not appear to have influenced, or to have been influenced by the styles around them. [177]

In working southward from Elende I passed through typical Umbundu cultures until the vicinity of Kipungo was reached. At this place the change in physical appearance, ornaments, and hairdressing was remarkable both for its abruptness and distinctiveness. But the change from agricultural to pastoral pursuits is gradual.

A comparison of photographs indicates at once the truth of this statement, which can be further illustrated by a detailed description of the ornaments observed from Kipungo to Mongua.

By far the most important of these is the circular *omba* shell made from the basal part of a gastropod shell of the genus *Conus* Linn; and allied forms. These are highly prized, not because of any intrinsic worth, but on account of strong sentiment arising from their bequest, which is usually in the female line. I have, however, seen a few males of the Vakuanyama wearing these shells. For the old *omba* shells monetary offers equal to the earnings of a woman for a period of six months were made, but without success. One woman wavered somewhat, but finally decided that she dared not return to her home without her *omba* shells. From a Portuguese trader I bought, for a small sum, *omba* shells showing stages in manufacture. 301 321 ● [825] [562]

301 The new ornaments had acquired no sentimental value, therefore
● 321 their price was moderate.

[171] *Omba* shells are to be seen in use from Kipungo southward through Huila, among the Luvando, and among the Vakuanyama of southern Angola. In the places mentioned one may judge the social status
[554] of a woman by the number of *omba* shells she wears. A principal wife is usually well supplied with these ornaments.

302 In this southern journey it was noticeable that there was an
171 increasing use of red pigment which is lavishly employed for smearing every kind of ornament, the body, and the hair. Leather belts and
[294] skirts of Vakuanyama women are thickly coated with red pigment which is invariably mixed with grease. The red powder is prepared
[824] by desiccating a red wood called *tukula* by the Vakuanyama, a name which is used through Angola and the southern Congo area.

412 From Kipungo southward through the Vakuanyama country
171 there is a notable absence of decorative wooden hair combs. On the contrary, delicately carved combs are used by both men and women of the Ovimbundu. The Vasele make such combs, but by far the best
[532] examples are made and used by the Vachokue tribe of eastern Angola. Here the decorative design usually includes a well-carved human figure at the top of the comb.

301 Among the Vakuanyama, necklaces of disks made from ostrich
[237] eggshell are worn by the women only. A woman of importance has a dozen loops of such necklaces, each loop being about 125 cm long.
[554] These necklaces are so greatly esteemed that only after much persuasion can a woman be induced to part with a single link. Perhaps, as is the case with *omba* shell, there is more than the intrinsic value to be considered. One point is constantly noticed in considering social status and ornament. All the wives of a wealthy man, especially among the Vakuanyama, are made to advertise their husband's position by the profusion of their ornaments and the quality of their leather skirts and belts.

[321] There is, in addition to the necklaces of ostrich-eggshell beads, a highly prized necklace made from small perforated disks of shell having a diameter of about a centimeter. The Vakuanyama women smear a necklace of this kind with grease and *tukula* powder; the
[435] value of a necklace 125 cm long is equivalent to that of an ox. In describing these necklaces there is interest in noting that they are traded to the south of Angola from places six hundred miles to the
[439] north; therefore their value is to some extent dependent on rarity and distant origin.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

463 *Wood-working*, including the following specializations:
462 Doors, windows, and their frames; coffins.
[322] Beds, tables, chairs, &c.
Mortars, pestles, grinding-handles, and handles for various iron implements.
Stools, household utensils, carved images, staves, knobkerries, &c.
Drums and other musical instruments.
Canoes (dug-outs and coracles).
Rope-making, nets, and rudimentary weaving.
Thatching has its specialists although all men can thatch.
Fishing.
Bee-hunting, including the making of hives.
224 *Hunting*.
326 *Iron-smelting and smithing*.
791 *Medical-practice and Divination*.

The last three professions of the list are sacred and are entered under special conditions. They are often passed on by inheritance, but not always. All of them require sacrifice at certain stages, and when the enslavement of a spirit (*oku andeka*) is required, it is socially allowable. This seems to be the case with these offices as with those of the king and his ministers, both because of benefits accruing to the community in their exercise and also because of inherent danger to the individuals who exercise these functions.

177 The advent of European commerce, industry, and government
463 has created a number of types of employment for boys and young men, some of which entail prolonged absence from the village and a loosening or severing of kinship ties. Church and mission have
[797] also offered employment and have opened new opportunities for advance in place and in position.

861 Later childhood, then, is the period of technical training during which it is expected that a large amount of economic responsibility will be assumed. A child begins to own property even before this, and from the beginning of later childhood will be accounted legally responsible for his actions. It is recognized, however, that he should not be set tasks beyond the experience or ability of his age and that the full responsibility of adulthood will only come with marriage.

[538] *Umālēhē ka tonyōlā ongulu yuvala*;
A youth does not scrape the pig for the wedding feast;
pekonjo pa siala (*ovonya*).
on the hoof there remain (bristles).

V. ECONOMIC LIFE

The words "economic life" are here used with a wide connotation 182
including nature lore, food supply, trade, transport, and industries; all these are combined to form a foundation for every aspect of the social life of the tribe.

The truth of this is realized if one pays attention to the rites 788
connected with occupations. For the hunter there is special training, 782
ritual, and a peculiar mode of burial. Final ceremonies in the initiation of a young blacksmith are associated with sacred acts such as sacrifice of animals and the sprinkling of the tools with their blood. Even the simple occupation of pounding corn requires that the rock shall be dedicated to this purpose by sprinkling the blood of a chicken on the surface. Similarly, a clay pit has to be consecrated before the raw material may be taken for making pottery. A caravan [787]
journey is not merely a commercial undertaking; the accompanying medicine-man carries a wooden figure which he consults with regard to the route (Plate XXI, Fig. 5).

Division of labor according to sex is one of the most important 462
principles involved in the economic life, more particularly in occupational groupings, which are strictly observed. Moreover, within any one activity, such as house-building, there are tasks for men only, while other parts of the work are performed exclusively by women or children.

The study of industries is of great importance when a comparison 322
of Umbundu and adjacent cultures is being made. This is particu- 177
larly true in the instance of wood-carving, an occupation yielding [778]
highly specialized products some of which are connected with religious belief and ritual. All artifacts are valuable as criteria of cultural contacts, though their reliability as evidence of trait diffusion naturally varies with their degree of complexity. Study of native industries in relation to European contacts illustrates a cultural process which may result in acceptance, rejection, or ingenious adaptation of new ideas.

That a study of the economic life of a tribe is not merely a record- 182
ing of material processes and artifacts, is illustrated by observation 231
of the treatment of cattle. This pastoral pursuit naturally falls under a heading "Domestic Animals," but the ideas associated with cattle, including funeral feasts, use of horns on graves, and the wrapping of the royal corpse in oxhide, lead directly into important matters of belief and ritual.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

322 The tools used by the wood-carver are the saw, ax, adze, and knife.
532 The products of this craft may be conveniently divided into the following groups:

(1) Figurines of human form (Plate XXI, Figs. 1–6).

(2) Animal forms, chiefly snakes, tortoises, birds, and lizards. The dog is sometimes represented (Plates XIX, Figs. 1–5; XLI, Fig. 1).

[534] (3) Parts of musical instruments, such as drums and the base-boards of *sansas*. The latter often have the metal keys mounted on boards decorated with elaborately incised patterns (Plates XLI, Fig. 2; XXII, Fig. 5).

[415] (4) Domestic implements and utensils, chief of which are heavy wooden beaters for flattening mud floors of houses, grain pounders, stools, cups, platters, bowls, and a heavy pestle and mortar (Plates XIII, Fig. 3; XVIII, Figs. 1, 2).

[531] (5) Carved sticks and clubs; these often show elaborate incised decorations of geometrical patterns. Frequently the head of the stick is carved to represent a human head or a full-length figure.
[293] The ornamented stick or club is carried as part of the personal dress and artistic equipment. The throwing club is usually a straight stick with an undecorated knob at the end (Plate XX, Figs. 1–10).

(6) Carved wooden posts representing the human form. These are set up at the wayside. One has been obtained from a grave near Bailundu.

(7) Tobacco-pipes and snuff boxes (Plate XV, Figs. 2, 4).

177 Figurines of human form require special consideration, because
532 they have claims other than that of aesthetic expression. The figures representing Europeans, or natives using some article of foreign introduction, illustrate the grafting of foreign ideas on older methods of work.

113 The art of the African Negro has of late years been accorded a place of honor in critical circles of Europe and America (P. Guillaume and T. Munro, Primitive Negro Sculpture, New York, 1926). Usually, however, the formal technique of lines, curves, and the general aesthetic effect have been discussed to the exclusion of the ethnological background which determines style and function.

532 By far the best example of carved human figures collected in Angola was the one from Cangamba (Plate XXI, Fig. 4). This female figure, 60 cm high, is carved from hard, dark, red wood in such a way as to achieve a graceful result by the employment of a few

787 532 A common type of small figurine, some of which are female, others asexual, is represented by an illustration (Plate XXI, Fig. 2). Such little carvings are a normal part of the miscellaneous contents of a divination basket described in chapter IX. These figures have been obtained from Elende, Bailundu, and Caconda, all of which are centers of Umbundu culture.

322 532 756 In addition to the figurines described, the collection contains many more whose use may be conjectured. The interrogation of Ovimbundu people indicates clearly that there are specific uses of wooden figures which are consulted by the medicine-man. The foregoing explanations illustrate the nature of the beliefs associated with carved wooden figures, but it is not always possible to elicit a clear account of the specific use of each one.

171 532 Consideration of this aspect of the wood-carver's art has an important bearing on the culture contacts of the Ovimbundu. In studying this question I have instituted comparisons between these figures from the Ovimbundu of Angola and similar figures from the Kasai area of the Congo region (chapter X). The publications of the Musée Congo Belge provide illustrations for comparison with the figures in Field Museum's collection.

The carving of animal forms (Plate XIX, Figs. 1–5) is no more than a means of aesthetic expression resulting from accurate observations of animal life as recorded under "Nature Lore." Inquiry failed to show that figures of animals are, or were at any time, used in rites and ceremonies.

[643] The carrying of a carved stick is essential when a chief is visiting, attending a council in his own village, or receiving visitors. The ornamental paddle (Plate XX, Fig. 8) was owned by the chief of the capital village (*ombala*) of the Vangangella, near Ngalangi.

[765] At the death of a chief his staff of office, with his tobacco-pipe and sleeping mat, are placed in a small house where such relics of deceased chiefs are kept permanently (Plate XLVI, Fig. 1). Plate XX, Fig. 6, shows a staff of this kind which was preserved in a sacred house in the capital village of Ngalangi, and on the same plate are drawn short ornamental clubs which French ethnologists call *batons de promenade*, an appropriate name because of their use as part of the full dress equipment.

[276] The Ovimbundu have specialized in the carving of small objects, for, in addition to clubs and staffs, tobacco-pipes and snuff boxes are often elaborately carved (Plate XV, Figs. 2, 4).

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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OVIMBUNDU WOOD-CARVERS, ELENDE

Fig. 1. Making human and animal figures. Fig. 2. Carving drum

[p.395]

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

PLATE VIII

323

Photo. R. S. Webb

a. Umbundu pots (before firing), baskets, and hoes

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286

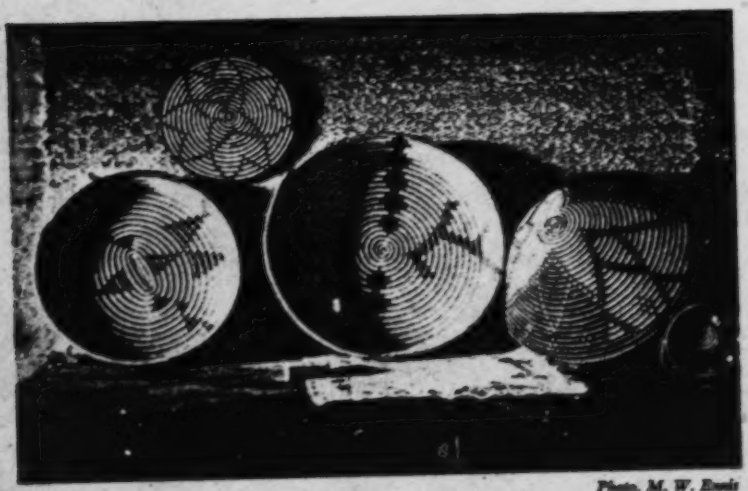

Photo. M. W. Ennis

b. Umbundu basketry with native-woven tapestry

[Facing p. 65]

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu EP 13

778
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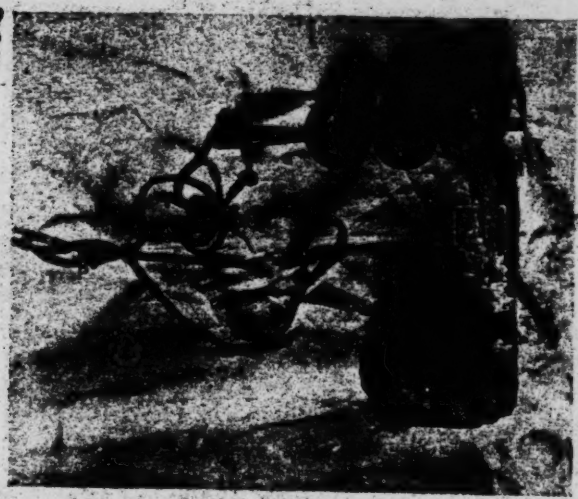

Photo. M. W. Smith

b. Fetish-charms and diviner's rattle

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a. A potter at work (Dondi)

[Facing p. 128]

rmerly it was believed that a smith owed his skill to the help of the 326
irit of a person whom he had killed, and wooden effigies of this person 782
re kept by the smith.(1)

The principal products of a blacksmith's forge are axe-heads, hoe 325
ades,(2) tools for mat-making, arrowheads, knives, and brass bracelets. 412
on, which is fairly plentiful, was formerly smelted over charcoal
res.(3) Today smiths use scrap iron.

ttery

Pot-making is a part of women's work among the Ovimbundu. A wheel 323
not used. Clay is mixed with a silicate, usually gravel, rolled out [462]
long ropes, and the pot built by the coiling process.(4) Pots are
nented when wet by making deep incisions with a piece of gourd; they
e then sun-dried, and fired in a kiln of dry grass. Pots are used as
ter-containers, as cooking vessels and as vessels for storing corn and
ans, and, when made in a very large size, for brewing beer.(5)

No ritual attaches to pot-making, except at the opening of a new [782]
ay-pit, when, in the presence of both men and women from the village,
e medicine-man sacrifices a chicken over the open pit.(6)

aving and Spinning

Looms have not been used among the Ovimbundu since they have been a 286
ople, although progenitors of the kingly families who came from the 439
ngala or Congo groups may have done weaving. Trade cloth has been known
d used by the Ovimbundu for nearly 300 years.(7) Skins have been used [281]
remote areas; Hambly when he mentions bark-cloth as being worn by the [287]
imbundu is probably referring to the Ngangela. Spun cotton, however, [283]
used for repairs, and there is a cotton plant in most gardens. Spin- 462
ng is done always by men.(8)

sketry

All girls learn to make baskets, although some become more proficient 285
an others. Knowledge of basket-making implies also an understanding of 462
ving, since coloured strands of grass are interwoven to make geometric [386]
tterns.(9) Baskets, and also basket-trays, are usually made by the
iling process.(10)

) Hambly, (2) 1934, pp.158-60. The ceremony was described from Njengolo village in Elende.
) See Cashman, 1944, pp.140-1.
) For details of the blacksmith's forge and tools, see Hambly, op.cit., pp.160-1; Cashman, 1944, pp.139, 140, 145-6.
) See Hambly, op.cit. Plates XXXIII and XXXIV, and Childs, 1949, Plate VIII.
) Hambly, op.cit., p.168; Cashman, op.cit., pp.144-5.
) Hambly, op.cit., p.169.
) Childs, personal communication. See also Childs, 1949, p.171, note 1.
) See Hambly, p.177, and Cashman, 1944, p.136.
) Red, yellow, black, and brown dyes are used. For a description of the process, see Hambly, op.cit., pp.170-1.
0) See Hambly, op.cit., p.171, and Cashman, op.cit., pp.141-2 for details of basket-making. Also for illustrations Hambly, op.cit. and Childs, 1949.

Mat-making

462 285 [412] The making of mats is a specialised craft for men. Generally elderly men are the mat-makers. Two tools are used, a borer and a needle, both products of the blacksmith's forge. Hambly[1] describes the making of reed sleeping mats, large mats used for partitions, and string bags. There are four distinct types of mats, each of which has its specialist.[2]

Leather-work

282 Leather pouches worn on a broad leather belt are part of the essential equipment of the hunter. The pouch is square, rectangular, or semi-cylindrical in shape, and may be decorated with cross-shaped patterns, or brass-headed nails used for decorative effect. Hide is also used for the seats of four-legged wooden stools. Hides are crudely dressed: they are soaked, the inner surface rubbed with ashes, the hair scraped away, and the hide pegged out.[3]

Wood-carving

323 [463] Wood-carving, which is men's work, includes the following specialisations: doors, windows and their frames; coffins; beds, tables and chairs; mortars, pestles, grinding-handles, and handles for various iron implements; stools, household utensils, carved images etc.; drums and other musical instruments; canoes (dug-outs and coracles).[4] Illustrations are given by Hambly.[5]

TRADE

438 484 791 [682] Caravan trade is now confined to short journeys when corn, beans and beeswax are carried by men and women porters to the traders' stores. Formerly however it was an important feature of tribal life. Each caravan had its professional leader, and was accompanied by a diviner or medicine-man. Before a caravan started out, a ceremony was performed at which the principal performers were the village headman and the medicine-man. The head of the former headman was brought from its box, sewn in oxhide; blood from a sacrificed animal was sprinkled on the head, and invocation was made to the deceased by the village headman, asking for good fortune for the journey.[6]

438 436 Today the Ovimbundu exchange products among themselves both by barter and the use of Portuguese money,[7] but there are no large markets except in the towns.

[439] 438 The "trade-agreements" between the Ovimbundu kingdoms and between the Ovimbundu and other tribes have been mentioned above.[8] Accompanying these, regional industrial and commercial specialisations within Ovimbundu country developed. Thus in the middle of the last century

(1) Hambly, op.cit., pp.169-70.
(2) Childs, 1949, p.109.
(3) Hambly, op.cit., p.176.
(4) Childs, op.cit., p.110.
(5) Op.cit., Plates XIII to XXII.
(6) Hambly, op.cit., p.156.
(7) For details of Ovimbundu units of measurement see Hambly, op.cit., p.157.
(8) p.9.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

Not only the carpenter, but almost every Ocimbundu man possesses an implement which may be readily adapted as ax or adze (Plate XIII, Fig. 2). The wooden shaft, from 50 to 70 cm in length, terminates in a narrow grip at one end, while the other end expands into a large oval knob into which a circular hole is bored. The strong iron blade, one of the main products of the local forge, can be removed. If the round tang of the blade is inserted so that the cutting edge is in the same plane as the shaft, the implement is an ax. On the contrary, insertion so that the cutting edge is at right angles to the shaft converts the implement into an adze. When placed over the shoulder this implement is used for carrying utensils in a fiber bag (Plate XXVIII, Fig. 1). 412 [482]

Gourds are of three main kinds, which may be found growing on the ground or resting on the roofs of houses at the ends of the climbing stems that bear them. *Ombenge* is a gourd which is narrow in the middle. It is often converted into a dipper for ladling liquids. The narrow neck is the handle, while a round hole is cut in the larger part so that the dipper can be filled with liquid. *Onganja* is round, or perhaps oval in form. There is a size used as a measure of capacity. *Onganja* can be used as a ladle by fixing it at the end of a stick. *Olukuembo* has a round body and a narrow hook-shaped neck; like the gourd *ombenge*, it is used as a ladle. 415 [244]

Gourds are elaborately decorated with incised and burned designs (Plate XII, Figs. 1–6). Usually these patterns are geometrical, but human figures and animals are sometimes included. Decorated gourds from Bailundu, used for containing beer at a wedding, are among the best examples of their kind (Plate XII, Fig. 6). The owner of a decorated gourd takes great pains to repair a crack with rattan, which is threaded through holes bored in the edges of the fracture. A large gourd is sometimes carried in a native-made net of vegetable fiber. 531 415

POTTERY

A large and varied collection of pottery has been acquired from the Ovimbundu, the Vacholue, and the Vasele. The shapes and styles are best indicated by the illustrations in Plate XIV, Figs. 1–5. 323 171

Among the Ovimbundu, only women make pots, which are inferior in workmanship to those of the Vacholue and the Vasele. At Elende, among the Ovimbundu, I was surprised to find a man making pottery. Further inquiry showed that he had learned his craft when young in the Vacholue country of eastern Angola. This man, whose work was not copied at all by Ovimbundu women, was regarded as a specialist whose products were in great demand. [462]

323 specialist whose products were in great demand. Instead of making
171 crude patterns with a piece of gourd, as do the Ovimbundu women,
[531] he presses a brass bracelet round the rims of the pots. The bracelet is deeply indented with geometrical patterns which appear on the clay (Plate XIV, Fig. 5). This man selects a very fine clay for his work, his products are symmetrical, and a polish is given with a smooth pebble after baking. Like all other potters of Angola, this artisan has no knowledge of the potter's wheel.

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531 The vessels made by Vasele women, among whom the trade is confined to female specialists, are unlike the products from any other part of Angola. The chevron design is characteristic, so also is the ornamenting of the pot by laying on strips of clay below the rim. This is appliqué work which may consist of only a few bands of clay, or the strips may pass repeatedly round the pot until one-half or two-thirds of the surface has been covered (Plate XIV, Fig. 2).

323 At Elende two Ovimbundu women were observed during the pot-making processes (Plates XXXIII, XXXIV). Woman *A* built up the pot in a basket lined with wet leaves. Woman *B* pounded the clay on a stone with the heavy wooden pounder used for pounding corn on the rocks. Between the two women was a gourd of water in which *A* moistened her fingers. Operator *B* poured water on the clay which she was pounding. *A* made a cup of clay five inches in diameter and four inches deep which served as a base on which the pot was built up by the coiling process. This cup was placed in the basket containing moist leaves.

The rim of the cup was built in height and breadth by the addition of rolls of clay supplied by woman *B*. As the rolls of clay were laid on the edges of the pot, the inside was smoothed with a piece of gourd. Meanwhile the outside of the pot was supported with one hand. Shaping of the pot proceeded by applying smaller and smaller rolls of clay as the neck of the pot was approached. Gentle smoothing pressure forced out the greatest breadth of the pot just below the base of the neck. A pause was made to allow a partial drying before the neck was built up. Ornamentation consisted of making deep incisions with a piece of gourd while the pot was still wet. During these processes there was constant wetting of the hands.

The pots were sun dried, then fired several at a time by placing them in a kiln of dry grass. Polish was given to a pot while it was still hot by covering the surface with liquid made from a tuberous root, during which process the pot was quickly turned on a stick.

When the clay was being mixed an old pot was broken and pulverized so that some of the powder might be added to the new pot. There may be the underlying idea of continuity in the potter's art. The potters said, *Sanga yi pita* ("Lest it leak"). There may be no purpose other than the imparting of stability to the new clay. 323

I was unable to find any trace of ritual except with reference to the opening of a new clay pit. When a pit is first opened both men and women attend. The head of a chicken is twisted off by a medicine-man, then the bird is held over the pit by either a man or a woman. There is no law or ceremony to determine who shall take the first clay from the pit. The art of making pots is in the hands of female specialists so far as the Ovimbundu are concerned. Observation makes clear that women will go for a long distance to obtain clay from the pit which has been opened in a ceremonial manner. On their way to such a pit they pass clay which would serve their purpose well, but they do not use it. Children sometimes amuse themselves by making animals of clay. [462] [782] [857]

The pottery of the Ovimbundu includes cooking vessels of many sizes, water containers, and very large pots for brewing beer (*olombia vi okukela*). [415]

MATS AND BASKETS

This occupation illustrates division of labor on a sex basis. Baskets are made by women, while mat-making is an occupation for males. As with other trades there is specialization. The majority of women are able to make baskets though the skill of individuals varies. All women who have a knowledge of basketry understand the manufacture of dyes. Only a few men make mats; my informant thought that perhaps one man in ten would have the necessary skill. Such specialization is continued into other occupations; for example, only a few men spin cotton thread, while the majority of people buy pottery from expert female potters. 462 285 [463]

The mat-maker, generally an elderly male, uses two tools, a borer and a needle, both products of the native forge. The borer (*utomo*) for piercing the reeds, consists of a long thin blade in a wooden grip. The needle (*osinja*) is threaded with bark fiber and passed through the holes made by the *utomo*. The bark thread is *ombanja* (plural *olombanja*). 285

The sleeping mat (*esisa*) is made of reeds which are gathered in the early morning by a man who wets and binds his material into bundles, each of which contains reeds of the same length. The length of the reeds varies, of course, with the size of mat he intends to make.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

The use of bird-arrows with blunt, wooden knobs was common 171
at Elende, and I collected sharp, barbed, wooden arrows from the 411
Vasele, also from the areas of Kipungo and Mongua. This will assist in extending the information given by Lindblom (pp. 94–98). Lindblom's map (p. 99) indicates that bird-arrows are used round Lake Victoria Nyanza, at the junction of the Kasai and the Congo, and likewise among the Bushongo and the Bayaka. My observation of the distribution of wooden arrows in Angola links up these regions shown by Lindblom with the south of Angola. Perhaps a transcontinental diffusion in a southwesterly direction from Victoria Nyanza may be assumed, for it is unlikely that the diffusion would go counter to the generally accepted line of tribal migration which has been from northeast to southwest.

AFRICAN POTTERY, BASKETS, AND MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

171

There is no reason to connect the pottery of the Ovimbundu [323]
with that of any particular region. The coiling method is far too widespread and generic to afford evidence of contacts. The Ovimbundu have evolved their own peculiar designs and forms.

In coiled basketry also the Ovimbundu have made special [285]
developments from a generic trait known in Egypt before 2000 B.C. Designs and dyes appear to be of local origin. My observation of African basketry does not suggest any particular parent form; moreover, resemblances of design may be misleading, for the nature of the material controls the shapes of the designs to a great extent in coiled basketry.

Wood-carving, on the contrary, links the culture of the Ovim- [532]
bundu very definitely with that of the southwest Congo. Perhaps the work of Angola is most closely allied with that of the Bakuba, who excel in the carving of figurines, cups, and staffs.

H. Balfour's article (III) on the distribution of the friction drum [534]
helps to identify the form used by the Ovimbundu with types of this instrument from other African areas. The type from Elende is like that of Barotseland with which the Ovimbundu caravans were frequently in contact, while the large friction drum from Ngalangi is of the Bayaka pattern. The friction drum is widely used in the southwest Congo among the Bakwese, the Bambala, and the Baluba.

Thus far research has been able to show a large number of cultural traits of the Ovimbundu in relation to immediate culture contacts of the Congo basin, Rhodesia, and South West Africa (chapter X). In addition to this, many traits connected with social

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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POTTERY AND WOODEN UTENSILS

[P 368]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP19 M'bundu FP13

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OVIMBUNDU MAKING POTTERY, ELENDE

Fig. 1. Building pottery vessel. Fig. 2. Molding pot with hands and gourd

[p.387]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

323

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OVIMBUNDU MAKING POTTERY, ELENDE

Fig. 1. Moistening and smoothing wet pot. Fig. 2. Finished wet pots with incised designs

[p. 388]

5: Hambly E-5 (1929-30)1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

sided permanently in the wooden figure. This ritual murder is now impossible, but the wooden figures are still used in the way described. 326 778

Women are never engaged in blacksmiths' work; neither are they employed as wood carvers. Among men wood carving is a specialized occupation, and within the craft itself are men who deal solely with one branch of the work. Thus in a village perhaps only one man is capable of making a drum, while another carves life-like wooden figures of animals, and a third specializes in the fabrication of household implements. [462] 532

Among the Ovimbundu women are the only potters, but I found just one exception in the case of a man who said that he learned the potter's craft in eastern Angola among the Vachokue. No ritual is connected with the making of pottery, but I observed that women always frequented one pit for their clay and in doing so passed better clay which was more accessible. I learned that a clay pit has to be consecrated by a medicine-man who kills a chicken and sprinkles the blood in the pit. All women at some time learn the arts of pottery making and basketry, but by the process of selection the industries become concentrated in the hands of the most skillful. 462 323 [782]

Only women make baskets; a craft in which they are skilled, especially in the gathering of plants and the extraction of dyes of soft shades. Such dyes have considerable endurance even though exposed to bright sunlight. Imported dyes are now competing with indigenous products, but the latter are still preferred in most localities. One might expect that women who are skilled in basket making would be expert weavers of mats, but this is not so. Mat making is in the hands of men who are skilled specialists, and within the mat making industry are at least three principal divisions of the craft, one for each type of mat. 462 285

Men spin cotton for mending clothes, but I have not seen women so engaged. I did not see any looms in use in Angola, but they survived up to a few years ago, and in the youth of my interpreter, who was about thirty years of age, looms worked by men were plentiful. 283 462 286

House building shows a division of labor according to age and sex. Men are responsible for cutting the poles, digging the trench in which these uprights are set, and binding the cross-pieces with bark. Men are likewise responsible for plastering the walls and laying the thatch. Women carry water to the clay pit and transport the puddled clay to the men who are plastering the walls. Children, some of them so young that they have to be rescued from a swampy grave, delight in puddling the clay with their feet. The rectangular pit is always as near the house as possible in order to minimize the labor of transport. I suggested that some of the tasks should 462 331

325

325 METALLURGY--smelting and refining of ores; alloys; methods of casting; hot and cold forging; tempering; soldering; welding; special apparatus (e. g., bellows, anvil); practical and scientific metallurgical knowledge; etc. See also:

Capital goods industries 39
Tools and weapons 41
Mining 316
Industrialized elaboration of metallurgical processes. 327, 328

Formerly it was believed that a smith owed his skill to the help of the spirit of a person whom he had killed, and wooden effigies of this person were kept by the smith.(1) 326 782

The principal products of a blacksmith's forge are axe-heads, hoe blades,(2) tools for mat-making, arrowheads, knives, and brass bracelets. Iron, which is fairly plentiful, was formerly smelted over charcoal fires.(3) Today smiths use scrap iron. 325 412

Pottery

Pot-making is a part of women's work among the Ovimbundu. A wheel is not used. Clay is mixed with a silicate, usually gravel, rolled out in long ropes, and the pot built by the coiling process.(4) Pots are ornamented when wet by making deep incisions with a piece of gourd; they are then sun-dried, and fired in a kiln of dry grass. Pots are used as water-containers, as cooking vessels and as vessels for storing corn and beans, and, when made in a very large size, for brewing beer.(5) 323 [462]

No ritual attaches to pot-making, except at the opening of a new clay-pit, when, in the presence of both men and women from the village, the medicine-man sacrifices a chicken over the open pit.(6) [782]

Weaving and Spinning

Looms have not been used among the Ovimbundu since they have been a people, although progenitors of the kingly families who came from the Bangala or Congo groups may have done weaving. Trade cloth has been known and used by the Ovimbundu for nearly 300 years.(7) Skins have been used in remote areas; Hambly when he mentions bark-cloth as being worn by the Ovimbundu is probably referring to the Ngangela. Spun cotton, however, is used for repairs, and there is a cotton plant in most gardens. Spinning is done always by men.(8) 286 439 [281] [287] [283] 462

Basketry

All girls learn to make baskets, although some become more proficient than others. Knowledge of basket-making implies also an understanding of dyeing, since coloured strands of grass are interwoven to make geometric patterns.(9) Baskets, and also basket-trays, are usually made by the coiling process.(10) 285 462 [386]

(1) Hambly, (2) 1934, pp.158-60. The ceremony was described from Njongolo village in Elende.
(2) See Cashmen, 1944, pp.140-1.
(3) For details of the blacksmith's forge and tools, see Hambly, op.cit., pp.160-1; Cashmen, 1944, pp.139, 140, 145-6.
(4) See Hambly, op.cit. Plates XXXIII and XXXIV, and Childs, 1949, Plate VIII.
(5) Hambly, op.cit., p.168; Cashmen, op.cit., pp.144-5.
(6) Hambly, op.cit., p.169.
(7) Childs, personal communication. See also Childs, 1949, p.171, note 1.
(8) See Hambly, p.177, and Cashmen, 1944, p.136.
(9) Red, yellow, black, and brown dyes are used. For a description of the process, see Hambly, op.cit., pp.170-1.
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3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

175 171 O. Dapper (Description de l'Afrique, 1732, p. 369) shows a scene in which an ax, such as I obtained from the Vasele country, is being used for beheading a slave.

[412] Cavazzi (Istorica descrizione, etc., Bologna, 1687) describes the three kingdoms of Congo, Matamba, and northern Angola. The [325] poison ordeal, the scapegoat, the blacksmith's bellows (pp. 101, 170) [534] are all traits known to the Ovimbundu. The musical instrument made from a large gourd, which has a ridged board attached for rubbing with a stick, is the type I collected. Cavazzi pictures the double iron gong and the long drum held between the knees. He [782] also shows a rain-maker (p. 214) and the sacrifice of two hundred victims at the accession of a king (p. 210).

174 243 Consideration of the history of maize in Africa is of importance in connection with these early writings, as this grain is the staple agricultural product of the Ovimbundu. I am indebted to Dr. [113] Berthold Laufer for access to his unpublished research on this subject. From the following facts one may assume that, in all probability, the maize culture of the Ovimbundu was derived from the Congo region before their migration into the Benguela Highlands.

175 243 Father Jerome Merolla remarks that maize was growing in the neighborhood of San Salvador (1683–92). The native names were *mampunni* and *massambuta;* from this corn an alcoholic beverage was prepared. According to Cavazzi (Ehrmann, Geschichte der merkwürdigsten Reisen, XIII, 1794) maize was not intensively cultivated by the Negroes of lower Guinea, though it thrives well and may be harvested twice or thrice a year. The natives said that the grain [177] was brought by the Portuguese, but they did not esteem it highly, and were accustomed to use it as food for pigs.

Bosman (p. 312) records that prior to the arrival of the Portuguese, Negroes were entirely ignorant of *milho* ("maize"). The account of Duarte Lopez preserved by Filippo Pigafetta states that the Negroes consider maize the vilest of all grains, so that it is given to swine. This contempt and lack of knowledge of the food value, combined with ignorance of methods of preparation, suggest a recent introduction (Pigafetta, translation by M. Hutchinson, 1881, p. 40). Dapper (Description de l'Afrique, 1732, p. 345) also mentions the cultivation of maize. Battell lived as prisoner in northern Angola about the year 1600, consequently his records of the use of the great Guinea wheat (maize), which the natives call *mas-importo*, give early evidence for the use of this grain (Hakluyt Soc., 1901, pp. 9, 11, 67).

175 [316] [325] Serpa Pinto saw shafts for the working of iron ore in the neighborhood of Cubango. The ore was mixed with charcoal and smelted in shallow pits. It is stated that the iron was sometimes tempered with ox-grease and salt. The bellows are of the type made at Elende (I, p. 128). Of the tempering process I have no confirmation.

175 787 [764] Somewhere near Bihé Serpa Pinto saw the ceremony of questioning a corpse which was made to sway to and fro, the people believing all the while that it does so without human intervention. The diviner declared that the soul of a dead person will tell who caused the death (I, p. 130). I observed and photographed this ceremony (Plate XLV, Fig. 1).

[695] The ordeal of the poison cup is described; blood-letting, and divination by shaking articles in a basket are also mentioned. Pinto says that in the articles that appear uppermost the diviner reads what his hearers are desirous of learning of the past, present, or future. Sorcery and rain-making are likewise briefly mentioned (I, p. 132). The divination basket, the poison ordeal, and rain-making, are Umbundu cultural traits today.

171 224 Here Pinto illustrates the existing practice of mounting the skulls of animals killed by a hunter on a pole in the village. There is a further reference to this custom among the Ambuellas (I, p. 333). These instances, combined with those personally noted, give a wide distribution for the practice (I, p. 177).

175 [304] Pinto saw the operation of tooth mutilation among the Luimba. The operation was performed with a knife which was struck by repeated light blows (I, p. 209).

[711] Pinto illustrates arrowheads in use in 1879 (I, pp. 277, 346). These are exactly the same as those made and used in 1929 (Plate XVII, Figs. 1–9).

[412] Axes used by the Luchazi are sketched with a detail that shows the old forms to persist without alteration (II, p. 36).

[321] Water-pipes made from horns and gourds by the Luina of eastern Angola are of the forms now used in that region, also by the Ovimbundu of the present day (II, pp. 33, 37).

175 114 For use in checking and supplementing my observations Serpa Pinto's book was found to be of the greatest service, though the precise locality was sometimes difficult to identify. This explorer, in common with others, scattered his ethnological observations among descriptions of the route and botanical, zoological, and other notes.

Lux traveled from Loanda due east, following the Kwanza on the northern bank between 9° and 10° S. Lat., and so into Lunda

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

326 778 of the murdered man were placed near the large anvil (p. 163), or they might be kept in the home of the blacksmith. Such figures are still used (Plate XXI, Fig. 3) but the killing of a victim is not now possible. Blacksmiths are free to marry without restrictions other than those imposed by the classificatory system of relationships.

325 348 The blacksmith's forge is a thatched house about twelve feet square with low eaves that almost reach the ground. The height from the floor to the point of the dome is fifteen feet. In the middle of the floor is a pit ten inches deep in which there is a quantity of charcoal brought from the charcoal burner's fire about half a mile away. At the sides of the pit are three stone seats for the workers. Two of these seats are occupied by men, each of whom works a pair of bellows. The two-chambered bellows is hewn from a block of wood in such a way as to give two circular air chambers from which wooden tubes lead to the fire. These wooden tubes are continued by clay tubes which project into the fire. Over the two round wooden chambers a piece of hide is stretched and tied over the woodwork. Two slender upright sticks, which the operator works up and down, are attached to the hide. In one corner of the hut there is a heap of charcoal, and in another corner lies the scrap iron. An iron rake with a wooden handle is used for stirring the charcoal in the fire. Plates XVI, XXXVII, and XXXVIII illustrate tools and processes.

413 The principal tools are:

(1) A flat stone anvil resting on rocks under a tree. The anvil is at such a height that the striker stands upright. At this anvil the metal is beaten with the heavy hammer *onjundo*.

(2) *Onjundo*, the most sacred of the tools, is 12.5 cm long. Its value is about that of an ox.

(3) There are tongs which can be clamped by a sliding metal ring. The larger tongs are 63 cm long and the smaller ones are 35 cm.

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(5) An iron holder for an axhead during the heating and hammering is 23 cm long. It is octagonal, hollow, and fits like a sheath over the shaft of the axhead.

(6) For heating the iron on the small anvil, after it has been roughly pounded to shape with the hammer (*onjundo*) on the large anvil, there is a smaller hammer (*usonjolo*) of which there are three varieties. These differ only in size.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

463 *Wood-working*, including the following specializations:
462 Doors, windows, and their frames; coffins.
[322] Beds, tables, chairs, &c.
Mortars, pestles, grinding-handles, and handles for various iron implements.
Stools, household utensils, carved images, staves, knobkerries, &c.
Drums and other musical instruments.
Canoes (dug-outs and coracles).
Rope-making, nets, and rudimentary weaving.
Thatching has its specialists although all men can thatch.
Fishing.
Bee-hunting, including the making of hives.
224 *Hunting*.
● 326 *Iron-smelting and smithing*.
791 *Medical-practice and Divination*.

The last three professions of the list are sacred and are entered under special conditions. They are often passed on by inheritance, but not always. All of them require sacrifice at certain stages, and when the enslavement of a spirit (*oku andeka*) is required, it is socially allowable. This seems to be the case with these offices as with those of the king and his ministers, both because of benefits accruing to the community in their exercise and also because of inherent danger to the individuals who exercise these functions.

177 The advent of European commerce, industry, and government
463 has created a number of types of employment for boys and young men, some of which entail prolonged absence from the village and a loosening or severing of kinship ties. Church and mission have
[797] also offered employment and have opened new opportunities for advance in place and in position.

861 Later childhood, then, is the period of technical training during which it is expected that a large amount of economic responsibility will be assumed. A child begins to own property even before this, and from the beginning of later childhood will be accounted legally responsible for his actions. It is recognized, however, that he should not be set tasks beyond the experience or ability of his age and that the full responsibility of adulthood will only come with marriage.

[538] *Umālēhē ka tonyōlā ongulu yuvala*;
A youth does not scrape the pig for the wedding feast;
pehonjo pa siala (*ovonya*).
on the hoof there remain (bristles).

233 The cattle herd obtains most of its food by grazing, but in the dry season the grass withers. Childs states[1] that "Herding has been a [609] function of the sister's son, and even now there is a reluctance on the part of the boys to herd for their fathers."

235 462 [844] Chickens are owned and looked after by both men and women, but other animals only by men. Boys may have small stock of their own, and a boy's economic independence most frequently begins with his owning a chicken.

231 Hambly states that goats are more common than any other animal, and that every family has one or more. These animals are not fed or watered but are allowed to wander to find their own sustenance. Goats are not milked. Young males are castrated. The goat is frequently used in sacrifices. Sheep also are allowed to find their own food; the males are not castrated. Pigs are cared for comparatively carefully, receivin water and a daily supply of sweet potatoes and their leaves, together wit some corn. Male pigs are castrated.[2]

APICULTURE[3]

[439] Beeswax was an important item of trade in the caravan days, and is still sold to Portuguese traders' stores, where it is massed into large rectangular cakes for export. Honey is eaten alone or with manioc, and [262] a fermented beer called *ochasa* is made by adding honey to corn-beer. [273] Fibre strainers are used for cleaning the wax, and large shallow baskets [252] are employed for drying the honey in the sun.

Large cylindrical hives, which are private property, are placed high in the trees. These are made by removing a cylinder of bark and lashing the halves together with strands of bark, forming a hive which has a diameter of one foot.

In Elende honey is removed from the hives during the months of August and December. One man ascends the tree in order to lower the hive with a long rope of bark or plaited fibre, while beneath the tree men are prepared to take the hive, which is opened over a smoky fire.

ARTS AND CRAFTS

326 782 *Smithing.* The profession of blacksmith or *ocivindo* is an important one, and, like hunting and divining, is sacred and is entered with specia ritual. Often, but not always, these three professions are passed on by inheritance. For smithing two years' apprenticeship to a member of the profession is necessary, and is usually entered upon at the age of eighteen. At the end of this period the master examines his pupil, and makes tools for him, especially the heavy hammer or *onjundo* which is regarded as symbolic of his craft. For the inauguration ceremony the boy provide four chickens (2 male, 2 female), a dog, and a goat; the blood of these animals is sprinkled on his tools, and their flesh is eaten at a feast [553] attended by the villagers. Throughout the procedure the boy remains standing on the small anvil. Finally he is asked to choose his professional name; he then steps down from the anvil a qualified blacksmith.

(1) Childs, 1949, p.109. (2) Hambly, op.cit., p.154.
(3) Hambly, (4) 1934.

Formerly it was believed that a smith owed his skill to the help of the spirit of a person whom he had killed, and wooden effigies of this person were kept by the smith.(1) 326 782

The principal products of a blacksmith's forge are axe-heads, hoe blades,(2) tools for mat-making, arrowheads, knives, and brass bracelets. Iron, which is fairly plentiful, was formerly smelted over charcoal fires.(3) Today smiths use scrap iron. 325 412

Pottery

Pot-making is a part of women's work among the Ovimbundu. A wheel is not used. Clay is mixed with a silicate, usually gravel, rolled out in long ropes, and the pot built by the coiling process.(4) Pots are ornamented when wet by making deep incisions with a piece of gourd; they are then sun-dried, and fired in a kiln of dry grass. Pots are used as water-containers, as cooking vessels and as vessels for storing corn and beans, and, when made in a very large size, for brewing beer.(5) 323 [462]

No ritual attaches to pot-making, except at the opening of a new clay-pit, when, in the presence of both men and women from the village, the medicine-man sacrifices a chicken over the open pit.(6) [782]

Weaving and Spinning

Looms have not been used among the Ovimbundu since they have been a people, although progenitors of the kingly families who came from the Bangala or Congo groups may have done weaving. Trade cloth has been known and used by the Ovimbundu for nearly 300 years.(7) Skins have been used in remote areas; Hambly when he mentions bark-cloth as being worn by the Ovimbundu is probably referring to the Ngangela. Spun cotton, however, is used for repairs, and there is a cotton plant in most gardens. Spinning is done always by men.(8) 286 439 [281] [287] [283] 462

Basketry

All girls learn to make baskets, although some become more proficient than others. Knowledge of basket-making implies also an understanding of dyeing, since coloured strands of grass are interwoven to make geometric patterns.(9) Baskets, and also basket-trays, are usually made by the coiling process.(10) 285 462 [386]

(1) Hambly, (2) 1934, pp.158-60. The ceremony was described from Njongolo village in Elende.
(2) See Cushman, 1944, pp.140-1.
(3) For details of the blacksmith's forge and tools, see Hambly, op.cit., pp.160-1; Cushman, 1944, pp.139, 140, 145-6.
(4) See Hambly, op.cit. Plates XXXIII and XXXIV, and Childs, 1949, Plate VIII.
(5) Hambly, op.cit., p.168; Cushman, op.cit., pp.144-5.
(6) Hambly, op.cit., p.169.
(7) Childs, personal communication. See also Childs, 1949, p.171, note 1.
(8) See Hambly, p.177, and Cushman, 1944, p.136.
(9) Red, yellow, black, and brown dyes are used. For a description of the process, see Hambly, op.cit., pp.170-1.
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3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

He draws the crescentic arrowhead (p. 123) still common among the Ovimbundu and Vachokue; the double iron gong (p. 122); and the musical bow, which he calls a viola (p. 121). 175 114 [534]

Sogaur states that iron-working had an advanced technique at Dindo, more than half a century ago. According to Sogaur, the blacksmith was using scrap iron from European sources (II, p. 14). 175 326

Perhaps the most valuable of Chatelain's books is "Fifty Folk Tales of Angola." The stories are accompanied by translations and ethnological notes, the most important of which are references to the carrying of a corpse on a pole; the building of a cairn of stones over the corpse of a hunter; matrilineal descent and the power of the maternal uncle over the persons of his nieces and nephews (sisters' children). My observations included some details respecting the pawning of a sister's children to redeem the debts of their mother's brother. Chatelain adds that sisters' children are successors to private property and chieftainship (pp. 8–10). My notes agree that property is inherited by children of a deceased man's sister, but my informants said that a new chieftain is normally the eldest son of the principal wife of the dead chief. Chatelain's folklore stories, fifty in number, relate chiefly to animals; this was the only kind of story told to me, but W. C. Bell has recorded a few tales of another type. 173 [114] [764] [611] [604] [428] [538]

Marquardsen (1928) devotes only one-fourth of his book to the ethnology of Angola, which he treats in a very general way; there is no section dealing specifically with any particular tribe. The author calls attention to Chapman's observation of rock paintings of South African Bushman type, between Cuma and Luimbale in northwest Angola. I have elsewhere remarked on the occasional occurrence of physical types which show a strain of Bushman blood. Today Bushmen penetrate southern Angola from the Kalahari (Plate LXIX, Figs. 1, 2), but their presence in times past or present does not affect the course of history or the data of ethnology to an appreciable extent. 114 177 [531] [144]

Marquardsen gives some notes of a general kind on Vaheneca, Mahuila and other tribes of southwest Angola. The suggestion is feasible that the Umbundu name Suku, for a supreme being, is the same as the Nzambi of Lunda and the Congo. Marquardsen refers to the importance of the maternal uncle in Umbundu society, to the poison ordeal, and to the burial of an Umbundu chief in oxhide, all of which points were recorded in my observations at Elende. 114 101

Ferreira Diniz's book is unobtainable, but, judging from the summary given in *Anthropos* (XX, 1925, pp. 321–331), the information was collected by a questionnaire widely distributed among adminis-

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

the tree in order to lower the hive with a long rope of bark or plaited 231
fiber, while beneath the tree men are prepared to take the hive, which is opened over a smoky fire. The men wear no protection, consequently they are badly stung. Boys are encouraged to help, and those who run away receive no honey. Honey may be eaten 263
alone or with manioc. No drink is made from honey only, but 273
ochasa is the name given to beer with honey in it. *Ovingundu* is a drink made from pounded corn which has been soaked in water to which a little honey has been added. The drink is allowed to remain untouched over night; thus it becomes sweet and is mildly intoxicating.

Wax is a very important item of trade. In the remote places 439
natives bring to small trading posts balls of wax which are about 257
two pounds in weight. These in former days were a standard of [436]
exchange in terms of which other values could be measured. These balls of wax are made into large cakes for foreign export. In the Easle country a fiber strainer is used for cleaning the wax. Honey is sometimes dried in very large baskets which are three feet in diameter and two inches deep. These baskets were not observed among the Ovimbundu, but they are used in the region of Cassanga in southern Angola. The honey of wild bees when eaten in the comb is palatable; it would be more so if one could disregard the presence of numerous dead bees.

The bow is the chief weapon of the hunter. The release of the 411
arrow is made with the index and middle fingers (Plate XXXIX, 171
Fig. 1). I have observed this method among the Ovimbundu of 224
the Benguela Highlands, in the region of Kipungo, in the far south among the Vakuanyama, and among the Vasele of the Novo Redondo hinterland. Arrows differ considerably in pattern as the illustrations show (Plate XVII, Figs. 1-9); the Ovimbundu have arrow-points of excellent workmanship. The manufacture of these arrow-points is [326]
one of the most skilled occupations of the blacksmith. Each man makes his own shafts and feathers them. The arrows of the Vasele have leaf-shaped iron points; so also have those used by the Vakuanyama.

Among the Ovimbundu are specialists who make bows from [463]
elastic woods called *usia* and *osambia*. The bow itself is *ohonji* and the arrow is *usongo*. At the third shot I saw a young Ocimbundu boy split a cane which was placed upright at a distance of thirty-three feet. The throwing club (*ohunya*) is used for killing small game such as hares.

224 an initiation feast when the training is ended. At the feast all people
874 of the village may be present but they do not dance; only the professional hunters may do so. The boy who is to be initiated must not speak or move until he "feels the spirit on his head"; then he gives meat to the people. After hunters have captured game for the feast, the blood from these animals is used to smear over the bow, arrows, and spear which have been made for the novice by his tutor. [326] This is analogous to the initiation of the young blacksmith who receives blood-sprinkled tools made by the master blacksmith.

224 There is in connection with the life and death of the professional
788 hunter a certain amount of ritual and precaution. The night before setting out to hunt is a time of dancing and renewal of the implements of the chase, which are kept in a house specially prepared for them. A hunter who is on the eve of departure calls in other professional hunters to share the ceremony, which includes the rubbing of the bows and other implements with palm oil. A libation of beer is poured on the bows, spears, and arrows, but no medicine-man is present. Some of the bows are never used, because they are merely the symbols of the personality and prowess of dead hunters whose names they have taken. The food and cooking pots of a hunter must never be associated with those of ordinary household use. If a hunter is following the tracks of an animal he must not point with his finger as this action will drive the animal away. The correct way to point is by use of the feathered end of an arrow. The hunter [34] must not sleep with his wife the night before setting out in quest of game.

224 I have frequently seen in front of the hut of a hunter a number
782 of skulls of antelope and other animals mounted on poles arranged in circular formation (Plate XXXII, Fig. 2). These skulls seem to be trophies, which are invariably taken away by the hunter if he finds a new home. There is no reason to doubt the statement that these skulls are an offering to the spirits who give good luck in hunting, because such a belief would be in harmony with the general respect for ancestral ghosts, which are thought to influence the affairs of the living.

764 On several occasions, notably near Ganda and in the Cassonge
224 country, I have seen the tombs of hunters. These are large structures built of slabs of granite laid with some symmetry. The rock tomb is invariably placed on the top of a commanding eminence of granite. The skulls of animals which the hunter has killed are piled on the top of the cairn, but I do not know whether these are the trophies

436 Balls of wax and tobacco were, and are now, definite standar
804 of trade. To some extent rubber as a medium of exchange has be used through contact with eastern Angola. The Umbundu wo *ocilila* expresses a weight of about thirty kilos.

805 There is no measure for minutes or hours. I have seen a ma
221 of the Luchazi tribe keep account of the number of days taken on journey by cutting notches on a stick. Ngonga says that the Ovim bundu reckon by cutting notches, also by knotting a piece of strin Three days would be expressed by the words *akumbi atatu* ("thre suns"). The word day or sun is used in fixing a time. There is n word for week. A month is *osai*, which is the word for moon. Whe the corn is ripe the people say, "We are in a new year." Anothe yearly time mark is the arrival of the first rains, probably in th middle of September.

The words *oku lima* ("to cultivate") yield the word *ulima*, whic designates the period between the beginnings of two rainy seasons Corn is planted about the time of the first heavy rains, which occu in late September or early October. Naturally, this important occa sion forms a somewhat uncertain time base; nevertheless it is th one used to express the lapse of years up to five in number. Afte such a period the estimation of time is unreliable.

INDUSTRIES

IRON-WORK

326 Among occupations of primary importance is that of the black-smith (*ocitinda*). Owing to the increasing importation of hoe blades and other iron goods, together with the facilities for collecting scrap iron, the winning and smelting of iron is increasingly rare. There are probably very few places where the old type of conical clay furnace now exists. Almost any fragments of iron are melted at the forge where a box is kept to hold nails, hoop iron from packing cases, and other fragments resulting from proximity to a European culture.

Nothing is mixed with the iron, neither is there any casting in molds. The only process is the forging of red-hot iron. The Ovim-bundu do not draw iron wire, although they know of the process which is practised by the Vachokue.

The work of the blacksmith was studied at the village of Njongolo in Elende. The men were for a time reticent respecting the nature of their training and the ceremony of initiation, but the chief of the village helped considerably by persuading the men to speak freely.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

Any boy who wishes to become a blacksmith may be trained for the work. It is not necessary that his father should have been a blacksmith. When the youth begins his training he must be eighteen years of age and physically robust. His first duties are the beating of hot iron on the anvil; he is also required to collect and soften fragments of iron. He works very hard but is never allowed to finish anything; the master has to complete the work. 326 874

At the end of two years the youth asks the master blacksmith to examine him. What is more important still, the master is asked to make the heavy hammer (*onjundo*), which is used for beating hot iron on the largest anvil (Plate XXXVIII, Fig. 1). There is no doubt as to the sacredness of this hammer, which is a symbol of the completion of apprenticeship. There is also the idea of the master handing on his skill to the pupil by personally making and presenting the tools. I made repeated efforts before being able to purchase one of these hammers; finally it was procurable only at a high price. The value is due to ritualistic associations, the large quantity of iron used in the making, and the labor required to weld the head to the shaft.

On the day of his inception the boy has to purchase four chickens, two male and two female, one pup, and a goat. The master blacksmith makes all the tools for the apprentice, but ritual centers chiefly in the fabrication of the big hammer (*onjundo*). While the master is making this the boy stands on the small anvil which is close to the ground, between the forge and the large anvil under the tree. 326 796

When the hammer (*onjundo*) is made, and while it is still red-hot, the handle is pushed into the belly of the dog. The goat and the four chickens are then killed. All the tools are brought together so that blood from the slaughtered animals may be sprinkled over them. The flesh of these animals is eaten with corn and beans. "The blacksmith calls many people to help him, and they like to eat the food," concluded my interpreter. [782]

During the entire ceremony, also throughout the feast, the boy stands on the anvil. There he remains until the master says, "You may speak and tell us what name you want." Perhaps the boy says, "I am Ndumbu." The people in the crowd clap hands and make a trilling with their fingers in their open mouths. The boy steps from the anvil; he is a blacksmith. My interpreter continued, "He must work hard and people must pay him. He used to work hard, but the master took the money."

There was an ancient belief that a blacksmith owed his skill to the help of the spirit of a person he had killed. Wooden effigies 326 778

3:Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

The principal products of the forge are axheads, which can be reversed in the shaft so as to form adzes. Hoe blades, tools for mat-making, brass bracelets, knives, and implements for gouging out the pith of gourds or hollowing out a drum, are also made. Arrowheads are likewise an important manufacture. 326

The blacksmith makes a saw blade, 47 cm in length, from hoop iron. The teeth of the saw are turned alternately to the right and left and the serrated blade is roughly hafted in wood (Plate XVI, Fig. 4). Another product of the forge is an iron tool hafted in wood. The pointed blade, which is round in cross section, tapers to a point used for boring holes in wood, after the tool has been made red-hot. Small axes, many of which are used ceremonially in dances, have remarkably well-fashioned blades decorated with punched designs in the form of geometrical patterns.

WOOD-CARVING

A glance over the list of trees named and used by the Ovimbundu indicates a complete knowledge of woodcraft which is in the hands of specialists. To name only a few, there is the *omanda* tree, also the *omue*, which yield charcoal for the smithy. *Ombula* wood is used for stools, while the elastic timber from the *omanda* tree is suitable for bows. The *ekenge*, *usamba*, and *ociyeko* trees supply bark for binding crosspieces to the upright poles when making the framework of a house; the same bark is used by Ovimbundu and Vachokue of eastern Angola for making bark cloth. In addition to the use of bark for these purposes it is made into large cylindrical receptacles for maize, while its use for beehives is general throughout Angola. Beehives are often made by professional hunters. A traveler notices the mutilation of trees from which complete cylinders of bark have been removed (Plate XL, Fig. 2); half of the cylinder makes a receptacle for carrying on the shoulder. 314

When a small pig is to be transported, four holes are bored in the bark container. Through these holes the legs of the animal are placed and tied together on the under side (Plate XXXI, Fig. 1). This is a more humane transportation than that of tying the feet of the animal to a pole which is supported on the shoulders of the two men who are carriers. 482

In the neighborhood of Cangamba fishermen make and use canoes of bark about fifteen feet in length (Plate LXXXV, Fig. 2). This illustration shows a man taking his nets into midstream where they will be pegged to the river bed. 501

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

straight lines. The legs show the usual flexion of the knees and a 532
shortening which is out of proportion to the body length. The lower limbs of most Angolan figures have these characteristics. The body of this figure is hollow and the head detachable. The incised head-dress is imitative of the coiffure of Vachokue women.

Cangamba, a village in eastern Angola, is a confluence of tribal 171
elements, namely, Vambuella, Luchazi, Babunda, and Vachokue, whose physical appearance, hairdressing, tooth mutilation, and tribal marks differ considerably. The man who sold the figurine brought it furtively. He was an Ocimbundu, but the work is of Chokue origin. The figure, I am informed, was filled with medicine, [755]
then placed near a patient who was undergoing curative treatment.

The figurine (*ngeve*) of a woman having a number of dark feathers 484
attached to her back has only one use. A caravan setting out for a 778
long journey is accompanied by a medicine-man whose outfit includes 787
such a figurine. Should the caravan leader be in doubt when choosing between two paths, the medicine-man sets up the image at the parting of the ways. He kneels before it and asks questions, then plugs his nostrils in order to make replies in a falsetto voice supposed to come from the figurine. Thus advised respecting the route to follow, the caravan continues its journey (Plate XXI, Fig. 5; p. 156).

The wooden figure (Plate XXI, Fig. 3) is of exceptional interest 326
because of its connection with the blacksmith's craft, which is asso- 775
ciated with introductory rites for apprentices. In former days a newly initiated blacksmith was expected to disappear for a period during which he killed a man. On returning to the work of his forge the blacksmith made a wooden figure of which this example, one of five obtained, is typical. The spirit of the murdered man took up its abode in the effigy and in this way helped with the work. The figure, which is of the usual dimensions, namely, 36 cm high, has the greater part of its surface covered with reddened earth (pp. 159–160).

Two figurines (Plate XXI, Figs. 1, 6) were obtained from 171
women of the Vachokue tribe in the village of Ngongo, Ngalangi. 842
Here the Vachokue and the Ovimbundu mingle to such an extent that customs are no doubt transferred from one culture to the other. These wooden images are used by childless women, or by women whose infants have died. The woman who sold these figures pressed them to her breasts to show the manner of use. People standing around smiled and nodded their approval. A wooden figure of this [845]
kind is substituted for a dead twin.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

the yam also was introduced. All these food plants spread with great rapidity, hence the extent of their distribution is not a guide to their antiquity. 171

THE BLACKSMITH'S CRAFT IN AFRICA

The antiquity of the blacksmith's occupation is not easy to determine, though the usefulness of the craft, and the accessibility of surface-ore in many parts of Africa, might incline one to favor a theory of rapid diffusion. There is an extensive literature dealing with the origin of the blacksmith's craft, which is variously attributed to the Negro, the ancient Egyptians, or to Hamitic invaders. 326 171

Diffusion of the craft, and not independent invention in many parts of Africa, is suggested by the continuity of like forms of apparatus; taboos of the same kind connected with the blacksmith; treatment of smiths as a special caste; also their employment of ritual in making furnaces, training apprentices, and consecrating their tools.

Iron objects requiring considerable skill in their manufacture are described by the earliest writers who came in contact with northern Angola, and early observations relating to iron gongs and axes have already been given. This evidence therefore suggests that the Ovimbundu must have had a knowledge of the working of iron when they entered the Benguela Highlands.

The following data from many parts of Africa are adduced to show the relation of the blacksmith's craft among the Ovimbundu to a wider background, of which Umbundu customs form a part. The Ovimbundu have developed ritual aspects of the blacksmith's craft which have already been described, and along with these the following instances should be considered.

Naturally, special local developments occur, but the general attitude of the Ovimbundu toward blacksmiths is in accord with a widely distributed body of African beliefs affecting Bantu, semi-Bantu, Sudanic, and Hamitic-speaking tribes, from which a few instances may be noted.

Among the Kpelle of Liberia a blacksmith receives no pay for work done for a chief, but he is free from military service. The blacksmith is a confidential person for the whole village, and he is conversant with many family secrets (D. Westermann, Die Kpelle, p. 170). Blacksmiths of the Ibo of Nigeria form a strong union which resents intrusion into the secrets of the craft. Blacksmiths are to be found only in certain towns which form halting places on

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

171 their itinerary (G. T. Basden, Among the Ibos of Nigeria, p. 176).
326 At Ife in a sacred grove I saw objects which were described as the hammer and the anvil of the first blacksmith. Over the anvil stone were the remains of a recently sacrificed dog. Such an offering is made twice a year to Ogun, the patron god of blacksmiths. Among the Masai, blacksmiths are said to be unlucky with cattle, and are therefore not allowed to own them. Smiths have their own language which is not well understood by other people of the tribe (A. C. Hollis, The Masai, p. 331). The Suk say that no woman may see a blacksmith at work because his tools would become heavy in his hand, then he would go mad and die. There is chanting by the blacksmiths during forging and molding (M. W. H. Beech, The Suk, p. 18).

Working in iron is accompanied by many special rites among the Bakitara; in fact, taboos are observed from the time of preparing the charcoal. Smiths belong to the serf class. Among the omens, sneezing is a warning from a ghost indicating that there is danger near and work is therefore discontinued. Offerings are made to the spirit of the hill where ore is dug in order to prevent burial of the diggers (J. Roscoe, IV, p. 218). When a Banyankole smith is making a new hammer he gives a feast at which six goats are killed. This sacredness of the large hammer was emphasized among the Ovimbundu.

Southwest of Lake Bangweolo a small shrine is erected near the smelting furnace, and here a prayer is offered to spirits of former smelters (H. B. Barnes, *J.R.A.I.*, LVI, p. 191). The Ila-speaking people of Rhodesia have a principal blacksmith who is named *munganga wa butale* ("the iron doctor"). Secrets of the craft are preserved by transmission from father to son only. The *munganga* takes charge of the preparation of iron and directs the ceremonies (E. W. Smith and A. M. Dale, I, pp. 203–207). E. Torday records that the Bambala have a T-shaped hammer with a pointed handle. "It is practically impossible to obtain a specimen of these hammers since death is the portion of a smith who parts with his tools." (I, p. 406.)

These examples do not reveal the origin of the blacksmith's craft and its ritual, but they explain Umbundu customs as part of a system of ideas which affects the whole continent of Africa south of the Sahara.

BANTU RELIGION AND SOCIAL SYSTEM

171 The spiritual beliefs of the Ovimbundu have already been shown to agree with those of the Congo basin and southwest Africa.

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2

BLACKSMITHS AT WORK, OVIMBUNDU, ELENDE

Fig. 1. Working bellows. Fig. 2. Forging axhead

[p. 391]

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2

BLACKSMITHS AT WORK, OVIMBUNDU, ELENDE

Fig. 1. Pounding on anvil. *Fig. 2.* Using cutting tool

[p. 392]

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professional hunters, and the smearing of the novice's bow and arrows with 224
blood from the meat is an important point of ritual. The bow and arrows
are made by the master for his pupil; a practice strictly analogous to the [326]
making of tools for a young blacksmith by the master who has trained
him.

In connection with the life and death of a hunter a certain amount of 177
ritual survives, and this despite long European contacts, game laws, and 224
the development of an economic system based primarily on extensive cul- [241]
tivation of maize and beans. But though these circumstances might tend to
discourage hunting and its attendant ritual, other facts have contributed
to survival. An embargo on guns and powder has led to prolonged use of
bows and arrows, with which all hunters are expert, though some, despite
official prohibition, have muzzle loading guns. Bows are in general use, and
their continuance has no doubt aided survival of ritual, since the rites
themselves are closely associated with the bows.

The night before a professional hunter sets out is an occasion for re- 224
newal of implements of the chase, that is, renewal in a spiritual sense, by a
ceremony designed to transfer power in a magical way from the disused
weapons of deceased hunters to the weapons in use. Weapons of dead
hunters are kept in a small hut to which a hunter repairs on the eve of de-
parture. He rubs the old weapons (bows, clubs, and spears) with palm-oil;
then pours over them a libation of beer. No medicine-man is present, so for
the occasion a hunter functions as his own priest.

It is hazardous and perhaps unprofitable to attempt an analysis of the
philosophy behind these ritual acts. Yet the weapons are symbols of the
personality and prowess of dead hunters whose names they have received.
Therefore the suggestion that the hunter is acquiring power from the dead
is reasonable, and the idea harmonizes with all that is known of ancestor
worship among Bantu tribes.

The food and cooking pots of a hunter must never be associated with
those of ordinary household use. If a hunter is following the tracks of an
animal he may not point with his finger, since this action will drive the
animal away. He may, however, point with the feathered end of an ar-
row. A dog must have his ears clipped in a peculiar way or he will not hear
and obey. A hunter may not sleep with his wife the night before setting out
in quest of game. Before leaving home a hunter washes his eyes with a con-
coction of herbs to give greater acuity of vision.

In any village the hut of a professional hunter can be readily distin- 224
guished by a number of poles erected near the entrance. On these supports 764
are placed the skulls of animals killed in the chase. A traveler cannot fail
to notice the tombs of hunters, which consist of cairns
of stones enclosing a

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ing become thin; but avoidance of milk is really one of those deeply rooted 234
food prejudices which even the people themselves could not explain if willing to do so.

The Vakuanyama of south Angola make butter by swinging two large calabashes on a pole, but though this practice is known to the Ovimbundu, they do not imitate the method. The flesh of cattle that have died from disease or accident is eaten, and uses are found for the hide, tail, and horns. 231
But cattle are not slaughtered except at a funeral feast, after which the horns are mounted on a pole over the grave, and perhaps the skulls are preserved near the site of burial.

Cattle serve as fines, sacrifices, and gifts, including a bride's dowry, but the social and religious importance is greater than the economic use. This is in accordance with what might be expected, since the pastoral activities of the Ovimbundu are but an adopted series of traits which can be found among numerous pastoral tribes of southwest, south, and east Africa. Wrapping the head of a king in oxhide which is ceremonially renewed has been mentioned.[1] In addition to this rite, the use of oxhide bracelets by mourners, and the use of an oxhide shroud for chiefs and kings, must be recorded. Use of ceremonial fire which is distributed from the chief's house when a new village is founded, and creation of new fire after epidemic sickness, are Umbundu traits which form part of the typical pastoral culture elsewhere.

Consideration of food supply has indicated the preservation of ritual and 182
belief, not intensively, but with sufficient force to show great tenacity of indigenous culture in the face of prolonged and disturbing intrusions.

HANDICRAFTS

Incomparably important is the craft of the blacksmith. The preservation 326
of ritual and belief was at once suggested by the workers' refusal to sell me any of the tools, especially the large hammer (onjundo), although the sum offered covered the value of the implements and the time lost in making new ones. After three months I acquired a large hammer from the wife of a blacksmith who had not worked at his trade for many years. She parted with the tool in the absence of her husband, but demanded a sum which would have purchased an ox. Other tools were made for me.

Information respecting the blacksmiths' ritual was given in the village of Njongolo in Elende, but I am informed that the beliefs are general, and they are certainly compatible with all that is known of blacksmiths' ritual among Bantu Negroes, Sudanic Negroes, and Hamiticized Negroes of east Africa. I found no mining of iron but saw a site where the ore was for-

[1] [Cf. p. 160, cat. 116. -- Analyst]

5: Hambly E-5 (1929-30) 1934 FP 13 Mbundu FP13

326 merly obtained. Blacksmiths now smelt scrap-iron from European sources.
[582] Among the Ovimbundu, blacksmiths are restricted in marriage only by those kinship laws arising from their classificatory system of relationships, and the operation of a system of cross-cousin marriage. The smiths are not an endogamous group, and the occupation is not hereditary.

But despite these differences, which are not quite in harmony with the general body of custom relating to Negro blacksmiths, the Ovimbundu preserve ritual which is part of a widely distributed attitude toward workers in iron.

When a boy begins his training he should be about eighteen years of age and physically robust. He is required to collect and soften fragments of iron in the charcoal fire, to work the bellows, and to beat iron on the anvil, but for a time he is not allowed to make implements, the chief of which are hoe blades and axe heads. At the end of two years the novice asks his master to examine him, and preparations are made for an inauguration ceremony should the youth have proved sufficiently skilled to become an independent blacksmith.

326 On the day of initiation the boy has to buy four chickens, two male and
782 two female, one pup, and a goat. The master blacksmith has already made a complete set of tools for presentation to his pupil, but the big hammer (onjundo) is not quite completed until the day of initiation. While the final touches are being given to this object the novice stands still on a small stone anvil which is situated between the forge and the large anvil.

When the hammer is completed, and while it is still red hot, it is thrust into the belly of the pup provided by the novice. The goat and the four chickens are killed and some of their blood is sprinkled over the new tools which are gathered in a heap. The blacksmiths invite their friends to feast on the flesh of the sacrificed animals.

326 The boy remains standing on the anvil[1] until the master says, "You may
553 speak and tell us what name you want." Perhaps the boy says, "I am Ndumbu;" then the people clap hands and trill with their fingers in their open mouths. My interpreter said, "The boy will work hard and people will pay him. He used to work hard but his master took the pay."

326 Near the large anvil may be seen one or more wooden figures which are
778 still regarded as essential to the work of the blacksmith. I was informed that a blacksmith owes his skill to the aid of a spirit of some person he has killed, and that this spirit uses the wooden figure as a dwelling place. If this information is reliable the wooden figure is of the nature of a shrine, but I was not able to learn of any ceremony for inducing a spirit into the wooden figure. The impression left was that the spirit of the murdered person re-

[1] [i.e., on the day of initiation of apprentice blacksmith. -- Analyst]

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sided permanently in the wooden figure. This ritual murder is now impossible, but the wooden figures are still used in the way described. 326 778

Women are never engaged in blacksmiths' work; neither are they employed as wood carvers. Among men wood carving is a specialized occupation, and within the craft itself are men who deal solely with one branch of the work. Thus in a village perhaps only one man is capable of making a drum, while another carves life-like wooden figures of animals, and a third specializes in the fabrication of household implements. [462] 532

Among the Ovimbundu women are the only potters, but I found just one exception in the case of a man who said that he learned the potter's craft in eastern Angola among the Vachokue. No ritual is connected with the making of pottery, but I observed that women always frequented one pit for their clay and in doing so passed better clay which was more accessible. I learned that a clay pit has to be consecrated by a medicine-man who kills a chicken and sprinkles the blood in the pit. All women at some time learn the arts of pottery making and basketry, but by the process of selection the industries become concentrated in the hands of the most skillful. 462 323 [782]

Only women make baskets; a craft in which they are skilled, especially in the gathering of plants and the extraction of dyes of soft shades. Such dyes have considerable endurance even though exposed to bright sunlight. Imported dyes are now competing with indigenous products, but the latter are still preferred in most localities. One might expect that women who are skilled in basket making would be expert weavers of mats, but this is not so. Mat making is in the hands of men who are skilled specialists, and within the mat making industry are at least three principal divisions of the craft, one for each type of mat. 462 285

Men spin cotton for mending clothes, but I have not seen women so engaged. I did not see any looms in use in Angola, but they survived up to a few years ago, and in the youth of my interpreter, who was about thirty years of age, looms worked by men were plentiful. 283 462 286

House building shows a division of labor according to age and sex. Men are responsible for cutting the poles, digging the trench in which these uprights are set, and binding the cross-pieces with bark. Men are likewise responsible for plastering the walls and laying the thatch. Women carry water to the clay pit and transport the puddled clay to the men who are plastering the walls. Children, some of them so young that they have to be rescued from a swampy grave, delight in puddling the clay with their feet. The rectangular pit is always as near the house as possible in order to minimize the labor of transport. I suggested that some of the tasks should 462 331

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

175 1853–4, crossed Africa from Benguela to the mouth of the Rovuma.[1]

484 Nor was this the only transcontinental journey effected by
439 Ovimbundu traders.[2] Such long-distance expeditions were not always the most profitable, and certainly the relatively shorter journeys of the time of the rubber trade must have been much more lucrative. Indeed, the judgement of Magyar was that the Ovimbundu generally got more enjoyment and excitement than
175 monetary gain from their expeditions.[3]

439 Mention has been made that the several Umbundu kingdoms
648 fell in line with the trading activities of Bailundu and Viye. By the beginning of the period of great activity this had eventuated in a loose system of alliances or mutual understandings to the effect that the traders and caravans of each would be tolerated in, and allowed passage through, the territory of the other. At times their 'trade-agreements' seem to have embraced all the Umbundu-speaking peoples, but violations were frequent,[4] and complaints of violations seem to have been almost the regular state of affairs
326 as between Viye and the Ciyaka-Cingolo-Citata group. There also
438 developed regional industrial and commercial specializations. In Magyar's time there was a great metal industry at Ekovongo, the
175 capital of Viye, making hoes for trade with the interior,[5] but by 1875 this work seems to have ceased,[6] for although hoes were still

[1] Cakahanga kept a diary which was edited by Silva Porto and published under the title 'Third Voyage' in the *Boletim Official* of Angola, 1856–7, and later in the *Annaes do Cons. Ultr. Ia Ser.* A summary of this diary appeared in the *Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society* of London, 1860, pp. 136–49, but the translator and editor mistakenly believed that Silva Porto had himself crossed Africa, and added to the confusion by calling the Ovimbundu 'Arabs from Zanzibar'. Silva Porto himself only went as far as Naliele, and it seems that there were 'Arabs' or Swahili in the party, but how far they accompanied it is not clear. That the diary was kept by Cakahanga is evident, for the 'Arabs' could write no language known to Silva Porto.

[2] See Magyar, op. cit., p. 297.

[3] Ibid., p. 299. This referred only to Magyar's time, 1849–57, but I feel it to be a judgement capable of wider extension. Serpa Pinto says that in 1878 he met many who 'turned over capital of a thousand to twelve hundred pounds sterling and some even more; one indeed . . . arrived during my sojourn . . . from the interior where he had traded on his own account to the extent of . . . about £3,500!' (op. cit., p. 161 f.). However, there were also losses and often, so that Magyar's dictum is worth remembering.

[4] e.g. see account of dispute between Ekuikui (Bailundu) and Njambayamina (Viye) in *Missionary Herald*, 1886, pp. 228 f., 452, 508; 1887, p. 463.

[5] L. Magyar, op. cit., p. 297.

[6] See negative testimony of Cameron, of Serpa Pinto, and of early missionaries.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

made, there as elsewhere throughout the Umbundu-speaking territory, their wholesale manufacture was only carried on in Ndulu. This was a natural specialization, for the best and most easily accessible deposits of iron ore are in the Ndulu country,[1] whose smiths have become justly famous. In exchange for hoes they received palm-oil or cattle from other regions, or salt, rum, or goods from the coast. Other regional specializations were—Kasongi and the Sele country for palm-oil, Cikuma for bees-wax (also obtained from the interior), cattle from Ngalangi, Kalukembe, Cilengi, and farther south. Ciyaka, Civula, and Bailundu took much corn-meal to the coast in those early days. 'Trade-agreements' were also made beyond the Umbundu-speaking area. At first these were strictly one-way affairs, allowing the Ovimbundu traders to operate in many lands, near and far, since this was to the advantage of the rulers of those lands. At the same time, the men from Bailundu and Viye did and said everything possible to discourage the interior peoples from venturing out on their own account.[2] Later, when the trade, as well as knowledge of the whites and their trade, spread, arrangements were made between the king of Viye and various interior chiefs allowing them to send their own caravans through to the coast, and gifts were exchanged periodically.[3]

Their very early introduction to articles of European use and manufacture has undoubtedly had great influence upon the development of the Ovimbundu. Their early and thorough familiarity with fire-arms certainly played a decisive role in their national formation and subsequent history. The introduction of domestic plants and animals from abroad is an important subject, but too broad for treatment at this time. The early introduction of European-manufactured goods has had profound influences.

[1] See article on smelting and smithing in Ndulu by F. W. Read in *Journal of the African Society*, 1902, pp. 44–9.

[2] Livingstone tells of the displeasure of the Ovimbundu ('Mambari') at meeting the Makololo near Luanda. The Ovimbundu tried to frighten them from trading with the whites with tall tales, making the whites out as impossibly clever magicians and wizards (op. cit., p. 384). Cameron and his east-coast carriers experienced the displeasure of Viye people owing to jealousy of the same sort, but no longer so openly expressed (op. cit., p. 406).

[3] The Muata-Yanvo of Lunda was one of those who had such a 'trade-agreement' with Viye. Silva Porto notes in his diary on 14 Jan. 1880 that an embassy from the Muata-Yanvo had arrived with a tusk of ivory for Cilemo (*Boletim Soc. Geog. Lisboa*, 5a Ser., p. 148).

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Only women make baskets; a craft in which they are skilled, especially in the gathering of plants and the extraction of dyes of soft shades. Such dyes have considerable endurance even though exposed to bright sunlight. Imported dyes are now competing with indigenous products, but the latter are still preferred in most localities. One might expect that women who are skilled in basket making would be expert weavers of mats, but this is not so. Mat making is in the hands of men who are skilled specialists, and within the mat making industry are at least three principal divisions of the craft, one for each type of mat. 462 285

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House building shows a division of labor according to age and sex. Men are responsible for cutting the poles, digging the trench in which these uprights are set, and binding the cross-pieces with bark. Men are likewise responsible for plastering the walls and laying the thatch. Women carry water to the clay pit and transport the puddled clay to the men who are plastering the walls. Children, some of them so young that they have to be rescued from a swampy grave, delight in puddling the clay with their feet. The rectangular pit is always as near the house as possible in order to minimize the labor of transport. I suggested that some of the tasks should 462 331

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462 be reversed and asked whether men could not carry the water. I was told that such a man would be laughed at and called a "he-woman." Yet 331 division of labor does not imply sex inferiority, and ridicule would arise from incongruity.

MEDICINE-MEN

759 The training of a medicine-man (ocimbanda) and a medicine-woman 791 (chambula) involves few formalities, but this class of work requires that a novice shall have "spirit in the head." When visited by a sick boy the medicine-man shakes his divination basket and if a certain combination of objects appears, he says, "Your father was ocimbanda and his spirit wants you." The boy who is thus adopted has to accompany the medicine-man, his master, carrying apparatus and standing near to play a small friction drum while the master is shaking his divination basket.

Specialization among medicine-men is carried to great degree of refinement, especially among those practitioners who profess therapeutic knowledge. I employed three medicine-men to collect plants, of which they appeared to have an expert knowledge. Umbundu names were given and the curative properties of each plant were explained with enthusiasm and evident conviction. The men were undoubtedly sincere in their own beliefs. A specialist who can cure blood in the urine, and another who is said to treat dizziness successfully, are greatly respected. The rainmaker is ocimbanda opulia, "the medicine-man of the rain," who dances while flourishing a cow-tail switch, and blowing a shrill whistle intermittently.

Ocimbanda is of course distinguished from onganga, since the former is concerned with socially beneficent tasks such as those mentioned, while [754] the latter may cause sickness, impotence, and sterility. In earlier days the task of finding sorcerers (onganga) by use of the poison ordeal was that of an ocimbanda. Medicine-women are called in to take care of difficult cases of childbirth, and I have seen a medicine-woman painting the face of a pregnant woman, who thereafter observed certain taboos.

Space will not permit enumeration of the contents of a divination basket and the significance attached to each item; neither can I give details of ceremonies for curing the sick or bringing a thief back to the village, but the foregoing notes suffice to show that the craft is specialized and still important. A medicine-man ceremonially washes a king or chief on rare occasions. He makes new fire by twirling; though flint and steel, also matches, are known. When a new village is founded a medicine-man stirs [782] the blood of sacrificed animals with the claws of a chicken; then he sprinkles this blood on each new house.

361 At the present time one type of village is surrounded by stout stakes ten or more feet high set in a roughly circular plan. The arrangement of alleyways within the village is complicated without following any symmetrical plan. A visitor sees only a labyrinth of passages between high poles, with here and there a rectangular wooden 417 gate at intervals along the passages. The door itself is made from ● 335 four stout heavy planks which are roughly hewn and as a rule undecorated, but occasionally I have seen the panels of a door carved with [531] designs representing the breasts of a woman; or there may have been simple geometrical patterns. The top ends of the door panels are massive spheres of wood bored through with holes. Through the holes in the tops of these panels a pintle is passed in such a way that the door is suspended from above. During the daytime the lower ends of the panels are raised to the level of the lintel. They are there supported on a Y-shaped upright which is erected in front of the doorway. At night the planks are removed from this support and allowed to hang downward in the doorway. There is a sliding cross-piece to push over the lower ends. The same arrangement is sometimes used to make a door for a hut. This old type of village doorway, common twenty years ago, is becoming increasingly rare.

342 The house of a king or a chief is larger than that of a commoner. 644 The enclosure which contains a king's house and the other buildings 621 is named *elombe*, while *epandavailo* is the word used to describe the entrance to this compound. The *elombe* is built by men and women who receive no payment. There is a ceremony when the compound is opened. The house of the chief, Kandimba Sanjahulu, near Bailundu, is rectangular, with mud walls raised on a platform of earth and stones. Whitewash has been applied to the outside of the walls and some ornament is given in the form of painted blue crosses. Complete study of structural types and the planning of internal [113] divisions has been made by F. and W. Jaspert, of the Städtisches Völkermuseum, Frankfort.

644 At a village near Cuma the house of the chief differed from the dwellings of commoners in being somewhat larger. The house had been abandoned, not because the chief died there, but because the chieftainship had been transferred to an adjacent village. The tomb, which will be described in connection with funeral rites, was a few yards from the house. This mausoleum was surrounded by a high wooden palisade, to a stake of which were attached the horns of an ox killed at the funeral feast, while the jawbone lay in the enclosure

(Plate XLV, Fig. 2). The house of bows for holding sacred relics will be described in connection with religion (Plate XLVI, Fig. 1). 644

In former days there used to be a hard mud floor for dancing, centrally placed in the village. 261 335

In the center of the village is the communal house where all men, and boys over four years of age, gather to eat their food, which is sent by the women. This *onjango* is the place of assembly for discussion of village affairs. A house of this kind at Bailundu is circular in form with a diameter of seventeen feet (Plate XLVIII, Fig. 1). In the middle of the *onjango* are stones forming a fireplace. In another such house there were jawbones of oxen. These were suspended from the walls as tokens of the payment of fines. There is no communal house for females. In some villages there is a common kraal for cattle. 344 [681] [417]

The king's compound usually contains: 644

(1) The king's house, which invariably has a separate sleeping room.

(2) A house and kitchen for each of his wives.

(3) A tomb for the burial of kings and their wives.

(4) The house of bows for staffs, bows, mats, and tobacco-pipes of dead chiefs.

(5) A house of meditation for the king (Plate LXXXIX, Fig. 1).

(6) Pens for pigs and chickens.

The guest houses (Plate XLVIII, Fig. 2) that I have seen were not in the king's compound. Granaries, which are conspicuous in every village, have been mentioned in connection with food supply (Plate XLIV, Fig. 1). Each house has its own granary. I have noticed garbage pits containing corn husks and refuse from sweet potatoes, but there is as a rule no organized scheme for disposing of refuse; dogs and pigs are the scavengers. There is no particular place for defecation; people use the bush. [485] 343 364

Every man has a knowledge of house-building. Women do not actually build, but, along with the children, they pour water into the clay pit and carry clay to the men who are plastering the walls. Ngonga says, "People would be surprised to see a woman building a house. They would call her a he-woman." Men help one another in house-building by giving reciprocal service for which there is a gift of food and beer. 462 476 [338]

A deep rectangular clay pit is made as close to the house as possible, and the children thoroughly enjoy puddling the clay with their 338

338 feet. A trench about eighteen inches deep is dug for the poles (*akoso*), which form the framework. The wattle work is tied to the uprights with strong strips of red bark before the plastering is begun.
341 The old type of Umbundu house was round, but most of the houses
171 now show a transition to square or rectangular forms (Plate XLIV, Fig. 2).

[531] Exterior wall-painting is found only in the northern districts of Angola (Plate LXXXIX, Fig. 2). Between Saurimo and Malange in the north, rectangular, painted houses are frequently seen. Wall-painting is a cultural trait from the Gongo region where that form of decoration is common.

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476 the village. Ngonga says, "The king never helps with any of the
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644 by communal labor. The king of the *ombala* of Ngalangi told me that a king always uses the house of his predecessor, which must not be pulled down. No repairs are permitted and the house is used until it is absolutely untenable.

354 The interior of a commoner's house has three hearth stones in the
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352 room is sometimes separated from the living room by matting. The bed is made from a cross-work of sticks supported on four Y-shaped posts, one at each corner. On the bed are coarse sleeping mats and possibly a modern blanket.

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252 pots of several sizes, pounders, and baskets. In many of the huts I found cooking going on in the general room, but frequently a sepa-

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP

PLATE IV

341

a. A new village (*itula*) near Elende

343

Photo. *M. W. Ennis*

b. A granary (*onila*), also used as a guest house

[facing p. 33]

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

245

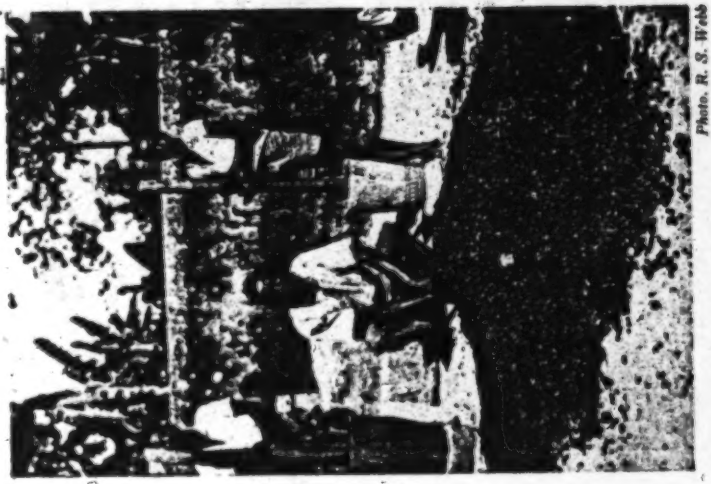

Photo. R. S. Webb

b. Hulling coffee (Bailundu Mission)

341

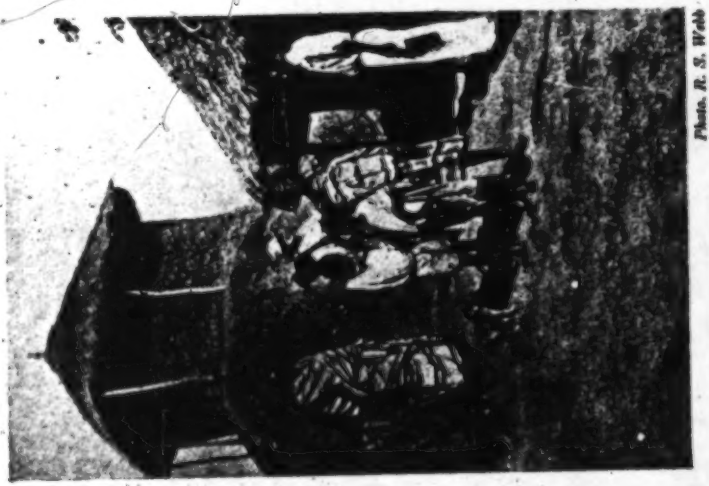

Photo. R. S. Webb

a. An Ecele village

[Facing p. 48]

338 feet. A trench about eighteen inches deep is dug for the poles (*akoso*), which form the framework. The wattle work is tied to the uprights with strong strips of red bark before the plastering is begun. 341 The old type of Umbundu house was round, but most of the houses 171 now show a transition to square or rectangular forms (Plate XLIV, Fig. 2).

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1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

perhaps in Ndulu. In Ngendo the Men's Club had taken over the 345
rocks just behind the headman's household for its meeting-place, 178
but the meetings were only occasional and there was no common meal.

The Village Plan

To speak of the plan of an Umbundu village may seem a con- 361
tradiction in terms, so haphazard seems the relation of houses, gardens, &c., to each other. Some houses are circular, but the [342]
majority are more nearly rectangular in shape. There is a palisade [417]
of hardwood sticks surrounding all the village except that side of the headman's household which is adjacent to the rocks used for a club-house. The headman had not bothered to keep up his own part of the fence since his only garden was a small tobacco plot fenced in by itself. The village is itself divided up by the 621
palisades which shut off one compound from another, each com- 343
pound containing the houses of from one to three households. Between the palisades are paths which lead on to the dancing floor [363]
and out of the village. In the village of Sekulu Sikilile there were twenty-five households with thirty-two houses in all. Each house (*onjo*) had its own granary (*osila*), and small chicken-coop built on stilts, and of all the houses only six had separate kitchens (*ociwo*). Nearly every household had separate pens for the pigs, goats, and sheep for the night. At one side of the headman's compound there was a common corral for the nine cattle which the villagers owned. Only the headman had a spirit-hut (*etambo*), [346]
used also for a storehouse, for entertaining a guest, and for his own bedroom should he sleep apart from his wives. Within the several 621
compounds were small gardens of tobacco and of maize and beans, 244
and just outside the village were two separate tobacco gardens. Just a few paces to the west was a small patch of wheat belonging to a man in the smallest ward. There was one household of two houses quite outside the palisades appropriately belonging to a man named *Kulika* (meaning 'Being-alone'). The water-holes [312]
and pounding rocks where meal was ground were between the [252]
several units of the village and were used in common. The fields were off to the east at from thirty minutes' to an hour's [241]
walk. The two smaller wards of Ciyanda and Kanjengo were so small that they were like two or three compounds by themselves. 621
The former had six households with eight houses, and the latter

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

361 A few words from the childhood recollections of Paulino
166 Ngonga Liahuka[1] bring out the facts.

787 One day we noticed that Sekulu Upalandanda[2] and my father went to the mountain of Kalilonge saying, 'We go to look around (and find out) whether the spirits (*olosande*) have agreed to our moving there.' Then another day we saw that the fathers were coming out of the spirit huts (*atambo*, plural), with the sacred chests (*ovimbangu*, plural), saying, 'We go to start a new village.' When they had arrived under the mountain of Kalilonge, they said, 'The spirits have agreed.' Then when everyone had moved, the elder, whose name had been Upalandanda at Muenesi, now changed his name, declaring, 'I am *Cilembo-camunda* (Shadow of Mountain). From that time the place was called Cilembo.

621 On seeking a new site the headman's fire in the old village is put out and the procession starts: a girl carries the sacred chest
[778] (*ocimbangu*) containing the relics (*ociye*) and the balls of iguana skin, and a boy the sacred bows.[3] They lead the way to the site
[346] selected where they cut a pole[4] suitable for a house-wall (*ekoso*), and tie a leaf of the *upu*[5] tree to it, dig a hole into which they put mud made by rain-water (*onata yondombo*),[6] and then together they lift the stick and let it fall into the hole. This is the beginning of the spirit hut (*etambo*), the first house to be built on the new site. The boy and the girl must take part ceremonially in each operation
[372] of building the hut. After that they together ignite (*oku tiafula*)[7] the new fire. A hen and a cock are killed, cooked on the new fire, and eaten inside the *etambo* by all who have taken part in the building. The headman and his wife cannot return to the old village but must camp at the new site (*itula*) and keep the new fire alight.
342 In building their houses, the villagers may commute (*oku usala*)
621 from the old site, but often the distance is too great to do this, and

[1] Of Ciyaka, ordained pastor of Elende Church in 1930. He was Hambly's chief informant.

[2] Sekulu Upalandanda was the younger brother of Ngonga's father's father, and therefore grandfather to Ngonga.

[776] [3] The bow (*ekonji*) of each ascendant who is now a guardian spirit (*osande*) of the family.

[4] When this first pole is cut, the axe should first be pointed toward the cardinal directions.

[824] [5] A leaf of the *upu* tree is used in the divorce ceremony. Its use here is a sign of divorce from the old site.

[6] Literally, 'mud of the rainy season'.

[7] This was formerly done with a fire drill (*vide* Hambly, op. cit., Plate XXXV), but not for a number of years now. When I showed the above picture to a group of 150 young men of 27 to 25 years of age, not one of them even knew what it was.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

therefore the usual procedure is to erect temporary grass-covered 621
huts (*olosingi*, plural) on the new site, in which they will live while 342
building their houses. Each hearth-fire must be ignited from the [372]
headman's fire.

The houses are built by the occupants themselves. The men's
club house is built by the communal labour of all men and boys 345
with a simple ritual designed to promote concord within, and to
ensure that the spirits (*olosande*) may find it a congenial abode. [776]
The spirits regularly attend the discussions in the *onjango*, and
there receive their daily portions. There also they are believed to
sleep.

At the first opportunity a hunt will be held and the meat brought 621
to the spirit-hut. The girl who carried the sacred chest receives 787
the heart and the boy the head. At this time, while a pot of sour
beer (non-alcoholic) (*ocisangua*) is being brewed, the girl sits
quietly in communion (*oku felevela*) with the spirits. With these
physical and spiritual preparations the village community makes
ready its home, a home which may seem poor and meagre to the
eyes of outsiders, but to a member of the community it is home
indeed and evokes in him, when absent, a feeling of great home-
sickness (*ongeva*). As the Umbundu version of 'Home, Sweet
Home' puts it:

[539]

Koliene, koliene, nda ku li ombambi ha yota
To your own, to your own, if there is cold you can warm yourself,

nda ku li onjala ha panga.
if there is hunger you can arrange.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

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CHAPTER VII

ADOLESCENCE

From Puberty until Marriage

The Youth (*Ukuenje* or *umālēhē*); The Girl (*Ufeko*)

THE onset of puberty is generally late among the Ovimbundu both 146
for boys and for girls.[1] The number of individuals who have exact records of their birth is not yet large, and for other reasons it is difficult to collect a large mass of exact data on this subject. From exact data in a few cases, biographical and genealogical data in more, and observation of a great many, I have concluded that, in general, puberty comes for girls at about fourteen to sixteen and for boys at about fifteen to seventeen. I have the impression that this may be due to faulty diet and other poor conditions of living. A careful study of this problem might yield interesting and significant results.

Soon after puberty young people generally stop sleeping in the 881
parents' house. The girls congregate in kitchens and each boy 342
builds himself a house. 'When he builds he does not wait for anyone to act as his teacher at all: he just goes ahead. A boy's father will show him saying, Begin there your house; stand a pole here, another there, and in the ground between, run a trench straight through. Then he will begin to cut poles and after that to build (the house) and thatch it. On the day of plastering it, they will show him how to mix the mud and throw it on, right up to the eaves.'[2] This is the boy's own house in which he will live through adolescence and young manhood, and to which he will bring his bride.

Before his marriage can take place, there must be a great deal of 883
preparation, most of which must be undertaken by the young man himself, just as he has himself built the house. Umbundu adolescent development involves growth and progress on those lines already begun in childhood, but it takes on a conscious urge and direction, for it is now preparation for the responsibilities of adult life,

[1] This is in contradiction to the opinion given by Magyar (op. cit., p. 283). Might it be that dietary and other conditions of life have changed enough in eighty years to produce this result? I think it more likely that Magyar's observations were faulty.

[2] R. Kavita Evambi: manuscript cited.

621 Ngendo is surrounded by a stick palisade except on that side of the headman's household which is adjacent to the rocks used as a club-house. The village itself (and each section) is divided up into compounds, each of which contains one to three houses,[1] and palisades divide one compound
[343] from the next; between are paths leading to the ocila and out of the village. Small gardens for tobacco, maize and beans are within the compounds, and the larger fields lie outside the village at from thirty minutes' to an hour's walk. In the headman's section of Ngendo there are 25 households containing 32 houses in all. Each house has its own granary
[343] *(ocila)* and a small chicken-coop built on stilts, and of all the houses only six have separate kitchens *(ocina)*. Most households had separate pens for pigs, goats and sheep for the night,[2] and at one side of the headman's compound there is a common corral for the nine cattle owned by
[622] the section. Only the headman had a spirit-hut *(etanbo)*, used also as a storehouse, for entertaining his guests, and for his own use should he wish to sleep apart from his wives.

621 Chiefs' villages or olombolo (singular ombolo) are often surrounded by
361 a belt of tall trees.[3] The chief's compound (the ilombe) is larger than those of other villagers, and, according to Hambly,[4] usually contains:
643 the chief's house, which always has a separate sleeping-room; a house and a kitchen for each of his wives; a tomb for the burial of the chief and his wives; a house of meditation for the chief, and pens for pigs and chickens.

342 Umbundu houses are usually circular, but sometimes rectangular, and made of wattle and daub, with thatched roofs. Sometimes huts are divided
[343] by matting into a living-room and a sleeping-room. Cooking is often done in the house itself, but sometimes a separate hut is built as a kitchen.[5]

345 The *onjango* (the Men's Club House) consists of a cone-shaped roof set on stout hardwood poles instead of a wall, and left open so that those for whom there may be no place inside may still see and hear what takes place within.[6]

341 Villages are moved when fields are exhausted and others are not available nearby[7] or, more often, when there has been illness or death in the
[768] village, which implies that some action displeasing to the spirits has been committed. (No information is available concerning the usual length
776 of life of a village.) When the new site is chosen, the headman's fire in the old village is extinguished, and a procession starts, led by a boy
774 carrying the sacred bows *(ohonji)* of each ancestor who is now a guardian
796 spirit of the family (i.e. the olose), and a girl carrying the sacred chest *(ocitabango)* containing the relics *(ocitye)* and the balls of iguana skin.[8] On arriving at the site the boy and girl cut and plant the

(1) In this section there were 13 goats, 39 sheep, 100 pigs and about 200 chickens. (Childs, op.cit. p.31) (2) Ibid.
(3) Hambly, (2) 1934, p.206 et.al. It was a custom of the Ngangela peoples to plant trees round the village and dedicate them to deceased chiefs. (See McCulloch 1950, p.68.) There is no evidence that the trees surrounding Umbundu villages have any ritual significance, although the custom may have been taken over from the conquered Ngangela peoples.
(4) Op.cit., p.206. (5) Ibid., p.39
(6) Childs, personal communication.
(7) See often to European settlement. (8) See below, p.67.

On arriving at the site the boy and girl cut and plant the first pole, which is to be a part of the new etambo (spirit hut). The boy and girl must take part ceremonially in each operation of building the hut, and when it is built they ignite the new fire. A hen and a cock are killed, cooked on the new fire, and eaten inside the etambo by all who have taken part in building it. The headman and his wife must remain on the new site to keep the fire alight; other villagers may commute from the old village or erect temporary grass shelters on the new site. Houses are built by the occupants themselves, although men may give each other mutual help, for which there is a gift of food and beer. The onjango is usually built by the communal labour of all boys and men, and on its completion a simple ritual is performed to promote harmony within and to welcome the spirits, who are believed to sleep in the onjango and to take part in all discussions within it.[1]

The village group: composition

Childs describes the relationship of the villagers of Ngundo to each other as typical of Umbundu country. Most of the heads of households are related agnatically to their respective section-heads (who are presumably also related agnatically to each other, since the village is based on the *olusu* group); Childs does not however discuss the relation of section heads to each other or to the village headman. He gives a table in which the householders are divided into six categories according to their relationship to their various section-heads:

1.	Patrilineal relatives of section head:	Section A (headman's)	21
		" B	2
		" C	1
		" D	2
			26
2.	Matrilineal relatives of section head:	Section B	4
		" C	1
		" D	1
			6
3.	Sisters' sons (or daughters)[2]	Section B	4
		" C	1
			5
4.	Relatives by marriage	Section A	2
		" B	1
			3
5.	Relationship not definitely known	Section B	2
6.	Former slaves	Section A	1
		" B	1
			2

(1) This section is based on Childs, 1949, pp.57-9.
(2) They could, of course, have been included as matrilineal relatives and patrilineal relatives, since they belong both to the *olusu* and to the *elunga*.

361 At the present time one type of village is surrounded by stout stakes ten or more feet high set in a roughly circular plan. The arrangement of alleyways within the village is complicated without following any symmetrical plan. A visitor sees only a labyrinth of passages between high poles, with here and there a rectangular wooden 417 gate at intervals along the passages. The door itself is made from 335 four stout heavy planks which are roughly hewn and as a rule undecorated, but occasionally I have seen the panels of a door carved with [531] designs representing the breasts of a woman; or there may have been simple geometrical patterns. The top ends of the door panels are massive spheres of wood bored through with holes. Through the holes in the tops of these panels a pintle is passed in such a way that the door is suspended from above. During the daytime the lower ends of the panels are raised to the level of the lintel. They are there supported on a Y-shaped upright which is erected in front of the doorway. At night the planks are removed from this support and allowed to hang downward in the doorway. There is a sliding crosspiece to push over the lower ends. The same arrangement is sometimes used to make a door for a hut. This old type of village doorway, common twenty years ago, is becoming increasingly rare.

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352 room is sometimes separated from the living room by matting. The bed is made from a cross-work of sticks supported on four Y-shaped posts, one at each corner. On the bed are coarse sleeping mats and possibly a modern blanket.

356 The miscellaneous contents of the hut are gourds, dippers, cooking
252 pots of several sizes, pounders, and baskets. In many of the huts I found cooking going on in the general room, but frequently a sepa-

VII. EDUCATION

Industrial Training and Division of Labor

871 Usually there is no formality connected with the industrial and occupational training of Ovimbundu children. The section dealing with play shows that boys and girls learn by spontaneous imitation of their elders.

874 There are, however, exceptions to this general truth. Special rites connected with the training and inauguration of blacksmiths and hunters have been described. The training of medicine-men and women will be dealt with in chapter IX, "Religion."

462 463 In describing economic life in chapter V, division of labor on a sex basis; also specialization in industry because of peculiar tastes and aptitudes, were noted. There is clearly a twofold division in industrial life. In the first place sex determines occupation, and within this primary grouping there is a secondary grouping depending [467] on personal preference and individual ability. I have found no instance of exclusive hereditary right to any occupation or industry.

462 The net result of the Umbundu system of division of labor is indicated by the following summary:

[342] When building houses, men dig the rectangular trench, cut the poles for the framework, lash the crosspieces, cut grass and lay the thatch, then place clay over the wattle walls. Women carry water for mixing the clay and convey the moist clay to the plasterers. [224] Children puddle the clay with their feet. Males are hunters both professional and general. During a communal hunt women and children assist in driving game, which is frightened by the firing of [857] grass. Boys organize games in which they imitate these activities. [226] Men fish with a line and bait, whereas women use baskets and [224] narcotic poison. Men and boys take care of cattle and have charge of dogs. Women and girls give what slight attention is afforded to other domestic animals. Male specialists castrate bulls and goats.

[241] During agricultural operations men clear the ground and burn the bush. Women carry on hoe cultivation without assistance from [482] men. Men are the chief carriers in caravans, but women and children may sometimes be seen carrying loads. They march in line with the men but have smaller burdens. Males are employed in blacksmith's work, wood-carving, making weapons and tools, weaving mats, dressing hides, spinning cotton, and formerly in weaving on an upright loom. Men are exclusively the makers of

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BUILDING CONSTRUCTION, OVIMBUNDU, ELENDE

Fig. 1. Mulao bin. Fig. 2. Framework of house

[p.398]

S. Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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VAKUANYAMA TRIBE, SOUTH ANGOLA

Fig. 1. Man treading bile, for making woman's skirt. Fig. 2. Typical dwelling, Dom Manuel

[p.42]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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TYPES OF VACHOKUE, MONA KUIMBUNDU, NORTHEAST ANGOLA

Fig. 1. Women pounding maize. Fig. 2. Dwelling

[p.438]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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SCENES IN CENTRAL ANGOLA

Fig. 1. House where king communes with ancestral spirits, Ngalangi
Fig. 2. House with painted walls, near Bailundo
Fig. 3. Group showing mixture of tribes at Ngalangi

[p. 443]

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

perhaps in Ndulu. In Ngendo the Men's Club had taken over the 345
rocks just behind the headman's household for its meeting-place, 178
but the meetings were only occasional and there was no common meal.

The Village Plan

To speak of the plan of an Umbundu village may seem a con- 361
tradiction in terms, so haphazard seems the relation of houses,
gardens, &c., to each other. Some houses are circular, but the [342]
majority are more nearly rectangular in shape. There is a palisade
of hardwood sticks surrounding all the village except that side of [417]
the headman's household which is adjacent to the rocks used
for a club-house. The headman had not bothered to keep up his
own part of the fence since his only garden was a small tobacco
plot fenced in by itself. The village is itself divided up by the 621
palisades which shut off one compound from another, each com- 343
pound containing the houses of from one to three households.
Between the palisades are paths which lead on to the dancing floor [363]
and out of the village. In the village of Sekulu Sikilile there were
twenty-five households with thirty-two houses in all. Each house
(*onjo*) had its own granary (*osila*), and small chicken-coop built
on stilts, and of all the houses only six had separate kitchens
(*ocimo*). Nearly every household had separate pens for the pigs,
goats, and sheep for the night. At one side of the headman's
compound there was a common corral for the nine cattle which
the villagers owned. Only the headman had a spirit-hut (*etambo*), [346]
used also for a storehouse, for entertaining a guest, and for his own
bedroom should he sleep apart from his wives. Within the several 621
compounds were small gardens of tobacco and of maize and beans, 244
and just outside the village were two separate tobacco gardens.
Just a few paces to the west was a small patch of wheat belonging
to a man in the smallest ward. There was one household of two
houses quite outside the palisades appropriately belonging to a
man named *Kulika* (meaning 'Being-alone'). The water-holes [312]
and pounding rocks where meal was ground were between the [252]
several units of the village and were used in common. The
fields were off to the east at from thirty minutes' to an hour's [241]
walk. The two smaller wards of Ciyanda and Kanjengo were so
small that they were like two or three compounds by themselves. 621
The former had six households with eight houses, and the latter

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FF

PLATE IV

341

a. A new village (*itula*) near Elende

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Photo. M. W. Ennis

b. A granary (*osila*), also used as a guest house

[facing p. 33]

2: McCulloch E-4 (1945-51)1952 FP13 Mbundu FP13

Ovimbundu women braid their hair neatly in strands across their foreheads, and decorate the braids with small blue and white trade beads.[1] 302

MAIN FEATURES OF ECONOMY

AGRICULTURE[2]

Main crops are maize and several kinds of beans. Subsidiary crops include: sorghum, kaffir corn, emmer wheat, manioc, peanuts, squash, sweet potatoes, garden vegetables, a little rice, cotton, sugar-cane and tobacco. Fruit-trees such as the papaya, banana, loquat, tangerine, lemon, peach and apple, are increasingly cultivated, and, to some extent, coffee. Upland fields for the principal crops of maize and beans are cultivated during the rainy season, and, to piece out the harvest, river gardens for secondary crops are used in the dry season. 241

The principal corn-gardens

Traditionally men work with their wives in the heavier labour of clearing new fields, but today the demands of contract labour are such that few are able to help.[3] Before the rains begin in early September, women prepare the fields for planting. If a new plot is to be used, it is first cleared with a small hatchet. Tree stumps are left two or three feet high; after the field has been cultivated for a year or two and the tree-stumps have dried and rotted, they are burned off and cleared away. When the rainy season has set in and the ground is thoroughly wet, the main corn-fields are planted. The ground is dug with a hoe and ridged slightly, the ridges following the contour of the land, so that the rain will not wash away the soil, and so that the moisture will be held. Occasionally irrigation is used, small channels being led from hillside streams to the gardens. Maize is dropped by hand on the ridges, and the seeds covered with the foot. Beans and squash are planted with the corn. In January there is usually a break in the rains, and this is the time when the bean crop ripens. (This is a critical period, since if the dry spell lasts too long the corn crop is blighted, but if it is too short the beans will not ripen.) The vines are pulled up and put in the field hut to dry. Later the beans are beaten out of the pods and stored. 241 [462] [312]

In each field there is a grass hut, which is used as a shelter from showers, as a place for drying beans or corn, and as living quarters when the corn is sprouting. (When a woman decides that it would be more convenient to live by her field, which requires constant guarding against birds, she may live in her field hut with her children for several weeks.) 241 343 ●

As the dry season commences, the corn crop ripens. When it is ripe, it is plucked, dried and shelled, and stored in the *osila*, a granary on posts, for future use. One *osila* is used for each household. When required, the corn is hulled and pounded into the meal which forms the staple food.[4] [257] [252]

(1) Hambly pp.129-32, and illustrations; Childs, personal communication.
(2) Cushman, 1944, pp.72-8; Hambly, (2) 1934, pp.146-8, and Childs, personal communication. (3) Childs, personal communication.
(4) For a good description of the preparation of corn-meal, see Cushman, pp.77-8.

621 Ngendo is surrounded by a stick palisade except on that side of the headman's household which is adjacent to the rocks used as a club-house. The village itself (and each section) is divided up into compounds, each of which contains one to three houses,(1) and palisades divide one compound [363] from the next; between are paths leading to the *ocila* and out of the village. Small gardens for tobacco, maize and beans are within the compounds, and the larger fields lie outside the village at from thirty minutes' to an hour's walk. In the headman's section of Ngendo there are 25 households containing 32 houses in all. Each house has its own granary [343] *(osila)* and a small chicken-coop built on stilts, and of all the houses only six have separate kitchens *(ociwo)*. Most households had separate pens for pigs, goats and sheep for the night,(2) and at one side of the headman's compound there is a common corral for the nine cattle owned by the section. Only the headman had a spirit-hut *(etambo)*, used also as a [122] storehouse, for entertaining his guests, and for his own use should he wish to sleep apart from his wives.

621 Chiefs' villages or *olombala* (singular *ombala*) are often surrounded by
361 a belt of tall trees.(3) The chief's compound (the *ilombe*) is larger than those of other villagers, and, according to Hambly,(4) usually contains:
643 the chief's house, which always has a separate sleeping-room; a house and a kitchen for each of his wives; a tomb for the burial of the chief and his wives; a house of meditation for the chief, and pens for pigs and chickens.

342 Umbundu houses are usually circular, but sometimes rectangular, and made of wattle and daub, with thatched roofs. Sometimes huts are divided by matting into a living-room and a sleeping-room. Cooking is often done [343] in the house itself, but sometimes a separate hut is built as a kitchen.(5)

345 The *onjongo* (the Men's Club House) consists of a cone-shaped roof set on stout hardwood poles instead of a wall, and left open so that those for whom there may be no place inside may still see and hear what takes place within.(6)

361 Villages are moved when fields are exhausted and others are not available nearby(7) or, more often, when there has been illness or death in the [768] village, which implies that some action displeasing to the spirits has been committed. (No information is available concerning the usual length
776 of life of a village.) When the new site is chosen, the headman's fire in the old village is extinguished, and a procession starts, led by a boy
778 carrying the sacred bows *(ohonji)* of each ascendant who is now a guardian spirit of the family (i.e. the *olusa*), and a girl carrying the sacred
796 chest *(ocimbangu)* containing the relics *(ociye)* and the balls of iguana skin.(8) On arriving at the site the boy and girl cut and plant the

(1) In this section there were 13 goats, 20 sheep, 100 pigs and about 100 chickens. (Childs, op.cit., p.31) (2) Ibid.
(3) Hambly, (2) 1934, p.206 *et.al.* It was a custom of the Ngangela peoples to plant trees round the village and dedicate them to deceased chiefs. (See McCulloch 1950, p.68.) There is no evidence that the trees surrounding Umbundu villages have any ritual significance, although the custom may have been taken over from the conquered Ngangela peoples.
(4) Op.cit., p.208. (5) Ibid., p.10
(6) Childs, personal communication.
(7) Due often to European settlement. (8) See below, p.47.

824 *Okalalūluka*. This tree has leaves which are used in treating a skin disease.
813 *Uvendangulure*. This small tree, only three feet in height, gives straight twigs which are used in making arrow shafts.

FOOD SUPPLY

COLLECTING AND HUNTING

222 Collecting of natural products which serve as food substances is
462 chiefly in the hands of women and children, though an exception has to be made in the instance of honey, which is gathered by men and boys.

Boys diligently search for nests, noting their location so as to be able to visit them again when the fledglings are large enough to serve as food. Large numbers of women and children may be seen
252 gathering caterpillars in gourds. The insides of the caterpillars are
222 squeezed into boiling water to make soup.

When a cloud of locusts appears, as in 1925, the creatures are gathered. They are sometimes fried, or they may be boiled in water, dried, and preserved with salt in earthenware pots.

A number of miscellaneous items of the food supply were mentioned in connection with names of trees whose fruits are gathered.

223 Boys engaged in food-gathering usually carry small bows and
[411] blunt wooden arrows (*ocilavi*). One type of bird arrow is fixed to the bowstring. The forward end of the arrow is split so that it may contain small stones that are ejected when the string is released. From the wild fig tree mucilage is obtained and this is boiled until it forms a thick paste which is smeared on the boughs of trees.
[231] Some of the small birds captured in this way are eaten, others are kept in wicker cages made by children.

343 In all parts of Angola large cylindrical beehives may be seen
171 fixed high in the trees (Plate XC, Fig. 2). Two types of hive have been noted in particular. In the Elende district a hive is made by opposing two half cylinders of wood each about three feet long, so forming a hive which has a diameter of one foot. The ends are covered, with the exception of a small round hole. The whole structure is bound round with grass which is kept in position by lashings of bark. In the neighborhood of Cassanga a difference in the structure of the hives was noticed. This type of hive is made from a cylinder of strong reddish bark, the edges of which are fastened together with stout wooden pegs. The dimensions are the same as for the hive used in Elende, but the hive of bark is uncovered.

231 In the Elende district honey of wild bees is removed from the hives in the months of August and December. One man ascend-
[see pp. 138-140, category 116]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

226 spear eight feet long, the end of which consisted of ten sharp prongs
462 of palm stem (Plate LXXIII, Fig. 1).

Near Cangamba in eastern Angola, fishing in the Kwando River
[171] occupied numerous men and women of the mixed tribes in the district, namely, Vachokue, Luchazi, and Babunda. Men paddled into midstream in small bark canoes from which fishing operations were directed. The fishermen carried small conical string nets, which were attached to stakes in such a way that the openings of the nets faced upstream. Vachokue women, working in pairs, dragged baskets against the current (Plate LXXXV, Figs. 1, 2).

AGRICULTURE AND COOKING

343 *Osila* is the Umbundu word for the granary which stands on
243 wooden supports (Plate XLIV, Fig. 1); this *osila* is for the restricted family, and there is one *osila* for every house. The Ovimbundu store their corn in bulk, but in the Esele country I noted that the cobs themselves were carefully packed. Each Ocimbundu girl culti-
[432] vates a small patch of ground, the produce of which she is at liberty to sell in order to buy brass ornaments, beads, and palm oil.

In addition to maize, barley, oats, and wheat, with here and
241 there a little rye, are occasionally grown. There are three colors of beans, red, white, and black. There is no attempt to keep the varieties
[651] separate, so they cross-fertilize freely. The Ovimbundu try to
[438] cultivate a surplus of beans and maize which they use to pay their taxes to the Portuguese, likewise to sell at the stores of traders.

252 Corn is pounded on the rock which has been used for generations
512 after it has been consecrated by sprinkling the blood of a chicken. Pounding begins as early as five o'clock in the morning, before sunrise, and from that time to sunset the pounding-rock is in use. The
[521] rock is evidently regarded as a meeting place for social intercourse; it is undoubtedly the center of village gossip so far as the women are concerned (Plate XXXVI, Fig. 2).

As corn alone is considered a poor food, it is sprinkled on boiling water to which beans are added. Cooking goes on from early morning to sunset over a slow fire. Children sometimes receive as their evening meal a thick plastic cake of mushed corn to which green leaves of a squash are added.

252 There are five kinds of manioc resembling one another in general appearance, but the Ovimbundu distinguish the plants, and reserve for each what they consider to be appropriate preparation. The method varies for sweet and bitter varieties of manioc.

312 bananas, but one could not say that irrigation is generally practised even when circumstances permit.

245 The papaya and the banana are increasingly cultivated, but they are by no means generally distributed. Here and there I [249] have seen a little sugar-cane cultivated by natives for their own [244] use. Near the main railway natives may be seen selling their products, which include cabbages and tomatoes. Some natives are today planting the guava tree which yields sweet palatable fruits. The fruits *olosia* are collected from the *usia* tree. When ripe, the fruit is yellow, round, and about two inches in diameter. These fruits are gathered in September, and the kernels, which are about the size of walnuts, are eaten uncooked. No fruits are collected for storage. *Olombula* fruits ripen in October, when they are eaten raw.

264 Each wife sends the food which she has cooked in her own kitchen to the *onjango* ("council house"). After carrying the food to this house of assembly, where the men meet each evening, the women return to their houses to eat alone, or with the young children.

343 When there is a plurality of wives each has her own house and 252 kitchen. Ngonga states that separate kitchens built outside the [595] living houses are becoming more rare. The poor have their kitchens in the living room because they cannot provide separate structures for living and cooking.

264 The first meal is taken between five and six o'clock in the morning, 262 the most usual food being meal sprinkled on boiling water to form 252 a paste which is eaten with sweet potatoes. A mush of beans is eaten at night; generally there is no meal at midday. Three pounds of cooked beans are eaten by a person for one meal. Over the cooking pots leaves are placed to keep in the steam, especially when the pot contains sweet potatoes. I have made a meal from the sticky, gluey paste which results from sprinkling meal on boiling water. The chief objection to this food is the unpleasant quantity of grit in the meal, owing to the fact that it is pounded on the rocks. Manioc and sugar-cane are chewed at irregular intervals of the day.

262 The amount of meat consumed by the Ovimbundu is small in comparison with the quantity of vegetable food used. This adoption of diet of a particular kind is largely a matter of habit, and there is no good reason why meat should not form a larger proportion of the food supply. The Ovimbundu do not kill their cattle for food though they will eat the meat of oxen which have died from natural causes.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

(Plate XLV, Fig. 2). The house of bows for holding sacred relics will be described in connection with religion (Plate XLVI, Fig. 1). 644

In former days there used to be a hard mud floor for dancing, centrally placed in the village. 261 335

In the center of the village is the communal house where all men, and boys over four years of age, gather to eat their food, which is sent by the women. This *onjango* is the place of assembly for discussion of village affairs. A house of this kind at Bailundu is circular in form with a diameter of seventeen feet (Plate XLVIII, Fig. 1). In the middle of the *onjango* are stones forming a fireplace. In another such house there were jawbones of oxen. These were suspended from the walls as tokens of the payment of fines. There is no communal house for females. In some villages there is a common kraal for cattle. 344 [681] [417]

The king's compound usually contains: 644

(1) The king's house, which invariably has a separate sleeping room.

(2) A house and kitchen for each of his wives.

(3) A tomb for the burial of kings and their wives.

(4) The house of bows for staffs, bows, mats, and tobacco-pipes of dead chiefs.

(5) A house of meditation for the king (Plate LXXXIX, Fig. 1).

(6) Pens for pigs and chickens.

The guest houses (Plate XLVIII, Fig. 2) that I have seen were not in the king's compound. Granaries, which are conspicuous in every village, have been mentioned in connection with food supply (Plate XLIV, Fig. 1). Each house has its own granary. I have noticed garbage pits containing corn husks and refuse from sweet potatoes, but there is as a rule no organized scheme for disposing of refuse; dogs and pigs are the scavengers. There is no particular place for defecation; people use the bush. [485] 343 364

Every man has a knowledge of house-building. Women do not actually build, but, along with the children, they pour water into the clay pit and carry clay to the men who are plastering the walls. Ngonga says, "People would be surprised to see a woman building a house. They would call her a he-woman." Men help one another in house-building by giving reciprocal service for which there is a gift of food and beer. 462 476 [338]

A deep rectangular clay pit is made as close to the house as possible, and the children thoroughly enjoy puddling the clay with their 338

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BUILDING CONSTRUCTION, OVIMBUNDU, BLENDE

Fig. 1. Maize bin. Fig. 2. Framework of house

[p. 390]

S. Hambly E-8 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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STORAGE OF MAIZE, YAKDANYAMA, SOUTH ANGOLA

Fig. 1. Grain basket. Fig. 2. Shelter for basket.

[p. 420]

2 Hamby E-9 (1929-1930) 1934 FF13 Miranda FF13

[P. 444 u]

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EAST-CENTRAL ANGOLA

Fig. 1. Women of Vimanquilla, Camanga. Fig. 2. Dwellings, Ganduburo

were polygynous and only one of these contain more than two wives.[1]

The village or inbo (plural ovoinbo) may consist of from 5 to 500 such households, the heads of which are usually related agnatically to each other. Most, but not all, of the larger villages are olombolo (villages of chiefs or sub-chiefs). These are said to have had formerly as many as 5,000 inhabitants,[2] but today few have as many as 3,000, and there is a general tendency towards smaller villages and even isolated households.[3] There are in general two quite different types of Umbundu village according to the terrain on which they are built. Those on the plains, where there is room to spread out, tend towards a circular shape, with the ocile and onjango (see below) near the centre. The various sections of the village may appear as quarters of a single whole, or they may be spread out haphazardly. Mountain villages[4] may have houses built on ledges almost one on top of the other. Here there is often no room or no suitable soil within the palisades for gardens or for the dancing-floor *(ocila)*, which are found outside the palisade. Different sections of the village tend to string themselves out horizontally along the mountain-side, or to find successive ledges.

The typical village of Ngando described by Childs, in Kasongi chiefdom, etumba (sub-chiefdom) of Ekonga, is of an intermediate type, built on a slope. Ngando has 196 inhabitants, of whom 42 are men, 60 are women, and 94 children. The village is divided into four smaller sections or wards (ovitawila pl.), of which the largest, that of the village headman *(ukulu)* has 127 inhabitants, while the other three have 19, 13 and 37 inhabitants respectively. The word inbo (village) may also be used for either of the two larger sections by themselves. Each section has its own elder, but the dancing-floor *(ocila)*, which is the centre of village life, is in the headman's section. The ocila is primarily a place for recreation, but religious functions also are held in it, and formal cases tried. Formerly most villages had a second communal building, the onjango or "Men's Club House"[5] whose importance was almost as great as that of the ocila. Here all the men, youths and boys gathered for the evening meal, and here guests were entertained, lesser judicial cases settled, and the day's work and gossip discussed, while young boys, sitting in the background, gained much of their knowledge of tribal history and custom.[6] Today the onjango exists and maintains its former function chiefly in parts of Ngolangi, Viye and possibly Ndulu. It does not exist in Childs' typical village, where the "Men's Club" holds only occasional meetings on the rocks behind the headman's house, and where the common evening meal no longer takes place. The reason suggested for the disappearance of the onjango is lack of leisure owing to demands for road work (in the immediate vicinity of Ngando), for contract labour, involving absences of from six months to a year,[7] and the difficulty of securing tax-money.

(1) And polygyny is thought to be more frequent here than in other areas. See above, p.23.
(2) According to Bagyar, 1951.
(3) Childs, op.cit., p.25, fn.1. Childs does not suggest any reason for this tendency.
(4) Formerly many villages were built on mountains for defence, and capital villages of this type may still be seen.
(5) The "Men's Club" seems to be simply a gathering of all the adult men (and possibly also the juveniles) of the village.
(6) Childs, op.cit.; Cachaus, 1951. Bagyar, (2) 1954.
(7) Most of the labour on the Benguella Railway to Lobanda, and many Ovimbundu travel to the Union of South Africa for work. (Childs, op.cit., p.26, et.al.)

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Continuing at the side the boy and girl cut and plant the

first pole, which is to be a part of the new etambo (spirit hut). The boy and girl must take part ceremonially in each operation of building the hut, and when it is built they ignite the new fire. A hen and a cock are killed, cooked on the new fire, and eaten inside the etambo by all who have taken part in building it. The headman and his wife must remain on the new site to keep the fire alight; other villagers may commute from the old village or erect temporary grass shelters on the new site. Houses are built by the occupants themselves, although men may give each other mutual help, for which there is a gift of food and beer. The onjango is usually built by the communal labour of all boys and men, and on its completion a simple ritual is performed to promote harmony within and to welcome the spirits, who are believed to sleep in the onjango and to take part in all discussions within it.[1]

The village group: composition

Childs describes the relationship of the villagers of Ngundu to each other as typical of Umbundu country. Most of the heads of households are related agnatically to their respective section-heads (who are presumably also related agnatically to each other, since the village is based on the clan group); Childs does not however discuss the relation of section heads to each other or to the village headman. He gives a table in which the householders are divided into six categories according to their relationship to their various section-heads:

1. Patrynal relatives of section head: Section A (headman's) 21
2. Matrynal relatives of section head: Section B
3. Sisters' sons (or daughters)[2] Section B
4. Relatives by marriage Section A
5. Relationship not definitely known Section B
6. Farmer slaves Section A

(1) This section is based on Childs, 1949, pp.37-9.
(2) They could, of course, have been included as matrynal relatives and patrynal relatives, since they belong both to the clan and to the class.

(Plate XLV, Fig. 2). The house of bows for holding sacred relics will be described in connection with religion (Plate XLVI, Fig. 1). 644

In former days there used to be a hard mud floor for dancing, centrally placed in the village. 261

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A deep rectangular clay pit is made as close to the house as possible, and the children thoroughly enjoy puddling the clay with their 338

338 feet. A trench about eighteen inches deep is dug for the poles (akoso), which form the framework. The wattle work is tied to the uprights with strong strips of red bark before the plastering is begun.
341 The old type of Umbundu house was round, but most of the houses
171 now show a transition to square or rectangular forms (Plate XLIV, Fig. 2).

[531] Exterior wall-painting is found only in the northern districts of Angola (Plate LXXXIX, Fig. 2). Between Saurimo and Malange in the north, rectangular, painted houses are frequently seen. Wall-painting is a cultural trait from the Congo region where that form of decoration is common.

796 The method of forming a village site and the right of the chief to
621 allot land have been described. The house of the chief is the first to be erected. There is drinking of beer to celebrate the completion of the village, and the pots of beer have to be stirred with the claws of chickens; these have been killed to provide blood for sprinkling the walls of the new houses. Village chiefs go through the process of stirring and drinking. The medicine-man drinks first, then he offers the cup to the chief.

• 344 The communal house is built by the united efforts of all men of
476 the village. Ngonga says, "The king never helps with any of the
[485] building, but he talks very much." The guest house is also built
644 by communal labor. The king of the ombala of Ngalangi told me that a king always uses the house of his predecessor, which must not be pulled down. No repairs are permitted and the house is used until it is absolutely untenable.

354 The interior of a commoner's house has three hearth stones in the
342 middle of the floor, which is of hard mud beaten down with a heavy wooden implement called ocikondulo. The ceremonial placing of the stones has been described in discussing marriage. There is no chimney, consequently the walls and roof are blackened with smoke. The junction of roof and walls provides pockets for the reception of small articles. On the floor near the walls may be several large beer pots. The dark smoky interior is almost intolerable. The sleeping
352 room is sometimes separated from the living room by matting. The bed is made from a cross-work of sticks supported on four Y-shaped posts, one at each corner. On the bed are coarse sleeping mats and possibly a modern blanket.

386 The miscellaneous contents of the hut are gourds, dippers, cooking
252 pots of several sizes, pounders, and baskets. In many of the huts I found cooking going on in the general room, but frequently a sepa-

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

621 they recognize Sekulu Sikīlīlē, the elder of the largest unit, as the village headman. Only in his village is there a dancing floor [345] (*ocīlā*),[1] which is the centre of village life, social, legal, and recreational. As the name indicates, it is first and foremost a place for recreation, but here also religious functions are held since they involve so much dancing and drinking, and here formal cases are tried. The *ocīlā* is the heart of the village.

345 *The Men's Club-House.* Ngendo does not have that other important Umbundu institution, the Men's Club House (*onjango*).[2] The *onjango* is, or was, hardly less important than the *ocīlā*. Perhaps before it fell to its present state of disuse, its place was of even greater importance, for in the *onjango* all the men, youths, [262] and boys gathered day by day for the evening meal. From all the kitchens came baskets of stiff corn porridge (*iputa*), and dishes of relish (*ombelela*)[3] which all shared, from the most honoured guest or the village elders, down to the naked, ash-whitened little boys just old enough (say from seven or eight years) to leave the kitchens [574] to their mothers and sisters. In the *onjango* guests were entertained, judicial cases of lesser import were settled, the day's work and gossip discussed, and youth was educated by precept and example in nearly everything from traditional history to etiquette. The *onjango* was dining-room, living-room, court, school, hotel, and club, all in one. For some of the Ovimbundu it continues to function. Upon inquiry I found that in all Kasonge there were hardly ten villages where the *onjango* existed and retained its [466] former functions. The reasons which my informants assigned are that the demands for road work (in the immediate region), for contract labour (involving absences of from six months to two years), and the difficulty of securing tax-money, did not leave the leisure required for the common meal in the *onjango*. When I 345 made wider inquiries as to localities where the *onjango* now exists 178 and retains its former functions, it seems that this institution is widely decadent. According to my information, the regions where it continues to function are chiefly in Ngalangi, in Viye, and

104

[1] *Ocīlā* comes from the verb *olu cīlā*, to dance.

[2] *Onjango* has been traced to the verb *olu ungula*, to converse, but I am doubtful of this derivation. It has been called 'The Palaver House', but this is an evident misnomer, for the *onjango* is much more than that.

[3] *Ombelela* is a word to cover any dish which may be eaten with the porridge staple. It may be meat, beans, mushrooms, or greens, and is preferred with gravy into which pieces of the stiff porridge may be dipped (*olu mīka*).

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

perhaps in Ndulu. In Ngendo the Men's Club had taken over the 345
rocks just behind the headman's household for its meeting-place, 178
but the meetings were only occasional and there was no common meal.

The Village Plan

To speak of the plan of an Umbundu village may seem a con- 361
tradiction in terms, so haphazard seems the relation of houses, gardens, &c., to each other. Some houses are circular, but the [342]
majority are more nearly rectangular in shape. There is a palisade [417]
of hardwood sticks surrounding all the village except that side of the headman's household which is adjacent to the rocks used for a club-house. The headman had not bothered to keep up his own part of the fence since his only garden was a small tobacco plot fenced in by itself. The village is itself divided up by the 621
palisades which shut off one compound from another, each com- 343
pound containing the houses of from one to three households. Between the palisades are paths which lead on to the dancing floor [363]
and out of the village. In the village of Sekulu Sikiliē there were twenty-five households with thirty-two houses in all. Each house (*onjo*) had its own granary (*orila*), and small chicken-coop built on stilts, and of all the houses only six had separate kitchens (*ocimo*). Nearly every household had separate pens for the pigs, goats, and sheep for the night. At one side of the headman's compound there was a common corral for the nine cattle which the villagers owned. Only the headman had a spirit-hut (*etambo*), [346]
used also for a storehouse, for entertaining a guest, and for his own bedroom should he sleep apart from his wives. Within the several 621
compounds were small gardens of tobacco and of maize and beans, 244
and just outside the village were two separate tobacco gardens. Just a few paces to the west was a small patch of wheat belonging to a man in the smallest ward. There was one household of two houses quite outside the palisades appropriately belonging to a man named *Kulika* (meaning 'Being-alone'). The water-holes [312]
and pounding rocks where meal was ground were between the [252]
several units of the village and were used in common. The fields were off to the east at from thirty minutes' to an hour's [241]
walk. The two smaller wards of Ciyanda and Kanjengo were so small that they were like two or three compounds by themselves. 621
The former had six households with eight houses, and the latter

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

therefore the usual procedure is to erect temporary grass-covered huts (*olosingi*, plural) on the new site, in which they will live while building their houses. Each hearth-fire must be ignited from the headman's fire.

The houses are built by the occupants themselves. The men's club house is built by the communal labour of all men and boys with a simple ritual designed to promote concord within, and to ensure that the spirits (*olosande*) may find it a congenial abode. The spirits regularly attend the discussions in the *onjango*, and there receive their daily portions. There also they are believed to sleep.

At the first opportunity a hunt will be held and the meat brought to the spirit-hut. The girl who carried the sacred chest receives the heart and the boy the head. At this time, while a pot of sour beer (non-alcoholic) (*ocisangua*) is being brewed, the girl sits quietly in communion (*oku felevela*) with the spirits. With these physical and spiritual preparations the village community makes ready its home, a home which may seem poor and meagre to the eyes of outsiders, but to a member of the community it is home indeed and evokes in him, when absent, a feeling of great home-sickness (*ongeva*). As the Umbundu version of 'Home, Sweet Home' puts it:

Koliene, koliene, nda ku li ombambi ha yota
To your own, to your own, if there is cold you can warm yourself,

nda ku li onjala ha panga.
if there is hunger you can arrange.

621 Ngendo is surrounded by a stick palisade except on that side of the headman's household which is adjacent to the rocks used as a club-house. The village itself (and each section) is divided up into compounds, each of which contains one to three houses,[1] and palisades divide one compound [363] from the next; between are paths leading to the *ocila* and out of the village. Small gardens for tobacco, maize and beans are within the compounds, and the larger fields lie outside the village at from thirty minutes' to an hour's walk. In the headman's section of Ngendo there are 25 households containing 32 houses in all. Each house has its own granary *(osila)* and a small chicken-coop built on stilts, and of all the houses [343] only six have separate kitchens *(ociwo)*. Most households had separate pens for pigs, goats and sheep for the night,[2] and at one side of the headman's compound there is a common corral for the nine cattle owned by the section. Only the headman had a spirit-hut *(ecambo)*, used also as a [622] storehouse, for entertaining his guests, and for his own use should he wish to sleep apart from his wives.

621 Chiefs' villages or *olombala* (singular *ombala*) are often surrounded by a belt of tall trees.[3] The chief's compound (the *ilombe*) is larger than 361 those of other villagers, and, according to Hambly,[4] usually contains: 643 the chief's house, which always has a separate sleeping-room; a house and a kitchen for each of his wives; a tomb for the burial of the chief and his wives; a house of meditation for the chief, and pens for pigs and chickens.

342 Umbundu houses are usually circular, but sometimes rectangular, and made of wattle and daub, with thatched roofs. Sometimes huts are divided by matting into a living-room and a sleeping-room. Cooking is often done [343] in the house itself, but sometimes a separate hut is built as a kitchen.[5]

345 The *onjango* (the Men's Club House) consists of a cone-shaped roof set on stout hardwood poles instead of a wall, and left open so that those for whom there may be no place inside may still see and hear what takes place within.[6]

341 Villages are moved when fields are exhausted and others are not available nearby[7] or, more often, when there has been illness or death in the [768] village, which implies that some action displeasing to the spirits has been committed. (No information is available concerning the usual length 776 of life of a village.) When the new site is chosen, the headman's fire in the old village is extinguished, and a procession starts, led by a boy 774 carrying the sacred bows *(ohonji)* of each ascendant who is now a guardian 796 spirit of the family (i.e. the *oluse*), and a girl carrying the sacred chest *(ocimbangu)* containing the relics *(ociye)* and the balls of iguana skin.[8] On arriving at the site the boy and girl cut and plant the

(1) In this section there were 13 goats, 20 sheep, 100 pigs and about 100 chickens. (Childs, op.cit. p.31) (2) Ibid.
(3) Hambly, (2) 1934, p.206 *et.al.* It was a custom of the Ngangela peoples to plant trees round the village and dedicate them to deceased chiefs. (See McCulloch 1950 p.68.) There is no evidence that the trees surrounding Umbundu villages have any ritual significance, although the custom may have been taken over from the conquered Ngangela peoples.
(4) Op.cit., p.208. (5) Ibid., p.10
(6) Childs, personal communication.
(7) Due often to European settlement. (8) See below, p.47.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

The use of caterpillars as food is noted (p.416): "A man cut open a large cocoon, extracted the contents, and smacked his lips with great gusto." My field notes mention the use of caterpillars as food. [262] 171 175

Capello and Ivens (1877–80) remark on the burial places of hunters which are distinguishable by the skulls of antelopes, buffalo, and hippopotamuses, stuck on upright poles, mixed with skulls of oxen killed in honor of the defunct. The writers noted that a heap of stones protected the body. I photographed two types of cairn in the regions of Ganda and Luimbale respectively. Capello and Ivens are not precise in their locality, but I judge it to have been Long. 17° E. and Lat. 13° S., a considerable distance from my own observations (Plates XXXII, Fig. 1; LXXIV, Fig. 1). [766]

I photographed the stilt-walkers at the final stages of the initiation ceremonies at Cangamba. These men had no costumes; on the contrary they were almost naked but were covered with white clay. Capello and Ivens (p. 295), saw a stilt-walker with a feathered mask and a netting costume. Such attire I saw on an Uluchazi medicine-man, but not on the stilt-walkers (Plate LXXXI, Figs. 1, 2). [481] [292]

I was unable to obtain information about the stilt-walkers, but Capello states that they castigated misdemeanants, punished shameless women, and accused criminals. Capello and Ivens were 187 miles to the northwest of my area of observation. The Uluchazi medicine-man, who appeared with the stilt-walkers during my visits, was said to make bad magic for women. The men ignored him but women gathered round in a derisive way; they quickly scattered when he pursued them. 693

Serpa Pinto, who made his journey across Angola in 1878, has so many references to customs and objects still extant, that I propose to tabulate his observations because of their value in showing the preservation of indigenous traits in spite of Portuguese contacts. 175 114

The body of a chief is buried with a covering of oxhide. Many oxen are sacrificed at the death of a king. The heir to the deceased is bound to sacrifice his whole herd in order to regale his people and give peace to the departed (S. Pinto, I, p. 63). The Ovimbundu conform at the present time to similar methods of burial and sacrifice. 175 766

Near Huambo, Serpa Pinto saw in every village a kind of "temple for conversation." This is the *onjango*, that I have described and photographed (Plate XLVIII, Fig. 1). It is the house in which all males foregather for the evening meal, which is brought by their women (I, p. 96). 175 [345]

The gathering and eating of caterpillars is described. This continues today (I, p. 120). [262]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu F

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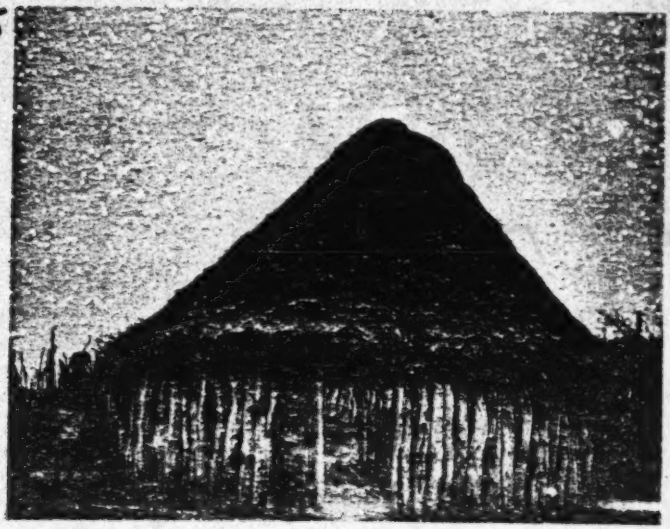

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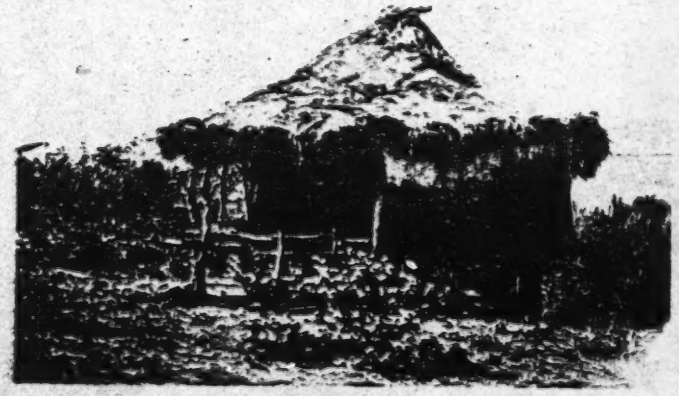

2

SOCIAL LIFE OF OVIMBUNDU

Fig. 1. Men's club house, Bailundu. Fig. 2. Guest house, Elende

[p. 402]

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

perhaps in Ndulu. In Ngendo the Men's Club had taken over the 345
rocks just behind the headman's household for its meeting-place, 178
but the meetings were only occasional and there was no common meal.

The Village Plan

To speak of the plan of an Umbundu village may seem a con- 361
tradiction in terms, so haphazard seems the relation of houses, gardens, &c., to each other. Some houses are circular, but the [342]
majority are more nearly rectangular in shape. There is a palisade [417]
of hardwood sticks surrounding all the village except that side of the headman's household which is adjacent to the rocks used for a club-house. The headman had not bothered to keep up his own part of the fence since his only garden was a small tobacco plot fenced in by itself. The village is itself divided up by the 621
palisades which shut off one compound from another, each com- 343
pound containing the houses of from one to three households. Between the palisades are paths which lead on to the dancing floor [363]
and out of the village. In the village of Sekulu Sikililē there were twenty-five households with thirty-two houses in all. Each house (*onjo*) had its own granary (*osila*), and small chicken-coop built on stilts, and of all the houses only six had separate kitchens (*ociwo*). Nearly every household had separate pens for the pigs, goats, and sheep for the night. At one side of the headman's compound there was a common corral for the nine cattle which the villagers owned. Only the headman had a spirit-hut (*etambo*), [346]
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compounds were small gardens of tobacco and of maize and beans, 244
and just outside the village were two separate tobacco gardens. Just a few paces to the west was a small patch of wheat belonging to a man in the smallest ward. There was one household of two houses quite outside the palisades appropriately belonging to a man named *Kulika* (meaning 'Being-alone'). The water-holes [312]
and pounding rocks where meal was ground were between the [252]
several units of the village and were used in common. The fields were off to the east at from thirty minutes' to an hour's [241]
walk. The two smaller wards of Ciyanda and Kanjengo were so small that they were like two or three compounds by themselves. 621
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.: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

621 four households with six houses. The school village had been laid
but in rectangular fashion without any palisade and with eucalyptus
[346] trees planted around the sides. The school was at the centre and
the elder's house at the upper corner. These two larger buildings
and one other were built of adobe, while the rest of the twelve
houses were of wattle and daub, identical with those in the other
wards except that all were rectangular. There were a few very
[312] small gardens watered by an irrigation ditch. The people of this
village had river gardens, and their fields were mostly to the south
between the village and the highway. Just to the east of the main
[797] village and beside one of the water-holes, a Roman Catholic
catechist had established himself, but as yet he had neither village
nor school.

The Villagers

602 Turning now to the people living in this village, it was interest-
621 ing to find that all save the households of two former slaves and the
Roman Catholic catechist, were related to each other, either by
blood or by marriage. Sekulu Cipange of Ciyanda summed the
matter up when he said, 'Likuluta Samikanjo (the Protestant elder)
is my younger brother (*manjange*), for in our Umbundu country
(we) people do not build together (i.e. in the same village) unless
we are blood relatives.' In order to determine the exact relation-
ships and other facts regarding the demography of this village,
I took the names of all householders and their wives, and inquired
their relationships to the elders of the respective wards. This
[115] information was supplied by Njomba, a son of Sekulu Sikīlīlē, and
by Sekulu Likuluta Samikanjo. In addition to those of the four
elders, there were twenty-four households. The relationship
of each of the householders to their respective elders may be sum-
marized as follows:

A. *Paternal relatives*		
In Sikīlīlē's village	21	
,, Ciyanda	1	
,, Kanjengo's ward	2	
,, School village	2	
	—	26
B. *Maternal relatives*		
In Ciyanda	1	
,, Kanjengo's ward	1	
,, School village	4	
	—	6

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

361 A few words from the childhood recollections of Paulino
166 Ngonga Liahuka[1] bring out the facts.

787 One day we noticed that Sekulu Upalandanda[2] and my father went to the mountain of Kalilonge saying, 'We go to look around (and find out) whether the spirits (*olosande*) have agreed to our moving there.' Then another day we saw that the fathers were coming out of the spirit huts (*atambo*, plural), with the sacred chests (*ovimbangu*, plural), saying, 'We go to start a new village.' When they had arrived under the mountain of Kalilonge, they said, 'The spirits have agreed.' Then when everyone had moved, the elder, whose name had been Upalandanda at Muenesi, now changed his name, declaring, 'I am *Cilembo-camunda* (Shadow of Mountain). From that time the place was called Cilembo.

621 On seeking a new site the headman's fire in the old village is put out and the procession starts: a girl carries the sacred chest
[778] (*ocimbangu*) containing the relics (*ociye*) and the balls of iguana skin, and a boy the sacred bows.[3] They lead the way to the site
[346] selected where they cut a pole[4] suitable for a house-wall (*ekoso*), and tie a leaf of the *upu*[5] tree to it, dig a hole into which they put mud made by rain-water (*onata yondombo*),[6] and then together they lift the stick and let it fall into the hole. This is the beginning of the spirit hut (*etambo*), the first house to be built on the new site. The boy and the girl must take part ceremonially in each operation
[372] of building the hut. After that they together ignite (*oku tiafula*)[7] the new fire. A hen and a cock are killed, cooked on the new fire, and eaten inside the *etambo* by all who have taken part in the building. The headman and his wife cannot return to the old village but must camp at the new site (*itula*) and keep the new fire alight.
342 In building their houses, the villagers may commute (*oku usala*)
621 from the old site, but often the distance is too great to do this, and

[1] Of Ciyaka, ordained pastor of Elende Church in 1930. He was Hambly's chief informant.

[2] Sekulu Upalandanda was the younger brother of Ngonga's father's father, and therefore grandfather to Ngonga.

[776] [3] The bow (*okowji*) of each ascendant who is now a guardian spirit (*osande*) of the family.

[4] When this first pole is cut, the axe should first be pointed toward the cardinal directions.

[824] [5] A leaf of the *upu* tree is used in the divorce ceremony. Its use here is a sign of divorce from the old site.

[6] Literally, 'mud of the rainy season'.

[7] This was formerly done with a fire drill (*vide* Hambly, op. cit., Plate XXXV), but not for a number of years now. When I showed the above picture to a group of 150 young men of 17 to 25 years of age, not one of them even knew what it was.

611 dispersed. Both groups have ritual leaders, whose offices are quite dis-
613 tinct. Barnes' suggestion[1] is that the two groups must be father's patrilineage and mother's matrilineage, with the qualification mentioned below.

613 The *oluse* consists of a large number of village groups, some of which
622 recognise mutual relationship,[2] but with no recognised head (other than the village headman) except in the case of the royal families. Land is owned by the *oluse* and passed on within it from father to son, or from
[428] elder to younger brother. Succession to village or tribal office, from village headman to king, descends in the same way.[3] Ritual leadership within the *oluse* lies with the village headman, who is in charge of the
[346] spirit-hut *(etambo)* of the guardian spirit of the village (or of the nuclear *oluse* within the village), and who officiates at regular village worship, including agricultural festivals.

613 The *oluina*, on the other hand, is a dispersed and apparently larger
428 group, whose members live with their various paternal lines of descent. The size of the *oluina* is unknown; Childs merely refers to it as a "large
604 and widespread organization, with a recognized head". The office of head *of the oluina (ukulu wepata) descends from mother's brother to sister's* son. Negotiable and moveable property, including cattle and trade goods, is owned by the *oluina* and inherited by the sister's son. Formerly the mother's elder brother had great powers over his sister's sons, and was even able to pawn them or sell them into slavery, to meet his own debts.
[592] The patrilocal household is usually responsible for training children, especially during their early years, but they are frequently sent to the *oluina* (i.e. to the mother's brother) for at least a part of their educa-
[536] tion. At death or divorce of parents, children go to the *oluina*.

The head *(ukulu wepata)* of the *oluina* is usually both the legal and
43 spiritual head of the group, although today the two functions are often divided. He is in charge of the spirit hut *(etambo)* of the guardian
782 spirit of the *oluina* (of whom there may be more than one, and of whom he becomes one after death). He leads the *oluina* in propitiatory rituals carried out in case of illness, death, or other misfortunes within the group, or in prayers made for desired economic advantages. (Apparently no regular rituals are carried out by the *oluina*.) The *ukulu wepata* may or may not be at the same time a village headman; if he is, he will be priest of two lines and have charge of two spirit huts; if he is not, there may be two (or more) priests in the village, each in charge of the spirit-hut of his *oluse* or *oluina*.

The onēlē yohonji and the onēlē yohumba

613 The *oluse* and the *oluina* are both divided into male and female
602 "sides": the *onēlē yohonji* (the side of the bow) and the *onēlē yohumba* (the side of the basket). It has been noted above that uterine brothers
582 and sisters belong to the same *oluse* and *oluina*, but to the male or female side in each, according to sex. The composition of these "sides" is

(1) Loc.cit.
(2) If some villages within the *oluse* cannot trace mutual relationship, the *oluse* should perhaps be called a patri-clan rather than a patrilineage.
(3) But see below, p.29.

Ceremony at the site: the boy and girl cut and plant the

first pole, which is to be a part of the new etombo (spirit hut). The boy and girl must take part ceremonially in each operation of building the hut, and when it is built they ignite the new fire. A hen and a cock are killed, cooked on the new fire, and eaten inside the etombo by all who have taken part in building it. The headman and his wife must remain on the new site to keep the fire alight; other villagers may commute from the old village or erect temporary grass shelters on the new site. Houses are built by the occupants themselves, although men may give each other mutual help, for which there is a gift of food and beer. The onjango is usually built by the communal labour of all boys and men, and on its completion a simple ritual is performed to promote harmony within and to welcome the spirits, who are believed to sleep in the onjango and to take part in all discussions within it.[1]

The village group: composition

Childs describes the relationship of the villagers of Ngundo to each other as typical of Umbundu country. Most of the heads of households are related agnatically to their respective section-heads (who are presumably also related agnatically to each other, since the village is based on the *olusa* group); Childs does not however discuss the relation of section heads to each other or to the village headman. He gives a table in which the householders are divided into six categories according to their relationship to their various section-heads:

1. Patrynal relatives of section head:	Section A (headman's)	21
	" B	2
	" C	1
	" D	2
		26
2. Mecmal relatives of section head:	Section B	4
	" C	1
	" D	1
		6
3. Sisters' sons (or daughters)[2]	Section D	4
	" C	1
		5
4. Relatives by marriage	Section A	2
	" B	1
		3
5. Relationship not definitely known	Section B	2
6. Former slaves	Section A	1
	" B	1
		2

(1) This section is based on Childs, 1949, pp.27-9.
(2) Who could, of course, have been included as maternal relatives and paternal relatives, since they belong both to the *olusa* and to the *olusa*.

621 The total number of households is 44, or 48 including those of the four
592 section heads. It should be noted that there is a discrepancy in Childs's
114 figures (apart from an obvious misprint):[1] in another context he writes that section B contains only 12 houses (not even *households*), while from this table it would appear that section B has 15 household heads, including that of the section head; and section C is said to have 6 households, while only 4 (again counting the section head) are accounted for in this table.

591 Childs states[2] that the incidence of patrilocal marriage in Ngendo
114 is fairly typical of Umbundu country, but unfortunately gives little information regarding the relationship of the various spouses to each other or concerning the location of the villages from which they came. Matrilocal marriage is recognised as a possibility: of the three relatives by marriage listed above, one was a husband of a daughter of the headman, another the widow of a younger brother of the headman, who should have been inherited by a younger brother (?) or a mother's brother of the deceased, or, failing that, could have returned to her father's village. Of those listed above as sisters' children, two were widows who had come to live in the village with their mother's brothers.[3]

POLITICAL STRUCTURE

The village headman[4]

622 The village headman *(sekulu yimbo)* is also the head of the *olume*
793 which form the nucleus of the village group, and is related agnatically
782 to most of the householders. He alone may speak of the village as *imbo liange* (my village); the heads of sections, who are also called *sekulu*[5] may speak possessively only of their own sections *(ocitiwilo cange)*, and other villagers speak only of "our village" *(imbo lietu)*.[6] The headman functions as both priest and legal head of the village. As priest he has in his compound the *etombo* (spirit hut), in which the insignia of office are kept, and in which he prays to the ancestral spirits. Upon occasion he may sleep there, usually offering a prayer to the spirits when he wakes during the night. The *etombo* may also be
● [34L] used as a lodging place for respected guests, or as a store-house for possessions not used every day. Childs states that he officiates at regular village worship, including agricultural festivals; Bastin adds that he may lead the people in offering sacrifices when epidemics of
613 sickness break out in the village. It has been noted above[7] that it is the function of the *olume* head to lead such rituals when illness occurs within the *olume*. In general the village head is responsible for
[622] matters - particularly agriculture and public health - which affect the whole village; individuals, both for protection and for help and other

(1) Childs, op.cit., p.28, line 27, where "twenty-four" should read "forty-four".
(2) On the basis of the 192 genealogies and 74 marriage-schedules which he collected. He does not, unfortunately, give examples or show how the comparison was made.
(3) Based on Childs, op.cit., pp.25-31.
(4) This section is based on Childs, op.cit., pp.36-7.
(5) It has been noted above that *sekulu* is used for all men (and some women) of the grandfather's generation.
(6) op.cit., p.283. (7) p.18.

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SCENES IN CENTRAL ANGOLA

Fig. 1. House where king communes with ancestral spirits, Ngalangi

Fig. 2. House with painted walls, near Bailundo

Fig. 3. Group showing mixture of tribes at Ngalangi

[p. 443]

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

More usually they are followed and sometimes

preceded by singing, and dancing. There are a certain number 797
of 'school' songs as distinct from hymns, which are semi- or 533
non-religious in nature, which are taught by the catechist and are sung on these occasions with other Umbundu traditional songs. There seems to be little composition of songs by present day Ovimbundu nor do they know popular Portuguese songs.

The school itself, the centre of these activities, is generally 797
built of adobe bricks in the shape of a church. In any village [346]
where there is a fair number of school people it will be the largest building in the village and even in villages of mixed Christian and pagan population the school building tends to be in the centre of the village, a topographical reflection of the social significance of the catechist and the catechetical school. In the school men and women are separated, men on the right, women on the left, a custom also found in some Angolan parish churches.

The catechist's presence is a mark of the identity of the 797
village. The catechetical school is the only institution which 621
groups people of different domestic groups on a village-wide basis, and in which people participate in a wider set of social relations on a village and not on an individual basis, as people are linked to kinsmen, or to the post or to an employer. One can and does associate oneself with a village if one does not belong geographically to it but simply attends its school. Thus Fernando considered himself as belonging to the village of Ngolo Catolica whose catechetical school he attended, although his house was well away from the main village, being much nearer the Protestant village of Vila Graça, where indeed he had kinsmen. When I asked a woman where she lived she replied by giving the name of the village catechist. The only occasions on which a group of people represent one village *vis-à-vis* another are in connection with the travels of missionaries, and in the wedding feasts, which will be described in another chapter.

A missionary on leaving one village for another has his 797
luggage carried by the school people of the village where he 484
has been staying, who will march singing, with perhaps a boy banging on a drum. When they get to the next village they will be greeted at the entrance into the village by the catechist and

326 of the murdered man were placed near the large anvil (p. 163), or
778 they might be kept in the home of the blacksmith. Such figures are still used (Plate XXI, Fig. 3) but the killing of a victim is not now possible. Blacksmiths are free to marry without restrictions other than those imposed by the classificatory system of relationships.

325 The blacksmith's forge is a thatched house about twelve feet
348 square with low eaves that almost reach the ground. The height from the floor to the point of the dome is fifteen feet. In the middle of the floor is a pit ten inches deep in which there is a quantity of charcoal brought from the charcoal burner's fire about half a mile away. At the sides of the pit are three stone seats for the workers. Two of these seats are occupied by men, each of whom works a pair of bellows. The two-chambered bellows is hewn from a block of wood in such a way as to give two circular air chambers from which wooden tubes lead to the fire. These wooden tubes are continued by clay tubes which project into the fire. Over the two round wooden chambers a piece of hide is stretched and tied over the woodwork. Two slender upright sticks, which the operator works up and down, are attached to the hide. In one corner of the hut there is a heap of charcoal, and in another corner lies the scrap iron. An iron rake with a wooden handle is used for stirring the charcoal in the fire. Plates XVI, XXXVII, and XXXVIII illustrate tools and processes.

913 The principal tools are:

(1) A flat stone anvil resting on rocks under a tree. The anvil is at such a height that the striker stands upright. At this anvil the metal is beaten with the heavy hammer *onjundo*.

(2) *Onjundo*, the most sacred of the tools, is 12.5 cm long. Its value is about that of an ox.

(3) There are tongs which can be clamped by a sliding metal ring. The larger tongs are 63 cm long and the smaller ones are 35 cm.

(4) The cutter is boat-shaped and triangular in cross section. The back, which is grasped in the hand, is 0.5 cm thick, tapering to a fine cutting edge.

(5) An iron holder for an axhead during the heating and hammering is 23 cm long. It is octagonal, hollow, and fits like a sheath over the shaft of the axhead.

(6) For heating the iron on the small anvil, after it has been roughly pounded to shape with the hammer (*onjundo*) on the large anvil, there is a smaller hammer (*usonjolo*) of which there are three varieties. These differ only in size.

3: Hamblly .E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu

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FUNERAL RITES, OVIMBUNDU

Fig. 1. Hut where possessions of dead chiefs are kept, Kiaala

Fig. 2. Home of an ever green, near Cassanda

[p. 400]

338 feet. A trench about eighteen inches deep is dug for the poles (akoso), which form the framework. The wattle work is tied to the uprights with strong strips of red bark before the plastering is begun.
341 The old type of Umbundu house was round, but most of the houses
171 now show a transition to square or rectangular forms (Plate XLIV, Fig. 2).

[531] Exterior wall-painting is found only in the northern districts of Angola (Plate LXXXIX, Fig. 2). Between Saurimo and Malange in the north, rectangular, painted houses are frequently seen. Wall-painting is a cultural trait from the Congo region where that form of decoration is common.

796 The method of forming a village site and the right of the chief to
621 allot land have been described. The house of the chief is the first to be erected. There is drinking of beer to celebrate the completion of the village, and the pots of beer have to be stirred with the claws of chickens; these have been killed to provide blood for sprinkling the walls of the new houses. Village chiefs go through the process of stirring and drinking. The medicine-man drinks first, then he offers the cup to the chief.

344 The communal house is built by the united efforts of all men of
476 the village. Ngonga says, "The king never helps with any of the
[485] building, but he talks very much." The guest house is also built
644 by communal labor. The king of the ombala of Ngalangi told me that a king always uses the house of his predecessor, which must not be pulled down. No repairs are permitted and the house is used until it is absolutely untenable.

359 The interior of a commoner's house has three hearth stones in the
342 middle of the floor, which is of hard mud beaten down with a heavy wooden implement called ocikandulo. The ceremonial placing of the stones has been described in discussing marriage. There is no chimney, consequently the walls and roof are blackened with smoke. The junction of roof and walls provides pockets for the reception of small articles. On the floor near the walls may be several large beer pots. The dark smoky interior is almost intolerable. The sleeping
● 352 room is sometimes separated from the living room by matting. The bed is made from a cross-work of sticks supported on four Y-shaped posts, one at each corner. On the bed are coarse sleeping mats and possibly a modern blanket.

356 The miscellaneous contents of the hut are gourds, dippers, cooking
252 pots of several sizes, pounders, and baskets. In many of the huts I found cooking going on in the general room, but frequently a sepa-

3: Hambly E-8 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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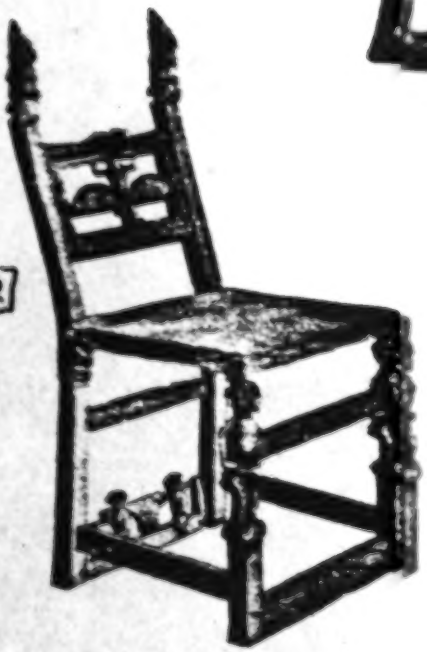
[532]



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4

HUT FURNITURE AND MASK

[p.372]

273 ant said, "Sometimes a man who has drunk this beer will sleep on the ground all day and say nothing."

263 438 Salt is a welcome gift in all parts of Angola. Native tribes appreciate its culinary value but show no eagerness to barter for the commodity. At the present time salt is sold in every trader's store, but in earlier times the substance had to be obtained along caravan routes from the coast and was therefore more highly prized than it is today. 317 [331] The Ovimbundu realize the value of salt in the diet of cattle; therefore the animals are occasionally driven to a salt lick in the hills. The Ovimbundu do not use this salt for their own diet, possibly because the salt enjoyed by the cattle is some form of potash and not sodium chloride.

[171] The Vachokue extract salt from the leaves of a river plant by burning it to ashes which are soaked and strained. This is a common African method, but I did not hear of it among the Ovimbundu. The probability is that the Ovimbundu have always obtained salt from the coast.

372 In connection with cooking and brewing beer, methods of making fire are of importance.

Matches are coming into use among the Ovimbundu, but the necessity for them is not great as the hearth fire is not extinguished. [354] In the center of each hut is a fireplace made of three hearth-stones over which logs of wood are placed with their ends in the fire which is kept alight by pushing the logs forward from time to time. A blaze is made by breaking off bark from the logs, placing it on the center of the fire and blowing. Fire is carried from one place to another by conveying a smoldering log. In the Esele country boys may be seen setting off at dawn to scare birds in the corn field, each carrying fire with him.

Usually the children or some other members of the family sleep on mats close to the fire, which requires no attention other than a pushing forward of the logs.

372 171 The Vasele make fire by the twirling method, and at Ngalangi the same procedure was witnessed. In the twirling method two different kinds of wood are used, soft wood for the base and hard wood for the twirling stick. The twirler used at Ngalangi was a piece of cane into the end of which a piece of hard white wood was secured by binding. Ngonga, my interpreter and informant, thinks that any man of the Ovimbundu could make fire by the twirling method if the necessity arose, but the performance witnessed at Ngalangi led me to doubt the truth of this statement. The operator

338 feet. A trench about eighteen inches deep is dug for the poles (*akoso*), which form the framework. The wattle work is tied to the uprights with strong strips of red bark before the plastering is begun.
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3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

rate hut is provided as a kitchen. In some dark corner of the hut 356
there is likely to be a sitting hen or a bitch with pups. Goats and 252
pigs intrude from time to time. Lean dogs scavenge round the
doorway. Naked little children whitened with dust play on the
floor. A woman crouches over the cooking pot stirring the glutinous 512
mass of corn meal. About sunset men are gathering in the council
house to which their meals are sent.

They push forward the logs into the fire, throw their blankets around them and chatter until the women and children arrive with the evening meal. In the vicinity of the village, boys are wandering about with blunt wooden arrows fitted to their bowstrings, to be ready for the homeward flight of birds. Other boys are driving cattle to the kraal.

As darkness falls the long tubular drums are brought out. These [535]
are held between the legs and played in compound rhythm (Plate XXVII, Fig. 1). A shuffling dance begins, slowly at first, then with increasing vigor, to be continued far into the night.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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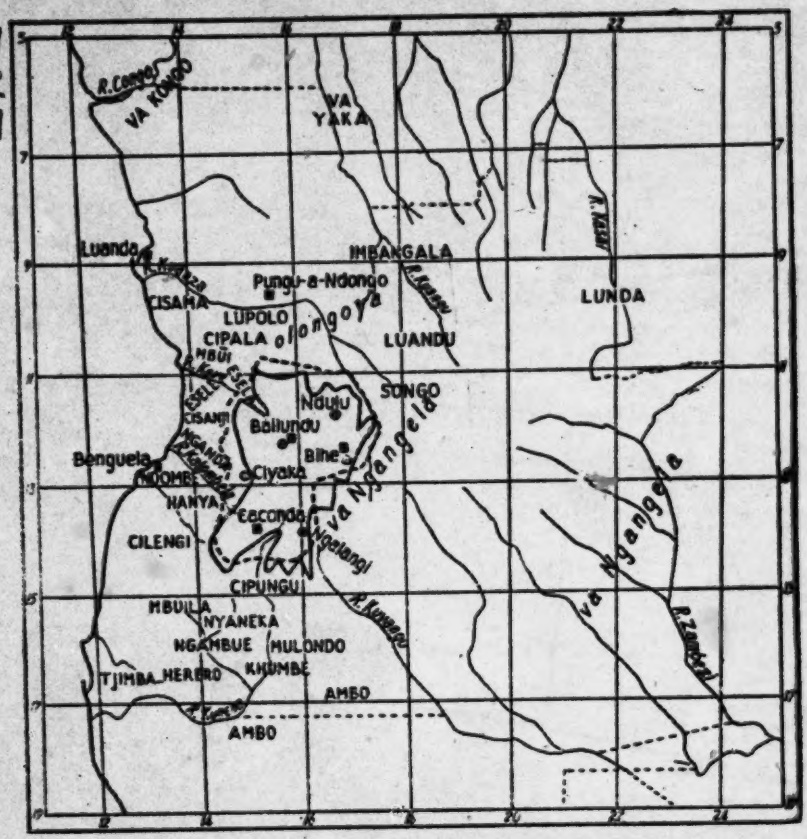


HABITAT OF THE OVIMBUNDU

AND THEIR POSITION WITH REGARD TO THEIR NEIGHBOURS

Heavy continuous line indicates elevation of 1,500 metres (4,920 ft.).

Broken line indicates limits of Umbundu territory.

© Leading capital villages (*olombala*). ■ Portuguese presidios.

[facing p. 1]

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

perhaps in Ndulu. In Ngendo the Men's Club had taken over the 345
rocks just behind the headman's household for its meeting-place, 178
but the meetings were only occasional and there was no common meal.

The Village Plan

To speak of the plan of an Umbundu village may seem a con- 361
tradiction in terms, so haphazard seems the relation of houses, gardens, &c., to each other. Some houses are circular, but the [342]
majority are more nearly rectangular in shape. There is a palisade [417]
of hardwood sticks surrounding all the village except that side of the headman's household which is adjacent to the rocks used for a club-house. The headman had not bothered to keep up his own part of the fence since his only garden was a small tobacco plot fenced in by itself. The village is itself divided up by the 621
palisades which shut off one compound from another, each com- 343
pound containing the houses of from one to three households. Between the palisades are paths which lead on to the dancing floor [363]
and out of the village. In the village of Sekulu Sikilile there were twenty-five households with thirty-two houses in all. Each house (*onjo*) had its own granary (*osila*), and small chicken-coop built on stilts, and of all the houses only six had separate kitchens (*ocitwo*). Nearly every household had separate pens for the pigs, goats, and sheep for the night. At one side of the headman's compound there was a common corral for the nine cattle which the villagers owned. Only the headman had a spirit-hut (*etambo*), [346]
used also for a storehouse, for entertaining a guest, and for his own bedroom should he sleep apart from his wives. Within the several 621
compounds were small gardens of tobacco and of maize and beans, 244
and just outside the village were two separate tobacco gardens. Just a few paces to the west was a small patch of wheat belonging to a man in the smallest ward. There was one household of two houses quite outside the palisades appropriately belonging to a man named *Kulika* (meaning 'Being-alone'). The water-holes [312]
and pounding rocks where meal was ground were between the [252]
several units of the village and were used in common. The fields were off to the east at from thirty minutes' to an hour's [241]
walk. The two smaller wards of Ciyanda and Kanjengo were so small that they were like two or three compounds by themselves. 621
The former had six households with eight houses, and the latter

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 18

their own wards, 'my ward' (*ocitawila cange*). The other villagers will speak only of 'our village' (*imbo lietu*). 622 554

There are, in general, two quite different and distinct types of Umbundu village according to the terrain on which they are built. The villages of the plains have room to spread out and tend toward a circular shape, with the dancing floor and men's club house near the centre. The wards may appear as quarters of a single whole or they may be added on in haphazard fashion. The villages of the mountains must conform to the possibilities of the terrain. Formerly, many villages were built on mountains for defence, and capital villages of this type may still be seen with the houses built on ledges and rocks almost one on top of the other. In this type of village, there is often not sufficient or sufficiently good soil for even small garden plots within the palisades. Occasionally one of these mountain villages may be found which has not even room within it for the dancing floor, which will in this case be found outside the palisade. If the site is not too severely confined, the wards of the mountain village tend either to string themselves out horizontally along the mountain-side, or to find successive ledges. The village of Ngendo is of an intermediate type, built as it is, on a slope. Sikiliĕ's village was first built as near the stream as possible. The wards later added themselves on, each a little higher than the one before. The school village, which was built last, got the highest and most hygienic site. 361

Moving a Village

Villages may be moved for any one of several reasons. When fields are worn out and others are not available[1] near by, a village may be moved to a site more conveniently located. More often, however, the reason assigned is that there has been much illness or death, that the old site is polluted, that its 'air is bad', which to the Ovimbundu means that some action displeasing to the spirits has been committed which has brought on these misfortunes. This will generally have been determined by divination, as will also the spirits' consent to the proposed new site. A site which has long been occupied is of course fertile soil. Since old sites are generally cultivated to good advantage this fact should not be overlooked as a possible additional reason for moving. 361 166 [768] [787]

[1] Nowadays European settlement often pre-empts such lands. [177]

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

361 A few words from the childhood recollections of Paulino
166 Ngonga Liahuka[1] bring out the facts.

787 One day we noticed that Sekulu Upalandanda[2] and my father went to the mountain of Kalilonge saying, 'We go to look around (and find out) whether the spirits (*olosande*) have agreed to our moving there.' Then another day we saw that the fathers were coming out of the spirit huts (*atambo*, plural), with the sacred chests (*ovimbangu*, plural), saying, 'We go to start a new village.' When they had arrived under the mountain of Kalilonge, they said, 'The spirits have agreed.' Then when everyone had moved, the elder, whose name had been Upalandanda at Muenesi, now changed his name, declaring, 'I am *Cilembo-camunda* (Shadow of Mountain). From that time the place was called Cilembo.

621 On seeking a new site the headman's fire in the old village is put out and the procession starts: a girl carries the sacred chest
[778] (*ocimbangu*) containing the relics (*ociye*) and the balls of iguana skin, and a boy the sacred bows.[3] They lead the way to the site
[346] selected where they cut a pole[4] suitable for a house-wall (*ekoso*), and tie a leaf of the *upu*[5] tree to it, dig a hole into which they put mud made by rain-water (*onata yondombo*),[6] and then together they lift the stick and let it fall into the hole. This is the beginning of the spirit hut (*etambo*), the first house to be built on the new site. The boy and the girl must take part ceremonially in each operation
[372] of building the hut. After that they together ignite (*oku tiafula*)[7] the new fire. A hen and a cock are killed, cooked on the new fire, and eaten inside the *etambo* by all who have taken part in the building. The headman and his wife cannot return to the old village but must camp at the new site (*itula*) and keep the new fire alight.
342 In building their houses, the villagers may commute (*oku usala*)
621 from the old site, but often the distance is too great to do this, and

[1] Of Ciyaka, ordained pastor of Elende Church in 1930. He was Hambly's chief informant.

[2] Sekulu Upalandanda was the younger brother of Ngonga's father's father, and therefore grandfather to Ngonga.

[776] [3] The bow (*ohengi*) of each ascendant who is now a guardian spirit (*osande*) of the family.

[4] When this first pole is cut, the axe should first be pointed toward the cardinal directions.

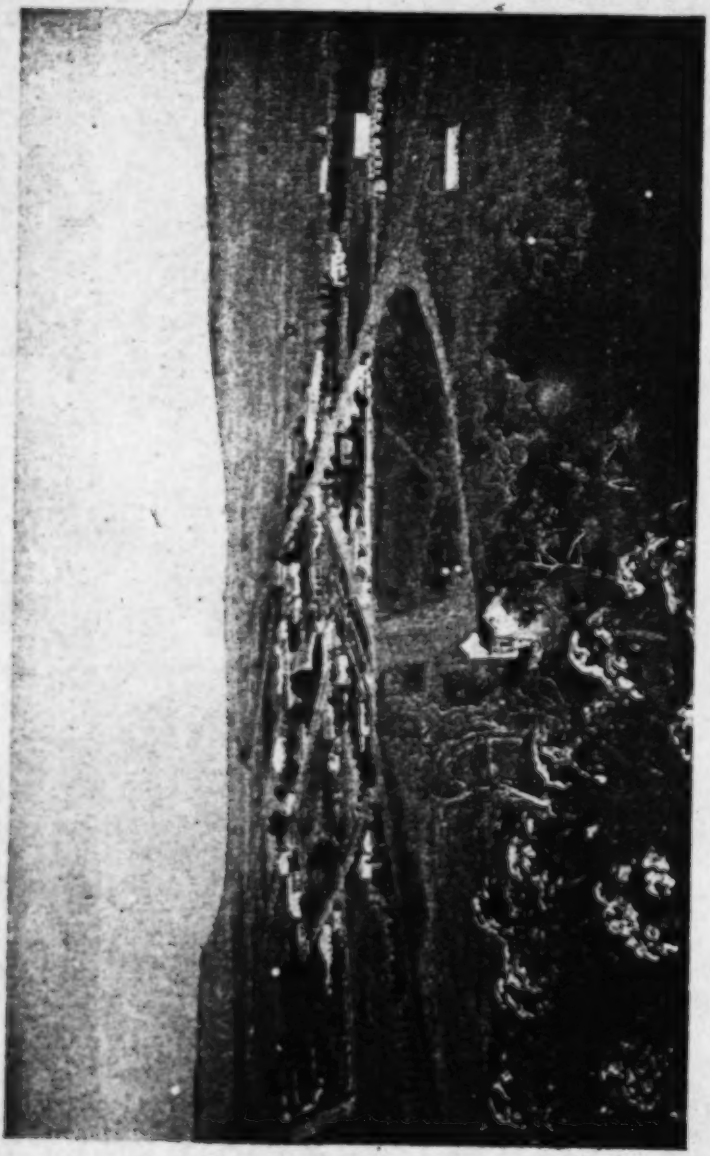
[824] [5] A leaf of the *upu* tree is used in the divorce ceremony. Its use here is a sign of divorce from the old site.

[6] Literally, 'mud of the rainy season'.

[7] This was formerly done with a fire drill (*vide* Hambly, op. cit., Plate XXXV), but not for a number of years now. When I showed the above picture to a group of 150 young men of 17 to 25 years of age, not one of them even knew what it was.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

PLATE XV



Bailundu: town of Teixeira da Silva

[Facing p. 176]

were polygynous and only one of these contain more than two wives.[1] 592 595

The village or imbo (plural *ovimbo*) may consist of from 5 to 500 such households, the heads of which are usually related agnatically to each other. Most, but not all, of the larger villages are *olombala* (villages of chiefs or sub-chiefs). These are said to have had formerly as many as 5,000 inhabitants,[2] but today few have as many as 3,000, and there is a general tendency towards smaller villages and even isolated households.[3] There are in general two quite different types of Umbundu village according to the terrain on which they are built. Those on the plains, where there is room to spread out, tend towards a circular shape, with the *ocila* and *onjango* (see below) near the centre. The various sections of the village may appear as quarters of a single whole, or they may be spread out haphazardly. Mountain villages[4] may have houses built on ledges almost one on top of the other. Here there is often no room or no suitable soil within the palisades for gardens or for the dancing-floor *(ocila)*, which are found outside the palisade. Different sections of the village tend to string themselves out horizontally along the mountain-side, or to find successive ledges. 621 [178] 621 361

The typical village of Ngendo described by Childs, in Kasongi chiefdom, *etumbu* (sub-chiefdom) of Ekongo, is of an intermediate type, built on a slope. Ngendo has 196 inhabitants, of whom 42 are men, 60 are women, and 94 children. The village is divided into four smaller sections or wards (*ovitawila* pl.), of which the largest, that of the village headman *(sekulu)* has 127 inhabitants, while the other three have 19, 13 and 37 inhabitants respectively. The word *imbo* (village) may also be used for either of the two larger sections by themselves. Each section has its own elder, but the dancing-floor *(ocila)*, which is the centre of village life, is in the headman's section. The *ocila* is primarily a place for recreation, but religious functions also are held in it, and formal cases tried. Formerly most villages had a second communal building, the *onjango* or "Men's Club House",[5] whose importance was almost as great as that of the *ocila*. Here all the men, youths and boys gathered for the evening meal, and here guests were entertained, lesser judicial cases settled, and the day's work and gossip discussed, while young boys, sitting in the background, gained much of their knowledge of tribal history and custom.[6] Today the *onjango* exists and maintains its former function chiefly in parts of Ngalangi, Viye and possibly Ndulu. It does not exist in Childs' typical village, where the "Men's Club" holds only occasional meetings on the rocks behind the headman's house, and where the common evening meal no longer takes place. The reason suggested for the disappearance of the *onjango* is lack of leisure owing to demands for road work (in the immediate vicinity of Ngendo), for contract labour, involving absences of from six months to a year,[7] and the difficulty of securing tax-money. 621 [344] [461]

(1) And polygyny is thought to be more frequent here than in other areas. See above, p.23.
(2) According to Mayer, 1851.
(3) Childs, op.cit., p.25, fn.1. Childs does not suggest any reason for this tendency.
(4) Formerly many villages were built on mountains for defence, and capital villages of this type may still be seen.
(5) The "Men's Club" seems to be simply a gathering of all the adult men (and possibly also the juveniles) of the village.
(6) Childs, op.cit.; Cashmore, 1946; Hambly, (2) 1934.
(7) Most of the labour on the Benguella Railway is Umbundu, and many Ovimbundu travel to the Union of South Africa for work. (Childs, op.cit., p.10, et.al.)

621 Ngendo is surrounded by a stick palisade except on that side of the headman's household which is adjacent to the rocks used as a club-house. The village itself (and each section) is divided up into compounds, each of which contains one to three houses,(1) and palisades divide one compound [363] from the next; between are paths leading to the *ocila* and out of the village. Small gardens for tobacco, maize and beans are within the compounds, and the larger fields lie outside the village at from thirty minutes' to an hour's walk. In the headman's section of Ngendo there are 25 households containing 32 houses in all. Each house has its own granary *(osila)* and a small chicken-coop built on stilts, and of all the houses [343] only six have separate kitchens *(ocimo)*. Most households had separate pens for pigs, goats and sheep for the night,(2) and at one side of the headman's compound there is a common corral for the nine cattle owned by the section. Only the headman had a spirit-hut *(etambo)*, used also as a [622] storehouse, for entertaining his guests, and for his own use should he wish to sleep apart from his wives.

621 Chiefs' villages or *olombala* (singular *ombala*) are often surrounded by a belt of tall trees.(3) The chief's compound (the *ilombe*) is larger than 361 those of other villagers, and, according to Hambly,(4) usually contains: 643 the chief's house, which always has a separate sleeping-room; a house and a kitchen for each of his wives; a tomb for the burial of the chief and his wives; a house of meditation for the chief, and pens for pigs and chickens.

342 Umbundu houses are usually circular, but sometimes rectangular, and made of wattle and daub, with thatched roofs. Sometimes huts are divided by matting into a living-room and a sleeping-room. Cooking is often done [343] in the house itself, but sometimes a separate hut is built as a kitchen.(5)

345 The *onjango* (the Men's Club House) consists of a cone-shaped roof set on stout hardwood poles instead of a wall, and left open so that those for whom there may be no place inside may still see and hear what takes place within.(6)

361 Villages are moved when fields are exhausted and others are not available nearby(7) or, more often, when there has been illness or death in the [768] village, which implies that some action displeasing to the spirits has been committed. (No information is available concerning the usual length 776 of life of a village.) When the new site is chosen, the headman's fire in the old village is extinguished, and a procession starts, led by a boy 774 carrying the sacred bows *(ohonji)* of each ascendant who is now a guardian 796 spirit of the family (i.e. the *oluse*), and a girl carrying the sacred chest *(ocimbangu)* containing the relics *(ociye)* and the balls of iguana skin.(8) On arriving at the site the boy and girl cut and plant the

(1) In this section there were 13 goats, 20 sheep, 100 pigs and about 100 chickens. (Childs, op.cit. p.31) (2) Ibid.
(3) Hambly, (2) 1934, p.206 *et.al.* It was a custom of the Ngangela peoples to plant trees round the village and dedicate them to deceased chiefs. (See McCulloch 1950, p.68.) There is no evidence that the trees surrounding Umbundu villages have any ritual significance, although the custom may have been taken over from the conquered Ngangela peoples.
(4) Op.cit., p.208. (5) Ibid., p.10
(6) Childs, personal communication.
(7) Due often to European settlement. (8) See below, p.47.

On arriving at the site the boy and girl cut and plant the first pole, which is to be a part of the new *etambo* (spirit hut). The boy and girl must take part ceremonially in each operation of building the hut, and when it is built they ignite the new fire. A hen and a cock are killed, cooked on the new fire, and eaten inside the *etambo* by all who have taken part in building it. The headman and his wife must remain on the new site to keep the fire alight; other villagers may commute from the old village or erect temporary grass shelters on the new site. Houses are built by the occupants themselves, although men may give each other mutual help, for which there is a gift of food and beer. The *onjango* is usually built by the communal labour of all boys and men, and on its completion a simple ritual is performed to promote harmony within and to welcome the spirits, who are believed to sleep in the *onjango* and to take part in all discussions within it.(1)

The village group: composition

Childs describes the relationship of the villagers of Ngendo to each other as typical of Umbundu country. Most of the heads of households are related agnatically to their respective section-heads (who are presumably also related agnatically to each other, since the village is based on the *oluse* group); Childs does not however discuss the relation of section heads to each other or to the village headman. He gives a table in which the householders are divided into six categories according to their relationship to their various section-heads:

1.	Paternal relatives of section head:	Section A (headman's)	21
		" B	2
		" C	1
		" D	2
			26
2.	Maternal relatives of section head:	Section B	4
		" C	1
		" D	1
			6
3.	Sisters' sons (or daughters)(2)	Section B	4
		" C	1
			5
4.	Relatives by marriage	Section A	2
		" B	1
			3
5.	Relationship not definitely known	Section B	2
6.	Former slaves	Section A	1
		" B	1
			2

(1) This section is based on Childs, 1949, pp.37-9.
(2) Who could, of course, have been included as maternal relatives and paternal relatives, since they belong both to the *oluse* and to the *olutne*.

885 and stability of his personality (unu - lit. the quality of being a person) is only proved when he enters the state of adulthood at marriage.

DEATH

361 764 Each village has its own burial ground about a mile or so away. The grave is usually dug by the children of the father's sister.(1) The corpse of a commoner is bound in a supine position and placed in a box before interment. It is usual during the funeral to find out the cause of death, i.e. whether it is the work of spirits or of some living enemy. Accusations of sorcery are frequently made. The corpse in its coffin, slung to a pole between two carriers, responds to questions as to who 'ate him' by forward (affirmative) or backward (negative) movements.(2) In the case described by Hambly,(3) the questions were put by the father's sister. The corpse may also cause its bearers to stop in front of a certain house during the procession through the village, thereby indicating that one of the occupants has caused its death.(4) Should the corpse not give a clear answer, the diviner might be called in to discover the cause of the death. Accusations of sorcery, as has been noted above, are often made within the circle of kin.(5)

Special cases

766 For *children* the same ceremony was carried out if they were old enough to walk and talk. Otherwise the diviner's services were called upon by the parents. At the death of twins, the mother has to shake a rattle or blow a horn instead of giving the usual greetings to passers-by, as she had to do also while the children were alive.(6)

766 791 At the death of *diviners* and *medicine-men* other members of the profession take charge of the ceremonies. The corpse is tied in a sitting posture and kept thus for three days before burial. No coffin is used. The questioning ceremony is carried out as for a commoner. After the interment the other medicine-men dance "because they have spirit in their heads", and during the dance each eats a living chicken that he carries in his hand. At the side of the grave a dog, a chicken and a goat are killed, and eaten by the mourners. The *ocimbanda*'s power is apparently thought to linger round the grave, which the chief or village-headman may visit to ask for rain and other favours.(7)

224 766 *Hunters* at death are buried in rock tombs *(ombilia* or *osonje)*, which are usually placed in commanding positions. The skulls of animals which the hunter has killed are piled on top of the tomb. The bows of the deceased hunter are kept in his successor's "house of bows".

766 693 *Chiefs*, and possibly also *village headmen*, are buried in specially-constructed enclosures in the villages over which they ruled. The tomb is a small hut with a substantial wooden door, which is surrounded by a strongly-built wooden fence, or it may be a cave. The wives of the chief are buried in the same enclosure. The head of a specially selected

(1) Hambly, (2) 1934, p.268.
(2) Childs, 1949, p.57.
(3) Op.cit., p.266.
(4) Childs, loc.cit.
(5) Ibid.
(6) Hambly, op.cit., p.268.
(7) Ibid., p.270.

growth is under examination. This central plateau, the Benguela 131
Highlands, rises in places to a height of 6,000 feet, an altitude which [133]
reduces the heat of the tropics and so modifies the flora, discouraging
some types of vegetation and encouraging others. Hostility of the
highlands to palm trees and the banana is appropriately discussed [241]
when dealing with cultural losses; while the fostering effect of reduced
temperature and the presence of wide expanses of open country on
the growth of maize and the keeping of cattle is a cultural gain.

The prevailing rains of Angola are from the northeast to the 132
southwest; consequently the high plateau intercepts rain clouds which
give an annual fall of sixty inches. This adequate rainfall is another
factor which has affected economic life, density of population, com-
munal welfare, and powers of expansion.

The villages of the Ovimbundu are built on hillsides having a 361
commanding view of the surrounding country. There is in the
nature of the land a natural protection from enemies. In addition
to this the Benguela Highlands are an admirable base from which
expeditions both predatory and commercial might, and actually did
set out eastward to the interior of Africa, and southwest to the
cattle-keeping country.

It is important to note that this central plateau is the watershed 133
for four large river systems; the Kwanza to the northwest; the Cunene
to the southwest; the tributaries of the Kasai to the northeast; and
the Zambezi and its affluents to the southeast. Fishing, with attend- [226]
ant beliefs of a ritualistic kind, is of local importance; so also is the
making of canoes. Moreover, the river valleys have marked out a
natural means of communication in several directions.

In connection with the river system the biological factor of the 136
tsetse fly is important, because the presence of the fly locally dis- 231
courages human habitation and prevents the keeping of cattle. The
exact distribution of the fly is imperfectly known, but *Glossinia* [164]
palpalis, the cause of sleeping sickness in human beings, also *Glos-*
sinia morsitans, which carries disease to cattle, are both present along
the Kwanza and parts of the other rivers (J. C. B. Statham, Through
Angola, p. 294).

The western coastal strip is a region of great aridity which has in 132
some years no rainfall whatever, because the northeasterly rains have 137
expended themselves on the high plateau. This region displays
vegetation of the semi-desert type; namely, baobab trees, prickly
acacias, euphorbias, and aloes. Population in this area is sparse, [162]
always nomadic, and in some places non-existent. The coastal strip 000

567 people, especially if they were from outside the Ovimbundu, was one of absolute and abject servitude.

The master had rights of punishment including a death sentence; but Ngonga says that a slave could appeal to the headman of the village if he were starved and cruelly treated. All children of a slave became slaves of the master. As the slave had no property he could not pay a fine; the master would pay the fine then relieve his feelings by beating the slave. Instead of paying the fine the master might sell the slave.

Slaves were not branded or marked in any way. Ngonga has seen runaway slaves hunted with dogs. A slave was not allowed to buy his own freedom. A master could dispose of his slave girls in marriage; for instance, a young girl might be sold to an old man. The condition of the slave is well expressed in Ngonga's own words: "The slave worked hard at everything, then the master said he had done nothing."

Slaves used to go to war to fight with their masters against an enemy. A slave might become a blacksmith or a hunter, two very esteemed occupations, but all his work would be for the master. Ngonga says there was no slave market belonging to the Ovimbundu, but every man knew where he could buy a slave. Slaves could act as witnesses in a trial. Slave women were not lent out for prostitu-
[585] tion. A slave owner did not have promiscuous intercourse with his
[768] slave women, but he chose two or three girls as concubines. A slave girl who was married to a free man would revert to her master along with her children when her husband died. If a master had married his own slave woman she would, at his death, become the property of his eldest brother and her children would go with her. In some instances the slave woman and her children would be given to the son of her master's brother.

VILLAGE ORGANIZATION

361 When choosing a site for a new village, a preference is shown for a hillside, though woods or valleys are at times selected. The foot of cliffs is a favorite site. In addition to the shade afforded by the cliff there was in time past the advantage of being hidden from the view of enemies. Further shelter was afforded by the planting of wild fig trees. Sometimes an *ombala* ("capital") was rendered picturesque by the planting of trees which grow to a great size; such a plan was followed at the *ombala* of Ngalangi.

Caves in the wall of a cliff, likewise rugged hillsides, gave a place of retreat for women and children during an attack. Usually there

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

are small streams of pure water falling down the cliffs and hillsides. 361 ●
Near Bailundu and Ngalangi, villages still retain their defences which consist of high poles set in a trench.

Judging from sites visited at Elende there was a pre-Ovimbundu 172
stone-building culture. One of the sites has such a commanding 712
view over extensive plains and valleys that the position would be almost impregnable. At the present day the line of fortifications is well marked by stone walls three feet high. These are composed of boulders to which the builders had ready access on adjacent hillsides. Large stones were no doubt rolled from the slopes to the small plateau chosen as a building site. This small plain lies midway between the hill crest and the valley.

At present this old site, which is enclosed by lichen-covered walls, is overgrown by tall grass and trees attaining twenty feet in height. Photography would be uninstructive unless a preliminary clearance were made—a formidable task owing to the density of vegetation.

In the center of the enclosure is a group of transported boulders possibly marking the site of a place of assembly. A search among the long grass reveals stone slabs and cylindrical crushers which were used for grinding grain over a very long period, as may be seen by the wear on the base stone; some thick stones are so worn as to be almost perforated. Weather-worn stones that were probably used as scrapers, are to be found. Surface potsherds are of the material of which present-day Ovimbundu women make their cooking pots. These sherds mark the places now used by small nomadic bands, hence the surface pottery may have no connection with a pre-Umbundu culture.

In the vicinity of this walled stone village are hillside cairns marking the sites of graves. These have been robbed by medicine-men in search of material for their charms.

The Ovimbundu have no traditions regarding the site, neither is there legendary or other evidence to show that the Ovimbundu ever made their villages of stone. The raising of a cairn of stones over [764] the body of a hunter is, however, a present-day practice near Ganda and in the Esele country.

If a site cannot be systematically worked, it is better left alone until scientific investigation is possible. The preliminary clearance of grass and timber would be a long process. The archaeological material recovered from such a site would be of a uniform and simple kind. There is no evidence of anything beyond an elementary stone age culture.

361 At the present time one type of village is surrounded by stout stakes ten or more feet high, set in a roughly circular plan. The arrangement of alleyways within the village is complicated without following any symmetrical plan. A visitor sees only a labyrinth of passages between high poles, with here and there a rectangular wooden
417 gate at intervals along the passages. The door itself is made from
335 four stout heavy planks which are roughly hewn and as a rule undecorated, but occasionally I have seen the panels of a door carved with
[531] designs representing the breasts of a woman; or there may have been simple geometrical patterns. The top ends of the door panels are massive spheres of wood bored through with holes. Through the holes in the tops of these panels a pintle is passed in such a way that the door is suspended from above. During the daytime the lower ends of the panels are raised to the level of the lintel. They are there supported on a Y-shaped upright which is erected in front of the doorway. At night the planks are removed from this support and allowed to hang downward in the doorway. There is a sliding cross-piece to push over the lower ends. The same arrangement is sometimes used to make a door for a hut. This old type of village doorway, common twenty years ago, is becoming increasingly rare.

342 The house of a king or a chief is larger than that of a commoner.
644 The enclosure which contains a king's house and the other buildings
621 is named *elombe*, while *epandavailo* is the word used to describe the entrance to this compound. The *elombe* is built by men and women who receive no payment. There is a ceremony when the compound is opened. The house of the chief, Kandimba Sanjahulu, near Bailundu, is rectangular, with mud walls raised on a platform of earth and stones. Whitewash has been applied to the outside of the walls and some ornament is given in the form of painted blue crosses. Complete study of structural types and the planning of internal
[113] divisions has been made by F. and W. Jaspert, of the Städtisches Völkermuseum, Frankfort.

644 At a village near Cuma the house of the chief differed from the dwellings of commoners in being somewhat larger. The house had been abandoned, not because the chief died there, but because the chieftainship had been transferred to an adjacent village. The tomb, which will be described in connection with funeral rites, was a few yards from the house. This mausoleum was surrounded by a high wooden palisade, to a stake of which were attached the horns of an ox killed at the funeral feast, while the jawbone lay in the enclosure

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

(Plate XLV, Fig. 2). The house of bows for holding sacred relics will be described in connection with religion (Plate XLVI, Fig. 1).

In former days there used to be a hard mud floor for dancing, centrally placed in the village.

In the center of the village is the communal house where all men, and boys over four years of age, gather to eat their food, which is sent by the women. This *onjango* is the place of assembly for discussion of village affairs. A house of this kind at Bailundu is circular in form with a diameter of seventeen feet (Plate XLVIII, Fig. 1). In the middle of the *onjango* are stones forming a fireplace. In another such house there were jawbones of oxen. These were suspended from the walls as tokens of the payment of fines. There is no communal house for females. In some villages there is a common kraal for cattle.

The king's compound usually contains:

(1) The king's house, which invariably has a separate sleeping room.

(2) A house and kitchen for each of his wives.

(3) A tomb for the burial of kings and their wives.

(4) The house of bows for staffs, bows, mats, and tobacco-pipes of dead chiefs.

(5) A house of meditation for the king (Plate LXXXIX, Fig. 1).

(6) Pens for pigs and chickens.

The guest houses (Plate XLVIII, Fig. 2) that I have seen were not in the king's compound. Granaries, which are conspicuous in every village, have been mentioned in connection with food supply (Plate XLIV, Fig. 1). Each house has its own granary. I have noticed garbage pits containing corn husks and refuse from sweet potatoes, but there is as a rule no organized scheme for disposing of refuse; dogs and pigs are the scavengers. There is no particular place for defecation; people use the bush.

Every man has a knowledge of house-building. Women do not actually build, but, along with the children, they pour water into the clay pit and carry clay to the men who are plastering the walls. Ngonga says, "People would be surprised to see a woman building a house. They would call her a he-woman." Men help one another in house-building by giving reciprocal service for which there is a gift of food and beer.

A deep rectangular clay pit is made as close to the house as possible, and the children thoroughly enjoy puddling the clay with their

764 787 later in explaining the meaning of the articles which are contained in the divination basket.

764 I interrogated my interpreter respecting funeral customs, and from these inquiries elicited the following information. Burial of the corpse takes place a mile or more from the village in a grave dug by the father's sister's children. The depth of the grave is about six feet. Each village has its own burial ground. The woman who questioned the corpse carried a sleeping mat which would be used to spread on the bottom of the grave, though sometimes the mat is placed outside the grave on the mound of earth. Midway between Cuma and Caconda I photographed graves of the Ovimbundu (Plate XLVII, Figs. 1, 2). The articles on the graves were the poles used for carrying the coffin, a basket, broken gourds, and in one instance the horns of a bullock which was killed at the funeral feast. The horns were mounted at the top of an upright pole (Plate XLVI, Fig. 2). Ngonga said that the belongings of a well-to-do person would usually be broken and placed on the grave; the breaking is necessary in order to prevent theft. I could find no trace of the idea that property is broken so that its spirit will accompany the man to a world of spirits.

(361)

The corpse was in a wooden box covered with a thin piece of blue and white chequered cloth tightly wound about the coffin. Ngonga explained that the body was prepared in the following manner before it was placed in the coffin. The corpse was extended in a supine position with the thumbs tied, the palms together, and the hands on the pubes. The great toes were tied together and the upper arms were bound to the torso with bands of bark or cloth. The use of bark no doubt represents the older method.

764 787 At the funeral of a baby one of the grandmothers carries the dead child to the grave on her back. The ceremony of questioning the corpse is carried out if the child is old enough to walk and talk. Ngonga said, "If the dead child was old enough to talk they think he will say something." If the child was unable to talk, the parents, accompanied by their brothers and sisters, would visit the medicine-man to inquire the cause of death.

766 There are a few special observances connected with the burial of twins. When the children were alive the mother had to shake a rattle or to blow a small horn instead of giving the usual greetings to a passer-by, and this she has to do at the funeral of one or both of her twins.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

766

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2

HUNTER'S TOMB AND VILLAGE OF VASELE

Fig. 1. Tomb, near Luimbale. Fig. 2. Village, near Vila Nova de Seles

[p.428]

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[1874-1911]

THE OVIMBUNDU UNDER TWO SOVEREIGNTIES

178 The great distinguishing mark of the Ovimbundu was their participation in the caravan trade. Some of the neighbouring people also engaged in trading journeys (e.g. the Chokwe) but in central Angola the dominant traders were the Ovimbundu by reason of their control of the routes to Benguela and Catumbela, a control which as Livingstone's narrative shows they tried for a while to turn into a monopoly.[43] With this must be linked 177 the greater readiness of the Ovimbundu to adopt European ways, marked by the general adoption of cloths for wear by at latest the mid-nineteenth century.[44]

3. *Economics and Social Structure*

101 This section will describe the economic life and social structure which marked the period of the rubber trade (1874–1911). 436 A genuine currency existed in the form of cloth, and fortunes 439 could be made in it. Serpa Pinto tells us of one Otjimbundu who made £3,500 by trading in the interior and that he had met many men who 'turned over capital of a thousand to twelve hundred pounds sterling',[45] presumably in trade goods since Portuguese currency did not circulate among the Ovimbundu. At the capitals of the kingdoms genuine towns grew up. 361 Magyar in the middle of the nineteenth century estimated that [162] 5,000 people lived at Bailundo[46] and the British explorer Cameron who had crossed Africa from Zanzibar says of Ekovongo, the capital of Bie, 'the town of Kagnombe, the largest I came across during my whole journey, being more than three miles in circumference. On arrival I was met by the 644 Kagnombe's secretary, chamberlain, and captain of the guard who wore red waistcoats as a sign of their dignity. The secretary was more ornamental than useful, being unable to write, but a subordinate, a black man and native of Dondo, was better educated and conducted the trade of Kagnombe with the coast'.[47]

[43] Ibid., p. 205.
[44] Ibid., p. 206, referring to Magyar as evidence.
[45] Serpa Pinto, pp. 161–2.
[46] Magyar, p. 391.
[47] V. L. Cameron, *Across Africa*, London, 1877. Vol. II, pp. 206–7.

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[Df74-1911]

not now possible for field work to supply the gaps in the written material.[72] 61 114

The traditional kinship system had neither clans nor segmenting lineages. The patrilineal group (*oluse*) was localized in a village, the group head being at the same time a village headman. Patrilineal ties do not seem to have been recognized between villages.[73] This social independence of the agnatically united village was reflected in the surrounding palisade, in the close clustering of the houses (nowadays much more spread out) and in the village institutions of the dancing-floor and the men's house (*ondjango*). It was here that all the men and boys, from seven or eight up, ate. Hastings writes, 'Each woman, after preparing the meal, takes or sends the portion which is for the male members of her family. This food is common property. As soon as enough has arrived some responsible member among the men will have it divided among the boys. For days a man may never taste of the food which is prepared by his wife.'[74] The men's house was also a club, and a court-room, where minor cases were decided. It was through this localized body of patrikin that an individual claimed land and residence rights and through it that he participated in the political system.[75] 614 613 621 [36] 575 264 613

The matrilineal group (the *oluina*) was composed of the descendants of a common great-great-grandmother.[76] According to Childs, it had a head who might also at times be a village headman,[77] and it was presumably the matrilineal group head who settled the disputes over property which Hambly says

[72] For an attempt at reconstructing Umbundu kinship on the basis of Childs's book see J. A. Barnes's review of *Umbundu Kinship and Character* in *Man*, 1950, pp. 126–128. It may be mentioned that the terms 'the side of the bow' and 'the side of the basket' are used simply to mean 'patrilateral kin' and 'matrilateral kin' (Dr. Childs, private information, and my own inquiries).

[73] A rather ambiguous phrase in Childs p. 43 ('The *oluse* consists of a large number of local village groups'), which might be interpreted as meaning that villages were patrilineally grouped into clans, seems really to mean simply that the village is the *oluse* unit.

[74] Hastings, p. 77.

[75] Ibid., p. 16. Childs, pp. 43–44.

[76] Hastings, p. 83, states that the matrilineal group consists of the descendants of a common great-great-great-grandmother (that is, five generations), and on p. 91 says that it consists of a group 'linked by a common great-great-grandmother'.

[77] Childs, p. 44.

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'robber-baron', established himself[21] and in 1904 there was a minor rising against the Portuguese[22] (not to be confused with the very extensive Bailundo war of 1902–3). In 1908 the government post was founded for Bimbe, and in 1928 the Catholic Mission was established at the point where the Bailundo Mission had the furthest flung catechetical school in that direction. In 1927 the first trader had settled at Chicunda.[23] The areas under the mission and the post do not coincide, but it may be said that Bimbe is the territory bounded on the west by the River Cuvo or Keve and on the east by the main road from Bailundo to Gabela. The southern boundary of the post ran roughly on a line between the post and the Ponte Salazar (which bridges the Cuvo (or Keve) and takes the road into Cassongue), and the northern boundary is formed by a parallel line drawn from the road some way to the south of Cela to the river. In 1956 the post of Bimbe was divided; much of the western part including the Mission was placed under a new post Luvemba.

Chicunda is twenty kilometres beyond the mission, and seven kilometres beyond Chicunda a turning from the main track brings one to the village of Epalanga. Keeping on the track, a further bifurcation, say two and a half kilometres on, gives a track to the left which leads to a small leper colony, and a track leading straight on and sharply upwards to the village of the chief of Gumba.

This village lies at the summit of a sharp ridge which rises up from the ordinary level and then drops abruptly to a neighbourhood inaccessible to motor transport, which forms the greater part of the Gumba chiefdom. The boundary on the other side is a river across which lies Cela.

Such is the lay-out of the area studied. It is up in the north-western corner of the Umbundu country, indeed down by the Mission, people said that the people of Gumba were not Ovimbundu really but 'Olongoya', as the peoples to the north are termed. Many of the people in Gumba had come from

[21] Childs, p. 22.

[22] Information obtained locally. I did not see official records.

[23] Information obtained locally.

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167 Many of the people in Gumba had come from
177

Cela, and Cela influences are notable in several ways.[24] In Cassongue Umbundu has relatively recently ousted other
133 speech.[25] Geographically Bimbe generally is rather lower than most of the Highland. Although the railway line and the growth
167 of maize have been influential here, an alternative pull for
361 labour migration is provided by the coffee plantation of Amboim and Seles, and by the coastal towns of Novo Redondo and Porto Amboim.[26] In the days of the caravan trade Novo Redondo was an important trading centre, more important perhaps than Benguela for the people of this area.

464 Work is sought by Ovimbundu in lands far from their home.
[167] There are Ovimbundu at Brazzaville; others have settled permanently in the Congo Republic, or work in Rhodesia; the Johannesburg mines have employed many, and some have gone as far as Natal.[27] In Epalanga, the village where I lived, there were two men who had been to Johannesburg—nor was this very exceptional and I am told that among the people south of the railway it is quite common.

82 The world picture of the Ovimbundu is vague, except as regards Angola and the neighbouring countries. The existence of Europe (Putu) composed of different nations Portuguese, French, and English is known, and I was several times asked if there were black people in England. Little or nothing is known of the other continents. The island of S. Tomé in the Atlantic is known, since up to recently Angolan labourers went there, and some convicts are still sent to it. Several people from the neighbourhood had lived in Luanda or worked on coffee
[484] plantations in northern Angola. The Belgian Congo was known as Bula Matadi, though people seem little aware of Rhodesia, and Mozambique (Portuguese East Africa) is confused with the southern Angolan port of Moçamedes. The railway lines and
[464] the cities along it are of course well known, and some of the people I knew had travelled to Kwanyama country in the far south of Angola to buy cattle. Johannesburg (Zhwaini) and its

[24] Notably in the arm ornaments and hair styles favoured by some women. Cela diviners are often consulted.

[25] Childs (p. 179) suggests that the change came about in the nineteenth century.

[26] For this area of Angola see Egerton, pp. 186–8. Galvão and Selvagem, pp. 378–80, 457–8.

[27] Personal information. Also Childs, p. 215.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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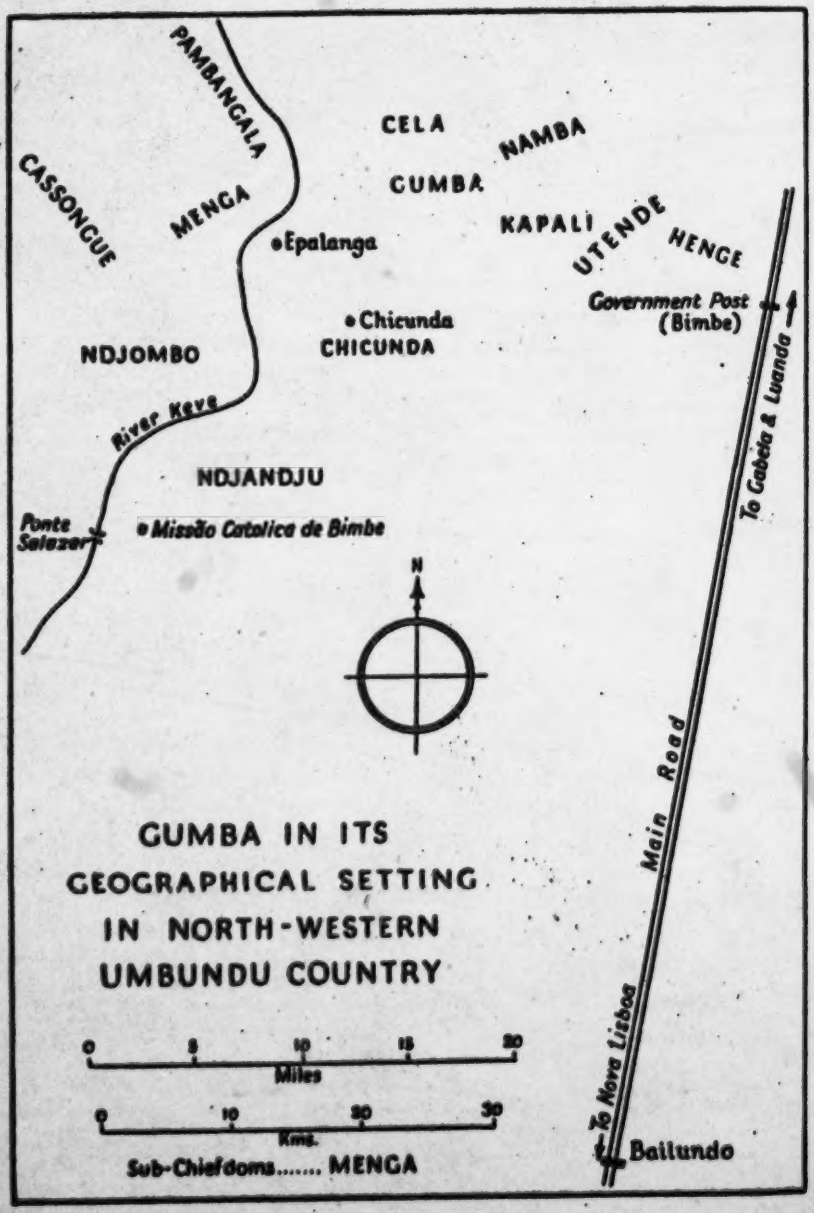

GUMBA IN ITS GEOGRAPHICAL SETTING IN NORTH-WESTERN UMBUNDU COUNTRY

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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622 villagers a certain, not very marked, respect, which may be increased by such factors as kinship ties between him and them, and his personal qualities.

621 Nor is the village itself clearly defined as a social unit. It does not possess any corporate rights over fishing and hunting sites, or control access to firewood gathering. A man may hold land in two villages. It is rarely that a village acts or is treated as a unit. The two main occasions on which the village is thus 'represented' are at marriages and in the context of the catechetical school. The party which goes from the bridegroom's [628] village to the bride's represents her village, to the other village; at the wedding feast food is given out on large basket plates, one for each village represented among the guests.

797 The role of the catechetical school as representative of the village as a whole will be discussed in another chapter; here it should be noted that the ceremonial reception of visiting missionaries by the 'school people' of the village has been evidently copied to some extent from the welcome given to the bridegroom's party, and this has in turn copied certain features from the welcoming of missionaries—notably the use of speeches in Portuguese.

361 The hamlets[20] and isolated households do not indicate a modernizing 'individualistic' trend away from village life, since 'conservative' and 'progressive' people are to be found in both units of residence. The Ovimbundu, whether educated 621 or illiterate, when talking about themselves (particularly in 829 comparison with the Kimbundu of Northern Angola) emphasize that they are a village-dwelling people, and for them the real values of village life seem to be the sociability and mutual help that a man living among his kin can enjoy. By settling in a village one indicates where the pull of kinship ties is strongest rather than any particular allegiance to the village headman.

[20] I use this term for a settlement with less than four households.

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CHAPTER IV

THE INTERNAL STRUCTURE OF VILLAGES

1. *The Village Epalanga*

In this chapter the internal social relations of the village and the relevance to them of the headman will be examined. 621

Epalanga, which has been mentioned as associated with Sapapula, the Epalanga of the former chief Kafelo, was a village of 148 inhabitants living in 36 households. Its houses stretched from near the River Keve (or Cuvo) to near the track leading to Chicunda, a distance of between half and two-thirds of a mile. Its layout is of the untidy scattered sort typical of most Umbundu villages, indeed its size leads it to be more scattered and spread out than is usual. Houses are surrounded by their own gardens in which maize and other crops are grown, and there are a number of stretches of bush in between homesteads. 361

Four main sources of origin (as regards kinship ties not as regards localities) for Epalanga may be noted. The largest 'kinship core'[1] was composed of Sapapula and his kin numbering 16 households. The second largest was that of the kin of Mwehombo (who was a matrilateral 'brother'[2] of Sapapula) and Mbati the former chief of Gumba and mother's brother 621

[1] This term seems more satisfactory than 'cluster' which has a local meaning, or 'group' which suggests an unilineal descent group. It is not intended to give a term indicating a unit with defined boundaries. Childs notes that *imbo* (village) can also be used as a word for a cluster of houses within a village. He also gives the word *ocitanda* for a ward within a village. This word was not known locally.

[2] I have employed inverted commas to indicate classificatory use of terms which for European refer to the members of the elementary family, e.g. matrilateral 'brother'. I have not done so where the classificatory use relates to a term not associated with the elementary family, e.g. mother's brother. In ordinary social life there is no great distinction between a 'true' and a 'classificatory' mother's brother. [601]

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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[Village of Epalanga]

621 of both Mwehombo and Sapapula. The third grouping was that of Ndjoleya (who was not directly related to Mwhombo or Sapapula) and his kin. Finally there were some people who were linked to Lusase (chief of Gumba 1954–6) who was not and had apparently never been an inhabitant of Epalanga, plus a few individuals who cannot be fitted on to any kinship core.

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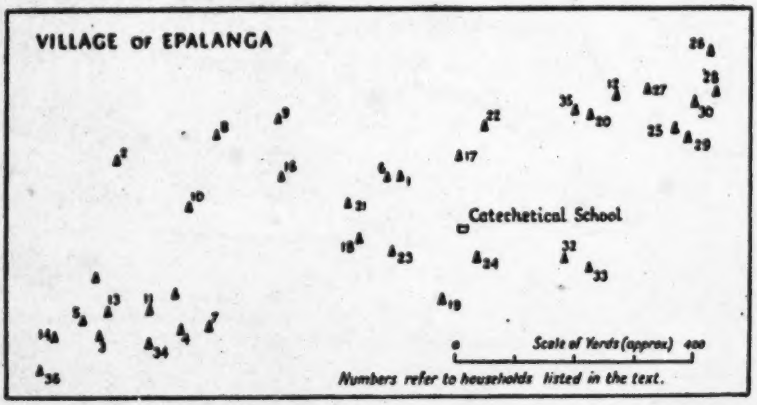

621 To some extent these differences of origin tended to be represented in the lay-out of the village. Sapapula's kin lived at the end of the village nearest the river, the kin of Mbati and Mwehombo lived in the centre of the village, and Ndjoleya's kinship core was to be found at the end of Epalanga by the Chicunda track. However, comparison of the list given below with the plan of the village show that the correspondence between core membership and the part of the village resided in is by no means total.[3]

In actual social life the differences between the cores to a large extent disappears. People from all cores take part in such activities as dances, funerals, house-building, and hunts, and this is facilitated by the numerous ties of kinship and marriage which exist between members of the different cores. Ndjoleya's

[3] Thus, Sendje, Sapapula's wife's mother, lived at Ndjoleya's end of the village. Ndjoleya had formerly lived at the other end of the village, but had moved. His 'sister', Tjingonene, still lived near his old home.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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ing home from labour in October wants cleared fields to sow. If he cannot find any kinsman who would give him a cleared field he will have to buy one, and will have perhaps to pay 200 escudos (£2 10s.). A man retains his rights to fields in a village he no longer inhabits.

The Ovimbundu keep cattle, sheep, goats, pigs, and fowls. The cattle are not milked but are used in sacrifices, and for fines; some have been brought by Ovimbundu from Kwanyama Ambo country but they do not seem to thrive in this neighbourhood. Sheep are few. In my village goats were much less numerous than chickens or pigs. The traders and European residents buy cattle, chickens, and pigs.

Fishing and hunting are practised, but despite the ingenious fish-traps, nets, poisons and weirs used for the first, and the popular enthusiasm for, and ritual associations of the second, neither dominates the actual food supply and ecological background in the way that maize does.

The Ovimbundu believe that the dry-season grass fires also help to fertilize the soil by leaving ashes. Ashes are sometimes spread in a village garden, and dry grass may also be left in a field for this purpose. Soil beside trees is considered to be especially rich, as to some extent are the sites of former villages. There is no idea of crop rotation and a field is worked for as long as it is fertile, that is indefinitely for an *onaka* and from three to six years, sometimes more, for a field of the *epya* type. The hoe is still the standard means of cultivation and the plough is a rarity.

Coffee-growing on any scale is usually undertaken by people living away from the villages, except for the Protestants who have been encouraged by their missionaries to plant coffee in their villages. Coffee, like maize, is bought by the traders. However, at least two local coffee-growers sold their coffee at Porto Amboim on the coast to get a better price. Basically, the agricultural economy of the neighbourhood is based on maize, grown by methods of shifting cultivation. The frequency with which villages rise and fall and individuals change from one village to another is entirely consistent with this type of agriculture.

Axe and hoe blades, blankets, cloths, clothing, cutlery,

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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CHAPTER VI

THE CATECHETICAL SCHOOL

797 Both the Catholic and Protestant missions have, in order to provide religious teaching and leadership at the village level, made use of catechists whose responsibility it is to prepare people for baptism and children for Communion by teaching them catechism, to lead the village people in prayers, and to maintain contact with the missions. There are a number of differences between the roles of the Catholic and the Protestant catechists. As most of the Christians in my immediate neighbourhood were Catholics, I shall deal in this chapter with the Catholic catechists, though I shall indicate some of the differences which the Protestant organization shows.

[166] In the early days large numbers of Christians settled round the missions. The first Catholic converts were slaves purchased from traders by the missionaries and settled in villages near the missions. While the Protestant missions did not do this, they were somewhat embarrassed by the large crowds of converts who settled round mission stations.[1] The missions expanded by sending out catechists who gathered converts. At one time the 797 practice was for the Christians to settle in a 'school village', 361 which was in fact a hamlet partially separated from the rest of the village from which its membership was recruited. This is still found in some Gumba villages. In other villages, however, there is no geographical division between Christian and pagan, and the school may occupy a central position in the lay-out of the village. There are as yet no purely Catholic villages in Gumba. These are established by the missionaries when there is considered to be a significant number of Catholic married couples. This pattern is followed even on the outskirts of Nova Lisboa.

[1] Childs, p. 68.

perhaps in Ndulu. In Ngendo the Men's Club had taken over the 345
rocks just behind the headman's household for its meeting-place, 178
but the meetings were only occasional and there was no common meal.

The Village Plan

To speak of the plan of an Umbundu village may seem a con- 361
tradiction in terms, so haphazard seems the relation of houses, gardens, &c., to each other. Some houses are circular, but the [342]
majority are more nearly rectangular in shape. There is a palisade [417]
of hardwood sticks surrounding all the village except that side of the headman's household which is adjacent to the rocks used for a club-house. The headman had not bothered to keep up his own part of the fence since his only garden was a small tobacco plot fenced in by itself. The village is itself divided up by the 621
palisades which shut off one compound from another, each com- 343
pound containing the houses of from one to three households. Between the palisades are paths which lead on to the dancing floor [363]
and out of the village. In the village of Sekulu Sikīlīlē there were twenty-five households with thirty-two houses in all. Each house (*onjo*) had its own granary (*osila*), and small chicken-coop built on stilts, and of all the houses only six had separate kitchens (*ociwo*). Nearly every household had separate pens for the pigs, goats, and sheep for the night. At one side of the headman's compound there was a common corral for the nine cattle which the villagers owned. Only the headman had a spirit-hut (*etambo*), [346]
used also for a storehouse, for entertaining a guest, and for his own bedroom should he sleep apart from his wives. Within the several 621
compounds were small gardens of tobacco and of maize and beans, 244
and just outside the village were two separate tobacco gardens. Just a few paces to the west was a small patch of wheat belonging to a man in the smallest ward. There was one household of two houses quite outside the palisades appropriately belonging to a man named *Kulika* (meaning 'Being-alone'). The water-holes [312]
and pounding rocks where meal was ground were between the [252]
several units of the village and were used in common. The fields were off to the east at from thirty minutes' to an hour's [241]
walk. The two smaller wards of Ciyanda and Kanjengo were so small that they were like two or three compounds by themselves. 621
The former had six households with eight houses, and the latter

621 Ngendo is surrounded by a stick palisade except on that side of the headman's household which is adjacent to the rocks used as a club-house. The village itself (and each section) is divided up into compounds, each of which contains one to three houses,[1] and palisades divide one compound [363] from the next; between are paths leading to the *ocila* and out of the village. Small gardens for tobacco, maize and beans are within the compounds, and the larger fields lie outside the village at from thirty minutes' to an hour's walk. In the headman's section of Ngendo there are 25 households containing 32 houses in all. Each house has its own granary *(osila)* and a small chicken-coop built on stilts, and of all the houses [343] only six have separate kitchens *(ociwo)*. Most households had separate pens for pigs, goats and sheep for the night,[2] and at one side of the headman's compound there is a common corral for the nine cattle owned by the section. Only the headman had a spirit-hut *(etambo)*, used also as a [622] storehouse, for entertaining his guests, and for his own use should he wish to sleep apart from his wives.

621 Chiefs' villages or *olombala* (singular *ombala*) are often surrounded by a belt of tall trees.[3] The chief's compound (the *ilombe*) is larger than 361 those of other villagers, and, according to Hambly,[4] usually contains: 643 the chief's house, which always has a separate sleeping-room; a house and a kitchen for each of his wives; a tomb for the burial of the chief and his wives; a house of meditation for the chief, and pens for pigs and chickens.

342 Umbundu houses are usually circular, but sometimes rectangular, and made of wattle and daub, with thatched roofs. Sometimes huts are divided by matting into a living-room and a sleeping-room. Cooking is often done [343] in the house itself, but sometimes a separate hut is built as a kitchen.[5]

345 The *onjango* (the Men's Club House) consists of a cone-shaped roof set on stout hardwood poles instead of a wall, and left open so that those for whom there may be no place inside may still see and hear what takes place within.[6]

361 Villages are moved when fields are exhausted and others are not available nearby[7] or, more often, when there has been illness or death in the [768] village, which implies that some action displeasing to the spirits has been committed. (No information is available concerning the usual length 776 of life of a village.) When the new site is chosen, the headman's fire in the old village is extinguished, and a procession starts, led by a boy 778 carrying the sacred bows *(ohonji)* of each ascendant who is now a guardian 796 spirit of the family (i.e. the *oluse*), and a girl carrying the sacred chest *(ocimbangu)* containing the relics *(ociye)* and the balls of iguana skin.[8] On arriving at the site the boy and girl cut and plant the

(1) In this section there were 13 goats, 20 sheep, 100 pigs and about 100 chickens. (Childs, op.cit. p.31) (2) Ibid.
(3) Hambly, (2) 1934, p.206 *et.al.* It was a custom of the Ngangela peoples to plant trees round the village and dedicate them to deceased chiefs. (See McCulloch 1950, p.68.) There is no evidence that the trees surrounding Umbundu villages have any ritual significance, although the custom may have been taken over from the conquered Ngangela peoples.
(4) Op.cit., p.208. (5) Ibid., p.10
(6) Childs, personal communication.
(7) Due often to European settlement. (8) See below, p.47.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

the household of the headman Sikīlilē, who had had four wives and 595
one young Esele concubine. At the time of my last visit (1936), 592
however, there were only two wives and the concubine, one wife having died, and another having gone to her people.

To complete the picture of the villagers, their numbers were as 621
follows:

Village	Men	Women	Children		Total
			Male	Female	
In Sikīlilē's village . .	24	35	31	37	127
In Ciyanda . . .	5	8	2	4	19
In Kanjengo . . .	3	6	3	1	13
At the School . . .	10	11	10	6	37
Total . . .	42	60	46	48	
	Adults: 102		Children: 94[1]		196

In Sikīlilē's village there were domestic animals as follows: 621
9 head of cattle, 13 goats, 20 sheep, 100 pigs, and about 100 463
chickens. There was practically no professional specialization; [231]
there were almost no specialists living in the village: no blacksmith or carpenter, no mat-maker, but only one 'hunter of meat', and three 'hunters of (bee-) hives'. As to the women, all could make baskets, and there were several who had made pottery, but were not doing so at the time.

Pigs, chickens, and dogs roamed the village, functioning as a 364
D.S.C. and a sewer system combined. Were it not for these scavengers the villages of the Ovimbundu would present an even more untidy spectacle than is the case. There is no other regular [514]
disposal of refuse, nor are there any latrines or privies.[2]

It will be seen that there is practically no division of labour as 621
between households: each is practically a self-contained unit. The 476

[1] It was reported that in addition to the children then living, these same households had lost 57 by death (29 males and 28 females).

[2] At Ngendo the school village had two or three enclosed pit privies. The Umbundu euphemism for defecate, 'go to the bush' (*oku enda kusenge*), is revealing. Even more revealing is a proverb which advises one not to burn his bridges behind him, but literally it runs as follows:

Nda wa lisinga huti, Si endi konyima onjo,
Nda o ha sūtilā pi?

If you forswear yourself saying, I shall not go behind the house,
Then will you go (to) urinate where?

There is a more shocking version which, however, may not be really authentic.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

(Plate XLV, Fig. 2). The house of bows for holding sacred relics will be described in connection with religion (Plate XLVI, Fig. 1). 644

In former days there used to be a hard mud floor for dancing, centrally placed in the village. 261 ~~395~~

In the center of the village is the communal house where all men, and boys over four years of age, gather to eat their food, which is sent by the women. This *onjango* is the place of assembly for discussion of village affairs. A house of this kind at Bailundu is circular in form with a diameter of seventeen feet (Plate XLVIII, Fig. 1). In the middle of the *onjango* are stones forming a fireplace. In another such house there were jawbones of oxen. These were suspended from the walls as tokens of the payment of fines. There is no communal house for females. In some villages there is a common kraal for cattle. 344 [681] [417]

The king's compound usually contains: 644

(1) The king's house, which invariably has a separate sleeping room.

(2) A house and kitchen for each of his wives.

(3) A tomb for the burial of kings and their wives.

(4) The house of bows for staffs, bows, mats, and tobacco-pipes of dead chiefs.

(5) A house of meditation for the king (Plate LXXXIX, Fig. 1).

(6) Pens for pigs and chickens.

The guest houses (Plate XLVIII, Fig. 2) that I have seen were not in the king's compound. Granaries, which are conspicuous in every village, have been mentioned in connection with food supply (Plate XLIV, Fig. 1). Each house has its own granary. I have noticed garbage pits containing corn husks and refuse from sweet potatoes, but there is as a rule no organized scheme for disposing of refuse; dogs and pigs are the scavengers. There is no particular place for defecation; people use the bush. [485] 343 364

Every man has a knowledge of house-building. Women do not actually build, but, along with the children, they pour water into the clay pit and carry clay to the men who are plastering the walls. Ngonga says, "People would be surprised to see a woman building a house. They would call her a he-woman." Men help one another in house-building by giving reciprocal service for which there is a gift of food and beer. 462 476 [338]

A deep rectangular clay pit is made as close to the house as possible, and the children thoroughly enjoy puddling the clay with their 338

372 The village chief takes this news to the people, saying, "Tomorrow
791 we must find a goat, a chicken, and a pig, so that we may kill them.
796 Then we must make a new fire." The chief pays for these animals.

Next day the medicine-man starts a fire by the twirling method, and as soon as the fire has been kindled he kills a fowl whose blood is allowed to drop on the fire and the wood near-by. The sacrificial goat and pig are treated in the same way. Sometimes a boy who is learning to be a medicine-man kills these animals. Meat from each of the animals so sacrificed is cooked on this newly made fire, care being taken that each kind of meat is kept in a separate pot. There is no special pottery for this cooking. When the meat is cooked it is tasted by a girl from twelve to fourteen years of age who hands a portion to the chief, who distributes the meat among the village elders (*olosekulu*). The meat from the chicken, which must be fat, is the first to be distributed. A cock or a hen may be chosen, but if the latter is selected it must be *utenda;* that is to say, it must not have arrived at the egg-laying age.

Finally there is a distribution of meat among the villagers who have been present throughout the ceremony. The chief speaks, saying, "We wish good fortune to the new fire." Each person has to take the responsibility for quenching his own fire before the new one is ceremonially made. After the feast each father of a "restricted" family takes away a portion of the newly kindled fire.

796 There is sometimes a ceremonial purification of the village water
364 supply. Water is carried in a block of wood from the nearest stream, and to this water a few drops of blood from the sacrificed animals are added. The idea involved throughout is the renewal of health by the furnishing of new, unadulterated supplies of fire and water.

796 At the inaugural ceremony of a new king a similar proceeding
643 is followed. A chicken is killed for the purpose of supplying blood to sprinkle the new fire and on this occasion there is a ceremonial hunt. The king may or may not join the males of the hunting party; sometimes he sends a substitute.

A girl follows the king or his substitute carrying a basket (*ongalo*) in which round fruits from the tree *olosangu* are contained. Each of the fruits is wrapped round with the skin of the large lizard (*etatu*). The object of the hunt is to kill a male antelope, the duiker (*ombambi*), and a hare (*ondimba*) which may be male or female. The hare is not called *ondimba* on this occasion, but receives the name for elephant (*onjamba*).

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

648 that the Government is benevolent even if its agents are not, and men say that they like the Europeans. There are other opposed currents of feeling, though; thus a cook to a European family said to me, 'The Portuguese do not wish us to learn' and a villager declared, 'The Portuguese say to the English that the Ovimbundu have tails.'[29] The great mass of the Ovimbundu
186 seemed to be without political consciousness, or desire for independence; there is little nostalgia for the days of the caravans, and it is widely felt that the present is better than the past, since there is more contact with Europeans.

● 366 Traders in the neighbourhood were relatively few, compared to other parts of Umbundu country. At Chicunda there were three trading stores and people who did not like them went across the river to Cassongue. Traders try to prevent natives
433 who live in their neighbourhood from dealing at other stores where they can get better prices, but this is not always effective. Some Ovimbundu realize that variations of price levels are related to such factors as proximity to the railway line. The traders are criticized for paying their servants low wages as compared with those paid in the coastal cities. Although there
609 is a great deal of mutual suspicion between the traders and the Ovimbundu which is expressed in the arguing and haggling that takes place in the stores, there is none of the fear so noticeable in the people's attitudes to the *chefes*. Many traders have a smattering of Umbundu, and have a certain affection for the
437 local people. Economically, the role of the traders is to receive the maize and other products grown locally for transport to the railway line, and to distribute trade goods to the villages. Their presence is also important in preventing the rise of any other system of trading by markets or pedlars.

439 The principal goods sold are blankets, cloths, and clothing of all sorts, including fancy items such as sun-glasses. There are also a good many bottles of wine, and also oil-lamps and kerosene tins, and electric torches. For literates or would-be literates, there are pens, pencils, writing-papers and slates. Such goods as bicycles, gramophones, and sewing-machines are generally

[29] i.e. The Portuguese say the Ovimbundu are savages and keep them from contact with other Europeans. The Bailundo area had not (up to September 1961) been affected by the revolt. However, a marked change in this attitude of submissiveness seems to have taken place.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

spent 10,000 escudos, he told me, in buying shells to trade in Kwanyama country and even if this be regarded as an exaggeration such an expedition will cost at least several hundred escudos.

I have not so far discussed labour migration and its economic consequences. There are three ways of going out to work: being recruited for 'contract labour', which involves selection by the chief and government headmen who send people to the post whence they are directed to wherever they are required; being recruited by labour-recruiters who visit villages with their lorries; and travelling, usually on foot, to find work. Contract labour is for a year, which may be followed by a fortnight's work at the post to which the *contratados* are returned. The coffee plantations of Amboim and Seles are important centres for voluntary labour from Gumba and neighbouring chiefdoms. Women, and boys from ten years up, go to work there for spells which may be only two months. However, even in Gumba whose people have a reputation for backwardness and for lack of enthusiasm for going away to work, there is nothing at all surprising in meeting men who have learnt a few words of English in Johannesburg.

Of the 36 household heads of Epalanga, 9 were women, and 8 were men who for one reason or another (elders, cripples, the catechist) would not leave the village. Of the other 19, 6 were absent as labourers during some part of my stay, and this figure excludes individuals who were not expected home within a year. In the cities there are large numbers of permanently or semi-permanently urbanized Ovimbundu, who have largely lost contact with their home villages. Some people who have spent years in the towns may come home—in Epalanga there were at least five women who had visited cities.

Although almost all able-bodied men and many women have lived outside the context of village life as servants to Europeans, as labourers on plantations, and as urban workers, it would be a mistake to think of the rural areas of the Benguela Highland, as being labour reservoirs economically dependent on the towns. It seems that prices of manufactured goods are lower near the railway line and in the cities; hence a man returning from wage labour may buy cloths, a bicycle, a sewing-machine, or a

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

631 life and each could be taken as a unit complete in itself. Individual studies and comparisons of one with another would provide much valuable material. Familiarity with individuals and groups belong-
184] ing to all the major tribal groups, and study of their folk-lore and customs has led me to conclude that as in language, so in social structure and in culture, the differences are of small account. In offering illustrative material, I shall give its tribal source.

The King

643 To describe the royal office and functions it would be necessary
177 to use the past tense. That reason, along with others, leads me to exclude this subject from the present study. Effective European occupation of the country and government by direct rule[1] have atrophied the royal office among the Ovimbundu until to-day kings survive as hardly more than living museum pieces. This being the case, I shall only enumerate the royal functions, very briefly characterize them, and pass on to describe other and living parts of the Umbundu social organism.

643 The principal functions of the royal office were:

776 1. *Religious*. The spirits of the king's ancestors were the principal national deities. The king was not only high priest but also the visible vice-regent and incarnation of the spirits. The
[778] sacrifices at the royal shrine, *kakokoto* (literally, at the skulls), the place of the royal skulls, were for the nation in order:

643 (*a*) *To control the elements*, i.e. to ensure a sufficient supply of rain and avoid the dangers caused by hail, by lightning, &c. Also
372 to control fire by providing a new fire properly (ceremonially)
789 kindled from which everyone took his fire. A king's reign was spoken of as 'during the Water of Lord So-and-so' (*Kovava a Ñalã Ngandi*), or 'during the Fire of Lord So-and-so' (*Kondalu ya Ñalã Ngandi*).

241 (*b*) *To ensure fertility*, toward which desideratum the royal
644 marriage had great influence. The queen's special province was agriculture and her kitchen was sanctified by human sacrifice to
[782] guarantee the national food supply. Ceremonially treated seed was distributed to be mixed with the seed of each granary.

[1] 'Direct rule' is applied in most parts of Africa where European settlement is the predominant consideration and also where centralized government is the ideal. 'Indirect rule' is best illustrated in the Gold Coast, Nigeria, Uganda, and Tanganyika Territory.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

361 A few words from the childhood recollections of Paulino
166 Ngonga Liahuka[1] bring out the facts.

787 One day we noticed that Sekulu Upalandanda[2] and my father went to the mountain of Kalilonge saying, 'We go to look around (and find out) whether the spirits (*olosande*) have agreed to our moving there.' Then another day we saw that the fathers were coming out of the spirit huts (*atambo*, plural), with the sacred chests (*ovimbangu*, plural), saying, 'We go to start a new village.' When they had arrived under the mountain of Kalilonge, they said, 'The spirits have agreed.' Then when everyone had moved, the elder, whose name had been Upalandanda at Muenesi, now changed his name, declaring, 'I am *Cilembo-camunda* (Shadow of Mountain). From that time the place was called Cilembo.

621 On seeking a new site the headman's fire in the old village is put out and the procession starts: a girl carries the sacred chest
[778] (*ocimbangu*) containing the relics (*ociye*) and the balls of iguana skin, and a boy the sacred bows.[3] They lead the way to the site
[346] selected where they cut a pole[4] suitable for a house-wall (*ekoso*), and tie a leaf of the *upu*[5] tree to it, dig a hole into which they put mud made by rain-water (*onata yondombo*),[6] and then together they lift the stick and let it fall into the hole. This is the beginning of the spirit hut (*etambo*), the first house to be built on the new site. The boy and the girl must take part ceremonially in each operation
• [372] of building the hut. After that they together ignite (*oku tiafula*)[7] the new fire. A hen and a cock are killed, cooked on the new fire, and eaten inside the *etambo* by all who have taken part in the building. The headman and his wife cannot return to the old village but must camp at the new site (*itula*) and keep the new fire alight.
342 In building their houses, the villagers may commute (*oku usala*)
621 from the old site, but often the distance is too great to do this, and

[1] Of Ciyaka, ordained pastor of Elende Church in 1930. He was Hambly's chief informant.

[2] Sekulu Upalandanda was the younger brother of Ngonga's father's father, and therefore grandfather to Ngonga.

[776] [3] The bow (*ohonji*) of each ascendant who is now a guardian spirit (*osande*) of the family.

[4] When this first pole is cut, the axe should first be pointed toward the cardinal directions.

[824] [5] A leaf of the *upu* tree is used in the divorce ceremony. Its use here is a sign of divorce from the old site.

[6] Literally, 'mud of the rainy season'.

[7] This was formerly done with a fire drill (*vide* Hambly, op. cit., Plate XXXV), but not for a number of years now. When I showed the above picture to a group of 150 young men of 17 to 25 years of age, not one of them even knew what it was.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

therefore the usual procedure is to erect temporary grass-covered huts (*olosingi*, plural) on the new site, in which they will live while building their houses. Each hearth-fire must be ignited from the headman's fire.

The houses are built by the occupants themselves. The men's club house is built by the communal labour of all men and boys with a simple ritual designed to promote concord within, and to ensure that the spirits (*olosande*) may find it a congenial abode. The spirits regularly attend the discussions in the *onjango*, and there receive their daily portions. There also they are believed to sleep.

At the first opportunity a hunt will be held and the meat brought to the spirit-hut. The girl who carried the sacred chest receives the heart and the boy the head. At this time, while a pot of sour beer (non-alcoholic) (*ocisangua*) is being brewed, the girl sits quietly in communion (*oku felevela*) with the spirits. With these physical and spiritual preparations the village community makes ready its home, a home which may seem poor and meagre to the eyes of outsiders, but to a member of the community it is home indeed and evokes in him, when absent, a feeling of great home-sickness (*ongeva*). As the Umbundu version of 'Home, Sweet Home' puts it:

Koliene, koliene, nda ku li ombambi ha yota
To your own, to your own, if there is cold you can warm yourself,

nda ku li onjala ha panga.
if there is hunger you can arrange.

000 643 769 782 regent and incarnation" of the spirits. Sacrifices were made at the royal shrine or *kokoloto* ("at the skulls"), where the skulls of past chiefs were kept, in order to:-

[372] (i) control the elements i.e. to ensure a sufficient supply of rain and avoid the dangers caused by storms; also to control fire by providing a new fire ceremonially kindled[1] from which everyone took his fire.

[842] [241] (ii) to ensure fertility, towards which the royal marriage had great influence. The queen's special province was agriculture and her kitchen was sanctified by human sacrifice to guarantee the national food supply. Ceremonially treated seed was distributed to be mixed with the seed of each granary.

643 648 721 [701] (b) *To represent the country in its external relations,* principally to make trade agreements with other chiefs, or to make war on other peoples in order to get tribute and plunder. The war leader *(Kesongo)* has his own residence entirely separate from that of the king, whom he must not meet face to face except on certain ceremonial occasions.[2] Each king must inaugurate his reign with a war, during which or after which he must ceremonially "eat the old one" *(oku lia ekongo)* - who was usually a specially fattened slave cooked with the flesh of the principal animals commonly eaten.[3] [266]

643 692 (c) *To dispense justice.* The chief's court or *olusenje* was the supreme court of the chiefdom. The chief had the final word in any case, but most chiefs acted according to custom.

644 [882] (d) *To protect himself and the chiefdom,* the chief could use "magic" (?) which might have been accounted witchcraft or murder if practised without authority: e.g. the ritual murder of a pregnant woman, or of the children whose lives were required for building and furnishing the queen's kitchen.

643 791 (e) The chief made much use of divination in order to carry out his office. For this purpose he had his own diviner *(citue cosoma)*, who was of the blood royal; but he also consulted diviners of other regions and types.

643 Succession to chiefship is in the male line,[4] from father to son, elder brother to younger brother or brother's son, or sometimes to one more distantly related. The election is made by the councillors whose duty it is (?), ordinarily before the old chief's death is announced. These same councillors may depose an unpopular chief, and there have been many such [242] depositions. This "democratic" tendency of the Ovimbundu has been noted by most writers. Childs points out that it is attested by the fact that a chief (formerly as well as today) works in his own fields, and by folk-tales which give incidental and intimate pictures of petty details in the lives of the chiefs†

(1) See above, p.26.
(2) In Bailundu he, with certain other officials, was of the stock of slaves of the state *(ovindili vissoma)*.
(3) Childs, p.21. Many early writers refer to the cannibalism of the "Jagas" or "Jabangalas" who are thought to have been the Ovimbundu chiefs. (See above, p.8, and also Lacerda and Ravenstein, quoted by Childs, pp.17ff.)
(4) But inheritance is said to follow a different line among chiefs from among commoners; possibly inheritance is also in the paternal line. See Childs p.18.

† See footnote 1, p. 31

273 ant said, "Sometimes a man who has drunk this beer will sleep on the ground all day and say nothing."

263 438 Salt is a welcome gift in all parts of Angola. Native tribes appreciate its culinary value but show no eagerness to barter for the commodity. At the present time salt is sold in every trader's store, but in earlier times the substance had to be obtained along caravan routes from the coast and was therefore more highly prized than it is today. 317 [231] The Ovimbundu realize the value of salt in the diet of cattle; therefore the animals are occasionally driven to a salt lick in the hills. The Ovimbundu do not use this salt for their own diet, possibly because the salt enjoyed by the cattle is some form of potash and not sodium chloride.

[171] The Vachokue extract salt from the leaves of a river plant by burning it to ashes which are soaked and strained. This is a common African method, but I did not hear of it among the Ovimbundu. The probability is that the Ovimbundu have always obtained salt from the coast.

372 In connection with cooking and brewing beer, methods of making fire are of importance.

Matches are coming into use among the Ovimbundu, but the necessity for them is not great as the hearth fire is not extinguished. [354] In the center of each hut is a fireplace made of three hearth-stones over which logs of wood are placed with their ends in the fire which is kept alight by pushing the logs forward from time to time. A blaze is made by breaking off bark from the logs, placing it on the center of the fire and blowing. Fire is carried from one place to another by conveying a smoldering log. In the Esele country boys may be seen setting off at dawn to scare birds in the corn field, each carrying fire with him.

Usually the children or some other members of the family sleep on mats close to the fire, which requires no attention other than a pushing forward of the logs.

372 171 The Vasele make fire by the twirling method, and at Ngalangi the same procedure was witnessed. In the twirling method two different kinds of wood are used, soft wood for the base and hard wood for the twirling stick. The twirler used at Ngalangi was a piece of cane into the end of which a piece of hard white wood was secured by binding. Ngonga, my interpreter and informant, thinks that any man of the Ovimbundu could make fire by the twirling method if the necessity arose, but the performance witnessed at Ngalangi led me to doubt the truth of this statement. The operator

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

undoubtedly knew the apparatus and the method, but he appeared 372
to have lost the dexterity which is necessary for a rapid moving of the 171
hands from the bottom of the twirler to the top. There was consequently a long period of smoldering before the flame appeared.

Among the Vachokue a little wooden box of tinder, a piece of quartz, and an iron blade are carried for fire-making. From an Esele man a bag containing tinder and quartz was obtained.

The making of fire ceremonially in connection with ritual and sacrifice is described among the functions of the medicine-man, because the sacred and profane uses of fire are quite distinct.

Tobacco is a very important item of trade. The cultivation is a 249
domestic industry followed usually by women but to some extent by 462
men. In former days when the Ovimbundu traded extensively in Africa every man had a field of tobacco which he himself cultivated. At the present time each man is likely to have a mound of tobacco plants in the middle of a corn field (Plate XXIX, Fig. 1). Women do sometimes cultivate tobacco near their huts, but in this case the little plantation must be strongly fenced. Goats are numerous, and they eat the leaves of the tobacco plant with avidity.

Toward the end of September, when the rains begin, tobacco seed is sown on a patch of ground a yard square to raise seedlings which are planted out in October. A few flowers only are left to produce seed. As a further effort to improve the quality of the tobacco many of the lower leaves are removed. The cutting of leaves intended for use as tobacco is done by men in the months of February and March; women and children assist if the field is large.

After the midrib has been removed from each leaf, the leaves are suspended from the roof in a bundle. At the end of five days, when the leaves have turned brown, they are twisted into a long straight roll which is hung in the sun for three days. At intervals the roll is twisted in another direction. This gradually exposes all parts of the leaves, so that the drying is thorough. There are three methods of making up the rolls: *ombola* is an oval roll; *ongalo* is the round coil; *ocine* is the name given to tobacco which has been dried and twisted 276
round a stick. Tobacco-pipes are varied in size and design (Plate XV, Figs. 1–3); those for men are larger than those used by women. A mixture of tobacco and hemp is smoked in a water-pipe made from the horn of a cow. Details of structure and ornament are given under "Wood-carving."

In order to make snuff a piece of dried tobacco is slowly baked near the fire on the end of a pointed stick which is turned frequently.

not an Ocimbundu, was dressed in only a skirt of cloth, and his equipment consisted of a reed whistle and a hair switch made from a cow's tail. 791

The dance was a slow revolution without any violent leaping. The man held his arms upward, fully extended, and went through the motions of drawing rain from above; then he made slow arm movements suggestive of spreading the rain all around. At times he stood quite still and gave a shrill whistle. The hair switch was constantly twirled and flourished.

POISON ORDEAL

Evidence presented in chapters VI and VII will show that the poison ordeal is a widely spread Negro trait, and that administration of the ordeal is connected with legal proceedings during which the poison cup is usually given to the suspects or litigants by a medicine-man. 695 791

This ordeal as practised among the Ovimbundu and other people of Angola is in conformity with the general Negro procedure. Ngonga thinks that the poison ordeal of the old type is still practised secretly. According to the old law the poison cup affected an innocent man by making him vomit, while the guilty person succumbed.

Ngonga states that a form of poison ordeal which exists today is as follows: The medicine-man holds out two potatoes, one of which is poisoned while the other is innocuous. The poisoned man does not die but he becomes so ill that he confesses his guilt. This use of potatoes has been fully described in connection with legal procedure (chapter VI).

The guilt or innocence of suspects is tested by giving poison to chickens brought to the medicine-man by the accused men. He whose chicken dies is the guilty person.

CEREMONIAL FIRE

New fire is made during epidemic sickness, at the accession of a king, and at the building of a new village. On such occasions the twirling method is employed. The fire made is called *ondalu*, which is the ordinary word for fire. 372 791 796

When an epidemic of sickness occurs the chief of the village takes a present of eight yards of cloth to the medicine-man and asks the cause of the visitation. The medicine-man replies, "Your fire is dirty and worn out, you must have new fire."

372 The village chief takes this news to the people, saying, "Tomorrow
791 we must find a goat, a chicken, and a pig, so that we may kill them
796 Then we must make a new fire." The chief pays for these animals.

Next day the medicine-man starts a fire by the twirling method and as soon as the fire has been kindled he kills a fowl whose blood is allowed to drop on the fire and the wood near-by. The sacrificial goat and pig are treated in the same way. Sometimes a boy who is learning to be a medicine-man kills these animals. Meat from each of the animals so sacrificed is cooked on this newly made fire, care being taken that each kind of meat is kept in a separate pot. There is no special pottery for this cooking. When the meat is cooked it is tasted by a girl from twelve to fourteen years of age who hands a portion to the chief, who distributes the meat among the village elders (*olosekulu*). The meat from the chicken, which must be fat, is the first to be distributed. A cock or a hen may be chosen, but if the latter is selected it must be *utenda;* that is to say, it must not have arrived at the egg-laying age.

Finally there is a distribution of meat among the villagers who have been present throughout the ceremony. The chief speaks, saying, "We wish good fortune to the new fire." Each person has to take the responsibility for quenching his own fire before the new one is ceremonially made. After the feast each father of a "restricted" family takes away a portion of the newly kindled fire.

796 There is sometimes a ceremonial purification of the village water
364 supply. Water is carried in a block of wood from the nearest stream, and to this water a few drops of blood from the sacrificed animals are added. The idea involved throughout is the renewal of health by the furnishing of new, unadulterated supplies of fire and water.

796 At the inaugural ceremony of a new king a similar proceeding
643 is followed. A chicken is killed for the purpose of supplying blood to sprinkle the new fire and on this occasion there is a ceremonial hunt. The king may or may not join the males of the hunting party; sometimes he sends a substitute.

A girl follows the king or his substitute carrying a basket (*ongalo*) in which round fruits from the tree *olosangu* are contained. Each of the fruits is wrapped round with the skin of the large lizard (*etatu*). The object of the hunt is to kill a male antelope, the duiker (*ombambi*), and a hare (*ondimba*) which may be male or female. The hare is not called *ondimba* on this occasion, but receives the name for elephant (*onjamba*).

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

1

2

OVIMBUNDU

Fig. 1. Using drill, Bailundu. Fig. 2. Girl, Elende

142

[p.389]

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

137 of the lower zones between the plateau and the coast is the baobab (*Adansonia digitata*). Where these lower zones are well watered, especially along the streams, dense tropical forests are the rule.

The Highland proper until quite recent times was well covered with a good variety of trees. This gave a pleasing aspect not lost upon travellers. Commander Cameron, who crossed from Zanzibar [114] to Benguela in 1875, was greatly impressed by the rustic beauty of the country-side:

> As we went forward the scenery increased in beauty, and at last I was constrained to halt and surrender myself to the enjoyment of the view which lay before me.
>
> I will content myself with asserting that nothing could be more lovely than this entrancing scene, this glimpse of Paradise. To describe it would be impossible. Neither poet, . . . nor painter . . . could by pen or pencil do full justice to the country of Bailundu.
>
> In the foreground were glades in the woodland, varied with knolls crowned by groves of large, English-looking trees, sheltering villages with yellow thatched roofs; . . . plantations with the fresh green of young crops and the bright red of newly hoed ground in vivid contrast, and running streams flashing in the sunlight; while in the far distance were mountains of endless and pleasing variety of form, gradually fading away until they blended with the blue of the sky. . . .
>
> That evening we camped in a wood, a clear space having literally to be cut out of the masses of sweet-scented creepers which festooned the trees.[1]

Some of this natural beauty still remains in Bailundu and other parts of the country, but much of it has gone, as grasslands have taken the place of forest and woodland. Native agriculture and the annual fires have caused much deforestation and much has [375] also come about from the demands of European settlement and the needs of the railway, which up to the present time uses only wood for fuel. The question as to whether the rainfall has yet been much affected is often discussed.

164 The Benguela Highland is within the tropics and therefore subject to many tropical diseases. Malaria is prevalent owing to the presence of the *Anopheles* mosquito, one of the two essential hosts in the life-cycle of the malaria germ, man being the other. Infant mortality owing to malaria seems to be high among the Ovimbundu. It seems probable, however, that many of the

[1] V. L. Cameron, *Across Africa* (New York: Harpers, 1877), p. 410 f.

Formerly it was believed that a smith owed his skill to the help of the spirit of a person whom he had killed, and wooden effigies of this person were kept by the smith.[1] 326 782

The principal products of a blacksmith's forge are axe-heads, hoe blades,[2] tools for mat-making, arrowheads, knives, and brass bracelets. Iron, which is fairly plentiful, was formerly smelted over charcoal fires.[3] Today smiths use scrap iron. 325 412

Pottery

Pot-making is a part of women's work among the Ovimbundu. A wheel is not used. Clay is mixed with a silicate, usually gravel, rolled out in long ropes, and the pot built by the coiling process.[4] Pots are ornamented when wet by making deep incisions with a piece of gourd; they are then sun-dried, and fired in a kiln of dry grass. Pots are used as water-containers, as cooking vessels and as vessels for storing corn and beans, and, when made in a very large size, for brewing beer.[5] 323 [462]

No ritual attaches to pot-making, except at the opening of a new clay-pit, when, in the presence of both men and women from the village, the medicine-man sacrifices a chicken over the open pit.[6] [782]

Weaving and Spinning

Looms have not been used among the Ovimbundu since they have been a people, although progenitors of the kingly families who came from the Bangala or Congo groups may have done weaving. Trade cloth has been known and used by the Ovimbundu for nearly 300 years.[7] Skins have been used in remote areas; Hambly when he mentions bark-cloth as being worn by the Ovimbundu is probably referring to the Ngangela. Spun cotton, however, is used for repairs, and there is a cotton plant in most gardens. Spinning is done always by men.[8] 286 439 [281] [287] [283] 462

Basketry

All girls learn to make baskets, although some become more proficient than others. Knowledge of basket-making implies also an understanding of dyeing, since coloured strands of grass are interwoven to make geometric patterns.[9] Baskets, and also basket-trays, are usually made by the coiling process.[10] 285 462 [386]

(1) Hambly, (2) 1934, pp.158-60. The ceremony was described from Njongolo village in Elende.
(2) See Cushman, 1944, pp.140-1.
(3) For details of the blacksmith's forge and tools, see Hambly, op.cit., pp.160-1; Cushman, 1944, pp.139, 140, 145-6.
(4) See Hambly, op.cit. Plates XXXIII and XXXIV, and Childs, 1949, Plate VIII.
(5) Hambly, op.cit., p.168; Cushman, op.cit., pp.144-5.
(6) Hambly, op.cit., p.169.
(7) Childs, personal communication. See also Childs, 1949, p.171, note 1.
(8) See Hambly, p.177, and Cushman, 1944, p.136.
(9) Red, yellow, black, and brown dyes are used. For a description of the process, see Hambly, op.cit., pp.170-1.
(10) See Hambly, op.cit., p.171, and Cushman, op.cit., pp.141-2 for details of basket-making. Also for illustrations Hambly, op.cit. and Childs, 1949.

285 The name *esisa* is given to the raw material as well as to the mat. The worker begins by laying out the reeds on the ground, side by side; then the slender tool *utomo* is passed through the reeds near their ends. This position is made permanent by sewing, and the process is repeated at intervals along the length of the reeds (Plate XLII, Figs. 1, 2).

Evinda is a large mat, about 120 cm long and 70 cm wide, while each strip of coarse elephant grass is about 3 cm wide. Ability to make the rush mat (*esisa*) is fairly common, but skill in making *evinda* is less usual. The mat *evinda* has several uses; it may be stretched on the floor or bed as a sleeping mat, or possibly it is rolled so that the ends can be fastened together; so treated it forms a cylinder which may be filled with grain when stood upright on the ground. A number of these mats is sometimes used to form a temporary storage place or shelter. The technique is of the twilled variety in which each weft passes over and under two warps.

Ocala is a coarse mat made from long stalks which are called "elephant grass" by the Boers; the agricultural term is "Napier's fodder." The long rods are white and glazed, so forming an artistic contrast to the crossbinding, which is of black bark. The technique is known as check, a term used to describe a structure in which warp and weft pass over and under each other singly.

The large mat (*ocikanga*) which is of soft texture shows neatly woven, diamond-shaped patterns of dark brown grass. The technique of this mat is of the twilled variety in which each weft passes over and then under two warps.

283 String bags, which are used for suspending gourds or hanging them over the shoulder, are made by men only. The root *ombundi*, mentioned in connection with brewing beer, is used for making string bags. Two fibers that have been teased out from the root are rolled tightly together by rubbing them between the palm and the thigh. [462] Strong rope is sometimes made by plaiting coarse grass; this occupation is in the hands of males.

● 386 In basket-making the preparation of dyes is of great importance because colored strands of grass are inwoven to make named geometrical patterns (Plates IX; X). [531] The Umbundu expression for dyeing is *oku lisa olosovo*.

Red coloring is produced by taking leaves of a plant named *esava* and cooking them in water along with the bark of the tree *ukondo*. [515] *Ukondo* is the "tooth brush" tree because small pieces of its wood are chewed and used for cleaning the teeth. After the grass has

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

simmered in this infusion of *evava* leaves and *ukondo* bark, it is buried 386
in a heap of ashes and earth. These processes produce the red coloring.

Yellow dye is made from the roots of a wild rhubarb (*ocilunguluila*) which has sagittate leaves. The roots are pounded and mixed with cold water, after which the grass is placed in the mixture. A pot containing the mixture is put on the fire and the contents are boiled for half an hour; at the end of this time the grass is an amber-yellow in color.

In order to dye grass black the leaves of *evava*, the plant used for making red dye, are mixed with an iron solution obtained from the mud of stagnant pools. If the grass which has been cooked in this mixture is not sufficiently dark it is reboiled in the *evava*-iron mixture to which the pounded leaves of *ungalo* are added. Brown coloring is made by mixing the red dye with the yellow.

Baskets made by the coiling process are the most common type 285
manufactured by Ovimbundu women (Plate XV, Fig. 6). The large basket *ohumba* is a woman's field basket in which she carries corn, sweet potatoes, and manioc, along with her hoe and pounder (Plate XXVIII, Fig. 2). Each coil consists of a large number of strands of fine grass which are tightly bound. The coils of the better baskets are wrapped with the grass called *osoka*; this wrapping fastens each coil to the preceding coil. Coarser baskets have the coils wrapped with strips from the leaf of the screw pine (*emañalālo*). There is a sewing process in which the coils are bound to one another with the bark *olondovi*, which is kept damp during the process. I have seen a needle, threaded with bast, used for sewing coils together; the needle was rethreaded every time it passed through a coil. Success in basket-making depends largely on the ability of the worker to keep the coils of uniform thickness. There is constant inspection and plucking out of a strand of grass here and there (Plate XXXIX, Fig. 2).

In making basket trays (*ongalo*), the same coiling process is followed, but the work is kept flat. These trays are used for winnowing corn. Wicker-work is used for making conical traps for small game such as hares and rats. Conical fish traps are made of wicker-work. Names of patterns, which are of a simple geometrical kind, [531]
are well known to basket-makers. Sometimes a pattern is woven round the basket at a certain height to indicate a generally accepted standard for measurement of capacity.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

people living there,[1] which also leads me to conclude that the Ovimbundu as we now know them were not there at that date. 175x 726

About 1661 there was an expedition from Benguela in order to restore a native ally, the 'Iaga Caconda', against an 'intruding Iaga' who used fire-arms.[2] This is the first record of fire-arms in native hands in the hinterland of Benguela. Muskets and powder were sold from the time of Luanda's founding (1576),[3] but not all tribes took to them quickly.[4] If fire-arms were already in use by natives in the Benguela hinterland in 1661, it is most probable that the founders of the present Umbundu dynasties had them when they came to the country. The first presídio of Caconda was built in 1680, destroyed soon after, and rebuilt nearby in 1685. This was at four or five days' journey from Benguela but not on the Plateau nor within the present Umbundu area. The third presídio, known as Caconda-Nova, was built at its present site in 1769. Most writers have supposed this fort to have been built at its present site in 1685, overlooking the fact that there were not two sites but three.[5]

648 [411] [177]

175# 648

European Influences 1770–1840. The governor who effected the final moving of Caconda on to the Plateau, D. Francisco de Souza Coutinho, also undertook many other reforms designed to better the economic state of the colony. He brought something of the intentions of the great Marquez de Pombal to this remote tropical dependency. He seems to have been the first governor of Angola to realize the immense superiority of the Benguela Highland,

[1] Cadornega, op. cit., vol. ii, pp. 42–6.

[2] Cadornega, op. cit., p. 176 f. It is of interest that according to this author (1680) this expedition passed the Bay then known as 'Catumbella of Salt Water' or 'Catumbella of the Oysters'. Jaspert made the error of stating that this Bay (Lobito) was 'discovered by the English' about 1900!

[3] Garcia Mendes Castello Branco (1620) protested against allowing this traffic (*Da Mina ao Cabo Negro*, p. 25).

[4] In 1790 the Ovimbundu used fire-arms very well, but the 'Ganguellas' had not then adopted their use (*Annaes Mar. e Col.*, *5a Ser.*, p. 489).

[5] Lopes de Lima (*Ensaios*) made this error (or omission), and more recent writers have perhaps erred by following him. The correct accounts are given in the *Catálogo dos Governadores*, pp. 396 ff., 416 ff. (also to be found in *Arquivos de Angola*, vol. iii, pp. 507 f., 528). The facts are most clearly brought out by the governor of the District of Benguela in reporting a visit made to Caconda. He gives a short history of the presídio and tells of having seen the ruins of the earlier forts (*Districto de Benguella 1892*, Lisboa, 1894). The report to the Ministry in Lisbon of the governor, D. Francisco Inocencio de Souza Coutinho, explaining (among other things) the moving of this presídio, and dated 18 Oct. 1769, has been published in *Arquivos de Angola*, vol. i, no. 1 (Oct. 1933).

A professional hunter usually works alone, using bows and arrows, clubs, spears, and several kinds of trap.(1) Nets and poison are not used. Every hunter makes his own arrow-shafts and feathers; the points are made by a blacksmith. On the night before leaving for a hunt, the *ukongo* calls in his fellow hunters to share a ceremony which includes dancing and the re-anointing of the weapons with beer and palm-oil. 224 411

Communal hunts usually take place in June-July, in the middle of the dry season, when large tracts of land are covered with grass ten or more feet high. The day for the hunt is set by the village headman; spears and arrows are prepared and, when the word is given, a party of about 30 men and boys move off to the assigned area of tall grass. A ring is formed round about two square miles of land, the hunters standing just within sight of each other. The grass is trodden down, fires started, and the animals killed as they rush from the flames. Antelope of many kinds, snakes, foxes, wolves, hyenas, mice and rabbits and occasionally leopards are killed in this way. 224

FISHING

In the Kunene and some of the other larger rivers fish are large and plentiful, and men go on communal fishing expeditions, and return with fish to sell.(2) Men usually fish with bark lines, women use basket-traps(3) and poisons. Poison is used, usually in the dry season, when the rivers are shallow. Both men and women use nets, and sometimes a fish-weir or *olunja* may be employed; this has an opening in the middle, in the lower side of which is placed a basket-trap. At the coast and along the Kwanza river dug-out canoes, about 20-30 feet long, are sometimes used for fishing.(4) 226 462 [501]

DOMESTIC ANIMALS

The principal domestic animals are the cow *(onjindi)*, ox *(ongombe*, which is also the generic name for cattle), bull *(onui)*, sheep *(omene)*, goat *(ohombo)*, pig *(ongulu)*, dog *(ombua)*, and chicken *(osanji)*.(5) The only transport animal is the ox, used both for riding and for drawing carts.(6) 231 [492]

Cattle are a measure of wealth, but few families own large herds. Childs lists the domestic animals in a typical village of 196 inhabitants as: 9 head of cattle, 13 goats, 20 sheep, 100 pigs, and about 100 chickens. Cattle are used for paying fines and debts, for funeral feasts, and for marriage payments. Cows are not usually milked, and cattle are killed for food only when they are aged or injured, or occasionally during the June-July period of food shortage. Treated hides are used to cover stools, and for making pouches and corn-bags.(7) 231 436 [282]

The cattle herd obtains most of its food by grazing, but in the dry 680

(1) Some hunters have guns, but the use of gunpowder is restricted by the Portuguese.
(2) Cushman, op.cit., p.143.
(3) See Cushman, loc.cit. for a brief description of the basket-trap.
(4) Hambly, (2) 1934, p.145.
(5) Ibid., pp.152-6.
(6) Childs, personal communication. Cf. Hambly, op.cit., p.152.
(7) Hambly, op.cit., p.153.

3. Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

175 [316] [325] Serpa Pinto saw shafts for the working of iron ore in the neighborhood of Cubango. The ore was mixed with charcoal and smelted in shallow pits. It is stated that the iron was sometimes tempered with ox-grease and salt. The bellows are of the type made at Elende (I, p. 128). Of the tempering process I have no confirmation.

175 787 [764] Somewhere near Bihé Serpa Pinto saw the ceremony of questioning a corpse which was made to sway to and fro, the people believing all the while that it does so without human intervention. The diviner declared that the soul of a dead person will tell who caused the death (I, p. 130). I observed and photographed this ceremony (Plate XLV, Fig. 1).

[695] The ordeal of the poison cup is described; blood-letting, and divination by shaking articles in a basket are also mentioned. Pinto says that in the articles that appear uppermost the diviner reads what his hearers are desirous of learning of the past, present, or future. Sorcery and rain-making are likewise briefly mentioned (I, p. 132). The divination basket, the poison ordeal, and rain-making, are Umbundu cultural traits today.

171 224 Here Pinto illustrates the existing practice of mounting the skulls of animals killed by a hunter on a pole in the village. There is a further reference to this custom among the Ambuellas (I, p. 333). These instances, combined with those personally noted, give a wide distribution for the practice (I, p. 177).

175 [304] Pinto saw the operation of tooth mutilation among the Luimba. The operation was performed with a knife which was struck by repeated light blows (I, p. 209).

[711] Pinto illustrates arrowheads in use in 1879 (I, pp. 277, 346). These are exactly the same as those made and used in 1929 (Plate XVII, Figs. 1–9).

[412] Axes used by the Luchazi are sketched with a detail that shows the old forms to persist without alteration (II, p. 36).

[321] Water-pipes made from horns and gourds by the Luina of eastern Angola are of the forms now used in that region, also by the Ovimbundu of the present day (II, pp. 33, 37).

175 114 For use in checking and supplementing my observations Serpa Pinto's book was found to be of the greatest service, though the precise locality was sometimes difficult to identify. This explorer, in common with others, scattered his ethnological observations among descriptions of the route and botanical, zoological, and other notes.

Lux traveled from Loanda due east, following the Kwanza on the northern bank between 9° and 10° S. Lat., and so into Lunda.

824 *Okalaluluka.* This tree has leaves which are used in treating a skin disease.
813 *Uvendanguluve.* This small tree, only three feet in height, gives straight twigs which are used in making arrow shafts.

FOOD SUPPLY

COLLECTING AND HUNTING

222 462 Collecting of natural products which serve as food substances is chiefly in the hands of women and children, though an exception has to be made in the instance of honey, which is gathered by men and boys.

Boys diligently search for nests, noting their location so as to be able to visit them again when the fledglings are large enough to serve as food. Large numbers of women and children may be seen 252 gathering caterpillars in gourds. The insides of the caterpillars are 222 squeezed into boiling water to make soup.

When a cloud of locusts appears, as in 1925, the creatures are gathered. They are sometimes fried, or they may be boiled in water, dried, and preserved with salt in earthenware pots.

A number of miscellaneous items of the food supply were mentioned in connection with names of trees whose fruits are gathered.

223 [411] Boys engaged in food-gathering usually carry small bows and blunt wooden arrows (*ocilavi*). One type of bird arrow is fixed to the bowstring. The forward end of the arrow is split so that it may contain small stones that are ejected when the string is released. From the wild fig tree mucilage is obtained and this is boiled until it forms a thick paste which is smeared on the boughs of trees. [231] Some of the small birds captured in this way are eaten, others are kept in wicker cages made by children.

343 171 In all parts of Angola large cylindrical beehives may be seen fixed high in the trees (Plate XC, Fig. 2). Two types of hive have been noted in particular. In the Elende district a hive is made by opposing two half cylinders of wood each about three feet long, so forming a hive which has a diameter of one foot. The ends are covered, with the exception of a small round hole. The whole structure is bound round with grass which is kept in position by lashings of bark. In the neighborhood of Cassanga a difference in the structure of the hives was noticed. This type of hive is made from a cylinder of strong reddish bark, the edges of which are fastened together with stout wooden pegs. The dimensions are the same as for the hive used in Elende, but the hive of bark is uncovered.

231 In the Elende district honey of wild bees is removed from the hives in the months of August and December. One man ascends

[see pp. 138-140, category 116]

the tree in order to lower the hive with a long rope of bark or plaited 231
fiber, while beneath the tree men are prepared to take the hive, which is opened over a smoky fire. The men wear no protection, consequently they are badly stung. Boys are encouraged to help, and those who run away receive no honey. Honey may be eaten 263
alone or with manioc. No drink is made from honey only, but 273
ochasa is the name given to beer with honey in it. *Ovingundu* is a drink made from pounded corn which has been soaked in water to which a little honey has been added. The drink is allowed to remain untouched over night; thus it becomes sweet and is mildly intoxicating.

Wax is a very important item of trade. In the remote places 439
natives bring to small trading posts balls of wax which are about 257
two pounds in weight. These in former days were a standard of [436]
exchange in terms of which other values could be measured. These balls of wax are made into large cakes for foreign export. In the Easle country a fiber strainer is used for cleaning the wax. Honey is sometimes dried in very large baskets which are three feet in diameter and two inches deep. These baskets were not observed among the Ovimbundu, but they are used in the region of Cassanga in southern Angola. The honey of wild bees when eaten in the comb is palatable; it would be more so if one could disregard the presence of numerous dead bees.

The bow is the chief weapon of the hunter. The release of the 411
arrow is made with the index and middle fingers (Plate XXXIX, 171
Fig. 1). I have observed this method among the Ovimbundu of 224
the Benguela Highlands, in the region of Kipungo, in the far south among the Vakuanyama, and among the Vasele of the Novo Redondo hinterland. Arrows differ considerably in pattern as the illustrations show (Plate XVII, Figs. 1-9); the Ovimbundu have arrow-points of excellent workmanship. The manufacture of these arrow-points is [326]
one of the most skilled occupations of the blacksmith. Each man makes his own shafts and feathers them. The arrows of the Vasele have leaf-shaped iron points; so also have those used by the Vakuanyama.

Among the Ovimbundu are specialists who make bows from [463]
elastic woods called *usia* and *osambia*. The bow itself is *ohonji* and the arrow is *usongo*. At the third shot I saw a young Ocimbundu boy split a cane which was placed upright at a distance of thirty-three feet. The throwing club (*ohunya*) is used for killing small game such as hares.

411 [237] The only spear (*unga*) that I have seen is made entirely of iron. The shaft is covered with the tail of an ox to which the tuft of hair remains attached. This is the spear formerly used in warfare. The distribution is wide. Such spears were purchased from the Ovimbundu of Elende and Bailundu and also from the Vakuanyama living in the far south of Angola, but I do not think that the Ovimbundu make these spears, which are probably traded from the south. [439]

224 (411) A hunter is considered exceptionally fortunate if he possesses an old muzzle-loading gun (*uta*). I have seen only two hunters who owned such a weapon. In one instance the barrel was bound to the stock with hide thongs, while the woodwork was decorated with brass tacks. Powder and fragments of metal are carried in a leather pouch which is attached to a broad, leather waist belt (Plate XIII, Fig. 6). There is certainly a feeling among hunters that the sale of a well-tried weapon will be followed by bad luck. The gun is sometimes fixed to form a trap in such a way that an antelope may tread on the string and so discharge the gun. Sometimes a piece of meat is attached to a string which is fastened to the trigger. A heavy beam of wood into which an iron spike is fastened was used in districts where the hippopotamus and elephant were hunted. Such a trap was fixed over a path known to be frequented by these animals. Big game of this type is now rare.

In the Esele country the following traps are in use: (1) A deep, narrow, grass-covered pit from the bottom of which sharp stakes project upward; this trap is known as *okueve*. (2) A simple trap consisting of four long sharp stakes which are fixed in the ground so that they incline toward a gap through which a buck is likely to jump (Plate LXXIII, Fig. 2). (3) The trap (*ocisonga*) for lions and leopards. This is a heavily built structure provided with a panel-like door which slides down when the entering animal releases a cord fastened to the bait (Plate XCII, Fig. 2). (4) A heavy trap triangular in form. This trap is not an enclosure, but a covering under which the animal has to go in order to reach the bait. In addition to the foregoing examples there is a trap (*onjanjo*) which is used for snaring antelope. The essential of the device is a loop which is bound to the end of a supple branch lightly fastened to the ground. This, however, did not come under my observation.

Long, cone-shaped, cane structures are placed in the grass, which is then fired. Animals disturbed and frightened by the fire rush into the wide end of the trap, then make their way to the narrow end (Plate XV, Fig. 5). One such trap is modified to form a snare with

285 171 Among the Ovimbundu are to be found baskets which they themselves seldom copy. These examples are from the Vachokue country of eastern Angola. The Vachokue specialize in making winnowing trays and rectangular baskets which are twilled by passing each weft over two or more warps.

By this technique, combined with the use of brown and black weft and warp, a great variety of geometrical patterns is produced. Trays of this kind vary in diameter from 50 to 200 cm. The Vachokue also make large strong trays in which honey is exposed to dry.

In the neighborhood of Cassanga wicker-work baskets are made. The warps or stakes are rigid while the more flexible wefts bend in and out. At this place there are both Ovimbundu and Vachokue inhabitants.

Women of the Vakuanyama in southern Angola make exceptionally neat little conical baskets by lashing coils very tightly. The lashing is done in such a way as to leave the outer surface covered with small chevron-shaped designs.

177 285 There is an intrusion of European influence which tends to mar the work of the Ovimbundu and other native craftswomen. Soft dyes produced by methods described are sometimes replaced by brightly colored, imported dyes; old ribbons from typewriters are soaked in order to extract coloring. The Ovimbundu are imitating European forms of basketry in a few centers, though the native method of coiling is still used.

WEAPONS

411 The bow of the Ovimbundu is made of hard red wood which takes a high polish after use. It is round in cross section and tapers considerably toward the ends. The length is usually 150 cm, not an inconvenient size in view of the fairly open bush through which the hunter has to make his way. The bowstring is made of a thin strip of twisted hide, which is looped over each end of the bow by a slip knot made of two half-hitches. A shoulder at each end of the bow shaft prevents the slip knot from passing down the shaft. In some examples only one end of the bow stave is notched. Usually, after completing the slip knot, the hunter leaves a surplus of bowstring which is wound round the shaft. One bow which is not notched has rattan wound round the stave to prevent the loops from slipping.

The bow for shooting bird arrows is small and is used only by boys; the string is of twisted vegetable fiber.

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The foregoing description applies to all bows collected in Elende, an Umbundu center; neither is there any appreciable difference between these bows and those of the Vachokue of the area from Cangamba to Saurimo in Lunda. The bows collected in the Vachokue region are on the average 10 cm longer than those collected at Elende, a structural difference probably connected with the heavier arrowheads used by the Vachokue (Plate XVII, Figs. 1–9). 411 171

The Vakuanyama of southern Angola make and use a bow which bears very little resemblance to those already described. The arrows, too, are entirely different from those used by the Ovimbundu and Vachokue.

The lengths of three bows collected at Mongua, a typical Kuanyama center, are 111, 123, and 123 cm. The bow stave, which is made from a monocotyledonous wood, is 5 cm broad in the widest part, while the cross section is a flattened ellipse. The bowstring is of twisted leather, looped at each end for slipping over the ends of the bow shaft (Plate XVII, Fig. 8).

According to L. S. B. Leakey (A New Classification of the Bow and Arrow in Africa, *J.R.A.I.*, LVI, 1926, pp. 259–294), the bows and arrows of Angola have not been studied. I am inclined to place the bows of the Ovimbundu and Vachokue with Leakey's "knotted string bows" (pp. 266–269). [114]

Leakey states that the technique employed in stabilizing flight forms the best basis of classification of arrows, but so far as Angola is concerned, the shapes of arrowheads form a basis of classification according to locality. Ovimbundu, Vachokue, Vakuanyama, and Vasele, have distinctive patterns. Naturally there is borrowing of patterns where Ovimbundu and Vachokue intermingle, but, even so, there are distinguishing signs of Vachokue workmanship. The information respecting bows and arrows of Angola is best presented in paragraph form, and comparison of types is facilitated by reference to Plate XVII, Figs. 1–9.

The following arrows are used for killing birds: 411

(1) Elende. Ovimbundu boys use a wooden arrow with a heavy blunt head which is carved into five nodules (Plate XVII, Fig. 3). The head is tanged into a reed shaft and bound there with fine fiber covered with wax. The feathers are whole, bent over, and tied. The number of feathers varies considerably in different examples. 223

(2) Kipungo. The Vakipungo have a wooden-headed arrow with nine well-carved barbs (Plate XVII, Fig. 7). The head is socketed

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223 fairly tightly into a reed shaft bound at the junction to prevent
411 further splitting of the shaft. There are four whole, untrimmed feathers at the butt; these feathers are bent over and bound.

(3) Vakuanyama. Wooden arrows having eleven sets of barbs are in use. The head is bound into a reed shaft with strong gut. Another type of wooden arrow has three sets of barbs with three barbs in each set. There are four whole feathers at the butt.

(4) Vasele. The Vasele use an arrow, pointed with fine pieces of sharp bamboo, for shooting lizards (Plate XVII, Fig. 9).

411 The foregoing information (1–4) relates only to wooden arrows
171 which are used by boys when hunting birds. The following paragraphs summarize the structural details of arrows used by men, and the data are arranged to call attention to differences in the patterns of arrows used by several principal tribes of Angola.

The Vasele make the arrow shafts of hollow reeds, and into these the narrow, ovate, iron heads are tanged and bound in position with fine bark which is not waxed. Three unsplit feathers are bent and tied to the shaft with fine bark fiber. The nock at the butt of the arrow is rectangular in shape and 0.3 cm deep. No quiver was observed.

The Ovimbundu form arrow shafts from hollow reeds, the average length of which is 76 cm. All arrowheads of iron are tanged and the tangs are inserted in the hollow reeds. A binding of fine bark fiber is given, and this is covered with wax. From five to ten feathers are used for each arrow. The feathers may be split or they may be left in the natural state. The trimming of the feathers is roughly executed. The depth of the rectangular nocks is 0.5 cm, and splitting of the shaft is prevented by binding the nock with fine bark. No quiver was observed.

The Vachokue of Cangamba, and thence northward to Saurimo, make arrow shafts of hollow reeds whose average length (79 cm) is a little in excess of those made by the Ovimbundu. The shapes of the iron heads are shown in comparison with those of the Ovimbundu (Plate XVII, Fig. 1). All arrowheads are tanged and bound into the hollow shaft with bark fiber which is then waxed. The feathers are split and bent with a neatness much greater than that shown in examples of Umbundu arrows. The rectangular nocks are 1 cm deep. No quiver was observed.

The Vakuanyama make solid wooden arrow shafts having an average length of 65 cm. The arrowheads of iron are socketed.

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Three prevailing shapes of arrowhead are conical, narrow ovate, and V-shaped. The quills are split, bent over, and tied. The usual number of feathers used for each arrow is eight. The workmanship is neat and symmetrical. The rectangular nock is 0.5 cm deep. A quiver of hide is used.

In addition to the assagai (Plates XIII, Fig. 8; LXVIII, Fig. 2) commonly used by the Vakuanyama and adopted to a very limited extent by the Ovimbundu, there are spearheads which originate in eastern Angola among the Vachokue, whose blacksmiths are expert.

Typical spearheads were collected at Munyangi where Ovimbundu and Vachokue cultures meet. The leaf-shaped blade and tang have a length of 30 cm and an average breadth of 4 cm across the blade (Plate XVI, Fig. 1). The upper part of the tang, made for insertion into a wooden shaft, is round in cross section while the lower part is square. The blade, which has a keen edge, is well graded from a central, raised midrib to the margin.

I did not observe many spears among the Ovimbundu and Vachokue. The former value highly a type of assagai which is owned by every man of the Vakuanyama. At Elende and Bailundu I obtained from Ovimbundu men assagais identical with those collected in the Vakuanyama country. The assagai is made entirely of iron; it has a narrow, leaf-shaped iron blade which is socketed to the iron shaft. The butt is sharply pointed. The shaft passes through a cow's tail on which the tuft of hair remains. Consequently the iron shaft is encased in hide for part of its length.

At Elende I obtained from Ovimbundu men two spears said to be a product of the local forge. The flat, narrow, leaf-shaped blades were tanged into very rough wooden shafts. Wax was thickly smeared over the junction. The workmanship, which followed the tanged method of hafting arrowheads, was extremely crude.

By far the most distinctive knives made in Angola are those manufactured and used by the Vakuanyama of the extreme south (Plate XVI, Fig. 10). I have never found this knife in use elsewhere in Angola, and similar types are to be found only among the Ovambo to the south of the Vakuanyama.

These knives vary in length from 48 cm to 73 cm, with a breadth of 5 cm to 7 cm across the scabbard. The general outline is a well-balanced ellipse. The wood used is hard in texture and dark red in color. On one side the scabbard is left open in such a way as to display the blade, which is long, keen, and tapering. A leather thong attached to the back of the scabbard provides means of attach-

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

411 171 ment either to the arm or to the belt of the wearer. The crescent-shaped expansion at the tip of the scabbard is sometimes held between the toes while the blade is withdrawn.

A small knife obtained from an Ocivokue man near Saurimo in the province of Lunda, northeast Angola, has a black wooden haft neatly bound with fine brass wire (Plate XVI, Fig. 2). The steel blade of Vachokue workmanship is eminently suitable for the purpose for which it is employed, namely, that of carving pipe bowls and snuff boxes, which are sometimes elaborately incised. The knife has a distribution from Saurimo to Cangamba, an area of intermittent Vachokue culture, but I have never observed it in the possession of an Ocimbundu. Men of the Ovimbundu have knives of somewhat poor quality. The roughly made wooden haft is attached to a blade which is protected by a sheath of lizard skin. More frequently than not, an Ocimbundu does not carry a knife; neither does he appear to have borrowed knives or the art of making them from the expert Vakuanyama or Vachokue, who are reluctant to part with their tools and weapons.

A knife used by Vasele men in the region of Vila Nova de Selles, in the hinterland of Novo Redondo, resembles one used by the Bangala of the Congo (Plate XIII, Fig. 1). The distribution of the implement, which is used for cutting branches from trees, is local in the Esele country. I have never seen such a knife in use among the Ovimbundu or in any other part of Angola. The preservation of this peculiar form, in common with other specialized traits of Esele culture, is due to isolation of the Vasele among hills difficult of access.

LEATHER WORK

282 Leather pouches worn on a broad leather belt are part of the essential equipment of a hunter. The pouch usually contains scrap [411] metal and powder for muzzle-loading guns. This type of firearm is, under present Portuguese regulations, difficult to obtain and still more difficult to furnish with powder, which is forbidden to the native. Consequently such a pouch may contain only a pipe and tobacco.

The pouch itself is either square, rectangular, or semi-cylindrical in shape (Plate XIII, Fig. 6). The hair may or may not have been removed from the hide. Some examples show signs of careful workmanship in stamping cross-shaped patterns. Brass-headed nails are used for decorative effect on these pouches among the Ovimbundu of Elende and as far south as Huila.

686 actually paid to redeem his brother and sister who were sold to pay the debts of his maternal uncle. Officialdom is one thing and actual [177] practice is another. Ngonga is right when he says that people appeal to the native law as laid down by the chief or king. If they are not satisfied they pretend a great respect for Portuguese law and therefore go to the Administrador.

WARFARE AND SLAVERY

648 The Ovimbundu have been for centuries an organized people 726 possessed of a well-developed language, a legal system, and complex social organization. In trade and travel too, the Ovimbundu have been in the vanguard of African tribes. These reasons, in conjunction with the fact of numerical superiority and early contact with the Portuguese, would account for the success of the Ovimbundu in warfare. The defensive federations existing between the ten or twelve main political units, whereby they did not habitually war on each other, helped to assure success. Should the eldest son of a king's [643] principal wife be thought unsuitable as successor, a competent son of the deceased king was elected by a council of village chiefs.

411 There is no evidence that the Ovimbundu poisoned their weapons, neither do they do so today. The Ovimbundu do not use a shield at the present time, neither is it certain that they had shields in former times. A skin-covered powder-box was carried in the king's train when on the warpath.

718 Signaling-drums were about two feet long. They were made from a cylinder of wood over the ends of which skin was stretched. Signaling, which was accomplished by drumming with the palms of the hands, was the task of boys who resided in the king's compound, except when they accompanied him to war or on a trading journey. There was no system of smoke signaling. The iron war gong was named *ongonge*, but the instrument is nowadays tapped by the assistant of a medicine-man during his performance. In former times the gong was struck in the night to give assurance that the enemy was not in sight.

726 In war the oldest son of a king or of a chief went ahead of the war party accompanied by a few men who wore red leaves on their foreheads.

721 Intertribal jealousies, raiding for cattle and slaves, also reprisals for interference with caravan trade, were the chief causes of conflict with surrounding peoples. There was undoubtedly some internal warfare within the confederacy. The Ovimbundu of Elende, Bail-

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

was too light to make it effective as a tool or weapon (Plate XIII, Fig. 4). At Bailundu I was informed that an ax of this kind is used in a medicine-man's dance which is intended to cure a man who is sick because a spirit has entered into him. The sickness may have occurred because the man has broken a promise. 755

The medicine-man, or sometimes the patient himself, dances violently, meanwhile cutting about him with the ax (*omutaka*), which is finally used for killing a little pig whose blood is drunk by the sick man. This is the ritual that was previously mentioned in describing divination.

The following are important ceremonial objects: The ax *ekuva* (Plate XIII, Fig. 5) was the one used for killing slaves who were eaten at the death of a king. This object was secured in the Vasele country near Vila Nova de Selles. It is of handsome appearance, having a copper circle inlaid into the iron blade. A spear from Bailundu is likewise important because of its use in ritual (Plate XIII, Fig. 8). Before war and hunting this spear was thrust first into an ox then into a slave. The human and animal flesh were cooked together and eaten from the same pot. The female figure used by the medicine-man for consultation with regard to the correct path for a caravan has been described. A carved wooden post obtained from Bailundu was set up at cross-paths so that it might be visited by a sick person or his representative who would make sacrifice there. 411 [266] 782

Without parallel among ceremonial objects used by the Ovimbundu is a small wooden cloth-covered box from Bailundu. This contains a piece of root of cylindrical form tightly bound with cloth having at one end a cowrie shell. The box is the shrine of *Kandundu*, for whom a small hut is built in order to contain the box. Any one who sees the contents of the shrine is said to become blind. *Kandundu* is believed to be the "spirit of dreaming who makes swellings come on the body." 778

Antelope horns are in general use as containers of magical potions. One horn from Bailundu is used for holding sweet beer which is drunk by a person afflicted by bad dreams. A large horn with a piece of fur attached, also from Bailundu, is named *ocindiko*. The horn contains a mixture of fat and charcoal which is heated near camp after sunset, when men are on the march. The spreading fumes keep away lions and thieves. It was said that a thief is deterred because the fumes make him cough. 789 237

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

recrudescence. Masks of eastern Angola most closely resemble those of the Bapindi of the southwest Congo, but the general background of these puberty rites is comparable in Angola, parts of the Congo, and in several parts of the forest belt of west Africa from Sierra Leone to Cameroon. 171 881

Usually there is seclusion, hardship, training in dances and tribal customs, with ceremonial reappearance and change of name. Evidently the Ovimbundu share the material traits and the psychological background of initiatory rites with a very large number of tribes, which occupy the forest zones of west and central Africa.

G. Lindblom's publication, "The Use of Stilts in Africa and America," helps to explain the occurrence of stilt-walking at the final ceremonies of initiation witnessed at Cangamba. Since stilt-walking in Angola occurs chiefly in the eastern section, perhaps one should link the trait with the stilt-walking in Nyasaland, because there has been continuous communication from Angola to Nyasaland along the Zambezi valley. The stilt-walking of eastern Angola may, however, be a cultural offshoot from the southwest Congo, for according to Lindblom the stilt-walking trait occurs there, and the contacts of eastern Angola with the southwest Congo have been important.

In turning from these factors of social life to traits of a more material kind, there are points of importance to be noted in connection with food supply and industries. A possibility exists that such traits as hunting, use of certain types of musical instruments, basketry, and pottery, will indicate that the Ovimbundu, before their separation, drew some of their fundamental traits from a widely distributed matrix. 174

HUNTING APPLIANCES OF AFRICA

L. S. B. Leakey (A New Classification of the Bow and Arrow in Africa, *J.R.A.I.*, LVI, pp. 259–294) has dealt with the distribution of bows and arrows. Leakey states that, owing to lack of evidence, he was unable to describe the bows and arrows of Angola. I have therefore illustrated these in detail (Plate XVII, Figs. 1–9). 171 411

Some of the arrowheads used by the Ovimbundu resemble those of the Bashilele in the southwest Congo, but on the whole arrowheads used in Angola are of distinctive patterns, and presumably they represent a special local development. The round bow of the Ovimbundu and the Vachokue is like that of the southern Congo, and it is absolutely distinct from the short flat bow used in southern Angola among the Vakuanyama.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

171 411 The question of arrow release is important in this connection. R. B. Dixon (The Building of Cultures, p. 131), while discussing evidence from Wissler, Kroeber, and Morse, has plotted a map showing the distribution of types of arrow release in all parts of the world. The Ovimbundu (Plate XXXIX, Fig. 1) use the Mediterranean release, which is shown by Kroeber (Univ. Calif. Pub., XXIII, p. 286) to occur in the southwest Congo region along with the tertiary release. My illustration and Kroeber's description of the Mediterranean release show that the thumb is kept entirely out of the way. The string is engaged by the inner surfaces of the tips of the index and middle fingers. The engaging finger-ends are at right angles to the string.

Young boys often use the primary release when shooting blunt wooden arrows at birds. In this release the butt of the arrow is clasped between the end of the thumb and the middle knuckle of the index finger. Kroeber remarks that the primary release is almost invariably attempted by children and uninstructed novices, which accords with my observations made in Angola. Presumably boys of the Ovimbundu change their method of release from the primary to the Mediterranean when they handle a man's bow and arrows. The Mediterranean release was observed throughout Angola, with the exception of the primary release employed by boys.

G. Lindblom (I, Part I) assists in comparing hunting apparatus of the Ovimbundu with a large number of African forms.

The throwing clubs of the Ovimbundu are definitely like those of the Hottentots, Barotse, and Bushmen (pp. 120–126).

224 171 In Part II of his leaflet Lindblom discusses many kinds of traps. The trap built of heavy poles, which is used for catching lions, leopards, and hyenas, is used all over Negro Africa; there is nothing distinctive in the form and use of the Umbundu pattern. The cane rat trap of conical form is described and its distribution is plotted (pp. 52, 53, 56). Lindblom's map shows a clustering round the mouth of the Congo, also again at Long. 30° E. and Lat. 10° S. The blank for Angola can now be filled. These traps are used in many parts of Angola, notably among the Vasele of the northwest, at Elende, Ngalangi, and Cangamba. The use of this trap in Angola explains its presence among the Vakuanyama. On Lindblom's map the occurrence of the trap in south Angola is isolated from the general African distribution, but use of the trap is really continuous from the Congo estuary through Angola to the Vakuanyama.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

The use of bird-arrows with blunt, wooden knobs was common at Elende, and I collected sharp, barbed, wooden arrows from the Vasele, also from the areas of Kipungo and Mongua. This will assist in extending the information given by Lindblom (pp. 94–98). Lindblom's map (p. 99) indicates that bird-arrows are used round Lake Victoria Nyanza, at the junction of the Kasai and the Congo, and likewise among the Bushongo and the Bayaka. My observation of the distribution of wooden arrows in Angola links up these regions shown by Lindblom with the south of Angola. Perhaps a transcontinental diffusion in a southwesterly direction from Victoria Nyanza may be assumed, for it is unlikely that the diffusion would go counter to the generally accepted line of tribal migration which has been from northeast to southwest. 171 411

AFRICAN POTTERY, BASKETS, AND MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

There is no reason to connect the pottery of the Ovimbundu with that of any particular region. The coiling method is far too widespread and generic to afford evidence of contacts. The Ovimbundu have evolved their own peculiar designs and forms. 171 [323]

In coiled basketry also the Ovimbundu have made special developments from a generic trait known in Egypt before 2000 B.C. Designs and dyes appear to be of local origin. My observation of African basketry does not suggest any particular parent form; moreover, resemblances of design may be misleading, for the nature of the material controls the shapes of the designs to a great extent in coiled basketry. [285]

Wood-carving, on the contrary, links the culture of the Ovimbundu very definitely with that of the southwest Congo. Perhaps the work of Angola is most closely allied with that of the Bakuba, who excel in the carving of figurines, cups, and staffs. [532]

H. Balfour's article (III) on the distribution of the friction drum helps to identify the form used by the Ovimbundu with types of this instrument from other African areas. The type from Elende is like that of Barotseland with which the Ovimbundu caravans were frequently in contact, while the large friction drum from Ngalangi is of the Bayaka pattern. The friction drum is widely used in the southwest Congo among the Bakwese, the Bambala, and the Baluba. [534]

Thus far research has been able to show a large number of cultural traits of the Ovimbundu in relation to immediate culture contacts of the Congo basin, Rhodesia, and South West Africa (chapter X). In addition to this, many traits connected with social

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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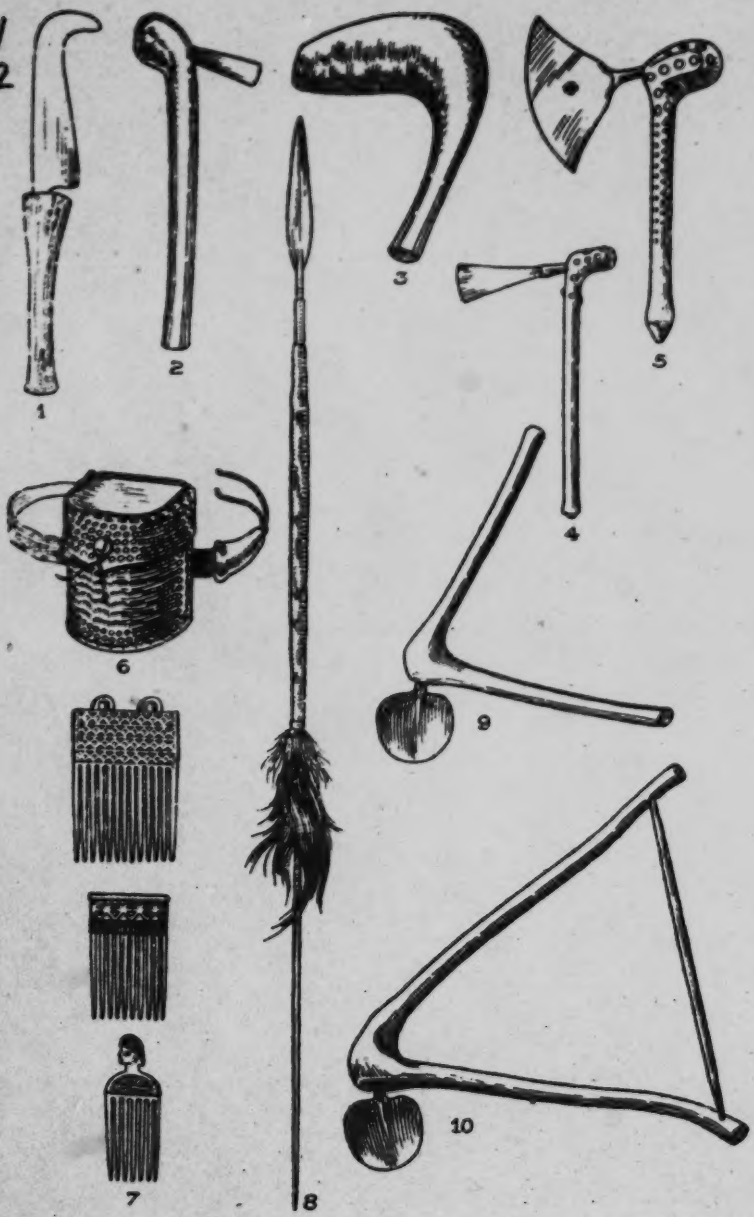
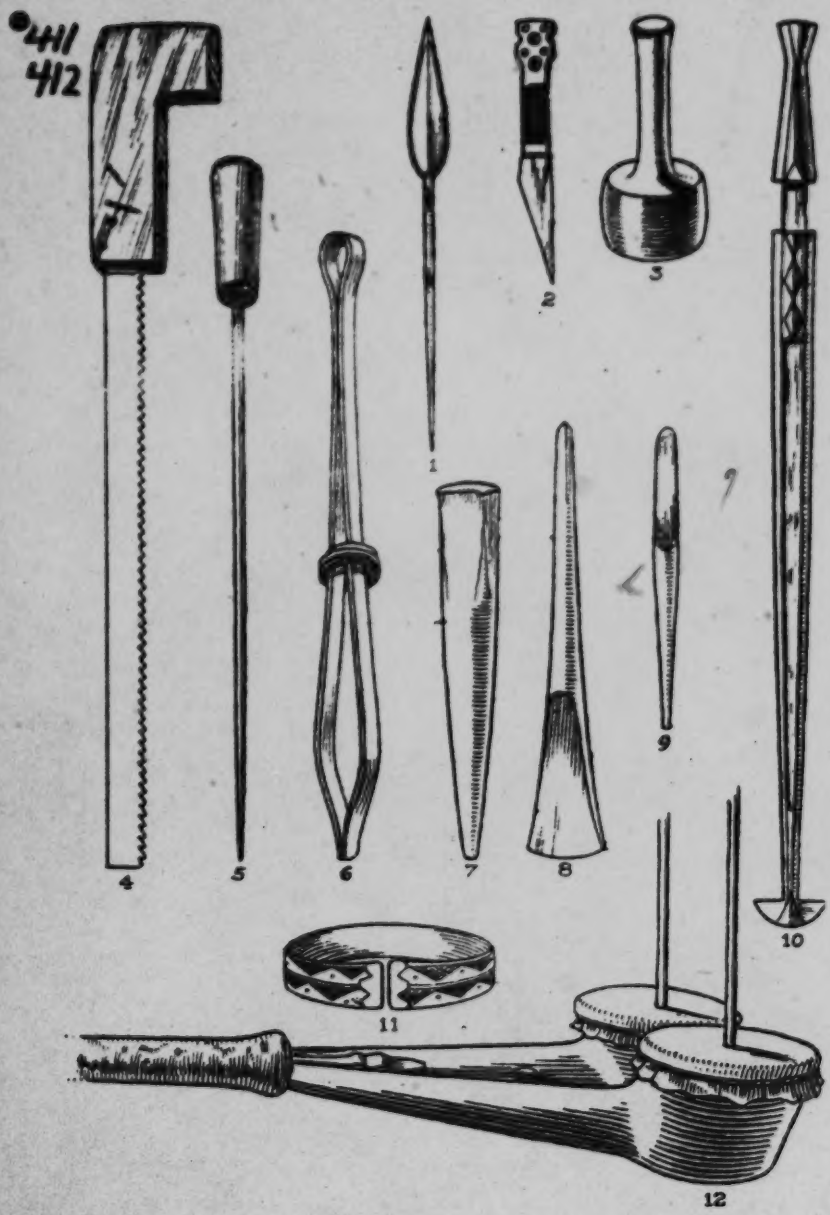
412



WOODEN COMBS, TOOLS, DOMESTIC IMPLEMENTS, AND WEAPONS

[p. 367]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13



TOOLS AND WEAPONS

[p. 370]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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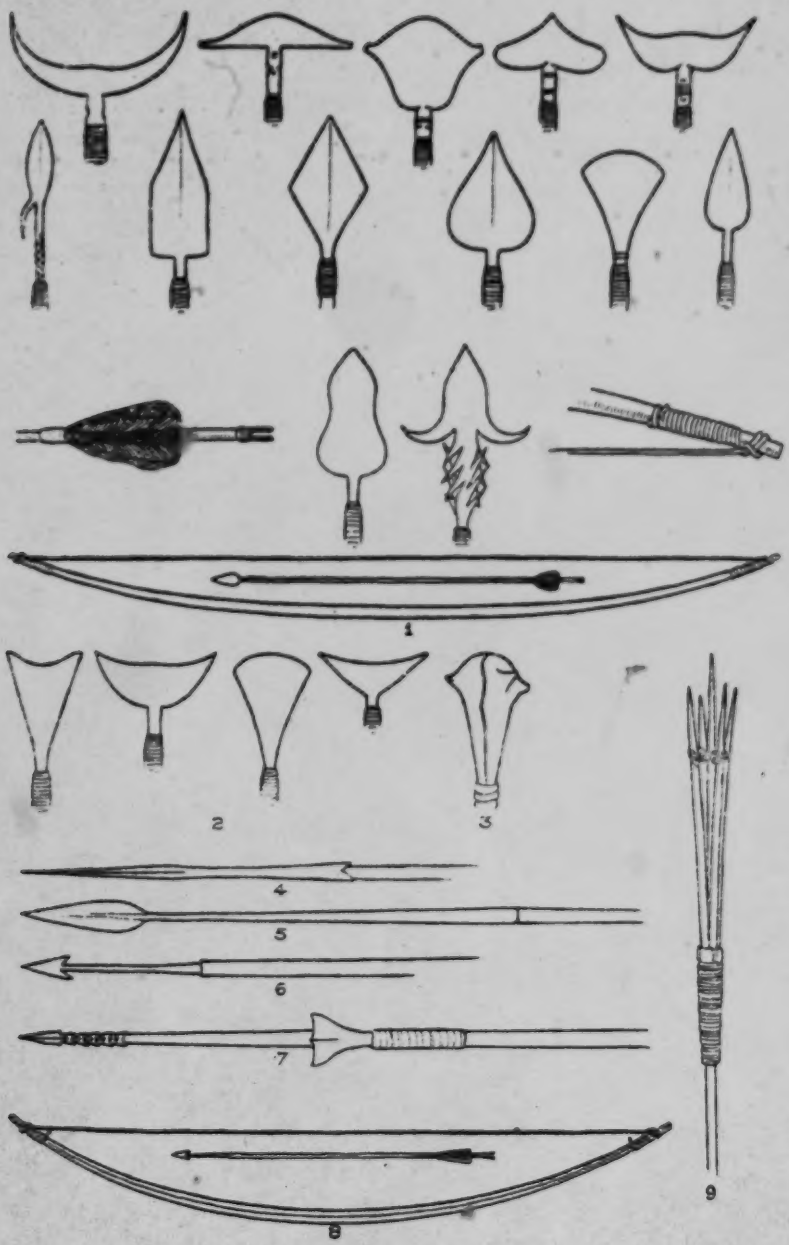

BOWS AND ARROWHEADS

[p.371]

Formerly it was believed that a smith owed his skill to the help of the spirit of a person whom he had killed, and wooden effigies of this person were kept by the smith.[1] 326 782

The principal products of a blacksmith's forge are axe-heads, hoe blades,[2] tools for mat-making, arrowheads, knives, and brass bracelets. Iron, which is fairly plentiful, was formerly smelted over charcoal fires.[3] Today smiths use scrap iron. 325 412

Pottery

Pot-making is a part of women's work among the Ovimbundu. A wheel is not used. Clay is mixed with a silicate, usually gravel, rolled out in long ropes, and the pot built by the coiling process.[4] Pots are ornamented when wet by making deep incisions with a piece of gourd; they are then sun-dried, and fired in a kiln of dry grass. Pots are used as water-containers, as cooking vessels and as vessels for storing corn and beans, and, when made in a very large size, for brewing beer.[5] 323 [462]

No ritual attaches to pot-making, except at the opening of a new clay-pit, when, in the presence of both men and women from the village, the medicine-man sacrifices a chicken over the open pit.[6] [782]

Weaving and Spinning

Looms have not been used among the Ovimbundu since they have been a people, although progenitors of the kingly families who came from the Bangala or Congo groups may have done weaving. Trade cloth has been known and used by the Ovimbundu for nearly 300 years.[7] Skins have been used in remote areas; Hambly when he mentions bark-cloth as being worn by the Ovimbundu is probably referring to the Ngangela. Spun cotton, however, is used for repairs, and there is a cotton plant in most gardens. Spinning is done always by men.[8] 286 439 [281] [287] [283] 462

Basketry

All girls learn to make baskets, although some become more proficient than others. Knowledge of basket-making implies also an understanding of dyeing, since coloured strands of grass are interwoven to make geometric patterns.[9] Baskets, and also basket-trays, are usually made by the coiling process.[10] 285 462 [382]

(1) Hambly, (2) 1934, pp.158-60. The ceremony was described from Njongolo village in Elende.
(2) See Cashman, 1944, pp.140-1.
(3) For details of the blacksmith's forge and tools, see Hambly, op.cit., pp.160-1; Cashman, 1944, pp.139, 140, 145-6.
(4) See Hambly, op.cit. Plates XXXIII and XXXIV, and Childs, 1949, Plate VIII.
(5) Hambly, op.cit., p.168; Cashman, op.cit., pp.144-5.
(6) Hambly, op.cit., p.169.
(7) Childs, personal communication. See also Childs, 1949, p.191, note 1.
(8) See Hambly, p.177, and Cashman, 1944, p.136.
(9) Red, yellow, black, and brown dyes are used. For a description of the process, see Hambly, op.cit., pp.170-1.
(10) See Hambly, op.cit., p.171, and Cashman, op.cit., pp.141-2 for details of basket-making. Also for illustrations Hambly, op.cit. and Childs, 1949.

Mat-making

462 285 [412] The making of mats is a specialised craft for men. Generally elderly men are the mat-makers. Two tools are used, a borer and a needle, both products of the blacksmith's forge. Hambly[1] describes the making of reed sleeping mats, large mats used for partitions, and string bags. There are four distinct types of mats, each of which has its specialist.[2]

Leather-work

282 Leather pouches worn on a broad leather belt are part of the essential equipment of the hunter. The pouch is square, rectangular, or semi-cylindrical in shape, and may be decorated with cross-shaped patterns, or brass-headed nails used for decorative effect. Hide is also used for the seats of four-legged wooden stools. Hides are crudely dressed: they are soaked, the inner surface rubbed with ashes, the hair scraped away, and the hide pegged out.[3]

Wood-carving

323 [413] Wood-carving, which is men's work, includes the following specialisations: doors, windows and their frames; coffins; beds, tables and chairs; mortars, pestles, grinding-handles, and handles for various iron implements; stools, household utensils, carved images etc., drums and other musical instruments; canoes (dug-outs and coracles).[4] Illustrations are given by Hambly.[5]

TRADE

438 484 791 [482] Caravan trade is now confined to short journeys when corn, beans and beeswax are carried by men and women porters to the traders' stores. Formerly however it was an important feature of tribal life. Each caravan had its professional leader, and was accompanied by a diviner or medicine-man. Before a caravan started out, a ceremony was performed at which the principal performers were the village headman and the medicine-man. The head of the former headman was brought from its box, sewn in cowhide; blood from a sacrificed animal was sprinkled on the head, and invocation was made to the deceased by the village headman, asking for good fortune for the journey.[6]

438 436 Today the Ovimbundu exchange products among themselves both by barter and the use of Portuguese money,[7] but there are no large markets except in the towns.

[439] 438 The "trade-agreements" between the Ovimbundu kingdoms and between the Ovimbundu and other tribes have been mentioned above.[8] Accompanying these, regional industrial and commercial specialisations within Ovimbundu country developed. Thus in the middle of the last century

(1) Hambly, op.cit., pp.169-70.
(2) Childs, 1949, p.109.
(3) Hambly, op.cit., p.176.
(4) Childs, op.cit., p.110.
(5) Op.cit., Plates XIII to XXII.
(6) Hambly, op.cit., p.156.
(7) For details of Ovimbundu units of measurement see Hambly, op.cit., p.157.
(8) p.9.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

175 171 [412] O. Dapper (Description de l'Afrique, 1732, p. 369) shows a scene in which an ax, such as I obtained from the Vasele country, is being used for beheading a slave.

Cavazzi (Istorica descrizione, etc., Bologna, 1687) describes the three kingdoms of Congo, Matamba, and northern Angola. The [325] poison ordeal, the scapegoat, the blacksmith's bellows (pp. 101, 170) [534] are all traits known to the Ovimbundu. The musical instrument made from a large gourd, which has a ridged board attached for rubbing with a stick, is the type I collected. Cavazzi pictures the double iron gong and the long drum held between the knees. He [782] also shows a rain-maker (p. 214) and the sacrifice of two hundred victims at the accession of a king (p. 210).

174 243 Consideration of the history of maize in Africa is of importance in connection with these early writings, as this grain is the staple agricultural product of the Ovimbundu. I am indebted to Dr. [113] Berthold Laufer for access to his unpublished research on this subject. From the following facts one may assume that, in all probability, the maize culture of the Ovimbundu was derived from the Congo region before their migration into the Benguela Highlands.

175 243 Father Jerome Merolla remarks that maize was growing in the neighborhood of San Salvador (1683–92). The native names were *mampunni* and *massambuta;* from this corn an alcoholic beverage was prepared. According to Cavazzi (Ehrmann, Geschichte der merkwürdigsten Reisen, XIII, 1794) maize was not intensively cultivated by the Negroes of lower Guinea, though it thrives well and may be harvested twice or thrice a year. The natives said that the grain [177] was brought by the Portuguese, but they did not esteem it highly, and were accustomed to use it as food for pigs.

Bosman (p. 312) records that prior to the arrival of the Portuguese, Negroes were entirely ignorant of *milho* ("maize"). The account of Duarte Lopez preserved by Filippo Pigafetta states that the Negroes consider maize the vilest of all grains, so that it is given to swine. This contempt and lack of knowledge of the food value, combined with ignorance of methods of preparation, suggest a recent introduction (Pigafetta, translation by M. Hutchinson, 1881, p. 40). Dapper (Description de l'Afrique, 1732, p. 345) also mentions the cultivation of maize. Battell lived as prisoner in northern Angola about the year 1600, consequently his records of the use of the great Guinea wheat (maize), which the natives call *mas-importo,* give early evidence for the use of this grain (Hakluyt Soc., 1901, pp. 9, 11, 67).

The foregoing facts, when compared with field work among the Ovimbundu, indicate that the old culture of the Congo and northern Angola bears a strong resemblance to Umbundu culture at the present day. A more detailed analysis of this resemblance is made in chapter X. 174

The following notes dealing with exploration in Angola (1800–1930) are adduced for critical comparison with my own observations among the Ovimbundu. 175 171

The work of Sir R. F. Burton describing the exploration of Lacerda and other Portuguese pioneers, is more useful for geographical than for ethnological information. Lacerda's journey to Czambe, south of Lake Moero, was performed in 1798. A mention of veneration for the dead and consultation of the deceased on all occasions of war or of good fortune, is made (p. 127). These are important points in the present tribal life of the Ovimbundu. [114] [769]

Bowditch (1824) writes from information given to him by Almeida and Saldanha. There are valuable references to the Vacilenge, a people adjacent to the Ovimbundu, who refused to kill their cattle, "rather than do which they will endure famine to extremity." This note was made about Long. 15° E. and Lat. 15° S. (p. 34). The cattle were milked, and cattle-raiding by the Ovimbundu was common at this time. Many present-day Ovimbundu do not milk their cattle, but the Vacilenge still follow their milking custom observed before 1824. 175 101 234

Livingstone's journey through northeast and northern Angola in 1853 contains references to the Vachokue who seemed bent on plunder (I, p. 370). Livingstone noted cotton spinning, which I recorded as an occupation of males of the Ovimbundu at Elende. Livingstone, like other early travelers, encountered caravans of Bihéans (Ovimbundu) bearing elephants' tusks and beeswax, commodities, which, along with slaves, formed the chief merchandise of these caravans from the Benguela Highlands (p. 466). Livingstone notes and sketches (Plate XIII, Fig. 10) the double-handled hoe (p. 442) which is still used. 175 171 [283] [439] [412]

J. J. Monteiro (I, p. 61) saw the poison ordeal administered. The poison itself was prepared from the thick hard bark of a large tree (*Erythrophlaeum guineense*). The place of observation was Mongue Grande, just south of the Congo estuary, and again Monteiro was present when the poison cup was given to two women at Ambrizette. Of this ordeal there is more to be said when discussing the culture contacts of the Ovimbundu, because the ordeal is a basic factor of [695] [824]

175 [316] [325] Serpa Pinto saw shafts for the working of iron ore in the neighborhood of Cubango. The ore was mixed with charcoal and smelted in shallow pits. It is stated that the iron was sometimes tempered with ox-grease and salt. The bellows are of the type made at Elende (I, p. 128). Of the tempering process I have no confirmation.

175 787 [764] Somewhere near Bihé Serpa Pinto saw the ceremony of questioning a corpse which was made to sway to and fro, the people believing all the while that it does so without human intervention. The diviner declared that the soul of a dead person will tell who caused the death (I, p. 130). I observed and photographed this ceremony (Plate XLV, Fig. 1).

[695] The ordeal of the poison cup is described; blood-letting, and divination by shaking articles in a basket are also mentioned. Pinto says that in the articles that appear uppermost the diviner reads what his hearers are desirous of learning of the past, present, or future. Sorcery and rain-making are likewise briefly mentioned (I, p. 132). The divination basket, the poison ordeal, and rain-making, are Umbundu cultural traits today.

171 224 Here Pinto illustrates the existing practice of mounting the skulls of animals killed by a hunter on a pole in the village. There is a further reference to this custom among the Ambuellas (I, p. 333). These instances, combined with those personally noted, give a wide distribution for the practice (I, p. 177).

175 [304] Pinto saw the operation of tooth mutilation among the Luimba. The operation was performed with a knife which was struck by repeated light blows (I, p. 209).

[711] Pinto illustrates arrowheads in use in 1879 (I, pp. 277, 346). These are exactly the same as those made and used in 1929 (Plate XVII, Figs. 1–9).

[412] Axes used by the Luchazi are sketched with a detail that shows the old forms to persist without alteration (II, p. 36).

[321] Water-pipes made from horns and gourds by the Luina of eastern Angola are of the forms now used in that region, also by the Ovimbundu of the present day (II, pp. 33, 37).

175 114 For use in checking and supplementing my observations Serpa Pinto's book was found to be of the greatest service, though the precise locality was sometimes difficult to identify. This explorer, in common with others, scattered his ethnological observations among descriptions of the route and botanical, zoological, and other notes.

Lux traveled from Loanda due east, following the Kwanza on the northern bank between 9° and 10° S. Lat., and so into Lunda.

301 The new ornaments had acquired no sentimental value, therefore
321 their price was moderate.

[171] *Omba* shells are to be seen in use from Kipungo southward through Huila, among the Luvando, and among the Vakuanyama of southern Angola. In the places mentioned one may judge the social status
[554] of a woman by the number of *omba* shells she wears. A principal wife is usually well supplied with these ornaments.

302 In this southern journey it was noticeable that there was an
171 increasing use of red pigment which is lavishly employed for smearing
[294] every kind of ornament, the body, and the hair. Leather belts and skirts of Vakuanyama women are thickly coated with red pigment which is invariably mixed with grease. The red powder is prepared
[824] by desiccating a red wood called *tukula* by the Vakuanyama, a name which is used through Angola and the southern Congo area.

412 From Kipungo southward through the Vakuanyama country
171 there is a notable absence of decorative wooden hair combs. On the contrary, delicately carved combs are used by both men and women of the Ovimbundu. The Vasele make such combs, but by far the best
[532] examples are made and used by the Vachokue tribe of eastern Angola. Here the decorative design usually includes a well-carved human figure at the top of the comb.

301 Among the Vakuanyama, necklaces of disks made from ostrich
[237] eggshell are worn by the women only. A woman of importance has a dozen loops of such necklaces, each loop being about 125 cm long.
[551] These necklaces are so greatly esteemed that only after much persuasion can a woman be induced to part with a single link. Perhaps, as is the case with *omba* shell, there is more than the intrinsic value to be considered. One point is constantly noticed in considering social status and ornament. All the wives of a wealthy man, especially among the Vakuanyama, are made to advertise their husband's position by the profusion of their ornaments and the quality of their leather skirts and belts.

[321] There is, in addition to the necklaces of ostrich-eggshell beads, a highly prized necklace made from small perforated disks of shell having a diameter of about a centimeter. The Vakuanyama women smear a necklace of this kind with grease and *tukula* powder; the
[435] value of a necklace 125 cm long is equivalent to that of an ox. In describing these necklaces there is interest in noting that they are traded to the south of Angola from places six hundred miles to the
[439] north; therefore their value is to some extent dependent on rarity and distant origin.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

The water-pipe of the Ovimbundu consists of the horn of a cow 276
into the side of which a short hollow pipe stem is introduced; at the top of the stem is a clay bowl for the reception of tobacco, or a mixture of tobacco and hemp. The wide end of the horn is plugged with clay, while a hole is made at the tip in order to provide a mouth-piece. A gourd water-pipe, similar to that used by the Vachokue, is also found among the Ovimbundu.

Cylindrical snuff boxes are ornamented with incised, burned, 276
geometrical patterns. The lid is usually attached to the box by a 531
leather thong. One large snuff box is ornamented with three well-carved female figures. The smoker's equipment is sometimes carried in a leather pouch fastened on a waist belt, or the container may be a hollow cylinder of ivory with a leather cap at each end.

To this information respecting the smoking and snuff-taking outfit 276
of the Ovimbundu, some observations on the pipes and snuff boxes 171
of other tribes should be added. When making a journey from Cangamba to Saurimo I seldom met an Ocivokue man who was not carrying a gourd water-pipe for the smoking of tobacco and hemp. Such pipes are usually ornamented with brass nails and are finely bound with thin brass wire (Plate XV, Fig. 3). One long pipe from Ngalangi has a pair of metal tongs attached for taking charcoal from the fire in order to ignite the tobacco (Plate XV, Fig. 1). A pipe with two bowls, closely resembling some Zulu patterns, was smoked by an Ocimbundu woman at Ngalangi. The Vachokue make snuff boxes from a yellow wood, which they ornament by burning portions of the surface in such a way that the yellow color is here and there visible.

Both men and women of the Vakipungo and Vakuanyama tribes carry snuff boxes of conical shape on their leather waist belts. At the top and bottom such snuff boxes are neatly bound with brass or copper wire.

DOMESTIC IMPLEMENTS

At an early age girls become accustomed to the use of the V-shaped 412
pounder which is made from hard heavy wood (Plate XXXVI, Fig. 2). The small end of the shaft is a convenient thickness for grasping in such a way that the knuckles are on the under side of the shaft. This is the very reverse of what appears to be the natural grip. Women use the pounder with an easy, circular swing so that the flat round surface comes into contact with the grain on the rock. Endurance in this work is remarkable, and there is no doubt that

412 fatigue is avoided by the method of holding and swinging so that the work of crushing is done by the weight of the implement.

412 252 Two less usual methods of pulverizing grain are by use of a long pestle, which is worked up and down in a heavy wooden mortar as shown by Plate LXXXIV, Fig. 1, in which Vachokuc women are so employed, and the crushing of grain with a cylindrical stone which is rolled on a flat slab. This latter method I judge to be very old, for on a pre-Umbundu site encircled by stone walls I have seen flat slabs of stone and cylindrical rollers. Some of the flat slabs were worn extremely thin in the middle and a few were perforated by the friction.

It is noteworthy that there are rocks especially reserved for the pounding of grain with the wooden mallet. Such rocks are to be [782] found close to every village, and the dedication of a new rock for this purpose requires the killing of a chicken whose blood is sprinkled on the rock.

252 Work of this kind is begun before daybreak. From that time to [512] sunset the pounding of the wooden mallets, accompanied by the singsong of the women, marks the progress of the day's work. At intervals the pounded grain is sifted through the hands and spread out on a basket-work tray, which is shaken to separate the fine meal. The unbroken and partly broken grain is replaced on the rock for further pounding. A small brush of grass is used for bringing together the grain which is dispersed by the blows.

412 171 The sole implement used in agriculture, which is entirely in the hands of women, is the hoe. Of this implement there are several [862] variations according to locality. The Ovimbundu and others of Ngalangi employ the form illustrated in Plate XIII, Fig. 10. The long handles measuring 85 cm no doubt reduce fatigue by minimizing bending. Both hands are used, and, furthermore, the increased length of the handles must give a greater leverage. The smaller hoe used by Ovimbundu women of Elende has short handles only 51 cm (Plate XIII, Fig. 9), while that from the Esele country is distinguished by a broader blade and still shorter handles only 36 cm in length.

412 Included in the outfit of every Umbundu home is the heavy wooden floor beater. This implement, which is fashioned from a single piece of wood, consists of a narrow handle, round in cross section, and a flat portion for beating the moist, newly made, mud floor of the hut. The total length is about 88 cm.

Not only the carpenter, but almost every Ocimbundu man possesses an implement which may be readily adapted as ax or adze (Plate XIII, Fig. 2). The wooden shaft, from 50 to 70 cm in length, terminates in a narrow grip at one end, while the other end expands into a large oval knob into which a circular hole is bored. The strong iron blade, one of the main products of the local forge, can be removed. If the round tang of the blade is inserted so that the cutting edge is in the same plane as the shaft, the implement is an ax. On the contrary, insertion so that the cutting edge is at right angles to the shaft converts the implement into an adze. When placed over the shoulder this implement is used for carrying utensils in a fiber bag (Plate XXVIII, Fig. 1). 412 [482]

Gourds are of three main kinds, which may be found growing on the ground or resting on the roofs of houses at the ends of the climbing stems that bear them. *Ombenge* is a gourd which is narrow in the middle. It is often converted into a dipper for ladling liquids. The narrow neck is the handle, while a round hole is cut in the larger part so that the dipper can be filled with liquid. *Onganja* is round, or perhaps oval in form. There is a size used as a measure of capacity. *Onganja* can be used as a ladle by fixing it at the end of a stick. *Olukuembo* has a round body and a narrow hook-shaped neck; like the gourd *ombenge*, it is used as a ladle. 415 [244]

Gourds are elaborately decorated with incised and burned designs (Plate XII, Figs. 1–6). Usually these patterns are geometrical, but human figures and animals are sometimes included. Decorated gourds from Bailundu, used for containing beer at a wedding, are among the best examples of their kind (Plate XII, Fig. 6). The owner of a decorated gourd takes great pains to repair a crack with rattan, which is threaded through holes bored in the edges of the fracture. A large gourd is sometimes carried in a native-made net of vegetable fiber. 531 415

POTTERY

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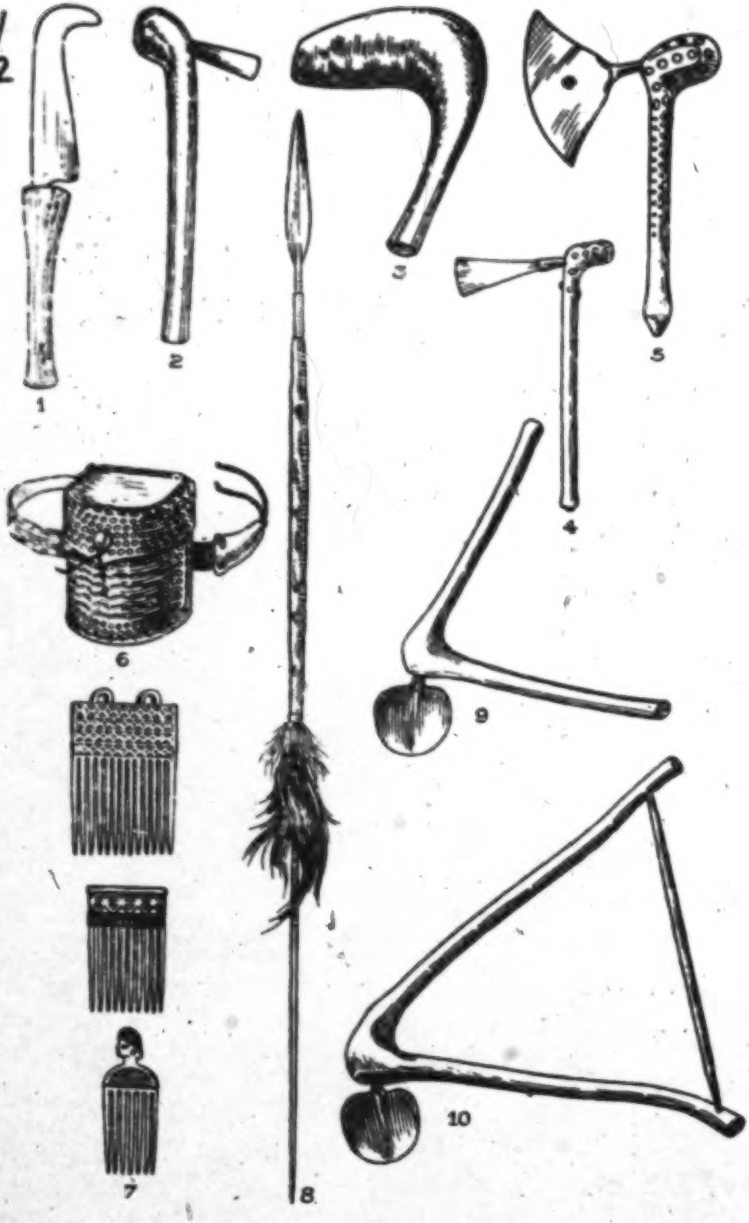

WOODEN COMBS, TOOLS, DOMESTIC IMPLEMENTS, AND WEAPONS

[p. 367]

.3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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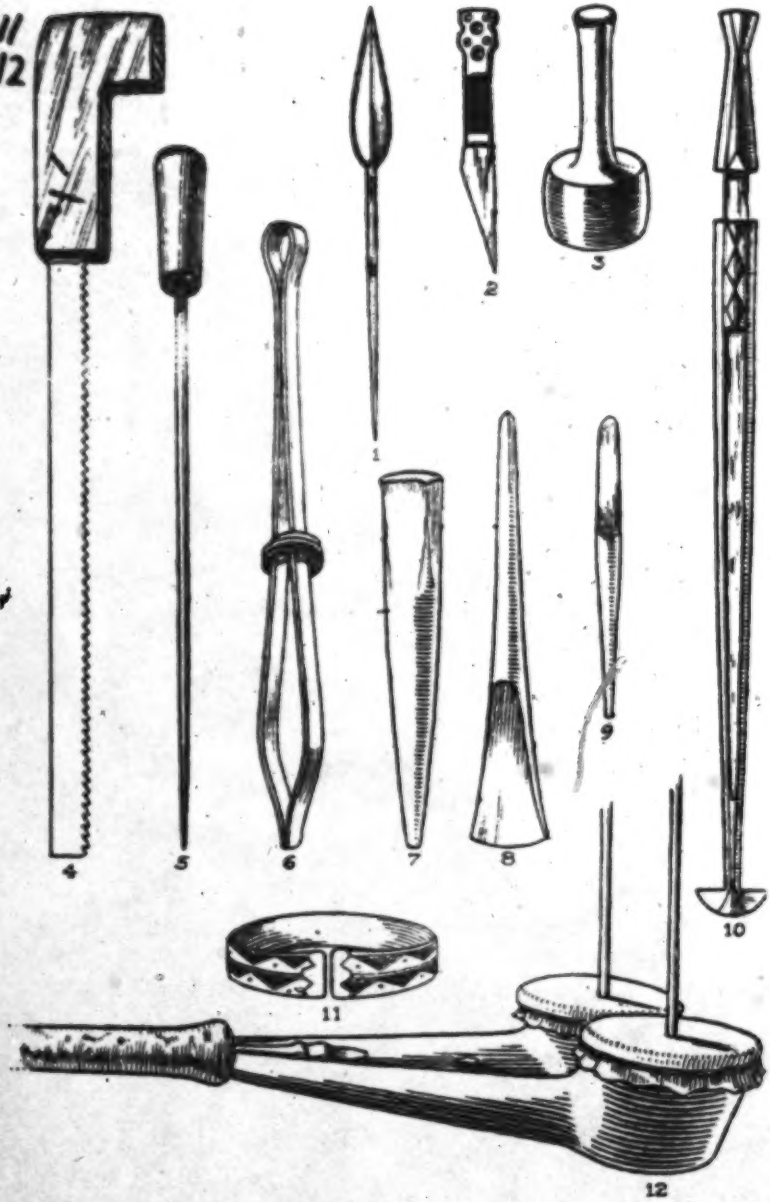

TOOLS AND WEAPONS

[p. 370]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

326 778 of the murdered man were placed near the large anvil (p. 163), or they might be kept in the home of the blacksmith. Such figures are still used (Plate XXI, Fig. 3) but the killing of a victim is not now possible. Blacksmiths are free to marry without restrictions other than those imposed by the classificatory system of relationships.

325 348 The blacksmith's forge is a thatched house about twelve feet square with low eaves that almost reach the ground. The height from the floor to the point of the dome is fifteen feet. In the middle of the floor is a pit ten inches deep in which there is a quantity of charcoal brought from the charcoal burner's fire about half a mile away. At the sides of the pit are three stone seats for the workers. Two of these seats are occupied by men, each of whom works a pair of bellows. The two-chambered bellows is hewn from a block of wood in such a way as to give two circular air chambers from which wooden tubes lead to the fire. These wooden tubes are continued by clay tubes which project into the fire. Over the two round wooden chambers a piece of hide is stretched and tied over the woodwork. Two slender upright sticks, which the operator works up and down, are attached to the hide. In one corner of the hut there is a heap of charcoal, and in another corner lies the scrap iron. An iron rake with a wooden handle is used for stirring the charcoal in the fire. Plates XVI, XXXVII, and XXXVIII illustrate tools and processes.

413 The principal tools are:

(1) A flat stone anvil resting on rocks under a tree. The anvil is at such a height that the striker stands upright. At this anvil the metal is beaten with the heavy hammer *onjundo*.

(2) *Onjundo*, the most sacred of the tools, is 12.5 cm long. Its value is about that of an ox.

(3) There are tongs which can be clamped by a sliding metal ring. The larger tongs are 63 cm long and the smaller ones are 35 cm.

(4) The cutter is boat-shaped and triangular in cross section. The back, which is grasped in the hand, is 0.5 cm thick, tapering to a fine cutting edge.

(5) An iron holder for an axhead during the heating and hammering is 23 cm long. It is octagonal, hollow, and fits like a sheath over the shaft of the axhead.

(6) For heating the iron on the small anvil, after it has been roughly pounded to shape with the hammer (*onjundo*) on the large anvil, there is a smaller hammer (*usonjolo*) of which there are three varieties. These differ only in size.

322 The tools used by the wood-carver are the saw, ax, adze, and knife.
532 The products of this craft may be conveniently divided into the following groups:

(1) Figurines of human form (Plate XXI, Figs. 1–6).

(2) Animal forms, chiefly snakes, tortoises, birds, and lizards. The dog is sometimes represented (Plates XIX, Figs. 1–5; XLI, Fig. 1).

[534] (3) Parts of musical instruments, such as drums and the baseboards of *sansas*. The latter often have the metal keys mounted on boards decorated with elaborately incised patterns (Plates XLI, Fig. 2; XXII, Fig. 5).

[415] (4) Domestic implements and utensils, chief of which are heavy wooden beaters for flattening mud floors of houses, grain pounders, stools, cups, platters, bowls, and a heavy pestle and mortar (Plates XIII, Fig. 3; XVIII, Figs. 1, 2).

[531] (5) Carved sticks and clubs; these often show elaborate incised decorations of geometrical patterns. Frequently the head of the stick is carved to represent a human head or a full-length figure.
[293] The ornamented stick or club is carried as part of the personal dress and artistic equipment. The throwing club is usually a straight stick with an undecorated knob at the end (Plate XX, Figs. 1–10).

(6) Carved wooden posts representing the human form. These are set up at the wayside. One has been obtained from a grave near Bailundu.

(7) Tobacco-pipes and snuff boxes (Plate XV, Figs. 2, 4).

177 Figurines of human form require special consideration, because
532 they have claims other than that of aesthetic expression. The figures representing Europeans, or natives using some article of foreign introduction, illustrate the grafting of foreign ideas on older methods of work.

113 The art of the African Negro has of late years been accorded a place of honor in critical circles of Europe and America (P. Guillaume and T. Munro, Primitive Negro Sculpture, New York, 1926). Usually, however, the formal technique of lines, curves, and the general aesthetic effect have been discussed to the exclusion of the ethnological background which determines style and function.

532 By far the best example of carved human figures collected in Angola was the one from Cangamba (Plate XXI, Fig. 4). This female figure, 60 cm high, is carved from hard, dark, red wood in such a way as to achieve a graceful result by the employment of a few

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When the clay was being mixed an old pot was broken and pulverized so that some of the powder might be added to the new pot. There may be the underlying idea of continuity in the potter's art. The potters said, *Sanga yi pita* ("Lest it leak"). There may be no purpose other than the imparting of stability to the new clay. 323

I was unable to find any trace of ritual except with reference to the opening of a new clay pit. When a pit is first opened both men and women attend. The head of a chicken is twisted off by a medicine-man, then the bird is held over the pit by either a man or a woman. There is no law or ceremony to determine who shall take the first clay from the pit. The art of making pots is in the hands of female specialists so far as the Ovimbundu are concerned. Observation makes clear that women will go for a long distance to obtain clay from the pit which has been opened in a ceremonial manner. On their way to such a pit they pass clay which would serve their purpose well, but they do not use it. Children sometimes amuse themselves by making animals of clay. [462] [784] [857]

The pottery of the Ovimbundu includes cooking vessels of many sizes, water containers, and very large pots for brewing beer (*olombia vi okukela*). [415]

MATS AND BASKETS

This occupation illustrates division of labor on a sex basis. Baskets are made by women, while mat-making is an occupation for males. As with other trades there is specialization. The majority of women are able to make baskets though the skill of individuals varies. All women who have a knowledge of basketry understand the manufacture of dyes. Only a few men make mats; my informant thought that perhaps one man in ten would have the necessary skill. Such specialization is continued into other occupations; for example, only a few men spin cotton thread, while the majority of people buy pottery from expert female potters. 462 285 [463]

The mat-maker, generally an elderly male, uses two tools, a borer and a needle, both products of the native forge. The borer (*utomo*) for piercing the reeds, consists of a long thin blade in a wooden grip. The needle (*osinja*) is threaded with bark fiber and passed through the holes made by the *utomo*. The bark thread is *ombanja* (plural *olombanja*). 285

The sleeping mat (*esisa*) is made of reeds which are gathered in the early morning by a man who wets and binds his material into bundles, each of which contains reeds of the same length. The length of the reeds varies, of course, with the size of mat he intends to make.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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POTTERY AND WOODEN UTENSILS

[P 368]

4:Dorsey E-4, 5 (no date)1899 FP13 Mbundu FP13

791 case of sickness. He is also a diviner, reading both the past and
759 future. At all spirit feasts, at the installation of a new chief, in preparation for war, and on almost every occasion the witch-doctor plays a prominent part. He bears an influential position among his people, and his art is the source of a considerable income, for always before he begins operations the pay must be brought and laid down before him. Thus it is that he is loth to part with even a few of his charms, much less a full set.

The ocimbanda does not inherit his power, but must serve a long apprenticeship to some old witch-doctor, whom he pays liberally. He is then given a small basket with a few charms, to which he adds from time to time. His idols and charms are not made by him, but
[798] are purchased one by one. All of these objects are considered powerful, *cikola* or sacred, and the common people are afraid to touch them; even the touch of a white man is sacrilegious. One of the distinguishing features of a witch-doctor's costume is a head-dress, *ekufue*, made of long porcupine quills fastened together at one end, sewn to a cloth disk about two inches in diameter. Many of the quills are over a foot in length. This headdress is only worn when divining. He also occasionally wears about the loins a girdle, *uya*, consisting of a strip of antelope skin sewn together along the two edges, thus forming a pouch which contains medicines. Attached to the girdle are war charms and medicines, of which he eats from time to time. There are also several kinds of small skins in the collection, on which the doctor kneels when about to perform.
[302] Two pigments should also be noticed. The first is a white, clayey substance, *ocikela*, with which the ocimbanda paints himself, and with which he also marks the person whom by his divining he has discovered to be innocent, the sign of acquittal being a mark across the forehead and down the arms. The other pigment is a red clay, *onongo*, with which he also marks his own body and employs as the sign of guilt.

787 Of the various objects of the ocimbanda's[1] outfit proper, the most
415 important is the basket, *uhamba*, in which the outfit is kept. When it is said that so and so has a "uhamba," it means that he is a witch-doctor. The basket is thirteen inches high by nineteen in length, and eight inches in thickness. The ends are rounded, thus giving the basket, as seen from above, an elliptical form. The cover, three inches in height, fits closely down over the basket, after the manner of our telescope bag. The bottom of the basket is made separate, and is fastened by means of an interlacing of grass braid. The sides of the basket are simply one long strip of interlaced reed and bark fibre, the ends overlapping and being fastened together by the grass braid, which passes up continuously from the bottom to

[1] [i.e., diviner. -- Analyst]

4:Dorsey E-4, 5 (no date)1899 FP13 Mbundu FP13

the top of the basket which it circles, thus giving a decorative 787
effect as well as affording additional strength. The lid is built in a 415
similar manner.

Only second in importance is a small basket-shaped gourd, *ongombo*, used in divination. The basket is ten inches in diameter and three inches deep. Around the rim is bound two bands of grass fibre, thus affording strength, and, by means of the manner of binding these in place, a certain amount of decoration. The basket has evidently seen much use, for the bottom is cracked in several places and has been mended with cotton thread. On two sides near the rim are two cowry shells. The contents of this basket are extremely varied, all the objects being in the nature of charms. Among them may be enumerated several small images made of different kinds of wood, horn of a goat, ox hoof, piece of pig's foot, lion's tooth; skin from the nose of a hyena, to smell out crime; bone of a person, a supposed witch; chicken bones, and a chicken head with open mouth, which is supposed to represent a gossip; and dozens of other trinkets, each having its own significance in the eyes of the witch-doctor.

During the process of divination two images, *ovitakas*, represent- 789
ing male and female, are set up before the ocimbanda, that he may 778
cause them to be inhabited by spirits. These are not worshipped as idols, yet are venerated in a sense by the common people, especially by women and children. The images are carved out of hard wood, and stand a little over a foot in height. Each one is partially clothed in a cotton wrapper, and bears about the neck several strands of native beads. They possess unusual interest, as on the back of the head of each the manner of wearing the hair of each sex is carefully portrayed. Attached to the male by a string around the neck is a rosette of dull red and yellow feathers, one of which has been artificially notched. To enable the ocimbanda to call the spirits into these images, he uses a whistle, *omlinga*, consisting of the horn of a small antelope inserted into an ox-tail wrapped with beads arranged into broad bands of white, black, and red. Furthermore, when about to divine, the doctor eats a number of ants. He also has some medicines known collectively as *ovihemba*, which are kept in a skin, from which he takes and eats before and during divining. Of rattles, *ocisikilo*, shaken by the ocimbanda during the practice of his art, there are two, both bottle-shaped gourds containing cannalilly seeds.

When the ocimbanda goes to divine, he first carefully spreads his 787
skins one upon the other, and upon these he places his basket of charms. He puts white and red clay on his eyebrows, cheek bones, shoulders, and elbows; also stripes his body with these clays, and

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

perhaps in Ndulu. In Ngendo the Men's Club had taken over the 345
rocks just behind the headman's household for its meeting-place, 178
but the meetings were only occasional and there was no common meal.

The Village Plan

To speak of the plan of an Umbundu village may seem a con- 361
tradiction in terms, so haphazard seems the relation of houses, gardens, &c., to each other. Some houses are circular, but the [342]
majority are more nearly rectangular in shape. There is a palisade [417]
of hardwood sticks surrounding all the village except that side of the headman's household which is adjacent to the rocks used for a club-house. The headman had not bothered to keep up his own part of the fence since his only garden was a small tobacco plot fenced in by itself. The village is itself divided up by the 621
palisades which shut off one compound from another, each com- 343
pound containing the houses of from one to three households. Between the palisades are paths which lead on to the dancing floor [363]
and out of the village. In the village of Sekulu Sikililē there were twenty-five households with thirty-two houses in all. Each house (*onjo*) had its own granary (*osila*), and small chicken-coop built on stilts, and of all the houses only six had separate kitchens (*ocivo*). Nearly every household had separate pens for the pigs, goats, and sheep for the night. At one side of the headman's compound there was a common corral for the nine cattle which the villagers owned. Only the headman had a spirit-hut (*etambo*), [346]
used also for a storehouse, for entertaining a guest, and for his own bedroom should he sleep apart from his wives. Within the several 621
compounds were small gardens of tobacco and of maize and beans, 244
and just outside the village were two separate tobacco gardens. Just a few paces to the west was a small patch of wheat belonging to a man in the smallest ward. There was one household of two houses quite outside the palisades appropriately belonging to a man named *Kulika* (meaning 'Being-alone'). The water-holes [312]
and pounding rocks where meal was ground were between the [252]
several units of the village and were used in common. The fields were off to the east at from thirty minutes' to an hour's [241]
walk. The two smaller wards of Ciyanda and Kanjengo were so small that they were like two or three compounds by themselves. 621
The former had six households with eight houses, and the latter

361 At the present time one type of village is surrounded by stout stakes ten or more feet high set in a roughly circular plan. The arrangement of alleyways within the village is complicated without following any symmetrical plan. A visitor sees only a labyrinth of passages between high poles, with here and there a rectangular wooden 417 gate at intervals along the passages. The door itself is made from 335 four stout heavy planks which are roughly hewn and as a rule undecorated, but occasionally I have seen the panels of a door carved with [531] designs representing the breasts of a woman; or there may have been simple geometrical patterns. The top ends of the door panels are massive spheres of wood bored through with holes. Through the holes in the tops of these panels a pintle is passed in such a way that the door is suspended from above. During the daytime the lower ends of the panels are raised to the level of the lintel. They are there supported on a Y-shaped upright which is erected in front of the doorway. At night the planks are removed from this support and allowed to hang downward in the doorway. There is a sliding cross-piece to push over the lower ends. The same arrangement is sometimes used to make a door for a hut. This old type of village doorway, common twenty years ago, is becoming increasingly rare.

342 The house of a king or a chief is larger than that of a commoner. 644 The enclosure which contains a king's house and the other buildings 621 is named *elombe*, while *epandavailo* is the word used to describe the entrance to this compound. The *elombe* is built by men and women who receive no payment. There is a ceremony when the compound is opened. The house of the chief, Kandimba Sanjahulu, near Bailundu, is rectangular, with mud walls raised on a platform of earth and stones. Whitewash has been applied to the outside of the walls and some ornament is given in the form of painted blue crosses. Complete study of structural types and the planning of internal [113] divisions has been made by F. and W. Jaspert, of the Städtisches Völkermuseum, Frankfort.

644 At a village near Cuma the house of the chief differed from the dwellings of commoners in being somewhat larger. The house had been abandoned, not because the chief died there, but because the chieftainship had been transferred to an adjacent village. The tomb, which will be described in connection with funeral rites, was a few yards from the house. This mausoleum was surrounded by a high wooden palisade, to a stake of which were attached the horns of an ox killed at the funeral feast, while the jawbone lay in the enclosure

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

(Plate XLV, Fig. 2). The house of bows for holding sacred relics will be described in connection with religion (Plate XLVI, Fig. 1). 644

In former days there used to be a hard mud floor for dancing, centrally placed in the village. 261

In the center of the village is the communal house where all men, and boys over four years of age, gather to eat their food, which is sent by the women. This *onjango* is the place of assembly for discussion of village affairs. A house of this kind at Bailundu is circular in form with a diameter of seventeen feet (Plate XLVIII, Fig. 1). In the middle of the *onjango* are stones forming a fireplace. In another such house there were jawbones of oxen. These were suspended from the walls as tokens of the payment of fines. There is no communal house for females. In some villages there is a common kraal for cattle. 344 [681] [417]

The king's compound usually contains: 644

(1) The king's house, which invariably has a separate sleeping room.

(2) A house and kitchen for each of his wives.

(3) A tomb for the burial of kings and their wives.

(4) The house of bows for staffs, bows, mats, and tobacco-pipes of dead chiefs.

(5) A house of meditation for the king (Plate LXXXIX, Fig. 1).

(6) Pens for pigs and chickens.

The guest houses (Plate XLVIII, Fig. 2) that I have seen were not in the king's compound. Granaries, which are conspicuous in every village, have been mentioned in connection with food supply (Plate XLIV, Fig. 1). Each house has its own granary. I have noticed garbage pits containing corn husks and refuse from sweet potatoes, but there is as a rule no organized scheme for disposing of refuse; dogs and pigs are the scavengers. There is no particular place for defecation; people use the bush. [485] 343 364

Every man has a knowledge of house-building. Women do not actually build, but, along with the children, they pour water into the clay pit and carry clay to the men who are plastering the walls. Ngonga says, "People would be surprised to see a woman building a house. They would call her a he-woman." Men help one another in house-building by giving reciprocal service for which there is a gift of food and beer. 462 476 [338]

A deep rectangular clay pit is made as close to the house as possible, and the children thoroughly enjoy puddling the clay with their 338

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

The extent to which the order of the *vakuacisoko* exists at present or has existed among the Ovimbundu would be a very interesting subject of inquiry. It is certain that the institution does not exist throughout the territory but only in certain families which belong to the order and pass on membership in it by heredity. Whether there are certain regions where it is or was in the past more strongly held to is not known. It seems to be or to have been more strongly entrenched among the cattle-rearing people to the south, but it is also said to have been practised in Lupolo (Libolo) and even in the region of Luanda.[1] Among the Ovimbundu it seems to have been stronger in the past than at present. Few if any practising members of the set are now known. All 'coevals' or members of the set were in duty bound to render mutual assistance. All had mutual rights to the property of the others without complaint or remedy. These mutual rights seem to have been extended to the extreme limit of having intercourse with each other's wives, nor did the injury or even the death of one brought about by another allow the injured family to seek revenge or legal redress. It was the duty of *vakuacisoko* to bury their fellows, themselves digging the grave and attending to all expenses not already supplied by the family. Theirs was also the duty of burying strangers without family who would not be buried by others fearing defilement or responsibility for their debts. Bastos gives a tradition ascribing the origin of this institution to a wager laid between two chiefs.[2] It seems more probable, however, that it is connected with circumcision and tribal initiation. An analogous set of rights and duties is said to have existed among the Herero between 'coevals' circumcised at the same time.[3]

Tribal initiation for both boys (*oku liseviza evamba*) and girls (*uso wakāi*) is carried on in camps or 'schools' in the southern and south-eastern tribes of the Ovimbundu. These camps are regularly held in Kalukembe, Kakonda, and Ngalangi. Sporadic instances of individual camps have also occurred recently in Viye, Bailundu, Sambu, Wambu, Cingolo, and Cikuma. Even in those regions where camps are regularly held, only the children of certain families enter. It seems that there has been some passing on of the custom by heredity and, in general, there is intermarriage only between families and individuals who adhere to the initiation rites.

[1] Bastos, 1909, op. cit., pp. 67–70.
[2] Ibid., p. 69 f.
[3] Vedder in Hahn *et al.*, op. cit., p. 178.

606 ocisumbo (since Childs states (p.55) that it includes every relative of the generation of the spouse's parents.) *Ndatembo* must avoid: (i) speaking each other's names. This may be accomplished by using the names compounded from those of children (thus *Nakambotia* and *Sakambotia* are the father and mother of Kambotia) or by using the terms which one's spouse uses, i.e. *mai, tate, manu* etc. (ii) seeing each other, if they are of opposite sex; if it is necessary to converse, it must be done out of sight, or with gaze averted. (iii) eating with each other. (This applies only to regular meals and not to casual refreshment.)

607 (c) The term *nawa* is used reciprocally for all the spouse's relatives of one's own generation, including those classed as "sister", "brother" and "cross-cousin". Between the *nawa* the only avoidance enjoined is that they may not eat regular meals in each other's presence; otherwise they are on "free and easy" terms".

"Avoidance of meeting ... is especially difficult for the bride who comes to live in a village of her husband's people, a large proportion of the men of which may be *ndatembo* to her. The prohibition may be lifted by .. a simple ceremony, in which each rubs a little oil on the other ... Avoidance of eating in each other's presence may be done away with after some months by sacrificing a chicken and feeding it ceremonially .. to the *ndatembo* or *nawa* ... It is especially important that the ceremonies be carried through with respect *(esumbilo)*."(1)

A note on the kinship system

613 There is a tendency today for the claims of the *oluse*, the land-
421 owning group, to supplant those of the property-owning *oluina*; one import-
178 ant reason for this is the change from trade to agriculture as the most important economic activity. With European influence also conflicts have arisen over rights to children. Childs states(2) that the bilineal kinship system has been a factor leading to social stability, especially stability of marriage, but he does not elaborate this statement.

LOCAL GROUPS(3)

The "household", consisting of a man, his wife or wives and children,
592 and such other related or unrelated dependants as may be attached to this
595 basic group, is the basis of the village. The word *onjo* (house) may be used for this group, i.e. to include the various houses which a man may have established by marriage, or it may be used for the house of any one of his wives. Each wife has her own hut, granary, chickens, and fields for her children and herself, and the husband has no house of his own unless he is village headman or the head of an *oluina*, in which case he has
[591] a spirit-hut *(etembo)* in which he may sometimes pass the night. Sons when they marry form their own households, usually in their father's village. The size of the household varies greatly according to wealth and
[554] status. Some recent kings have had as many as 12 wives. But it has been noted above that, in Childs' typical village, out of 48 households only 10

(1) Childs, p.52.
(2) Ibid., p.56; see also ibid. pp.70, 45, 50 etc.
(3) This section is based on Childs, 1949, pp.25-41.

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The mother's brother has rights over his sister's children even to the extent of pawning them to pay his own debts. On the other hand the maternal uncle is responsible for the conduct of his sister's children. He would have to pay fines incurred by thefts they committed, and he provides for his sister's son a wife who is either his daughter or his widow.

Ngonga stated that the maternal uncle does not invariably take all the property of a deceased nephew for himself. He may give something to the deceased's mother, the deceased's maternal grandfather, or to a brother of the deceased. Such gifts appear to be the outcome of good will on the part of the dead man's maternal uncle; [421] there is no compulsion. Women never inherit cattle or rights to the use of land.

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643 There are many kings among the Ovimbundu, but I thought that there was a tendency to confuse the titles of *osoma* ("king") and *sekulu* ("headman" or "chief" of a village). The jurisdiction of a king is so well known that any person is able to say under which king he lives. Ngonga said definitely that a man of the Ovimbundu who was under the jurisdiction of a certain king would have to obey the commands of a visiting king, provided they were not in any way disapproved of by the king to whom first allegiance was due.

643 [465] A chief may demand labor for the building of his house or the cultivation of his land. He does not pay for this but usually gives beer to the workers; sometimes he secures the labor and gives nothing in return.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

responsible for the children, especially during their early years, but they are frequently sent 'to the *oluina*', i.e. to the mother's brother for at least a part of their education. Herein has arisen a conflict between the claims of the paternal household and the maternal kinship group. Economic and other forces seem to have favoured the former so that 'During these days in which we stand, things have changed somewhat so that as between children and their parents, they work for their fathers for they say, "A child is strong with his *oluse* and less so with his *oluina*." Nowadays a man teaches a child work and also looks out for his education that he may advance properly. His mother's brothers (*va inanu*) have no longer much power as of old.'[1]

Bearing in mind their bilateral nature and the fact that every Ocimbundu belongs at the same time to his paternal (*oluse*) and to his maternal (*oluina*) groups, the functions of these kinship groups may be summarized as follows:

Oluse	*Oluina*
SOCIAL	
Consists of local residence units; succession of village and tribal offices from father to son, or elder to younger brother.	Extended family organization; office of family head descends from mother's brother to sister's son; children belong.
Marriage allowed between cross-cousins and other relatives of non-parallel descent; couple lives at groom's father's village.	*Marriage preferred* between cross-cousins and other relatives of non-parallel descent; children belong to mother's *oluina*.
EDUCATIONAL	
Responsibility for education of young children, especially in social usage.	Responsibility sometimes assumed in later childhood, especially for technical phases.
ECONOMIC	
Ownership and inheritance of land. (Passed from father to son or elder to younger brother.)	Ownership and inheritance of more largely negotiable and movable property, as e.g. trade goods, cattle, &c. (passed from mother's brother to sister's son).

[1] Raul Kavita Evambi, op. cit.

I. Grandparents.
II. Parents.
III. Speaker's generation.
IV. Children.
V. Grandchildren.

601

Numbers on the left of the sign (=) refer to males, those on the right, to females.

The terms of relationship used in Tables E and F are as follows:

1. *Ukui wange.* My wife (vocative). Ngonga's wife calls him *wyange*, my husband.
2. *Mume, manja, manjange.* Younger brother.
3. *Kota, kasu.* Older brother.
4. *Mbuale.* Sister (vocative). *Mukui wange.* Sister (nonvocative).
5. *Nawa.* In-laws of speaker's generation.
6. *Ndatemba.* In-laws of ascending or descending generation.
7. *Tate.* Father.
8. *Mai.* Mother.
9. *Aphai.* Father's sister (female father).
10. *Omolange.* Child, used for speaker's family only.
11. *Ocimamba.* Children of spouse's family.
12. *Mowa, inawa.* Mother's brother (direct ascendant).
13. *Kulu.* An old person in grandparent's and grandchild's generation.
    Sekulu, kukulala. Male grandparents.
14. *Mokulu.* Female grandparents.
15. *Onokulu.* Grandchild of either sex.
16. *Upolume.* Mother's brother's or father's sister's children.
17. *Olulume.* Father's sister's husband.

NOTE: Age distinctions are made chiefly in the speaker's own generation.

LAW AND GOVERNMENT

In dealing with marriage rites it was stated that a woman had to contribute certain articles to the home; these are the utensils that she uses in her daily work. The baskets, pottery, pounders, and brushes may seem insignificant, but nevertheless there are rules regulating their disposal at death. Her husband will retain some of the articles; the remainder will be shared among the deceased woman's sisters. 428 422

The disposal of a widow is a matter for discussion among the relatives. The husband makes no bequest to his widow and children, though the children may receive a small gift of a pig or some corn. The property of a man is bequeathed to his mother's brother or to his sister's sons. The eldest brother of the deceased or the maternal uncle of the widow takes her to his house along with her children. If her father is alive he may take her. Ngonga says that each responsible relative says, "It is better that you should take her"; at last some one says, "I will take her." 768

When explaining the system of inheritance Ngonga was clear on two points. In the first place wives and children of the deceased are 428

itself is *onoma*. The flat wooden drum without membrane is *ocingufu*, 534
the player of this drum is *usiki wocingufu* (Plate XXVII, Fig. 2). 463
The long tubular drums vary in length from 50 to 103 cm. At a funeral, four of these tubular drums, which are usually held between the legs or placed upright, are played in compound rhythm. A performer always warms the skin of the drum at a fire, and sometimes the pitch is altered by sticking a lump of wax on the membrane of a long drum, or on the sides of a wooden drum.

Dr. Herzog reports as follows, after transcribing several cylinders 533
of phonographic records of rhythms played on the long drum, and after examining motion pictures which were synchronized with the drumming (Plates XXV, XXVI).

"These motion pictures indicate the position of the performer's hands, and suggest that the sharply accented tones are produced by impacts from the phalanges. The higher notes so produced have been marked by notes above the line. A mark placed between notes indicates a very short rest.

"No. 1 (dictaphone record 3) represents the drumming of a young player, who is apparently still an apprentice, since his rhythm is very simple. The three forms of his playing given below were used interchangeably, and he shifted from one to the other without stopping. In the second form, the order of the sharp and of the plain beat is reversed. Otherwise, the sharp beat occurs, in the playing of all drummers, on the off beat. The rhythm of No. 2 (dictaphone record 15) is a little more varied because the player was changed. The drummer of No. 3 (dictaphone record 30) was the best performer in the neighborhood, according to Mr. Hambly; and his playing is the most interesting. The drum records consist of a small number of rhythms which are freely interchanged; the two predominating rhythms are given below. The moving pictures were made from this player's performance.

"The notations found here do not convey to the reader the bewildering complexity of African rhythm, for this appears only when a performance includes the use of several drums and musical instruments in conjunction with dancing."

From Ngalangi a large friction drum 120 cm long and 47 cm in 534
diameter was obtained. This instrument, which was the property [422]
of the village, was played only on public occasions. Apparently the drum had been hollowed from a log of wood, one end of which was left open while the other was covered with hide. To the inner side of this hide a long cane was attached. On the side of the drum

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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[1874-1911]

slave. Once ransomed a boy could not be sold again. If, however, the father was displeased with his son's behaviour he could refuse to ransom him. When a man died, his adolescent sons would go to the household of a classificatory father and the children who did not yet 'have sense' would go with the widow to her kin, returning to their agnatic kin when they were older. 593 768

4. *Analysis of the Old Kinship System*

The ethnography of the Ovimbundu does show that there existed a double-descent kinship system, each individual belonging to both a local patrilineal group, and a dispersed matrilineal group, in which movable property is inherited. So great has been the impact of social change that not only have these groups disappeared but it is practically impossible to gain additional information on them by direct questions about their nature and functions. The information on kinship norms does give a somewhat clearer picture. 611 613 [422] 613 178

Within the village there was a very strong emphasis on the unity and solidarity of the men of the village. The men's house was the main social centre of the village where the men ate, received guests, and listened to cases. It was about it rather than about the person of the headman that ritual clustered.[20] The elementary family was not the unit of domestic consumption, and it is clear, from the taboos regarding contact with women kin, and the evidence as to the social life of the man's house that there was little recreational contact between the sexes. The concept of *ondjamba*[21] shows that the elementary family of husband, wife, and children, was morally and ritually significant, but many of the educational, nutritive, and recreational functions frequently associated with it were here attached to the men's house. 575 594 575

The strength of the agnatic ties in this society seems to have lain in the solidarity of the men of the village rather than in the patriarchal authority of fathers over sons. A son was economically independent of his father since he could trade on his own while his father was still living; the most powerful social sanction in the hands of kinsmen, that of being sold as a slave, was 593 [602] [604]

[20] For these rituals see Hastings, pp. 73–76, and Childs, p. 39.
[21] *Ondjamba* will be discussed more fully in the next chapter.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

responsible for the children, especially during their early years, but they are frequently sent 'to the *oluina*', i.e. to the mother's brother for at least a part of their education. Herein has arisen a conflict between the claims of the paternal household and the maternal kinship group. Economic and other forces seem to have favoured the former so that 'During these days in which we stand, things have changed somewhat so that as between children and their parents, they work for their fathers for they say, "A child is strong with his *oluse* and less so with his *oluina*." Nowadays a man teaches a child work and also looks out for his education that he may advance properly. His mother's brothers (*va inanu*) have no longer much power as of old.'[1]

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[1] Raul Kavina Evambi, op. cit.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

651 another small amount were added, so that it is now Ag. 91,00.[1] This is not high in comparison with the figures for the Union of South Africa and some other African territories, but opportunities for earning in Angola are small. Wages and prices of produce are 465 low indeed. These problems of labour and of taxation are much the same in many South and Central African territories. Their present-day poverty bears very hardly upon the Ovimbundu who saw much more prosperous times in the days of their large-scale trading.

423 *Land.* The ownership and occupation of land by natives does not present the acute problem in Angola which it does in several 648 African territories. Natives have not been herded on to reserves, for rigid segregation is not the Portuguese idea, nor has there yet been occupation of land by European settlers on a scale sufficient to encroach upon the land needed by natives, save in a few localities. A large proportion of the concessions provisionally taken out by Europeans in 1919–25 have reverted to the State for failure to meet requirements, as, for example, to bring a stated proportion under cultivation. Many schemes for European colonization in the Benguela Highland have been projected from time to time. The Portuguese law protects the native in his holdings, but since European settlers often find ways to circumvent the intent of the law, and since an increasing European colonization is apt to be a threat to native holdings, a simplification of the machinery whereby the natives may secure sure title to communal or to individual holdings is highly desirable.[2]

423 Whatever else may be said, however, it is good to be able to report that at the present time the Ovimbundu have their land. This fact has been a very important factor in their transition from

[1] About $4.00 at present exchange. In 1937 the economic year was changed to the calendar year, and in most districts payment of an extra half-year's tax was required. About 1941 the tax was again raised, to Ag. 108,00, and in 1945 it was again put up, to 120,00. These figures are for most of the districts inhabited by the Ovimbundu. In some areas, especially frontier areas, the amounts levied are considerably lower.

[2] For the present official status of the questions of administration, land, labour, &c., see Comte J. de Penha-Garcia, *Organisation politique et administrative de l'empire colonial portugais*, Inst. Col. Int'n'l (1936); ibid. (ed.), *Les Colonies portugaises* (1931); a useful summary of the same will be found in Lord Hailey, *An African Survey* (London: 1938), pp. 213–16, 796 f. There is a discussion of these problems in J. T. Tucker, *Angola, Land of the Blacksmith Prince* (1933), chap. 8. See also Valdez dos Santos, *Angola, Coração do Império* (Lisboa: Agência Geral das Colónias, 1943).

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

the occupations of warfare and of trade to the more settled agricul- 423
tural life. And it is the possession and cultivation of land which provides a minimum basis for those who are also able to engage in any sort of trade, either commercial or one of the handicrafts.

Health. A sanitary history, or the course of health among the 164
Ovimbundu throughout their national existence, would be of 173
interest if it could be made known. Legend tells of a time in the 177
distant past when sickness was rare and death came hardly ever, if at all. It is said that hasty burials were not permitted because there had been cases of the supposed corpse returning to life. Some have taken this to mean that the tribe came from a more healthful region than the one which it now occupies, but it seems rather to be a traditional recognition of the fact that many of the diseases and bodily ills which at present afflict the Ovimbundu are of comparatively recent date. The time of arrival of some of these unwelcome guests can be estimated. Some are the subject of [136]
traditional tales as, for example, the jigger[1] (*pulex penetrans*), which a Ngalangi tradition says came to them from Bailundu, and Bailundu tradition says was first recognized in the time of Ekongo-liohombo (*c.* 1875) or Ekuikui II (*c.* 1876–93). Now the jigger is well known 164
in Africa as an importation from South America, and the time of 177
its first appearance could probably be determined. This parasite is widely present in tropical Africa, but there are some regions which it has not (yet) reached.[2] Its coming to Angola is probably, therefore, of recent date. Silva Porto, writing in 1879, said, "This evil is of recent date on the coast . . . (*pulex penetrans*)."[3] The first notice of this pest which reached the pages of the *Boletim Official* of Angola was in 1875. If this date really represents the time when the jigger first appeared in Angola, it seems strange that it should have been so late, in view of the slave-ships ferrying back and forth from Brazil for the previous three hundred years.

Small-pox[4] might also be thought of as a recent arrival for, according to a note in the *Boletim Official*, it first appeared in Novo Redondo in June 1864, having been brought from Luanda by ships' crews.[5] Its first appearance on the Plateau, however,

[1] *Ewanda* or *ovindlundu* is the Umbundu name, from *oku wanda*, to hide (the hidden one).

[2] e.g. Amboland, according to Umbundu testimony.

[3] *Boletim Soc. Geog. Lisboa*, 5a Ser., p. 10.

[4] *Ocingonge* is the Umbundu name.

[5] *Boletim Official da Provincia de Angola*, 1865, no. 5.

29

advancement, will go to the head of their *oluina* to ask for his intercession with the spirits.[1] 613

As legal head of the village, the *sekulu yimbo* presides over both the more serious cases, which are held before the whole village on the dance-floor, and the simpler ones, which require the attendance only of those concerned, together with their respective elders, and may be taken up either in the *onjango* or in the headman's own courtyard. Hambly seems to suggest that all the section-heads act with the village headman as a kind of council, but does not give details. He states also that the *olosekulu* (sing. *sekulu*) of the village formerly had charge of trials for murder, theft, adultery, and arguments over land,[2] and points out that they were more active in the legal system than the chiefs.[3] This is even more true today, when the village court of justice continues to function in spite of political and administrative changes, although the offices of chiefs and to some extent of sub-chiefs have largely decayed. 622 623 691 [177]

Other functions of the village headman include: the distribution of land to the various families when new village sites are opened;[4] the direction of the communal fire-hunts;[5] and, today, the collecting of taxes from the villagers and the direction and organisation of labour to work on the roads.[6] But however numerous the headman's official duties, he usually finds some time to attend to his own affairs, whether he is a farmer, hunter, or trader.[7] 622 423 651 466 [463]

Succession to headmanship is usually from father to son or from elder to younger brother, "with only as much recognition of primogeniture as belongs to the general ... hierarchy of age."[8] Succession is, however, affected by the "democratic" tendencies in succession to chieftainship.[9] 622 643

The Chief (osoma or sova)[10]

The Ovimbundu are grouped in 22 chiefdoms, of which half were in the past generally tributary to the more powerful chiefs.[11] At the same time each chiefdom had its separate government and could be considered as a unit in itself. Effective European occupation and direct rule have strophied the chiefly office among the Ovimbundu, until today chiefs survive as little more than "living museum pieces".[12] Childs[13] enumerates the functions of the chiefly office as follows: 631 643 [177]

(a) *Religious.* The chief's ancestral spirits were the principal chiefdom deities, and the king was high-priest as well as the visible "vice-regent and incarnation" of the spirits. 643 793 769

(1) Childs, personal communication.
(2) The maternal uncle is responsible for settling disputes over property which occur within the *oluina*. (Hambly op.cit., p.200).
(3) Ibid.
(4) Ibid.
(5) Cashman, op.cit., p.115.
(6) Ibid., p.121.
(7) Childs, op.cit., p.36.
(8) Ibid., p.44.
(9) Ibid.
(10) *Osoma* means chief or king. *Sova* is the personalised form used with the name. This the Portuguese writers have corrupted into *sova* or *soba*. (Childs, personal communication)
(11) See above, p.2.
(12) Childs, op.cit., p.20.
(13) Ibid.

586 When a woman divorces her husband to marry another man, she takes to her home all children under three years of age; other children go to the home of her parents.(1) There is no information concerning the fate of children when the man divorces his wife.

[591] Divorce cases are apparently brought before the court of the village headman only where the return of the marriage payment to the husband is long delayed or in some way unsatisfactory.(2)

LAND TENURE

● 423 There is virtually no information on Umbundu land usage. Childs states that land is inherited in the paternal line, i.e. by brother or son. Hambly suggests that "The right to land depends on its use and allotment by a chief (?) at the time of founding a village," and that "Rights seem to have been well defined and there was always enough room for a stranger". The meaning of neither of these statements is very clear.(3)

DOMESTIC SLAVERY

567 [572] Slaves were formerly taken in war, and, until very recently, as a result of a person's inability to pay his debts. In such a case not the debtor, but the debtor's sister's children were taken as slaves by the creditor. If the debt was paid later, the children were set free.(4) Today children instead of being sold into slavery may be expected to work for the creditor to pay off the debts of the mother's brother.(5) Childs writes "Slaves or former slaves have a status within the household or village which to the ordinary observer does not differ from that of the children: they are treated such as the children and they may carry on in all matters social and economic as though they were members of the family". He adds however that when there is a call for labour, the lot falls more often to a slave or a pawn.(6) Hambly, however, notes that formerly the master had rights of punishment including the death sentence, although an ill-treated slave might appeal to the village headman. Slave women were frequently taken as concubines, but were not lent out as prostitutes. A slave woman who married a free man would revert to her master along with her children when her husband died. All children of slaves became slaves of the master, who could dispose of the girls in marriage. If he himself married a slave girl, she would, at his death, become the property of his eldest brother and her children would go with her, although in some instances the woman and children might go to the mother's brother's son.

[727] It seems likely (although it is nowhere stated) that there was a clear distinction between slaves captured in war and slaves taken as a result of a debt; possibly the information quoted above from Hambly refers mainly to war captives.

(1) Hambly, op.cit., pp.189-2. (2) Ibid., p.193.
(3) Hambly, op.cit., p.201. Hambly states here that the system of land distribution is described in a later section of his book, but this section merely refers back to these remarks.
(4) Bastos (1900, p.33) adds that if a father redeemed his children, the maternal uncle lost his right to sell them into slavery.
(5) Hambly, op.cit., p.205. (6) 1940, p.42.

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643 [463] A chief may demand labor for the building of his house or the cultivation of his land. He does not pay for this but usually gives beer to the workers; sometimes he secures the labor and gives nothing in return,

in return. Even a slave used to have rights of appeal to the king if he were starved and beaten without cause. The king was the prime mover in warfare. The whole legal system is at this time directly under Portuguese administration though the kings and chiefs have minor powers. Ngonga says that complainants who are dissatisfied with the decision of their own chief go to the Fort, meaning of course the Portuguese military post, or office of the Administrador. 000 643 177

There is no doubt that in former days the responsibility for crime and debt was transferred to a relative in the absence of the delinquent. If a thief escaped, responsibility would rest with a brother, a father or a son. The mother's brother was often held to be responsible for the misdeeds and debts of his sister's children. The mother's brother has rights that extend to the sale of his sister's children to pay his debts. For this reason Ngonga says, "If I have done wrong and they cannot catch me it is right that he (mother's brother) should pay for me." 672 604

I supposed the case of Ngonga having stolen a cow; he has been caught but escapes. Ngonga said that the man from whom he had stolen the animal would go to his (Ngonga's) mother's brother in order to name the price required for the cow, or any other possession which had been stolen. If the mother's brother thought the price reasonable he would pay. On the contrary, if the price claimed were too high the mother's brother would appeal, first to the village chief, then if necessary to the king. [692]

Ownership of land does not appear to have been a source of dispute. Apparently land was distributed by the chief as explained in dealing with village organization. Rights seem to have been well defined and there was always enough land for a stranger. When a man was going away on a trading journey he might lend his land to another who would agree to cultivate it and take the produce for a year. I was unable to satisfy myself that land is now, or was in time past held to be the property of dead ancestors. The right to land depends on its use and allotment by a chief at the time of founding a village. A man who intended to be absent would make a payment so that he might leave his goods at the house of another. The chief would settle any disputes arising from these arrangements. 423 [426] [437]

The complainant in a suit is called *ombile*, the defendant is *ovilue*. The name for a witness is *uvangi*. In the old days a false witness had to make recompense to the man about whom he had told a lie; he would probably have a beating as well. A master was in every way responsible for the actions of a slave. The degree of responsi- 695 672

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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maize from these beds is for home consumption, and it comes at a time when maize supplies are running low, and some people have to rely on manioc. The *ombanda* type is sown in September and early October. Then the main fields (*ovapya*, plural of *epya*) are sown in October and November, and only after this is maize sown in the gardens round the houses. In December and January the people are busy hoeing the fields and in February the sowing of beans takes place, continuing into March. This is followed by the harvesting of the gardens in the village, and by the gathering of the maize in the fields, the maize then being placed in field huts to dry. This takes place in March and April, and with its ending the dry season has come.

The dry season is the time for travelling to see relatives and for getting married, since the burden of work is much reduced. May is a good time to clear the bush and then and in later months there is time to build houses. During the dry season there was much more chance of finding people at home, and there were far more festive occasions. This is also a time when men and women can practise crafts such as basketry, fish-trap making, pottery, and so on. In July, the maize dried in the field hut is pounded and brought back to the village, whence it is taken to the traders for sale. The pounding and carrying is often the work of parties of friends and relatives who are rewarded with beer. Occasionally somebody's maize is collected like this well into September, but most people finish in August. By August the grass has grown very high, and the firing of it is the beginning of large-scale hunts in which men and boys from several villages may join together. Hunts may be undertaken by individuals or by groups at other times of the year either as a hobby or to kill a destructive wild pig (in which case the hunt will be undertaken by a group of people). September is a good month for fishing. The fire has cleared the stream valleys which can now be sown, thus starting off the year's cycle again.

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The Ovimbundu keep cattle, sheep, goats, pigs, and fowls 231
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help to fertilize the soil by leaving ashes. Ashes are sometimes spread in a village garden, and dry grass may also be left in a field for this purpose. Soil beside trees is considered to be especially rich, as to some extent are the sites of former villages. There is no idea of crop rotation and a field is worked for as long as it is fertile, that is indefinitely for an *onaka* and from three to six years, sometimes more, for a field of the *epya* type. The hoe is still the standard means of cultivation and the plough is a rarity.

Coffee-growing on any scale is usually undertaken by people 245
living away from the villages, except for the Protestants who have been encouraged by their missionaries to plant coffee in their villages. Coffee, like maize, is bought by the traders. However, at least two local coffee-growers sold their coffee at Porto Amboim on the coast to get a better price. Basically, the 241
agricultural economy of the neighbourhood is based on maize, 361
grown by methods of shifting cultivation. The frequency with which villages rise and fall and individuals change from one village to another is entirely consistent with this type of agriculture.

Axe and hoe blades, blankets, cloths, clothing, cutlery, 000

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

553 *Naming* (*oku luka*). The Ovimbundu name their children with great care. It is important to name a first-born (*uveli*) on the day of its birth, but if the child is evidently weak and not likely to live, they wait a few days. Names are in a sense family property and given over and over again. In naming the baby several factors may be taken into consideration:

1. The name (*onduko*) should have been borne by an ancestor, whether living or dead, whose character and state of well-being are satisfactory.

2. Ordinarily the baby is named by the father from his family unless there should be some reason for not doing so, in which case the name is given by the mother from her family, but if either family has a bad record for deaths or other misfortunes, that may prevent the parents following the custom, for

3. The name must not prejudice but rather assist the child's chance of survival. Thus a child born after the death of several siblings may be given an insignificant name, intended to cause the spirits to overlook it or to consider it as less than human, as, for example, *Katekãvã*, Little-black-thing; *Cīvī*, Bad; *Mbili*, I-do-not-know-it; *Kacinyama*, Little animal; *Kalūsuē*, Nit; *Cilūlū*, Ghost; *Vimbuandu*, Filth; or even *Kaniña*, Little excrement. A child may be given a name never used in the family if extreme measures to prevent its recognition by the spirits are thought necessary.

4. Events or persons prominent at the time of birth may influence the choice. A namesake, whether intentional or not, is known as *Sando* (from the Portuguese *santo* (saint), and the Roman Catholic custom of naming after the saints). Events of the time of birth or its calendric period may be summed up in a proverb or a sentence, a keyword of which is used as the name.[1]

[424] 5. While names remain in a family, some names may belong to several families. Certain names belong to families predominantly agricultural, others to trading or wealthy families, others to kings' families, &c. Kings' families were especially jealous of their names and commoners were not allowed to use them.

As already explained, parents take the name of their first-born. Should the child die young, the name will not be retained. During illness a person may change his name, taking one calcu-

[1] *Vide* E. L. Ennis, 'Women's names among the Ovimbundu', *African Studies* (Johannesburg), March 1945.

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in return. Even a slave used to have rights of appeal to the king 000 643
if he were starved and beaten without cause. The king was the prime 177
mover in warfare. The whole legal system is at this time directly under Portuguese administration though the kings and chiefs have minor powers. Ngonga says that complainants who are dissatisfied with the decision of their own chief go to the Fort, meaning of course the Portuguese military post, or office of the Administrador.

There is no doubt that in former days the responsibility for crime 672
and debt was transferred to a relative in the absence of the delinquent. 604
If a thief escaped, responsibility would rest with a brother, a father or a son. The mother's brother was often held to be responsible for the misdeeds and debts of his sister's children. The mother's brother has rights that extend to the sale of his sister's children to pay his debts. For this reason Ngonga says, "If I have done wrong and they cannot catch me it is right that he (mother's brother) should pay for me."

I supposed the case of Ngonga having stolen a cow; he has been caught but escapes. Ngonga said that the man from whom he had stolen the animal would go to his (Ngonga's) mother's brother in order to name the price required for the cow, or any other possession which had been stolen. If the mother's brother thought the price reasonable he would pay. On the contrary, if the price claimed were [692]
too high the mother's brother would appeal, first to the village chief, then if necessary to the king.

Ownership of land does not appear to have been a source of dis- 423
pute. Apparently land was distributed by the chief as explained in dealing with village organization. Rights seem to have been well defined and there was always enough land for a stranger. When a man was going away on a trading journey he might lend his land to [426]
another who would agree to cultivate it and take the produce for a year. I was unable to satisfy myself that land is now, or was in time past held to be the property of dead ancestors. The right to land depends on its use and allotment by a chief at the time of founding a village. A man who intended to be absent would make [437]
a payment so that he might leave his goods at the house of another. The chief would settle any disputes arising from these arrangements.

The complainant in a suit is called *ombile*, the defendant is *ovilue*. 695
The name for a witness is *uungi*. In the old days a false witness had to make recompense to the man about whom he had told a lie; he would probably have a beating as well. A master was in every 672
way responsible for the actions of a slave. The degree of responsi-

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of the men's house, and the headman's loss of status. The new institution of the catechetical school does not revive village solidarity in this form. The contemporary Ovimbundu do not live in a 'village headman society' comparable to those of British Central Africa,[13] since the concept and manifestations of village solidarity around a headman are so notably deficient. Reference may also be made to the economic ethics of the Ovimbundu with their approval of making money and the belief that all loans even within the circle of the elementary family should be repaid, that is, wealth is seen by all as an end in itself rather than a means of obtaining personal loyalties.

In the previous chapter it was shown how the traditional headmanship is no longer a significant legal and political institution. In this chapter I have tried to indicate that it lacks sources of authority and prestige within the village.

The line of argument has involved reference to the contemporary kinship system of which an outline has been given. This will be more fully discussed in later chapters, when a more detailed comparison of present institutions with the traditional kinship system will be made.

[13] For an example of these societies see J. C. Mitchell, *The Yao Village*, Manchester 1956.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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gramophone in a town rather than at a trader's near his home village. Most of the money paid for purchases at the stores is money raised by selling crops or livestock. Through labour migration there is, however, some transmission of skills; it is easy to find bricklayers and carpenters of a sort even in Gumba.

Money, rather than barter, is the principal means of exchange among the villages in the selling of local products, and even of meat from pigs. Payment for labour service, such as assistance in house-building and in bringing in maize, is made in beer, except among Protestants who substitute a meal. There is also a custom by which a household which finds, probably at the end of the dry season, that it has not enough maize will make beer to exchange on a particular day for maize.

Ties of kinship and friendship have some economic significance. A kinsman will help with house-building without expecting payment; likewise a man who has a cleared field which he does not want to use may sell it for 200 escudos (£2. 10s.) but would give it free to a kinsman. A man may make a charge for lending his bicycle, though this varies with individuals; he certainly would not do so if it were lent to a friend. Loans between kinsmen should be repaid, and a tailor with a sewing-machine will make the same charges to relatives as to non-kinsmen.

There are few occasions for groups to work together. The unit of consumption and production is the domestic family. Even here, the husband, each wife, and the adolescents have their own fields, though a man may help his wife. Such other occasions of mutual help, in clearing a field, which may occur between friends or kinsmen, will only bring a few, often only two of them.

The Ovimbundu I knew were (with exceptions) not avaricious or grasping; thus, beer might be given to people who have not actually worked in house-building parties. It is regarded as a moral duty to pay one's monetary debts as soon as possible. On various occasions I lent money to people who were pressed and I received back all the money lent. Borrowers insisted that borrowings should be written down, and that the paper on which it was written should be given to them when they paid, or destroyed. Making money and being rich are regarded with

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

613 825 621 *penricei*), and *ovinyama viakasa* (animals having paws, from the lion down). No other *oluse* has any such rules. The chief function of the *oluse* is as a local residence group. Within the *oluse* there is no inheritance of property but only succession to office, which from the king to the village headman is from father to son, or from elder to younger brother, with only as much recognition of primogeniture as belongs to the general idea of the hierarchy of age. Succession to office is further affected by the democratic tendencies already noted with regard to the kingly succession.[1] The character of the *oluse* as a series of local groups is further borne out by the character of its priesthood, which lies wholly with the village headmen.

613 The *oluina* is not a local group, since its members for the most part live in the villages of their several lines of paternal descent—each with his *oluse*. When an Ocimbundu speaks of his family (*epata*) in the sense of a large and widespread organization with a recognized head in some elder, it is generally his *oluina* to which he refers. This family elder (*ukulu wepata*) is generally both the legal and spiritual head of the family. He is the family high-priest in charge of the spirit-hut (*etambo*) of the family guardian spirit (*osande*)[2] of whom there may be more than one and of whom he may become one after death. This family head is generally the eldest in the maternal line. In these days the priestly and the legal functions may be divided considering the advantages of having for legal head one who knows the ways of this world, while the spiritual head needs rather to be acquainted with the spirit-world. [428] Property is inherited through the *oluina* from mother's brother to 613 sister's son.[3] Only the *oluina* is an organization in the wider or 178 more than local sense, and it is to it that the children belong. Formerly the mother's elder brother had great powers over his sister's sons and was even able to pawn them or sell them into slavery to meet his own debts.[4] The patrilocal household is

[1] See *supra*, p. 22 f.

[2] The head of an *oluina* may or may not be a village headman. In case he is, he will be priest of two lines and have two spirit-huts. There may be more than one spirit-hut in a single village.

[3] This fact was noted by A. Bastos, *Traços Gerais sôbre a Etnografia do Distrito de Benguella* (Lisboa, 1909), p. 33 (par. 39°).

[4] This has been noted by a number of writers. Bastos, op. cit., p. 29 (par. 26°) adds that once a father has redeemed his son, the maternal uncle can never sell him again. Cf. *ovumbali potentes* among the Ba-Ila, E. W. Smith and A. M. Dale, *The Ila-Speaking Peoples* (London, 1920), vol. i, p. 320.

611 dispersed. Both groups have ritual leaders, whose offices are quite dis-
613 tinct. Barnes' suggestion[1] is that the two groups must be father's patrilineage and mother's matrilineage, with the qualification mentioned below.

613 The olusu consists of a large number of village groups, some of which
622 recognise mutual relationship,[2] but with no recognised head (other than the village headman) except in the case of the royal families. Land is owned by the olusu and passed on within it from father to son, or from
[428] older to younger brother. Succession to village or tribal office, from village headman to king, descends in the same way.[3] Ritual leadership within the olusu lies with the village headman, who is in charge of the
[346] spirit-hut (etambo) of the guardian spirit of the village (or of the nuclear olusu within the village), and who officiates at regular village worship, including agricultural festivals.

613 The olutno, on the other hand, is a dispersed and apparently larger
428 group, whose members live with their various paternal lines of descent. The size of the olutno is unknown; Childs merely refers to it as a "large
604 and widespread organisation, with a recognised head". The office of head of the olutno (akulu wepeta) descends from mother's brother to sister's son. Negotiable and moveable property, including cattle and trade goods, is owned by the olutno and inherited by the sister's son. Formerly the mother's elder brother had great powers over his sister's sons, and was even able to pawn them or sell them into slavery, to meet his own debts.
[592] The patrilocal household is usually responsible for training children, especially during their early years, but they are frequently sent to the olutno (i.e. to the mother's brother) for at least a part of their educa-
[582] tion. At death or divorce of parents, children go to the olutno.

The head (akulu wepeta) of the olutno is usually both the legal and
43 spiritual head of the group, although today the two functions are often divided. He is in charge of the spirit hut (etambo) of the guardian
782 spirit of the olutno (of whom there may be more than one, and of whom he becomes one after death). He leads the olutno in propitiatory rituals carried out in case of illness, death, or other misfortunes within the group, or in prayers made for desired economic advantages. (Apparently no regular rituals are carried out by the olutno.) The akulu wepeta may or may not be at the same time a village headman; if he is, he will be priest of two lines and have charge of two spirit huts; if he is not, there may be two (or more) priests in the village, each in charge of the spirit-hut of his olusu or olutno.

The ondil yokunji and the ondil yokumbo

613 The olusu and the olutno are both divided into male and female
602 "sides": the *ondil yokunji* (the side of the bow) and the *ondil yokumbo* (the side of the basket). It has been noted above that uterine brothers
582 and sisters belong to the same olusu and olutno, but to the male or female side in each, according to sex. The composition of these "sides" is

(1) Loc.cit.
(2) If some villages within the olusu cannot trace mutual relationship, the olusu should perhaps be called a patri-clan rather than a patrilineage.
(3) But see below, p.20.

for murder as two cows and two slaves; for adultery, two cows, a pig, and a slave.) Today a man who has committed adultery sometimes takes the woman and all children under three years of age, but this is for the husband to decide. An adulterer with one of the chief's wives was castrated but not killed, and the castration might be compounded for a high fine, while he, his sisters, and the sons of his sisters would become slaves of the chief.(1) Hambly states finally that "Criminal law did not distinguish between responsibility for intentional and unintentional offences."(2) 682 684 671

There is no information regarding the kinds of cases tried or the punishments given in the courts of village headmen or sub-chiefs today.

INHERITANCE

It has been noted above that moveable property is inherited in the maternal line, land in the paternal line.(3) The eldest brother of the deceased's mother has the first claim and is responsible for settling disputes. He may distribute the property to the mother of the deceased, the maternal grandfather, or to a brother of the deceased, but is not compelled to do this. Women never inherit cattle or land, although the sisters of a deceased woman usually receive most of her household utensils (the rest belong to her husband). A widow goes to the house of (? marries) the eldest brother of the deceased or her own maternal uncle, or she may return to her father's village. Apparently her children accompany her, although one would expect them to go to her brother.(4) 428 768

DIVORCE

Divorce appears to be infrequent; grounds for divorce are many, but difficulties are often overcome by a compromise between the two kin groups concerned. Causes for dissatisfaction on the part of a husband include his wife's incompetence, dishonesty, physical weakness, or infidelity (in the last case today a fine from the adulterer is usually accepted and the marriage continues). Barrenness is not a ground for divorce; usually the husband takes a second wife, but the first maintains her position as head wife. Sterility in the male is sometimes suspected, in which case the husband may try another girl, with his wife's consent, or the woman another man. A woman may divorce a man if he is impotent (not sterile), or if he ill-treats her, but not because he is unfaithful. If for any of these reasons the woman returns to her family, the latter are expected to return the marriage payment, although they may wait until another suitor appears who will pay the deserted husband. Whether the initiative in divorce is taken by the woman or the man, the marriage is not annulled until a renunciatory ceremony has been carried out by the husband, the wife, and the wife's father, in the presence of the village headman. The husband receives from his wife's father a roll of tobacco and a pig, and then plucks leaves(5) and pals oil on his wife's back; he then slaps his wife's back saying "It is finished". 586 [592]

(1) Hambly, op.cit., p.[illegible]. (2) Loc.cit.
(3) See above, p.[illegible], and Childs, 1949, p.46.
(4) Hambly, (2) 1934, p.[illegible].
(5) The leaf used is of the ape tree; the same leaf is tied to the pole of the cradle of a new village, as a sign of divorce from the old site. (Childs, 1949, p.[illegible]; this is the only context in which Childs mentions divorce.)

He draws the crescentic arrowhead (p. 123) still common among the Ovimbundu and Vachokue; the double iron gong (p. 122); and the musical bow, which he calls a viola (p. 121). 175 114 [534]

Sogaur states that iron-working had an advanced technique at Dindo, more than half a century ago. According to Sogaur, the blacksmith was using scrap iron from European sources (II, p. 14). 175 326

Perhaps the most valuable of Chatelain's books is "Fifty Folk Tales of Angola." The stories are accompanied by translations and ethnological notes, the most important of which are references to the carrying of a corpse on a pole; the building of a cairn of stones over the corpse of a hunter; matrilineal descent and the power of the maternal uncle over the persons of his nieces and nephews (sisters' children). My observations included some details respecting the pawning of a sister's children to redeem the debts of their mother's brother. Chatelain adds that sisters' children are successors to private property and chieftainship (pp. 8–10). My notes agree that property is inherited by children of a deceased man's sister, but my informants said that a new chieftain is normally the eldest son of the principal wife of the dead chief. Chatelain's folklore stories, fifty in number, relate chiefly to animals; this was the only kind of story told to me, but W. C. Bell has recorded a few tales of another type. 173 [114] [764] [611] [604] [429] [538]

Marquardsen (1928) devotes only one-fourth of his book to the ethnology of Angola, which he treats in a very general way; there is no section dealing specifically with any particular tribe. The author calls attention to Chapman's observation of rock paintings of South African Bushman type, between Cuma and Luimbale in northwest Angola. I have elsewhere remarked on the occasional occurrence of physical types which show a strain of Bushman blood. Today Bushmen penetrate southern Angola from the Kalahari (Plate LXIX, Figs. 1, 2), but their presence in times past or present does not affect the course of history or the data of ethnology to an appreciable extent. 114 177 [531] [144]

Marquardsen gives some notes of a general kind on Vahenoca, Mahuila and other tribes of southwest Angola. The suggestion is feasible that the Umbundu name Suku, for a supreme being, is the same as the Nsambi of Lunda and the Congo. Marquardsen refers to the importance of the maternal uncle in Umbundu society, to the poison ordeal, and to the burial of an Umbundu chief in cowhide, all of which points were recorded in my observations at Elende. 114 101

Ferreira Diniz's book is unobtainable, but, judging from the summary given in *Anthropos* (XX, 1925, pp. 321–331), the information was collected by a questionnaire widely distributed among adminis-

601

I. Grandparents.
II. Parents.
III. Speaker's generation.
IV. Children.
V. Grandchildren.

Numbers on the left of the sign (–) refer to males, those on the right, to females.

The terms of relationship used in Tables E and F are as follows:

1. *Ukui wange.* My wife (vocative). Ngonga's wife calls him *wengo*, my husband.
2. *Mana, manja, manjange.* Younger brother.
3. *Kala, kaso.* Older brother.
4. *Mbuale.* Sister (vocative). *Mukui wange.* Sister (nonvocative).
5. *Nanu.* In-laws of speaker's generation.
6. *Ndalunda.* In-laws of ascending or descending generation.
7. *Tata.* Father.
8. *Moi.* Mother.
9. *Apkui.* Father's sister (female father).
10. *Omolunge.* Child, used for speaker's family only.
11. *Ovinumba.* Children of spouse's family.
12. *Mosu, fanza.* Mother's brother (direct ascendant).
13. *Kala.* An old person in grandparent's and grandchild's generation.
    Sokulu, kulukulu. Male grandparents.
14. *Mokulu.* Female grandparents.
15. *Omokulu.* Grandchild of either sex.
16. *Opulanza.* Mother's brother's or father's sister's children.
17. *Okulanza.* Father's sister's husband.

NOTE: Age distinctions are made chiefly in the speaker's own generation.

LAW AND GOVERNMENT

In dealing with marriage rites it was stated that a woman had to contribute certain articles to the home; these are the utensils that she uses in her daily work. The baskets, pottery, pounders, and brushes may seem insignificant, but nevertheless there are rules regulating their disposal at death. Her husband will retain some of the articles; the remainder will be shared among the deceased woman's sisters. 428 422

The disposal of a widow is a matter for discussion among the relatives. The husband makes no bequest to his widow and children, though the children may receive a small gift of a pig or some corn. The property of a man is bequeathed to his mother's brother or to his sister's sons. The eldest brother of the deceased or the maternal uncle of the widow takes her to his house along with her children. If her father is alive he may take her. Ngonga says that each responsible relative says, "It is better that you should take her"; at last some one says, "I will take her." 768

When explaining the system of inheritance Ngonga was clear on two points. In the first place wives and children of the deceased are 428

428 not entitled to inheritance of land, cattle, or anything else belonging to the dead man. The greater part of the property would be bequeathed to the eldest brother of the deceased's mother.

428 604 768 There appears to be discussion as to the distribution of property, but the maternal uncle is responsible for settling disputes. He himself has the first claim, and in Ngonga's words, "If there are quarrels about the cattle, land, and other things, the mother's eldest brother will settle them."

The mother's brother has rights over his sister's children even to the extent of pawning them to pay his own debts. On the other hand the maternal uncle is responsible for the conduct of his sister's children. He would have to pay fines incurred by thefts they committed, and he provides for his sister's son a wife who is either his daughter or his widow.

Ngonga stated that the maternal uncle does not invariably take all the property of a deceased nephew for himself. He may give something to the deceased's mother, the deceased's maternal grandfather, or to a brother of the deceased. Such gifts appear to be the outcome of good will on the part of the dead man's maternal uncle; there is no compulsion. Women never inherit cattle or rights to the use of land. [421]

423 692 622 The king is the head of the legal system, though his activities as such are not so great as those of the village headman (*sekulu*). The *olosekulu* (there are usually more than one) of a village witness the final act in a divorce ceremony. They used to have charge of trials for theft, murder, adultery, likewise the right of settling arguments concerning the ownership of land. It was the *sekulu* who distributed the land to the extended families when a new village site was opened. The maternal uncles settled the minor divisions among the limited families.

643 There are many kings among the Ovimbundu, but I thought that there was a tendency to confuse the titles of *osoma* ("king") and *sekulu* ("headman" or "chief" of a village). The jurisdiction of a king is so well known that any person is able to say under which king he lives. Ngonga said definitely that a man of the Ovimbundu who was under the jurisdiction of a certain king would have to obey the commands of a visiting king, provided they were not in any way disapproved of by the king to whom first allegiance was due.

643 [468] A chief may demand labor for the building of his house or the cultivation of his land. He does not pay for this but usually gives beer to the workers; sometimes he secures the labor and gives nothing in return.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

E. Torday's paper, "Dualism in Western Bantu Religion and Social Organization," is an admirable summary of a wide background of Bantu beliefs with which those of the Ovimbundu agree in detail. Torday (VI) has also given a summary of Bantu sexual relations. His summary of prenuptial relationships of boys and girls, the system of polygyny, and domestic arrangements in general, indicates that records made among the Ovimbundu are but a sample of an extensive and homogeneous series of Bantu sex customs. 171

With regard to the classificatory system of relationships and cross-cousin marriage, sufficient quotations have been given to indicate that the system of the Ovimbundu is one which is paralleled in Rhodesia, the Congo basin, and still more remote regions. To the instances given should be added corroborative examples from J. Roscoe (The Baganda, p. 109), R. S. Rattray (Ashanti, p. 29), and H. A. Stayt (The Bavenda, pp. 172–184). L. H. Buxton and R. S. Rattray have offered a theory to explain the kinship system and cross-cousin marriage in Ashanti (*Jour. African Soc.*, XXIV, p. 83; Religion and Art in Ashanti, p. 318). 171 601

In Africa a classificatory system of relationships is particularly characteristic of the Bantu area. The system is Semitic and Hamitic. It is not reported among the Bushmen, but is in vogue among the Nama Hottentots. The wide distribution of a classificatory system, with variations, and its importance in tribal life, suggest antiquity (see Hoernlé, II, and B. Z. Seligman, III).

H. Baumann (I) has prepared maps showing the distribution of customs affecting descent of property in Africa. Investigation among the Ovimbundu proves that their scheme of inheritance of property is part of a more widely distributed system. Baumann (pp. 66, 127) states that in the Kasai valley and the Cabinda Enclave the rights of the mother's brother are expressed in his control of his sister's children. The power of the maternal uncle in Ovimbundu families was reported, and it was stated that he has the right to sell his sister's children for redemption of his debts. Baumann's map further indicates an area in which property descends, not to a wife or children, but to a mother's brother, or to the sons of the deceased man's oldest sister. The social system of the Ovimbundu is definitely a part of this cultural matrix, which extends to the north and northeast of the Ovimbundu but, according to Baumann's record, not to the south of Angola. In the south of Angola among pastoral people a system of succession and inheritance in the male line prevails, and 171 428

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

171 428 this method is characteristic of many pastoral tribes of south and east Africa.

171 611 The Ovimbundu are situated between two systems of reckoning descent, succession, and inheritance; namely, the Negro system of the Congo region, and that of the eastern and southern cattle-keeping people. In view of the culture contacts described in Chapter X, the mixed system of the Ovimbundu is intelligible.

On the one hand the Ovimbundu emphasize the rights of the mother's brother while denying inheritance to a wife and her children, but in royal families the eldest son of the principal wife succeeds to kingship. Among commoners descent is reckoned through both the father and the mother. Therefore the inference is that the [174] Ovimbundu have, by virtue of their position and contacts, made a blending of two distinct social systems, one of which gives succession to office in the male line, while the other gives inheritance in the female line. In their system of burial rites for kings the Ovimbundu follow the usages of the pastoral area.

171 608 Exchange of blood is an Umbundu custom resembling that which occurs widely in Negro Africa. This exchange of blood is the typical Negro form of the blood brotherhood. Another rite is the Hamitic custom of drinking a mixture of blood and milk; this the Ovimbundu do not practise.

171 241 The hoe-cultivation practised by Ovimbundu women is in agreement with Baumann's association of hoe-culture and matriarchal conditions, the latter being indicated by the importance of the mother's brother. These concomitant factors are shown by Baumann (II, p. 292) to be characteristic of a wide area in the Congo basin. To this area may be added the whole of central Angola.

171 567 The factors of slavery among the Ovimbundu are in agreement with all that is known of the treatment of slaves in the Congo area and farther west Africa. Slaves of the Ovimbundu taken in warfare were treated with less consideration than those who passed into slavery to redeem a debt. There was also discrimination in favor of slaves taken in local quarrels among the Ovimbundu themselves. The killing and eating of slaves in north Angola is a custom whose early occurrence has already been noted.

AFRICAN PUBERTY RITES

171 881 Initiation ceremonies for boys and girls are at present well preserved among the Vachokue of eastern Angola; for a period such ceremonies declined among the Ovimbundu, but there is now a

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Inheritance of movable goods was traditionally entirely matrilineal. Today informants are confused as to what ought to be done. Inquiry about particular cases will reveal that often no movable property was left by the deceased, it having been used to pay for such expenses of the illness and funeral as the purchase of medicines and the buying of animals to be slaughtered at the feasts.

Where there is movable property, the transmission of it to the heirs is carried out in a rather informalized way, as so often happens in Umbundu social activities. The actual division of property is undertaken by a kinsman of the deceased. This should apparently be the most senior kinsman. It may be a cross-cousin or 'brother' or a sister's son.[29] How it is decided who is the senior kinsman, and who are fitted to participate in the share-out is not very clear. Nor does it seem that there is any effective device against the sharer-out giving himself the lion's share, except the general pressures and reciprocities of kinship. The principle accepted in the share-out is that inheritance should be a reflection of the relations which existed with the dead man, and also be a reward of funeral services. Nothing is kept for kin who are away working, and a son who did not keep in contact with his father would be omitted from the share-out.

By inheritance a man can increase his small stock of possessions. He is unlikely to receive anything much in the way of money, and since there is no land shortage, and, as yet, little in the way of valuable immovable property such as brick

rubber trade to be reconciled with the statement by Childs that fear of sorcery was increasing (Childs pp. 57–58)? I suggest that the final disintegration of the old kinship groups may have been marked by particularly sharp social tensions, but that once these groups were in fact dissolved and a new form of social relations established the fear of sorcery may have declined. It should also be remembered that as indicated in Chapter V the present-day economic values of the Ovimbundu do not lead to expectations that a prosperous individual will share his wealth with poorer kinsmen, as was the case in the time of the rubber trade. Hence accusations of sorcery based on disappointed expectations of generosity are unlikely to arise.

Another aspect of the question which cannot be explored here in detail is the lack of agreement on the causality of classes of happenings or individual events. Thus one informant will say that a woman's pains in childbirth are due to sorcerers among her kin, another will say that they are caused by God (as we would say, are natural).

[29] Hambly, pp. 199–200.

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houses, coffee plants and so on there is little likelihood of disputes arising about the inheritance of land claims. A woman's property should be given to her sisters, after her children have had their cut. In one case a man inherited his sister's debts but allowed her children to inherit her property, 'lest they be sad'. A wife's fields return to her husband.

Inheritance is then a process by which the relations of certain kin, both sons and sister's sons, with the deceased are recognized by the transmission of his property. As with other aspects of Umbundu kinship, while the existence of the kinship tie provides the basis on which to found a relationship, its content is determined by the nature of the contacts between the individuals involved and the services given.

Although there is a definite tendency for men of chiefly stock to have longer pedigrees than other individuals there is no chiefly genealogy. When Paulo, the elder of the school of Epalanga, told me that had he not been blind he might have been chief of Gumba, he quoted the names of four chiefs to whom he was related. The chieftancy is not tied to a lineage, but can be held by any individual who can claim links with a former chief or chiefs. People 'of the blood of the chiefs' in no sense form a differentiated group of aristocrats significant in social life.

In similar fashion membership of the spirit-linked professions and of certain cults seems to have been a matter of succession of one individual to the role of another.[30] Membership of the hunting and smithing professions descended patrilineally, but if a hunter or smith had no son his position could be succeeded to by a daughter's son.[31]

7. *Kinship in a Changing Society*

From this, and from other chapters, a picture of Umbundu kinship may emerge as something so blurred, confused, and confusing, as hardly to merit the term 'kinship system', yet at

[30] i.e. rather than admission to a corporate group of hunters. A man can inherit his father's hunting spirit before the latter's death; in Epalanga Batista had received the hunting spirit of his father Epalata.

[31] My informants were not agreed as to whether a sister's son could inherit in default of a son.

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the same time clearly an important part of social life. Kinship norms are confused, as is the correct term to use in a particular relationship. Ritual and jural sanctions are lacking, as are institutions based on the regular co-operation of groups of kinsmen. Yet a man likes to live with kinsfolk and there is a tendency for kin to cluster together in a neighbourhood.

By the very facts, that so many of a man's neighbours are his kinsmen, and that there is very little marked differentiation between the behaviour towards different categories of kin, kinship is robbed of any great specificity of content. It might be said that it is the quantity rather than the quality of kinship ties that makes kinship significant in establishing a 'sense of community' in a neighbourhood, in that the multiplicity of local kin ties creates some identification between a man's range of kin and his neighbourhood. At the same time a kinship tie provides a basis on which a closer relationship may be built by reciprocal services. It appears that the inheritance of property recognizes kinship in this way by recognizing claims not on the basis of strict genealogical proximity but on the quality of the relationship.

A discussion of marriage and the household must be left to the next chapter. The outline given of the present kinship system is sufficiently clear to begin an examination of the reasons for the changes. This must rely to some extent on speculation, owing to a lack of information on the actual working of the kinship system while it was in transition to its present form.

The key change is the disappearance of the kinship groups. These, it seems, disappeared because of their high degree of dependence on the particular type of economy existing before 1911. It has already been argued that the distinction between the patrikin and the matrikin is an attempt to isolate economic claims and conflicts from village and political relationships, and that the giving of loans without right of repayment within the matrikin was called for by a trading system in which credit played an important part. With the end of the trade the wealth passing through Umbundu hands declined sharply, and there was neither need for funds to meet trading losses nor currency to provide them. A man obtained money either by growing crops

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

132 are divided into several sub-zones. A glance at the map[1] reproduced herewith will give a fairly good idea of the climatic regions. This map, apparently based entirely upon temperature averages and relative humidity in the localities for which such data are to be had,[1] is useful for an approximation of the principal zones and sub-zones. The names given to the several zones and sub-zones, however, are somewhat misleading, and the data on which the map is based are insufficient to assure accuracy.

The mean annual rainfall varies from 1,000 mm. (40 inches) to 1,500 mm. (60 inches) according to region[2] and locality. In the Highland the rains begin with a few showers during September and usually set in heavily during October. During November they increase in intensity and then suffer a break of from two to four weeks in December, January, or February. Then they continue until the end of April with sometimes a few showers in May. The heaviest fall is often in November or December, but sometimes in March. There seems to be some sort of cycle of morning, afternoon, and night rains, but I know of no study on this subject. Afternoon and evening rains are more common. Night rains seem to be more common towards the end of the season. Morning rains 512 are least frequent. A day in which rain begins near (or before) 132 daybreak and continues well into the day is called in Umbundu *ulembi*. On such a day agricultural work and travel are suspended. There is a custom that on such a day the first, after greeting, to [431] speak the word *ulembi* can claim a gift from the one to whom he says it. The number of days in which work or travel may be suspended on account of rain is relatively not large. The working day is customarily from early morning until mid-afternoon. Men often continue field-work later in the day than do women. The connexion of the working day with weather conditions is readily seen. 132 Whether the heavier rainfall occurs in November–December or in February–March, it is in March and April that transportation is most likely to be interfered with. That is the time of swollen

[1] See Dr. José de Oliveira Ferreira Diniz, 'As características climatológicas de Angola' (*Boletim Geral das Colónias*, 1930, no. 62, 63, pp. 3–15).

[2] See maps and charts of rainfall in H. F. Shantz and C. F. Marbut, *The Vegetation and Soils of Africa* (New York, 1923); also some figures on rainfall and temperature in J. C. B. Statham, *Through Angola, a Coming Colony* (London, 1922) and in O. Letcher, *South Central Africa*, chap. xiii (Johannesburg, 1932). More detailed treatment of the whole subject is given by Marquardsen u. Stahl, *Angola*, chap. v (Berlin, 1928).

1 [Facing p. 8.—Analyst]

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

made, there as elsewhere throughout the Umbundu-speaking territory, their wholesale manufacture was only carried on in Ndulu. This was a natural specialization, for the best and most easily accessible deposits of iron ore are in the Ndulu country,[1] whose smiths have become justly famous. In exchange for hoes they received palm-oil or cattle from other regions, or salt, rum, or goods from the coast. Other regional specializations were—Kasongi and the Sele country for palm-oil, Cikuma for bees-wax (also obtained from the interior), cattle from Ngalangi, Kalukembe, Cilengi, and farther south. Ciyaka, Civula, and Bailundu took much corn-meal to the coast in those early days. 'Trade-agreements' were also made beyond the Umbundu-speaking area. At first these were strictly one-way affairs, allowing the Ovimbundu traders to operate in many lands, near and far, since this was to the advantage of the rulers of those lands. At the same time, the men from Bailundu and Viye did and said everything possible to discourage the interior peoples from venturing out on their own account.[2] Later, when the trade, as well as knowledge of the whites and their trade, spread, arrangements were made between the king of Viye and various interior chiefs allowing them to send their own caravans through to the coast, and gifts were exchanged periodically.[3]

Their very early introduction to articles of European use and manufacture has undoubtedly had great influence upon the development of the Ovimbundu. Their early and thorough familiarity with fire-arms certainly played a decisive role in their national formation and subsequent history. The introduction of domestic plants and animals from abroad is an important subject, but too broad for treatment at this time. The early introduction of European-manufactured goods has had profound influences.

[1] See article on smelting and smithing in Ndulu by F. W. Read in *Journal of the African Society*, 1902, pp. 44–9.

[2] Livingstone tells of the displeasure of the Ovimbundu ('Mambari') at meeting the Makololo near Luanda. The Ovimbundu tried to frighten them from trading with the whites with tall tales, making the whites out as impossibly clever magicians and wizards (op. cit., p. 384). Cameron and his east-coast carriers experienced the displeasure of Viye people owing to jealousy of the same sort, but no longer so openly expressed (op. cit., p. 406).

[3] The Muata-Yanvo of Lunda was one of those who had such a 'trade-agreement' with Viye. Silva Porto notes in his diary on 14 Jan. 1880 that an embassy from the Muata-Yanvo had arrived with a tusk of ivory for Cilemo (*Boletim Soc. Geog. Lisboa*, 5a Ser., p. 148).

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181 Making money and being rich are regarded with

unambiguous approval, though there is a certain undertone suggesting cunning in the verb *oku lunguka* (to be shrewd) used about prosperous people. The old suspicion of sorcery attaching to people who were more successful farmers than their neighbours[6] seems to have disappeared. While a prosperous villager would be expected to lend money to a poorer kinsman (provided the latter was not known as a bad debtor) yet, the situation which occurs in other parts of Africa, where, as Dr. V. W. Turner notes of the Mwinilunga Ndembu, prosperous Africans 'find themselves increasingly embarrassed by the demands of their kin for presents in cash and kind'[7], would not arise among the Ovimbundu, who would regard such demands as being unjustified, even outrageous.

Wealthy Ovimbundu may spend some of their wealth on clothing and on drink. Cattle-buying has been noted as a form of capital investment and the same term may be used of small stock buying. Another way of disposing of money is by building a house of bricks with the assistance of a bricklayer. A plough may be, but rarely is, bought by two men joining together to pool their money. Generally speaking, the agricultural technology of the Ovimbundu has been little changed since 1911 except for the spread of the techniques of coffee-growing.

It has been noted earlier that the Ovimbundu play an important part in the economic life of Angola both as cultivators and labourers. In this chapter an attempt has been made to show how at the local level it is the cultivation of cash crops, rather than migration for wage labour, which incorporates villagers into the commercial economy of modern Angola. The main source of money in rural areas is the trader's store, which is also the main recipient of money, apart from the administration. While trade both between Ovimbundu and between Ovimbundu and other tribes survives on a minor scale, the social institutions associated with the rubber trade, the large caravans, the non-repayable loans within the matrilineal group, and the obligations of wealthy traders to assist their kin, have disappeared. The contemporary social structure with the

[6] Childs, pp. 106–8.

[7] V. W. Turner, op. cit., p. 135.

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797 his people, who will be neatly dressed and lined up. The
484 welcoming catechist will deliver a speech in Portuguese, and will conclude with three Vivas one, say, for the Bishop of Nova Lisboa, one for the Mission, and one for the visiting priest. These may be varied—I have heard a Viva for Diogo Cão, the Portuguese navigator who discovered Angola. This formal welcome to a procession seems copied from the welcome given to the party from the bride's village when they arrive at the bridegroom's village; and this welcome has in turn copied elements—speeches in Portuguese and calls for Vivas—from the reception of missionaries. Then both parties singing and dancing will proceed to the house where the priest is to stay. The people of the welcoming village should have taken over his luggage at the point where they met his party—if they have not, his carriers will complain vigorously.

797 It is the catechist's responsibility to get his people to provide
[431] the customary gifts of a chicken or two, and possibly eggs and bananas to the visiting priest. He must explain the spiritual state of the school people to the missionary, notably telling him if any of the Christians have married according to pagan custom. It is to him that the priest will direct criticisms on the state of the school building or on the lack of catechetical knowledge of the people. The catechist has also the obligation to visit the mission occasionally during the year—how often depends on nearness, on circumstances and on his own enthusiasm. The most popular times for visiting the mission are Christmastime, the New Year, Easter, and Corpus Christi, when the catechist may go with a number of the school people, though individual Christians also go alone. A catechist will also visit the mission when he has some catechumens who are sufficiently advanced to be tested on their religious knowledge. He has also a general responsibility to report to the mission the activities of diviners, or Christians who have married polygamously. He may also be responsible for referring other disputes to the mission, or for obtaining a letter of commendation to the post in some dispute.

The catechist, then, does not have much authority of his own; his personal role is that of a teacher and leader of prayers. He can, however, invoke the authority of the mission, which

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man has four daughters he will receive the bridewealth only for the two oldest. The mother's brother will receive the bridewealth for the third sister and a brother for the fourth. If the father is dead, the payment is made to a mother's brother or a brother real or classificatory. To some extent the size of the bridewealth is a reflection of the status of the girl—thus on the railway line 1,000 escudos (£12. 10s.) might be paid for a girl who could read and write. In my own area a Gumba man might pay more for a girl from Ndjandju than for a Cela girl because Ndjandju is regarded, owing to its proximity to the mission, as being more civilized. There exist also counter-gifts. Ndjoleya, who as mother's brother received the bridewealth for Feliciana, gave a pig to Daniel, and it is customary for a pig to be given to the husband by his wife's father on the birth of their first child.[11]

The Umbundu word for marriage *oku kwela* is applied both to customary marriage and to Christian marriage. To distinguish between the two, Portuguese words are taken over, *amigar* (originally, to live in concubinage) being used for the customary marriage, and *casar* (to marry) being used for marriage in church. The use of *amigar* of a particular marriage implies that the people making it are pagans, or Christians who have omitted the church ceremony for one reason or another. In Gumba the church marriage, while it gives status among Christians is not an important occasion in the local milieu, and people who have been through the church marriage but who have not made the *uvala*, the traditional wedding feast, are not permitted by their senior kin to cohabit. Around the mission the church ceremony is regarded as the important thing, and the *uvala* seems to be thought of simply as a party. Traditionally and usually at the present day the *uvala* is held in the dry season.

In the wedding feast there are a number of variations between one occasion and another, but a general outline can

[11] Hastings, p. 110, states that a year or two after the birth of the first child another pig is given which is called the pig of cutting off. The giving and the accepting of this severs all responsibilities between the families. The women can no more be returned to her father's people for misdemeanour—only in the case of the death of her husband will she be taken back.

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226 spear eight feet long, the end of which consisted of ten sharp prongs
962 of palm stem (Plate LXXIII, Fig. 1).

Near Cangamba in eastern Angola, fishing in the Kwando River
[171] occupied numerous men and women of the mixed tribes in the district, namely, Vachokue, Luchazi, and Babunda. Men paddled into midstream in small bark canoes from which fishing operations were directed. The fishermen carried small conical string nets, which were attached to stakes in such a way that the openings of the nets faced upstream. Vachokue women, working in pairs, dragged baskets against the current (Plate LXXXV, Figs. 1, 2).

AGRICULTURE AND COOKING

343 *Osila* is the Umbundu word for the granary which stands on
243 wooden supports (Plate XLIV, Fig. 1); this *osila* is for the restricted family, and there is one *osila* for every house. The Ovimbundu store their corn in bulk, but in the *Esele* country I noted that the cobs themselves were carefully packed. Each Ocimbundu girl culti-
[432] vates a small patch of ground, the produce of which she is at liberty to sell in order to buy brass ornaments, beads, and palm oil.

In addition to maize, barley, oats, and wheat, with here and
241 there a little rye, are occasionally grown. There are three colors of beans, red, white, and black. There is no attempt to keep the varieties
[651] separate, so they cross-fertilize freely. The Ovimbundu try to
[438] cultivate a surplus of beans and maize which they use to pay their taxes to the Portuguese, likewise to sell at the stores of traders.

252 Corn is pounded on the rock which has been used for generations
512 after it has been consecrated by sprinkling the blood of a chicken. Pounding begins as early as five o'clock in the morning, before sunrise, and from that time to sunset the pounding-rock is in use. The
[521] rock is evidently regarded as a meeting place for social intercourse; it is undoubtedly the center of village gossip so far as the women are concerned (Plate XXXVI, Fig. 2).

As corn alone is considered a poor food, it is sprinkled on boiling water to which beans are added. Cooking goes on from early morning to sunset over a slow fire. Children sometimes receive as their evening meal a thick plastic cake of mashed corn to which green leaves of a squash are added.

252 There are five kinds of manioc resembling one another in general appearance, but the Ovimbundu distinguish the plants, and reserve for each what they consider to be appropriate preparation. The method varies for sweet and bitter varieties of manioc.

Men are exclusively the makers 462

musical instruments, and males are the musicians. Men are the only persons engaged in warfare and administration, and the enjango or council house is used exclusively by males. Men follow the occupation of medicine-man, in which there is considerable specialization. Female practitioners deal with pregnancy and women's ailments. In addition to the tasks for women mentioned above, the following are staple occupations: collecting firewood, drawing water, caring for infants, making pottery, weaving baskets, dancing, and singing. Young girls share these activities with older women. [534] [756]

The foregoing categories explain division on the grounds of sex. Degrees of specialization are not so easy to formulate, but in general a man follows some one occupation, for example wood-carving. Then within this occupation there is specialization in the making of drums, domestic utensils, or figurines. 463

Almost any woman could make pottery or baskets, but the difference in skill leads naturally to concentration in the hands of expert potters and basket-weavers respectively. These sell their wares to those who either do not make such articles or are inept at the process. [432]

STANDARDS OF CONDUCT, MANNERS, AND SALUTATIONS

The parents of a child, also his maternal uncle, assume responsibility for training in the precepts and standards given here. The maternal uncle, who is the mother's oldest brother, is particularly interested because he has to pay fines should his sister's children commit thefts. The evidence indicates that the home and restricted family have formative influences over the conduct of children. 861 867

Children are beaten if they tell lies, answer old people rudely, or steal food. Ngonga says that his "stealing hand" was once placed in the hot leaves of the cooking pot. If a child steals an egg which is cooking, the hot egg is held between the culprit's hands.

One cannot fail to notice the quiet and unobtrusive way in which children sit in the presence of their elders both in the home and in the council house. Children do not speak when their elders are in conversation, unless addressed. [858]

A child, likewise an adult, receives a gift with both hands. The implied idea is that reception with one hand is a depreciation of the gift. If a child holds out one hand, the hand is slapped. When receiving, an Ocimbundu says "kaku," literally grandfather or elder. Colloquially the word is used to mean greeting, "I thank you," or "I beg your pardon." [576]

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that the Government is benevolent even if its agents are not, and men say that they like the Europeans. There are other opposed currents of feeling, though; thus a cook to a European family said to me, 'The Portuguese do not wish us to learn', and a villager declared, 'The Portuguese say to the English that the Ovimbundu have tails.'[29] The great mass of the Ovimbundu seemed to be without political consciousness, or desire for independence; there is little nostalgia for the days of the caravans, and it is widely felt that the present is better than the past, since there is more contact with Europeans.

Traders in the neighbourhood were relatively few, compared to other parts of Umbundu country. At Chicunda there were three trading stores and people who did not like them went across the river to Cassongue. Traders try to prevent natives who live in their neighbourhood from dealing at other stores where they can get better prices, but this is not always effective. Some Ovimbundu realize that variations of price levels are related to such factors as proximity to the railway line. The traders are criticized for paying their servants low wages as compared with those paid in the coastal cities. Although there is a great deal of mutual suspicion between the traders and the Ovimbundu which is expressed in the arguing and haggling that takes place in the stores, there is none of the fear so noticeable in the people's attitudes to the *chefes*. Many traders have a smattering of Umbundu, and have a certain affection for the local people. Economically, the role of the traders is to receive the maize and other products grown locally for transport to the railway line, and to distribute trade goods to the villages. Their presence is also important in preventing the rise of any other system of trading by markets or pedlars.

The principal goods sold are blankets, cloths, and clothing of all sorts, including fancy items such as sun-glasses. There are also a good many bottles of wine, and also oil-lamps and kerosene tins, and electric torches. For literates or would-be literates, there are pens, pencils, writing-papers and slates. Such goods as bicycles, gramophones, and sewing-machines are generally

[29] i.e. The Portuguese say the Ovimbundu are savages and keep them from contact with other Europeans. The Bailundo area had not (up to September 1961) been affected by the revolt. However, a marked change in this attitude of submissiveness seems to have taken place.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

drinking-mugs, lanterns, metal plates, pens, pencils, wine, and writing slates are bought from the traders. Axe and hoe handles, buckets, bedsteads, beer, bows and arrows, chairs, fish-traps, mats, mush sticks, pottery, pounding-blocks, stools, tables, and small metal objects such as knives are made by Ovimbundu and may be sold locally. To this local trade may be added the selling of pieces of meat by anyone who has killed a pig, or gone hunting and killed a duiker. Very occasionally somebody who has bought cloths in a town or has some hand-made object superior to the local average may tour villages selling his goods as a pedlar.

The only trade which all recalls the days of the caravan trade is the cattle trade with the Kwanyama Ambo. As in the rubber trade the Ovimbundu make use of their intermediary geographical position. They obtain from Luanda shells called *elemende* (singular *emende*). One of these shells costs 10 escudos (2s. 6d.) at Luanda and ten of them will buy a beast in Kwanyama country. Alternatively 30 rounds of tobacco will buy a beast there. I knew several men who had made, or planned to make, trips of this nature. The analogy with the caravan trade breaks down, however, when the relative importance of the two is examined. The caravan trade determined the economic standards of the Ovimbundu, absorbed a great part of the time of every able-bodied man and youth, and influenced every aspect of Umbundu life from the foreign policy of the kings to accusations of sorcery; the cattle-keeping is relatively unimportant economically since the Ovimbundu do not drink milk, and eat meat, even chicken or pork, very irregularly, nor does the occasional sale of cattle to traders altogether balance their uncertain survival away from their indigenous grasses. The real importance of cattle in the economy seems to be as a form of capital investment for spare savings, an investment which can be liquidated either by sacrifice on ceremonial occasions or back into money by sale. Socially, it may be thought of as marking the survival of the Umbundu capacity and enthusiasm for trading in an age when the economic situation has closed the old routes. Indeed, perhaps the subconscious motive for the Ovimbundu who trade is to show that they can act outside of that economic framework of cultivation

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and wage labour which I have described as affecting the Ovimbundu as a whole.

It is not easy to compose budgets of household expenditure and income, partly because they have not yet much of a 'book-keeping' outlook, and partly because they suspect the motives behind questions of this sort. My own opinion is that from agriculture the average household would earn considerably less than 1,000 escudos (£12. 10s.) a year. The Banco de Angola in its Report for 1955[4] gives a budget for an African family at Silva Porto, consisting of father, mother, and two young children, having agriculture as their only source of income. Their total yearly income is given as 7,750 escudos (about £96. 17s. 6d.). Even allowing for the higher prices paid for crops on the railway line, an income of this order is far above anything earned by the average cultivating household, though it might be earned by the few men who cultivated coffee extensively and lived in Portuguese style.

Some details of the economic life of individuals may give depth to this chapter. Kambungo, a kinsman of Sapapula living in Menga, was a man of over sixty who had in his youth travelled on the caravans. He had a large house but lived in a village amongst kinsfolk. In June 1955 he had been in Kwanyama country where, with shells obtained at Luanda, he had bought cattle and for 15 of the *olomanda* shells he got a sewing-machine. In the year 1955–6 (very roughly from the end of the dry season in '55 to the same period in '56) he had sold ten sacks of maize at 25 escudos each and six sacks of beans for 60 escudos each. He had, however, concluded that maize did not pay and had started to grow coffee. He had sold one beast for 900 escudos (£10. 15. 0), and had also sold ten sheep for 100 escudos (£1. 5. 0) each. He had also sold a coat for 120 escudos (£1. 10. 0).

The principal item of Kambungo's expenditure was a bicycle which he bought for 1,500 escudos (£18. 15s.). He had also bought two beds each 100 escudos, and ten plates 100 escudos altogether. He had bought ten bottles of wine, at 5 escudos each, and had also bought some indigenous rum, price not noted. Ten traditional sleeping mats cost 2½ escudos each, and four

[4] Quoted by Egerton, pp. 124–5.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

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Luveli's income from bricklaying. The laying of the bricks that form a modern villager's house may bring 100 escudos. 511

The basic cash need of an Otjimbundu, then, is for money to pay government demands and to provide clothing for his wife and children, who seem more likely than the men to get new clothing every year.[8] Add to this the possibility of other calls (e.g. provision for a relative's funeral) a desirable income even for this low level of consumption would be 400 escudos (£5) and a more prosperous villager might earn and spend double the amount. Exceptional individuals still remaining within the normal conditions of Umbundu cultural and social life, such as Kambungo, may earn from 2,000 to 3,000 escudos a year, perhaps even more, from agriculture. Maize is the foundation of the agricultural economy, but Kambungo's remark that maize did not pay seems to reflect a trend to find other openings such as growing coffee, which is, however, subject to difficulties of climate.

Within the villages there is some trade in handmade objects such as pottery, sleeping-mats, and sticks for stirring mush, and there are quite a number of bricklayers, carpenters, and tailors (proprietors of sewing-machines) who have acquired European skills which bring them money. These craftsmen are, on payment of a fee of 250 escudos (a figure given me by a tailor), exempt from contract labour. 438 463 [648]

Many European residents seem to think that the only European products natives desire are cloths, clothing, and wine. This is not so; villagers wanted me to sell them kerosene for lamps, D.D.T. powder for their hair, and soap. It is interesting that the occasions on which an Otjimbundu would accumulate large (for him) sums all fall outside the maize-for-cloth pattern of trading. These occasions are bridewealth payment (and counting all expenses this may well come to 800 escudos—£10 or more), which is a traditional due, the purchase of bicycles (according to place of purchase from 1,200 escudos [£15] to 1,500 escudos [£18. 15. 0]) which are prestige-giving objects, and the trading journeys to buy cattle. Kambungo had 434 454 [543] [493] [32]

[8] The trader whose opinions I have previously quoted (Senhor Alberto Oliveira Mendes of Chicunda), remarked, 'It is the women who save us. The men make a shirt last for three or four years but the women get something new every year.'

593 178 Going round the houses at night one meets in one house a man and his wife sitting together talking, in another a group of men and women sitting round a fire. This is a very definite change from traditional pattern of social life in which men and women sat in separate groups, a pattern which is still observed at funerals.[15] A man who has a case at the post is likely to take with him his wife as a witness. A husband has the right to beat 593 his wife, and she should show respect to him. In fact wife-beating is rare, and the relationship seems from observation to be often one of mutual affection and close companionship. Informants were divided as to whether one can joke with one's wife—some people may fear that she will cease to respect her husband if he jokes with her—but conversationally an Umbundu wife often seems to enjoy an easy familiarity with her husband. A wife may occasionally go and stay with her relatives, and in the neighbourhood she may pay calls on kinsfolk, friends, or co-villagers, without her husband. This contrasts with the way the white and mulatto wives of traders follow the custom of rural Portugal by staying more or less permanently in the house.

The wife has her own fields, and her own granary. If the marriage is polygamous, each wife has her field and granary. [24] Her husband may help her in her fields, although he also has fields of his own. The maize in the husband's granary is sold to [434] produce money to pay tax and to buy clothing for both husband and wife, and the maize in the wife's granary is used for food. If her husband is away a woman will buy her clothes from her own granary. The cooking of maize has not only a nutritive importance but also a social one since it is considered the service, which is specifically wifely. Thus, the explanation I was given 582 for the lower age of marriage emphasizes this—I should explain that people returning from contract labour are sent first to the post at which they were recruited and may have to do an additional fortnight's work there. 'It is because of the hardship.[16] In the past one married only when one was fully grown. Now it is necessary to have somebody who will send food to the post when you come back.' 'Perhaps,' I suggested, 'your mother

[15] Childs, pp. 32, 35.
[16] Ohali, a word often used with regard to administrative demands.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

301 The new ornaments had acquired no sentimental value, therefore
321 their price was moderate.

[171] *Omba* shells are to be seen in use from Kipungo southward through Huila, among the Luvando, and among the Vakuanyama of southern Angola. In the places mentioned one may judge the social status
[554] of a woman by the number of *omba* shells she wears. A principal wife is usually well supplied with these ornaments.

302 In this southern journey it was noticeable that there was an
171 increasing use of red pigment which is lavishly employed for smearing
[294] every kind of ornament, the body, and the hair. Leather belts and skirts of Vakuanyama women are thickly coated with red pigment which is invariably mixed with grease. The red powder is prepared
[824] by desiccating a red wood called *tukula* by the Vakuanyama, a name which is used through Angola and the southern Congo area.

412 From Kipungo southward through the Vakuanyama country
171 there is a notable absence of decorative wooden hair combs. On the contrary, delicately carved combs are used by both men and women of the Ovimbundu. The Vasele make such combs, but by far the best
[532] examples are made and used by the Vachokue tribe of eastern Angola. Here the decorative design usually includes a well-carved human figure at the top of the comb.

301 Among the Vakuanyama, necklaces of disks made from ostrich
[237] eggshell are worn by the women only. A woman of importance has a dozen loops of such necklaces, each loop being about 125 cm long.
[554] These necklaces are so greatly esteemed that only after much persuasion can a woman be induced to part with a single link. Perhaps, as is the case with *omba* shell, there is more than the intrinsic value to be considered. One point is constantly noticed in considering social status and ornament. All the wives of a wealthy man, especially among the Vakuanyama, are made to advertise their husband's position by the profusion of their ornaments and the quality of their leather skirts and belts.

[321] There is, in addition to the necklaces of ostrich-eggshell beads, a highly prized necklace made from small perforated disks of shell having a diameter of about a centimeter. The Vakuanyama women smear a necklace of this kind with grease and *tukula* powder; the
[435] value of a necklace 125 cm long is equivalent to that of an ox. In describing these necklaces there is interest in noting that they are traded to the south of Angola from places six hundred miles to the
[439] north; therefore their value is to some extent dependent on rarity and distant origin.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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spent 10,000 escudos, he told me, in buying shells to trade in Kwanyama country and even if this be regarded as an exaggeration such an expedition will cost at least several hundred escudos.

I have not so far discussed labour migration and its economic consequences. There are three ways of going out to work: being recruited for 'contract labour', which involves selection by the chief and government headmen who send people to the post whence they are directed to wherever they are required; being recruited by labour-recruiters who visit villages with their lorries; and travelling, usually on foot, to find work. Contract labour is for a year, which may be followed by a fortnight's work at the post to which the *contratados* are returned. The coffee plantations of Amboim and Seles are important centres for voluntary labour from Gumba and neighbouring chiefdoms. Women, and boys from ten years up, go to work there for spells which may be only two months. However, even in Gumba whose people have a reputation for backwardness and for lack of enthusiasm for going away to work, there is nothing at all surprising in meeting men who have learnt a few words of English in Johannesburg.

Of the 36 household heads of Epalanga, 9 were women, and 8 were men who for one reason or another (elders, cripples, the catechist) would not leave the village. Of the other 19, 6 were absent as labourers during some part of my stay, and this figure excludes individuals who were not expected home within a year. In the cities there are large numbers of permanently or semi-permanently urbanized Ovimbundu, who have largely lost contact with their home villages. Some people who have spent years in the towns may come home—in Epalanga there were at least five women who had visited cities.

Although almost all able-bodied men and many women have lived outside the context of village life as servants to Europeans, as labourers on plantations, and as urban workers, it would be a mistake to think of the rural areas of the Benguela Highland, as being labour reservoirs economically dependent on the towns. It seems that prices of manufactured goods are lower near the railway line and in the cities; hence a man returning from wage labour may buy cloths, a bicycle, a sewing-machine, or a

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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gramophone in a town rather than at a trader's near his home 435
village. Most of the money paid for purchases at the stores is money raised by selling crops or livestock. Through labour 463
migration there is, however, some transmission of skills; it is easy to find bricklayers and carpenters of a sort even in Gumba.

Money, rather than barter, is the principal means of exchange 437
among the villages in the selling of local products, and even of meat from pigs. Payment for labour service, such as assistance in house-building and in bringing in maize, is made in beer, except among Protestants who substitute a meal. There is also a custom by which a household which finds, probably at the end of the dry season, that it has not enough maize will make beer to exchange on a particular day for maize.

Ties of kinship and friendship have some economic signifi- 435
cance. A kinsman will help with house-building without ex- 602
pecting payment; likewise a man who has a cleared field which he does not want to use may sell it for 200 escudos (£2. 10s.) but would give it free to a kinsman. A man may make a charge for lending his bicycle, though this varies with individuals; he certainly would not do so if it were lent to a friend. Loans between kinsmen should be repaid, and a tailor with a sewing-machine will make the same charges to relatives as to non-kinsmen.

There are few occasions for groups to work together. The 476
unit of consumption and production is the domestic family. [593]
Even here, the husband, each wife, and the adolescents have their own fields, though a man may help his wife. Such other occasions of mutual help, in clearing a field, which may occur between friends or kinsmen, will only bring a few, often only two of them.

The Ovimbundu I knew were (with exceptions) not avari- 152
cious or grasping; thus, beer might be given to people who have not actually worked in house-building parties. It is regarded as 577
a moral duty to pay one's monetary debts as soon as possible. On various occasions I lent money to people who were pressed 426
and I received back all the money lent. Borrowers insisted that borrowings should be written down, and that the paper on which it was written should be given to them when they paid, or destroyed. Making money and being rich are regarded with 000

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

geographic position in the centre of the colony has also made it harder for them to evade it. Nevertheless, many have emigrated. In 1941 and again in 1944, when the writer visited South Africa, he found thousands of Ovimbundu on the Rand and many more in the Rhodesias and the Congo. Many are also known to have gone to the South-West Territory and to Bechuanaland, and some even to such distant points as Natal's north coast and French Equatorial Africa.[1]

Recent Developments

Currency, in the sense of money, is quite a recent introduction to the Ovimbundu. To the end of their trading activities, cloth ('trade goods') was the standard of exchange. Although dependence upon world markets caused prices to fluctuate with the course of the rubber trade, as we have seen, there was not, however, the great range which follows the fluctuations of the money market through a course of inflation and deflation. The Ovimbundu had had some dealings in money before the time of World War I, when there was a silver coinage, so that the depreciation which set in about 1921 was all the more confusing to them. This is not the place to discuss the finances and banking of Angola, but it must be noted that the conversion of the 'Escudo' into the 'Angolar' in 1928 at the rate of Ag. 0,80 to Esc. 1 $00 greatly increased the sense of confusion among the natives. This was only to be expected when the native tax remained at Ag. 80,00 where it was Esc. 80,00 before, whereas daily wages to contract labourers became Ag. 0,80 where before they were Esc. 1 $00. The confusion was considerable.[2]

Taxes began to be levied soon after military occupation, but for some years they were very small, especially in relation to opportunities for earning. When the head-tax reached Esc. 80,00 it remained at that figure for some years. In 1935 a 'work tax' and

[1] This state of affairs is frequently and quite freely commented upon in the Angola papers. For a recent notice see local correspondence entitled 'Notícias do Cuma' in the *Voz do Planalto* (Nova Lisboa) for 17 Aug. 1946. One of the most serious recent indictments is contained in an article in *O Farolim*, Luanda, 5 Nov. 1945, by Padre J. Alves Correia. This distinguished writer asserts that the present labour policy is 'killing the goose which lays the golden egg'.

[2] For finance, currency, banking, and economic conditions in general, see Department of Overseas Trade, *Economic Conditions in Angola*, H.M.S.O., 1929. There are also reports for 1923 and 1925, but the one for 1929 covers the previous decade.

A professional hunter usually works alone, using bows and arrows, clubs, spears, and several kinds of trap.(1) Nets and poison are not used. Every hunter makes his own arrow-shafts and feathers; the points are made by a blacksmith. On the night before leaving for a hunt, the *ukongo* calls in his fellow hunters to share a ceremony which includes dancing and the re-anointing of the weapons with beer and palm-oil. 224 411

Communal hunts usually take place in June-July, in the middle of the dry season, when large tracts of land are covered with grass ten or more feet high. The day for the hunt is set by the village headman; spears and arrows are prepared and, when the word is given, a party of about 30 men and boys move off to the assigned area of tall grass. A ring is formed round about two square miles of land, the hunters standing just within sight of each other. The grass is trodden down, fires started, and the animals killed as they rush from the flames. Antelope of many kinds, snakes, foxes, wolves, hyenas, mice and rabbits and occasionally leopards are killed in this way. 224

FISHING

In the Kunene and some of the other larger rivers fish are large and plentiful, and men go on communal fishing expeditions, and return with fish to sell.(2) Men usually fish with bark lines, women use basket-traps(3) and poisons. Poison is used, usually in the dry season, when the rivers are shallow. Both men and women use nets, and sometimes a fish-weir or *olunja* may be employed; this has an opening in the middle, in the lower side of which is placed a basket-trap. At the coast and along the Kwanza river dug-out canoes, about 20-30 feet long, are sometimes used for fishing.(4) 226 462 [501]

DOMESTIC ANIMALS

The principal domestic animals are the cow *(onjindi)*, ox *(ongombe*, which is also the generic name for cattle), bull *(onui)*, sheep *(omene)*, goat *(ohombo)*, pig *(ongulu)*, dog *(oabua)*, and chicken *(osanji)*.(5) The only transport animal is the ox, used both for riding and for drawing carts.(6) 231 [492]

Cattle are a measure of wealth, but few families own large herds. Childs lists the domestic animals in a typical village of 196 inhabitants as: 9 head of cattle, 13 goats, 20 sheep, 100 pigs, and about 100 chickens. Cattle are used for paying fines and debts, for funeral feasts, and for marriage payments. Cows are not usually milked, and cattle are killed for food only when they are aged or injured, or occasionally during the June-July period of food shortage. Treated hides are used to cover stools, and for making pouches and corn-bags.(7) 231 436 [282]

The cattle herd obtains most of its food by grazing, but in the dry 080

(1) Some hunters have guns, but the use of gunpowder is restricted by the Portuguese.
(2) Cushman, op.cit., p.143.
(3) See Cushman, loc.cit. for a brief description of the basket-trap.
(4) Hambly, (2) 1934, p.145.
(5) Ibid., pp.152-6.
(6) Childs, personal communication. Cf. Hambly, op.cit., p.152.
(7) Hambly, op.cit., p.153.

Mat-making

462 285 [412] The making of mats is a specialised craft for men. Generally elderly men are the mat-makers. Two tools are used, a borer and a needle, both products of the blacksmith's forge. Hambly[1] describes the making of reed sleeping mats, large mats used for partitions, and string bags. There are four distinct types of mats, each of which has its specialist.[2]

Leather-work

282 Leather pouches worn on a broad leather belt are part of the essential equipment of the hunter. The pouch is square, rectangular, or semi-cylindrical in shape, and may be decorated with cross-shaped patterns, or brass-headed nails used for decorative effect. Hide is also used for the seats of four-legged wooden stools. Hides are crudely dressed: they are soaked, the inner surface rubbed with ashes, the hair scraped away, and the hide pegged out.[3]

Wood-carving

323 [463] Wood-carving, which is men's work, includes the following specialisations: doors, windows and their frames; coffins; beds, tables and chairs; mortars, pestles, grinding-handles, and handles for various iron implements; stools, household utensils, carved images etc.; drums and other musical instruments; canoes (dug-outs and coracles).[4] Illustrations are given by Hambly.[5]

TRADE

438 484 791 [582] Caravan trade is now confined to short journeys when corn, beans and beeswax are carried by men and women porters to the traders' stores. Formerly however it was an important feature of tribal life. Each caravan had its professional leader, and was accompanied by a diviner or medicine-man. Before a caravan started out, a ceremony was performed at which the principal performers were the village headman and the medicine-man. The head of the former headman was brought from its box, sewn in oxhide; blood from a sacrificed animal was sprinkled on the head, and invocation was made to the deceased by the village headman, asking for good fortune for the journey.[6]

438 436 Today the Ovimbundu exchange products among themselves both by barter and the use of Portuguese money,[7] but there are no large markets except in the towns.

[439] 438 The "trade-agreements" between the Ovimbundu kingdoms and between the Ovimbundu and other tribes have been mentioned above.[8] Accompanying these, regional industrial and commercial specialisations within Ovimbundu country developed. Thus in the middle of the last century

(1) Hambly, op.cit., pp.169-70.
(2) Childs, 1949, p.109.
(3) Hambly, op.cit., p.176.
(4) Childs, op.cit., p.110.
(5) Op.cit., Plates XIII to XXII.
(6) Hambly, op.cit., p.156.
(7) For details of Ovimbundu units of measurement see Hambly, op.cit., p.157.
(8) p.9.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

the tree in order to lower the hive with a long rope of bark or plaited 231
fiber, while beneath the tree men are prepared to take the hive, which is opened over a smoky fire. The men wear no protection, consequently they are badly stung. Boys are encouraged to help, and those who run away receive no honey. Honey may be eaten 263
alone or with manioc. No drink is made from honey only, but 273
ochaza is the name given to beer with honey in it. *Ovingundu* is a drink made from pounded corn which has been soaked in water to which a little honey has been added. The drink is allowed to remain untouched over night; thus it becomes sweet and is mildly intoxicating.

Wax is a very important item of trade. In the remote places 439
natives bring to small trading posts balls of wax which are about 257
two pounds in weight. These in former days were a standard of [436]
exchange in terms of which other values could be measured. These balls of wax are made into large cakes for foreign export. In the Easle country a fiber strainer is used for cleaning the wax. Honey is sometimes dried in very large baskets which are three feet in diameter and two inches deep. These baskets were not observed among the Ovimbundu, but they are used in the region of Cassanga in southern Angola. The honey of wild bees when eaten in the comb is palatable; it would be more so if one could disregard the presence of numerous dead bees.

The bow is the chief weapon of the hunter. The release of the 411
arrow is made with the index and middle fingers (Plate XXXIX, 171
Fig. 1). I have observed this method among the Ovimbundu of 224
the Benguela Highlands, in the region of Kipungo, in the far south among the Vakuanyama, and among the Vasele of the Novo Redondo hinterland. Arrows differ considerably in pattern as the illustrations show (Plate XVII, Figs. 1-9); the Ovimbundu have arrow-points of excellent workmanship. The manufacture of these arrow-points is [326]
one of the most skilled occupations of the blacksmith. Each man makes his own shafts and feathers them. The arrows of the Vasele have leaf-shaped iron points; so also have those used by the Vakuanyama.

Among the Ovimbundu are specialists who make bows from [463]
elastic woods called *usia* and *osombia*. The bow itself is *ohonji* and the arrow is *usongo*. At the third shot I saw a young Ocimbundu boy split a cane which was placed upright at a distance of thirty-three feet. The throwing club (*ohunya*) is used for killing small game such as hares.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

At the present time a day's march is twenty-five miles, during which a man carries sixty pounds, while the load for a woman is half that weight. The gait of the Ovimbundu includes a limp at every step, so suggesting that the carrier is lame or tired. This appears to be a method consciously adopted as a protection against fatigue, because all muscles are momentarily relaxed. Loads are carried on the head in a long forked stick to which they are lashed. When the carrier rests, the load is not placed on the ground, but is held upright on the stick (Plate XXX, Fig. 2). Such a method avoids the strain of lifting the load from the ground after each rest pause. 481 [482]

Although the Ovimbundu have an exchange of products among themselves by both barter and the use of Portuguese money, there are no large markets, with the exception of those at the coastal towns of Loanda, Lobito, and Benguela. There is absolutely nothing in Angola which can be compared with the great markets in Nigeria. 438 [436]

Despite the absence of a system of exchange on a large scale, the Ovimbundu have many terms describing units of measurement. There are native standards of length, area, and capacity, but no measures of weight which are undeniably of Umbundu origin. 804

The unit of length (*epaluma*) is the distance from the tip of the thumb to the tip of the middle finger when the hand is outstretched. The term for two of these units is *apaluma avali*. These words are the plural of *epaluma; avali* means two. These units are used to measure tobacco before it has been coiled.

Cloth is measured by stretching the arms to their full extent in line with the shoulders; the distance between the tips of the middle fingers is *epeka*. The stride for measuring land is *elianga*.

Onjimba is an area about twenty-five feet square. *Etemo* ("hoe") is an area of land two hundred yards long and thirty feet broad. A large field covers two or three *atemo*.

Measures of capacity are provided by various types of baskets. The large conical basket (*ohumba*) has an interwoven mark which indicates a measure for corn, meal, and beans. *Ocitenge* is a coarsely made basket used as a unit of capacity. *Uhamba* is a basket two feet long and one foot deep. The basket on a rectangular base is also *uhamba*, but at the present day cans are taking the place of all these old measures. Palm oil is measured in a gourd (*ocitau* or *ombangi*) of definite size. This little gourd is also used for measuring a viscous substance from trees. The word *ekokoto* is used to describe this mucilage. [285] [314]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

436 804 Balls of wax and tobacco were, and are now, definite standar of trade. To some extent rubber as a medium of exchange has be used through contact with eastern Angola. The Umbundu wo *ocilila* expresses a weight of about thirty kilos.

805 221 There is no measure for minutes or hours. I have seen a ma of the Luchazi tribe keep account of the number of days taken on journey by cutting notches on a stick. Ngonga says that the Ovim bundu reckon by cutting notches, also by knotting a piece of strin Three days would be expressed by the words *akumbi atatu* ("thre suns"). The word day or sun is used in fixing a time. There is n word for week. A month is *ossi*, which is the word for moon. Whe the corn is ripe the people say, "We are in a new year." Anothe yearly time mark is the arrival of the first rains, probably in th middle of September.

The words *oku lima* ("to cultivate") yield the word *ulima*, whic designates the period between the beginnings of two rainy season Corn is planted about the time of the first heavy rains, which occu in late September or early October. Naturally, this important occa sion forms a somewhat uncertain time base; nevertheless it is th one used to express the lapse of years up to five in number. Afte such a period the estimation of time is unreliable.

INDUSTRIES

IRON-WORK

326 Among occupations of primary importance is that of the black smith (*ocirinda*). Owing to the increasing importation of hoe blade and other iron goods, together with the facilities for collecting scrap iron, the winning and smelting of iron is increasingly rare. There are probably very few places where the old type of conical clay furnace now exists. Almost any fragments of iron are melted at the forge where a box is kept to hold nails, hoop iron from packing cases, and other fragments resulting from proximity to a European culture.

Nothing is mixed with the iron, neither is there any casting in molds. The only process is the forging of red-hot iron. The Ovimbundu do not draw iron wire, although they know of the process which is practised by the Vachokue.

The work of the blacksmith was studied at the village of Njongolo in Elende. The men were for a time reticent respecting the nature of their training and the ceremony of initiation, but the chief of the village helped considerably by persuading the men to speak freely.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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[1874-1911]

THE OVIMBUNDU UNDER TWO SOVEREIGNTIES

178 The great distinguishing mark of the Ovimbundu was their participation in the caravan trade. Some of the neighbouring people also engaged in trading journeys (e.g. the Chokwe) but in central Angola the dominant traders were the Ovimbundu by reason of their control of the routes to Benguela and Catumbela, a control which as Livingstone's narrative shows they tried for a while to turn into a monopoly.[45] With this must be linked
177 the greater readiness of the Ovimbundu to adopt European ways, marked by the general adoption of cloths for wear by at latest the mid-nineteenth century.[46]

3. *Economics and Social Structure*

101 This section will describe the economic life and social structure which marked the period of the rubber trade (1874–1911).
436 A genuine currency existed in the form of cloth, and fortunes
439 could be made in it. Serpa Pinto tells us of one Otjimbundu who made £3,500 by trading in the interior and that he had met many men who 'turned over capital of a thousand to twelve hundred pounds sterling',[48] presumably in trade goods since Portuguese currency did not circulate among the Ovim-
361 bundu. At the capitals of the kingdoms genuine towns grew up. Magyar in the middle of the nineteenth century estimated that
[162] 5,000 people lived at Bailundo[49] and the British explorer Cameron who had crossed Africa from Zanzibar says of Ekovongo, the capital of Bie, 'the town of Kagnombe, the largest I came across during my whole journey, being more than three miles in circumference. On arrival I was met by the
644 Kagnombe's secretary, chamberlain, and captain of the guard who wore red waistcoats as a sign of their dignity. The secretary was more ornamental than useful, being unable to write, but a subordinate, a black man and native of Dondo, was better educated and conducted the trade of Kagnombe with the coast'.[47]

[45] Ibid., p. 205.
[46] Ibid., p. 206, referring to Magyar as evidence.
[48] Serpa Pinto, pp. 161–2.
[49] Magyar, p. 391.
[47] V. L. Cameron, *Across Africa*, London, 1877. Vol. II, pp. 206–7.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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drinking-mugs, lanterns, metal plates, pens, pencils, wine, and writing slates are bought from the traders. Axe and hoe handles, buckets, bedsteads, beer, bows and arrows, chairs, fish-traps, mats, mush sticks, pottery, pounding-blocks, stools, tables, and small metal objects such as knives are made by Ovimbundu and may be sold locally. To this local trade may be added the selling of pieces of meat by anyone who has killed a pig, or gone hunting and killed a duiker. Very occasionally somebody who has bought cloths in a town or has some hand-made object superior to the local average may tour villages selling his goods as a pedlar.

The only trade which at all recalls the days of the caravan trade is the cattle trade with the Kwanyama Ambo. As in the rubber trade the Ovimbundu make use of their intermediary geographical position. They obtain from Luanda shells called *olomande* (singular *omande*). One of these shells costs 10 escudos (2s. 6d.) at Luanda and ten of them will buy a beast in Kwanyama country. Alternatively 30 rounds of tobacco will buy a beast there. I knew several men who had made, or planned to make, trips of this nature. The analogy with the caravan trade breaks down, however, when the relative importance of the two is examined. The caravan trade determined the economic standards of the Ovimbundu, absorbed a great part of the time of every able-bodied man and youth, and influenced every aspect of Umbundu life from the foreign policy of the kings to accusations of sorcery; the cattle-keeping is relatively unimportant economically since the Ovimbundu do not drink milk, and eat meat, even chicken or pork, very irregularly, nor does the occasional sale of cattle to traders altogether balance their uncertain survival away from their indigenous grasses. The real importance of cattle in the economy seems to be as a form of capital investment for spare savings, an investment which can be liquidated either by sacrifice on ceremonial occasions or back into money by sale. Socially, it may be thought of as marking the survival of the Umbundu capacity and enthusiasm for trading in an age when the economic situation has closed the old routes. Indeed, perhaps the subconscious motive for the Ovimbundu who trade is to show that they can act outside of that economic framework of cultivation

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

in return. Even a slave used to have rights of appeal to the king if he were starved and beaten without cause. The king was the prime mover in warfare. The whole legal system is at this time directly under Portuguese administration though the kings and chiefs have minor powers. Ngonga says that complainants who are dissatisfied with the decision of their own chief go to the Fort, meaning of course the Portuguese military post, or office of the Administrador. 000 643 177

There is no doubt that in former days the responsibility for crime and debt was transferred to a relative in the absence of the delinquent. If a thief escaped, responsibility would rest with a brother, a father or a son. The mother's brother was often held to be responsible for the misdeeds and debts of his sister's children. The mother's brother has rights that extend to the sale of his sister's children to pay his debts. For this reason Ngonga says, "If I have done wrong and they cannot catch me it is right that he (mother's brother) should pay for me." 672 604

I supposed the case of Ngonga having stolen a cow; he has been caught but escapes. Ngonga said that the man from whom he had stolen the animal would go to his (Ngonga's) mother's brother in order to name the price required for the cow, or any other possession which had been stolen. If the mother's brother thought the price reasonable he would pay. On the contrary, if the price claimed were too high the mother's brother would appeal, first to the village chief, then if necessary to the king. [692]

Ownership of land does not appear to have been a source of dispute. Apparently land was distributed by the chief as explained in dealing with village organization. Rights seem to have been well defined and there was always enough land for a stranger. When a man was going away on a trading journey he might lend his land to another who would agree to cultivate it and take the produce for a year. I was unable to satisfy myself that land is now, or was in time past held to be the property of dead ancestors. The right to land depends on its use and allotment by a chief at the time of founding a village. A man who intended to be absent would make a payment so that he might leave his goods at the house of another. The chief would settle any disputes arising from these arrangements. 423 [426] [437]

The complainant in a suit is called *ombile*, the defendant is *ovilue*. The name for a witness is *uvangi*. In the old days a false witness had to make recompense to the man about whom he had told a lie; he would probably have a beating as well. A master was in every way responsible for the actions of a slave. The degree of responsi- 695 672

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[1874-1910]

THE OLD SOCIETY

The trade was conducted in caravans composed of up to several thousand people,[48] under the leadership of *entrepeneurs* called *olofumbelo* (of which the singular is *efumbelo*). Of such were the individuals whom Serpa Pinto describes as earning wealth equivalent to a thousand pounds or more. Their role was to get together the caravans, to negotiate with the local political authorities, and to provide ritual leadership. The exact relationship between the *efumbelo* and the ordinary members of the caravan is difficult to see. European travellers found that porters were content with low wages since they had opportunities for private trade, but apparently the caravan organizers had better opportunities for getting rich than had ordinary Ovimbundu. My informants stated that a man organized a caravan to gain wealth. A man who was in a position of prosperity would be known as an *ohwase* (rich man), would stay at home and be expected to assist his relatives.[49] 437 472 474 [556]

Different ages and both sexes participated in the trade. Childs says that boys from the age of nine upwards travelled on the caravans, and this is confirmed by Serpa Pinto.[50] Tucker, and my informants however, give the age when caravan travel began as being fifteen or over.[51] Unmarried girls travelled too, but simply acted as helpers to some male relative. The caravan organizers (*olofumbelo*) were old men, I was told, and travelled in the rear while in front of the caravan marched a young man (called the *kesongo*) who carried a flag.[52]

Dr. Childs states that between 1874 and 1886 rubber was gathered from the forests of the interior and took eight months (four months each way presumably) for the Ovimbundu to obtain. From 1886, however, 'red rubber' was obtained from the sandy lands beyond the Cuanza, a journey which only took three months altogether. Hence, Childs states, the trading 439 474

[48] A Bastos, *Monografia de Catumbella*, in *Bol. Soc. Geog. Lisboa* 1910 (p. 151) states that caravans of several thousand were used in the 1870s but that by the time of writing (1908–9, nearly the end of the trade) people came in small parties. My informants who would remember this period spoke of the large size of the caravans.

[49] My informants.

[50] Serpa Pinto, p. 164.

[51] J. T. Tucker in *Africa* (Notes and News), April 1956.

[52] Informants.

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631 funerals (though these burials could be undertaken by the
564 cross-cousins of the deceased). When *sakwatjiseko* came to their partner-chiefdom for a funeral they had the right to steal small live-stock, such as chickens, or pigeons, but not cattle, goats, or
[837] pigs. An *ukwatjiseko* could sleep with the wives of his *sakwatjiseko* partners without being sued for damages.[68]

631 The ties of kinship and affinity crossed the boundaries of
[602] the sub-chiefdoms and even of the kingdoms.[69] The members
[463] of the three spirit-protected professions, blacksmithing, divin-
[574] ing, and hunting recognized obligations of hospitality to co-professionals from other parts of the country.[70] Again the caravans were so large that they must have involved people
[437] from many sub-chiefdoms, which presupposes a wide range of contacts.

182 It may be said that the picture given here is contradictory and inadequate. How can the existence of large kingdoms be reconciled to the extreme insecurity described by old men? How do the wealthy caravan organizers fit into the political system? What sort of politics were there in the kingdoms? It is not easy to answer these questions owing to the lack of evidence, and, probably, because the kingdoms were already in decline during the latter part of the rubber trade period. Indeed, the impression that accounts of the Ovimbundu in the nineteenth century give is that of adventure, battle, commerce, migration —a vigorous rather than a stable society.[71]

61 The kinship system is perhaps the field of Umbundu society
114 which has aroused most interest among anthropologists. Childs and Hastings have written much that is interesting on the old double-descent grouping but as, with the kinship system, the form has been described rather than the functioning and it is

[68] Informants. The account in Childs, pp. 114–15 differs considerably. For this institution elsewhere in Angola see Estermann, 'Clans et alliances de clans', *Anthropos*, 1952.

[69] Childs, p. 54.

[70] Informants.

[71] Magyar describes the king and his courtiers as being extremely despotic towards the villagers, and states that their despotism depended on their having a standing military force called 'Sons of the Elephant' (pp. 278–80). Later accounts do not mention this, and Childs notes (p. 209) that at the height of the rubber trade it was more difficult for the kings to recruit armies for their wars.

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613 could be resolved in the matrilineal group.[78] Hastings, who gives the most detailed account of the matrilineal groups, which he calls sibs, tells us, 'There can be no exaction of fines or taking of slaves between the members of a sib group—the group members are supposed to pay each other's debts, and one who has wealth and refuses so to communicate may be secretly poisoned by the others. It is within the group of matrilineal sibs that most compacts, whether social or economic, are formed and operate. The same is true even of malevolent plots and anti-
[759] social practices, such as killing by witchcraft.'[79]

182 Clearly, the matrilineal groups in which the rich had to pool
613 their wealth with poorer kinsfolk and in which trading arrange-
937 ments[80] were made indicate the adaptation of the kinship system to the needs of the trade. It may be suggested that one of the functions of the double descent system was to separate the fields of village and chiefdom relations, established through patrilineal ties, from the field of commerce, credit, and the inheritance of wealth gained by trade. Thus the conflicts in which a man would be involved in one set of relations would not involve his other set of ties, and this distribution of stresses must have limited the strains set up by disputes. The distinction between the local group and the commercial group would also prevent heavy losses from trade striking a whole village simultaneously.[81] The credit institutions demanded by a trading
[452] system in which debt was frequently incurred were fitted into the kinship system, and associated with a device for levelling those who had become prosperous in the trade.

613 Unhappily the disintegration of the traditional social struc-
[170] ture, and the accompanying loss of knowledge of it, prevented me from adding to, or even corroborating entirely, the written material on the form of the matrilineal groups.[82] It is not at all evident how the groups maintained integration, or how new

[78] Hambly, p. 200.

[79] Ibid., p. 92.

[80] Dr. Childs suggested to me that the core of the caravans might be composed of kin. However, the caravans were so large that they clearly could not be organised on a kinship basis. See also Serpa Pinto, p. 165.

[81] This point was suggested to me by Dr. Mary Douglas.

[82] I did not obtain any information on the size of the matrilineal group, the existence of heads of the groups, and the degree to which it was a congregation.

[1874-1911]

groups emerged. The information on the cult of the matrilineal 613
spirits which might have thrown some light on matrilineal conflicts and integration, is confused. Both Hastings and Mrs. Tucker state that the matrilineal spirits are always malevolent, but this is not confirmed by my informants,[83] and it may be that they were referring to the traditional belief that sorcery was [754] only practised between members of a matrilineal group. Although, as has been stated, a man looked to his matrilineal 613 kin for economic aid, he might travel with his father (who had 437 first claim on his services), or with his mother's brother or some other kinsman; indeed while his father was still alive he might travel and trade on his own account.[84] The matrilineal group (in this area at least) was not a unit from which trading teams were formed, but rather a means for providing financial assistance when needed for those engaged in trading. It is of course possible that in some areas of Umbundu country the matrilineal kin groups were significant in the organization of trading caravans.

Another institution whose form can be described but whose 582
function cannot be properly known is that of preferential marriage with certain categories of kin. Childs states that the categories were cross-cousins (both patrilateral and matrilateral), the sister's daughter, and the father's sister, and indicates that the cross-cousin marriages were not generally with first-cousins. My informants generally denied that it had been permitted to marry a father's sister, but confirmed his other statements. They added that an indemnification was paid by [583] the bridegroom to the bride's family 'to cut the blood',[85] and [601] that the kinship terms were replaced by affinal. This suggests that these marriages may have been intended to restore distant kinship ties by turning them into affinal ties and so renewing them for the next generation, but how this would operate cannot even be guessed.

[83] Hastings, p. 87; L. S. Tucker, 'The Divining Basket of the Ovimbundu', *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, 1940, pp. 171–201.

[84] Informants.

[85] This was paid down to 1949 or so in the area where I was. It was about 20 escudos, much less than bridewealth. It was formerly referred to by the Umbundu term for 'fine' (*ocinda*), as was the payment made on the death of a non-kinswoman wife.

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that the Government is benevolent even if its agents are not, and men say that they like the Europeans. There are other opposed currents of feeling, though; thus a cook to a European family said to me, 'The Portuguese do not wish us to learn' and a villager declared, 'The Portuguese say to the English that the Ovimbundu have tails.'[29] The great mass of the Ovimbundu seemed to be without political consciousness, or desire for independence; there is little nostalgia for the days of the caravans, and it is widely felt that the present is better than the past, since there is more contact with Europeans.

Traders in the neighbourhood were relatively few, compared to other parts of Umbundu country. At Chicunda there were three trading stores and people who did not like them went across the river to Cassongue. Traders try to prevent natives who live in their neighbourhood from dealing at other stores where they can get better prices, but this is not always effective. Some Ovimbundu realize that variations of price levels are related to such factors as proximity to the railway line. The traders are criticized for paying their servants low wages as compared with those paid in the coastal cities. Although there is a great deal of mutual suspicion between the traders and the Ovimbundu which is expressed in the arguing and haggling that takes place in the stores, there is none of the fear so noticeable in the people's attitudes to the *chefes*. Many traders have a smattering of Umbundu, and have a certain affection for the local people. Economically, the role of the traders is to receive the maize and other products grown locally for transport to the railway line, and to distribute trade goods to the villages. Their presence is also important in preventing the rise of any other system of trading by markets or pedlars.

The principal goods sold are blankets, cloths, and clothing of all sorts, including fancy items such as sun-glasses. There are also a good many bottles of wine, and also oil-lamps and kerosene tins, and electric torches. For literates or would-be literates, there are pens, pencils, writing-papers and slates. Such goods as bicycles, gramophones, and sewing-machines are generally

[29] i.e. The Portuguese say the Ovimbundu are savages and keep them from contact with other Europeans. The Bailundo area had not (up to September 1961) been affected by the revolt. However, a marked change in this attitude of submissiveness seems to have taken place.

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Luveli's income from bricklaying. The laying of the bricks that form a modern villager's house may bring 100 escudos. 511

The basic cash need of an Otjimbundu, then, is for money to pay government demands and to provide clothing for his wife and children, who seem more likely than the men to get new clothing every year.[5] Add to this the possibility of other calls (e.g. provision for a relative's funeral) a desirable income even for this low level of consumption would be 400 escudos (£5) and a more prosperous villager might earn and spend double the amount. Exceptional individuals still remaining within the normal conditions of Umbundu cultural and social life, such as Kambungo, may earn from 2,000 to 3,000 escudos a year, perhaps even more, from agriculture. Maize is the foundation of the agricultural economy, but Kambungo's remark that maize did not pay seems to reflect a trend to find other openings such as growing coffee, which is, however, subject to difficulties of climate.

Within the villages there is some trade in handmade objects such as pottery, sleeping-mats, and sticks for stirring mush, and there are quite a number of bricklayers, carpenters, and tailors (proprietors of sewing-machines) who have acquired European skills which bring them money. These craftsmen are, on payment of a fee of 250 escudos (a figure given me by a tailor), exempt from contract labour. 438 463 [648]

Many European residents seem to think that the only European products natives desire are cloths, clothing, and wine. This is not so; villagers wanted me to sell them kerosene for lamps, D.D.T. powder for their hair, and soap. It is interesting that the occasions on which an Otjimbundu would accumulate large (for him) sums all fall outside the maize-for-cloth pattern of trading. These occasions are bridewealth payment (and counting all expenses this may well come to 800 escudos—£10 or more), which is a traditional due, the purchase of bicycles (according to place of purchase from 1,200 escudos [£15] to 1,500 escudos [£18. 15. 0]) which are prestige-giving objects, and the trading journeys to buy cattle. Kambungo had 434 454 [543] [493] [435]

[5] The trader whose opinions I have previously quoted (Senhor Alberto Oliveira Mendes of Chicunda), remarked, 'It is the women who save us. The men make a shirt last for three or four years but the women get something new every year.'

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gramophone in a town rather than at a trader's near his home village. Most of the money paid for purchases at the stores is money raised by selling crops or livestock. Through labour migration there is, however, some transmission of skills; it is easy to find bricklayers and carpenters of a sort even in Gumba.

Money, rather than barter, is the principal means of exchange among the villages in the selling of local products, and even of meat from pigs. Payment for labour service, such as assistance in house-building and in bringing in maize, is made in beer, except among Protestants who substitute a meal. There is also a custom by which a household which finds, probably at the end of the dry season, that it has not enough maize will make beer to exchange on a particular day for maize.

Ties of kinship and friendship have some economic significance. A kinsman will help with house-building without expecting payment; likewise a man who has a cleared field which he does not want to use may sell it for 200 escudos (£2. 10s.) but would give it free to a kinsman. A man may make a charge for lending his bicycle, though this varies with individuals; he certainly would not do so if it were lent to a friend. Loans between kinsmen should be repaid, and a tailor with a sewing-machine will make the same charges to relatives as to non-kinsmen.

There are few occasions for groups to work together. The unit of consumption and production is the domestic family. Even here, the husband, each wife, and the adolescents have their own fields, though a man may help his wife. Such other occasions of mutual help, in clearing a field, which may occur between friends or kinsmen, will only bring a few, often only two of them.

The Ovimbundu I knew were (with exceptions) not avaricious or grasping; thus, beer might be given to people who have not actually worked in house-building parties. It is regarded as a moral duty to pay one's monetary debts as soon as possible. On various occasions I lent money to people who were pressed and I received back all the money lent. Borrowers insisted that borrowings should be written down, and that the paper on which it was written should be given to them when they paid, or destroyed. Making money and being rich are regarded with

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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[1874-1911]

593 604 in the hands of the mother's brother, though the father could, if he wished, intervene; and a man could establish a shrine of his own while his father lived.

613 It is not altogether easy to see how the matrilineal group maintained its cohesion. It was not the working team on which the caravan trade operated since a man's father had first claim on his services, and he could travel with other relatives. Within it alone loans need not be repaid and accusations of sorcery were made; with this in mind, it is evident why, as Dr. Hastings tells us, people tended to avoid the company of their matrikin, [578] and why most disputes arose in the matrilineal groups.[22] It 613 seems that probably the key to the functioning of the matri- 437 lineal groups lies in the details, not now recoverable, of the economy of the caravan trade. As everybody, however successful, was in danger at some time or another of incurring heavy losses,[23] an arrangement by which anybody who was in difficulties could call on his kin for help would be generally acceptable. The association of mutual aid of this sort with matrilineal rather than patrilineal kin would spread losses geographically and would exclude conflicts over currency and movable property from village life. Moreover, the dispersal of the matrilineal kin would provide an individual with business contacts over a considerable area.

5. *Contemporary Kinship Norms*

593 Much of this has disappeared. The men's house is no longer 264 the dining-room of the village male population. Men now often 178 eat with their wives and children though attitudes and practice of this vary between households. People in their twenties knew of the existence of these avoidance rules but it seems that the rules forbidding sons to eat with their mother and eldest sons and daughters to eat with their father are now generally ignored.

[692] [22] Hastings, pp. 18, 87. Disputes within the matrilineal group could be, and very often were, referred to the sub-chief and king. The account of legal proceedings in Hastings (pp. 139–51) suggests that a high proportion of the cases heard by the kings were to do with sorcery. In such cases the social extension of the matrilineal group beyond the area of the sub-chiefdom and the wider political integration achieved by the kingdoms 'co-operated' in preserving a range of social relations beyond the sub-chiefdom.

[23] Apropos of losses Childs quotes Magyar as saying that the Ovimbundu traded for excitement rather than gain (p. 204).

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

175 x 1853–4, crossed Africa from Benguela to the mouth of the Rovuma.[1]

484 Nor was this the only transcontinental journey effected by
439 Ovimbundu traders.[2] Such long-distance expeditions were not always the most profitable, and certainly the relatively shorter journeys of the time of the rubber trade must have been much more lucrative. Indeed, the judgement of Magyar was that the Ovimbundu generally got more enjoyment and excitement than
x 175 monetary gain from their expeditions.[3]

439 Mention has been made that the several Umbundu kingdoms
648 fell in line with the trading activities of Bailundu and Viye. By the beginning of the period of great activity this had eventuated in a loose system of alliances or mutual understandings to the effect that the traders and caravans of each would be tolerated in, and allowed passage through, the territory of the other. At times their 'trade-agreements' seem to have embraced all the Umbundu-speaking peoples, but violations were frequent,[4] and complaints of violations seem to have been almost the regular state of affairs
326 as between Viye and the Ciyaka-Cingolo-Citata group. There also
● 438 developed regional industrial and commercial specializations. In Magyar's time there was a great metal industry at Ekovongo, the
175 x capital of Viye, making hoes for trade with the interior,[5] but by 1875 this work seems to have ceased,[6] for although hoes were still

[1] Cakahanga kept a diary which was edited by Silva Porto and published under the title 'Third Voyage' in the *Boletim Official* of Angola, 1856–7, and later in the *Annaes do Cons. Ultr. Ia Ser.* A summary of this diary appeared in the *Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society* of London, 1860, pp. 136–49, but the translator and editor mistakenly believed that Silva Porto had himself crossed Africa, and added to the confusion by calling the Ovimbundu 'Arabs from Zanzibar'. Silva Porto himself only went as far as Naliele, and it seems that there were 'Arabs' or Swahili in the party, but how far they accompanied it is not clear. That the diary was kept by Cakahanga is evident, for the 'Arabs' could write no language known to Silva Porto.

[2] See Magyar, op. cit., p. 297.

[3] Ibid., p. 299. This referred only to Magyar's time, 1849–57, but I feel it to be a judgement capable of wider extension. Serpa Pinto says that in 1878 he met many who 'turned over capital of a thousand to twelve hundred pounds sterling and some even more; one indeed . . . arrived during my sojourn . . . from the interior where he had traded on his own account to the extent of . . . about £3,500!' (op. cit., p. 161 f.). However, there were also losses and often, so that Magyar's dictum is worth remembering.

[4] e.g. see account of dispute between Ekuikui (Bailundu) and Njambayamina (Viye) in *Missionary Herald*, 1886, pp. 228 f., 452, 508; 1887, p. 463.

[5] L. Magyar, op. cit., p. 297.

[6] See negative testimony of Cameron, of Serpa Pinto, and of early missionaries.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

made, there as elsewhere throughout the Umbundu-speaking 175x
territory, their wholesale manufacture was only carried on in 326
Ndulu. This was a natural specialization, for the best and most 438
easily accessible deposits of iron ore are in the Ndulu country,[1]
whose smiths have become justly famous. In exchange for hoes
they received palm-oil or cattle from other regions, or salt, rum, 175x
or goods from the coast. Other regional specializations were— 438
Kasongi and the Sele country for palm-oil, Cikuma for bees-wax [314]
(also obtained from the interior), cattle from Ngalangi, Kalu-
kembe, Cilengi, and farther south. Ciyaka, Civula, and Bailundu [243]
took much corn-meal to the coast in those early days. 'Trade-
agreements' were also made beyond the Umbundu-speaking area. 175x
At first these were strictly one-way affairs, allowing the Ovi- 648
mbundu traders to operate in many lands, near and far, since this
was to the advantage of the rulers of those lands. At the same
time, the men from Bailundu and Viye did and said everything
possible to discourage the interior peoples from venturing out on
their own account.[2] Later, when the trade, as well as knowledge
of the whites and their trade, spread, arrangements were made
between the king of Viye and various interior chiefs allowing them
to send their own caravans through to the coast, and gifts were [431]
exchanged periodically.[3]

Their very early introduction to articles of European use and 177
manufacture has undoubtedly had great influence upon the 175x
development of the Ovimbundu. Their early and thorough
familiarity with fire-arms certainly played a decisive role in their
national formation and subsequent history. The introduction
of domestic plants and animals from abroad is an important
subject, but too broad for treatment at this time. The early
introduction of European-manufactured goods has had profound
influences.

[1] See article on smelting and smithing in Ndulu by F. W. Read in *Journal of the African Society*, 1902, pp. 44–9.

[2] Livingstone tells of the displeasure of the Ovimbundu ('Mambari') at meeting the Makololo near Luanda. The Ovimbundu tried to frighten them from trading with the whites with tall tales, making the whites out as impossibly clever magicians and wizards (op. cit., p. 384). Cameron and his east-coast carriers experienced the displeasure of Viye people owing to jealousy of the same sort, but no longer so openly expressed (op. cit., p. 406).

[3] The Muata-Yanvo of Lunda was one of those who had such a 'trade-agreement' with Viye. Silva Porto notes in his diary on 14 Jan. 1880 that an embassy from the Muata-Yanvo had arrived with a tusk of ivory for Cilemo (*Boletim Soc. Geog. Lisboa, 5a Ser.*, p. 148).

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

It must not be supposed that trade has been abandoned. Every sale or exchange of field or garden produce is a serious trading operation. Produce will often be carried a very long way for a very small advantage, or even for no apparent gain. The successively lower economic levels to which the colony, and especially the natives, have fallen since the close of the rubber trade is a factor. Individual trading, involving journeys into even such distant regions as Ovamboland, is a latter-day development since European rule has made for greater personal security.

Another factor which operated to end all large-scale trading operations of the Ovimbundu was the disappearance of the traffic in human beings. It has been shown that even before they ruled over the Ovimbundu the 'Jagas' were leading intermediaries in this traffic, and the Ovimbundu have continued in this role right down to the period under review. Whatever name or form it bore at the coast, in the interior the traffic was the same. At the height of the rubber boom this traffic, along with other activities, suffered a decline, being somewhat less profitable than rubber. At that time came the peak of the rum trade and the demoralization which it brought turned the point of the 'contract labour' traffic in upon the Ovimbundu themselves. Such Umbundu customs as getting into debt, the pawning of relatives, and also such factors as times of food scarcity, quickly taken advantage of by the traders, served to exacerbate the hardships, and the result was the native uprising of 1902 known as the 'Bailundu Campaign', but extending beyond the limits of Bailundu. The effects of this uprising upon trade have already been noted. Pending investigation of its causes, the export of 'contract labourers' was stopped,[1] but the practice was soon resumed. The scandalous conditions then obtaining in the neighbouring 'Congo Free State' almost from its founding until 1908 greatly aided and abetted the slave-traffic, however much this new frontier may have interfered with trade in ivory and rubber. Trade with the *revoltés* was particularly lucrative to Ovimbundu and other traders of Angola. Powder and arms were an especially important item in this trade.

and just under the rim of the Highland. In 1916 construction stopped at Chinguar (312 miles and on the edge of Viye) until after World War I. It was completed to the Angola frontier in 1929 and the Belgian section finished in 1931, with transcontinental connexion at Elizabethville.

[1] Cabral Moncada, op. cit.; Massano de Amorim, *Relatorio sôbre os acontecimentos do Bailundo* (Loanda, 1903); *Missionary Herald*, 1903, p. 69.

Mat-making

462 285 [412] The making of mats is a specialised craft for men. Generally elderly men are the mat-makers. Two tools are used, a borer and a needle, both products of the blacksmith's forge. Hambly[1] describes the making of reed sleeping mats, large mats used for partitions, and string bags. There are four distinct types of mats, each of which has its specialist.[2]

Leather-work

282 Leather pouches worn on a broad leather belt are part of the essential equipment of the hunter. The pouch is square, rectangular, or semi-cylindrical in shape, and may be decorated with cross-shaped patterns, or brass-headed nails used for decorative effect. Hide is also used for the seats of four-legged wooden stools. Hides are carefully dressed: they are soaked, the inner surface rubbed with ashes, the hair scraped away, and the hide pegged out.[3]

Wood-carving

323 [463] Wood-carving, which is men's work, includes the following specialisations: doors, windows and their frames; coffins; beds, tables and chairs; mortars, pestles, grinding-handles, and handles for various iron implements; stools, household utensils, carved images etc., drums and other musical instruments; canoes (dug-outs and coracles).[4] Illustrations are given by Hambly.[5]

TRADE

438 484 991 [582] Caravan trade is now confined to short journeys when corn, beans and beeswax are carried by men and women porters to the traders' stores. Formerly however it was an important feature of tribal life. Each caravan had its professional leader, and was accompanied by a diviner or medicine-man. Before a caravan started out, a ceremony was performed at which the principal performers were the village headman and the medicine-man. The head of the former headman was brought from its box, sewn in oxhide; blood from a sacrificed animal was sprinkled on the head, and invocation was made to the deceased by the village headman, asking for good fortune for the journey.[6]

438 436 Today the Ovimbundu exchange products among themselves both by barter and the use of Portuguese money,[7] but there are no large markets except in the towns.

[439] 438 The "trade-agreements" between the Ovimbundu kingdoms and between the Ovimbundu and other tribes have been mentioned above.[8] Accompanying these, regional industrial and commercial specialisations within Ovimbundu country developed. Thus in the middle of the last century

(1) Hambly, op.cit., pp.169-70.
(2) Childs, 1949, p.109.
(3) Hambly, op.cit., p.176.
(4) Childs, op.cit., p.110.
(5) Op.cit., Plates XIII to XXII.
(6) Hambly, op.cit., p.156.
(7) For details of Ovimbundu units of measurement see Hambly, op.cit., p.157.
(8) p.9.

there was a great metal industry in Viye, where hoes were made for trade with the interior; later the wholesale manufacture of hoes was taken over by Ndulu, where there are the best and most easily accessible deposits of iron. In exchange for hoes they received palm-oil or cattle from other regions, or salt, rum, or goods from the coast. Other regional specialisations were :- Kasongi and the Sele country for palm-oil, Cikuma for beeswax, cattle from Ngalangi, Kalukembe, and, further south, corn-meal from Ciyaka, Civula and Bailundu.(1) 438 [316]

SOCIAL ORGANISATION AND POLITICAL STRUCTURE

KINSHIP AND DESCENT

The Ovimbundu appear to have a system of double descent which has not yet been fully reported and analysed, and whose nature is not very clear from existing accounts. The following outline is based on information given by Childs,(2) who unfortunately details the functions but not the composition of the kin groups concerned. In a review(3) of Childs' book, Barnes has formulated a descent system which would be congruent with Childs' description, and his suggestions are outlined here. 611 114

The epata

Childs translates *epata* as "blood relatives", and his use of the term suggests that it may have either a general or a limited sense. Thus he writes (p.42): "Nearly all of the villagers belong to the same *epata* or extended family, which includes both lines of descent. Most of them belong to the father's family *(oluse)*, and the mother's family *(oluina)* may also be represented." And, in another context, (p.44): "When an Ocimbundu speaks of his *epata* (family) in the sense of a large and widespread organization with a recognized head....it is generally his *oluina* [mother's family] to which he refers." 596

The oluse and the oluina

Every Ocimbundu belongs in the first instance to two distinct kin groupings: the *oluse*, to whom he is related through his father, and the *oluina* to whom he is related through his mother. Uterine brothers and sisters belong to the same *oluse* and *oluina*, but to the male and female side respectively, according to sex. (see below.) A difficulty has arisen because both Hambly(4) and Childs appear to regard *both groups* as bilateral. Hambly states explicitly that the *oluse*, or *epata lia tate* (family of my father) includes *all* relatives on the father's side, and the *oluina* or *epata lia mai* (family of my mother) *all* relatives on the mother's side. Childs writes (p.45) "Bearing in mind *their bilateral nature* ..... the functions of [the *oluse* and the *oluina*] may be summarised...". But from his summary it is obvious that the *oluse* and the *oluina* cannot be bilateral groups, neither can they have parallel descent systems of any kind. Marriage is patrilocal, and the *oluse* forms a local unit while the *oluina* is 611 613 [591]

(1) Childs, 1949, p.205.
(2) 1949, pp.42-6.
(3) Man, September 1950, p.127.
(4) Op.cit., pp.191-2.

226 spear eight feet long, the end of which consisted of ten sharp prongs
462 of palm stem (Plate LXXIII, Fig. 1).

Near Cangamba in eastern Angola, fishing in the Kwando River
[171] occupied numerous men and women of the mixed tribes in the district, namely, Vachokue, Luchazi, and Babunda. Men paddled into midstream in small bark canoes from which fishing operations were directed. The fishermen carried small conical string nets, which were attached to stakes in such a way that the openings of the nets faced upstream. Vachokue women, working in pairs, dragged baskets against the current (Plate LXXXV, Figs. 1, 2).

AGRICULTURE AND COOKING

343 *Osila* is the Umbundu word for the granary which stands on
243 wooden supports (Plate XLIV, Fig. 1); this *osila* is for the restricted family, and there is one *osila* for every house. The Ovimbundu store their corn in bulk, but in the Esele country I noted that the cobs themselves were carefully packed. Each Ocimbundu girl culti-
[432] vates a small patch of ground, the produce of which she is at liberty to sell in order to buy brass ornaments, beads, and palm oil.

In addition to maize, barley, oats, and wheat, with here and
241 there a little rye, are occasionally grown. There are three colors of beans, red, white, and black. There is no attempt to keep the varieties
[651] separate, so they cross-fertilize freely. The Ovimbundu try to
● [438] cultivate a surplus of beans and maize which they use to pay their taxes to the Portuguese, likewise to sell at the stores of traders.

252 Corn is pounded on the rock which has been used for generations
512 after it has been consecrated by sprinkling the blood of a chicken. Pounding begins as early as five o'clock in the morning, before sunrise, and from that time to sunset the pounding-rock is in use. The
[521] rock is evidently regarded as a meeting place for social intercourse; it is undoubtedly the center of village gossip so far as the women are concerned (Plate XXXVI, Fig. 2).

As corn alone is considered a poor food, it is sprinkled on boiling water to which beans are added. Cooking goes on from early morning to sunset over a slow fire. Children sometimes receive as their evening meal a thick plastic cake of mushed corn to which green leaves of a squash are added.

252 There are five kinds of manioc resembling one another in general appearance, but the Ovimbundu distinguish the plants, and reserve for each what they consider to be appropriate preparation. The method varies for sweet and bitter varieties of manioc.

273 ant said, "Sometimes a man who has drunk this beer will sleep on the ground all day and say nothing."

263 438 Salt is a welcome gift in all parts of Angola. Native tribes appreciate its culinary value but show no eagerness to barter for the commodity. At the present time salt is sold in every trader's store, but in earlier times the substance had to be obtained along caravan routes from the coast and was therefore more highly prized than it is today. 317 [231] The Ovimbundu realize the value of salt in the diet of cattle; therefore the animals are occasionally driven to a salt lick in the hills. The Ovimbundu do not use this salt for their own diet, possibly because the salt enjoyed by the cattle is some form of potash and not sodium chloride.

[171] The Vachokue extract salt from the leaves of a river plant by burning it to ashes which are soaked and strained. This is a common African method, but I did not hear of it among the Ovimbundu. The probability is that the Ovimbundu have always obtained salt from the coast.

372 In connection with cooking and brewing beer, methods of making fire are of importance.

Matches are coming into use among the Ovimbundu, but the necessity for them is not great as the hearth fire is not extinguished. [354] In the center of each hut is a fireplace made of three hearth-stones over which logs of wood are placed with their ends in the fire which is kept alight by pushing the logs forward from time to time. A blaze is made by breaking off bark from the logs, placing it on the center of the fire and blowing. Fire is carried from one place to another by conveying a smoldering log. In the Esele country boys may be seen setting off at dawn to scare birds in the corn field, each carrying fire with him.

Usually the children or some other members of the family sleep on mats close to the fire, which requires no attention other than a pushing forward of the logs.

372 171 The Vasele make fire by the twirling method, and at Ngalangi the same procedure was witnessed. In the twirling method two different kinds of wood are used, soft wood for the base and hard wood for the twirling stick. The twirler used at Ngalangi was a piece of cane into the end of which a piece of hard white wood was secured by binding. Ngonga, my interpreter and informant, thinks that any man of the Ovimbundu could make fire by the twirling method if the necessity arose, but the performance witnessed at Ngalangi led me to doubt the truth of this statement. The operator

235 guese for a long period. The chicken is highly esteemed as a sacrificial
[262] animal, but it could not be said that the flesh is in common use. This failure to develop and utilize to the full, again raises the point of social custom and economic habit. Chickens are cared for, as may be seen in the way they are cooped at night. Sometimes a hen may be seen sitting on her clutch of eggs in a dark corner of a hut, unmolested by people and dogs, yet it is certain that there is no concentration on the rearing of poultry.

Eggs are laid, and chickens are hatched throughout the year except in the months of November and December when corn supplies
[252] are at their lowest ebb. Eggs are boiled, or fried on a fragment of
[264] pottery, but they are not sucked.

231 The domestic cat is not raised by the Ovimbundu. Wild cats are common, but there is no evidence of their domestication. Small birds and monkeys are sometimes kept as pets.

TRADE AND TRANSPORT

438 Caravan trade, which was at one time an important factor of tribal life, is now confined to short journeys for transporting corn, beans, and beeswax to traders' stores. But in spite of present-day
439 decline of transportation the memory of more prosperous times still exists.

Names of distant places survive in the Umbundu language; thus Tanganyika is called Nakandundu, while the name for far eastern Angola is Muacimbundu, the name of a one-time important chief. The Umbundu language is understood in all parts of Angola, far away from typical Umbundu centers of culture.

484 In the old days there were professional leaders of caravans, and a
788 ceremony was conducted before starting. The medicine-man and the
778 village chief were the principal performers in a rite which consisted
787 of bringing from its box the head of a former chief, sewn in oxhide. An animal was sacrificed so that the blood could be used for sprinkling on the chief's head, and on some occasions of this kind the head was sewn up in a new piece of oxhide. Direct appeal was made to the preserved head by the reigning chief, who asked for good fortune on the journey.

The medicine-man who accompanied a caravan carried with him a female wooden figure decorated with feathers (Plate XXI, Fig. 5). When a branching of the paths gave rise to doubts concerning the correct way the wooden figure was consulted by the medicine-man.

At the present time a day's march is twenty-five miles, during 481
which a man carries sixty pounds, while the load for a woman is half [482]
that weight. The gait of the Ovimbundu includes a limp at every step, so suggesting that the carrier is lame or tired. This appears to be a method consciously adopted as a protection against fatigue, because all muscles are momentarily relaxed. Loads are carried on the head in a long forked stick to which they are lashed. When the carrier rests, the load is not placed on the ground, but is held upright on the stick (Plate XXX, Fig. 2). Such a method avoids the strain of lifting the load from the ground after each rest pause.

Although the Ovimbundu have an exchange of products among 438
themselves by both barter and the use of Portuguese money, there [436]
are no large markets, with the exception of those at the coastal towns of Loanda, Lobito, and Benguela. There is absolutely nothing in Angola which can be compared with the great markets in Nigeria.

Despite the absence of a system of exchange on a large scale, 804
the Ovimbundu have many terms describing units of measurement. There are native standards of length, area, and capacity, but no measures of weight which are undeniably of Umbundu origin.

The unit of length (*epaluma*) is the distance from the tip of the thumb to the tip of the middle finger when the hand is outstretched. The term for two of these units is *apaluma avali*. These words are the plural of *epaluma; avali* means two. These units are used to measure tobacco before it has been coiled.

Cloth is measured by stretching the arms to their full extent in line with the shoulders; the distance between the tips of the middle fingers is *epeka*. The stride for measuring land is *elianga*.

Onjimba is an area about twenty-five feet square. *Etemo* ("hoe") is an area of land two hundred yards long and thirty feet broad. A large field covers two or three *atemo*.

Measures of capacity are provided by various types of baskets.
The large conical basket (*ohumba*) has an interwoven mark which [285]
indicates a measure for corn, meal, and beans. *Ocitenge* is a coarsely made basket used as a unit of capacity. *Uhamba* is a basket two feet long and one foot deep. The basket on a rectangular base is also *uhamba*, but at the present day cans are taking the place of all these old measures. Palm oil is measured in a gourd (*ocitau* or *ombangi*)
of definite size. This little gourd is also used for measuring a viscous [314]
substance from trees. The word *ekokoto* is used to describe this mucilage.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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1

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2

VAKUANYAMA TRIBE, SOUTH ANGOLA

Fig. 1. Man treading hide, for making woman's skirt. Fig. 2. Typical dwelling, Dom Manuel

[p.421]

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

439 Axe and hoe blades, blankets, cloths, clothing, cutlery,

drinking-mugs, lanterns, metal plates, pens, pencils, wine, and writing slates are bought from the traders. Axe and hoe handles, 438 buckets, bedsteads, beer, bows and arrows, chairs, fish-traps, mats, mush sticks, pottery, pounding-blocks, stools, tables, and small metal objects such as knives are made by Ovimbundu and may be sold locally. To this local trade may be added the selling of pieces of meat by anyone who has killed a pig, or gone hunting and killed a duiker. Very occasionally somebody who has bought cloths in a town or has some hand-made object superior to the local average may tour villages selling his goods as a pedlar.

439 The only trade which at all recalls the days of the caravan trade is the cattle trade with the Kwanyama Ambo. As in the rubber trade the Ovimbundu make use of their intermediary geographical position. They obtain from Luanda shells called *olomande* (singular *omande*). One of these shells costs 10 escudos [436] (2s. 6d.) at Luanda and ten of them will buy a beast in Kwanyama country. Alternatively 30 rounds of tobacco will buy a beast there. I knew several men who had made, or planned to make, trips of this nature. The analogy with the caravan trade 43 breaks down, however, when the relative importance of the two 1+2 is examined. The caravan trade determined the economic standards of the Ovimbundu, absorbed a great part of the time of every able-bodied man and youth, and influenced every aspect of Umbundu life from the foreign policy of the kings to accusations of sorcery; the cattle-keeping is relatively unimportant economically since the Ovimbundu do not drink [262] milk, and eat meat, even chicken or pork, very irregularly, nor does the occasional sale of cattle to traders altogether balance their uncertain survival away from their indigenous grasses. The real importance of cattle in the economy seems to be as a [254] form of capital investment for spare savings, an investment which can be liquidated either by sacrifice on ceremonial occasions or back into money by sale. Socially, it may be thought of as marking the survival of the Umbundu capacity and enthusiasm for trading in an age when the economic situation has closed the old routes. Indeed, perhaps the subconscious motive for the Ovimbundu who trade is to show that they can act outside of that economic framework of cultivation

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

Luveli's income from bricklaying. The laying of the bricks that form a modern villager's house may bring 100 escudos. 511

The basic cash need of an Otjimbundu, then, is for money to pay government demands and to provide clothing for his wife and children, who seem more likely than the men to get new clothing every year.[5] Add to this the possibility of other calls (e.g. provision for a relative's funeral) a desirable income even for this low level of consumption would be 400 escudos (£5) and a more prosperous villager might earn and spend double the amount. Exceptional individuals still remaining within the normal conditions of Umbundu cultural and social life, such as Kambungo, may earn from 2,000 to 3,000 escudos a year, perhaps even more, from agriculture. Maize is the foundation of the agricultural economy, but Kambungo's remark that maize did not pay seems to reflect a trend to find other openings such as growing coffee, which is, however, subject to difficulties of climate.

Within the villages there is some trade in handmade objects such as pottery, sleeping-mats, and sticks for stirring mush, and there are quite a number of bricklayers, carpenters, and tailors (proprietors of sewing-machines) who have acquired European skills which bring them money. These craftsmen are, on payment of a fee of 250 escudos (a figure given me by a tailor), exempt from contract labour. 438 463 [648]

Many European residents seem to think that the only European products natives desire are cloths, clothing, and wine. This is not so; villagers wanted me to sell them kerosene for lamps, D.D.T. powder for their hair, and soap. It is interesting that the occasions on which an Otjimbundu would accumulate large (for him) sums all fall outside the maize-for-cloth pattern of trading. These occasions are bridewealth payment (and counting all expenses this may well come to 800 escudos—£10 or more), which is a traditional due, the purchase of bicycles (according to place of purchase from 1,200 escudos [£15] to 1,500 escudos [£18. 15. 0]) which are prestige-giving objects, and the trading journeys to buy cattle. Kambungo had 434 454 [583] [493] [437]

[5] The trader whose opinions I have previously quoted (Senhor Alberto Oliveira Mendes of Chicunda), remarked, 'It is the women who save us. The men make a shirt last for three or four years but the women get something new every year.'

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

their historical development. The traditional history and separate European contacts of each of the several Umbundu kingdoms would occupy far more time and space than the limits of this study permit. I propose, therefore, to give in outline the broader trends of European contacts from the earliest days, filling in such items of traditional history as may be necessary for complete understanding, and to summarize this with a chronological chart in which the dynastic successions of the principal Umbundu kingdoms are included. 175×

There are many books about Angola and several histories of Angola, so-called, but the History of Angola, in the proper sense of the term, remains to be written. None of the books written thus far has taken sufficient cognizance of the economic factors involved, whereas a history of Angola is no history at all if not an economic history. This is particularly true of this territory where two of the greater traders of the continent have met.

The Portuguese are the most tenacious traders of all the Europeans who have gone to Africa. Proof of this is the fact that the Hausa, Indian, Syrian, Armenian, or Greek traders, who almost monopolize the petty trade of most African colonies, in Angola have no footing whatever. From the first, the Portuguese traders began to utilize in their trade the services of natives of the old kingdom of Angola. Early in the nineteenth century the Ovimbundu began to be noticed as traders and soon came to be known[1] as the greatest traders of Bantu Africa, after the Zanzibar Arabs.[2] These latter they met in the Great Lakes region, and they (the Arabs) subsequently began to come down to Benguela or Luanda themselves.[3] In the middle of the nineteenth century the Yankees in their clipper ships played a large part in the trade of the Angola coast. More recently the British have made considerable investments in trade and in industrial developments. After the war of 1914–18 Germans played an important part in the commercial life of the colony. Any history of Angola, then, that makes sense must be an economic history. This is no less true of the history of the Ovimbundu and their European contacts. 175* 439 ● 177

[1] Under various names, as, for example, Mambari, Biheans, Bailundos, Kimbundus, Mbundus, &c.

[2] Cf. comparisons drawn by Serpa Pinto, op. cit., p. 163.

[3] The Umbundu name for the Zanzibaris is 'va Lunguana'; compare the medieval (1228) name for Zanzibar, Langujah (C. M. Doke in *Bantu Studies*, 1938, p. 135 f.).

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

175× 177 439 *European Influences 1600–1770.* The first European contact of the Ovimbundu or of the 'proto-Ovimbundu' was without doubt for purposes of trade. The first record which we have of any such contact is in *Andrew Battell in Guinea.* About 1600 the governor, as the chief trader,[1] sent his prisoner Battell on trading expeditions along the Benguela coast. At the Bahia das Vaccas, the Ndombe, a cattle-keeping people, were met. They supplied the Europeans with produce,[2] including cattle and 'the famous sheep which have five quarters',[3] but *not* with the principal article of commerce, for as another of the conquistadores noted, 'In this kingdom there is [567] no slave trade, for it is not their custom to sell each other.'[4] This lack was soon supplied by 'proto-Ovimbundu' when, on the next voyage, Battell with the 'Portugals and Mulattos' found the encampment of 'Jagas' at the mouth of the Keve River, from Battell's account of which we have already quoted.[5] Although hardly recognized as such at the time, this, it seems, was the beginning of a long commercial partnership. As long as the 'Jagas' continued 'to take the spoil of the land', they supplied many slaves[6] for the trade, and after they settled they became traders both in direct European employ and on their own account.

439 567 797 175× The early European settlements in Africa were made with the hope of finding gold, but although that metal was not found in the Congo or Angola, black gold—human gold—soon proved to be equally profitable. There was a religious motive in the Portuguese discoveries, for from the time of Prince Henry the Navigator, his captains were bidden to 'plant the Cross on some new headland'. With every ship priests went out to convert the heathen. Some priests doubtless did good work but more of them, both individually and as members of the various orders, early came to the conclusion that the best way to convert the heathen was to sell

[1] The governors continued to engage in trade openly, until forbidden by the law of 17 Sept. 1721, and then, says Lopes de Lima, some complied, while others did not (*Ensaios*, part i, p. 84).

[2] A. Battell, p. 16.

[3] L. Cordeiro (ed.), 1574–1620, *Da Mina ao Cabo Negro segundo Garcia Mendes Castello Branco*, p. 34. The reference is to the fat-tailed sheep of the Hottentots and their neighbours. This is perhaps the first reference to it on the west coast.

[4] Ibid., 1593–1631, *Terras e minas africanas segundo Balthazar Rebello de Aragão*, p. 15.

[5] *Supra*, p. 182 f.

[6] Battell, pp. 20, 28; L. Cordeiro (ed.), 1574–1620, *Da Mina ao Cabo Negro segundo Garcia Mendes Castello Branco*, p. 17.

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him off where he would have the double benefit of regular work and Christian doctrine. In 1560 the Bishop of São Thomé wrote that 'he doubted that the people of the kingdom of Angola could be made Catholics unless the King would allow Trade'.[1] The slaves were baptized by the bishop by the boatload—rowed along the wharf of Luanda. The Jesuits profited greatly by the slave-trade, employing continuously three of their own ships. The religious motive was thus early swallowed up by the commercial and profit motive. Commerce was almost entirely taken up with the slave-trade. Four-fifths of the value of all exports were slaves.[2]

During the first hundred years of the Colony of Angola a million slaves were exported,[3] and three million would probably be a very conservative estimate of the total. As long as the over-sea slave traffic remained legal, little effort seems to have been made to develop other exports. In spite of protests and until 1832, ivory remained a monopoly of the royal treasury with regulations which discouraged its export. Such products as gum copal and orchilia only began to be exported in 1832–8. The only product of any importance which had also been exported in the time of the slave-trade was bees-wax. The slave-trade was first questioned in 1831, it was formally prohibited in 1836, but for many years enforcement was not accomplished. During the 250 years of the oversea slave-trade, Angola was in reality a dependency of Brazil.[4] When Brazil became independent, there was a movement in Benguela for union with that country.[5] So complete was the commercial domination of Brazil that Lisbon merchants had hardly anything to do with the Angolan trade. Lopes de Lima points out that the colony was also spiritually dominated by Brazil, and attributes the noteworthy religious decadence not only to the preoccupation of the clergy with the slave-trade, but also to the fact that from 1677 until 1845 the diocese of Angola and Congo was a part of the Metropolitan archdiocese of Bahia. The one great fact with regard to Angola of the sixteenth, seventeenth,

[1] It had been a royal monopoly and allowed only through Kongo. This letter is from the National Archives of the Torre do Tombo and quoted by Lopes de Lima, *Ensaios*, p. ix.

[2] Statistics given by Lopes de Lima, *Ensaios*, part i, p. 69 f.

[3] Cadornega, *História Geral das Guerras Angolanas* (1680–1), vol. iii, p. 254 (also quoted by Paiva Manso).

[4] Lopes de Lima, *Ensaios*, part i, p. 74; J. P. Oliveira Martins, *O Brasil e as Colónias Portuguezas*, p. 18.

[5] Lopes de Lima, op. cit., p. 127.

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175* eighteenth, and much of the nineteenth century, then, was the
439 slave-trade.
567 Most of the historical treatises on Angola are little more than
648 chronological lists of battles and expeditions. The relation of these events to the main facts, i.e. to the economic facts, has rarely been made. Two or three presídios were founded with the hope of controlling nearby mineral deposits,[1] whether real or supposed, but all the rest were intended as spearheads for trade or to protect existing trade. Many of the military expeditions were raids with an obvious end in view; others were rearguard actions to protect a more or less successful raid of the same sort; others were retaliations for reprisals or vice versa. Practically all of the soldiers who were free men, from the captain-general down, were also traders, and some who were not free were traders on account of others. There may have been a few expeditions which had less immediate connexion with trade, for there were genuine explorers in those
*175 early days, even as more recently.
726 There would be little interest or profit in cataloguing the military
648 expeditions which had, or seem to have had, contact with the Ovimbundu or with their predecessors in the land during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. There were only a very few of real significance. During the seventeenth century many raids were made from Massangano across Libolo to the edge of or into the Benguela Highland, and likewise there were many actions between the garrisons of Benguela and Caconda and the inhabitants of the plateau. In 1607 Balthazar Rebello de Aragão set out to cross Africa and had to turn back after going eighty leagues, but his own report was so scanty that even the direction he took cannot be determined.[2] In 1645, while the Dutch controlled Luanda and the coast, there was a raid which was said to have reached Bailundu.[3] The very scanty references to this raid give no description of the inhabitants, but since there seems to be no Bailundu tradition with regard to it, I conclude that the present dynasty (beyond the establishment of which tradition hardly goes) must have been founded since that date. About 1650 there was a raid across Libolo as far as the Keve River which found a cattle-rearing

[1] e.g. Benguela Velha and Cambambe.

[2] L. Cordeiro (ed.), 1593–1620, *Terras e minas africanas segundo Balthazar Rebello de Aragão*, p. 15.

[3] *Catálogo dos Governadores*, p. 374; Lopes de Lima, *Ensaios*, part i, p. 99.

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from the point of view of climate, situation, and resources, over the rest of the West African lands with which the Portuguese had relations. He stated in his report[1] that until that time most of the Europeans who entered the Highland were escaped convicts or deserters. He attempted to provide for a more orderly commercial development in these regions not only by building the forts of Caconda-Nova and Novo Redondo,[2] but also by bringing the traders of the interior together at determined places where they could have judges appointed from among themselves, and even parish priests.[3] If the office of 'captain-major and exterior judge'[4] did not originate at this time, at least it was Souza Coutinho who revived it in his appointments and made it a useful instrument for the commercial penetration of the Benguela Highland and of the regions beyond.

Among the regions for which he created such an office was 'Gallangue grande'[5] (Ngalangi). This captaincy-major and the parish of 'S. João Nepomuceno de Gallangue' are mentioned subsequently but only to note the vacancy of both posts. Souza Coutinho was remembered for his many accomplishments, and for his realistic attitudes. He recognized that the law of 1620 prohibiting the entry of traders into the hinterlands[6] was largely a dead letter, and that in so far as it was observed, it only favoured the

*175 648 439

[1] Dated 18 Oct. 1769, loc. cit.

[2] The chief reason for building the latter was to put an end to the contraband trade of the English (see reports of the same governor of 12 Jan. and of 16 May 1769 in op. cit., vol. i, nos. 5 and 6 (Mar. 1936).

[3] Order of 23 Sept. 1768, and report of 12 Jan. 1769 in ibid.; report of 18 Oct. 1769; also *Catálogo dos Governadores*, p. 416 f. (*Arquivos de Angola*, vol. iii, p. 528).

[4] The *capitão mor e juiz de fora* was appointed to represent the government in a region not subject to it nor within the range of military occupation. His chief duty was to keep the peace among the Portuguese subjects of his jurisdiction and to attend to legal and orderly inheritance of their goods when they died. He also was supposed to secure for them as much extra-territorial treatment as the native kings and courts would concede. Compare explanation by Francisco de Salles Ferreira in *Annaes Mar. e Col.*, 1846, p. 118. Long lists of these appointments for the various regions of the interior, together with many contemporary documents, are given by Ralph Delgado, *Ao Sul do Cuanza*.

[5] He gave it the name 'Linhares' after a Portuguese town, but neither this name nor that of 'Contins' for Caconda was kept.

[6] The purpose of this law was not, as Livingstone supposed (*Missionary Travels and Researches*, p. 369), directly humanitarian, but more especially to preserve the trade for residents of the towns and to avoid the necessity for punitive expeditions which the traders' presence in the hinterland had so often motivated.

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foreign buccaneers and other contraband trade in the unoccupied ports of the Congo, Loango, &c. He therefore removed the prohibition[1] and counted on the appointment of captains-major to keep the peace. From this time the hinterlands were legally open to traders—to all Portuguese subjects whether white, black, or brown.

Though the hinterlands were now legally open to all traders, life was not thereby made any easier for them than it had been previously for the 'barefoot traders'[2] who had carried on most of the trade hitherto. Once they went beyond the range of the guns of a presídio, they entered what were practically foreign countries which recognized no European principles of law or of conduct. Those who could afford it built themselves small fortresses and manned them with their slaves. Even so, they had to become vassals and feudatories of some native king and pay tribute according to his good pleasure. Those traders who could not afford such an establishment led a very precarious existence, nor could they long maintain a status above that of the natives of the region. Many of these early traders and their descendants were subsequently incorporated into the Umbundu stock, and in some instances whole communities of them.[3] For one reason or another this increased commercial contact led to further wars with the natives. The war of this period which made the greatest impression upon the Ovimbundu was the campaign of 1774–6, to which allusion has already been made.[4] Memories of this war and of the capture of their respective kings have been preserved in the traditions of Bailundu and of Ndulu,[5] and it also seems that these two peoples learned, for a time at least, that it was safer and more profitable to trade with the Europeans than to raid their establishments. Ciyaka and the neighbouring groups do not seem to have followed suit, for they continued to raid the forts of Caconda, Quilengues, and Huila until fairly recent times; nor do Europeans seem to have penetrated Ciyaka for residence until almost the turn of the present century. But in all the Umbundu kingdoms life

[1] Report of 9 May 1765 in *Arquivos de Angola*, vol. i, nos. 5 and 6.

[2] i.e. native African trading agents.

[3] I have genealogical tables and family histories of some of the present-day descendants. The mixed origin of communities in Kakonda has been noted by several writers. A noteworthy example in Viye is the region called Kamundongo—an old Ndongo (Angola) settlement.

[4] *Supra*, pp. 166, 171, 174.

[5] *Supra*, pp. 170, 171.

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continued to be difficult for the traders, subject as they were to the conditions of primitive custom and belief.[1]

About the time of the above-mentioned military campaign, events took a turn which in the end greatly advanced commercial life in Viye. I refer to the restoration of Kangombe to his 'stool' with the help of the governor, Dom Antonio de Lancastre.[2] This alliance with the Portuguese government was maintained by Kangombe's successors until 1890. In 1782, and perhaps even in 1770, there were so many Portuguese residents that a 'Captain-major and exterior judge of Bihe' was appointed,[3] a post which seems to have been maintained until Silva Porto's suicide in 1890.

Reference has already been made to an account by Paulo Martins Pinheiro de Lacerda, who evidently lived in Ngalangi and in Wambu about 1790,[4] but although this man wrote a good deal about native life, he had little to say about trade, although it was perhaps his own livelihood. I have accounts of two trading expeditions from Benguela to the country of 'Lovar' or 'Lovale' at the head-waters of the Zambezi in 1794 and 1795, undertaken by Alexandre de Silva Teixeira and Jozé da Silva Costa at the instigation of a slave originally from that region.[5] They passed through Bailundu and Viye, but mentioned these regions only to say that the road was already well known to all backwoodsmen (traders). All available evidence seems to indicate that before the close of the eighteenth century the Ovimbundu were becoming, if they had not already become, traders. If trade had not yet taken first place over raiding and warfare, at least it was well-established in their habits of life. Bailundu tradition says that the first traders to offer cloth and beads and fire-arms for slaves and ivory were the Ndongo, the 'barefoot traders' (*pombeiros descalços*). This was doubtless during the very early days of the eighteenth century, or

[1] Silva Porto's diaries, although referring to a later time, give a good description of difficulties faced (op. cit.). *Soc. Geog. Lisboa, 5a Ser.*

[2] Governor and captain-general, 1772–9. He was the immediate successor of D. Francisco de Souza Coutinho.

[3] For this appointment, which may not have been the first, and the duties of the office, see *Annaes Mar. e Col., 6a Ser.*, p. 118. I have the names of subsequent appointees, and for four of them the following dates of appointment, respectively—1791, 1819, 1838, 1885; also of one previous appointee in 1770 or 1771.

[4] *Supra*, p. 188.

[5] *Arquivos de Angola*, vol. i, no. 4 (Nov. 1935); *Annaes Mar. e Col., 4a Ser.* (1844), p. 159 f.

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even earlier. Long before that the forerunners of the Ovimbundu kings, the 'Jagas', had sold their prisoners to the *pombeiros*. The other side of the national lineage had probably bought salt from Cisama[1] even before the white men came to the land.

Dominant Tendencies 1840–74. The next period in which there was great commercial development among the Ovimbundu began with the fourth decade of the nineteenth century, following upon the abolition of the monopoly in ivory and the development of new products as substitutes for the slave-trade, formally prohibited in 1836. This period saw a considerable increase in the number of traders resident in the region. The new régime at the coast may have caused some to go inland.[2] In Bailundu, and especially in Viye, they were well received by kings and by people who saw in the coming of more Europeans to live among them increased commercial opportunities.[3] For various reasons most of these traders established themselves in Viye,[4] and from this time Viye took first place in trade with the interior and with the coast. But since the caravan road to Benguela must pass either through

[1] Lopes de Lima, *Ensaios*, part ii, p. 55.

[2] Some statistics on these older periods are available, but since they are themselves in disagreement and none of them seem to be very reliable I do not include them here. The Report of the Governor of Benguela for 1799 gives the rather optimistic figure of 78 *whites* (including 5 women) resident in the several interior districts (*Annaes Mar. e Col.*, 1844, p. 161), with correspondingly larger numbers for persons of mixed race and (civilized) blacks. In 1838, according to Lopes de Lima (*Ensaios*, part i, p. 4 f.), the number of *whites* in the same districts was only 14, with no women, and the number of 'brown inhabitants' correspondingly small except in Caconda, for which he gives the number of 2,992—more than in all the rest of the colony! J. R. Graça gave a list of 101 names of inhabitants of Viye alone, 'Portuguese or descendants of Portuguese *including 6 Europeans*'. This was probably near the truth for 1846. Magyar (1849–57) gave very interesting calculations of the population and area of the several Umbundu kingdoms, but no figures on European residents.

[3] A very interesting glimpse of Bailundu in 1837 was given by a political exile, Carlos de Almeida Sandoval (*Annaes do Cons. Ultr.*, *Ia Ser.*, p. 519 f.). Very full accounts of life in Viye have been given by Silva Porto, who first reached Viye in 1840, coming from Luanda (see some of his diaries in *Annaes do Cons. Ultr.*, Ser. I; *Boletim Soc. Geog. Lisboa*, Ser. 5, 6. A small volume of excerpts from Silva Porto's diaries was published in 1942 by the Agência Geral das Colónias under the title *Viagens e apon'amentos de um portuense em África.*)

[4] The early continuous connexion of the dynasty with the Luanda government has been mentioned, as also the continuous appointment of a *capitão mor*. The incumbent at the time (appointed 1838) was Francisco José Coimbra, of mixed race from Caconda (*Annaes Mar. e Col.*, 1846, p. 118; *Annaes do Cons. Ultr.*, *Ia Ser.*, p. 112 f.). Both Cameron and the early missionaries mention dealings with his sons. Some of his grandsons and great-grandsons, now reincorporated with the Ovimbundu, still tell of their descent.

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175 178 439 [643] Bailundu (and its dependent states), or through Wambu and Ciyaka, while the road to Luanda lay either through Ndulu or Bailundu, these other kingdoms were not slow in following along the path of commercial success. In Ngalangi the king himself took a very active interest in trade and annually sent a royal caravan to Benguela, taking care to get a pass from the captain of the fort at Caconda. Other kings also adopted the practice of the royal caravan,[1] but the kings of the principal kingdoms were slow to give up raiding, plunder, and warfare as a manner of life[2]—a custom which became distasteful to their subjects in proportion as trade became more profitable and attractive.

In addition to those already named, there were other historical events and policies which contributed toward the development of trade during this period. The abolition in 1834 of the monopoly [567] in ivory,[3] which the royal treasury had held since the beginning, was of great importance, and this, in turn, abetted in perpetuating the slave-trade, now a contraband, for ivory always had been brought from the interior on the backs of slaves, and it must not be supposed that this would suddenly be stopped, especially since ivory had just become much more valuable. According to Bastos,[4] slaves for this contraband trade continued to be cheap and plentiful until the eighties, which was probably due in part to the large supply offered. Another reason was perhaps that the contraband oversea trade was largely in the hands of foreigners—Brazilians, Spaniards, and Americans, who were not always reliable in the matter of paying for their cargoes.[5]

[1] *Omaka*, which had special routines and prerogatives. Other types of caravans were named from the products which they carried or conducted.

[2] See Lopes de Lima, *Ensaios*, part ii, p. 54: 'Bailundo . . . a warlike people, of the race of "Jagas", whose chief is always on a campaign'; Magyar, *Reisen*, many references, but especially pp. 290 ff., 383–420; Silva Porto, op. cit., p. 82 f., 160; *Missionary Herald*, 1883, p. 339; 1884, pp. 145 f., 504 f.; 1885, pp. 279, 375 f.; 1886, p. 228 f.; 1887, p. 106; 1889, pp. 67, 535; 1890, p. 292, &c.

[3] From 1618 (B. Rebello de Aragão, p. 14) until 1834 (Saldanha da Gama, p. 86), all critics agreed that this monopoly even defeated its own purpose, i.e. revenue; for, they said, the conditions and regulations were so onerous that the natives could not afford to bring ivory to the coast. Available statistics show that there was very little export of ivory until 1835 (Lopes de Lima, *Ensaios*).

[4] A. Bastos, *Monographia de Catumbella*, pp. 18, 25. He gives prices varying from 5$000 to 18$000 or even 20$000, and remarks that slaves were later designated as servants, redeemed ones, contracted labourers, &c. The milreis (1$000) was then worth about $1.10. Monteiro (*vide infra*) says that in the sixties 'a little nigger' could be had for 5*s*.

[5] J. J. Monteiro, *Angola and the River Congo*, pp. 181–4. Monteiro attributes

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The town of Catumbela (founded 1836) played an important part in the trade of the Ovimbundu. The first trade of Bailundu, Ndulu, and Viye had been with Luanda and with the presídios on the north bank of the Kuanza, while the rest of the tribe had traded with Caconda and with Benguela. Some trade went to Egito from Bailundu, Kasongi, &c. Catumbela was first built on the left bank of the river of that name, about four miles from its mouth, at the point where caravans from Viye, Bailundu, and from nearer regions to the north of the river crossed to go to Benguela. Immediately some began to stay in Catumbela rather than go on to Benguela, some fifteen miles farther. The nearness of Catumbela to Lobito Bay, a favourite hide-out for slavers and other contrabandists, was another advantage.[1] In 1856 the commercial houses of Catumbela completed a move to the right bank of the river, and after that the caravans from the interior had no further need for going on to Benguela. Just previously, in 1852, Silva Porto had 'broken a new trail' from Viye to Catumbela by way of Bailundu, Civula, and Cisanji, thus avoiding entirely the regions of Ciyaka and Ganda where the caravans were 'continually assaulted, robbed, and at times cut to pieces by the highwaymen of those regions'.[2]

The old road in its descent from the plateau followed more nearly (although not entirely) a natural watershed, but even though the new one had to cross some large and turbulent streams, it was much superior because of the greater safety which it offered. Silva Porto's road was 'new' in that part where it took its final rise to the Highland and in most of the section that crossed the Umbundu country, but not in the section crossing the Cisanji country, nor in the final descent to the coast. In these latter sections it followed the same old slave caravan road, long rutted by the passage of endless loads of human misery.[3] The descent of

unreliability to the receivers in Cuba, &c., and not to the ships' masters. There are interesting incidents of American and other contrabandists in the *Boletim Official da Provincia de Angola*, for the years 1850–69.

[1] A. Bastos, op. cit., p. 85. In this bay ships could anchor very close in-shore, and there was a great overgrown mangrove-swamp which hid them from view to seaward.

[2] A. Bastos, op. cit., p. 9. For the date of opening of the 'new road', see *Boletim Soc. Geog. Lisboa, 5a Ser.*, p. 6; op. cit., p. 19 f. (Silva Porto's diary). I have autobiographical notes from old men in Ciyaka which give a very realistic picture of the activities of the robber-barons and their followers.

[3] Bastos, who is almost everywhere very careful of his facts and who gives

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175 439 487 this trail along the face of the cliffs behind Catumbela may still be seen to-day.

I have noted how largely Brazil had absorbed the commerce of 648 the colony. This was due in large part, of course, to the slave- 439 trade, but it was also due to the fact that all foreign, i.e. non-Portuguese, ships were prohibited from having any part in the colony's trade, or even from entering its ports. This was an effort to keep all colonial trade for the motherland, and was quite in line with early colonial theory and practice. In this instance it served to enrich Brazil at the expense not only of Angola but also of Portugal itself, and it is rather strange that this ruinous policy should have persisted even after the separation of Brazil. In 1844 the two ports of Luanda and Benguela were opened to ships of all the world. Lopes de Lima remarks[1] that not only did foreign commerce flow in, but Portuguese commerce with the colony also increased greatly. It must not be supposed that Angola at once became a great example of Free Trade, for customs duties remained high. Only the first bars in the fence of monopoly were 175 let down, but for that day it was a great step and it attracted trade. 314 In 1869 the first experimental export of raw rubber was made: 439 a very small beginning of a very important movement.[2] The imminent importance of this export was not realized by 'the man on the spot'. In 1870 Silva Porto, tired of accusations of witchcraft by his Ovimbundu neighbours and of the increasing demands

a very truthful and realistic picture of conditions, of events, and of trends, errs in supposing that it was only with the opening of this 'new road' by Silva Porto that caravans from the interior began to come to Catumbela. Magyar, who went inland from Benguela in 1849, took the usual road via Catumbela. Even in 1795, when there was no town at Catumbela, but only a few vegetable farms, Teixeira and Mello started for the interior from there (*Annaes Mar. e Col.*, 1844, p. 159). Their itinerary in detail from Catumbela to Viye is not given, but only distances to Cisanji, to Civula, to Bailundu, and to Viye. Since their route was via Civula and Bailundu, rather than via Ciyaka and Wambu (Huambo), and therefore the route of Silva Porto's 'new' road, I am inclined to believe that the latter was probably a return to a route formerly used. Magyar gives a good description of the route via Ciyaka. The route via Bailundu has been described by scores of writers from Silva Porto through Cameron, the early missionaries (of the A.B.C.F.M.), Nevinson, *et al.*, down to 1910, when the road was abandoned for the Benguela Railway. There are now three motor roads from the Highland to the coast, but none of them follows the old slavers' route except in certain short sections.

[1] *Ensaios*, part i, pp. 78, 135.

[2] Bastos, op. cit., p. 24; *Boletim Official*, 1870 (Exports for 1869); *Benguella, Relatório do Districto de*, 1891, p. 29.

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for tribute and other exactions of King Konya Cilemo, successor to the stool of Viye, decided to leave his place at Belmonte (Viye) for Benguela,[1] where he remained for ten years. A year later Guilherme Gonçalves left to his sons his flourishing settlement near Kamundongo (Viye), and sailed for Lisbon, intending to stay indefinitely.[2] These two men were the leading traders established in the Highland, but little idea had they that the small trickle of rubber exports begun in 1869 would so soon inaugurate a new era in Central African trade. It was only in 1882 that rubber took even second place in the exports (after bees-wax),[3] but already in 1872[4] its importance was becoming evident, and by 1877 individual Ovimbundu of Viye had already turned over considerable fortunes in the trade.[5] Bastos seems to be correct in taking 1874 as the beginning of this new era in the trade of the region.[6] For the Ovimbundu, the preceding decades, indeed the preceding century or even centuries, had been a period of preparation for the trade which was now beginning. For them the rubber trade, from 1874 until its close in 1916, was the classical period of commercial activity.

The time of preparation had necessarily developed in the Ovimbundu the intellectual acumen, venturesomeness, a technique of co-operation both within their own social groupings and with outsiders, a knowledge of people, places, and things of their Central African world, together with the other qualities which enabled them to carry on their far-flung trading activities. These qualities merit a fuller description (q.v. *infra*, p. 206 f.). During this earlier period, since many of their travels were naturally exploratory, the Ovimbundu probably travelled more widely than during the time of the rubber trade. There were hardly any territories within the bounds of the Congo River, the Lakes, and the Kalahari Desert which they had not penetrated.[7] Some Ovimbundu went even farther afield as employees of European traders or on their own account. A ready example is Domingos Cakahanga and his companions who, in the employ of Silva Porto during the years

[1] *Boletim Soc. Geog. Lisboa, 5a Ser.*, p. 20.
[2] See Cameron, op. cit., p. 400.
[3] *Benguella*, op. cit., 1887, pp. 24 ff.
[4] *Benguella*, op. cit., 1892, p. 29.
[5] Serpa Pinto, op. cit., p. 161 f.
[6] Bastos, op. cit., p. 24.
[7] Serpa Pinto, op. cit., p. 164; L. Magyar, op. cit., pp. 298, 299. The best proof, however, is the fact of the geographical and tribal names found in the Umbundu language.

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175 x 1853–4, crossed Africa from Benguela to the mouth of the Rovuma.[1]

484 Nor was this the only transcontinental journey effected by
439 Ovimbundu traders.[2] Such long-distance expeditions were not always the most profitable, and certainly the relatively shorter journeys of the time of the rubber trade must have been much more lucrative. Indeed, the judgement of Magyar was that the Ovimbundu generally got more enjoyment and excitement than
x 175 monetary gain from their expeditions.[3]

439 Mention has been made that the several Umbundu kingdoms
648 fell in line with the trading activities of Bailundu and Viye. By the beginning of the period of great activity this had eventuated in a loose system of alliances or mutual understandings to the effect that the traders and caravans of each would be tolerated in, and allowed passage through, the territory of the other. At times their 'trade-agreements' seem to have embraced all the Umbundu-speaking peoples, but violations were frequent,[4] and complaints of violations seem to have been almost the regular state of affairs
326 as between Viye and the Ciyaka-Cingolo-Citata group. There also
438 developed regional industrial and commercial specializations. In Magyar's time there was a great metal industry at Ekovongo, the
175 x capital of Viye, making hoes for trade with the interior,[5] but by 1875 this work seems to have ceased,[6] for although hoes were still

[1] Cakahanga kept a diary which was edited by Silva Porto and published under the title 'Third Voyage' in the *Boletim Official* of Angola, 1856–7, and later in the *Annaes do Cons. Ultr. Ia Ser.* A summary of this diary appeared in the *Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society* of London, 1860, pp. 136–49, but the translator and editor mistakenly believed that Silva Porto had himself crossed Africa, and added to the confusion by calling the Ovimbundu 'Arabs from Zanzibar'. Silva Porto himself only went as far as Naliele, and it seems that there were 'Arabs' or Swahili in the party, but how far they accompanied it is not clear. That the diary was kept by Cakahanga is evident, for the 'Arabs' could write no language known to Silva Porto.

[2] See Magyar, op. cit., p. 297.

[3] Ibid., p. 299. This referred only to Magyar's time, 1849–57, but I feel it to be a judgement capable of wider extension. Serpa Pinto says that in 1878 he met many who 'turned over capital of a thousand to twelve hundred pounds sterling and some even more; one indeed . . . arrived during my sojourn . . . from the interior where he had traded on his own account to the extent of . . . about £3,500!' (op. cit., p. 161 f.). However, there were also losses and often, so that Magyar's dictum is worth remembering.

[4] e.g. see account of dispute between Ekuikui (Bailundu) and Njambayamina (Viye) in *Missionary Herald*, 1886, pp. 228 f., 452, 508; 1887, p. 463.

[5] L. Magyar, op. cit., p. 297.

[6] See negative testimony of Cameron, of Serpa Pinto, and of early missionaries.

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175x 177 influences. The stock to which the common people belong were wearers of skins, which is true of many of them to the present time. The people from whom the ruling houses came have a highly developed weaving industry. The 'Ngangela' neighbours, who [565] have also contributed elements to the racial make-up of the Ovi- [287] mbundu, make and use bark-cloth. The Ovimbundu evidently gave up the use of skins for clothing more than a hundred years ago.[1] This fact, and the additional one that they never developed weaving or bark-cloth industries, was probably due to their early and widespread use of trade-cloth. Rum came with the slave-trade 177 from Brazil. They were almost inseparable. The ships which 273 fetched the slaves came laden with rum distilled in Brazil. The 567 rum was used in buying the slaves, and much more of it was con- 439 sumed by Ovimbundu—traders, chiefs, and retainers—than by 175x the interior people. Thus, while the slave-trade had such a disruptive influence in the life of the interior tribes, rum did much to corrupt the Ovimbundu. Native tradition[2] and the accounts of early travellers agree on this point. Rum continued to come from Brazil and from other countries or oversea colonies all through this early period, but import was partly supplanted by distillation at the coast, and this process was soon learned by the Ovimbundu themselves.

439 The part which the Umbundu trade had in spreading the goods and uses of the outside world is a fascinating subject and one which 567 would repay study. Ethnographical and historical knowledge of 175x Central Africa is not yet so extensive or precise that the dates and places of these movements can be plotted with certainty. Professor C. M. Doke records that Nkumine, who ruled the Lamba sometime before 1840, sold many of his people 'as slaves to the Mbundu traders from the West Coast for calico, guns, and powder'.[3] It is important to remember that throughout this period the Ovimbundu were for all this part of Africa the chief intermediaries in the slave-trade. These activities affected the ultimate

[1] See Magyar, *passim*.

[2] A Ngalangi tradition says that from the time of King Ndumba II (*c.* 1840) rum was so plentiful that it was poured into troughs, whence it was lapped up by all—men, women, and children. A constant difficulty encountered by the early missionaries was the objection of chiefs and their counsellors to the missionaries' refusal to give liberal presents of rum, as did all the traders.

[3] C. M. Doke, *The Lambas of Northern Rhodesia* (London: Harrap, 1931), pp. 36, 37.

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physical composition of the Ovimbundu themselves, and also their character and accepted attitudes. Livingstone told of the beginning of their trade with the Makololo in 1850, and how they had visited the Barotse 'in ancient times'.[1] These items fit into the picture of that early period of trading activities which is had from studying Umbundu traditional history in the light of documents such as Silva Porto's diaries, Magyar's account,[2] the historical monograph of Augusto Bastos, the comments of travellers,[3] and of the early missionaries.

Period of the Rubber Trade, 1874–1911. Turning now to the rubber trade, that time may conveniently be divided into three periods: from 1874 until 1886, during which only 'first-class' rubber (from the plants themselves)[4] was exported; from 1886, when the discovery of 'second-class' or 'red rubber' (from a root)[5] caused a great boom which lasted until 1900; and, finally, the period of decline until the rubber export stopped in 1916, though for the Ovimbundu it had already practically stopped several years earlier.

Of the older exports only bees-wax and ivory survived along with rubber. The former of these was somewhat neglected, while the importance of the latter continued in Benguela only until about 1893 when the frontier of the Congo was closed. Bastos remarks that after 1900 not a single tusk appeared.[6] Already in 1880 Silva Porto had to go beyond Lunda to the middle Kasai before he found ivory.[7] At that time most of the ivory trade was in the hands of Viye traders. Between 2 November 1879, when Silva Porto left Catumbela, and 26 November when he reached Belmonte (Viye), there passed him about forty caravans on their way to the coast. Of these, ten carried ivory, practically all of which

[1] D. Livingstone, op. cit., p. 91 f. The business-like methods of the Ovimbundu were commented upon later, see op. cit., p. 271.

[2] The picture which Magyar (*Reisen in Süd-Afrika*) gives of Umbundu life in that early period is very good, but for an understanding of many terms used a knowledge of Portuguese and Umbundu is quite necessary. His truthfulness with regard to the slave-trade must be questioned when confronted by evidence from Valdez, Monteiro, and especially from Bastos.

[3] Valdez, op. cit.; Monteiro, op. cit.; Graça, op. cit.; Serpa Pinto, op. cit.; Capello and Ivens, *From Benguella to the Territory of Yacca.*

[4] Principally *Landolphia*, which are big woody climbers; also the tall and stately *Funtumia elastica.* [5] Especially the *Carpodinus chylorrhiza.*

[6] Bastos, op. cit., p. 39. From this time until 1913 Angola continued to export ivory in ever-decreasing quantities, but from the port of Mossamedes and therefore not from the Umbundu country.

[7] *Boletim Soc. Geog. Lisboa, 6a Ser.*, pp. 189 f., 256.

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175x were from Viye,[1] since Viye was nearest to what was then the
237 source of supply—Luva, Katanga, Barotze, &c. Caravans from
439 other regions could and did pass through Viye, but they found it more economical and advantageous to go to other regions for other commodities. Bees-wax was to be found in most of the neighbouring regions and was brought to the coast by traders of all the Umbundu
439 kingdoms. The same may be said of the 'first-class' rubber.[2] It
175x was found chiefly in the forest regions of the interior, and the distance and consequent time involved made it a product hardly more profitable than bees-wax. Rubber was then simply one product along with the others, and until 1886 its export had its ups and downs.

Red Rubber, 1886–1900. In 1886 a caravan of Ovimbundu came
314 down to Catumbela with loads of 'red rubber' for the first time.
439 They had gotten it in the sandy country to the east of the Kuanza
[489] River, and a great deal nearer than the region of the 'first-class'
178 rubber. At first, the price paid for this 'red rubber' was lower than
175x for the other, but whereas a caravan could not procure loads of the first in less than eight months, the 'red rubber' could be gotten within three months.[3] Subsequently the red rubber was found to have certain superior qualities so that the higher price came to be paid for it. Immediately the export of rubber from Benguela increased enormously and reached undreamed-of totals.[4] Beeswax

[1] *Boletim Soc. Geog. Lisboa*, 5a Ser., pp. 5, 6, 10, 16.

[2] There are very interesting summaries and descriptions of the commercial activities of the period—both native and European—in the *Relatorios do Districto de Benguella*, 1887, 1891 (Ministerio da Marinha e Ultramar, Lisboa, 1888, 1894).

[3] See a note in *Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society*, 1888, p. 450 f.

[4] The values of the three leading products exported from Benguela from 1886 to 1891 were as follows (from *Relatorios do Districto de Benguella*, 1887, 1891):

Product	*1886*	*1887*	*1888*
Rubber . .	65,210$153	286,937$018	664,786$870
Wax . . .	187,483$964	158,945$996	109,734$140
Ivory . . .	37,692$536	36,923$042	29,997$968

Product	*1889*	*1890*	*1891*
Rubber . .	665,746$552	781,057$860	1,042,112$070
Wax . . .	133,436$344	93,680$580	123,645$876
Ivory . . .	31,701$133	11,298$782	45,392$534

For further statistical reports of this period, see also *Portugal, Ministerio da Marinha e Ultramar, Relatório, Propostos de Lei, &c.* (Lisboa, 1899), p. 266 f.

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dropped off; of ivory there was no more. From 1893 on, says Bastos, rubber was practically the sole export of the District of Benguela and of its hinterland.[1] In 1891 more than one million milreis' worth of rubber was exported from Benguela, sixteen times as much as was exported only five years before, and three and one-half times the value of the *three* leading exports in 1886. Until 1891 this increase was not at the expense of other exports, but rather in addition to them.

All of this rubber, and the other exports as well, came to the coast in caravans of the Ovimbundu or their neighbours. In its inception and its great development it was an enterprise of the Ovimbundu. Everyone who was able to carry a load joined a caravan. It had always been the custom to take boys on trading expeditions, as young as they could go—say, from their tenth year—as a part of their education. Now girls were also taken and hardly any but the women stayed at home to raise the crops and provide rations for the caravans. European residents experienced great difficulty in securing necessary porters,[2] and this was one reason for finally putting through the wagon-road from Benguela to Caconda.[3] It was extended to Viye during the military campaign of 1890. The fever of the rubber trade reached into all the villages of the land and took in everyone able to travel. Mission schools had been established since 1881, but they had but few pupils until 1900. There were also other reasons for this, but a principal one was the attractiveness of the rubber trade.[4] Even the kings found it more difficult to gather armies for their wars: trade had become more attractive than the possibility of plunder.

Of all the kings who ruled the various Umbundu kingdoms during this time, the one who is best remembered is Ekuikui (II) of Bailundu (1876–93). Tradition has begun to ascribe to him and to his reign some things which properly belong to earlier

[1] Bastos, op. cit., p. 34. He does not include *serviçaes* in the exports, since they all went to the mainland or island plantations, but he remarks that at this time the price rose to even 90$000 (p. 33). The rise in price was perhaps due to the smaller supply owing to the preoccupation of the Ovimbundu with the rubber trade.

[2] See *Missionary Herald*, 1889, p. 350.

[3] *Benguella*, 1891, op. cit., p. 10.

[4] The reports of the governor of Benguela, to which reference has been made, also mentioned this fact, saying that although the American missions were intelligently directed, their results were small, since parents would not send their children to learn while they could pick up loads of rubber (1887, p. 19; 1891, p. 20).

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and the country settled down to the rule of 'the Fort' with Ndunduma's successor named by the captain-major. The occupation of Bailundu was effected at that same time,[1] while Ekuikui yet ruled, but for several years only a nominal force was employed.[2] In 1896 Ekuikui's successor, Numa II, attacked the fort, and the captain-major burned the *ombala*[3] in retaliation. From 1890 European traders settled in both Viye and Bailundu in ever-increasing numbers.[4] Then came the 'Bailundu War' of 1902,[5] after which the occupation of the whole Umbundu country was quickly completed.

The operations of 1890 had only interrupted the ivory trade. The campaign of 1902 completely paralysed trade in and with the interior, and greatly aggravated a depression which the District of Benguela was feeling because of a fall from the high prices which rubber had enjoyed in 1898–9.[6] After the war it seemed that trade would soon regain its former levels, and the export statistics show that for a time it did so, but closer inspection and a consideration of other factors which entered into the situation show that this was the beginning of the end. The price of rubber never regained its former level, so that the high value of exports reported represents an even larger quantity than before. The increased quantity largely represented a greatly debased product, for the native traders and producers understood nothing

and Garenganze, pp. 19–23) also wrote of these incidents but with more of the personal element and perhaps less accuracy.

[1] *Relatorio, Benguella*, 1892, p. 13 f.

[2] In 1892 there were 2 soldiers in Bailundu, 135 in Viye, 21 in Caconda (*Benguella*, op. cit., 1891, p. 15). Bailundu tradition says that (native) soldiers were first brought in disguised as porters with loads of goods.

[3] *Ombala*, capital village.

[4] A. Bastos, op. cit., pp. 36, 43.

[5] This war was named in Umbundu after the Bailundu war leader, *Mutu ya Kevela*. He is named among the kings, but it was only during the war that he assumed power. The immediate causes were excesses on the part of European residents against the natives, especially in connexion with 'the recruiting of contract labour'. The best work on the subject is in the nature of a report written by the man who was then governor, Cabral Moncada, *A Campanha do Bailundo* (Luanda 1903). General ideas may be had from *Missionary Herald*, 1902, pp. 353, 400, 452 f., 520 f.; 1903, pp. 22 f., 69 f., 122, 211 f.; H. W. Nevinson, op. cit., p. 157 f.; and J. T. Tucker, *Drums in the Darkness*, p. 122 f. The account given by Keiling (*Quarenta Anos de África*) is of interest for certain details of this war, but its statements are inaccurate and its judgements unreliable. The missionaries sought to dissuade the natives from taking up arms, and once the fighting had begun they provided medical services for both sides and sent food-supplies to the garrison of the beleaguered Portuguese fort.

[6] A. Bastos, op. cit., p. 39 f.

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175 of price fluctuations and sought by every means to maintain the
439 former level of returns. The European traders aided and abetted
314 this process in order to bolster up their credit, for from 1887, when the boom began, most of them were operating on shoe-strings. The result was almost immediate. Benguela rubber was classified as 'third-class' at a price one-fourth the former rate.[1] This was the end of the rubber trade. With the establishment of plantations in the East Indies, in South America, and on the African west coast, which produced a uniformly high quality, the native-produced wild rubber of Angola ceased to have any quotation whatever.[2]

Export statistics show that the totals in quantity and value of rubber exported were nearly as large in 1916 as in 1888, and that [731] in 1918 and 1919 they fell to almost nothing,[3] but for the Ovimbundu the rubber trade ended in 1911—'the year of the great hunger in the Ngangela country'. They remember that many caravans which went out at the beginning of that year's dry season never did return, or that only a few of their stronger members returned—mere skeletons and shadows. *Ngandi*[4] tried to eat wax and died; *Ngandi* killed and ate his younger brother, saying, 'It is better that one of us should live to return, rather than both die.' [484] The caravans usually carried actual rations for only a few days of the outward journey (to last through the 'Hungry Country'), and relied on buying the food needed for the rest of the time. This experience put an end to a trade which was already passing out of the hands of the Ovimbundu—owing to the multiplication of European trading establishments, not only throughout the Umbundu country but even in the 'Ngangela' regions, and the building of the Benguela Railway, which finally put an end to porterage and the trading caravans of former days.[5]

[1] A. Bastos, op. cit., pp. 40 ff.

[2] In 1942, after the capture of Malaya and the Dutch East Indies by the Japanese and the consequent acute shortage of rubber, the gathering of wild rubber in eastern Angola was resumed, most of the product going to Britain. Some, however, has gone to the national factories at Luanda and in Portugal, and consequently there is a stimulus to maintain the production of wild rubber in the colony, but unless more humane methods are used with the native producers the present limited supply is bound to fall off.

[3] Statistics of export and import are given by F. Trancoso, op. cit. The figures for rubber from 1888 to 1919 are on p. 36.

[4] *Ngandi*, the Umbundu equivalent for 'John Doe' or 'So-and-so'.

[5] The Benguela Railway (*Caminho de Ferro de Benguela*) began construction in 1904; in 1910 it reached Cuma (198 miles) in Ciyaka, well up on the Plateau

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It must not be supposed that trade has been abandoned. Every 175x
sale or exchange of field or garden produce is a serious trading 438
operation. Produce will often be carried a very long way for a very small advantage, or even for no apparent gain. The successively lower economic levels to which the colony, and especially the natives, have fallen since the close of the rubber trade is a factor. Individual trading, involving journeys into even such distant regions as Ovamboland, is a latter-day development since European rule has made for greater personal security.

Another factor which operated to end all large-scale trading 567
operations of the Ovimbundu was the disappearance of the traffic 439
in human beings. It has been shown that even before they ruled over the Ovimbundu the 'Jagas' were leading intermediaries in this traffic, and the Ovimbundu have continued in this role right down to the period under review. Whatever name or form it bore at the coast, in the interior the traffic was the same. At the height of the rubber boom this traffic, along with other activities, suffered a decline, being somewhat less profitable than rubber. At that time came the peak of the rum trade and the demoralization which it brought turned the point of the 'contract labour' traffic in upon the Ovimbundu themselves. Such [669]
Umbundu customs as getting into debt, the pawning of relatives, and also such factors as times of food scarcity, quickly taken advantage of by the traders, served to exacerbate the hardships, and the result was the native uprising of 1902 known as the 'Bailundu Campaign', but extending beyond the limits of Bailundu. The effects of this uprising upon trade have already been noted. Pending investigation of its causes, the export of 'contract labourers' was stopped,[1] but the practice was soon resumed. The scandalous 648
conditions then obtaining in the neighbouring 'Congo Free State' 439
almost from its founding until 1908 greatly aided and abetted the 567
slave-traffic, however much this new frontier may have interfered with trade in ivory and rubber. Trade with the *revoltés* was particularly lucrative to Ovimbundu and other traders of Angola. Powder and arms were an especially important item in this trade.

and just under the rim of the Highland. In 1916 construction stopped at Chinguar (312 miles and on the edge of Viye) until after World War I. It was completed to the Angola frontier in 1929 and the Belgian section finished in 1931, with transcontinental connexion at Elizabethville.

[1] Cabral Moncada, op. cit.; Massano de Amorim, *Relatorio sôbre os acontecimentos do Bailundo* (Loanda, 1903); *Missionary Herald*, 1903, p. 69.

EARLY HISTORY

175 The earliest records of native migration in what is now Angola concern the warrior hordes of Jagas (Jaggas, Jakas, Iagges, Giaghis, Giaki, Ayaka etc.), who from about 1560 onwards were reported in north-western Angola and the adjacent Kingdom of Congo.(1) Various attempts have been made to identify the Jagas. Van Wing(2) and Torday(3) hold that the name is derived from the Bayaka tribe on the middle Kwango; Battell's account would seem to identify them with the Bangala (Imbangala) of Jaga Cassange, who are known to have been invading western Angola at this time. Childs points to suggestive links of the Jagas with Ovimbundu dynasties: e.g. the Ciyaka group of Ovimbundu, who recognise the region of Cassange as the location of their earliest ancestral tombs. He also shows that certain Jaga customs as described by the earlier writers resemble those connected with Ovimbundu kingship. Childs suggests that the name *Jaga* (which seems to derive from the verb "to fight" *-oku yaka*; "they fight" = *a yaka* or *vayaka*) was originally a name given to these hordes or to their leaders by the African peoples whom they fought and conquered.(4)

175 177 [521] European contacts with the people of the Benguella Highland took place in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, before the migrations had settled down. Dutch and Portuguese raids took place in 1645, 1650 and 1661, and since fire-arms appear to have been used at that time by the Africans, it seems likely that Umbundu dynasties had them when they came into the region.(5) In 1769 the throwing open of the hinterland to European traders(6) led to greatly increased commercial contact, and this in turn gave rise to wars between the native rulers and the Portuguese. In 1774-6 a war was fought between the Portuguese and their native allies and the kings of Bailundu and Cingolo. Ciyaka and neighbouring kingdoms continued to raid the European garrisons until recent times, and Europeans appear not to have penetrated Ciyaka until almost the turn of the present century.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF OVIMBUNDU TRADE

175 439 There are indications that before the end of the eighteenth century the Ovimbundu were becoming, or had become, traders. The slave-trade was formally prohibited in 1836,(7) and subsequently European traders began to move inland in greater numbers in search of ivory, settling especially in Bailundu and Viye. This began a period of great commercial development among the Ovimbundu, the principal commodities being ivory, beeswax, and, in the third quarter of the century, rubber.(8) Trading caravans of the Ovimbundu (under the names *Mambari*, *Eiheans*, *Bailundus*, or *Mbundus*) became

(1) See especially Battell, pp.19f. (2) 1921, p.106.
(3) 1925, map facing p.282.
(4) Childs, op.cit., pp.185-6. (5) Ibid., p.195.
(6) Entry of European traders to the hinterland had been forbidden by law in 1620, although the law had become largely a dead letter.
(7) Although contraband slave-trade continued until late in the nineteenth century, the slaves being used for the transport of ivory and other goods from the hinterland to the coast.
(8) These were at first one-way agreements, allowing Ovimbundu to trade in many lands, since it was to the advantage of the rulers of these countries. The Ovimbundu are said in fact to have discouraged the tribes to the east from venturing out on their own account. See Livingstone 1857, p.384, Cameron 1877, p.406.

known throughout the territory bounded by the Congo river, the Great Lakes, and the Kalahari desert. Most other Ovimbundu kingdoms fell into line with the trading activities of Bailundu and Viye. By the middle of the century this had resulted in a loose system of alliances and mutual understandings to the effect that the traders and caravans of each kingdom would be permitted to enter or travel through the others. At time these "trade-agreements" seem to have embraced all the Umbundu-speaking peoples, but violations were frequent, especially between Viye and the Ciyaka-Cingola-Citata group. Trade-agreements were also made beyond the Umbundu-speaking area, e.g. with the Mwata Yamvo of the Lunda.(1) 175 439 [484]

From roughly the turn of the twentieth century the large-scale trading activities of the Ovimbundu declined. Military occupation of Viye and Bailundu took place in 1890, and from that date European traders began to settle in Viye and Bailundu in ever-increasing numbers. In 1902 the Bailundu war occurred, after which the occupation of the whole of Umbundu country was quickly completed. This campaign paralysed trade, which was already suffering because of a great fall in rubber prices. Other factors which hastened the decline of Ovimbundu trading activities(2) include the famine in Ngangela country in 1911, the disappearance of illicit slave-traffic, and, finally, the building of the Benguella Railway (commenced in 1904), which put an end to the porterage and trading caravans of former days.(3) [721] [496]

LANGUAGE

"Umbundu is usually(4) associated with Ambo, Herero and kindred languages. It would however seem that more comparative study is required to show how real this apparent relationship is: it appears to be especially based on the fact that Umbundu uses prefixial o- with many of its noun classes. In general structure, however, Umbundu shows remarkable similarity in grammar and vocabulary to Luena, Luchazi and other languages of the Ganguella [Ngangela] group. 197

Features of Umbundu which are worthy of note are:-

i. Presence of nasal vowels before and after 'l', 'h', 'v' and 'w'.

ii. In certain nasal compounds, subtraction occurs, involving the second consonant, but not the nasal, e.g. *muntu* is realised as *omunu*.

iii. Compared with the Lunda-Luena languages Umbundu exhibits an unusually large number of defective verbs.

iv. A vowel system of five vowels.

(1) These were at first one-way agreements, allowing Ovimbundu to trade in many lands, since it was to the advantage of the rulers of these countries. The Ovimbundu are said in fact to have discouraged the tribes to the east from venturing out on their own account. See Livingstone 1857, p.384, Cameron 1877, p.406.
(2) For much greater detail concerning the rise and fall of Ovimbundu trade see Childs op.cit., pp.191-215.
(3) Ibid.
(4) Doke 1945, p.101; Guthrie 1948, p.64; Childs 1949, p.8.

233 The cattle herd obtains most of its food by grazing, but in the dry season the grass withers. Childs states[1] that "Herding has been a [609] function of the sister's son, and even now there is a reluctance on the part of the boys to herd for their fathers."

235 462 [844] Chickens are owned and looked after by both men and women, but other animals only by men. Boys may have small stock of their own, and a boy's economic independence most frequently begins with his owning a chicken.

231 Hambly states that goats are more common than any other animal, and that every family has one or more. These animals are not fed or watered, but are allowed to wander to find their own sustenance. Goats are not milked. Young males are castrated. The goat is frequently used in sacrifices. Sheep also are allowed to find their own food; the males are not castrated. Pigs are cared for comparatively carefully, receiving water and a daily supply of sweet potatoes and their leaves, together with some corn. Male pigs are castrated.[2]

APICULTURE[3]

[439] Beeswax was an important item of trade in the caravan days, and is still sold to Portuguese traders' stores, where it is massed into large rectangular cakes for export. Honey is eaten alone or with manioc, and [262] a fermented beer called *ochasa* is made by adding honey to corn-beer. [273] Fibre strainers are used for cleaning the wax, and large shallow baskets [252] are employed for drying the honey in the sun.

Large cylindrical hives, which are private property, are placed high in the trees. These are made by removing a cylinder of bark and lashing the halves together with strands of bark, forming a hive which has a diameter of one foot.

In Elende honey is removed from the hives during the months of August and December. One man ascends the tree in order to lower the hive with a long rope of bark or plaited fibre, while beneath the tree men are prepared to take the hive, which is opened over a smoky fire.

ARTS AND CRAFTS

326 782 *Smithing.* The profession of blacksmith or *ocivinda* is an important one, and, like hunting and divining, is sacred and is entered with special ritual. Often, but not always, these three professions are passed on by inheritance. For smithing two years' apprenticeship to a member of the profession is necessary, and is usually entered upon at the age of eighteen. At the end of this period the master examines his pupil, and makes tools for him, especially the heavy hammer or *onjundo* which is regarded as symbolic of his craft. For the inauguration ceremony the boy provides four chickens (2 male, 2 female), a dog, and a goat; the blood of these animals is sprinkled on his tools, and their flesh is eaten at a feast [553] attended by the villagers. Throughout the procedure the boy remains standing on the small anvil. Finally he is asked to choose his professional name; he then steps down from the anvil a qualified blacksmith.

(1) Childs, 1949, p.109. (2) Hambly, op.cit., p.154.
(3) Hambly, (4) 1934.

Formerly it was believed that a smith owed his skill to the help of the spirit of a person whom he had killed, and wooden effigies of this person were kept by the smith.(1) 326 782

The principal products of a blacksmith's forge are axe-heads, hoe blades,(2) tools for mat-making, arrowheads, knives, and brass bracelets. Iron, which is fairly plentiful, was formerly smelted over charcoal fires.(3) Today smiths use scrap iron. 325 412

Pottery

Pot-making is a part of women's work among the Ovimbundu. A wheel is not used. Clay is mixed with a silicate, usually gravel, rolled out in long ropes, and the pot built by the coiling process.(4) Pots are ornamented when wet by making deep incisions with a piece of gourd; they are then sun-dried, and fired in a kiln of dry grass. Pots are used as water-containers, as cooking vessels and as vessels for storing corn and beans, and, when made in a very large size, for brewing beer.(5) 323 [462]

No ritual attaches to pot-making, except at the opening of a new clay-pit, when, in the presence of both men and women from the village, the medicine-man sacrifices a chicken over the open pit.(6) [782]

Weaving and Spinning

Looms have not been used among the Ovimbundu since they have been a people, although progenitors of the kingly families who came from the Bangala or Congo groups may have done weaving. Trade cloth has been known and used by the Ovimbundu for nearly 300 years.(7) Skins have been used in remote areas; Hambly when he mentions bark-cloth as being worn by the Ovimbundu is probably referring to the Ngangela. Spun cotton, however, is used for repairs, and there is a cotton plant in most gardens. Spinning is done always by men.(8) 286 439 [281] [287] [283] 462

Basketry

All girls learn to make baskets, although some become more proficient than others. Knowledge of basket-making implies also an understanding of dyeing, since coloured strands of grass are interwoven to make geometric patterns.(9) Baskets, and also basket-trays, are usually made by the coiling process.(10) 285 462 [382]

(1) Hambly, (2) 1934, pp.158-60. The ceremony was described from Njengalo village in Elende.
(2) See Cashmen, 1944, pp.140-1.
(3) For details of the blacksmith's forge and tools, see Hambly, op.cit., pp.160-1; Cashmen, 1944, pp.139, 140, 145-6.
(4) See Hambly, op.cit. Plates XXXIII and XXXIV, and Childs, 1949, Plate VIII.
(5) Hambly, op.cit., p.168; Cashmen, op.cit., pp.144-5.
(6) Hambly, op.cit., p.169.
(7) Childs, personal communication. See also Childs, 1949, p.171, note 1.
(8) See Hambly, p.177, and Cashmen, 1944, p.136.
(9) Red, yellow, black, and brown dyes are used. For a description of the process, see Hambly, op.cit., pp.170-1.
(10) See Hambly, op.cit., p.171, and Cashmen, op.cit., pp.141-2 for details of basket-making. Also for illustrations Hambly, op.cit. and Childs, 1949.

Mat-making

462 285 [412] The making of mats is a specialised craft for men. Generally elderly men are the mat-makers. Two tools are used, a borer and a needle, both products of the blacksmith's forge. Hambly[1] describes the making of reed sleeping mats, large mats used for partitions, and string bags. There are four distinct types of mats, each of which has its specialist.[2]

Leather-work

282 Leather pouches worn on a broad leather belt are part of the essential equipment of the hunter. The pouch is square, rectangular, or semi-cylindrical in shape, and may be decorated with cross-shaped patterns, or brass-headed nails used for decorative effect. Hide is also used for the seats of four-legged wooden stools. Hides are crudely dressed: they are soaked, the inner surface rubbed with ashes, the hair scraped away, and the hide pegged out.[3]

Wood-carving

323 [463] Wood-carving, which is men's work, includes the following specialisations: doors, windows and their frames; coffins; beds, tables and chairs; mortars, pestles, grinding-handles, and handles for various iron implements; stools, household utensils, carved images etc., drums and other musical instruments; canoes (dug-outs and coracles).[4] Illustrations are given by Hambly.[5]

TRADE

438 484 791 [482] Caravan trade is now confined to short journeys when corn, beans and beeswax are carried by men and women porters to the traders' stores. Formerly however it was an important feature of tribal life. Each caravan had its professional leader, and was accompanied by a diviner or medicine-man. Before a caravan started out, a ceremony was performed at which the principal performers were the village headman and the medicine-man. The head of the former headman was brought from its box, sewn in oxhide; blood from a sacrificed animal was sprinkled on the head, and invocation was made to the deceased by the village headman, asking for good fortune for the journey.[6]

438 436 Today the Ovimbundu exchange products among themselves both by barter and the use of Portuguese money,[7] but there are no large markets except in the towns.

[439] 438 The "trade-agreements" between the Ovimbundu kingdoms and between the Ovimbundu and other tribes have been mentioned above.[8] Accompanying these, regional industrial and commercial specialisations within Ovimbundu country developed. Thus in the middle of the last century

(1) Hambly, op.cit., pp.169-70.
(2) Childs, 1949, p.169.
(3) Hambly, op.cit., p.176.
(4) Childs, op.cit., p.110.
(5) Op.cit., Plates XIII to XVII.
(6) Hambly, op.cit., p.156.
(7) For details of Ovimbundu units of measurement see Hambly, op.cit., p.157.
(8) p.9.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

175 that the Church participated actively (T. Lewis, The Old Kingdom of Kongo, *Geog. Journ.*, 1908, pp. 598–600).

Political influence of the Portuguese, working often through the agency of Jesuit priests, led to factions within the Congo Empire, and the resulting disturbances caused movements of peoples that affected the whole of northern Angola and the population of the Benguela Highlands.

Portuguese penetration of the hinterland of Angola, especially from Loanda to Bihé, was concerned with attempts to subjugate native tribes, the establishment of trading posts, and the encouragement of the slave trade (S. Marquardsen, Angola, 1928, pp. 6–10).

439 721 The value of the Portuguese as allies of Umbundu caravans from Bihé lay in their ability to supply guns and powder to their native henchmen, who gave something more than military service in return. In response to Portuguese demand for slaves and ivory, Umbundu caravans made long journeys into the Congo basin, Rhodesia, south and southwest Angola, and possibly across Africa to lakes Tanganyika and Nyasa. The arms supplied in exchange for ivory and slaves must have helped the Ovimbundu in all their predatory excursions.

648 Thus the Ovimbundu were, in the early centuries of contact with the Portuguese, invaders encouraged in the building up of their tribal life and resources. Never were the Portuguese strong enough completely to subjugate northern Angola. Relationships with natives, especially the Bihéan section of the Ovimbundu, were directed toward alliances on a commercial basis. The political result of this was a combination of the Portuguese and the stronger tribes for the exploitation of the weaker.

167 177 The historical ethnology of the southwest Congo is so complex that the elements are difficult to disentangle. The number of tribes concerned is great, and their movements are not easy to follow; but a gradual extension of people from the Congo in a southwesterly direction through Lunda to the Benguela Highlands (1600–1800) seems to be the summation of all the conflict. I regard the Ovimbundu as the most southerly branch of these mass movements, during which they received a discipline that enabled them to make their home in central Angola, despite opposition from the Portuguese and earlier arrivals.

114 For these conclusions reliance has been placed on the extensive field work and historical analyses of E. Torday and T. A. Joyce, whose "Notes on the Ethnography of the Bambala" (*J.R.A.I.*, XXXV, pp. 398–426) have proved of particular value in this connection.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

The foregoing facts, when compared with field work among the Ovimbundu, indicate that the old culture of the Congo and northern Angola bears a strong resemblance to Umbundu culture at the present day. A more detailed analysis of this resemblance is made in chapter X. 174

The following notes dealing with exploration in Angola (1800–1930) are adduced for critical comparison with my own observations among the Ovimbundu. 175 171

The work of Sir R. F. Burton describing the exploration of Lacerda and other Portuguese pioneers, is more useful for geographical than for ethnological information. Lacerda's journey to Czambe, south of Lake Moero, was performed in 1798. A mention of veneration for the dead and consultation of the deceased on all occasions of war or of good fortune, is made (p. 127). These are important points in the present tribal life of the Ovimbundu. [114] [769]

Bowditch (1824) writes from information given to him by Almeida and Saldanha. There are valuable references to the Vacilenge, a people adjacent to the Ovimbundu, who refused to kill their cattle, "rather than do which they will endure famine to extremity." This note was made about Long. 15° E. and Lat. 15° S. (p. 34). The cattle were milked, and cattle-raiding by the Ovimbundu was common at this time. Many present-day Ovimbundu do not milk their cattle, but the Vacilenge still follow their milking custom observed before 1824. 175 101 234

Livingstone's journey through northeast and northern Angola in 1853 contains references to the Vachokue who seemed bent on plunder (I, p. 370). Livingstone noted cotton spinning, which I recorded as an occupation of males of the Ovimbundu at Elende. Livingstone, like other early travelers, encountered caravans of Bihéans (Ovimbundu) bearing elephants' tusks and beeswax, commodities, which, along with slaves, formed the chief merchandise of these caravans from the Benguela Highlands (p. 466). Livingstone notes and sketches (Plate XIII, Fig. 10) the double-handled hoe (p. 442) which is still used. 175 171 [439] [412]

J. J. Monteiro (I, p. 61) saw the poison ordeal administered. The poison itself was prepared from the thick hard bark of a large tree (*Erythrophlaeum guineense*). The place of observation was Mongue Grande, just south of the Congo estuary, and again Monteiro was present when the poison cup was given to two women at Ambrizette. Of this ordeal there is more to be said when discussing the culture contacts of the Ovimbundu, because the ordeal is a basic factor of [695] [824]

301 The new ornaments had acquired no sentimental value, therefore
321 their price was moderate.

[171] *Omba* shells are to be seen in use from Kipungo southward through Huila, among the Luvando, and among the Vakuanyama of southern Angola. In the places mentioned one may judge the social status
[554] of a woman by the number of *omba* shells she wears. A principal wife is usually well supplied with these ornaments.

302 In this southern journey it was noticeable that there was an
171 increasing use of red pigment which is lavishly employed for smearing
[294] every kind of ornament, the body, and the hair. Leather belts and skirts of Vakuanyama women are thickly coated with red pigment which is invariably mixed with grease. The red powder is prepared
[824] by desiccating a red wood called *tukula* by the Vakuanyama, a name which is used through Angola and the southern Congo area.

412 From Kipungo southward through the Vakuanyama country
171 there is a notable absence of decorative wooden hair combs. On the contrary, delicately carved combs are used by both men and women of the Ovimbundu. The Vasele make such combs, but by far the best
[532] examples are made and used by the Vachokue tribe of eastern Angola. Here the decorative design usually includes a well-carved human figure at the top of the comb.

301 Among the Vakuanyama, necklaces of disks made from ostrich
[237] eggshell are worn by the women only. A woman of importance has a dozen loops of such necklaces, each loop being about 125 cm long.
[551] These necklaces are so greatly esteemed that only after much persuasion can a woman be induced to part with a single link. Perhaps, as is the case with *omba* shell, there is more than the intrinsic value to be considered. One point is constantly noticed in considering social status and ornament. All the wives of a wealthy man, especially among the Vakuanyama, are made to advertise their husband's position by the profusion of their ornaments and the quality of their leather skirts and belts.

There is, in addition to the necklaces of ostrich-eggshell beads, a
[321] highly prized necklace made from small perforated disks of shell having a diameter of about a centimeter. The Vakuanyama women smear a necklace of this kind with grease and *tukula* powder; the
[435] value of a necklace 125 cm long is equivalent to that of an ox. In describing these necklaces there is interest in noting that they are traded to the south of Angola from places six hundred miles to the
[439] north; therefore their value is to some extent dependent on rarity and distant origin.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

Young unmarried girls of the Luvando tribe wear a large number of leg-bands which extend from the ankles to the knees as a sign that puberty has not been reached. These leg-bands are somewhat roughly twisted from fibrous roots and twigs from which the cortex has been removed. Collars of tough, elastic, cane-like substance are worn by Luvando women, and so numerous are these that the neck is entirely covered. These cane neck-bands are ornamented with burned, incised, geometrical patterns, and, in keeping with other ornaments, are thickly smeared with grease and red powder from *tukula* wood (Plate LIX, Figs. 1, 2). 301 124 [881] [531]

Women of the Vakipungo and Vakuanyama wear heavy coils of brass or copper wire on their forearms. In southern Angola women wear bracelets of twisted wire which are identical with those worn by Zulu women. Bracelets of beaten trade brass, ornamented with incised geometrical designs, are worn by women of the Ovimbundu, Vakuanyama, Luvando, and Vakipungo tribes. Ovimbundu women now depend largely on trade goods for personal ornament. 171 301 439 [531]

Ovimbundu men and women are dressed in trade cloth. Unmarried girls wear one piece of cloth which hangs from the armpits to the knees. A married woman drapes herself with two pieces of cloth, a skirt hanging from her girdle, and an upper piece so folded as to hold her baby tightly to her back. Men wear a single piece of cloth as a skirt; the upper part of the body is bare (Plates XLIX–LI). From the region of Kipungo to the southern border, clothing is of leather. The Vachokue wear trade cloth or bark cloth. 291 171

Hairdressing is of many styles. Ovimbundu women braid their hair neatly in strands across their foreheads, and small blue and white trade beads are used to decorate the braids. The hairdressing of the Ovimbundu women is different from that in any other part of Angola. At an early age the hair is trained into two long loops at the back of the head. Then these are covered with black cloth which is bound tightly. The two loops are afterwards studded with brass-headed tacks obtained from a store (Plate XL, Fig. 3). 302 171

Luvando women in the region of Kipungo dress the hair to form a large triangular projection from the back of the head. Girls of the Vaheneca tribe near Huila mass the hair with clay to form large "cock's combs." Women of Gambos pass each small plait of hair through hollow reeds. Humbe women do not redden or grease their hair which is massed into three high ridges on the top, while at the sides there are hornlike projections. Vakuanyama women dress their hair with grease and *tukula* powder. A principal wife builds up her

302 A principal wife builds up her
[595] hair into five high cones. Vachokue women mass their hair into
separate balls shaped and held by clay and red coloring matter.
171 I know of no hairdressing for Vachokue men, but ornamental wooden combs are sometimes used.

304 In only one place have I seen a nose pin worn, namely, the Esele country of Vila Nova de Selles. The fashion is out of date, but women of only twenty-five years of age have the septum of the nose bored; evidently the custom has not been obsolete for a long period (Plate LXXV, Fig. 1).

177 The most popular European importations are blue cloth with
439 white spots, metal hair combs, beads, and bright metal crosses
301 bearing a figure of the Virgin Mary with the infant Jesus. This ornament has penetrated to districts far away from Christian missions, and its wide dispersal shows that a newly introduced and attractive ornament from a foreign source may readily be accepted by tribes of different cultures.

517 There are interesting points of psychology in the attitude of the
301 Ovimbundu toward European importations. Only a few patterns of cloth are favored, and there is no sale for any other design. Some designs are thought to be appropriate for young girls while others are favored by older women. The same may be said of colored beads, for whereas both blue and white beads are the usual decoration for young women and immature girls, red beads are worn chiefly by the elderly women.

178 A consideration of personal ornament establishes the general truth that in scarification, hairdressing, tooth mutilation, the use of red powder and grease, the anointing of the hair with palm oil, and the wearing of trade cloth, leather, or bark cloth, there is little exchange of styles. There are diffusions in language and other cultural traits, but decorative elements which have for a long period been regarded as distinctive of tribal life are rigidly preserved.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

the tree in order to lower the hive with a long rope of bark or plaited 231
fiber, while beneath the tree men are prepared to take the hive, which is opened over a smoky fire. The men wear no protection, consequently they are badly stung. Boys are encouraged to help, and those who run away receive no honey. Honey may be eaten 263
alone or with manioc. No drink is made from honey only, but 273
ochasa is the name given to beer with honey in it. *Ovingundu* is a drink made from pounded corn which has been soaked in water to which a little honey has been added. The drink is allowed to remain untouched over night; thus it becomes sweet and is mildly intoxicating.

Wax is a very important item of trade. In the remote places 439
natives bring to small trading posts balls of wax which are about 257
two pounds in weight. These in former days were a standard of [436]
exchange in terms of which other values could be measured. These balls of wax are made into large cakes for foreign export. In the Esele country a fiber strainer is used for cleaning the wax. Honey is sometimes dried in very large baskets which are three feet in diameter and two inches deep. These baskets were not observed among the Ovimbundu, but they are used in the region of Cassanga in southern Angola. The honey of wild bees when eaten in the comb is palatable, it would be more so if one could disregard the presence of numerous dead bees.

The bow is the chief weapon of the hunter. The release of the 411
arrow is made with the index and middle fingers (Plate XXXIX, 171
Fig. 1). I have observed this method among the Ovimbundu of 224
the Benguela Highlands, in the region of Kipungo, in the far south among the Vakuanyama, and among the Vasele of the Novo Redondo hinterland. Arrows differ considerably in pattern as the illustrations show (Plate XVII, Figs. 1-9); the Ovimbundu have arrow-points of excellent workmanship. The manufacture of these arrow-points is [326]
one of the most skilled occupations of the blacksmith. Each man makes his own shafts and feathers them. The arrows of the Vasele have leaf-shaped iron points; so also have those used by the Vakuanyama.

Among the Ovimbundu are specialists who make bows from [463]
elastic woods called *usia* and *osambia*. The bow itself is *ohonji* and the arrow is *usongo*. At the third shot I saw a young Ocimbundu boy split a cane which was placed upright at a distance of thirty-three feet. The throwing club (*ohunya*) is used for killing small game such as hares.

411 [237] The only spear (*unga*) that I have seen is made entirely of iron. The shaft is covered with the tail of an ox to which the tuft of hair remains attached. This is the spear formerly used in warfare. The distribution is wide. Such spears were purchased from the Ovimbundu of Elende and Bailundu and also from the Vakuanyama [439] living in the far south of Angola, but I do not think that the Ovimbundu make these spears, which are probably traded from the south.

224 [411] A hunter is considered exceptionally fortunate if he possesses an old muzzle-loading gun (*uta*). I have seen only two hunters who owned such a weapon. In one instance the barrel was bound to the stock with hide thongs, while the woodwork was decorated with brass tacks. Powder and fragments of metal are carried in a leather pouch which is attached to a broad, leather waist belt (Plate XIII, Fig. 6). There is certainly a feeling among hunters that the sale of a well-tried weapon will be followed by bad luck. The gun is sometimes fixed to form a trap in such a way that an antelope may tread on the string and so discharge the gun. Sometimes a piece of meat is attached to a string which is fastened to the trigger. A heavy beam of wood into which an iron spike is fastened was used in districts where the hippopotamus and elephant were hunted. Such a trap was fixed over a path known to be frequented by these animals. Big game of this type is now rare.

In the Esele country the following traps are in use: (1) A deep, narrow, grass-covered pit from the bottom of which sharp stakes project upward; this trap is known as *okueve*. (2) A simple trap consisting of four long sharp stakes which are fixed in the ground so that they incline toward a gap through which a buck is likely to jump (Plate LXXIII, Fig. 2). (3) The trap (*ocisonga*) for lions and leopards. This is a heavily built structure provided with a panel-like door which slides down when the entering animal releases a cord fastened to the bait (Plate XCII, Fig. 2). (4) A heavy trap triangular in form. This trap is not an enclosure, but a covering under which the animal has to go in order to reach the bait. In addition to the foregoing examples there is a trap (*onjanjo*) which is used for snaring antelope. The essential of the device is a loop which is bound to the end of a supple branch lightly fastened to the ground. This, however, did not come under my observation.

Long, cone-shaped, cane structures are placed in the grass, which is then fired. Animals disturbed and frightened by the fire rush into the wide end of the trap, then make their way to the narrow end (Plate XV, Fig. 5). One such trap is modified to form a snare with

235 guese for a long period. The chicken is highly esteemed as a sacrificial
[242] animal, but it could not be said that the flesh is in common use. This failure to develop and utilize to the full, again raises the point of social custom and economic habit. Chickens are cared for, as may be seen in the way they are cooped at night. Sometimes a hen may be seen sitting on her clutch of eggs in a dark corner of a hut, unmolested by people and dogs; yet it is certain that there is no concentration on the rearing of poultry.

Eggs are laid, and chickens are hatched throughout the year except in the months of November and December when corn supplies
[252] are at their lowest ebb. Eggs are boiled, or fried on a fragment of
[264] pottery, but they are not sucked.

231 The domestic cat is not raised by the Ovimbundu. Wild cats are common, but there is no evidence of their domestication. Small birds and monkeys are sometimes kept as pets.

TRADE AND TRANSPORT

438 Caravan trade, which was at one time an important factor of tribal life, is now confined to short journeys for transporting corn, beans, and beeswax to traders' stores. But in spite of present-day
439 decline of transportation the memory of more prosperous times still exists.

Names of distant places survive in the Umbundu language; thus Tanganyika is called Nakandundu, while the name for far eastern Angola is Muacimbundu, the name of a one-time important chief. The Umbundu language is understood in all parts of Angola, far away from typical Umbundu centers of culture.

484 In the old days there were professional leaders of caravans, and a
788 ceremony was conducted before starting. The medicine-man and the
778 village chief were the principal performers in a rite which consisted
787 of bringing from its box the head of a former chief, sewn in oxhide. An animal was sacrificed so that the blood could be used for sprinkling on the chief's head, and on some occasions of this kind the head was sewn up in a new piece of oxhide. Direct appeal was made to the preserved head by the reigning chief, who asked for good fortune on the journey.

The medicine-man who accompanied a caravan carried with him a female wooden figure decorated with feathers (Plate XXI, Fig. 5). When a branching of the paths gave rise to doubts concerning the correct way the wooden figure was consulted by the medicine-man.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

174 pattern. In principle, the puberty rites for boys and girls of eastern Angola are the same as those of the Congo region, and masks of eastern Angola resemble those used by the Bapindi of the southwest Congo. Cannibalism was a factor common to the Congo basin and the territory occupied by the Ovimbundu, who have practised ceremonial cannibalism within the memory of persons still alive.

The foregoing summary, supported by preceding details, makes clear that a substantial part of Umbundu culture is definitely like that of the Congo basin. There can be no objection to the evidence as a possibly fortuitous series of vague resemblances, since the entire backgrounds are of the same pattern. The Ovimbundu have a tribal life which is demonstrably a part of the matrix from which, on historical grounds, it is thought to have been derived. The loss of elements, the stressing of others, and the welding of traits from different sources, are matters for discussion in a final chapter dealing with the processes of cultural growth.

RHODESIA

439 177 A constant factor in the economic and cultural development of the Ovimbundu has been the caravan trade from Bihé and Bailundu northeastward across Africa to the Great Lakes, and southward across Moxico into the Zambezi valley and Rhodesia. Every traveler from Battell (1600) onward mentions these caravans which returned to the Benguela Highlands with slaves and ivory. The traditions of journeys still live. Umbundu words are used to describe the Great Lakes, and I have mentioned a wooden figure used for consultation by the medicine-man at a division of routes. There are even today a few large caravans.

The first regular slave traders into northern Rhodesia were the Mbundus from Angola. The Lambas say they were peaceful traders who brought calico, guns, and beads to trade for ivory and slaves. The Mbundu traders were often treated treacherously by both the Lambas and the Lenjes. In some cases they were robbed by the Lamba chiefs. It is said that the Lenjes used to bring their own children to the Mbundu traders in order to buy calico and powder. In the evening the Lenjes used the newly acquired guns to attack the Mbundu traders so that they might recover the children who had been traded (C. M. Doke, p. 79).

The account of F. S. Arnot is a valuable record of a journey which brought him into touch with these traders' caravans, whose route he followed into Garenganze, a country to the southwest of

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

Lake Moero, close to the territory occupied by the Barotse. With 439
his Bihéan carriers Arnot passed along the valley of the Kwando 177
(Livingstone's Chobe). He notes the use of bark cloth (p. 101) and gives an excellent description of the divination basket. "For divining they have a basket filled with bones, teeth, finger nails, seeds, stones, and such articles which are rattled by the diviner till the spirit comes and speaks to him by the movement of these things" (pp. 106, 116). The *onganga* or witch doctor is described on page 115; he is a person not to be confused with the *ocimbanda* or legitimate medicine-man.

Arnot saw a corpse tied to a pole supported on the shoulders of several men. "The witch-doctors demanded of the dead man the cause of his death, whether by poison or by witchcraft, and if by the latter, who was the witch? The jerking of the bier is taken as the dead man's answer." This is the ceremony I described at Elende about three hundred miles from the place mentioned by Arnot. "When a chief dies they say he is sick or asleep [p. 117], and an oxhide from a beast killed at the funeral should be buried with the chief's remains." Arnot was not quite correct; the body of the chief is sewn in the hide. "The people of Bihé say that there is a great spirit Suku over and above all, but they do not know him—I cannot say they believe him to be a universal god" (p. 119).

These instances recorded half a century ago are particularly interesting because of their agreement with present-day procedure. Arnot's description of the Vachokue country and the preparation of beeswax, also the method of extracting honey from hives lodged in trees (p. 146), would serve as a present-day record.

Arnot's information concerns the Garenganze country bordering on Katanga, a copper-producing region near the Lualaba River. Here traders from Uganda, Unyamwezi, the Luba country, the basin of the Zambezi, Bihé, Nyasa, and Zanzibar, gathered to carry on their trade in copper, salt, ivory, slaves, flintlock guns, powder, cloth, and beads. Apart from the evidence of any other writer, that of Arnot alone would suffice to prove the importance of cultural contacts of the Ovimbundu through caravan trade.

One would be mistaken in supposing that the Bihéans made occasional contacts only. For three centuries there has been this to-and-fro movement between the Benguela Highlands and central Africa. In Garenganze, about eight hundred miles from the centers of my research, Arnot noted several points that have been recorded in my notes. The word for medicine-man is *ocimbanda* (p. 242).

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

•439 177 The vertebrae of serpents strung together as a girdle are a cure for rheumatism (p. 237). A necklace of pythons' vertebrae was obtained from a chief of Ngalangi who wore the bones to cure that affliction. In Garenganze twins were introduced to the chief at a ceremony conducted by a female *ocimbanda*. The Ovimbundu welcome twins and one of triplets is given to the king.

171 E. Holub (II) mentions important traits of culture among the Marutse, a Rhodesian people who keep cattle. The Marutse have an aptitude for working in iron, horn, wood, bone, and leather. The masked dance at which performers wore tightly fitting jackets of netted fiber, with close-fitting sleeves, gloves, and stockings of the same material, would serve as a description of the costumes worn in the ceremonies observed at Cangamba in eastern Angola. Holub notes the use of the double iron gong at these dances (vol. II, pp. 168–170). The bark receptacle (p. 308) is the one commonly used in eastern Angola, and along the line from Saurimo to Malange.

The Marutse have the poison ordeal in which vomiting is a sign of innocence, the witness being the god Nyambe (p. 322). Gourd decorations of the Marutse and Babunda tribes show a technique comparable with work of this kind done by the Ovimbundu (pp. 305, 335). The practice of cupping is described by Holub (p. 325); so also is the custom of wearing wooden hair-combs (p. 349). These are cultural traits of the Vachokue and the Ovimbundu.

In his "Eine Kulturskizze des Marutse-Mambunda Reiches" Holub gives a few additional points which connect the Marutse culture with that of eastern and central Angola. The main instances are the technique in gourds (p. 81); the form and hafting of axes (p. 116); blacksmith's bellows and tongs (p. 129); the musical bow (p. 139); the board with metal keys (p. 138); the small friction drum, identical in pattern with my specimen from Elende (p. 140, fig. 70); a musical instrument consisting of a notched board which is rubbed with a stick (p. 142); tobacco-pipes made from the horns of animals and from gourds (p. 147); cylindrical snuff boxes and sticks for pounding snuff (p. 150, fig. 83); wooden hair-combs (p. 155, fig. 87); and wooden stools (p. 163, fig. 92).

All these articles, which are pictured by Holub as being representative of the work of the Marutse of Rhodesia, have their exact parallels in Field Museum collections from the Ovimbundu.

Perusal of "The New Africa" by Schulz and Hammar was not ethnologically fruitful except for a series of outline drawings

5: Hambly E-5 (1929-30) 1934 FP 13 Mbundu FP13

224 hollow chamber. I removed a thin slab of stone which formed an entrance
764 to a tomb of this kind and observed within two skeletons lying supine. On the top of the cairns were skulls of animals killed by the hunter. I noted one instance of the burial of a hunter's dog under a cairn of stones.

825 Three birds are protected by a prohibition. Esuvi is a bird which has
794 power to steal the souls of the dead, so making them die a second death. As usual, no direct explanation was given concerning this second death, but an explanation came later, quite fortuitously. For instance, an old man said he was sick because esuvi had stolen the spirit of his grandfather. This statement is logical, since welfare depends on a beneficent interest of dead ancestors, and it is evident that dying a second death prevents a spirit from exercising a benign influence over the living. Other protected birds are one which supplies feathers from which the decorations of kings and medicine-men are made, and one whose night cry is a warning of death in a village.

226 In fishing, a division of labor is recognized: men use a rod and line, while women drag baskets against the stream or use poison in slow, shallow water. The night before poison is to be used for fishing, husband and wife must avoid intercourse, since intimacy of this kind would make the fish stay together at the bottom of the river. A man who has prepared his rod and line, by transfixing a grasshopper and attaching it to a thin piece of bark,
[539] sings a song which is of the nature of a spell. He says:

> "O fish come and take your good thing.
> Do not send the little fish to spoil the good thing.
> Better you come and take the good thing with all your strength."

● 439 Up to half a century ago the Ovimbundu were renowned traders whose caravans penetrated deeply into the Congo region and even to the east side of Africa. It is natural, therefore, that some ritual should be connected with
[443] such an important enterprise. At the present day caravans may be seen, but these are local, and most of the carriers are found to be taking their maize, beans, and beeswax to traders' stores. I believe women did not accompany the transcontinental caravans of early days, but today women may be seen in line with the other carriers. Their loads are lighter, being on the average thirty pounds as compared with sixty pounds for a man. Children also carry small loads in the caravan.

439 Ngonga, my chief informant, said that in former times no caravan
787 leader would set out without having consulted the preserved head of a de-
[643] ceased king. Even at present the corpse of a king is suspended by the neck and twisted until the head is severed. The head is sewn in oxhide and preserved in a box. The ancient caravan custom consisted of taking the box

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containing the head and attaching it to a pole by which it was supported 439
on the shoulders of two bearers. Then followed a series of questions from 787
the village chief (sekulu), and answers were supposed to be given through forward or backward swinging of the pole. A forward swing was affirmative, and a backward swing was negative. I have seen this procedure followed with a coffin supported as described, and the questions related to the cause of death.

The head of a king would be asked, "Do you want an ox for sacrifice? We will give you one." "Do you want a new skin for your head? We will give you one." Such was the ceremony for bringing spiritual aid to what was otherwise a commercial undertaking.

A wooden figure of a female decorated with black feathers was an indispensable part of the equipment of a medicine-man who accompanied a caravan. When in doubt with regard to the path he knelt at the parting of the ways and consulted the figure. Replies came in a falsetto voice attained by plugging his nostrils. Horns containing a mixture of fat, charcoal, and other substances were carried so that they might be planted near a camping ground to drive away thieves and leopards. These horns are still used and are obtainable.

At the present day a belated Ocimbundu, who fears the sun may set 789
before he reaches the next village, will take some earth from an ant hill. This earth he places in the fork of a tree saying, "O sun wait for me a little while."

Examination of the culture of the Ovimbundu, combined with observa- 101
tions on the Umbundu language and somatic traits, indicate that the Ovim- 241
bundu are a part of the Bantu peoples of southwest Africa. They have, however, taken advantage of the open Benguela highlands to develop their system of agriculture far beyond that which is usually carried on by Negroes in forest clearings.

In agricultural work a clear division of labor is observed. Men clear 241
timber and burn the bush, after which hoe cultivation is in the hands of 562
women, though men assist with the harvest. Unmarried girls help in the fields and each has a piece of ground whose products are the cultivator's personal property. This gives unmarried girls a measure of economic independence. Usually a girl spends the proceeds of her work in buying trinkets and palm-oil for personal decoration. Under their system of poly- 595
gyny each wife has her own field, utensils, and a separate hut with its fire 562
and cooking arrangements. The husband visits each hut for four consecutive nights, though in some districts there is a seven night cycle. Men always take evening meals in the mens' council house (onjango) in the center (to notice the tombs of hunters, which consist of cairns of stones enclosing a) 1/1

1/1 [Printer's error: This sentence refers to p. 159. -- Analyst]

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173 The Hungarian explorer L. Magyar collected in the

middle of the nineteenth century, in the eastern Umbundu kingdom of Bie, an historical legend which linked Bie origins to the kingdom of Mwata Yamvo.[18] Childs has suggested[19] that this legend was in fact not of Umbundu origin since later investigators from Serpa Pinto[20] (1878) to Childs himself (1938) have found that Bie traditions emphasized the local origins of the dynasty. This may of course be a case of the African tendency to manipulate historical narratives to accord with social relationships. It may be suggested that the Lunda traditions, which the core of the Jaga hordes carried with them, became diluted by the recruitment from the conquered peoples, and that the link between the Umbundu royal houses and the Northern Lunda were forgotten because the kings of the Ovimbundu felt no need, unlike the weak Luena and Ndembu chiefs,[21] to prop up their position by stressing their links with the mighty Mwata Yamvo.

175 177 By the end of the eighteenth century the Umbundu kingdoms that were to survive until the end of Umbundu independence were already well established.[22] In 1769 the first Portuguese fort in the Benguela Highland, that at Caconda, was established, and a few years later a king of Bie was to owe his throne to Portuguese intervention.[23] Trade in slaves had begun with the 175 Jagas; but other items such as beeswax and ivory were bought 177 by the bare-footed Kimbundu traders who came from the 439 Portuguese settlements on the Cuanza (founded between 1582 and 1671); and by 1782 there existed small colonies of Portuguese traders in Bie and Caconda.[24]

Portuguese political influence was weak, and the kings con-

[18] L. Magyar, *Reisen in Sud-Afrika*, Pest and Leipzig, 1859, pp. 266–269.

[19] Childs, p. 173.

[20] A. Serpa Pinto, *How I Crossed Africa*, London, 1881. Vol. I, pp. 156–60.

[21] For Luena and Ndembu chiefs, see C. M. N. White, 'Clan, chieftainship, and slavery in Luvale political organization' (*Africa*, January 1957), and V. W. Turner, *Schism and Continuity in an African Society*, Manchester, 1957. For African attitudes to the recording of the past see J. A. Barnes, 'History in a Changing Society'. *Rhodes-Livingstone Journal* 1951, No. 11, Ian Cunnison, *History on the Luapula*, Rhodes-Livingstone Papers, No. 21, and L. Bohannan, 'A Genealogical Charter', *Africa*, October 1952. Mr. White informs me that the Luena regard the Bie kingdom as being of Northern Lunda origin.

[22] Childs, pp. 167–8.

[23] Ibid., pp. 174, 195.

[24] Ibid., p. 198.

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tinued to engage in warfare. However, trade became increasingly important as the Ovimbundu realized the advantage of their position in between the coastal towns of Benguela and Catumbela, and the tribes of the interior. By the middle of the nineteenth century Ovimbundu were travelling throughout the area bounded by the Congo River, the Great Lakes and the Kalahari, and even transcontinental journeys were made. The Ovimbundu carried with them cloths, guns, and rum which they exchanged for ivory, slaves, and wax, to which must be added corn and palm-oil, these latter, however, obtained not from the far interior but from inside or near Umbundu land. The safety of the Umbundu caravans was preserved by the negotiation of treaties with the local rulers, and by agreements (not always satisfactorily kept) between the different Umbundu kingdoms.[25]

From about 1874 rubber became important in Umbundu trade, and it is in the period from then until 1911,[26] when the caravan trade collapsed, that the Ovimbundu knew a prosperity which they have hardly recovered today.[27] It is in this period too that there occurred both the loss of Umbundu independence and the establishment of the missions. In 1890 Ndunduma, the king of Bie, was defeated and deposed, and in 1896 Numa, the king of Bailundo attacked, disastrously, the fort which his predecessors had allowed to be established near the capital. In 1902–3 a widespread revolt, known as the Bailundo war, broke out against the Portuguese, the traders being killed, and the forts besieged. The reasons for this revolt, whose leader Mutuya-Kevela was a minister of the Bailundo court, seem to have been injustices on the part of the white population, and possibly a fall in rubber prices. After 1903 the remaining parts of Umbundu country were brought under effective European rule,

[25] Magyar, pp. 292–9; Childs, pp. 203–5.

[26] Childs following A. Bastos, *Monografia de Catumbella* (*Bol. Soc. Geog. Lisboa*, 1910, pp. 74–81, 105–9, 141–3, 180–3, 225–8, 251–3, 279–85) divides the rubber trade into three periods: the rise of the trade 1874–86, the boom 1886–1900, and the decline 1900–11.

[27] I have heard it said by old men who had taken part in the caravan journeys, and by a local mulatto trader that the Ovimbundu of that period had more clothes than they have now. For Angolan economics after 1911 see Henrique Galvão and Carlos Selvagem, *Imperio Ultramarino Portuguès*, Vol. III, pp. 124–39, Lisboa, 1932, and Clement Egerton, *Angola in Perspective*, London, 1957, pp. 106–13.

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[1874-1911]

THE OVIMBUNDU UNDER TWO SOVEREIGNTIES

178 The great distinguishing mark of the Ovimbundu was their participation in the caravan trade. Some of the neighbouring people also engaged in trading journeys (e.g. the Chokwe) but in central Angola the dominant traders were the Ovimbundu by reason of their control of the routes to Benguela and Catumbela, a control which as Livingstone's narrative shows they tried for a while to turn into a monopoly.[43] With this must be linked
177 the greater readiness of the Ovimbundu to adopt European ways, marked by the general adoption of cloths for wear by at latest the mid-nineteenth century.[44]

3. *Economics and Social Structure*

101 This section will describe the economic life and social structure which marked the period of the rubber trade (1874–1911).
436 A genuine currency existed in the form of cloth, and fortunes
439 could be made in it. Serpa Pinto tells us of one Otjimbundu who made £3,500 by trading in the interior and that he had met many men who 'turned over capital of a thousand to twelve hundred pounds sterling',[45] presumably in trade goods since Portuguese currency did not circulate among the Ovim-
361 bundu. At the capitals of the kingdoms genuine towns grew up. Magyar in the middle of the nineteenth century estimated that
[162] 5,000 people lived at Bailundo[46] and the British explorer Cameron who had crossed Africa from Zanzibar says of Ekovongo, the capital of Bie, 'the town of Kagnombe, the largest I came across during my whole journey, being more than three miles in circumference. On arrival I was met by the
644 Kagnombe's secretary, chamberlain, and captain of the guard who wore red waistcoats as a sign of their dignity. The secretary was more ornamental than useful, being unable to write, but a subordinate, a black man and native of Dondo, was better educated and conducted the trade of Kagnombe with the coast'.[47]

[43] Ibid., p. 205.
[44] Ibid., p. 206, referring to Magyar as evidence.
[45] Serpa Pinto, pp. 161–2.
[46] Magyar, p. 391.
[47] V. L. Cameron, *Across Africa*, London, 1877. Vol. II, pp. 206–7.

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[1874-1911]

THE OLD SOCIETY

The trade was conducted in caravans composed of up to several thousand people,[48] under the leadership of *entrepeneurs* called *olofumbelo* (of which the singular is *ofumbelo*). Of such were the individuals whom Serpa Pinto describes as earning wealth equivalent to a thousand pounds or more. Their role was to get together the caravans, to negotiate with the local political authorities, and to provide ritual leadership. The exact relationship between the *ofumbelo* and the ordinary members of the caravan is difficult to see. European travellers found that porters were content with low wages since they had opportunities for private trade, but apparently the caravan organizers had better opportunities for getting rich than had ordinary Ovimbundu. My informants stated that a man organized a caravan to gain wealth. A man who was in a position of prosperity would be known as an *ohwase* (rich man), would stay at home and be expected to assist his relatives.[49] 437 478 484 [556]

Different ages and both sexes participated in the trade. Childs says that boys from the age of nine upwards travelled on the caravans, and this is confirmed by Serpa Pinto.[50] Tucker, and my informants however, give the age when caravan travel began as being fifteen or over.[51] Unmarried girls travelled too, but simply acted as helpers to some male relative. The caravan organizers (*olofumbelo*) were old men, I was told, and travelled in the rear while in front of the caravan marched a young man (called the *kesongo*) who carried a flag.[52]

Dr. Childs states that between 1874 and 1886 rubber was gathered from the forests of the interior and took eight months (four months each way presumably) for the Ovimbundu to obtain. From 1886, however, 'red rubber' was obtained from the sandy lands beyond the Cuanza, a journey which only took three months altogether. Hence, Childs states, the trading 439 484

[48] A Bastos, *Monografia de Catimbella*, in *Bol. Soc. Geog. Lisboa* 1910 (p. 151) states that caravans of several thousand were used in the 1870s but that by the time of writing (1908–9, nearly the end of the trade) people came in small parties. My informants who would remember this period spoke of the large size of the caravans.

[49] My informants.

[50] Serpa Pinto, p. 164.

[51] J. T. Tucker in *Africa* (Notes and News), April 1956.

[52] Informants.

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[1874-1911]

439 484 journeys diminished in distance as they increased in profitability.[53]

My informants, however, gave a somewhat different picture. Long trading journeys were still being undertaken in the last decade of the trade (1901–11). Some men whom I met had travelled to the kingdom of the Mwata Yamvo and beyond to Luba country; one man had made a journey into what is now the Congo Republic which took a year to go and a year to return; another had visited Barotseland. It should be said that these seem to have been unusually long journeys; journeys totalling six to eight months were common.[54]

182 829 [776] [254] The significance of the trade in social life is reflected in the mystical explanations of success in business found in Umbundu religion. Prosperity might be explained either by the favour of spirits such as Kandundu and Otjipuku, who received at their shrines libations of wine, or by malevolent sorcery involving the sacrifice of relatives in exchange for wealth.[55] The existence of these two explanations probably reflects the existence of some rich men who satisfied the expectations of their relatives and others who did not.

567 178 Apart from the rubber trade, the older slave trade continued until its vigorous suppression in the period 1910–12, and indeed seems, as regards the Ovimbundu, to have become intensified in the period after 1890. The slaves went to S. Tome and Principe, or to coastal plantations. Up to that time the Ovimbundu had sold few of their own people, with the exception of criminals or people who had become generally unpopular with their kin. The collapse of the old political system played into the hands of adventurers who unscrupulously exploited the Umbundu custom of debt slavery or conducted raids for this purpose.[56]

604 439 It was then the 'trade' which was the common factor in the life of all Ovimbundu, and which was so to speak the factor,

[53] Childs, p. 208.

[54] Informants.

[55] Although some old men still have shrines to the luck-giving spirits it is not possible to see how their cult functioned in the social structure then existing. It is, however, notable that success could be interpreted mystically in two ways by benevolent spirits or by sorcery.

[56] Childs, p. 213. I was told that Gumba had been raided from Bailundo.

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[1874-1911]

rather than any political alliance or opposition, which related the Ovimbundu as a whole to the Portuguese and the other tribes. Informants who remember 'the time of the rubber' talk about it with much more interest and much more detail than about any other aspect of the past, and it is far easier to make an ordered picture out of the narratives of the caravan journeys than to fill in the gaps in the descriptions of the political and kinship systems provided by Childs and Hastings.[57]

Politically the Ovimbundu were divided, as has been said, into several kingdoms. Bailundo, the largest of the kingdoms was divided, according to Childs into about 200 sub-chiefdoms. As it had about half a million inhabitants this would give an average population of about 2,500. While the kingdoms seem to have been more or less stable in number and boundaries from the end of the eighteenth century, the number of sub-chiefdoms seems to have increased. Thus an official Portuguese estimate made in 1799 gives Bailundo as having only 82 sub-chiefdoms, and Galangue, where Childs counted 112 sub-chiefdoms, as having 78. The sub-chiefdom paid tribute to the king, sent men for his armies, and recognized his court as the supreme arbitrator. Some sub-chiefdoms were held by ministers or relatives of the king.[58]

It is, however, not easy on the sparse detail available to decide how much autonomy the sub-chiefdoms really had. Gumba, the area where I worked, was a sub-chiefdom of the Bailundo kingdom, albeit on the north-western frontier, neighbouring Cassongue and Cela, where the people did not call themselves Va-Mbailundu, though their rulers acknowledged the suzerainty of the king of Bailundo. Old men told me of raids from Bailundo for slaves, but I cannot say if this was the result of the period of disorder mentioned, or whether sub-chiefdoms on the border of a kingdom gave only nominal submission and received only nominal protection. In the area where I worked,

[57] This is not intended as a personal reflection on Dr. Childs and the late Dr. Hastings, both of whom deserve the highest praise for their work and for their obvious devotion to the Ovimbundu. Hastings devoted far more space to the magico-religious field than to the kinship system. Likewise Childs's description of kinship is much shorter, much less detailed, and much less satisfactory than his account of childhood and adolescence, or the really outstanding historical chapter.

[58] Magyar, pp. 383–92; Childs, pp. 23–24.

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kingdoms of the Ovimbundu, though more frequently perhaps it was made against the non-Umbundu peoples.[89]

The question of the influence of the trade provides interesting opportunities for comparison. The Ovimbundu were the southernmost of the peoples who in the nineteenth century participated in the trade between the Europeans of the West African coast and the peoples of the interior.[90] In some ways the Ovimbundu seem to have been less influenced by it than were some of the peoples further north. The Ovimbundu did not develop genuine patterns of urban life as in Dahomey or Benin.[91]

Three explanations can be offered for the relative failure of associational groups and urban society to develop. Umbundu crafts were much inferior to those found along the coast of the Gulf of Guinea; there was no indigenous weaving industry, for instance, and the goods which the caravans carried to the interior were all of European or American origin, cloths, guns, and rum.[92] For these goods the Ovimbundu were dependent on the Portuguese settled at the coast or in the Highland and this meant that the Ovimbundu were far from economic autonomy. Again the trade had a relatively short time span—the real boom period lasted only from 1886 to 1900, and earlier on in the 1840's when the beeswax, ivory, and slave trade was flourishing, the Ovimbundu had plenty of time for warfare.

It would, however, be a grave mistake to think that trade had only a marginal influence on Umbundu society. It has been suggested that the form of the double-descent system owes its origin to the necessity to isolate economic relations from other social fields. In the sphere of ritual, there are some remarkable copies of European practices—for instance the holding of a feast in honour of the ancestors at Christmas-time.[93] Many ritual concepts are related to the explanation of business

[89] For information on Umbundu warfare see Magyar, pp. 277–80 and Serpa Pinto, pp. 177–9.

[90] See Balandier, *Sociologie Actuelle de l'Afrique Noire*, Paris, 1955, for a discussion of social change in other areas which had experienced a trade of a similar sort.

[91] For Dahomey see M. J. Herskovits, *Dahomey*, New York, 1938. For Benin see R. Bradbury, *The Benin Kingdom* (Ethnographic Survey of Africa), London, 1957.

[92] Childs, p. 206.

[93] Informants.

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that the Government is benevolent even if its agents are not, and men say that they like the Europeans. There are other opposed currents of feeling, though; thus a cook to a European family said to me, 'The Portuguese do not wish us to learn' and a villager declared, 'The Portuguese say to the English that the Ovimbundu have tails.'[29] The great mass of the Ovimbundu seemed to be without political consciousness, or desire for independence; there is little nostalgia for the days of the caravans, and it is widely felt that the present is better than the past, since there is more contact with Europeans.

Traders in the neighbourhood were relatively few, compared to other parts of Umbundu country. At Chicunda there were three trading stores and people who did not like them went across the river to Cassongue. Traders try to prevent natives who live in their neighbourhood from dealing at other stores where they can get better prices, but this is not always effective. Some Ovimbundu realize that variations of price levels are related to such factors as proximity to the railway line. The traders are criticized for paying their servants low wages as compared with those paid in the coastal cities. Although there is a great deal of mutual suspicion between the traders and the Ovimbundu which is expressed in the arguing and haggling that takes place in the stores, there is none of the fear so noticeable in the people's attitudes to the *chefes*. Many traders have a smattering of Umbundu, and have a certain affection for the local people. Economically, the role of the traders is to receive the maize and other products grown locally for transport to the railway line, and to distribute trade goods to the villages. Their presence is also important in preventing the rise of any other system of trading by markets or pedlars.

The principal goods sold are blankets, cloths, and clothing of all sorts, including fancy items such as sun-glasses. There are also a good many bottles of wine, and also oil-lamps and kerosene tins, and electric torches. For literates or would-be literates, there are pens, pencils, writing-papers and slates. Such goods as bicycles, gramophones, and sewing-machines are generally

[29] i.e. The Portuguese say the Ovimbundu are savages and keep them from contact with other Europeans. The Bailundo area had not (up to September 1961) been affected by the revolt. However, a marked change in this attitude of submissiveness seems to have taken place.

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bought in the towns, and men returning from South Africa are said to bring all sorts of goods including typewriters. The traders do not lend money though they sometimes give credit. The living standards of the traders are often low, some being unable to buy a truck, and having therefore to come to terms with someone who has one. I have even heard of traders having to eat the staple Umbundu mush (*pirão* in Portuguese).

While the traders play an extremely important role in the local economy they do not establish any permanent face-to-face relationship with the natives outside their household and store, because they are not interested in them and have no reason to be. This does not apply in the same way to African *assimilados*, actual or self-styled, of whom there were a few in the neighbourhood, who lived more or less in Portuguese style. Of these one in particular, Justino, made a hobby of settling disputes, and will therefore re-appear later on. Their main source of revenue was coffee-growing, and they would occasionally have local labour working for them. As they tend to identify themselves with the 'civilized' population, their attitude to the natives is not unlike that of the traders, but culturally and linguistically they are linked to the Ovimbundu villagers, and if of local origin will have kinship links too.

This group is significant because it is in the total social structure of Angola a link between the 'civilized' and 'non-civilized' communities. Both the *assimilados* and those pseudo-*assimilados* who have persuaded the natives that they are *assimilados*, identify themselves with the whites but are also linked much more closely with the natives than any other group. As the division into 'civilized' and 'non-civilized' is legally sanctioned on the grounds of culture not race, a group which participates to some degree in the cultures of both sections must be of great significance in the study of the means by which the whole society is integrated. In the neighbourhood where I worked this group of Europeanized Africans were few in numbers,[80] both absolutely and in relation to other parts of Angola.

[80] I only know of one genuine *assimilado* in the neighbourhood though there were others who claimed to be such. Galvão and Selvagem (p. 408) remark of the Casengo concelho of northern Angola, 'The great number of civilized negroes, some planters incorporated in the European economic system, hastened the disintegration and confusion of the tribal institutions.'

[assimilados are Africans possessing Portuguese citizenship -- Analyst]

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drinking-mugs, lanterns, metal plates, pens, pencils, wine, and writing slates are bought from the traders. Axe and hoe handles, buckets, bedsteads, beer, bows and arrows, chairs, fish-traps, mats, mush sticks, pottery, pounding-blocks, stools, tables, and small metal objects such as knives are made by Ovimbundu and may be sold locally. To this local trade may be added the selling of pieces of meat by anyone who has killed a pig, or gone hunting and killed a duiker. Very occasionally somebody who has bought cloths in a town or has some hand-made object superior to the local average may tour villages selling his goods as a pedlar.

The only trade which at all recalls the days of the caravan trade is the cattle trade with the Kwanyama Ambo. As in the rubber trade the Ovimbundu make use of their intermediary geographical position. They obtain from Luanda shells called *olomande* (singular *omande*). One of these shells costs 10 escudos (2s. 6d.) at Luanda and ten of them will buy a beast in Kwanyama country. Alternatively 30 rounds of tobacco will buy a beast there. I knew several men who had made, or planned to make, trips of this nature. The analogy with the caravan trade breaks down, however, when the relative importance of the two is examined. The caravan trade determined the economic standards of the Ovimbundu, absorbed a great part of the time of every able-bodied man and youth, and influenced every aspect of Umbundu life from the foreign policy of the kings to accusations of sorcery; the cattle-keeping is relatively unimportant economically since the Ovimbundu do not drink milk, and eat meat, even chicken or pork, very irregularly, nor does the occasional sale of cattle to traders altogether balance their uncertain survival away from their indigenous grasses. The real importance of cattle in the economy seems to be as a form of capital investment for spare savings, an investment which can be liquidated either by sacrifice on ceremonial occasions or back into money by sale. Socially, it may be thought of as marking the survival of the Umbundu capacity and enthusiasm for trading in an age when the economic situation has closed the old routes. Indeed, perhaps the subconscious motive for the Ovimbundu who trade is to show that they can act outside of that economic framework of cultivation

5: Hambly E-5 (1929-30) 1934 FP 13 Mbundu FP13

224 hollow chamber. I removed a thin slab of stone which formed an entrance
764 to a tomb of this kind and observed within two skeletons lying supine. On the top of the cairns were skulls of animals killed by the hunter. I noted one instance of the burial of a hunter's dog under a cairn of stones.

825 Three birds are protected by a prohibition. Esuvi is a bird which has
794 power to steal the souls of the dead, so making them die a second death. As usual, no direct explanation was given concerning this second death, but an explanation came later, quite fortuitously. For instance, an old man said he was sick because esuvi had stolen the spirit of his grandfather. This statement is logical, since welfare depends on a beneficent interest of dead ancestors, and it is evident that dying a second death prevents a spirit from exercising a benign influence over the living. Other protected birds are one which supplies feathers from which the decorations of kings and medicine-men are made, and one whose night cry is a warning of death in a village.

226 In fishing, a division of labor is recognized: men use a rod and line, while women drag baskets against the stream or use poison in slow, shallow water. The night before poison is to be used for fishing, husband and wife must avoid intercourse, since intimacy of this kind would make the fish stay together at the bottom of the river. A man who has prepared his rod and line, by transfixing a grasshopper and attaching it to a thin piece of bark,
[339] sings a song which is of the nature of a spell. He says:

> "O fish come and take your good thing.
> Do not send the little fish to spoil the good thing.
> Better you come and take the good thing with all your strength."

439 Up to half a century ago the Ovimbundu were renowned traders whose caravans penetrated deeply into the Congo region and even to the east side of Africa. It is natural, therefore, that some ritual should be connected with
[443] such an important enterprise. At the present day caravans may be seen, but these are local, and most of the carriers are found to be taking their maize, beans, and beeswax to traders' stores. I believe women did not accompany the transcontinental caravans of early days, but today women may be seen in line with the other carriers. Their loads are lighter, being on the average thirty pounds as compared with sixty pounds for a man. Children also carry small loads in the caravan.

439 Ngonga, my chief informant, said that in former times no caravan
787 leader would set out without having consulted the preserved head of a de-
[643] ceased king. Even at present the corpse of a king is suspended by the neck and twisted until the head is severed. The head is sewn in oxhide and preserved in a box. The ancient caravan custom consisted of taking the box

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613 could be resolved in the matrilineal group.[78] Hastings, who gives the most detailed account of the matrilineal groups, which he calls sibs, tells us, 'There can be no exaction of fines or taking of slaves between the members of a sib group—the group members are supposed to pay each other's debts, and one who has wealth and refuses so to communicate may be secretly poisoned by the others. It is within the group of matrilineal sibs that most compacts, whether social or economic, are formed and operate. The same is true even of malevolent plots and anti-
[754] social practices, such as killing by witchcraft.'[79]

182 613 437 Clearly, the matrilineal groups in which the rich had to pool their wealth with poorer kinsfolk and in which trading arrangements[80] were made indicate the adaptation of the kinship system to the needs of the trade. It may be suggested that one of the functions of the double descent system was to separate the fields of village and chiefdom relations, established through patrilineal ties, from the field of commerce, credit, and the inheritance of wealth gained by trade. Thus the conflicts in which a man would be involved in one set of relations would not involve his other set of ties, and this distribution of stresses must have limited the strains set up by disputes. The distinction between the local group and the commercial group would also prevent heavy losses from trade striking a whole village simultaneously.[81] The credit institutions demanded by a trading
[452] system in which debt was frequently incurred were fitted into the kinship system, and associated with a device for levelling those who had become prosperous in the trade.

613 Unhappily the disintegration of the traditional social structure, and the accompanying loss of knowledge of it, prevented
[170] me from adding to, or even corroborating entirely, the written material on the form of the matrilineal groups.[82] It is not at all evident how the groups maintained integration, or how new

[78] Hambly, p. 200.

[79] Ibid., p. 92.

[80] Dr. Childs suggested to me that the core of the caravans might be composed of kin. However, the caravans were so large that they clearly could not be organized on a kinship basis. See also Serpa Pinto, p. 163.

[81] This point was suggested to me by Dr. Mary Douglas.

[82] I did not obtain any information on the size of the matrilineal group, the existence of heads of the groups, and the degree to which it was a congregation.

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bought in the towns, and men returning from South Africa are said to bring all sorts of goods including typewriters. The traders do not lend money though they sometimes give credit. The living standards of the traders are often low, some being unable to buy a truck, and having therefore to come to terms with someone who has one. I have even heard of traders having to eat the staple Umbundu mush (*pirão* in Portuguese).

While the traders play an extremely important role in the local economy they do not establish any permanent face-to-face relationship with the natives outside their household and store, because they are not interested in them and have no reason to be. This does not apply in the same way to African *assimilados*, actual or self-styled, of whom there were a few in the neighbourhood, who lived more or less in Portuguese style. Of these one in particular, Justino, made a hobby of settling disputes, and will therefore re-appear later on. Their main source of revenue was coffee-growing, and they would occasionally have local labour working for them. As they tend to identify themselves with the 'civilized' population, their attitude to the natives is not unlike that of the traders, but culturally and linguistically they are linked to the Ovimbundu villagers, and if of local origin will have kinship links too.

This group is significant because it is in the total social structure of Angola a link between the 'civilized' and 'non-civilized' communities. Both the *assimilados* and those pseudo-*assimilados* who have persuaded the natives that they are *assimilados*, identify themselves with the whites but are also linked much more closely with the natives than any other group. As the division into 'civilized' and 'non-civilized' is legally sanctioned on the grounds of culture not race, a group which participates to some degree in the cultures of both sections must be of great significance in the study of the means by which the whole society is integrated. In the neighbourhood where I worked this group of Europeanized Africans were few in numbers,[30] both absolutely and in relation to other parts of Angola.

[30] I only know of one genuine *assimilado* in the neighbourhood though there were others who claimed to be such. Galvão and Selvagem (p. 408) remark of the Cazengo concelho of northern Angola, 'The great number of civilized negroes, some planters incorporated in the European economic system, hastened the disintegration and confusion of the tribal institutions.'

[assimilados are Africans possessing Portuguese citizenship -- Analyst]

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Luveli's income from bricklaying. The laying of the bricks that form a modern villager's house may bring 100 escudos. 511

The basic cash need of an Otjimbundu, then, is for money to pay government demands and to provide clothing for his wife and children, who seem more likely than the men to get new clothing every year.[3] Add to this the possibility of other calls (e.g. provision for a relative's funeral) a desirable income even for this low level of consumption would be 400 escudos (£5) and a more prosperous villager might earn and spend double the amount. Exceptional individuals still remaining within the normal conditions of Umbundu cultural and social life, such as Kambungo, may earn from 2,000 to 3,000 escudos a year, perhaps even more, from agriculture. Maize is the foundation of the agricultural economy, but Kambungo's remark that maize did not pay seems to reflect a trend to find other openings such as growing coffee, which is, however, subject to difficulties of climate.

Within the villages there is some trade in handmade objects such as pottery, sleeping-mats, and sticks for stirring mush, and there are quite a number of bricklayers, carpenters, and tailors (proprietors of sewing-machines) who have acquired European skills which bring them money. These craftsmen are, on payment of a fee of 250 escudos (a figure given me by a tailor), exempt from contract labour. 438 463 [648]

Many European residents seem to think that the only European products natives desire are cloths, clothing, and wine. This is not so; villagers wanted me to sell them kerosene for lamps, D.D.T. powder for their hair, and soap. It is interesting that the occasions on which an Otjimbundu would accumulate large (for him) sums all fall outside the maize-for-cloth pattern of trading. These occasions are bridewealth payment (and counting all expenses this may well come to 800 escudos—£10 or more), which is a traditional due, the purchase of bicycles (according to place of purchase from 1,200 escudos [£15] to 1,500 escudos [£18. 15. 0]) which are prestige-giving objects, and the trading journeys to buy cattle. Kambungo had 434 454 [543] [493] [432]

[3] The trader whose opinions I have previously quoted (Senhor Alberto Oliveira Mendes of Chicunda), remarked, 'It is the women who save us. The men make a shirt last for three or four years but the women get something new every year.'

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spent 10,000 escudos, he told me, in buying shells to trade in Kwanyama country and even if this be regarded as an exaggeration such an expedition will cost at least several hundred escudos.

I have not so far discussed labour migration and its economic consequences. There are three ways of going out to work: being recruited for 'contract labour', which involves selection by the chief and government headmen who send people to the post whence they are directed to wherever they are required; being recruited by labour-recruiters who visit villages with their lorries; and travelling, usually on foot, to find work. Contract labour is for a year, which may be followed by a fortnight's work at the post to which the *contratados* are returned. The coffee plantations of Amboim and Seles are important centres for voluntary labour from Gumba and neighbouring chiefdoms. Women, and boys from ten years up, go to work there for spells which may be only two months. However, even in Gumba whose people have a reputation for backwardness and for lack of enthusiasm for going away to work, there is nothing at all surprising in meeting men who have learnt a few words of English in Johannesburg.

Of the 36 household heads of Epalanga, 9 were women, and 8 were men who for one reason or another (elders, cripples, the catechist) would not leave the village. Of the other 19, 6 were absent as labourers during some part of my stay, and this figure excludes individuals who were not expected home within a year. In the cities there are large numbers of permanently or semi-permanently urbanized Ovimbundu, who have largely lost contact with their home villages. Some people who have spent years in the towns may come home—in Epalanga there were at least five women who had visited cities.

Although almost all able-bodied men and many women have lived outside the context of village life as servants to Europeans, as labourers on plantations, and as urban workers, it would be a mistake to think of the rural areas of the Benguela Highland, as being labour reservoirs economically dependent on the towns. It seems that prices of manufactured goods are lower near the railway line and in the cities; hence a man returning from wage labour may buy cloths, a bicycle, a sewing-machine, or a

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unambiguous approval, though there is a certain undertone suggesting cunning in the verb *oku lunguka* (to be shrewd) used about prosperous people. The old suspicion of sorcery attaching to people who were more successful farmers than their neighbours[6] seems to have disappeared. While a prosperous villager would be expected to lend money to a poorer kinsman (provided the latter was not known as a bad debtor) yet, the situation which occurs in other parts of Africa, where, as Dr. V. W. Turner notes of the Mwinilunga Ndembu, prosperous Africans 'find themselves increasingly embarrassed by the demands of their kin for presents in cash and kind'[7], would not arise among the Ovimbundu, who would regard such demands as being unjustified, even outrageous.

Wealthy Ovimbundu may spend some of their wealth on clothing and on drink. Cattle-buying has been noted as a form of capital investment and the same term may be used of small stock buying. Another way of disposing of money is by building a house of bricks with the assistance of a bricklayer. A plough may be, but rarely is, bought by two men joining together to pool their money. Generally speaking, the agricultural technology of the Ovimbundu has been little changed since 1911 except for the spread of the techniques of coffee-growing.

It has been noted earlier that the Ovimbundu play an important part in the economic life of Angola both as cultivators and labourers. In this chapter an attempt has been made to show how at the local level it is the cultivation of cash crops, rather than migration for wage labour, which incorporates villagers into the commercial economy of modern Angola. The main source of money in rural areas is the trader's store, which is also the main recipient of money, apart from the administration. While trade both between Ovimbundu and between Ovimbundu and other tribes survives on a minor scale, the social institutions associated with the rubber trade, the large caravans, the non-repayable loans within the matrilineal group, and the obligations of wealthy traders to assist their kin, have disappeared. The contemporary social structure with the

[6] Childs, pp. 106–8.

[7] V. W. Turner, op. cit., p. 135.

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The extent to which the order of the *vakuacisoko* exists at present or has existed among the Ovimbundu would be a very interesting subject of inquiry. It is certain that the institution does not exist throughout the territory but only in certain families which belong to the order and pass on membership in it by heredity. Whether there are certain regions where it is or was in the past more strongly held to is not known. It seems to be or to have been more strongly entrenched among the cattle-rearing people to the south, but it is also said to have been practised in Lupolo (Libolo) and even in the region of Luanda.[1] Among the Ovimbundu it seems to have been stronger in the past than at present. Few if any practising members of the set are now known. All 'coevals' or members of the set were in duty bound to render mutual assistance. All had mutual rights to the property of the others without complaint or remedy. These mutual rights seem to have been extended to the extreme limit of having intercourse with each other's wives, nor did the injury or even the death of one brought about by another allow the injured family to seek revenge or legal redress. It was the duty of *vakuacisoko* to bury their fellows, themselves digging the grave and attending to all expenses not already supplied by the family. Theirs was also the duty of burying strangers without family who would not be buried by others fearing defilement or responsibility for their debts. Bastos gives a tradition ascribing the origin of this institution to a wager laid between two chiefs.[2] It seems more probable, however, that it is connected with circumcision and tribal initiation. An analogous set of rights and duties is said to have existed among the Herero between 'coevals' circumcised at the same time.[3]

Tribal initiation for both boys (*oku lisevi:a evamba*) and girls (*uso wakãi*) is carried on in camps or 'schools' in the southern and south-eastern tribes of the Ovimbundu. These camps are regularly held in Kalukembe, Kakonda, and Ngalangi. Sporadic instances of individual camps have also occurred recently in Viye, Bailundu, Sambu, Wambu, Cingolo, and Cikuma. Even in those regions where camps are regularly held, only the children of certain families enter. It seems that there has been some passing on of the custom by heredity and, in general, there is intermarriage only between families and individuals who adhere to the initiation rites.

[1] Bastos, 1909, op. cit., pp. 67–70.
[2] Ibid., p. 69 f.
[3] Vedder in Hahn *et al.*, op. cit., p. 178.

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geographic position in the centre of the colony has also made it harder for them to evade it. Nevertheless, many have emigrated. In 1941 and again in 1944, when the writer visited South Africa, he found thousands of Ovimbundu on the Rand and many more in the Rhodesias and the Congo. Many are also known to have gone to the South-West Territory and to Bechuanaland, and some even to such distant points as Natal's north coast and French Equatorial Africa.[1]

Recent Developments

Currency, in the sense of money, is quite a recent introduction to the Ovimbundu. To the end of their trading activities, cloth ('trade goods') was the standard of exchange. Although dependence upon world markets caused prices to fluctuate with the course of the rubber trade, as we have seen, there was not, however, the great range which follows the fluctuations of the money market through a course of inflation and deflation. The Ovimbundu had had some dealings in money before the time of World War I, when there was a silver coinage, so that the depreciation which set in about 1921 was all the more confusing to them. This is not the place to discuss the finances and banking of Angola, but it must be noted that the conversion of the 'Escudo' into the 'Angolar' in 1928 at the rate of Ag. 0,80 to Esc. 1 $00 greatly increased the sense of confusion among the natives. This was only to be expected when the native tax remained at Ag. 80,00 where it was Esc. 80,00 before, whereas daily wages to contract labourers became Ag. 0,80 where before they were Esc. 1 $00. The confusion was considerable.[2]

Taxes began to be levied soon after military occupation, but for some years they were very small, especially in relation to opportunities for earning. When the head-tax reached Esc. 80,00 it remained at that figure for some years. In 1935 a 'work tax' and

[1] This state of affairs is frequently and quite freely commented upon in the Angola papers. For a recent notice see local correspondence entitled 'Notícias do Cuma' in the *Voz do Planalto* (Nova Lisboa) for 17 Aug. 1946. One of the most serious recent indictments is contained in an article in *O Farolim*, Luanda, 5 Nov. 1945, by Padre J. Alves Correia. This distinguished writer asserts that the present labour policy is 'killing the goose which lays the golden egg'.

[2] For finance, currency, banking, and economic conditions in general, see Department of Overseas Trade, *Economic Conditions in Angola*, H.M.S.O., 1929. There are also reports for 1923 and 1925, but the one for 1929 covers the previous decade.

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On nights when there is little or no moonlight, the evening 562
gatherings in the village sometimes, although not always, follow 517
the sex division, with the men and boys in the *onjango*, and the women and girls at one or more of the kitchens. Discussion of affairs, with youth listening to age, is the usual order, but the time is often passed in the recital of folk-tales or in propounding riddles.

Riddles are more especially a field of youth but age also enjoys 524
hearing the answers given. A favourite occupation of the men, 171
especially by day, is *ocela*, a game known all over Africa and in other parts of the world as well.[1] Junod calls it 'the national game of Africa'.[2]

The Ovimbundu have brought recreation to the service of their 461 •
work. Europeans are often irritated by the amount of conversation which Ovimbundu carry on during working hours, but on consideration it may be found that were it not for the conversation and other psychological aids, the work might be quite unendurable. This is especially the case with regard to road work and many types of contract labour. Road songs and work songs are of real [533]
help in keeping up morale and in prolonging endurance. Most of them seem to have been developed in the days of the caravan trade, but they have not been forgotten and are now used on many occasions.

A word about ceremonial occasions before leaving the social 764
life of the village. Some rites and ceremonies are celebrated so quietly that they are not even social occasions. Most of them, however, are very social. This is especially true of funerals and post-mortuary rites. During visits to Ngendo I was able to witness two post-mortuary rites and the funeral of an important person of a near-by village. Other ceremonial occasions, such as weddings [585]
and a return from a trading expedition, also call for much sociability, but funerals and post-mortuary rites are the social occasions which occupy the most time and attention and make for the greatest conviviality.

[1] Known under the name *Mancala*, which is evidently a Bantu word, or taken from one; cf. the Umbundu *oku mangala*, to play. Hambly mentions *ocela*, op. cit., p. 219. See also Nevinson, op. cit., p. 91. The *New Standard Dictionary* (Funk and Wagnalls) attributes to Arabian origin both the game and the word *Mankalah*.

[2] H. A. Junod, *The Life of a South African Tribe*, 2nd ed., vol. i, p. 345 f.

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children may have enough food. Therefore while parents have their children with them, they teach them, saying, Let us work that we may have much food, for if a person lacks food he will die of hunger, or perhaps he may steal from another's field and get into trouble. Children must be diligent in working. 868

'But should a parent have a child who does not want to work, the parent may beat that child to teach him sense lest he may be a sluggard (*ocisiãi*). Parents have a proverb saying, [538]

U wa ku vetela[1] *kepia,*
He who you beat in the field
ka ku vetele,
did not you punish
wa ku longisa olondunge.
he you taught sense.

'Before beginning, parents always encourage their children to work. Cultivation, however, is not counted as a profession (*ocipinduko*). Should a person cultivate a great deal so that from his field he has very much food, then people will take notice and say, So-and-so has enslaved a spirit[2] to the seeds, he has spirits (*ilũlũ*) and they are helping him. That causes great fear, for people fear (those who) have spirits.[3] Thus, even though a person should purpose to teach another how to cultivate in order to have much food, the other will only apparently agree[4] because of his fear. Therefore the work of cultivation is not sought after as a profession by children, for they say, Being a farmer (*ongunja*)[5] is the work of sorcerers (*olonganga*) and not of ordinary people.'[6] 461 241

[1] *Vetela* is the relative mood (or form) of the verb *oku vetela*. There is a pun in its use here since it is also used with *epia* in the sense of breaking ground for a new field.

[2] The verb used here—*oku andeka, andekela*—means securing the services of a person's spirit by killing the person (whether by witchcraft or by actual violence). The person is often a child and often of one's own family. In some cases parts of the body are said to have been kept for subsequent ritual use, e.g. bones and flesh dried and ground for 'fertilizer', or the skull for a drinking-cup. It will be seen that this is sorcery. The reflexive form of this verb, *oku liandeka*, means to form a blood-brotherhood, but it is a sorcerer's pact involving the sacrifice of a third person. 754

[3] The expression used means either to have or to have the reputation for having.

[4] He agrees with *ocenyo*, a term commonly translated as 'irony' or 'contempt'.

[5] This is the term which we commonly use for 'farmer'. Its connotation should be understood.

[6] This section is translated from a manuscript by Raul Kavita Evambi of Ciyaka.

were polygynous and only one of these contain more than two wives.[1] 592 595

The village or ombo (plural *ovombo*) may consist of from 5 to 500 such households, the heads of which are usually related agnatically to each other. Most, but not all, of the larger villages are *olombala* (villages of chiefs or sub-chiefs). These are said to have had formerly as many as 5,000 inhabitants,[2] but today few have as many as 3,000, and there is a general tendency towards smaller villages and even isolated households.[3] There are in general two quite different types of Umbundu village according to the terrain on which they are built. Those on the plains, where there is room to spread out, tend towards a circular shape, with the *ocila* and *onjango* (see below) near the centre. The various sections of the village may appear as quarters of a single whole, or they may be spread out haphazardly. Mountain villages[4] may have houses built on ledges almost one on top of the other. Here there is often no room or no suitable soil within the palisades for gardens or for the dancing-floor *(ocila)*, which are found outside the palisade. Different sections of the village tend to string themselves out horizontally along the mountain-side, or to find successive ledges. 621 [178] 621 361

The typical village of Ngendo described by Childs, in Kasongi chiefdom, etumbu (sub-chiefdom) of Ekongo, is of an intermediate type, built on a slope. Ngendo has 196 inhabitants, of whom 42 are men, 60 are women, and 94 children. The village is divided into four smaller sections or wards (*ovitawila* pl.), of which the largest, that of the village headman *(sekulu)* has 127 inhabitants, while the other three have 19, 13 and 37 inhabitants respectively. The word ombo (village) may also be used for either of the two larger sections by themselves. Each section has its own elder, but the dancing-floor *(ocila)*, which is the centre of village life, is in the headman's section. The *ocila* is primarily a place for recreation, but religious functions also are held in it, and formal cases tried. Formerly most villages had a second communal building, the *onjango* or "Men's Club House",[5] whose importance was almost as great as that of the *ocila*. Here all the men, youths and boys gathered for the evening meal, and here guests were entertained, lesser judicial cases settled, and the day's work and gossip discussed, while young boys, sitting in the background, gained much of their knowledge of tribal history and custom.[6] Today the *onjango* exists and maintains its former function chiefly in parts of Ngalangi, Viye and possibly Ndulu. It does not exist in Childs' typical village, where the "Men's Club" holds only occasional meetings on the rocks behind the headman's house, and where the common evening meal no longer takes place. The reason suggested for the disappearance of the *onjango* is lack of leisure owing to demands for road work (in the immediate vicinity of Ngendo), for contract labour, involving absences of from six months to a year,[7] and the difficulty of securing tax-money. 621 [344] [461]

(1) And polygyny is thought to be more frequent here than in other areas. See above, p.23.
(2) According to Magyar, 1851.
(3) Childs, op.cit., p.25, fn.1. Childs does not suggest any reason for this tendency.
(4) Formerly many villages were built on mountains for defence, and capital villages of this type may still be seen.
(5) The "Men's Club" seems to be simply a gathering of all the adult men (and possibly also the juveniles) of the village.
(6) Childs, op.cit.; Cashmen, 1944; Hambly, (2) 1934.
(7) Most of the labour on the Benguella Railway is Umbundu, and many Ovimbundu travel to the Union of South Africa for work. (Childs, op.cit., p.10, et.al.)

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heavy tasks and the close and constant routine of housework, on the other hand, sometimes require more than casual urging by the mother. Biographical evidence agrees with observation on this point, but nevertheless few girls reach puberty without attaining proficiency in the various household tasks. The decline of polygyny has probably hastened the girl's education in the household arts. When there is only one wife in the household, not only must she have more regular help from her daughters, but also it is more likely that the daughters will have to take on full responsibility at those times when the mother is unable for ritual reasons to take part in the preparation of her husband's food.[1] Biographical sources indicate that this tendency was already operating at least fifty or sixty years ago.

Every Ocimbundu assumes that his sustenance will come from cultivation of the soil. The 'professions' which a child may learn are therefore in the nature of side-lines. Although the Ovimbundu are not a true cattle-rearing people, they possess many domestic animals, especially dogs, pigs, sheep, goats, and chickens. Chickens are owned and looked after by both men and women, but the other animals only by the men. Boys may have small stock of their own, and a boy's economic independence most frequently begins with owning a chicken. Herding has been a function of the sister's son and even now there is reluctance on the part of boys to herd for their fathers. Animal husbandry is largely a commercial enterprise, save in the extreme southern tribes of Kalukembe, Ngalangi, &c.

The principal side-line 'professions' (*ovipinduko*) may be listed as follows:

For Girls

Basket-making, which is practised by all to a limited extent, but excelled in by relatively few.

Pottery-making.

Medical-practice and Divination (for conditions, see *infra*).

For Boys

Mat-making, which includes the making of four distinct types of mats each of which has its specialist; the making of trays and large baskets for granaries.

[1] i.e. at the times of her menstrual periods, after the birth of a child, &c.

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463 *Wood-working*, including the following specializations:
● 462 Doors, windows, and their frames; coffins.
[322] Beds, tables, chairs, &c.
Mortars, pestles, grinding-handles, and handles for various iron implements.
Stools, household utensils, carved images, staves, knobkerries, &c.
Drums and other musical instruments.
Canoes (dug-outs and coracles).
Rope-making, nets, and rudimentary weaving.
Thatching has its specialists although all men can thatch.
Fishing.
Bee-hunting, including the making of hives.
224 *Hunting*.
326 *Iron-smelting and smithing*.
791 *Medical-practice and Divination*.

The last three professions of the list are sacred and are entered under special conditions. They are often passed on by inheritance, but not always. All of them require sacrifice at certain stages, and when the enslavement of a spirit (*oku andeka*) is required, it is socially allowable. This seems to be the case with these offices as with those of the king and his ministers, both because of benefits accruing to the community in their exercise and also because of inherent danger to the individuals who exercise these functions.

177 The advent of European commerce, industry, and government
463 has created a number of types of employment for boys and young men, some of which entail prolonged absence from the village and a loosening or severing of kinship ties. Church and mission have
[797] also offered employment and have opened new opportunities for advance in place and in position.

861 Later childhood, then, is the period of technical training during which it is expected that a large amount of economic responsibility will be assumed. A child begins to own property even before this, and from the beginning of later childhood will be accounted legally responsible for his actions. It is recognized, however, that he should not be set tasks beyond the experience or ability of his age and that the full responsibility of adulthood will only come with marriage.

[538] *Umālēhē ka tonyōlā ongulu yuvala*;
A youth does not scrape the pig for the wedding feast;
pekonjo pa siala (*ovonya*).
on the hoof there remain (bristles).

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

dropped off; of ivory there was no more. From 1893 on, says Bastos, rubber was practically the sole export of the District of Benguela and of its hinterland.[1] In 1891 more than one million milreis' worth of rubber was exported from Benguela, sixteen times as much as was exported only five years before, and three and one-half times the value of the *three* leading exports in 1886. Until 1891 this increase was not at the expense of other exports, but rather in addition to them.

All of this rubber, and the other exports as well, came to the coast in caravans of the Ovimbundu or their neighbours. In its inception and its great development it was an enterprise of the Ovimbundu. Everyone who was able to carry a load joined a caravan. It had always been the custom to take boys on trading expeditions, as young as they could go—say, from their tenth year—as a part of their education. Now girls were also taken and hardly any but the women stayed at home to raise the crops and provide rations for the caravans. European residents experienced great difficulty in securing necessary porters,[2] and this was one reason for finally putting through the wagon-road from Benguela to Caconda.[3] It was extended to Viye during the military campaign of 1890. The fever of the rubber trade reached into all the villages of the land and took in everyone able to travel. Mission schools had been established since 1881, but they had but few pupils until 1900. There were also other reasons for this, but a principal one was the attractiveness of the rubber trade.[4] Even the kings found it more difficult to gather armies for their wars: trade had become more attractive than the possibility of plunder.

Of all the kings who ruled the various Umbundu kingdoms during this time, the one who is best remembered is Ekuikui (II) of Bailundu (1876–93). Tradition has begun to ascribe to him and to his reign some things which properly belong to earlier

[1] Bastos, op. cit., p. 34. He does not include *serviçaes* in the exports, since they all went to the mainland or island plantations, but he remarks that at this time the price rose to even 90$000 (p. 33). The rise in price was perhaps due to the smaller supply owing to the preoccupation of the Ovimbundu with the rubber trade.

[2] See *Missionary Herald*, 1889, p. 350.

[3] *Benguella*, 1891, op. cit., p. 10.

[4] The reports of the governor of Benguela, to which reference has been made, also mentioned this fact, saying that although the American missions were intelligently directed, their results were small, since parents would not send their children to learn while they could pick up loads of rubber (1887, p. 19; 1891, p. 20).

2: McCulloch E-4 (1945-51) 1952 FP13 Mbundu FP13

Ovimbundu women braid their hair neatly in strands across their foreheads, and decorate the braids with small blue and white trade beads.[1] 302

MAIN FEATURES OF ECONOMY

AGRICULTURE[2]

Main crops are maize and several kinds of beans. Subsidiary crops include: sorghum, kaffir corn, emmer wheat, manioc, peanuts, squash, sweet potatoes, garden vegetables, a little rice, cotton, sugar-cane and tobacco. Fruit-trees such as the papaya, banana, loquat, tangerine, lemon, peach and apple, are increasingly cultivated, and, to some extent, coffee. Upland fields for the principal crops of maize and beans are cultivated during the rainy season, and, to piece out the harvest, river gardens for secondary crops are used in the dry season. 241

The principal corn-gardens

Traditionally men work with their wives in the heavier labour of clearing new fields, but today the demands of contract labour are such that few are able to help.[3] Before the rains begin in early September, women prepare the fields for planting. If a new plot is to be used, it is first cleared with a small hatchet. Tree stumps are left two or three feet high; after the field has been cultivated for a year or two and the tree-stumps have dried and rotted, they are burned off and cleared away. When the rainy season has set in and the ground is thoroughly wet, the main corn-fields are planted. The ground is dug with a hoe and ridged slightly, the ridges following the contour of the land, so that the rain will not wash away the soil, and so that the moisture will be held. Occasionally irrigation is used, small channels being led from hillside streams to the gardens. Maize is dropped by hand on the ridges, and the seeds covered with the foot. Beans and squash are planted with the corn. In January there is usually a break in the rains, and this is the time when the bean crop ripens. (This is a critical period, since if the dry spell lasts too long the corn crop is blighted, but if it is too short the beans will not ripen.) The vines are pulled up and put in the field hut to dry. Later the beans are beaten out of the pods and stored. 241 [462] [312]

In each field there is a grass hut, which is used as a shelter from showers, as a place for drying beans or corn, and as living quarters when the corn is sprouting. (When a woman decides that it would be more convenient to live by her field, which requires constant guarding against birds, she may live in her field hut with her children for several weeks.) 241 343

As the dry season commences, the corn crop ripens. When it is ripe, it is plucked, dried and shelled, and stored in the *osila*, a granary on posts, for future use. One *osila* is used for each household. When required, the corn is hulled and pounded into the meal which forms the staple food.[4] [251] [252]

(1) Hambly pp.129-32, and illustrations; Childs, personal communication.
(2) Cashman, 1944, pp.72-8; Hambly, (2) 1934, pp.146-8, and Childs, personal communication.
(3) Childs, personal communication.
(4) For a good description of the preparation of corn-meal, see Cashman, pp.77-8.

242 When a field is wearing out, the corn growing shorter and bearing
244 fewer ears to the stalk,[1] the woman makes a final planting of corn, sticking cuttings of manioc between the rows. Most of these cuttings take root and grow. It takes two or three years for the tubers of this plant to mature in an old field, but in some parts of the country where manioc is set in new land it matures within a year. The leaves of the plant are used as a vegetable with corn-meal, and manioc meal is used as a basic substitute when corn is short.

The onaka or river-garden

241 In August a woman plants her *onaka*, near a stream in the alluvial soil, or in some river bed. Here she plants corn which will be ready for eating during the January period of food shortage, as well as cabbage and other vegetables.

Organisation of labour

[462] Formerly men did the heavier work of clearing new fields, although, as has been noted above, since the introduction of wage labour much of the work is left to the women. Men may also have their own fields, the produce of which is sold to provide ready cash to clothe the family, pay taxes etc. The women's fields are intended to feed the family. Children help their parents in the fields, but also have their own plots. Gardens are made by each household, i.e. by each wife where there are a number of wives. Neighbours often co-operate during the harvesting
[476] period, after which beer is supplied by the owner of the field which has been harvested.[2]

HUNTING[3]

796 Most men and boys hunt, and women and children may help in burning
224 the grass and driving the game during the annual communal fire-hunts.
[463] But the professional hunter or *ukongo* is a recognised specialist, qualified by specific training and dependent on his knowledge of hunting magic
[868] and ritual for his success. A boy becomes a *ukongo* by an apprenticeship of about two years to an older hunter. This period culminates in a ceremony of inauguration, which may be attended by all the villagers but at which only the professional hunters dance. Several *ukongo* provide game, which is cooked for the feast; the dancing commences but the novice remains still and silent until he feels the "spirit of the head"; he then rises and distributes game to the villagers. Blood from the animals killed is sprinkled over his weapons, which have been made by the *ukongo* who has trained him. From now on his daily life is subject to certain ritual prohibitions: he must not sleep with his wife on the night before going on a hunt, special food and cooking-pots must be used for him, etc.

000 A professional hunter usually works alone, using bows and arrows,

(1) There is no information concerning the length of the farming-cycle.
(2) Childs, personal communication.
(3) See Hambly, *Bantu Studies*, 1934, and *Ovimbundu*, 1934, pp.140-5; Cushman, 1944, pp.113-20.

A professional hunter usually works alone, using bows and arrows, clubs, spears, and several kinds of trap.(1) Nets and poison are not used. Every hunter makes his own arrow-shafts and feathers; the points are made by a blacksmith. On the night before leaving for a hunt, the ukongo calls in his fellow hunters to share a ceremony which includes dancing and the re-anointing of the weapons with beer and palm-oil. 224 411

Communal hunts usually take place in June-July, in the middle of the dry season, when large tracts of land are covered with grass ten or more feet high. The day for the hunt is set by the village headman; spears and arrows are prepared and, when the word is given, a party of about 30 men and boys move off to the assigned area of tall grass. A ring is formed round about two square miles of land, the hunters standing just within sight of each other. The grass is trodden down, fires started, and the animals killed as they rush from the flames. Antelope of many kinds, snakes, foxes, wolves, hyenas, mice and rabbits and occasionally leopards are killed in this way. 224

FISHING

In the Kunene and some of the other larger rivers fish are large and plentiful, and men go on communal fishing expeditions, and return with fish to sell.(2) Men usually fish with bark lines, women use basket-traps(3) and poisons. Poison is used, usually in the dry season, when the rivers are shallow. Both men and women use nets, and sometimes a fish-weir or *olunja* may be employed; this has an opening in the middle, in the lower side of which is placed a basket-trap. At the coast and along the Kwanza river dug-out canoes, about 20-30 feet long, are sometimes used for fishing.(4) 226 462 [501]

DOMESTIC ANIMALS

The principal domestic animals are the cow *(onjindi)*, ox *(ongombe*, which is also the generic name for cattle), bull *(onui)*, sheep *(omene)*, goat *(ohombo)*, pig *(ongulu)*, dog *(ombua)*, and chicken *(osanji)*.(5) The only transport animal is the ox, used both for riding and for drawing carts.(6) 231 [492]

Cattle are a measure of wealth, but few families own large herds. Childs lists the domestic animals in a typical village of 196 inhabitants as: 9 head of cattle, 13 goats, 20 sheep, 100 pigs, and about 100 chickens. Cattle are used for paying fines and debts, for funeral feasts, and for marriage payments. Cows are not usually milked, and cattle are killed for food only when they are aged or injured, or occasionally during the June-July period of food shortage. Treated hides are used to cover stools, and for making pouches and corn-bags.(7) 231 436 [282]

The cattle herd obtains most of its food by grazing, but in the dry 880

(1) Some hunters have guns, but the use of gunpowder is restricted by the Portuguese.
(2) Cashman, op.cit., p.143.
(3) See Cashman, loc.cit. for a brief description of the basket-trap.
(4) Hambly, (2) 1934, p.145.
(5) Ibid., pp.152-6.
(6) Childs, personal communication. Cf. Hambly, op.cit., p.152.
(7) Hambly, op.cit., p.153.

233 The cattle herd obtains most of its food by grazing, but in the dry season the grass withers. Childs states[1] that "Herding has been a [604] function of the sister's son, and even now there is a reluctance on the part of the boys to herd for their fathers."

235 462 [844] Chickens are owned and looked after by both men and women, but other animals only by men. Boys may have small stock of their own, and a boy's economic independence most frequently begins with his owning a chicken.

231 Hambly states that goats are more common than any other animal, and that every family has one or more. These animals are not fed or watered, but are allowed to wander to find their own sustenance. Goats are not milked. Young males are castrated. The goat is frequently used in sacrifices. Sheep also are allowed to find their own food; the males are not castrated. Pigs are cared for comparatively carefully, receiving water and a daily supply of sweet potatoes and their leaves, together with some corn. Male pigs are castrated.[2]

APICULTURE[3]

[439] Beeswax was an important item of trade in the caravan days, and is still sold to Portuguese traders' stores, where it is massed into large rectangular cakes for export. Honey is eaten alone or with manioc, and [762] a fermented beer called *ochasa* is made by adding honey to corn-beer. [273] Fibre strainers are used for cleaning the wax, and large shallow baskets [252] are employed for drying the honey in the sun.

Large cylindrical hives, which are private property, are placed high in the trees. These are made by removing a cylinder of bark and lashing the halves together with strands of bark, forming a hive which has a diameter of one foot.

In Elende honey is removed from the hives during the months of August and December. One man ascends the tree in order to lower the hive with a long rope of bark or plaited fibre, while beneath the tree men are prepared to take the hive, which is opened over a smoky fire.

ARTS AND CRAFTS

326 782 *Smithing.* The profession of blacksmith or *ocivinda* is an important one, and, like hunting and divining, is sacred and is entered with special ritual. Often, but not always, these three professions are passed on by inheritance. For smithing two years' apprenticeship to a member of the profession is necessary, and is usually entered upon at the age of eighteen. At the end of this period the master examines his pupil, and makes tools for him, especially the heavy hammer or *onjundo* which is regarded as symbolic of his craft. For the inauguration ceremony the boy provides four chickens (2 male, 2 female), a dog, and a goat; the blood of these animals is sprinkled on his tools, and their flesh is eaten at a feast [553] attended by the villagers. Throughout the procedure the boy remains standing on the small anvil. Finally he is asked to choose his professional name; he then steps down from the anvil a qualified blacksmith.

(1) Childs, 1949, p.109. (2) Hambly, op.cit., p.154.
(3) Hambly, (4) 1934.

Formerly it was believed that a smith owed his skill to the help of the spirit of a person whom he had killed, and wooden effigies of this person were kept by the smith.[1] 326 782

The principal products of a blacksmith's forge are axe-heads, hoe blades,[2] tools for mat-making, arrowheads, knives, and brass bracelets. Iron, which is fairly plentiful, was formerly smelted over charcoal fires.[3] Today smiths use scrap iron. 325 412

Pottery

Pot-making is a part of women's work among the Ovimbundu. A wheel is not used. Clay is mixed with a silicate, usually gravel, rolled out in long ropes, and the pot built by the coiling process.[4] Pots are ornamented when wet by making deep incisions with a piece of gourd; they are then sun-dried, and fired in a kiln of dry grass. Pots are used as water-containers, as cooking vessels and as vessels for storing corn and beans, and, when made in a very large size, for brewing beer.[5] 323 [462]

No ritual attaches to pot-making, except at the opening of a new clay-pit, when, in the presence of both men and women from the village, the medicine-man sacrifices a chicken over the open pit.[6] [782]

Weaving and Spinning

Looms have not been used among the Ovimbundu since they have been a people, although progenitors of the kingly families who came from the Bangala or Congo groups may have done weaving. Trade cloth has been known and used by the Ovimbundu for nearly 300 years.[7] Skins have been used in remote areas; Hambly when he mentions bark-cloth as being worn by the Ovimbundu is probably referring to the Ngangela. Spun cotton, however, is used for repairs, and there is a cotton plant in most gardens. Spinning is done always by men.[8] 286 439 [281] [287] [283] 462

Basketry

All girls learn to make baskets, although some become more proficient than others. Knowledge of basket-making implies also an understanding of dyeing, since coloured strands of grass are interwoven to make geometric patterns.[9] Baskets, and also basket-trays, are usually made by the coiling process.[10] 285 462 [382]

(1) Hambly, (2) 1934, pp.158-60. The ceremony was described from Njangelo village in Elendo.
(2) See Cashman, 1944, pp.140-1.
(3) For details of the blacksmith's forge and tools, see Hambly, op.cit., pp.160-1; Cashman, 1944, pp.139, 140, 145-6.
(4) See Hambly, op.cit. Plates XXXIII and XXXIV, and Childs, 1949, Plate VIII.
(5) Hambly, op.cit., p.168; Cashman, op.cit., pp.144-5.
(6) Hambly, op.cit., p.169.
(7) Childs, personal communication. See also Childs, 1949, p.171, note 1.
(8) See Hambly, p.177, and Cashman, 1944, p.136.
(9) Red, yellow, black, and brown dyes are used. For a description of the process, see Hambly, op.cit., pp.170-1.
(10) See Hambly, op.cit., p.171, and Cashman, op.cit., pp.141-2 for details of basket-making. Also for illustrations Hambly, op.cit. and Childs, 1949.

Mat-making

462 285 [412] The making of mats is a specialised craft for men. Generally elderly men are the mat-makers. Two tools are used, a borer and a needle, both products of the blacksmith's forge. Hambly[1] describes the making of reed sleeping mats, large mats used for partitions, and string bags. There are four distinct types of mats, each of which has its specialist.[2]

Leather-work

282 Leather pouches worn on a broad leather belt are part of the essential equipment of the hunter. The pouch is square, rectangular, or semi-cylindrical in shape, and may be decorated with cross-shaped patterns, or brass-headed nails used for decorative effect. Hide is also used for the seats of four-legged wooden stools. Hides are crudely dressed: they are soaked, the inner surface rubbed with ashes, the hair scraped away, and the hide pegged out.[3]

Wood-carving

323 [413] Wood-carving, which is men's work, includes the following specialisations: doors, windows and their frames; coffins; beds, tables and chairs; mortars, pestles, grinding-handles, and handles for various iron implements; stools, household utensils, carved images etc., drums and other musical instruments; canoes (dug-outs and coracles).[4] Illustrations are given by Hambly.[5]

TRADE

438 484 791 [682] Caravan trade is now confined to short journeys when corn, beans and beeswax are carried by men and women porters to the traders' stores. Formerly however it was an important feature of tribal life. Each caravan had its professional leader, and was accompanied by a diviner or medicine-man. Before a caravan started out, a ceremony was performed at which the principal performers were the village headman and the medicine-man. The head of the former headman was brought from its box, sewn in cowhide; blood from a sacrificed animal was sprinkled on the head, and invocation was made to the deceased by the village headman, asking for good fortune for the journey.[6]

438 436 Today the Ovimbundu exchange products among themselves both by barter and the use of Portuguese money,[7] but there are no large markets except in the towns.

[435] 438 The "trade-agreements" between the Ovimbundu kingdoms and between the Ovimbundu and other tribes have been mentioned above.[8] Accompanying these, regional industrial and commercial specialisations within Ovimbundu country developed. Thus in the middle of the last century

(1) Hambly, op.cit., pp.169-70.
(2) Childs, 1949, p.169.
(3) Hambly, op.cit., p.176.
(4) Childs, op.cit., p.120.
(5) Op.cit., Plates XIII to XXII.
(6) Hambly, op.cit., p.184.
(7) For details of Ovimbundu units of measurement see Hambly, op.cit., p.197.
(8) p.9.

time to the village of the paramount chief. These periods spent away from home, continue into adolescence. Not only relatives, but also friends, blood-brothers and vakuacisoko (see below) exchange children in this way. 604 857

Later childhood

No definite time marks the transition from early to later childhood, but there are marked differences between the two stages. As soon as the child is physically able, he begins to assume a definite role in the community. Soon after a child gets his permanent teeth, a notch in the form of an inverted V is chipped between the two upper front incisors. Formerly the beginning of the period was marked for the boy by his first trip with a trading caravan; today a boy of this age may begin to work in the fields with his father, or begin to learn a trade, or be sent to school. A girl starts to learn field-work and housework. 852 858

Professions

A boy is expected to learn the profession or ocipindako in which his father or his mother's brother is expert, and after that, should he wish to learn some other side-line profession, he may apprentice himself. All children, both boys and girls, are expected to learn to cultivate, but that is not counted as a profession. The principal ocipindako (professions) listed by Childs are: for girls, basket-making, pottery-making, medical practice and divination; for boys, mat-making, wood-working, rope-making, thatching, fishing, apiculture, hunting, smithing, and medical practice and divination. The last three, as has been mentioned above, are "sacred" and entered under special conditions. 462 828 [463]

"Later childhood, then, is the period of technical training during which it is expected that a large amount of economic responsibility will be assumed. A child begins to own property even before this, and from the beginning of childhood will be accounted legally responsible for his actions. It is recognised, however, that he should not be set tasks beyond the experience or ability of his age and that the full responsibility of adulthood will come only with marriage."(1) 866 [672]

The coming of European commerce, industry, and government has created new types of employment for boys and men, some of which cause a prolonged absence from the village and a loosening or severing of kinship ties. There are no estimates of the number of persons employed by Europeans, or the average length of their absence from home. 178 466

ADOLESCENCE(2)

Childs found that the onset of puberty was late among the Ovimbundu, coming between fourteen and sixteen years for girls and between fifteen and seventeen years for boys. Soon after puberty young people generally stop sleeping in the parents' house. The girls congregate in kitchens and each boy builds himself a house, in which he will live through adolescence 882

(1) Childs, op.cit., p.130.
(2) Based on Childs, op.cit., pp.38-9 and 111-12.

V. ECONOMIC LIFE

The words "economic life" are here used with a wide connotation 182
including nature lore, food supply, trade, transport, and industries;
all these are combined to form a foundation for every aspect of the
social life of the tribe.

The truth of this is realized if one pays attention to the rites 788
connected with occupations. For the hunter there is special training, 782
ritual, and a peculiar mode of burial. Final ceremonies in the initiation of a young blacksmith are associated with sacred acts such as sacrifice of animals and the sprinkling of the tools with their blood. Even the simple occupation of pounding corn requires that the rock shall be dedicated to this purpose by sprinkling the blood of a chicken on the surface. Similarly, a clay pit has to be consecrated before the raw material may be taken for making pottery. A caravan [787]
journey is not merely a commercial undertaking; the accompanying medicine-man carries a wooden figure which he consults with regard to the route (Plate XXI, Fig. 5).

Division of labor according to sex is one of the most important 462
principles involved in the economic life, more particularly in occupational groupings, which are strictly observed. Moreover, within any one activity, such as house-building, there are tasks for men only, while other parts of the work are performed exclusively by women or children.

The study of industries is of great importance when a comparison 322
of Umbundu and adjacent cultures is being made. This is particu- 177
larly true in the instance of wood-carving, an occupation yielding highly specialized products some of which are connected with religious [778]
belief and ritual. All artifacts are valuable as criteria of cultural contacts, though their reliability as evidence of trait diffusion naturally varies with their degree of complexity. Study of native industries in relation to European contacts illustrates a cultural process which may result in acceptance, rejection, or ingenious adaptation of new ideas.

That a study of the economic life of a tribe is not merely a record- 182
ing of material processes and artifacts, is illustrated by observation 231
of the treatment of cattle. This pastoral pursuit naturally falls under a heading "Domestic Animals," but the ideas associated with cattle, including funeral feasts, use of horns on graves, and the wrapping of the royal corpse in oxhide, lead directly into important matters of belief and ritual.

824 *Okalalulula.* This tree has leaves which are used in treating a skin disease.
813 *Usendangulure.* This small tree, only three feet in height, gives straight twigs which are used in making arrow shafts.

FOOD SUPPLY

COLLECTING AND HUNTING

222 462 Collecting of natural products which serve as food substances is chiefly in the hands of women and children, though an exception has to be made in the instance of honey, which is gathered by men and boys.

Boys diligently search for nests, noting their location so as to be able to visit them again when the fledglings are large enough to serve as food. Large numbers of women and children may be seen 252 222 gathering caterpillars in gourds. The insides of the caterpillars are squeezed into boiling water to make soup.

When a cloud of locusts appears, as in 1925, the creatures are gathered. They are sometimes fried, or they may be boiled in water, dried, and preserved with salt in earthenware pots.

A number of miscellaneous items of the food supply were mentioned in connection with names of trees whose fruits are gathered.

223 [411] Boys engaged in food-gathering usually carry small bows and blunt wooden arrows (*ocilasi*). One type of bird arrow is fixed to the bowstring. The forward end of the arrow is split so that it may contain small stones that are ejected when the string is released. From the wild fig tree mucilage is obtained and this is boiled until it forms a thick paste which is smeared on the boughs of trees. [231] Some of the small birds captured in this way are eaten, others are kept in wicker cages made by children.

343 171 In all parts of Angola large cylindrical beehives may be seen fixed high in the trees (Plate XC, Fig. 2). Two types of hive have been noted in particular. In the Elende district a hive is made by opposing two half cylinders of wood each about three feet long, so forming a hive which has a diameter of one foot. The ends are covered, with the exception of a small round hole. The whole structure is bound round with grass which is kept in position by lashings of bark. In the neighborhood of Cassanga a difference in the structure of the hives was noticed. This type of hive is made from a cylinder of strong reddish bark, the edges of which are fastened together with stout wooden pegs. The dimensions are the same as for the hive used in Elende, but the hive of bark is uncovered.

231 In the Elende district honey of wild bees is removed from the hives in the months of August and December. One man ascends

[see pp. 138-140, category 116]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

which are fixed on poles in front of the hunter's home during his lifetime (Plate XXXII, Figs. 1, 2). 764 224

There are at the funeral of a hunter special observances which will be mentioned under the heading of funeral rites.

FISHING

In the region of Elende there is fishing with both basket and line; 226 a method of poisoning fish is also practised. Usually a male fishes 462 with a bark line. Women catch fish by the poisoning method, and in addition to this they generally follow the procedure in which baskets are held or weighted in the stream. If the water flows swiftly men may take charge of the fishing operations. At times both men and women fish with nets. Husband and wife may not sleep together the night before fishing, as this is believed to make [531] the male and female fish stay together at the bottom of the river.

The fishing line consists of tough green bark which is cut into [283] strips whose length depends on the height of the river's bank. A hole is bored through the body of a grasshopper, a worm, or a grub taken from under the bark of a tree. Through this hole is passed a short stiff piece of grass about half an inch long, to which the line is attached. The fish is caught when the crosspiece of sharp grass becomes fast in its throat.

When the fisher throws the line he sings: "O fish, come and take your good thing. Do not send the little fish to spoil the good thing. Better you come and take the good thing with all your strength."

In order to make fish poison the tuberous roots of a plant are taken and soaked in water until a scum rises to the top. The solid part of the poison is not given, because it would sink and the fish which ate it would remain at the bottom of the river. Therefore only the scum of this poisonous infusion is thrown in the water. The stupefied, gasping fish remain at the surface, whereupon they are seized by women who transfer them to gourds or baskets worn around their necks. Usually poison is used only in the dry season when the rivers are shallow.

Sometimes there is fishing by means of a weir (*olunja*) which has an opening in the middle. On the lower side of this gap a basket trap is placed.

There is no fishing by torchlight. At the coast, and along the river Kwanza I have seen heavy dugout canoes in use; these were about twenty to thirty feet long and hollowed from single trees [501] (Plate LXXII, Figs. 1, 2). At Ambrizette I noted the use of a fishing

226 spear eight feet long, the end of which consisted of ten sharp prongs
462 of palm stem (Plate LXXIII, Fig. 1).

[171] Near Cangamba in eastern Angola, fishing in the Kwando River occupied numerous men and women of the mixed tribes in the district, namely, Vachokue, Luchazi, and Babunda. Men paddled into midstream in small bark canoes from which fishing operations were directed. The fishermen carried small conical string nets, which were attached to stakes in such a way that the openings of the nets faced upstream. Vachokue women, working in pairs, dragged baskets against the current (Plate LXXXV, Figs. 1, 2).

AGRICULTURE AND COOKING

343 *Osila* is the Umbundu word for the granary which stands on
243 wooden supports (Plate XLIV, Fig. 1); this *osila* is for the restricted family, and there is one *osila* for every house. The Ovimbundu store their corn in bulk, but in the Esele country I noted that the cobs themselves were carefully packed. Each Ocimbundu girl cultivates a small patch of ground, the produce of which she is at liberty [432] to sell in order to buy brass ornaments, beads, and palm oil.

In addition to maize, barley, oats, and wheat, with here and
241 there a little rye, are occasionally grown. There are three colors of beans, red, white, and black. There is no attempt to keep the varieties [651] separate, so they cross-fertilize freely. The Ovimbundu try to [438] cultivate a surplus of beans and maize which they use to pay their taxes to the Portuguese, likewise to sell at the stores of traders.

252 Corn is pounded on the rock which has been used for generations
512 after it has been consecrated by sprinkling the blood of a chicken. Pounding begins as early as five o'clock in the morning, before sunrise, and from that time to sunset the pounding-rock is in use. The [521] rock is evidently regarded as a meeting place for social intercourse; it is undoubtedly the center of village gossip so far as the women are concerned (Plate XXXVI, Fig. 2).

As corn alone is considered a poor food, it is sprinkled on boiling water to which beans are added. Cooking goes on from early morning to sunset over a slow fire. Children sometimes receive as their evening meal a thick plastic cake of mushed corn to which green leaves of a squash are added.

252 There are five kinds of manioc resembling one another in general appearance, but the Ovimbundu distinguish the plants, and reserve for each what they consider to be appropriate preparation. The method varies for sweet and bitter varieties of manioc.

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undoubtedly knew the apparatus and the method, but he appeared 372
to have lost the dexterity which is necessary for a rapid moving of the 171
hands from the bottom of the twirler to the top. There was consequently a long period of smoldering before the flame appeared.

Among the Vachokue a little wooden box of tinder, a piece of quartz, and an iron blade are carried for fire-making. From an Esele man a bag containing tinder and quartz was obtained.

The making of fire ceremonially in connection with ritual and sacrifice is described among the functions of the medicine-man, because the sacred and profane uses of fire are quite distinct.

Tobacco is a very important item of trade. The cultivation is a 249
domestic industry followed usually by women but to some extent by 462
men. In former days when the Ovimbundu traded extensively in Africa every man had a field of tobacco which he himself cultivated. At the present time each man is likely to have a mound of tobacco plants in the middle of a corn field (Plate XXIX, Fig. 1). Women do sometimes cultivate tobacco near their huts, but in this case the little plantation must be strongly fenced. Goats are numerous, and they eat the leaves of the tobacco plant with avidity.

Toward the end of September, when the rains begin, tobacco seed is sown on a patch of ground a yard square to raise seedlings which are planted out in October. A few flowers only are left to produce seed. As a further effort to improve the quality of the tobacco many of the lower leaves are removed. The cutting of leaves intended for use as tobacco is done by men in the months of February and March; women and children assist if the field is large.

After the midrib has been removed from each leaf, the leaves are suspended from the roof in a bundle. At the end of five days, when the leaves have turned brown, they are twisted into a long straight roll which is hung in the sun for three days. At intervals the roll is twisted in another direction. This gradually exposes all parts of the leaves, so that the drying is thorough. There are three methods of making up the rolls: *ombola* is an oval roll; *ongalo* is the round coil; *ocise* is the name given to tobacco which has been dried and twisted 276
round a stick. Tobacco-pipes are varied in size and design (Plate XV, Figs. 1–3); those for men are larger than those used by women. A mixture of tobacco and hemp is smoked in a water-pipe made from the horn of a cow. Details of structure and ornament are given under "Wood-carving."

In order to make snuff a piece of dried tobacco is slowly baked near the fire on the end of a pointed stick which is turned frequently.

412 fatigue is avoided by the method of holding and swinging so that the work of crushing is done by the weight of the implement.

412 252 Two less usual methods of pulverizing grain are by use of a long pestle, which is worked up and down in a heavy wooden mortar as shown by Plate LXXXIV, Fig. 1, in which Vachokue women are so employed, and the crushing of grain with a cylindrical stone which is rolled on a flat slab. This latter method I judge to be very old, for on a pre-Umbundu site encircled by stone walls I have seen flat slabs of stone and cylindrical rollers. Some of the flat slabs were worn extremely thin in the middle and a few were perforated by the friction.

It is noteworthy that there are rocks especially reserved for the pounding of grain with the wooden mallet. Such rocks are to be [782] found close to every village, and the dedication of a new rock for this purpose requires the killing of a chicken whose blood is sprinkled on the rock.

252 Work of this kind is begun before daybreak. From that time to [512] sunset the pounding of the wooden mallets, accompanied by the singsong of the women, marks the progress of the day's work. At intervals the pounded grain is sifted through the hands and spread out on a basket-work tray, which is shaken to separate the fine meal. The unbroken and partly broken grain is replaced on the rock for further pounding. A small brush of grass is used for bringing together the grain which is dispersed by the blows.

412 The sole implement used in agriculture, which is entirely in the 171 hands of women, is the hoe. Of this implement there are several [862] variations according to locality. The Ovimbundu and others of Ngalangi employ the form illustrated in Plate XIII, Fig. 10. The long handles measuring 85 cm no doubt reduce fatigue by minimizing bending. Both hands are used, and, furthermore, the increased length of the handles must give a greater leverage. The smaller hoe used by Ovimbundu women of Elende has short handles only 51 cm (Plate XIII, Fig. 9), while that from the Esele country is distinguished by a broader blade and still shorter handles only 36 cm in length.

412 Included in the outfit of every Umbundu home is the heavy wooden floor beater. This implement, which is fashioned from a single piece of wood, consists of a narrow handle, round in cross section, and a flat portion for beating the moist, newly made, mud floor of the hut. The total length is about 83 cm.

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Not only the carpenter, but almost every Ocimbundu man possesses an implement which may be readily adapted as ax or adze (Plate XIII, Fig. 2). The wooden shaft, from 50 to 70 cm in length, terminates in a narrow grip at one end, while the other end expands into a large oval knob into which a circular hole is bored. The strong iron blade, one of the main products of the local forge, can be removed. If the round tang of the blade is inserted so that the cutting edge is in the same plane as the shaft, the implement is an ax. On the contrary, insertion so that the cutting edge is at right angles to the shaft converts the implement into an adze. When placed over the shoulder this implement is used for carrying utensils in a fiber bag (Plate XXVIII, Fig. 1). 412 [482]

Gourds are of three main kinds, which may be found growing on the ground or resting on the roofs of houses at the ends of the climbing stems that bear them. *Ombenge* is a gourd which is narrow in the middle. It is often converted into a dipper for ladling liquids. The narrow neck is the handle, while a round hole is cut in the larger part so that the dipper can be filled with liquid. *Onganja* is round, or perhaps oval in form. There is a size used as a measure of capacity. *Onganja* can be used as a ladle by fixing it at the end of a stick. *Olukembo* has a round body and a narrow hook-shaped neck; like the gourd *ombenge*, it is used as a ladle. 415 [244]

Gourds are elaborately decorated with incised and burned designs (Plate XII, Figs. 1–6). Usually these patterns are geometrical, but human figures and animals are sometimes included. Decorated gourds from Bailundu, used for containing beer at a wedding, are among the best examples of their kind (Plate XII, Fig. 6). The owner of a decorated gourd takes great pains to repair a crack with rattan, which is threaded through holes bored in the edges of the fracture. A large gourd is sometimes carried in a native-made net of vegetable fiber. 531 415

POTTERY

A large and varied collection of pottery has been acquired from the Ovimbundu, the Vachokue, and the Vasele. The shapes and styles are best indicated by the illustrations in Plate XIV, Figs. 1–5. 323 171

Among the Ovimbundu, only women make pots, which are inferior in workmanship to those of the Vachokue and the Vasele. At Elende, among the Ovimbundu, I was surprised to find a man making pottery. Further inquiry showed that he had learned his craft when young in the Vachokue country of eastern Angola. This man, whose work was not copied at all by Ovimbundu women, was regarded as a specialist whose products were in great demand. [462]

When the clay was being mixed an old pot was broken and pulverized so that some of the powder might be added to the new pot. There may be the underlying idea of continuity in the potter's art. The potters said, *Sanga yi pita* ("Lest it leak"). There may be no purpose other than the imparting of stability to the new clay. 323

I was unable to find any trace of ritual except with reference to the opening of a new clay pit. When a pit is first opened both men and women attend. The head of a chicken is twisted off by a medicine-man, then the bird is held over the pit by either a man or a woman. There is no law or ceremony to determine who shall take the first clay from the pit. The art of making pots is in the hands of female specialists so far as the Ovimbundu are concerned. Observation makes clear that women will go for a long distance to obtain clay from the pit which has been opened in a ceremonial manner. On their way to such a pit they pass clay which would serve their purpose well, but they do not use it. Children sometimes amuse themselves by making animals of clay. [462] [982] [857]

The pottery of the Ovimbundu includes cooking vessels of many sizes, water containers, and very large pots for brewing beer (*olombia vi okukela*). [415]

MATS AND BASKETS

This occupation illustrates division of labor on a sex basis. Baskets are made by women, while mat-making is an occupation for males. As with other trades there is specialization. The majority of women are able to make baskets though the skill of individuals varies. All women who have a knowledge of basketry understand the manufacture of dyes. Only a few men make mats; my informant thought that perhaps one man in ten would have the necessary skill. Such specialization is continued into other occupations; for example, only a few men spin cotton thread, while the majority of people buy pottery from expert female potters. 462 285 [463]

The mat-maker, generally an elderly male, uses two tools, a borer and a needle, both products of the native forge. The borer (*utomo*) for piercing the reeds, consists of a long thin blade in a wooden grip. The needle (*osinja*) is threaded with bark fiber and passed through the holes made by the *utomo*. The bark thread is *ombanja* (plural *olombanja*). 285

The sleeping mat (*esisa*) is made of reeds which are gathered in the early morning by a man who wets and binds his material into bundles, each of which contains reeds of the same length. The length of the reeds varies, of course, with the size of mat he intends to make.

285 The name *esisa* is given to the raw material as well as to the mat. The worker begins by laying out the reeds on the ground, side by side; then the slender tool *utomo* is passed through the reeds near their ends. This position is made permanent by sewing, and the process is repeated at intervals along the length of the reeds (Plate XLII, Figs. 1, 2).

Evinda is a large mat, about 120 cm long and 20 cm wide, while each strip of coarse elephant grass is about 3 cm wide. Ability to make the rush mat (*esisa*) is fairly common, but skill in making *evinda* is less usual. The mat *evinda* has several uses; it may be stretched on the floor or bed as a sleeping mat, or possibly it is rolled so that the ends can be fastened together; so treated it forms a cylinder which may be filled with grain when stood upright on the ground. A number of these mats is sometimes used to form a temporary storage place or shelter. The technique is of the twilled variety in which each weft passes over and under two warps.

Ocala is a coarse mat made from long stalks which are called "elephant grass" by the Boers; the agricultural term is "Napier's fodder." The long rods are white and glazed, so forming an artistic contrast to the crossbinding, which is of black bark. The technique is known as check, a term used to describe a structure in which warp and weft pass over and under each other singly.

The large mat (*ocikanga*) which is of soft texture shows neatly woven, diamond-shaped patterns of dark brown grass. The technique of this mat is of the twilled variety in which each weft passes over and then under two warps.

283 String bags, which are used for suspending gourds or hanging them over the shoulder, are made by men only. The root *ombundi*, mentioned in connection with brewing beer, is used for making string bags. Two fibers that have been teased out from the root are rolled tightly together by rubbing them between the palm and the thigh. [462] Strong rope is sometimes made by plaiting coarse grass; this occupation is in the hands of males.

386 In basket-making the preparation of dyes is of great importance because colored strands of grass are inwoven to make named geometrical patterns (Plates IX; X). [531] The Umbundu expression for dyeing is *oku lisa olosovo*.

Red coloring is produced by taking leaves of a plant named *evava* and cooking them in water along with the bark of the tree *ukondo*. [515] *Ukondo* is the "tooth brush" tree because small pieces of its wood are chewed and used for cleaning the teeth. After the grass has

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In addition to pouches, hide is used by the Ovimbundu for the 282
seats of four-legged wooden stools. Before stretching the hide over the wooden frame the edge of the leather is cut into strips which are interlaced on the under side of the stool (Plate XVIII, Fig. 1). There are few evidences of the hide having been dressed; usually the hair is attached. The Ovimbundu understand the dressing of hides in a crude way. The hide is soaked, after which the inner surface is rubbed with ashes. The hair is scraped away and the hide is tightly pegged out. Hide was formerly used for covering wooden boxes in which a king carried his powder and possessions to war. Scraped [534]
hide is used to form the tympanum in tubular wooden drums.

In only one part of Angola, notably in the south among the 171
Vakuanyama, is leather used as clothing. Women wear pleated 282
skirts of hide and several broad leather belts, while the men have [291]
small leather aprons in front and behind. Men only are the leather 462
workers. The hide is soaked and trampled under foot for many hours in order to soften it and make it pliable; the hair is not removed. Before leather clothing is worn it is thickly greased with a mixture of fat and red powder from *tukula* wood (Plates LXV, Figs. 1–3; LXVII, Fig. 1).

SPINNING AND WEAVING

My interpreter Ngonga remembers the use of a heavy upright 286
loom about twenty years ago, but this loom is not used at the present 177
time among the Ovimbundu. The Ovimbundu have been in contact with Europeans for three centuries. This has not been a close and permanent contact, but it has been sufficient to account for the disappearance of a one-time essential art. There are in Elende some 287
very fine raffia palm trees, but no use is made of the leaf fiber for 171
manufacturing clothes. Bark cloth is not made by the Ovimbundu of Elende, but I have seen the Vangangella and Ovimbundu of Ngalangi engaged in stripping, beating, and preparing bark for use as clothing, which is formed of one piece wound round the body. The bark cloth is not dyed or decorated with patterns.

Frequently at Elende men are seen engaged in spinning cotton 283
which is used for repairs, and not for fabricating garments. The 824
cotton is obtained from a shrub which has reddish leaves and yellow flowers. The cotton may be seen protruding from the calyx in the months of June and July. The man who is winding holds high in his left hand a slender stick which is wrapped for a length of two feet with fluffy cotton. All work of pressing and twisting the cotton into a thread is done by the thumb and index finger of the right hand.

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283 In the beginning a thread from the fluffy mass on the stick is fastened to a corncob or to a potato, the weight of which keeps the thread taut (Plate XXXVI, Fig. 1).

[462] I have never seen a woman spinning and am informed that in former days the working of the loom was a task for men only.

463 In presenting facts bearing on the economic life of the Ovimbundu
791 attention has been paid to the importance of ritual, specialization in industry, and division of labor on a sex basis. Clearly, the economic life is one of the fundamentals of social structure, while at many points it is a field in which the magician works.

132 Topography and climate have fixed certain conditions which, so
241 far as the Benguela Highlands are concerned, favor agriculture on an extensive scale, also the keeping of cattle. In the Benguela Highlands a moderate temperature, combined with sufficient rainfall, has produced a type of vegetation which provides timbers serviceable to the craftsman, together with bush that affords shelter for game.

128 The bearing of these economic facts on the probable origins of traits, and their assembly to form the tribal life of the Ovimbundu, is reserved for discussion in chapters dealing with culture contacts and cultural processes. In chapters X–XII the factual material presented here under "Economic Life" is correlated with what is known of similar activities in cultures surrounding that of the Ovimbundu.

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(Plate XLV, Fig. 2). The house of bows for holding sacred relics will be described in connection with religion (Plate XLVI, Fig. 1). 644

In former days there used to be a hard mud floor for dancing, centrally placed in the village. 261 335

In the center of the village is the communal house where all men, and boys over four years of age, gather to eat their food, which is sent by the women. This *onjango* is the place of assembly for discussion of village affairs. A house of this kind at Bailundu is circular in form with a diameter of seventeen feet (Plate XLVIII, Fig. 1). In the middle of the *onjango* are stones forming a fireplace. In another such house there were jawbones of oxen. These were suspended from the walls as tokens of the payment of fines. There is no communal house for females. In some villages there is a common kraal for cattle. 344 [681] [417]

The king's compound usually contains: 644

(1) The king's house, which invariably has a separate sleeping room.

(2) A house and kitchen for each of his wives.

(3) A tomb for the burial of kings and their wives.

(4) The house of bows for staffs, bows, mats, and tobacco-pipes of dead chiefs.

(5) A house of meditation for the king (Plate LXXXIX, Fig. 1).

(6) Pens for pigs and chickens.

The guest houses (Plate XLVIII, Fig. 2) that I have seen were not in the king's compound. Granaries, which are conspicuous in every village, have been mentioned in connection with food supply (Plate XLIV, Fig. 1). Each house has its own granary. I have noticed garbage pits containing corn husks and refuse from sweet potatoes, but there is as a rule no organized scheme for disposing of refuse; dogs and pigs are the scavengers. There is no particular place for defecation; people use the bush. [485] 343 364

Every man has a knowledge of house-building. Women do not actually build, but, along with the children, they pour water into the clay pit and carry clay to the men who are plastering the walls. Ngonga says, "People would be surprised to see a woman building a house. They would call her a he-woman." Men help one another in house-building by giving reciprocal service for which there is a gift of food and beer. 462 476 [338]

A deep rectangular clay pit is made as close to the house as possible, and the children thoroughly enjoy puddling the clay with their 338

VII. EDUCATION

Industrial Training and Division of Labor

871 Usually there is no formality connected with the industrial and occupational training of Ovimbundu children. The section dealing with play shows that boys and girls learn by spontaneous imitation of their elders.

874 There are, however, exceptions to this general truth. Special rites connected with the training and inauguration of blacksmiths and hunters have been described. The training of medicine-men and women will be dealt with in chapter IX, "Religion."

462 463 In describing economic life in chapter V, division of labor on a sex basis; also specialization in industry because of peculiar tastes and aptitudes, were noted. There is clearly a twofold division in industrial life. In the first place sex determines occupation, and within this primary grouping there is a secondary grouping depending [467] on personal preference and individual ability. I have found no instance of exclusive hereditary right to any occupation or industry.

462 The net result of the Umbundu system of division of labor is indicated by the following summary:

[342] When building houses, men dig the rectangular trench, cut the poles for the framework, lash the crosspieces, cut grass and lay the thatch, then place clay over the wattle walls. Women carry water for mixing the clay and convey the moist clay to the plasterers. [224] Children puddle the clay with their feet. Males are hunters both professional and general. During a communal hunt women and children assist in driving game, which is frightened by the firing of [857] grass. Boys organize games in which they imitate these activities. [226] Men fish with a line and bait, whereas women use baskets and [231] narcotic poison. Men and boys take care of cattle and have charge of dogs. Women and girls give what slight attention is afforded to other domestic animals. Male specialists castrate bulls and goats.

[241] During agricultural operations men clear the ground and burn the bush. Women carry on hoe cultivation without assistance from [482] men. Men are the chief carriers in caravans, but women and children may sometimes be seen carrying loads. They march in line with the men but have smaller burdens. Males are employed in blacksmith's work, wood-carving, making weapons and tools, weaving mats, dressing hides, spinning cotton, and formerly in weaving on an upright loom. Men are exclusively the makers of

Men are exclusively the makers of 462
musical instruments, and males are the musicians. Men are the [534]
only persons engaged in warfare and administration, and the *onjango*
or council house is used exclusively by males. Men follow the [756]
occupation of medicine-man, in which there is considerable specialization. Female practitioners deal with pregnancy and women's ailments. In addition to the tasks for women mentioned above, the following are staple occupations: collecting firewood, drawing water, caring for infants, making pottery, weaving baskets, dancing, and singing. Young girls share these activities with older women.

The foregoing categories explain division on the grounds of sex. 463
Degrees of specialization are not so easy to formulate, but in general a man follows some one occupation, for example wood-carving. Then within this occupation there is specialization in the making of drums, domestic utensils, or figurines.

Almost any woman could make pottery or baskets, but the difference in skill leads naturally to concentration in the hands of expert potters and basket-weavers respectively. These sell their [432]
wares to those who either do not make such articles or are inept at the process.

STANDARDS OF CONDUCT, MANNERS, AND SALUTATIONS

The parents of a child, also his maternal uncle, assume respon- 861
sibility for training in the precepts and standards given here. The 867
maternal uncle, who is the mother's oldest brother, is particularly interested because he has to pay fines should his sister's children commit thefts. The evidence indicates that the home and restricted family have formative influences over the conduct of children.

Children are beaten if they tell lies, answer old people rudely, or steal food. Ngonga says that his "stealing hand" was once placed in the hot leaves of the cooking pot. If a child steals an egg which is cooking, the hot egg is held between the culprit's hands.

One cannot fail to notice the quiet and unobtrusive way in which children sit in the presence of their elders both in the home and in the council house. Children do not speak when their elders are in [858]
conversation, unless addressed.

A child, likewise an adult, receives a gift with both hands. The [576]
implied idea is that reception with one hand is a depreciation of the gift. If a child holds out one hand, the hand is slapped. When receiving, an Ocimbundu says "*kuku*," literally grandfather or elder. Colloquially the word is used to mean greeting, "I thank you," or "I beg your pardon."

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way. Such instances as these came to light when my primary intention was a study of the use of wooden arrows for killing birds. 105 182 825

An inquiry about the names of trees and the use of timbers led to the topic of making and using wooden figures for magical purposes. Woodcraft, wood-carving, and religion are associated.

There is no fallacy so great as that of supposing that data may be collected and retained in mutually exclusive divisions. For example, a study of proverbs leads to native ideas concerning government, succession to office, and standards of conduct. The Ovimbundu say, "A turtle cannot climb on a tree stump, some one has to place it there." What is the meaning of this proverb? There are some men who occupy positions for which they have no ability; such men have been chosen through influence. The normal successor to chieftainship and kingship is the eldest son of the deceased man's principal wife, but if this rightful successor is stupid, some other son will be chosen. Yet the foolish youth may have friends who see their own advantage in having a weak ruler; they therefore combine to place him in office. The turtle has been placed on the tree stump, since it could not climb there.

In addition, folklore shows projection of the mentality of human beings into the lives of animals. Bird cries, with their supposed calls and answers, indicate that the birds have their family relationships involving strife, love, jealousy, and generosity. To the Ovimbundu, birds are a feathered human community.

Proverbs reveal a philosophy which is expressed by the German *Weltanschauung*. "If you are full of food, do not climb on a leopard's back; the leopard may be hungry." This means that one should not be foolishly exalted through good fortune. "You cannot tie a buck's head in a cloth; the horns will stick out," expresses the idea that crime cannot be concealed. "Hot water does not burn a house, and cold water does not make mush," is a sarcastic reply to one who boasts of things he cannot do. A riddle may express a philosophical train of thought. "What is it that lives while it dies and dies while it lives?" This is the log of wood the end of which is from time to time pushed farther into the fire. Like a human life, the log is being slowly consumed while yet living. Such examples as these call attention to a welding of thought, language, nature lore, and ideas that regulate conduct. 538 829 182

In considering food supply and occupations, division of labor on a sex basis is clear. Social sanctions have determined the appro- 183 462 105

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priateness of certain tasks for males and females respectively, and individuals reflect these attitudes in their ideas and conduct.

My interpreter and others who were questioned laughed at the idea that men and women might interchange their occupations in the course of house-building. A woman collects wood for fuel, but not for house-building. Structural work is in the hands of men who dig the foundations, erect the poles, tie the crosspieces and add the roof. Women carry water for mixing the clay which is puddled by children; men, women, and children apply wet clay to the wattle walls. "Suppose a man should carry water?" I asked. "He would be laughed at and people would say that he was a he-woman," came the ready answer.

Women invariably make pottery among the Ovimbundu, but this is not always so in Negro tribes. Women of the Ovimbundu are likewise basket-makers, but they do not make mats, for this occupation is considered suitable for men only. Only women pound corn; before daybreak the heavy wooden pestles are at work and until sunset the rocks reserved for this operation are the centers of female activity, which includes singing and gossip. Only men herd cattle and only males are hunters. Women and children are the collectors of wild fruits and caterpillars, but only men take honey from the hives.

Agriculture and the preparation of food are entirely in the hands of the women. Men never eat with women; the latter have to carry the prepared food to the men's communal house in the middle of the village. Both men and women catch fish, but there are methods appropriate for each sex. There is a sex-division of labor without any implication of the inferiority of women.

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Occupations cannot be studied merely in a formal way, for, although the tasks are performed every day, a ceremonial element is involved. A clay pit is consecrated by the killing of a fowl; so also is the rock which is used as a base for pounding grain. The young blacksmith is initiated after two years of apprenticeship. On this occasion a dog is killed with the hammer which the master made for his pupil and the blood of the sacrificed animal is sprinkled on the tools. The remainder of the ritual and belief has been described in connection with occupations of the Ovimbundu. Study of the blacksmith's work was begun as research in technology; but failure to purchase the large hammer, even for a tempting sum, led to the discovery of considerable ritual.

Abstention from sexual relationships is enjoined on men and women who are going fishing. That copulation would induce the

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824 semblance for a time caused confusion in my mind, were well known to be
825 distinct; though occasionally a prolonged and serious argument would arise among the old men respecting the correct Umbundu names for two similar snakes.

The cries of birds are interpreted in terms of human conversation: thus the female hornbill says to her mate, "I'm going; I'm going; I'm going to our village;" to which the male replies, "Don't go. The rain has come; let us plant." Another bird says, "Where will the guests stay? where? where? where?" This is an intimation that strangers will visit the village. All animals play a part in folk stories: human beings when introduced are usually of secondary importance.

Nature lore is, of course, fundamental to industries, since the artisans must know the best timbers for particular purposes. Thus certain woods yield the best charcoal for a blacksmith's forge; other woods are essential for house building because the timbers resist attacks of termites; again certain trees yield bark for making rope; while other woods are used for carving animals and household utensils.

[462] I am not sure of the extent to which women participate in nature lore; but certainly their knowledge cannot equal that of the men, since women are concerned chiefly with agriculture, domestic work, care of children, and collection of firewood. Yet women and little children are collectors. I have seem many of them together gathering caterpillars which are to be made into soup. Women know the plants that will yield dyes for basketry, and from women some of the bird calls were obtained. The conversation of men bears on their occupations and the nature lore fundamental to these; therefore women must learn, though perhaps only by unconscious absorption.

224 In connection with a study of food supply the occupation of hunting comes most closely to the general nature lore mentioned above. Here a distinction should be made between hunting as a general occupation for males, and hunting by a professional who gives his life to the work. The only occasion on which women and children assist hunters is during a communal hunt, when all the inhabitants of a village fire the dry grass and aid in the capture of game by shouting and driving the frightened animals.

A professional hunter is usually called ukongo, more rarely onyanga. The occupation is not hereditary. A boy has to serve two years with a professional hunter before his initiation. The principal guests at the initiation feast are professional hunters, who alone may dance, though a miscellaneous company is present. The boy who seeks initiation is required to keep quite still until he feels the "spirit on his head;" then he distributes meat to the people present. The meat used at the feast is that of antelope shot by

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595 of the village. The meals are brought there by those wives who are at the
562 time cohabiting with their husbands. But an exception is made in case of menstruation, for a woman is not allowed to cook or handle food during her period. At such times the preparation and transfer of food is carried out by another wife, and of course the time comes when such a service can be
241 requited. I found no survival of agricultural rites such as offering first fruits or other similar ceremony.

In some tribes of Sudanic and Bantu Negroes agricultural rites are important in relation to sowing and harvest, since land is in the first place the property of dead ancestors, but so far as my inquiries go such rites are not now known to the Ovimbundu. Maize may be pounded only on rocks that have been consecrated by the medicine-man: he kills a chicken and sprinkles
[462 the surface of the rock with its blood. Only women may pound corn, and a
838] youth who persisted in dressing as a woman and pounding on the rocks was beaten by his relatives. This information gave a clue to homosexual practices, but the information obtained was meager.

231 In connection with the care of domestic animals many tempting digressions present themselves, but I am concerned only with beliefs, ritual, and division of labor. Chickens are of ritual importance since they provide the least expensive sacrifice, and in connection with industries the piacular use of chickens will presently be mentioned. For sacrificial purposes a goat is preferred to a sheep since it makes more noise; but the reason for this is not clear, though making a surmise I would say that the noise better appeases ancestral spirits to whom most sacrifices are made. Pigs are kept, but I did not hear of them being used for sacrifice. The animals so far mentioned have little or no attention. Goats fend entirely for themselves; so also do sheep. Chickens receive maize from women and children, who also gather the eggs. Pigs receive maize and mush from cooking pots or that discarded in making beer, but they depend largely on foraging in refuse pits.

The castration of pigs and bulls is the work of a male specialist who receives a fee of four yards of cloth for operating on the latter animal, but only a small gift of tobacco or similar recognition for castrating a pig.

The Ovimbundu have acquired cattle of the long-horned Damara breed, and in connection with the care of these some important points of ritual and division of labor should be recorded. The herding of cattle is
[462] exclusively the work of males, and I am not aware that women have any
234 tasks connected with cattle. Only in recent times have some male owners of cattle begun to milk the cows. This they do somewhat stealthily, deceiving the cow from time to time by allowing the calf to suck for a few moments. If asked why milk is not used, the owners say that calves deprived of suck-

5: Hambly E-5 (1929-30)1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

sided permanently in the wooden figure. This ritual murder is now impossible, but the wooden figures are still used in the way described. 326 778

Women are never engaged in blacksmiths' work; neither are they employed as wood carvers. Among men wood carving is a specialized occupation, and within the craft itself are men who deal solely with one branch of the work. Thus in a village perhaps only one man is capable of making a drum, while another carves life-like wooden figures of animals, and a third specializes in the fabrication of household implements. [462] 532

Among the Ovimbundu women are the only potters, but I found just one exception in the case of a man who said that he learned the potter's craft in eastern Angola among the Vachokue. No ritual is connected with the making of pottery, but I observed that women always frequented one pit for their clay and in doing so passed better clay which was more accessible. I learned that a clay pit has to be consecrated by a medicine-man who kills a chicken and sprinkles the blood in the pit. All women at some time learn the arts of pottery making and basketry, but by the process of selection the industries become concentrated in the hands of the most skillful. 462 323 [782]

Only women make baskets; a craft in which they are skilled, especially in the gathering of plants and the extraction of dyes of soft shades. Such dyes have considerable endurance even though exposed to bright sunlight. Imported dyes are now competing with indigenous products, but the latter are still preferred in most localities. One might expect that women who are skilled in basket making would be expert weavers of mats, but this is not so. Mat making is in the hands of men who are skilled specialists, and within the mat making industry are at least three principal divisions of the craft, one for each type of mat. 462 285

Men spin cotton for mending clothes, but I have not seen women so engaged. I did not see any looms in use in Angola, but they survived up to a few years ago, and in the youth of my interpreter, who was about thirty years of age, looms worked by men were plentiful. 283 462 286

House building shows a division of labor according to age and sex. Men are responsible for cutting the poles, digging the trench in which these uprights are set, and binding the cross-pieces with bark. Men are likewise responsible for plastering the walls and laying the thatch. Women carry water to the clay pit and transport the puddled clay to the men who are plastering the walls. Children, some of them so young that they have to be rescued from a swampy grave, delight in puddling the clay with their feet. The rectangular pit is always as near the house as possible in order to minimize the labor of transport. I suggested that some of the tasks should 462 331

5: Hambly E-5 (1929-30) 1934 FP 13 Mbundu FP13

462 be reversed and asked whether men could not carry the water. I was told
331 that such a man would be laughed at and called a "he-woman." Yet division of labor does not imply sex inferiority, and ridicule would arise from incongruity.

MEDICINE-MEN

759 The training of a medicine-man (ocimbanda) and a medicine-woman
791 (chambula) involves few formalities, but this class of work requires that a novice shall have "spirit in the head." When visited by a sick boy the medicine-man shakes his divination basket and if a certain combination of objects appears, he says, "Your father was ocimbanda and his spirit wants you." The boy who is thus adopted has to accompany the medicine-man, his master, carrying apparatus and standing near to play a small friction drum while the master is shaking his divination basket.

Specialization among medicine-men is carried to great degree of refinement, especially among those practitioners who profess therapeutic knowledge. I employed three medicine-men to collect plants, of which they appeared to have an expert knowledge. Umbundu names were given and the curative properties of each plant were explained with enthusiasm and evident conviction. The men were undoubtedly sincere in their own beliefs. A specialist who can cure blood in the urine, and another who is said to treat dizziness successfully, are greatly respected. The rainmaker is ocimbanda epulia, "the medicine-man of the rain," who dances while flourishing a cow-tail switch, and blowing a shrill whistle intermittently.

Ocimbanda is of course distinguished from ongango, since the former is concerned with socially beneficent tasks such as those mentioned, while
[759] the latter may cause sickness, impotence, and sterility. In earlier days the task of finding sorcerers (ongango) by use of the poison ordeal was that of an ocimbanda. Medicine-women are called in to take care of difficult cases of childbirth, and I have seen a medicine-woman painting the face of a pregnant woman, who thereafter observed certain taboos.

Space will not permit enumeration of the contents of a divination basket and the significance attached to each item; neither can I give details of ceremonies for curing the sick or bringing a thief back to the village, but the foregoing notes suffice to show that the craft is specialized and still important. A medicine-man ceremonially washes a king or chief on rare occasions. He makes new fire by twirling; though flint and steel, also
[782] matches, are known. When a new village is founded a medicine-man stirs the blood of sacrificed animals with the claws of a chicken; then he sprinkles this blood on each new house.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

could send food.' 'Perhaps your mother is dead, and she has to think of your father.' A man should not cook for himself in a village, by a rule of convention which has no sanction attached, although he may do so when away working.

Clearing fields, house-building, and thatching are men's work, as are brick-making, fishing, hunting, mat-making, sewing, and woodwork. Beer-brewing, cooking, maize-pounding, and water and firewood gathering are women's work. Men and women can work together in most forms of agriculture, sowing, hoeing, harvesting, feeding small stock and treating tobacco. The division of labour is based on ideas of what is natural and fitting, not on any sanctions, mystical or otherwise. Nor is the division always strictly observed. A man may fetch water if his wife is ill, or simply away visiting relatives, and I have seen an adolescent boy pounding out maize on a pounding-block.

A man should look after his sick wife. There is a song which is sung about the married couples of the village, each being named in turn, which tells how the husband went to the post and his wife climbed a tree to get some fruit down. She fell down and hurt herself and then wailed because there was nobody to look after her. A woman who is ill for some time will return to her kin to get better.

The husband does not attend his wife's funeral, but washes himself all over, and then has to lie down asleep, or as if sleeping, during the funeral. Grains of maize and other crops may be, but are not always, even at pagan funerals, thrown over a woman's coffin as it is taken to the cemetery. A man should leave his old home when his wife dies, although this rule is neglected nowadays, certainly by the owners of brick houses. After a year or two, a widower should *ala mwaga*, pile up stones on his wife's grave, a duty which has behind it a vague mystical sanction of illness. The widow of a hunter should be buried beside her husband even though after his death she has married again.[17]

A widow may marry again about six months after the funeral. The exception to this is the *isakala*, the chief's main wife. Formerly, it was permitted for a widow to marry her husband's

[17] A case of this occurred during my stay.

1: Childs M-S (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

the household of the headman Sikillile, who had had four wives and one young Esele concubine. At the time of my last visit (1936), however, there were only two wives and the concubine, one wife having died, and another having gone to her people.

To complete the picture of the villagers, their numbers were as follows:

Village	Men	Women	Children		Total
			Male	Female	
In Sikillile's village . .	24	35	31	37	127
In Ciyanda . . .	5	8	2	4	19
In Kanjengo . . .	3	6	3	1	13
At the School . . .	10	11	10	6	37
Total . . .	42	60	46	48	
	Adults: 102		Children: 94[1]		196

In Sikillile's village there were domestic animals as follows: 9 head of cattle, 13 goats, 20 sheep, 100 pigs, and about 100 chickens. There was practically no professional specialization; there were almost no specialists living in the village: no blacksmith or carpenter, no mat-maker, but only one 'hunter of meat', and three 'hunters of (bee-) hives'. As to the women, all could make baskets, and there were several who had made pottery, but were not doing so at the time.

Pigs, chickens, and dogs roamed the village, functioning as a D.S.C. and a sewer system combined. Were it not for these scavengers the villages of the Ovimbundu would present an even more untidy spectacle than is the case. There is no other regular disposal of refuse, nor are there any latrines or privies.[2]

It will be seen that there is practically no division of labour as between households: each is practically a self-contained unit. The

[1] It was reported that in addition to the children then living, these same households had lost 57 by death (29 males and 28 females).

[2] At Ngendo the school village had two or three enclosed pit privies. The Umbundu euphemism for defecate, 'go to the bush' (*ohu enda kuenge*), is revealing. Even more revealing is a proverb which advises one not to burn his bridges behind him, but literally it runs as follows:

Nda ua kinga kuti, Si endi kuyimua ongo,
Nda o ka ellili yi?

If you forswear yourself saying, I shall not go behind the house,
Then will you go (to) urinate where?

There is a more shocking version which, however, may not be really authentic.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

heavy tasks and the close and constant routine of housework, on the other hand, sometimes require more than casual urging by the mother. Biographical evidence agrees with observation on this point, but nevertheless few girls reach puberty without attaining proficiency in the various household tasks. The decline of polygyny has probably hastened the girl's education in the household arts. When there is only one wife in the household, not only must she have more regular help from her daughters, but also it is more likely that the daughters will have to take on full responsibility at those times when the mother is unable for ritual reasons to take part in the preparation of her husband's food.[1] Biographical sources indicate that this tendency was already operating at least fifty or sixty years ago.

Every Ocimbundu assumes that his sustenance will come from cultivation of the soil. The 'professions' which a child may learn are therefore in the nature of side-lines. Although the Ovimbundu are not a true cattle-rearing people, they possess many domestic animals, especially dogs, pigs, sheep, goats, and chickens. Chickens are owned and looked after by both men and women, but the other animals only by the men. Boys may have small stock of their own, and a boy's economic independence most frequently begins with owning a chicken. Herding has been a function of the sister's son and even now there is reluctance on the part of boys to herd for their fathers. Animal husbandry is largely a commercial enterprise, save in the extreme southern tribes of Kalukembe, Ngalangi, &c.

The principal side-line 'professions' (*ovipinduko*) may be listed as follows:

For Girls

Basket-making, which is practised by all to a limited extent, but excelled in by relatively few.

Pottery-making.

Medical-practice and Divination (for conditions, see *infra*).

For Boys

Mat-making, which includes the making of four distinct types of mats each of which has its specialist; the making of trays and large baskets for granaries.

[1] i.e. at the times of her menstrual periods, after the birth of a child, &c.

463 *Wood-working*, including the following specializations:
962 Doors, windows, and their frames; coffins.
[322] Beds, tables, chairs, &c.
Mortars, pestles, grinding-handles, and handles for various iron implements.
Stools, household utensils, carved images, staves, knobkerries, &c.
Drums and other musical instruments.
Canoes (dug-outs and coracles).
Rope-making, nets, and rudimentary weaving.
Thatching has its specialists although all men can thatch.
Fishing.
Bee-hunting, including the making of hives.
224 *Hunting*.
326 *Iron-smelting and smithing*.
791 *Medical-practice and Divination*.

The last three professions of the list are sacred and are entered under special conditions. They are often passed on by inheritance, but not always. All of them require sacrifice at certain stages, and when the enslavement of a spirit (*oku andeka*) is required, it is socially allowable. This seems to be the case with these offices as with those of the king and his ministers, both because of benefits accruing to the community in their exercise and also because of inherent danger to the individuals who exercise these functions.

177 The advent of European commerce, industry, and government
463 has created a number of types of employment for boys and young men, some of which entail prolonged absence from the village and a loosening or severing of kinship ties. Church and mission have
[797] also offered employment and have opened new opportunities for advance in place and in position.

861 Later childhood, then, is the period of technical training during which it is expected that a large amount of economic responsibility will be assumed. A child begins to own property even before this, and from the beginning of later childhood will be accounted legally responsible for his actions. It is recognized, however, that he should not be set tasks beyond the experience or ability of his age and that the full responsibility of adulthood will only come with marriage.

[538] *Umālihil ka tonyālil ongula yonale*;
A youth does not scrape the pig for the wedding feast;
pekonjo ;pa siala (*ovonya*).
on the hoof there remain (bristles).

242 When a field is wearing out, the corn growing shorter and bearing
244 fewer ears to the stalk,[1] the woman makes a final planting of corn, sticking cuttings of manioc between the rows. Most of these cuttings take root and grow. It takes two or three years for the tubers of this plant to mature in an old field, but in some parts of the country where manioc is set in new land it matures within a year. The leaves of the plant are used as a vegetable with corn-meal, and manioc meal is used as a basic substitute when corn is short.

The onaka or river-garden

241 In August a woman plants her onaka, near a stream in the alluvial soil, or in some river bed. Here she plants corn which will be ready for eating during the January period of food shortage, as well as cabbage and other vegetables.

Organisation of labour

[462] Formerly men did the heavier work of clearing new fields, although, as has been noted above, since the introduction of wage labour much of the work is left to the women. Men may also have their own fields, the produce of which is sold to provide ready cash to clothe the family, pay taxes etc. The women's fields are intended to feed the family. Children help their parents in the fields, but also have their own plots. Gardens are made by each household, i.e. by each wife where there are a number of wives. Neighbours often co-operate during the harvesting
[474] period, after which beer is supplied by the owner of the field which has been harvested.[2]

HUNTING[3]

Most men and boys hunt, and women and children may help in burning
796 the grass and driving the game during the annual communal fire-hunts.
224 But the professional hunter or ukongo is a recognised specialist, qualified by specific training and dependent on his knowledge of hunting magic
[463] and ritual for his success. A boy becomes a ukongo by an apprenticeship
[468] of about two years to an older hunter. This period culminates in a ceremony of inauguration, which may be attended by all the villagers but at which only the professional hunters dance. Several ukongo provide game, which is cooked for the feast; the dancing commences but the novice remains still and silent until he feels the "spirit of the head"; he then rises and distributes game to the villagers. Blood from the animals killed is sprinkled over his weapons, which have been made by the ukongo who has trained him. From now on his daily life is subject to certain ritual prohibitions: he must not sleep with his wife on the night before going on a hunt, special food and cooking-pots must be used for him, etc.

469 A professional hunter usually works alone, using bows and arrows,

(1) There is no information concerning the length of the farming-cycle.
(2) Childs, personal communication.
(3) See Heanly, *Bantu Studies*, 1934, and *Ovimbundu*, 1934, pp.145-5; Cashman, 1944, pp.113-39.

Mat-making

462 285 [412] The making of mats is a specialised craft for men. Generally elderly men are the mat-makers. Two tools are used, a borer and a needle, both products of the blacksmith's forge. Hambly[1] describes the making of reed sleeping mats, large mats used for partitions, and string bags. There are four distinct types of mats, each of which has its specialist.[2]

Leather-work

282 Leather pouches worn on a broad leather belt are part of the essential equipment of the hunter. The pouch is square, rectangular, or semi-cylindrical in shape, and may be decorated with cross-shaped patterns, or brass-headed nails used for decorative effect. Hide is also used for the seats of four-legged wooden stools. Hides are crudely dressed: they are soaked, the inner surface rubbed with ashes, the hair scraped away, and the hide pegged out.[3]

Wood-carving

323 [463] Wood-carving, which is men's work, includes the following specialisations: doors, windows and their frames; coffins; beds, tables and chairs; mortars, pestles, grinding-handles, and handles for various iron implements; stools, household utensils, carved images etc.; drums and other musical instruments; canoes (dug-outs and coracles).[4] Illustrations are given by Hambly.[5]

TRADE

438 484 791 [682] Caravan trade is now confined to short journeys when corn, beans and beeswax are carried by men and women porters to the traders' stores. Formerly however it was an important feature of tribal life. Each caravan had its professional leader, and was accompanied by a diviner or medicine-man. Before a caravan started out, a ceremony was performed at which the principal performers were the village headman and the medicine-man. The head of the former headman was brought from its box, sewn in cowhide; blood from a sacrificed animal was sprinkled on the head, and invocation was made to the deceased by the village headman, asking for good fortune for the journey.[6]

438 436 Today the Ovimbundu exchange products among themselves both by barter and the use of Portuguese money,[7] but there are no large markets except in the towns.

[439] 438 The "trade-agreements" between the Ovimbundu kingdoms and between the Ovimbundu and other tribes have been mentioned above.[8] Accompanying these, regional industrial and commercial specialisations within Ovimbundu country developed. Thus in the middle of the last century

(1) Hambly, op.cit., pp.169-70.
(2) Childs, 1949, p.169.
(3) Hambly, op.cit., p.176.
(4) Childs, op.cit., p.110.
(5) Op.cit., Plates XIII to XVII.
(6) Hambly, op.cit., p.156.
(7) For details of Ovimbundu units of measurement see Hambly, op.cit., p.157.
(8) p.9.

advancement, will go to the head of their *olunu* to ask for his intercession with the spirits.[1] 613

As legal head of the village, the *sekulu yimbo* presides over both the more serious cases, which are held before the whole village on the dance-floor, and the simpler ones, which require the attendance only of those concerned, together with their respective elders, and may be taken up either in the *onjango* or in the headman's own courtyard. Hambly seems to suggest that all the section-heads act with the village headman as a kind of council, but does not give details. He states also that the *olosekulu* (sing. *sekulu*) of the village formerly had charge of trials for murder, theft, adultery, and arguments over land,[2] and points out that they were more active in the legal system than the chiefs.[3] This is even more true today, when the village court of justice continues to function in spite of political and administrative changes, although the offices of chiefs and to some extent of sub-chiefs have largely decayed. 622 623 691 [177]

Other functions of the village headman include: the distribution of land to the various families when new village sites are opened;[4] the direction of the communal fire-hunts;[5] and, today, the collecting of taxes from the villagers and the direction and organisation of labour to work on the roads.[6] But however numerous the headman's official duties, he usually finds some time to attend to his own affairs, whether he is a farmer, hunter, or trader.[7] 622 423 651 466 [463]

Succession to headmanship is usually from father to son or from elder to younger brother, "with only as much recognition of primogeniture as belongs to the general ... hierarchy of age."[8] Succession is, however, affected by the "democratic" tendencies in succession to chieftainship.[9] 622 643

The Chief (osoma or sova)[10]

The Ovimbundu are grouped in 22 chiefdoms, of which half were in the past generally tributary to the more powerful chiefs.[11] At the same time each chiefdom had its separate government and could be considered as a unit in itself. Effective European occupation and direct rule have atrophied the chiefly office among the Ovimbundu, until today chiefs survive as little more than "living museum pieces".[12] Childs[13] enumerates the functions of the chiefly office as follows: 631 643 [177]

(a) *Religious.* The chief's ancestral spirits were the principal chiefdom deities, and the king was high-priest as well as the visible "vice-regent and incarnation" of the spirits. 643 793 769

(1) Childs, personal communication.
(2) The maternal uncle is responsible for settling disputes over property which occur within the *olunu*. (Hambly op.cit., p.200).
(3) Ibid.
(4) Ibid.
(5) Cushman, op.cit., p.115.
(6) Ibid., p.121.
(7) Childs, op.cit., p.36.
(8) Ibid., p.44.
(9) Ibid.
(10) *Osoma* means chief or king. *Soma* is the personalised form used with the name. This the Portuguese writers have corrupted into *sova* or *soba*. (Childs, personal communication)
(11) See above, p.2.
(12) Childs, op.cit., p.20.
(13) Ibid.

night in the *etambo* praying to or communing with ancestral spirits, when the occasion arises; Suku is regarded as too remote to receive prayers. 693 613

While cooking, a woman may spill a little meal on the ground for the spirits; at a meal, a person may spill a little food or beer for the same purpose. A portion of the meat at a feast may likewise be sacrificed, but it is often a less desirable portion, such as the intestines.[1] 782

Agricultural rituals were held before planting, at which time the headman and his wife had intercourse in their field and sacred seed from the chief's granary was distributed, a few grains to be mixed with the seed to be planted on each plot. When the maize began to ripen a few ears were sent to the chief before any were eaten.[2] 241 789

DIVINERS[3]

The word *ocimbanda* is used both for a diviner and for a maker of medicines. To distinguish the two, the diviner may be called *ocimbanda congombo* ("of the basket"), the herbalist *ocimbanda coviti* ("of trees or sticks"). Some practitioners are both diviner and herbalist. A female diviner is called *cambula*.[4] An *ocimbanda* frequently specialises in a certain kind of case;[5] and among the members of the profession there are many degrees of proficiency. One may work only in his own village, another may be consulted on matters of concern to the whole district or chiefdom; others go on professional journeys carrying their baskets, and accumulate profits in animals and cloth. The greater the reputation of the diviner, the greater the charges he makes for his services. 796 463

The tasks of the *ocimbanda* are:-

(a) To discover the cause of sickness, death, or any evil which has befallen the individual or the community. Sickness and death are always believed to be due either to the workings of spirits who are demanding sacrifices, or to living enemies who have malicious spirits under their control or who have bought potent charms. The diviner, after consulting the spirit who speaks in and through his basket, names the spirit who is causing the trouble and tells the victim what its demands are, or, if the enemy is a living person, indicates in a general manner from whence the trouble comes, e.g. to a woman "Your baskets are too well made; you are hated because of them", or, to a man, "This illness was found on a journey taken to collect a debt". If requested, the diviner makes a countercharm to offset that which has caused the ill. 787 753

(b) To interpret omens and dreams.

(c) To give advice on personal problems.

(d) To dispense medicines and charms.

(e) To bring or withhold rain, or to see who is guilty of withholding it. [789]

(1) Ibid., see also Cushman, loc.cit.
(2) Childs, personal communication.
(3) Based on Tucker, 1940.
(4) Hambly, (3) 1934.
(5) Ibid.

time to the village of the paramount chief. These periods spent away from home continue into adolescence. Not only relatives, but also friends, blood-brothers and *vakuacisoko* (see below) exchange children in this way. 604 857

Later childhood

No definite time marks the transition from early to later childhood, but there are marked differences between the two stages. As soon as the child is physically able, he begins to assume a definite role in the community. Soon after a child gets his permanent teeth, a notch in the form of an inverted V is chipped between the two upper front incisors. Formerly the beginning of the period was marked for the boy by his first trip with a trading caravan; today a boy of this age may begin to work in the fields with his father, or begin to learn a trade, or be sent to school. A girl starts to learn field-work and housework. 852 858

Professions

A boy is expected to learn the profession or *ocipinduko* in which his father or his mother's brother is expert, and after that, should he wish to learn some other side-line profession, he may apprentice himself. All children, both boys and girls, are expected to learn to cultivate, but that is not counted as a profession. The principal *ovipinduko* (professions) listed by Childs are: for girls, basket-making, pottery-making, medical practice and divination; for boys, mat-making, wood-working, rope-making, thatching, fishing, apiculture, hunting, smithing, and medical practice and divination. The last three, as has been mentioned above, are "sacred" and entered under special conditions. 462 868 [463]

"Later childhood, then, is the period of technical training during which it is expected that a large amount of economic responsibility will be assumed. A child begins to own property even before this, and from the beginning of childhood will be accounted legally responsible for his actions. It is recognised, however, that he should not be set tasks beyond the experience or ability of his age and that the full responsibility of adulthood will come only with marriage."(1) 866 [672]

The coming of European commerce, industry, and government has created new types of employment for boys and men, some of which cause a prolonged absence from the village and a loosening or severing of kinship ties. There are no estimates of the number of persons employed by Europeans, or the average length of their absence from home. 178 466

ADOLESCENCE(2)

Childs found that the onset of puberty was late among the Ovimbundu, coming between fourteen and sixteen years for girls and between fifteen and seventeen years for boys. Soon after puberty young people generally stop sleeping in the parents' house. The girls congregate in kitchens and each boy builds himself a house, in which he will live through adolescence 882

(1) Childs, op.cit., p.110.
(2) Based on Childs, op.cit., pp.58-9 and 111-18.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

the tree in order to lower the hive with a long rope of bark or plaited 231
fiber, while beneath the tree men are prepared to take the hive, which is opened over a smoky fire. The men wear no protection, consequently they are badly stung. Boys are encouraged to help, and those who run away receive no honey. Honey may be eaten 263
alone or with manioc. No drink is made from honey only, but 273
ochasa is the name given to beer with honey in it. *Ovingundu* is a drink made from pounded corn which has been soaked in water to which a little honey has been added. The drink is allowed to remain untouched over night; thus it becomes sweet and is mildly intoxicating.

Wax is a very important item of trade. In the remote places 439
natives bring to small trading posts balls of wax which are about 257
two pounds in weight. These in former days were a standard of [436]
exchange in terms of which other values could be measured. These balls of wax are made into large cakes for foreign export. In the Esele country a fiber strainer is used for cleaning the wax. Honey is sometimes dried in very large baskets which are three feet in diameter and two inches deep. These baskets were not observed among the Ovimbundu, but they are used in the region of Cassanga in southern Angola. The honey of wild bees when eaten in the comb is palatable; it would be more so if one could disregard the presence of numerous dead bees.

The bow is the chief weapon of the hunter. The release of the 411
arrow is made with the index and middle fingers (Plate XXXIX, 171
Fig. 1). I have observed this method among the Ovimbundu of 224
the Benguela Highlands, in the region of Kipungo, in the far south among the Vakuanyama, and among the Vasele of the Novo Redondo hinterland. Arrows differ considerably in pattern as the illustrations show (Plate XVII, Figs. 1-9); the Ovimbundu have arrow-points of excellent workmanship. The manufacture of these arrow-points is [326]
one of the most skilled occupations of the blacksmith. Each man makes his own shafts and feathers them. The arrows of the Vasele have leaf-shaped iron points; so also have those used by the Vakuanyama.

Among the Ovimbundu are specialists who make bows from [463]
elastic woods called *usia* and *osambia*. The bow itself is *ohonji* and the arrow is *usongo*. At the third shot I saw a young Ocimbundu boy split a cane which was placed upright at a distance of thirty-three feet. The throwing club (*ohunya*) is used for killing small game such as hares.

a noose which hangs over the entrance. From Ngalangi I obtained 224
a trap formed by suspending a heavy block of wood inside a box. The animal enters a small circular hole, passes under the heavy block and begins to nibble the grain which is strewn on the bottom of the box. Presently he releases a fine string which brings down the block in such a way that he is pinned underneath. I am informed that this trap is used at Elende, but I have not seen it there.

Some hunters note the feeding and drinking places of their quarry, which is shot from a hiding place in a tree. Young animals may be run down by a hunter in open chase. Screens are not carried in front of a hunter, but he does sometimes dress in the skins of animals. His disguise is completed by wearing a tuft of the animal's hair on his head.

Dogs are used for tiring out young animals in the chase, and also for catching hares. There is a tendency at the present time to improve the breed of native dog by crossing with a large hunting [232] dog from South Africa. In the Esele country I have seen, high on a granite rock, a small cairn of stones which covered the skull of a famous hunting dog. Dogs are used most commonly when the hunt is communal (Plate XXIII, Fig. 1), but the best hunters work alone without the aid of dogs. In the general hunt women and children may take part in driving the game; often a fire is started in the grass, which is very dry in the months of June and July. A hunter who works alone may excite the curiosity of an animal by blowing through a horn of an antelope. Spider's web covers the wide end of the horn.

I have observed a general hunt in which thirty men and boys participated, each carrying a bow and arrows. The party was accompanied by many dogs. The antelope which had been killed was carried on a pole slung on the shoulders of two men. There was intense excitement as the troop advanced toward their village, shouting and jumping. In another hunt of this kind muzzle-loading guns were carried. The Ovimbundu do not use nets in hunting, neither do they poison animals. Decoy animals are not used, but in the large wooden trap (*ocisonga*) a living goat or pig is placed.

It is necessary to distinguish between hunting as a general pas- [463] time, in which all males, and even women and children join to a certain extent, and the hunting of animals by a professional hunter. The professional hunter is usually called *ukongo* (less frequently *enyanga*); but there is no name for the non-professional hunter. A 874
boy who wishes to become a professional hunter has to serve for a 224
time with an *ukongo* before he himself receives this title. There is

The cow's tail is used
237 as a sheath for covering the iron shafts of assagais, and it is sometimes made into a switch which the rain-maker uses during his performances.

233 Bulls are castrated when two years old. The wound is rubbed
[232] with ashes, salt, soot, and palm oil. Bullocks are used for riding, also
[492] for pull-carts introduced by the Boers. The herd obtains most of its food by grazing. In the dry season grass withers, with the result that the animals become thin and stall-feeding is necessary. In former days cattle-raiding was a practice of the Ovimbundu, who
233 robbed the Vacilenge. It is certain that the Ovimbundu did not own
174 cattle when they entered Angola. If the general tradition is correct the Ovimbundu came into Angola from a northeasterly direction, from the borders of the Belgian Congo as it is called today; this is not a cattle-raising region.

The Ovimbundu of Elende have a joke against the people of Bailundu, because the latter on first seeing a cow offered the animal some food on a wooden platter. This story suggests that the Bailundu people, who are of the Ovimbundu confederacy, did not know the animal and its habits as early as did the Ovimbundu themselves.

233 Although the Ovimbundu ~~do not~~ usually kill their cattle they may do so in the months of June and July, because at this time pasture is withered and food is scarce. Animals which are diseased, aged, or injured, are killed and eaten.

231 The native pig is distinguishable from European breeds by its long thin snout and slender development. This breed is said by the Director of Animal Husbandry, Humpata, to be the Keltic breed (Plate LV). There is, he says, no evidence to prove that the
[176] Ovimbundu have at any time domesticated pigs from the wild hogs which are to be found in Angola. There is no family which does not own a pig, and on the whole the pig fares much better than the sheep or the goat. The pig receives water and a daily ration of food, which is usually sweet potatoes and their leaves, together with some
232 corn. Male pigs are castrated at any time between the ages of six
[463] months and one year by an operator who is a paid specialist. The fee for castrating a bull is four yards of cloth, but a small gift is considered sufficient reward for performing the operation on a pig.
[282] If a pig is thin, the leather is said to be of good quality and therefore
252 suitable for making sheaths for knives. Usually the flesh of the pig is eaten shortly after the animal has been killed, but the meat of the bullock, on the contrary, is sometimes dried over a fire and preserved. But this is not a general practice as the animals are too valuable to be slaughtered.

When the clay was being mixed an old pot was broken and pulverized so that some of the powder might be added to the new pot. There may be the underlying idea of continuity in the potter's art. The potters said, *Sanga yi pita* ("Lest it leak"). There may be no purpose other than the imparting of stability to the new clay. 323

I was unable to find any trace of ritual except with reference to the opening of a new clay pit. When a pit is first opened both men and women attend. The head of a chicken is twisted off by a medicine-man, then the bird is held over the pit by either a man or a woman. There is no law or ceremony to determine who shall take the first clay from the pit. The art of making pots is in the hands of female specialists so far as the Ovimbundu are concerned. Observation makes clear that women will go for a long distance to obtain clay from the pit which has been opened in a ceremonial manner. On their way to such a pit they pass clay which would serve their purpose well, but they do not use it. Children sometimes amuse themselves by making animals of clay. [462] [782] [857]

The pottery of the Ovimbundu includes cooking vessels of many sizes, water containers, and very large pots for brewing beer (*olombia vi okukela*). [415]

MATS AND BASKETS

This occupation illustrates division of labor on a sex basis. Baskets are made by women, while mat-making is an occupation for males. As with other trades there is specialization. The majority of women are able to make baskets though the skill of individuals varies. All women who have a knowledge of basketry understand the manufacture of dyes. Only a few men make mats; my informant thought that perhaps one man in ten would have the necessary skill. Such specialization is continued into other occupations; for example, only a few men spin cotton thread, while the majority of people buy pottery from expert female potters. 462 285 [463]

The mat-maker, generally an elderly male, uses two tools, a borer and a needle, both products of the native forge. The borer (*utomo*) for piercing the reeds, consists of a long thin blade in a wooden grip. The needle (*osinja*) is threaded with bark fiber and passed through the holes made by the *utomo*. The bark thread is *ombanja* (plural *olombanja*). 285

The sleeping mat (*esisa*) is made of reeds which are gathered in the early morning by a man who wets and binds his material into bundles, each of which contains reeds of the same length. The length of the reeds varies, of course, with the size of mat he intends to make.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

283 In the beginning a thread from the fluffy mass on the stick is fastened to a corncob or to a potato, the weight of which keeps the thread taut (Plate XXXVI, Fig. 1).

[462] I have never seen a woman spinning and am informed that in former days the working of the loom was a task for men only.

463 In presenting facts bearing on the economic life of the Ovimbundu attention has been paid to the importance of ritual, specialization 791 in industry, and division of labor on a sex basis. Clearly, the economic life is one of the fundamentals of social structure, while at many points it is a field in which the magician works.

132 Topography and climate have fixed certain conditions which, so 241 far as the Benguela Highlands are concerned, favor agriculture on an extensive scale, also the keeping of cattle. In the Benguela Highlands a moderate temperature, combined with sufficient rainfall, has produced a type of vegetation which provides timbers serviceable to the craftsman, together with bush that affords shelter for game.

128 The bearing of these economic facts on the probable origins of traits, and their assembly to form the tribal life of the Ovimbundu, is reserved for discussion in chapters dealing with culture contacts and cultural processes. In chapters X–XII the factual material presented here under "Economic Life" is correlated with what is known of similar activities in cultures surrounding that of the Ovimbundu.

VII. EDUCATION

Industrial Training and Division of Labor

871 Usually there is no formality connected with the industrial and occupational training of Ovimbundu children. The section dealing with play shows that boys and girls learn by spontaneous imitation of their elders.

874 There are, however, exceptions to this general truth. Special rites connected with the training and inauguration of blacksmiths and hunters have been described. The training of medicine-men and women will be dealt with in chapter IX, "Religion."

462 463 In describing economic life in chapter V, division of labor on a sex basis; also specialization in industry because of peculiar tastes and aptitudes, were noted. There is clearly a twofold division in industrial life. In the first place sex determines occupation, and within this primary grouping there is a secondary grouping depending [467] on personal preference and individual ability. I have found no instance of exclusive hereditary right to any occupation or industry.

462 The net result of the Umbundu system of division of labor is indicated by the following summary:

[342] When building houses, men dig the rectangular trench, cut the poles for the framework, lash the crosspieces, cut grass and lay the thatch, then place clay over the wattle walls. Women carry water for mixing the clay and convey the moist clay to the plasterers. [224] Children puddle the clay with their feet. Males are hunters both professional and general. During a communal hunt women and children assist in driving game, which is frightened by the firing of [857] grass. Boys organize games in which they imitate these activities. [226] Men fish with a line and bait, whereas women use baskets and [231] narcotic poison. Men and boys take care of cattle and have charge of dogs. Women and girls give what slight attention is afforded to other domestic animals. Male specialists castrate bulls and goats. [241] During agricultural operations men clear the ground and burn the bush. Women carry on hoe cultivation without assistance from [482] men. Men are the chief carriers in caravans, but women and children may sometimes be seen carrying loads. They march in line with the men but have smaller burdens. Males are employed in blacksmith's work, wood-carving, making weapons and tools, weaving mats, dressing hides, spinning cotton, and formerly in weaving on an upright loom. Men are exclusively the makers of

Men are exclusively the makers of 462

musical instruments, and males are the musicians. Men are the [534
only persons engaged in warfare and administration, and the *onjango* or council house is used exclusively by males. Men follow the [756]
occupation of medicine-man, in which there is considerable specialization. Female practitioners deal with pregnancy and women's ailments. In addition to the tasks for women mentioned above, the following are staple occupations: collecting firewood, drawing water, caring for infants, making pottery, weaving baskets, dancing, and singing. Young girls share these activities with older women.

The foregoing categories explain division on the grounds of sex. 463
Degrees of specialization are not so easy to formulate, but in general a man follows some one occupation, for example wood-carving. Then within this occupation there is specialization in the making of drums, domestic utensils, or figurines.

Almost any woman could make pottery or baskets, but the difference in skill leads naturally to concentration in the hands of expert potters and basket-weavers respectively. These sell their [432]
wares to those who either do not make such articles or are inept at the process.

STANDARDS OF CONDUCT, MANNERS, AND SALUTATIONS

The parents of a child, also his maternal uncle, assume respon- 861
sibility for training in the precepts and standards given here. The 867
maternal uncle, who is the mother's oldest brother, is particularly interested because he has to pay fines should his sister's children commit thefts. The evidence indicates that the home and restricted family have formative influences over the conduct of children.

Children are beaten if they tell lies, answer old people rudely, or steal food. Ngonga says that his "stealing hand" was once placed in the hot leaves of the cooking pot. If a child steals an egg which is cooking, the hot egg is held between the culprit's hands.

One cannot fail to notice the quiet and unobtrusive way in which children sit in the presence of their elders both in the home and in the council house. Children do not speak when their elders are in [858]
conversation, unless addressed.

A child, likewise an adult, receives a gift with both hands. The [576]
implied idea is that reception with one hand is a depreciation of the gift. If a child holds out one hand, the hand is slapped. When receiving, an Ocimbundu says "*kuku*," literally grandfather or elder. Colloquially the word is used to mean greeting, "I thank you," or "I beg your pardon."

535 Almost every evening one may hear the tapping of drums an the songs of dancers, because in addition to dances for a funeral o other special occasion there are ordinary dances of amusement i which lines of men and women advance and retreat, or men an women circle round the drums making arm movements accom panied by a swaying rhythm.

[243] The dance *onyaco*, performed in June when the corn is ripe, ma have an ancient history and special significance as part of an agri cultural rite. When corn is being stored the people sing, "There i grain in the house, may it never be out." There is no dance i [226] connection with fishing.

224 There is mimicry of animals in the hunting game played by boys The frog, the leopard, and other animals are imitated in certai games, but I have no evidence of the performance of mimetic dance in relation to any cult for increasing the supply of animal life.

535 The use of the small ball *ombunje* illustrates the way in which [534] an apparent toy can be used in rites of a religious kind. *Ombunj* consists of a hard spherical fruit about six centimeters in diameter in which several hard seeds rattle. The sphere is covered with a layer of cloth over which lizard skin is stretched and sewn.

[769] When the people wish to commemorate the death of a king, o [789] when the king is sick, the medicine-man (*ocimbanda*) says that there must be *osaka* dancing. A strong man dances for many hours while holding this little ball in his outstretched hand. Other men who are dancing use their fists to hit the muscles of the outstretched arm in an attempt to make the holder drop the ball (*ombunje*). If he does so another man will promptly take hold of it. The precise nature of the endurance test is unexplained, but there is possibly the idea of giving strength to a sick king by this tension and endurance. My interpreter thought this was so, but could not explain why the dance should be performed to commemorate the death of a king. It would seem natural, however, to transfer the *ombunje* rite to a commemorative festival, if in the first place it was part of the last rites of a dying king.

534 There are among the Ovimbundu specialists in dancing, singing, 463 and the playing of musical instruments. *Onjimbi* is the word for a singer of merit who starts the choruses. *Ocili* is a dancer of more than ordinary skill. When a man is required to play a drum or other instrument I have noticed that it is thought necessary to bring a specialist. There is no doubt that drumming requires special aptitude and practice. The man who plays the long drum is *usiki*, the drum

itself is *onoma*. The flat wooden drum without membrane is *ocingufu*, 534
the player of this drum is *usiki wocingufu* (Plate XXVII, Fig. 2). 463
The long tubular drums vary in length from 50 to 103 cm. At a funeral, four of these tubular drums, which are usually held between the legs or placed upright, are played in compound rhythm. A performer always warms the skin of the drum at a fire, and sometimes the pitch is altered by sticking a lump of wax on the membrane of a long drum, or on the sides of a wooden drum.

Dr. Herzog reports as follows, after transcribing several cylinders 533
of phonographic records of rhythms played on the long drum, and after examining motion pictures which were synchronized with the drumming (Plates XXV, XXVI).

"These motion pictures indicate the position of the performer's hands, and suggest that the sharply accented tones are produced by impacts from the phalanges. The higher notes so produced have been marked by notes above the line. A mark placed between notes indicates a very short rest.

"No. 1 (dictaphone record 3) represents the drumming of a young player, who is apparently still an apprentice, since his rhythm is very simple. The three forms of his playing given below were used interchangeably, and he shifted from one to the other without stopping. In the second form, the order of the sharp and of the plain beat is reversed. Otherwise, the sharp beat occurs, in the playing of all drummers, on the off beat. The rhythm of No. 2 (dictaphone record 15) is a little more varied because the player was changed. The drummer of No. 3 (dictaphone record 30) was the best performer in the neighborhood, according to Mr. Hambly; and his playing is the most interesting. The drum records consist of a small number of rhythms which are freely interchanged; the two predominating rhythms are given below. The moving pictures were made from this player's performance.

"The notations found here do not convey to the reader the bewildering complexity of African rhythm, for this appears only when a performance includes the use of several drums and musical instruments in conjunction with dancing."

From Ngalangi a large friction drum 120 cm long and 47 cm in 534
diameter was obtained. This instrument, which was the property [422]
of the village, was played only on public occasions. Apparently the drum had been hollowed from a log of wood, one end of which was left open while the other was covered with hide. To the inner side of this hide a long cane was attached. On the side of the drum

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

[1874-1911]

631 764 funerals (though these burials could be undertaken by the cross-cousins of the deceased). When *vakwatjisoko* came to their partner-chiefdom for a funeral they had the right to steal small live-stock, such as chickens, or pigeons, but not cattle, goats, or [837] pigs. An *ukwatjisoko* could sleep with the wives of his *vakwatjisoko* partners without being sued for damages.[68]

631 [602] The ties of kinship and affinity crossed the boundaries of the sub-chiefdoms and even of the kingdoms.[69] The members [463] [574] of the three spirit-protected professions, blacksmithing, divining, and hunting recognized obligations of hospitality to co-professionals from other parts of the country.[70] Again the caravans were so large that they must have involved people [437] from many sub-chiefdoms, which presupposes a wide range of contacts.

182 It may be said that the picture given here is contradictory and inadequate. How can the existence of large kingdoms be reconciled to the extreme insecurity described by old men? How do the wealthy caravan organizers fit into the political system? What sort of politics were there in the kingdoms? It is not easy to answer these questions owing to the lack of evidence, and, probably, because the kingdoms were already in decline during the latter part of the rubber trade period. Indeed, the impression that accounts of the Ovimbundu in the nineteenth century give is that of adventure, battle, commerce, migration —a vigorous rather than a stable society.[71]

61 114 The kinship system is perhaps the field of Umbundu society which has aroused most interest among anthropologists. Childs and Hastings have written much that is interesting on the old double-descent grouping but as, with the kinship system, the form has been described rather than the functioning and it is

[68] Informants. The account in Childs, pp. 114–15 differs considerably. For this institution elsewhere in Angola see Estermann, 'Clans et alliances de clans', *Anthropos*, 1952.

[69] Childs, p. 54.

[70] Informants.

[71] Magyar describes the king and his courtiers as being extremely despotic towards the villagers, and states that their despotism depended on their having a standing military force called 'Sons of the Elephant' (pp. 278–80). Later accounts do not mention this, and Childs notes (p. 209) that at the height of the rubber trade it was more difficult for the kings to recruit armies for their wars.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13
Angola FP1

M 496 463 Most of the employees of the Benguela Railway are Ovimbundu and many of the old pupils of the Catholic seminaries and of the Protestant secondary school[5] have found employment on it as clerks and telegraphists. The railway has also become a means M [167] of Umbundu migration carrying Ovimbundu to work in the coastal cities and plantations, and on the other side carrying their speech with it to the interior.

A 433 Angola is economically a land of primary production, and its cities and towns are founded on trade. There is little industry, although Lobito is noted for its cement works and saw mill, and drinks, both alcoholic and soft, paper and pottery are all manufactured in Angola.[6] On the coastal plain there are sugar plantations and there are a number of other plantations especially on the western fringe of the Highland, but the main crop of the Highland is maize, grown by the Ovimbundu and sold by the traders to the official boards which have store-houses on A 438 the railway line. The traders have generally tended to scatter themselves over the countryside though now the Government is insisting on new traders settling in recognized hamlets. The A 361 towns are small and frankly rather dismal places, serving as the administrative and postal centres for the neighbourhood, with a parish church, a school, two or three hotels, perhaps a club, and occasional cinema shows and a number of stores with a rather wider range of goods than those in the bush. They are significant from the point of view of communications, linking the traders in the bush to the cities and the railway.

A 49 A network of roads covers the Benguela Highland with the result that all villages are at most only a few miles from a track which is usable by motor vehicles. A truck seen on one of these roads will most likely belong to a trader, though it might belong to an official on one of his rare local trips, to a missionary, or to a labour recruiter. There are now a number of bus services in the Highland. As these serve only a certain number of roads, villagers who want to make a journey of any distance must walk or thumb a lift from a trader (who will charge) or a missionary (who will not charge) or ride on one of the still infrequent bicycles, his own, or a borrowed one.

[5] At Dondi, with Dr. Childs as headmaster.
[6] Egerton, op. cit., pp. 151–2. Galvão and Selvagem, op. cit., pp. 334–8.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

Luveli's income from bricklaying. The laying of the bricks that form a modern villager's house may bring 100 escudos.

The basic cash need of an Otjimbundu, then, is for money to pay government demands and to provide clothing for his wife and children, who seem more likely than the men to get new clothing every year.[1] Add to this the possibility of other calls (e.g. provision for a relative's funeral) a desirable income even for this low level of consumption would be 400 escudos (£5) and a more prosperous villager might earn and spend double the amount. Exceptional individuals still remaining within the normal conditions of Umbundu cultural and social life, such as Kambungo, may earn from 2,000 to 3,000 escudos a year, perhaps even more, from agriculture. Maize is the foundation of the agricultural economy, but Kambungo's remark that maize did not pay seems to reflect a trend to find other openings such as growing coffee, which is, however, subject to difficulties of climate.

Within the villages there is some trade in handmade objects such as pottery, sleeping-mats, and sticks for stirring mush, and there are quite a number of bricklayers, carpenters, and tailors (proprietors of sewing-machines) who have acquired European skills which bring them money. These craftsmen are, on payment of a fee of 250 escudos (a figure given me by a tailor), exempt from contract labour.

Many European residents seem to think that the only European products natives desire are cloths, clothing, and wine. This is not so; villagers wanted me to sell them kerosene for lamps, D.D.T. powder for their hair, and soap. It is interesting that the occasions on which an Otjimbundu would accumulate large (for him) sums all fall outside the maize-for-cloth pattern of trading. These occasions are bridewealth payment (and counting all expenses this may well come to 800 escudos—£10 or more), which is a traditional due, the purchase of bicycles (according to place of purchase from 1,200 escudos [£15] to 1,500 escudos [£18. 15. 0]) which are prestige-giving objects and the trading journeys to buy cattle. Kambungo had

[1] The trader whose opinions I have previously quoted (Senhor Alberto Oliveira Mendes of Chicunda), remarked, 'It is the women who save us. The men make a shirt last for three or four years but the women get something new every year.'

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

gramophone in a town rather than at a trader's near his home village. Most of the money paid for purchases at the stores is money raised by selling crops or livestock. Through labour migration there is, however, some transmission of skills; it is easy to find bricklayers and carpenters of a sort even in Gumba.

Money, rather than barter, is the principal means of exchange among the villages in the selling of local products, and even of meat from pigs. Payment for labour service, such as assistance in house-building and in bringing in maize, is made in beer, except among Protestants who substitute a meal. There is also a custom by which a household which finds, probably at the end of the dry season, that it has not enough maize will make beer to exchange on a particular day for maize.

Ties of kinship and friendship have some economic significance. A kinsman will help with house-building without expecting payment; likewise a man who has a cleared field which he does not want to use may sell it for 200 escudos (£2. 10s.) but would give it free to a kinsman. A man may make a charge for lending his bicycle, though this varies with individuals; he certainly would not do so if it were lent to a friend. Loans between kinsmen should be repaid, and a tailor with a sewing-machine will make the same charges to relatives as to non-kinsmen.

There are few occasions for groups to work together. The unit of consumption and production is the domestic family. Even here, the husband, each wife, and the adolescents have their own fields, though a man may help his wife. Such other occasions of mutual help, in clearing a field, which may occur between friends or kinsmen, will only bring a few, often only two of them.

The Ovimbundu I knew were (with exceptions) not avaricious or grasping; thus, beer might be given to people who have not actually worked in house-building parties. It is regarded as a moral duty to pay one's monetary debts as soon as possible. On various occasions I lent money to people who were pressed and I received back all the money lent. Borrowers insisted that borrowings should be written down, and that the paper on which it was written should be given to them when they paid, or destroyed. Making money and being rich are regarded with

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

175 It was only with the beginning of World War I that trade in powder
567 and fire-arms was stopped. For more than a century Portuguese
648 patriots and thinkers had been insisting upon the necessity for ending the export of man-power, so evidently impoverishing in its effects on the life of the colony.[1] Law succeeded law, and regulation followed regulation, but there was little real change.[2] With the Republic,[3] however, real changes began. Conditions were
175 investigated,[4] and although complete and immediate reform could
567 hardly have been expected, changes did begin. Provisions for
166 manumission upon presentation to authority were made and carried out. Repatriation from island and mainland plantations began to be undertaken. This was the origin of small communities of Cokue and other 'Ngangela' people now living at various points in the Umbundu country. From the plantations they were repatriated to 'their places of origin', which were, however, not their own homes but the places whence they had been sold into servitude.
464 Under various regulatory practices, contract labour has been
467 continued down to the present day. The depression which came
175 to Central Africa in 1930 reduced the demand to a minimum, and for a few years it did not represent a serious problem in the life of the Ovimbundu. There was a time of great activity in road building (approximately 1915–32) when the demands for labour were a serious problem to Umbundu life. Soon after the opening of World War II a strong demand for colonial products revived the industries of Angola and stimulated the creation of new ones. The consequent demand for labour and the means used to supply it have come to constitute the most severe trial which has yet come to the Ovimbundu. Their docility has made this service bear more hardly on them than on some other people of the colony. Their

[1] e.g. Saldanha da Gama, *Memoria*, 1814; Sá da Bandeira, 1839; Lopes de Lima, *Ensaios* (1846), pp. xxxviii, 6 f., 44 f.; Casmiro, *Africa Nostra*, p. 60 f.

[2] The principal laws were promulgated as follows: 1836 (Formal abolition of the traffic); 1839 (Authorizing co-operation with the international naval squadron); 184[illegible] 1841, 1845 (Supplementary ordinances); 1875 (Law of Liberation and regulation of contract labour); 1878, 1889 (Further regulations); 1899 (Dealing with 'corrective labour'); 1902, 1903 (Further regulation of recruitment).

[3] Proclaimed in Portugal, 5 Oct., 1910.

[4] A Commission came from Lisbon that same year and took testimony throughout the colony. For conditions just previous to the Republic, see Nevinson, op. cit.; C. A. Swan, *The Slavery of To-day* (1909); H. R. F. Bourne, *Slave Traffic in Portuguese Africa* (1908); W. A. Cadbury, *Labour in Portuguese West Africa* (2nd ed. 1910); C. Harding, *In Remotest Barotseland* (1905).

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

geographic position in the centre of the colony has also made it harder for them to evade it. Nevertheless, many have emigrated. In 1941 and again in 1944, when the writer visited South Africa, he found thousands of Ovimbundu on the Rand and many more in the Rhodesias and the Congo. Many are also known to have gone to the South-West Territory and to Bechuanaland, and some even to such distant points as Natal's north coast and French Equatorial Africa.[1]

175 464 467 [167]

Recent Developments

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436 [457] [651] [465]

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651

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Men can go out to work in three ways. By going to look for work in a city or on a plantation, by being recruited in his village by a travelling labour recruiter (*angariador*), or by being recruited through the post for military service or for contract labour (a period of a year's non-voluntary work).

Men who are away at work may keep in touch with their kin by letters. These are sent to the nearest Catholic or Protestant mission station according to the religious sympathies of the sender and his kin and are sent from there to the villages.

Angola forms an Overseas Province of Portugal, and is therefore subject to the Overseas Ministry in Lisbon. The Overseas Provinces of Portugal are officially declared to be integral parts of Portugal, which is regarded as a nation existing in Europe, Africa, and Asia. The expression 'Here also is Portugal' is often heard in Angola.

The inhabitants of Angola are in legal status divided into 'civilized' persons, whether white, mulatto, or black, with Portuguese citizenship, and Portuguese 'natives' or 'uncivilized' persons,[1] this latter category including some 3,000 'uncivilized' mulattoes. The 1950 census gave Angola a total population of 4,145,266 of whom 135,355 were 'civilized'. This category was composed of 78,826 whites, 26,335 mulattoes, and 30,089 Africans, plus a balance of 105 presumably Goans.

The 'natives' are, unlike the 'civilized', subject to the Labour Code. There is no Native Legal Code, nor does Portuguese law apply to 'natives'. Administrative officers may apply Portuguese law, or native custom as known to them, or their own judgement.

The administration is headed by the Governor-General who resides at Luanda. The province of Angola is divided into districts each headed by a district governor. Both the governors-general and the district governors have usually distinguished themselves in the Services or in a legal career. Members of the administrative service are not usually promoted to these posts, although they may attain such positions as that of Secretary of Native Affairs.

The districts are in turn sub-divided into *concelhos* (a term

[1] By a law of 1961 Portuguese citizenship has been made universal.

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167 Many of the people in Gumba had come from
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Cela, and Cela influences are notable in several ways.[24] In Cassongue Umbundu has relatively recently ousted other
133 speech.[25] Geographically Bimbe generally is rather lower than most of the Highland. Although the railway line and the growth
167 of maize have been influential here, an alternative pull for
361 labour migration is provided by the coffee plantation of Amboim and Seles, and by the coastal towns of Novo Redondo and Porto Amboim.[26] In the days of the caravan trade Novo Redondo was an important trading centre, more important perhaps than Benguela for the people of this area.

464 Work is sought by Ovimbundu in lands far from their home.
[167] There are Ovimbundu at Brazzaville; others have settled permanently in the Congo Republic, or work in Rhodesia; the Johannesburg mines have employed many, and some have gone as far as Natal.[27] In Epalanga, the village where I lived, there were two men who had been to Johannesburg—nor was this very exceptional and I am told that among the people south of the railway it is quite common.

82 The world picture of the Ovimbundu is vague, except as regards Angola and the neighbouring countries. The existence of Europe (Putu) composed of different nations Portuguese, French, and English is known, and I was several times asked if there were black people in England. Little or nothing is known of the other continents. The island of S. Tomé in the Atlantic is known, since up to recently Angolan labourers went there, and some convicts are still sent to it. Several people from the neighbourhood had lived in Luanda or worked on coffee
[467] plantations in northern Angola. The Belgian Congo was known as Bula Matadi, though people seem little aware of Rhodesia, and Mozambique (Portuguese East Africa) is confused with the southern Angolan port of Moçamedes. The railway lines and
[464] the cities along it are of course well known, and some of the people I knew had travelled to Kwanyama country in the far south of Angola to buy cattle. Johannesburg (Zhwaini) and its

[24] Notably in the arm ornaments and hair styles favoured by some women. Cela diviners are often consulted.

[25] Childs (p. 179) suggests that the change came about in the nineteenth century.

[26] For this area of Angola see Egerton, pp. 186–8. Galvão and Selvagem, pp. 378–80, 457–8.

[27] Personal information. Also Childs, p. 213.

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spent 10,000 escudos, he told me, in buying shells to trade in Kwanyama country and even if this be regarded as an exaggeration such an expedition will cost at least several hundred escudos.

I have not so far discussed labour migration and its economic consequences. There are three ways of going out to work: being recruited for 'contract labour', which involves selection by the chief and government headmen who send people to the post whence they are directed to wherever they are required; being recruited by labour-recruiters who visit villages with their lorries; and travelling, usually on foot, to find work. Contract labour is for a year, which may be followed by a fortnight's work at the post to which the *contratados* are returned. The coffee plantations of Amboim and Seles are important centres for voluntary labour from Gumba and neighbouring chiefdoms. Women, and boys from ten years up, go to work there for spells which may be only two months. However, even in Gumba whose people have a reputation for backwardness and for lack of enthusiasm for going away to work, there is nothing at all surprising in meeting men who have learnt a few words of English in Johannesburg.

Of the 36 household heads of Epalanga, 9 were women, and 8 were men who for one reason or another (elders, cripples, the catechist) would not leave the village. Of the other 19, 6 were absent as labourers during some part of my stay, and this figure excludes individuals who were not expected home within a year. In the cities there are large numbers of permanently or semi-permanently urbanized Ovimbundu, who have largely lost contact with their home villages. Some people who have spent years in the towns may come home—in Epalanga there were at least five women who had visited cities.

Although almost all able-bodied men and many women have lived outside the context of village life as servants to Europeans, as labourers on plantations, and as urban workers, it would be a mistake to think of the rural areas of the Benguela Highland, as being labour reservoirs economically dependent on the towns. It seems that prices of manufactured goods are lower near the railway line and in the cities; hence a man returning from wage labour may buy cloths, a bicycle, a sewing-machine, or a

1: Child M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

mbundu, they have not, independent of some related elder, generally been very successful within the kinship group.

There is another factor in the situation of the Ngendo out-station which has tended to preserve the ties of kinship between the villagers of the two groups. The support of the two leaders is very largely found locally. Neither teacher nor elder has ever received more than a very occasional bonus from either the native church or the mission. They carry on by the help of the local people and through their own efforts. Dr. Gutmann holds that it is the schools which are most disruptive in their influence on African social structure because of their organization and the way in which they are carried on. A school, he says, should reflect the organic connexions of native society and enter into reciprocal relations with the folk group. Instead, he points out, this is being made impossible in East Africa by raising the salaries of the teachers until they are removed from the ordinary life of the rest of the people.[1] This cleavage between educated individuals who should be leaders and the masses of the people seems to have reached an even more markedly advanced stage in South Africa, according to Mrs. Hoernlé, Eiselen, and others who also seek remedies in strengthening or renewing the natural social bonds.[2] What I wish to emphasize is that the more important point is not how much salary a teacher or an elder may receive, but whether his appointment and the remuneration he receives tend to weaken the organic bonds of native society and to make difficult his relations with the folk group. Do the conditions of his position *ipso facto* place him or keep him outside the local group?

In seeking to lay among the Ovimbundu sure foundations for a truly indigenous Church, the importance of ties of kinship have probably been recognized by more than one missionary. The importance of stimulating local self-support both for its influence on building up the Church and on the development of indigenous leadership has long been stressed in mission circles, although it must be recognized that the principle has often been honoured rather in the breach than in the observance. While recognizing the value of these principles as long-term objectives, impatient of meagre immediate and visible 'results' or failing to realize how

[1] Gutmann; *Africa*, 1928, p. 443 f.

[2] e.g., see Eiselen in Schapera (ed.), *Western Civilization and the Natives of South Africa* (London, 1934), p. 81.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

geographic position in the centre of the colony has also made it harder for them to evade it. Nevertheless, many have emigrated. In 1941 and again in 1944, when the writer visited South Africa, he found thousands of Ovimbundu on the Rand and many more in the Rhodesias and the Congo. Many are also known to have gone to the South-West Territory and to Bechuanaland, and some even to such distant points as Natal's north coast and French Equatorial Africa.[1]

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651 another small amount were added, so that it is now Ag. 91,00.[1] This is not high in comparison with the figures for the Union of South Africa and some other African territories, but opportunities for earning in Angola are small. Wages and prices of produce are 465 low indeed. These problems of labour and of taxation are much the same in many South and Central African territories. Their present-day poverty bears very hardly upon the Ovimbundu who saw much more prosperous times in the days of their large-scale trading.

423 *Land.* The ownership and occupation of land by natives does not present the acute problem in Angola which it does in several 648 African territories. Natives have not been herded on to reserves, for rigid segregation is not the Portuguese idea, nor has there yet been occupation of land by European settlers on a scale sufficient to encroach upon the land needed by natives, save in a few localities. A large proportion of the concessions provisionally taken out by Europeans in 1919–25 have reverted to the State for failure to meet requirements, as, for example, to bring a stated proportion under cultivation. Many schemes for European colonization in the Benguela Highland have been projected from time to time. The Portuguese law protects the native in his holdings, but since European settlers often find ways to circumvent the intent of the law, and since an increasing European colonization is apt to be a threat to native holdings, a simplification of the machinery whereby the natives may secure sure title to communal or to individual holdings is highly desirable.[2]

423 Whatever else may be said, however, it is good to be able to report that at the present time the Ovimbundu have their land. This fact has been a very important factor in their transition from

[1] About $4.00 at present exchange. In 1937 the economic year was changed to the calendar year, and in most districts payment of an extra half-year's tax was required. About 1941 the tax was again raised, to Ag. 108,00, and in 1945 it was again put up, to 120,00. These figures are for most of the districts inhabited by the Ovimbundu. In some areas, especially frontier areas, the amounts levied are considerably lower.

[2] For the present official status of the questions of administration, land, labour, &c., see Comte J. de Penha-Garcia, *Organisation politique et administrative de l'empire colonial portugais*, Inst. Col. Int'n'l (1936); ibid. (ed.), *Les Colonies portugaises* (1931); a useful summary of the same will be found in Lord Hailey, *An African Survey* (London: 1938), pp. 213–16, 796 f. There is a discussion of these problems in J. T. Tucker, *Angola, Land of the Blacksmith Prince* (1933), chap. 8. See also Valdez dos Santos, *Angola, Coração do Império* (Lisboa: Agência Geral das Colónias, 1945).

428 not entitled to inheritance of land, cattle, or anything else belonging to the dead man. The greater part of the property would be bequeathed to the eldest brother of the deceased's mother.

428 604 768 There appears to be discussion as to the distribution of property, but the maternal uncle is responsible for settling disputes. He himself has the first claim, and in Ngonga's words, "If there are quarrels about the cattle, land, and other things, the mother's eldest brother will settle them."

The mother's brother has rights over his sister's children even to the extent of pawning them to pay his own debts. On the other hand the maternal uncle is responsible for the conduct of his sister's children. He would have to pay fines incurred by thefts they committed, and he provides for his sister's son a wife who is either his daughter or his widow.

Ngonga stated that the maternal uncle does not invariably take all the property of a deceased nephew for himself. He may give something to the deceased's mother, the deceased's maternal grandfather, or to a brother of the deceased. Such gifts appear to be the outcome of good will on the part of the dead man's maternal uncle; [421] there is no compulsion. Women never inherit cattle or rights to the use of land.

423 692 622 The king is the head of the legal system, though his activities as such are not so great as those of the village headman (*sekulu*). The *olosekulu* (there are usually more than one) of a village witness the final act in a divorce ceremony. They used to have charge of trials for theft, murder, adultery, likewise the right of settling arguments concerning the ownership of land. It was the *sekulu* who distributed the land to the extended families when a new village site was opened. The maternal uncles settled the minor divisions among the limited families.

643 There are many kings among the Ovimbundu, but I thought that there was a tendency to confuse the titles of *osoma* ("king") and *sekulu* ("headman" or "chief" of a village). The jurisdiction of a king is so well known that any person is able to say under which king he lives. Ngonga said definitely that a man of the Ovimbundu who was under the jurisdiction of a certain king would have to obey the commands of a visiting king, provided they were not in any way disapproved of by the king to whom first allegiance was due.

643 [465] A chief may demand labor for the building of his house or the cultivation of his land. He does not pay for this but usually gives beer to the workers; sometimes he secures the labor and gives nothing in return.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

621 they recognize Sekulu Sikīlilẽ, the elder of the largest unit, as the village headman. Only in his village is there a dancing floor [345] (*ocīlã*),[1] which is the centre of village life, social, legal, and recreational. As the name indicates, it is first and foremost a place for recreation, but here also religious functions are held since they involve so much dancing and drinking, and here formal cases are tried. The *ocīlã* is the heart of the village.

345 *The Men's Club-House.* Ngendo does not have that other important Umbundu institution, the Men's Club House (*onjango*).[2] The *onjango* is, or was, hardly less important than the *ocīlã*. Perhaps beforé it fell to its present state of disuse, its place was of even greater importance, for in the *onjango* all the men, youths, [262] and boys gathered day by day for the evening meal. From all the kitchens came baskets of stiff corn porridge (*iputa*), and dishes of relish (*ombelela*)[3] which all shared, from the most honoured guest or the village elders, down to the naked, ash-whitened little boys just old enough (say from seven or eight years) to leave the kitchens [574] to their mothers and sisters. In the *onjango* guests were entertained, judicial cases of lesser import were settled, the day's work and gossip discussed, and youth was educated by precept and example in nearly everything from traditional history to etiquette. The *onjango* was dining-room, living-room, court, school, hotel, and club, all in one. For some of the Ovimbundu it continues to function. Upon inquiry I found that in all Kasonge there were hardly ten villages where the *onjango* existed and retained its [466] former functions. The reasons which my informants assigned are that the demands for road work (in the immediate region), for contract labour (involving absences of from six months to two years), and the difficulty of securing tax-money, did not leave the leisure required for the common meal in the *onjango*. When I 345 made wider inquiries as to localities where the *onjango* now exists 178 and retains its former functions, it seems that this institution is widely decadent. According to my information, the regions where it continues to function are chiefly in Ngalangi, in Viye, and

104 [1] *Ocīlã* comes from the verb *oku cīlã*, to dance.

[2] *Onjango* has been traced to the verb *oku vangula*, to converse, but I am doubtful of this derivation. It has been called 'The Palaver House', but this is an evident misnomer, for the *onjango* is much more than that.

[3] *Ombelela* is a word to cover any dish which may be eaten with the porridge staple. It may be meat, beans, mushrooms, or greens, and is preferred with gravy into which pieces of the stiff porridge may be dipped (*oku miña*).

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

PLATE VI

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Photo. R. S. Webb

a. Harvesting peanuts (Bailundu)

466

Photo. M. W. Smith

b. Road workers

[Facing p 49]

advancement, will go to the head of their *oluina* to ask for his intercession with the spirits.[1] 613

As legal head of the village, the *sekulu yimbo* presides over both the more serious cases, which are held before the whole village on the dance-floor, and the simpler ones, which require the attendance only of those concerned, together with their respective elders, and may be taken up either in the *onjango* or in the headman's own courtyard. Hambly seems to suggest that all the section-heads act with the village headman as a kind of council, but does not give details. He states also that the *olosekulu* (sing. *sekulu*) of the village formerly had charge of trials for murder, theft, adultery, and arguments over land,[2] and points out that they were more active in the legal system than the chiefs.[3] This is even more true today, when the village court of justice continues to function in spite of political and administrative changes, although the offices of chiefs and to some extent of sub-chiefs have largely decayed. 622 623 691 [177]

Other functions of the village headman include: the distribution of land to the various families when new village sites are opened;[4] the direction of the communal fire-hunts;[5] and, today, the collecting of taxes from the villagers and the direction and organisation of labour to work on the roads.[6] But however numerous the headman's official duties, he usually finds some time to attend to his own affairs, whether he is a farmer, hunter, or trader.[7] 622 423 651 466 [463]

Succession to headmanship is usually from father to son or from elder to younger brother, "with only as much recognition of primogeniture as belongs to the general ... hierarchy of age."[8] Succession is, however, affected by the "democratic" tendencies in succession to chieftainship.[9] 622 643

The Chief (osona or sova)[10]

The Ovimbundu are grouped in 22 chiefdoms, of which half were in the past generally tributary to the more powerful chiefs.[11] At the same time each chiefdom had its separate government and could be considered as a unit in itself. Effective European occupation and direct rule have atrophied the chiefly office among the Ovimbundu, until today chiefs survive as little more than "living museum pieces".[12] Childs[13] enumerates the functions of the chiefly office as follows: 631 643 [177]

(a) *Religious.* The chief's ancestral spirits were the principal chiefdom deities, and the king was high-priest as well as the visible "vice-regent and incarnation" of the spirits. 643 793 769

(1) Childs, personal communication.
(2) The maternal uncle is responsible for settling disputes over property which occur within the *olusa*. (Hambly op.cit., p.200).
(3) Ibid. (4) Ibid.
(5) Chelman, op.cit., p.115. (6) Ibid., p.121.
(7) Childs, op.cit., p.36. (8) Ibid., p.44.
(9) Ibid.
(10) *Osona* means chief or king. *Sona* is the personalised form used with the name. This the Portuguese writers have corrupted into *sova* or *seba*. (Childs, personal communication)
(11) See above, p.2.
(12) Childs, op.cit., p.20. (13) Ibid.

time to the village of the paramount chief. These periods spent away from home continue into adolescence. Not only relatives, but also friends, blood-brothers and *vakuacisoko* (see below) exchange children in this way. 604 857

Later childhood

No definite time marks the transition from early to later childhood, but there are marked differences between the two stages. As soon as the child is physically able, he begins to assume a definite role in the community. Soon after a child gets his permanent teeth, a notch in the form of an inverted V is chipped between the two upper front incisors. Formerly the beginning of the period was marked for the boy by his first trip with a trading caravan; today a boy of this age may begin to work in the fields with his father, or begin to learn a trade, or be sent to school. A girl starts to learn field-work and housework. 852 858

Professions

A boy is expected to learn the profession or *ocipinduko* in which his father or his mother's brother is expert, and after that, should he wish to learn some other side-line profession, he may apprentice himself. All children, both boys and girls, are expected to learn to cultivate, but that is not counted as a profession. The principal *ovipinduko* (professions) listed by Childs are: for girls, basket-making, pottery-making, medical practice and divination; for boys, mat-making, wood-working, rope-making, thatching, fishing, apiculture, hunting, smithing, and medical practice and divination. The last three, as has been mentioned above, are "sacred" and entered under special conditions. 462 868 [463]

"Later childhood, then, is the period of technical training during which it is expected that a large amount of economic responsibility will be assumed. A child begins to own property even before this, and from the beginning of childhood will be accounted legally responsible for his actions. It is recognised, however, that he should not be set tasks beyond the experience or ability of his age and that the full responsibility of adulthood will come only with marriage."(1) 866 [672]

The coming of European commerce, industry, and government has created new types of employment for boys and men, some of which cause a prolonged absence from the village and a loosening or severing of kinship ties. There are no estimates of the number of persons employed by Europeans, or the average length of their absence from home. 178 466

ADOLESCENCE(2)

Childs found that the onset of puberty was late among the Ovimbundu, coming between fourteen and sixteen years for girls and between fifteen and seventeen years for boys. Soon after puberty young people generally stop sleeping in the parents' house. The girls congregate in kitchens and each boy builds himself a house, in which he will live through adolescence 882

(1) Childs, op.cit., p.110.
(2) Based on Childs, op.cit., pp.58-9 and 111-18.

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The tasks of recruiting contract labourers and road-workers and of getting fines and taxes paid, and such other duties as the arranging of compulsory purchase of tickets for the travelling cinema (showing patriotic films) are carried out through a long process of argument, attempted evasion, and pressure, between the chief, the government headmen, and the locally influential people, traditional headmen, catechists, and anyone else who can get himself listened to. Persons actually picked for contract labour or road work may make quite a fuss about it, but as such numbers are recruited it is ultimately accepted resignedly. It is not really practicable for a chief to discriminate in favour of his kinsman owing to the heavy demands for labour and the likelihood of such discrimination being reported at the post, as happened to Simbwyikoka. Demands for labour may fall heavily on some households. Thus one Epalanga household consisted of a man, his daughter by an earlier marriage, his wife and her baby daughter. The man had been taken for contract labour, his wife had been called to road work, and the adolescent daughter was carrying sisal[14] to the post. A kinsman of the household head attempted to arrange for some watch to be kept over the gardens lest animals should get in.

There were four government headmen in Gumba during my stay. Theoretically they are village headmen. The villages in which official records group Ovimbundu do not conform to the actual villages in which Ovimbundu live. Anybody moving from one village to another has to pay a fee; as the Ovimbundu move about quite frequently and no attempt is made to enforce this rule locally, the result is this discrepancy between paper and real villages.

The government headman's duties are those already described for the chief. As with the chief, there is only sufficient backing from the post for him to carry out the orders he receives; he does not receive power to enable him to exercise political leadership and judicial authority at the local level, nor is he a representative of the post in the villages. His interests and values are linked to those of his neighbours rather than to the post. It is through the chief and the government headmen

[14] Some villages are obliged to grow sisal and take it to the post without payment.

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It was only with the beginning of World War I that trade in powder and fire-arms was stopped. For more than a century Portuguese patriots and thinkers had been insisting upon the necessity for ending the export of man-power, so evidently impoverishing in its effects on the life of the colony.[1] Law succeeded law, and regulation followed regulation, but there was little real change.[2] With the Republic,[3] however, real changes began. Conditions were investigated,[4] and although complete and immediate reform could hardly have been expected, changes did begin. Provisions for manumission upon presentation to authority were made and carried out. Repatriation from island and mainland plantations began to be undertaken. This was the origin of small communities of Cokue and other 'Ngangela' people now living at various points in the Umbundu country. From the plantations they were repatriated to 'their places of origin', which were, however, not their own homes but the places whence they had been sold into servitude. Under various regulatory practices, contract labour has been continued down to the present day. The depression which came to Central Africa in 1930 reduced the demand to a minimum, and for a few years it did not represent a serious problem in the life of the Ovimbundu. There was a time of great activity in road building (approximately 1915–32) when the demands for labour were a serious problem to Umbundu life. Soon after the opening of World War II a strong demand for colonial products revived the industries of Angola and stimulated the creation of new ones. The consequent demand for labour and the means used to supply it have come to constitute the most severe trial which has yet come to the Ovimbundu. Their docility has made this service bear more hardly on them than on some other people of the colony. Their

[1] e.g. Saldanha da Gama, *Memoria*, 1814; Sá da Bandeira, 1839; Lopes de Lima, *Ensaios* (1846), pp. xxxviii, 6 f., 44 f.; Casmiro, *Africa Nostra*, p. 60 f.

[2] The principal laws were promulgated as follows: 1836 (Formal abolition of the traffic); 1839 (Authorizing co-operation with the international naval squadron); 1840, 1841, 1845 (Supplementary ordinances); 1875 (Law of Liberation and regulation of contract labour); 1878, 1889 (Further regulations); 1899 (Dealing with 'corrective labour'); 1902, 1903 (Further regulation of recruitment).

[3] Proclaimed in Portugal, 5 Oct., 1910.

[4] A Commission came from Lisbon that same year and took testimony throughout the colony. For conditions just previous to the Republic, see Nevinson, op. cit.; C. A. Swan, *The Slavery of To-day* (1909); H. R. F. Bourne, *Slave Traffic in Portuguese Africa* (1908); W. A. Cadbury, *Labour in Portuguese West Africa* (2nd ed. 1910); C. Harding, *In Remotest Barotseland* (1905).

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

geographic position in the centre of the colony has also made it harder for them to evade it. Nevertheless, many have emigrated. In 1941 and again in 1944, when the writer visited South Africa, he found thousands of Ovimbundu on the Rand and many more in the Rhodesias and the Congo. Many are also known to have gone to the South-West Territory and to Bechuanaland, and some even to such distant points as Natal's north coast and French Equatorial Africa.[1]

Recent Developments

Currency, in the sense of money, is quite a recent introduction to the Ovimbundu. To the end of their trading activities, cloth ('trade goods') was the standard of exchange. Although dependence upon world markets caused prices to fluctuate with the course of the rubber trade, as we have seen, there was not, however, the great range which follows the fluctuations of the money market through a course of inflation and deflation. The Ovimbundu had had some dealings in money before the time of World War I, when there was a silver coinage, so that the depreciation which set in about 1921 was all the more confusing to them. This is not the place to discuss the finances and banking of Angola, but it must be noted that the conversion of the 'Escudo' into the 'Angolar' in 1928 at the rate of Ag. 0,80 to Esc. 1$00 greatly increased the sense of confusion among the natives. This was only to be expected when the native tax remained at Ag. 80,00 where it was Esc. 80,00 before, whereas daily wages to contract labourers became Ag. 0,80 where before they were Esc. 1$00. The confusion was considerable.[2]

Taxes began to be levied soon after military occupation, but for some years they were very small, especially in relation to opportunities for earning. When the head-tax reached Esc. 80,00 it remained at that figure for some years. In 1935 a 'work tax' and

[1] This state of affairs is frequently and quite freely commented upon in the Angola papers. For a recent notice see local correspondence entitled 'Notícias do Cuma' in the *Voz do Planalto* (Nova Lisboa) for 17 Aug. 1946. One of the most serious recent indictments is contained in an article in *O Farolim*, Luanda, 5 Nov. 1945, by Padre J. Alves Correia. This distinguished writer asserts that the present labour policy is 'killing the goose which lays the golden egg'.

[2] For finance, currency, banking, and economic conditions in general, see Department of Overseas Trade, *Economic Conditions in Angola*, H.M.S.O., 1929. There are also reports for 1923 and 1925, but the one for 1929 covers the previous decade.

VII. EDUCATION

Industrial Training and Division of Labor

871 Usually there is no formality connected with the industrial and occupational training of Ovimbundu children. The section dealing with play shows that boys and girls learn by spontaneous imitation of their elders.

874 There are, however, exceptions to this general truth. Special rites connected with the training and inauguration of blacksmiths and hunters have been described. The training of medicine-men and women will be dealt with in chapter IX, "Religion."

462 463 In describing economic life in chapter V, division of labor on a sex basis; also specialization in industry because of peculiar tastes and aptitudes, were noted. There is clearly a twofold division in industrial life. In the first place sex determines occupation, and within this primary grouping there is a secondary grouping depending [467] on personal preference and individual ability. I have found no instance of exclusive hereditary right to any occupation or industry.

462 The net result of the Umbundu system of division of labor is indicated by the following summary:

[342] When building houses, men dig the rectangular trench, cut the poles for the framework, lash the crosspieces, cut grass and lay the thatch, then place clay over the wattle walls. Women carry water for mixing the clay and convey the moist clay to the plasterers. [224] Children puddle the clay with their feet. Males are hunters both professional and general. During a communal hunt women and children assist in driving game, which is frightened by the firing of [857] grass. Boys organize games in which they imitate these activities. [226] Men fish with a line and bait, whereas women use baskets and [231] narcotic poison. Men and boys take care of cattle and have charge of dogs. Women and girls give what slight attention is afforded to other domestic animals. Male specialists castrate bulls and goats.

[241] During agricultural operations men clear the ground and burn the bush. Women carry on hoe cultivation without assistance from [482] men. Men are the chief carriers in caravans, but women and children may sometimes be seen carrying loads. They march in line with the men but have smaller burdens. Males are employed in blacksmith's work, wood-carving, making weapons and tools, weaving mats, dressing hides, spinning cotton, and formerly in weaving on an upright loom. Men are exclusively the makers of

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

556 The attitude toward success in agriculture indicated by the
578 foregoing is held in some measure toward marked success in other
472 professions, but in lesser degree, except perhaps where trading is taken up individually or by two persons in partnership. One of the earliest observers, Pinheiro de Lacerda (*c.* 1790), noted that accusations of witchcraft were most often levelled at the wealthier members of the community.[1] This fear of success has continued down to the present day, but while trading was an open group enterprise in which many individuals acquired wealth, success in that field came to be accepted more quickly than in the more individualistic work of farming. At the present time, commercial activities are carried on largely by individuals alone or in a limited partnership, and the practice, or at least the suspicion, of witchcraft in connexion with them seems to be on the increase. Some may feel that similar attitudes with regard to successful results from cultivation of the soil are now held less strongly than formerly, but
[754] I know of no evidence to support such a feeling. One of the commonest traditional patterns for witchcraft is that of a partnership of a senior and a junior member—of parent and child, or of mother's brother and sister's son. That is one reason why urgent suggestions by an older person concerning choice of a profession by a younger are looked upon with disfavour among the Ovimbundu.

868 A child should be taught enough diligence and application in
562 cultivating that he or she may not lack the necessities in later adult life. Every boy will take to trading and bargaining almost as naturally as eating, drinking, breathing, and sleeping. Commerce still retains so much of its former glamour that every boy will take it up if and when opportunity offers. The care of younger children comes even more naturally to the girl, and she must also learn the housekeeper's art. Many folk-tales and songs indicate a reluctance on the part of girls to dedicate themselves with diligence to cultivation. In the days of the rubber trade, when girls could also join caravans for the coast and to the interior as porters, there may have been some real basis for this, but at the present time girls are convinced and enthusiastic cultivators, almost 100 per cent.[2] The

[1] *Annaes Maritimos e Coloniaes*, 5a Ser., p. 489 f.

[2] Women coming to live in the coast towns or in other European settlements where they have no fields or gardens find adjustment to life without agricultural labours very difficult.

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[1874-1911]

THE OLD SOCIETY

The trade was conducted in caravans composed of up to several thousand people,[48] under the leadership of *entrepeneurs* called *olofumbelo* (of which the singular is *ofumbelo*). Of such were the individuals whom Serpa Pinto describes as earning wealth equivalent to a thousand pounds or more. Their role was to get together the caravans, to negotiate with the local political authorities, and to provide ritual leadership. The exact relationship between the *ofumbelo* and the ordinary members of the caravan is difficult to see. European travellers found that porters were content with low wages since they had opportunities for private trade, but apparently the caravan organizers had better opportunities for getting rich than had ordinary Ovimbundu. My informants stated that a man organized a caravan to gain wealth. A man who was in a position of prosperity would be known as an *ohwase* (rich man), would stay at home and be expected to assist his relatives.[49] 437 472 484 [55b]

Different ages and both sexes participated in the trade. Childs says that boys from the age of nine upwards travelled on the caravans, and this is confirmed by Serpa Pinto.[50] Tucker, and my informants however, give the age when caravan travel began as being fifteen or over.[51] Unmarried girls travelled too, but simply acted as helpers to some male relative. The caravan organizers (*olofumbelo*) were old men, I was told, and travelled in the rear while in front of the caravan marched a young man (called the *kesongo*) who carried a flag.[52]

Dr. Childs states that between 1874 and 1886 rubber was gathered from the forests of the interior and took eight months (four months each way presumably) for the Ovimbundu to obtain. From 1886, however, 'red rubber' was obtained from the sandy lands beyond the Cuanza, a journey which only took three months altogether. Hence, Childs states, the trading 439 484

[48] A Bastos, *Monografia de Catombella*, in *Bol. Soc. Geog. Lisboa* 1910 (p. 151) states that caravans of several thousand were used in the 1870s but that by the time of writing (1908–9, nearly the end of the trade) people came in small parties. My informants who would remember this period spoke of the large size of the caravans.

[49] My informants.

[50] Serpa Pinto, p. 164.

[51] J. T. Tucker in *Africa* (Notes and News), April 1936.

[52] Informants.

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spent 10,000 escudos, he told me, in buying shells to trade in Kwanyama country and even if this be regarded as an exaggeration such an expedition will cost at least several hundred escudos.

I have not so far discussed labour migration and its economic consequences. There are three ways of going out to work: being recruited for 'contract labour', which involves selection by the chief and government headmen who send people to the post whence they are directed to wherever they are required; being recruited by labour-recruiters who visit villages with their lorries; and travelling, usually on foot, to find work. Contract labour is for a year, which may be followed by a fortnight's work at the post to which the *contratados* are returned. The coffee plantations of Amboim and Seles are important centres for voluntary labour from Gumba and neighbouring chiefdoms. Women, and boys from ten years up, go to work there for spells which may be only two months. However, even in Gumba whose people have a reputation for backwardness and for lack of enthusiasm for going away to work, there is nothing at all surprising in meeting men who have learnt a few words of English in Johannesburg.

Of the 36 household heads of Epalanga, 9 were women, and 8 were men who for one reason or another (elders, cripples, the catechist) would not leave the village. Of the other 19, 6 were absent as labourers during some part of my stay, and this figure excludes individuals who were not expected home within a year. In the cities there are large numbers of permanently or semi-permanently urbanized Ovimbundu, who have largely lost contact with their home villages. Some people who have spent years in the towns may come home—in Epalanga there were at least five women who had visited cities.

Although almost all able-bodied men and many women have lived outside the context of village life as servants to Europeans, as labourers on plantations, and as urban workers, it would be a mistake to think of the rural areas of the Benguela Highland, as being labour reservoirs economically dependent on the towns. It seems that prices of manufactured goods are lower near the railway line and in the cities; hence a man returning from wage labour may buy cloths, a bicycle, a sewing-machine, or a

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the household of the headman Sikililē, who had had four wives and 595
one young Esele concubine. At the time of my last visit (1936), 592
however, there were only two wives and the concubine, one wife having died, and another having gone to her people.

To complete the picture of the villagers, their numbers were as 621
follows:

Village	Men	Women	Children: Male	Children: Female	Total
In Sikililē's village	24	35	31	37	127
In Ciyanda	5	8	2	4	19
In Kanjengo	3	6	3	1	13
At the School	10	11	10	6	37
Total	42	60	46	48	
	Adults: 102		Children: 94[1]		196

In Sikililē's village there were domestic animals as follows: 621
9 head of cattle, 13 goats, 20 sheep, 100 pigs, and about 100 463
chickens. There was practically no professional specialization; [231]
there were almost no specialists living in the village: no blacksmith or carpenter, no mat-maker, but only one 'hunter of meat', and three 'hunters of (bee-) hives'. As to the women, all could make baskets, and there were several who had made pottery, but were not doing so at the time.

Pigs, chickens, and dogs roamed the village, functioning as a 364
D.S.C. and a sewer system combined. Were it not for these scavengers the villages of the Ovimbundu would present an even more untidy spectacle than is the case. There is no other regular [514]
disposal of refuse, nor are there any latrines or privies.[2]

It will be seen that there is practically no division of labour as 621
between households: each is practically a self-contained unit. The 476

[1] It was reported that in addition to the children then living, these same households had lost 57 by death (29 males and 28 females).

[2] At Ngendo the school village had two or three enclosed pit privies. The Umbundu euphemism for defecate, 'go to the bush' (*oku enda kusenge*), is revealing. Even more revealing is a proverb which advises one not to burn his bridges behind him, but literally it runs as follows:

Nda wa lisinga huti, Si endi kuyima onjo,
Nda o ha sūtilā pi?

If you forswear yourself saying, I shall not go behind the house,
Then will you go (to) urinate where?

There is a more shocking version which, however, may not be really authentic. 338

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

621 common meal was formerly a great bond of village unity. Mutual
476 help within the village and the family group is practised on many occasions. There are a number of folk-tales designed to show the evil consequences of refusing to lend, whether beer-pots or more valued assistance. Many proverbs enjoin the necessity of prompt and effectual mutual helpfulness and co-operation, as e.g.

U o popela ukuavo ongandu ka lula.

[538] (He who saves another (from) a crocodile does not undress.)

476 The mechanism of co-operation, the round of daily life in village and field, together with the cycles of food and of work, are properly subjects of further study. Here the purpose is to show the definitely family nature of the village and of its life. To the [181] casual observer the Ovimbundu appear as severe individualists. Indeed, they are individualistic to a degree, but they have worked out mechanisms of mutual helpfulness and co-operation which functioned both on political lines under the aegis of the king and within the kinship units.

Social Life of the Village

517 The two foci of the village life are the Men's Club and the
521 Dancing Floor. Even though no *onjango* may have been built, the
562 Men's Club will find a place in which to carry on, at least when there may be fine weather. Leisure may be limited, but time for conversation will be found. Europeans often express wonder at the amount of conversation which goes on between Africans, for they cannot understand what people of apparently such limited opportunities and with what seems like so narrow an outlook may have to discuss at such great length. As for the Ovimbundu, there is nothing which is a greater hardship than lack of opportunity for conversation with their fellows. Under primitive conditions this is more especially true of the men, who, in their villages, are always surrounded by members of their own family group. Owing to their peculiar position in the village and their household pre-occupations, the women's social propensities may find less outlet in these public gatherings. When the villagers gather on the dancing floor and the gourds of beer go round, they always separate according to sex. Whether the occasion be formal or informal, I have seen the discussion carried to great lengths, with the pipe passed between the men, while the women sat silently by,

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The extent to which the order of the *vakuacisoko* exists at present or has existed among the Ovimbundu would be a very interesting subject of inquiry. It is certain that the institution does not exist throughout the territory but only in certain families which belong to the order and pass on membership in it by heredity. Whether there are certain regions where it is or was in the past more strongly held to is not known. It seems to be or to have been more strongly entrenched among the cattle-rearing people to the south, but it is also said to have been practised in Lupolo (Libolo) and even in the region of Luanda.[1] Among the Ovimbundu it seems to have been stronger in the past than at present. Few if any practising members of the set are now known. All 'coevals' or members of the set were in duty bound to render mutual assistance. All had mutual rights to the property of the others without complaint or remedy. These mutual rights seem to have been extended to the extreme limit of having intercourse with each other's wives, nor did the injury or even the death of one brought about by another allow the injured family to seek revenge or legal redress. It was the duty of *vakuacisoko* to bury their fellows, themselves digging the grave and attending to all expenses not already supplied by the family. Theirs was also the duty of burying strangers without family who would not be buried by others fearing defilement or responsibility for their debts. Bastos gives a tradition ascribing the origin of this institution to a wager laid between two chiefs.[2] It seems more probable, however, that it is connected with circumcision and tribal initiation. An analogous set of rights and duties is said to have existed among the Herero between 'coevals' circumcised at the same time.[3]

Tribal initiation for both boys (*oku liseviza evamba*) and girls (*uso wakãi*) is carried on in camps or 'schools' in the southern and south-eastern tribes of the Ovimbundu. These camps are regularly held in Kalukembe, Kakonda, and Ngalangi. Sporadic instances of individual camps have also occurred recently in Viye, Bailundu, Sambu, Wambu, Cingolo, and Cikuma. Even in those regions where camps are regularly held, only the children of certain families enter. It seems that there has been some passing on of the custom by heredity and, in general, there is intermarriage only between families and individuals who adhere to the initiation rites.

[1] Bastos, 1909, op. cit., pp. 67–70.
[2] Ibid., p. 69 f.
[3] Vedder in Hahn *et al.*, op. cit., p. 178.

242 When a field is wearing out, the corn growing shorter and bearing
244 fewer ears to the stalk,[1] the woman makes a final planting of corn, sticking cuttings of manioc between the rows. Most of these cuttings tak root and grow. It takes two or three years for the tubers of this plant to mature in an old field, but in some parts of the country where manioc is set in new land it matures within a year. The leaves of the plant are used as a vegetable with corn-meal, and manioc meal is used as a basic substitute when corn is short.

The onaka or river-garden

241 In August a woman plants her *onaka*, near a stream in the alluvial soil, or in some river bed. Here she plants corn which will be ready for eating during the January period of food shortage, as well as cabbage and other vegetables.

Organisation of labour

[462] Formerly men did the heavier work of clearing new fields, although, as has been noted above, since the introduction of wage labour much of the work is left to the women. Men may also have their own fields, the produce of which is sold to provide ready cash to clothe the family, pay taxes etc. The women's fields are intended to feed the family. Children help their parents in the fields, but also have their own plots. Gardens are made by each household, i.e. by each wife where there are a number of wives. Neighbours often co-operate during the harvesting
● [476] period, after which beer is supplied by the owner of the field which has been harvested.[2]

HUNTING[3]

796 Most men and boys hunt, and women and children may help in burning
224 the grass and driving the game during the annual communal fire-hunts.
[463] But the professional hunter or *ukongo* is a recognised specialist, qualified by specific training and dependent on his knowledge of hunting magic
[868] and ritual for his success. A boy becomes a *ukongo* by an apprenticeship of about two years to an older hunter. This period culminates in a ceremony of inauguration, which may be attended by all the villagers but at which only the professional hunters dance. Several *ukongo* provide game, which is cooked for the feast; the dancing commences but the novice remains still and silent until he feels the "spirit of the head"; he then rises and distributes game to the villagers. Blood from the animals killed is sprinkled over his weapons, which have been made by the *ukongo* who has trained him. From now on his daily life is subject to certain ritual prohibitions: he must not sleep with his wife on the night before going on a hunt, special food and cooking-pots must be used for him, etc.

100 A professional hunter usually works alone, using bows and arrows,

(1) There is no information concerning the length of the farming-cycle.
(2) Childs, personal communication.
(3) See Hambly, *Bantu Studies*, 1934, and *Ovimbundu*, 1934, pp.140-5; Cushman, 1944, pp.113-20.

On arriving at the site the boy and girl cut and plant the first pole, which is to be a part of the new *etambo* (spirit hut). The boy and girl must take part ceremonially in each operation of building the hut, and when it is built they ignite the new fire. A hen and a cock are killed, cooked on the new fire, and eaten inside the *etambo* by all who have taken part in building it. The headman and his wife must remain on the new site to keep the fire alight; other villagers may commute from the old village or erect temporary grass shelters on the new site. Houses are built by the occupants themselves, although men may give each other mutual help, for which there is a gift of food and beer. The *onjango* is usually built by the communal labour of all boys and men, and on its completion a simple ritual is performed to promote harmony within and to welcome the spirits, who are believed to sleep in the *onjango* and to take part in all discussions within it.(1)

The village group: composition

Childs describes the relationship of the villagers of Ngendo to each other as typical of Umbundu country. Most of the heads of households are related agnatically to their respective section-heads (who are presumably also related agnatically to each other, since the village is based on the *oluse* group); Childs does not however discuss the relation of section heads to each other or to the village headman. He gives a table in which the householders are divided into six categories according to their relationship to their various section-heads:

1.	Paternal relatives of section head:	Section A (headman's)	21
		" B	2
		" C	1
		" D	2
			26
2.	Maternal relatives of section head:	Section B	4
		" C	1
		" D	1
			6
3.	Sisters' sons (or daughters)(2)	Section B	4
		" C	1
			5
4.	Relatives by marriage	Section A	2
		" B	1
			3
5.	Relationship not definitely known	Section B	2
6.	Former slaves	Section A	1
		" B	1
			2

(1) This section is based on Childs, 1949, pp.37-9.
(2) We could, of course, have been included as maternal relatives and paternal relatives, since they belong both to the *oluse* and to the *olume*.

(Plate XLV, Fig. 2). The house of bows for holding sacred relics will be described in connection with religion (Plate XLVI, Fig. 1).

In former days there used to be a hard mud floor for dancing, centrally placed in the village.

In the center of the village is the communal house where all men, and boys over four years of age, gather to eat their food, which is sent by the women. This *onjango* is the place of assembly for discussion of village affairs. A house of this kind at Bailundu is circular in form with a diameter of seventeen feet (Plate XLVIII, Fig. 1). In the middle of the *onjango* are stones forming a fireplace. In another such house there were jawbones of oxen. These were suspended from the walls as tokens of the payment of fines. There is no communal house for females. In some villages there is a common kraal for cattle.

The king's compound usually contains:

(1) The king's house, which invariably has a separate sleeping room.

(2) A house and kitchen for each of his wives.

(3) A tomb for the burial of kings and their wives.

(4) The house of bows for staffs, bows, mats, and tobacco-pipes of dead chiefs.

(5) A house of meditation for the king (Plate LXXXIX, Fig. 1).

(6) Pens for pigs and chickens.

The guest houses (Plate XLVIII, Fig. 2) that I have seen were not in the king's compound. Granaries, which are conspicuous in every village, have been mentioned in connection with food supply (Plate XLIV, Fig. 1). Each house has its own granary. I have noticed garbage pits containing corn husks and refuse from sweet potatoes, but there is as a rule no organized scheme for disposing of refuse; dogs and pigs are the scavengers. There is no particular place for defecation; people use the bush.

Every man has a knowledge of house-building. Women do not actually build, but, along with the children, they pour water into the clay pit and carry clay to the men who are plastering the walls. Ngonga says, "People would be surprised to see a woman building a house. They would call her a he-woman." Men help one another in house-building by giving reciprocal service for which there is a gift of food and beer.

A deep rectangular clay pit is made as close to the house as possible, and the children thoroughly enjoy puddling the clay with their

338 feet. A trench about eighteen inches deep is dug for the poles (*akoso*), which form the framework. The wattle work is tied to the uprights with strong strips of red bark before the plastering is begun.
341 The old type of Umbundu house was round, but most of the houses
171 now show a transition to square or rectangular forms (Plate XLIV, Fig. 2).

[531] Exterior wall-painting is found only in the northern districts of Angola (Plate LXXXIX, Fig. 2). Between Saurimo and Malange in the north, rectangular, painted houses are frequently seen. Wall-painting is a cultural trait from the Congo region where that form of decoration is common.

796 The method of forming a village site and the right of the chief to
621 allot land have been described. The house of the chief is the first to be erected. There is drinking of beer to celebrate the completion of the village, and the pots of beer have to be stirred with the claws of chickens; these have been killed to provide blood for sprinkling the walls of the new houses. Village chiefs go through the process of stirring and drinking. The medicine-man drinks first, then he offers the cup to the chief.

344 The communal house is built by the united efforts of all men of
476 the village. Ngonga says, "The king never helps with any of the
[485] building, but he talks very much." The guest house is also built
644 by communal labor. The king of the *ombala* of Ngalangi told me that a king always uses the house of his predecessor, which must not be pulled down. No repairs are permitted and the house is used until it is absolutely untenable.

354 The interior of a commoner's house has three hearth stones in the
342 middle of the floor, which is of hard mud beaten down with a heavy wooden implement called *ocikandulo*. The ceremonial placing of the stones has been described in discussing marriage. There is no chimney, consequently the walls and roof are blackened with smoke. The junction of roof and walls provides pockets for the reception of small articles. On the floor near the walls may be several large beer pots. The dark smoky interior is almost intolerable. The sleeping
352 room is sometimes separated from the living room by matting. The bed is made from a cross-work of sticks supported on four Y-shaped posts, one at each corner. On the bed are coarse sleeping mats and possibly a modern blanket.

356 The miscellaneous contents of the hut are gourds, dippers, cooking
252 pots of several sizes, pounders, and baskets. In many of the huts I found cooking going on in the general room, but frequently a sepa-

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gramophone in a town rather than at a trader's near his home village. Most of the money paid for purchases at the stores is money raised by selling crops or livestock. Through labour migration there is, however, some transmission of skills; it is easy to find bricklayers and carpenters of a sort even in Gumba.

Money, rather than barter, is the principal means of exchange among the villages in the selling of local products, and even of meat from pigs. Payment for labour service, such as assistance in house-building and in bringing in maize, is made in beer, except among Protestants who substitute a meal. There is also a custom by which a household which finds, probably at the end of the dry season, that it has not enough maize will make beer to exchange on a particular day for maize.

Ties of kinship and friendship have some economic significance. A kinsman will help with house-building without expecting payment; likewise a man who has a cleared field which he does not want to use may sell it for 200 escudos (£2. 10s.) but would give it free to a kinsman. A man may make a charge for lending his bicycle, though this varies with individuals; he certainly would not do so if it were lent to a friend. Loans between kinsmen should be repaid, and a tailor with a sewing-machine will make the same charges to relatives as to non-kinsmen.

There are few occasions for groups to work together. The unit of consumption and production is the domestic family. Even here, the husband, each wife, and the adolescents have their own fields, though a man may help his wife. Such other occasions of mutual help, in clearing a field, which may occur between friends or kinsmen, will only bring a few, often only two of them.

The Ovimbundu I knew were (with exceptions) not avaricious or grasping; thus, beer might be given to people who have not actually worked in house-building parties. It is regarded as a moral duty to pay one's monetary debts as soon as possible. On various occasions I lent money to people who were pressed and I received back all the money lent. Borrowers insisted that borrowings should be written down, and that the paper on which it was written should be given to them when they paid, or destroyed. Making money and being rich are regarded with

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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helped by his wife and children or by going out to work. Neither means of making money involves regular co-operation with a body of kinsmen. The occasional co-operation needed in situations of financial crisis or mutual help for some particular job can be provided by those of a man's numerous kinsfolk with whom he has established ties of amity above the mere recognition of relationship.[32] 613 178

The disappearance of the matrilineal group was a logical consequence of the disappearance of its *raison d'être*. With the disappearance of the matrilineal group, there was no longer any need to preserve the distinctive nature of the agnatic group. It is quite possible to suppose that the village might have preserved its patrilineal base if other factors had come into play. Such possible factors would be a shortage of land, danger of attack from enemies, or the use by the headman of his political power to keep control over his patrikin.[33]

A question of some significance arises from the differences of attitude to a man's 'fathers' and to his 'mother's brothers' which has been noted earlier on. From the literature it might seem that the link between agnates was very strong, and that it is surprising that it should have broken up so completely. It may be suggested that the unity of agnatic kin was expressed in the idiom of relations between villagers rather than of relations between kin, and that within the village there was not necessarily much greater solidarity between siblings than between distant agnates. The solidarity of paternal siblings was then, granting this hypothesis, a reflection of the wider solidarity of the village. When the village disintegrated the close ties between brothers disintegrated also. 602 178

The unity of the matrikin was perhaps expressed to a much greater degree in a kinship idiom.[34] This is perhaps one of the

[32] The amount of aid an individual can mobilise in case of need depends to a very great extent on personal factors. It should be emphasised that it is personal co-operation over a number of years rather than any genealogical nearness that inclines a man to be helpful. While helpfulness to kinsfolk is a norm of Umbundu ethics, it is possible in practice to provide excuses for non-co-operation. [476]

[33] The rapid disintegration of the indigenous system of authority after the middle thirties may reasonably be linked with the decay of agnatic ties of residence.

[34] 'When an Ocimbundu speaks of his family (*epata*) in the sense of a large and widespread organisation with a recognised head in some elder, it is generally his *ekina* to which he refers.' Childs, p. 44.

The use of caterpillars as food is noted (p.416): "A man cut open [262]
a large cocoon, extracted the contents, and smacked his lips with 171
great gusto." My field notes mention the use of caterpillars as food. 175

Capello and Ivens (1877–80) remark on the burial places of [766]
hunters which are distinguishable by the skulls of antelopes, buffalo, and hippopotamuses, stuck on upright poles, mixed with skulls of oxen killed in honor of the defunct. The writers noted that a heap of stones protected the body. I photographed two types of cairn in the regions of Ganda and Luimbale respectively. Capello and Ivens are not precise in their locality, but I judge it to have been Long. 17° E. and Lat. 13° S., a considerable distance from my own observations (Plates XXXII, Fig. 1; LXXIV, Fig. 1).

I photographed the stilt-walkers at the final stages of the initiation [481]
ceremonies at Cangamba. These men had no costumes; on the contrary they were almost naked but were covered with white clay. [292]
Capello and Ivens (p. 295), saw a stilt-walker with a feathered mask and a netting costume. Such attire I saw on an Uluchazi medicine-man, but not on the stilt-walkers (Plate LXXXI, Figs. 1, 2).

I was unable to obtain information about the stilt-walkers, but 693
Capello states that they castigated misdemeanants, punished shameless women, and accused criminals. Capello and Ivens were 187 miles to the northwest of my area of observation. The Uluchazi medicine-man, who appeared with the stilt-walkers during my visits, was said to make bad magic for women. The men ignored him but women gathered round in a derisive way; they quickly scattered when he pursued them.

Serpa Pinto, who made his journey across Angola in 1878, has 175
so many references to customs and objects still extant, that I propose 114
to tabulate his observations because of their value in showing the preservation of indigenous traits in spite of Portuguese contacts.

The body of a chief is buried with a covering of oxhide. Many 175
oxen are sacrificed at the death of a king. The heir to the deceased 766
is bound to sacrifice his whole herd in order to regale his people and give peace to the departed (S. Pinto, I, p. 63). The Ovimbundu conform at the present time to similar methods of burial and sacrifice.

Near Huambo, Serpa Pinto saw in every village a kind of "temple 175
for conversation." This is the *onjango*, that I have described and [345]
photographed (Plate XLVIII, Fig. 1). It is the house in which all males foregather for the evening meal, which is brought by their women (I, p. 96).

The gathering and eating of caterpillars is described. This con- [262]
tinues today (I, p. 120).

At the present time a day's march is twenty-five miles, during which a man carries sixty pounds, while the load for a woman is half that weight. The gait of the Ovimbundu includes a limp at every step, so suggesting that the carrier is lame or tired. This appears to be a method consciously adopted as a protection against fatigue, because all muscles are momentarily relaxed. Loads are carried on the head in a long forked stick to which they are lashed. When the carrier rests, the load is not placed on the ground, but is held upright on the stick (Plate XXX, Fig. 2). Such a method avoids the strain of lifting the load from the ground after each rest pause. 481 [482]

Although the Ovimbundu have an exchange of products among themselves by both barter and the use of Portuguese money, there are no large markets, with the exception of those at the coastal towns of Loanda, Lobito, and Benguela. There is absolutely nothing in Angola which can be compared with the great markets in Nigeria. 438 [436]

Despite the absence of a system of exchange on a large scale, the Ovimbundu have many terms describing units of measurement. There are native standards of length, area, and capacity, but no measures of weight which are undeniably of Umbundu origin. 804

The unit of length (*epalama*) is the distance from the tip of the thumb to the tip of the middle finger when the hand is outstretched. The term for two of these units is *epalama asali*. These words are the plural of *epalama; asali* means two. These units are used to measure tobacco before it has been coiled.

Cloth is measured by stretching the arms to their full extent in line with the shoulders; the distance between the tips of the middle fingers is *epala*. The stride for measuring land is *elianga*.

Ongimba is an area about twenty-five feet square. *Etemo* ("hoe") is an area of land two hundred yards long and thirty feet broad. A large field covers two or three *etemo*.

Measures of capacity are provided by various types of baskets. The large conical basket (*ohumba*) has an interwoven mark which indicates a measure for corn, meal, and beans. *Ocitenge* is a coarsely made basket used as a unit of capacity. *Uhumba* is a basket two feet long and one foot deep. The basket on a rectangular base is also *ohumba*, but at the present day cans are taking the place of all these old measures. Palm oil is measured in a gourd (*ocitua* or *ombangi*) of definite size. This little gourd is also used for measuring a viscous substance from trees. The word *ekoloto* is used to describe this mucilage. [285] [314]

VI. SOCIAL LIFE

Sexual Relations

COURTSHIP

There is a certain humor and quaintness of language used by Ngonga in describing sexual relations of the Ovimbundu. So far as possible the interpreter's style of expression has been preserved because of its value in revealing the native attitude. 584 836

When a man begins to like a girl, he looks at her for several days. Perhaps the boy will talk to the girl who will tell him to go to her father and mother. The boy must ask the parents for a friendship, which may last for one or two years. During this time the boy must not do anything to the girl, and if he tries she ought to tell her parents. If a baby were born to them in this time it would be a shameful thing. After the boy has told the parents that he wishes to marry the girl he must find something to give to them. The girl must have agreed to marriage before the boy asks the parents. The first token may be no more than a ball of wax or a present of salt. This token says, "The girl is mine," and no other boy will ask for her because it is understood that she is promised to somebody. In former days there were restrictions against marriage with other tribes, but in eastern Angola at the present day the Ovimbundu occasionally marry with the Vachokue. [582

Soon the boy will start building a house on his father's plot, because he intends to bring the girl to his father's land. The boy must at this stage make a further present to the parents of the girl. In the old days he would take about five kilos of salt; but now he will take a bottle of Portuguese wine, two or three blankets, or a piece of cloth. The people who carry the present must be the brother, father, or a male cousin of the suitor. These relatives will say, "This is the day we have come for our boy's wife." Then the parents will examine the things. Perhaps they will say, "You must bring a better blanket." The father or the girl's mother's brother must call the relatives of the girl to a council (*onjango*) where the relatives of the boy and girl are gathered. 584 481

The parents say, "We are taking these things for our daughter; we hope she will be a good girl and not shame us. She is a good girl to us and we hope she will be a good girl in your house." The girl's parents turn to her and say, "We should like to hear that you are hospitable; give food to your husband's relatives when they visit you." 584 577

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

171 wide distribution in Africa (C. Wiedemann, 1909) and the ceremony
175 still survives among the Ovimbundu in modified form.

[114] Though an informative writer, Monteiro is sometimes vague; he says (I, p. 278) that circumcision is a universal custom among the blacks of Angola. In view of the extent of Angola, the diversity of tribes, and the fact that Monteiro traveled over only a small part of the country, this information is misleading.

Monteiro is the only writer in whose works I have found a reference to the Vasele tribe; probably no part of Angola has been so neglected as the Esele country in the hinterland of Novo Redondo. At the present day the Vasele have a reputation for cannibalism. [266] Monteiro saw human flesh eaten at Cuacra, while the skulls of the victims were placed on adjacent trees. Monteiro states (II, p. 167) that on the death of a king the Mucelis (Vasele) put out all the fires in the kingdom; these were relighted by the succeeding king who [321] used fire produced by rubbing two sticks together. The flat beads of shell called *dongos*, made from *Achatina monetaria* (II, p. 168), are made today and traded to the far south of Angola, where their novelty assures them a value far beyond their intrinsic worth. I was fortunate in obtaining an example of the old beheading ax mentioned by Monteiro (II, p. 157) and sketched by Cavazzi (p. 210). Par- [262] boiled and roasted rats were offered to me as food; Monteiro mentions the offering of a roasted rat on a skewer (I, p. 99).

The account of Commander V. L. Cameron, who left Zanzibar for his journey across Africa in 1873, mentions several points of anthropological importance in relation to the Angolan section of his [756] journey. Cameron saw a net-covered medicine-man of the Kibokue (Vachokue) wearing a mask and a kilt of grass (p. 384). The function [524] of this man was to frighten devils from the woods. The contest in which boys discharge their arrows at a rolling root was seen by Cameron near Kagnombe (Cangamba?). Skulls of victims killed in [787] war were spiked on poles (p. 399). The diviner was followed by attendants who struck iron gongs, while the diviner himself shook a rattle made of basket-work in the form of a dumb-bell (p. 404). Cameron gives an accurate description of the divination basket and its use without going into details. These I have been able to supply [482] (chapter IX). The explorer met caravans of Bihéans, renowned carriers then as they are today. They were usually drunk and abusive; in some instances they attempted to rob the stragglers. 000 The use of caterpillars as food is noted (p. 416): "A man cut open

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that weight. The gait of the Ovimbundu includes a limp at every step, so suggesting that the carrier is lame or tired. This appears to be a method consciously adopted as a protection against fatigue, because all muscles are momentarily relaxed. Loads are carried on the head in a long forked stick to which they are lashed. When the carrier rests, the load is not placed on the ground, but is held upright on the stick (Plate XXX, Fig. 2). Such a method avoids the strain of lifting the load from the ground after each rest pause.

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The unit of length (*epaluma*) is the distance from the tip of the thumb to the tip of the middle finger when the hand is outstretched. The term for two of these units is *apaluma avali*. These words are the plural of *epaluma; avali* means two. These units are used to measure tobacco before it has been coiled.

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of definite size. This little gourd is also used for measuring a viscous [314]
substance from trees. The word *ekokoto* is used to describe this mucilage.

The principal products of the forge are axheads, which can be 326
reversed in the shaft so as to form adzes. Hoe blades, tools for mat-making, brass bracelets, knives, and implements for gouging out the pith of gourds or hollowing out a drum, are also made. Arrowheads are likewise an important manufacture.

The blacksmith makes a saw blade, 47 cm in length, from hoop iron. The teeth of the saw are turned alternately to the right and left and the serrated blade is roughly hafted in wood (Plate XVI, Fig. 4). Another product of the forge is an iron tool hafted in wood. The pointed blade, which is round in cross section, tapers to a point used for boring holes in wood, after the tool has been made red-hot. Small axes, many of which are used ceremonially in dances, have remarkably well-fashioned blades decorated with punched designs in the form of geometrical patterns.

WOOD-CARVING

A glance over the list of trees named and used by the Ovimbundu 314
indicates a complete knowledge of woodcraft which is in the hands of specialists. To name only a few, there is the *omanda* tree, also the *omue*, which yield charcoal for the smithy. *Ombula* wood is used for stools, while the elastic timber from the *omanda* tree is suitable for bows. The *ekenge*, *usamba*, and *ociyeko* trees supply bark for binding crosspieces to the upright poles when making the framework of a house; the same bark is used by Ovimbundu and Vachokue of eastern Angola for making bark cloth. In addition to the use of bark for these purposes it is made into large cylindrical receptacles for maize, while its use for beehives is general throughout Angola. Beehives are often made by professional hunters. A traveler notices the mutilation of trees from which complete cylinders of bark have been removed (Plate XL, Fig. 2); half of the cylinder makes a receptacle for carrying on the shoulder.

When a small pig is to be transported, four holes are bored in the 482
bark container. Through these holes the legs of the animal are placed and tied together on the under side (Plate XXXI, Fig. 1). This is a more humane transportation than that of tying the feet of the animal to a pole which is supported on the shoulders of the two men who are carriers.

In the neighborhood of Cangamba fishermen make and use canoes 501
of bark about fifteen feet in length (Plate LXXXV, Fig. 2). This illustration shows a man taking his nets into midstream where they will be pegged to the river bed.

Not only the carpenter, but almost every Ocimbundu man possesses an implement which may be readily adapted as ax or adze (Plate XIII, Fig. 2). The wooden shaft, from 50 to 70 cm in length, terminates in a narrow grip at one end, while the other end expands into a large oval knob into which a circular hole is bored. The strong iron blade, one of the main products of the local forge, can be removed. If the round tang of the blade is inserted so that the cutting edge is in the same plane as the shaft, the implement is an ax. On the contrary, insertion so that the cutting edge is at right angles to the shaft converts the implement into an adze. When placed over the shoulder this implement is used for carrying utensils in a fiber bag (Plate XXVIII, Fig. 1). 412 [482]

Gourds are of three main kinds, which may be found growing on the ground or resting on the roofs of houses at the ends of the climbing stems that bear them. *Ombenge* is a gourd which is narrow in the middle. It is often converted into a dipper for ladling liquids. The narrow neck is the handle, while a round hole is cut in the larger part so that the dipper can be filled with liquid. *Onganja* is round, or perhaps oval in form. There is a size used as a measure of capacity. *Onganja* can be used as a ladle by fixing it at the end of a stick. *Olukuembo* has a round body and a narrow hook-shaped neck; like the gourd *ombenge*, it is used as a ladle. 415 [244]

Gourds are elaborately decorated with incised and burned designs (Plate XII, Figs. 1–6). Usually these patterns are geometrical, but human figures and animals are sometimes included. Decorated gourds from Bailundu, used for containing beer at a wedding, are among the best examples of their kind (Plate XII, Fig. 6). The owner of a decorated gourd takes great pains to repair a crack with rattan, which is threaded through holes bored in the edges of the fracture. A large gourd is sometimes carried in a native-made net of vegetable fiber. 531 415

POTTERY

A large and varied collection of pottery has been acquired from the Ovimbundu, the Vachokue, and the Vasele. The shapes and styles are best indicated by the illustrations in Plate XIV, Figs. 1–5. 323 171

Among the Ovimbundu, only women make pots, which are inferior in workmanship to those of the Vachokue and the Vasele. At Elende, among the Ovimbundu, I was surprised to find a man making pottery. Further inquiry showed that he had learned his craft when young in the Vachokue country of eastern Angola. This man, whose work was not copied at all by Ovimbundu women, was regarded as a specialist whose products were in great demand. [462]

VII. EDUCATION

Industrial Training and Division of Labor

871 Usually there is no formality connected with the industrial and occupational training of Ovimbundu children. The section dealing with play shows that boys and girls learn by spontaneous imitation of their elders.

874 There are, however, exceptions to this general truth. Special rites connected with the training and inauguration of blacksmiths and hunters have been described. The training of medicine-men and women will be dealt with in chapter IX, "Religion."

462 463 In describing economic life in chapter V, division of labor on a sex basis; also specialization in industry because of peculiar tastes and aptitudes, were noted. There is clearly a twofold division in industrial life. In the first place sex determines occupation, and within this primary grouping there is a secondary grouping depending [467] on personal preference and individual ability. I have found no instance of exclusive hereditary right to any occupation or industry.

462 The net result of the Umbundu system of division of labor is indicated by the following summary:

[342] When building houses, men dig the rectangular trench, cut the poles for the framework, lash the crosspieces, cut grass and lay the thatch, then place clay over the wattle walls. Women carry water for mixing the clay and convey the moist clay to the plasterers. [224] Children puddle the clay with their feet. Males are hunters both professional and general. During a communal hunt women and children assist in driving game, which is frightened by the firing of [857] grass. Boys organize games in which they imitate these activities. [226] Men fish with a line and bait, whereas women use baskets and [231] narcotic poison. Men and boys take care of cattle and have charge of dogs. Women and girls give what slight attention is afforded to other domestic animals. Male specialists castrate bulls and goats.

[241] During agricultural operations men clear the ground and burn the bush. Women carry on hoe cultivation without assistance from [482] men. Men are the chief carriers in caravans, but women and children may sometimes be seen carrying loads. They march in line with the men but have smaller burdens. Males are employed in blacksmith's work, wood-carving, making weapons and tools, weaving mats, dressing hides, spinning cotton, and formerly in weaving on an upright loom. Men are exclusively the makers of

534 Another musical bow named *ekolowa* is of simple construction, consisting of a strip of cane from 54 to 70 cm long and 2 cm wide. At each end of the cane is a projection. A string, when tightly stretched between these projections, pulls the cane into the form of a bow. The performer, placing one end of the bow in his mouth, plucks the string with his thumb and forefinger (Plate XXII, Fig. 7).

Two rubbing instruments are used by the Ovimbundu. *Ogolanda* is a large gourd with a slit in the top along which there is a board cut into sixteen notches. The rubbing of a short stick along these notches produces a sound which is greatly amplified by the gourd resonator. The second instrument of this type is in the form of a wooden bow having its thickest part notched for rubbing with a stick (Plate XXII, Figs. 3, 8).

533 Only specialists are skilled in composing songs, and both men and women are composers. The younger people sometimes go to the old people to learn songs which were popular a generation ago. There are no professional itinerant story-tellers.

There is a chant for funerals which has been quoted in the appropriate section, but no special wedding songs are used. The Ovimbundu have satirical songs humorously describing individual [626] foibles and peculiarities, and as usual in Negro communities a satirical song is feared by thieves, adulterers, or other offenders.

[726] In former days when men were on the warpath they sang, *Okaimbo ketu katito eteke tu lisanumbula tu tandako.* ("Our village is little today, we attack, we extend.") Another war song is *Ocisonde ci likoka ove o kasi vonjila tumdamo.* ("Red ant that creeps along, you who are in the way, get out.")

[484] When men on the march came to a camping ground occupied by another caravan, they sang as a challenge, *Cinene nye? Cinene onjamba kakuli okachama kavela ukuavo.* ("What is the largest? There is no animal largest. The largest is the elephant.")

During hauling and carrying, men sing, *Yende, yende chale, ocimboto lomala vaco.* ("Let it go, let it go, the crab, the frog, with its children.")

482 Lifting loads is always accompanied by noises which suggest that someone is injured. Part of the men make deep grunts to which their companions answer with prolonged groans.

INITIATION

867 Evidence bearing on initiatory rites in Angola shows that the
881 ceremonies are arranged as a process of incorporation into the

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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OVIMBUNDU, ELENDE

[p. 392]

3. Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP18-Mbundu FP13

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[p.384]

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METHODS OF TRANSPORTATION, ELENDE

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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2

METHODS OF TRANSPORTATION, OVIMBUNDU, ELENDE

Fig. 1. Boy carrying pig. Fig. 2. Men bearing sick man in hammock

[p. 385]

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3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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TRANSPORTATION, OVIMBUNDU, ELENDE

Fig. 1. Bridge across swamp and stream. Fig. 2. Carrying children

[p. 397]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

[p. 403]

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2

PHYSICAL TYPES, OVIMBUNDU, ELENDE

Fig. 1. Boys, showing tooth mutilation on left. Fig. 2. Girl with field basket

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1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

for tribute and other exactions of King Konya Cilemo, successor to the stool of Viye, decided to leave his place at Belmonte (Viye) for Benguela,[1] where he remained for ten years. A year later Guilherme Gonçalves left to his sons his flourishing settlement near Kamundongo (Viye), and sailed for Lisbon, intending to stay indefinitely.[2] These two men were the leading traders established in the Highland, but little idea had they that the small trickle of rubber exports begun in 1869 would so soon inaugurate a new era in Central African trade. It was only in 1882 that rubber took even second place in the exports (after bees-wax),[3] but already in 1872[4] its importance was becoming evident, and by 1877 individual Ovimbundu of Viye had already turned over considerable fortunes in the trade.[5] Bastos seems to be correct in taking 1874 as the beginning of this new era in the trade of the region.[6] For the Ovimbundu, the preceding decades, indeed the preceding century or even centuries, had been a period of preparation for the trade which was now beginning. For them the rubber trade, from 1874 until its close in 1916, was the classical period of commercial activity.

The time of preparation had necessarily developed in the Ovimbundu the intellectual acumen, venturesomeness, a technique of co-operation both within their own social groupings and with outsiders, a knowledge of people, places, and things of their Central African world, together with the other qualities which enabled them to carry on their far-flung trading activities. These qualities merit a fuller description (q.v. *infra*, p. 206 f.). During this earlier period, since many of their travels were naturally exploratory, the Ovimbundu probably travelled more widely than during the time of the rubber trade. There were hardly any territories within the bounds of the Congo River, the Lakes, and the Kalahari Desert which they had not penetrated.[7] Some Ovimbundu went even farther afield as employees of European traders or on their own account. A ready example is Domingos Cakahanga and his companions who, in the employ of Silva Porto during the years

[1] *Boletim Soc. Geog. Lisboa, 5a Ser.*, p. 20.
[2] See Cameron, op. cit., p. 400.
[3] *Benguella*, op. cit., 1887, pp. 24 ff.
[4] *Benguella*, op. cit., 1892, p. 29.
[5] Serpa Pinto, op. cit., p. 161 f.
[6] Bastos, op. cit., p. 24.
[7] Serpa Pinto, op. cit., p. 164; L. Magyar, op. cit., pp. 298, 299. The best proof, however, is the fact of the geographical and tribal names found in the Umbundu language.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

175 x 1853–4, crossed Africa from Benguela to the mouth of the Rovuma.[1]

484 439 Nor was this the only transcontinental journey effected by Ovimbundu traders.[2] Such long-distance expeditions were not always the most profitable, and certainly the relatively shorter journeys of the time of the rubber trade must have been much more lucrative. Indeed, the judgement of Magyar was that the Ovimbundu generally got more enjoyment and excitement than monetary gain from their expeditions.[3]

175 439 648 Mention has been made that the several Umbundu kingdoms fell in line with the trading activities of Bailundu and Viye. By the beginning of the period of great activity this had eventuated in a loose system of alliances or mutual understandings to the effect that the traders and caravans of each would be tolerated in, and allowed passage through, the territory of the other. At times their 'trade-agreements' seem to have embraced all the Umbundu-speaking peoples, but violations were frequent,[4] and complaints of violations seem to have been almost the regular state of affairs as between Viye and the Ciyaka-Cingolo-Citata group. There also developed regional industrial and commercial specializations. In Magyar's time there was a great metal industry at Ekovongo, the capital of Viye, making hoes for trade with the interior,[5] but by 1875 this work seems to have ceased,[6] for although hoes were still

326 438 175 x

[1] Cakahanga kept a diary which was edited by Silva Porto and published under the title 'Third Voyage' in the *Boletim Official* of Angola, 1856–7, and later in the *Annaes do Cons. Ultr. Ia Ser.* A summary of this diary appeared in the *Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society* of London, 1860, pp. 136–49, but the translator and editor mistakenly believed that Silva Porto had himself crossed Africa, and added to the confusion by calling the Ovimbundu 'Arabs from Zanzibar'. Silva Porto himself only went as far as Naliele, and it seems that there were 'Arabs' or Swahili in the party, but how far they accompanied it is not clear. That the diary was kept by Cakahanga is evident, for the 'Arabs' could write no language known to Silva Porto.

[2] See Magyar, op. cit., p. 297.

[3] Ibid., p. 299. This referred only to Magyar's time, 1849–57, but I feel it to be a judgement capable of wider extension. Serpa Pinto says that in 1878 he met many who 'turned over capital of a thousand to twelve hundred pounds sterling and some even more; one indeed . . . arrived during my sojourn . . . from the interior where he had traded on his own account to the extent of . . . about £3,500!' (op. cit., p. 161 f.). However, there were also losses and often, so that Magyar's dictum is worth remembering.

[4] e.g. see account of dispute between Ekuikui (Bailundu) and Njambayamina (Viye) in *Missionary Herald*, 1886, pp. 228 f., 452, 508; 1887, p. 463.

[5] L. Magyar, op. cit., p. 297.

[6] See negative testimony of Cameron, of Serpa Pinto, and of early missionaries.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

175 439 314 of price fluctuations and sought by every means to maintain the former level of returns. The European traders aided and abetted this process in order to bolster up their credit, for from 1887, when the boom began, most of them were operating on shoe-strings. The result was almost immediate. Benguela rubber was classified as 'third-class' at a price one-fourth the former rate.[1] This was the end of the rubber trade. With the establishment of plantations in the East Indies, in South America, and on the African west coast, which produced a uniformly high quality, the native-produced wild rubber of Angola ceased to have any quotation whatever.[2]

Export statistics show that the totals in quantity and value of rubber exported were nearly as large in 1916 as in 1888, and that [731] in 1918 and 1919 they fell to almost nothing,[3] but for the Ovimbundu the rubber trade ended in 1911—'the year of the great hunger in the Ngangela country'. They remember that many caravans which went out at the beginning of that year's dry season never did return, or that only a few of their stronger members returned—mere skeletons and shadows. *Ngandi*[4] tried to eat wax and died; *Ngandi* killed and ate his younger brother, saying, 'It is better that one of us should live to return, rather than both die.' The caravans usually carried actual rations for only a few days of [484] the outward journey (to last through the 'Hungry Country'), and relied on buying the food needed for the rest of the time. This experience put an end to a trade which was already passing out of the hands of the Ovimbundu—owing to the multiplication of European trading establishments, not only throughout the Umbundu country but even in the 'Ngangela' regions, and the building of the Benguela Railway, which finally put an end to porterage and the trading caravans of former days.[5]

[1] A. Bastos, op. cit., pp. 40 ff.

[2] In 1942, after the capture of Malaya and the Dutch East Indies by the Japanese and the consequent acute shortage of rubber, the gathering of wild rubber in eastern Angola was resumed, most of the product going to Britain. Some, however, has gone to the national factories at Luanda and in Portugal, and consequently there is a stimulus to maintain the production of wild rubber in the colony, but unless more humane methods are used with the native producers the present limited supply is bound to fall off.

[3] Statistics of export and import are given by F. Trancoso, op. cit. The figures for rubber from 1888 to 1919 are on p. 36.

[4] *Ngandi*, the Umbundu equivalent for 'John Doe' or 'So-and-so'.

[5] The Benguela Railway (*Caminho de Ferro de Benguela*) began construction in 1904; in 1910 it reached Cuma (198 miles) in Ciyaka, well up on the Plateau

known throughout the territory bounded by the Congo river, the Great Lakes, and the Kalahari desert. Most other Ovimbundu kingdoms fell into line with the trading activities of Bailundu and Viye. By the middle of the century this had resulted in a loose system of alliances and mutual understandings to the effect that the traders and caravans of each kingdom would be permitted to enter or travel through the others. At time these "trade-agreements" seem to have embraced all the Umbundu-speaking peoples, but violations were frequent, especially between Viye and the Ciyaka-Cingola-Citata group. Trade-agreements were also made beyond the Umbundu-speaking area, e.g. with the Mwata Yamvo of the Lunda.(1) 175 439 [484]

From roughly the turn of the twentieth century the large-scale trading activities of the Ovimbundu declined. Military occupation of Viye and Bailundu took place in 1890, and from that date European traders began to settle in Viye and Bailundu in ever-increasing numbers. In 1902 the Bailundu war occurred, after which the occupation of the whole of Umbundu country was quickly completed. This campaign paralysed trade, which was already suffering because of a great fall in rubber prices. Other factors which hastened the decline of Ovimbundu trading activities(2) include the famine in Ngangela country in 1911, the disappearance of illicit slave-traffic, and, finally, the building of the Benguella Railway (commenced in 1904), which put an end to the porterage and trading caravans of former days.(3) [721] [496]

LANGUAGE

"Umbundu is usually(4) associated with Ambo, Herero and kindred languages. It would however seem that more comparative study is required to show how real this apparent relationship is: it appears to be especially based on the fact that Umbundu uses prefixial o- with many of its noun classes. In general structure, however, Umbundu shows remarkable similarity in grammar and vocabulary to Luena, Luchazi and other languages of the Ganguella [Ngangela] group. 197

Features of Umbundu which are worthy of note are:-

i. Presence of nasal vowels before and after 'l', 'h', 'v' and 'w'.

ii. In certain nasal compounds, subtraction occurs, involving the second consonant, but not the nasal, e.g. *muntu* is realised as *omunu*.

iii. Compared with the Lunda-Luena languages Umbundu exhibits an unusually large number of defective verbs.

iv. A vowel system of five vowels.

(1) These were at first one-way agreements, allowing Ovimbundu to trade in many lands, since it was to the advantage of the rulers of these countries. The Ovimbundu are said in fact to have discouraged the tribes to the east from venturing out on their own account. See Livingstone 1857, p.384, Cameron 1877, p.406.
(2) For much greater detail concerning the rise and fall of Ovimbundu trade see Childs op.cit., pp.191-215.
(3) Ibid.
(4) Duke 1945, p.101; Guthrie 1948, p.64; Childs 1949, p.8.

Mat-making

462 285 [412] The making of mats is a specialised craft for men. Generally elderly men are the mat-makers. Two tools are used, a borer and a needle, both products of the blacksmith's forge. Hambly[1] describes the making of reed sleeping mats, large mats used for partitions, and string bags. There are four distinct types of mats, each of which has its specialist.[2]

Leather-work

282 Leather pouches worn on a broad leather belt are part of the essential equipment of the hunter. The pouch is square, rectangular, or semi-cylindrical in shape, and may be decorated with cross-shaped patterns, or brass-headed nails used for decorative effect. Hide is also used for the seats of four-legged wooden stools. Hides are crudely dressed: they are soaked, the inner surface rubbed with ashes, the hair scraped away, and the hide pegged out.[3]

Wood-carving

323 [463] Wood-carving, which is men's work, includes the following specialisations: doors, windows and their frames; coffins; beds, tables and chairs; mortars, pestles, grinding-handles, and handles for various iron implements; stools, household utensils, carved images etc., drums and other musical instruments; canoes (dug-outs and coracles).[4] Illustrations are given by Hambly.[5]

TRADE

438 484 791 [582] Caravan trade is now confined to short journeys when corn, beans and beeswax are carried by men and women porters to the traders' stores. Formerly however it was an important feature of tribal life. Each caravan had its professional leader, and was accompanied by a diviner or medicine-man. Before a caravan started out, a ceremony was performed at which the principal performers were the village headman and the medicine-man. The head of the former headman was brought from its box, sewn in oxhide; blood from a sacrificed animal was sprinkled on the head, and invocation was made to the deceased by the village headman, asking for good fortune for the journey.[6]

438 436 Today the Ovimbundu exchange products among themselves both by barter and the use of Portuguese money,[7] but there are no large markets except in the towns.

[439] 438 The "trade-agreements" between the Ovimbundu kingdoms and between the Ovimbundu and other tribes have been mentioned above.[8] Accompanying these, regional industrial and commercial specialisations within Ovimbundu country developed. Thus in the middle of the last century

(1) Hambly, op.cit., pp.169-70.
(2) Childs, 1949, p.109.
(3) Hambly, op.cit., p.176.
(4) Childs, op.cit., p.110.
(5) Op.cit., Plates XIII to XXII.
(6) Hambly, op.cit., p.156.
(7) For details of Ovimbundu units of measurement see Hambly, op.cit., p.157.
(8) p.9.

The coastal strip

131 was at times traversed by the Ovimbundu who know of the sea and
484 call it *kalunga*. Bihéan caravans crossed to the coast with slaves, as history shows, but the nature of the coastal strip marks it as a western barrier limiting the expansion of the Ovimbundu in that direction. The coast line itself is of the greatest moment in the consideration of historical factors. From Loanda, Benguela, and
[177] Mossamedes on the coast, the Portuguese penetrated the interior, so making contacts with the Ovimbundu to the encouragement of caravan trade. The importance of this European contact will be seen in subsequent chapters.

The south and southwest parts of Angola are of particular importance in studying the contacts of the Ovimbundu, but to give here the details of the wealthy cattle-keeping culture of these regions, which were accessible through peaceful proximity, trade, and occasional raiding, would be an anticipation of chapter X, "Culture Contacts."
[723] One topographical point is of primary importance; namely, the ease with which the Ovimbundu could descend from their strongholds to the low-lying land of the west and south, whereas the reverse journey is much more difficult for a people unaccustomed to manoeuvring and finding their way among hills.

101 Having described the northern, central, western, and southern areas, there remains only the eastern section to consider; this presents several features of peculiar geographical and ethnological interest.
[133] The eastern section of Angola is either slightly undulating or flat, the general characteristic is dryness, and vegetation is somewhat
[136] sparse though sufficient to shelter many kinds of antelope.

The major population is the Vachokue, a warlike, hunting people, who follow agricultural pursuits but slightly, and do not keep cattle. Examination of the literature describing early exploration indicates
[726] the truculent nature of these eastern people with whom caravans of Ovimbundu were in frequent conflict. Umbundu caravans crossed this country when making their way to Rhodesia, culture contacts with which are discussed in chapter X.

The results of contact of Ovimbundu and Vachokue tribes, so far as physical miscegenation is concerned, are mentioned in chapter "Physical Appearance"; while the social effects of slavery resulting from hostilities are described in chapter VI, "Social Life."

174 Rhodesia is a cattle-raising country, but the hostility of the
231 Vachokue, the great distance from central Angola to Rhodesia, and the general dryness of the country to be crossed, discourage the idea that the Ovimbundu obtained their cattle from Rhodesia. If it is

235 guese for a long period. The chicken is highly esteemed as a sacrificial
[262] animal, but it could not be said that the flesh is in common use. This failure to develop and utilize to the full, again raises the point of social custom and economic habit. Chickens are cared for, as may be seen in the way they are cooped at night. Sometimes a hen may be seen sitting on her clutch of eggs in a dark corner of a hut, unmolested by people and dogs; yet it is certain that there is no concentration on the rearing of poultry.

Eggs are laid, and chickens are hatched throughout the year except in the months of November and December when corn supplies
[252] are at their lowest ebb. Eggs are boiled, or fried on a fragment of
[264] pottery, but they are not sucked.

231 The domestic cat is not raised by the Ovimbundu. Wild cats are common, but there is no evidence of their domestication. Small birds and monkeys are sometimes kept as pets.

TRADE AND TRANSPORT

438 Caravan trade, which was at one time an important factor of tribal life, is now confined to short journeys for transporting corn, beans, and beeswax to traders' stores. But in spite of present-day
439 decline of transportation the memory of more prosperous times still exists.

Names of distant places survive in the Umbundu language; thus Tanganyika is called Nakandundu, while the name for far eastern Angola is Muacimbundu, the name of a one-time important chief. The Umbundu language is understood in all parts of Angola, far away from typical Umbundu centers of culture.

484 In the old days there were professional leaders of caravans, and a
788 ceremony was conducted before starting. The medicine-man and the
778 village chief were the principal performers in a rite which consisted
787 of bringing from its box the head of a former chief, sewn in oxhide. An animal was sacrificed so that the blood could be used for sprinkling on the chief's head, and on some occasions of this kind the head was sewn up in a new piece of oxhide. Direct appeal was made to the preserved head by the reigning chief, who asked for good fortune on the journey.

The medicine-man who accompanied a caravan carried with him a female wooden figure decorated with feathers (Plate XXI, Fig. 5). When a branching of the paths gave rise to doubts concerning the correct way the wooden figure was consulted by the medicine-man.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

straight lines. The legs show the usual flexion of the knees and a 532
shortening which is out of proportion to the body length. The lower limbs of most Angolan figures have these characteristics. The body of this figure is hollow and the head detachable. The incised head-dress is imitative of the coiffure of Vachokue women.

Cangamba, a village in eastern Angola, is a confluence of tribal 171
elements, namely, Vambuella, Luchazi, Babunda, and Vachokue, whose physical appearance, hairdressing, tooth mutilation, and tribal marks differ considerably. The man who sold the figurine brought it furtively. He was an Ocimbundu, but the work is of Chokue origin. The figure, I am informed, was filled with medicine, [755]
then placed near a patient who was undergoing curative treatment.

The figurine (*ngevi*) of a woman having a number of dark feathers 484
attached to her back has only one use. A caravan setting out for a 778
long journey is accompanied by a medicine-man whose outfit includes 787
such a figurine. Should the caravan leader be in doubt when choosing between two paths, the medicine-man sets up the image at the parting of the ways. He kneels before it and asks questions, then plugs his nostrils in order to make replies in a falsetto voice supposed to come from the figurine. Thus advised respecting the route to follow, the caravan continues its journey (Plate XXI, Fig. 5; p. 156).

The wooden figure (Plate XXI, Fig. 3) is of exceptional interest 326
because of its connecion with the blacksmith's craft, which is asso- 775
ciated with introductory rites for apprentices. In former days a newly initiated blacksmith was expected to disappear for a period during which he killed a man. On returning to the work of his forge the blacksmith made a wooden figure of which this example, one of five obtained, is typical. The spirit of the murdered man took up its abode in the effigy and in this way helped with the work. The figure, which is of the usual dimensions, namely, 36 cm high, has the greater part of its surface covered with reddened earth (pp. 159–160).

Two figurines (Plate XXI, Figs. 1, 6) were obtained from 171
women of the Vachokue tribe in the village of Ngongo, Ngalangi. 842
Here the Vachokue and the Ovimbundu mingle to such an extent that customs are no doubt transferred from one culture to the other. These wooden images are used by childless women, or by women whose infants have died. The woman who sold these figures pressed them to her breasts to show the manner of use. People standing around smiled and nodded their approval. A wooden figure of this [845]
kind is substituted for a dead twin.

534 Another musical bow named *ekolowa* is of simple construction, consisting of a strip of cane from 54 to 70 cm long and 2 cm wide. At each end of the cane is a projection. A string, when tightly stretched between these projections, pulls the cane into the form of a bow. The performer, placing one end of the bow in his mouth, plucks the string with his thumb and forefinger (Plate XXII, Fig. 7).

Two rubbing instruments are used by the Ovimbundu. *Ogolanda* is a large gourd with a slit in the top along which there is a board cut into sixteen notches. The rubbing of a short stick along these notches produces a sound which is greatly amplified by the gourd resonator. The second instrument of this type is in the form of a wooden bow having its thickest part notched for rubbing with a stick (Plate XXII, Figs. 3, 8).

533 Only specialists are skilled in composing songs, and both men and women are composers. The younger people sometimes go to the old people to learn songs which were popular a generation ago. There are no professional itinerant story-tellers.

There is a chant for funerals which has been quoted in the appropriate section, but no special wedding songs are used. The Ovimbundu have satirical songs humorously describing individual [626] foibles and peculiarities, and as usual in Negro communities a satirical song is feared by thieves, adulterers, or other offenders.

[726] In former days when men were on the warpath they sang, *Okaimbo ketu katito eteke tu lisanumbula tu tandako.* ("Our village is little today, we attack, we extend.") Another war song is *Ocisonde ci likoka ove o kasi vonjila tumdamo.* ("Red ant that creeps along, you who are in the way, get out.")

[484] When men on the march came to a camping ground occupied by another caravan, they sang as a challenge, *Cinene nye? Cinene onjamba kakuli okachama kavela ukuavo.* ("What is the largest? There is no animal largest. The largest is the elephant.")

During hauling and carrying, men sing, *Yende, yende chale, ocimboto lomala vaco.* ("Let it go, let it go, the crab, the frog, with its children.")

482 Lifting loads is always accompanied by noises which suggest that someone is injured. Part of the men make deep grunts to which their companions answer with prolonged groans.

INITIATION

867 Evidence bearing on initiatory rites in Angola shows that the
881 ceremonies are arranged as a process of incorporation into the

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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[1874-1912]

THE OLD SOCIETY

The trade was conducted in caravans composed of up to several thousand people,[48] under the leadership of *entrepeneurs* called *olofumbelo* (of which the singular is *ofumbelo*). Of such were the individuals whom Serpa Pinto describes as earning wealth equivalent to a thousand pounds or more. Their role was to get together the caravans, to negotiate with the local political authorities, and to provide ritual leadership. The exact relationship between the *ofumbelo* and the ordinary members of the caravan is difficult to see. European travellers found that porters were content with low wages since they had opportunities for private trade, but apparently the caravan organizers had better opportunities for getting rich than had ordinary Ovimbundu. My informants stated that a man organized a caravan to gain wealth. A man who was in a position of prosperity would be known as an *ohwase* (rich man), would stay at home and be expected to assist his relatives.[49]

Different ages and both sexes participated in the trade. Childs says that boys from the age of nine upwards travelled on the caravans, and this is confirmed by Serpa Pinto.[50] Tucker, and my informants however, give the age when caravan travel began as being fifteen or over.[51] Unmarried girls travelled too, but simply acted as helpers to some male relative. The caravan organizers (*olofumbelo*) were old men, I was told, and travelled in the rear while in front of the caravan marched a young man (called the *kesongo*) who carried a flag.[52]

Dr. Childs states that between 1874 and 1886 rubber was gathered from the forests of the interior and took eight months (four months each way presumably) for the Ovimbundu to obtain. From 1886, however, 'red rubber' was obtained from the sandy lands beyond the Cuanza, a journey which only took three months altogether. Hence, Childs states, the trading

[48] A Bastos, *Monografia de Catimbella*, in *Bol. Soc. Geog. Lisboa* 1910 (p. 151) states that caravans of several thousand were used in the 1870s but that by the time of writing (1908–9, nearly the end of the trade) people came in small parties. My informants who would remember this period spoke of the large size of the caravans.

[49] My informants.

[50] Serpa Pinto, p. 164.

[51] J. T. Tucker in *Africa* (Notes and News), April 1956.

[52] Informants.

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[1874-1911]

439 484 journeys diminished in distance as they increased in profitability.[53]

My informants, however, gave a somewhat different picture. Long trading journeys were still being undertaken in the last decade of the trade (1901–11). Some men whom I met had travelled to the kingdom of the Mwata Yamvo and beyond to Luba country; one man had made a journey into what is now the Congo Republic which took a year to go and a year to return; another had visited Barotseland. It should be said that these seem to have been unusually long journeys; journeys totalling six to eight months were common.[54]

182 829 [776] [754] The significance of the trade in social life is reflected in the mystical explanations of success in business found in Umbundu religion. Prosperity might be explained either by the favour of spirits such as Kandundu and Otjipuku, who received at their shrines libations of wine, or by malevolent sorcery involving the sacrifice of relatives in exchange for wealth.[55] The existence of these two explanations probably reflects the existence of some rich men who satisfied the expectations of their relatives and others who did not.

567 178 Apart from the rubber trade, the older slave trade continued until its vigorous suppression in the period 1910–12, and indeed seems, as regards the Ovimbundu, to have become intensified in the period after 1890. The slaves went to S. Tome and Principe, or to coastal plantations. Up to that time the Ovimbundu had sold few of their own people, with the exception of criminals or people who had become generally unpopular with their kin. The collapse of the old political system played into the hands of adventurers who unscrupulously exploited the Umbundu custom of debt slavery or conducted raids for this purpose.[56]

484 439 It was then the 'trade' which was the common factor in the life of all Ovimbundu, and which was so to speak the factor,

[53] Childs, p. 208.

[54] Informants.

[55] Although some old men still have shrines to the luck-giving spirits it is not possible to see how their cult functioned in the social structure then existing. It is, however, notable that success could be interpreted mystically in two ways by benevolent spirits or by sorcery.

[56] Childs, p. 213. I was told that Gumba had been raided from Bailundo.

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167 Many of the people in Gumba had come from

Cela, and Cela influences are notable in several ways.[24] In Cassongue Umbundu has relatively recently ousted other
133 speech.[25] Geographically Bimbe generally is rather lower than most of the Highland. Although the railway line and the growth
167 of maize have been influential here, an alternative pull for
361 labour migration is provided by the coffee plantation of Amboim and Seles, and by the coastal towns of Novo Redondo and Porto Amboim.[26] In the days of the caravan trade Novo Redondo was an important trading centre, more important perhaps than Benguela for the people of this area.

464 Work is sought by Ovimbundu in lands far from their home.
[167] There are Ovimbundu at Brazzaville; others have settled permanently in the Congo Republic, or work in Rhodesia; the Johannesburg mines have employed many, and some have gone as far as Natal.[27] In Epalanga, the village where I lived, there were two men who had been to Johannesburg—nor was this very exceptional and I am told that among the people south of the railway it is quite common.

82 The world picture of the Ovimbundu is vague, except as regards Angola and the neighbouring countries. The existence of Europe (Putu) composed of different nations Portuguese, French, and English is known, and I was several times asked if there were black people in England. Little or nothing is known of the other continents. The island of S. Tomé in the Atlantic is known, since up to recently Angolan labourers went there, and some convicts are still sent to it. Several people from the neighbourhood had lived in Luanda or worked on coffee
[484] plantations in northern Angola. The Belgian Congo was known as Bula Matadi, though people seem little aware of Rhodesia, and Mozambique (Portuguese East Africa) is confused with the southern Angolan port of Moçamedes. The railway lines and
[484] the cities along it are of course well known, and some of the people I knew had travelled to Kwanyama country in the far south of Angola to buy cattle. Johannesburg (Zhwaini) and its

[24] Notably in the arm ornaments and hair styles favoured by some women. Cela diviners are often consulted.

[25] Childs (p. 179) suggests that the change came about in the nineteenth century.

[26] For this area of Angola see Egerton, pp. 186–8. Galvão and Selvagem, pp. 378–80, 457–8.

[27] Personal information. Also Childs, p. 815.

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More usually they are followed and sometimes

preceded by singing, and dancing. There are a certain number 797
of 'school' songs as distinct from hymns, which are semi- or 533
non-religious in nature, which are taught by the catechist and are sung on these occasions with other Umbundu traditional songs. There seems to be little composition of songs by present day Ovimbundu nor do they know popular Portuguese songs.

The school itself, the centre of these activities, is generally 797
built of adobe bricks in the shape of a church. In any village [346]
where there is a fair number of school people it will be the largest building in the village and even in villages of mixed Christian and pagan population the school building tends to be in the centre of the village, a topographical reflection of the social significance of the catechist and the catechetical school. In the school men and women are separated, men on the right, women on the left, a custom also found in some Angolan parish churches.

The catechist's presence is a mark of the identity of the 797
village. The catechetical school is the only institution which 621
groups people of different domestic groups on a village-wide basis, and in which people participate in a wider set of social relations on a village and not on an individual basis, as people are linked to kinsmen, or to the post or to an employer. One can and does associate oneself with a village if one does not belong geographically to it but simply attends its school. Thus Fernando considered himself as belonging to the village of Ngolo Catolica whose catechetical school he attended, although his house was well away from the main village, being much nearer the Protestant village of Vila Graça, where indeed he had kinsmen. When I asked a woman where she lived she replied by giving the name of the vilage catechist. The only occasions on which a group of people represent one village *vis-à-vis* another are in connection with the travels of missionaries, and in the wedding feasts, which will be described in another chapter.

A missionary on leaving one village for another has his 797
luggage carried by the school people of the village where he 484
has been staying, who will march singng, with perhaps a boy banging on a drum. When they get to the next village they will be greeted at the entrance into the village by the catechist and

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his people, who will be neatly dressed and lined up. The welcoming catechist will deliver a speech in Portuguese, and will conclude with three Vivas one, say, for the Bishop of Nova Lisboa, one for the Mission, and one for the visiting priest. These may be varied—I have heard a Viva for Diogo Cão, the Portuguese navigator who discovered Angola. This formal welcome to a procession seems copied from the welcome given to the party from the bride's village when they arrive at the bridegroom's village; and this welcome has in turn copied elements—speeches in Portuguese and calls for Vivas—from the reception of missionaries. Then both parties singing and dancing will proceed to the house where the priest is to stay. The people of the welcoming village should have taken over his luggage at the point where they met his party—if they have not, his carriers will complain vigorously.

It is the catechist's responsibility to get his people to provide the customary gifts of a chicken or two, and possibly eggs and bananas to the visiting priest. He must explain the spiritual state of the school people to the missionary, notably telling him if any of the Christians have married according to pagan custom. It is to him that the priest will direct criticisms on the state of the school building or on the lack of catechetical knowledge of the people. The catechist has also the obligation to visit the mission occasionally during the year—how often depends on nearness, on circumstances and on his own enthusiasm. The most popular times for visiting the mission are Christmastime, the New Year, Easter, and Corpus Christi, when the catechist may go with a number of the school people, though individual Christians also go alone. A catechist will also visit the mission when he has some catechumens who are sufficiently advanced to be tested on their religious knowledge. He has also a general responsibility to report to the mission the activities of diviners, or Christians who have married polygamously. He may also be responsible for referring other disputes to the mission, or for obtaining a letter of commendation to the post in some dispute.

The catechist, then, does not have much authority of his own; his personal role is that of a teacher and leader of prayers. He can, however, invoke the authority of the mission, which

(Plate XLV, Fig. 2). The house of bows for holding sacred relics will be described in connection with religion (Plate XLVI, Fig. 1). 644

In former days there used to be a hard mud floor for dancing, centrally placed in the village. 361 335

In the center of the village is the communal house where all men, and boys over four years of age, gather to eat their food, which is sent by the women. This *onjango* is the place of assembly for discussion of village affairs. A house of this kind at Bailundu is circular in form with a diameter of seventeen feet (Plate XLVIII, Fig. 1). In the middle of the *onjango* are stones forming a fireplace. In another such house there were jawbones of oxen. These were suspended from the walls as tokens of the payment of fines. There is no communal house for females. In some villages there is a common kraal for cattle. 344 [681] [417]

The king's compound usually contains: 644

(1) The king's house, which invariably has a separate sleeping room.

(2) A house and kitchen for each of his wives.

(3) A tomb for the burial of kings and their wives.

(4) The house of bows for staffs, bows, mats, and tobacco-pipes of dead chiefs.

(5) A house of meditation for the king (Plate LXXXIX, Fig. 1).

(6) Pens for pigs and chickens.

The guest houses (Plate XLVIII, Fig. 2) that I have seen were not in the king's compound. Granaries, which are conspicuous in every village, have been mentioned in connection with food supply (Plate XLIV, Fig. 1). Each house has its own granary. I have noticed garbage pits containing corn husks and refuse from sweet potatoes, but there is as a rule no organized scheme for disposing of refuse; dogs and pigs are the scavengers. There is no particular place for defecation; people use the bush. [485] 343 364

Every man has a knowledge of house-building. Women do not actually build, but, along with the children, they pour water into the clay pit and carry clay to the men who are plastering the walls. Ngonga says, "People would be surprised to see a woman building a house. They would call her a he-woman." Men help one another in house-building by giving reciprocal service for which there is a gift of food and beer. 462 476 [338]

A deep rectangular clay pit is made as close to the house as possible, and the children thoroughly enjoy puddling the clay with their 338

338 feet. A trench about eighteen inches deep is dug for the poles (*akoso*), which form the framework. The wattle work is tied to the uprights with strong strips of red bark before the plastering is begun.
341 The old type of Umbundu house was round, but most of the houses
171 now show a transition to square or rectangular forms (Plate XLIV, Fig. 2).

[531] Exterior wall-painting is found only in the northern districts of Angola (Plate LXXXIX, Fig. 2). Between Saurimo and Malange in the north, rectangular, painted houses are frequently seen. Wall-painting is a cultural trait from the Congo region where that form of decoration is common.

796 The method of forming a village site and the right of the chief to
621 allot land have been described. The house of the chief is the first to be erected. There is drinking of beer to celebrate the completion of the village, and the pots of beer have to be stirred with the claws of chickens; these have been killed to provide blood for sprinkling the walls of the new houses. Village chiefs go through the process of stirring and drinking. The medicine-man drinks first, then he offers the cup to the chief.

344 The communal house is built by the united efforts of all men of
476 the village. Ngonga says, "The king never helps with any of the
[485] building, but he talks very much." The guest house is also built
644 by communal labor. The king of the *ombala* of Ngalangi told me that a king always uses the house of his predecessor, which must not be pulled down. No repairs are permitted and the house is used until it is absolutely untenable.

354 The interior of a commoner's house has three hearth stones in the
342 middle of the floor, which is of hard mud beaten down with a heavy wooden implement called *ocikandulo*. The ceremonial placing of the stones has been described in discussing marriage. There is no chimney, consequently the walls and roof are blackened with smoke. The junction of roof and walls provides pockets for the reception of small articles. On the floor near the walls may be several large beer pots. The dark smoky interior is almost intolerable. The sleeping
352 room is sometimes separated from the living room by matting. The bed is made from a cross-work of sticks supported on four Y-shaped posts, one at each corner. On the bed are coarse sleeping mats and possibly a modern blanket.

356 The miscellaneous contents of the hut are gourds, dippers, cooking
252 pots of several sizes, pounders, and baskets. In many of the huts I found cooking going on in the general room, but frequently a sepa-

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13
Angola FP1

A M 162

institutions or divisions have had little consideration in drawing administrative boundaries.

A 496

Systems of communications have been developed during the last forty years. The Benguela Railway, built by Sir Robert Williams and the Tanganyika Concessions, Ltd., was completed in 1931 from Lobito to Elisabethville in the Katanga region, where direct connexion is made with the South, Central, and East African systems of rail and water transport. This railway serves as the most direct outlet for the mines of the Congo and Northern Rhodesia. The great majority of native employees of the railway are Ovimbundu and it has also brought this people their first contact with the mines and with industrialized South Africa. Regular steamship connexion between Lobito and Europe includes Portuguese, Belgian, German, and British lines with occasional calls from American, Japanese, and Scandinavian ships.[1] Recent years have seen considerable extensions of telegraphic and radio service throughout the colony. Motor roads have been built extensively, especially on the plateau and along the watersheds. In addition there are many wagon-tracks for ox-wagons which were introduced by the voortrekkers almost seventy years ago. In many cases the routes followed are those first used by native caravans.

M 486 177 A 505 M A 206 487 494

M 797

There are eleven missionary societies at work among the Ovimbundu: five Protestant and six Roman Catholic.[2] There is only one fully organized Umbundu Church. It includes the work of three Protestant societies. It is the work of this Church and of the Missions of the A.B.C.F.M.[3] and of the United Church of Canada with which the evaluations of this study are concerned. The Mission of the A.B.C.F.M. was founded in 1880, as the first Christian work undertaken among the Ovimbundu.[4]

[1] This was the situation in 1939. During the period of the war the Portuguese services were maintained, although with less regularity than before. The U.S. Maritime Commission maintained a cargo service. There were occasional calls by cargo vessels of various nationalities. The Belgian line is reopening its service (1946) and the Portuguese lines have acquired additional vessels.

[2] Pères du Saint-Esprit began work among the Ovimbundu in 1890, the Padres Seculares have been working in the towns; the Benedictines and several orders of nuns also have stations.

[3] American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions.

[4] The two missions mentioned conduct their work in most respects as a single mission. The other Protestant societies do not have very extensive work among the Ovimbundu.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

175x 726 648 648 439 175 continued to be difficult for the traders, subject as they were to the conditions of primitive custom and belief.[1]

About the time of the above-mentioned military campaign, events took a turn which in the end greatly advanced commercial life in Viye. I refer to the restoration of Kangombe to his 'stool' with the help of the governor, Dom Antonio de Lancastre.[2] This alliance with the Portuguese government was maintained by Kangombe's successors until 1890. In 1782, and perhaps even in 1770, there were so many Portuguese residents that a 'Captain-major and exterior judge of Bihe' was appointed,[3] a post which seems to have been maintained until Silva Porto's suicide in 1890.

Reference has already been made to an account by Paulo Martins Pinheiro de Lacerda, who evidently lived in Ngalangi and in Wambu about 1790,[4] but although this man wrote a good deal about native life, he had little to say about trade, although it was perhaps his own livelihood. I have accounts of two trading expeditions from Benguela to the country of 'Lovar' or 'Lovale' at the head-waters of the Zambezi in 1794 and 1795, undertaken by Alexandre de Silva Teixeira and Jozé da Silva Costa at the instigation of a slave originally from that region.[5] They passed through Bailundu and Viye, but mentioned these regions only to [487] say that the road was already well known to all backwoodsmen (traders). All available evidence seems to indicate that before the close of the eighteenth century the Ovimbundu were becoming, if they had not already become, traders. If trade had not yet taken first place over raiding and warfare, at least it was well-established in their habits of life. Bailundu tradition says that the first traders to offer cloth and beads and fire-arms for slaves and ivory were the Ndongo, the 'barefoot traders' (*pombeiros descalços*). This was doubtless during the very early days of the eighteenth century, or

[1] Silva Porto's diaries, although referring to a later time, give a good description of difficulties faced (op. cit.). *Soc. Geog. Lisboa, 5a Ser.*

[2] Governor and captain-general, 1772–9. He was the immediate successor of D. Francisco de Souza Coutinho.

[3] For this appointment, which may not have been the first, and the duties of the office, see *Annaes Mar. e Col., 6a Ser.*, p. 118. I have the names of subsequent appointees, and for four of them the following dates of appointment, respectively—1791, 1819, 1838, 1885; also of one previous appointee in 1770 or 1771.

[4] *Supra*, p. 188.

[5] *Arquivos de Angola*, vol. i, no. 4 (Nov. 1935); *Annaes Mar. e Col., 4a Ser.* (1844), p. 159 f.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

The town of Catumbela (founded 1836) played an important part in the trade of the Ovimbundu. The first trade of Bailundu, Ndulu, and Viye had been with Luanda and with the presídios on the north bank of the Kuanza, while the rest of the tribe had traded with Caconda and with Benguela. Some trade went to Egito from Bailundu, Kasongi, &c. Catumbela was first built on the left bank of the river of that name, about four miles from its mouth, at the point where caravans from Viye, Bailundu, and from nearer regions to the north of the river crossed to go to Benguela. Immediately some began to stay in Catumbela rather than go on to Benguela, some fifteen miles farther. The nearness of Catumbela to Lobito Bay, a favourite hide-out for slavers and other contrabandists, was another advantage.[1] In 1856 the commercial houses of Catumbela completed a move to the right bank of the river, and after that the caravans from the interior had no further need for going on to Benguela. Just previously, in 1852, Silva Porto had 'broken a new trail' from Viye to Catumbela by way of Bailundu, Civula, and Cisanji, thus avoiding entirely the regions of Ciyaka and Ganda where the caravans were 'continually assaulted, robbed, and at times cut to pieces by the highwaymen of those regions'.[2]

The old road in its descent from the plateau followed more nearly (although not entirely) a natural watershed, but even though the new one had to cross some large and turbulent streams, it was much superior because of the greater safety which it offered. Silva Porto's road was 'new' in that part where it took its final rise to the Highland and in most of the section that crossed the Umbundu country, but not in the section crossing the Cisanji country, nor in the final descent to the coast. In these latter sections it followed the same old slave caravan road, long rutted by the passage of endless loads of human misery.[3] The descent of

unreliability to the receivers in Cuba, &c., and not to the ships' masters. There are interesting incidents of American and other contrabandists in the *Boletim Official da Provincia de Angola*, for the years 1850–69.

[1] A. Bastos, op. cit., p. 85. In this bay ships could anchor very close in-shore, and there was a great overgrown mangrove-swamp which hid them from view to seaward.

[2] A. Bastos, op. cit., p. 9. For the date of opening of the 'new road', see *Boletim Soc. Geog. Lisboa, 5a Ser.*, p. 6; op. cit., p. 19 f. (Silva Porto's diary). I have autobiographical notes from old men in Ciyaka which give a very realistic picture of the activities of the robber-barons and their followers.

[3] Bastos, who is almost everywhere very careful of his facts and who gives

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

this trail along the face of the cliffs behind Catumbela may still be seen to-day.

I have noted how largely Brazil had absorbed the commerce of the colony. This was due in large part, of course, to the slave-trade, but it was also due to the fact that all foreign, i.e. non-Portuguese, ships were prohibited from having any part in the colony's trade, or even from entering its ports. This was an effort to keep all colonial trade for the motherland, and was quite in line with early colonial theory and practice. In this instance it served to enrich Brazil at the expense not only of Angola but also of Portugal itself, and it is rather strange that this ruinous policy should have persisted even after the separation of Brazil. In 1844 the two ports of Luanda and Benguela were opened to ships of all the world. Lopes de Lima remarks[1] that not only did foreign commerce flow in, but Portuguese commerce with the colony also increased greatly. It must not be supposed that Angola at once became a great example of Free Trade, for customs duties remained high. Only the first bars in the fence of monopoly were let down, but for that day it was a great step and it attracted trade.

In 1869 the first experimental export of raw rubber was made: a very small beginning of a very important movement.[2] The imminent importance of this export was not realized by 'the man on the spot'. In 1870 Silva Porto, tired of accusations of witchcraft by his Ovimbundu neighbours and of the increasing demands

a very truthful and realistic picture of conditions, of events, and of trends, errs in supposing that it was only with the opening of this 'new road' by Silva Porto that caravans from the interior began to come to Catumbela. Magyar, who went inland from Benguela in 1849, took the usual road via Catumbela. Even in 1795, when there was no town at Catumbela, but only a few vegetable farms, Teixeira and Mello started for the interior from there (*Annaes Mar. e Col.*, 1844, p. 159). Their itinerary in detail from Catumbela to Viye is not given, but only distances to Cisanji, to Civula, to Bailundu, and to Viye. Since their route was via Civula and Bailundu, rather than via Ciyaka and Wambu (Huambo), and therefore the route of Silva Porto's 'new' road, I am inclined to believe that the latter was probably a return to a route formerly used. Magyar gives a good description of the route via Ciyaka. The route via Bailundu has been described by scores of writers from Silva Porto through Cameron, the early missionaries (of the A.B.C.F.M.), Nevinson, *et al.*, down to 1910, when the road was abandoned for the Benguela Railway. There are now three motor roads from the Highland to the coast, but none of them follows the old slavers' route except in certain short sections.

[1] *Ensaios*, part i, pp. 78, 135.

[2] Bastos, op. cit., p. 24; *Boletim Official*, 1870 (Exports for 1869); *Benguella, Relatório do Districto de*, 1891, p. 29.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

175* were from Viye,[1] since Viye was nearest to what was then the
237 source of supply—Luva, Katanga, Barotze, &c. Caravans from
439 other regions could and did pass through Viye, but they found it more economical and advantageous to go to other regions for other commodities. Bees-wax was to be found in most of the neighbouring regions and was brought to the coast by traders of all the Umbundu
439 kingdoms. The same may be said of the 'first-class' rubber.[2] It
175* was found chiefly in the forest regions of the interior, and the distance and consequent time involved made it a product hardly more profitable than bees-wax. Rubber was then simply one product along with the others, and until 1886 its export had its ups and downs.

Red Rubber, 1886–1900. In 1886 a caravan of Ovimbundu came
314 down to Catumbela with loads of 'red rubber' for the first time.
439 They had gotten it in the sandy country to the east of the Kuanza
489 River, and a great deal nearer than the region of the 'first-class'
178 rubber. At first, the price paid for this 'red rubber' was lower than
175* for the other, but whereas a caravan could not procure loads of the first in less than eight months, the 'red rubber' could be gotten within three months.[3] Subsequently the red rubber was found to have certain superior qualities so that the higher price came to be paid for it. Immediately the export of rubber from Benguela increased enormously and reached undreamed-of totals.[4] Beeswax

[1] *Boletim Soc. Geog. Lisboa*, 5a Ser., pp. 5, 6, 10, 16.

[2] There are very interesting summaries and descriptions of the commercial activities of the period—both native and European—in the *Relatorios do Districto de Benguella*, 1887, 1891 (Ministerio da Marinha e Ultramar, Lisboa, 1888, 1894).

[3] See a note in *Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society*, 1888, p. 450 f.

[4] The values of the three leading products exported from Benguela from 1886 to 1891 were as follows (from *Relatorios do Districto de Benguella*, 1887, 1891):

Product	*1886*	*1887*	*1888*
Rubber . .	65,210$153	286,937$018	664,786$870
Wax . . .	187,483$964	158,945$996	109,734$140
Ivory . . .	37,692$536	36,923$042	29,997$968

Product	*1889*	*1890*	*1891*
Rubber . .	665,746$552	781,057$860	1,042,112$070
Wax . . .	133,436$344	93,680$580	123,645$876
Ivory . . .	31,701$133	11,298$782	45,392$534

For further statistical reports of this period, see also *Portugal, Ministerio da Marinha e Ultramar, Relatório, Propostos de Lei*, &c. (Lisboa, 1899), p. 266 f.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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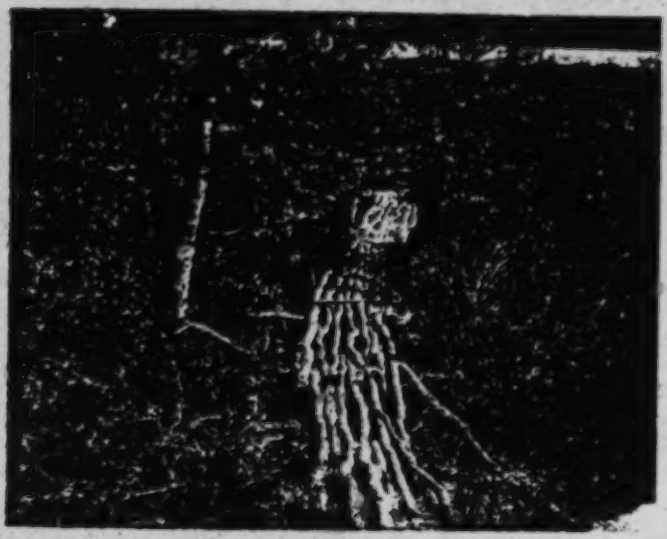

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2

TRANSPORTATION, OVIMBUNDU, ELENDE

Fig. 1. Bridge across swamp and stream. Fig. 2. Carrying chickens.

[p. 397]

A professional hunter usually works alone, using bows and arrows, clubs, spears, and several kinds of trap.(1) Nets and poison are not used. Every hunter makes his own arrow-shafts and feathers; the points are made by a blacksmith. On the night before leaving for a hunt, the *ukongo* calls in his fellow hunters to share a ceremony which includes dancing and the re-anointing of the weapons with beer and palm-oil. 224 411

Communal hunts usually take place in June-July, in the middle of the dry season, when large tracts of land are covered with grass ten or more feet high. The day for the hunt is set by the village headman; spears and arrows are prepared and, when the word is given, a party of about 30 men and boys move off to the assigned area of tall grass. A ring is formed round about two square miles of land, the hunters standing just within sight of each other. The grass is trodden down, fires started, and the animals killed as they rush from the flames. Antelope of many kinds, snakes, foxes, wolves, hyenas, mice and rabbits and occasionally leopards are killed in this way. 224

FISHING

In the Kunene and some of the other larger rivers fish are large and plentiful, and men go on communal fishing expeditions, and return with fish to sell.(2) Men usually fish with bark lines, women use basket-traps(3) and poisons. Poison is used, usually in the dry season, when the rivers are shallow. Both men and women use nets, and sometimes a fish-weir or *olunja* may be employed; this has an opening in the middle, in the lower side of which is placed a basket-trap. At the coast and along the Kwanza river dug-out canoes, about 20-30 feet long, are sometimes used for fishing.(4) 226 462 [501]

DOMESTIC ANIMALS

The principal domestic animals are the cow *(onjindi)*, ox *(ongombe*, which is also the generic name for cattle), bull *(onui)*, sheep *(omene)*, goat *(ohombo)*, pig *(ongulu)*, dog *(ombua)*, and chicken *(osanji)*.(5) The only transport animal is the ox, used both for riding and for drawing carts.(6) 231 [492]

Cattle are a measure of wealth, but few families own large herds. Childs lists the domestic animals in a typical village of 196 inhabitants as: 9 head of cattle, 13 goats, 20 sheep, 100 pigs, and about 100 chickens. Cattle are used for paying fines and debts, for funeral feasts, and for marriage payments. Cows are not usually milked, and cattle are killed for food only when they are aged or injured, or occasionally during the June-July period of food shortage. Treated hides are used to cover stools, and for making pouches and corn-bags.(7) 231 436 [282]

The cattle herd obtains most of its food by grazing, but in the dry 880

(1) Some hunters have guns, but the use of gunpowder is restricted by the Portuguese.
(2) Cushman, op.cit., p.143.
(3) See Cushman, loc.cit. for a brief description of the basket-trap.
(4) Hambly, (2) 1934, p.145.
(5) Ibid., pp.152-6.
(6) Childs, personal communication. Cf. Hambly, op.cit., p.152.
(7) Hambly, op.cit., p.153.

276 The snuff is pounded and placed in a small wooden box of cylindrical
[531] shape. Usually the box is ornamented with incised, burned patterns. The Ovimbundu of Bihé add ashes of wood to their snuff, so producing a mixture called *ulelemo*. The Ovimbundu of Elende usually use the
[549] snuff without adulteration. Two main species of tobacco plants are grown.

Women smoke in all parts of Angola. The Ovimbundu do not chew tobacco, neither have I seen it so used elsewhere in Angola. Boys and girls are not allowed to smoke before the age of thirteen years.

576 In the *ombala* of the Vangangella near Ngalangi, I asked a girl
[834] for her pipe which I desired for my collection. The interpreter took the pipe when she proffered it, explaining that, according to local custom, I had asked for the girl. If I took the proffered pipe *from her hand* I accepted her. Another social custom associated with tobacco is the passing of the communal pipe from hand to hand in the men's council house.

276 Ngonga, my interpreter, says that he has never seen an Ocimbundu
171 woman smoke hemp, but he has seen a woman of the Vangangella (people to the east of the Ovimbundu) smoking hemp. Hemp (*epangue*) is cultivated only by the Ovimbundu men who smoke it. Pure hemp is smoked in the water-pipe which is not passed from hand to hand. Only tobacco is used in communal smoking. Smoking of hemp or tobacco consists of a few deep inhalations; there is not usually a prolonged placid smoking. When hemp is placed in the bowl of the water-pipe it is covered with large grains of sand or a piece of tin. This intervening substance prevents the hot coals from coming into contact with the hemp. The object is to secure slow ignition.

DOMESTIC ANIMALS

231 The principal domestic animals are cow (*onjindi*), ox (*ongombe*, which is also the generic name for cattle), bull (*onui*), sheep (*omeme*), goat (*ohombo*), pig (*ongulu*), dog (*ombua*), chicken (*osanji*) (Plates LV, LVI, LVII).

492 The transport animals, donkey, horse, and mule, are not used by the Ovimbundu of Elende and not to any extent by Ovimbundu of other parts; but in the south of Angola the Vakuanyama have sturdy ponies and well-kept mules. The ox when ridden by Portuguese is provided with a leather saddle which is very comfortable if covered with a blanket. The brass stirrups are broad and massive. Through the septum of the bullock's nostrils there is a short brass rod to the ends of which the reins are attached (Plate XXX, Fig. 1).

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

I have seen an Ocimbundu male riding an ox without saddle. A 492
cord was passed through the animal's nose to serve as reins.

The Portuguese name for horse is *cavalo*, a word which the Ovim- 192
bundu use in the form *okavalu*, though there is an Umbundu word *ocingongovala*, which means "going with his neck up." The Umbundu words for donkey and mule are *ocimbulu* and *omula*, respectively.

Generally speaking, the ears of animals are not clipped, neither 231
are cattle branded or otherwise marked to indicate ownership, but sometimes the ears of pigs and goats are cut to aid identification. When asked why the tips of the ears of dogs are mutilated an Ocimbundu will say that a dog with uncut ears does not hear when called (Plate LVI, Fig. 2).

Not many families own large herds of cattle among the Ovim- 233
bundu, and I did not see a big kraal until I was in southwest Angola. 556
Cattle, which are a measure of wealth, are used for paying fines, making funeral feasts, paying debts, and securing wives. The cattle throughout Angola are well-developed, handsome animals (Plate LVII, Fig. 1). The bull remains with the herd the entire year; there is therefore no particular season for the birth of calves. Usually cows are not milked by the Ovimbundu, consequently these people have no milk, butter, or cheese. The Vakuanyama of the south milk their [171]
cows and churn butter in calabashes slung on a pole.

The Ovimbundu say that milking the cow makes the calf thin, 234
but where the idea of milking the cow is borrowed from the Portu- [177]
guese the Ovimbundu have a procedure which is as follows: The calf is allowed to suck for a few minutes in order to deceive the cow; then the milker begins his work. At intervals of a few minutes the calf is allowed to suck in order to continue the deception.

Cattle are killed at the funeral feasts of the rich, and the horns [765]
of the slaughtered animals are generally mounted on a pole in the vicinity of the grave (Plate XLVI, Fig. 2).

The horns of the cow may be used for making water-pipes in 237
which tobacco is smoked, or they may be employed as magical horns when filled with medicine. The hide is pegged out in the sunlight 281
for one day after it has been scraped; it is then rolled and kept until required. When about to be used, the skin is soaked in water for one day. The hide is used to cover the tops of stools, to make pouches and to manufacture bags for carrying corn. In bygone days each king had a wooden box covered with hide, which contained his powder and metal when he went to war. The cow's tail is used

The cow's tail is used
237 as a sheath for covering the iron shafts of assagais, and it is sometimes made into a switch which the rain-maker uses during his performances.

233 Bulls are castrated when two years old. The wound is rubbed
[232] with ashes, salt, soot, and palm oil. Bullocks are used for riding, also
[492] for pull-carts introduced by the Boers. The herd obtains most of its food by grazing. In the dry season grass withers, with the result that the animals become thin and stall-feeding is necessary. In former days cattle-raiding was a practice of the Ovimbundu, who
233 robbed the Vacilenge. It is certain that the Ovimbundu did not own
174 cattle when they entered Angola. If the general tradition is correct the Ovimbundu came into Angola from a northeasterly direction, from the borders of the Belgian Congo as it is called today; this is not a cattle-raising region.

The Ovimbundu of Elende have a joke against the people of Bailundu, because the latter on first seeing a cow offered the animal some food on a wooden platter. This story suggests that the Bailundu people, who are of the Ovimbundu confederacy, did not know the animal and its habits as early as did the Ovimbundu themselves.

233 Although the Ovimbundu do not usually kill their cattle they may do so in the months of June and July, because at this time pasture is withered and food is scarce. Animals which are diseased, aged, or injured, are killed and eaten.

231 The native pig is distinguishable from European breeds by its long thin snout and slender development. This breed is said by the Director of Animal Husbandry, Humpata, to be the Keltic breed (Plate LV). There is, he says, no evidence to prove that the
[176] Ovimbundu have at any time domesticated pigs from the wild hogs which are to be found in Angola. There is no family which does not own a pig, and on the whole the pig fares much better than the sheep or the goat. The pig receives water and a daily ration of food, which is usually sweet potatoes and their leaves, together with some
232 corn. Male pigs are castrated at any time between the ages of six
[463] months and one year by an operator who is a paid specialist. The fee for castrating a bull is four yards of cloth, but a small gift is considered sufficient reward for performing the operation on a pig.
[282] If a pig is thin, the leather is said to be of good quality and therefore
252 suitable for making sheaths for knives. Usually the flesh of the pig is eaten shortly after the animal has been killed, but the meat of the bullock, on the contrary, is sometimes dried over a fire and preserved. But this is not a general practice as the animals are too valuable to be slaughtered.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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Luveli's income from bricklaying. The laying of the bricks that form a modern villager's house may bring 100 escudos.

The basic cash need of an Otjimbundu, then, is for money to pay government demands and to provide clothing for his wife and children, who seem more likely than the men to get new clothing every year.[5] Add to this the possibility of other calls (e.g. provision for a relative's funeral) a desirable income even for this low level of consumption would be 400 escudos (£5) and a more prosperous villager might earn and spend double the amount. Exceptional individuals still remaining within the normal conditions of Umbundu cultural and social life, such as Kambungo, may earn from 2,000 to 3,000 escudos a year, perhaps even more, from agriculture. Maize is the foundation of the agricultural economy, but Kambungo's remark that maize did not pay seems to reflect a trend to find other openings such as growing coffee, which is, however, subject to difficulties of climate.

Within the villages there is some trade in handmade objects such as pottery, sleeping-mats, and sticks for stirring mush, and there are quite a number of bricklayers, carpenters, and tailors (proprietors of sewing-machines) who have acquired European skills which bring them money. These craftsmen are, on payment of a fee of 250 escudos (a figure given me by a tailor), exempt from contract labour.

Many European residents seem to think that the only European products natives desire are cloths, clothing, and wine. This is not so; villagers wanted me to sell them kerosene for lamps, D.D.T. powder for their hair, and soap. It is interesting that the occasions on which an Otjimbundu would accumulate large (for him) sums all fall outside the maize-for-cloth pattern of trading. These occasions are bridewealth payment (and counting all expenses this may well come to 800 escudos—£10 or more), which is a traditional due, the purchase of bicycles (according to place of purchase from 1,200 escudos [£15] to 1,500 escudos [£18. 15. 0]) which are prestige-giving objects, and the trading journeys to buy cattle. Kambungo had

[5] The trader whose opinions I have previously quoted (Senhor Alberto Oliveira Mendes of Chicunda), remarked, 'It is the women who save us. The men make a shirt last for three or four years but the women get something new every year.'

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13
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A M 162

institutions or divisions have had little consideration in drawing administrative boundaries.

A 496

Systems of communications have been developed during the last forty years. The Benguela Railway, built by Sir Robert Williams and the Tanganyika Concessions, Ltd., was completed in 1931 from Lobito to Elisabethville in the Katanga region, where direct connexion is made with the South, Central, and East African systems of rail and water transport. This railway serves as the most direct outlet for the mines of the Congo and Northern Rhodesia. The great majority of native employees of the railway are Ovimbundu and it has also brought this people their first contact with the mines and with industrialized South Africa. Regular steamship connexion between Lobito and Europe includes Portuguese, Belgian, German, and British lines with occasional calls from American, Japanese, and Scandinavian ships.[1] Recent years have seen considerable extensions of telegraphic and radio service throughout the colony. Motor roads have been built extensively, especially on the plateau and along the watersheds. In addition there are many wagon-tracks for ox-wagons which were introduced by the voortrekkers almost seventy years ago. In many cases the routes followed are those first used by native caravans.

M 496 177 A 505 M A 206 487 494

M 797

There are eleven missionary societies at work among the Ovimbundu: five Protestant and six Roman Catholic.[2] There is only one fully organized Umbundu Church. It includes the work of three Protestant societies. It is the work of this Church and of the Missions of the A.B.C.F.M.[3] and of the United Church of Canada with which the evaluations of this study are concerned. The Mission of the A.B.C.F.M. was founded in 1880, as the first Christian work undertaken among the Ovimbundu.[4]

[1] This was the situation in 1939. During the period of the war the Portuguese services were maintained, although with less regularity than before. The U.S. Maritime Commission maintained a cargo service. There were occasional calls by cargo vessels of various nationalities. The Belgian line is reopening its service (1946) and the Portuguese lines have acquired additional vessels.

[2] Pères du Saint-Esprit began work among the Ovimbundu in 1890; the Padres Seculares have been working in the towns; the Benedictines and several orders of nuns also have stations.

[3] American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions.

[4] The two missions mentioned conduct their work in most respects as a single mission. The other Protestant societies do not have very extensive work among the Ovimbundu.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

dropped off; of ivory there was no more. From 1893 on, says Bastos, rubber was practically the sole export of the District of Benguela and of its hinterland.[1] In 1891 more than one million milreis' worth of rubber was exported from Benguela, sixteen times as much as was exported only five years before, and three and one-half times the value of the *three* leading exports in 1886. Until 1891 this increase was not at the expense of other exports, but rather in addition to them.

All of this rubber, and the other exports as well, came to the coast in caravans of the Ovimbundu or their neighbours. In its inception and its great development it was an enterprise of the Ovimbundu. Everyone who was able to carry a load joined a caravan. It had always been the custom to take boys on trading expeditions, as young as they could go—say, from their tenth year—as a part of their education. Now girls were also taken and hardly any but the women stayed at home to raise the crops and provide rations for the caravans. European residents experienced great difficulty in securing necessary porters,[2] and this was one reason for finally putting through the wagon-road from Benguela to Caconda.[3] It was extended to Viye during the military campaign of 1890. The fever of the rubber trade reached into all the villages of the land and took in everyone able to travel. Mission schools had been established since 1881, but they had but few pupils until 1900. There were also other reasons for this, but a principal one was the attractiveness of the rubber trade.[4] Even the kings found it more difficult to gather armies for their wars: trade had become more attractive than the possibility of plunder.

Of all the kings who ruled the various Umbundu kingdoms during this time, the one who is best remembered is Ekuikui (II) of Bailundu (1876–93). Tradition has begun to ascribe to him and to his reign some things which properly belong to earlier

[1] Bastos, op. cit., p. 34. He does not include *serviçaes* in the exports, since they all went to the mainland or island plantations, but he remarks that at this time the price rose to even 90$000 (p. 33). The rise in price was perhaps due to the smaller supply owing to the preoccupation of the Ovimbundu with the rubber trade.

[2] See *Missionary Herald*, 1889, p. 350.

[3] *Benguella*, 1891, op. cit., p. 10.

[4] The reports of the governor of Benguela, to which reference has been made, also mentioned this fact, saying that although the American missions were intelligently directed, their results were small, since parents would not send their children to learn while they could pick up loads of rubber (1887, p. 19; 1891, p. 20).

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

Much of the soil has been greatly im-
134 poverished both by use and by the action of the weather. The most productive soil areas consist of alluvial deposits, but the precipitate nature of much of the region precludes the formation of such deposits. The bulk of the soil is rather poor, but still it is of better quality, on the whole, than in adjoining regions to the north, east, and south.[1]

133 In common with several of the African plateaux the Benguela Highland rises very precipitately from the sea. This is one of the most striking features of African geography. The steepness of the [48] ascent forces the Benguela Railway to use a cog-line for a short distance. The village of Ngendo, described in the section dealing with the social structure, has an elevation of about 1,650 metres (5,400 feet) but is situated at only about 60 miles from the ocean.[2] That part of the intermediate zone which adjoins the Highland on the west consists of river valleys between mountain ridges and is well watered, but between that and the sea the country is very arid. This arid region is in reality a northern extension of the Kalahari, Omaheke, and Namieb deserts. Much of this arid stretch is exceedingly rough mountainous country. All along the African coast there is a coastal plain, but in the region under consideration it is very narrow. Plain and mountain are equally arid and this desert country generally has an elevation of less than 1,000 metres (about 3,280 feet). This intermediate zone is well known to the Ovimbundu and played an important role in the history of their commercial developments since they were obliged to cross it to reach the European stations on the coast.

Other adjoining regions have also been of importance to the
101 Ovimbundu. It was from the region to the north between the Highland and the Kuanza River that some of the principal ruling families came. Across this same region the Ovimbundu had their
[177] first European contacts—with the Portuguese establishments on the Kuanza River. In the regions to the south live cattle-raising people whence the Ovimbundu got cattle, whether by raiding or
133 by trading. East of the Kuanza River valley the elevation drops
167 gradually toward the basins of the Congo and the Zambezi. When the slave- and rubber-trades led the Ovimbundu into this region

[1] i.e. of all adjoining regions only on the north-west are there valleys of superior soil. No complete survey of the soils of Angola has been made. Most books overrate the qualities of the soils of the colony.

[2] See *infra*, Chap. II.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13
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A M 162 A 496 M 496 177 A 505 M A 206 487 494 M 797

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known throughout the territory bounded by the Congo river, the Great Lakes, and the Kalahari desert. Most other Ovimbundu kingdoms fell into line with the trading activities of Bailundu and Viye. By the middle of the century this had resulted in a loose system of alliances and mutual understandings to the effect that the traders and caravans of each kingdom would be permitted to enter or travel through the others. At time these "trade-agreements" seem to have embraced all the Umbundu-speaking peoples, but violations were frequent, especially between Viye and the Ciyaka-Cingola-Citata group. Trade-agreements were also made beyond the Umbundu-speaking area, e.g. with the Mwata Yamvo of the Lunda.(1) 175 439 [484]

From roughly the turn of the twentieth century the large-scale trading activities of the Ovimbundu declined. Military occupation of Viye and Bailundu took place in 1890, and from that date European traders began to settle in Viye and Bailundu in ever-increasing numbers. In 1902 the Bailundu war occurred, after which the occupation of the whole of Umbundu country was quickly completed. This campaign paralysed trade, which was already suffering because of a great fall in rubber prices. Other factors which hastened the decline of Ovimbundu trading activities(2) include the famine in Ngangela country in 1911, the disappearance of illicit slave-traffic, and, finally, the building of the Benguella Railway (commenced in 1904), which put an end to the porterage and trading caravans of former days.(3) [721] [496]

LANGUAGE

"Umbundu is usually(4) associated with Ambo, Herero and kindred languages. It would however seem that more comparative study is required to show how real this apparent relationship is: it appears to be especially based on the fact that Umbundu uses prefixial o- with many of its noun classes. In general structure, however, Umbundu shows remarkable similarity in grammar and vocabulary to Luena, Luchazi and other languages of the Ganguella [Ngangela] group. 197

Features of Umbundu which are worthy of note are:-

i. Presence of nasal vowels before and after 'l', 'h', 'v' and 'w'.

ii. In certain nasal compounds, subtraction occurs, involving the second consonant, but not the nasal, e.g. *muntu* is realised as *omunu*.

iii. Compared with the Lunda-Luena languages Umbundu exhibits an unusually large number of defective verbs.

iv. A vowel system of five vowels.

(1) These were at first one-way agreements, allowing Ovimbundu to trade in many lands, since it was to the advantage of the rulers of these countries. The Ovimbundu are said in fact to have discouraged the tribes to the east from venturing out on their own account. See Livingstone 1857, p.384, Cameron 1877, p.406.
(2) For much greater detail concerning the rise and fall of Ovimbundu trade see Childs op.cit., pp.191-215.
(3) Ibid.
(4) Doke 1945, p.101; Guthrie 1948, p.64; Childs 1949, p.8.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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and the European population greatly increased.[28] In some areas at this time a confused situation arose, in which 'robber barons', white and black, tyrannized over chiefs and villagers and engaged in the still vigorous slave trade, which now had acquired a few disguises on the coast.[29]

In 1911 the rubber trade ended, and about the same time slavery and the slave trade were effectively suppressed.[30] From this time onwards, too, civil administration began to be effective and the Benguela Railway became the most important link between the coast and the interior.[31] The trade disappeared, powers of the chiefs declined. The missions, both Catholic and Protestant, which had relatively little influence during the rubber trade period, gained more and more converts.[32]

2. *Ethnography*

Between the Ovimbundu and the sea lie the Hanya, the Nganda, and the Tjisanji tribes of whom little is known except that the Hanya and Nganda seem to be culturally related to the Ovimbundu.[33] To the south are the Nyaneka-Humbi group, cattle-keeping peoples who are culturally and linguistically related to the Ovimbundu, but who did not participate in the trade.[34] To the east lie the Ngangela[35], the Luimbi, and the

[28] Childs, pp. 210–11.

[29] For an account of Umbundu country at this time see H. W. Nevison, *A Modern Slavery*, New York, 1906. In Gumba I was told that Mutu-ya-Kevela the leader of the 1902–3 revolt had raided villages for slaves but that Samakaka whom Childs (p. 22) describes as a robber baron was spoken of favourably.

[30] Slavery had been legally suppressed from 1878. The slaves were called by other names but no effective change was made till 1910. See A. Bastos, *Monografia de Catumbella* in *Bol. Soc. Geog. Lisboa*, 1910 (pp. 74–81, 105–9, 141–55, 180–3, 225–8, 251–5, 279–5).

[31] Childs, p. 228.

[32] Ibid., pp. 220–23. Personal information.

[33] Ibid., p. 8.

[34] On these peoples see Estermann, *Etnografia do Sudoeste de Angola*, Vol. II.

[35] A tribe using this word as the root of the tribal name is to be found to the south-east of Umbundu country in the area round Vila Artur de Paiva. Padre A. Van Horrik, formerly of the Missão Católica de Cubango, tells me that the map contained in M. McCulloch, *The Southern Lunda and Related Peoples*, (London, 1951) should show the Ngangela as occupying much of the area actually assigned to the Mbwela and the south-eastern Ovimbundu. Mbwela does not seem to be the name any tribe uses for itself (Private information, Estermann and Van Horrik).

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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THE OVIMBUNDU UNDER TWO SOVEREIGNTIES

M 496 463 Most of the employees of the Benguela Railway are Ovimbundu and many of the old pupils of the Catholic seminaries and of the Protestant secondary school[5] have found employment on it as clerks and telegraphists. The railway has also become a means M [267] of Umbundu migration carrying Ovimbundu to work in the coastal cities and plantations, and on the other side carrying their speech with it to the interior.

A 433 Angola is economically a land of primary production, and its cities and towns are founded on trade. There is little industry, although Lobito is noted for its cement works and saw mill, and drinks, both alcoholic and soft, paper and pottery are all manufactured in Angola.[6] On the coastal plain there are sugar plantations and there are a number of other plantations especially on the western fringe of the Highland, but the main crop of the Highland is maize, grown by the Ovimbundu and sold by the traders to the official boards which have store-houses on A 438 the railway line. The traders have generally tended to scatter themselves over the countryside though now the Government is insisting on new traders settling in recognized hamlets. The A 361 towns are small and frankly rather dismal places, serving as the administrative and postal centres for the neighbourhood, with a parish church, a school, two or three hotels, perhaps a club, and occasional cinema shows and a number of stores with a rather wider range of goods than those in the bush. They are significant from the point of view of communications, linking the traders in the bush to the cities and the railway.

A 49 A network of roads covers the Benguela Highland with the result that all villages are at most only a few miles from a track which is usable by motor vehicles. A truck seen on one of these roads will most likely belong to a trader, though it might belong to an official on one of his rare local trips, to a missionary, or to a labour recruiter. There are now a number of bus services in the Highland. As these serve only a certain number of roads, villagers who want to make a journey of any distance must walk or thumb a lift from a trader (who will charge) or a missionary (who will not charge) or ride on one of the still infrequent bicycles, his own, or a borrowed one.

[5] At Dondi, with Dr. Childs as headmaster.
[6] Egerton, op. cit., pp. 151–2. Galvão and Selvagem, op. cit., pp. 334–8.

A professional hunter usually works alone, using bows and arrows, clubs, spears, and several kinds of trap.(1) Nets and poison are not used. Every hunter makes his own arrow-shafts and feathers; the points are made by a blacksmith. On the night before leaving for a hunt, the ukongo calls in his fellow hunters to share a ceremony which includes dancing and the re-anointing of the weapons with beer and palm-oil. 224 411

Communal hunts usually take place in June-July, in the middle of the dry season, when large tracts of land are covered with grass ten or more feet high. The day for the hunt is set by the village headman; spears and arrows are prepared and, when the word is given, a party of about 30 men and boys move off to the assigned area of tall grass. A ring is formed round about two square miles of land, the hunters standing just within sight of each other. The grass is trodden down, fires started, and the animals killed as they rush from the flames. Antelope of many kinds, snakes, foxes, wolves, hyenas, mice and rabbits and occasionally leopards are killed in this way. 224

FISHING

In the Kunene and some of the other larger rivers fish are large and plentiful, and men go on communal fishing expeditions, and return with fish to sell.(2) Men usually fish with bark lines, women use basket-traps(3) and poisons. Poison is used, usually in the dry season, when the rivers are shallow. Both men and women use nets, and sometimes a fish-weir or *olunja* may be employed; this has an opening in the middle, in the lower side of which is placed a basket-trap. At the coast and along the Kwanza river dug-out canoes, about 20-30 feet long, are sometimes used for fishing.(4) 226 462 [501]

DOMESTIC ANIMALS

The principal domestic animals are the cow *(onjindi)*, ox *(ongombe*, which is also the generic name for cattle), bull *(onui)*, sheep *(oseme)*, goat *(ohombo)*, pig *(ongulu)*, dog *(osbua)*, and chicken *(osanji)*.(5) The only transport animal is the ox, used both for riding and for drawing carts.(6) 231 [492]

Cattle are a measure of wealth, but few families own large herds. Childs lists the domestic animals in a typical village of 196 inhabitants as: 9 head of cattle, 13 goats, 20 sheep, 100 pigs, and about 100 chickens. Cattle are used for paying fines and debts, for funeral feasts, and for marriage payments. Cows are not usually milked, and cattle are killed for food only when they are aged or injured, or occasionally during the June-July period of food shortage. Treated hides are used to cover stools, and for making pouches and corn-bags.(7) 231 436 [282]

The cattle herd obtains most of its food by grazing, but in the dry 080

(1) Some hunters have guns, but the use of gunpowder is restricted by the Portuguese.
(2) Cashman, op.cit., p.143.
(3) See Cashman, loc.cit. for a brief description of the basket-trap.
(4) Bambly, (2) 1934, p.145.
(5) Ibid., pp.152-6.
(6) Childs, personal communication. Cf. Bambly, op.cit., p.152.
(7) Bambly, op.cit., p.153.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

which are fixed on poles in front of the hunter's home during his lifetime (Plate XXXII, Figs. 1, 2). 764 224

There are at the funeral of a hunter special observances which will be mentioned under the heading of funeral rites.

FISHING

In the region of Elende there is fishing with both basket and line; a method of poisoning fish is also practised. Usually a male fishes with a bark line. Women catch fish by the poisoning method, and in addition to this they generally follow the procedure in which baskets are held or weighted in the stream. If the water flows swiftly men may take charge of the fishing operations. At times both men and women fish with nets. Husband and wife may not sleep together the night before fishing, as this is believed to make the male and female fish stay together at the bottom of the river. 226 462 [537]

The fishing line consists of tough green bark which is cut into strips whose length depends on the height of the river's bank. A hole is bored through the body of a grasshopper, a worm, or a grub taken from under the bark of a tree. Through this hole is passed a short stiff piece of grass about half an inch long, to which the line is attached. The fish is caught when the crosspiece of sharp grass becomes fast in its throat. [283]

When the fisher throws the line he sings: "O fish, come and take your good thing. Do not send the little fish to spoil the good thing. Better you come and take the good thing with all your strength."

In order to make fish poison the tuberous roots of a plant are taken and soaked in water until a scum rises to the top. The solid part of the poison is not given, because it would sink and the fish which ate it would remain at the bottom of the river. Therefore only the scum of this poisonous infusion is thrown in the water. The stupefied, gasping fish remain at the surface, whereupon they are seized by women who transfer them to gourds or baskets worn around their necks. Usually poison is used only in the dry season when the rivers are shallow.

Sometimes there is fishing by means of a weir (*olunja*) which has an opening in the middle. On the lower side of this gap a basket trap is placed.

There is no fishing by torchlight. At the coast, and along the river Kwanza I have seen heavy dugout canoes in use; these were about twenty to thirty feet long and hollowed from single trees (Plate LXXII, Figs. 1, 2). At Ambrizette I noted the use of a fishing [501]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

The principal products of the forge are axheads, which can be reversed in the shaft so as to form adzes. Hoe blades, tools for mat-making, brass bracelets, knives, and implements for gouging out the pith of gourds or hollowing out a drum, are also made. Arrowheads are likewise an important manufacture. 326

The blacksmith makes a saw blade, 47 cm in length, from hoop iron. The teeth of the saw are turned alternately to the right and left and the serrated blade is roughly hafted in wood (Plate XVI, Fig. 4). Another product of the forge is an iron tool hafted in wood. The pointed blade, which is round in cross section, tapers to a point used for boring holes in wood, after the tool has been made red-hot. Small axes, many of which are used ceremonially in dances, have remarkably well-fashioned blades decorated with punched designs in the form of geometrical patterns.

WOOD-CARVING

A glance over the list of trees named and used by the Ovimbundu indicates a complete knowledge of woodcraft which is in the hands of specialists. To name only a few, there is the *omanda* tree, also the *omue*, which yield charcoal for the smithy. *Ombula* wood is used for stools, while the elastic timber from the *omanda* tree is suitable for bows. The *ekenge*, *usamba*, and *ociyeko* trees supply bark for binding crosspieces to the upright poles when making the framework of a house; the same bark is used by Ovimbundu and Vachokue of eastern Angola for making bark cloth. In addition to the use of bark for these purposes it is made into large cylindrical receptacles for maize, while its use for beehives is general throughout Angola. Beehives are often made by professional hunters. A traveler notices the mutilation of trees from which complete cylinders of bark have been removed (Plate XL, Fig. 2); half of the cylinder makes a receptacle for carrying on the shoulder. 314

When a small pig is to be transported, four holes are bored in the bark container. Through these holes the legs of the animal are placed and tied together on the under side (Plate XXXI, Fig. 1). This is a more humane transportation than that of tying the feet of the animal to a pole which is supported on the shoulders of the two men who are carriers. 482

In the neighborhood of Cangamba fishermen make and use canoes of bark about fifteen feet in length (Plate LXXXV, Fig. 2). This illustration shows a man taking his nets into midstream where they will be pegged to the river bed. 501

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP1

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1

2

DUGOUT CANOES, RIVER KWANZA, NEAR MALANGE, NORTHWEST ANGOLA

Fig. 1. Rotation. Fig. 2. View of stern

[p. 426]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FR13

226

501

2

VACHOKUE FISHING AT CANGAMBA

Fig. 1. Women dragging basket. Fig. 2. Man in back canoe, holding net

[p.439]

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

and wage labour which I have described as affecting the Ovimbundu as a whole.

It is not easy to compose budgets of household expenditure and income, partly because they have not yet much of a 'book-keeping' outlook, and partly because they suspect the motives behind questions of this sort. My own opinion is that from agriculture the average household would earn considerably less than 1,000 escudos (£12. 10s.) a year. The Banco de Angola in its Report for 1955[4] gives a budget for an African family at Silva Porto, consisting of father, mother, and two young children, having agriculture as their only source of income. Their total yearly income is given as 7,750 escudos (about £96. 17s. 6d.). Even allowing for the higher prices paid for crops on the railway line, an income of this order is far above anything earned by the average cultivating household, though it might be earned by the few men who cultivated coffee extensively and lived in Portuguese style.

Some details of the economic life of individuals may give depth to this chapter. Kambungo, a kinsman of Sapapula living in Menga, was a man of over sixty who had in his youth travelled on the caravans. He had a large house but lived in a village amongst kinsfolk. In June 1955 he had been in Kwanyama country where, with shells obtained at Luanda, he had bought cattle and for 15 of the *olomande* shells he got a sewing-machine. In the year 1955–6 (very roughly from the end of the dry season in '55 to the same period in '56) he had sold ten sacks of maize at 25 escudos each and six sacks of beans for 60 escudos each. He had, however, concluded that maize did not pay and had started to grow coffee. He had sold one beast for 900 escudos (£10. 15. 0), and had also sold ten sheep for 100 escudos (£1. 5. 0) each. He had also sold a coat for 120 escudos (£1. 10. 0).

The principal item of Kambungo's expenditure was a bicycle which he bought for 1,500 escudos (£18. 15s.). He had also bought two beds each 100 escudos, and ten plates 100 escudos altogether. He had bought ten bottles of wine, at 5 escudos each, and had also bought some indigenous rum, price not noted. Ten traditional sleeping mats cost 2½ escudos each, and four

[4] Quoted by Egerton, pp. 124–5.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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5// pairs of shorts cost 70 escudos each. Two kerchiefs for women cost 50 escudos each.

Total income recorded is 2,870 escudos (£35. 17. 6). Total expenditure recorded is 2,255 escudos (£28. 3. 9). It should be noted that Kambungo, while not living in Portuguese style, was considered wealthy for an Otjimbundu and that much of his income, for instance from the sale of the ten sheep, was from exceptional sales which could not be annually repeated. As regards livestock Kambungo had five head of cattle, five chickens, four sheep and two ducks.

More typical would be the year's expenditure of Pedro Musungu, an inhabitant of a Protestant village, who had bought two cloths, each of four metres and each costing 50 escudos (about 12s 6d.) for his wife, and for each of his four children two cloths, one 25 escudos the other 30. He had bought a hoe for 7½ escudos, a book for the same. To this total expendi-
[65] ture should be added the tax (180 escudos) plus the communal fines levied each year for burning the grass and so on which may come to 40 escudos or more. The total expenditure then would be about 555 escudos (£6. 18. 9). It was not possible to calculate his income since he could not remember how many sacks he had sold to the traders. He had, however, raised 200 escudos by selling a pig and had got 40 escudos for two kilos of coffee, though most of the coffee he planted had not produced berries.

A yet poorer household was that of Cypriano, a villager of Epalanga with a wife and two young children. His maize crop in 1956 had gone to pay debts to traders, for the 1955 maize harvest had been very poor. He had got tax-money by making pounding-blocks, and pounding-sticks (for beating out maize), but could not remember how much he had earned thus. Although Cypriano's stock amounted to one sow and one hen,
[292] he and his wife had a set of smart clothes for special occasions, like all Ovimbundu.

Much better off was Luveli, who like Cypriano combined a craft with agriculture. He had sold ten kilos of coffee for 20 escudos each, as well as twelve sacks of maize at 25 escudos each and two sacks of potatoes at 20 escudos each, making a total agricultural revenue of 540 escudos, to which must be added

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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Luveli's income from bricklaying. The laying of the bricks that form a modern villager's house may bring 100 escudos.

The basic cash need of an Otjimbundu, then, is for money to pay government demands and to provide clothing for his wife and children, who seem more likely than the men to get new clothing every year.[5] Add to this the possibility of other calls (e.g. provision for a relative's funeral) a desirable income even for this low level of consumption would be 400 escudos (£5) and a more prosperous villager might earn and spend double the amount. Exceptional individuals still remaining within the normal conditions of Umbundu cultural and social life, such as Kambungo, may earn from 2,000 to 3,000 escudos a year, perhaps even more, from agriculture. Maize is the foundation of the agricultural economy, but Kambungo's remark that maize did not pay seems to reflect a trend to find other openings such as growing coffee, which is, however, subject to difficulties of climate.

Within the villages there is some trade in handmade objects such as pottery, sleeping-mats, and sticks for stirring mush, and there are quite a number of bricklayers, carpenters, and tailors (proprietors of sewing-machines) who have acquired European skills which bring them money. These craftsmen are, on payment of a fee of 250 escudos (a figure given me by a tailor), exempt from contract labour.

Many European residents seem to think that the only European products natives desire are cloths, clothing, and wine. This is not so; villagers wanted me to sell them kerosene for lamps, D.D.T. powder for their hair, and soap. It is interesting that the occasions on which an Otjimbundu would accumulate large (for him) sums all fall outside the maize-for-cloth pattern of trading. These occasions are bridewealth payment (and counting all expenses this may well come to 800 escudos—£10 or more), which is a traditional due, the purchase of bicycles (according to place of purchase from 1,200 escudos [£15] to 1,500 escudos [£18. 15. 0]) which are prestige-giving objects, and the trading journeys to buy cattle. Kambungo had

[5] The trader whose opinions I have previously quoted (Senhor Alberto Oliveira Mendes of Chicunda), remarked, 'It is the women who save us. The men make a shirt last for three or four years but the women get something new every year.'

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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181 Making money and being rich are regarded with

unambiguous approval, though there is a certain undertone suggesting cunning in the verb *oku lunguka* (to be shrewd) used about prosperous people. The old suspicion of sorcery attaching to people who were more successful farmers than their neighbours[6] seems to have disappeared. While a prosperous villager would be expected to lend money to a poorer kinsman (provided the latter was not known as a bad debtor) yet, the situation which occurs in other parts of Africa, where, as Dr. V. W. Turner notes of the Mwinilunga Ndembu, prosperous Africans 'find themselves increasingly embarrassed by the demands of their kin for presents in cash and kind'[7], would not arise among the Ovimbundu, who would regard such demands as being unjustified, even outrageous.

Wealthy Ovimbundu may spend some of their wealth on clothing and on drink. Cattle-buying has been noted as a form of capital investment and the same term may be used of small stock buying. Another way of disposing of money is by building a house of bricks with the assistance of a bricklayer. A plough may be, but rarely is, bought by two men joining together to pool their money. Generally speaking, the agricultural technology of the Ovimbundu has been little changed since 1911 except for the spread of the techniques of coffee-growing.

It has been noted earlier that the Ovimbundu play an important part in the economic life of Angola both as cultivators and labourers. In this chapter an attempt has been made to show how at the local level it is the cultivation of cash crops, rather than migration for wage labour, which incorporates villagers into the commercial economy of modern Angola. The main source of money in rural areas is the trader's store, which is also the main recipient of money, apart from the administration. While trade both between Ovimbundu and between Ovimbundu and other tribes survives on a minor scale, the social institutions associated with the rubber trade, the large caravans, the non-repayable loans within the matrilineal group, and the obligations of wealthy traders to assist their kin, have disappeared. The contemporary social structure with the

[6] Childs, pp. 106-8.

[7] V. W. Turner, op. cit., p. 135.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

132 are divided into several sub-zones. A glance at the map[1] reproduced herewith will give a fairly good idea of the climatic regions. This map, apparently based entirely upon temperature averages and relative humidity in the localities for which such data are to be had,[1] is useful for an approximation of the principal zones and sub-zones. The names given to the several zones and sub-zones, however, are somewhat misleading, and the data on which the map is based are insufficient to assure accuracy.

The mean annual rainfall varies from 1,000 mm. (40 inches) to 1,500 mm. (60 inches) according to region[2] and locality. In the Highland the rains begin with a few showers during September and usually set in heavily during October. During November they increase in intensity and then suffer a break of from two to four weeks in December, January, or February. Then they continue until the end of April with sometimes a few showers in May. The heaviest fall is often in November or December, but sometimes in March. There seems to be some sort of cycle of morning, afternoon, and night rains, but I know of no study on this subject. Afternoon and evening rains are more common. Night rains seem to be more common towards the end of the season. Morning rains are least frequent. A day in which rain begins near (or before) 512 132 daybreak and continues well into the day is called in Umbundu *ulembi*. On such a day agricultural work and travel are suspended. There is a custom that on such a day the first, after greeting, to [431] speak the word *ulembi* can claim a gift from the one to whom he says it. The number of days in which work or travel may be suspended on account of rain is relatively not large. The working day is customarily from early morning until mid-afternoon. Men often continue field-work later in the day than do women. The connexion of the working day with weather conditions is readily seen. 132 Whether the heavier rainfall occurs in November–December or in February–March, it is in March and April that transportation is most likely to be interfered with. That is the time of swollen

[1] See Dr. José de Oliveira Ferreira Diniz, 'As características climatológicas de Angola' (*Boletim Geral das Colónias*, 1930, no. 62, 63, pp. 3–15).

[2] See maps and charts of rainfall in H. F. Shantz and C. F. Marbut, *The Vegetation and Soils of Africa* (New York, 1923); also some figures on rainfall and temperature in J. C. B. Statham, *Through Angola, a Coming Colony* (London, 1922) and in O. Letcher, *South Central Africa*, chap. xiii (Johannesburg, 1932). More detailed treatment of the whole subject is given by Marquardsen u. Stahl, *Angola*, chap. v (Berlin, 1928).

1 [Facing p. 8.—Analyst]

226 spear eight feet long, the end of which consisted of ten sharp prongs
462 of palm stem (Plate LXXIII, Fig. 1).

Near Cangamba in eastern Angola, fishing in the Kwando River
[171] occupied numerous men and women of the mixed tribes in the district, namely, Vachokue, Luchazi, and Babunda. Men paddled into midstream in small bark canoes from which fishing operations were directed. The fishermen carried small conical string nets, which were attached to stakes in such a way that the openings of the nets faced upstream. Vachokue women, working in pairs, dragged baskets against the current (Plate LXXXV, Figs. 1, 2).

AGRICULTURE AND COOKING

343 *Osila* is the Umbundu word for the granary which stands on
243 wooden supports (Plate XLIV, Fig. 1); this *osila* is for the restricted family, and there is one *osila* for every house. The Ovimbundu store their corn in bulk, but in the Esele country I noted that the cobs themselves were carefully packed. Each Ocimbundu girl culti-
[432] vates a small patch of ground, the produce of which she is at liberty to sell in order to buy brass ornaments, beads, and palm oil.

In addition to maize, barley, oats, and wheat, with here and
241 there a little rye, are occasionally grown. There are three colors of beans, red, white, and black. There is no attempt to keep the varieties
[651] separate, so they cross-fertilize freely. The Ovimbundu try to
[438] cultivate a surplus of beans and maize which they use to pay their taxes to the Portuguese, likewise to sell at the stores of traders.

252 Corn is pounded on the rock which has been used for generations
512 after it has been consecrated by sprinkling the blood of a chicken. Pounding begins as early as five o'clock in the morning, before sunrise, and from that time to sunset the pounding-rock is in use. The
[521] rock is evidently regarded as a meeting place for social intercourse; it is undoubtedly the center of village gossip so far as the women are concerned (Plate XXXVI, Fig. 2).

As corn alone is considered a poor food, it is sprinkled on boiling water to which beans are added. Cooking goes on from early morning to sunset over a slow fire. Children sometimes receive as their evening meal a thick plastic cake of mushed corn to which green leaves of a squash are added.

252 There are five kinds of manioc resembling one another in general appearance, but the Ovimbundu distinguish the plants, and reserve for each what they consider to be appropriate preparation. The method varies for sweet and bitter varieties of manioc.

412 fatigue is avoided by the method of holding and swinging so that the work of crushing is done by the weight of the implement.

412 252 Two less usual methods of pulverizing grain are by use of a long pestle, which is worked up and down in a heavy wooden mortar as shown by Plate LXXXIV, Fig. 1, in which Vachokue women are so employed, and the crushing of grain with a cylindrical stone which is rolled on a flat slab. This latter method I judge to be very old, for on a pre-Umbundu site encircled by stone walls I have seen flat slabs of stone and cylindrical rollers. Some of the flat slabs were worn extremely thin in the middle and a few were perforated by the friction.

It is noteworthy that there are rocks especially reserved for the pounding of grain with the wooden mallet. Such rocks are to be [782] found close to every village, and the dedication of a new rock for this purpose requires the killing of a chicken whose blood is sprinkled on the rock.

252 Work of this kind is begun before daybreak. From that time to [512] sunset the pounding of the wooden mallets, accompanied by the singsong of the women, marks the progress of the day's work. At intervals the pounded grain is sifted through the hands and spread out on a basket-work tray, which is shaken to separate the fine meal. The unbroken and partly broken grain is replaced on the rock for further pounding. A small brush of grass is used for bringing together the grain which is dispersed by the blows.

412 171 The sole implement used in agriculture, which is entirely in the hands of women, is the hoe. Of this implement there are several [862] variations according to locality. The Ovimbundu and others of Ngalangi employ the form illustrated in Plate XIII, Fig. 10. The long handles measuring 85 cm no doubt reduce fatigue by minimizing bending. Both hands are used, and, furthermore, the increased length of the handles must give a greater leverage. The smaller hoe used by Ovimbundu women of Elende has short handles only 51 cm (Plate XIII, Fig. 9), while that from the Esele country is distinguished by a broader blade and still shorter handles only 36 cm in length.

412 Included in the outfit of every Umbundu home is the heavy wooden floor beater. This implement, which is fashioned from a single piece of wood, consists of a narrow handle, round in cross section, and a flat portion for beating the moist, newly made, mud floor of the hut. The total length is about 83 cm.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

rate hut is provided as a kitchen. In some dark corner of the hut 356
there is likely to be a sitting hen or a bitch with pups. Goats and 252
pigs intrude from time to time. Lean dogs scavenge round the
doorway. Naked little children whitened with dust play on the
floor. A woman crouches over the cooking pot stirring the glutinous 512
mass of corn meal. About sunset men are gathering in the council
house to which their meals are sent.

They push forward the logs into the fire, throw their blankets around them and chatter until the women and children arrive with the evening meal. In the vicinity of the village, boys are wandering about with blunt wooden arrows fitted to their bowstrings, to be ready for the homeward flight of birds. Other boys are driving cattle to the kraal.

As darkness falls the long tubular drums are brought out. These [535]
are held between the legs and played in compound rhythm (Plate XXVII, Fig. 1). A shuffling dance begins, slowly at first, then with increasing vigor, to be continued far into the night.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

the household of the headman Sikililē, who had had four wives and 595
one young Esele concubine. At the time of my last visit (1936), 592
however, there were only two wives and the concubine, one wife having died, and another having gone to her people.

To complete the picture of the villagers, their numbers were as 621
follows:

Village	Men	Women	Children: Male	Children: Female	Total
In Sikililē's village	24	35	31	37	127
In Ciyanda	5	8	2	4	19
In Kanjengo	3	6	3	1	13
At the School	10	11	10	6	37
Total	42	60	46	48	
	Adults: 102		Children: 94[1]		196

In Sikililē's village there were domestic animals as follows: 621
9 head of cattle, 13 goats, 20 sheep, 100 pigs, and about 100 463
chickens. There was practically no professional specialization; [231]
there were almost no specialists living in the village: no blacksmith or carpenter, no mat-maker, but only one 'hunter of meat', and three 'hunters of (bee-) hives'. As to the women, all could make baskets, and there were several who had made pottery, but were not doing so at the time.

Pigs, chickens, and dogs roamed the village, functioning as a 364
D.S.C. and a sewer system combined. Were it not for these scavengers the villages of the Ovimbundu would present an even more untidy spectacle than is the case. There is no other regular [514]
disposal of refuse, nor are there any latrines or privies.[2]

It will be seen that there is practically no division of labour as 621
between households: each is practically a self-contained unit. The 476

[1] It was reported that in addition to the children then living, these same households had lost 57 by death (29 males and 28 females).

[2] At Ngendo the school village had two or three enclosed pit privies. The Umbundu euphemism for defecate, 'go to the bush' (*oku enda kusenge*), is revealing. Even more revealing is a proverb which advises one not to burn his bridges behind him, but literally it runs as follows:

Nda we lisinga huti, Si endi konyima onjo,
Nda o ha sitilā pi?

If you forswear yourself saying, I shall not go behind the house,
Then will you go (to) urinate where?

There is a more shocking version which, however, may not be really authentic.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

hood was a day when he and an elder brother set off for the fields 857
and almost ran into a party of raiders. The scolding which they 861
received was not forgotten.

The practice of leaving the *ocisembe* in the village by day makes his elder sibling responsible for much of his education. This is the beginning of a close bond which lasts through life. She herself may not be more than six or seven years old and consequently cannot be expected to 'educate' her little charge very thoroughly. She interests herself in his walking and talking and he will imitate her in many things, but the rest of 'conscious education' must be attended to by the parents.

Cleanliness. Instruction in cleanliness begins at this age, but I fear 863
that it is lacking either in intensity or in persistence for its effect seems to be rather long-delayed. Small babies are not washed very often but their bodies and heads are anointed with palm-oil against infestation with the various parasites of the tropics. Anointing the body continues to be a part of the toilet of the Ocimbundu through life. When palm-oil is scarce, such afflictions as common itch are more prevalent. Nowadays, in the well-appointed household, the *ocisembe* has his hands and face washed before breakfast. If such a connexion between washing and eating were always and everywhere maintained, habits of personal cleanliness might be more widespread. Brushing the teeth may be begun in imitation of mother. Sphincter training is begun very early, for the mother feels every muscular movement made or attempted by the baby on her back. Hence she is apt to know when it is necessary to take him down for defecation. If and when this procedure is followed through with regularity and persistence early sphincter control may be established, but too often this is not the case. Establishment of bladder control is apt to come even more uncertainly as a favourite proverb concerning the weather indicates:

Ilu lia soka ndetako lioñaña. [538]

The sky is like the bottom of a baby.

The Ovimbundu do not associate these bodily functions with shame to the extent which is the case in our culture, but euphemisms are used in place of the exact terminology.[1] If an

[1] There are prohibitions regarding these functions during visits to relatives- 606
in-law with whom one has respect-relations, also to the bride during the wedding 5140
ceremonies. (See Folk-tales nos. 12 and 13 of the short collection in the *Journal*

1: Childi M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

863 *ociumbe* defecates on the bed he will be slapped that he may not repeat, but less flagrant breaches do not seem to call for punishment.

868 *Language*. The progress of toddlers in language mastery is rapid. Some mispronunciations are allowed. Some children pronounce correctly more rapidly than do others. Correct use of the language including mastery of the complicated grammatical structure, however, is mastered much earlier than is the case with English-speaking children. One could almost say as does Father Van Wing of the Kongo child: 'À quatre ans il parle mieux sa belle langue Kikongo, qu'un Européen de douze ans ne parle la sienne.'[1] The baby's earliest babblings, as well as his later evident imitations of his elders, are all recognized as his attempts at self-expression which as a matter of course will straighten themselves out in due time.[2] Parents speak to their children in a tone distinctly different from that employed in ordinary adult conversation, but they rarely if ever use the baby's own mispronunciations or 'baby-talk' as do Europeans and Americans. This, and the fact that young children have much more practice than have our children, owing to the constant companionship of their elders, seems to be the secret of their rapid progress. Whether the nature of the language itself has any effect would be an interesting subject for investigation.

867 *Manners* are also taken on quickly during this time. Toddlers are not expected to practise any very wide range of the social niceties, but what they do, they do correctly. They give and receive with both hands. They both give and answer greetings with proper terms of respect. An outsider, however, can rarely observe such behaviour naturally in the young child. He has been so

606 514 *of the American Folk-Lore Society*, vol. xxxv, pp. 129 ff.) The terms used are as follows:

Exact terms	*Euphemisms*
To urinate, *oku sūsū* (urine, *ocūsū*)	*oku talamillako*, lit. 'to stand to something'.
	oku litapela, lit. 'to water oneself' (said of a child when it wets itself or its bed).
To defecate, *oku nia* (faces, *ensiña*)	*oku enda kuzenge*, lit. 'to go to the bush'.
	oku enda kofeka, lit. 'to go to the country'.

The verb *oku nia* is used as a strong or profane expletive or interjectory phrase, especially in the first person with *etaili* (to-day), as *Etaili nda nia*. The verb is commonly left off.

[1] *Etudes Bakongo*, p. 262.

[2] Cf. the proverb: *Wa sema, na imba: na tambuka, na papia*, 'He mispronounces, he sings: he babbles, he speaks.'

285 The name *esisa* is given to the raw material as well as to the mat. The worker begins by laying out the reeds on the ground, side by side; then the slender tool *utomo* is passed through the reeds near their ends. This position is made permanent by sewing, and the process is repeated at intervals along the length of the reeds (Plate XLII, Figs. 1, 2).

Evinda is a large mat, about 120 cm long and 20 cm wide, while each strip of coarse elephant grass is about 3 cm wide. Ability to make the rush mat (*esisa*) is fairly common, but skill in making *evinda* is less usual. The mat *evinda* has several uses; it may be stretched on the floor or bed as a sleeping mat, or possibly it is rolled so that the ends can be fastened together; so treated it forms a cylinder which may be filled with grain when stood upright on the ground. A number of these mats is sometimes used to form a temporary storage place or shelter. The technique is of the twilled variety in which each weft passes over and under two warps.

Ocala is a coarse mat made from long stalks which are called "elephant grass" by the Boers; the agricultural term is "Napier's fodder." The long rods are white and glazed, so forming an artistic contrast to the crossbinding, which is of black bark. The technique is known as check, a term used to describe a structure in which warp and weft pass over and under each other singly.

The large mat (*ocikanga*) which is of soft texture shows neatly woven, diamond-shaped patterns of dark brown grass. The technique of this mat is of the twilled variety in which each weft passes over and then under two warps.

283 String bags, which are used for suspending gourds or hanging them over the shoulder, are made by men only. The root *ombundi*, mentioned in connection with brewing beer, is used for making string bags. Two fibers that have been teased out from the root are rolled tightly together by rubbing them between the palm and the thigh. [462] Strong rope is sometimes made by plaiting coarse grass; this occupation is in the hands of males.

386 In basket-making the preparation of dyes is of great importance because colored strands of grass are inwoven to make named geometrical patterns (Plates IX; X). [331] The Umbundu expression for dyeing is *olu lisa olosovo*.

Red coloring is produced by taking leaves of a plant named *esaso* and cooking them in water along with the bark of the tree *ukondo*. [515] *Ukondo* is the "tooth brush" tree because small pieces of its wood are chewed and used for cleaning the teeth. After the grass has

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

prolonged if even one boy fails to recover. One of the two youths interrogated said that in his camp there were seventy-eight boys, three of whom died. My other informant said that in his camp there were sixty-eight boys, only one of whom died. The informants agreed that the deaths were due to an epidemic of influenza and not to privations or septic conditions arising from the operation. 881

During the period of seclusion the boys are taught songs and dances used at the ceremony that celebrates the conclusion of their initiation. By privation the boys are taught the value of food and fire. Novices are beaten if they show any disrespect for their guardians, and trifling offences are severely punished. Every boy has to take from the fire a burning stick, which he holds in his hand while running between two lines of men who beat him, and if he drops the stick he has to start his run once more. The boys swear allegiance to one another. A novice thinks that he will die if he gives information to a woman or to a man who has not been initiated.

From his mother, each boy receives food in a gourd which he deposits on the bank of a river near the novices' camp. If a boy dies, a hole is bored in the gourd so that when the mother receives this she will not send more food. Each guardian has a stick which is sent to the mother of his pupil when the ceremony of initiation and seclusion is ended. If the boy has died, bark is cut from both ends of the stick before this symbol of death is sent to his parents. 763 881

When the boys come out from their camp at the conclusion of the rites one man and one woman stand on the bank of the river, and the boys pass under the legs of both the man and the woman. When the boys arrive at the village the whole population comes out to welcome them. There is a feast and beer-drinking bout on the day of return. 881

During seclusion no water is allowed for washing, and the informants laughed as they spoke of the order "wash hands," whereupon the boys merely rubbed their hands together. When the order, "wash dishes," was given the boys rubbed their platters with their hands. On the day of leaving camp the novices bathe in the river. Ablution consists of three dips, after each of which the boy stands on the bank until he is dry. [515]

For two months the boys wear strips of bark cloth. During this period all the novices must move together, but there is no objection to their leaving the village provided they do so all in one company. While wearing bark cloth the boys have each day to attend a cere- [292]

164 Deformities resulting from burns are frequent. Cooking pots
[732] are unstably placed on logs which form the fire, and, in addition to this, people sleep very near the fire. There is no cerebro-spinal fever. Pneumonia is very common; the result is often fatal. Weakness of the heart is only occasional. Varicose veins are rare. There is no appendicitis.

One cannot fail to notice the prevalence of tropical ulcers among the Ovimbundu. These occur most frequently on the tibia. The
[757] big sloughing ulcer makes a large hole which the native fills with clay and a pulp of leaves. Sometimes a bark is pounded to a pulp and used in this way. These ulcers are very obstinate even under skilled treatment. Often after the wound has been healed it will break out again when irritated by the slightest injury. Medical
[732] opinion is divided as to the cause of these ulcers. Jiggers are a cause of deformation of the toes, which sometimes fall off or have to be amputated. Cancer is not usual in people under sixty years of age. Superficial cancer is the most common form.

• 515 Water, even when procurable, is sparingly used by the Ovimbundu. The hands and face may receive a perfunctory wash each day, but the entire body seldom receives this attention.

757 Cupping was observed on two occasions, but I think the operations were performed by the mothers of the children concerned, and not by a medicine-man. The method of using the horns or gourds is illustrated (Plate LXXXVI, Fig. 1). After incisions had been made the cups were applied. The operator sucked the pointed end of the cup, so creating a vacuum, which was maintained by pushing forward with the tip of the tongue a small ball of wax. This wax filled the hole at the pointed end of the cupping horn. The people shown in the photograph are Vachokue, but the method is the same among the Ovimbundu.

At Elende there was a sweat bath in the form of a hole in the ground containing a heap of stones. The stones are heated in a fire, then cold water is thrown over them so that steam arises to the patient, who crouches above the hole covered with a blanket.

In the Vasele country, also among the Ovimbundu at Elende, I examined corporeal incisions other than tribal marks. The explanation was to the effect that the making of cuts cured pain (Plates XXIV, Fig. 3; LXXVI, Fig. 2).

RAIN-MAKING

791 The rain-maker (*upuli*) is a medicine-man who has specialized in this function. The *upuli*, who was an Ocivokue of Ngongo, and

.3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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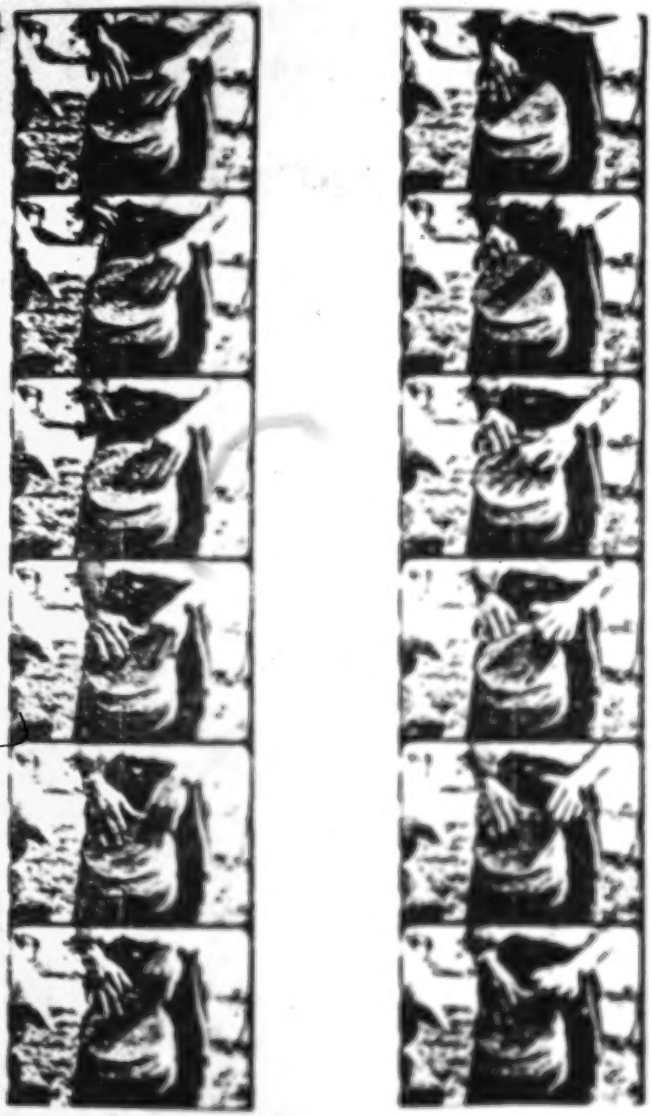
516



POSITIONS OF HANDS IN DRUMMING, OTIMBUNDU, ELENDE

Front view

[p. 379]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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POSITIONS OF HANDS IN DRUMMING, OVIMBUNDU, BIENDE

Side view

[p. 380]

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

621 common meal was formerly a great bond of village unity. Mutual
476 help within the village and the family group is practised on many occasions. There are a number of folk-tales designed to show the evil consequences of refusing to lend, whether beer-pots or more valued assistance. Many proverbs enjoin the necessity of prompt and effectual mutual helpfulness and co-operation, as e.g.

U o popela ukuavo ongundu ka hula.

[538] (He who saves another (from) a crocodile does not undress.)

476 The mechanism of co-operation, the round of daily life in village and field, together with the cycles of food and of work, are properly subjects of further study. Here the purpose is to show the definitely family nature of the village and of its life. To the [181] casual observer the Ovimbundu appear as severe individualists. Indeed, they are individualistic to a degree, but they have worked out mechanisms of mutual helpfulness and co-operation which functioned both on political lines under the aegis of the king and within the kinship units.

Social Life of the Village

517 The two foci of the village life are the Men's Club and the
521 Dancing Floor. Even though no *onjango* may have been built, the
562 Men's Club will find a place in which to carry on, at least when there may be fine weather. Leisure may be limited, but time for conversation will be found. Europeans often express wonder at the amount of conversation which goes on between Africans, for they cannot understand what people of apparently such limited opportunities and with what seems like so narrow an outlook may have to discuss at such great length. As for the Ovimbundu, there is nothing which is a greater hardship than lack of opportunity for conversation with their fellows. Under primitive conditions this is more especially true of the men, who, in their villages, are always surrounded by members of their own family group. Owing to their peculiar position in the village and their household pre-occupations, the women's social propensities may find less outlet in these public gatherings. When the villagers gather on the dancing floor and the gourds of beer go round, they always separate according to sex. Whether the occasion be formal or informal, I have seen the discussion carried to great lengths, with the pipe passed between the men, while the women sat silently by,

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

517 521 562 some pulling on their stubby little pipes and watching the men. As the men smoke, they may pass the pipe from mouth to mouth, but not so the women.

577 276 Tobacco (*akaya*) is a great vehicle for sociability whether in the pipe or in the form of snuff. 'Snuffing is held to clear the head, to clarify the thought, to enlighten the eyes, to sharpen the hearing, and comfort the heart.'[1] 'Taking a pinch of snuff, between the forefinger and the thumb, is unknown . . . and would be considered . . . very unsatisfactory. . . . They pour about a teaspoonful into the palm of the hand, and burying their . . . nostrils in the peppery mixture snort it up loudly, aided by a rotary motion of the half-closed hand.'[2]

273 Beer (*ocimbombo*) is of even greater importance. Its place has long been threatened by such drinks as the stronger beer made from emmer wheat (*ekundi*), mead (*ingundu* and *ocasa*), and [177] imported rum. Within the past thirty or forty years the Ovimbundu have themselves learned to distil rum (*okacipembe*) from sweet potatoes, sugar-cane, pumpkins, &c., and although the industry is illegal, it has grown to great proportions and nothing now seems able to stop it. It is the widespread use of this strong drink, with its concomitant evils, which is to-day the greatest enemy of the social life.

535 The dance is probably the most important element in the social life of the village. The Ovimbundu have many different dances and they dance on every occasion and on the slightest provocation. I have collected thirty songs to accompany dances. About three-fourths of them are sometimes used at funerals or at other ceremonial occasions, some of them are for more frivolous purposes, and most of those which are used for ceremonies are used at other times also. It is not for nothing that an Umbundu equivalent of (539) the proverb 'Strike while the iron is hot', runs as follows:

> *Nda ua mõlã õkoma, pãlaka:*
> When you see a drum, dance:
> *Õkoma ka yi mulõnã kuvali.*
> A drum may not be seen twice.

During one of my visits to Ngendo there was an important funeral with much dancing at Ndumba, just across the valley. At

[1] Tucker, *Drums in the Darkness* (Toronto and New York; Doran, 1927), p. 38.
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1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

On nights when there is little or no moonlight, the evening 562
gatherings in the village sometimes, although not always, follow 517
the sex division, with the men and boys in the *onjango*, and the
women and girls at one or more of the kitchens. Discussion of
affairs, with youth listening to age, is the usual order, but the
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riddles.

Riddles are more especially a field of youth but age also enjoys 524
hearing the answers given. A favourite occupation of the men, 171
especially by day, is *ocela*, a game known all over Africa and in
other parts of the world as well.[1] Junod calls it 'the national game
of Africa'.[2]

The Ovimbundu have brought recreation to the service of their 461
work. Europeans are often irritated by the amount of conversation
which Ovimbundu carry on during working hours, but on con-
sideration it may be found that were it not for the conversation
and other psychological aids, the work might be quite unendurable.
This is especially the case with regard to road work and many
types of contract labour. Road songs and work songs are of real [533]
help in keeping up morale and in prolonging endurance. Most of
them seem to have been developed in the days of the caravan
trade, but they have not been forgotten and are now used on many
occasions.

A word about ceremonial occasions before leaving the social 764
life of the village. Some rites and ceremonies are celebrated so
quietly that they are not even social occasions. Most of them,
however, are very social. This is especially true of funerals and
post-mortuary rites. During visits to Ngendo I was able to witness
two post-mortuary rites and the funeral of an important person of
a near-by village. Other ceremonial occasions, such as weddings [585]
and a return from a trading expedition, also call for much sociability,
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conviviality.

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[2] H. A. Junod, *The Life of a South African Tribe*, 2nd ed., vol. i, p. 345 f.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

302 A principal wife builds up her
[595] hair into five high cones. Vachokue women mass their hair into
171 separate balls shaped and held by clay and red coloring matter. I know of no hairdressing for Vachokue men, but ornamental wooden combs are sometimes used.

304 In only one place have I seen a nose pin worn, namely, the Esele country of Vila Nova de Selles. The fashion is out of date, but women of only twenty-five years of age have the septum of the nose bored; evidently the custom has not been obsolete for a long period (Plate LXXV, Fig. 1).

177 The most popular European importations are blue cloth with
439 white spots, metal hair combs, beads, and bright metal crosses
301 bearing a figure of the Virgin Mary with the infant Jesus. This ornament has penetrated to districts far away from Christian missions, and its wide dispersal shows that a newly introduced and attractive ornament from a foreign source may readily be accepted by tribes of different cultures.

517 There are interesting points of psychology in the attitude of the
301 Ovimbundu toward European importations. Only a few patterns of cloth are favored, and there is no sale for any other design. Some designs are thought to be appropriate for young girls while others are favored by older women. The same may be said of colored beads, for whereas both blue and white beads are the usual decoration for young women and immature girls, red beads are worn chiefly by the elderly women.

178 A consideration of personal ornament establishes the general truth that in scarification, hairdressing, tooth mutilation, the use of red powder and grease, the anointing of the hair with palm oil, and the wearing of trade cloth, leather, or bark cloth, there is little exchange of styles. There are diffusions in language and other cultural traits, but decorative elements which have for a long period been regarded as distinctive of tribal life are rigidly preserved.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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226 spear eight feet long, the end of which consisted of ten sharp prongs
462 of palm stem (Plate LXXIII, Fig. 1).

[171] Near Cangamba in eastern Angola, fishing in the Kwando River occupied numerous men and women of the mixed tribes in the district, namely, Vachokue, Luchazi, and Babunda. Men paddled into midstream in small bark canoes from which fishing operations were directed. The fishermen carried small conical string nets, which were attached to stakes in such a way that the openings of the nets faced upstream. Vachokue women, working in pairs, dragged baskets against the current (Plate LXXXV, Figs. 1, 2).

AGRICULTURE AND COOKING

343 *Osila* is the Umbundu word for the granary which stands on
243 wooden supports (Plate XLIV, Fig. 1); this *osila* is for the restricted family, and there is one *osila* for every house. The Ovimbundu store their corn in bulk, but in the Esele country I noted that the cobs themselves were carefully packed. Each Ocimbundu girl cultivates a small patch of ground, the produce of which she is at liberty [432] to sell in order to buy brass ornaments, beads, and palm oil.

In addition to maize, barley, oats, and wheat, with here and
241 there a little rye, are occasionally grown. There are three colors of beans, red, white, and black. There is no attempt to keep the varieties [651] separate, so they cross-fertilize freely. The Ovimbundu try to [438] cultivate a surplus of beans and maize which they use to pay their taxes to the Portuguese, likewise to sell at the stores of traders.

252 Corn is pounded on the rock which has been used for generations
512 after it has been consecrated by sprinkling the blood of a chicken. Pounding begins as early as five o'clock in the morning, before sunrise, and from that time to sunset the pounding-rock is in use. The [521] rock is evidently regarded as a meeting place for social intercourse; it is undoubtedly the center of village gossip so far as the women are concerned (Plate XXXVI, Fig. 2).

As corn alone is considered a poor food, it is sprinkled on boiling water to which beans are added. Cooking goes on from early morning to sunset over a slow fire. Children sometimes receive as their evening meal a thick plastic cake of mushed corn to which green leaves of a squash are added.

252 There are five kinds of manioc resembling one another in general appearance, but the Ovimbundu distinguish the plants, and reserve for each what they consider to be appropriate preparation. The method varies for sweet and bitter varieties of manioc.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

among the Ovimbundu is 'grudge-building'. This is probably 154
fairly common and often eventuates either in sorcery or in suspicion 578
of sorcery. There is special danger of this type of reaction between men and women who have an in-law relation to each other. This is probably a principal reason for the avoidance with which these relations are so carefully hedged and the respectful treatment mutually enjoined.[1] Grudges are sometimes inherited through several generations. According to folk-tales, children sometimes bear grudges against their parents for real or fancied ill treatment.[2]

Recognized outlets for anger in frankly 'extroverted' form are found in war and raiding parties, in the hunt, and in lawsuits. War is no longer resorted to but up to the present day anger still finds a recognized expression in actions at law. One of the commonest of such actions is the accusation of sorcery (*oku sunga owanga*) already touched upon above. Church councils and meetings have taken over some functions of the traditional courts of law and this is probably one reason for the decidedly stormy sessions which sometimes occur.

The importance of wit and humour as an outlet for anger has 154
been recognized. 'The ability to turn one's anger into a jest goes 522
with the trait of insight . . . and is sometimes appropriately called 828
"the saving sense of humour".'[3] That the Ovimbundu have this ability and use it often and to good advantage is very much in their favour. May not this be one indication of a considerable degree of insight which many observers have noted in the Umbundu character?[4] I would not claim that the Ovimbundu have made any very remarkable attainments in the social control of anger: their achievements in that direction may be slight when compared to some of the more advanced peoples, as, for example, the Scandinavians, the Hollanders, or the English. What is remarkable, however, is that they have frankly recognized the necessity for such control more clearly than have some supposedly more advanced peoples.

Adjustments in family life are held to be resolutions of what 593
are ultimately sex conflicts.[5] Marital adjustments are of prime

[1] See *supra*, pp. 57 ff.
[2] Cf. *Journal of American Folk-Lore Society*, 1922, vol. 35, no. 6, p. 123 f.
[3] Allport, op. cit., p. 344.
[4] Some writers have attributed to negroes a quality of 'insight' superior to that possessed by whites, cf. article 'Insight, &c.' in the *Atlantic Monthly*, Sept. 1938.
[5] Allport, op. cit., pp. 345–53.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

The compound in which the initiates had been confined for three months was a circular enclosure made of light branches and leafy boughs, at the narrow embrasure of which stood a guardian of the boys, who permitted entrance. In the middle of the large enclosure were seven small cages, each of which was just large enough to allow one boy to lie on his back, and I was informed that the boys lie thus for two weeks after circumcision (Plate LXXX, Fig. 2). 881 304 171

The ages of the boys appeared to be from ten to seventeen years (Plate LXXX, Fig. 1), an observation which agrees well with that made at Katoko and Ngongo. The disparity of age among the novices at each center where initiation was observed bears out the statement that initiation ceremonies are held at irregular intervals, but not more frequently than once in four years.

During confinement in the large enclosure the novices had made masks and costumes (Plate LXXIX, Fig. 1), and when they were pulling on the coarse netting suits, which fit tightly, I observed that circumcision had been performed thoroughly, evidently some weeks ago, for the wounds were healed. Masks were obtained, and these the instructors of the boys were careful to wrap in bark cloth, at the same time requesting me not to show the objects to women.

A few days later these boys returned to their village to dance while wearing the costumes which had been made in the enclosure. At Cangamba the final ceremony lasted twelve hours amid great excitement, including ceaseless drumming and dancing. One boy, who wore a skirt on his fiber costume, lifted this to display an artificial penis of great size (Plate LXXIX, Fig. 2). This organ he grasped in his hand while chasing the women and girls, who ran away screaming and laughing. [522]

At this ceremony there appeared stilt-walkers (Plate LXXXI, Fig. 1) and a medicine-man, a member of the Luchazi tribe (Plate LXXXI, Fig. 2).

Circumcision among the Bdjok (Vachokue) has been witnessed by C. P. Holdredge and described by Kimball Young (*Amer. Anthr.*, XXIX, pp. 661–669). This ceremony took place in the far northeast of Angola. The man described as the *magish* of whom women are afraid, but who is known to the initiates, corresponds to the Uluchazi medicine-man seen in the final ceremony at Cangamba. Of this grotesquely dressed person the men and boys took no notice, neither did he pay attention to them. On the contrary he chased women, who ran away screaming. Kimball Young's description of the enclosure where boys are confined, and his account of the [113] [756]

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

535 that time I got several of the accompanying songs, the texts of which I hope may be published later. At this time I wish only to point out the important place in the social life of the village which the dance occupies, with reference both to ceremonial and to [821] recreation. Whenever 'the moon makes a basket' (*osaĩ yi tunga ohumba*),[1] there is apt to be a great urge for rhythmic expression. [533] The drums begin to throb, the leader's voice is heard in invitation:

> *We-lele, we-lele wiya,*
> Oh light ones, oh light ones, come,
> *Usiki wohoma Kaluyua.*
> The beater of the drum (is) Kaluyua.

Then the dancers reply with the same words as a refrain:

> *We-lele, we-lele wiya,*
> *Usiki wohoma Kaluyua.*

The invitation is not given in vain. More and more feet join the shuffling, stamping rhythm, more voices join the chorused invitation; the throbbing mounts as perhaps another drummer or two join in, and soon other songs supersede the invitation now no longer necessary. Dance follows dance, each with its appropriate song, running the gamut of the emotions from ribaldry to pathos, according to the dancers' moods. The dancing will continue nearly all the night and may be resumed on the three or four [527] subsequent nights. After the harvest is gathered and there are no immediate agricultural labours, and if there happens to be little or no government work required at the time or in the region, dances may begin of an afternoon and last through two or three days and nights.

•524 There are a number of games involving either agility or quick wits, or both, which are also played on moonlight nights, both by children and by adolescents. The adults do not join in except in some games which involve dancing. A simple one called *Ka limbua limbua* (Not forgotten) is played by either a large or small group. The children have many games. One which is played either by day or by night, called either *Cimbamba co lia* (The night hawk ate him) or *Mai* (Mother) *Cinangu*, has been fully described by Hambly,[2] with the transcription of its songs arranged by Dr. Herzog.

[1] When the moon is full it 'makes a basket', i.e. is large and round like a field-basket.

[2] Hambly, op. cit., p. 116 f.

On nights when there is little or no moonlight, the evening gatherings in the village sometimes, although not always, follow the sex division, with the men and boys in the *ombanda*, and the women and girls at one or more of the kitchens. Discussion of affairs, with youth listening to age, is the usual order, but the time is often passed in the recital of folk-tales or in propounding riddles. 562 517

Riddles are more especially a field of youth but age also enjoys hearing the answers given. A favourite occupation of the men, especially by day, is *ocela*, a game known all over Africa and in other parts of the world as well.[1] Junod calls it 'the national game of Africa'.[2] 524 171

The Ovimbundu have brought recreation to the service of their work. Europeans are often irritated by the amount of conversation which Ovimbundu carry on during working hours, but on consideration it may be found that were it not for the conversation and other psychological aids, the work might be quite unendurable. This is especially the case with regard to road work and many types of contract labour. Road songs and work songs are of real help in keeping up morale and in prolonging endurance. Most of them seem to have been developed in the days of the caravan trade, but they have not been forgotten and are now used on many occasions. 461 [533]

A word about ceremonial occasions before leaving the social life of the village. Some rites and ceremonies are celebrated so quietly that they are not even social occasions. Most of them, however, are very social. This is especially true of funerals and post-mortuary rites. During visits to Ngendo I was able to witness two post-mortuary rites and the funeral of an important person of a near-by village. Other ceremonial occasions, such as weddings and a return from a trading expedition, also call for much sociability, but funerals and post-mortuary rites are the social occasions which occupy the most time and attention and make for the greatest conviviality. 764 [585]

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3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

171 175 wide distribution in Africa (C. Wiedemann, 1909) and the ceremony still survives among the Ovimbundu in modified form.

[114] Though an informative writer, Monteiro is sometimes vague; he says (I, p. 278) that circumcision is a universal custom among the blacks of Angola. In view of the extent of Angola, the diversity of tribes, and the fact that Monteiro traveled over only a small part of the country, this information is misleading.

Monteiro is the only writer in whose works I have found a reference to the Vasele tribe; probably no part of Angola has been so neglected as the Easle country in the hinterland of Novo Redondo. At the present day the Vasele have a reputation for cannibalism. [266] Monteiro saw human flesh eaten at Cuacra, while the skulls of the victims were placed on adjacent trees. Monteiro states (II, p. 167) that on the death of a king the Mucelis (Vasele) put out all the fires in the kingdom; these were relighted by the succeeding king who [321] used fire produced by rubbing two sticks together. The flat beads of shell called *dongos*, made from *Achatina monsteryia* (II, p. 168), are made today and traded to the far south of Angola, where their novelty assures them a value far beyond their intrinsic worth. I was fortunate in obtaining an example of the old beheading ax mentioned by Monteiro (II, p. 157) and sketched by Cavazzi (p. 210). Par- [262] boiled and roasted rats were offered to me as food; Monteiro mentions the offering of a roasted rat on a skewer (I, p. 99).

The account of Commander V. L. Cameron, who left Zanzibar for his journey across Africa in 1873, mentions several points of anthropological importance in relation to the Angolan section of his [756] journey. Cameron saw a net-covered medicine-man of the Kibokue (Vachokue) wearing a mask and a kilt of grass (p. 384). The function of this man was to frighten devils from the woods. The contest in [524] which boys discharge their arrows at a rolling root was seen by Cameron near Kagnombe (Cangamba?). Skulls of victims killed in war were spiked on poles (p. 399). The diviner was followed by [797] attendants who struck iron gongs, while the diviner himself shook a rattle made of basket-work in the form of a dumb-bell (p. 404). Cameron gives an accurate description of the divination basket and its use without going into details. These I have been able to supply [482] (chapter IX). The explorer met caravans of Bihéans, renowned carriers then as they are today. They were usually drunk and abusive; in some instances they attempted to rob the stragglers. ooo The use of caterpillars as food is noted (p. 416): "A man cut open

3. Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

114 trative posts. I agree that people between Caconda and Huila
101 represent a racial mixture of the Ovimbundu and the Ovambo. The record speaks of painting-houses for girls at Cabinda, an item which agrees with reports from other sources. The jottings concerning tribes from Cabinda to the far south of Angola are too vague to be used in ethnological work with confidence.

There are many points on which the work of A. Schachtzabel should be consulted for the purpose of making comparisons with my
[621] own observations. The chief of these are a note and photograph on
[281] village construction (p. 130); the musical bow (p. 32); the loom
[175] (plate VI); transmigration of the soul of a chief into an animal (p. 51);
[549] and the game of mancala (p. 52). My observations of initiation at
[281] Katoko, Ngalangi, and Cangamba agree well with that of Schachtzabel at Katoko, but I was able to obtain more detail and more
[282] numerous photographs of the ritual of initiation. The spinning of cotton (p. 143) is exactly the process so frequently witnessed now at Elende. Iron-working (p. 111) appears to be comparable with the technique at Elende, but Schachtzabel seems to have missed the ritual. I was not so fortunate as this author in finding the old type of iron-smelting furnace in use.

114 The work of Statham is devoted primarily to hunting and descrip-
136 tions of plant and animal life. The chapter given to a casual description of people among whom he passed is not useful as ethnology; but the book is of service in providing a background of natural history. Information on the tsetse fly in Angola (p. 294) assists ethnological work by showing the determining effect of this biological factor. Presence of the fly is prohibitive to cattle-keeping, therefore cattle
[231] are not kept along the river courses which are infested with this pest.

114 Alexander Barns made no pretence of writing more than a travel book; nevertheless he publishes photographs of ethnological value, gives useful historical summaries, and deals with economic problems of production and transportation.

114 Tucker's book "Drums in the Darkness," though written to
175 interest the American public in mission work, contains many ethnological statements. The chief of these relate to the structure of the compound (p. 37); the dress of women (p. 39); naming of twins and triplets; and other items which agree well with data from the district in which I worked. There are notes on drum signals (p. 74) and
[202] cannibalism (p. 77). Apparently drum signals were in use at Bihé half a century ago. Forty years ago a slave was killed and eaten
[266] at the installation ceremonies for a new king, a point that was noted

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

825 Observation of reptiles is a necessary self-protection as there are many poisonous snakes. The flesh of the python is eaten. Snake-
[524] skin and lizard-skin are occasionally used; for example, in covering a round, hard fruit in order to make a ball for playing a game.

When collecting lizards and snakes I found that each kind had a well-known name, though there was occasional disagreement among the men consulted.

Oriosangoko is a lizard (*Agama planiceps*) about ten inches long whose tail is covered with sharp spines. This reptile has colors of bright blue, red, and orange. *Ovangu* is a large spinous gray lizard (*Agama atricoll*). *Ekangola* (*Gerrhosaurus nigrolineatus*) is a brilliantly colored lizard which burrows deeply into the ground.

Olutanjila is a long slender green snake which hides in trees to capture birds. *Ombundanjila* is a long gray-backed snake with a light green belly. The generic name for snake is *ongoko*. The python is *omoma*. The chameleon (*olokalo*) seems to be feared, as the men and boys refuse to touch a dead one but always move it with sticks. There is a proverb to the effect that the chameleon though slow always gets there. The refusal to touch even dead reptiles is due to an exaggerated fear of being bitten. I could find no other reason.

824 Trees are of importance in connection with building houses and
315 wood-carving. The qualities of different timbers are well known to the Ovimbundu. For the main part, the collection of medicinal plants and their uses will be described in connection with the medicine-man. The following are the most common trees which are of economic importance.

Usia (pronounced *osoka*). This tree has an edible fruit the size of a walnut. The kernel is valued as a food.

Ombala. This tree provides wood which burns readily. The small skin-covered stools to be found in every hut are often made from this wood.

Ukwapa. The fruit has a hard rind.

[751] *Ovinde*. This tree has a small acid fruit from which a medicine is made for the cure of painful menstruation.

Usilasila. The leaf is compound and palmate. The fruit is black.

Usimbimbala. Bears a little red, oval fruit.

Usala. Has a large red fruit.

Usunda. Grows near streams. It has a fruit like that of *okulakula*, but smaller.

[723] *Ukuliavapa*. Has a fruit like the berry of a coffee plant. The fruit is used for making mucilage which is used for capturing small birds.

Ovanda. When this tree is small, the wood is springy, and is therefore useful for making bows. The wood of the older trees is burned for preparing charcoal which is used in the blacksmith's fire.

Ovanda. This is an erect tree having no branches on the lower part. The wood is extensively used in building native huts.

576 *kongimo oko* are spoken. The literal interpretation of these words is "back there." Ngonga says the words actually mean "excuse my back."

827 576 Spitting in the vicinity of the house of the king or of the chief is not allowed. "If you did that in the old days, you would have to pay something." Some people spit near the hearth in their own houses. A man who spits in the road is expected to cover the spittle. No person would spit in the presence of the chief or of the king. A hand should be placed in front of the mouth by a person who is coughing or sneezing.

576 [851] Shortly after the birth of a boy or girl all who are on good terms with the parents greet them by saying *kalunga*. The word is repeated four times with clapping of the palms. When words have been imperfectly heard and the listener desires repetition it is customary to say *kuku* in an interrogative tone.

[264] No particular etiquette is observed when eating. Two or three children eat from one platter, helping themselves with their fingers to the mush or sweet potatoes.

Rules forbidding the preparation of food by menstruating women, likewise prohibitions relating to stepping over a person, are mentioned in discussing taboos and omens.

EDUCATIONAL VALUE OF PLAY, MUSIC, AND DANCING

524 182 533 The educational value of play lies in its imitation of the pursuits of adult life. Though there are specialists in music, dancing, and singing, these exercises are indulged in by everyone. Music, singing, and dancing are more than amusements, they are fundamental as coordinating forces in tribal life at all levels of culture (W. D. Hambly, Tribal Dancing and Social Development, London, 1926). [113]

Among the Ovimbundu *Cimbombo Co Lia* is a popular game for girls, who form a circle, join hands, and sing:

PART I

524 [535] *Omola una, ndo eile ekungo, Cimbombo co lia* ("That little child was left in the desert, the nighthawk ate it"). At the word *Cimbombo* they begin to dance, facing from side to side in such a manner that they meet and bow. Some sing, *Cimbombo co lia* ("The nighthawk ate him"), and others respond, *Kalikisi* ("'tis the goblins"), as many times as they wish. Finally a return is made to the first words which are sung again. All musical transcriptions have been made by Dr. G. Herzog from my phonographic records.

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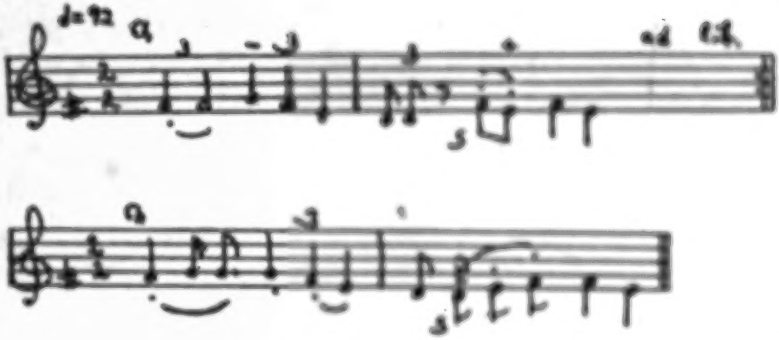
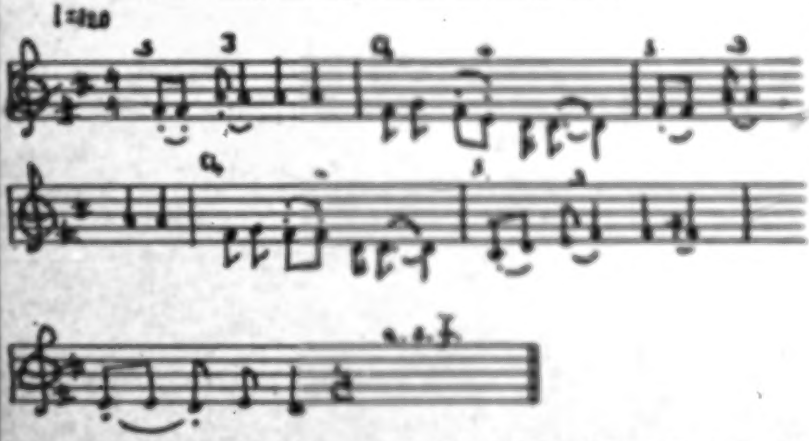
[533]



PART II

The children then form in a line holding each other. The leader is the mother and all the others are her children, except one who is the leopard. The last child in the line calls, *A mai, engue yi ndio* ("Mother, the leopard will eat me"). Mother, *Ka yi ku li*, ("It will not eat you"). Child, *Yi lia utapi uosuo* ("It is eating the water carrier"). Mother, *Ka yi ku li*. Child, *Yi lia utiotki uolokui*. Mother, *Ka yi ku li*. The one who represents the leopard now attempts to pass the outstretched arms of the mother in order to catch the child. Every time the leopard is foiled in his attempt to catch the child they all cry, *Ah-ah-ah Ka yi ku li*.

[533]



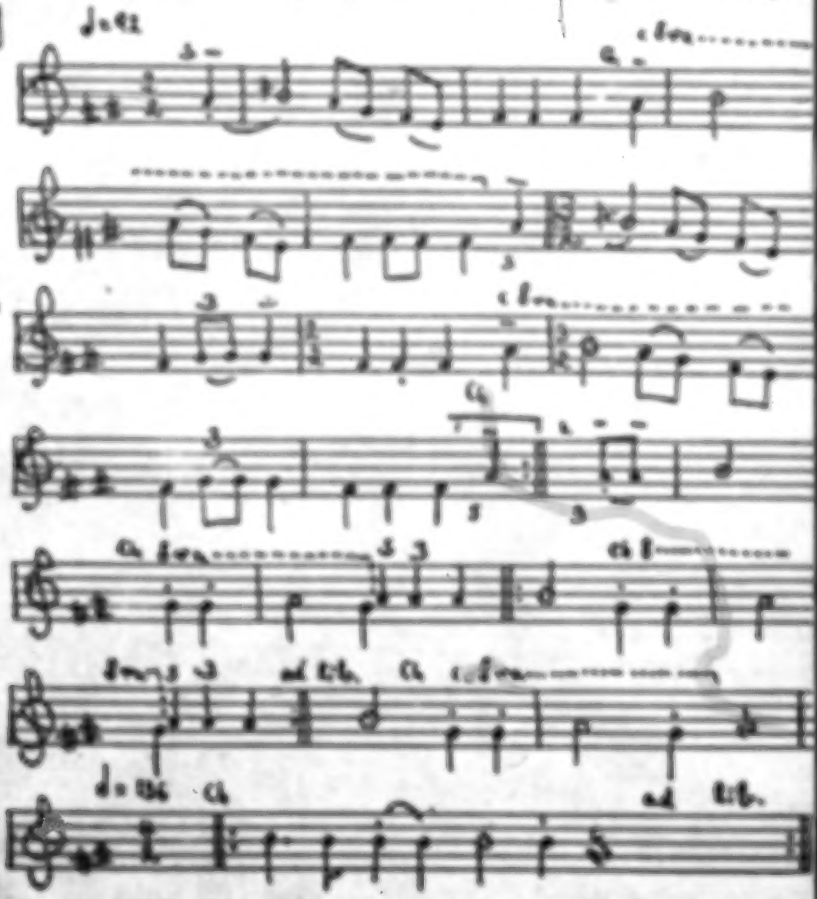
Eventually the leopard gets the last child and deposits it on the ground where it immediately begins to imitate the pounding of meal and to sing, *Fule, fule, fule, fule, kolohonda ko Luwa* ("Pound, pound, pound, pound on the rocks of Luwa"). This ditty, which is sung by women during their daily occupation of pounding maize on the

524 rocks, is repeated until all the children have been captured. Lastly the mother is caught and taken by the leopard to the bushes, where he hides her.

[533]

The leopard goes back and picks up a handful of sand which is an imitation of meal. Each of the children pretends to pick up a handful of sand before going in search of the mother. The leopard

[533]



3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FF13 Mbundu FF13

says, "Here's your mother." The children look and sing, "She's not there." They throw sand in that direction. The leopard repeatedly leads to places where the mother is not hidden, while each time the same words are repeated and sand is thrown. Finally the leopard leads the children to the place where the mother is hidden. Then the mourning song is changed to a glad dance. The children clap hands and sing, *Moi Cisangu weye*. *Moi Cisangu weye* ("Mother Cisangu has come"). 524 ●

After transcribing the music of this song Dr. Herzog reported, "The melodies are rather simple, moving within a restricted range, with a plain rhythm, the same short unassuming melodic fragment being repeated as long as the game may require it, or changed slightly to suit the words. It should be kept in mind that these are children's songs; other songs of the Ovimbundu are probably much more elaborate. The manner of singing songs by a solo and a responding choir is highly characteristic of African singing. Thirds as seen in the transcriptions on page 218 are often used in the music of west Africa. 533

"In the musical notations, *S* stands for Solo, *Ch* for the Choir. *A* as a sign above a note indicates that the tone is sung approximately a quartertone higher than noted. It indicates a short transitional tone of slight rhythmic or melodic significance and of uncertain pitch."

There is but one example of children's dolls in Field Museum's collection. This was obtained from a little Ocimbundu girl of Elende. The doll is made from a corncob which is draped in blue cloth of European origin such as women wear. My interpreter said that the dressing of dolls made from corncobs is a general custom at the time of cutting the corn. In view of the frequent occurrence of agricultural rites among Bantu Negroes, the use of dolls led me to inquire into the possibility of there being some kind of fertility cult associated with a corn-mother concept, but my inquiries met with negative results. 524 [241]

There is an Umbundu word for game (*omapolo*; plural, *olomapolo*) which is used for games in general. The verb *oku papola* means "to play." As a rule, male adults do not play games, but they have the game of mancala which is called *ocela*. This is difficult because it involves quick counting. Mancala has a wide distribution as shown by the fact that it occurs in Africa, Syria, the Malay Archipelago, South America, and the West Indies. At Dom Manuel in the southeast of Angola I saw an arrangement of holes in the ground which was used for this game. There were four rows of fourteen holes in each row. The counters were nuts from an oil palm. [171]

524 In the compound of the king at Ngalangi there was an oc board consisting of an oval piece of wood on a short base. Th board had holes arranged in four rows of seven, twenty-eight hol [525] in all. The king refused to sell the board. He said that it w highly valued and that the gambling stakes were high.

Up to the age of sixteen years boys play the game of *ocitiko* Each side has a number of bulbs from a figwort, which are rolle along between two lines of boys who shoot at them with arrow The winners are those who have shot the greater number of thei opponents' bulbs. The party *A* rolls bulbs while the opponents do the shooting. Then the positions are reversed. A game wit whipping tops is *ongolili* which is said to be of Umbundu origin not a derivative from a Portuguese game. There is no evidenc that games are seasonal; any game may be played at any time.

Games of mimicry naturally form a diversion, and boys imitat the occupations of their elders. The chief activities of adult male are warfare, hunting, and carrying, all of which used to play a very important part in the communal life up to a few years ago. Whe boys play at making war they have two sides, the attack and th defense. The attacking party runs about the village taking prisoners, who are tied with bark rope. Girls sometimes play this and othe games with the boys, but usually boys and girls play separately.

Sometimes strong boys are selected for hunters whose dogs are the little boys. Boys who pretend to be the antelopes or other gam go to the tall grass to hide. Toy bows and arrows are made, but sometimes the hunters go through only the movements of shooting. The boys who are pretending to be the game roll over and gasp when shot. The "dead game" has to cling to the pole on which it is borne to the village on the shoulders of the hunters. The little boys go along on all fours barking like dogs.

The Ovimbundu were, and still are, renowned carriers whose prowess is imitated in boys' games. Boys make up loads in the correct way; that is, lashed in the fork of two long sticks which can be rested on the ground. These they carry along, singing as they go. There is some wrestling, also stone throwing to test distance and accuracy. Rubber is made into a ball which is bounced rapidly and repeatedly with the open palm. Men and boys sometimes form a ring around which the ball is thrown from one person to another.

The Ovimbundu have no game played with string wound around the fingers, and I have been unable to find any evidence for the past or present formation of string figures. I have seen boys making bird

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

cages and wooden animals to use as playthings. Girls mold small 524 ●
animals from clay. The bull-roarer is in use as a plaything at Elende.

There is a game of hide and seek for boys. A knife is hidden; then a boy who has been absent for a time enters the ring marked off for the game. His proximity to the knife is indicated by playing on a musical bow. There are taps on the instrument which mean that the knife is far away. On the contrary, when the searcher approaches the hidden knife, the boy with the bow plays a distinctive note, yelala, yelala, meaning "pick it up, pick it up."

Boys readily make a simple apparatus for playing a game of lassoing a hoop. A pliable branch is bent so as to form a circle, then the ends are lashed together with bark strips. The lasso is a piece of rattan or bark having at each end a corncob or a small stick three inches long. One boy bowls the hoop so that it passes in front of, and a few feet away from his opponent, who stands twenty-five feet distant. As the hoop passes in front of him, the boy throws his lasso in such a way that it twines round the hoop and brings it to the ground.

There are dances of many kinds, but Ngonga says that he would 535
not know from the steps only what particular purpose the dance served. Several dances have been described, each in its appropriate section. There are no dances specially arranged to celebrate weddings or births. The funeral dance is described along with other ceremonies relating to interment. The medicine-man dances in connection [789]
with making rain or curing the sick. In order to say why the dance was being performed, it would be necessary to listen to the words of the songs; these are usually chanted in accompaniment to shuffling movements and the rhythm of drums.

Some of the older men and women perform dances and sing songs 535
that are unknown to the younger generation. Dancing is in favor 527
during the months of May and June because there are supplies of maize for making beer. As the dry season advances the maize formerly available for making beer is consumed as food, hence dancing is not so usual. Ngonga says that the old people know a dance which should be performed at new moon "so that there will be no sickness during this moon." Older men dance in commemoration of events [727]
during past wars, while women are spectators, and on these occasions there are beer-drinking and the slaughter of an ox. A group of men keeps up a shuffling dance while an old man relates a war story in a singsong voice. The oldest man is the first to cut the meat, after which each man helps himself.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

(9) Four fingers of the right hand are placed on the thumb of the extended left hand. 201

(10) The hands are placed together palm to palm.

A very insulting sign is made in this way. The left arm is held up with the fist closed. The left wrist is grasped with the right hand. The left fist is then shaken while the right hand is still grasping the left wrist. "This is done when a man is very angry, and he cannot find words."

A bending forward of the head accompanied by wide opening of the eyes and protrusion of the tongue means "you're a fool."

Shaking the head means "no." If the right hand is shaken in front of the face with the index finger extended, a negative is implied. Nodding the head is an affirmative sign. To indicate absence of anything, or the completion of something, the index finger of the right hand is drawn across the mouth. Rubbing the palms together rapidly has the same significance. In order to call some one the right arm is extended with the palm down. If they summon some one from a distance the arm is lowered, while a scratching movement is made with the fingers. The sign indicating "go away" is a flipping of the hand outwardly, while the arm is extended.

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RIDDLES AND PROVERBS

"There is a red belt round our field. What is it?" The answer is, "red ants."

"We have somebody who lies all his life in our field. He always lies on one side." The answer is, "a squash."

"We have a stump in the house that is always burning and always moving." This is a metaphor rather than a riddle. The stump is the log which is pushed forward into the fire. It is always alive yet is gradually dying. The saying is intended to refer to human lives. People are alive but their lives are becoming shorter each day.

"What is it that we eat above and below the ground?" The answer is, "manioc, because the leaves and roots are eaten."

"The turtle cannot climb up on a stump, some one has to put it there." This is said in reference to some person who gains a high position which he could attain only by influence and not through merit. 539

When a person makes threats without being able to fulfil them the following expressions are appropriate: "Hot water does not

5: Hambly E-5 (1929-30)1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

At Caconda I obtained the basket of a medicine-man which contained 759
a human tibia, a hoe for digging in graves, and a round stone for pounding 791
the bone before mixing it with fat and charcoal. Medicine-men still make potions for internal use, and these are usually carried in small horns suspended round the neck, or the paste may be contained in the carapace of a tortoise. In every way the medicine-man is still functioning, and his tasks are fundamental to the social and religious life of the Ovimbundu.

At an early age children specialize in their play which has a bearing 868
on the business of life. Boys make wooden-tipped arrows, play at hunting, and shoot at tubers which are rolled along the ground. Girls take clay from the potters to fabricate their own small cooking pots, and young girls attempt the coiling of basketry.

Men are the musicians, and among these a high degree of specialization 533
is observed. In a large village there are likely to be only a few competent drummers, and only a few men who play the small iron-keyed instrument called ocisanji. Osaka is a ritual game played only by men, and only when a village headman or a king is dying. The ball (ombunje) is made by sewing 535
lizard skin over a hard spherical fruit about six centimeters in diameter. A 524
man continues to dance with this little ball clenched in his outstretched 755
hand, while another dancer hits the muscles of his arm to make him release the ball. This game is thought to give strength to the sick man. There is a transfer of the endurance of the dancers to the invalid.

Preliminary observation in some villages occupied by Ovimbundu is 177
disappointing in its suggestion of Europeanization. The foreign culture is, however, a thin veneer, and further research shows a strong persistence of indigenous custom and belief quite near to centers of Portuguese influence.

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CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

524 In the compound of the king at Ngalangi there was an *ocel* board consisting of an oval piece of wood on a short base. Thi board had holes arranged in four rows of seven, twenty-eight hole [525] in all. The king refused to sell the board. He said that it wa highly valued and that the gambling stakes were high.

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1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

535 that time I got several of the accompanying songs, the texts of which I hope may be published later. At this time I wish only to point out the important place in the social life of the village which the dance occupies, with reference both to ceremonial and to [821] recreation. Whenever 'the moon makes a basket' (*osaī yi tunga ohumba*),[1] there is apt to be a great urge for rhythmic expression. [533] The drums begin to throb, the leader's voice is heard in invitation:

> *We-lele, we-lele wiya,*
> Oh light ones, oh light ones, come,
> *Usiki woñoma Kaluyua.*
> The beater of the drum (is) Kaluyua.

Then the dancers reply with the same words as a refrain:

> *We-lele, we-lele wiya,*
> *Usiki woñoma Kaluyua.*

The invitation is not given in vain. More and more feet join the shuffling, stamping rhythm, more voices join the chorused invitation; the throbbing mounts as perhaps another drummer or two join in, and soon other songs supersede the invitation now no longer necessary. Dance follows dance, each with its appropriate song, running the gamut of the emotions from ribaldry to pathos, according to the dancers' moods. The dancing will continue nearly all the night and may be resumed on the three or four [527] subsequent nights. After the harvest is gathered and there are no immediate agricultural labours, and if there happens to be little or no government work required at the time or in the region, dances may begin of an afternoon and last through two or three days and nights.

524 There are a number of games involving either agility or quick wits, or both, which are also played on moonlight nights, both by children and by adolescents. The adults do not join in except in some games which involve dancing. A simple one called *Ka limbua limbua* (Not forgotten) is played by either a large or small group. The children have many games. One which is played either by day or by night, called either *Cimbamba co lia* (The night hawk ate him) or *Mai* (Mother) *Cisangu*, has been fully described by Hambly,[2] with the transcription of its songs arranged by Dr. Herzog.

[1] When the moon is full it 'makes a basket', i.e. is large and round like a basket-basket.

[2] Hambly, op. cit., p. 216 f.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

He draws the crescentic arrowhead (p. 123) still common among the Ovimbundu and Vachokue; the double iron gong (p. 122); and the musical bow, which he calls a viola (p. 121). 175 114 [534]

Sogaur states that iron-working had an advanced technique at Dindo, more than half a century ago. According to Sogaur, the blacksmith was using scrap iron from European sources (II, p. 14). 175 326

Perhaps the most valuable of Chatelain's books is "Fifty Folk Tales of Angola." The stories are accompanied by translations and ethnological notes, the most important of which are references to the carrying of a corpse on a pole; the building of a cairn of stones over the corpse of a hunter; matrilineal descent and the power of the maternal uncle over the persons of his nieces and nephews (sisters' children). My observations included some details respecting the pawning of a sister's children to redeem the debts of their mother's brother. Chatelain adds that sisters' children are successors to private property and chieftainship (pp. 8–10). My notes agree that property is inherited by children of a deceased man's sister, but my informants said that a new chieftain is normally the eldest son of the principal wife of the dead chief. Chatelain's folklore stories, fifty in number, relate chiefly to animals; this was the only kind of story told to me, but W. C. Bell has recorded a few tales of another type. 173 [114] [764] [611] [604] [428] [538]

Marquardsen (1928) devotes only one-fourth of his book to the ethnology of Angola, which he treats in a very general way; there is no section dealing specifically with any particular tribe. The author calls attention to Chapman's observation of rock paintings of South African Bushman type, between Cuma and Luimbale in northwest Angola. I have elsewhere remarked on the occasional occurrence of physical types which show a strain of Bushman blood. Today Bushmen penetrate southern Angola from the Kalahari (Plate LXIX, Figs. 1, 2), but their presence in times past or present does not affect the course of history or the data of ethnology to an appreciable extent. 114 177 [531] [144]

Marquardsen gives some notes of a general kind on Vaheneca, Mahuila and other tribes of southwest Angola. The suggestion is feasible that the Umbundu name Suku, for a supreme being, is the same as the Nzambi of Lunda and the Congo. Marquardsen refers to the importance of the maternal uncle in Umbundu society, to the poison ordeal, and to the burial of an Umbundu chief in oxhide, all of which points were recorded in my observations at Elende. 114 101

Ferreira Diniz's book is unobtainable, but, judging from the summary given in *Anthropos* (XX, 1925, pp. 321–331), the information was collected by a questionnaire widely distributed among adminis-

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

Young unmarried girls of the Luvando tribe wear a large number of leg-bands which extend from the ankles to the knees as a sign that puberty has not been reached. These leg-bands are somewhat roughly twisted from fibrous roots and twigs from which the cortex has been removed. Collars of tough, elastic, cane-like substance are worn by Luvando women, and so numerous are these that the neck is entirely covered. These cane neck-bands are ornamented with burned, incised, geometrical patterns, and, in keeping with other ornaments, are thickly smeared with grease and red powder from *tukula* wood (Plate LIX, Figs. 1, 2). 301 124 [881] [531]

Women of the Vakipungo and Vakuanyama wear heavy coils of brass or copper wire on their forearms. In southern Angola women wear bracelets of twisted wire which are identical with those worn by Zulu women. Bracelets of beaten trade brass, ornamented with incised geometrical designs, are worn by women of the Ovimbundu, Vakuanyama, Luvando, and Vakipungo tribes. Ovimbundu women now depend largely on trade goods for personal ornament. 171 301 439 [531]

Ovimbundu men and women are dressed in trade cloth. Unmarried girls wear one piece of cloth which hangs from the armpits to the knees. A married woman drapes herself with two pieces of cloth, a skirt hanging from her girdle, and an upper piece so folded as to hold her baby tightly to her back. Men wear a single piece of cloth as a skirt; the upper part of the body is bare (Plates XLIX–LI). From the region of Kipungo to the southern border, clothing is of leather. The Vachokue wear trade cloth or bark cloth. 291 171

Hairdressing is of many styles. Ovimbundu women braid their hair neatly in strands across their foreheads, and small blue and white trade beads are used to decorate the braids. The hairdressing of the Ovimbundu women is different from that in any other part of Angola. At an early age the hair is trained into two long loops at the back of the head. Then these are covered with black cloth which is bound tightly. The two loops are afterwards studded with brass-headed tacks obtained from a store (Plate XL, Fig. 3). 302 171

Luvando women in the region of Kipungo dress the hair to form a large triangular projection from the back of the head. Girls of the Vaheneca tribe near Huila mass the hair with clay to form large "cock's comba." Women of Gambos pass each small plait of hair through hollow reeds. Humbe women do not redden or grease their hair which is massed into three high ridges on the top, while at the sides there are hornlike projections. Vakuanyama women dress their hair with grease and *tukula* powder. A principal wife builds up her

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276 The snuff is pounded and placed in a small wooden box of cylindrical
[531] shape. Usually the box is ornamented with incised, burned patterns. The Ovimbundu of Bihé add ashes of wood to their snuff, so producing a mixture called *ulelemo*. The Ovimbundu of Elende usually use the
[349] snuff without adulteration. Two main species of tobacco plants are grown.

Women smoke in all parts of Angola. The Ovimbundu do not chew tobacco, neither have I seen it so used elsewhere in Angola. Boys and girls are not allowed to smoke before the age of thirteen years.

576 In the *ombala* of the Vangangella near Ngalangi, I asked a girl
[834] for her pipe which I desired for my collection. The interpreter took the pipe when she proffered it, explaining that, according to local custom, I had asked for the girl. If I took the proffered pipe *from her hand* I accepted her. Another social custom associated with tobacco is the passing of the communal pipe from hand to hand in the men's council house.

276 Ngonga, my interpreter, says that he has never seen an Ocimbundu
171 woman smoke hemp, but he has seen a woman of the Vangangella (people to the east of the Ovimbundu) smoking hemp. Hemp (*epangue*) is cultivated only by the Ovimbundu men who smoke it. Pure hemp is smoked in the water-pipe which is not passed from hand to hand. Only tobacco is used in communal smoking. Smoking of hemp or tobacco consists of a few deep inhalations; there is not usually a prolonged placid smoking. When hemp is placed in the bowl of the water-pipe it is covered with large grains of sand or a piece of tin. This intervening substance prevents the hot coals from coming into contact with the hemp. The object is to secure slow ignition.

DOMESTIC ANIMALS

231 The principal domestic animals are cow (*onjindi*), ox (*ongombe*, which is also the generic name for cattle), bull (*onui*), sheep (*omeme*), goat (*ohombo*), pig (*ongulu*), dog (*ombua*), chicken (*osanji*) (Plates LV, LVI, LVII).

492 The transport animals, donkey, horse, and mule, are not used by the Ovimbundu of Elende and not to any extent by Ovimbundu of other parts; but in the south of Angola the Vakuanyama have sturdy ponies and well-kept mules. The ox when ridden by Portuguese is provided with a leather saddle which is very comfortable if covered with a blanket. The brass stirrups are broad and massive. Through the septum of the bullock's nostrils there is a short brass rod to the ends of which the reins are attached (Plate XXX, Fig. 1).

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322 The tools used by the wood-carver are the saw, ax, adze, and knife.
532 The products of this craft may be conveniently divided into the following groups:

(1) Figurines of human form (Plate XXI, Figs. 1–6).

(2) Animal forms, chiefly snakes, tortoises, birds, and lizards. The dog is sometimes represented (Plates XIX, Figs. 1–5; XLI, Fig. 1).

[534] (3) Parts of musical instruments, such as drums and the baseboards of sanzas. The latter often have the metal keys mounted on boards decorated with elaborately incised patterns (Plates XLI, Fig. 2; XXII, Fig. 5).

[415] (4) Domestic implements and utensils, chief of which are heavy wooden beaters for flattening mud floors of houses, grain pounders, stools, cups, platters, bowls, and a heavy pestle and mortar (Plates XIII, Fig. 3; XVIII, Figs. 1, 2).

[531] (5) Carved sticks and clubs; these often show elaborate incised decorations of geometrical patterns. Frequently the head of the stick is carved to represent a human head or a full-length figure. [283] The ornamented stick or club is carried as part of the personal dress and artistic equipment. The throwing club is usually a straight stick with an undecorated knob at the end (Plate XX, Figs. 1–10).

(6) Carved wooden posts representing the human form. These are set up at the wayside. One has been obtained from a grave near Bailundu.

(7) Tobacco-pipes and snuff boxes (Plate XV, Figs. 2, 4).

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532 By far the best example of carved human figures collected in Angola was the one from Cangamba (Plate XXI, Fig. 4). This female figure, 60 cm high, is carved from hard, dark, red wood in such a way as to achieve a graceful result by the employment of a few

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The water-pipe of the Ovimbundu consists of the horn of a cow 276
into the side of which a short hollow pipe stem is introduced; at the top of the stem is a clay bowl for the reception of tobacco, or a mixture of tobacco and hemp. The wide end of the horn is plugged with clay, while a hole is made at the tip in order to provide a mouthpiece. A gourd water-pipe, similar to that used by the Vachokue, is also found among the Ovimbundu.

Cylindrical snuff boxes are ornamented with incised, burned, 276
geometrical patterns. The lid is usually attached to the box by a 531
leather thong. One large snuff box is ornamented with three well-carved female figures. The smoker's equipment is sometimes carried in a leather pouch fastened on a waist belt, or the container may be a hollow cylinder of ivory with a leather cap at each end.

To this information respecting the smoking and snuff-taking outfit 276
of the Ovimbundu, some observations on the pipes and snuff boxes 171
of other tribes should be added. When making a journey from Cangamba to Saurimo I seldom met an Ocivokue man who was not carrying a gourd water-pipe for the smoking of tobacco and hemp. Such pipes are usually ornamented with brass nails and are finely bound with thin brass wire (Plate XV, Fig. 3). One long pipe from Ngalangi has a pair of metal tongs attached for taking charcoal from the fire in order to ignite the tobacco (Plate XV, Fig. 1). A pipe with two bowls, closely resembling some Zulu patterns, was smoked by an Ocimbundu woman at Ngalangi. The Vachokue make snuff boxes from a yellow wood, which they ornament by burning portions of the surface in such a way that the yellow color is here and there visible.

Both men and women of the Vakipungo and Vakuanyama tribes carry snuff boxes of conical shape on their leather waist belts. At the top and bottom such snuff boxes are neatly bound with brass or copper wire.

DOMESTIC IMPLEMENTS

At an early age girls become accustomed to the use of the V-shaped 412
pounder which is made from hard heavy wood (Plate XXXVI, Fig. 2). The small end of the shaft is a convenient thickness for grasping in such a way that the knuckles are on the under side of the shaft. This is the very reverse of what appears to be the natural grip. Women use the pounder with an easy, circular swing so that the flat round surface comes into contact with the grain on the rock. Endurance in this work is remarkable, and there is no doubt that

Not only the carpenter, but almost every Ocimbundu man possesses an implement which may be readily adapted as ax or adze (Plate XIII, Fig. 2). The wooden shaft, from 50 to 70 cm in length, terminates in a narrow grip at one end, while the other end expands into a large oval knob into which a circular hole is bored. The strong iron blade, one of the main products of the local forge, can be removed. If the round tang of the blade is inserted so that the cutting edge is in the same plane as the shaft, the implement is an ax. On the contrary, insertion so that the cutting edge is at right angles to the shaft converts the implement into an adze. When placed over the shoulder this implement is used for carrying utensils in a fiber bag (Plate XXVIII, Fig. 1). 412 [482]

Gourds are of three main kinds, which may be found growing on the ground, or resting on the roofs of houses at the ends of the climbing stems that bear them. *Ombenge* is a gourd which is narrow in the middle. It is often converted into a dipper for ladling liquids. The narrow neck is the handle, while a round hole is cut in the larger part so that the dipper can be filled with liquid. *Ongunja* is round, or perhaps oval in form. There is a size used as a measure of capacity. *Ongunja* can be used as a ladle by fixing it at the end of a stick. *Olukuembo* has a round body and a narrow hook-shaped neck; like the gourd *ombenge*, it is used as a ladle. 415 [244]

Gourds are elaborately decorated with incised and burned designs (Plate XII, Figs. 1–6). Usually these patterns are geometrical, but human figures and animals are sometimes included. Decorated gourds from Bailundu, used for containing beer at a wedding, are among the best examples of their kind (Plate XII, Fig. 6). The owner of a decorated gourd takes great pains to repair a crack with rattan, which is threaded through holes bored in the edges of the fracture. A large gourd is sometimes carried in a native-made net of vegetable fiber. 531 415

POTTERY

A large and varied collection of pottery has been acquired from the Ovimbundu, the Vachokue, and the Vasele. The shapes and styles are best indicated by the illustrations in Plate XIV, Figs. 1–5. 323 171

Among the Ovimbundu, only women make pots, which are inferior in workmanship to those of the Vachokue and the Vasele. At Elende, among the Ovimbundu, I was surprised to find a man making pottery. Further inquiry showed that he had learned his craft when young in the Vachokue country of eastern Angola. This man, whose work was not copied at all by Ovimbundu women, was regarded as a specialist whose products were in great demand. [462]

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323 specialist whose products were in great demand. Instead of making
171 crude patterns with a piece of gourd, as do the Ovimbundu women,
(531) he presses a brass bracelet round the rims of the pots. The bracelet is deeply indented with geometrical patterns which appear on the clay (Plate XIV, Fig. 5). This man selects a very fine clay for his work, his products are symmetrical, and a polish is given with a smooth pebble after baking. Like all other potters of Angola, this artisan has no knowledge of the potter's wheel.

323 The vessels made by Vasele women, among whom the trade is
171 confined to female specialists, are unlike the products from any other
531 part of Angola. The chevron design is characteristic, so also is the ornamenting of the pot by laying on strips of clay below the rim. This is appliqué work which may consist of only a few bands of clay, or the strips may pass repeatedly round the pot until one-half or two-thirds of the surface has been covered (Plate XIV, Fig. 2).

323 At Elende two Ovimbundu women were observed during the pot-making processes (Plates XXXIII, XXXIV). Woman *A* built up the pot in a basket lined with wet leaves. Woman *B* pounded the clay on a stone with the heavy wooden pounder used for pounding corn on the rocks. Between the two women was a gourd of water in which *A* moistened her fingers. Operator *B* poured water on the clay which she was pounding. *A* made a cup of clay five inches in diameter and four inches deep which served as a base on which the pot was built up by the coiling process. This cup was placed in the basket containing moist leaves.

The rim of the cup was built in height and breadth by the addition of rolls of clay supplied by woman *B*. As the rolls of clay were laid on the edges of the pot, the inside was smoothed with a piece of gourd. Meanwhile the outside of the pot was supported with one hand. Shaping of the pot proceeded by applying smaller and smaller rolls of clay as the neck of the pot was approached. Gentle smoothing pressure forced out the greatest breadth of the pot just below the base of the neck. A pause was made to allow a partial drying before the neck was built up. Ornamentation consisted of making deep incisions with a piece of gourd while the pot was still wet. During these processes there was constant wetting of the hands.

The pots were sun dried, then fired several at a time by placing them in a kiln of dry grass. Polish was given to a pot while it was still hot by covering the surface with liquid made from a tuberous root, during which process the pot was quickly turned on a stick.

285 The name *esisa* is given to the raw material as well as to the mat. The worker begins by laying out the reeds on the ground, side by side; then the slender tool *utomo* is passed through the reeds near their ends. This position is made permanent by sewing, and the process is repeated at intervals along the length of the reeds (Plate XLII, Figs. 1, 2).

Evinda is a large mat, about 120 cm long and 20 cm wide, while each strip of coarse elephant grass is about 3 cm wide. Ability to make the rush mat (*esisa*) is fairly common, but skill in making *evinda* is less usual. The mat *evinda* has several uses; it may be stretched on the floor or bed as a sleeping mat, or possibly it is rolled so that the ends can be fastened together; so treated it forms a cylinder which may be filled with grain when stood upright on the ground. A number of these mats is sometimes used to form a temporary storage place or shelter. The technique is of the twilled variety in which each weft passes over and under two warps.

Ocula is a coarse mat made from long stalks which are called "elephant grass" by the Boers; the agricultural term is "Napier's fodder." The long rods are white and glazed, so forming an artistic contrast to the crossbinding, which is of black bark. The technique is known as check, a term used to describe a structure in which warp and weft pass over and under each other singly.

The large mat (*ocikanga*) which is of soft texture shows neatly woven, diamond-shaped patterns of dark brown grass. The technique of this mat is of the twilled variety in which each weft passes over and then under two warps.

283 String bags, which are used for suspending gourds or hanging them over the shoulder, are made by men only. The root *ombundi*, mentioned in connection with brewing beer, is used for making string bags. Two fibers that have been teased out from the root are rolled tightly together by rubbing them between the palm and the thigh. [462] Strong rope is sometimes made by plaiting coarse grass; this occupation is in the hands of males.

386 In basket-making the preparation of dyes is of great importance because colored strands of grass are inwoven to make named geometrical patterns (Plates IX; X). The Umbundu expression for dyeing is *oku lisa olosovo*. [531]

R[illegible] coloring is produced by taking leaves of a plant named *esoro* and cooking them in water along with the bark of the tree *ukondo*. [515] *Ukondo* is the "tooth brush" tree because small pieces of its wood are chewed and used for cleaning the teeth. After the grass has

simmered in this infusion of *esuso* leaves and *ukondo* bark, it is buried 386
in a heap of ashes and earth. These processes produce the red coloring.

Yellow dye is made from the roots of a wild rhubarb (*ocilusapalula*) which has sagittate leaves. The roots are pounded and mixed with cold water, after which the grass is placed in the mixture. A pot containing the mixture is put on the fire and the contents are boiled for half an hour; at the end of this time the grass is an amber-yellow in color.

In order to dye grass black the leaves of *esuso*, the plant used for making red dye, are mixed with an iron solution obtained from the mud of stagnant pools. If the grass which has been cooked in this mixture is not sufficiently dark it is reboiled in the *esuso*-iron mixture to which the pounded leaves of *ungalo* are added. Brown coloring is made by mixing the red dye with the yellow.

Baskets made by the coiling process are the most common type 285
manufactured by Ovimbundu women (Plate XV, Fig. 6). The large basket *olumbo* is a woman's field basket in which she carries corn, sweet potatoes, and manioc, along with her hoe and pounder (Plate XXVIII, Fig. 2). Each coil consists of a large number of strands of fine grass which are tightly bound. The coils of the better baskets are wrapped with the grass called *oeoka*; this wrapping fastens each coil to the preceding coil. Coarser baskets have the coils wrapped with strips from the leaf of the screw pine (*omañalalo*). There is a sewing process in which the coils are bound to one another with the bark *olondovi*, which is kept damp during the process. I have seen a needle, threaded with bast, used for sewing coils together; the needle was rethreaded every time it passed through a coil. Success in basket-making depends largely on the ability of the worker to keep the coils of uniform thickness. There is constant inspection and plucking out of a strand of grass here and there (Plate XXXIX, Fig. 2).

In making basket trays (*ongalo*), the same coiling process is followed, but the work is kept flat. These trays are used for winnowing corn. Wicker-work is used for making conical traps for small game such as hares and rats. Conical fish traps are made of wicker-work. Names of patterns, which are of a simple geometrical kind, [531]
are well known to basket-makers. Sometimes a pattern is woven round the basket at a certain height to indicate a generally accepted standard for measurement of capacity.

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361 At the present time one type of village is surrounded by stout stakes ten or more feet high set in a roughly circular plan. The arrangement of alleyways within the village is complicated without following any symmetrical plan. A visitor sees only a labyrinth of passages between high poles, with here and there a rectangular wooden gate at intervals along the passages. The door itself is made from
417 335 four stout heavy planks which are roughly hewn and as a rule undecorated, but occasionally I have seen the panels of a door carved with
[531] designs representing the breasts of a woman; or there may have been simple geometrical patterns. The top ends of the door panels are massive spheres of wood bored through with holes. Through the holes in the tops of these panels a pintle is passed in such a way that the door is suspended from above. During the daytime the lower ends of the panels are raised to the level of the lintel. They are there supported on a Y-shaped upright which is erected in front of the doorway. At night the planks are removed from this support and allowed to hang downward in the doorway. There is a sliding crosspiece to push over the lower ends. The same arrangement is sometimes used to make a door for a hut. This old type of village doorway, common twenty years ago, is becoming increasingly rare.

342 The house of a king or a chief is larger than that of a commoner.
644 The enclosure which contains a king's house and the other buildings is named *elombe*, while *epandanilo* is the word used to describe the
621 entrance to this compound. The *elombe* is built by men and women who receive no payment. There is a ceremony when the compound is opened. The house of the chief, Kandimba Sanjahulu, near Bailundu, is rectangular, with mud walls raised on a platform of earth and stones. Whitewash has been applied to the outside of the walls and some ornament is given in the form of painted blue crosses.
[113] Complete study of structural types and the planning of internal divisions has been made by F. and W. Jaspert, of the Städtisches Völkermuseum, Frankfort.

644 At a village near Cuma the house of the chief differed from the dwellings of commoners in being somewhat larger. The house had been abandoned, not because the chief died there, but because the chieftainship had been transferred to an adjacent village. The tomb, which will be described in connection with funeral rites, was a few yards from the house. This mausoleum was surrounded by a high wooden palisade, to a stake of which were attached the horns of an ox killed at the funeral feast, while the jawbone lay in the enclosure

338 feet. A trench about eighteen inches deep is dug for the poles (akose), which form the framework. The wattle work is tied to the uprights with strong strips of red bark before the plastering is begun.
341 The old type of Umbundu house was round, but most of the houses
171 now show a transition to square or rectangular forms (Plate XLIV, Fig. 2).

[531] Exterior wall-painting is found only in the northern districts of Angola (Plate LXXXIX, Fig. 2). Between Saurimo and Malange in the north, rectangular, painted houses are frequently seen. Wall-painting is a cultural trait from the Congo region where that form of decoration is common.

796 The method of forming a village site and the right of the chief to
621 allot land have been described. The house of the chief is the first to be erected. There is drinking of beer to celebrate the completion of the village, and the pots of beer have to be stirred with the claws of chickens; these have been killed to provide blood for sprinkling the walls of the new houses. Village chiefs go through the process of stirring and drinking. The medicine-man drinks first, then he offers the cup to the chief.

344 The communal house is built by the united efforts of all men of
476 the village. Ngonga says, "The king never helps with any of the
[485] building, but he talks very much." The guest house is also built
644 by communal labor. The king of the *osbala* of Ngalangi told me that a king always uses the house of his predecessor, which must not be pulled down. No repairs are permitted and the house is used until it is absolutely untenable.

359 The interior of a commoner's house has three hearth stones in the
342 middle of the floor, which is of hard mud beaten down with a heavy wooden implement called *ocikondulo*. The ceremonial placing of the stones has been described in discussing marriage. There is no chimney, consequently the walls and roof are blackened with smoke. The junction of roof and walls provides pockets for the reception of small articles. On the floor near the walls may be several large beer pots. The dark smoky interior is almost intolerable. The sleeping
352 room is sometimes separated from the living room by matting. The bed is made from a cross-work of sticks supported on four Y-shaped posts, one at each corner. On the bed are course sleeping mats and possibly a modern blanket.

386 The miscellaneous contents of the hut are gourds, dippers, cooking
252 pots of several sizes, pounders, and baskets. In many of the huts I found cooking going on in the general room, but frequently a sepa-

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BASKET-WORK PATTERNS

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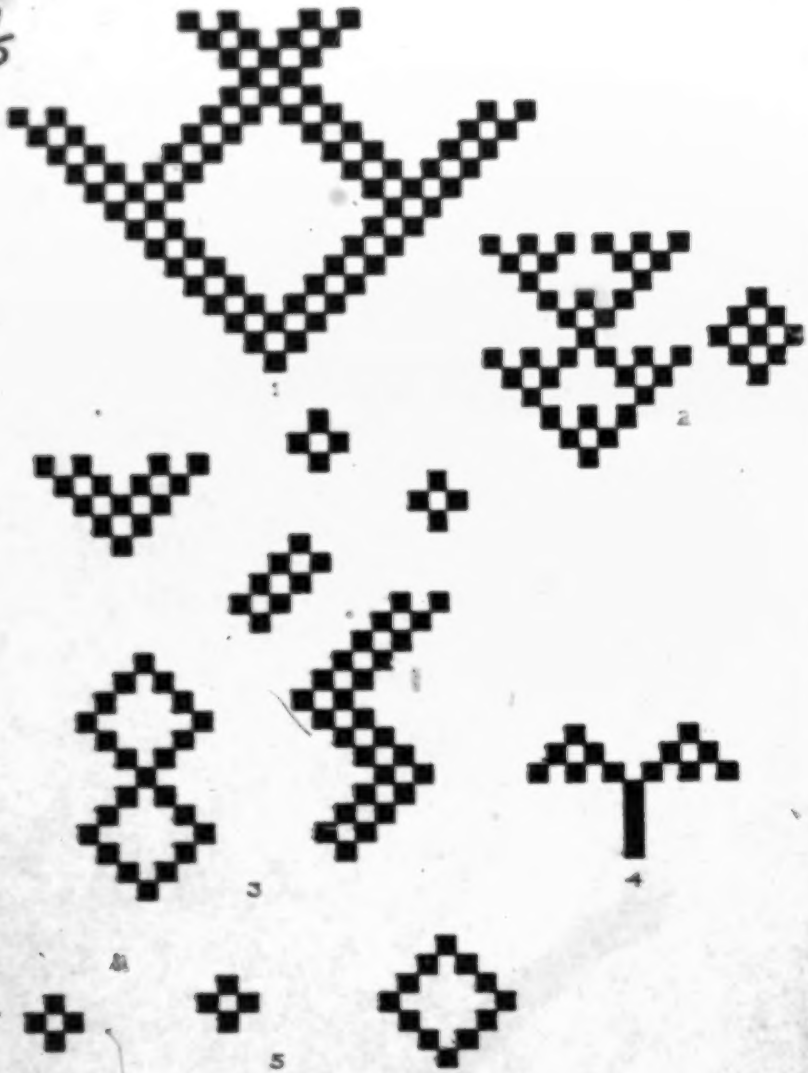

BASKET-WORK PATTERNS

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SCENES IN CENTRAL ANGOLA.

Fig. 1. House where king communes with ancestral spirits, Ngalangi
Fig. 2. House with painted walls, near Bailundo
Fig. 3. Group showing mixture of tribes at Ngalangi

[p. 443]

301 The new ornaments had acquired no sentimental value, therefore
321 their price was moderate.

[171] *Omba* shells are to be seen in use from Kipungo southward through Huila, among the Luvando, and among the Vakuanyama of southern Angola. In the places mentioned one may judge the social status
[554] of a woman by the number of *omba* shells she wears. A principal wife is usually well supplied with these ornaments.

302 In this southern journey it was noticeable that there was an
171 increasing use of red pigment which is lavishly employed for smearing
[294] every kind of ornament, the body, and the hair. Leather belts and skirts of Vakuanyama women are thickly coated with red pigment which is invariably mixed with grease. The red powder is prepared
[824] by desiccating a red wood called *tukula* by the Vakuanyama, a name which is used through Angola and the southern Congo area.

412 From Kipungo southward through the Vakuanyama country
171 there is a notable absence of decorative wooden hair combs. On the contrary, delicately carved combs are used by both men and women of the Ovimbundu. The Vasele make such combs, but by far the best
[532] examples are made and used by the Vachokue tribe of eastern Angola. Here the decorative design usually includes a well-carved human figure at the top of the comb.

301 Among the Vakuanyama, necklaces of disks made from ostrich
[237] eggshell are worn by the women only. A woman of importance has a dozen loops of such necklaces, each loop being about 125 cm long.
[554] These necklaces are so greatly esteemed that only after much persuasion can a woman be induced to part with a single link. Perhaps, as is the case with *omba* shell, there is more than the intrinsic value to be considered. One point is constantly noticed in considering social status and ornament. All the wives of a wealthy man, especially among the Vakuanyama, are made to advertise their husband's position by the profusion of their ornaments and the quality of their leather skirts and belts.

[321] There is, in addition to the necklaces of ostrich-eggshell beads, a highly prized necklace made from small perforated disks of shell having a diameter of about a centimeter. The Vakuanyama women smear a necklace of this kind with grease and *tukula* powder; the
[435] value of a necklace 125 cm long is equivalent to that of an ox. In describing these necklaces there is interest in noting that they are traded to the south of Angola from places six hundred miles to the
[439] north; therefore their value is to some extent dependent on rarity and distant origin.

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straight lines. The legs show the usual flexion of the knees and a 532
shortening which is out of proportion to the body length. The lower limbs of most Angolan figures have these characteristics. The body of this figure is hollow and the head detachable. The incised head-dress is imitative of the coiffure of Vachokue women.

Cangamba, a village in eastern Angola, is a confluence of tribal 171
elements, namely, Vambuella, Luchazi, Babunda, and Vachokue, whose physical appearance, hairdressing, tooth mutilation, and tribal marks differ considerably. The man who sold the figurine brought it furtively. He was an Ocimbundu, but the work is of Chokue origin. The figure, I am informed, was filled with medicine, [755]
then placed near a patient who was undergoing curative treatment.

The figurine (*ngeve*) of a woman having a number of dark feathers 484
attached to her back has only one use. A caravan setting out for a 778
long journey is accompanied by a medicine-man whose outfit includes 787
such a figurine. Should the caravan leader be in doubt when choosing between two paths, the medicine-man sets up the image at the parting of the ways. He kneels before it and asks questions, then plugs his nostrils in order to make replies in a falsetto voice supposed to come from the figurine. Thus advised respecting the route to follow, the caravan continues its journey (Plate XXI, Fig. 5; p. 156).

The wooden figure (Plate XXI, Fig. 3) is of exceptional interest 326
because of its connection with the blacksmith's craft, which is asso- 775
ciated with introductory rites for apprentices. In former days a newly initiated blacksmith was expected to disappear for a period during which he killed a man. On returning to the work of his forge the blacksmith made a wooden figure of which this example, one of five obtained, is typical. The spirit of the murdered man took up its abode in the effigy and in this way helped with the work. The figure, which is of the usual dimensions, namely, 36 cm high, has the greater part of its surface covered with reddened earth (pp. 159–160).

Two figurines (Plate XXI, Figs. 1, 6) were obtained from 171
women of the Vachokue tribe in the village of Ngongo, Ngalangi. 842
Here the Vachokue and the Ovimbundu mingle to such an extent that customs are no doubt transferred from one culture to the other. These wooden images are used by childless women, or by women whose infants have died. The woman who sold these figures pressed them to her breasts to show the manner of use. People standing around smiled and nodded their approval. A wooden figure of this [845]
kind is substituted for a dead twin.

787 532 A common type of small figurine, some of which are female, others asexual, is represented by an illustration (Plate XXI, Fig. 2). Such little carvings are a normal part of the miscellaneous contents of a divination basket described in chapter IX. These figures have been obtained from Elende, Bailundu, and Caconda, all of which are centers of Umbundu culture.

322 532 756 In addition to the figurines described, the collection contains many more whose use may be conjectured. The interrogation of Ovimbundu people indicates clearly that there are specific uses of wooden figures which are consulted by the medicine-man. The foregoing explanations illustrate the nature of the beliefs associated with carved wooden figures, but it is not always possible to elicit a clear account of the specific use of each one.

171 532 Consideration of this aspect of the wood-carver's art has an important bearing on the culture contacts of the Ovimbundu. In studying this question I have instituted comparisons between these figures from the Ovimbundu of Angola and similar figures from the Kasai area of the Congo region (chapter X). The publications of the Musée Congo Belge provide illustrations for comparison with the figures in Field Museum's collection.

The carving of animal forms (Plate XIX, Figs. 1–5) is no more than a means of aesthetic expression resulting from accurate observations of animal life as recorded under "Nature Lore." Inquiry failed to show that figures of animals are, or were at any time, used in rites and ceremonies.

[643] The carrying of a carved stick is essential when a chief is visiting, attending a council in his own village, or receiving visitors. The ornamental paddle (Plate XX, Fig. 8) was owned by the chief of the capital village (*ombala*) of the Vangangella, near Ngalangi.

[765] At the death of a chief his staff of office, with his tobacco-pipe and sleeping mat, are placed in a small house where such relics of deceased chiefs are kept permanently (Plate XLVI, Fig. 1). Plate XX, Fig. 6, shows a staff of this kind which was preserved in a sacred house in the capital village of Ngalangi, and on the same plate are drawn short ornamental clubs which French ethnologists call *batons de promenade*, an appropriate name because of their use as part of the full dress equipment.

[276] The Ovimbundu have specialized in the carving of small objects, for, in addition to clubs and staffs, tobacco-pipes and snuff boxes are often elaborately carved (Plate XV, Figs. 2, 4).

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

drunk. The concoction is described in Umbundu as *ihemba vioku tundiaspo imo* ("medicine to take away belly"). 847

When the monthly period begins too early in life, the medicine-man recommends that the young girl should wear the cowrie necklace worn by her mother's mother. 841

A deformed child is destroyed, but not if it has been allowed to survive the first day. 847

If male triplets are born, two stay permanently with the mother. At the age of five years one child goes to the king, whose child he becomes. 851

When a woman has had relationships with more than one man, she will die in childbirth unless the medicine-man is called to cure her. 837

In a Vachokue village of eastern Angola I bought a female wooden figure. It was explained that this would be nursed by a woman, one of whose twins was dead, in order to induce another conception. Moreover, the nursing of the figure prevents the death of the second twin. The Ovimbundu also use these wooden figurines for replacing dead twins (p. 163). 532 845 842

Children are suckled for a long time; even those of three years and older come to the breast. There are instances in which milk is present but lacking the nutritive qualities; then the baby is likely to die. The matter is simpler when a mother gives no milk at all because the baby is given to another woman, but not necessarily to a woman who is suckling a child. A baby whose mother has no milk may be given to a woman who has not borne a child for many years, and the sucking of the child quickly induces a milk supply. This is agreed upon by informants at Ngalangi and Elende who have seen a child nursed by a woman with withered breasts. Protection is given to the fontanelle by covering it with a vegetable gum which hardens. 853

Near the chief village of the Vangangella at Ngalangi there is a mound decorated with feathers and painted wooden posts (Plate XCII, Fig. 1). Childless women are placed on the mound which is near a river. They are covered with mud, after which the medicine-man sings songs and administers potions. The women go home and are made to sit on mounds in their kitchens. These mounds, which are made in rows, like earth heaped up after hoeing a trench, may be a symbol of successful agriculture and human fertility. 842 789

On looking into the subject of blood brotherhood I found that an exchange of blood between two males who swore mutual fidelity was at one time common. At the present day an exchange of blood is 608

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

The use of bird-arrows with blunt, wooden knobs was common at Elende, and I collected sharp, barbed, wooden arrows from the Vasele, also from the areas of Kipungo and Mongua. This will assist in extending the information given by Lindblom (pp. 94–98). Lindblom's map (p. 99) indicates that bird-arrows are used round Lake Victoria Nyanza, at the junction of the Kasai and the Congo, and likewise among the Bushongo and the Bayaka. My observation of the distribution of wooden arrows in Angola links up these regions shown by Lindblom with the south of Angola. Perhaps a transcontinental diffusion in a southwesterly direction from Victoria Nyanza may be assumed, for it is unlikely that the diffusion would go counter to the generally accepted line of tribal migration which has been from northeast to southwest. 171 411

AFRICAN POTTERY, BASKETS, AND MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

171

There is no reason to connect the pottery of the Ovimbundu with that of any particular region. The coiling method is far too widespread and generic to afford evidence of contacts. The Ovimbundu have evolved their own peculiar designs and forms. [323]

In coiled basketry also the Ovimbundu have made special developments from a generic trait known in Egypt before 2000 B.C. Designs and dyes appear to be of local origin. My observation of African basketry does not suggest any particular parent form; moreover, resemblances of design may be misleading, for the nature of the material controls the shapes of the designs to a great extent in coiled basketry. [285]

Wood-carving, on the contrary, links the culture of the Ovimbundu very definitely with that of the southwest Congo. Perhaps the work of Angola is most closely allied with that of the Bakuba, who excel in the carving of figurines, cups, and staffs. [532]

H. Balfour's article (III) on the distribution of the friction drum helps to identify the form used by the Ovimbundu with types of this instrument from other African areas. The type from Elende is like that of Barotseland with which the Ovimbundu caravans were frequently in contact, while the large friction drum from Ngalangi is of the Bayaka pattern. The friction drum is widely used in the southwest Congo among the Bakwese, the Bambala, and the Baluba. [534]

Thus far research has been able to show a large number of cultural traits of the Ovimbundu in relation to immediate culture contacts of the Congo basin, Rhodesia, and South West Africa (chapter X). In addition to this, many traits connected with social

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

I cannot find in the life of the Ovimbundu anything to support the opinion of W. C. Willoughby. This writer sees in the soul of every race an instinct for god that tells upon behavior, an upward urge that makes for betterment, due to the unwearied play of the spirit of god on the souls of man. The views of E. Torday and R. J. van Wing (Dualism in Western Bantu Religion and Social Organization, *J.R.A.I.*, XLVIII, p. 225) seem to be more applicable to the spiritual beliefs of the Ovimbundu. 105 114 771

The Ovimbundu have standards of conduct, codes of laws, crimes, and punishments. In addition to the *ekandu* (antisocial acts) already noted, *ohembi* is a liar, *okusapa* means to be greedy, and such actions are deprecated; but there is no deistic injunction toward the virtues of truthfulness, hospitality, and fair dealing. 577 105

Standards of conduct and social values are preserved by the educational forces previously mentioned (chapter VII), and in addition to these there are such controls as trial by ordeal, and divination to detect guilt. The satirical song is also a form of correction, though its application may be antisocial, for instance in taunting the sexually impotent.

Music and dancing are adjuncts for the preservation of social customs and the stimulation of collective emotions on which cooperation depends. Music and dancing are also aids to magical practices. For example, a friction drum is played while a medicine-man carries out his divination with the basket, and vigorous drumming takes place during treatment of the sick. Music and dancing were again seen to be of importance at a funeral ceremony. 532 105

These instances, which are chosen from many of like kind reported in the foregoing chapters, serve to indicate an interrelationship among the main aspects of tribal life. I have endeavored to choose from personal experience those facts and incidents which illustrate the mutual dependence of language, folklore, proverbs, nature lore, food supply, and occupations. 182 105

The sexual division of labor, the connection of ceremonial with occupation, the relationship of the sexes, and the position of woman, have all been brought forward as examples of social controls.

The persistence of belief and custom despite foreign influences; the nature of government, including the psychology of prestige and leadership; spiritual beliefs; the training of children; and the value of music and dancing, have likewise been emphasized as coordinating

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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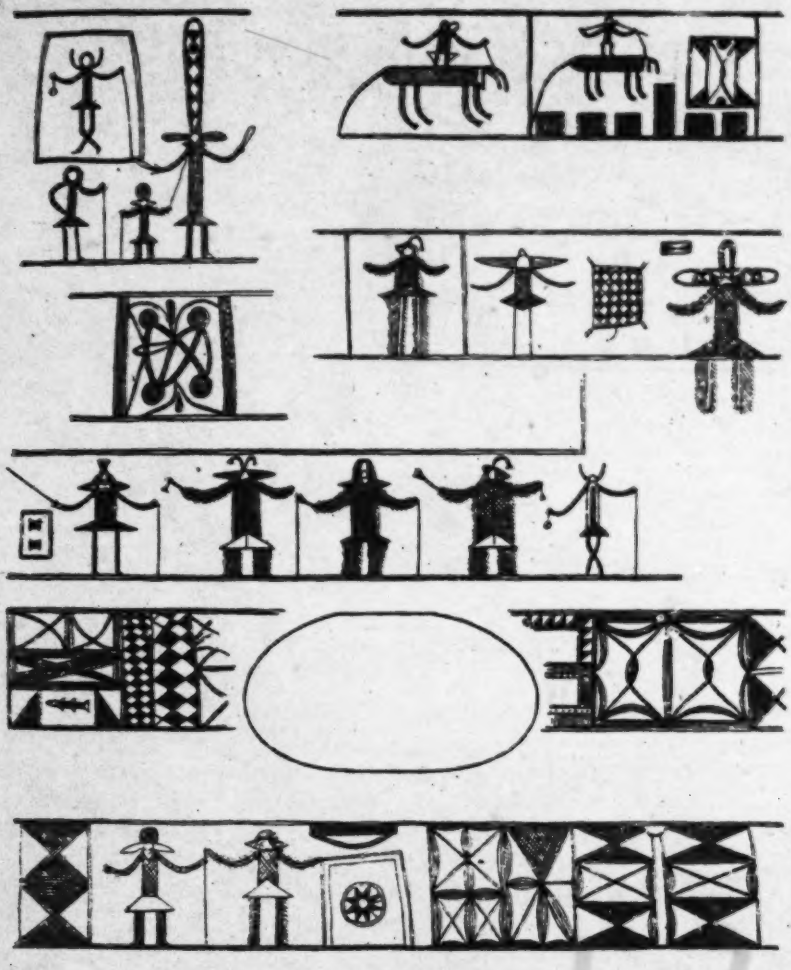

INCISED AND BURNED DESIGNS ON A GOURD

[p. 365]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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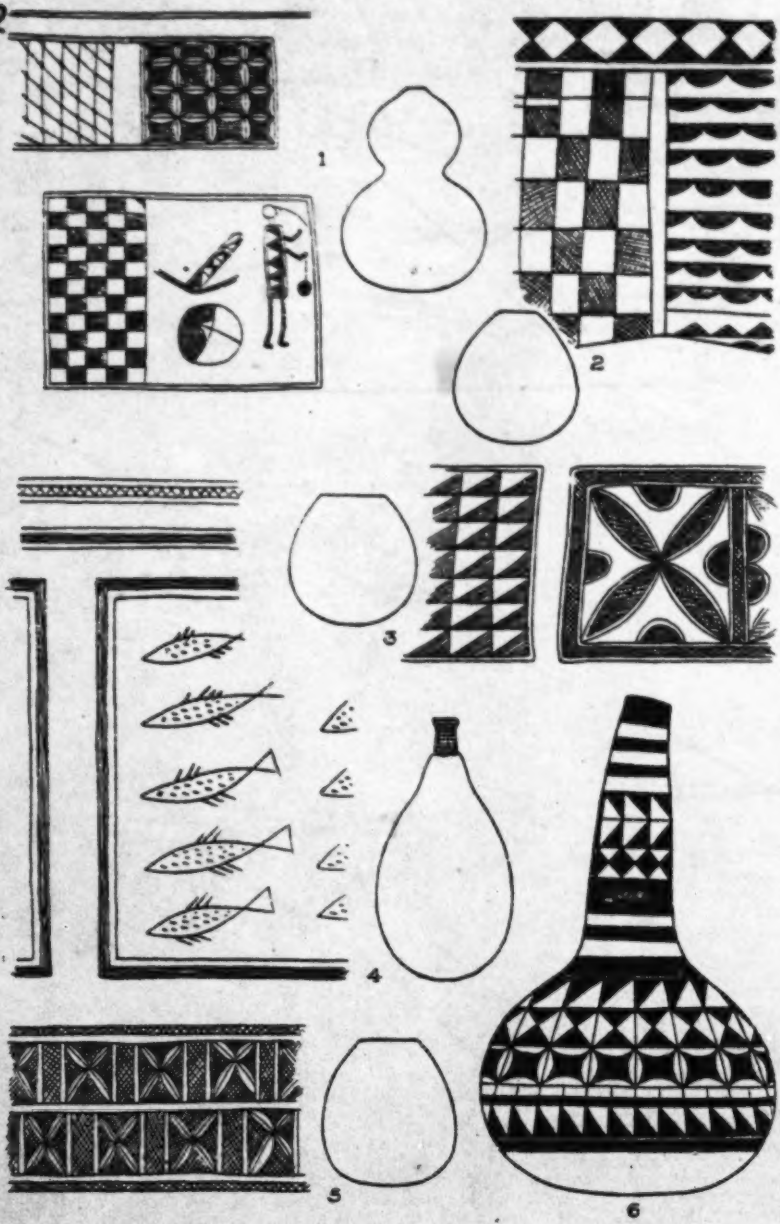

INCISED AND BURNED DECORATIONS ON GOURDS

[p.366]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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[532]

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HUT FURNITURE AND MASK

[p.372]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

532

WOOD-CARVING

[p.373]

B. Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

532
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STAFFS OF VILLAGE CHIEFS

[p. 374]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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CARVED HUMAN FIGURES

[p. 315]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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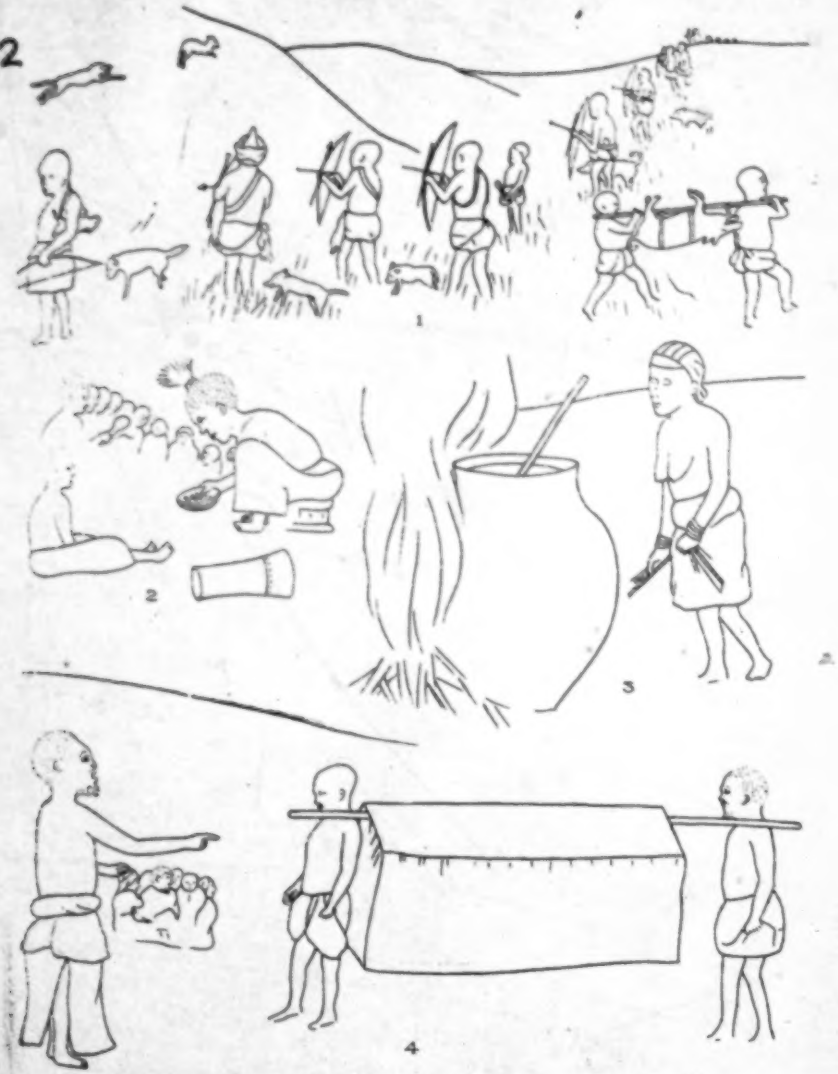

DRAWINGS REPRESENTING LIFE OF OVIMBUNDU, ELENDE

Made by untrained Ocimbundu youth who had lived with Europeans

[p. 377]

5: Hambly E-5 (1929-30)1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

sided permanently in the wooden figure. This ritual murder is now impossible, but the wooden figures are still used in the way described. 326 778

Women are never engaged in blacksmiths' work; neither are they employed as wood carvers. Among men wood carving is a specialized occupation, and within the craft itself are men who deal solely with one branch of the work. Thus in a village perhaps only one man is capable of making a drum, while another carves life-like wooden figures of animals, and a third specializes in the fabrication of household implements. [462] 532

Among the Ovimbundu women are the only potters, but I found just one exception in the case of a man who said that he learned the potter's craft in eastern Angola among the Vachokue. No ritual is connected with the making of pottery, but I observed that women always frequented one pit for their clay and in doing so passed better clay which was more accessible. I learned that a clay pit has to be consecrated by a medicine-man who kills a chicken and sprinkles the blood in the pit. All women at some time learn the arts of pottery making and basketry, but by the process of selection the industries become concentrated in the hands of the most skillful. 462 323 [782]

Only women make baskets; a craft in which they are skilled, especially in the gathering of plants and the extraction of dyes of soft shades. Such dyes have considerable endurance even though exposed to bright sunlight. Imported dyes are now competing with indigenous products, but the latter are still preferred in most localities. One might expect that women who are skilled in basket making would be expert weavers of mats, but this is not so. Mat making is in the hands of men who are skilled specialists, and within the mat making industry are at least three principal divisions of the craft, one for each type of mat. 462 285

Men spin cotton for mending clothes, but I have not seen women so engaged. I did not see any looms in use in Angola, but they survived up to a few years ago, and in the youth of my interpreter, who was about thirty years of age, looms worked by men were plentiful. 283 462 286

House building shows a division of labor according to age and sex. Men are responsible for cutting the poles, digging the trench in which these uprights are set, and binding the cross-pieces with bark. Men are likewise responsible for plastering the walls and laying the thatch. Women carry water to the clay pit and transport the puddled clay to the men who are plastering the walls. Children, some of them so young that they have to be rescued from a swampy grave, delight in puddling the clay with their feet. The rectangular pit is always as near the house as possible in order to minimize the labor of transport. I suggested that some of the tasks should 462 331

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

535 that time I got several of the accompanying songs, the texts of which I hope may be published later. At this time I wish only to point out the important place in the social life of the village which the dance occupies, with reference both to ceremonial and to [821] recreation. Whenever 'the moon makes a basket' (*osaï yi tunga ohumba*),[1] there is apt to be a great urge for rhythmic expression. [533] The drums begin to throb, the leader's voice is heard in invitation:

> *We-lele, we-lele wiya,*
> Oh light ones, oh light ones, come,
> *Usiki woñoma Kaluyua.*
> The beater of the drum (is) Kaluyua.

Then the dancers reply with the same words as a refrain:

> *We-lele, we-lele wiya,*
> *Usiki woñoma Kaluyua.*

The invitation is not given in vain. More and more feet join the shuffling, stamping rhythm, more voices join the chorused invitation; the throbbing mounts as perhaps another drummer or two join in, and soon other songs supersede the invitation now no longer necessary. Dance follows dance, each with its appropriate song, running the gamut of the emotions from ribaldry to pathos, according to the dancers' moods. The dancing will continue nearly all the night and may be resumed on the three or four [527] subsequent nights. After the harvest is gathered and there are no immediate agricultural labours, and if there happens to be little or no government work required at the time or in the region, dances may begin of an afternoon and last through two or three days and nights.

524 There are a number of games involving either agility or quick wits, or both, which are also played on moonlight nights, both by children and by adolescents. The adults do not join in except in some games which involve dancing. A simple one called *Ka limbua limbua* (Not forgotten) is played by either a large or small group. The children have many games. One which is played either by day or by night, called either *Cimbamba co lia* (The night hawk ate him) or *Mai* (Mother) *Cisangu*, has been fully described by Hambly,[2] with the transcription of its songs arranged by Dr. Herzog.

[1] When the moon is full it 'makes a basket', i.e. is large and round like a fish-basket.

[2] Hambly, op. cit., p. 216 f.

1: Childs M-5 (1934-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

On nights when there is little or no moonlight, the evening 562
gatherings in the village sometimes, although not always, follow 517
the sex division, with the men and boys in the *onjango*, and the women and girls at one or more of the kitchens. Discussion of affairs, with youth listening to age, is the usual order, but the time is often passed in the recital of folk-tales or in propounding riddles.

Riddles are more especially a field of youth but age also enjoys 524
hearing the answers given. A favourite occupation of the men, 171
especially by day, is *ocela*, a game known all over Africa and in other parts of the world as well.[1] Junod calls it 'the national game of Africa'.[2]

The Ovimbundu have brought recreation to the service of their 461
work. Europeans are often irritated by the amount of conversation which Ovimbundu carry on during working hours, but on consideration it may be found that were it not for the conversation and other psychological aids, the work might be quite unendurable. This is especially the case with regard to road work and many types of contract labour. Road songs and work songs are of real [533] ●
help in keeping up morale and in prolonging endurance. Most of them seem to have been developed in the days of the caravan trade, but they have not been forgotten and are now used on many occasions.

A word about ceremonial occasions before leaving the social 764
life of the village. Some rites and ceremonies are celebrated so quietly that they are not even social occasions. Most of them, however, are very social. This is especially true of funerals and post-mortuary rites. During visits to Ngendo I was able to witness two post-mortuary rites and the funeral of an important person of a near-by village. Other ceremonial occasions, such as weddings [585]
and a return from a trading expedition, also call for much sociability, but funerals and post-mortuary rites are the social occasions which occupy the most time and attention and make for the greatest conviviality.

[1] Known under the name *Mancala*, which is evidently a Bantu word, or taken from one; cf. the Umbundu *ola mangala*, to play. Hambly mentions *ocela*, op. cit., p. 219. See also Nevinson, op. cit., p. 91. The *New Standard Dictionary* (Funk and Wagnalls) attributes to Arabian origin both the game and the word *Mankalah*.

[2] H. A. Junod, *The Life of a South African Tribe*, 2nd ed., vol. i, p. 345 f.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

178 of marriage through all these changes, whether with or without
836 the trial marriage, is a testimony to the vitality of their culture.

Young people of the same age-groups are thrown constantly
883 more closely together during adolescence in all their activities and in all aspects of their life. Strengthening of the age-groups is therefore to be expected. New names are taken at this time and the names received at birth discarded so far as possible. Boys used to go off together on hunts, on trading expeditions, &c. The girls work more individually in the fields, but are together in such communal labours as harvests. The preparation of food allows them more sociability and they have the additional advantage of congregating in kitchens not only for meals, but for the night as well. Ceremonial and social occasions are always opportunities for those of the same age-groups to get together. There is a limited amount of fagging of the immediately inferior age-group, but it is not institutionalized save where initiation camps have entered the picture.

883 Folk-lore, music, and the dance have very important roles in the
535 education of the young. The Bantu are probably among the most
533 naturally musical of all peoples and the Ovimbundu are perhaps excelled by few other Bantu. Their vocal ability is certainly superior to that of several of their immediate neighbours. Many of their songs are sung in connexion with dances. Other musical forms are road and work songs. Dancing is much enjoyed during adolescence but by no means only at that time, for it is learned in early childhood, very soon after walking, and continued on through life as long as the man or woman can get about unaided. It is a great sight to see toddlers, hardly more than able to walk, climb down off their mothers' backs and try a few steps at dancing; or again, to see a wizened and white-haired old man or woman step out and execute a *pas seul* on some ceremonial occasion. The adolescents, however, enjoy their dancing most, and they are the originators of most of the new steps and new dances which appear from time to time. The dance is of great importance to Umbundu life: social, educational, and ceremonial.

It remains to speak briefly of two institutions, neither of which is practised extensively throughout the country, nor does either seem to be a typical or integral part of Umbundu culture. These are the institutions of initiation at puberty, and the communistic order of the *vakuacisoko* (lit. 'those of the set').

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

000 have for several years agreed to be the most effective. This is the method whereby babies learn their own language, a method which competent African teachers can easily understand and have adapted with good results.

Physical education and recreation would seem to be a simple matter among a people which spends so large a proportion of its time in out-of-doors occupations and one which, again, has almost universally good posture, and a large proportion of which is of good physique. Comparing the Ovimbundu with their neighbours 535 to the north, the Ovimbundu are greatly superior both in physique ·868 and in posture. Umbundu forms of physical education are responsible at least in part. Carrying loads on the head, which is done by all ages and both sexes, has also had undoubted influence. Most important of all is the dance. The dance is very good physical exercise but it is much more than that. It is more than mere recreation. 'The dance is in most primitive societies an important factor in maintaining group solidarity.'[1] This is certainly true of the Ovimbundu. There is nothing which can take 000 its place. It is doubtful whether the solidarity of any group of Ovimbundu can be firmly established or long maintained without the dance. They do adopt various foreign forms of recreation, but the dance meets a deeper need. Whatever new exercises and games may be introduced the physical educator cannot afford to neglect indigenous forms.

533 Music is of great importance to the Ovimbundu. The Church 177 and mission schools have made much use of this musical ability and bent. The great choirs which give such pleasing renditions of European classical and sacred music would do credit to schools or colleges in any part of the world.[2] Less use has been made of native music but it is still sung, and some teachers have taken real interest in it. Not having described the Umbundu musical forms it is not possible to extend this evaluation. However, it must be noted that European music has been supplied with Umbundu words, and very successfully in some instances. Contrary to the predictions of several authorities, the result, most emphatically, is not 'a kind of musical pidgin'.[3]

[1] Krige, 1936, op. cit., p. 336.

[2] See article by Elizabeth Scattergood Chalmers, 'The Music at the Jubilee', *Missionary Herald*, 1930, pp. 335–8.

[3] See E. M. von Hornbostel, 'African Negro Music', *Africa*, 1928, pp. 30–62. He offers some interesting suggestions on the use of drums. His conclusions on

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

576 *konyimo oko* are spoken. The literal interpretation of these words is "back there." Ngonga says the words actually mean "excuse my back."

827 576 Spitting in the vicinity of the house of the king or of the chief is not allowed. "If you did that in the old days, you would have to pay something." Some people spit near the hearth in their own houses. A man who spits in the road is expected to cover the spittle. No person would spit in the presence of the chief or of the king. A hand should be placed in front of the mouth by a person who is coughing or sneezing.

576 [851] Shortly after the birth of a boy or girl all who are on good terms with the parents greet them by saying *kalunga*. The word is repeated four times with clapping of the palms. When words have been imperfectly heard and the listener desires repetition it is customary to say *kuku* in an interrogative tone.

[264] No particular etiquette is observed when eating. Two or three children eat from one platter, helping themselves with their fingers to the mush or sweet potatoes.

Rules forbidding the preparation of food by menstruating women, likewise prohibitions relating to stepping over a person, are mentioned in discussing taboos and omens.

EDUCATIONAL VALUE OF PLAY, MUSIC, AND DANCING

524 182 533 The educational value of play lies in its imitation of the pursuits of adult life. Though there are specialists in music, dancing, and singing, these exercises are indulged in by everyone. Music, singing, and dancing are more than amusements, they are fundamental as coordinating forces in tribal life at all levels of culture (W. D. Hambly, Tribal Dancing and Social Development, London, 1926). [113]

Among the Ovimbundu *Cimbamba Co Lia* is a popular game for girls, who form a circle, join hands, and sing:

PART I

524 [535] *Omola una, ndo sile vekango, Cimbamba co lia* ("That little child was left in the desert, the nighthawk ate it"). At the word *Cimbamba* they begin to dance, facing from side to side in such a manner that they meet and bow. Some sing, *Cimbamba co lia* ("The nighthawk ate him"), and others respond, *Kalikisi* ("'tis the goblins"), as many times as they wish. Finally a return is made to the first words which are sung again. All musical transcriptions have been made by Dr. G. Herzog from my phonographic records.

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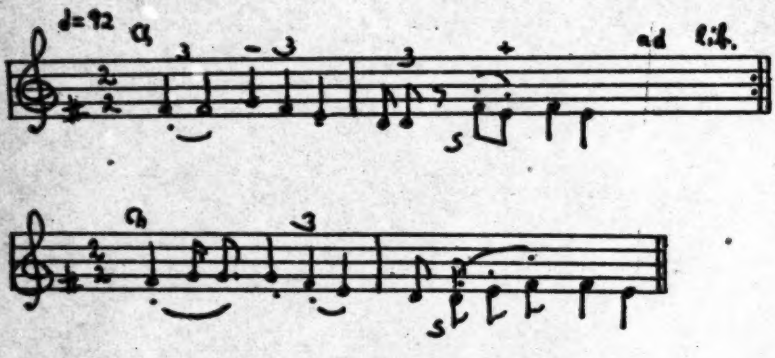
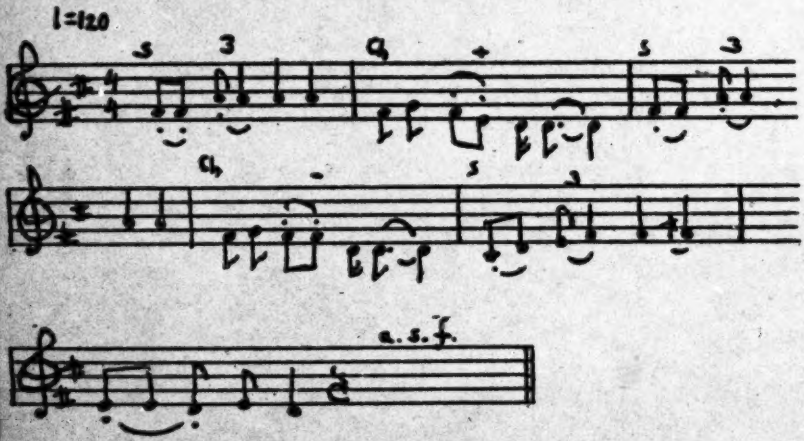
[533]



PART II

The children then form in a line holding each other. The leader is the mother and all the others are her children, except one who is the leopard. The last child in the line calls, *A mai, ongue yi ndia* ("Mother, the leopard will eat me"). Mother, *Ka yi ku li,* ("It will not eat you"). Child, *Yi lia utapi wovava* ("It is eating the water carrier"). Mother, *Ka yi ku li.* Child, *Yi lia utiañi wolohui.* Mother, *Ka yi ku li.* The one who represents the leopard now attempts to pass the outstretched arms of the mother in order to catch the child. Every time the leopard is foiled in his attempt to catch the child they all cry, *Ah-ah-ah Ka yi ku li.*

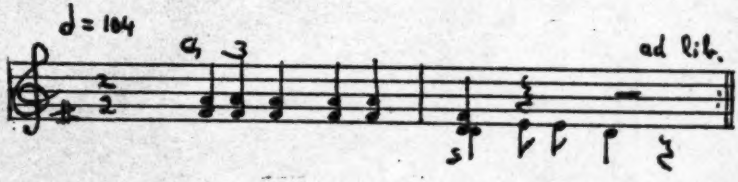
[533]



Eventually the leopard gets the last child and deposits it on the ground where it immediately begins to imitate the pounding of meal and to sing, *Fule, fule, fule, fule, kolohanda ko Luwa* ("Pound, pound, pound, pound on the rocks of Luwa"). This ditty, which is sung by women during their daily occupation of pounding maize on the

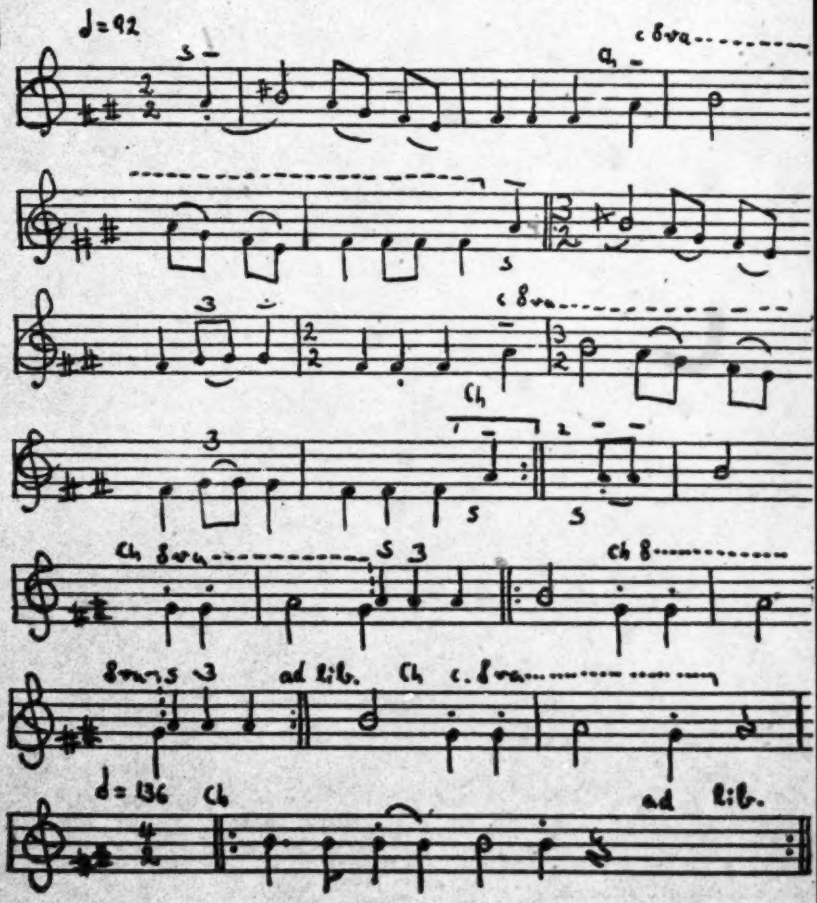
524 rocks, is repeated until all the children have been captured. Lastly the mother is caught and taken by the leopard to the bushes, wher he hides her.

[533]



The leopard goes back and picks up a handful of sand which i an imitation of meal. Each of the children pretends to pick up handful of sand before going in search of the mother. The leopar

[533]



3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

says, "Here's your mother." The children look and sing, "She's not 524
there." They throw sand in that direction. The leopard repeatedly leads to places where the mother is not hidden, while each time the same words are repeated and sand is thrown. Finally the leopard leads the children to the place where the mother is hidden. Then the mourning song is changed to a glad dance. The children clap hands and sing, *Mai Cisangu weya. Mai Cisangu weya* ("Mother Cisangu has come").

After transcribing the music of this song Dr. Herzog reported, 533 ●
"The melodies are rather simple, moving within a restricted range, with a plain rhythm, the same short unassuming melodic fragment being repeated as long as the game may require it, or changed slightly to suit the words. It should be kept in mind that these are children's songs; other songs of the Ovimbundu are probably much more elaborate. The manner of singing songs by a solo and a responding choir is highly characteristic of African singing. Thirds as seen in the transcriptions on page 218 are often used in the music of west Africa.

"In the musical notations, *S* stands for Solo, *Ch* for the Choir. *A* as a sign above a note indicates that the tone is sung approximately a quartertone higher than noted. It indicates a short transitional tone of slight rhythmic or melodic significance and of uncertain pitch."

There is but one example of children's dolls in Field Museum's 524
collection. This was obtained from a little Ocimbundu girl of Elende. The doll is made from a corncob which is draped in blue cloth of European origin such as women wear. My interpreter said that the dressing of dolls made from corncobs is a general custom at the time of cutting the corn. In view of the frequent occurrence of [241]
agricultural rites among Bantu Negroes, the use of dolls led me to inquire into the possibility of there being some kind of fertility cult associated with a corn-mother concept, but my inquiries met with negative results.

There is an Umbundu word for game (*omapalo;* plural, *olomapalo*) which is used for games in general. The verb *oku papala* means "to play." As a rule, male adults do not play games, but they have the game of mancala which is called *ocela*. This is difficult because it involves quick counting. Mancala has a wide distribution as [171]
shown by the fact that it occurs in Africa, Syria, the Malay Archipelago, South America, and the West Indies. At Dom Manuel in the southeast of Angola I saw an arrangement of holes in the ground which was used for this game. There were four rows of fourteen holes in each row. The counters were nuts from an oil palm.

itself is *onoma*. The flat wooden drum without membrane is *ocingufu*, 534
the player of this drum is *usiki wocingufu* (Plate XXVII, Fig. 2). 463
The long tubular drums vary in length from 50 to 103 cm. At a funeral, four of these tubular drums, which are usually held between the legs or placed upright, are played in compound rhythm. A performer always warms the skin of the drum at a fire, and sometimes the pitch is altered by sticking a lump of wax on the membrane of a long drum, or on the sides of a wooden drum.

Dr. Herzog reports as follows, after transcribing several cylinders 533
of phonographic records of rhythms played on the long drum, and after examining motion pictures which were synchronized with the drumming (Plates XXV, XXVI).

"These motion pictures indicate the position of the performer's hands, and suggest that the sharply accented tones are produced by impacts from the phalanges. The higher notes so produced have been marked by notes above the line. A mark placed between notes indicates a very short rest.

"No. 1 (dictaphone record 3) represents the drumming of a young player, who is apparently still an apprentice, since his rhythm is very simple. The three forms of his playing given below were used interchangeably, and he shifted from one to the other without stopping. In the second form, the order of the sharp and of the plain beat is reversed. Otherwise, the sharp beat occurs, in the playing of all drummers, on the off beat. The rhythm of No. 2 (dictaphone record 15) is a little more varied because the player was changed. The drummer of No. 3 (dictaphone record 30) was the best performer in the neighborhood, according to Mr. Hambly; and his playing is the most interesting. The drum records consist of a small number of rhythms which are freely interchanged; the two predominating rhythms are given below. The moving pictures were made from this player's performance.

"The notations found here do not convey to the reader the bewildering complexity of African rhythm, for this appears only when a performance includes the use of several drums and musical instruments in conjunction with dancing."

From Ngalangi a large friction drum 120 cm long and 47 cm in 534
diameter was obtained. This instrument, which was the property [422]
of the village, was played only on public occasions. Apparently the drum had been hollowed from a log of wood, one end of which was left open while the other was covered with hide. To the inner side of this hide a long cane was attached. On the side of the drum

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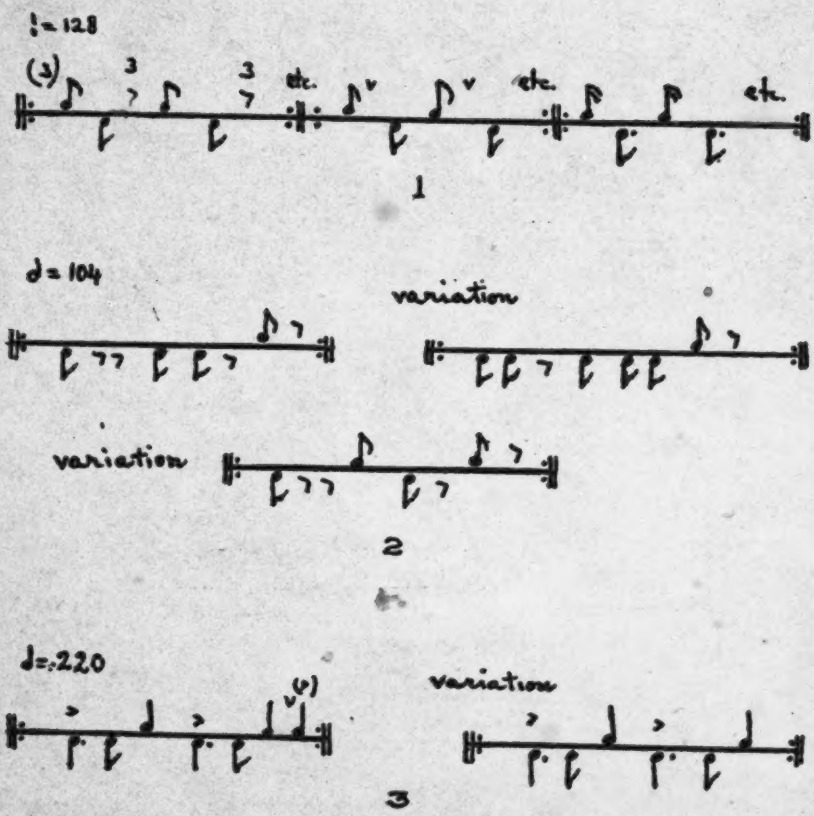

534 and in the middle was an oval aperture. The performer laid the drum on the ground and took his seat astride it. He dipped his right hand in a gourd of water, then rubbed his wet palm up and down the cane rod, which he could reach through the oval aperture. The sound of the rubbing on the rod was communicated to the membrane.

A short friction drum made at Elende measures 21 by 42 cm. One end of the drum is covered with hide kept taut by pegs of wood while the other end is open for the insertion of the player's hand. A cane rod is attached to the inside of the membrane. The [756] assistant of a medicine-man holds this instrument under his arm and plays during divination. The medicine-man sits on a stool shaking his divination basket (Plate XXIII, Fig. 2).

Rattles are of three kinds, and of these the more common are a small, long-necked gourd containing hard seeds, and a compound

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

rattle made by fixing seed pods on a stick. Rattles of the latter type are sometimes tied to the ankles during dancing and they usually form a part of the medicine-man's outfit (Plate XXII, Fig. 4). From Cangamba a basket rattle of dumb-bell form was obtained; the basket-work receptacles at each end of the connecting rod contain hard seeds (Plate XXII, Fig. 1). 534

At Bailundu three Ovimbundu flute players met a party of visitors whom they accompanied around the native village under the leadership of a chief. The men played the flutes continuously except when the chief was speaking. The wooden flutes varied in length from 20 to 50 cm. The instruments were end-played, and the smallest of them had seven stop-holes. The visitors were conducted from the village by this small orchestra which is a permanent guard of honor for the chief (Plate XL, Fig. 1). 533 43 534

At Cangamba the Vachokue have an instrument consisting of eight slats of wood which vary in length and thickness. These sounding boards are attached to two parallel cords which are kept tight by two assistants. The performer taps the wooden slats with two sticks terminating in balls of wax. This is the well-known marimba, but the gourds which are usually fastened under the slats of wood were absent in this instance. 534 171

The instrument *ocisanji* is played well by only a few men. It consists of a wooden board, often well carved, on which there are from eight to nineteen thin keys of metal. These can be pushed backward and forward in their bridge so as to alter the vibrating length and pitch of the note. The pitch may also be varied by placing small balls of wax on the under side of the keys. When the instrument is held between the palms the player's thumbs are in position for stroking the keys. Sometimes *ocisanji* is played inside a wide gourd (Plate XXII, Fig. 5). 534

The musical bow is called *ombumbumba*. The bridge, which is a small stone, or a piece of wood placed at one end of the bow, keeps the string taut. The gourd is tightly fastened to the bowstring with a loop of string. One end of the bow is sometimes placed in the player's mouth. The left hand holds the bow and presses the gourd to the body, then releases it a little from time to time in order to assist tone and resonance. The player holds in his right hand a reed which is tapped lightly on the bowstring, while the thumb and forefinger of the left hand are used occasionally in pressing on the string to alter its vibrating length (Plate XXII, Fig. 6).

534 Another musical bow named *ekolowa* is of simple construction, consisting of a strip of cane from 54 to 70 cm long and 2 cm wide. At each end of the cane is a projection. A string, when tightly stretched between these projections, pulls the cane into the form of a bow. The performer, placing one end of the bow in his mouth, plucks the string with his thumb and forefinger (Plate XXII, Fig. 7).

Two rubbing instruments are used by the Ovimbundu. *Ogolanda* is a large gourd with a slit in the top along which there is a board cut into sixteen notches. The rubbing of a short stick along these notches produces a sound which is greatly amplified by the gourd resonator. The second instrument of this type is in the form of a wooden bow having its thickest part notched for rubbing with a stick (Plate XXII, Figs. 3, 8).

533 Only specialists are skilled in composing songs, and both men and women are composers. The younger people sometimes go to the old people to learn songs which were popular a generation ago. There are no professional itinerant story-tellers.

There is a chant for funerals which has been quoted in the appropriate section, but no special wedding songs are used. The Ovimbundu have satirical songs humorously describing individual [626] foibles and peculiarities, and as usual in Negro communities a satirical song is feared by thieves, adulterers, or other offenders.

[726] In former days when men were on the warpath they sang, *Okaimbo ketu katito eteke tu lisanumbula tu tandako.* ("Our village is little today, we attack, we extend.") Another war song is *Ocisonde ci likoka ove o kasi vonjila tumdamo.* ("Red ant that creeps along, you who are in the way, get out.")

[484] When men on the march came to a camping ground occupied by another caravan, they sang as a challenge, *Cinene nye? Cinene onjamba kakuli okachama kavela ukuavo.* ("What is the largest? There is no animal largest. The largest is the elephant.")

During hauling and carrying, men sing, *Yende, yende chale, ocimboto lomala vaco.* ("Let it go, let it go, the crab, the frog, with its children.")

482 Lifting loads is always accompanied by noises which suggest that someone is injured. Part of the men make deep grunts to which their companions answer with prolonged groans.

INITIATION

867 881 Evidence bearing on initiatory rites in Angola shows that the ceremonies are arranged as a process of incorporation into the

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP1

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3

OVIMBUNDU TRIBE

Fig. 1. Flute players, Bailundu. Fig. 2. Bark removed for making utensils, Elundu
Fig. 3. Girl, hair studded with brass nails, Elundu

[p.394]

5: Hambly E-5 (1929-30) 1934 FP 13 Mbundu FP13

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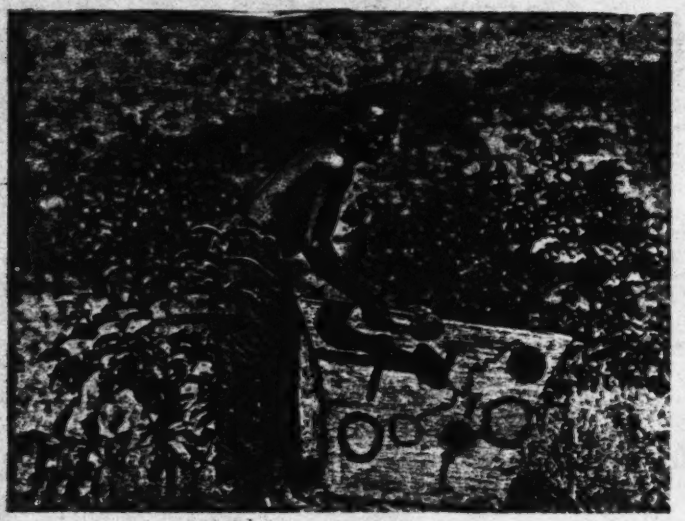

A

B

A. Player of the drum (ocingufu). B. Official flute players to a chief at Bailundu. (Photographs by courtesy of Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago.)

[Facing p. 159]

5: Hambly E-5 (1929-30)1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

At Caconda I obtained the basket of a medicine-man which contained 759
a human tibia, a hoe for digging in graves, and a round stone for pounding 791
the bone before mixing it with fat and charcoal. Medicine-men still make potions for internal use, and these are usually carried in small horns suspended round the neck, or the paste may be contained in the carapace of a tortoise. In every way the medicine-man is still functioning, and his tasks are fundamental to the social and religious life of the Ovimbundu.

At an early age children specialize in their play which has a bearing 868
on the business of life. Boys make wooden-tipped arrows, play at hunting, and shoot at tubers which are rolled along the ground. Girls take clay from the potters to fabricate their own small cooking pots, and young girls attempt the coiling of basketry.

Men are the musicians, and among these a high degree of specialization 533
is observed. In a large village there are likely to be only a few competent drummers, and only a few men who play the small iron-keyed instrument called ocisanji. Osaka is a ritual game played only by men, and only when
a village headman or a king is dying. The ball (ombunje) is made by sewing 535
lizard skin over a hard spherical fruit about six centimeters in diameter. A 524
man continues to dance with this little ball clenched in his outstretched 755
hand, while another dancer hits the muscles of his arm to make him release the ball. This game is thought to give strength to the sick man. There is a transfer of the endurance of the dancers to the invalid.

Preliminary observation in some villages occupied by Ovimbundu is 177
disappointing in its suggestion of Europeanization. The foreign culture is, however, a thin veneer, and further research shows a strong persistence of indigenous custom and belief quite near to centers of Portuguese influence.

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6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

More usually they are followed and sometimes

preceded by singing, and dancing. There are a certain number 797
of 'school' songs as distinct from hymns, which are semi- or 533
non-religious in nature, which are taught by the catechist and are sung on these occasions with other Umbundu traditional songs. There seems to be little composition of songs by present day Ovimbundu nor do they know popular Portuguese songs.

The school itself, the centre of these activities, is generally 797
built of adobe bricks in the shape of a church. In any village [346]
where there is a fair number of school people it will be the largest building in the village and even in villages of mixed Christian and pagan population the school building tends to be in the centre of the village, a topographical reflection of the social significance of the catechist and the catechetical school. In the school men and women are separated, men on the right, women on the left, a custom also found in some Angolan parish churches.

The catechist's presence is a mark of the identity of the 797
village. The catechetical school is the only institution which 621
groups people of different domestic groups on a village-wide basis, and in which people participate in a wider set of social relations on a village and not on an individual basis, as people are linked to kinsmen, or to the post or to an employer. One can and does associate oneself with a village if one does not belong geographically to it but simply attends its school. Thus Fernando considered himself as belonging to the village of Ngolo Catolica whose catechetical school he attended, although his house was well away from the main village, being much nearer the Protestant village of Vila Graça, where indeed he had kinsmen. When I asked a woman where she lived she replied by giving the name of the village catechist. The only occasions on which a group of people represent one village *vis-à-vis* another are in connection with the travels of missionaries, and in the wedding feasts, which will be described in another chapter.

A missionary on leaving one village for another has his 797
luggage carried by the school people of the village where he 484
has been staying, who will march singing, with perhaps a boy banging on a drum. When they get to the next village they will be greeted at the entrance into the village by the catechist and

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

534

Photo. 'Minerva'

a. Musicians of Luanda with xylophone

Photo. M. P. Childs

b. Musicians with flutes

[Facing p. 144]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

As early as 1600 there were cattle as far north as Benguela, and the Jaggas regarded these as a most valuable part of their plunder. Palms are a characteristic part of the vegetation of Angola north of the Benguela Highlands. Evidently the Jaggas moved extensively in northern Angola because they cut down palms for making wine (Battell, p. 30). The usual method is to tap the top of a standing tree, but the Jaggas were an itinerant people who did not cultivate palms. 175 171 [824]

Sprinkling the blood of sacrificed animals on a newly kindled fire I have mentioned in connection with Umbundu rites celebrating the founding of a new village. The Jaggas carried out this ceremony before a raiding expedition, when cows and other animals were sacrificed (Battell, p. 33). Battell mentions the use of red *tukula* wood for personal decoration. This wood (*Pterocarpus tinctorius*) is used in many parts of Angola at the present time. [824]

Reference to Battell confirms the information given to me in relation to an old iron gong obtained at Ngalangi. He says (p. 20), "The general did strike his gong, which is an instrument of war that soundeth like a bell, and presently made an oration with a loud voice." [534]

Battell reported that the Jaggas wore beads of ostrich eggshell. Ravenstein, the editor of this volume in the Hakluyt Series, seems to doubt this statement, saying, "There are no ostriches in Angola, and as to beads made of ostrich eggs I can give no explanation." I noted the presence of captive ostriches in southern Angola as far north as Gambos. The Vakuanyama women greatly value their long necklaces of ostrich-eggshell beads. Necklaces made in the north of Angola are traded to the south and conversely, each kind of necklace having a high value due to remoteness of origin. This instance, like many other points, confirms the reliability of Battell's observations in Angola. [237] [114]

Father Jerome Merolla (1682) describes the poison ordeal which was used from the Congo estuary to San Salvador (Churchills' Voyages, II, p. 675). "The aforesaid oath is administered to the supposed traitor by a sort of wizard, who, making a certain composition out of the juices of herbs, serpent's flesh, pulp of fruits, and divers other things, gives it to the supposed delinquent to drink. If guilty (as they tell you) he will immediately fall down in a swoon or trembling to the ground." The marimba was used, and a double iron gong was carried before a chief and struck by an attendant. [695]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

175 171 [412] O. Dapper (Description de l'Afrique, 1732, p. 369) shows a scene in which an ax, such as I obtained from the Vasele country, is being used for beheading a slave.

Cavazzi (Istorica descrizione, etc., Bologna, 1687) describes the three kingdoms of Congo, Matamba, and northern Angola. The [325] poison ordeal, the scapegoat, the blacksmith's bellows (pp. 101, 170) [534] are all traits known to the Ovimbundu. The musical instrument made from a large gourd, which has a ridged board attached for rubbing with a stick, is the type I collected. Cavazzi pictures the double iron gong and the long drum held between the knees. He [782] also shows a rain-maker (p. 214) and the sacrifice of two hundred victims at the accession of a king (p. 210).

174 243 Consideration of the history of maize in Africa is of importance in connection with these early writings, as this grain is the staple agricultural product of the Ovimbundu. I am indebted to Dr. [113] Berthold Laufer for access to his unpublished research on this subject. From the following facts one may assume that, in all probability, the maize culture of the Ovimbundu was derived from the Congo region before their migration into the Benguela Highlands.

175 243 Father Jerome Merolla remarks that maize was growing in the neighborhood of San Salvador (1683–92). The native names were *mampunni* and *massambuta;* from this corn an alcoholic beverage was prepared. According to Cavazzi (Ehrmann, Geschichte der merkwürdigsten Reisen, XIII, 1794) maize was not intensively cultivated by the Negroes of lower Guinea, though it thrives well and may be harvested twice or thrice a year. The natives said that the grain [177] was brought by the Portuguese, but they did not esteem it highly, and were accustomed to use it as food for pigs.

Bosman (p. 312) records that prior to the arrival of the Portuguese, Negroes were entirely ignorant of *milho* ("maize"). The account of Duarte Lopez preserved by Filippo Pigafetta states that the Negroes consider maize the vilest of all grains, so that it is given to swine. This contempt and lack of knowledge of the food value, combined with ignorance of methods of preparation, suggest a recent introduction (Pigafetta, translation by M. Hutchinson, 1881, p. 40). Dapper (Description de l'Afrique, 1732, p. 345) also mentions the cultivation of maize. Battell lived as prisoner in northern Angola about the year 1600, consequently his records of the use of the great Guinea wheat (maize), which the natives call *mas-importo*, give early evidence for the use of this grain (Hakluyt Soc., 1901, pp. 9, 11, 67).

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

He draws the crescentic arrowhead (p. 123) still common among the Ovimbundu and Vachokue; the double iron gong (p. 122); and the musical bow, which he calls a viola (p. 121). 175 114 [534]

Sogaur states that iron-working had an advanced technique at Dindo, more than half a century ago. According to Sogaur, the blacksmith was using scrap iron from European sources (II, p. 14). 175 326

Perhaps the most valuable of Chatelain's books is "Fifty Folk Tales of Angola." The stories are accompanied by translations and ethnological notes, the most important of which are references to the carrying of a corpse on a pole; the building of a cairn of stones over the corpse of a hunter; matrilineal descent and the power of the maternal uncle over the persons of his nieces and nephews (sisters' children). My observations included some details respecting the pawning of a sister's children to redeem the debts of their mother's brother. Chatelain adds that sisters' children are successors to private property and chieftainship (pp. 8–10). My notes agree that property is inherited by children of a deceased man's sister, but my informants said that a new chieftain is normally the eldest son of the principal wife of the dead chief. Chatelain's folklore stories, fifty in number, relate chiefly to animals; this was the only kind of story told to me, but W. C. Bell has recorded a few tales of another type. 173 [114] [764] [611] [604] [428] [538]

Marquardsen (1928) devotes only one-fourth of his book to the ethnology of Angola, which he treats in a very general way; there is no section dealing specifically with any particular tribe. The author calls attention to Chapman's observation of rock paintings of South African Bushman type, between Cuma and Luimbale in northwest Angola. I have elsewhere remarked on the occasional occurrence of physical types which show a strain of Bushman blood. Today Bushmen penetrate southern Angola from the Kalahari (Plate LXIX, Figs. 1, 2), but their presence in times past or present does not affect the course of history or the data of ethnology to an appreciable extent. 114 177 [531] [144]

Marquardsen gives some notes of a general kind on Vaheneca, Mahuila and other tribes of southwest Angola. The suggestion is feasible that the Umbundu name Suku, for a supreme being, is the same as the Nzambi of Lunda and the Congo. Marquardsen refers to the importance of the maternal uncle in Umbundu society, to the poison ordeal, and to the burial of an Umbundu chief in oxhide, all of which points were recorded in my observations at Elende. 114 101

Ferreira Diniz's book is unobtainable, but, judging from the summary given in *Anthropos* (XX, 1925, pp. 321–331), the information was collected by a questionnaire widely distributed among adminis-

S: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

322 The tools used by the wood-carver are the saw, ax, adze, and knife.
532 The products of this craft may be conveniently divided into the following groups:

(1) Figurines of human form (Plate XXI, Figs. 1–6).

(2) Animal forms, chiefly snakes, tortoises, birds, and lizards. The dog is sometimes represented (Plates XIX, Figs. 1–5; XLI, Fig. 1).

[534] (3) Parts of musical instruments, such as drums and the base-boards of *sansas*. The latter often have the metal keys mounted on boards decorated with elaborately incised patterns (Plates XLI, Fig. 2; XXII, Fig. 5).

[415] (4) Domestic implements and utensils, chief of which are heavy wooden beaters for flattening mud floors of houses, grain pounders, stools, cups, platters, bowls, and a heavy pestle and mortar (Plates XIII, Fig. 3; XVIII, Figs. 1, 2).

[531] (5) Carved sticks and clubs; these often show elaborate incised decorations of geometrical patterns. Frequently the head of the stick is carved to represent a human head or a full-length figure.
[293] The ornamented stick or club is carried as part of the personal dress and artistic equipment. The throwing club is usually a straight stick with an undecorated knob at the end (Plate XX, Figs. 1–10).

(6) Carved wooden posts representing the human form. These are set up at the wayside. One has been obtained from a grave near Bailundu.

(7) Tobacco-pipes and snuff boxes (Plate XV, Figs. 2, 4).

177 Figurines of human form require special consideration, because
532 they have claims other than that of aesthetic expression. The figures representing Europeans, or natives using some article of foreign introduction, illustrate the grafting of foreign ideas on older methods of work.

113 The art of the African Negro has of late years been accorded a place of honor in critical circles of Europe and America (P. Guillaume and T. Munro, Primitive Negro Sculpture, New York, 1926). Usually, however, the formal technique of lines, curves, and the general aesthetic effect have been discussed to the exclusion of the ethnological background which determines style and function.

532 By far the best example of carved human figures collected in Angola was the one from Cangamba (Plate XXI, Fig. 4). This female figure, 60 cm high, is carved from hard, dark, red wood in such a way as to achieve a graceful result by the employment of a few

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbunc

In addition to pouches, hide is used by the Ovimbundu for the seats of four-legged wooden stools. Before stretching the hide over the wooden frame the edge of the leather is cut into strips which are interlaced on the under side of the stool (Plate XVIII, Fig. 1). There are few evidences of the hide having been dressed; usually the hair is attached. The Ovimbundu understand the dressing of hides in a crude way. The hide is soaked, after which the inner surface is rubbed with ashes. The hair is scraped away and the hide is tightly pegged out. Hide was formerly used for covering wooden boxes in which a king carried his powder and possessions to war. Scraped hide is used to form the tympanum in tubular wooden drums. 282 [534]

In only one part of Angola, notably in the south among the Vakuanyama, is leather used as clothing. Women wear pleated skirts of hide and several broad leather belts, while the men have small leather aprons in front and behind. Men only are the leather workers. The hide is soaked and trampled under foot for many hours in order to soften it and make it pliable; the hair is not removed. Before leather clothing is worn it is thickly greased with a mixture of fat and red powder from *tukula* wood (Plates LXV, Figs. 1–3; LXVII, Fig. 1). 171 282 [291] 462

SPINNING AND WEAVING

My interpreter Ngonga remembers the use of a heavy upright loom about twenty years ago, but this loom is not used at the present time among the Ovimbundu. The Ovimbundu have been in contact with Europeans for three centuries. This has not been a close and permanent contact, but it has been sufficient to account for the disappearance of a one-time essential art. There are in Elende some very fine raffia palm trees, but no use is made of the leaf fiber for manufacturing clothes. Bark cloth is not made by the Ovimbundu of Elende, but I have seen the Vangangella and Ovimbundu of Ngalangi engaged in stripping, beating, and preparing bark for use as clothing, which is formed of one piece wound round the body. The bark cloth is not dyed or decorated with patterns. 286 177 287 171

Frequently at Elende men are seen engaged in spinning cotton which is used for repairs, and not for fabricating garments. The cotton is obtained from a shrub which has reddish leaves and yellow flowers. The cotton may be seen protruding from the calyx in the months of June and July. The man who is winding holds high in his left hand a slender stick which is wrapped for a length of two feet with fluffy cotton. All work of pressing and twisting the cotton into a thread is done by the thumb and index finger of the right hand. 283 824

Men are exclusively the makers of 462
musical instruments, and males are the musicians. Men are the [534]
only persons engaged in warfare and administration, and the *onjango*
or council house is used exclusively by males. Men follow the [756]
occupation of medicine-man, in which there is considerable speciali-
zation. Female practitioners deal with pregnancy and women's
ailments. In addition to the tasks for women mentioned above, the
following are staple occupations: collecting firewood, drawing water,
caring for infants, making pottery, weaving baskets, dancing, and
singing. Young girls share these activities with older women.

The foregoing categories explain division on the grounds of sex. 463
Degrees of specialization are not so easy to formulate, but in general
a man follows some one occupation, for example wood-carving. Then
within this occupation there is specialization in the making of
drums, domestic utensils, or figurines.

Almost any woman could make pottery or baskets, but the
difference in skill leads naturally to concentration in the hands of
expert potters and basket-weavers respectively. These sell their [432]
wares to those who either do not make such articles or are inept
at the process.

STANDARDS OF CONDUCT, MANNERS, AND SALUTATIONS

The parents of a child, also his maternal uncle, assume respon- 861
sibility for training in the precepts and standards given here. The 867
maternal uncle, who is the mother's oldest brother, is particularly
interested because he has to pay fines should his sister's children
commit thefts. The evidence indicates that the home and restricted
family have formative influences over the conduct of children.

Children are beaten if they tell lies, answer old people rudely,
or steal food. Ngonga says that his "stealing hand" was once placed
in the hot leaves of the cooking pot. If a child steals an egg which
is cooking, the hot egg is held between the culprit's hands.

One cannot fail to notice the quiet and unobtrusive way in which
children sit in the presence of their elders both in the home and in
the council house. Children do not speak when their elders are in [858]
conversation, unless addressed.

A child, likewise an adult, receives a gift with both hands. The [576]
implied idea is that reception with one hand is a depreciation of the
gift. If a child holds out one hand, the hand is slapped. When
receiving, an Ocimbundu says "*kuku*," literally grandfather or elder.
Colloquially the word is used to mean greeting, "I thank you," or
"I beg your pardon."

535 Almost every evening one may hear the tapping of drums and the songs of dancers, because in addition to dances for a funeral or other special occasion there are ordinary dances of amusement in which lines of men and women advance and retreat, or men and women circle round the drums making arm movements accompanied by a swaying rhythm.

[243] The dance *onyaco*, performed in June when the corn is ripe, may have an ancient history and special significance as part of an agricultural rite. When corn is being stored the people sing, "There is grain in the house, may it never be out." There is no dance in [226] connection with fishing.

224 There is mimicry of animals in the hunting game played by boys. The frog, the leopard, and other animals are imitated in certain games, but I have no evidence of the performance of mimetic dances in relation to any cult for increasing the supply of animal life.

535 The use of the small ball *ombunje* illustrates the way in which [534] an apparent toy can be used in rites of a religious kind. *Ombunje* consists of a hard spherical fruit about six centimeters in diameter, in which several hard seeds rattle. The sphere is covered with a layer of cloth over which lizard skin is stretched and sewn.

[769] When the people wish to commemorate the death of a king, or [789] when the king is sick, the medicine-man (*ocimbanda*) says that there must be *osaka* dancing. A strong man dances for many hours while holding this little ball in his outstretched hand. Other men who are dancing use their fists to hit the muscles of the outstretched arm in an attempt to make the holder drop the ball (*ombunje*). If he does so another man will promptly take hold of it. The precise nature of the endurance test is unexplained, but there is possibly the idea of giving strength to a sick king by this tension and endurance. My interpreter thought this was so, but could not explain why the dance should be performed to commemorate the death of a king. It would seem natural, however, to transfer the *ombunje* rite to a commemorative festival, if in the first place it was part of the last rites of a dying king.

534 There are among the Ovimbundu specialists in dancing, singing, 463 and the playing of musical instruments. *Onjimbi* is the word for a singer of merit who starts the choruses. *Ocili* is a dancer of more than ordinary skill. When a man is required to play a drum or other instrument I have noticed that it is thought necessary to bring a specialist. There is no doubt that drumming requires special aptitude and practice. The man who plays the long drum is *usiki*, the drum

itself is *onoma*. The flat wooden drum without membrane is *ocingufu*, 534
the player of this drum is *usiki wocingufu* (Plate XXVII, Fig. 2). 463
The long tubular drums vary in length from 50 to 103 cm. At a funeral, four of these tubular drums, which are usually held between the legs or placed upright, are played in compound rhythm. A performer always warms the skin of the drum at a fire, and sometimes the pitch is altered by sticking a lump of wax on the membrane of a long drum, or on the sides of a wooden drum.

Dr. Herzog reports as follows, after transcribing several cylinders 533
of phonographic records of rhythms played on the long drum, and after examining motion pictures which were synchronized with the drumming (Plates XXV, XXVI).

"These motion pictures indicate the position of the performer's hands, and suggest that the sharply accented tones are produced by impacts from the phalanges. The higher notes so produced have been marked by notes above the line. A mark placed between notes indicates a very short rest.

"No. 1 (dictaphone record 3) represents the drumming of a young player, who is apparently still an apprentice, since his rhythm is very simple. The three forms of his playing given below were used interchangeably, and he shifted from one to the other without stopping. In the second form, the order of the sharp and of the plain beat is reversed. Otherwise, the sharp beat occurs, in the playing of all drummers, on the off beat. The rhythm of No. 2 (dictaphone record 15) is a little more varied because the player was changed. The drummer of No. 3 (dictaphone record 30) was the best performer in the neighborhood, according to Mr. Hambly; and his playing is the most interesting. The drum records consist of a small number of rhythms which are freely interchanged; the two predominating rhythms are given below. The moving pictures were made from this player's performance.

"The notations found here do not convey to the reader the bewildering complexity of African rhythm, for this appears only when a performance includes the use of several drums and musical instruments in conjunction with dancing."

From Ngalangi a large friction drum 120 cm long and 47 cm in 534
diameter was obtained. This instrument, which was the property [422]
of the village, was played only on public occasions. Apparently the drum had been hollowed from a log of wood, one end of which was left open while the other was covered with hide. To the inner side of this hide a long cane was attached. On the side of the drum

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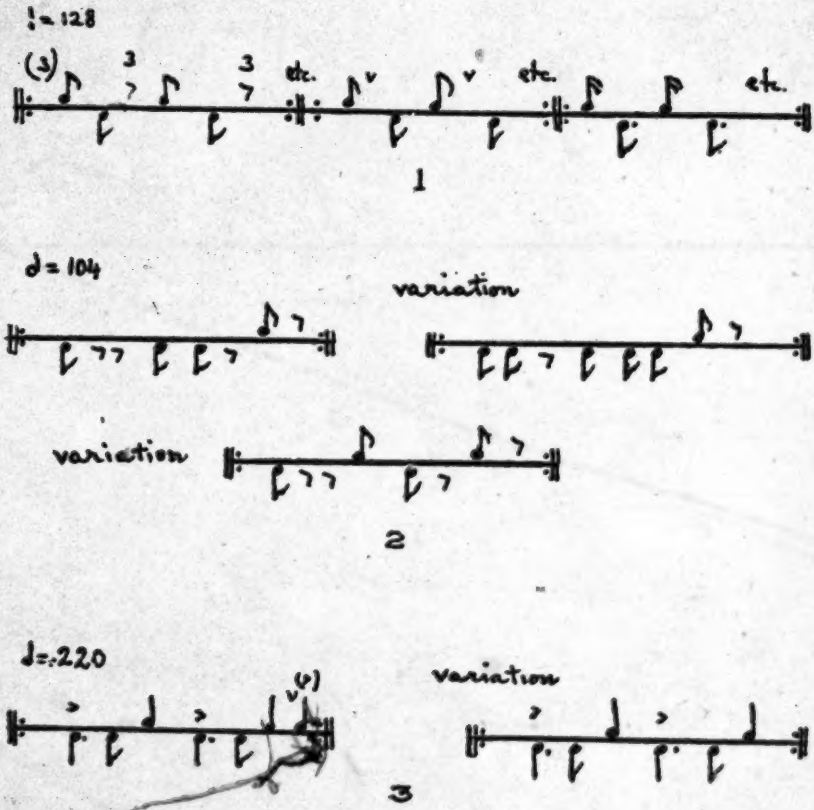

534 and in the middle was an oval aperture. The performer laid the drum on the ground and took his seat astride it. He dipped his right hand in a gourd of water, then rubbed his wet palm up and down the cane rod, which he could reach through the oval aperture. The sound of the rubbing on the rod was communicated to the membrane.

A short friction drum made at Elende measures 21 by 42 cm. One end of the drum is covered with hide kept taut by pegs of wood while the other end is open for the insertion of the player's hand. A cane rod is attached to the inside of the membrane. The [156] assistant of a medicine-man holds this instrument under his arm and plays during divination. The medicine-man sits on a stool shaking his divination basket (Plate XXIII, Fig. 2).

Rattles are of three kinds, and of these the more common are a small, long-necked gourd containing hard seeds, and a compound

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

rattle made by fixing seed pods on a stick. Rattles of the latter type are sometimes tied to the ankles during dancing and they usually form a part of the medicine-man's outfit (Plate XXII, Fig. 4). From Cangamba a basket rattle of dumb-bell form was obtained; the basket-work receptacles at each end of the connecting rod contain hard seeds (Plate XXII, Fig. 1). 534

At Bailundu three Ovimbundu flute players met a party of visitors whom they accompanied around the native village under the leadership of a chief. The men played the flutes continuously except when the chief was speaking. The wooden flutes varied in length from 20 to 50 cm. The instruments were end-played, and the smallest of them had seven stop-holes. The visitors were conducted from the village by this small orchestra which is a permanent guard of honor for the chief (Plate XL, Fig. 1). 533 543 534

At Cangamba the Vachokue have an instrument consisting of eight slats of wood which vary in length and thickness. These sounding boards are attached to two parallel cords which are kept tight by two assistants. The performer taps the wooden slats with two sticks terminating in balls of wax. This is the well-known marimba, but the gourds which are usually fastened under the slats of wood were absent in this instance. 534 171

The instrument *ocisanji* is played well by only a few men. It consists of a wooden board, often well carved, on which there are from eight to nineteen thin keys of metal. These can be pushed backward and forward in their bridge so as to alter the vibrating length and pitch of the note. The pitch may also be varied by placing small balls of wax on the under side of the keys. When the instrument is held between the palms the player's thumbs are in position for stroking the keys. Sometimes *ocisanji* is played inside a wide gourd (Plate XXII, Fig. 5). 534

The musical bow is called *ombumbumba*. The bridge, which is a small stone, or a piece of wood placed at one end of the bow, keeps the string taut. The gourd is tightly fastened to the bowstring with a loop of string. One end of the bow is sometimes placed in the player's mouth. The left hand holds the bow and presses the gourd to the body, then releases it a little from time to time in order to assist tone and resonance. The player holds in his right hand a reed which is tapped lightly on the bowstring, while the thumb and forefinger of the left hand are used occasionally in pressing on the string to alter its vibrating length (Plate XXII, Fig. 6).

534 Another musical bow named *ekolowa* is of simple construction, consisting of a strip of cane from 54 to 70 cm long and 2 cm wide. At each end of the cane is a projection. A string, when tightly stretched between these projections, pulls the cane into the form of a bow. The performer, placing one end of the bow in his mouth, plucks the string with his thumb and forefinger (Plate XXII, Fig. 7).

Two rubbing instruments are used by the Ovimbundu. *Ogolanda* is a large gourd with a slit in the top along which there is a board cut into sixteen notches. The rubbing of a short stick along these notches produces a sound which is greatly amplified by the gourd resonator. The second instrument of this type is in the form of a wooden bow having its thickest part notched for rubbing with a stick (Plate XXII, Figs. 3, 8).

533 Only specialists are skilled in composing songs, and both men and women are composers. The younger people sometimes go to the old people to learn songs which were popular a generation ago. There are no professional itinerant story-tellers.

There is a chant for funerals which has been quoted in the appropriate section, but no special wedding songs are used. The Ovimbundu have satirical songs humorously describing individual [626] foibles and peculiarities, and as usual in Negro communities a satirical song is feared by thieves, adulterers, or other offenders.

[726] In former days when men were on the warpath they sang, *Okaimbo ketu katito eteke tu lisanumbula tu tandako.* ("Our village is little today, we attack, we extend.") Another war song is *Ocisonde ci likoka ove o kasi vonjila tumdamo.* ("Red ant that creeps along, you who are in the way, get out.")

When men on the march came to a camping ground occupied [484] by another caravan, they sang as a challenge, *Cinene nye? Cinene onjamba kakuli okachama kavela ukuavo.* ("What is the largest? There is no animal largest. The largest is the elephant.")

During hauling and carrying, men sing, *Yende, yende chale, ocimboto lomala vaco.* ("Let it go, let it go, the crab, the frog, with its children.")

482 Lifting loads is always accompanied by noises which suggest that someone is injured. Part of the men make deep grunts to which their companions answer with prolonged groans.

INITIATION

867 Evidence bearing on initiatory rites in Angola shows that the 881 ceremonies are arranged as a process of incorporation into the

787 The handle of a hoe is the symbol of cultivation. The appearance of the miniature handle at the top of the basket implies that the spirit of a woman who was rich in corn is troubling the community.

Two united, human figures of wood indicate that a twin will die. The Ovimbundu welcome twins; when one is dead the mother has a wooden figure (Plate XXI, Fig. 1) made to take its place; this is nursed to induce another conception and to comfort the remaining child.

The little gourd means that a deceased person was secretly poisoned in revenge because of his thefts from a field.

The seed of the oil palm means that a large gourd of palm oil has been stolen.

The description of funeral rites gave an account of the questioning of the spirit of the deceased. If no answer is given, divination is made to learn the cause of death.

There is no divination by examination of entrails. Bones are thrown in playing a game, but this is not connected with divination.

EQUIPMENT AND MISCELLANEOUS DUTIES

755 [842] The basket of an Ocimbundu medicine-man at Caconda contained, in addition to the human bone, pounder, and hoe blades already mentioned, two carved wooden female figures whose specific use is unknown. It is known, however, that such figures may be nursed and held to the breast of a woman who wishes to conceive. There was a cowrie shell on a cord which forms a charm to be worn round the neck of a woman who desires children. A small tin box containing a coin and some stones was used for shaking. The kind of sound produced, also any arrested movement of the objects in the box, are indications of the guilt of a person whose name was mentioned just as the objects ceased to move.

A large antelope horn, filled with a mixture of goat's fat and charcoal from the bones of a goat, was intended for use in curing the sick. The contents of the horn become liquid when heated; then they can be dropped on the heads of the people who come for treatment. It was explained that a number of sick people sat around the medicine-man who walked to each person and poured out a small quantity of medicine on the patient's head.

[534] The only musical instruments used by a medicine-man are a small friction drum and a rattle. At Ngalangi I saw a medicine-man give a dance during which he slashed about him with a small ax, which was evidently a ceremonial object, since the construction

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The use of bird-arrows with blunt, wooden knobs was common at Elende, and I collected sharp, barbed, wooden arrows from the Vasele, also from the areas of Kipungo and Mongua. This will assist in extending the information given by Lindblom (pp. 94–98). Lindblom's map (p. 99) indicates that bird-arrows are used round Lake Victoria Nyanza, at the junction of the Kasai and the Congo, and likewise among the Bushongo and the Bayaka. My observation of the distribution of wooden arrows in Angola links up these regions shown by Lindblom with the south of Angola. Perhaps a transcontinental diffusion in a southwesterly direction from Victoria Nyanza may be assumed, for it is unlikely that the diffusion would go counter to the generally accepted line of tribal migration which has been from northeast to southwest. 171 411

AFRICAN POTTERY, BASKETS, AND MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

There is no reason to connect the pottery of the Ovimbundu with that of any particular region. The coiling method is far too widespread and generic to afford evidence of contacts. The Ovimbundu have evolved their own peculiar designs and forms. 171 [323]

In coiled basketry also the Ovimbundu have made special developments from a generic trait known in Egypt before 2000 B.C. Designs and dyes appear to be of local origin. My observation of African basketry does not suggest any particular parent form; moreover, resemblances of design may be misleading, for the nature of the material controls the shapes of the designs to a great extent in coiled basketry. [285]

Wood-carving, on the contrary, links the culture of the Ovimbundu very definitely with that of the southwest Congo. Perhaps the work of Angola is most closely allied with that of the Bakuba, who excel in the carving of figurines, cups, and staffs. [532]

H. Balfour's article (III) on the distribution of the friction drum helps to identify the form used by the Ovimbundu with types of this instrument from other African areas. The type from Elende is like that of Barotseland with which the Ovimbundu caravans were frequently in contact, while the large friction drum from Ngalangi is of the Bayaka pattern. The friction drum is widely used in the southwest Congo among the Bakwese, the Bambala, and the Baluba. [534]

Thus far research has been able to show a large number of cultural traits of the Ovimbundu in relation to immediate culture contacts of the Congo basin, Rhodesia, and South West Africa (chapter X). In addition to this, many traits connected with social

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MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

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516

POSITIONS OF HANDS IN DRUMMING, OVIMBUNDU, ELENDE

Front view

[p. 379]

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POSITIONS OF HANDS IN DRUMMING, OVIMBUNDU, ELENDE

Side view

[p. 380]

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OVIMBUNDU DRUMMERS, ELENDE

Fig. 1. Long drum. Fig. 2. Flat drum

[p. 381]

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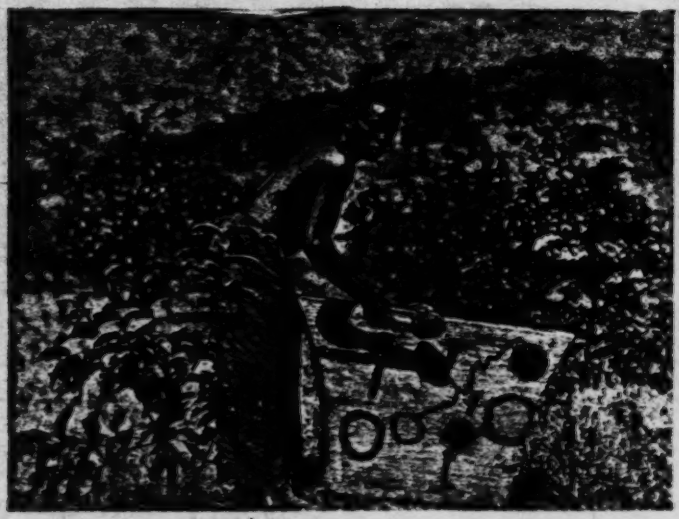

A

B

A. Player of the drum (ocingufu). B. Official flute players to a chief at Ballundu. (Photographs by courtesy of Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago.)

[Facing p. 159]

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

517 521 562 some pulling on their stubby little pipes and watching the men. As the men smoke, they may pass the pipe from mouth to mouth, but not so the women.

517 276 Tobacco (*akaya*) is a great vehicle for sociability whether in the pipe or in the form of snuff. 'Snuffing is held to clear the head, to clarify the thought, to enlighten the eyes, to sharpen the hearing, and comfort the heart.'[1] 'Taking a pinch of snuff, between the forefinger and the thumb, is unknown . . . and would be considered . . . very unsatisfactory. . . . They pour about a teaspoonful into the palm of the hand, and burying their . . . nostrils in the peppery mixture snort it up loudly, aided by a rotary motion of the half-closed hand.'[2]

273 Beer (*ocimbombo*) is of even greater importance. Its place has long been threatened by such drinks as the stronger beer made from emmer wheat (*ekundi*), mead (*ingundu* and *ocasa*), and [177] imported rum. Within the past thirty or forty years the Ovimbundu have themselves learned to distil rum (*okacipembe*) from sweet potatoes, sugar-cane, pumpkins, &c., and although the industry is illegal, it has grown to great proportions and nothing now seems able to stop it. It is the widespread use of this strong drink, with its concomitant evils, which is to-day the greatest enemy of the social life.

535 The dance is probably the most important element in the social life of the village. The Ovimbundu have many different dances and they dance on every occasion and on the slightest provocation. I have collected thirty songs to accompany dances. About three-fourths of them are sometimes used at funerals or at other ceremonial occasions, some of them are for more frivolous purposes, and most of those which are used for ceremonies are used at other times also. It is not for nothing that an Umbundu equivalent of [338] the proverb 'Strike while the iron is hot', runs as follows:

Nda wa mōlā oñoma, pīluka:
When you see a drum, dance:
Oñoma ka yi mudwā luvali.
A drum may not be seen twice.

During one of my visits to Ngendo there was an important funeral with much dancing at Ndumba, just across the valley. At

[1] Tucker, *Drums in the Darkness* (Toronto and New York; Doran, 1927), p. 38.
[2] Monteiro, *Angola and the River Congo*, 2 vols. (London: Macmillan, 1875), vol. ii, p. 271.

535 that time I got several of the accompanying songs, the texts of which I hope may be published later. At this time I wish only to point out the important place in the social life of the village which the dance occupies, with reference both to ceremonial and to [821] recreation. Whenever 'the moon makes a basket' (*osaĩ yi tunga ohumba*),[1] there is apt to be a great urge for rhythmic expression. [533] The drums begin to throb, the leader's voice is heard in invitation:

> *We-lele, we-lele wiya,*
> Oh light ones, oh light ones, come,
> *Usiki woñoma Kaluyua.*
> The beater of the drum (is) Kaluyua.

Then the dancers reply with the same words as a refrain:

> *We-lele, we-lele wiya,*
> *Usiki woñoma Kaluyua.*

The invitation is not given in vain. More and more feet join the shuffling, stamping rhythm, more voices join the chorused invitation; the throbbing mounts as perhaps another drummer or two join in, and soon other songs supersede the invitation now no longer necessary. Dance follows dance, each with its appropriate song, running the gamut of the emotions from ribaldry to pathos, according to the dancers' moods. The dancing will continue nearly all the night and may be resumed on the three or four [527] subsequent nights. After the harvest is gathered and there are no immediate agricultural labours, and if there happens to be little or no government work required at the time or in the region, dances may begin of an afternoon and last through two or three days and nights.

524 There are a number of games involving either agility or quick wits, or both, which are also played on moonlight nights, both by children and by adolescents. The adults do not join in except in some games which involve dancing. A simple one called *Ka limbua limbua* (Not forgotten) is played by either a large or small group. The children have many games. One which is played either by day or by night, called either *Cimbamba co lia* (The night hawk ate him) or *Mai* (Mother) *Cisangu*, has been fully described by Hambly,[2] with the transcription of its songs arranged by Dr. Herzog.

[1] When the moon is full it 'makes a basket', i.e. is large and round like a fish-basket.

[2] Hambly, op. cit., p. 216 f.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

178 of marriage through all these changes, whether with or without
936 the trial marriage, is a testimony to the vitality of their culture.

Young people of the same age-groups are thrown constantly
883 more closely together during adolescence in all their activities and in all aspects of their life. Strengthening of the age-groups is therefore to be expected. New names are taken at this time and the names received at birth discarded so far as possible. Boys used to go off together on hunts, on trading expeditions, &c. The girls work more individually in the fields, but are together in such communal labours as harvests. The preparation of food allows them more sociability and they have the additional advantage of congregating in kitchens not only for meals, but for the night as well. Ceremonial and social occasions are always opportunities for those of the same age-groups to get together. There is a limited amount of fagging of the immediately inferior age-group, but it is not institutionalized save where initiation camps have entered the picture.

883 Folk-lore, music, and the dance have very important roles in the
535 education of the young. The Bantu are probably among the most
533 naturally musical of all peoples and the Ovimbundu are perhaps excelled by few other Bantu. Their vocal ability is certainly superior to that of several of their immediate neighbours. Many of their songs are sung in connexion with dances. Other musical forms are road and work songs. Dancing is much enjoyed during adolescence but by no means only at that time, for it is learned in early childhood, very soon after walking, and continued on through life as long as the man or woman can get about unaided. It is a great sight to see toddlers, hardly more than able to walk, climb down off their mothers' backs and try a few steps at dancing; or again, to see a wizened and white-haired old man or woman step out and execute a *pas seul* on some ceremonial occasion. The adolescents, however, enjoy their dancing most, and they are the originators of most of the new steps and new dances which appear from time to time. The dance is of great importance to Umbundu life: social, educational, and ceremonial.

It remains to speak briefly of two institutions, neither of which is practised extensively throughout the country, nor does either seem to be a typical or integral part of Umbundu culture. These are the institutions of initiation at puberty, and the communistic order of the *vakuacisoko* (lit. 'those of the set').

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have for several years agreed to be the most effective. This is the method whereby babies learn their own language, a method which competent African teachers can easily understand and have adapted with good results.

Physical education and recreation would seem to be a simple matter among a people which spends so large a proportion of its time in out-of-doors occupations and one which, again, has almost universally good posture, and a large proportion of which is of good physique. Comparing the Ovimbundu with their neighbours to the north, the Ovimbundu are greatly superior both in physique and in posture. Umbundu forms of physical education are responsible at least in part. Carrying loads on the head, which is done by all ages and both sexes, has also had undoubted influence. Most important of all is the dance. The dance is very good physical exercise but it is much more than that. It is more than mere recreation. 'The dance is in most primitive societies an important factor in maintaining group solidarity.'[1] This is certainly true of the Ovimbundu. There is nothing which can take its place. It is doubtful whether the solidarity of any group of Ovimbundu can be firmly established or long maintained without the dance. They do adopt various foreign forms of recreation, but the dance meets a deeper need. Whatever new exercises and games may be introduced the physical educator cannot afford to neglect indigenous forms.

Music is of great importance to the Ovimbundu. The Church and mission schools have made much use of this musical ability and beat. The great choirs which give such pleasing renditions of European classical and sacred music would do credit to schools or colleges in any part of the world.[2] Less use has been made of native music but it is still sung, and some teachers have taken real interest in it. Not having described the Umbundu musical forms it is not possible to extend this evaluation. However, it must be noted that European music has been supplied with Umbundu words, and very successfully in some instances. Contrary to the predictions of several authorities, the result, most emphatically, is not 'a kind of musical pidgin'.[3]

[1] Krige, 1936, op. cit., p. 336.

[2] See article by Elizabeth Scattergood Chalmers, 'The Music at the Jubilee', *Missionary Herald*, 1930, pp. 335–8.

[3] See E. M. von Hornbostel, 'African Negro Music', *Africa*, 1928, pp. 30–62. He offers some interesting suggestions on the use of drums. His conclusions on

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(Plate XLV, Fig. 2). The house of bows for holding sacred relics will be described in connection with religion (Plate XLVI, Fig. 1). 644

In former days there used to be a hard mud floor for dancing, centrally placed in the village. 361 335

In the center of the village is the communal house where all men, and boys over four years of age, gather to eat their food, which is sent by the women. This *onjango* is the place of assembly for discussion of village affairs. A house of this kind at Bailundu is circular in form with a diameter of seventeen feet (Plate XLVIII, Fig. 1). In the middle of the *onjango* are stones forming a fireplace. In another such house there were jawbones of oxen. These were suspended from the walls as tokens of the payment of fines. There is no communal house for females. In some villages there is a common kraal for cattle. 344 [681] [417]

The king's compound usually contains: 644

(1) The king's house, which invariably has a separate sleeping room.

(2) A house and kitchen for each of his wives.

(3) A tomb for the burial of kings and their wives.

(4) The house of bows for staffs, bows, mats, and tobacco-pipes of dead chiefs.

(5) A house of meditation for the king (Plate LXXXIX, Fig. 1).

(6) Pens for pigs and chickens.

The guest houses (Plate XLVIII, Fig. 2) that I have seen were not in the king's compound. Granaries, which are conspicuous in every village, have been mentioned in connection with food supply (Plate XLIV, Fig. 1). Each house has its own granary. I have noticed garbage pits containing corn husks and refuse from sweet potatoes, but there is as a rule no organized scheme for disposing of refuse; dogs and pigs are the scavengers. There is no particular place for defecation; people use the bush. [485] 343 364

Every man has a knowledge of house-building. Women do not actually build, but, along with the children, they pour water into the clay pit and carry clay to the men who are plastering the walls. Ngonga says, "People would be surprised to see a woman building a house. They would call her a he-woman." Men help one another in house-building by giving reciprocal service for which there is a gift of food and beer. 462 476 [338]

A deep rectangular clay pit is made as close to the house as possible, and the children thoroughly enjoy puddling the clay with their 338

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rate hut is provided as a kitchen. In some dark corner of the hut there is likely to be a sitting hen or a bitch with pups. Goats and pigs intrude from time to time. Lean dogs scavenge round the doorway. Naked little children whitened with dust play on the floor. A woman crouches over the cooking pot stirring the glutinous mass of corn meal. About sunset men are gathering in the council house to which their meals are sent. 356 252 512

They push forward the logs into the fire, throw their blankets around them and chatter until the women and children arrive with the evening meal. In the vicinity of the village, boys are wandering about with blunt wooden arrows fitted to their bowstrings, to be ready for the homeward flight of birds. Other boys are driving cattle to the kraal.

As darkness falls the long tubular drums are brought out. These are held between the legs and played in compound rhythm (Plate XXVII, Fig. 1). A shuffling dance begins, slowly at first, then with increasing vigor, to be continued far into the night. [535

576 *konyimo oko* are spoken. The literal interpretation of these words is "back there." Ngonga says the words actually mean "excuse my back."

827 576 Spitting in the vicinity of the house of the king or of the chief is not allowed. "If you did that in the old days, you would have to pay something." Some people spit near the hearth in their own houses. A man who spits in the road is expected to cover the spittle. No person would spit in the presence of the chief or of the king. A hand should be placed in front of the mouth by a person who is coughing or sneezing.

576 [851] Shortly after the birth of a boy or girl all who are on good terms with the parents greet them by saying *kalunga*. The word is repeated four times with clapping of the palms. When words have been imperfectly heard and the listener desires repetition it is customary to say *kuku* in an interrogative tone.

[264] No particular etiquette is observed when eating. Two or three children eat from one platter, helping themselves with their fingers to the mush or sweet potatoes.

Rules forbidding the preparation of food by menstruating women, likewise prohibitions relating to stepping over a person, are mentioned in discussing taboos and omens.

EDUCATIONAL VALUE OF PLAY, MUSIC, AND DANCING

524 182 533 The educational value of play lies in its imitation of the pursuits of adult life. Though there are specialists in music, dancing, and singing, these exercises are indulged in by everyone. Music, singing, and dancing are more than amusements, they are fundamental as coordinating forces in tribal life at all levels of culture (W. D. Hambly, Tribal Dancing and Social Development, London, 1926). [113]

Among the Ovimbundu *Cimbamba Co Lia* is a popular game for girls, who form a circle, join hands, and sing:

PART I

524 [535] *Omola una, ndo sile vekango, Cimbamba co lia* ("That little child was left in the desert, the nighthawk ate it"). At the word *Cimbamba* they begin to dance, facing from side to side in such a manner that they meet and bow. Some sing, *Cimbamba co lia* ("The nighthawk ate him"), and others respond, *Kalikisi* ("'tis the goblins"), as many times as they wish. Finally a return is made to the first words which are sung again. All musical transcriptions have been made by Dr. G. Herzog from my phonographic records.

cages and wooden animals to use as playthings. Girls mold small 524
animals from clay. The bull-roarer is in use as a plaything at Elende.

There is a game of hide and seek for boys. A knife is hidden; then a boy who has been absent for a time enters the ring marked off for the game. His proximity to the knife is indicated by playing on a musical bow. There are taps on the instrument which mean that the knife is far away. On the contrary, when the searcher approaches the hidden knife, the boy with the bow plays a distinctive note, *yelula, yelula*, meaning "pick it up, pick it up."

Boys readily make a simple apparatus for playing a game of lassoing a hoop. A pliable branch is bent so as to form a circle, then the ends are lashed together with bark strips. The lasso is a piece of rattan or bark having at each end a corncob or a small stick three inches long. One boy bowls the hoop so that it passes in front of, and a few feet away from his opponent, who stands twenty-five feet distant. As the hoop passes in front of him, the boy throws his lasso in such a way that it twines round the hoop and brings it to the ground.

There are dances of many kinds, but Ngonga says that he would 535 ●
not know from the steps only what particular purpose the dance served. Several dances have been described, each in its appropriate section. There are no dances specially arranged to celebrate weddings or births. The funeral dance is described along with other ceremonies relating to interment. The medicine-man dances in connection [789]
with making rain or curing the sick. In order to say why the dance was being performed, it would be necessary to listen to the words of the songs; these are usually chanted in accompaniment to shuffling movements and the rhythm of drums.

Some of the older men and women perform dances and sing songs 535
that are unknown to the younger generation. Dancing is in favor 527
during the months of May and June because there are supplies of maize for making beer. As the dry season advances the maize formerly available for making beer is consumed as food, hence dancing is not so usual. Ngonga says that the old people know a dance which should be performed at new moon "so that there will be no sickness during this moon." Older men dance in commemoration of events [727]
during past wars, while women are spectators, and on these occasions there are beer-drinking and the slaughter of an ox. A group of men keeps up a shuffling dance while an old man relates a war story in a singsong voice. The oldest man is the first to cut the meat, after which each man helps himself.

535 Almost every evening one may hear the tapping of drums and the songs of dancers, because in addition to dances for a funeral or other special occasion there are ordinary dances of amusement in which lines of men and women advance and retreat, or men and women circle round the drums making arm movements accompanied by a swaying rhythm.

[243] The dance *onyaco*, performed in June when the corn is ripe, may have an ancient history and special significance as part of an agricultural rite. When corn is being stored the people sing, "There is grain in the house, may it never be out." There is no dance in [226] connection with fishing.

224 There is mimicry of animals in the hunting game played by boys. The frog, the leopard, and other animals are imitated in certain games, but I have no evidence of the performance of mimetic dances in relation to any cult for increasing the supply of animal life.

535 The use of the small ball *ombunje* illustrates the way in which [534] an apparent toy can be used in rites of a religious kind. *Ombunje* consists of a hard spherical fruit about six centimeters in diameter in which several hard seeds rattle. The sphere is covered with a layer of cloth over which lizard skin is stretched and sewn.

[769] When the people wish to commemorate the death of a king, or [789] when the king is sick, the medicine-man (*ocimbanda*) says that there must be *osaka* dancing. A strong man dances for many hours while holding this little ball in his outstretched hand. Other men who are dancing use their fists to hit the muscles of the outstretched arm in an attempt to make the holder drop the ball (*ombunje*). If he does so another man will prompty take hold of it. The precise nature of the endurance test is unexplained, but there is possibly the idea of giving strength to a sick king by this tension and endurance. My interpreter thought this was so, but could not explain why the dance should be performed to commemorate the death of a king. It would seem natural, however, to transfer the *ombunje* rite to a commemorative festival, if in the first place it was part of the last rites of a dying king.

534 There are among the Ovimbundu specialists in dancing, singing, 463 and the playing of musical instruments. *Onjimbi* is the word for a singer of merit who starts the choruses. *Ocili* is a dancer of more than ordinary skill. When a man is required to play a drum or other instrument I have noticed that it is thought necessary to bring a specialist. There is no doubt that drumming requires special aptitude and practice. The man who plays the long drum is *usiki*, the drum

881 mony at which the older initiates dance while the novices clap their hands.

I witnessed the dance of initiated boys at Ngongo, where the [292] costumes resembled those I had seen at Katoko. At night a youth brought for me a set of initiation costumes (Plate LXXVIII, Fig. 1), which resembled those worn during the dance; this he did with great secrecy.

While at Ngalangi, the initiation of girls was investigated. After several days of negotiation with a village headman three female guardians of the girls came from the bush. The illustrations (Plate LXXVII, Figs. 1, 2) show the attitudes of these women and their decoration. There were three male drummers in the orchestra and several women, who sang and clapped their hands. On emerging from the bush the females moved toward the orchestra with their backs toward the players. As there were about two hundred yards to cover, this slow backward movement occupied a long time, since the three women did not take more than a few inches at each step. The dance [535] itself was a slow, shuffling, swaying movement, made while the bodies of the performers remained inclined forward and their heads were bent so that it was almost impossible to see their faces. The women wore no clothing except loin cloths. Each female was [302] plastered from head to foot with alternate bands of red and white clay smeared thickly. These three females are the women who act [864] as instructors for the girls during isolation in the bush where they receive sexual and domestic instruction.

881 The seclusion of girls covers a period of one month. During 304 this time the novices suffer no harsh treatment though an operation is performed, possibly excision of the clitoris, but I am not certain on this point. It was also stated that a corncob is introduced into the vagina. The tribe practising this ceremony for girls was the [171] Vanyemba, living close to the Ovimbundu at Ngongo near Ngalangi in central Angola.

881 In order to corroborate further the two accounts of initiation 171 ceremonies for boys I journeyed to Cangamba in Moxico, eastern 304 Angola. The position of the two first centers visited (Katoko and Ngongo) is on the border line where Ovimbundu and Vachokue mingle, and although there is a mixture of these and other tribes at Cangamba, the culture, language, and physique of the Vachokue predominate. A description of the circumcision ceremonies witnessed at Cangamba is given below for comparison with the accounts resulting from visits to Katoko and Ngongo.

5: Hambly E-5 (1929-30)1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

At Caconda I obtained the basket of a medicine-man which contained 759
a human tibia, a hoe for digging in graves, and a round stone for pounding 791
the bone before mixing it with fat and charcoal. Medicine-men still make potions for internal use, and these are usually carried in small horns suspended round the neck, or the paste may be contained in the carapace of a tortoise. In every way the medicine-man is still functioning, and his tasks are fundamental to the social and religious life of the Ovimbundu.

At an early age children specialize in their play which has a bearing 868
on the business of life. Boys make wooden-tipped arrows, play at hunting, and shoot at tubers which are rolled along the ground. Girls take clay from the potters to fabricate their own small cooking pots, and young girls attempt the coiling of basketry.

Men are the musicians, and among these a high degree of specialization 533
is observed. In a large village there are likely to be only a few competent drummers, and only a few men who play the small iron-keyed instrument called ocisanji. Osaka is a ritual game played only by men, and only when a village headman or a king is dying. The ball (ombunje) is made by sewing 535
lizard skin over a hard spherical fruit about six centimeters in diameter. A 524
man continues to dance with this little ball clenched in his outstretched 755
hand, while another dancer hits the muscles of his arm to make him release the ball. This game is thought to give strength to the sick man. There is a transfer of the endurance of the dancers to the invalid.

Preliminary observation in some villages occupied by Ovimbundu is 177
disappointing in its suggestion of Europeanization. The foreign culture is, however, a thin veneer, and further research shows a strong persistence of indigenous custom and belief quite near to centers of Portuguese influence.

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1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

the household of the headman Sikililē, who had had four wives and 595
one young Esele concubine. At the time of my last visit (1936), 592
however, there were only two wives and the concubine: one wife having died, and another having gone to her people.

To complete the picture of the villagers, their numbers were as 621
follows:

Village	Men	Women	Children: Male	Children: Female	Total
In Sikililē's village	24	35	31	37	127
In Ciyanda	5	8	2	4	19
In Kanjengo	3	6	3	1	13
At the School	10	11	10	6	37
Total	42	60	46	48	
	Adults: 102		Children: 94[1]		196

In Sikililē's village there were domestic animals as follows: 621
9 head of cattle, 13 goats, 20 sheep, 100 pigs, and about 100 463
chickens. There was practically no professional specialization; [231]
there were almost no specialists living in the village: no blacksmith or carpenter, no mat-maker, but only one 'hunter of meat', and three 'hunters of (bee-) hives'. As to the women, all could make baskets, and there were several who had made pottery, but were not doing so at the time.

Pigs, chickens, and dogs roamed the village, functioning as a 364
D.S.C. and a sewer system combined. Were it not for these scavengers the villages of the Ovimbundu would present an even more untidy spectacle than is the case. There is no other regular [514]
disposal of refuse, nor are there any latrines or privies.[2]

It will be seen that there is practically no division of labour as 621
between households: each is practically a self-contained unit. The 476

[1] It was reported that in addition to the children then living, these same households had lost 57 by death (29 males and 28 females).

[2] At Ngendo the school village had two or three enclosed pit privies. The Umbundu euphemism for defecate, 'go to the bush' (*oku enda kusenge*), is revealing. Even more revealing is a proverb which advises one not to burn his bridges behind him, but literally it runs as follows:

Nda wa lisinga huti, Si endi hanyima ongo,
Nda o ha sitila pi?

If you forswear yourself saying, I shall not go behind the house,
Then will you go (to) urinate where?

There is a more shocking version which, however, may not be really authentic.

338

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621 common meal was formerly a great bond of village unity. Mutual
476 help within the village and the family group is practised on many occasions. There are a number of folk-tales designed to show the evil consequences of refusing to lend, whether beer-pots or more valued assistance. Many proverbs enjoin the necessity of prompt and effectual mutual helpfulness and co-operation, as e.g.

U o popela ukuavo ongandu ka lula.

[538] (He who saves another (from) a crocodile does not undress.)

476 The mechanism of co-operation, the round of daily life in village and field, together with the cycles of food and of work, are properly subjects of further study. Here the purpose is to show the definitely family nature of the village and of its life. To the [181] casual observer the Ovimbundu appear as severe individualists. Indeed, they are individualistic to a degree, but they have worked out mechanisms of mutual helpfulness and co-operation which functioned both on political lines under the aegis of the king and within the kinship units.

Social Life of the Village

517 The two foci of the village life are the Men's Club and the
521 Dancing Floor. Even though no *onjango* may have been built, the
562 Men's Club will find a place in which to carry on, at least when there may be fine weather. Leisure may be limited, but time for conversation will be found. Europeans often express wonder at the amount of conversation which goes on between Africans, for they cannot understand what people of apparently such limited opportunities and with what seems like so narrow an outlook may have to discuss at such great length. As for the Ovimbundu, there is nothing which is a greater hardship than lack of opportunity for conversation with their fellows. Under primitive conditions this is more especially true of the men, who, in their villages, are always surrounded by members of their own family group. Owing to their peculiar position in the village and their household pre-occupations, the women's social propensities may find less outlet in these public gatherings. When the villagers gather on the dancing floor and the gourds of beer go round, they always separate according to sex. Whether the occasion be formal or informal, I have seen the discussion carried to great lengths, with the pipe passed between the men, while the women sat silently by,

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754 attacks also upon the persons or possessions of enemies. This type of sorcery in a very common form involves the enslavement of the spirit of another person, often a child of one's own family or kin.[1] The person whose spirit is used may be killed either by violent or by magical means. Sorcery of this type is much feared, but if wealth supposedly gained by this means is used for the benefit of the kin, the sorcerer may be tolerated or even protected in the exercise of his black art. Beneficiaries do not often have qualms concerning the source of the benefits received. One who, by reason of his family connexions or his own power, has secured a strong position may escape interference. Jealousy or grudges, however, often bring out accusations from within the circle of kin. 754 Accusations may also be made by outsiders. With the decline in 682 influence which the tribal courts have suffered, and their inability to inflict capital punishment, sorcery is less frequently punished than formerly. The consequent reductions in the number of innocent victims is a gain. This same cause has operated, how- [177] ever, to increase dealings in, and fear of, sorcery. Most of the cases brought to European courts, and even to the Church, under the name of 'poisoning' are in reality accusations of sorcery.

178 In the foregoing brief note it has not been possible adequately 754 to treat the subject, but it will be seen that sorcery has long been a divisive influence in Umbundu life. It sometimes seriously affects the cohesion of the household and the larger kinship groups. Economic, political, and other forces now seem to be acting to increase the incidence of sorcery, the influence of which is probably a considerable factor in the present rapid disintegration of the Umbundu social structure.

The Hierarchy of Age

561 Passing references have been made to associations of coevals. The Ovimbundu recognize very definitely the hierarchy of age and consider orderly society quite impossible without it. One of the keenest criticisms of the European and his ways is contained in the aphorism:

Kundele ka ku li ukulu.
[538] In 'civilization' there is no senior.

To Umbundu wisdom this is an impossible state of affairs;

[1] The Umbundu term is *oku andeka*; *vide* ref. *infra*, p. 107, n. 1.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

there must be a responsible senior and, hence as a matter of course, 561
the following is accepted:

Ndalu holuluko la Vava: [538]
Fire is not older than water:

Ciyo wa pindikapo.
Potsherd (or frying-pan) passes between (i.e. keeps the peace).

As potsherd (or frying-pan) keeps water from putting out fire and fire from consuming water, so the elder keeps the peace between the young of relatively equal status.

The hierarchy of age is taken as a matter of course and circumcision camps or other formal 'schools' are not considered necessary 561 881
to reinforce an attitude which no one would dream of disputing. At the present time there is quite a vogue for circumcision camps (*vakusevamba*) in the southern or south-eastern half of the country. Some affirm that these are new-fangled notions coming in from neighbouring tribes. Others declare the institution to be very old. The Ngalangi people say that they have always had both *evamba* for the boys and *uso wakãi* for the girls. Some tribes require *evamba* [643]
of the king before he may rule. Even where the institution is not in vogue, there are associations of coevals (*vakuacisoko*) whose members have definite rights and duties toward each other. These matters are treated more fully in a later chapter. Inasmuch 561
as these age-grade sets are both age and sex divisions, they contain 182
some elements of social cleavage, but their association with the economic and political sides of life makes them a strongly cohesive force for society.

Umbundu Social Structure: Summary

Summarizing the evidence of the present chapter, I wish only to 182
tie in a few of the more important threads so that the pattern of the 621
Umbundu social structure may be seen at a glance.

Although the Ovimbundu no longer maintain the political life which formerly existed, there are elements of cohesion which still give reality to their social organism. These elements all centre in or spring from the kinship group.

With regard to the village, two facts stand out:

1. The Umbundu village is a local kinship unit, with the villagers quite literally the children of the headman-patriarch.
2. Although its political, religious, and social functions may be

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

[p.81]

PART TWO

INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION

121 *The purpose of Part Two is* (1) *to describe the life-cycle or development of the individual Ocimbundu from birth until adulthood,* (2) *to analyse the Umbundu educational process, and* (3) *to indicate and evaluate elements in this process that are or may be significant for the educational work of Christian missions among the Ovimbundu.*

Chapters V, VI, and VII describe the Umbundu life-cycle and consist largely of Umbundu narrative given in direct translation. The principal source is a composite manuscript compiled for classroom use from the contributions of a number of Ovimbundu.[1] *Comments and other Umbundu material are interpolated from time to time into this principal source.*

In Chapter VIII there is an analysis of Umbundu development. The evaluations are in Chapters IX, X, and XI.

CHAPTER V

THE UMBUNDU BABY

Birth

844 WHEN birth occurs in the house, it is supposed to take place on the grinding-stone (*olumbambo*). That this was so is indicated by the folk-tales and proverbs which refer to the place of birth as [538] *polumbambo*, or *kewe lioku cita* (on the stone of giving birth).[2] In this case, and especially if a woman is giving birth for the first time, she may be assisted by older women of the village. These, in the case of widows, may be relatives of the husband, or in the case of wives of householders, they will be his relatives by marriage. A woman's own mother may assist, but when she lives in a different village she is unlikely to attend. It would not be proper for the

[1] This source is given in quotation but without further reference. The chief contributors were R. Kavita Evambi, of Ciyaka; Abrão Ngulu and A. Siku Nunda, both of Bailundu; R. Kalupeteka of Ngalangi; I. Kayalo of Viye; Ndondi students of the normal classes and several women there. It was compiled and edited (in Umbundu) by Pedro Paulo of the Currie Institute staff.

[2] Cf. the 'birth-stool' of the Hebrews (or Egyptians), *vide* Exod. i. 16.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

844 husband's mother (whether uterine or classificatory) to attend the labour of her daughter-in-law. The husband does not attend. As Mr. Hambly's informant phrased it, 'The child would be ashamed to be born.'[1] It seems that the husband's non-attendance may be
845 connected with the danger to him of the blood.[2] No other man will be present unless delayed labour entails the intervention of a medical practitioner, especially a diviner. Resort will not be had to outside aid until it seems impossible otherwise for the child to be born, and nowadays even where modern medical aid is available, often it will only be resorted to after the woman has been in labour for more than twenty-four hours[3]—sometimes much more, and then when it is already too late. Difficult delivery may be caused by:

(*a*) *Broken taboos*, as, for example, theft, either by the mother or the father. Only after confession can someone go out and steal something, after which the child 'consents' to be born.

(*b*) *Adultery* on the part of the mother, which must be confessed before the child will 'consent' to be born. The father's adultery may also cause trouble at this time, but this is more often believed to be the cause of a disease in his offspring known as *onjamba*. Failing confession of the above faults, a diviner may be called, but his diagnosis may more often indicate

(*c*) *Sorcery*, to which difficult labour, along with many other ills of life, may be attributed.[4]

(*d*) It is also believed that in some cases a woman may herself refuse to give birth and may extend her pregnancy far beyond the nine months' period, the limits of which, and its method of reckoning, are not understood. Such cases as

[1] Hambly, op. cit., p. 185.

[2] Among church-members the husband often attends the birth and is sometimes the only attendant.

[3] A labour of twelve or fourteen hours is considered quite usual, and a shorter one as light.

754 [4] Sorcery, together with ill will and anger recognized as its principal roots, are great dangers to a woman giving birth. Anyone who dislikes the woman in labour, or even one who has ever shown ill will against her, will stay strictly away from the birth. While a woman is in labour all women of the village are expected to stay at home and refrain from ordinary activities—to commune with the spirits. As one of many proverbs has it: *Ukuene nda o cita, vu salela: oku cita kukuene, oku cita kuove*; 'Your fellow, if she gives birth, you stay in: childbirth of your fellow, is childbirth of yours.'

[538]

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

844 never use them again. The placenta they put in a broken gourd and bury it at the corner of the house or under the threshold: in the case of a boy outside the house, and in the case of a girl within.

'After this then they wash[1] the baby and anoint it with oil, and they tie a girdle of rag around its little loins. When all is ready, then some step outside and begin to shout for joy (*oku ulula*) saying, *Ulú! Ulú! Ulú!*[2] There has come a great big man here. Or if the baby is a girl they say, *Ulú! Ulú! Ulú!* There has come a girl here! A girl for the pounding-rock, *we-e-e! Ulú! Ulú! Ulú!* We are very grateful that she has increased our number.

'When the people hear the shouting, they hasten with joy to greet the parents and to congratulate them. Some seize the hand of the male parent and greet him saying, You have done well, you have begotten[3] for us a youth for the road, and a gatherer of firewood for the club-house. In the case of a girl, they say, A girl for the pounding-rock, the grinding stone is dirty.[4]

'In case the woman had already borne before, it is usual for her just to do it all alone by herself. She herself cuts the (cord of the) navel and buries the placenta. Many prefer to give birth in the field. Should a child have been born in the field (the cord of) his navel may be cut with a blade of corn in case there is no knife at hand. To tie up the cord she may just tear a bit of rag from her own cloth. When she comes to the village, the people will notice that she carries her basket on her head and the child in her hand, and straightway they greet her.'

846 It will be seen from this that childbirth is nothing if not simple among the Ovimbundu. Immediately after giving birth the mother purifies herself by washing in a running stream. She is accompanied only by her mentor. There is a lying-in period (until the cord falls from the navel) to be observed by the child *and* the mother, but it seems that in these days it is often observed in the [539] breach. In the folk-tale of 'Baby and his Elder Sister' (*Ñaña la Kota liaye*), the mother did not observe her part of the taboo but left the house to Elder Sister, and it was perhaps for that reason that Baby took vengeance by eating up the beans left cooking on the fire, while no one was looking.

[1] The water is warmed by being taken into the mouth and then squirted on to the baby.

[2] The sound made by plucking at the lips while shouting.

[3] The verb *oku cita*, to bear or to beget, is used of males and of females without distinction.

[4] i.e. needs attention.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

the fire, while no one was looking. Before going on to that period, 846
the narrative will tell a little about the birth of

Twins (*Olonjamba*).[1] 'If twins are born, when they have finished 845
cutting (the cords of) the navels they bury their placentas out of doors at a cross-road. After washing and anointing them with oil, they shout saying, *Ulú! Ulú! Ulú!* There have come here a man and a woman. When the people come, they begin while yet outside (the hut), to curse[2] (and continue) until they enter, cursing the parents. It is called *Ongombo*, The Diviner's Basket. In that way such children are followed about by all, that none of them may die. And all the time that such children are growing, it is done month by month. The parent comes out and begins to curse the people who are in the village, and then all come from their houses and follow cursing her.'

In the case of triplets, when they are weaned, one is given to the king.[3]

As soon as the midwives have finished their task, the father may 844
come in and take up the child, but men do not 'like' to hold a child which is still 'red' (i.e. not yet black) and whose 'neck is not yet strong'. Should a woman abort (*pulumuisa*), or should the [847]
child be stillborn or die at birth, the loss is accepted philosophically, 845
quoting the proverb: 538

Cinene ombenje akolovi hacimueko.
The main thing (is) the gourd jug, the shavings (are) nothing.

Should the mother also die, then they quote:

Olũsi ka kuatele, ocinunga ca enda lovava.
A fish (he) did not catch, the bracelet went with water.

Should a young woman complain that her baby is too small, the [856]
others may remind her:

Esaila olio osanji.
The egg that (is) the chicken.

Should she complain that her baby does not grow properly, they will say:

Ka ci kuli omõlã ombia, omõlã omunu o kula
It does not grow the child of (a) pot, (the) child of (a) person grows.

[1] Lit., Elephants. The reference is to the names given to twins: *Njamba* (Elephant), *Hosi* (Lion), or *Ngeve* (Hippopotamus).
[2] *Tukãlã*, which literally means to call *hard* names.
[3] I knew of one such case in Civaka.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

in the household and then the names of all kinds of little objects 856
until his speech is perfected.'

Weaning (*Oku sumũhã* or *oku nyamũhã*). Every day the child 862
goes to the fields with his mother. As he grows and gets fatter and heavier he becomes quite a burden for her or for his young nurse. Until he has passed twelve months, however, there is no alternative, and more often his daily excursions continue well past his second birthday. When he is able to walk a little, then his mother may begin to leave him in the village with his young nurse while she goes to her field-work. 'So in the morning at daybreak his mother will give him his food on a little dish and the toddler (*ocisembe*) will eat until he is full. Then his mother will speak to him saying, Suckle (*Nyama*) for I am going to the veld; so he will suckle and his mother will go.' He will not suckle again until she returns at from 2 to 4 in the afternoon. Thus he begins to be weaned quite unconsciously, but that does not mean that the process will be finished quickly; it may continue for even more than two years yet, unless a younger brother or sister intervenes.

'Some children, however, do not stop suckling quickly and if that is the case, his mother will frighten him when he wants to suckle, for she will say, Look out, here is a bugaboo; for perhaps she will have put an ugly worm on her breast, or perhaps she will have rubbed on pepper and the child nursing will burn his mouth and begin to cry. But some children are shrewd so that when they taste the bitterness they will fetch water and wash the breast and it is very hard to wean them. The parent will try many different things until the child is weaned. Some children are only weaned after they are four years old or even older, but that is not common.'

As the preceding paragraph suggests, children of this age may 861
be tyrants to their mothers and all the more since the Ovimbundu punish their children with reluctance. But field-work presses inexorably and much more can be accomplished without a child to hinder one. His mother may promise that if he doesn't cry she will bring him a rat or a bird. Then if he still does not *consent* to stay she may, with reluctance, apply the sterner measures of a slap or a proverb said in exasperation:[1]

Ove oku ku pikila ku kuta.
You, making for you mush, you do not fill. [638]

[1] The serious regard for the spoken word must be kept in mind.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

861 *Oku longa ku yevi, vumōlā hē?*
[538] Teaching you do not hear, are you child?

One who fails properly to absorb both mush and teaching can hardly be a proper human being. The implication of the question is that if he is not a child he may be some unearthly creature. There may be a similar implication in this other proverb which may also be used on similar occasions:

Ku ka ñavise ame konjembo si endi love.
Do not tire me I to hades shall not go with you.

U lonjila yaye, u lonjila yaye.
Each with path his (own), each with path his (own).

With the aid of elder sister mother usually wins out. Picking up her hoe and basket she gives the children their injunctions for the day. 'Stay then and I'll come right back, but don't play with the neighbour's chickens, don't beat each other, don't play with bows lest you put out the eye of another, and don't steal from the cooking pot, there now!'

857 461 With children of all ages left alone in the village, these injunctions are a minimum of necessity. The mother might also go on to detail the consequences of disobedience, how one who put out another's eye would be sold into slavery, nor was the mother exaggerating. If the Ovimbundu punish their children with reluctance, they have no reticence in instilling in them what they consider to be a healthy fear, whether of persons, animals, things, their own actions, or quite imaginary dangers. Older children likewise work on the younger. Nor are occasions for further instilling fear lacking. 'Always when they stay in the village, they go to the dancing-floor (*ocīlā*) to play with the other children. During that time should something come to frighten them and make them run away, those who haven't younger siblings to carry are glad to get away quickly. But those who have younger siblings to carry see much hardship. They tire themselves terribly trying to carry their heavy young siblings and being unable to continue, they drag them, both of them crying and crying.' Nowadays, in case of need or simply tiring of their play, children may start off for the fields in search of mother, but formerly children were not allowed to venture unaccompanied outside the safety of the village palisades. The danger of kidnappers and of raiding parties was very real. One of the most vivid memories of the Rev. Paulino Ngonga's early child-

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

hood was a day when he and an elder brother set off for the fields 857
and almost ran into a party of raiders. The scolding which they 861
received was not forgotten.

The practice of leaving the *ocisembe* in the village by day makes his elder sibling responsible for much of his education. This is the beginning of a close bond which lasts through life. She herself may not be more than six or seven years old and consequently cannot be expected to 'educate' her little charge very thoroughly. She interests herself in his walking and talking and he will imitate her in many things, but the rest of 'conscious education' must be attended to by the parents.

Cleanliness. Instruction in cleanliness begins at this age, but I fear 863
that it is lacking either in intensity or in persistence for its effect seems to be rather long-delayed. Small babies are not washed very often but their bodies and heads are anointed with palm-oil against infestation with the various parasites of the tropics. Anointing the body continues to be a part of the toilet of the Ocimbundu through life. When palm-oil is scarce, such afflictions as common itch are more prevalent. Nowadays, in the well-appointed household, the *ocisembe* has his hands and face washed before breakfast. If such a connexion between washing and eating were always and everywhere maintained, habits of personal cleanliness might be more widespread. Brushing the teeth may be begun in imitation of mother. Sphincter training is begun very early, for the mother feels every muscular movement made or attempted by the baby on her back. Hence she is apt to know when it is necessary to take him down for defecation. If and when this procedure is followed through with regularity and persistence early sphincter control may be established, but too often this is not the case. Establishment of bladder control is apt to come even more uncertainly as a favourite proverb concerning the weather indicates:

Ilu lia soka ndetako lioñaña. [538]

The sky is like the bottom of a baby.

The Ovimbundu do not associate these bodily functions with shame to the extent which is the case in our culture, but euphemisms are used in place of the exact terminology.[1] If an

[1] There are prohibitions regarding these functions during visits to relatives- 606
in-law with whom one has respect-relations, also to the bride during the wedding 514
ceremonies. (See Folk-tales nos. 12 and 13 of the short collection in the *Journal*

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

868 offered.[1] Boys may also help with younger siblings and fetch wood and water especially if there is no girl in the family, but it is my impression that at this age boys find much more time for play than do girls.

The girl of this age has already been performing useful tasks for several years in helping to care for the younger siblings or younger cousins, but the eagerness with which a girl takes up the care of a younger child makes it evident that she considers that activity rather in the nature of play. If there is no baby for whom she is expected to be responsible, she may borrow one from a neighbour. It seems almost more natural for her to carry a baby than to carry a doll (made of an ear of maize). This she will do only if she lacks a baby. Field-work and housework, chiefly the cultivation and preparation of food, are the adult activities which she must learn and which she regards as work.

861 The Ovimbundu consider that a child's socio-psychological education should be completed during early childhood. It is felt that after this time direct instruction should not be necessary, but reproof may be given should a child omit a usage or commit a fault. Should a child have plainly failed to attain the customary standards, a fatalistic attitude is often assumed as illustrated by this proverb:

[538]

Omōlā wa linga Cipupulungunju;
The child has become a worthless thing.
Nda longele, Nda kava.
I have done with educating, I am tired.

868 *Acquiring skills.* Later childhood is the time *par excellence* for technical education. That is the time recognized for beginning to learn a profession (*ocipinduko*), and a boy is expected to try that in which either his father or his mother's brother is expert. After that, should he wish to learn some other profession and can find a master, he may apprentice himself. All children, both boys and girls, are expected to learn to cultivate, but that is not counted as a profession as the following clearly shows:

'As to cultivating (*oku lima*), formerly the purpose was only for food, that one may not be hungry, whether during the dry season (*okuenye*), or during the rains (*ondombo*), that a person and his

[1] Considering the type of formal education available, the Ovimbundu are probably right: young children need far more activity than the formal school offers or allows.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

children may have enough food. Therefore while parents have 868
their children with them, they teach them, saying, Let us work that we may have much food, for if a person lacks food he will die of hunger, or perhaps he may steal from another's field and get into trouble. Children must be diligent in working.

'But should a parent have a child who does not want to work, the parent may beat that child to teach him sense lest he may be a sluggard (*ocisiãi*). Parents have a proverb saying, [538]

Ũ wa ku vetela[1] *kepia,*
He who you beat in the field
ka ku vetele,
did not you punish
wa ku longisa olondunge.
he you taught sense.

'Before beginning, parents always encourage their children to 461
work. Cultivation, however, is not counted as a profession 241
(*ocipinduko*). Should a person cultivate a great deal so that from his field he has very much food, then people will take notice and say, So-and-so has enslaved a spirit[2] to the seeds, he has spirits (*ilũlũ*) and they are helping him. That causes great fear, for people fear (those who) have spirits.[3] Thus, even though a person should purpose to teach another how to cultivate in order to have much food, the other will only apparently agree[4] because of his fear. Therefore the work of cultivation is not sought after as a profession by children, for they say, Being a farmer (*ongunja*)[5] is the work of sorcerers (*olongangã*) and not of ordinary people.'[6]

[1] *Vetela* is the relative mood (or form) of the verb *oku veta*. There is a pun in its use here since it is also used with *epia* in the sense of breaking ground for a new field.

[2] The verb used here—*oku andeka, andekela*—means securing the services of a person's spirit by killing the person (whether by witchcraft or by actual violence). The person is often a child and often of one's own family. In some cases parts of the body are said to have been kept for subsequent ritual use, e.g. bones and flesh dried and ground for 'fertilizer', or the skull for a drinking-cup. It will be seen that this is sorcery. The reflexive form of this verb, *oku liandeka*, means to form a blood-brotherhood, but it is a sorcerer's pact involving the sacrifice of a third person. 754

[3] The expression used means either to have or to have the reputation for having.

[4] He agrees with *ocenyo*, a term commonly translated as 'irony' or 'contempt'.

[5] This is the term which we commonly use for 'farmer'. Its connotation should be understood.

[6] This section is translated from a manuscript by Raul Kavita Evambi of Ciyaka.

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463 *Wood-working*, including the following specializations:
462 Doors, windows, and their frames; coffins.
[322] Beds, tables, chairs, &c.
Mortars, pestles, grinding-handles, and handles for various iron implements.
Stools, household utensils, carved images, staves, knobkerries, &c.
Drums and other musical instruments.
Canoes (dug-outs and coracles).
Rope-making, nets, and rudimentary weaving.
Thatching has its specialists although all men can thatch.
Fishing.
Bee-hunting, including the making of hives.
224 *Hunting*.
326 *Iron-smelting and smithing*.
791 *Medical-practice and Divination*.

The last three professions of the list are sacred and are entered under special conditions. They are often passed on by inheritance, but not always. All of them require sacrifice at certain stages, and when the enslavement of a spirit (*oku andeka*) is required, it is socially allowable. This seems to be the case with these offices as with those of the king and his ministers, both because of benefits accruing to the community in their exercise and also because of inherent danger to the individuals who exercise these functions.

177 The advent of European commerce, industry, and government
463 has created a number of types of employment for boys and young men, some of which entail prolonged absence from the village and a loosening or severing of kinship ties. Church and mission have
[797] also offered employment and have opened new opportunities for advance in place and in position.

861 Later childhood, then, is the period of technical training during which it is expected that a large amount of economic responsibility will be assumed. A child begins to own property even before this, and from the beginning of later childhood will be accounted legally responsible for his actions. It is recognized, however, that he should not be set tasks beyond the experience or ability of his age and that the full responsibility of adulthood will only come with marriage.

[538] *Umālēhē ka tonyōlā ongulu yuvala*;
A youth does not scrape the pig for the wedding feast;
pehonjo pa siala (*ovonya*).
on the hoof there remain (bristles).

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885 preference for a polygynous household at this age, but no definite
581 tradition which urges one 'to become lord and master of a complete circular village'.[1] Women are happiest while carrying a baby on the back.

[538]

Onyima yiwa ha yi mõlã omõlã,
Back good (yet) it does not see a child,

888 wails a childless woman. No grandmother is satisfied without herself caring for at least one grandchild. Old age is subject to its own burden of the years but among the Ovimbundu the aged are treated with much respect and deference.

SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS V–VII

561 THE periods in the life of an Ocimbundu may be summarized as follows:

1. The 'Marginal' Period of the First Week (*ocitete*) until the funicle drops.
2. The Baby Proper (second week until about seventh month) (*oñaña*) (from turning black until sitting alone).
3. The Sitting-baby or Toddler (*ocisembe*) (from sitting alone until mastery of walking and completion of weaning).
4. Early Childhood (from weaning until about 9 years) (*oneñe*). Period of socio-psychological education.
5. Later Childhood (from about 9 until puberty) (*omõlã*). Period of technical training and assumption of economic responsibility.
6. Adolescence (from puberty until marriage). Period of preparation for marriage and full adulthood.
7. First Year of Marriage, during which the bride completes her training under her mother-in-law's guidance.
8. Full Adulthood (from birth of first child).

[1] Junod, op. cit., 1927, vol. i, p. 127.

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861 This unity of 'the social sphere of adult and child' is a striking
867 feature of the Umbundu educational process. A child learns by actual participation in adult activities. He participates as soon as he is able and in so far as he is able in all phases of adult life. A child begins early to assume responsibility both for himself and for as much regular 'adult activity' as his knowledge and ability may allow him to take on. This being the case, it is to be expected that all factors—physiological, psychological, social, and cultural—are so closely interrelated in the process of Umbundu education that their unity is almost organic.

Given this unitary social sphere, it is easy to understand that children always want to grow up. They are anxious to undertake full responsibility and full participation as early as they may. It has been pointed out that adults do not, or are expected not to, force the pace: they must not set tasks beyond the ability of the children in the actual stage of their development.[1] Normal development and normal behaviour are expected of children as a matter of course.[2] The possibility of aberrant behaviour[3] does not seem regularly to enter parents' minds, much less their utterances, as is too often the case with us. Adult expectation of normal develop-
[828] ment in children is perhaps best seen in the Umbundu concept of sense or intelligence (*olondunge*), something which every normal person is expected to have in some measure from the time of weaning. It is a relative term when applied to children and the young.[4] Some adults have it in greater measure than others. But every *person* will have it according to the proverb:

[538] *Omuku lovonya, omunu lolondunge.*
A rat with fur, a person with sense.

As every rat has fur, every person has sense.

861 Learning, as he does, in the real social and cultural situation
153 of Umbundu life, the child develops genetically the behaviour

Mead, *Coming of Age in Samoa* (New York: Morrow, 1928). Some writers have claimed this to be true of all the simpler cultures, e.g. Dewey, op. cit., p. 8 f., but cf. Margaret Mead, *Growing up in New Guinea* (New York: Morrow, 1930). Many of the African initiation rites seem to have been introduced from the outside and hence involve a distinct dichotomy, *vide* Stayt, op. cit.

[1] See *supra*, p. 110.

[2] See Fortes' discussion of a similar attitude among the Tallensi, op. cit., pp. 25–8.

[3] For the fatalistic attitude taken on failure to conform, see *supra*, p. 106.

[4] See *supra*, p. 100.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

from several primitive cultures,[1] and some experimental studies seem to indicate that it is less general in the United States than had previously been supposed.[2] It is recognized that in this country parent–child fixations have produced many pathological cases.[3] With the practical absence of such fixations among the Ovimbundu, no such group of pathological cases exists. This is a clear gain, but there is also probably a loss, in that there seems to be a corresponding scarcity of the more or less introverted idealistic persons, 'the tender-minded class described by William James'.[4]

Ovimbundu parents proverbially love their eldest child (*nuñulũ*) in a special way,[5] but there is not in their family situation as much invidious distinction as that which in ours often produces the domineering eldest child, the inadequate youngest, and others in the sequence with feelings of neglect or 'rejection'. The Umbundu family situation almost inevitably involves less sharpness of distinction, for although the eldest child may be loved in a special way he deals not only with his parents but with other relatives of their generation and with elder (classificatory) siblings and cross-cousins of his own generation. So, also, the last or youngest child of a sequence would hardly sense himself the youngest since there will almost certainly be younger (classificatory) siblings and cross-cousins toward whom he in turn will act as his elders acted toward him.[6] In a normal Umbundu family situation the problem of the 'only child', so acute in America, is almost inconceivable.

Some Ovimbundu, not only as children but also as younger siblings and as secondary wives, do suffer from feelings of neglect and rejection. I have not noted this from biographical or other direct evidence, except from observation of resentment on the part of younger siblings of fagging by their elders. Evidence exists, however, in the frequency of the Cinderella motif in Umbundu folk-tales. Many are the fables in which Little Hare (*Kandimba*), Little Tortoise (*Kambeu*), or Little Weasel (*Kavili*) gets the better of his stupid elders, represented by almost any and all of the larger

[1] Cf. Mead, loc. cit., Fortes, op. cit., p. 9.

[2] Gardner and Lois B. Murphy, *Experimental Social Psychology* (New York: Harpers, 1931), pp. 429–32.

[3] Allport, op. cit., p. 362.

[4] Quoted from Allport, op. cit., p. 362.

[5] Cf. the proverb: *Epungu liwa konendela; omõlã sole kunuñulũ*, '(Of) corn best the first fruits; (of) children (you) love the first born'.

[6] This seems to be the state of affairs quite generally in societies having a classificatory kinship system. Cf. M. Mead, op. cit., chaps. iii, iv.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

157 animals.[1] Other tales with frankly human protagonists portray
538 the same theme,[2] and there are a number of Umbundu adapta-
593 tions and variations of such European versions of this theme as Cinderella, Snow White, &c. In some tales, such as 'Kalitangi', the hero escaped as an infant from an agreement made by his mother before his birth with another expectant mother that they would both destroy their offspring. Does this indicate a resentment of, or a protest against, child-sacrifice in certain Umbundu rites? I mention this as one possible source for the feeling of neglect and 'rejection' which, however, does not seem to be as acute or as widespread as in our own society.[3] The exact situation could only be determined by careful and extensive investigation.

593 Adjustments between siblings among the Ovimbundu on the
152 whole are relatively satisfactory. Resentment on the part of the younger does sometimes occur as indicated above. Overt sibling
[643] conflict has also arisen quite frequently in the royal families because of disputes over the succession. Instances of this latter type of conflict may be found in narratives of the early missionaries,[4] in diaries of Silva Porto,[5] and in other early sources. Conflict from jealousy arising out of the parent–child relationship, however, seems to be relatively rare. In a kinship society regulated by the hierarchy of age, jealousy between siblings does not quite fit into the picture. The two most common terms for jealousy over personal relations refer strictly to sexual jealousy: *esepa*, woman's jealousy; and *ukuelume*, jealousy on the part of a man. The other terms are somewhat more applicable but they belong less to household affairs. The meaning of *onya* is jealousy and envy, while *ocipululu* is covetousness and so belongs to the economic sphere.

572 Friendship, especially between age-mates or 'coevals', has played
[554] and continues to play an important role in Umbundu social adjustments. Such differences as social station, family, distance of habitation, and even diversity of language and culture are easily bridged by friendship. Many friendships were formed on trading

[1] Cf. *Journal of the American Folk-Lore Society*, 1922, vol. 35, nos. 1 and 18, pp. 116 f., 140 ff.

[2] The tale of *Ñaña la kota liaye* (Baby and his elder sister) referred to *supra*, p. 84.

[3] Investigations of the 'foster-child phantasy', feelings of neglect ,'rejection', &c., reported by Murphy, op. cit., p. 415 f.; and by Allport, op. cit., p. 364 f.

[4] *Missionary Herald*, 1888, p. 242 f.

[5] In *Boletim da Sociedade de Geografia de Lisboa*, 1885, 1886.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

He draws the crescentic arrowhead (p. 123) still common among the Ovimbundu and Vachokue; the double iron gong (p. 122); and the musical bow, which he calls a violin (p. 121). 175 114 [534]

Sogaur states that iron-working had an advanced technique at Dindo, more than half a century ago. According to Sogaur, the blacksmith was using scrap iron from European sources (II, p. 14). 175 326

Perhaps the most valuable of Chatelain's books is "Fifty Folk Tales of Angola." The stories are accompanied by translations and ethnological notes, the most important of which are references to the carrying of a corpse on a pole; the building of a cairn of stones over the corpse of a hunter; matrilineal descent and the power of the maternal uncle over the persons of his nieces and nephews (sisters' children). My observations included some details respecting the pawning of a sister's children to redeem the debts of their mother's brother. Chatelain adds that sisters' children are successors to private property and chieftainship (pp. 8–10). My notes agree that property is inherited by children of a deceased man's sister, but my informants said that a new chieftain is normally the eldest son of the principal wife of the dead chief. Chatelain's folklore stories, fifty in number, relate chiefly to animals; this was the only kind of story told to me, but W. C. Bell has recorded a few tales of another type. 173 [114] [764] [611] [604] [428] [538]

Marquardsen (1928) devotes only one-fourth of his book to the ethnology of Angola, which he treats in a very general way; there is no section dealing specifically with any particular tribe. The author calls attention to Chapman's observation of rock paintings of South African Bushman type, between Cuma and Luimbale in northwest Angola. I have elsewhere remarked on the occasional occurrence of physical types which show a strain of Bushman blood. Today Bushmen penetrate southern Angola from the Kalahari (Plate LXIX, Figs. 1, 2), but their presence in times past or present does not affect the course of history or the data of ethnology to an appreciable extent. 114 177 [531] [144]

Marquardsen gives some notes of a general kind on Vaheneca, Mahuila and other tribes of southwest Angola. The suggestion is feasible that the Umbundu name Suku, for a supreme being, is the same as the Nzambi of Lunda and the Congo. Marquardsen refers to the importance of the maternal uncle in Umbundu society, to the poison ordeal, and to the burial of an Umbundu chief in oxhide, all of which points were recorded in my observations at Elende. 114 101

Ferreira Diniz's book is unobtainable, but, judging from the summary given in *Anthropos* (XX, 1925, pp. 321–331), the information was collected by a questionnaire widely distributed among adminis-

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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Nature lore of the Ovimbundu rightly forms an introduction to other aspects of economic life, because there is no better introduction to ethnological research in the field than that of associating with the people in daily occupations connected with the food supply and industries. In this way a field worker realizes that observation on the part of hunters and food gatherers is fundamental, not merely to economic and social life, but to the growth of language and folklore.

Observation and experiment have led to the selection of many kinds of timber, each having one or more specific uses. Collection of plants is connected with the making of dyes for baskets, a varnish for pots, and a pharmacopoeia for the medicine-man. Minute observation of the habits of animals, primarily carried out to ensure successful hunting, is clearly reflected in the growth of vocabulary, and likewise in the realism and humor of folk tales and proverbs (chapter VIII).

[538]

This chapter is concerned chiefly with a presentation of factual material whose psychological and cultural bearing is more fully dealt with in chapters X–XII.

NATURE LORE

825

The Ovimbundu are keen observers whose knowledge of the natural history of plants and animals is comprehensive. Almost any boy of twelve years of age is able to give the information detailed here. Some of the birds have been identified by Mr. Rudyerd Boulton, Department of Zoology, Field Museum.

Ombo. Ostrich. The knowledge of this bird must come from the south of Angola. In traveling south I first saw ostriches at Humbe. These were domesticated birds.

Epanda. Wattled Crane (*Bugeranus carunculatus*). The informant said, "*Epanda* is a big bird which has long legs and a long neck."

Epumumu. This is the Ground Hornbill (*Bucorvus cafer*) whose black wings are tipped with white. I have observed them from Ganda to Vakuanyama country. They take to flight slowly after hopping heavily for a few paces.

Ocamukongo. From the Umbundu word *ukongo*, a hunter. This bird lives on small buck and rabbits.

Etokailo. This is the smaller bustard called by the Boers knorhaan.

Ohanga. The Guinea Fowl (*Numida meleagris*).

Onjava. Spur-winged Goose (*Plectropterus gambensis*).

Ongonga. An eagle. The word is used generally for a large bird of prey.

Ohokohoko. The Bateleur Eagle (*Terathopius ecaudatus*). The bird is almost without a tail. This bird is not predatory. It kills snakes but does not take chickens or other small animals.

Ociselele. A kite, well known because it preys on chickens.

Etalahanga. A hawk which waits in the trees then volplanes on its prey.

Okapamba. A small hawk which preys on chickens.

Enyamahuti. A hawk.

Ocikuamanga. The White-breasted Crow (*Corvus albus*).

Onguali (*ua-ua*). This is the Red-necked Partridge (*Pternistis afer*).

3/ Hambly B-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

825

Ekalaupa. A species of francolin without red coloring on the legs.

Esusi. This is a bird which comes out at night. It can catch spirits and make them die a second death.

Onjimbi. This nocturnal owl (*Bubo maculosus*) is thought to be very dangerous. People who hear the cry of this bird are frightened because the noise is the sound of death.

Kacukucuku. The Barn Owl (*Tyto alba affinis*).

Ongongayulombo. An eagle which eats small buck, pigs, and rabbits.

Ekuti. Is a Red-eyed Dove (*Streptopelia semitorquata*) which says "oo—oo—oo" very sharply all day.

Onende. A dove (*Streptopelia capicola*) which makes the same noise as *ekuti* but on a higher note.

Onduna. This bird is of great importance to the Ovimbundu, because the feathers are used for decorating the head of a dead king. A medicine-man sometimes uses them for decoration when he is performing.

Ondonga. Is a little bird, which, like *onduna*, belongs to the royal family of birds.

Ukuku. A water bird.

Ocisandombunji. This is a bird which feeds on white ants.

Epandacokocoko. This is a bird (*Geocichla litsipsirupa*) whose cry tells the people of a village to make the guest house ready as strangers are coming.

Ocilonga. Is a beautiful yellow bird, an oriole (*Oriolus monarchus angolensis*).

Etua, singular; *ocatua*, plural. A species of bustard.

Etioko. A small bird of the plains (*Anthus leucophrys*).

Okakelekele. This is the Spur-wing Plover (*Hoplopterus armatus*), a large bird which lives on flat land near rivers.

Ocikandi. An unidentified bird. My informant said, "*Ocikandi* can cry in the same way as any other bird."

Okakongonyala. This is a bird somewhat like a pigeon but larger. It has long legs and is able to run well.

Undolo. A small spotted bird which always looks in the direction of the sun.

Omiapia. This is a swallow.

Ocikungumiapia. My informant said, "This bird is like *omiapia* but larger."

Omuipui. "He has a crest on his head and when he sings rain is coming."

Ecungupulupu. This bird has a long beak. It lays eggs on the ground. The bird is as big as a man's fist.

Omanala. A woodpecker (family Picidae).

Okangongo. Has a white breast spotted with black; the head is blue.

Ocinjonjo. This is a little bird having a long beak which is used to probe into flowers.

Kosselekele. A little black bird which makes a small fine nest.

Ocituku. A river bird. These birds go about in flocks.

Ongombo. A small yellow bird.

Epilili. A yellow bird rather larger than *ongombo*. This bird is kept in cages very cleverly made of reeds by small boys. The birds are caught by smearing a sticky substance on the branches of trees.

Ocikenge. *Agapornis roseicollis.* A small green parrot.

Okalusondonjovo. Is to be seen at the time of *onjovo* (spring). These birds fly in flocks.

A description of bird-calls illustrates a method of reasoning by analogy. This results in a transference of human thoughts and emotions to animals, a process which gives animal fables their strong 538 825

538 825 appeal. For example, the pigeon says, *Tu kolela oku iva* ("We believe in stealing"), and the following are further instances of the same kind.

Ocinganja is a bird which has several calls. Early in the year the female says as she looks at the newly hatched brood, "This year I have borne white children." Later the little birds grow black feathers. Then the mother cries, "Each year disappointment." Sometimes the female says to the cock bird, "A stick has stuck in my eye. I wonder whether it will make a growth there." The bird is probably the Black Flycatcher (*Melaenornis pammelaina*).

Epandacokocoko says, "Where will the guests stay? Where? Where? Where?" This is an unfailing intimation that strangers will visit the village.

Omanula. This is another bird which announces the approach of strangers by saying, "*Akombe! Akombe! Akombe!*" ("Guests! Guests! Guests!") Two birds are supposed to carry on a dialogue.

Sankanjuele says, "He who has eaten should leave the rest for the important ones," meaning himself.

Ondonga answers, "Do you mean me? The way you scold hurts me to my heart."

Ungolombia. The male and female birds *ungolombia* are about to cross a stream. The female says, "I am wearing four yards of cloth," meaning that she will get wet. The husband says, three times, "If you are wearing four yards of cloth, why do you not cross at the source of the river?"

Omboso says, "When I lay my eggs on the ground, the white ants destroy them." The call continues, "When I lay them up high, *kalupamba* steals them." *Omboso* cries, "Such hardship, goodness gracious me!" The exclamation is, "*A mai we,*" literally, "O my mother!"

Kocukuku the Barn Owl (*Typo alba*) and his mate speak together. The female says, "*Cimuku*, do you eat rats?" He answers, "I do not eat them, they have tails."

Ungungu says, "No big animal lays eggs, so the crocodile must be a bird, too."

Ocimbamba (night hawk) may be heard on moonlight nights saying, "O lion, here are the people."

Ekuti says, "My child is gone to *Koputu*." *Koputu*, in Umbundu, means a far off place. Possibly *Koputu* is a corruption of Oporto. This bird makes a monotonous and continuous cry from sunrise to sunset.

Epumumu (hornbills) are large black birds. The female says, "I'm going, I'm going, I'm going to our village." The male replies, "Don't go, don't go, the rain has come; let us plant."

Katendipanga. This bird is quiet until September, the month in which rain begins to fall. Then the bird says, "Save! Save! Save!" He means this as a warning to people who eat their corn instead of saving some for seed. The seed should be sown in October when the rains have begun. The derivation of the name of this bird is important. *Okutenda*, to count; *oripanga*, the rows of corn in a field.

Kalusundanjovo. The female bird says, "Let's throw away the big drum." The male answers, "When we have thrown it away, what shall we do for dances?"

821 Observations of the weather are of importance in fixing dates for sowing and reaping; such dates are the base of time reckoning. Rainfall is important where cattle are kept, and a knowledge of the stars is of service to hunters and caravan leaders when following unfamiliar routes.

[789] The weather is thought to be controlled to some extent by the *ocimbanda* ("medicine-man") and his performances. The rain-

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

(9) Four fingers of the right hand are placed on the thumb of the extended left hand. 201

(10) The hands are placed together palm to palm.

A very insulting sign is made in this way. The left arm is held up with the fist closed. The left wrist is grasped with the right hand. The left fist is then shaken while the right hand is still grasping the left wrist. "This is done when a man is very angry, and he cannot find words."

A bending forward of the head accompanied by wide opening of the eyes and protrusion of the tongue means "you're a fool."

Shaking the head means "no." If the right hand is shaken in front of the face with the index finger extended, a negative is implied. Nodding the head is an affirmative sign. To indicate absence of anything, or the completion of something, the index finger of the right hand is drawn across the mouth. Rubbing the palms together rapidly has the same significance. In order to call some one the right arm is extended with the palm down. If they summon some one from a distance the arm is lowered, while a scratching movement is made with the fingers. The sign indicating "go away" is a flipping of the hand outwardly, while the arm is extended.

RIDDLES AND PROVERBS

[538] 524 539

"There is a red belt round our field. What is it?" The answer is, "red ants."

"We have somebody who lies all his life in our field. He always lies on one side." The answer is, "a squash."

"We have a stump in the house that is always burning and always moving." This is a metaphor rather than a riddle. The stump is the log which is pushed forward into the fire. It is always alive yet is gradually dying. The saying is intended to refer to human lives. People are alive but their lives are becoming shorter each day.

"What is it that we eat above and below the ground?" The answer is, "manioc, because the leaves and roots are eaten."

"The turtle cannot climb up on a stump, some one has to put it there." This is said in reference to some person who gains a high position which he could attain only by influence and not through merit. 539

When a person makes threats without being able to fulfil them the following expressions are appropriate: "Hot water does not

539 mother leopard returned, the jerboa brought out the only cub four times. On the fourth day the jerboa ate the last of the cubs.

When the mother leopard came home the jerboa was terrified, so said, "The cubs are not very well, you must go in the room to feed them; I cannot bring them out." When the leopard had gone into the sleeping room the jerboa ran quickly into his hole in the ground.

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538 These tales from my records were all told to me by Ngonga. It is true that some of the stories appear in the Umbundu reader [113] "Olosapo Vioku Likisa Oku Tanga" (Kamundongo, 1914). But when this book was printed Ngonga was already well acquainted with all the stories therein, and many more. Most of the tales were, and are today, an integral part of the Umbundu language.

My own inquiries had the same result as those of Chatelain in revealing a preponderance of stories of animals. Yet W. C. Bell [113] was able to collect several tales relating entirely to the adventures of human beings (*Jour. Amer. Folk-Lore*, XXXV, pp. 116–150). At times there is a didactic theme running through a tale, which emphasizes the value of courage, presence of mind, and perseverance. A sense of humor is shown in the conversations of animals and the tricks which the smaller creatures use to the discomfort of the larger animals.

538 171 Comparative study of stories told by the Ovimbundu with those from other parts of Africa opens up a field of research, especially in view of the long caravan journeys of the Ovimbundu. Chatelain narrates the Angolan story of the frog who boasted that he could ride the elephant, and contrived to do so by a clever ruse (*Jour.* [113] *Amer. Folk-Lore*, VII, p. 62). The Nigerian story of the tortoise who fulfilled the same boast is told by A. B. Ellis (Yoruba-speaking Peoples of the Slave Coast, London, 1894, p. 265).

The Ovimbundu have the story of the tortoise who made a wager with the antelope respecting a race which they agreed to run. The tortoise won the wager by placing one of his brothers at the winning post. The Umbundu version is given in "Olosapo" (p. 53), and there is a Cameroon version.

The tug-of-war story which tells of a trick played against the hippopotamus and the elephant is known to the Ovimbundu. The story has a wide distribution with local variations. Sometimes the elephant and the hippopotamus are unwittingly made to pull

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

against one another by some small clever animal such as the monkey or the hare. In the version given by H. S. Stannus (Harvard African Studies, vol. III, p. 329) the hare perpetrates this ruse. The version given by Smith and Dale (The Ila-speaking Peoples of Rhodesia, vol. II, p. 377) makes the contestants a hippopotamus and a rhinoceros, but the hare again arranges the tug-of-war. E. Dayrell (Folklore Stories from Southern Nigeria, London, 1910, p. 104) gives another variant of the tug-of-war story, which states that one end of the rope was made fast to a palm tree. The hippopotamus was under water so he could not see the object against which he was pulling. He thought he was tugging against the tortoise as arranged.

538 171 [113]

Umbundu stories are humorous and didactic, while some indicate a process of rationalizing. An example of the latter kind is found in the story explaining why the bat flies at night. Dayrell (pp. 36, 51) gives two different versions of this rationalizing tale.

These folklore stories of the Ovimbundu give information respecting vocabulary, structure of the language, powers of observation, customs, and ideas of conduct.

I have found no stories which illustrate the grafting of elements from two different cultures. In some parts of Africa tales may be heard which contain blended elements from a Negro and a Semitic culture, as in Nigeria. But assimilation of features which were foreign to the story at its cultural origin does not occur in the tales given here, with the exception of the European story of the greedy dog, which is an importation.

The Ovimbundu were noted for their long caravan journeys, which were undertaken in territory occupied by tribes of the same linguistic family (Bantu), a fact which may account for the similarity of Umbundu and other Bantu versions of the same tales.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

way. Such instances as these came to light when my primary intention was a study of the use of wooden arrows for killing birds. 105 182 825

An inquiry about the names of trees and the use of timbers led to the topic of making and using wooden figures for magical purposes. Woodcraft, wood-carving, and religion are associated.

There is no fallacy so great as that of supposing that data may be collected and retained in mutually exclusive divisions. For example, a study of proverbs leads to native ideas concerning government, succession to office, and standards of conduct. The Ovimbundu say, "A turtle cannot climb on a tree stump, some one has to place it there." What is the meaning of this proverb? There are some men who occupy positions for which they have no ability; such men have been chosen through influence. The normal successor to chieftainship and kingship is the eldest son of the deceased man's principal wife, but if this rightful successor is stupid, some other son will be chosen. Yet the foolish youth may have friends who see their own advantage in having a weak ruler; they therefore combine to place him in office. The turtle has been placed on the tree stump, since it could not climb there.

In addition, folklore shows projection of the mentality of human beings into the lives of animals. Bird cries, with their supposed calls and answers, indicate that the birds have their family relationships involving strife, love, jealousy, and generosity. To the Ovimbundu, birds are a feathered human community.

Proverbs reveal a philosophy which is expressed by the German *Weltanschauung*. "If you are full of food, do not climb on a leopard's back; the leopard may be hungry." This means that one should not be foolishly exalted through good fortune. "You cannot tie a buck's head in a cloth; the horns will stick out," expresses the idea that crime cannot be concealed. "Hot water does not burn a house, and cold water does not make mush," is a sarcastic reply to one who boasts of things he cannot do. A riddle may express a philosophical train of thought. "What is it that lives while it dies and dies while it lives?" This is the log of wood the end of which is from time to time pushed farther into the fire. Like a human life, the log is being slowly consumed while yet living. Such examples as these call attention to a welding of thought, language, nature lore, and ideas that regulate conduct. 538 829 182

In considering food supply and occupations, division of labor on a sex basis is clear. Social sanctions have determined the appro- 183 962 105

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

therefore the usual procedure is to erect temporary grass-covered huts (*olosingi*, plural) on the new site, in which they will live while building their houses. Each hearth-fire must be ignited from the headman's fire.

The houses are built by the occupants themselves. The men's club house is built by the communal labour of all men and boys with a simple ritual designed to promote concord within, and to ensure that the spirits (*olosande*) may find it a congenial abode. The spirits regularly attend the discussions in the *onjango*, and there receive their daily portions. There also they are believed to sleep.

At the first opportunity a hunt will be held and the meat brought to the spirit-hut. The girl who carried the sacred chest receives the heart and the boy the head. At this time, while a pot of sour beer (non-alcoholic) (*ocisangua*) is being brewed, the girl sits quietly in communion (*oku felevela*) with the spirits. With these physical and spiritual preparations the village community makes ready its home, a home which may seem poor and meagre to the eyes of outsiders, but to a member of the community it is home indeed and evokes in him, when absent, a feeling of great home-sickness (*ongeva*). As the Umbundu version of 'Home, Sweet Home' puts it:

Koliene, koliene, nda ku li ombambi ha yota
To your own, to your own, if there is cold you can warm yourself,

nda ku li onjala ha panga.
if there is hunger you can arrange.

584 you." There is no infant betrothal. There is not and never was any
[567] compulsion of a girl in marriage, but slave girls were disposed of in marriage by their masters.

832 A girl is not allowed to do anything to show that she loves a boy, for it would be a great shame for her to tell the boy that she loves him. Often a girl who prefers a boy will pretend that she does not like him.
[539] The Ovimbundu have a story which states that a man said, "I will bring my cow to the green grass"; he did so, but the cow would not eat. This expresses the idea that a boy would not like a girl who confessed a preference for him.

MARRIAGE

585 The prospective bride chooses one married woman and six unmarried girls to accompany her to the house prepared by her husband. Here a feast consisting of a pig and some chickens is provided by the husband for the relatives of both families. For three nights the girl returns to the house of her parents while the boy sleeps at his home. The married woman and six girls sleep at the house prepared by the bridegroom. During these days beer is provided by the boy's parents. The prospective husband is ironically addressed as *sandombua*. *Ndombua* means bridegroom, *sa* is an abbreviation of *isia* meaning father. The term "father bridegroom" refers to the fact that the youth is a potential husband only; the marriage has not been consummated.

On the fourth day the bride brings her supply of domestic utensils. These are the cooking pots (*olombia*); the wooden spoons (*ovito*); the brush of grass for sweeping (*olueyo*); some meal; also the pounder (*upi*). For the first month the wife is not allowed to cook in her own home; she cooks food in the home of her husband's parents and sends
[269] it to the council house (*onjango*) where her husband takes his meals with other men according to Umbundu custom. At the end of the first month of married life the mother of the husband invites any three old women who have been happily married to lay the hearth
[782] stones in the new home. Each of the old women brings a stone for the hearth. A chicken is killed and its blood is sprinkled on the hearth stones. While the young wife is preparing food at the new hearth, she is helped by the old women. If the girl is stirring with the big wooden spoon, one of the old women places her own hands over those of the girl. There is this kind of guidance in every action.

I understand that at the present day virginity in a bride is not so highly valued as in former days. The old custom was an examination

193 *ka wa tuŋgili*, you did not build
ka va tuŋgile, they did not build
omanu ka va yongola oku tila, the people do not wish to flee
ocimunu ka ci yongola upange, the thief does not wish work
ha ngombe ko, it is not an ox
ha njoko, it is not a house
ha munuko, it is not a person
ha manuko, they are not people
ha ci munuko, he is not a thief
ha meko, it is not I
he yeko, it is not he
ha veko, it is not you
he tuko, it is not we
he nako, it is not you
ha voko, it is not they
si ci munuko, I am not a thief
ku ci munuko, you are not a thief
ha ci munuko, he is not a thief
ka tui munuko, we are not thieves
ka wi munuko, you are not thieves
ha i munuko, they are not thieves

TRANSCRIPTION OF FOLKLORE STORIES

• 539

Ombwá lolwisó lwáyo[1]
Dog with Greed His

Ombwá kèyaù, okásitu vómèlà. Yi li lókúyókàyoka
Dog on bridge little meat in mouth. It is there to cross

òlwi. Vovává yi letemo ómbwá yekwávò lonumbá
stream. In water it sees dog another with piece

yinénè yósitù. Ombwá yà lólá okásitu káhè; yà wílà
big of meat. Dog dropped little meat his; it threw itself

vovává hà yi kwátà ósitù yinénè yikwávò. Omó yà
in water in order to catch meat large other. Thus it

ñelisá òlònúmbá vieòli, yikwávò ya káilè láyò,
lost pieces two, the other it was with him,

yikwávò yi lète pólwi. Yà vi ñelisá momo o kwete
(the) other it saw in stream. It then lost because he had

olúŋgòŋgò. Isó lilmólá mólà ondjámba, òkù liénda ka li ká
greed. Eye sees (continuously) elephant, in going it is not

velèla ohatù.
increased meat-hunger.

[177] [1]Presumably an adaption of the well-known European fable of the dog and his reflection.

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Sómá Tciyúkà
King Tciyuka

Sómá Tciyúkà ɔmǫ́lą à djǫ́ą̀ɔ̀ wɔ̀ɛ̀ndà ku Kaŋgándjì
King Tciyuka son of John went to Kangandji

ɔ̀kùlìà ɔ̀ɛ́mbù. Váti tambúla tcà sókà. Kɔ̀kwɛ́ne kulívo
to eat (impose) fines. They said, "Take that which is proper. Among yourselves there are also

ɔ̀ɛ́mbù vìɛ̀tù. Eyé Tciyúkà hátì, kwa káìle ùkóŋgɔ̀
fines of ours." He Tciyuka said, "There was once a hunter

wà ká lìle ɔ̀ɛ́mbù, wà tambúla ɔ̀pą́ù. Okwiyá
who went (and) imposed fines; he received (a) stick. Coming

kɔ̀ndjìla wà yɛ́và ondjuvúŋgo yètátù lomą́lą́ ɛ́áhè. Eyé
along the path he heard a rustling of iguana with children his. He

wàtílà wà lóndà vútì lúta wáhè. Opą́ù yasìala pósì.
fled; he climbed tree with gun his. (The) stick remained down (on the ground).

Nóke ètátù ɔ̀kwiyá wàmólà ɔ̀pą́ù hátì, ᵊdá lúlà. Ukóŋgɔ̀
Afterward iguana coming saw stick; said, 'I have seen.' Hunter

hátì kɔ̀ùkɔ̀ ɔ̀pą́ù yáŋgè. Etátù hátì ᵊdátì. ᵊDá yá káìlè
said, 'Not so stick my.' Iguana said, 'No. If it had been

yɔ́vè ᵊdá wa lóndà láyà. Nɔ̀ke ètátù wàtàmbúlà, wàètcà
yours then you (would) have climbed with it.' Afterwards iguana took (it), he gave (it)

kɔ̀mànù. Ukóŋgɔ̀ wàpúmbà, wàtùndápà ɔ̀ɛ́kà, wàɛ̀ndà
to the people. Hunter lost, (he) went away empty handed, (he) went

kímbà ìjávà.
to village his.

Nóké wàlàlékà ɔ̀ndjɛ́và votcisúkù, ótcó tcósi
"Afterward he invited a hunt of the tall grass, so that all

tcápìà. Etátù hámà akálà votcisúkù. Hátì ɔ̀ɛ́ndjà ókà
was burned. Iguana however was in the tall grass. He said, 'One looks where

a tìlìla kà kù molɛ́hà. Otcó ᵊdsáŋgà ɔ̀kálúŋgì, hátì
one may flee it does not appear.' Then he found a little hole, he said,

iŋílàkà ká wɔ́ìkà. Etìmbá ìjàìŋílà, utcílà wàsìálà
'(I will) enter there.' He could not be contained (in it). (The) body entered, the tail was left

539 *pòsámwò.* *Nóké* *ùkóŋgò* *wèyà.* *Hátì* *òvándjà* *utcílà*
outside. Afterwards hunter came. (He) said, 'One sees (the) tail

wètátù *pòsámwò.* *Leye* *hátì,* *ⁿdá lúlà.* *Etátù* *hátì*
of the iguana outside.' And he said, 'I have seen.' Iguana said,

kòtókò *òtcò* *ètímbà* *lìáŋgè.* *Ukóŋgò* *hátì* *kòtókò.*
'Not so that (is) body my.' Hunter said, 'Not so.

ⁿDá *lìàkáìlè* *lìóvè* *ⁿdá* *lìàlŋílà.* *ⁿOké* *ùkóŋgò*
If it had been yours it would have entered.' Afterward hunter

wàñaŋúlà *òmókò* *yáhè,* *wà tétà.* *Otcó* *ètátù* *lìáfà.*
(he) stretched out knife his, he cut. Thus iguana died."

Otcò *Tcìyúkà* *hátì,* *amé* *ⁿdìà* *tcáŋgè.* *Noké*
So Tciyuka said, "I shall eat mine. After

ⁿdá *ŋwètè* *tcénè,* *lámè* *wìyì,* *ù* *lìsáŋgélà.*
if I have yours, with me come, you with it will find yourselves."

Hósi la ⁿGúli
Lion and Hyena

Tcìsukìlá *wà tumìlá* *kusómá* *Tcìpóŋgè* *hátì,* *a ende*
Tcisukila sent to king Tciponge, said, "Let him go

a *katúle* *ukúlu* *ùnénè* *lòvákwéndje.* *Veye* *va* *leméle*
he that you cause to arise (an) elder great with young men. Let them come they may warn

ofeká *yáŋgè,* *yá* *nómbà.* *Sómá* *Tcìpóŋge* *yu* *wà tela*
country my, which despises me." King Tciponge he told

òlùsápò *hátì,* *kwá kála* *òŋgúlì,* *òmánù* *vósì* *vo leválà*
a proverb, said, "There was hyena, people all from him borrowed

tcáhè. *ⁿGúli* *etci* *wà èndá* *kimbo* *vò háŋga* *lovótà*
his (things). Hyena when (he) went to village they drove off him with guns

lolohóndjì. *ⁿOkè* *tcovála* *kutímà* *hátì,* *ha* *sembìká*
and clubs. Then it hurt him to (the) heart he said, 'I go I engage

ku hósi, *eyé* *ò* *téla* *oku* *kwátà* *òmánù.* *Etcí* *a* *sáŋgà*
(to) lion he is able to catch people.' When he found

hósi, *hósi* *hátì,* *twendá* *ku* *bùlù* *o* *kwetè* *esáŋgà,* *eyé*
lion, lion said, 'Let us go to jackal he has honesty he

òtcimbanda *tcìnénè.* *Otcó* *hósi* *laⁿgúli* *và likwòlì* *oku ènda*
(is) medicine-man great.' So lion and hyena they followed each other to go

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ko bùlù. *Bùlù* *háti,* *ìu* *vándjiliyá* *ímbó* *ḷiovisóndè.* *Otcó*
to jackal. Jackal said, 'We shall search village of driver ants. Thus

amé *ⁿdjimbemó* *utcilá* *wáyge.* *Ené* *usiálá* *kofékà.*
I thrust in tail my. You remain in country (outside).

Amé *ⁿdjiyilá* *vimbo* *oko* *ñilá* *ovisóndè* *vimbo*
I shall enter in the village there I shall sprinkle driver ants in the village

ḷióši. *Ománú* *étci* *vatundá* *ove* *u hósi* *wendá* *loku kwátà.*
all. People when they come out you O lion go (them) to catch.

Otcó *tca* *soká* *oku* *fetà* *ofuka* *ya ⁿgúli.* *Oká* *sapúlà*
So that shall be enough to pay debt of hyena.'" This one goes tells

ku *Tcisukílà,* *ⁿdá yátúlá* *ukúlu* *lákwéndjè* *velómbè*
to Tcisukila, "Should I cause to arise (an) elder with young men from the court

tca sókà *oku sándúlà* *oféká* *yáhè,* *mómó* *amé*
it (would) be equal to scatter country his, for I

ⁿdumúnù *ònénè.* *Ové a* *Tcisukílà,* *lemelá* *ofeká* *yóvè*
am (a) person great. You Tcisukila, warn country your

evándò *ótcó* *u kóla* *tciwà.*
slowly so you shall be well."

Hósi lá Bindji
Lion and Wild Dog

Hósi *wa* *túygá* *kùséygè.* *Wà kúka.* *Kà* *kwéte* *òygùsù*
Lion he built in the woods. He was old. He had not strength

yòkù limwisa *òkùljà.* *Wà sóka* *òkù* *lúygúkà.* *Yú* *wàèndà*
to provide himself food. He thought to be cunning. He went

kèléva, *wà yáḷlà* *kohondo,* *wàlúvíkiya* *òkù vélà.*
to cave, he crawled to a corner, he made out to be sick.

Ovlñámá *vḷósi* *vḷéyà vḷò* *vándjà,* *ⁿdá* *ò vélà* *òtcílì.*
The animals all came they at him looked, if he is sick indeed.

Etci *vḷéyá* *hósi* *ò* *lóku* *vì* *tàkáìlà.* *Etci* *òviñama* *vḷálwa*
As they came lion he them ate. When animals many

vḷá *kwàtlwa* *lá* *hósi,* *bindji* *wéya* *wà lúygà.* *Eye* *ò tḷi*
they were caught by lion, wild dog he came he took warning. He stands

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kùvélò	*wèlèvà.*	*Wà púla*	*hósi*	*háti,*	*wàkólápó.*	*Hósi*	*hátì,*	
at open-ing	of the cave.	He asked	lion,	saying,	"Are you well?"	Lion	said,	
ndá	*vélà*	*ènénè.*	*Wà*	*láleka*	*bíndji*	*òku ìŋílà*	*vèléva*	*òkù*
"I am	sick	very."	He	invited	wild dog	to enter	into the cave	to
vàŋgula	*láhè.*	*Bíndji*	*wà*	*kúmbúlúlá*	*hátì,*	*nda*	*távà,*	*pwàí*
talk	with him.	Wild dog	he	replied	saying,	"I should have agreed		but
nda	*límbúka*	*àkàsà*	*ósì*	*àìmbà*	*òvásò*	*kèlèvà.*	*Kà*	*kúlí*
I	noticed	tracks	all	go	toward	the cave.	There	are
àkàsà	*àìmbà*	*òvásò*	*pòsámwà.*	*Tcà*	*líŋguá*	*mbwí*	*tcà*	
no tracks	going	toward	the outside."	That which	goes	down? (sinks)	it	
lùŋgísá	*avá*	*và*	*ywà.*					
warns	those	who	swim.					

SIGN LANGUAGE

201 Various language signs are in use. The action of throwing a mat on the ground and laying the head on the hands indicates sleep. Inquiry about the health of a father may be made by stroking an imaginary beard. If the father is strong and well the reply will be a flection of the forearm to harden the biceps.

There are dumb signs for numbers:

(1) The right hand is used to bend the little finger of the left hand into the left palm.

(2) The little finger and the one next to it on the left hand are turned over into the palm.

(3) Three fingers are turned inward.

(4) Four fingers are turned inward.

(5) Four fingers and the thumb are turned inward. The thumb is then tapped with the index finger of the right hand.

(6) The right hand is extended and the thumb of the left hand is placed on the little finger of the right hand. This action adds one to five.

(7) The right hand is extended, then the thumb of the left hand is placed on the little finger and the one next to it. This adds two to five.

(8) The thumb of the left hand is placed on the extended little finger, middle finger, and third finger of the left hand.

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(9) Four fingers of the right hand are placed on the thumb of the extended left hand. 201

(10) The hands are placed together palm to palm.

A very insulting sign is made in this way. The left arm is held up with the fist closed. The left wrist is grasped with the right hand. The left fist is then shaken while the right hand is still grasping the left wrist. "This is done when a man is very angry, and he cannot find words."

A bending forward of the head accompanied by wide opening of the eyes and protrusion of the tongue means "you're a fool."

Shaking the head means "no." If the right hand is shaken in front of the face with the index finger extended, a negative is implied. Nodding the head is an affirmative sign. To indicate absence of anything, or the completion of something, the index finger of the right hand is drawn across the mouth. Rubbing the palms together rapidly has the same significance. In order to call some one the right arm is extended with the palm down. If they summon some one from a distance the arm is lowered, while a scratching movement is made with the fingers. The sign indicating "go away" is a flipping of the hand outwardly, while the arm is extended.

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RIDDLES AND PROVERBS

"There is a red belt round our field. What is it?" The answer is, "red ants."

"We have somebody who lies all his life in our field. He always lies on one side." The answer is, "a squash."

"We have a stump in the house that is always burning and always moving." This is a metaphor rather than a riddle. The stump is the log which is pushed forward into the fire. It is always alive yet is gradually dying. The saying is intended to refer to human lives. People are alive but their lives are becoming shorter each day.

"What is it that we eat above and below the ground?" The answer is, "manioc, because the leaves and roots are eaten."

"The turtle cannot climb up on a stump, some one has to put it there." This is said in reference to some person who gains a high position which he could attain only by influence and not through merit. 539

When a person makes threats without being able to fulfil them the following expressions are appropriate: "Hot water does not

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539 burn a house." "Cold water does not make mush." "A sleeping dog does not catch a hare."

If advice is given and disregarded, or if an effort fails and has seemed likely to do so, the people say, "Bark rope comes from a tree; if it does not come, leave it there."

"He who sits by a pot of honey does not soon leave it." This means that a man does not readily leave that which he enjoys.

"When eating honey a man does not put in his finger only once." A good thing is not used in small portions; or, one goes back to a good thing.

When two people have a secret there is a saying, "They uncovered the pot, ate a little honey, and covered it up again."

"If you are full of food, do not climb on a leopard's back." If you yourself are not hungry, this does not imply that the leopard has no appetite. In other words, do not be foolish through good fortune.

"He caught no fish and lost his bracelet." This is said when an object of value is lost while performing a task of small importance. This saying would be applied to an instance of a man who left his work to take up a task for smaller payment.

"If it is not heavy, it is not worth while." That which is desirable is deserving of some effort for attainment.

The fact that something can be accomplished by a number of united people is expressed by the saying, "Where there is a crowd there is a bridge."

"You may throw away what is in the hand, but you cannot throw away what is in the heart." It is difficult to dismiss important matters from mind.

"You cannot tie a buck's head in a cloth. The horns will stick out." This means that a crime cannot be concealed. Murder will out.

"That which destroyed the buck came from its own head." The hunter's whistle is a buck's horn. This means that man is the cause of his own troubles.

"A chicken knows a dangerous thing." The implication is that a man should know.

The English expression, "six of one and half a dozen of the other," is expressed by the Umbundu, "If it is on cattle or on people it is still a louse."

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FOLKLORE STORIES

THE LEOPARD AND THE HARE

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A hare said to a leopard who was about to eat him, "Don't eat me, I will give you something good." Holding out his hand the hare said, "I have a little bit of something good in my hand now, taste it."

This was honey that the hare gave to the leopard, who licked his mouth and said, "This is a good thing that you have given me."

The hare promised to bring some more honey to the leopard. Next morning the hare went to the woods, collected a swarm of bees and placed them in a gourd under a covering of honey. The hare told the leopard to gather his wife and family into a hut, saying, "You will have a good feast of honey, but you must be careful to close the door and fill up all the holes in the walls."

The leopard was told to drop the gourd on the floor of the hut in order to get the honey. He did exactly as he was told. He gathered his family in the house, closed the door, and filled up all the holes in the walls. Then when all was dark he dropped the gourd on the ground to get the honey. The gourd broke and out came a swarm of bees. The hare was listening outside. Presently the cries died down, then the hare went away thinking that the leopard and all his family were dead. The mother and the young leopards died, but the father leopard recovered from the stings of the bees.

The leopard said, "Whenever I find a hare I will kill him."

One day the leopard caught the hare who had given him the swarm of bees. Of course the hare was frightened, so he said, "I made a mistake, I thought that there was nothing but honey in the gourd."

The hare pleaded for his life promising to give the leopard some good oil to make his coat shine. "First of all you must let me drive a wooden peg into your head," said the hare.

The leopard allowed this, and, of course, died immediately.

THE HARE IS PUNISHED

A young leopard and a young hare were tired of obeying their mothers, so they decided to kill them. The hare said, "Let us eat your mother first of all."

They did so. The hare pretended that he had killed his mother and buried her in the woods, but the truth was that the hare had

539 hidden his mother, hoping that the leopard would forget about the agreement they had made. The leopard was suspicious, so he searched the woods and at last found the hare and his mother in hiding. The leopard ate both of them.

THE BIRD AND THE BAT

The bird Choko met a rat with a long snout. The rat, whose name is Enganga, said, "Run from the drill," meaning his snout. The bird was afraid, so flew up into the branches of a tree.

One day the bird saw that the rat was asleep, so summoned courage to fly down and tap his nose with a stick. The bird saw that the nose was soft, so flew back to the tree calling out, "Brother rat said, 'Run from the drill, run from the drill,' but I smashed it and found that it was meat."

The bird's cry is expressed in Umbundu by the call "*Kota Enganga wa ndinga hati, tila eseka, tila eseka.*"

THE QUAIL AND THE ROOSTER

The quail found a large fat white grub under the bark of a tree. He said to the rooster, "You live with people who have fire, so go and cook this for me."

The rooster carried the grub to the village in his mouth. The people of the village liked these grubs, so they caught the rooster and took the grub from his beak.

The quail waited for a long time, then called, "Rooster, rooster, bring the grub."

The rooster replied, "The fools have eaten it."

THE STORY OF THE CRICKET

The cricket was very quiet; he did not talk too much or quarrel with other people. One day he invited people to dig in his field, and promised that he would give them some beer. The first helper to arrive was the rooster, who drank a pot of beer. While drinking the beer, the rooster looked out and saw the wild cat coming toward the cricket's home. The rooster was very much afraid of the wild cat, so hid under the bed. Presently the wild cat entered the house and received a pot of beer. But looking out he saw the dog coming that way, so hid under the bed.

The dog said to the cricket, "Did I see somebody as I came along the path?"

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The cricket said that nobody had called. While the dog was drinking the gourd of beer he saw the hyena coming, and he was so afraid that he hid under the bed. Soon after the hyena had settled comfortably in the hut, a man carrying a gun approached the cricket's home. The hyena felt sure that the hunter would kill him so hid under the bed. All the animals were now crowded under the bed not daring to fight among themselves, because they were all afraid of the man.

For a long time the hunter sat drinking beer and talking to the cricket. The animals under the bed were quite safe because they kept quiet. Suddenly a cockroach fell from the roof to the floor of the hut. The rooster was so excited that he forgot that he was hiding. He dashed out from under the bed and gobbled up the cockroach. The wild cat then became excited and dashed out after the rooster. The dog followed the cat, and the hyena attacked the dog. There was a terrible noise as the animals fought in the middle of the floor. The cat killed the rooster. The dog killed the cat. The hyena killed the dog. The hunter shot the hyena, then went away. Presently a tortoise arrived. He was frightened when he saw the dead bodies of all these animals, so sent for the little hare. The hare dug up the cricket from the hole where he was hiding. The tortoise and the hare killed the cricket, because they said he had caused the death of all the other animals.

THE WATTLED CRANE (EPANDA) AND THE SPUR-WING GOOSE (ONJAVA)

These two birds agreed to lay their eggs together in one nest. Onjava is a clean bird who washes her eggs, but Epanda is a dirty bird whose eggs are never clean. The little ones of Epanda hatched out looking dirty and ugly, while the little ones of Onjava were pretty and clean.

One day the two birds went in different directions to find food for their young. Epanda watched Onjava out of sight, then returned to the nest and stole the pretty young ones. When Onjava returned with worms to feed her chicks she found only the young of Epanda, so began to cry, "Epanda, Epanda, Epanda, with your long neck and long beak, you have stolen my young ones."

Onjava set out to follow Epanda. The little ugly chicks of Epanda kept up with Onjava for a time then died because they were so tired. When, at last, Epanda was overtaken, she said to

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539 Onjava, "You have killed my chicks by making them walk so far, I shall keep your children."

Then the great hornbill was called in as judge. He said that the chicks were to stay with Epanda. For a time the little birds did as the judge had said, but soon they returned to their mother, Onjava, because they were clean birds and Epanda was a dirty bird.

THE HARE (NDIMBA) AND THE LEMUR (EVÒVO)

Evovo (the Great Galago) is somewhat like a lemur. It has gray bushy fur and a long fluffy tail.

One day Evovo addressed the hare, saying, "O comrade, what is the noise I am always hearing from the place where you have your house."

Ndimba answered, "My friend, have you never seen the people carry me in a hammock while they sing?"

"No, I never saw anything like that," responded Evovo.

Ndimba invited Evovo to the plains where they hid themselves, Ndimba in one place, Evovo in another. Presently the two hidden animals heard the sound of people singing, "We know where Ndimba is hidden."

Then the barking of dogs was heard, and the people called their dogs, shouting, "Haow! Haow!"

Ndimba said, "I hear them coming with my hammock."

Evovo replied excitedly, "Yes, yes, I can hear."

The dogs chased the two animals. Ndimba knew the paths across the plain and so escaped, but Evovo knew of no hiding place, so was killed.

THE FRUIT BAT AND THE SUN

The child of the sun was sick. The bat was a good *ocimbanda* (medicine-man), so the sun sent for him to cure his child. The bat arrived without delay, performed the cure, and returned home. The sun was very grateful at the time, but soon forgot the kindness of the bat. By and by the son of the bat fell ill with a sickness for which the sun was a clever *ocimbanda*.

The messengers from the bat arrived after the sun had risen above the horizon. The sun told them that he could not come to cure any one after he had started across the sky on his journey for the day.

"Come very early tomorrow," he said. Next morning the messengers were sent away again, because they were too late.

Sadly these messengers returned to the bat with their disappointing news, only to find that the young bat was dead. 539

The bat said, "I hate the sun and I will never look at him again." The bat made a vow that he would never again go out into the sunlight to find food.

This is the reason why the bat never flies by day. He hangs head downward in a dark place all day, so that he will not see the sun.

THE DOG AND THE LIZARD

The dog and the lizard met on the pounding rocks where a woman had left a little meal when she finished pounding her corn. When the dog began to lick up the meal the lizard said, "You ought to be ashamed to eat this. All the corn on the rocks belongs to me because you have people in the village who give you food."

The dog said that this was not true. "Come to the village with me and I will show you how the people treat me," continued the dog.

The two animals went to the village together, and the dog found a hiding place for the lizard in a fence near his home. When the dog entered the hut a woman picked up a stick and drove him out. Then the dog cried as he came running from the hut, "*Tala! tala! sa ci popele,*" meaning "See! see! Didn't I say so?"

Ever since that the lizard and the dog have been great friends who may be seen on the pounding rocks eating together.

THE JERBOA AND THE LEOPARD

This story which is told at Ngalangi is essentially the same as one related at Elende, but in the latter version the dog and the hyena are the actors.

The leopard hired the jerboa to act as nurse to her cubs. While the mother leopard was absent hunting for food, the jerboa decided to eat one of these fat little leopards.

Presently the mother leopard returned and said, "Bring out the children, I will feed them."

The jerboa brought out the cubs one by one, taking care to bring out the first one twice over. Next day when the mother leopard was away the jerboa ate another cub. Again the leopard asked for her little ones. The jerboa had been placed in charge of four cubs. As two were eaten, the jerboa had to bring out each of the two remaining cubs twice over in order to satisfy the mother leopard. On the third day the jerboa ate another little leopard. When the

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

539 mother leopard returned, the jerboa brought out the only cub four times. On the fourth day the jerboa ate the last of the cubs.

When the mother leopard came home the jerboa was terrified, so said, "The cubs are not very well, you must go in the room to feed them; I cannot bring them out." When the leopard had gone into the sleeping room the jerboa ran quickly into his hole in the ground.

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538 These tales from my records were all told to me by Ngonga. It is true that some of the stories appear in the Umbundu reader [113] "Olosapo Vioku Likisa Oku Tanga" (Kamundongo, 1914). But when this book was printed Ngonga was already well acquainted with all the stories therein, and many more. Most of the tales were, and are today, an integral part of the Umbundu language.

My own inquiries had the same result as those of Chatelain in revealing a preponderance of stories of animals. Yet W. C. Bell [113] was able to collect several tales relating entirely to the adventures of human beings (*Jour. Amer. Folk-Lore*, XXXV, pp. 116–150). At times there is a didactic theme running through a tale, which emphasizes the value of courage, presence of mind, and perseverance. A sense of humor is shown in the conversations of animals and the tricks which the smaller creatures use to the discomfort of the larger animals.

538 171 Comparative study of stories told by the Ovimbundu with those from other parts of Africa opens up a field of research, especially in view of the long caravan journeys of the Ovimbundu. Chatelain narrates the Angolan story of the frog who boasted that he could ride the elephant, and contrived to do so by a clever ruse (*Jour.* [113] *Amer. Folk-Lore*, VII, p. 62). The Nigerian story of the tortoise who fulfilled the same boast is told by A. B. Ellis (Yoruba-speaking Peoples of the Slave Coast, London, 1894, p. 265).

The Ovimbundu have the story of the tortoise who made a wager with the antelope respecting a race which they agreed to run. The tortoise won the wager by placing one of his brothers at the winning post. The Umbundu version is given in "Olosapo" (p. 53), and there is a Cameroon version.

The tug-of-war story which tells of a trick played against the hippopotamus and the elephant is known to the Ovimbundu. The story has a wide distribution with local variations. Sometimes the elephant and the hippopotamus are unwittingly made to pull

5: Hambly E-5 (1929-30) 1934 FP 13 Mbundu FP13

224 764 hollow chamber. I removed a thin slab of stone which formed an entrance to a tomb of this kind and observed within two skeletons lying supine. On the top of the cairns were skulls of animals killed by the hunter. I noted one instance of the burial of a hunter's dog under a cairn of stones.

825 794 Three birds are protected by a prohibition. Esuvi is a bird which has power to steal the souls of the dead, so making them die a second death. As usual, no direct explanation was given concerning this second death, but an explanation came later, quite fortuitously. For instance, an old man said he was sick because esuvi had stolen the spirit of his grandfather. This statement is logical, since welfare depends on a beneficent interest of dead ancestors, and it is evident that dying a second death prevents a spirit from exercising a benign influence over the living. Other protected birds are one which supplies feathers from which the decorations of kings and medicine-men are made, and one whose night cry is a warning of death in a village.

226 In fishing, a division of labor is recognized: men use a rod and line, while women drag baskets against the stream or use poison in slow, shallow water. The night before poison is to be used for fishing, husband and wife must avoid intercourse, since intimacy of this kind would make the fish stay together at the bottom of the river. A man who has prepared his rod and line, by transfixing a grasshopper and attaching it to a thin piece of bark, [539] sings a song which is of the nature of a spell. He says:

> "O fish come and take your good thing.
> Do not send the little fish to spoil the good thing.
> Better you come and take the good thing with all your strength."

439 Up to half a century ago the Ovimbundu were renowned traders whose caravans penetrated deeply into the Congo region and even to the east side of Africa. It is natural, therefore, that some ritual should be connected with [443] such an important enterprise. At the present day caravans may be seen, but these are local, and most of the carriers are found to be taking their maize, beans, and beeswax to traders' stores. I believe women did not accompany the transcontinental caravans of early days, but today women may be seen in line with the other carriers. Their loads are lighter, being on the average thirty pounds as compared with sixty pounds for a man. Children also carry small loads in the caravan.

439 787 Ngonga, my chief informant, said that in former times no caravan leader would set out without having consulted the preserved head of a de- [643] ceased king. Even at present the corpse of a king is suspended by the neck and twisted until the head is severed. The head is sewn in oxhide and preserved in a box. The ancient caravan custom consisted of taking the box

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

606 being 'father', to the wife they are *ndatembo* (father-in-law). All relatives whom one considers as 'parents' are parents-in-law to one's spouse, and conversely, all whom one considers as one's 'children' are *ndatembo* (sons-in-law or daughters-in-law) to the spouse. To all these relatives-in-law is due the same pattern of respectful behaviour. Avoidance of seeing each other applies only between the *va ndatembo* of opposite sex. There is the additional prohibition that they may not eat in each other's presence. This avoidance is further extended to include one's *ndatembo* of the same sex, and also one's *nãtwã* (relatives-in-law of one's own generation). With the *nãtwã*, however, one is otherwise on free and easy terms.[1] The prohibition on eating does not apply to drinking beer or to other such casual refreshment, but only to 'hot food', i.e. to regular meals.

606 788 Avoidance of meeting (*oku liyuvuila kocipala*, lit. 'avoiding each other to the face') is especially difficult for the bride who comes to live in a village of her husband's people, a large proportion of the men of which may be *ndatembo* to her. The prohibition may be lifted by going through a simple ceremony in which each rubs a little oil on the other. The woman rubs oil on the breast, the face, and the right arm of her *ndatembo*, while he in turn rubs oil from the same dish on her breast and on the braids of her forehead. Avoidance of eating in each other's presence may be done away with after some months by sacrificing a chicken and feeding it ceremonially together with maize porridge to the *ndatembo* or *nãtwã* (throwing it into her mouth, mouthful by mouthful), with the attendance of the immediate family. It is especially important that these ceremonies be carried through with respect (*esumbilo*).

The avoidance of the name, whether of husband and wife, or of the parents-in-law, must be maintained: the names must not be pronounced. Many euphemisms are resorted to when it becomes 606 necessary to speak of or to these relatives-in-law. This is one 551 reason why the parents themselves take the name of their first-born, prefixing *Na*, 'mother of', and *Sa*, 'father of'. Thus the parents of *Kambõtiã* are known as *Nakambõtiã* and *Sakambõtiã*. This name may be pronounced. This is also probably one reason for extend-

[1] See the folk-tale in which the man who knows the speech of the red ants gives away his knowledge by laughing out *while his sister-in-law is braiding his hair*.

1: Childs M-S (1934-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

ing to the wife all the relationships which are the husband's and 606
vice versa. Thus by courtesy the parents-in-law are spoken of not 551
as *ndatembo*, but *Mai* (my mother) and *Tate* (my father). The
same extension also applies to all of the kin of the spouse and for all kinship terms both direct and reciprocal. Another reason for this is the mutual respect which is a principal basis of the Umbundu marriage.[1]

There remains one important matter necessary to an under- 582
standing of the Umbundu concept of relationship by marriage. To the Ovimbundu the proper, or at least the most desirable, marriage is a marriage within the circle of kin. 'Formerly people never married unless they were related, that is to say, unless they touched the blood together. If in the mother's kin (*koluina*), only on the side of the bow (i.e. male line). If in the father's kin (*koluse*), only on the side of the basket (i.e. female line).'[2] Upon closer consideration it becomes evident which of the relatives one may marry. It would not be possible to marry any who are classed as brother, sister, father, mother, grandparent, child, or grandchild, for such a union would involve incest (*oku ndõ*). The relatives whom one may marry are, then, those of one's own age-level who belong to classes other than the above-mentioned. An ideal mate of one's own generation is a cross-cousin classed as *Epalume* or *Cepua* (Class A. 4, p. 47). Beside this, a woman may marry one classed as her mother's brother (Class D. 3, p. 48), and a man one classed as his father's sister (Class D. 4, p. 48), if of appropriate age. One may also marry an *ocimumba* (Class J. 2, p. 49). Hambly remarked that 'cross-cousin marriage . . . is the functional form among the Ovimbundu'.[3] This is true, but only in part, for not only are there many relatives other than his cross-cousin whom an Ocimbundu may marry, but the financial arrangements are quite other than those usually associated with the cross-cousin marriage.

[1] While I do not pretend to believe that 'respect' is the only or even the main reason for the observances described, it seems sufficiently important to receive the attention which I have given it.

[2] Verbatim translation of statement by Likuhuta Samikanje, elder of the school village at Ngendo (Kasonge).

[3] Hambly, op. cit., p. 194. In reporting the replies of his informant as to whom he could marry, with regard to the marriage of father's sister's daughter, the reply was that it was possible but not desirable 'because the children will be stupid'. The reason assigned was evidently taken from European ideas, but the reply also indicates a preference for marriage within the olunu, which I have also had from many but not from all informants.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

The Ovimbundu are not ordinary cannibals, if indeed that term may be applied to any people in Africa, nor do the commoners of the Ovimbundu ever eat human flesh on their own account, but no king may ever reign or be considered as regularly enthroned until he has 'eaten Ekongo'.[1] The cannibalism traditionally ascribed to Wambu-Kalunga is also a case in point.[2] Other human sacrifices practised by the 'Jagas' and described by Battell also have their counterparts in the practices of the Umbundu kingdoms.[3] The mode of the burial of the dead described by Battell[4] is essentially that which has been used, at least until the last few years, for the kings and the other 'holy'[5] men of the Ovimbundu, except that where rock caves are available the use of them has been adopted and in Kasongi cairns were used. The sitting posture and the sacrifice of wives or slaves and cattle (or of substitutes) are the important points, and these have everywhere been used for the classes mentioned, until quite recently.

The custom of keeping boys captured from the enemy and training them to be fearless warriors amid the terrors of the country has a parallel in the Umbundu custom of the king's slaves,[6] who came from another land[7] and would therefore do the king's bidding without fear, favour, or consideration of family feeling. They often reached high position and certain of the king's ministers always came from among them. There seem to be many recollections of the 'Jagas' in the customs of the kings' sons.[8] Names of certain of the officials seem to have survived, as, for example, Mani (*mulil*) Lumbo, Mani-Curio (*Mulkelia*), Golambolo (*Ngulamboli*), Tendala (*Candala*), Ukuetambo,[9] &c. Careful linguistic studies would doubtless reveal many remains of the speech

[1] *Oku lia Ekongo*—lit. 'to eat the Old One'. This is a ritual feast in which the flesh of a specially fattened slave is eaten mixed with the flesh of various animals. See Ravenstein, op. cit., p. 33, note 3. Magyar described this custom, calling it '*Ouri-Kongo*', op. cit., pp. 275 ff.

[2] See *supra*, p. 176.

[3] Compare Ravenstein, op. cit. [4] Op. cit., p. 34 f.

[5] 'Holy' in the sense of spirit possessed—the king, the hunter, the medical practitioner, and the smith.

[6] *Ocindali* *ocoma*, singular. May there be some recollection of 'Kinguri' (=Cinguli) in this word?

[7] In Bailundu the *ocindali* *ocoma* (plural) came mostly from Lunda, i.e. the Songo country across the Kutuxa—further evidence of connexion with Lunda emigrants.

[8] *Ondili* *ombomba*, used collectively of all the royal families of the Ovimbundu.

[9] Cavazzi, op. cit., pp. 206 f., 221.

relative after whom he is named.[1]

(b) Ordinarily the baby is named by the father from his family. According to Ennis,[2] the first male child is usually named after the paternal grandfather, the first female child after the paternal grandmother; the next two or three children are named after paternal uncles and aunts, and then the mother may choose a name. Childs writes that the name may be given by the mother if the father's family has a bad record of deaths and illnesses.

(c) The name must not prejudice but assist the child's chance of survival; thus a child born after the death of several siblings may be given an insignificant name, intended to cause the spirits to overlook it, or to consider it less than human.

(d) Events or persons prominent at the birth may influence the choice. A namesake, whether intentional or not, is known as *Sundo* (from the Portuguese word for saint). Events at the time of birth may be summed up in a proverb, of which the key word is the name. Ennis gives numerous examples of such names.[3]

(e) The same names may belong to several families of a type, e.g. trading or farming families, or the families of paramount chiefs, who were jealous of their names and did not permit their use by commoners.

Parents take the name of their first-born: thus "Nanjamba" is "the mother of Njamba". During illness a person may change his name to draw away the attention of the spirits. Adolescents discard their birth names and choose new ones.[4]

Infancy

During the first six months the child sleeps with his mother and during the day is carried in a cloth on her back, and fed whenever he demands milk. If the mother has no helper, she works in the fields with the baby on her back. An older sister or other young relative may play with the infant within hearing distance of the mother.

Between six and twelve months the child is taught to sit; when he can do this he is no longer a baby *(onana)* but an ocisemba (toddler). A child rarely walks before the age of 24 months, since he is carried and held so much.

Weaning: a child goes every day with his mother to the fields; each month he becomes fatter and heavier, but he usually continues like this until after the second birthday. When he can walk, he may be left during the day with his young nurse (older sister, cross-cousin or other relative) and not fed until the mother returns during the afternoon. The process of weaning begins then at this stage but is usually not completed till a year or two later, unless another baby intervenes. Those who take longer than usual in weaning may, however, be frightened away from the breast.[5]

(1) Childs, op.cit., p.87.
(2) 1945.
(3) op.cit.
(4) Childs, loc.cit.
(5) Childs, op.cit., p.93.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

608 sometimes made between husband and wife, at night and in secret. People say that those who exchange blood will die at the same time.

NAMING

553 551 In addition to the words chosen to describe twins, there are some points of importance in connection with the naming of children. The father and mother change their names when the first child, male or female, is born, but there is no change of name at the birth of subsequent children. In a certain family the name of the first child, a girl, was Vitundo. The name of her father, which was Cingandu, was abandoned; he became Savitundo, "the father of Vitundo." The mother's name of Visolela was changed to Navitundo, "the mother of Vitundo."

If the first child dies, the parents dislike their names; they therefore revert to their original names. When another baby is born, the parents again change their names in the way described. A posthumous child is called Lusati. A child born after twins is Kasinda, which means "to push." Twins are called the Lion and the Elephant, or the Elephant and the Hippopotamus. There are no secret names. The names of the dead must not be mentioned; the deceased is referred to as "the one who has gone." Children may change their own names at the age of about sixteen years, and actually do so if their names are distasteful to them. Ngonga's friend, named Katito ("little"), changed his name to Mukayita (meaning not known). Ngonga's sister, named Ndumbila (meaning not known), changed her name to Cilingobenda, which means "It is a pity." I met a chief near Bailundu who was called Kandimba, meaning "the Little Hare."

There may be a change of name during sickness. A man now named Katahali suffered sickness in addition to other misfortunes. His sickness recurred, so he changed his name from Kopiongo to Katahali. The meaning of the former name is not known. The new name, Ka tala chali, means "He who has seen trouble"; Katahali is an abbreviation. Another instance of change of name, also in the village of Cilembo, was that of a man who changed his name from Lumingu to Kaihemba, which means "the one who lives by medicine"; because without medicine he would have died. A sick child may receive a bad name, for instance, the name Pig. If one or more children have died a subsequent child receives an ugly name with a bad meaning. There is no totemism, but children may be named after animals. A girl is sometimes named Kambundu ("a little frog"). Other names for females are Esenje ("the rock where corn

is pounded") and Cisengu ("a small bird with a long tail"). A boy may be Kangwe ("the little leopard"). 553 551

Names sometimes give an indication of descent. Ngonga's full name is Ngonga Kalei Liahuka, Ngonga ("eagle"), Kalei ("one who works for the king"), Liahuka (the father's surname). Ngonga's sister is Cinyañala ("the old basket"). This was the name of her father's father's sister. As the father of Cinyañala is Liahuka, the daughter is surnamed Yaliahuka (*ya*, "of"). The father chooses the names of the three first children whether boys or girls. The mother chooses the name of the fourth child whether male or female. If the child is a boy, the mother probably chooses the name of her brother or of her father's brother. When a first son is born, the father usually gives the name of his father; for example, Ngonga's father's father was Ngonga. If the first baby is a girl the father chooses the name of his sister. Ages are not known, but reckoning of age goes back five years by counting the number of times maize has been sown; maize is planted each October. The period from sowing to sowing is *ulima*.

If a man has a child by a woman who is not a wife or a concubine, the woman keeps the child for eight or ten years. The man must give the mother a cloth in which to carry her illegitimate baby, also oil for her hair. Sometimes the girl will go to the father of her child to be his concubine, but her parents will not let her do so if he has a bad reputation. To bear a child out of wedlock is a disgrace. 848

TERMS OF RELATIONSHIP

In preparing the following tables Ngonga was the ego, or, male speaker, and each term is given in relation to himself, with its reciprocal. The tables give firstly Ngonga's own generation, then his ascendants, and finally some of his descendants. Tables E and F are diagrammatic forms of tables A–D. 601

TABLE A

(See Table E III)

NGONGA'S OWN GENERATION

Terms in italics are Umbundu names either for persons or for kindred classes. Reciprocals are placed in brackets; W.S. means, "woman speaking."

Ukai wange is my wife; *aketa*, which means "spouse," is a modern form of address for husbands and wives when speaking to each other (*wenange*, my husband).

Kota or *kuse* is my elder brother (*mame wange* or *manja*, younger brother).

Kota or *kasange* is my elder sister. An elder brother speaking to his sister calls her by name, or he uses the term *mbuale*. When speaking of her he says *wakai wange* (*mame wange* or *manjange*, younger brother). The same terms are used in the same way to apply to my father's brother's son, and my

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

servant of mine explaining how the Mwekalia chose the chief said, giving me a comparison: 'The Bishop of Nova Lisboa thinks "This priest has sense" and so makes him the superior of a mission'.[6] The disintegration of the old political system, and the association of its representatives with the ritual values which are no longer very significant for the mass of Ovimbundu, has destroyed the old pyramid of authority and prestige. The people associate demands and punishment, for which they seem to receive very little in return, with the post. Many draw a distinction between the actual *chefe* and the government, which they regard as benevolent and ignorant of the behaviour of its representatives. Despite such expressions of loyalty as the singing of the Portuguese national anthem at village parties the 'government' is too distant and shadowy for the Ovimbundu to have much knowledge of it. Nor has the post tried effectively to build up new types of bureaucratic authority in the villages—the government headmen are not given sufficient backing or responsibility by the post to do more than execute its orders.

Hence, the establishment of new types of grouping and leadership at the local level has been the work of the missions, and it is through the missions that these new groupings are articulated on to the total Angolan social system. The missionaries, who provide this articulation between the 'civilized' society and the local organization of the natives, form the section of the 'civilized' population which most satisfies, in its relations with the people, the expectations of the Africans.

To use another term, it is within the Catholic and Protestant Churches that Ovimbundu most clearly identify themselves. Baptism identifies an individual by giving him a name, hence Christians object to non-baptized people identifying themselves in this way. To an individual baptism is significant since it is concerned with his destiny. By it also he identifies himself with the 'civilized' population and achieves a new status superior to that of the pagans. The newly-born child of Christian parents will be given a Christian name and also an Umbundu name from one already held by a dead kinsman.[7] A few villagers

[6] Actually responsibility for appointing superiors of mission largely belongs to the superior of the Nova Lisboa district of the Congregação do Espírito Santo.

[7] For Umbundu names, see Elizabeth Smith, *Africa Studies* (Johannesburg) March 1945.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

795 attempt to take on European surnames. Alternatively, a man
551 may take his father's name and attempt to use it as a surname. Thus Joaõ Batista Tjindandi, a resident of Epalanga, had received Joaõ Batista in baptism, and had taken Tjindandi, his father's name, as a surname. This is, however, not at all a general trend. Even a village of mixed Christian-pagan population may be known by the name of its school, identifying itself by its Christian name.

795 A man identifies himself also with social change and with
554 progress by 'entering the school'. When a small girl, whom I asked if she had 'entered into the school' replied 'Not at all', her elder sister's husband remarked: 'She is asleep'. In the general Angolan society the religious referent is the most status-giving type of reference that most Ovimbundu can give.

186 There is no very marked feeling in the superiority of one area of
554 Umbundu country to another nor even is there a marked sense of the superiority of Ovimbundu to other tribes—thus the Kimbundu will be highly praised for the degree of European culture they have acquired. The very word Ovimbundu is used as an equivalent of '*pretos*' (blacks) a word not used of 'civilized' Africans, since it is indicative of the lowest colour-class. As a Christian, a man has a status which he shares with Europeans.

797 He can also identify himself not only in a general way with
649 the Europeans but more particularly with the general church organization. There is much closer contact between the authority-figures of the church organization and the people than between the authority-figures of the administration and the natives. Thus all Catholics in the Nova Lisboa diocese are confirmed by the Bishop of Nova Lisboa, and have seen him—similarly many of the Protestant Ovimbundu know of Dr. Childs, the headmaster of the Protestant secondary school at Dondi, through having heard him preach at a conference. Some Christian villagers would know the names of pioneer missionaries. Little is known by the people about the personalities or duties of the senior members of their administration, and even their titles are not properly understood.

795 The religious differences which exist at local level have no
649 marked significance in the relations of natives to the post. In certain circumstances a pagan may appeal to a Christian

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

The rules about avoidance at night are still kept. The prohibitions on a man borrowing his father's clothes and sleeping in the same room as his father seem to survive. The prohibition on a child speaking the name of his father or mother reported by Childs is not, and was not formerly, found in this area. It is, however, wrong for a child to address his parents by name.

Children begin to work in the fields when they are about six. Occasionally boys of 10 to 11 go to the coffee fields for two months work, but usually boys do not go out to work until they are about 14 or 15.

A boy going out to work should ask his father's permission to go though this is not always done. Returning from work whether contract labour or voluntary work a boy should bring presents to his relatives. He would be expected to give something, say, a jacket, to his father, and a cloth to his mother, on returning from voluntary work and a shirt to his father on coming back from contract labour. These gifts should be made in kind. Money lent from son to father should be repaid, though it is wrong for a son to enforce payment by appealing to the post for policemen. A father may give money to his son for bridewealth, and may suggest a choice of bride. He cannot constrain, nor could he in the past, his son and daughter to a marriage they do not wish.

A man cannot be said to have real authority over his grown sons. The stated norm is that a man's sons stay in the same village till he dies. He has no power to make them do so, and they are not condemned by public opinion if they live elsewhere. A man's attitude to classificatory 'fathers' is determined by the age, status, and personalities of those involved, rather than by jural rights and obligations. I have found men unable to tell me what had become of their own brothers' children.

Formerly when the father of an adolescent boy died he would join the household of a father's brother. Nowadays this would be much less likely, as it is common for such a boy to settle with other categories of kin, notably siblings and maternal kinsfolk. A man is free to stay with his brothers if he wishes, or to leave them.

While the tie between full brothers is held to be the strongest, as regards classificatory brothers there seems to be a slight

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

553 *Naming* (*oku luka*). The Ovimbundu name their children with great care. It is important to name a first-born (*uveli*) on the day of its birth, but if the child is evidently weak and not likely to live, they wait a few days. Names are in a sense family property and given over and over again. In naming the baby several factors may be taken into consideration:

1. The name (*onduko*) should have been borne by an ancestor, whether living or dead, whose character and state of well-being are satisfactory.

2. Ordinarily the baby is named by the father from his family unless there should be some reason for not doing so, in which case the name is given by the mother from her family, but if either family has a bad record for deaths or other misfortunes, that may prevent the parents following the custom, for

3. The name must not prejudice but rather assist the child's chance of survival. Thus a child born after the death of several siblings may be given an insignificant name, intended to cause the spirits to overlook it or to consider it as less than human, as, for example, *Katekāvā*, Little-black-thing; *Cīvī*, Bad; *Mbili*, I-do-not-know-it; *Kacinyama*, Little animal; *Kalūsuē*, Nit; *Cilūlū*, Ghost; *Vimbuandu*, Filth; or even *Kaniña*, Little excrement. A child may be given a name never used in the family if extreme measures to prevent its recognition by the spirits are thought necessary.

4. Events or persons prominent at the time of birth may influence the choice. A namesake, whether intentional or not, is known as *Sando* (from the Portuguese *santo* (saint), and the Roman Catholic custom of naming after the saints). Events of the time of birth or its calendric period may be summed up in a proverb or a sentence, a keyword of which is used as the name.[1]

[424] 5. While names remain in a family, some names may belong to several families. Certain names belong to families predominantly agricultural, others to trading or wealthy families, others to kings' families, &c. Kings' families were especially jealous of their names and commoners were not allowed to use them.

As already explained, parents take the name of their first-born. Should the child die young, the name will not be retained. During illness a person may change his name, taking one calcu-

[1] *Vide* E. L. Ennis, 'Women's names among the Ovimbundu', *African Studies* (Johannesburg), March 1945.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

lated either to cause the spirits to pass him by or to facilitate his 553
cure. In adolescence young people discard the names with which they were born and name themselves (*oku lisapa*) according to their own choice. I have collected the explanations for about two hundred names.

The names of children are used, and that is one reason for 553
choosing them with care, for the name will be heard often by the 775
spirits. It is his superiors and those with whom he has respect-relationships whose names one may not pronounce. A child's name may be affected by whether there are recently deceased siblings, but he is not the reincarnation of such a one. Rather, he may reincarnate an ancestor. This is doubtless one reason for naming him after an ancestor. This, however, is a subject for treatment elsewhere.

The Period of Lying-in (*Ocitete*)[1]

'During lying-in the work of the mother is to cause the cord to 846
fall from the navel of her child. On the navel she rubs castor-bean charcoal mixed with palm oil, or palm oil mixed with ashes, or with the soot from burning a sleeping-mat of reeds. A chicken feather is required from a wing or the tail, to dip it in the soot. That is done day by day until the navel is freed.' It must be noted that although a large percentage of the babies get infected navels, this does not seem to be as serious among the Ovimbundu as with us. 'For the bed of mother and baby are spread leaves that it may be soft, if possible leaves of the *ongonguila* tree. Over the leaves [824]
are spread a sleeping-mat (*esisa*) and some little cloths. During that time the mother does not sleep in the dark. The father must bring firewood and firelogs that it may be warm and light in the house, so that if the baby defecates in the night, it may be wiped properly.' No cloths or diapers are used for babies either at this period or later. An additional reason given for having a good fire in the hut is that the baby is supposed to be very much afraid of the dark.

'During those first days the women come to entertain[2] the mother and to hold the baby. Some bring meal and meat, some meal and beans, some porridge and relish, some sour beer and

[1] *Ocitete* seems to be derived from *oku teta*, to cut, in reference to the cutting of the cord.

[2] *Oku poka*, to provide for and entertain, as for a guest.

233 The cattle herd obtains most of its food by grazing, but in the dry season the grass withers. Childs states[1] that "Herding has been a [609] function of the sister's son, and even now there is a reluctance on the part of the boys to herd for their fathers."

235 462 [844] Chickens are owned and looked after by both men and women, but other animals only by men. Boys may have small stock of their own, and a boy's economic independence most frequently begins with his owning a chicken.

231 Hambly states that goats are more common than any other animal, and that every family has one or more. These animals are not fed or watered, but are allowed to wander to find their own sustenance. Goats are not milked. Young males are castrated. The goat is frequently used in sacrifices. Sheep also are allowed to find their own food; the males are not castrated. Pigs are cared for comparatively carefully, receiving water and a daily supply of sweet potatoes and their leaves, together with some corn. Male pigs are castrated.[2]

APICULTURE[3]

[439] Beeswax was an important item of trade in the caravan days, and is still sold to Portuguese traders' stores, where it is massed into large rectangular cakes for export. Honey is eaten alone or with manioc, and [262] a fermented beer called *ochasa* is made by adding honey to corn-beer. [273] Fibre strainers are used for cleaning the wax, and large shallow baskets [252] are employed for drying the honey in the sun.

Large cylindrical hives, which are private property, are placed high in the trees. These are made by removing a cylinder of bark and lashing the halves together with strands of bark, forming a hive which has a diameter of one foot.

In Elende honey is removed from the hives during the months of August and December. One man ascends the tree in order to lower the hive with a long rope of bark or plaited fibre, while beneath the tree men are prepared to take the hive, which is opened over a smoky fire.

ARTS AND CRAFTS

326 782 *Smithing*. The profession of blacksmith or *ocivinda* is an important one, and, like hunting and divining, is sacred and is entered with special ritual. Often, but not always, these three professions are passed on by inheritance. For smithing two years' apprenticeship to a member of the profession is necessary, and is usually entered upon at the age of eighteen. At the end of this period the master examines his pupil, and makes tools for him, especially the heavy hammer or *onjundo* which is regarded as symbolic of his craft. For the inauguration ceremony the boy provides four chickens (2 male, 2 female), a dog, and a goat; the blood of these animals is sprinkled on his tools, and their flesh is eaten at a feast [553] attended by the villagers. Throughout the procedure the boy remains standing on the small anvil. Finally he is asked to choose his professional name; he then steps down from the anvil a qualified blacksmith.

(1) Childs, 1949, p.109. (2) Hambly, op.cit., p.154.
(3) Hambly, (4) 1934.

769 They intimate their wishes to their descendants only through slight illness, usually asking for honour to be paid to them by a feast, or by some descendant carrying on their profession.

Osande is the spirit of the much-honoured founder of the family,(1) and is always beneficent, bringing good fortune and warning his descendants of danger. Hambly and Tucker agree that *Ekisi* is the same kind of spirit as *Osande* (although Hambly does not give *Osande* this special meaning). Tucker writes that *Ekisi* is a benevolent spirit who calls the villagers together at night, and gives them advice through a medium (?), whom he enters without the latter's going into the usual trance. *Kandundu* according to Tucker is an *ekisi* who holds the leading position among the ancestral spirits owing to his seniority. Hambly describes a shrine to *Kandundu* at Bailundu; anyone who sees the contents of the shrine is supposed to become blind. He writes that *Kandundu* is thought of as "the spirit of dreaming who makes swellings on the body", but gives no further explanation. According to Tucker *Kandundu* is an especially powerful *ondele*, and ceremonies performed for him have many distinctive features.

776 769 [778]

Huvi, the spirit of the hunt, has his own shrine and priest in the village of the (paramount?) chief. His hut is very large, since all the meat of the hunts is placed in it. In front of it dances are held, and poles are decorated with skulls and other trophies of hunting. Before the door there is a carved figure of *Samemba*, the spirit who chases the game towards the hunter. A man whose ritual name is *Kapila*, and a woman called *Kuanja*(2) are in charge of the spirit-hut of *Huvi*, and make supplication to him for success in hunting. Hunters living elsewhere but in an *ombala* or head village do not have persons bearing these ritual names, but their dogs are often called *Huvi*, *Samemba*, *Kapila* or *Kuanja*.

224 776 778 [553]

The most dreaded spirits are the *otulopokopoko*, who may be spirits of still-born babies or foetuses, mental defectives, maltreated slaves, or persons, especially children, killed by sorcery. When a person has been found guilty of killing a child by sorcery or witchcraft, he is sentenced to "restore life" to it, which he does by substituting for it a child from his own family: if the deceased child is a girl, he must give an ox as well. The child is treated with great respect by his new family. If however the parents do not ask the sorcerer or witch for restitution, the child becomes an *okalupokopoko*, and may return to "eat" other children, at the command of the sorcerer who has killed it.

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RITUAL

It has been noted that the village headman acts as priest for the *oluse*, the group of paternally-related persons who form the basis of the village group, while the head of the *oluina* acts as priest for his dispersed, maternally-related group.(3) There is little detailed information on the religious duties of these priests. Cushman(4) describes the village headman as making public prayers each morning to Suku. Childs however points out(5) that it is more usual for the headman to spend a

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(1) i.e. of either the *oluse* or the *oluina*. (Childs, personal communication)
(2) According to Childs, (1949, p.21) *Kuanja* is a hunting goddess.
(3) See above, p.28.
(4) 1944, p.51. (5) Personal communication.

683 One of the commonest forms of punishment for sorcery was, and still is, banishment. Only the chief could pronounce the death penalty. Charges of sorcery are sometimes brought today to civil courts and to church courts under the guise of "poisoning".(1)

781 There are obvious gaps in the information on Umbundu religion and magic e.g. on spirits other than those of ancestors; on ritual connected
776 with the ancestors; on productive and protective magic; on the work of the medicine-man as distinct from the diviner, and on the functions of
171 the two separate offices of family priest. From existing accounts, however, Umbundu magico-religious concepts would appear to have much in common with those of the peoples to the east of the Plateau, and many of the words used for these concepts *(ngombo, ahamba, wanga, nganga* e.g.*)* are in fact the same. These peoples have been described in another section of the Survey.(2)

THE LIFE CYCLE

852 Childs' chapters on infancy, childhood, and adolescence form the
114 main part of his book, and his treatment of the subject is much more detailed and on a deeper level than information offered by other writers,(3) and should be consulted.

BIRTH

844 A woman remains in her husband's village for the birth of her children. During the first birth, she is generally assisted by older women of the village, usually relatives of the husband. No man is present unless delayed labour entails the presence of a medical practitioner, or a
[845] diviner. Difficult delivery is said to be caused by broken taboos, adultery on the part of the mother, sorcery, or the woman's own refusal to give birth. There is little ceremony connected with childbirth, and a woman may give birth to her second and later children alone when she is
[846] in the fields. There is a customary lying-in period until the cord falls from the navel, but this is frequently ignored today.

845 *Twins* are welcomed but are considered prodigies whose birth requires the administrations of an *ocimbanda.*(4) Soon after the birth, and every month while the children are growing, the whole village takes part in a ceremony to preserve their lives. In the case of triplets, one is given to the paramount chief.(5)

553 *Naming* usually takes place, in the case of a first-born, on the day of its birth. Childs notes several factors:

(a) The name *(onduko)* should have been borne by a relative, whether living or dead, whose character and state of well-being are satisfactory; sometimes the child may be considered the re-incarnation of the deceased relative after whom he is named.†

(1) Childs, personal communication. (2) McCulloch, 1951, pp.72-83.
(3) Hambly, (2) 1934, pp.212-33, and Cushman, 1944.
(4) Ennis, 1945. (5) Childs, 1949, p.83.

† [Childs, op. cit, p. 87-]

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relative after whom he is named.[1]

(b) Ordinarily the baby is named by the father from his family. According to Ennis,[2] the first male child is usually named after the paternal grandfather, the first female child after the paternal grandmother; the next two or three children are named after paternal uncles and aunts, and then the mother may choose a name. Childs writes that the name may be given by the mother if the father's family has a bad record of deaths and illnesses. 553

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During the first six months the child sleeps with his mother and during the day is carried in a cloth on her back, and fed whenever he demands milk. If the mother has no helper, she works in the fields with the baby on her back. An older sister or other young relative may play with the infant within hearing distance of the mother. 853

Between six and twelve months the child is taught to sit; when he can do this he is no longer a baby *(onana)* but an *ocisembe* (toddler). A child rarely walks before the age of 24 months, since he is carried and held so much. 856

Weaning: a child goes every day with his mother to the fields; each month he becomes fatter and heavier, but he usually continues like this until after the second birthday. When he can walk, he may be left during the day with his young nurse (elder sister, cross-cousin or other relative) and not fed until the mother returns during the afternoon. The process of weaning begins then at this stage but is usually not completed till a year or two later, unless another baby intervenes. Those who take longer than usual in weaning may, however, be frightened away from the breast.[5] 862

(1) Childs, op.cit., p.87.
(2) 1045.
(3) op.cit.
(4) Childs, loc.cit.
(5) Childs, op.cit., p.93.

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NAMING

553 551 In addition to the words chosen to describe twins, there are some points of importance in connection with the naming of children. The father and mother change their names when the first child, male or female, is born, but there is no change of name at the birth of subsequent children. In a certain family the name of the first child, a girl, was Vitundo. The name of her father, which was Cingandu, was abandoned; he became Savitundo, "the father of Vitundo." The mother's name of Visolela was changed to Navitundo, "the mother of Vitundo."

If the first child dies, the parents dislike their names; they therefore revert to their original names. When another baby is born, the parents again change their names in the way described. A posthumous child is called Lusati. A child born after twins is Kasinda, which means "to push." Twins are called the Lion and the Elephant, or the Elephant and the Hippopotamus. There are no secret names. The names of the dead must not be mentioned; the deceased is referred to as "the one who has gone." Children may change their own names at the age of about sixteen years, and actually do so if their names are distasteful to them. Ngonga's friend, named Katito ("little"), changed his name to Mukayita (meaning not known). Ngonga's sister, named Ndumbila (meaning not known), changed her name to Cilingohenda, which means "It is a pity." I met a chief near Bailundu who was called Kandimba, meaning "the Little Hare."

There may be a change of name during sickness. A man now named Katahali suffered sickness in addition to other misfortunes. His sickness recurred, so he changed his name from Kopiongo to Katahali. The meaning of the former name is not known. The new name, Ka tala ohali, means "He who has seen trouble"; Katahali is an abbreviation. Another instance of change of name, also in the village of Cilembo, was that of a man who changed his name from Lumingu to Kaihemba, which means "the one who lives by medicine"; because without medicine he would have died. A sick child may receive a bad name, for instance, the name Pig. If one or more children have died a subsequent child receives an ugly name with a bad meaning. There is no totemism, but children may be named after animals. A girl is sometimes named Kambundu ("little frog"). Other names for females are Esenje ("the rock where corn

is pounded") and Cisengu ("a small bird with a long tail"). A boy may be Kangwe ("the little leopard"). 553 551

Names sometimes give an indication of descent. Ngonga's full name is Ngonga Kalei Liahuka, Ngonga ("eagle"), Kalei ("one who works for the king"), Liahuka (the father's surname). Ngonga's sister is Cinyañala ("the old basket"). This was the name of her father's father's sister. As the father of Cinyañala is Liahuka, the daughter is surnamed Yaliahuka (*ya*, "of"). The father chooses the names of the three first children whether boys or girls. The mother chooses the name of the fourth child whether male or female. If the child is a boy, the mother probably chooses the name of her brother or of her father's brother. When a first son is born, the father usually gives the name of his father; for example, Ngonga's father's father was Ngonga. If the first baby is a girl the father chooses the name of his sister. Ages are not known, but reckoning of age goes back five years by counting the number of times maize has been sown; maize is planted each October. The period from sowing to sowing is *ulima*.

If a man has a child by a woman who is not a wife or a concubine, the woman keeps the child for eight or ten years. The man must give the mother a cloth in which to carry her illegitimate baby, also oil for her hair. Sometimes the girl will go to the father of her child to be his concubine, but her parents will not let her do so if he has a bad reputation. To bear a child out of wedlock is a disgrace. 848

TERMS OF RELATIONSHIP

In preparing the following tables Ngonga was the ego, or, male speaker, and each term is given in relation to himself, with its reciprocal. The tables give firstly Ngonga's own generation, then his ascendants, and finally some of his descendants. Tables E and F are diagrammatic forms of tables A–D. 601

TABLE A

(*See Table E III*)

NGONGA'S OWN GENERATION

Terms in italics are Umbundu names either for persons or for kindred classes. Reciprocals are placed in brackets; W.S. means, "woman speaking."

Ukai wange is my wife; *ukatu*, which means "spouse," is a modern form of address for husbands and wives when speaking to each other (*weyange*, my husband).

Kota or *huca* is my elder brother (*mume wange* or *manja*, younger brother).

Kota or *hucange* is my elder sister. An elder brother speaking to his sister calls her by name, or he uses the term *mbuale*. When speaking of her he says *mukai wange* (*mume wange* or *manjange*, younger brother). The same terms are used in the same way to apply to my father's brother's son, and my

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

881 292 During the period of isolation costumes for the dance are made. These consist of clothing of tightly fitting, coarse netting, masks, and girdles which are for the use of only those boys who have been circumcised. The feasts and dances celebrating the conclusion of initiatory rites are of great importance. Women are not supposed to know that the operation of circumcision is taking place, and they are taught that *ovinganji* are supernatural beings who have sprung up from the earth; therefore every effort is made to conceal masks and costumes from the sight of women and the uninitiated. No female is allowed to go near the enclosure where novices are confined.

881 A few days after observing the costumes and dances of the newly initiated boys at Katoko I was in the Ngalangi region at the village of Ngongo, about a hundred miles to the north of Katoko. At Ngalangi two boys of the Ovimbundu were questioned with regard to their experiences in the initiation camp.

It is certain that initiation ceremonies are held at irregular intervals and not more frequently than once in four years. The name given to the ceremonies for boys in the Ngalangi area is *ocinganji* (*oci*, "big"; *nganji*, "judge," or a masked person). When there is a number of boys who have not been circumcised, these approach the oldest men to ask for a circumcision ceremony. The old men visit the *sekulu* ("headman") of the village to request that arrangements shall be made. An *ocimbanda* ("medicine-man"), assisted by other men, prepares a camp in a wooded area. Usually the father of each boy has to arrange that a tutor shall accompany his son to the camp, but sometimes as many as three boys have the same guardian. The guardian receives a small fee, possibly nothing more valuable than a chicken.

The camp is made on the side of a stream remote from the village. Each boy takes a chicken to the camp for the purpose of making a special meal, which is given at the name-changing ceremony which follows initiation. The chicken is eaten soon after the boy has been circumcised. The boy changes his own name for a new one which is announced in the village from which he came. While circumcision is in progress the enclosure is surrounded by male drummers and men who shout, so that any noise made by the boys during circumcision will not be heard.

The period spent in camp is uncertain, probably from three to six months. The rule is that camp is not disbanded until every boy is healed; which means that the confinement may be greatly

5: Hambly E-5 (1929-30) 1934 FP 13 Mbundu FP13

326 merly obtained. Blacksmiths now smelt scrap-iron from European sources.
[582] Among the Ovimbundu, blacksmiths are restricted in marriage only by those kinship laws arising from their classificatory system of relationships, and the operation of a system of cross-cousin marriage. The smiths are not an endogamous group, and the occupation is not hereditary.

But despite these differences, which are not quite in harmony with the general body of custom relating to Negro blacksmiths, the Ovimbundu preserve ritual which is part of a widely distributed attitude toward workers in iron.

When a boy begins his training he should be about eighteen years of age and physically robust. He is required to collect and soften fragments of iron in the charcoal fire, to work the bellows, and to beat iron on the anvil, but for a time he is not allowed to make implements, the chief of which are hoe blades and axe heads. At the end of two years the novice asks his master to examine him, and preparations are made for an inauguration ceremony should the youth have proved sufficiently skilled to become an independent blacksmith.

326 On the day of initiation the boy has to buy four chickens, two male and
782 two female, one pup, and a goat. The master blacksmith has already made a complete set of tools for presentation to his pupil, but the big hammer (onjundo) is not quite completed until the day of initiation. While the final touches are being given to this object the novice stands still on a small stone anvil which is situated between the forge and the large anvil.

When the hammer is completed, and while it is still red hot, it is thrust into the belly of the pup provided by the novice. The goat and the four chickens are killed and some of their blood is sprinkled over the new tools which are gathered in a heap. The blacksmiths invite their friends to feast on the flesh of the sacrificed animals.

326 The boy remains standing on the anvil[1] until the master says, "You may
●553 speak and tell us what name you want." Perhaps the boy says, "I am Ndumbu;" then the people clap hands and trill with their fingers in their open mouths. My interpreter said, "The boy will work hard and people will pay him. He used to work hard but his master took the pay."

326 Near the large anvil may be seen one or more wooden figures which are
778 still regarded as essential to the work of the blacksmith. I was informed that a blacksmith owes his skill to the aid of a spirit of some person he has killed, and that this spirit uses the wooden figure as a dwelling place. If this information is reliable the wooden figure is of the nature of a shrine, but I was not able to learn of any ceremony for inducing a spirit into the wooden figure. The impression left was that the spirit of the murdered person re-

1 [i.e., on the day of initiation of apprentice blacksmith. -- Analyst]

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

The Village Headman

622 The village headman (*Sekulu yimbo*) is in a very real sense the father of the villagers. Considering their relationship to him as shown by the survey of Ngendo, it is no surprise to find that to nearly all of the householders the headman is quite literally either 'father' (*tate*) or 'elder brother' (*kota*). The headman is literally the patriarch. He is also therefore the village priest. His com-
[769] pound is the only one in the village which has a spirit hut (*etambo*). In this hut the elder prays to ancestral spirits and holds communion (*oku felevela*) with them. In case of need, he may spend an entire night or more so occupied, but he will often offer a prayer when he awakens during the night. This hut is also used as a store-room for possessions not used every day and here are kept the insignia of office. The elder may sleep in this hut at any time when he is not sleeping with one of his wives, and here also he may lodge respected guests.

622 The headman functions as a Justice of the Peace for the village.
692 The graver and more difficult cases are heard before the whole village on the dance-floor, while the simpler ones which require the attendance only of those concerned, together with their respective elders, are taken up either in the *onjango* or in the headman's own courtyard. Through all and in spite of all political and administrative changes, the village court of justice continues and will continue to function.

622 It is evident from the above that a headman may have much or
554 little to do in attending to the affairs of his village, depending on several factors, such as the number of the villagers, their attitudes and disposition toward each other, relations with neighbouring villages, the demands made upon the village by the authorities, &c. However numerous may be his 'official duties', he will still find some time to attend to his own affairs, whether he be a farmer, a hunter, or a trader. In former times and before he became village headman, Sikillilē was a trader and caravan leader (*ofumbelo*, Portuguese: *pombeiro*), and made many trips to the regions of Ngangela. As a headman he returned to farming and although he seemed to be quite old at the time of my visits, he had a creditable little plot of tobacco. It may be of interest to note that only the headman may speak of the village as 'my village' (*imbo liange*). The heads of the little wards may speak thus possessively only of

their own wards, 'my ward' (*ocitumbu cange*). The other villagers will speak only of 'our village' (*imbo lietu*). 622 554

There are, in general, two quite different and distinct types of Umbundu village according to the terrain on which they are built. The villages of the plains have room to spread out and tend toward a circular shape, with the dancing floor and men's club house near the centre. The wards may appear as quarters of a single whole or they may be added on in haphazard fashion. The villages of the mountains must conform to the possibilities of the terrain. Formerly, many villages were built on mountains for defence, and capital villages of this type may still be seen with the houses built on ledges and rocks almost one on top of the other. In this type of village, there is often not sufficient or sufficiently good soil for even small garden plots within the palisades. Occasionally one of these mountain villages may be found which has not even room within it for the dancing floor, which will in this case be found outside the palisade. If the site is not too severely confined, the wards of the mountain village tend either to string themselves out horizontally along the mountain-side, or to find successive ledges. The village of Ngendo is of an intermediate type, built as it is, on a slope. Sikfilit's village was first built as near the stream as possible. The wards later added themselves on, each a little higher than the one before. The school village, which was built last, got the highest and most hygienic site. 361

Moving a Village

Villages may be moved for any one of several reasons. When fields are worn out and others are not available[1] near by, a village may be moved to a site more conveniently located. More often, however, the reason assigned is that there has been much illness or death, that the old site is polluted, that its 'air is bad', which to the Ovimbundu means that some action displeasing to the spirits has been committed which has brought on these misfortunes. This will generally have been determined by divination, as will also the spirits' consent to the proposed new site. A site which has long been occupied is of course fertile soil. Since old sites are generally cultivated to good advantage this fact should not be overlooked as a possible additional reason for moving. 361 166 [168] [787]

[1] Nowadays European settlement often pre-empts such lands. (177)

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

291 The practice and teaching of modesty seem to have been chang-
554 ing considerably for a long time. The influence of Europeans has doubtless had its effect, but more fundamental, it seems, has been the effect of increasingly generalized use of clothing, a process which began perhaps 200 years ago, but is yet far from complete. The time when boy or girl may begin to wear clothing is determined less by age than by the economic status of his family. There seems to be no shame (on the part of the child) connected with late wearing of clothes, but once a child has begun to wear a cloth, he or she is taught that it is shameful to take it off in the presence of those who are older. That this attitude is not of recent origin is attested by its appearance in a biographical narrative which goes back sixty years or more.[1] A large proportion of the women have only enough cloth for workaday wear for a short skirt, so that they leave the torso bare, but once one becomes accustomed to covering the torso always, she would be ashamed not to. This feeling belongs more to the field of economic status than to that of modesty. This shows up clearly in the strong objection to being ragged (*epêlê*), which has nothing to do with modesty but rather with economic status. The narrative concludes the teaching of social usage with this observation: 'From the time that children first enter into the school of understanding (*olondange*), parents recognize that it is proper to respect them, rather than to revile them or tell them that which is evil.'

869 3. *Training in skills.* Before the age of eight or nine, children acquire few definite skills. Many of their games, however, are in imitation of adult activities, and adults recognize their preparatory nature and value. The little girl in caring for her younger sibling acquires certain skills, but with little or no definite adult guidance. Little boys begin early to make and set traps and snares under the tuition of an elder sibling or cousin. The first rat or bird caught belongs to the tutor. Games of many sorts are played: games with sides, round games, games with an 'It', imaginative games, and competitive games; games demanding skill, especially with dances of some intricacy. Games in imitation of animals are favourites, including 'birdcalls', in which very ingenious words are set to the bird songs.

604 4. The Ovimbundu have a custom somewhat comparable to
867 what Vedder calls '*child insurance*' among the Herero,[2] i.e., the

[1] From a manuscript by Daniel Kalei of Bailundu.
[2] In Hahn *et al.*, op. cit., p. 177.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

157 animals.[1] Other tales with frankly human protagonists portray
538 the same theme,[2] and there are a number of Umbundu adapta-
593 tions and variations of such European versions of this theme as Cinderella, Snow White, &c. In some tales, such as 'Kalitangi', the hero escaped as an infant from an agreement made by his mother before his birth with another expectant mother that they would both destroy their offspring. Does this indicate a resentment of, or a protest against, child-sacrifice in certain Umbundu rites? I mention this as one possible source for the feeling of neglect and 'rejection' which, however, does not seem to be as acute or as widespread as in our own society.[3] The exact situation could only be determined by careful and extensive investigation.

593 Adjustments between siblings among the Ovimbundu on the
152 whole are relatively satisfactory. Resentment on the part of the younger does sometimes occur as indicated above. Overt sibling
[543] conflict has also arisen quite frequently in the royal families because of disputes over the succession. Instances of this latter type of conflict may be found in narratives of the early missionaries,[4] in diaries of Silva Porto,[5] and in other early sources. Conflict from jealousy arising out of the parent–child relationship, however, seems to be relatively rare. In a kinship society regulated by the hierarchy of age, jealousy between siblings does not quite fit into the picture. The two most common terms for jealousy over personal relations refer strictly to sexual jealousy: *esepa*, woman's jealousy; and *akuelame*, jealousy on the part of a man. The other terms are somewhat more applicable but they belong less to household affairs. The meaning of *ovya* is jealousy and envy, while *ocipalulu* is covetousness and so belongs to the economic sphere.

572 Friendship, especially between age-mates or 'coevals', has played
[554] and continues to play an important role in Umbundu social adjustments. Such differences as social station, family, distance of habitation, and even diversity of language and culture are easily bridged by friendship. Many friendships were formed on trading

[1] Cf. *Journal of the American Folk-Lore Society*, 1922, vol. 35, nos. 1 and 18, pp. 116 f., 140 ff.

[2] The tale of *Ñoka la hona liaye* (Baby and his elder sister) referred to *supra*, p. 84.

[3] Investigations of the 'foster-child phantasy', feelings of neglect, 'rejection', &c., reported by Murphy, op. cit., p. 415 f.; and by Allport, op. cit., p. 364 f.

[4] *Missionary Herald*, 1888, p. 242 f.

[5] In *Boletim da Sociedade de Geografia de Lisboa*, 1885, 1886.

suspected as indications of sorcery. It would of course be impossible to indicate what proportion achieve the ideal. It would seem that their respective manners of life have favoured its development in the men more largely than in the women. May this perhaps be one reason why women seem to be caught more often in the vicious circle of suspicion of sorcery? 156 183

Fearing anger and ill will as a root-cause of sorcery, yet developing a very aggressive type of character, and achieving in their villages and other social groupings such a large measure of socialized life, the adjustments in anger achieved have been, perhaps, a necessary prerequisite. That does not make the achievement any less important. Note has already been made of the ability to use humour as an outlet for anger, which is held to be an indication of true insight.[1]

Statesmanlike ability, good judgement, and dignity were often noted by the early missionaries as qualities of some of the old kings, councillors, and headmen.[2] After 1900 these qualities were less often observed, owing perhaps to the demoralizing effects of the rum trade. These qualities have, however, survived to the present day and may be observed in pastors, elders, teachers, and other leaders of the church. That shrewd behaviour (*oku lunguka*) is appreciated by this great trading people is easily understood, but it is not as universally or unreservedly admired as are some other types. [554]

There is also a tender side to Umbundu character. It might conceivably be supposed that long-continued and intimate participation in such inhumane occupations as the slave-trade might leave a stamp of callous brutality on the character of the Ovimbundu generally.[3] On second thought a similar question might be raised with regard to Americans because of their participation in the same slave-traffic, or their more recent participation in equally ruthless practices under the banner of modern capitalism.

The rarity or absence among kings of the Ovimbundu of resort to 'revolting and wholesale punishments—so common at African courts' has been noted.[4] On the positive side, a most admirable

[1] Cf. Allport, op. cit., pp. 118, 344.

[2] Cf. *Missionary Herald*, 1883, p. 229; 1886, p. 143; 1887, pp. 26, 530, &c.

[3] H. W. Nevinson alleged some such effect. Cf. *A Modern Slavery*, chap. ii. The references are to people of Viye. The effects noted were more probably due to long association with Europeans.

[4] *Supra*, p. 21 f.

606 ocimumbo (since Childs states (p.55) that it includes every relative of the generation of the spouse's parents.) *Ndotembo* must avoid: (i) speaking each other's names. This may be accomplished by using the names compounded from those of children (thus *Nakombotio* and *Sakombotio* are the father and mother of *Kambotia*) or by using the terms which one's spouse uses, i.e. *sei*, *tete*, *sonu* etc. (ii) seeing each other, if they are of opposite sex; if it is necessary to converse, it must be done out of sight, or with gaze averted. (iii) eating with each other. (This applies only to regular meals and not to casual refreshment.)

607 (c) The term *nawa* is used reciprocally for all the spouse's relatives of one's own generation, including those classed as "sister", "brother" and "cross-cousin". Between the *nawa* the only avoidance enjoined is that they may not eat regular meals in each other's presence; otherwise they are on "free and easy" terms".

"Avoidance of meeting ... is especially difficult for the bride who comes to live in a village of her husband's people, a large proportion of the men of which may be *ndotembo* to her. The prohibition may be lifted by .. a simple ceremony, in which each rubs a little oil on the other ... Avoidance of eating in each other's presence may be done away with after some months by sacrificing a chicken and feeding it ceremonially .. to the *ndotembo* or *nawa* ... It is especially important that the ceremonies be carried through with respect *(esumbilo)*."(1)

A note on the kinship system

613 421 178 There is a tendency today for the claim of the *olusa*, the land-owning group, to supplant those of the property-owning *olusa*; one important reason for this is the change from trade to agriculture as the most important economic activity. With European influence also conflicts have arisen over rights to children. Childs states(2) that the bilineal kinship system has been a factor leading to social stability, especially stability of marriage, but he does not elaborate this statement.

LOCAL GROUPS(3)

592 595 *The "household"*, consisting of a man, his wife or wives and children, and such other related or unrelated dependants as may be attached to this basic group, is the basis of the village. The word *onjo* (house) may be used for this group, i.e. to include the various houses which a man may have established by marriage, or it may be used for the house of any one of his wives. Each wife has her own hut, granary, chickens, and fields for her children and herself, and the husband has no house of his own unless he is village headman or the head of an *olusa*, in which case he has a spirit-hut *(etombo)* in which he may sometimes pass the night. Sons [591] when they marry form their own households, usually in their father's village. The size of the household varies greatly according to wealth and [554] status. Some recent kings have had as many as 12 wives. But it has been noted above that, in Childs' typical village, out of 48 households only 10

(1) Childs, p.52.
(2) Ibid., p.56; see also ibid. pp.70, 45, 50 etc.
(3) This section is based on Childs, 1949, pp.25-41.

301 The new ornaments had acquired no sentimental value, therefore
321 their price was moderate.

[171] *Ombo* shells are to be seen in use from Kipungo southward through Huila, among the Luvando, and among the Vakuanyama of southern Angola. In the places mentioned one may judge the social status [554] of a woman by the number of *ombo* shells she wears. A principal wife is usually well supplied with these ornaments.

302 In this southern journey it was noticeable that there was an
171 increasing use of red pigment which is lavishly employed for smearing every kind of ornament, the body, and the hair. Leather belts and [294] skirts of Vakuanyama women are thickly coated with red pigment which is invariably mixed with grease. The red powder is prepared [824] by desiccating a red wood called *takula* by the Vakuanyama, a name which is used through Angola and the southern Congo area.

912 From Kipungo southward through the Vakuanyama country
171 there is a notable absence of decorative wooden hair combs. On the contrary, delicately carved combs are used by both men and women of the Ovimbundu. The Vasele make such combs, but by far the best [552] examples are made and used by the Vachokue tribe of eastern Angola. Here the decorative design usually includes a well-carved human figure at the top of the comb.

30 Among the Vakuanyama, necklaces of disks made from ostrich
[237] eggshell are worn by the women only. A woman of importance has a dozen loops of such necklaces, each loop being about 125 cm long. [551] These necklaces are so greatly esteemed that only after much persuasion can a woman be induced to part with a single link. Perhaps, as is the case with *ombo* shell, there is more than the intrinsic value to be considered. One point is constantly noticed in considering social status and ornament. All the wives of a wealthy man, especially among the Vakuanyama, are made to advertise their husband's position by the profusion of their ornaments and the quality of their leather skirts and belts.

[321] There is, in addition to the necklaces of ostrich-eggshell beads, a highly prized necklace made from small perforated disks of shell having a diameter of about a centimeter. The Vakuanyama women smear a necklace of this kind with grease and *takula* powder; the [435] value of a necklace 125 cm long is equivalent to that of an ox. In describing these necklaces there is interest in noting that they are traded to the south of Angola from places six hundred miles to the [939] north; therefore their value is to some extent dependent on rarity and distant origin.

of the word depends upon the syllable accented and the context, as further explained in the chapter on the Umbundu language. 576 643

A man or woman of the royal family greets the king with the words *na kuku*; *na* means "lord," and *kuku* is a term used for any old man to whom the speaker intends to show respect. *Kuku* is also applied to a man who stands in the relationship of grandfather. The king is expected to reply to a greeting given by one of the royal family by placing his right hand on his chest and saying twice, "*kalunga*." There may then follow from the king a question relating to welfare in general. Possibly the king will inquire the object of his subject's journey. A *sekulu* ("chief of a village") greets a king in the same manner as does a commoner, and the king replies as he would to a commoner. 565

Commoners greet a *sekulu* with the words *na kalunga* ("lord, greeting"). One *sekulu* greets another of the same rank with the one word *kalunga*, accompanied by clapping of the palms. Male commoners clap hands on meeting; this action is accompanied by the word *kalunga*, from each of them. Two female commoners use the word *kalunga* as a greeting, but as a rule they do not clap hands. They do, however, clap their palms when greeting a woman of the royal house.

Boys and girls must greet their fathers, maternal uncles, grandfathers, and other old men with either of the terms *na kuku* or *na kalunga*, the latter being more usual. *Na kuku* would be the appropriate term of respect for any elderly man. Children use the same words (*na kuku*) when addressing any elderly woman, including a grandmother. A usual greeting of a child to the mother, likewise to the mother's sister, would be *kalunga mai* ("greetings, mother"). 561 576

There is no prescribed form of address to the medicine-man. Greetings between a commoner and a medicine-man follow the usage noted for two commoners. Ngonga says, "They will treat him (the medicine-man) like a village chief if he is an old man and good. Perhaps they will say *na kalunga* as if talking to a chief." 576 [554] [756]

In the early morning people pass the greeting *olu lipanda*. This means "we have been like dead, we are awake." The appropriate early morning greeting of a commoner to the king or to a chief is *olu lipanda o kuku*. A usual afternoon greeting is *olu lutian*. The evening greeting is *olu lisutiaya*. [643]

One who desires to pass across a room usually walks in front of other people, but while passing the attitude must not be erect. The thumb and middle finger should be snapped together, while the words

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

756 men and women each of whom receives the name *ocimbanda*, and specialization in some particular form of magical practice is the [554] rule. Some practitioners are more highly esteemed than others. For example, an *ocimbanda* who has the reputation for curing dizziness, madness, and *ovyalai* (p. 281) is one of great repute; so also is the man who can cure a case of blood in the urine (*bilicos*). [164] This is the Portuguese term commonly applied to blackwater fever.

DIVINATION

787 An examination of objects collected gives the best indication of the equipment of the *ocimbanda*, and among these no item is more important than the small divination basket containing a heterogeneous collection of objects.

A diviner receives the distinguishing title of *ocimbanda congomba*, and a description of his methods explains his belief in the activities of spirits. He shakes the basket while his assistant plays a small friction drum; then he inspects the objects lying at the top.

A figure with beads on its neck indicates that trouble is due to the ghost of a dead baby whose spirit wishes to come back.

A piece of gourd with a round orifice means that some one has been talking too much. The orifice represents a human mouth.

Two figures, male and female, whispering together, indicate that a husband and wife are making a plan to poison somebody.

The figure of a female with a large abdomen indicates that the spirit of a deceased pregnant woman is causing sickness in the village.

The horn with shells on it indicates that the woman who is consulting the diviner will not bear children.

There is a little figure with a black tuft on its head, whose [177] arrival at the top of the basket indicates that misfortune among the natives is caused by Europeans. When talking to this figure the medicine-man tries to speak like a white man by adopting a falsetto voice and mimicking the intonation of Europeans.

The figure with a little crest on its head is an indication of sickness or other trouble arising from a spirit which likes to drink blood. When this figure comes to the top of the basket, the medicine-man induces the blood-drinking spirit to enter a man, because the evil must first be localized before it can be exorcised. This possessed person dances with a small ax or a hair switch in his hand. When dancing has induced a frenzy, the dancer kills a pig and drinks the fresh blood. The blood-drinking spirit is in this way exorcised from the community.

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for individuals to build up large villages—thus Simbwyikoka encouraged people to settle at Mwekalia to make it a large village. It may also be suggested that the power of the village headmen was to some extent linked with the power of the chief, since the headmen were associated politically with the chief, and would from this, tend to gain authority in their dealings with their fellow villagers. The village headmen also lacked any real competition from other types of leadership. Mbati had kept relations with the post in his own hands, and there were therefore no government headmen. The first catechist had arrived in Mbati's village in 1928, but cannot have met with much lasting success as there are few baptized Christians over thirty-five in Gumba.

Other factors at the time strengthening the position of the village headmen were the low rate of labour migration[18] and the fact that practically every man over forty at the time of Simbwyikoka's accession had participated in the rubber trade. This meant that many of the best known caravan leaders were still in full vigour, and enjoyed a prestige based on the first-hand knowledge of the middle-aged and older men.

Between this period of the middle thirties and the beginning of my own fieldwork twenty years had passed and many changes had taken place. The status of the chief had sharply declined and he was now assisted by the four government headmen. Every village except the chief's village had a Catholic or Protestant catechist, and there had been a marked trend towards learning catechism in preparation for baptism, which had begun about 1946. Hence the catechetical school was usually attended by the majority of under twenty-five's in the village.

Agnatic kinship had ceased to be the principle of village membership. Nor can it be said that headmen build up villages by getting people to settle at a particular spot. It is not always easy even to find the headman, village population is not very stable, and a man can settle with any category of kin.

To discover the traditional headman required careful phrasing of questions. When I visited a village and asked for the *ankala yimbo* (the traditional phrase for the village headman) I

[18] Ibid., p. 214.

In the previous

chapter I have indicated that the position of headman is today 622
a somewhat shadowy one, and that the headman emerges rather than succeeds by virtue of various grounds; the main ones being official recognition, some tie to the local chief, the presence of a core of one's kinsmen, a claim to be the first resident, and personality. During my stay Sapapula was as much a headman of Epalanga as anyone can reasonably be these days, yet his position had not always gone unchallenged.

In 1954 he had found himself in danger of being displaced 622 665
by his matrilateral 'brother' Mwehombo. Both men, apparently, claimed that they had founded the village, both had substantial cores of kinsfolk in the village, and both possessed strong personalities. Sapapula by holding the ministerial title of Epalanga to Kafelo had had a stronger position in village affairs. This prop to his power was taken away when Kafelo was deposed from the chiefdom, and Luanga and Mwehombo purchased the title of Epalanga from Lusase.

In this partnership Mwehombo must have been the leading personality, Luanga being extremely amiable but not at all domineering or energetic. Mwehombo's idea was presumably to establish himself as recognized headman of Epalanga, and to obtain whatever advantages were to be gained from an association with Lusase. Luanga's aim, from what he told me, was to escape contract labour by having a position as a traditional headman and title-holder. Titles will still be sought after, [554]
although the substance of power has gone, so long as they can confer some prestige or protection from administrative labour demands. It was not customary for the role of Epalanga to be held by two people jointly.

Mwehombo died shortly after this. He had been baptized 763
by the name of Simon when dying on January 13th 1955, when his social personality began its posthumous career. At the inquest, which was held according to the old Umbundu pattern in which the corpse suspended in a hammock from a pole held by two men was supposed to answer questions by the way it swung, it was found that Mwehombo had suffered the pro- [554]
verbial fate of the sorcerer in being killed by the spirit he had [561]
used to kill others.

The role of the questioner was taken by Paulo, sister's son to

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servant of mine explaining how the Mwekalia chose the chief said, giving me a comparison: 'The Bishop of Nova Lisboa thinks "This priest has sense" and so makes him the superior of a mission'.[6] The disintegration of the old political system, and the association of its representatives with the ritual values which are no longer very significant for the mass of Ovimbundu, has destroyed the old pyramid of authority and prestige. The people associate demands and punishment, for which they seem to receive very little in return, with the post. Many draw a distinction between the actual *chefe* and the government, which they regard as benevolent and ignorant of the behaviour of its representatives. Despite such expressions of loyalty as the singing of the Portuguese national anthem at village parties the 'government' is too distant and shadowy for the Ovimbundu to have much knowledge of it. Nor has the post tried effectively to build up new types of bureaucratic authority in the villages—the government headmen are not given sufficient backing or responsibility by the post to do more than execute its orders.

Hence, the establishment of new types of grouping and leadership at the local level has been the work of the missions, and it is through the missions that these new groupings are articulated on to the total Angolan social system. The missionaries, who provide this articulation between the 'civilized' society and the local organization of the natives, form the section of the 'civilized' population which most satisfies, in its relations with the people, the expectations of the Africans.

To use another term, it is within the Catholic and Protestant Churches that Ovimbundu most clearly identify themselves. Baptism identifies an individual by giving him a name, hence Christians object to non-baptized people identifying themselves in this way. To an individual baptism is significant since it is concerned with his destiny. By it also he identifies himself with the 'civilized' population and achieves a new status superior to that of the pagans. The newly-born child of Christian parents will be given a Christian name and also an Umbundu name from one already held by a dead kinsman.[7] A few villagers

[6] Actually responsibility for appointing superiors of missions largely belongs to the superior of the Nova Lisboa district of the Congregação do Espírito Santo.

[7] For Umbundu names, see Elizabeth Ennis, *African Studies* (Johannesburg) March 1945.

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795 551 attempt to take on European surnames. Alternatively, a man may take his father's name and attempt to use it as a surname. Thus Joaõ Batista Tjindandi, a resident of Epalanga, had received Joaõ Batista in baptism, and had taken Tjindandi, his father's name, as a surname. This is, however, not at all a general trend. Even a village of mixed Christian-pagan population may be known by the name of its school, identifying itself by its Christian name.

795 554 A man identifies himself also with social change and with progress by 'entering the school'. When a small girl, whom I asked if she had 'entered into the school' replied 'Not at all', her elder sister's husband remarked: 'She is asleep'. In the general Angolan society the religious referent is the most status-giving type of reference that most Ovimbundu can give. 186 554 There is no very marked feeling in the superiority of one area of Umbundu country to another nor even is there a marked sense of the superiority of Ovimbundu to other tribes—thus the Kimbundu will be highly praised for the degree of European culture they have acquired. The very word Ovimbundu is used as an equivalent of '*pretos*' (blacks) a word not used of 'civilized' Africans, since it is indicative of the lowest colour-class. As a Christian, a man has a status which he shares with Europeans.

797 648 He can also identify himself not only in a general way with the Europeans but more particularly with the general church organization. There is much closer contact between the authority-figures of the church organization and the people than between the authority-figures of the administration and the natives. Thus all Catholics in the Nova Lisboa diocese are confirmed by the Bishop of Nova Lisboa, and have seen him—similarly many of the Protestant Ovimbundu know of Dr. Childs, the headmaster of the Protestant secondary school at Dondi, through having heard him preach at a conference. Some Christian villagers would know the names of pioneer missionaries. Little is known by the people about the personalities or duties of the senior members of their administration, and even their titles are not properly understood.

795 648 The religious differences which exist at local level have no marked significance in the relations of natives to the post. In certain circumstances a pagan may appeal to a Christian

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houses, coffee plants and so on there is little likelihood of disputes arising about the inheritance of land claims. A woman's property should be given to her sisters, after her children have had their cut. In one case a man inherited his sister's debts but allowed her children to inherit her property, 'lest they be sad'. A wife's fields return to her husband.

Inheritance is then a process by which the relations of certain kin, both sons and sister's sons, with the deceased are recognized by the transmission of his property. As with other aspects of Umbundu kinship, while the existence of the kinship tie provides the basis on which to found a relationship, its content is determined by the nature of the contacts between the individuals involved and the services given.

Although there is a definite tendency for men of chiefly stock to have longer pedigrees than other individuals there is no chiefly genealogy. When Paulo, the elder of the school of Epalanga, told me that had he not been blind he might have been chief of Gumba, he quoted the names of four chiefs to whom he was related. The chieftancy is not tied to a lineage, but can be held by any individual who can claim links with a former chief or chiefs. People 'of the blood of the chiefs' in no sense form a differentiated group of aristocrats significant in social life.

In similar fashion membership of the spirit-linked professions and of certain cults seems to have been a matter of succession of one individual to the role of another.[30] Membership of the hunting and smithing professions descended patrilineally, but if a hunter or smith had no son his position could be succeeded to by a daughter's son.[31]

7. *Kinship in a Changing Society*

From this, and from other chapters, a picture of Umbundu kinship may emerge as something so blurred, confused, and confusing, as hardly to merit the term 'kinship system', yet at

[30] i.e. rather than admission to a corporate group of hunters. A man can inherit his father's hunting spirit before the latter's death; in Epalanga Batista had received the hunting spirit of his father Epalata.

[31] My informants were not agreed as to whether a sister's son could inherit in default of a son.

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was a man of fifty or more, who lived in Portuguese style making money from coffee and other crops. He claimed to be an *assimilado* (African with the status of a Portuguese citizen) but in actual fact he was not one. He had employed a man called Kusumula, who lived in Epalanga and was the brother of Kapapelo's wife.

To appreciate the point of Justino's complaint, it is necessary to explain the significance of certain terms indicative of ethnic and social status. Otjimbundu is the singular of Ovimbundu, a people defined by the use of the Umbundu language. It is also used to refer to any black person (thus I was often asked whether there were Ovimbundu [i.e. Africans] in England), and is therefore equivalent to the Portuguese *preto* (black), which when used of a person has a rather pejorative sense like 'native' in other parts of Africa. Livingstone, writing a hundred years ago, remarks of one area in Angola; 'The people under him (the chief) are divided into a number of classes. . . . They are also divided into gentlemen and little gentlemen, and, though quite black, speak of themselves as white men and of the others, who may not wear shoes, as "blacks".'[7] Justino's complaint was that Sapapula had referred to him as a *preto qualquer* or in Umbundu (Sapapula did not speak Portuguese), *otjimbundu tjango*, a mere black.

Justino delivered a speech when the people from Epalanga had settled on the veranda of his house in which he declared with much force that he was not an Otjimbundu '*Ame sitjimbunduko*.' This accusation was based on information given him by Kusumula, who alleged that Sapapula had said to government headmen that Kusumula could be recruited for road work, as he worked not for a white (a term applied also to *assimilados*) but for a mere black.

I give the main lines of the ensuing argument. Sapapula denied that he had called Justino a black. Kusumula claimed that Sapapula was always picking on him. Sapapula declared that he had founded the village, and that Kusumula wanted to break it up. Kapapelo said that he had at one time given medicine to a girl and Sapapula had told Jaime to kill him because he might have seduced her. Kutenga Lusase, the chief

[7] Livingstone, *Missionary Travels and Researches*, p. 411.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

556 The attitude toward success in agriculture indicated by the
578 foregoing is held in some measure toward marked success in other
472 professions, but in lesser degree, except perhaps where trading is taken up individually or by two persons in partnership. One of the earliest observers, Pinheiro de Lacerda (*c.* 1790), noted that accusations of witchcraft were most often levelled at the wealthier members of the community.[1] This fear of success has continued down to the present day, but while trading was an open group enterprise in which many individuals acquired wealth, success in that field came to be accepted more quickly than in the more individualistic work of farming. At the present time, commercial activities are carried on largely by individuals alone or in a limited partnership, and the practice, or at least the suspicion, of witchcraft in connexion with them seems to be on the increase. Some may feel that similar attitudes with regard to successful results from cultivation of the soil are now held less strongly than formerly, but
[754] I know of no evidence to support such a feeling. One of the commonest traditional patterns for witchcraft is that of a partnership of a senior and a junior member—of parent and child, or of mother's brother and sister's son. That is one reason why urgent suggestions by an older person concerning choice of a profession by a younger are looked upon with disfavour among the Ovimbundu.

868 A child should be taught enough diligence and application in
562 cultivating that he or she may not lack the necessities in later adult life. Every boy will take to trading and bargaining almost as naturally as eating, drinking, breathing, and sleeping. Commerce still retains so much of its former glamour that every boy will take it up if and when opportunity offers. The care of younger children comes even more naturally to the girl, and she must also learn the housekeeper's art. Many folk-tales and songs indicate a reluctance on the part of girls to dedicate themselves with diligence to cultivation. In the days of the rubber trade, when girls could also join caravans for the coast and to the interior as porters, there may have been some real basis for this, but at the present time girls are convinced and enthusiastic cultivators, almost 100 per cent.[2] The

[1] *Annaes Maritimos e Coloniaes*, 5a Ser., p. 489 f.

[2] Women coming to live in the coast towns or in other European settlements where they have no fields or gardens find adjustment to life without agricultural labours very difficult.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

I have seen an Ocimbundu male riding an ox without saddle. A 492
cord was passed through the animal's nose to serve as reins.

The Portuguese name for horse is *cavalo*, a word which the Ovim- 192
bundu use in the form *okavalu*, though there is an Umbundu word *ocingongovala*, which means "going with his neck up." The Umbundu words for donkey and mule are *ocimbulu* and *omula*, respectively.

Generally speaking, the ears of animals are not clipped, neither 231
are cattle branded or otherwise marked to indicate ownership, but sometimes the ears of pigs and goats are cut to aid identification. When asked why the tips of the ears of dogs are mutilated an Ocimbundu will say that a dog with uncut ears does not hear when called (Plate LVI, Fig. 2).

Not many families own large herds of cattle among the Ovim- 233
bundu, and I did not see a big kraal until I was in southwest Angola. 556
Cattle, which are a measure of wealth, are used for paying fines, making funeral feasts, paying debts, and securing wives. The cattle throughout Angola are well-developed, handsome animals (Plate LVII, Fig. 1). The bull remains with the herd the entire year; there is therefore no particular season for the birth of calves. Usually cows are not milked by the Ovimbundu, consequently these people have no milk, butter, or cheese. The Vakuanyama of the south milk their [171]
cows and churn butter in calabashes slung on a pole.

The Ovimbundu say that milking the cow makes the calf thin, 234
but where the idea of milking the cow is borrowed from the Portu- [177]
guese the Ovimbundu have a procedure which is as follows: The calf is allowed to suck for a few minutes in order to deceive the cow; then the milker begins his work. At intervals of a few minutes the calf is allowed to suck in order to continue the deception.

Cattle are killed at the funeral feasts of the rich, and the horns [765]
of the slaughtered animals are generally mounted on a pole in the vicinity of the grave (Plate XLVI, Fig. 2).

The horns of the cow may be used for making water-pipes in 237
which tobacco is smoked, or they may be employed as magical horns when filled with medicine. The hide is pegged out in the sunlight 281
for one day after it has been scraped; it is then rolled and kept until required. When about to be used, the skin is soaked in water for one day. The hide is used to cover the tops of stools, to make pouches and to manufacture bags for carrying corn. In bygone days each king had a wooden box covered with hide, which contained his powder and metal when he went to war. [illegible]e cow's tail is used 90

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[1874-1911]

THE OLD SOCIETY

The trade was conducted in caravans composed of up to several thousand people,[48] under the leadership of *entrepeneurs* called *olofumbelo* (of which the singular is *ofumbelo*). Of such were the individuals whom Serpa Pinto describes as earning wealth equivalent to a thousand pounds or more. Their role was to get together the caravans, to negotiate with the local political authorities, and to provide ritual leadership. The exact relationship between the *ofumbelo* and the ordinary members of the caravan is difficult to see. European travellers found that porters were content with low wages since they had opportunities for private trade, but apparently the caravan organizers had better opportunities for getting rich than had ordinary Ovimbundu. My informants stated that a man organized a caravan to gain wealth. A man who was in a position of prosperity would be known as an *ohwase* (rich man), would stay at home and be expected to assist his relatives.[49] 437 472 484 [556]

Different ages and both sexes participated in the trade. Childs says that boys from the age of nine upwards travelled on the caravans, and this is confirmed by Serpa Pinto.[50] Tucker, and my informants however, give the age when caravan travel began as being fifteen or over.[51] Unmarried girls travelled too, but simply acted as helpers to some male relative. The caravan organizers (*olofumbelo*) were old men, I was told, and travelled in the rear while in front of the caravan marched a young man (called the *kesongo*) who carried a flag.[52]

Dr. Childs states that between 1874 and 1886 rubber was gathered from the forests of the interior and took eight months (four months each way presumably) for the Ovimbundu to obtain. From 1886, however, 'red rubber' was obtained from the sandy lands beyond the Cuanza, a journey which only took three months altogether. Hence, Childs states, the trading 439 484

[48] A Bastos, *Monografia de Catimbella*, in *Bol. Soc. Geog. Lisboa* 1910 (p. 151) states that caravans of several thousand were used in the 1870s but that by the time of writing (1908–9, nearly the end of the trade) people came in small parties. My informants who would remember this period spoke of the large size of the caravans.

[49] My informants.

[50] Serpa Pinto, p. 164.

[51] J. T. Tucker in *Africa* (Notes and News), April 1956.

[52] Informants.

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621/178 of the men's house, and the headman's loss of status. The new institution of the catechetical school does not revive village solidarity in this form. The contemporary Ovimbundu do not live in a 'village headman society' comparable to those of British Central Africa,[13] since the concept and manifestations of village solidarity around a headman are so notably deficient. ●356 Reference may also be made to the economic ethics of the Ovimbundu with their approval of making money and the [426] belief that all loans even within the circle of the elementary family should be repaid, that is, wealth is seen by all as an end in itself rather than a means of obtaining personal loyalties.

622/178 In the previous chapter it was shown how the traditional headmanship is no longer a significant legal and political institution. In this chapter I have tried to indicate that it lacks sources of authority and prestige within the village.

The line of argument has involved reference to the contemporary kinship system of which an outline has been given. 128 This will be more fully discussed in later chapters, when a more detailed comparison of present institutions with the traditional kinship system will be made.

[13] For an example of these societies see J. C. Mitchell, *The Yao Village*, Manchester 1956.

only five children living, and the largest polygynous household had only four, but many children had died in infancy. 592

The attitudes within the household are much like those found universally between members of the same 'family'. Children respect and love both parents. Perhaps there is a little more respect for the father and a little more love for the mother, but this distinction is not carried to the extent which seems to be the case in more strongly patrilineal societies. The respect which a child has for his parents is plainly shown in his refusal under ordinary circumstances to speak their names. 'Even a child on being asked to tell the name of his father or his mother, will reply saying, "*Tate* (my father) indeed is his name." And if one asks again, saying, "Your mother, what is her name?" the child will reply saying, "*Mai* (my mother) indeed is her name."'[1] The sex division of Umbundu life begins within the household when very early in life the boys begin to be trained by their elder brothers, fathers, and other male relatives, while the girls remain or go about with their mothers, elder sisters, and other female relatives. Only the very small boys and girls (say under six or eight) play together. The age distinctions of Umbundu society are learned with the child's first attempts at language. Either his elder brother or sister he calls *huvange*, and he soon learns that the brother or sister younger than himself is *manjange*. Brothers and sisters, siblings or children of the same parents, 'are replicas of one another in social relationship, and . . . socially identical'[2] for practical purposes. Among Ovimbundu the principal differences are due to the two factors of age and sex. The influence of age is fundamental and is easily demonstrated by the fact that there is no word for 'brother' but instead for 'elder brother' or 'younger brother'. Within the household the factor of sex is ever present, but there is not the invidious distinction found among some of the more strongly patrilineal societies such as the Zulu[2] which reserves the more respectful term for the brother. Umbundu applies the terms *huva* and *manja*[3] to brothers and sisters without distinction of sex. There are the additional terms *kota* (elder brother), *mbuale* (sister), and the reciprocal terms *mume* (brother, spoken 857 593 561

[1] R. Kavita Evambi, from an Umbundu manuscript.

[2] E. J. Krige, *The Social System of the Zulus* (London: Longmans, 1936), p. 24.

[3] These are the root terms without the possessive suffixes.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FF13 Mbundu FF13

593 only by a sister), and *mukili* (sister, spoken only by a brother). In
[561] a polygynous household each of the wives is mother to all the
children and each of the children is *kuta* or *manja*[1] to all the others.
848 Illegitimate children are not stigmatised but since they belong to
567 the mother they have a distinct designation.[2] Slaves or former
slaves have a status within the household and village which to the
ordinary observer does not differ from that of the children: they
are treated much as the children and they may carry on in all
matters social and economic much as though they were members
of the family. I have noticed, however, that when there is a call for
labour, the lot falls oftener to one of these 'children-born-by-day'[3]
whether he was a war-captive or a pawn.

567 Both slavery and the polygynous household, two institutions
595 manifestly and intimately inter-related, are still a part of the
178 Umbundu social structure, but neither the one nor the other now
has the importance which it formerly had. Neither of these
institutions is part of the present and personal experience of the
great majority of Umbundu households.

Kinship

596 *Blood Relatives* (*Epata*). The relationships of the wider kinship
602 groups are for the most part extensions of those of the household.
621 The child learns them very early in life owing to the fact that the
village community into which he is born is only a part of this
larger kinship group. Nearly all of the villagers belong to the
same *epata* or extended family, which includes both lines of
descent. Most of them belong to the father's family (*olase*), and
the mother's family (*olusina*) may also be represented. The fact is
that most of the adults of the village are father or mother to
nearly every child and most of the children are brothers or sisters.
Those of his coevals who do not bear this relation to him are
otherwise related and are also potential spouses or potential
relatives-in-law.

[1] This distinction *yesepakaf* (lit. 'of the jealousy of women') may be made but it is not applied in ordinary speech.

[2] *Omilli a ngunda-lo-ina* (lit. 'child of goes-with-mother').

[3] *Omilli-co-ritima-hatanya*. Cf. 'child of my calves', Luganda expression and attitudes, L. P. Mair, *An African People in the Twentieth Century* (London, 1934), p. 32 f.

1: Childs M-8 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

754 attacks also upon the persons or possessions of enemies. This type of sorcery in a very common form involves the enslavement of the spirit of another person, often a child of one's own family or kin.[1] The person whose spirit is used may be killed either by violent or by magical means. Sorcery of this type is much feared, but if wealth supposedly gained by this means is used for the benefit of the kin, the sorcerer may be tolerated or even protected in the exercise of his black art. Beneficiaries do not often have qualms concerning the source of the benefits received. One who, by reason of his family connexions or his own power, has secured a strong position may escape interference. Jealousy or grudges, however, often bring out accusations from within the circle of kin. 754 Accusations may also be made by outsiders. With the decline in 482 influence which the tribal courts have suffered, and their inability to inflict capital punishment, sorcery is less frequently punished than formerly. The consequent reductions in the number of innocent victims is a gain. This same cause has operated, how- [177] ever, to increase dealings in, and fear of, sorcery. Most of the cases brought to European courts, and even to the Church, under the name of 'poisoning' are in reality accusations of sorcery.

178 754 In the foregoing brief note it has not been possible adequately to treat the subject, but it will be seen that sorcery has long been a divisive influence in Umbundu life. It sometimes seriously affects the cohesion of the household and the larger kinship groups. Economic, political, and other forces now seem to be acting to increase the incidence of sorcery, the influence of which is probably a considerable factor in the present rapid disintegration of the Umbundu social structure.

The Hierarchy of Age

561 Passing references have been made to associations of coevals. The Ovimbundu recognize very definitely the hierarchy of age and consider orderly society quite impossible without it. One of the keenest criticisms of the European and his ways is contained in the aphorism:

> *Kundele ku ku li ukulu.*
> [538] In 'civilization' there is no senior.

To Umbundu wisdom this is an impossible state of affairs;

[1] The Umbundu term is *ulu undeke*; *vide* ref. *infra*, p. 107, n. 1.

there must be a responsible senior and, hence as a matter of course, 561
the following is accepted:

Ndalu halulako la Vava: [538]
Fire is not older than water:

Ciyo wa pindikepo.
Potsherd (or frying-pan) passes between (i.e. keeps the peace).

As potsherd (or frying-pan) keeps water from putting out fire and fire from consuming water, so the elder keeps the peace between the young of relatively equal status.

The hierarchy of age is taken as a matter of course and circum- 561
cision camps or other formal 'schools' are not considered necessary 881
to reinforce an attitude which no one would dream of disputing. At the present time there is quite a vogue for circumcision camps (*vakaenamba*) in the southern or south-eastern half of the country. Some affirm that these are new-fangled notions coming in from neighbouring tribes. Others declare the institution to be very old. The Ngalangi people say that they have always had both *enamba* for the boys and *uso wakili* for the girls. Some tribes require *enamba* [643]
of the king before he may rule. Even where the institution is not in vogue, there are associations of coevals (*vakuaciako*) whose members have definite rights and duties toward each other. These matters are treated more fully in a later chapter. Inasmuch 561
as these age-grade sets are both age and sex divisions, they contain 182
some elements of social cleavage, but their association with the economic and political sides of life makes them a strongly cohesive force for society.

Umbundu Social Structure: Summary

Summarizing the evidence of the present chapter, I wish only to 182
tie in a few of the more important threads so that the pattern of the 621
Umbundu social structure may be seen at a glance.

Although the Ovimbundu no longer maintain the political life which formerly existed, there are elements of cohesion which still give reality to their social organism. These elements all centre in or spring from the kinship group.

With regard to the village, two facts stand out:

1. The Umbundu village is a local kinship unit, with the villagers quite literally the children of the headman-patriarch.
2. Although its political, religious, and social functions may be

1: Childs M-S (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

182 621 in a somewhat decadent state, the Umbundu village has up to the present maintained its status as a local kinship unit.

182 592 602 The household is not a solitary unit but a part of the village. Since it is constituted by marriage, it embodies the union of at least two kinship groups. The attitudes and behaviour patterns within the Umbundu household are basically those universally recognized. In common with the households of most Bantu cultures, it differs from the European model in that it extends its attitudes and behaviour patterns to the wider kinship groupings by means of a classificatory system of relationship.

613 182 In the wider kinship groupings (*epata*), the Ovimbundu recognize both the maternal (*oluina*) and the paternal (*oluse*) lines of descent. The functions of the latter have been largely local, residential, social, and religious, with succession (of status) in the male line. The function of the former has been cohesive over a larger territory, with a recognized head in whom has been vested both religious and economic functions. Both his office and the inheritance of property descend in the female line. Much of the power, economic and personal, formerly held by the *oluina*, in the person of the mother's brother, seems to be passing at the present time to the *oluse*, in the person of the father. The bilineal kinship system has been a strongly cohesive social force.

182 [582] The form of marriage practised by the Ovimbundu is of the two-way cross-cousin type in both lines of kin and in three generations. It seems to be an individual type developed in the particular social and economic situation of the Ovimbundu. As a contract between two families and as a new venture, the marriage relation demands that great attention be given to attitudes and behaviour patterns which emphasize mutual respect.

[561] The hierarchy of age is a very real factor in the Umbundu social structure. Age-set 'schools' have not existed generally throughout the tribes, but there are associations of coevals. This is largely a cohesive force.

754 Sorcery is the most important disruptive force at work *within* Umbundu society. Working as it does, within kinship groups, and inasmuch as it seems to be on the increase, sorcery embodies a real danger to social cohesion.

184 718 Homogeneity has never been an attribute of the Ovimbundu as regards their racial or cultural make-up. The slave-trade injected other and more diverse elements, and recent movements and

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

The extent to which the order of the *vakuacisoko* exists at present or has existed among the Ovimbundu would be a very interesting subject of inquiry. It is certain that the institution does not exist throughout the territory but only in certain families which belong to the order and pass on membership in it by heredity. Whether there are certain regions where it is or was in the past more strongly held to is not known. It seems to be or to have been more strongly entrenched among the cattle-rearing people to the south, but it is also said to have been practised in Lupolo (Libolo) and even in the region of Luanda.[1] Among the Ovimbundu it seems to have been stronger in the past than at present. Few if any practising members of the set are now known. All 'coevals' or members of the set were in duty bound to render mutual assistance. All had mutual rights to the property of the others without complaint or remedy. These mutual rights seem to have been extended to the extreme limit of having intercourse with each other's wives, nor did the injury or even the death of one brought about by another allow the injured family to seek revenge or legal redress. It was the duty of *vakuacisoko* to bury their fellows, themselves digging the grave and attending to all expenses not already supplied by the family. Theirs was also the duty of burying strangers without family who would not be buried by others fearing defilement or responsibility for their debts. Bastos gives a tradition ascribing the origin of this institution to a wager laid between two chiefs.[2] It seems more probable, however, that it is connected with circumcision and tribal initiation. An analogous set of rights and duties is said to have existed among the Herero between 'coevals' circumcised at the same time.[3]

Tribal initiation for both boys (*oku lisevi:a evamba*) and girls (*uso wakāi*) is carried on in camps or 'schools' in the southern and south-eastern tribes of the Ovimbundu. These camps are regularly held in Kalukembe, Kakonda, and Ngalangi. Sporadic instances of individual camps have also occurred recently in Viye, Bailundu, Sambu, Wambu, Cingolo, and Cikuma. Even in those regions where camps are regularly held, only the children of certain families enter. It seems that there has been some passing on of the custom by heredity and, in general, there is intermarriage only between families and individuals who adhere to the initiation

[1] Bastos, 1909, op. cit., pp. 67–70.
[2] Ibid., p. 69 f.
[3] Vedder in Hahn *et al.*, op. cit., p. 178.

1: Childs M-S (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

preference for a polygynous household at this age, but no definite tradition which urges one 'to become lord and master of a complete circular village'.[1] Women are happiest while carrying a baby on the back.

Onyima yima ha yi mõlõ omõlõ,
Back good (yet) it does not see a child,

wails a childless woman. No grandmother is satisfied without herself caring for at least one grandchild. Old age is subject to its own burden of the years but among the Ovimbundu the aged are treated with much respect and deference.

SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS V–VII

THE periods in the life of an Ocimbundu may be summarized as follows:

1. The 'Marginal' Period of the First Week (*ocitete*) until the funicle drops.
2. The Baby Proper (second week until about seventh month) (*oñaka*) (from turning black until sitting alone).
3. The Sitting-baby or Toddler (*ocisembe*) (from sitting alone until mastery of walking and completion of weaning).
4. Early Childhood (from weaning until about 9 years) (*oneñe*). Period of socio-psychological education.
5. Later Childhood (from about 9 until puberty) (*omõlõ*). Period of technical training and assumption of economic responsibility.
6. Adolescence (from puberty until marriage). Period of preparation for marriage and full adulthood.
7. First Year of Marriage, during which the bride completes her training under her mother-in-law's guidance.
8. Full Adulthood (from birth of first child).

[1] Junod, op. cit., 1927, vol. i, p. 127.

Vakuacisoko (lit. "those of the set")[1]

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Childs considers that the custom of vacuacisoko is probably connected with circumcision and initiation. It does not exist throughout the territory but only in certain families who belong to the order and are said to pass it on by heredity. It seems to have been stronger in the past, but few practising members of the set are now known. All 'cuevala' or members of the set were in duty bound to render mutual assistance, and all had mutual rights to the property of the others without complaint or remedy. These rights seem to have included that of having intercourse with each other's wives. Injury or even death of one member brought about by another did not allow the injured family to seek revenge or legal redress. It was the duty of the vacuacisoko to bury their fellows, themselves digging the grave and attending to all the expenses ordinarily supplied by the family of the deceased. They also had the duty of burying strangers without family who would not be buried by others for fear of defilement or responsibility for their debts.[2] Childs describes the vacuacisoko associations as "age-grade sets",[3] but gives no further explanation.

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"With or without initiation rites, adolescence is largely preparation for marriage and full adult life. Traditionally, adolescence is not a time of conflict or stress....Contract and *corvée* labour have brought profound changes, especially for the young men. As for the girls, a few have gone into the towns; relatively few, however, other than those who attend a boarding-school, lead a life essentially different from that which has been traditionally theirs."[4]

MARRIAGE

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Available information concerning degrees of relationship in which marriage is permitted, marriage-payment, polygyny and divorce has been given above.[5] Evashi[6] and Hambly[7] describe some of the customs and ceremonies connected with marriage.

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For three nights after the commencement of the marriage ceremony the girl sleeps with her own parents, while the married women and six unmarried girls whom she has chosen as her attendants sleep in the house of her husband. On the fourth day she moves to the man's house, bringing her cooking utensils. For the first month, according to Hambly, or, according to Evashi, the first year, i.e. until the grain is ripe in her new fields, she lives with her husband's mother or aunt, in whose kitchen she cooks food each night to send to her husband in the *enjango*. When her first child is two or three months old, a present of a pig passes from the girl's mother to her husband.

[606]

Childs[8] adds that adulthood comes with marriage, and marriage is only recognised as complete when the first child has been born. A child or an adolescent is only a "potential" person (*ovuna*) and the permanency

(1) Childs, op.cit., p.115.
(2) Those who buried a man were considered responsible for his debts. Hence corpses were often placed in trees.
(3) Childs, op.cit., p.39.
(4) Ibid., p.117.
(5) Pp.20f.
(6) 1938.
(7) 1934, pp.180f.
(8) Op.cit., pp.119-20.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

of the word depends upon the syllable accented and the context, as further explained in the chapter on the Umbundu language. 576 643

A man or woman of the royal family greets the king with the words *na kuku*; *na* means "lord," and *kuku* is a term used for any old man to whom the speaker intends to show respect. *Kuku* is also applied to a man who stands in the relationship of grandfather. The king is expected to reply to a greeting given by one of the royal family by placing his right hand on his chest and saying twice, "*kalunga*." There may then follow from the king a question relating to welfare in general. Possibly the king will inquire the object of his subject's journey. A *sekulu* ("chief of a village") greets a king in the same manner as does a commoner, and the king replies as he would to a commoner. 565

Commoners greet a *sekulu* with the words *na kalunga* ("lord, greeting"). One *sekulu* greets another of the same rank with the one word *kalunga*, accompanied by clapping of the palms. Male commoners clap hands on meeting; this action is accompanied by the word *kalunga*, from each of them. Two female commoners use the word *kalunga* as a greeting, but as a rule they do not clap hands. They do, however, clap their palms when greeting a woman of the royal house.

Boys and girls must greet their fathers, maternal uncles, grandfathers, and other old men with either of the terms *na kuku* or *na kalunga*, the latter being more usual. *Na kuku* would be the appropriate term of respect for any elderly man. Children use the same words (*na kuku*) when addressing any elderly woman, including a grandmother. A usual greeting of a child to the mother, likewise to the mother's sister, would be *kalunga mai* ("greetings, mother"). 561 576

There is no prescribed form of address to the medicine-man. Greetings between a commoner and a medicine-man follow the usage noted for two commoners. Ngonga says, "They will treat him (the medicine-man) like a village chief if he is an old man and good. Perhaps they will say *na kalunga* as if talking to a chief." 576 [854] [758]

In the early morning people pass the greeting *oku lipasula*. This means "we have been like dead, we are awake." The appropriate early morning greeting of a commoner to the king or to a chief is *oku lipasula a kuku*. A usual afternoon greeting is *oku lañisa*. The evening greeting is *oku lisuñinya*. [643]

One who desires to pass across a room usually walks in front of other people, but while passing the attitude must not be erect. The thumb and middle finger should be snapped together, while the words

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

621 common meal was formerly a great bond of village unity. Mutual
476 help within the village and the family group is practised on many occasions. There are a number of folk-tales designed to show the evil consequences of refusing to lend, whether beer-pots or more valued assistance. Many proverbs enjoin the necessity of prompt and effectual mutual helpfulness and co-operation, as e.g.

U o popela ukuavo ongandu ka lula.

[538] (He who saves another (from) a crocodile does not undress.)

476 The mechanism of co-operation, the round of daily life in village and field, together with the cycles of food and of work, are properly subjects of further study. Here the purpose is to show the definitely family nature of the village and of its life. To the [181] casual observer the Ovimbundu appear as severe individualists. Indeed, they are individualistic to a degree, but they have worked out mechanisms of mutual helpfulness and co-operation which functioned both on political lines under the aegis of the king and within the kinship units.

Social Life of the Village

517 The two foci of the village life are the Men's Club and the
521 Dancing Floor. Even though no *onjango* may have been built, the
562 Men's Club will find a place in which to carry on, at least when there may be fine weather. Leisure may be limited, but time for conversation will be found. Europeans often express wonder at the amount of conversation which goes on between Africans, for they cannot understand what people of apparently such limited opportunities and with what seems like so narrow an outlook may have to discuss at such great length. As for the Ovimbundu, there is nothing which is a greater hardship than lack of opportunity for conversation with their fellows. Under primitive conditions this is more especially true of the men, who, in their villages, are always surrounded by members of their own family group. Owing to their peculiar position in the village and their household pre-occupations, the women's social propensities may find less outlet in these public gatherings. When the villagers gather on the dancing floor and the gourds of beer go round, they always separate according to sex. Whether the occasion be formal or informal, I have seen the discussion carried to great lengths, with the pipe passed between the men, while the women sat silently by,

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

517 521 562 some pulling on their stubby little pipes and watching the men. As the men smoke, they may pass the pipe from mouth to mouth, but not so the women.

577 276 Tobacco (*akaya*) is a great vehicle for sociability whether in the pipe or in the form of snuff. 'Snuffing is held to clear the head, to clarify the thought, to enlighten the eyes, to sharpen the hearing, and comfort the heart.'[1] 'Taking a pinch of snuff, between the forefinger and the thumb, is unknown . . . and would be considered . . . very unsatisfactory. . . . They pour about a teaspoonful into the palm of the hand, and burying their . . . nostrils in the peppery mixture snort it up loudly, aided by a rotary motion of the half-closed hand.'[2]

273 Beer (*ocimbombo*) is of even greater importance. Its place has long been threatened by such drinks as the stronger beer made from emmer wheat (*ekundi*), mead (*ingundu* and *ocasa*), and [177] imported rum. Within the past thirty or forty years the Ovimbundu have themselves learned to distil rum (*okacipembe*) from sweet potatoes, sugar-cane, pumpkins, &c., and although the industry is illegal, it has grown to great proportions and nothing now seems able to stop it. It is the widespread use of this strong drink, with its concomitant evils, which is to-day the greatest enemy of the social life.

535 The dance is probably the most important element in the social life of the village. The Ovimbundu have many different dances and they dance on every occasion and on the slightest provocation. I have collected thirty songs to accompany dances. About three-fourths of them are sometimes used at funerals or at other ceremonial occasions, some of them are for more frivolous purposes, and most of those which are used for ceremonies are used at other times also. It is not for nothing that an Umbundu equivalent of [538] the proverb 'Strike while the iron is hot', runs as follows:

> *Nda wa mõlã oñoma, piluka:*
> When you see a drum, dance:
> *Oñoma ka yi mudwã lwali.*
> A drum may not be seen twice.

During one of my visits to Ngendo there was an important funeral with much dancing at Ndumba, just across the valley. At

[1] Tucker, *Drums in the Darkness* (Toronto and New York; Doran, 1927), p. 38.
[2] Monteiro, *Angola and the River Congo*, 2 vols. (London: Macmillan, 1875), vol. ii, p. 271.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

On nights when there is little or no moonlight, the evening 562
gatherings in the village sometimes, although not always, follow 517
the sex division, with the men and boys in the *onjango*, and the women and girls at one or more of the kitchens. Discussion of affairs, with youth listening to age, is the usual order, but the time is often passed in the recital of folk-tales or in propounding riddles.

Riddles are more especially a field of youth but age also enjoys 524
hearing the answers given. A favourite occupation of the men, 171
especially by day, is *ocela*, a game known all over Africa and in other parts of the world as well.[1] Junod calls it 'the national game of Africa'.[2]

The Ovimbundu have brought recreation to the service of their 461
work. Europeans are often irritated by the amount of conversation which Ovimbundu carry on during working hours, but on consideration it may be found that were it not for the conversation and other psychological aids, the work might be quite unendurable. This is especially the case with regard to road work and many types of contract labour. Road songs and work songs are of real [533]
help in keeping up morale and in prolonging endurance. Most of them seem to have been developed in the days of the caravan trade, but they have not been forgotten and are now used on many occasions.

A word about ceremonial occasions before leaving the social 764
life of the village. Some rites and ceremonies are celebrated so quietly that they are not even social occasions. Most of them, however, are very social. This is especially true of funerals and post-mortuary rites. During visits to Ngendo I was able to witness two post-mortuary rites and the funeral of an important person of a near-by village. Other ceremonial occasions, such as weddings [585]
and a return from a trading expedition, also call for much sociability, but funerals and post-mortuary rites are the social occasions which occupy the most time and attention and make for the greatest conviviality.

[1] Known under the name *Mancala*, which is evidently a Bantu word, or taken from one; cf. the Umbundu *ohu mangala*, to play. Hambly mentions *ocela*, op. cit., p. 219. See also Nevinson, op. cit., p. 91. The *New Standard Dictionary* (Funk and Wagnalls) attributes to Arabian origin both the game and the word *Mankalah*.

[2] H. A. Junod, *The Life of a South African Tribe*, 2nd ed., vol. i, p. 345 f.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

556 The attitude toward success in agriculture indicated by the
578 foregoing is held in some measure toward marked success in other
472 professions, but in lesser degree, except perhaps where trading is taken up individually or by two persons in partnership. One of the earliest observers, Pinheiro de Lacerda (*c.* 1790), noted that accusations of witchcraft were most often levelled at the wealthier members of the community.[1] This fear of success has continued down to the present day, but while trading was an open group enterprise in which many individuals acquired wealth, success in that field came to be accepted more quickly than in the more individualistic work of farming. At the present time, commercial activities are carried on largely by individuals alone or in a limited partnership, and the practice, or at least the suspicion, of witchcraft in connexion with them seems to be on the increase. Some may feel that similar attitudes with regard to successful results from cultivation of the soil are now held less strongly than formerly, but [754] I know of no evidence to support such a feeling. One of the commonest traditional patterns for witchcraft is that of a partnership of a senior and a junior member—of parent and child, or of mother's brother and sister's son. That is one reason why urgent suggestions by an older person concerning choice of a profession by a younger are looked upon with disfavour among the Ovimbundu.

868 A child should be taught enough diligence and application in
562 cultivating that he or she may not lack the necessities in later adult life. Every boy will take to trading and bargaining almost as naturally as eating, drinking, breathing, and sleeping. Commerce still retains so much of its former glamour that every boy will take it up if and when opportunity offers. The care of younger children comes even more naturally to the girl, and she must also learn the housekeeper's art. Many folk-tales and songs indicate a reluctance on the part of girls to dedicate themselves with diligence to cultivation. In the days of the rubber trade, when girls could also join caravans for the coast and to the interior as porters, there may have been some real basis for this, but at the present time girls are convinced and enthusiastic cultivators, almost 100 per cent.[2] The

[1] *Annaes Maritimos e Coloniaes*, 5a Ser., p. 489 f.

[2] Women coming to live in the coast towns or in other European settlements where they have no fields or gardens find adjustment to life without agricultural labours very difficult.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

heavy tasks and the close and constant routine of housework, on the other hand, sometimes require more than casual urging by the mother. Biographical evidence agrees with observation on this point, but nevertheless few girls reach puberty without attaining proficiency in the various household tasks. The decline of polygyny has probably hastened the girl's education in the household arts. When there is only one wife in the household, not only must she have more regular help from her daughters, but also it is more likely that the daughters will have to take on full responsibility at those times when the mother is unable for ritual reasons to take part in the preparation of her husband's food.[1] Biographical sources indicate that this tendency was already operating at least fifty or sixty years ago.

Every Ocimbundu assumes that his sustenance will come from cultivation of the soil. The 'professions' which a child may learn are therefore in the nature of side-lines. Although the Ovimbundu are not a true cattle-rearing people, they possess many domestic animals, especially dogs, pigs, sheep, goats, and chickens. Chickens are owned and looked after by both men and women, but the other animals only by the men. Boys may have small stock of their own, and a boy's economic independence most frequently begins with owning a chicken. Herding has been a function of the sister's son and even now there is reluctance on the part of boys to herd for their fathers. Animal husbandry is largely a commercial enterprise, save in the extreme southern tribes of Kalukembe, Ngalangi, &c.

The principal side-line 'professions' (*ovipinduko*) may be listed as follows:

For Girls

Basket-making, which is practised by all to a limited extent, but excelled in by relatively few.

Pottery-making.

Medical-practice and Divination (for conditions, see *infra*).

For Boys

Mat-making, which includes the making of four distinct types of mats each of which has its specialist; the making of trays and large baskets for granaries.

[1] i.e. at the times of her menstrual periods, after the birth of a child, &c.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

593 importance, but treatment of that subject must be reserved for [562] another time. The balance maintained in the Umbundu social system, which has already been noted,[1] together with woman's important position in the economic sphere, give to the women and girls a relatively satisfactory place in Umbundu society. It has also been noted that woman's sphere has suffered less disintegration than has man's. Although the girl may have somewhat less freedom than the boy, her personal prospects are more stable, and in the long run more satisfactory.

Adjustments between parents and children among the Ovimbundu are relatively satisfactory. The fact that there are no specific father–daughter or mother–son avoidances or taboos, beyond the general laws of incest which nearly all cultures maintain, indicates an absence of strain in these relationships. In our own society adult–child fixations, and particularly the parent–child fixations, with the consequent repressions, are very common and are held to be responsible, at least in part, for much trouble including difficulties of adjustment at pubescence.[2] In traditional Umbundu society such fixations occur very infrequently, if at all.[3] In this context we should be reminded of the following factors:

[855]
1. The early and continued close association of the child largely (although not exclusively) with the parent of the same sex.[4]
2. The association of the child with many (classificatory) 'fathers' and 'mothers' which may result in a partial transfer of affection.[2]
3. The absence of fondling, kissing, and other close bodily contact in display of affection.[5]

157 The picture in these respects is not unlike that of the Samoans given by Margaret Mead.[6] In some other respects it is quite different but it is similar in the apparent absence of a period of adolescent *Sturm und Drang*. What actual correlations there may be between parent–child fixations and a period of adolescent stress I do not know. The absence of any such period has been reported

[1] *Vide supra*, p. 43.
[2] Cf. Allport, op. cit., pp. 355 ff.
[3] The proverbial inability of a widow properly to rear a child (*vide supra*, p. 102) may indicate difficulties of this sort.
[4] *Vide supra*, p. 98.
[5] No display of affection whatever is congenial to the Ovimbundu, except to babies and between adolescent age-mates of the same sex.
[6] Op. cit., chap. x.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

The picture of types gathered at Ngalangi (Plate LXXXIX, Fig. 3) shows, reading from left to right along the back row, then along the front row in the same direction: an Ocimbundu; an Ocivokue; a man of the Vangangella; an Uluchazi woman; a Lunda man; and two types of the Vangangella. 142 101

The M'Bunda man and woman photographed at Cangamba display characteristic deformation of the upper central incisors (Plate XCI, Figs. 1, 2). Photographs of a Mussurongo man and two women, taken about a hundred miles east of Malange, show no great difference from the Ovimbundu except in their shorter stature (Plates LXX, Figs. 1, 2; LXXI, Figs. 1, 2). The Bushman (Plate LXIX, Figs. 1, 2) shows a type found wandering in small bands in the south of Angola. These photographs were taken at Cassanga. [304]

The dress and personal ornaments of the tribes dwelling to the south of the Ovimbundu (Plates LIX–LXVIII) are entirely different from the clothing and decorative styles observed in the areas occupied by the Ovimbundu. This statement is true with regard to bodily covering, ornaments, tooth mutilation, use of pigment, scarification, and hairdressing. 171 301 304

In respect of all these factors, males and females of the Ovimbundu have distinctive patterns which do not appear to have influenced, or to have been influenced by the styles around them. [177]

In working southward from Elende I passed through typical Umbundu cultures until the vicinity of Kipungo was reached. At this place the change in physical appearance, ornaments, and hairdressing was remarkable both for its abruptness and distinctiveness. But the change from agricultural to pastoral pursuits is gradual.

A comparison of photographs indicates at once the truth of this statement, which can be further illustrated by a detailed description of the ornaments observed from Kipungo to Mongua.

By far the most important of these is the circular *omba* shell made from the basal part of a gastropod shell of the genus *Conus* Linn; and allied forms. These are highly prized, not because of any intrinsic worth, but on account of strong sentiment arising from their bequest, which is usually in the female line. I have, however, seen a few males of the Vakuanyama wearing these shells. For the old *omba* shells monetary offers equal to the earnings of a woman for a period of six months were made, but without success. One woman wavered somewhat, but finally decided that she dared not return to her home without her *omba* shells. From a Portuguese trader I bought, for a small sum, *omba* shells showing stages in manufacture. 301 321 [825] [562]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

672 bility of women is mentioned in describing the penalties for adultery and theft.

562 The penalties for offences against the king were undoubtedly
681 more severe than those imposed for the same offences against a commoner. Ngonga says that the punishments for crimes against a chief or medicine-man were, and are now, the same as the penalties for offences against any other person. It seems, however, that if the chief were a very powerful man, he could claim penalties which would have been appropriate for offences against a king.

685 A thief was punished by beating, in addition to which he would have to pay a fine to the people from whom he had stolen, but he rarely escaped without the beating. The thief would be beaten just as much for stealing one animal as he would for stealing many. If a woman stole from her neighbor's garden, those who caught her would tie her and take her to her husband, who would pay compensation and then beat her. A child caught stealing would be taken to the maternal uncle or to his own father. If a woman stole from relations she would probably have no punishment other than a beating. Her husband would have to compensate the relations. Stealing honey from hives is an offence that is punished according to the general laws relating to theft.

696 If a man was sentenced to a death penalty, or to a beating, there was an official appointed by the king or by the chief to see the sentence carried out. This representative was called *ukuenje welombe* which means "the servant, or minister, of the court."

682 Ngonga described the penalty for murder saying, "It was a terrible thing they did to the murderer. A tight triangle of wood was fastened on to his neck by a peg and to this a cord was attached so that he was suspended to the roof with his feet barely touching the ground. In some instances his head was placed through a hole in the door of his house while his body was inside the hut. He had very little food or water and people threw things at him. He was kept tied up for a month to see whether he could pay something. Suppose he could not pay, and nobody would pay for him, he was taken outside the village where his head was cut off. If he had many possessions, he said on the first day, 'If you will take this thing off my neck I will pay two oxen and two slaves.' The payment would be made, not to the wife or children of the murdered man, but to the brother of the mother of the murdered man, or to the mother of the murdered man, or to the son of a sister of the victim. If the murderer agreed to make the payment the people kept him tied up until the

Pg. 203

Social Life

fines were in their hands. If he murdered one of the royal family 682
he was killed after he had paid the fine." The punishment of a woman [562]
who has committed a murder is the same as that for a man.

Ombulungu is the name given to trial by poison ordeal. The 695
medicine-man holds out both his hands, in each of which there is a potato, only one of which is poisoned. The accused man says, "If I have done this thing, this potato will be poison for me. If I have not done this thing, this potato will be food for me." The complainant says, "If this is not the man who poisoned my brother, this potato will be poison for me." They sit in front of the medicine-man, and each must take the potato in the hand opposite to him. The poison makes a man very sick. His mouth swells so that he cannot speak.

When a woman was accused of murder her son or her brother [562]
would take her place in the poison ordeal. A boy of fifteen years of age would have the same treatment as a man. "I don't think a girl would kill anybody. I never heard about it," said Ngonga. It appears that resort was made to a medicine-man when the accused was thought to have committed murder by poison or magic. If the murderer used weapons, the accuser, who was usually a relative, was entitled to kill him with the kind of weapon used for the crime.

The penalties for adultery were the same as those for murder. 684
The woman appears to have escaped punishment, except that "her husband would not have her any more." The male adulterer had to pay the husband; if he could not pay or escape, the husband had the right to kill him. In the old days the price for adultery was two oxen, a pig, and a slave. At the present day a man who has committed adultery and made payment, possibly takes the woman and all children under three years of age. The husband has the right to decide whether the adulterer has the privilege of taking the woman and her children. An adulterer with one of the king's wives was
castrated but not killed. He might, instead of mutilation, pay a very [567]
high price, while he himself along with his sisters and the sons of his sisters, would become slaves of the king. If a man could not pay, he might be sold as a slave in order to provide money for the fine.
Criminal law did not distinguish between responsibility for inten- [671]
tional and unintentional offences.

It is very difficult to say how much of the old law survives. One 681
feels that underneath the ostensible Portuguese rule there is an active 177
native life that is resisting subjugation.

Only two years ago Ngonga paid an ox to prevent one of his female 686
relatives from being pawned. Within the past ten years Ngonga has

577 Lying is strongly disapproved and the liar is called *ohembi*. The Ovimbundu appreciate hospitality (*unu*) which also means generosity. A man who is hospitable is said to be *ongavi*. Greediness, which is disliked, is described by the word *oku sapa* ("to be greedy"). There are standards of honesty in sales and exchanges. A deceiver in trade is *ohembi*.

836 With regard to the relation of the sexes in early years it may be said that, in spite of boy and girl friendships, and the communal sleeping of boys and girls at the home of one of the girls, a man expects to marry a virgin, a point which has been dealt with in describing marriage ceremonies.

Naturally there is a difficulty in obtaining precise information respecting the details of these nocturnal gatherings of boys and girls. Ngonga said that girls inform their parents concerning the house where the night is to be spent, and there is a point of etiquette requiring that girls must not go to a house where boys are staying together.

864 Standards of conduct already described under courtship are a result of direct teaching by parents. Marriage rules and a classificatory system of relationships, with its prohibitive decrees, are taught in the home, in the men's council house, and at initiation ceremonies where such exist. In addition to these sources of instruction there is no doubt an unconscious absorption of ideas and standards. The power of suggestion is always at work through everyday examples.

831 Apart from demands made by tribal custom and direct instruction there are variable personal standards of modesty. Ngonga states
• [562] that many lascivious stories are told among men, and when the men are drunk, they tell these to women. "Sometimes the women laugh, but the good women do not like to hear these tales."

576 A male commoner when meeting the king bows low, extends his
643 arms, claps his palms and says, "*ohosi* ["lion"] *akuku* ["grandfather"]."
565 Only the old people follow the ancient custom of falling on their knees when greeting the king. The Ovimbundu never were in the habit of doing more profound obeisance, but the Vangangella, when greeting one of their kings, rub their chins on the ground and place dust on their chests. Even at the present day a woman or child of the Ovimbundu is expected to kneel when greeting a king, but such an acknowledgment is not now usual in greetings given by a male commoner. The reply of the king to the commoner is "*kalunga*." This word enters into greetings of all kinds. The literal meaning of the word is "the sea," "king," "god," or "death," but the interpretation

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

fish to stay together at the bottom of the river, is the reason alleged for this taboo. A young hunter is ceremonially initiated. Throughout his life he has to make sacrifice to the ancestral spirits of hunters who are in the house where bows of famous hunters are kept; these ceremonies must be performed before a hunter leaves for the chase. A caravan is a commercial undertaking, but, before setting out, the head of a dead chief is asked for a guarantee of success; meanwhile a sacrifice is made by a medicine-man. A wooden image, when consulted by the medicine-man, indicates the correct caravan route. These instances illustrate a blending of the sacred and the profane in occupations.

Sexual relationships among the Ovimbundu form a basis of social life, as they do in all communities, but the sexual aspect is not all-pervading and completely dominant.

In early years children separate during play. Boys play games of hunting and warfare, enter into competition with bows and arrows, or amuse themselves with wood-carving. Girls find amusement in imitating their mothers in the occupations of making pottery and baskets, and in cultivating the fields. The small sums of money which a girl derives from the sale of produce from her own corn patch are personal property which she usually spends on trinkets and palm oil. This measure of economic independence, combined with considerable freedom of choice in marriage, indicates an individuality that has not been generally recognized.

I have mentioned among the Ovimbundu a system of friendship between boys and girls of from twelve to sixteen years, which permits the children to sleep together in the home of one of the girls in whose house the early evening has been spent. Cohabitation is forbidden, and pregnancy would be a disgrace. The practice is not unlike that of night visits by a lover in certain European countries during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (W. Goodsell, A History of the Family as a Social and Educational Institution, p. 365). Clearly sex is a factor that plays its part as a formative influence from infancy onward, until final emphasis of sex dichotomy is made by tribal initiations.

The social position of woman may be considered by selecting a few points from the data relating to courtship, marriage, and divorce. Marriages are sometimes arranged during infancy, but this does not invalidate the previous statement that considerable freedom of choice is allowed; a girl is not compelled to follow arrangements made during her childhood. A bride has to make contributions toward the

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domestic equipment. Ritual enters into the introduction of the bride to her home, as was shown by explaining the functions of three elderly women, who erect the fireplace, bring new fire from the chief's house, and assist the bride in a ceremonial way. If a husband has reason to doubt the virginity of his bride, he bores a hole in her cloth with a firebrand, and makes her carry the cloth to her parents. But the marriage is not necessarily invalidated, since the husband is reconciled by a return of some portion of his gifts to the parents.

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Some light is thrown on the ethics of family life by considering the meeting which takes place in the men's council house (*onjango*) before the bride goes to her new home. Here in the presence of relatives from both families the father of the bride says, "We are taking these things for our daughter, we hope she will not shame us." He turns to his daughter, enjoining her to be hospitable, never forgetting to feed her husband's people when they call.

Minor incidents help in a study of the psychology of family life. When husband and wife have quarreled, the latter goes away for a few hours into the bush and arranges that a number of burrs shall be clinging to her dress when she returns. If her husband silently and spontaneously picks these from her cloth, amicable feeling is restored.

Analysis of the grounds for divorce shows that women have their rights, though the male is in the more favorable position. In Rome the legal rights of a matron were slender, but in actual practice she held an important and honorable position. Similarly the status of an Ocimbundu woman is higher than the divorce laws imply.

The human side of family differences was well brought out by studying the interference and indirect influence of relatives on the relationship of husband and wife. Details have been given indicating that divorce is not entirely a matter of adjustment between families; the village chief may be called upon to act as arbiter. The final ceremony of repudiation, at which the husband slaps his wife's back saying, "It is finished," is a public rite. There is here a close connection between family consent and public ratification.

Although a woman may return to her parents under certain conditions which justify the divorce of the husband, parents are not anxious to encourage this practice. Marriage tokens would have to be returned to the husband of their daughter; moreover there might be a difficulty in securing another husband. In this instance a conflict occurs between parental obligations and cupidity. This is again shown by the argument which always arises respecting

5: Hambly E-5 (1929-30)1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

containing the head and attaching it to a pole by which it was supported 439
on the shoulders of two bearers. Then followed a series of questions from 787
the village chief (sekulu), and answers were supposed to be given through forward or backward swinging of the pole. A forward swing was affirmative, and a backward swing was negative. I have seen this procedure followed with a coffin supported as described, and the questions related to the cause of death.

The head of a king would be asked, "Do you want an ox for sacrifice? We will give you one." "Do you want a new skin for your head? We will give you one." Such was the ceremony for bringing spiritual aid to what was otherwise a commercial undertaking.

A wooden figure of a female decorated with black feathers was an indispensable part of the equipment of a medicine-man who accompanied a caravan. When in doubt with regard to the path he knelt at the parting of the ways and consulted the figure. Replies came in a falsetto voice attained by plugging his nostrils. Horns containing a mixture of fat, charcoal, and other substances were carried so that they might be planted near a camping ground to drive away thieves and leopards. These horns are still used and are obtainable.

At the present day a belated Ocimbundu, who fears the sun may set 789
before he reaches the next village, will take some earth from an ant hill. This earth he places in the fork of a tree saying, "O sun wait for me a little while."

Examination of the culture of the Ovimbundu, combined with observa- 101
tions on the Umbundu language and somatic traits, indicate that the Ovim- 241
bundu are a part of the Bantu peoples of southwest Africa. They have, however, taken advantage of the open Benguela highlands to develop their system of agriculture far beyond that which is usually carried on by Negroes in forest clearings.

In agricultural work a clear division of labor is observed. Men clear 241
timber and burn the bush, after which hoe cultivation is in the hands of 562
women, though men assist with the harvest. Unmarried girls help in the fields and each has a piece of ground whose products are the cultivator's personal property. This gives unmarried girls a measure of economic independence. Usually a girl spends the proceeds of her work in buying trinkets and palm-oil for personal decoration. Under their system of poly- 595
gyny each wife has her own field, utensils, and a separate hut with its fire 562
and cooking arrangements. The husband visits each hut for four consecutive nights, though in some districts there is a seven night cycle. Men always take evening meals in the mens' council house (onjango) in the center (to notice the tombs of hunters, which consist of cairns of stones enclosing a) ‡

‡ [Printer's error: This sentence refers to p. 159. -- Analyst]

5: Hambly E-5 (1929-30) 1934 FP 13 Mbundu FP13

595 of the village. The meals are brought there by those wives who are at the
562 time cohabiting with their husbands. But an exception is made in case of menstruation, for a woman is not allowed to cook or handle food during her period. At such times the preparation and transfer of food is carried out by another wife, and of course the time comes when such a service can be
241 requited. I found no survival of agricultural rites such as offering first fruits or other similar ceremony.

In some tribes of Sudanic and Bantu Negroes agricultural rites are important in relation to sowing and harvest, since land is in the first place the property of dead ancestors, but so far as my inquiries go such rites are not now known to the Ovimbundu. Maize may be pounded only on rocks that have been consecrated by the medicine-man: he kills a chicken and sprinkles
[462 the surface of the rock with its blood. Only women may pound corn, and a
838] youth who persisted in dressing as a woman and pounding on the rocks was beaten by his relatives. This information gave a clue to homosexual practices, but the information obtained was meager.

231 In connection with the care of domestic animals many tempting digressions present themselves, but I am concerned only with beliefs, ritual, and division of labor. Chickens are of ritual importance since they provide the least expensive sacrifice, and in connection with industries the piacular use of chickens will presently be mentioned. For sacrificial purposes a goat is preferred to a sheep since it makes more noise; but the reason for this is not clear, though making a surmise I would say that the noise better appeases ancestral spirits to whom most sacrifices are made. Pigs are kept, but I did not hear of them being used for sacrifice. The animals so far mentioned have little or no attention. Goats fend entirely for themselves; so also do sheep. Chickens receive maize from women and children, who also gather the eggs. Pigs receive maize and mush from cooking pots or that discarded in making beer, but they depend largely on foraging in refuse pits.

The castration of pigs and bulls is the work of a male specialist who receives a fee of four yards of cloth for operating on the latter animal, but only a small gift of tobacco or similar recognition for castrating a pig.

The Ovimbundu have acquired cattle of the long-horned Damara breed, and in connection with the care of these some important points of ritual and division of labor should be recorded. The herding of cattle is
[462] exclusively the work of males, and I am not aware that women have any
234 tasks connected with cattle. Only in recent times have some male owners of cattle begun to milk the cows. This they do somewhat stealthily, deceiving the cow from time to time by allowing the calf to suck for a few moments. If asked why milk is not used, the owners say that calves deprived of suck-

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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switching to Umbundu or Portuguese for addressing an African, whereas Portuguese is the language used at the Catholic missions even between non-Portuguese.

The African Catholic priests then have approximate equality and identity of status with their white confreres within the hierarchic framework of the diocese of Nova Lisboa; the Ovimbundu pastors lack this equality and identity but instead possess greater independence and opportunities for leadership within the Umbundu Native Church, which functions as a partly autonomous body.[19] The difference in functions of the priests and pastors is related to the ultimate aims of missionary action; for the Catholic missions the establishment of a local clergy is part of the complete incorporation of Ovimbundu into the universal Church; for the Protestants the establishment of a local clergy is part of the building up of a totally independent local church.

I attempt later in this work to show what roles the missions play in social life among the Ovimbundu and in the relations between the 'civilized' and native population. Here it should be noted that it is the missions rather than commerce or the Government which have opened status-giving positions to the Ovimbundu. The clergy have higher statuses in the total Angolan society than do any other of the *assimilados*. They combine this high status *vis-à-vis* the Europeans with leadership in groupings which include the ordinary villagers, unlike the various welfare societies in which the *assimilados* associate.

So much then for the general pattern of cities, communications, and trains, of administration, missionaries, and traders. I now turn to the particular features of the neighbourhood where I lived. Bimbe is said to derive from the name of a princess (Mbimbi) who ruled as a vassal of the king of Bailundo.[20] Here at the beginning of this century Samakaka, a

[19] The missions provide supervision and specialist services including agricultural instruction, community development, education, and health. Village work and actual pastoral activity is the responsibility of the Native Church. For an account of such specialist services see M. F. Cushmann, *Missionary Doctor in Africa*, New York, 1944 and A. Strangeways in *African Women* (June 1956).

[20] Information obtained locally from 'civilized' people. Princesses were very rare among the Ovimbundu, though Childs notes that Sambos (Sambu) had a woman ruler early in its history (p. 178).

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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602 leaning towards matrilateral rather than patrilateral brothers. The classificatory kinship terminology, and the lack of genealogies and kinship groups, means that a man knows a great many classificatory brothers living in his neighbourhood of whom he vaguely recognizes some as 'close' others as 'distant', but with whom his relations are not especially significant. A boy or girl [268] who loses his or her parents is fairly likely, judging from the evidence of Epalanga households, to settle with a full- or half-brother or sister.

602 591 178 Formerly, owing to virilocal marriage, a sister was geographically separated from her brother, and even if widowed or divorced would not necessarily return to his village, but might go to her mother's brother.[24] With this geographical separation went a situation of possible conflict, since the brother could sell his sister's children to recoup his own debts, and the shadow of sorcery fears seems to have touched this relationship.[25] The suppression of the rubber and slave trades and the subsequent disintegration of the kinship groups have removed the economic pressures which made for conflict between matrilineal kin and the residence rules which divided people locally into groups of agnates and their wives. The brother-sister tie has therefore [593] changed its content, since it is released from the heavy pressures formerly active in the matrilineal kin groups.

562 It would be wrong to produce any such generalization as 'a woman must always be under the guardianship of a male relative'. A woman who is widowed or divorced or whose husband is away working will tend, however, to develop a particular link with the male head of some household, her own kinsman usually, except in the case of a labour migrant's wife, when it may be a kinsman of her husband. Thus in Epalanga, Augusto (25) aided the household of his absent full brother Julio (29).

602 Aid is most likely to be given to a kinsman's wife when the two households are close together. The underlying idea seems to be to keep the kinsman's household together rather than any duty of aiding an affine. For a widow or divorced woman or the

[24] Childs, pp. 25–37.

[25] H. W. Nevinson (*A Modern Slavery*) gives a complicated story which suggests this possibility (p. 101).

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13
Angola FP1

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3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

hoping that another man will ask for their daughter; this new suitor 586
will have to make payment to the deserted husband. The chief of the village is not consulted unless the return of the husband's presents is long delayed or is in some way unsatisfactory. A woman who [564]
claims even remote relationship with the royal family is treated well, because her husband is afraid of the influence which may be used against him. A woman who returns to her parents takes with her the articles she contributed to the home; these are pottery, corn baskets, a wooden pounder, and wooden spoons. If a wife returns to her parents without telling her husband that she intends going, he will beat her if he finds her packing up her utensils.

The procedure of divorce contains a very human element. When a man has fully decided that he would like to divorce his wife, he will first of all inform his parents of his intention. The parents may advise their son to try the girl for a longer time.

On the contrary, the parents of the man may be mischief-makers. Sometimes the parents will say to the husband, "Do you know that your wife is doing these things? It is better you should send her away." If the man is fond of his wife, he will take her to another [587]
place where his parents cannot watch her. When a woman divorces her husband to marry another man, she takes to her new home all children under three years of age. Older children go to the home of her parents.

The chief of the village has to witness the final ceremony of divorcing a woman; but the husband and wife, also the wife's father, are the principal people concerned in the divorce ceremony. The husband receives from his wife's father a roll of tobacco and a pig, then he places leaves and palm oil on the back of his wife. He slaps her back saying, "It is finished," after which the woman goes to her father or to another man.

When a woman takes the initiative and has declared her intention of divorcing her husband, she returns to her parents as described; but the divorce cannot be completed until the husband has been persuaded to perform this ceremony of slapping her back and making a ceremonial renunciation in public.

PREGNANCY AND CHILDBIRTH

When a woman finds that she is pregnant, she makes and drinks 843
an infusion prepared from bark fiber. This is to insure the removal of all stringy matter at delivery. Formerly a husband was not

PART ONE [p.17]

SOCIAL STRUCTURE

121 *The object of Part One is (1) to describe the present social structure of the Ovimbundu, and (2) to suggest significant elements that this social structure has or may have for the programme of Christian missions among this people.*

CHAPTER II

POLITICAL AND SOCIAL LIFE

127 HAD my historical survey revealed a detailed description of
122 Umbundu social structure made at some former time, it would also be useful to make comparisons with the present state of affairs. Since there is no such witness out of the past, it is only possible to describe and analyse that which at present exists. For this purpose some excerpts from Umbundu narratives are presented and references made to certain folk-tales and proverbs. The basis of the analysis and description rests more especially, however, upon notes and impressions gathered in field-work over a period of years and upon a considerable number of genealogical tables and schedules of marriage arrangements.[1] These latter are referred to here only to a certain extent. I hope to treat these more fully later. The subject of marriage properly belongs to the field of social structure, but because of its importance I hope to devote a chapter to it. Only certain of the genealogical tables are presented fully and in their several aspects, while the others have served as basis and background for the whole of this part of the study.

565 The most significant historical allusion to the social structure
175 of the Ovimbundu which I have found was an observation of Pinheiro de Lacerda about 1790. 'These are they of the Highlands who are made up of two "systems" the one call themselves
[266] "Quimbundos" (i.e. Ovimbundu), (these do not eat human flesh): the others are called "Quimbangalas" (i.e. the royal households of Imbangala stock), who eat it, and when they make their sacrifice,
[782] at which all together attend, then all eat the "Makongo".'[2]

[1] I have 192 of the former and 75 of the latter.
[2] *Annaes Maritimos & Coloniaes*, 5a Ser., p. 488.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

175 565 Evidently royal persons could then be easily distinguished from the commoners.

565 178 The question naturally arises how far may a similar distinction be observed at the present time. The genealogical tables presented may answer the question. It may be seen that intermarriage of commoners and royalty has proceeded to such a degree that the differences have been greatly dimmed, if not quite erased. Furthermore, the loss of the political power which the royal families formerly held has levelled down distinctions until they have largely lost their meaning. This loss again has hastened the process of intermarriage with commoners. While there are some distinctive practices which persist, they may now pertain to or be practised by certain members of a family only, or in some instances, and not in others. These refer especially to inheritance and to the naming of children.

121 By 'social structure' is meant the more or less permanent framework of relationships between members of a community which manifests itself in an ordered group-life, with reciprocal rights and duties, privileges and obligations, of members, determining behaviour-patterns . . . and moulding the feelings, thoughts, and conduct of members according to these patterns, so that it is only in and through them that the individual can achieve his personal self-realization and participate in the satisfactions offered by the life of his community.

This framework of social organization, or social structure, is permanent compared with the stream of human lives that, in the succession of the generations, flows through it. Each new generation finds it there, as an inheritance from untold generations of his predecessors. Yet the framework of social structure is not absolutely rigid or fixed for all time, but is itself a thing of growth, capable of variation in detail, sometimes giving birth to new developments, at other times undergoing disintegration and decay.[1]

101 [601] The genealogical tables which I have collected are fairly representative of the major divisions or 'tribes' of the Ovimbundu. The only 'tribes' not represented are those of the border regions of Namba, Sanga, Cikomba, and Kalukembe, none of which save the last are numerically important. These border groups themselves offer an interesting field of study and particularly in that they may provide cultural and linguistic bridges between the Ovimbundu and their neighbors.

[1] A. W. Hoernlé in Schapera, *The Bantu-Speaking Tribes of South Africa* (London: Routledge, 1937), p. 67 f.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

The Ovimbundu are not ordinary cannibals, if indeed that term may be applied to any people in Africa, nor do the commoners of the Ovimbundu ever eat human flesh on their own account, but no king may ever reign or be considered as regularly enthroned until he has 'eaten Ekongo'.[1] The cannibalism traditionally ascribed to Wambu-Kalunga is also a case in point.[2] Other human sacrifices practised by the 'Jagas' and described by Battell also have their counterparts in the practices of the Umbundu kingdoms.[3] The mode of the burial of the dead described by Battell[4] is essentially that which has been used, at least until the last few years, for the kings and the other 'holy'[5] men of the Ovimbundu, except that where rock caves are available the use of them has been adopted and in Kasongi cairns were used. The sitting posture and the sacrifice of wives or slaves and cattle (or of substitutes) are the important points, and these have everywhere been used for the classes mentioned, until quite recently.

The custom of keeping boys captured from the enemy and training them to be fearless warriors amid the terrors of the country has a parallel in the Umbundu custom of the king's slaves,[6] who came from another land[7] and would therefore do the king's bidding without fear, favour, or consideration of family feeling. They often reached high position and certain of the king's ministers always came from among them. There seem to be many recollections of the 'Jagas' in the customs of the kings' sons.[8] Names of certain of the officials seem to have survived, as, for example, Mani (*muēlē*) Lumbo, Mani-Curio (*Muēkalia*), Golambolo (*Ngalamboli*), Tendala (*Candala*), Ukuetambo,[9] &c. Careful linguistic studies would doubtless reveal many remains of the speech

[1] *Oku lia Ekongo*—lit. 'to eat the Old One'. This is a ritual feast in which the flesh of a specially fattened slave is eaten mixed with the flesh of various animals. See Ravenstein, op. cit., p. 33, note 3. Magyar described this custom, calling it '*Ouri-Kongo*', op. cit., pp. 275 ff.

[2] See *supra*, p. 176.

[3] Compare Ravenstein, op. cit.

[4] Op. cit., p. 34 f.

[5] 'Holy' in the sense of spirit possessed—the king, the hunter, the medical practitioner, and the smith.

[6] *Ocindali cosoma*, singular. May there be some recollection of 'Kinguri' (=Cinguli) in this word?

[7] In Bailundu the *ovinduli viosoma* (plural) came mostly from Luandu, i.e. the Songo country across the Kuanza—further evidence of connexion with Lunda emigrants.

[8] *Omālā volosoma*, used collectively of all the royal families of the Ovimbundu.

[9] Cavazzi, op. cit., pp. 206 f., 211.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

175x 177 influences. The stock to which the common people belong were wearers of skins, which is true of many of them to the present time. The people from whom the ruling houses came have a highly developed weaving industry. The 'Ngangela' neighbours, who [565] have also contributed elements to the racial make-up of the Ovi- [287] mbundu, make and use bark-cloth. The Ovimbundu evidently gave up the use of skins for clothing more than a hundred years ago.[1] This fact, and the additional one that they never developed weaving or bark-cloth industries, was probably due to their early and widespread use of trade-cloth. Rum came with the slave-trade 177 from Brazil. They were almost inseparable. The ships which 273 fetched the slaves came laden with rum distilled in Brazil. The 567 rum was used in buying the slaves, and much more of it was con- 439 sumed by Ovimbundu—traders, chiefs, and retainers—than by 175x the interior people. Thus, while the slave-trade had such a disruptive influence in the life of the interior tribes, rum did much to corrupt the Ovimbundu. Native tradition[2] and the accounts of early travellers agree on this point. Rum continued to come from Brazil and from other countries or oversea colonies all through this early period, but import was partly supplanted by distillation at the coast, and this process was soon learned by the Ovimbundu themselves.

439 The part which the Umbundu trade had in spreading the goods and uses of the outside world is a fascinating subject and one which 567 would repay study. Ethnographical and historical knowledge of 175x Central Africa is not yet so extensive or precise that the dates and places of these movements can be plotted with certainty. Professor C. M. Doke records that Nkumine, who ruled the Lamba sometime before 1840, sold many of his people 'as slaves to the Mbundu traders from the West Coast for calico, guns, and powder'.[3] It is important to remember that throughout this period the Ovimbundu were for all this part of Africa the chief intermediaries in the slave-trade. These activities affected the ultimate

[1] See Magyar, *passim*.

[2] A Ngalangi tradition says that from the time of King Ndumba II (*c.* 1840) rum was so plentiful that it was poured into troughs, whence it was lapped up by all—men, women, and children. A constant difficulty encountered by the early missionaries was the objection of chiefs and their counsellors to the missionaries' refusal to give liberal presents of rum, as did all the traders.

[3] C. M. Doke, *The Lambas of Northern Rhodesia* (London: Harrap, 1931), pp. 36, 37.

613 *mai* (or *oluina*) mean "family of my mother." These terms seem to indicate a bilateral rather than a unilateral lineage. Inquiry did not show that there were totems for the mother's or the father's people, or that marriage into any particular local group was com-
631 manded or enjoined. A village is a unit under the administration of a chief (*sekulu*) and as such is part of a large group of villages forming a kingdom ruled by a king (*osoma*), but such village units are concerned with government and warfare, not with exogamy.

613 In tracing descent an Ocimbundu gives the names of relatives of
565 both the father and mother, but commoners are unlikely to know the names of their relatives beyond the grandparent class. The children of a king were at one time able to recite many generations
[582] of ancestors along both parental lines. But if the king had married a commoner, as he was allowed to do after choosing his first wife from the royal line, the children knew only the genealogy of their father. This is obvious since the commoner mother would not be likely to know her line of descent. The son of a village chief (*sekulu*) may marry a commoner, but, according to Ngonga, the *sekulu*, his father, "would have a very good look at her."

582 Ngonga had not heard of the marriage of brothers and sisters,
565 not even in the royal family; the idea of such a union was new and repulsive to him. In Umbundu society there would be no necessity for such a marriage as that of brother and sister or other close relative, because members of a royal family of one part of the country could intermarry with members of a royal family in some area far away. There might, for example, be marriages between the royal families of Bailundu and Ngalangi, which are two principal kingships of the Ovimbundu confederacy.

835 When asked what would be the fate of a man who committed
684 incest with his blood daughter or uterine sister, Ngonga said he would be killed by his brother or by his mother's brother. If he escaped he would have to go far away so that his people could never see him again. If a fine were accepted for incest, the culprit would have to pay his own kin "because he had shamed them."

601 Table A, Ngonga's Own Generation, calls attention to a plurality of terms for brother and sister according to the relative ages of the speaker and the person addressed. Moreover, there is a term for direct address and another which is used when speaking of a brother or sister.

Ngonga was questioned with regard to forms of address for his brothers and sisters other than the children of his uterine mother.

577 Lying is strongly disapproved and the liar is called *ohembi*. The Ovimbundu appreciate hospitality (*unu*) which also means generosity. A man who is hospitable is said to be *ongavi*. Greediness, which is disliked, is described by the word *oku sapa* ("to be greedy"). There are standards of honesty in sales and exchanges. A deceiver in trade is *ohembi*.

836 With regard to the relation of the sexes in early years it may be said that, in spite of boy and girl friendships, and the communal sleeping of boys and girls at the home of one of the girls, a man expects to marry a virgin, a point which has been dealt with in describing marriage ceremonies.

Naturally there is a difficulty in obtaining precise information respecting the details of these nocturnal gatherings of boys and girls. Ngonga said that girls inform their parents concerning the house where the night is to be spent, and there is a point of etiquette requiring that girls must not go to a house where boys are staying together.

864 Standards of conduct already described under courtship are a result of direct teaching by parents. Marriage rules and a classificatory system of relationships, with its prohibitive decrees, are taught in the home, in the men's council house, and at initiation ceremonies where such exist. In addition to these sources of instruction there is no doubt an unconscious absorption of ideas and standards. The power of suggestion is always at work through everyday examples.

831 Apart from demands made by tribal custom and direct instruction there are variable personal standards of modesty. Ngonga states [562] that many lascivious stories are told among men, and when the men are drunk, they tell these to women. "Sometimes the women laugh, but the good women do not like to hear these tales."

576 A male commoner when meeting the king bows low, extends his 643 arms, claps his palms and says, "*ohosi* ["lion"] *akuku* ["grandfather"]." 565 Only the old people follow the ancient custom of falling on their knees when greeting the king. The Ovimbundu never were in the habit of doing more profound obeisance, but the Vangangella, when greeting one of their kings, rub their chins on the ground and place dust on their chests. Even at the present day a woman or child of the Ovimbundu is expected to kneel when greeting a king, but such an acknowledgment is not now usual in greetings given by a male commoner. The reply of the king to the commoner is "*kalunga*." This word enters into greetings of all kinds. The literal meaning of the word is "the sea," "king," "god," or "death," but the interpretation

of the word depends upon the syllable accented and the context, as further explained in the chapter on the Umbundu language. 576 643

A man or woman of the royal family greets the king with the words *na kuku; na* means "lord," and *kuku* is a term used for any old man to whom the speaker intends to show respect. *Kuku* is also applied to a man who stands in the relationship of grandfather. The king is expected to reply to a greeting given by one of the royal family by placing his right hand on his chest and saying twice, "*kalunga.*" There may then follow from the king a question relating to welfare in general. Possibly the king will inquire the object of his subject's journey. A *sekulu* ("chief of a village") greets a king in the same manner as does a commoner, and the king replies as he would to a commoner. 565

Commoners greet a *sekulu* with the words *na kalunga* ("lord, greeting"). One *sekulu* greets another of the same rank with the one word *kalunga*, accompanied by clapping of the palms. Male commoners clap hands on meeting; this action is accompanied by the word *kalunga*, from each of them. Two female commoners use the word *kalunga* as a greeting, but as a rule they do not clap hands. They do, however, clap their palms when greeting a woman of the royal house.

Boys and girls must greet their fathers, maternal uncles, grandfathers, and other old men with either of the terms *na kuku* or *na kalunga*, the latter being more usual. *Na kuku* would be the appropriate term of respect for any elderly man. Children use the same words (*na kuku*) when addressing any elderly woman, including a grandmother. A usual greeting of a child to the mother, likewise to the mother's sister, would be *kalunga mai* ("greetings, mother"). 561 576

There is no prescribed form of address to the medicine-man. Greetings between a commoner and a medicine-man follow the usage noted for two commoners. Ngonga says, "They will treat him (the medicine-man) like a village chief if he is an old man and good. Perhaps they will say *na kalunga* as if talking to a chief." 576 [654] [758]

In the early morning people pass the greeting *oku lipasula.* This means "we have been like dead, we are awake." The appropriate early morning greeting of a commoner to the king or to a chief is *oku lipasula a kuku.* A usual afternoon greeting is *oku lañisa.* The evening greeting is *oku lisuñinya.* [643]

One who desires to pass across a room usually walks in front of other people, but while passing the attitude must not be erect. The thumb and middle finger should be snapped together, while the words

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

A mourning widow must leave her hair loose and undressed, and she has to wear a cloth which conceals her from crown to sole. For three days she is obliged to sleep close to the corpse of her husband with only a stick between them. The stick, which is about the length of the bed, is laid between the widow and the corpse. During this time she has no food, and her wailing is expected to be almost continuous day and night. When the corpse is tied and prepared for burial the widow says farewell to it. Relatives support the corpse and make it advance toward her, while she herself is held in the position of a bound corpse, and is supported by relatives who make her confront the dead body of her husband. The widow does not go to the funeral. 765

Mourning continues after the funeral, with fasting and periodical wailing at three o'clock in the afternoon, and again twelve hours later. At the end of a month of mourning the widow lies for one night in the place where the corpse of her husband lay the night before burial. At the beer-drinking which marks the end of the period of mourning a medicine-man guides the hand of the widow as she dips a ladle into the beer pot and distributes the beverage.

The widow may stay with her mother's brother or she may return to her parents, but she must not become the wife of another man until a year has elapsed. The second husband will make a present to the widow's parents or others who have taken her, but this gift will not be as valuable as if the groom were taking a virgin. 768 587

Tree burial I have not seen, but heard of it near Ngalangi, and it has recently taken place at Cileso. Tree burial is the method for disposing of the corpse of a person who has died in debt. Any one who gives interment to a corpse assumes responsibility for the debts; hence tree burial is the most convenient way of disposal. 766 672

An Ocimbundu from Bailundu said that in that district the child is taken from the womb of a woman who has died pregnant. Food is placed on the lips of the removed foetus so that it will not induce the death of other pregnant women. Near Ngalangi a pregnant woman would be buried with the point of a long stick on her abdomen, and after the grave had been filled a blow would be given to the top of the stick. 766

The foregoing are the principal points of importance in the funeral rites of commoners. Ceremonies connected with the death and burial of medicine-men, kings, chiefs, and hunters require separate consideration. [565]

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

bought in the towns, and men returning from South Africa are said to bring all sorts of goods including typewriters. The traders do not lend money though they sometimes give credit. The living standards of the traders are often low, some being unable to buy a truck, and having therefore to come to terms with someone who has one. I have even heard of traders having to eat the staple Umbundu mush (*pirão* in Portuguese).

While the traders play an extremely important role in the local economy they do not establish any permanent face-to-face relationship with the natives outside their household and store, because they are not interested in them and have no reason to be. This does not apply in the same way to African *assimilados*, actual or self-styled, of whom there were a few in the neighbourhood, who lived more or less in Portuguese style. Of these one in particular, Justino, made a hobby of settling disputes, and will therefore re-appear later on. Their main source of revenue was coffee-growing, and they would occasionally have local labour working for them. As they tend to identify themselves with the 'civilized' population, their attitude to the natives is not unlike that of the traders, but culturally and linguistically they are linked to the Ovimbundu villagers, and if of local origin will have kinship links too.

This group is significant because it is in the total social structure of Angola a link between the 'civilized' and 'non-civilized' communities. Both the *assimilados* and those pseudo-*assimilados* who have persuaded the natives that they are *assimilados*, identify themselves with the whites but are also linked much more closely with the natives than any other group. As the division into 'civilized' and 'non-civilized' is legally sanctioned on the grounds of culture not race, a group which participates to some degree in the cultures of both sections must be of great significance in the study of the means by which the whole society is integrated. In the neighbourhood where I worked this group of Europeanized Africans were few in numbers,[30] both absolutely and in relation to other parts of Angola.

[30] I only know of one genuine *assimilado* in the neighbourhood though there were others who claimed to be such. Galvão and Selvagem (p. 408) remark of the Cazengo concelho of northern Angola, 'The great number of civilized negroes, some planters incorporated in the European economic system, hastened the disintegration and confusion of the tribal institutions.'

[assimilados are Africans possessing Portuguese citizenship -- Analyst]

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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565 Their higher social status limits their contacts with the villagers without giving them positions of direct control. Hence they are not leaders in the native social system. They are significant for
565 the culture of village Ovimbundu since they are one of the
177 channels for the communication of European culture traits, and their very existence indicates the possibility of becoming 'equal with the white man"[31]

797 More significant than the *assimilados* as a means of linking the
177 Ovimbundu with the whites, of the transmitting of cultural values, and of the creation of new statuses and groupings at village level, are the missions.

128 In the following chapters, the composition and degree of solidarity of the sub-chiefdom, and village, the network of kinship ties, the choice of marriage partners, and the means of social control will be discussed in their operation among the Ovimbundu who are inescapably tied to Portuguese rule, to world markets, and to the spiritual authority of the missions.

[31] I have the impression that in the cities there is some feeling that the status of *assimilado* does not give real equality but simply exemption from such burdens as road work.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

175x the origin of this tribal name. It is no less reasonable to suppose that the name has also been preserved in the name of a section of
167 the Ovimbundu—the va Ciyaka,[1] which is an augmentative noun from the same verbal stem.

'He saith they are called . . . by themselves Imbangolas.' This statement has given rise to a great deal of speculation from the time of Purchas to our own. The *Imbangala*, better known as 'the people of Jaga Cassange' or Bangalas, are generally recognized to have been one of the marauding hordes which troubled Angola in the seventeenth century, and it has already been noted that their own traditional history, as given by Dias de Carvalho and by Ferreira Diniz, fits in with this theory. It seems reasonable, therefore, to make this further identification of the 'Jagas' of Battell with the Imbangala of Cassange. There is one more
[173] traditional link to add, and that is that the Ovimbundu of Ciyaka recognize the region of Cassange as the location of the oldest ancestral tombs of which they have any tradition. Once when there was a particularly severe drought, tribal elders were sent from Ciyaka to Cassange to worship at these ancient tombs, to anoint the skulls, and to plead for rain.

When Purchas noted in 1613 that 'Elembe settled himself in Benguele', he meant the hinterland of Benguela Velha,[2] i.e. in the regions of Mbũi (*Amboim*), Cipala (*Quibala*), or Sela (*Cela*). As I have shown, tradition connects the kingdom of Wambu with Sela, and the kingdom of Bailundu with Cipala. Although 'Kelandula, sometime his page, proceeds in that beastly life before mentioned'. we may be reasonably sure that eventually he also, or his followers, settled in the same general region. Both Elembe and Kalandula are common Umbundu names and the latter is found twice among the kings of Bailundu.

175x There is further evidence in the similarity of customs as be-
266 tween the 'Jagas' and the royal families of the Ovimbundu, for
566 both Battell and Cavazzi have given fairly full accounts. To show these similarities fully it would be necessary to re-edit Battell, and therefore I shall speak of only a few outstanding points. The cannibalism of the 'Jagas' was perhaps their most striking custom.

[1] The Portuguese transcription of this form would be 'Giaca', but this has become changed to 'Quiaca', as also with many similar names.

[2] See p. 122, n. 4 *supra*. It was only in 1617 that the settlement on the *Baia das Vaccas* was made, and (wrongly) given the name of Benguela.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

593 only by a sister), and *mukãi* (sister, spoken only by a brother). In
[561] a polygynous household each of the wives is mother to all the children and each of the children is *huva* or *manja*[1] to all the others.
848 Illegitimate children are not stigmatized but since they belong to
● 567 the mother they have a distinct designation.[2] Slaves or former slaves have a status within the household and village which to the ordinary observer does not differ from that of the children: they are treated much as the children and they may carry on in all matters social and economic much as though they were members of the family. I have noticed, however, that when there is a call for labour, the lot falls oftener to one of these 'children-born-by-day'[3] whether he was a war-captive or a pawn.

567 Both slavery and the polygynous household, two institutions
595 manifestly and intimately inter-related, are still a part of the
178 Umbundu social structure, but neither the one nor the other now has the importance which it formerly had. Neither of these institutions is part of the present and personal experience of the great majority of Umbundu households.

Kinship

596 *Blood Relatives* (*Epata*). The relationships of the wider kinship
602 groups are for the most part extensions of those of the household.
621 The child learns them very early in life owing to the fact that the village community into which he is born is only a part of this larger kinship group. Nearly all of the villagers belong to the same *epata* or extended family, which includes both lines of descent. Most of them belong to the father's family (*oluse*), and the mother's family (*olutina*) may also be represented. The fact is that most of the adults of the village are father or mother to nearly every child and most of the children are brothers or sisters. Those of his coevals who do not bear this relation to him are otherwise related and are also potential spouses or potential relatives-in-law.

[1] This distinction *yesepakaĩ* (lit. 'of the jealousy of women') may be made but it is not applied in ordinary speech.

[2] *Omõlã a ngenda-la-ina* (lit. 'child of goes-with-mother').

[3] *Omãlã-va-citiwa-lutanya*. Cf. 'child of my calves', Luganda expression and attitudes, L. P. Mair, *An African People in the Twentieth Century* (London, 1934), p. 32 f.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

The Ovimbundu are not ordinary cannibals, if indeed that term may be applied to any people in Africa, nor do the commoners of the Ovimbundu ever eat human flesh on their own account, but no king may ever reign or be considered as regularly enthroned until he has 'eaten Ekongo'.[1] The cannibalism traditionally ascribed to Wambu-Kalunga is also a case in point.[2] Other human sacrifices practised by the 'Jagas' and described by Battell also have their counterparts in the practices of the Umbundu kingdoms.[3] The mode of the burial of the dead described by Battell[4] is essentially that which has been used, at least until the last few years, for the kings and the other 'holy'[5] men of the Ovimbundu, except that where rock caves are available the use of them has been adopted and in Kasongi cairns were used. The sitting posture and the sacrifice of wives or slaves and cattle (or of substitutes) are the important points, and these have everywhere been used for the classes mentioned, until quite recently.

The custom of keeping boys captured from the enemy and training them to be fearless warriors amid the terrors of the country has a parallel in the Umbundu custom of the king's slaves,[6] who came from another land[7] and would therefore do the king's bidding without fear, favour, or consideration of family feeling. They often reached high position and certain of the king's ministers always came from among them. There seem to be many recollections of the 'Jagas' in the customs of the kings' sons.[8] Names of certain of the officials seem to have survived, as, for example, Mani (*muēlē*) Lumbo, Mani-Curio (*Muēkalia*), Golambolo (*Ngalamboli*), Tendala (*Candala*), Ukuetambo,[9] &c. Careful linguistic studies would doubtless reveal many remains of the speech

[1] *Oku lia Ekongo*—lit. 'to eat the Old One'. This is a ritual feast in which the flesh of a specially fattened slave is eaten mixed with the flesh of various animals. See Ravenstein, op. cit., p. 33, note 3. Magyar described this custom, calling it '*Ouri-Kongo*', op. cit., pp. 275 ff.

[2] See *supra*, p. 176.

[3] Compare Ravenstein, op. cit.

[4] Op. cit., p. 34 f.

[5] 'Holy' in the sense of spirit possessed—the king, the hunter, the medical practitioner, and the smith.

[6] *Ocinduli cosoma*, singular. May there be some recollection of 'Kinguri' (=Cinguli) in this word?

[7] In Bailundu the *ovinduli viosoma* (plural) came mostly from Luandu, i.e. the Songo country across the Kuanza—further evidence of connexion with Lunda emigrants.

[8] *Omālā volosoma*, used collectively of all the royal families of the Ovimbundu.

[9] Cavazzi, op. cit., pp. 206 f., 211.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

175x 177 439 *European Influences 1600–1770.* The first European contact of the Ovimbundu or of the 'proto-Ovimbundu' was without doubt for purposes of trade. The first record which we have of any such contact is in *Andrew Battell in Guinea.* About 1600 the governor, as the chief trader,[1] sent his prisoner Battell on trading expeditions along the Benguela coast. At the Bahia das Vaccas, the Ndombe, a cattle-keeping people, were met. They supplied the Europeans with produce,[2] including cattle and 'the famous sheep which have five quarters',[3] but *not* with the principal article of commerce, for as another of the conquistadores noted, 'In this kingdom there is no slave trade, for it is not their custom to sell each other.'[4] This lack was soon supplied by 'proto-Ovimbundu' when, on the next voyage, Battell with the 'Portugals and Mulattos' found the encampment of 'Jagas' at the mouth of the Keve River, from Battell's account of which we have already quoted.[5] Although hardly recognized as such at the time, this, it seems, was the beginning of a long commercial partnership. As long as the 'Jagas' continued 'to take the spoil of the land', they supplied many slaves[6] for the trade, and after they settled they became traders both in direct European employ and on their own account.

[567]

439 567 797 175x The early European settlements in Africa were made with the hope of finding gold, but although that metal was not found in the Congo or Angola, black gold—human gold—soon proved to be equally profitable. There was a religious motive in the Portuguese discoveries, for from the time of Prince Henry the Navigator, his captains were bidden to 'plant the Cross on some new headland'. With every ship priests went out to convert the heathen. Some priests doubtless did good work but more of them, both individually and as members of the various orders, early came to the conclusion that the best way to convert the heathen was to sell

[1] The governors continued to engage in trade openly, until forbidden by the law of 17 Sept. 1721, and then, says Lopes de Lima, some complied, while others did not (*Ensaios*, part i, p. 84).

[2] A. Battell, p. 16.

[3] L. Cordeiro (ed.), 1574–1620, *Da Mina ao Cabo Negro segundo Garcia Mendes Castello Branco*, p. 34. The reference is to the fat-tailed sheep of the Hottentots and their neighbours. This is perhaps the first reference to it on the west coast.

[4] Ibid., 1593–1631, *Terras e minas africanas segundo Balthazar Rebello de Aragão*, p. 15.

[5] *Supra*, p. 182 f.

[6] Battell, pp. 20, 28; L. Cordeiro (ed.), 1574–1620, *Da Mina ao Cabo Negro segundo Garcia Mendes Castello Branco*, p. 17.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

him off where he would have the double benefit of regular work and Christian doctrine. In 1560 the Bishop of São Thomé wrote that 'he doubted that the people of the kingdom of Angola could be made Catholics unless the King would allow Trade'.[1] The slaves were baptized by the bishop by the boatload—rowed along the wharf of Luanda. The Jesuits profited greatly by the slave-trade, employing continuously three of their own ships. The religious motive was thus early swallowed up by the commercial and profit motive. Commerce was almost entirely taken up with the slave-trade. Four-fifths of the value of all exports were slaves.[2]

During the first hundred years of the Colony of Angola a million slaves were exported,[3] and three million would probably be a very conservative estimate of the total. As long as the over-sea slave traffic remained legal, little effort seems to have been made to develop other exports. In spite of protests and until 1832, ivory remained a monopoly of the royal treasury with regulations which discouraged its export. Such products as gum copal and orchilia only began to be exported in 1832–8. The only product of any importance which had also been exported in the time of the slave-trade was bees-wax. The slave-trade was first questioned in 1831, it was formally prohibited in 1836, but for many years enforcement was not accomplished. During the 250 years of the oversea slave-trade, Angola was in reality a dependency of Brazil.[4] When Brazil became independent, there was a movement in Benguela for union with that country.[5] So complete was the commercial domination of Brazil that Lisbon merchants had hardly anything to do with the Angolan trade. Lopes de Lima points out that the colony was also spiritually dominated by Brazil, and attributes the noteworthy religious decadence not only to the preoccupation of the clergy with the slave-trade, but also to the fact that from 1677 until 1845 the diocese of Angola and Congo was a part of the Metropolitan archdiocese of Bahia. The one great fact with regard to Angola of the sixteenth, seventeenth,

[1] It had been a royal monopoly and allowed only through Kongo. This letter is from the National Archives of the Torre do Tombo and quoted by Lopes de Lima, *Ensaios*, p. ix.

[2] Statistics given by Lopes de Lima, *Ensaios*, part i, p. 69 f.

[3] Cadornega, *História Geral das Guerras Angolanas* (1680–1), vol. iii, p. 254 (also quoted by Paiva Manso).

[4] Lopes de Lima, *Ensaios*, part i, p. 74; J. P. Oliveira Martins, *O Brasil e as Colónias Portuguezas*, p. 18.

[5] Lopes de Lima, op. cit., p. 127.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

175x 439 eighteenth, and much of the nineteenth century, then, was the slave-trade.

• 567 648 Most of the historical treatises on Angola are little more than chronological lists of battles and expeditions. The relation of these events to the main facts, i.e. to the economic facts, has rarely been made. Two or three presídios were founded with the hope of controlling nearby mineral deposits,[1] whether real or supposed, but all the rest were intended as spearheads for trade or to protect existing trade. Many of the military expeditions were raids with an obvious end in view; others were rearguard actions to protect a more or less successful raid of the same sort; others were retaliations for reprisals or vice versa. Practically all of the soldiers who were free men, from the captain-general down, were also traders, and some who were not free were traders on account of others. There may have been a few expeditions which had less immediate connexion with trade, for there were genuine explorers in those early days, even as more recently.

*175 726 648 There would be little interest or profit in cataloguing the military expeditions which had, or seem to have had, contact with the Ovimbundu or with their predecessors in the land during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. There were only a very few of real significance. During the seventeenth century many raids were made from Massangano across Libolo to the edge of or into the Benguela Highland, and likewise there were many actions between the garrisons of Benguela and Caconda and the inhabitants of the plateau. In 1607 Balthazar Rebello de Aragão set out to cross Africa and had to turn back after going eighty leagues, but his own report was so scanty that even the direction he took cannot be determined.[2] In 1645, while the Dutch controlled Luanda and the coast, there was a raid which was said to have reached Bailundu.[3] The very scanty references to this raid give no description of the inhabitants, but since there seems to be no Bailundu tradition with regard to it, I conclude that the present dynasty (beyond the establishment of which tradition hardly goes) must have been founded since that date. About 1650 there was a raid across Libolo as far as the Keve River which found a cattle-rearing

[1] e.g. Benguela Velha and Cambambe.

[2] L. Cordeiro (ed.), 1593–1620, *Terras e minas africanas segundo Balthazar Rebello de Aragão*, p. 15.

[3] *Catálogo dos Governadores*, p. 374; Lopes de Lima, *Ensaios*, part i, p. 99.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

175 178 439 [643] Bailundu (and its dependent states), or through Wambu and Ciyaka, while the road to Luanda lay either through Ndulu or Bailundu, these other kingdoms were not slow in following along the path of commercial success. In Ngalangi the king himself took a very active interest in trade and annually sent a royal caravan to Benguela, taking care to get a pass from the captain of the fort at Caconda. Other kings also adopted the practice of the royal caravan,[1] but the kings of the principal kingdoms were slow to give up raiding, plunder, and warfare as a manner of life[2]—a custom which became distasteful to their subjects in proportion as trade became more profitable and attractive.

In addition to those already named, there were other historical events and policies which contributed toward the development of trade during this period. The abolition in 1834 of the monopoly [567] in ivory,[3] which the royal treasury had held since the beginning, was of great importance, and this, in turn, abetted in perpetuating the slave-trade, now a contraband, for ivory always had been brought from the interior on the backs of slaves, and it must not be supposed that this would suddenly be stopped, especially since ivory had just become much more valuable. According to Bastos,[4] slaves for this contraband trade continued to be cheap and plentiful until the eighties, which was probably due in part to the large supply offered. Another reason was perhaps that the contraband oversea trade was largely in the hands of foreigners—Brazilians, Spaniards, and Americans, who were not always reliable in the matter of paying for their cargoes.[5]

[1] *Omaka*, which had special routines and prerogatives. Other types of caravans were named from the products which they carried or conducted.

[2] See Lopes de Lima, *Ensaios*, part ii, p. 54: 'Bailundo . . . a warlike people, of the race of "Jagas", whose chief is always on a campaign'; Magyar, *Reisen*, many references, but especially pp. 290 ff., 383–420; Silva Porto, op. cit., p. 82 f., 160; *Missionary Herald*, 1883, p. 339; 1884, pp. 145 f., 504 f.; 1885, pp. 279, 375 f.; 1886, p. 228 f.; 1887, p. 106; 1889, pp. 67, 535; 1890, p. 292, &c.

[3] From 1618 (B. Rebello de Aragão, p. 14) until 1834 (Saldanha da Gama, p. 86), all critics agreed that this monopoly even defeated its own purpose, i.e. revenue; for, they said, the conditions and regulations were so onerous that the natives could not afford to bring ivory to the coast. Available statistics show that there was very little export of ivory until 1835 (Lopes de Lima, *Ensaios*).

[4] A. Bastos, *Monographia de Catumbella*, pp. 18, 25. He gives prices varying from 5$000 to 18$000 or even 20$000, and remarks that slaves were later designated as servants, redeemed ones, contracted labourers, &c. The milreis (1$000) was then worth about $1.10. Monteiro (*vide infra*) says that in the sixties 'a little nigger' could be had for 5*s*.

[5] J. J. Monteiro, *Angola and the River Congo*, pp. 131–4. Monteiro attributes

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

175x 177 influences. The stock to which the common people belong were wearers of skins, which is true of many of them to the present time. The people from whom the ruling houses came have a highly developed weaving industry. The 'Ngangela' neighbours, who [565] have also contributed elements to the racial make-up of the Ovi- [287] mbundu, make and use bark-cloth. The Ovimbundu evidently gave up the use of skins for clothing more than a hundred years ago.[1] This fact, and the additional one that they never developed weaving or bark-cloth industries, was probably due to their early and widespread use of trade-cloth. Rum came with the slave-trade 177 from Brazil. They were almost inseparable. The ships which 273 fetched the slaves came laden with rum distilled in Brazil. The ● 567 rum was used in buying the slaves, and much more of it was con- 439 sumed by Ovimbundu—traders, chiefs, and retainers—than by 175x the interior people. Thus, while the slave-trade had such a disruptive influence in the life of the interior tribes, rum did much to corrupt the Ovimbundu. Native tradition[2] and the accounts of early travellers agree on this point. Rum continued to come from Brazil and from other countries or oversea colonies all through this early period, but import was partly supplanted by distillation at the coast, and this process was soon learned by the Ovimbundu themselves.

439 The part which the Umbundu trade had in spreading the goods 567 and uses of the outside world is a fascinating subject and one which 175x would repay study. Ethnographical and historical knowledge of Central Africa is not yet so extensive or precise that the dates and places of these movements can be plotted with certainty. Professor C. M. Doke records that Nkumine, who ruled the Lamba sometime before 1840, sold many of his people 'as slaves to the Mbundu traders from the West Coast for calico, guns, and powder'.[3] It is important to remember that throughout this period the Ovimbundu were for all this part of Africa the chief intermediaries in the slave-trade. These activities affected the ultimate

[1] See Magyar, *passim*.

[2] A Ngalangi tradition says that from the time of King Ndumba II (*c.* 1840) rum was so plentiful that it was poured into troughs, whence it was lapped up by all—men, women, and children. A constant difficulty encountered by the early missionaries was the objection of chiefs and their counsellors to the missionaries' refusal to give liberal presents of rum, as did all the traders.

[3] C. M. Doke, *The Lambas of Northern Rhodesia* (London: Harrap, 1931), pp. 36, 37.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

physical composition of the Ovimbundu themselves, and also their character and accepted attitudes. Livingstone told of the beginning of their trade with the Makololo in 1850, and how they had visited the Barotse 'in ancient times'.[1] These items fit into the picture of that early period of trading activities which is had from studying Umbundu traditional history in the light of documents such as Silva Porto's diaries, Magyar's account,[2] the historical monograph of Augusto Bastos, the comments of travellers,[3] and of the early missionaries.

Period of the Rubber Trade, 1874–1911. Turning now to the rubber trade, that time may conveniently be divided into three periods: from 1874 until 1886, during which only 'first-class' rubber (from the plants themselves)[4] was exported; from 1886, when the discovery of 'second-class' or 'red rubber' (from a root)[5] caused a great boom which lasted until 1900; and, finally, the period of decline until the rubber export stopped in 1916, though for the Ovimbundu it had already practically stopped several years earlier.

Of the older exports only bees-wax and ivory survived along with rubber. The former of these was somewhat neglected, while the importance of the latter continued in Benguela only until about 1893 when the frontier of the Congo was closed. Bastos remarks that after 1900 not a single tusk appeared.[6] Already in 1880 Silva Porto had to go beyond Lunda to the middle Kasai before he found ivory.[7] At that time most of the ivory trade was in the hands of Viye traders. Between 2 November 1879, when Silva Porto left Catumbela, and 26 November when he reached Belmonte (Viye), there passed him about forty caravans on their way to the coast. Of these, ten carried ivory, practically all of which

[1] D. Livingstone, op. cit., p. 91 f. The business-like methods of the Ovimbundu were commented upon later, see op. cit., p. 271.

[2] The picture which Magyar (*Reisen in Süd-Afrika*) gives of Umbundu life in that early period is very good, but for an understanding of many terms used a knowledge of Portuguese and Umbundu is quite necessary. His truthfulness with regard to the slave-trade must be questioned when confronted by evidence from Valdez, Monteiro, and especially from Bastos.

[3] Valdez, op. cit.; Monteiro, op. cit.; Graça, op. cit.; Serpa Pinto, op. cit.; Capello and Ivens, *From Benguella to the Territory of Yacca.*

[4] Principally *Landolphia*, which are big woody climbers; also the tall and stately *Funtumia elastica.* [5] Especially the *Carpodinus chylorrhiza.*

[6] Bastos, op. cit., p. 39. From this time until 1913 Angola continued to export ivory in ever-decreasing quantities, but from the port of Mossamedes and therefore not from the Umbundu country.

[7] *Boletim Soc. Geog. Lisboa, 6a Ser.*, pp. 189 f., 256.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

It must not be supposed that trade has been abandoned. Every sale or exchange of field or garden produce is a serious trading operation. Produce will often be carried a very long way for a very small advantage, or even for no apparent gain. The successively lower economic levels to which the colony, and especially the natives, have fallen since the close of the rubber trade is a factor. Individual trading, involving journeys into even such distant regions as Ovamboland, is a latter-day development since European rule has made for greater personal security.

Another factor which operated to end all large-scale trading operations of the Ovimbundu was the disappearance of the traffic in human beings. It has been shown that even before they ruled over the Ovimbundu the 'Jagas' were leading intermediaries in this traffic, and the Ovimbundu have continued in this role right down to the period under review. Whatever name or form it bore at the coast, in the interior the traffic was the same. At the height of the rubber boom this traffic, along with other activities, suffered a decline, being somewhat less profitable than rubber. At that time came the peak of the rum trade and the demoralization which it brought turned the point of the 'contract labour' traffic in upon the Ovimbundu themselves. Such Umbundu customs as getting into debt, the pawning of relatives, and also such factors as times of food scarcity, quickly taken advantage of by the traders, served to exacerbate the hardships, and the result was the native uprising of 1902 known as the 'Bailundu Campaign', but extending beyond the limits of Bailundu. The effects of this uprising upon trade have already been noted. Pending investigation of its causes, the export of 'contract labourers' was stopped,[1] but the practice was soon resumed. The scandalous conditions then obtaining in the neighbouring 'Congo Free State' almost from its founding until 1908 greatly aided and abetted the slave-traffic, however much this new frontier may have interfered with trade in ivory and rubber. Trade with the *revoltés* was particularly lucrative to Ovimbundu and other traders of Angola. Powder and arms were an especially important item in this trade.

and just under the rim of the Highland. In 1916 construction stopped at Chinguar (312 miles and on the edge of Viye) until after World War I. It was completed to the Angola frontier in 1929 and the Belgian section finished in 1931, with transcontinental connexion at Elizabethville.

[1] Cabral Moncada, op. cit.; Massano de Amorim, *Relatorio sôbre os acontecimentos do Bailundo* (Loanda, 1903); *Missionary Herald*, 1903, p. 69.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

175 It was only with the beginning of World War I that trade in powder
567 and fire-arms was stopped. For more than a century Portuguese
648 patriots and thinkers had been insisting upon the necessity for ending the export of man-power, so evidently impoverishing in its effects on the life of the colony.[1] Law succeeded law, and regulation followed regulation, but there was little real change.[2] With the Republic,[3] however, real changes began. Conditions were
175 investigated,[4] and although complete and immediate reform could
567 hardly have been expected, changes did begin. Provisions for
166 manumission upon presentation to authority were made and carried out. Repatriation from island and mainland plantations began to be undertaken. This was the origin of small communities of Cokue and other 'Ngangela' people now living at various points in the Umbundu country. From the plantations they were repatriated to 'their places of origin', which were, however, not their own homes but the places whence they had been sold into servitude.
464 Under various regulatory practices, contract labour has been
467 continued down to the present day. The depression which came
175 to Central Africa in 1930 reduced the demand to a minimum, and for a few years it did not represent a serious problem in the life of the Ovimbundu. There was a time of great activity in road building (approximately 1915–32) when the demands for labour were a serious problem to Umbundu life. Soon after the opening of World War II a strong demand for colonial products revived the industries of Angola and stimulated the creation of new ones. The consequent demand for labour and the means used to supply it have come to constitute the most severe trial which has yet come to the Ovimbundu. Their docility has made this service bear more hardly on them than on some other people of the colony. Their

[1] e.g. Saldanha da Gama, *Memoria*, 1814; Sá da Bandeira, 1839; Lopes de Lima, *Ensaios* (1846), pp. xxxviii, 6 f., 44 f.; Casmiro, *Africa Nostra*, p. 60 f.

[2] The principal laws were promulgated as follows: 1836 (Formal abolition of the traffic); 1839 (Authorizing co-operation with the international naval squadron); 1840, 1841, 1845 (Supplementary ordinances); 1875 (Law of Liberation and regulation of contract labour); 1878, 1889 (Further regulations); 1899 (Dealing with 'corrective labour'); 1902, 1903 (Further regulation of recruitment).

[3] Proclaimed in Portugal, 5 Oct., 1910.

[4] A Commission came from Lisbon that same year and took testimony throughout the colony. For conditions just previous to the Republic, see Nevinson, op. cit.; C. A. Swan, *The Slavery of To-day* (1909); H. R. F. Bourne, *Slave Traffic in Portuguese Africa* (1908); W. A. Cadbury, *Labour in Portuguese West Africa* (2nd ed. 1910); C. Harding, *In Remotest Barotseland* (1905).

692 Hambly and Childs seem to suggest that any case might be referred to the
567 chief for his decision: "Even a slave used to have rights of appeal to the king if he were starved or beaten without cause".(1) Neither describes the composition of the courts or the mechanism of appeal.

Legal procedure

695 Childs writes rather obscurely "Cases might be settled by ordeal or by decision of the king, and there was therefore room for appeal and retrial".(2)

One kind of ordeal, the *ombulungu* or poison ordeal, is described by Hambly:(3) It was used (only?) when the accused was thought to have committed murder by poison or sorcery. (If weapons were used, the accuser, usually a relative of the deceased, had the right to kill the murderer with the same kind of weapon.) If a woman were accused in this way, her son or brother would take her place in the poison ordeal.

The complainant in a suit is called *ombile*, the defendant *ovilue*, and the witness *uvangi*. Cushman states that no evidence is ever ruled out of court, and that each witness is required to give a complete account of all his dealings with the persons concerned in the case, so that the court may know on which side he is likely to be prejudiced.(4) Hambly(5) adds that formerly a witness had to make recompense to the man about whom he had told a lie, and probably received a beating as well. According to Cushman an Umbundu court may find that both parties are to blame in a case, and may fine or penalise both according to the degree of guilt. "If the chief is not satisfied, he simply gets up and leaves the court circle. This indicates that the evidence has not been satisfactory and more must be presented."(6)

672 In the absence of the delinquent, responsibility for crime was formerly transferred to a relative. If a thief escaped, responsibility would rest with a brother, a father, or a son. The mother's brother was often held responsible for the misdeeds of his sister's children, and would be expected to pay their debts.(7)

Punishments

685 A thief was punished by a beating and a fine paid to the persons from whom he had stolen.(8) An habitual thief was sold into slavery. He might be redeemed, but only if the authorities considered his reformation complete.(9) Murder was punishable by death, although this penalty might
682 be avoided by a heavy fine paid to the relatives, usually the mother,
684 mother's brother, or sister's son of the deceased. If the victim were of the royal family, the murderer might be put to death after the payment of the fine. The punishment for women murderers was the same as for men.(10) In adultery the woman was not punished, but a man was punished in the same way as a murderer, i.e. by death or a heavy fine. (Hambly gives the fine

(1) Hambly, op.cit., p.201.
(2) 1949, p.21.
(3) op.cit., p.203.
(4) 1944, pp.38-9.
(5) op.cit., p.201.
(6) 1944, p.39.
(7) Hambly, op.cit., p.201.
(8) Ibid., p.202.
(9) Cushman, 1944, p.39.
(10) Hambly, op.cit., pp.202-3.

586 When a woman divorces her husband to marry another man, she takes to her home all children under three years of age; other children go to the home of her parents.(1) There is no information concerning the fate of children when the man divorces his wife.

[691] Divorce cases are apparently brought before the court of the village headman only where the return of the marriage payment to the husband is long delayed or in some way unsatisfactory.(2)

LAND TENURE

423 There is virtually no information on Umbundu land usage. Childs states that land is inherited in the paternal line, i.e. by brother or son. Hambly suggests that "The right to land depends on its use and allotment by a chief (?) at the time of founding a village," and that "Rights seem to have been well defined and there was always enough room for a stranger". The meaning of neither of these statements is very clear.(3)

DOMESTIC SLAVERY

567 [672] Slaves were formerly taken in war, and, until very recently, as a result of a person's inability to pay his debts. In such a case not the debtor, but the debtor's sister's children were taken as slaves by the creditor. If the debt was paid later, the children were set free.(4) Today children instead of being sold into slavery may be expected to work for the creditor to pay off the debts of the mother's brother.(5) Childs writes "Slaves or former slaves have a status within the household or village which to the ordinary observer does not differ from that of the children: they are treated much as the children and they may carry on in all matters social and economic as though they were members of the family". He adds however that when there is a call for labour, the lot falls more often to a slave or a pawn.(6) Hambly, however, notes that formerly the master had rights of punishment including the death sentence, although an ill-treated slave might appeal to the village headman. Slave women were frequently taken as concubines, but were not lent out as prostitutes. A slave woman who married a free man would revert to her master along with her children when her husband died. All children of slaves became slaves of the master, who could dispose of the girls in marriage. If he himself married a slave girl, she would, at his death, become the property of his eldest brother and her children would go with her, although in some instances the woman and children might go to the mother's brother's son.

[727] It seems likely (although it is nowhere stated) that there was a clear distinction between slaves captured in war and slaves taken as a result of a debt; possibly the information quoted above from Hambly refers mainly to war captives.

(1) Hambly, op.cit., pp.182-3. (2) Ibid., p.183.
(3) Hambly, op.cit., p.201. Hambly states here that the system of land distribution is described in a later section of his book, but this section merely refers back to these remarks.
(4) Bastos (1909, p.33) adds that if a father redeemed his children, the maternal uncle lost his right to sell them into slavery.
(5) Hambly, op.cit., p.205. (6) 1940, p.42.

A man slave might become a blacksmith or a hunter, although his work was always for his master. He was also required to fight for his master in case of war.(1) 567

RELIGION AND MAGIC

Information on Umbundu religion and magic is very slight, being practically confined to a few items collected by Hambly from his Umbundu interpreter,(2) and a more coherent article by Tucker, primarily on divination.(3) 771

THE SUPREME BEING

Suku, the Supreme Being, is thought of as the creator of mountains, rivers, sky and human beings.(4) His attributes have not been described. 776

CONCEPTS OF SPIRIT(5)

The body *(etimba)* is thought of as having *omuenyo* (breath or life), and containing the *ocililemba* (spirit or soul). The *ocililemba* is visible in a person's shadow in the daytime, and during sleep it has adventures of its own, which it reports to the sleeper through dreams *(olonjoi)*. At death it leaves the body, but lingers nearby, accompanying the body to the interment, still in the form of a shadow. It then becomes an *ocilulu* (ghost), and may wander where it pleases. Sometimes it may be seen passing with superhuman swiftness through the village, uttering weird cries or calling pigs or chickens as the person used to do while alive. It chooses one of the households as a home, and indicates its wish to stay there by causing illness among the householders. The victim when he has learned the cause of his illness from the diviner places himself in a favourable condition to receive the spirit by performing a ceremony which includes going into a trance.(6) When this ceremony has been performed the *ocilulu* (ghost) becomes an *ondele*, which appears to be a generic name for ancestral (and other?) spirits. It is not clear from Tucker's description whether the relatives of the deceased always wait for this intimation of the wish of the *ocilulu* for a home, or whether the ceremonies may sometimes be performed immediately after death. Nor does she give any information regarding the relatives with whom the *ocilulu* usually chooses to live. She states that spirits of paternal ancestors are less feared than those of maternal ancestors, for while the former are usually satisfied with a hunt, a beer-drinking and a feast held in their honour, the latter are malignant and may "eat" children and occasionally adults also. 774 775 [787] [769]

The *ohamba* (sing. *ehamba*) "are the peaceful spirits of ancestors of long ago, who have already had the trance ceremony performed for them, and thus have a home and ... standing in the other world". (Tucker does not indicate how much time must pass before a spirit becomes a *ehamba*.(7)) 769

(1) Hambly, 1934, p.206. (2) Op.cit., chap.IX.
(3) 1940. (4) Hambly, op.cit., p.262.
(5) Based on Tucker, op.cit. unless otherwise stated.
(6) Tucker does not describe this ritual.
(7) It may be noted that among the Ngangela peoples to the east, the ehamba are the forms taken by ancestral spirits when they wish to harass their descendants. See McCulloch 1951, p.75.

584 you." There is no infant betrothal. There is not and never was any
[567] compulsion of a girl in marriage, but slave girls were disposed of in marriage by their masters.

832 A girl is not allowed to do anything to show that she loves a boy, for it would be a great shame for her to tell the boy that she loves him. Often a girl who prefers a boy will pretend that she does not like him.
[539] The Ovimbundu have a story which states that a man said, "I will bring my cow to the green grass"; he did so, but the cow would not eat. This expresses the idea that a boy would not like a girl who confessed a preference for him.

MARRIAGE

585 The prospective bride chooses one married woman and six unmarried girls to accompany her to the house prepared by her husband. Here a feast consisting of a pig and some chickens is provided by the husband for the relatives of both families. For three nights the girl returns to the house of her parents while the boy sleeps at his home. The married woman and six girls sleep at the house prepared by the bridegroom. During these days beer is provided by the boy's parents. The prospective husband is ironically addressed as *sandombua*. *Ndombua* means bridegroom, *sa* is an abbreviation of *isia* meaning father. The term "father bridegroom" refers to the fact that the youth is a potential husband only; the marriage has not been consummated.

On the fourth day the bride brings her supply of domestic utensils. These are the cooking pots (*olombia*); the wooden spoons (*ovito*); the brush of grass for sweeping (*olueyo*); some meal; also the pounder (*upi*). For the first month the wife is not allowed to cook in her own home; she cooks food in the home of her husband's parents and sends
[269] it to the council house (*onjango*) where her husband takes his meals with other men according to Umbundu custom. At the end of the first month of married life the mother of the husband invites any three old women who have been happily married to lay the hearth
[782] stones in the new home. Each of the old women brings a stone for the hearth. A chicken is killed and its blood is sprinkled on the hearth stones. While the young wife is preparing food at the new hearth, she is helped by the old women. If the girl is stirring with the big wooden spoon, one of the old women places her own hands over those of the girl. There is this kind of guidance in every action.

I understand that at the present day virginity in a bride is not so highly valued as in former days. The old custom was an examination

Kukululu or *sekululu*. These terms are applicable to my father's father's brother, my father's father's brother's wife; my father's father's sister's husband; and my mother's father (the reciprocal *onekulu* describes the reciprocals, brother's son's son; husband's brother's son's son; wife's brother's son's son; daughter's son). 601

Maikulu. This designation, which is derived from *mai*, meaning mother, and *kulu*, an old person, is applied to my father's mother (reciprocal, *onekulu yange*, son's son). *Maikulu* also means my father's father's sister; my mother's mother; my mother's mother's brother's wife; and my mother's mother's sister (the reciprocal is *onekulu* which equals the English reciprocals brother's son's son; daughter's son; husband's daughter's child; and sister's daughter's child).

This completes the second generation of ascendants.

NOTE: Ngonga's wife uses the names *maikulu* and *kukululu* for those relatives of her husband to whom Ngonga himself applies those terms. These relatives call Ngonga's wife *onekulu*.

TABLE D

(*See Table E IV and V, also Table F II, IV and V*)

SOME OF NGONGA'S DESCENDANTS

Nunulu or *uveli* is my first-born son. Other sons are *omola*, meaning child. *Omola ulume* means a male child. *Omola ukai* is a female child. *Uveli* also means a first daughter (the reciprocal for these terms is *tate*, meaning father).

Omolange means my child. I apply the word, not only to my own children, but to my elder brother's son (reciprocal, *tate*, father's younger brother); to my elder brother's daughter; and to my younger brother's son.

Ndatembo. The word is applied to my son's wife; my daughter's husband; my elder brother's son's wife; my elder brother's daughter's husband; and my younger brother's son's wife (the same word *ndatembo* is used for the reciprocals of these terms; namely, husband's father; wife's father; husband's father's younger brother; wife's father's younger brother; and husband's father's elder brother).

The foregoing classificatory system of relationship is not peculiar to the Ovimbundu, but is a cultural trait of many Bantu-speaking and some Sudanic-speaking Negroes. The similarity of the Umbundu system to those of surrounding peoples in Rhodesia and the Congo will be pointed out in chapters dealing with culture contacts. 601 171

When describing marriage rites reference was made to the fact that a wife goes to live near her husband's relatives; the system is therefore patrilocal. The limited family consists of husband and wife (or wives) with their children. The greatest number of wives observed in the family of a commoner was four, and in the family of a king eleven. A household sometimes contains adopted children, also domestic slaves (pawns) who are working to pay off debts for their maternal uncles. An extended family may include a grandfather and his wife, his sons, their wives and children, and his unmarried daughters, with classes and nomenclatures mentioned in the foregoing tables. 591 592 [595] [597] [567] 596

The phrase *epata lia tate* (or *aluse*) means "family of my father" and includes all relatives on the father's side. The words *epata lia* 613

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Social Life

fines were in their hands. If he murdered one of the royal family 682
he was killed after he had paid the fine." The punishment of a woman [562]
who has committed a murder is the same as that for a man.

Ombulungu is the name given to trial by poison ordeal. The 695
medicine-man holds out both his hands, in each of which there is a potato, only one of which is poisoned. The accused man says, "If I have done this thing, this potato will be poison for me. If I have not done this thing, this potato will be food for me." The complainant says, "If this is not the man who poisoned my brother, this potato will be poison for me." They sit in front of the medicine-man, and each must take the potato in the hand opposite to him. The poison makes a man very sick. His mouth swells so that he cannot speak.

When a woman was accused of murder her son or her brother [562]
would take her place in the poison ordeal. A boy of fifteen years of age would have the same treatment as a man. "I don't think a girl would kill anybody. I never heard about it," said Ngonga. It appears that resort was made to a medicine-man when the accused was thought to have committed murder by poison or magic. If the murderer used weapons, the accuser, who was usually a relative, was entitled to kill him with the kind of weapon used for the crime.

The penalties for adultery were the same as those for murder. 684
The woman appears to have escaped punishment, except that "her husband would not have her any more." The male adulterer had to pay the husband; if he could not pay or escape, the husband had the right to kill him. In the old days the price for adultery was two oxen, a pig, and a slave. At the present day a man who has committed adultery and made payment, possibly takes the woman and all children under three years of age. The husband has the right to decide whether the adulterer has the privilege of taking the woman and her children. An adulterer with one of the king's wives was castrated but not killed. He might, instead of mutilation, pay a very [567]
high price, while he himself along with his sisters and the sons of his sisters, would become slaves of the king. If a man could not pay, he might be sold as a slave in order to provide money for the fine. Criminal law did not distinguish between responsibility for inten- [671]
tional and unintentional offences.

It is very difficult to say how much of the old law survives. One 681
feels that underneath the ostensible Portuguese rule there is an active 177
native life that is resisting subjugation.

Only two years ago Ngonga paid an ox to prevent one of his female 686
relatives from being pawned. Within the past ten years Ngonga has

undu, and Ngalangi are said to have had conflicts. In time past, 721
as at the present day, a king reigned over territory which was
extensive but definitely delimited for purposes of administration.
Encroachment of one king on the rights of taxation and administra- 651
tion of another led to raids and reprisals. Village chiefs collected
taxes in the form of agricultural produce and gave these to the king,
who personally visited a village from which payments had not been
made. A folklore story begins, "The people had not paid taxes
so the king came to the village and told them a parable."

A king, if young, accompanied his people on the warpath. There 726
was, however, a permanent leader named *kesongo*, a derivative from [701
songola ("to lead"). The declaration of war, likewise the tactics,
were discussed by a council of *olosekulu* ("village chiefs") in the
ombala ("capital") where the king had, and still has, a royal com-
pound. If war had been conducted among sections of the Ovim- 727
bundu, the defeated people had to pay taxes and tribute; moreover,
their women and cattle were taken. In event of a successful war
against the Vachokue there was plundering of cattle and women,
but it was not found practicable to exact periodical payments
from the enemy.

The subject of warfare is intimately related to that of slavery. 686
There was until very recent times a domestic slavery which followed 567 ●
from the inability of a person to pay his debts. In connection with 672
this reduction of free persons to a condition of slavery there are
several points of exceptional interest. The debtor himself is not
taken as a slave, neither are his wife or children. The correct proce-
dure is a sale of his sister's children; but more frequently the children
themselves are taken by the creditor. "The debtor's sister will say
nothing because this is the law of the Ovimbundu." If payment of
the debt is made later, the children are set free. Usually the word
pawning is used by ethnologists to describe this proceeding.

Further consideration of Ngonga's payment to his mother's
brother clarifies the facts of domestic slavery. "I paid for them,
I took their place," said my interpreter. The payment for the
return of these two children was two oxen. The girl, who was ten
years of age when she was taken to pay the debt, was returned to
her people when she was a woman with three children. Ngonga's
brother was not actually taken from his home. He was made to
pay his mother's brother's debt by working for the creditor. In
general, these domestic slaves were not ill treated, though their
rights were limited. The position of slaves taken from a hostile 567

567 people, especially if they were from outside the Ovimbundu, was one of absolute and abject servitude.

The master had rights of punishment including a death sentence; but Ngonga says that a slave could appeal to the headman of the village if he were starved and cruelly treated. All children of a slave became slaves of the master. As the slave had no property he could not pay a fine; the master would pay the fine then relieve his feelings by beating the slave. Instead of paying the fine the master might sell the slave.

Slaves were not branded or marked in any way. Ngonga has seen runaway slaves hunted with dogs. A slave was not allowed to buy his own freedom. A master could dispose of his slave girls in marriage; for instance, a young girl might be sold to an old man. The condition of the slave is well expressed in Ngonga's own words: "The slave worked hard at everything, then the master said he had done nothing."

Slaves used to go to war to fight with their masters against an enemy. A slave might become a blacksmith or a hunter, two very esteemed occupations, but all his work would be for the master. Ngonga says there was no slave market belonging to the Ovimbundu, but every man knew where he could buy a slave. Slaves could act as witnesses in a trial. Slave women were not lent out for prostitu-
[595] tion. A slave owner did not have promiscuous intercourse with his
[768] slave women, but he chose two or three girls as concubines. A slave girl who was married to a free man would revert to her master along with her children when her husband died. If a master had married his own slave woman she would, at his death, become the property of his eldest brother and her children would go with her. In some instances the slave woman and her children would be given to the son of her master's brother.

VILLAGE ORGANIZATION

361 When choosing a site for a new village, a preference is shown for a hillside, though woods or valleys are at times selected. The foot of cliffs is a favorite site. In addition to the shade afforded by the cliff there was in time past the advantage of being hidden from the view of enemies. Further shelter was afforded by the planting of wild fig trees. Sometimes an *ombala* ("capital") was rendered picturesque by the planting of trees which grow to a great size; such a plan was followed at the *ombala* of Ngalangi.

Caves in the wall of a cliff, likewise rugged hillsides, gave a place of retreat for women and children during an attack. Usually there

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

171 428 this method is characteristic of many pastoral tribes of south and east Africa.

171 611 The Ovimbundu are situated between two systems of reckoning descent, succession, and inheritance; namely, the Negro system of the Congo region, and that of the eastern and southern cattle-keeping people. In view of the culture contacts described in Chapter X, the mixed system of the Ovimbundu is intelligible.

On the one hand the Ovimbundu emphasize the rights of the mother's brother while denying inheritance to a wife and her children, but in royal families the eldest son of the principal wife succeeds to kingship. Among commoners descent is reckoned through both the father and the mother. Therefore the inference is that the [174] Ovimbundu have, by virtue of their position and contacts, made a blending of two distinct social systems, one of which gives succession to office in the male line, while the other gives inheritance in the female line. In their system of burial rites for kings the Ovimbundu follow the usages of the pastoral area.

171 608 Exchange of blood is an Umbundu custom resembling that which occurs widely in Negro Africa. This exchange of blood is the typical Negro form of the blood brotherhood. Another rite is the Hamitic custom of drinking a mixture of blood and milk; this the Ovimbundu do not practise.

171 241 The hoe-cultivation practised by Ovimbundu women is in agreement with Baumann's association of hoe-culture and matriarchal conditions, the latter being indicated by the importance of the mother's brother. These concomitant factors are shown by Baumann (II, p. 292) to be characteristic of a wide area in the Congo basin. To this area may be added the whole of central Angola.

171 567 The factors of slavery among the Ovimbundu are in agreement with all that is known of the treatment of slaves in the Congo area and farther west Africa. Slaves of the Ovimbundu taken in warfare were treated with less consideration than those who passed into slavery to redeem a debt. There was also discrimination in favor of slaves taken in local quarrels among the Ovimbundu themselves. The killing and eating of slaves in north Angola is a custom whose early occurrence has already been noted.

AFRICAN PUBERTY RITES

171 881 Initiation ceremonies for boys and girls are at present well preserved among the Vachokue of eastern Angola; for a period such ceremonies declined among the Ovimbundu, but there is now a

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and the European population greatly increased.[28] In some areas at this time a confused situation arose, in which 'robber barons', white and black, tyrannized over chiefs and villagers and engaged in the still vigorous slave trade, which now had acquired a few disguises on the coast.[29]

In 1911 the rubber trade ended, and about the same time slavery and the slave trade were effectively suppressed.[30] From this time onwards, too, civil administration began to be effective and the Benguela Railway became the most important link between the coast and the interior.[31] The trade disappeared, powers of the chiefs declined. The missions, both Catholic and Protestant, which had relatively little influence during the rubber trade period, gained more and more converts.[32]

2. *Ethnography*

Between the Ovimbundu and the sea lie the Hanya, the Nganda, and the Tjisanji tribes of whom little is known except that the Hanya and Nganda seem to be culturally related to the Ovimbundu.[33] To the south are the Nyaneka-Humbi group, cattle-keeping peoples who are culturally and linguistically related to the Ovimbundu, but who did not participate in the trade.[34] To the east lie the Ngangela[35], the Luimbi, and the

[28] Childs, pp. 210–11.

[29] For an account of Umbundu country at this time see H. W. Nevison, *A Modern Slavery*, New York, 1906. In Gumba I was told that Mutu-ya-Kevela the leader of the 1902–3 revolt had raided villages for slaves but that Samakaka whom Childs (p. 22) describes as a robber baron was spoken of favourably.

[30] Slavery had been legally suppressed from 1878. The slaves were called by other names but no effective change was made till 1910. See A. Bastos, *Monografia de Catumbella* in *Bol. Soc. Geog. Lisboa*, 1910 (pp. 74–81, 105–9, 141–55, 180–5, 225–8, 251–5, 279–5).

[31] Childs, p. 228.

[32] Ibid., pp. 220–23. Personal information.

[33] Ibid., p. 8.

[34] On these peoples see Estermann, *Etnografia do Sudoeste de Angola*, Vol. II.

[35] A tribe using this word as the root of the tribal name is to be found to the south-east of Umbundu country in the area round Vila Artur de Paiva. Padre A. Van Horrik, formerly of the Missão Católica de Cubango, tells me that the map contained in M. McCulloch, *The Southern Lunda and Related Peoples*, (London, 1951) should show the Ngangela as occupying much of the area actually assigned to the Mbwela and the south-eastern Ovimbundu. Mbwela does not seem to be the name any tribe uses for itself (Private information, Estermann and Van Horrik).

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[1874-1911]

439 journeys diminished in distance as they increased in profit-
484 ability.[53]

My informants, however, gave a somewhat different picture. Long trading journeys were still being undertaken in the last decade of the trade (1901–11). Some men whom I met had travelled to the kingdom of the Mwata Yamvo and beyond to Luba country; one man had made a journey into what is now the Congo Republic which took a year to go and a year to return; another had visited Barotseland. It should be said that these seem to have been unusually long journeys; journeys totalling six to eight months were common.[54]

182 The significance of the trade in social life is reflected in the
829 mystical explanations of success in business found in Umbundu religion. Prosperity might be explained either by the favour of
[976] spirits such as Kandundu and Otjipukû, who received at their shrines libations of wine, or by malevolent sorcery involving the
[254] sacrifice of relatives in exchange for wealth.[55] The existence of these two explanations probably reflects the existence of some rich men who satisfied the expectations of their relatives and others who did not.

567 Apart from the rubber trade, the older slave trade continued
128 until its vigorous suppression in the period 1910–12, and indeed seems, as regards the Ovimbundu, to have become intensified in the period after 1890. The slaves went to S. Tome and Principe, or to coastal plantations. Up to that time the Ovimbundu had sold few of their own people, with the exception of criminals or people who had become generally unpopular with their kin. The collapse of the old political system played into the hands of adventurers who unscrupulously exploited the Umbundu custom of debt slavery or conducted raids for this purpose.[56]

604 It was then the 'trade' which was the common factor in the
439 life of all Ovimbundu, and which was so to speak the factor,

[53] Childs, p. 208.

[54] Informants.

[55] Although some old men still have shrines to the luck-giving spirits it is not possible to see how their cult functioned in the social structure then existing. It is, however, notable that success could be interpreted mystically in two ways by benevolent spirits or by sorcery.

[56] Childs, p. 213. I was told that Gumba had been raided from Bailundo.

763 Mwehombo, and elder of the school, a post he would certainly have lost had this come to the ears of the missionaries. Attitudes to the verdict are interesting. Sapapula assured me that [754] Mwehombo had killed many people by sorcery both sons and sisters' sons; Luanga did not see the contradiction which I pointed out to him of his saying both that Mwehombo was good and that he had practised sorcery; Gonçalve, Mwehombo's son, appeared sceptical of the verdict, as did Aspirante, Sapapula's sister's son who was married to a daughter of Mwehombo's half-brother, Wayangu.

764 The verdict did not prevent Mwehombo having an impressive funeral. He was buried according to his wishes in the traditional hammock placed in the circular grave, instead of the modern coffin placed in the modern oblong grave. As a caravan-leader he was buried by the track to Chicunda at the point where the path to Epalanga branched off. A low thatched covering was erected over his grave with the horns of the beast [237] killed at the funeral on it. In 1956 Gonçalve and Pedro Nendi, son of Mbati and therefore a cross-cousin of Mwehombo, replaced this by a concrete memorial in the form of a cross with the base inscribed in Portuguese 'Simon Mwehombo Native of Gumba Great Man died 13th January 1955.'

797 Thus Mwehombo had twice undergone conversion from pagan to Christian, once as he lay dying and once after death. 754 His posthumous conviction for sorcery affected neither the form of funeral, nor the continued residence of his kin in the village. His conviction for sorcery was a reflection of the social strains in which he had been involved, not the opening of another cycle 621 of conflict. The kinship cores are not segments opposing one ●571 another as in a lineage system; they possess no clearly defined boundaries[10] or continuing existence in time. Their existence is dependent on the persons around whom the cores have formed, and on their deaths they lack any integrating principles. Mwehombo dead, his kinsfolk mostly found no objection in continuing to live in the village where his rival now lived as undisputed traditional headman.

621 There is no word in Umbundu for these groupings. The

[10] For example I have included José in the Mwehombo-Mbati kinship core, on the basis of association, but he came to the village through a tie with Sapapula.

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even in non-religious matters has influence with the post, and can through this influence effect the arrest of diviners and baptized polygamists, or intervene on the side of somebody called before the post.

A catechist may be removed from his position by the mission for incompetence, or for moral failings, such as unchastity or rum-brewing on an extensive scale. He may also become involved in quarrels with his people, who may say that he is bad-tempered, while he will say that they are disobedient. Such a dispute will be referred to the mission where an attempt will be made to persuade the two parties to sink their differences. If this fails, the catechist may return to his old village, but may become a catechist elsewhere if the circumstances have not been such as to destroy the mission's confidence in him.

There are other ways in which the catechist represents his village. The post may impose certain responsibilities; thus the catechist may be told to record all live births in the village for the purposes of official statistics. The catechist will try and keep on good terms with the policemen who live at the post and visit the villages. The catechist of Epalanga gave a chicken to a visiting policeman and explained that this was a general practice in order that catechists visiting the post for the annual check on their papers should find a policeman who would be good to them. However, a catechist will object to attempts to associate him with the more unpopular activities of the post. Thus when a policeman came to the Epalanga catechist and asked him to help in recruiting labourers, the latter was rather angry. 'My work is to teach doctrine, not to seize people.' Similarly, when visiting a Protestant village once I asked where the government headman lived and was told in rather an irritated tone, 'No, we have nothing of the post here. We have only the school.'

The sense of responsibility which the catechist feels for his village is sometimes counterbalanced by his lack of effective power. Thus in the dry season of 1956 a bridge near Epalanga which was crossed by the track to Chicunda was broken down. Pedro Chiquete Santos thought that this might bring punishment on the villagers, and accordingly appealed for volunteers to repair it. He also asked Jeremias, the Protestant catechist of

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797 Simbwyikoka, to help. Jeremias turned up with three of his
571 pupils; Pedro, however, had no response. Returning at night to Epalanga, he complained of the attitude of his people, not so much that they had not been ready to help but that they had spread the rumour that he was going to complain to the post. He insisted that he had not said that he would complain to the post; what he had said was that a white labour-recruiter who had had difficulty with the bridge would complain to the post. The attitudes expressed by the catechist are interesting; he feels a responsibility for the village, he has not a corresponding authority to get people to do something which is concerned with the village, but not with the school, but is indignant at the suggestion that he would be willing to denounce his fellow villagers to the post. Indeed, cases arose, which will be described in later chapters, in which a catechist and an elder of the school took an active part in opposing a domineering government headman.

One evening two Kimbundu men, from a different geographical and tribal area, arrived in Epalanga with an unusual story. They had been travelling in the company of a European employer who had suddenly gone off, leaving them without money. This was at a town on the main Luanda–Nova Lisboa road. They had then set out travelling through the villages relying on the hospitality of the catechists to get to the Missão Católica de Bimbe, where they hoped to obtain money to pay bus fares back home. I do not know why they took this way; perhaps as missionary effort to the immediate north of Umbundu country lacks intensity there were no helpful catechists linking the place where they were stranded to their home. What is interesting is that they could rely on the hospitality of the catechists, although they had no kin or tribal bond to appeal to. Here again the catechist appears as the representative of his village who has particular moral duties. Another example of this was when the catechist of Epalanga took part in a funeral as a funeral-friend, which he was, being a native of Ndjandju, the partner-chiefdom of Gumba. He said that he would not take a chicken, as was his right, since he was a catechist, that is, he had special obligations to be generous.

In general the position of the Protestant catechists and elders

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of the school seems considerably stronger than that of their Catholic counterparts. This impression is gained by visits to Protestant villages and to episodes like that just quoted, where the Protestant catechist had more success than the Catholic in recruiting volunteers for work on the bridge. The reasons for this lie in the organization of the Protestant Church, which owes its origin to Congregationalist missionaries, and in which the distribution of power differs from that in the Catholic Church. The white missionaries exercise only a supervisory role over the work of the Native Church which is responsible for pastoral activity in the villages. The African clergy of the Native Church are entirely dependent financially on their people.

Compared with Catholicism, Protestantism lays much less stress on the sacraments of baptism and communion and much more on Bible-reading and the religious knowledge of the individual. Hence the teaching role of the catechist is more strongly stressed among the Protestants. For example, the Protestant catechists teach girls as well as boys to read and write. His dependence on the clergy is reduced; indeed, owing to the lay participation in the Umbundu Native Church he exercises some control over them. Among the Ovimbundu, as elsewhere in the world, the 'pyramidal' form of Catholicism is absent in Protestantism in which the position of the clergy is weaker and that of the lay leaders strengthened.

The relative autonomy of the Umbundu Native Church *vis-à-vis* the white missionaries and the disintegration of the traditional system of authority have given judicial powers to its officials. Dr. Childs has written in a recent article:[1] 'In Angola . . . the breakdown of traditional authority has been so rapid that the social life of the villages is now very near to complete anarchy . . . the missions and churches have been compelled to take over. Church leaders—catechists, deacons, and pastors—have taken on judicial functions. Church meetings, both local and regional, have become courts and councils.' He goes on to describe the legalistic attitudes and casuistical morality which is associated with these developments, and suggests that the lack of opportunity for political activity

[1] G. T. Childs, *International Review of Missions*, April 1958.

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servant of mine explaining how the Mwekalia chose the chief said, giving me a comparison: 'The Bishop of Nova Lisboa thinks "This priest has sense" and so makes him the superior of a mission'.[6] The disintegration of the old political system, and the association of its representatives with the ritual values which are no longer very significant for the mass of Ovimbundu, has destroyed the old pyramid of authority and prestige. The people associate demands and punishment, for which they seem to receive very little in return, with the post. Many draw a distinction between the actual *chefe* and the government, which they regard as benevolent and ignorant of the behaviour of its representatives. Despite such expressions of loyalty as the singing of the Portuguese national anthem at village parties the 'government' is too distant and shadowy for the Ovimbundu to have much knowledge of it. Nor has the post tried effectively to build up new types of bureaucratic authority in the villages—the government headmen are not given sufficient backing or responsibility by the post to do more than execute its orders.

Hence, the establishment of new types of grouping and leadership at the local level has been the work of the missions, and it is through the missions that these new groupings are articulated on to the total Angolan social system. The missionaries, who provide this articulation between the 'civilized' society and the local organization of the natives, form the section of the 'civilized' population which most satisfies, in its relations with the people, the expectations of the Africans.

To use another term, it is within the Catholic and Protestant Churches that Ovimbundu most clearly identify themselves. Baptism identifies an individual by giving him a name, hence Christians object to non-baptized people identifying themselves in this way. To an individual baptism is significant since it is concerned with his destiny. By it also he identifies himself with the 'civilized' population and achieves a new status superior to that of the pagans. The newly-born child of Christian parents will be given a Christian name and also an Umbundu name from one already held by a dead kinsman.[7] A few villagers

[6] Actually responsibility for appointing superiors of missions largely belongs to the superior of the Nova Lisboa district of the Congregação do Espírito Santo.

[7] For Umbundu names, see Elizabeth Ennis, *African Studies* (Johannesburg) March 1945.

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catechist or missionary for support at the post. There is no tendency to confine government appointments to chiefdoms and headmanships to Catholics.[8] However, the Protestant catechists are, unlike the Catholic catechists, not exempt from taxes.[9]

The Ovimbundu no longer possess a coherent political system of their own. They cannot, owing to the nature of their relations with the post and their ignorance of the higher administration, regard the Government as being their representative; the only wide-range systems with which they can identify themselves are the missions. It is through them that the individual is promised eternal life, that the village receives a new type of identity and unity, and that the Ovimbundu as a people participate with the 'civilized' population in ritual communities cutting across the boundaries of culture and geography.

The objection may be made that it is only the Christians who could effectively be represented by the missions and that in Epalanga and Gumba generally baptized Christians formed a minority. It has, however, been previously noted how the school may give its name to a village of mixed population. The catechist will represent both Christians and pagans when he is concerned with the post or with the mission. Moreover, the percentage of pagans in Gumba is far higher than in the rest of Bimbe to which they are linked by the Umbundu language and culture, by administrative divisions, and by a wide range of personal contacts.

It may, then, be asserted, that the catechetical schools and the wider groupings which they build up are the social groups most significant for Umbundu integration on any scale wider than that of the household.

[8] In Gumba the chief and government headman were pagan. There are government-recognised Protestant chiefs elsewhere in Umbundu country.

[9] In some parts of Angola the Catholic catechists are not automatically granted exemption but have to have obtained certain other qualifications, e.g. a certain degree of literacy.

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story to explain the non-appearance of the others which satisfied the *chefe*.

The catechist was somewhat criticized for not having pushed on with the case, and thereby perhaps getting Guilherme landed in jail. Guilherme did move out of the village in February and settled near the outskirts of the Protestant village of Kalungwengwe. Kapapelo also set about moving out of Epalanga.

In the conflict which has just been described, there are three disputes, the question of the bridewealth which involved Luciano, Simbwyikoka, Guilherme, and the anthropologist, the quarrel between Paulo and Guilherme, and the subsequent uprising against Guilherme which takes its signal from Paulo's reference of the dispute to the priest.

The question of bridewealth repayment is subordinate to, indeed enclosed within, the main dispute. It does illustrate one point central to the problem of Umbundu social control, the absence of any court machinery. Jeremias and Luciano had tried to recover it by appealing to the priest; later Luciano and Simbwyikoka attempted to get it back by coming and demanding it, that is by self-help. Another extremely significant aspect of the social structure is revealed by this 'enclosed' case. Guilherme after a bitter dispute with Paulo which has ended in the arrest of Paulo and Bartolomeu borrows 200 escudos from them as a kinsman. This indicates that kinship ties can survive and function despite a quarrel which they do not check or prevent, a point which will be developed later in an examination of how kinship affects and is affected by a dispute.

The conflict cannot be viewed as simply a dispute between individuals, nor as a dispute between the holders of opposed roles. Guilherme was generally regarded as lacking 'sense' (*olondunge*), the quality, greatly admired by the Ovimbundu, of good judgement and decent social behaviour, and he confessed himself to be at fault. Yet he could not have acted in the way he did unless he had been a government headman, nor would the uprising against him have taken the form it did had he not held an office dependent on the post. There is, however, no necessary conflict between a government headman and the catechist or

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elder of the school in the sense that there is no sphere where their duties overlap and where they must compete.

The roles of government headmen and of officials of the school are complementary. It is through the chief and the government headman that the Ovimbundu pay their taxes and fines, are recruited as contract labourers and are called to road service, are arrested for crimes and misdemeanours and are entered on official records. It is through the catechists and elders of the school that the Ovimbundu find the expression of village unity by which at the same time they are linked to the whites and to the rest of the world on the religious level. The missions bring the Ovimbundu closer to the whites than does the administration, without the administration's predominant interest in making demands.[5]

While at the level of the total Angolan political system the administration is more powerful than the missions, the position of the catechist or elder of the school is stronger at the local level because the catechist and the elder represent the catechetical school which is the only social grouping existing on a village basis, whereas the government headman in fact represents no social group but is simply an executant of the orders of the *chefe*. Hence the catechist owing to this representative role and to his contact with the mission (which is much closer than that of the government headman) can lead the people and invoke the aid of the mission against abuses on the part of chiefs or government headmen. This would not be the case if the post gave firm backing to its local agents and turned a deaf ear to communications from the missions. Opposition to an overbearing government headman is then likely to be led by the leaders of the 'school', who can count on the backing of the mission, if they have a good case, to intervene for them at the post. The relative importance in a village of the catechist and elder of the school varies according to such factors as personality. The way in which the catechist was ignored when he tried to intervene in the dispute over the bridewealth shows that the catechist cannot claim authority in disputes as a matter of course.

[5] The missions impose fees and a yearly levy on their adherents which are small compared to the official taxes.

SOCIAL CONTROL

The transformation of the dispute between Guilherme and Paulo into what amounted to both a trial of, and an uprising against, the government headman is not purely accidental but is a natural consequence of the principle latent in the social organization by which the 'school' leaders complement and can check the chief and government headman. 627 797 622 571

The case also indicates the limited nature of their roles. Both Paulo (by preventing Anna's marriage) and Guilherme (by getting Francisco sent to contract labour) can strike at the other through the lawful exercise of their authority; any real attack on the other's position involves an appeal to either mission or post, and hence brings about a trial of some sort. Guilherme finding that the quasi-trial before the priest went against him, tried to bring the case before the post, but realizing that this also was likely to go against him came to terms with his enemies. That is, any determined attempt to solve a dispute is likely to involve at least the threat of a reference to the post or the mission.

The power of the priest to intervene in the actions of the agents of the post is limited. Thus Antonio Pires did not intervene in the case of Francisco but advised him to get a letter from his employer. It is, however, notable that the missionaries are not simply appealed to by Catholics. Protestants like Jeremias and Luciano, and pagans like Kasosi and Sapapula, were ready to appeal to the priest although the initiative came from Paulo. That this is so is a convincing argument for the claim which has been made that the catechetical school represents the whole village, although it could also be claimed that it reflects rather an aspect of 'civilized'-native relations in the total Angolan system, clientship, as the typical form of relations between the two groups, with the missions being the patrons *par excellence* to whom all natives are at least potentially clients. The general well-being of all natives is the concern of the missions, who are therefore liable to be appealed to in such cases as this. 627 797 571 [648]

In particular cases where there is another patron to appeal to his aid will be sought. This patron-client situation will crop up again in the account of subsequent disputes. Its origin historically lies in the history of attitudes to employees and to 627 648 571

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627 servants in Portugal and Angola;[8] sociologically it reflects the
648 lack of any system of bureaucratic administration at the local
571 level and the isolation of the *chefes* from the people. The uncertainties of taking a case to the post are such that it is thought desirable to have some backing (such as the letter the catechist got from the mission) from a representative of the 'civilized' community and in the absence of any other 'civilized' person the mission becomes the patron of all natives, whatever their religious allegiance.

578 The importance of this case, then, is its illustration of what
627 may happen in a conflict between a catechist or elder of the
571 school and a government headman. The limited nature of their powers, and the fact that their roles are not competitive, make a conflict between them, so long as it is not extended to pull in other people, necessarily confined to indirect attacks. If either party wishes to bring down the other he must appeal to the post or to the mission. The government headman can pull people in by accusing them at the post of not paying taxes or creating a disturbance, or by recommending them for contract labour. His position is not so strong as his dependence on the post might suggest, since the intervention of the mission, at the request of the villagers, can bring him down.

Within this main 'political' dispute is the quarrel over bridewealth, which is illuminating both in indicating the absence of legal mechanisms at the village level, and in showing how kinship ties continue to function at the height of a bitter quarrel. Both these points will be noticed again in the accounts of later disputes.

3. *Kapapelo and Sapapula*

578 The next case involved Sapapula and Kapapelo and was
627 again to end in an averted appeal to the *chefe de posto*. On the 21st of February Sapapula, Sahuke (see List II, p. 56), Wasuka, Luanga (21), and others went from Epalanga to the house of Justino, who had called them there to settle a dispute. Justino

[8] An inhabitant of Lisbon, wishing to emigrate to Canada, wooed the maid of a former official of the British Embassy. Discovering that this would get him nowhere, he transferred his affections to the maid of one of the staff of the American Embassy. The implications are interesting.

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do not know how Kafelo and Lusase came to hear of the case). 627
In practice, their role was that of any other spectator in trying to bring about a settlement, although a chief has, as was noted, the right to a commission on any indemnification. The right of spectators to intervene is not based on any particular relationship to those involved nor on any reputation for wisdom. There is in fact no organized routine for determining who may and who must turn up and who may and who must speak. Spectators and speakers are simply members of the neighbourhood community, some related to Sapapula, some simply fellow-villagers, and it is natural that in present Umbundu society, [57] lacking clearly-defined social groups, the crowd that assembles on such an occasion should look like a chance gathering. Its lack of recognized procedure, of accepted leadership, and of specific criteria of recruitment are all typical of the neighbourhood community among the contemporary Ovimbundu.

Despite the 'unorganized' character of this gathering, there 627
exists evidently a set of generally accepted symbolic values, 183
which are accepted by Christian and pagan, by young and old. 637
Thus Nahoka claimed as evidence that she had not committed adultery her meal with Kapapelo's wife, and the latter in turn offered as evidence that adultery had been committed a statement that her husband had made a gift of soap to Nahoka. These actions provide presumptive evidence of innocence or guilt since an adulterer or adulteress may not eat under apparently mystical sanctions with the spouse of the person with whom he or she has committed adultery, and the giving of gifts by a man to a woman implies a sexual relationship. These actions were presumably recognized as convincing evidence in the days when there existed a formal court system, and continue to be recognized as such at the present day.

The nature of contemporary social relations, as being the 578
end-product of a series of acts between individuals rather than 571
as the content of jural norms defined by status, is also revealed in [67]
the dispute, particularly in the episode at Justino's. Sapapula does not complain that Kapapelo had not behaved as a villager should to his headman, but that he had not been grateful for having been given land. Kapapelo's complaint that Saviel, Sapapula's sister's son, had attempted to seduce his wife was,

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like his accusation that Sapapula had incited Jaime to kill him, an attempt to portray himself not as an ungrateful recipient of Sapapula's goodness but a much suffering victim of his malevolence.

Although the moot reflects the existing social structure and values there are occasional reminiscences of the former social system. Thus Ngombe seems to have been acting according to a traditional but non-effective pattern in giving a long, judicial, summing up, which had no practical effect. Again, when Sapapula accused Kapapelo of wishing to break up the village it is probable that he was thinking of the old villages socially defined by the agnatic tie and physically enclosed by a stockade rather than the physically and socially amorphous villages of the present day. Values such as these survive in the minds of individuals when the associated social forms have disintegrated. They are brought out on occasions analogous to those in which they were formerly used, but are not nowadays decisive in the way they would have been.

The quarrel between Kapapelo and Sapapula is different from the other cases, since the meeting held to discuss it is held without the presence of a 'civilized' person and it pivots about a question of adultery or rather attempted adultery, a subject which has hitherto appeared marginally as a subject for insults. The case is held without the presence of a 'civilized' person, and this is from necessity, not from choice. Sapapula had tried to have the case heard by Justino, and Kapapelo was eventually brought to terms by Sapapula's threat to refer the matter to the post. While the moot shows us the community acting to uphold social control, such action is regarded as an unsatisfactory substitute for a decision by somebody who could, as Gonçalve said of Antonio Pires, 'leave with the words', that is, settle the case.

Adultery has previously occurred as an accusation thrown in during a squabble that has begun with something else. Thus Guilherme accused Paulo and Wasuka accused Kapapelo of adultery because they were angry with them; they were not angry with them because they thought they had committed adultery with their wives. It is parallel to the suggestions that Kapapelo was a sorcerer, an insult not an accusation. It now

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than the catechists and 'elders of the school'; yet the weakness of the agents of the post before a local opposition led, not by such traditional figures as Kafelo and Sapapula, but by the school functionaries, has been demonstrated. The post accepts intervention by the mission in supporting disputants, and the mission is ready to help not only its disputants but any native who has a strong case—that is, it has a generalized relation of patronage to all natives.[13] Hence, since in a serious dispute people look round for a 'civilized' patron, the mission is the one most likely to be appealed to, and these appeals usually go through its local agents.

While the symbiosis of two societies, one ruling, the other ruled, is a common feature of modern Africa, the extremely limited nature of the role delegated by the administration to the native authority, the 'patron-client' tie linking 'civilized' persons to the natives, and the opportunity given to patrons to intervene in cases before the *chefe*, seem to be distinctive features of Portuguese colonization.[13]

The third aspect of the social structure mentioned in the introductory section was the role in disputes of kinship ties. It has been earlier noted that Sapapula's supporters regarded him as a victim of a concerted alliance by Guilherme, Kapapelo, Lusase, and Ndonga. In fact Lusase had avoided getting involved in the dispute between Guilherme and Paulo, had supported Sapapula against Kapapelo, and had disclaimed responsibility for Ndonga's act. The present social structure is not one in which groups of kin habitually co-operate;[14] and it is possible that this belief in a coalition against Sapapula reflects memories of the old social structure.

Kinship ties between individuals seem neither to restrain them from quarrelling nor to be liable to permanent disruption as a result of quarrels. By August 1956 Kasosi was once again

[13] It is felt in administrative circles that the advancement of the African is mainly the responsibility of the missions.

[13] Anybody who knows the Portuguese well will acknowledge the importance given to personal influence (*ensaio*) and the lack of esteem for bureaucratic (in the Weberian sense) procedures.

[14] See Chapters IV and VII for details on the kinship cores and on general aspects of kinship. The support which Sapapula received was not confined to his own kinship core—thus Gregorio who enthusiastically supported Sapapula was not even a kinsman.

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157 538 593 animals.[1] Other tales with frankly human protagonists portray the same theme,[2] and there are a number of Umbundu adaptations and variations of such European versions of this theme as Cinderella, Snow White, &c. In some tales, such as 'Kalitangi', the hero escaped as an infant from an agreement made by his mother before his birth with another expectant mother that they would both destroy their offspring. Does this indicate a resentment of, or a protest against, child-sacrifice in certain Umbundu rites? I mention this as one possible source for the feeling of neglect and 'rejection' which, however, does not seem to be as acute or as widespread as in our own society.[3] The exact situation could only be determined by careful and extensive investigation.

593 152 [643] Adjustments between siblings among the Ovimbundu on the whole are relatively satisfactory. Resentment on the part of the younger does sometimes occur as indicated above. Overt sibling conflict has also arisen quite frequently in the royal families because of disputes over the succession. Instances of this latter type of conflict may be found in narratives of the early missionaries,[4] in diaries of Silva Porto,[5] and in other early sources. Conflict from jealousy arising out of the parent–child relationship, however, seems to be relatively rare. In a kinship society regulated by the hierarchy of age, jealousy between siblings does not quite fit into the picture. The two most common terms for jealousy over personal relations refer strictly to sexual jealousy: *esepa*, woman's jealousy; and *ukuelume*, jealousy on the part of a man. The other terms are somewhat more applicable but they belong less to household affairs. The meaning of *onya* is jealousy and envy, while *ocipululu* is covetousness and so belongs to the economic sphere.

572 [554] Friendship, especially between age-mates or 'coevals', has played and continues to play an important role in Umbundu social adjustments. Such differences as social station, family, distance of habitation, and even diversity of language and culture are easily bridged by friendship. Many friendships were formed on trading

[1] Cf. *Journal of the American Folk-Lore Society*, 1922, vol. 35, nos. 1 and 18, pp. 116 f., 140 ff.

[2] The tale of *Ñaña la kota liaye* (Baby and his elder sister) referred to *supra*, p. 84.

[3] Investigations of the 'foster-child phantasy', feelings of neglect, 'rejection', &c., reported by Murphy, op. cit., p. 415 f.; and by Allport, op. cit., p. 364 f.

[4] *Missionary Herald*, 1888, p. 242 f.

[5] In *Boletim da Sociedade de Geografia de Lisboa*, 1885, 1886.

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572 expeditions. Many blood-brotherhoods were doubtless under-
[608] taken purely from motives of friendship.[1] The *vakuacisoko* is a
[181] friendly institution. The Ovimbundu are a friendly people.

Identification is a strikingly important feature of Umbundu
156 social adjustments and of the whole learning process. Children overtly identify themselves with older siblings, with parents, with other older relatives both living and dead, with friends of their parents, with the village headman, or even the king.[2] This perhaps is the process involved in that which the Ovimbundu name reincarnation. It is largely through identification that character appears to run in families. This is why boys are so keen to learn the professions of their fathers or their mother's brothers. Identification with their seniors in social position and economic activity more closely cements the unity of the child–adult sphere and gives the children yet another urge to enter into adult life and assume complete responsibility as quickly as possible.

158 'Inferiority Conflict' has probably been present in Umbundu life for a long time, perhaps since the rubber trade (1874), perhaps even longer. When a people's activity is keyed to so high a pitch there will be some individuals who find themselves inadequate. There are a number of proverbs which ridicule the stay-at-homes or those 'too lazy' to undertake the exceedingly arduous trading
[177] expeditions. European domination has set new paces and created new frustrations, with one result, that 'inferiority conflicts' are probably on the increase. Many individual instances could be cited. A particularly striking one of my observation is of a man whose suffering from epileptic seizures had induced attitudes of inferiority. The conflict was exacerbated by his selection as a hospital assistant, in which position the responsibility required was plainly beyond his ability.[3] Individuals suffering from any physical disability find life difficult among such an aggressive people.

[732] If the disability is great the handicapped individual generally finds the adjustment beyond his powers. I have observed a number of severely crippled individuals brought up in traditional kinship groups, and all of them were suffering from overt inferiority conflicts. All of these individuals had adopted compensatory

[1] Although the rite seems to have connotations of sorcery.

[2] Among the Tallensi, according to Fortes, identification is only with older siblings, with parents, and with 'the clan' (op. cit., pp. 46 ff.).

[3] Epilepsy (*ocinonya*) is considered by the Ovimbundu as a visitation of the spirits and is much feared.

Vakuacisoko (lit. "those of the set")[1]

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Childs considers that the custom of *vacuacisoko* is probably connected with circumcision and initiation. It does not exist throughout the territory but only in certain families who belong to the order and are said to pass it on by heredity. It seems to have been stronger in the past, but few practising members of the set are now known. All 'coevals' or members of the set were in duty bound to render mutual assistance, and all had mutual rights to the property of the others without complaint or remedy. These rights seem to have included that of having intercourse with each other's wives. Injury or even death of one member brought about by another did not allow the injured family to seek revenge or legal redress. It was the duty of the *vacuacisoko* to bury their fellows, themselves digging the grave and attending to all the expenses ordinarily supplied by the family of the deceased. They also had the duty of burying strangers without family who would not be buried by others for fear of defilement or responsibility for their debts.[2] Childs describes the *vacuacisoko* associations as "age-grade sets",[3] but gives no further explanation.

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"With or without initiation rites, adolescence is largely preparation for marriage and full adult life. Traditionally, adolescence is not a time of conflict or stress....Contract and *corvée* labour have brought profound changes, especially for the young men. As for the girls, a few have gone into the towns; relatively few, however, other than those who attend a boarding-school, lead a life essentially different from that which has been traditionally theirs."[4]

MARRIAGE

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Available information concerning degrees of relationship in which marriage is permitted, marriage-payment, polygyny and divorce has been given above.[5] Evambi[6] and Hambly[7] describe some of the customs and ceremonies connected with marriage.

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For three nights after the commencement of the marriage ceremony the girl sleeps with her own parents, while the married woman and six unmarried girls whom she has chosen as her attendants sleep in the house of her husband. On the fourth day she moves to the man's house, bringing her cooking utensils. For the first month, according to Hambly, or, according to Evambi, the first year, i.e. until the grain is ripe in her new fields, she lives with her husband's mother or aunt, in whose kitchen she cooks food each night to send to her husband in the *onjango*. When her first child is two or three months old, a present of a pig passes from the girl's mother to her husband. [606]

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Childs[8] adds that adulthood comes with marriage, and marriage is only recognised as complete when the first child has been born. A child or an adolescent is only a "potential" person *(omunu)* and the permanency

(1) Childs, op.cit., p.115.
(2) Those who buried a man were considered responsible for his debts. Hence corpses were often placed in trees.
(3) Childs, op.cit., p.59.
(4) Ibid., p.117.
(5) Pp.20f.
(6) 1938.
(7) 1934, pp.180f.
(8) Op.cit., pp.119-20.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

621 they recognize Sekulu Sikīlilē, the elder of the largest unit, as the village headman. Only in his village is there a dancing floor [345] (*ocīlā*),[1] which is the centre of village life, social, legal, and recreational. As the name indicates, it is first and foremost a place for recreation, but here also religious functions are held since they involve so much dancing and drinking, and here formal cases are tried. The *ocīlā* is the heart of the village.

345 *The Men's Club-House.* Ngendo does not have that other important Umbundu institution, the Men's Club House (*onjango*).[2] The *onjango* is, or was, hardly less important than the *ocīlā*. Perhaps before it fell to its present state of disuse, its place was of even greater importance, for in the *onjango* all the men, youths [262] and boys gathered day by day for the evening meal. From all the kitchens came baskets of stiff corn porridge (*iputa*), and dishes of relish (*ombelela*)[3] which all shared, from the most honoured guest or the village elders, down to the naked, ash-whitened little boys just old enough (say from seven or eight years) to leave the kitchens [574] to their mothers and sisters. In the *onjango* guests were entertained, judicial cases of lesser import were settled, the day's work and gossip discussed, and youth was educated by precept and example in nearly everything from traditional history to etiquette. The *onjango* was dining-room, living-room, court, school, hotel, and club, all in one. For some of the Ovimbundu it continues to function. Upon inquiry I found that in all Kasonge there were hardly ten villages where the *onjango* existed and retained its [466] former functions. The reasons which my informants assigned are that the demands for road work (in the immediate region), for contract labour (involving absences of from six months to two years), and the difficulty of securing tax-money, did not leave the leisure required for the common meal in the *onjango*. When I 345 made wider inquiries as to localities where the *onjango* now exists 178 and retains its former functions, it seems that this institution is widely decadent. According to my information, the regions where it continues to function are chiefly in Ngalangi, in Viye, and

104 [1] *Ocīlā* comes from the verb *oku cīlā*, to dance.

[2] *Onjango* has been traced to the verb *oku vangula*, to converse, but I am doubtful of this derivation. It has been called 'The Palaver House', but this is an evident misnomer, for the *onjango* is much more than that.

[3] *Ombelela* is a word to cover any dish which may be eaten with the porridge staple. It may be meat, beans, mushrooms, or greens, and is preferred with gravy into which pieces of the stiff porridge may be dipped (*oku miña*).

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

867 spit, nor toy with anything in his hand. Should his knees knock together, *puaki puaki*,[1] when he runs, they will warn him (against it), saying, Lest when you are grown you may retain the habit and may not be able to walk properly as everyone walks. When a visitor comes into the hut to visit with his parents, while they talk, the well-taught child does not interrupt but is strictly silent, for it is taboo. Otherwise, it would be said, Their child has been taught as by a widow,[2] interrupting when people converse. But if he is spoken to, he must reply with care and with respect to the person speaking, saying, Yes sir (*nã oco*); Yes, thank you (*ã kuku*, lit. yes, great-grandfather!); Yes indeed, thank you (*oco muẽlẽ a kuku*); Sir Lion (*nã Hosi*); Ah, Sir Lord (*Nã a Ñalã*); Ah, Master of the Paws (*nã a Cime-cakasa*).[3]

'Should the elders send him (somewhere), he will obey quickly. He will also imitate the elders in everything. Then they may say of him, This boy now begins to have the habits of adults. They may begin to liken him to someone who died a long time ago. Those who have known his family may say, This child completes so-and-so (*Ngandi*), surely he is likely to be the inheritor of so-and-so (*Kapiñalã ka Ngandi*), perhaps it is his great-grandfather.[4]

'These then are the habits which belong to being grown-up and should a person omit them, people's words will have no meaning for him, and he will have lost his chance.'

From the foregoing it will be seen that a child of about eight is supposed to know his social status and all the etiquette which pertains to it. Where the *onjango* (men's club) still functions as an institution, there the boys learn much of the Umbundu way of life, for there they eat daily in company with all the men and boys of the village. Children are supposed to learn 'table-manners' by watching and imitating their elders. In the *onjango* the hierarchy of age is observed, honoured guests and old men being served first, and so on down the line. Guests are provided with individual (574) servings, but it is hardly proper for one to finish up everything. Any one of the boys will count it a privilege to do that for him. The greater the guest, the greater the honour to finish his plate. A guest of special category, as, for example, the king, who is unable

[1] *Puaki, puaki*, imitation of the sound made by knees knocking together.

[2] It is proverbial that a widow (alone) is unable to bring up her child. Cf. the proverb: *Ocimbumba ka ci longi omõlã*. 'A widow does not educate a child.'

[3] The last three are addressed only to a king or a chief; the others to any older person of either sex.

[4] The reference is to reincarnation.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

of the girl by her husband, and if she were not a virgin he took a hot 585
stick from the fire and burned a hole through her loin cloth. "The girl began to cry, but she had to take the burned cloth to her mother." In such an instance there does not seem to be an idea of guilt. The husband had accepted something that was damaged, and the payment of a pig by the girl's parents reunited the two young people. In former days, also at present, there are boy and girl companions who sleep together, supposedly without having sexual connections, [836]
although they may be seventeen years of age. The girl calls the boy *ombaisi*, and he calls her by the same name. The Ovimbundu [842]
understand something of the physiology of conception; the woman is, however, regarded as only a receiving vessel. "The man puts something into her which grows."

Husband and wife do not sleep in the same bed during the wife's 841
menstrual period; the wife sleeps on a mat at the side of her husband's bed. A woman who is menstruating never cooks food, but women give mutual aid in this matter. A man with more than one wife 595
sleeps either four nights or seven nights with each; the four-night cycle is more usual than the seven-night cycle among the Ovimbundu. Each wife has a separate hut and kitchen. There is no wife lending, 837
but a visitor may be provided with a widow or even with an un- [574]
married girl. Then the man would have to pay the woman.

Ngonga was able to give information with regard to homosexual- 838
ity. "There are men who want men, and women who want women." Ngonga says he has heard people talk about it, and "they think this very bad." A woman has been known to make an artificial penis for use with another woman. The medicine-man will sometimes dress as a woman. Ngonga, who has seen a man dress as a woman, stated that the man arranged his cloth like that of a woman, put palm oil on his hair, and joined the women to pound corn on the rocks. "The other people laughed and spoke bad words to him. His brother, father, and uncle beat him," but without producing reformation.

DIVORCE

There are many grounds on which a man may secure a divorce, 586
but it does not follow that divorce is frequent. On the contrary the evidence indicates that the majority of difficulties are overcome by a compromise between the relations of the husband and those of the wife. The main causes of dissatisfaction with a wife are want of ability in cultivating her garden, physical weakness, a habit of thieving from the gardens of other women, incompetence in cooking,

The hare is not carried over the shoulder, but has a ceremonial 796
conveyance slung on poles (*owanda*) which are supported on the 643
shoulders of two or even four men.

Laying the evil of a village on a goat, which is then driven out 783
to die, is an Umbundu custom. The scapegoat ceremony has a cleansing function similar in purpose to the rekindling of fire for the community. Cavazzi pictured and described the scapegoat ceremony in the seventeenth century, and Ngonga informed me that he saw the rite twenty years ago.

PROHIBITIONS AND OMENS

There is a taboo against killing *oka kuhu*, which is the yellow- 262
backed duiker. When Ngonga was sick he was forbidden to eat the flesh of the duiker (*ombambi*); neither is this flesh to be eaten by people who suffer from dizziness. In former days women were not allowed to eat eggs. The flesh of sheep and goats is said to be indigestible for children between the ages of three and six years. The [643]
flesh of the lion, leopard, and hyena is forbidden as food for the king, but other people may eat it. The king is in fact forbidden to eat the flesh of any animal which has paws; neither may he eat flesh of the bush buck. A medicine-man must not eat flesh of a dog except before a ceremony for curing the sick. The taboo against dog's flesh applies also to the diet of a king.

A woman must not step over the legs of a male, neither must a 784
man step over the legs of a woman; for to do so causes weakness of the knees. A man or woman may step over the legs of a child.

Omens are numerous. It is unfortunate to see a snake holding 787
a frog, and the person who observes this should go to the medicine-man at once. When going to a village to be tried by the chief it is bad to meet some one who is carrying a bark rope, as this indicates binding and punishment. If a person who is setting out from home meets a woman carrying corn meal or any other white substance, he or she must take a little of the meal, whiten the face, and all will be well. A fly in the mouth is a good sign, because the fly knows where meat is to be obtained and is trying to lead the way.

A stranger visiting a village is pleased when a dog is the first [574]
animal to enter the guest house. Dogs are fed, so the entry of a dog is a sign that the visitor will receive food. On the contrary, the appearance of a goat is a bad omen, because goats are not fed; they pick up a frugal living as best they can. Other prohibitions and omens have been mentioned in discussing the pregnancy of women.

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631 764 funerals (though these burials could be undertaken by the cross-cousins of the deceased). When *vakwatjisoko* came to their partner-chiefdom for a funeral they had the right to steal small live-stock, such as chickens, or pigeons, but not cattle, goats, or [837] pigs. An *ukwatjisoko* could sleep with the wives of his *vakwatjisoko* partners without being sued for damages.[68]

631 The ties of kinship and affinity crossed the boundaries of [602] the sub-chiefdoms and even of the kingdoms.[69] The members of the three spirit-protected professions, blacksmithing, divining, and hunting recognized obligations of hospitality to co-professionals from other parts of the country.[70] Again the caravans were so large that they must have involved people [437] from many sub-chiefdoms, which presupposes a wide range of contacts.

182 It may be said that the picture given here is contradictory and inadequate. How can the existence of large kingdoms be reconciled to the extreme insecurity described by old men? How do the wealthy caravan organizers fit into the political system? What sort of politics were there in the kingdoms? It is not easy to answer these questions owing to the lack of evidence, and, probably, because the kingdoms were already in decline during the latter part of the rubber trade period. Indeed, the impression that accounts of the Ovimbundu in the nineteenth century give is that of adventure, battle, commerce, migration —a vigorous rather than a stable society.[71]

61 114 The kinship system is perhaps the field of Umbundu society which has aroused most interest among anthropologists. Childs and Hastings have written much that is interesting on the old double-descent grouping but as, with the kinship system, the form has been described rather than the functioning and it is

[68] Informants. The account in Childs, pp. 114–15 differs considerably. For this institution elsewhere in Angola see Estermann, 'Clans et alliances de clans', *Anthropos*, 1952.

[69] Childs, p. 54.

[70] Informants.

[71] Magyar describes the king and his courtiers as being extremely despotic towards the villagers, and states that their despotism depended on their having a standing military force called 'Sons of the Elephant' (pp. 278–80). Later accounts do not mention this, and Childs notes (p. 209) that at the height of the rubber trade it was more difficult for the kings to recruit armies for their wars.

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for the bride's village. Here they may be greeted with formal speeches of welcome in Portuguese, a usage copied from the reception of missionaries. 585

One only turns up to a wedding if one has been invited, and not everybody who is a kinsman living in the neighbourhood is invited. Nor is there any marked distinction between kin and non-kin in the ceremony, except for the ending of avoidances and the recognition of the father's sister, who is recompensed for her services as nursemaid. Village membership is significantly recognized in the distribution of food, and the sending of the party to the bride's home to represent the bridegroom's village.

Umbundu marriage is virilocal, although a certain number of marriages are within the village. Apart from such marriages, it seems to be rare to find a man settling in a village because his wife has kin there. 591

Although during the early months of the marriage the bridegroom's mother may supervise the bride's work, the individual household is essentially an independent unit[13] and was not even in the past merged with other household units to form a 'grandfamily'. This independence is not isolation. I have only a very few times seen houses with any sort of compound about them. Much of domestic life, eating, working, resting, talking, may be done out of doors in front of the house. Paying visits is a great feature of village life especially when the day's work is over, although there is also a term *oku pasula*, to visit in the morning, referring to what are usually just short calls, involving the exchange of greetings. Perhaps the opportunity of calling and being called on is one of the factors maintaining the village as a social unit. The idea that a man should not eat with his wife still survives to some extent so that questions on this topic receive contradictory answers. Observation shows that even among the men who travelled on the caravans, eating with one's wife is the general practice. 592 574 264

One of the most striking features of Umbundu domestic life is the close companionship which exists between husband and wife and which is unquestionably a modern development.[14] 593 178

[13] See Magyar, pp. 281–3.

[14] The role of the *Ondjange* as described by Childs and Hastings indicates that a man's normal companions both for eating and recreation were other men.

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not now possible for field work to supply the gaps in the written material.[72]

The traditional kinship system had neither clans nor segmenting lineages. The patrilineal group (*oluse*) was localized in a village, the group head being at the same time a village headman. Patrilineal ties do not seem to have been recognized between villages.[73] This social independence of the agnatically united village was reflected in the surrounding palisade, in the close clustering of the houses (nowadays much more spread out) and in the village institutions of the dancing-floor and the men's house (*ondjango*). It was here that all the men and boys, from seven or eight up, ate. Hastings writes, 'Each woman, after preparing the meal, takes or sends the portion which is for the male members of her family. This food is common property. As soon as enough has arrived some responsible member among the men will have it divided among the boys. For days a man may never taste of the food which is prepared by his wife.'[74] The men's house was also a club, and a court-room, where minor cases were decided. It was through this localized body of patrikin that an individual claimed land and residence rights and through it that he participated in the political system.[75]

The matrilineal group (the *oluina*) was composed of the descendants of a common great-great-grandmother.[76] According to Childs, it had a head who might also at times be a village headman,[77] and it was presumably the matrilineal group head who settled the disputes over property which Hambly says

[72] For an attempt at reconstructing Umbundu kinship on the basis of Childs's book see J. A. Barnes's review of *Umbundu Kinship and Character* in *Man*, 1950, pp. 126–128. It may be mentioned that the terms 'the side of the bow' and 'the side of the basket' are used simply to mean 'patrilateral kin' and 'matrilateral kin' (Dr. Childs, private information, and my own inquiries).

[73] A rather ambiguous phrase in Childs p. 43 ('The *oluse* consists of a large number of local village groups'), which might be interpreted as meaning that villages were patrilineally grouped into clans, seems really to mean simply that the village is the *oluse* unit.

[74] Hastings, p. 77.

[75] Ibid., p. 16. Childs, pp. 43–44.

[76] Hastings, p. 83, states that the matrilineal group consists of the descendants of a common great-great-great-grandmother (that is, five generations), and on p. 91 says that it consists of a group 'linked by a common great-great-grandmother'.

[77] Childs, p. 44.

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[1874-1911]

A man did not eat or chat with his eldest son or his daughters. Nor did a woman eat or chat with her sons. By 'chatting' I mean a prolonged conversation. It was not forbidden for people in these relationships to speak to one another. Nor could a man eat or joke with his sister (although chatting was permitted) or be alone with her at night. A grown man could not sleep in the same room as his father, except perhaps on a journey, nor could he wear his father's clothes while he was still alive. A grown woman might sleep in the same room as her mother, provided they were far apart.

The reason for these avoidances is usually given simply as 'shame' (*osoi*) although I have also heard it said in explanation of the father-eldest son avoidance 'If you don't have an eldest son you can't have a family', that is, it is the birth of his eldest son which gives a man status as a father. There seems to be no formalized norm of behaviour towards the *Kwasula*, but it is said that the youngest child is the parent's favourite.[19] When I asked what would happen if a man was alone with his mother at night the answer given was, 'Your father would be angry.'

It is evident that these avoidances would limit the role of the elementary family as an associational unit. This was further 575 limited by the institution of the men's house in which the men and boys from the age of seven or so upwards eat together. In this way, a boy was associated from childhood with the body of agnatic kinsmen from whose conversation he received much of his education in matters ranging from table manners to history.

593 The authority of a man over his grown sons does not seem to have been very marked. A father had first claim on the services of his adolescent son in the caravan trade; if his father did not need him a lad could travel with another kinsman and a grown man could trade on his own account. Nor did a father apparently control his son's access to land, since this was allocated by [622] the village headman. There was, however, one very important service a father could perform for his son, that of ransoming him when the latter's mother's brother wished to sell him as a

[19] I am not sure if the *kwasula* is the youngest child, either male or female, or the youngest child provided that he is male. I think the latter.

[1874-1911]

slave. Once ransomed a boy could not be sold again. If, however, the father was displeased with his son's behaviour he could refuse to ransom him. When a man died, his adolescent sons would go to the household of a classificatory father and the children who did not yet 'have sense' would go with the widow to her kin, returning to their agnatic kin when they were older. 593 768

4. *Analysis of the Old Kinship System*

The ethnography of the Ovimbundu does show that there existed a double-descent kinship system, each individual belonging to both a local patrilineal group, and a dispersed matrilineal group, in which movable property is inherited. So great has been the impact of social change that not only have these groups disappeared but it is practically impossible to gain additional information on them by direct questions about their nature and functions. The information on kinship norms does give a somewhat clearer picture. 611 613 [422] 613 128

Within the village there was a very strong emphasis on the unity and solidarity of the men of the village. The men's house was the main social centre of the village where the men ate, received guests, and listened to cases. It was about it rather than about the person of the headman that ritual clustered.[20] The elementary family was not the unit of domestic consumption, and it is clear, from the taboos regarding contact with women kin, and the evidence as to the social life of the man's house that there was little recreational contact between the sexes. The concept of *ondjamba*[21] shows that the elementary family of husband, wife, and children, was morally and ritually significant, but many of the educational, nutritive, and recreational functions frequently associated with it were here attached to the men's house. 575 594 575

The strength of the agnatic ties in this society seems to have lain in the solidarity of the men of the village rather than in the patriarchal authority of fathers over sons. A son was economically independent of his father since he could trade on his own while his father was still living; the most powerful social sanction in the hands of kinsmen, that of being sold as a slave, was 593 [602] [604]

[20] For these rituals see Hastings, pp. 73–76, and Childs, p. 39.
[21] *Ondjamba* will be discussed more fully in the next chapter.

1: Childs M-S (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

warned against that which is taboo (*eci ci kola*)—anger, theft, and doing evil to people. Should a child hear bad words from children with whom he stays when his parents go to the fields, he will imitate them and if elders hear him they will report. When parents go off to the fields they warn their child saying, When you stay here in the village, do not wound your playmate or put out his eye, lest it bring trouble (*ovimbu*, lit. 'fines') on your family. Or again, As to stealing eggs or snatching from the pot cooking on the fire, don't do it. Should your playmate say, Let's go and steal such-and-such a thing, you run away; and don't greet a person you don't know lest you may find trouble (*ovimbu*). Then the child will remain with that fear. 867

'From his infancy a child is bashful about coming in where elders are, but a little later he likes to be among them to hear what they are saying and to become accustomed to the points of their talk. In order to catch them (the points), he is quiet. He notices how they greet people, whether in the morning or during the day, or again how they greet guests coming from afar; for there are great differences between the various greetings. Even a small child may be taught to greet people until he is accustomed to it and remembers that people are to be greeted. But if a child grows up without learning to greet people (i.e. properly), they will say of him, His parents taught him badly, the child is a fool for when he meets people he does not greet them, not even guests. His parents will hear it said that their child has not been taught, that he is an indecent fellow, and that even among those who make shame, he does even that which ties up with shame. Among people he speaks standing up instead of bowing over or kneeling and snapping his fingers (i.e. for permission to speak).

'His parents must teach him to direct his glance properly that his eyes remain properly in his head.[1] Likewise his mouth, if while he is speaking he should twist it to one side, then if his parents or his grandmother should see it, they will warn him saying, Your mouth, you must not twist it to the side while you speak, lest people should think, He ridicules (us). The child is taught that while speaking with a person he must neither eat, nor

[1] i.e. he must not look his interlocutor in the eye. It is proper to remain with downcast look or to look away at something else. Europeans not understanding this demeanour take it to indicate inattention. One of our pupils failed in his official school examination for this reason, in January 1938. [576]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

276 The snuff is pounded and placed in a small wooden box of cylindrical
[531] shape. Usually the box is ornamented with incised, burned patterns. The Ovimbundu of Bihé add ashes of wood to their snuff, so producing a mixture called *ulelemo*. The Ovimbundu of Elende usually use the
[549] snuff without adulteration. Two main species of tobacco plants are grown.

Women smoke in all parts of Angola. The Ovimbundu do not chew tobacco, neither have I seen it so used elsewhere in Angola. Boys and girls are not allowed to smoke before the age of thirteen years.

576 In the *ombala* of the Vangangella near Ngalangi, I asked a girl
[834] for her pipe which I desired for my collection. The interpreter took the pipe when she proffered it, explaining that, according to local custom, I had asked for the girl. If I took the proffered pipe *from her hand* I accepted her. Another social custom associated with tobacco is the passing of the communal pipe from hand to hand in the men's council house.

276 Ngonga, my interpreter, says that he has never seen an Ocimbundu
171 woman smoke hemp, but he has seen a woman of the Vangangella (people to the east of the Ovimbundu) smoking hemp. Hemp (*epangue*) is cultivated only by the Ovimbundu men who smoke it. Pure hemp is smoked in the water-pipe which is not passed from hand to hand. Only tobacco is used in communal smoking. Smoking of hemp or tobacco consists of a few deep inhalations; there is not usually a prolonged placid smoking. When hemp is placed in the bowl of the water-pipe it is covered with large grains of sand or a piece of tin. This intervening substance prevents the hot coals from coming into contact with the hemp. The object is to secure slow ignition.

DOMESTIC ANIMALS

231 The principal domestic animals are cow (*onjindi*), ox (*ongombe*, which is also the generic name for cattle), bull (*onui*), sheep (*omeme*), goat (*ohombo*), pig (*ongulu*), dog (*ombua*), chicken (*osanji*) (Plates LV, LVI, LVII).

492 The transport animals, donkey, horse, and mule, are not used by the Ovimbundu of Elende and not to any extent by Ovimbundu of other parts; but in the south of Angola the Vakuanyama have sturdy ponies and well-kept mules. The ox when ridden by Portuguese is provided with a leather saddle which is very comfortable if covered with a blanket. The brass stirrups are broad and massive. Through the septum of the bullock's nostrils there is a short brass rod to the ends of which the reins are attached (Plate XXX, Fig. 1).

Men are exclusively the makers of 462
musical instruments, and males are the musicians. Men are the [534
only persons engaged in warfare and administration, and the *onjango* or council house is used exclusively by males. Men follow the [756]
occupation of medicine-man, in which there is considerable specialization. Female practitioners deal with pregnancy and women's ailments. In addition to the tasks for women mentioned above, the following are staple occupations: collecting firewood, drawing water, caring for infants, making pottery, weaving baskets, dancing, and singing. Young girls share these activities with older women.

The foregoing categories explain division on the grounds of sex. 463
Degrees of specialization are not so easy to formulate, but in general a man follows some one occupation, for example wood-carving. Then within this occupation there is specialization in the making of drums, domestic utensils, or figurines.

Almost any woman could make pottery or baskets, but the difference in skill leads naturally to concentration in the hands of expert potters and basket-weavers respectively. These sell their [432
wares to those who either do not make such articles or are inept at the process.

STANDARDS OF CONDUCT, MANNERS, AND SALUTATIONS

The parents of a child, also his maternal uncle, assume respon- 861
sibility for training in the precepts and standards given here. The 867
maternal uncle, who is the mother's oldest brother, is particularly interested because he has to pay fines should his sister's children commit thefts. The evidence indicates that the home and restricted family have formative influences over the conduct of children.

Children are beaten if they tell lies, answer old people rudely, or steal food. Ngonga says that his "stealing hand" was once placed in the hot leaves of the cooking pot. If a child steals an egg which is cooking, the hot egg is held between the culprit's hands.

One cannot fail to notice the quiet and unobtrusive way in which children sit in the presence of their elders both in the home and in the council house. Children do not speak when their elders are in [858]
conversation, unless addressed.

A child, likewise an adult, receives a gift with both hands. The [576]
implied idea is that reception with one hand is a depreciation of the gift. If a child holds out one hand, the hand is slapped. When receiving, an Ocimbundu says "*kuku*," literally grandfather or elder. Colloquially the word is used to mean greeting, "I thank you," or "I beg your pardon."

577 Lying is strongly disapproved and the liar is called *ohembi*. The Ovimbundu appreciate hospitality (*unu*) which also means generosity. A man who is hospitable is said to be *ongavi*. Greediness, which is disliked, is described by the word *oku sapa* ("to be greedy"). There are standards of honesty in sales and exchanges. A deceiver in trade is *ohembi*.

836 With regard to the relation of the sexes in early years it may be said that, in spite of boy and girl friendships, and the communal sleeping of boys and girls at the home of one of the girls, a man expects to marry a virgin, a point which has been dealt with in describing marriage ceremonies.

Naturally there is a difficulty in obtaining precise information respecting the details of these nocturnal gatherings of boys and girls. Ngonga said that girls inform their parents concerning the house where the night is to be spent, and there is a point of etiquette requiring that girls must not go to a house where boys are staying together.

864 Standards of conduct already described under courtship are a result of direct teaching by parents. Marriage rules and a classificatory system of relationships, with its prohibitive decrees, are taught in the home, in the men's council house, and at initiation ceremonies where such exist. In addition to these sources of instruction there is no doubt an unconscious absorption of ideas and standards. The power of suggestion is always at work through everyday examples.

831 Apart from demands made by tribal custom and direct instruction there are variable personal standards of modesty. Ngonga states [562] that many lascivious stories are told among men, and when the men are drunk, they tell these to women. "Sometimes the women laugh, but the good women do not like to hear these tales."

•576 A male commoner when meeting the king bows low, extends his 643 arms, claps his palms and says, "*ohosi* ["lion"] *akuku* ["grandfather"]." 565 Only the old people follow the ancient custom of falling on their knees when greeting the king. The Ovimbundu never were in the habit of doing more profound obeisance, but the Vangangella, when greeting one of their kings, rub their chins on the ground and place dust on their chests. Even at the present day a woman or child of the Ovimbundu is expected to kneel when greeting a king, but such an acknowledgment is not now usual in greetings given by a male commoner. The reply of the king to the commoner is "*kalunga*." This word enters into greetings of all kinds. The literal meaning of the word is "the sea," "king," "god," or "death," but the interpretation

of the word depends upon the syllable accented and the context, as further explained in the chapter on the Umbundu language. 576 643

A man or woman of the royal family greets the king with the words *na kuku; na* means "lord," and *kuku* is a term used for any old man to whom the speaker intends to show respect. *Kuku* is also applied to a man who stands in the relationship of grandfather. The king is expected to reply to a greeting given by one of the royal family by placing his right hand on his chest and saying twice, "*kalunga.*" There may then follow from the king a question relating to welfare in general. Possibly the king will inquire the object of his subject's journey. A *sekulu* ("chief of a village") greets a king in the same manner as does a commoner, and the king replies as he would to a commoner. 565

Commoners greet a *sekulu* with the words *na kalunga* ("lord, greeting"). One *sekulu* greets another of the same rank with the one word *kalunga*, accompanied by clapping of the palms. Male commoners clap hands on meeting; this action is accompanied by the word *kalunga*, from each of them. Two female commoners use the word *kalunga* as a greeting, but as a rule they do not clap hands. They do, however, clap their palms when greeting a woman of the royal house.

Boys and girls must greet their fathers, maternal uncles, grandfathers, and other old men with either of the terms *na kuku* or *na kalunga*, the latter being more usual. *Na kuku* would be the appropriate term of respect for any elderly man. Children use the same words (*na kuku*) when addressing any elderly woman, including a grandmother. A usual greeting of a child to the mother, likewise to the mother's sister, would be *kalunga mai* ("greetings, mother"). 561 576

There is no prescribed form of address to the medicine-man. Greetings between a commoner and a medicine-man follow the usage noted for two commoners. Ngonga says, "They will treat him (the medicine-man) like a village chief if he is an old man and good. Perhaps they will say *na kalunga* as if talking to a chief." 576 [554] [756]

In the early morning people pass the greeting *oku lipasula*. This means "we have been like dead, we are awake." The appropriate early morning greeting of a commoner to the king or to a chief is *oku lipasula a kuku*. A usual afternoon greeting is *oku lañisa*. The evening greeting is *oku lisuñinya*. [643]

One who desires to pass across a room usually walks in front of other people, but while passing the attitude must not be erect. The thumb and middle finger should be snapped together, while the words

576 *konyimo oko* are spoken. The literal interpretation of these words is "back there." Ngonga says the words actually mean "excuse my back."

827 576 Spitting in the vicinity of the house of the king or of the chief is not allowed. "If you did that in the old days, you would have to pay something." Some people spit near the hearth in their own houses. A man who spits in the road is expected to cover the spittle. No person would spit in the presence of the chief or of the king. A hand should be placed in front of the mouth by a person who is coughing or sneezing.

576 [851] Shortly after the birth of a boy or girl all who are on good terms with the parents greet them by saying *kalunga*. The word is repeated four times with clapping of the palms. When words have been imperfectly heard and the listener desires repetition it is customary to say *kuku* in an interrogative tone.

[264] No particular etiquette is observed when eating. Two or three children eat from one platter, helping themselves with their fingers to the mush or sweet potatoes.

Rules forbidding the preparation of food by menstruating women, likewise prohibitions relating to stepping over a person, are mentioned in discussing taboos and omens.

EDUCATIONAL VALUE OF PLAY, MUSIC, AND DANCING

524 182 533 The educational value of play lies in its imitation of the pursuits of adult life. Though there are specialists in music, dancing, and singing, these exercises are indulged in by everyone. Music, singing, and dancing are more than amusements, they are fundamental as coordinating forces in tribal life at all levels of culture (W. D. Hambly, Tribal Dancing and Social Development, London, 1926). [113]

Among the Ovimbundu *Cimbamba Co Lia* is a popular game for girls, who form a circle, join hands, and sing:

PART I

524 [535] *Omola una, ndo sile vekango, Cimbamba co lia* ("That little child was left in the desert, the nighthawk ate it"). At the word *Cimbamba* they begin to dance, facing from side to side in such a manner that they meet and bow. Some sing, *Cimbamba co lia* ("The nighthawk ate him"), and others respond, *Kalikisi* ("'tis the goblins"), as many times as they wish. Finally a return is made to the first words which are sung again. All musical transcriptions have been made by Dr. G. Herzog from my phonographic records.

VI. SOCIAL LIFE

Sexual Relations

COURTSHIP

There is a certain humor and quaintness of language used by Ngonga in describing sexual relations of the Ovimbundu. So far as possible the interpreter's style of expression has been preserved because of its value in revealing the native attitude. 584 836

When a man begins to like a girl, he looks at her for several days. Perhaps the boy will talk to the girl who will tell him to go to her father and mother. The boy must ask the parents for a friendship, which may last for one or two years. During this time the boy must not do anything to the girl, and if he tries she ought to tell her parents. If a baby were born to them in this time it would be a shameful thing. After the boy has told the parents that he wishes to marry the girl he must find something to give to them. The girl must have agreed to marriage before the boy asks the parents. The first token may be no more than a ball of wax or a present of salt. This token says, "The girl is mine," and no other boy will ask for her because it is understood that she is promised to somebody. In former days there were restrictions against marriage with other tribes, but in eastern Angola at the present day the Ovimbundu occasionally marry with the Vachokue. [582

Soon the boy will start building a house on his father's plot, because he intends to bring the girl to his father's land. The boy must at this stage make a further present to the parents of the girl. In the old days he would take about five kilos of salt; but now he will take a bottle of Portuguese wine, two or three blankets, or a piece of cloth. The people who carry the present must be the brother, father, or a male cousin of the suitor. These relatives will say, "This is the day we have come for our boy's wife." Then the parents will examine the things. Perhaps they will say, "You must bring a better blanket." The father or the girl's mother's brother must call the relatives of the girl to a council (*onjango*) where the relatives of the boy and girl are gathered. 584 481

The parents say, "We are taking these things for our daughter; we hope she will be a good girl and not shame us. She is a good girl to us and we hope she will be a good girl in your house." The girl's parents turn to her and say, "We should like to hear that you are hospitable; give food to your husband's relatives when they visit you." 584 577

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3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

I cannot find in the life of the Ovimbundu anything to support the opinion of W. C. Willoughby. This writer sees in the soul of every race an instinct for god that tells upon behavior, an upward urge that makes for betterment, due to the unwearied play of the spirit of god on the souls of man. The views of E. Torday and R. J. van Wing (Dualism in Western Bantu Religion and Social Organization, *J.R.A.I.*, XLVIII, p. 225) seem to be more applicable to the spiritual beliefs of the Ovimbundu. 105 114 77

The Ovimbundu have standards of conduct, codes of laws, crimes, and punishments. In addition to the *ekandu* (antisocial acts) already noted, *ohembi* is a liar, *okusapa* means to be greedy, and such actions are deprecated; but there is no deistic injunction toward the virtues of truthfulness, hospitality, and fair dealing. 577 105

Standards of conduct and social values are preserved by the educational forces previously mentioned (chapter VII), and in addition to these there are such controls as trial by ordeal, and divination to detect guilt. The satirical song is also a form of correction, though its application may be antisocial, for instance in taunting the sexually impotent.

Music and dancing are adjuncts for the preservation of social customs and the stimulation of collective emotions on which cooperation depends. Music and dancing are also aids to magical practices. For example, a friction drum is played while a medicine-man carries out his divination with the basket, and vigorous drumming takes place during treatment of the sick. Music and dancing were again seen to be of importance at a funeral ceremony. 532 105

These instances, which are chosen from many of like kind reported in the foregoing chapters, serve to indicate an interrelationship among the main aspects of tribal life. I have endeavored to choose from personal experience those facts and incidents which illustrate the mutual dependence of language, folklore, proverbs, nature lore, food supply, and occupations. 182 105

The sexual division of labor, the connection of ceremonial with occupation, the relationship of the sexes, and the position of woman, have all been brought forward as examples of social controls.

The persistence of belief and custom despite foreign influences; the nature of government, including the psychology of prestige and leadership; spiritual beliefs; the training of children; and the value of music and dancing, have likewise been emphasized as coordinating

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

gramophone in a town rather than at a trader's near his home village. Most of the money paid for purchases at the stores is money raised by selling crops or livestock. Through labour migration there is, however, some transmission of skills; it is easy to find bricklayers and carpenters of a sort even in Gumba.

Money, rather than barter, is the principal means of exchange among the villages in the selling of local products, and even of meat from pigs. Payment for labour service, such as assistance in house-building and in bringing in maize, is made in beer, except among Protestants who substitute a meal. There is also a custom by which a household which finds, probably at the end of the dry season, that it has not enough maize will make beer to exchange on a particular day for maize.

Ties of kinship and friendship have some economic significance. A kinsman will help with house-building without expecting payment; likewise a man who has a cleared field which he does not want to use may sell it for 200 escudos (£2. 10s.) but would give it free to a kinsman. A man may make a charge for lending his bicycle, though this varies with individuals; he certainly would not do so if it were lent to a friend. Loans between kinsmen should be repaid, and a tailor with a sewing-machine will make the same charges to relatives as to non-kinsmen.

There are few occasions for groups to work together. The unit of consumption and production is the domestic family. Even here, the husband, each wife, and the adolescents have their own fields, though a man may help his wife. Such other occasions of mutual help, in clearing a field, which may occur between friends or kinsmen, will only bring a few, often only two of them.

The Ovimbundu I knew were (with exceptions) not avaricious or grasping; thus, beer might be given to people who have not actually worked in house-building parties. It is regarded as a moral duty to pay one's monetary debts as soon as possible. On various occasions I lent money to people who were pressed and I received back all the money lent. Borrowers insisted that borrowings should be written down, and that the paper on which it was written should be given to them when they paid, or destroyed. Making money and being rich are regarded with

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

story to explain the non-appearance of the others which satisfied the *chefe*. 578

The catechist was somewhat criticized for not having pushed on with the case, and thereby perhaps getting Guilherme landed in jail. Guilherme did move out of the village in February and settled near the outskirts of the Protestant village of Kalungwengwe. Kapapelo also set about moving out of Epalanga. 627

In the conflict which has just been described, there are three disputes, the question of the bridewealth which involved Luciano, Simbwyikoka, Guilherme, and the anthropologist, the quarrel between Paulo and Guilherme, and the subsequent uprising against Guilherme which takes its signal from Paulo's reference of the dispute to the priest. 578

The question of bridewealth repayment is subordinate to, indeed enclosed within, the main dispute. It does illustrate one point central to the problem of Umbundu social control, the absence of any court machinery. Jeremias and Luciano had tried to recover it by appealing to the priest; later Luciano and Simbwyikoka attempted to get it back by coming and demanding it, that is by self-help. Another extremely significant aspect of the social structure is revealed by this 'enclosed' case. Guilherme after a bitter dispute with Paulo which has ended in the arrest of Paulo and Bartolomeu borrows 200 escudos from them as a kinsman. This indicates that kinship ties can survive and function despite a quarrel which they do not check or prevent, a point which will be developed later in an examination of how kinship affects and is affected by a dispute. 627 578 602

The conflict cannot be viewed as simply a dispute between individuals, nor as a dispute between the holders of opposed roles. Guilherme was generally regarded as lacking 'sense' (*olondunge*), the quality, greatly admired by the Ovimbundu, of good judgement and decent social behaviour, and he confessed himself to be at fault. Yet he could not have acted in the way he did unless he had been a government headman, nor would the uprising against him have taken the form it did had he not held an office dependent on the post. There is, however, no necessary conflict between a government headman and the catechist or 578 571 [572]

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

responsible for the children, especially during their early years, but they are frequently sent 'to the *oluina*', i.e. to the mother's brother for at least a part of their education. Herein has arisen a conflict between the claims of the paternal household and the maternal kinship group. Economic and other forces seem to have favoured the former so that 'During these days in which we stand, things have changed somewhat so that as between children and their parents, they work for their fathers for they say, "A child is strong with his *oluse* and less so with his *oluina*." Nowadays a man teaches a child work and also looks out for his education that he may advance properly. His mother's brothers (*va inanu*) have no longer much power as of old.'[1]

Bearing in mind their bilateral nature and the fact that every Ocimbundu belongs at the same time to his paternal (*oluse*) and to his maternal (*oluina*) groups, the functions of these kinship groups may be summarized as follows:

Oluse	*Oluina*
SOCIAL	
Consists of local residence units; succession of village and tribal offices from father to son, or elder to younger brother.	Extended family organization; office of family head descends from mother's brother to sister's son; children belong.
Marriage allowed between cross-cousins and other relatives of non-parallel descent; couple lives at groom's father's village.	*Marriage preferred* between cross-cousins and other relatives of non-parallel descent; children belong to mother's *oluina*.
EDUCATIONAL	
Responsibility for education of young children, especially in social usage.	Responsibility sometimes assumed in later childhood, especially for technical phases.
ECONOMIC	
Ownership and inheritance of land. (Passed from father to son or elder to younger brother.)	Ownership and inheritance of more largely negotiable and movable property, as e.g. trade goods, cattle, &c. (passed from mother's brother to sister's son).

[1] Raul Kavita Evambi, op. cit.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

internally disruptive forces is sorcery. It is apparently on the increase among the Ovimbundu, a tendency which has also been reported from other parts of Africa.[1] The extent to which sorcery operates within the kinship groups themselves makes its influence even more dangerous to social cohesion.

Any marked success achieved by an individual, especially when such success has been achieved by an individual alone or in partnership, but not in co-operation with a number of persons, often brings on suspicion of sorcery.[2] Should the results of such success be distributed widely and freely within the family or kinship group, suspicion of sorcery is less likely to arise and open accusation may be avoided. Grudges, however, whether newly built up or inherited, often find expression in suspicion or in open accusation of sorcery.[3] An open accusation of sorcery (*oku sunga owanga*) is a very serious matter and will not often be made lightly.

Such accusations are made both within and across kinship lines. Affinal relatives are quite often accused of sorcery, and suspicion frequently rests upon wives whose kinship connexions are in distant regions. Predilection for and skill in the use of sorcery is supposed to be inherited. A reputation for sorcery may be imputed to a family through a number of generations.

Somewhat less overt accusations of sorcery are made at the inquest during a funeral. The corpse in its coffin slung to a pole between two carriers responds to questions as to who 'ate him' by forward (affirmative), or backward (negative) movements. It may also cause its carriers to stop in front of a certain house during the procession through the village, meaning that one of the occupants of the house is thereby accused of having caused the death. Traditionally such accusations during inquests were exceedingly common, perhaps even usually expected.[4] Should the corpse not give a clear answer, then subsequent divination would often bring out an accusation of sorcery. Accusations such as these, involving responsibility for the death of a person, are usually made *within* the body of blood or affinal kin.

When sorcery is consciously taken up and employed, the purpose is usually economic advancement, but it often involves overt

[1] Cf. B. Malinowski, in *Africa*, 1939, p. 39.
[2] *Vide infra*, pp. 107 ff.
[3] *Vide infra*, p. 125.
[4] For an early observation of this (*c.* 1790) *vide Annaes Mar. e Col.*, 5a Ser., p. 489 f.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

556 The attitude toward success in agriculture indicated by the
●578 foregoing is held in some measure toward marked success in other
472 professions, but in lesser degree, except perhaps where trading is taken up individually or by two persons in partnership. One of the earliest observers, Pinheiro de Lacerda (*c.* 1790), noted that accusations of witchcraft were most often levelled at the wealthier members of the community.[1] This fear of success has continued down to the present day, but while trading was an open group enterprise in which many individuals acquired wealth, success in that field came to be accepted more quickly than in the more individualistic work of farming. At the present time, commercial activities are carried on largely by individuals alone or in a limited partnership, and the practice, or at least the suspicion, of witchcraft in connexion with them seems to be on the increase. Some may feel that similar attitudes with regard to successful results from cultivation of the soil are now held less strongly than formerly, but
[754] I know of no evidence to support such a feeling. One of the commonest traditional patterns for witchcraft is that of a partnership of a senior and a junior member—of parent and child, or of mother's brother and sister's son. That is one reason why urgent suggestions by an older person concerning choice of a profession by a younger are looked upon with disfavour among the Ovimbundu.

868 A child should be taught enough diligence and application in
562 cultivating that he or she may not lack the necessities in later adult life. Every boy will take to trading and bargaining almost as naturally as eating, drinking, breathing, and sleeping. Commerce still retains so much of its former glamour that every boy will take it up if and when opportunity offers. The care of younger children comes even more naturally to the girl, and she must also learn the housekeeper's art. Many folk-tales and songs indicate a reluctance on the part of girls to dedicate themselves with diligence to cultivation. In the days of the rubber trade, when girls could also join caravans for the coast and to the interior as porters, there may have been some real basis for this, but at the present time girls are convinced and enthusiastic cultivators, almost 100 per cent.[2] The

[1] *Annaes Maritimos e Coloniaes*, 5a Ser., p. 489 f.

[2] Women coming to live in the coast towns or in other European settlements where they have no fields or gardens find adjustment to life without agricultural labours very difficult.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

867 the correct adjustments early, naturally grows into a comparatively well-adjusted life, and so avoids the major conflicts to a much greater degree than is the case in our society. A very large proportion of those in conflict in present-day Umbundu society are de-
154 tribalized or partially de-tribalized individuals, especially those who as children were brought up outside or largely outside the kinship groups. The large proportion of those brought up on the mission stations who are out of adjustment, and often in overt conflict, has been noticed by many observers. The biographies and autobiographies which I have collected witness clearly to the same fact, that most of the ill-adjusted individuals and those in overt conflict were products of an extra-tribal, de-tribalized, or non-traditional situation; while practically all of the well-adjusted persons were educated within the kinship system.

154 The three major conflicts which have been recognized in our
865 society, that is, 'struggle', sex, and 'inferiority',[1] are all present in some form among the Ovimbundu. The adjustments by which they resolve these conflicts are distinctive.

Adjustments in anger by which the 'struggle conflict' is resolved are interesting and important educationally. The child is taught when quite young that the expression of anger is taboo.[2] Tantrums are rare among Ovimbundu children. Anger and ill-will are named by thoughtful Ovimbundu as the chief root-cause of sorcery. The more thoughtful ones also recognize these as an important cause of accusations of sorcery. Expression of anger is traditionally much feared. It is not desired in the character of the king.[3] Nowadays
[177] there are more who give free vent to expressions of anger, but they are for the most part either individuals who imitate Europeans and who seek to discard Umbundu cultural habits and values; or they are those who are considered sorcerers, either by themselves or others. An Ocimbundu who as a child has learned traditional adjustments in anger will rarely allow his anger to break through the resistance and become 'extroverted' except in recognized outlets. These outlets are somewhat analogous to our own rationalizations of anger.[4]

154 The chief 'introverted' reaction of anger which I have noted
578

[1] The psychological analysis follows Allport, op. cit., chap. xiv.

[2] See *supra*, p. 101.

[3] See *supra*, p. 21.

[4] Cf. Allport, op. cit., p. 344. The Ovimbundu have not thought up such a high-sounding term as 'moral indignation' as a euphemism for anger.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

among the Ovimbundu is 'grudge-building'. This is probably fairly common and often eventuates either in sorcery or in suspicion of sorcery. There is special danger of this type of reaction between men and women who have an in-law relation to each other. This is probably a principal reason for the avoidance with which these relations are so carefully hedged and the respectful treatment mutually enjoined.[1] Grudges are sometimes inherited through several generations. According to folk-tales, children sometimes bear grudges against their parents for real or fancied ill treatment.[2]

Recognized outlets for anger in frankly 'extroverted' form are found in war and raiding parties, in the hunt, and in lawsuits. War is no longer resorted to but up to the present day anger still finds a recognized expression in actions at law. One of the commonest of such actions is the accusation of sorcery (*oku sunga owanga*) already touched upon above. Church councils and meetings have taken over some functions of the traditional courts of law and this is probably one reason for the decidedly stormy sessions which sometimes occur.

The importance of wit and humour as an outlet for anger has been recognized. 'The ability to turn one's anger into a jest goes with the trait of insight . . . and is sometimes appropriately called "the saving sense of humour".'[3] That the Ovimbundu have this ability and use it often and to good advantage is very much in their favour. May not this be one indication of a considerable degree of insight which many observers have noted in the Umbundu character?[4] I would not claim that the Ovimbundu have made any very remarkable attainments in the social control of anger: their achievements in that direction may be slight when compared to some of the more advanced peoples, as, for example, the Scandinavians, the Hollanders, or the English. What is remarkable, however, is that they have frankly recognized the necessity for such control more clearly than have some supposedly more advanced peoples.

Adjustments in family life are held to be resolutions of what are ultimately sex conflicts.[5] Marital adjustments are of prime

[1] See *supra*, pp. 57 ff.

[2] Cf. *Journal of American Folk-Lore Society*, 1922, vol. 35, no. 6, p. 123 f.

[3] Allport, op. cit., p. 344.

[4] Some writers have attributed to negroes a quality of 'insight' superior to that possessed by whites, cf. article 'Insight, &c.' in the *Atlantic Monthly*, Sept. 1938.

[5] Allport, op. cit., pp. 345–53.

whole supernatural world... The divining basket is the concrete medium through which the spirits reveal their will to their descendants on earth, and warn them of dangers, human or supernatural".[1] 787

SORCERERS AND WITCHES

Sorcerers and witches are not clearly distinguished. Both are called olongongo, and have powers over one or more malignant spirits whom they can send anywhere to kill, steal, or torment. These "familiar spirits" are sometimes called otulo ndumba, and are held responsible for all mysterious disappearances of maize, beans and other possessions, as well as for many illnesses and deaths. Some sorcerers are said to own small images which they send out at night. Others are said to dance naked at night at the door of the intended victim's house. When sorcery involves killing by physical means, portions of the victim's body may be used to make "medicine" or charms.[2] 754 776

A person may be a sorcerer without knowing it, and may deny it when accused by the diviner. If he does so, he and his accuser undergo the ombulungu (poison test),[3] to discover who is in the right.[4] Concerning accusation of sorcery, Childs writes "Any marked success ... by an individual, especially when such success has been achieved by an individual alone or in partnership, but not in co-operation with a number of persons, often brings on suspicion of sorcery. Should the results of such success be distributed widely....suspicion is less likely to arise....An open accusation of sorcery *(oku sunga ovanga)* is a very serious matter and will not often be made lightly. Such accusations are made both within and across kinship lines. Affinal relatives are quite often accused of sorcery, and suspicion frequently rests upon wives whose kinship connexions are in distant regions..."[5] 754 683 [578]

The tendency or aptitude for sorcery is supposed to be inherited by a daughter, or a son, or a nephew from the mother, uterine or classificatory, from the mother's brother etc. It is said that older relatives take younger ones as apprentices and partners.[6] The aim of a person who consciously takes up sorcery is said usually to be economic advancement. A very common form involves the enslavement of the spirit of another person, often a child of one's own family or kin group; the victim may be killed by either physical or magical means. Childs points out that sorcery is one of the greatest internally disruptive forces within the kin group and social system of the Ovimbundu. He notes that jealousy and grudges often bring accusations from within the circle of kin, but does not describe what happens when the charges have been made and verified. Especially in view of his statement that economic, political and other forces now seem to be acting to increase the incidence of sorcery,[7] it would be interesting to have information concerning its possible connection with segmentation of lineages or village groups, or its relation to tensions between the paternal and maternal groups of relatives. 754 [829] 754 578

(1) Tucker, op.cit., p.201.
(2) Childs, personal communication.
(3) The ombulungu is administered by the medicine-man, and causes sickness but not death. See Tucker, op.cit., and Hambly, (2) 1934, p.203.
(4) Tucker, op.cit.
(5) Childs, 1949, p.37.
(6) Childs, personal communication.
(7) Childs, 1949, p.58.

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that the administration gets labour and money from the villagers, and largely though not exclusively through them that the villagers keep in touch with the post which politically integrates them into Angola and legally provides sanctions which they do not possess. The government headmen do not supervise on behalf of the post the daily life of their fellow-villagers. The government laws—such as the prohibition of beer- and rum-brewing and grass-burning (for hunts)—which if enforced would bring about a certain number of changes in Umbundu social life, are not enforced for many reasons—the administration makes no real attempt to suppress these uses as opposed to levying annual fines[15] per head, the government headmen go in for these customs themselves, and they lack the power to achieve this enforcement. Were the government to introduce policies involving some reorganization of the social life they would need a stronger form of local authority. Under the present circumstances, however, the powers and status of the chief and government headmen are quite consistent with the demands made on them by the post.

There were four government headmen in Gumba in 1955–6, Guilherme, Lupassa, Tjilombo (who became chief after the deposition of Lusase), and Walivanga. Guilherme was in 1955 living in Epalanga. Some people thought he should live in Kamupa, which had been founded by his mother's brother Lusase—however, when he left Epalanga in 1956 he settled near the Protestant village of Kalungwengwe. His change of residence had been the result of violent quarrels with Paulo and other Epalanga people. Lupassa lived in Katembo, and was a sister's son of Kaluywa, who was the traditional headman. I do not think Lupassa was the dominating personality in Katembo. Tjilombo was on the other hand the leading personality in Tjisangu, many of its people being related to him. Walivanga was similarly linked by kin or affinal ties to the majority of the people of Belem.

The foregoing paragraph raises the question of the relationship of the government headman to the traditional headmen. A man who is both a government headman and a traditional headman is in a fairly strong position in his village; when the

[15] Each fine is about 10–20 escudos (2/6d.–5/-).

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593 604 in the hands of the mother's brother, though the father could, if he wished, intervene; and a man could establish a shrine of his own while his father lived.

613 It is not altogether easy to see how the matrilineal group maintained its cohesion. It was not the working team on which the caravan trade operated since a man's father had first claim on his services, and he could travel with other relatives. Within it alone loans need not be repaid and accusations of sorcery were made; with this in mind, it is evident why, as Dr. Hastings tells us, people tended to avoid the company of their matrikin, [578] and why most disputes arose in the matrilineal groups.[22] It 613 seems that probably the key to the functioning of the matri- 437 lineal groups lies in the details, not now recoverable, of the economy of the caravan trade. As everybody, however successful, was in danger at some time or another of incurring heavy losses,[23] an arrangement by which anybody who was in difficulties could call on his kin for help would be generally acceptable. The association of mutual aid of this sort with matrilineal rather than patrilineal kin would spread losses geographically and would exclude conflicts over currency and movable property from village life. Moreover, the dispersal of the matrilineal kin would provide an individual with business contacts over a considerable area.

5. *Contemporary Kinship Norms*

593 Much of this has disappeared. The men's house is no longer 264 the dining-room of the village male population. Men now often 578 eat with their wives and children though attitudes and practice of this vary between households. People in their twenties knew of the existence of these avoidance rules but it seems that the rules forbidding sons to eat with their mother and eldest sons and daughters to eat with their father are now generally ignored.

[692] [22] Hastings, pp. 18, 87. Disputes within the matrilineal group could be, and very often were, referred to the sub-chief and king. The account of legal proceedings in Hastings (pp. 139–51) suggests that a high proportion of the cases heard by the kings were to do with sorcery. In such cases the social extension of the matrilineal group beyond the area of the sub-chiefdom and the wider political integration achieved by the kingdoms 'co-operated' in preserving a range of social relations beyond the sub-chiefdom.

[23] Apropos of losses Childs quotes Magyar as saying that the Ovimbundu traded for excitement rather than gain (p. 204).

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CHAPTER IX

SOCIAL CONTROL

1. *Introduction*

121 626 In this chapter I shall describe and analyse three disputes which reveal the working of social control in present-day Umbundu society. The first dispute is between an elder of the school and a government headman, the second is between a traditional headman and a villager with the intervention of a local self-styled *assimilado*[1], and the third arose from a quarrel between an irregularly installed chief and a traditional headman.

The points which it is hoped will arise from the analysis of [178] the material are the disappearance or extreme weakness of the traditional institutions of social control, the way in which the Ovimbundu appeal to the members of the 'civilized' community for decisions or support in cases, and how kinship ties affect the relations between persons involved in a dispute.

2. *Guilherme and Paulo*

578 The parties principally involved in the first dispute were Paulo (24. See List of Epalanga residents), the elder of the school at Epalanga, and his cross-cousin Guilherme (see List II, p. 55), a government headman then living in Epalanga, Francisco, a son of the former chief Mbati and wife's brother to Paulo, and Sapapula (10), the headman and reputed founder of Epalanga. The sequence of the dispute is first a quarrel between Paulo and Guilherme. Guilherme then attacks Paulo through his wife's brother Francisco. This brings about a general attack

[1] The fact that Justino was not actually an *assimilado*[2] is not relevant, since he used the belief of the local people that he was.

[2] [assimilado is an African governing Portuguese citizenship -- Analyst]

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by the people under Paulo's leadership on Guilherme's position. 578
Guilherme counter-attacks by using his relationship with the post but finds himself forced to seek a reconciliation with the people of Epalanga.

The quarrel had begun with the proposed marriage of Anna, a step-daughter of Guilherme, and a member of his household, to Luciano, a son of the former chief Simbwyikoka and an inhabitant of the latter's village. Guilherme had no effective religious affiliation but Anna had been baptized as a Catholic, her godmother being Maria, the wife of Paulo. Luciano on the other hand was the elder of the Protestant catechetical school in Simbwyikoka village. Paulo therefore intervened to stop the marriage in accordance with the rule made by the Catholic [582] missions against marriage with non-Catholics. Guilherme, angry at this, decided to pick on Pedro Nendi (see List II, p. 55) and Francisco Lyonjanga, sons of Mbati, and therefore wife's brothers to Paulo. Pedro Nendi had been at one time a Catholic catechist but had since been dismissed. Francisco was at the time of my arrival in Epalanga moving out of his village to settle near Pedro in a hamlet near the village. He worked as assistant to Abel Pinheiro, an African carpenter, who lived a little further along the road to Chicunda and who was employed by a white living elsewhere. Guilherme accordingly reported to the post that the two brothers had never gone to [648] contract labour and got a policeman to come with an order for them to be brought to the post for contract labour. The policeman arrived and got Francisco, but Pedro was away visiting relatives at Nova Lisboa. Francisco then claimed that he was in fact employed by a white and was therefore exempt from contract labour. At that time Antonio Pires, an African priest from the *Missão Católica de Bimbe*, was visiting Epalanga as part of a tour through the villages. Accordingly, on the morning of the 16th January 1956, Francisco came to my house where the priest had been breakfasting with me, and stated his case. This action brought the dispute between Guilherme and Paulo for the first time within the sphere of a representative of the civilized community. The priest told Francisco to get a letter from his employer to the post. Francisco duly arrived at the post with a letter, but forgot to bring his

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pass[2] and was sent to contract labour. The *chefe* apparently informed his employer that he could get other carpenters from the post.

Paulo, then acting in his official capacity as elder of the school, had intervened in a projected marriage in which Guilherme had received the bridewealth. Guilherme, acting in his official capacity, had attacked Paulo's wife's brothers Francisco and Pedro. The dispute had now been brought within the sphere of the mission (as represented by the priest Antonio Pires) and of the administration which had ordered the recruitment of the two men. The conflict between Guilherme and Paulo was now to widen out to include several other people.

On the 21st January the strain between Guilherme and Paulo showed itself again in violent quarrelling, from which I learnt about the broken engagement of Anna. Paulo said that he would refer the matter to Antonio Pires when the priest came back.

On the morning of the 24th the question was brought before Antonio Pires, the catechist Pedro Chiquete Santos (35), Paulo, and Guilherme all speaking in turn. Then other people raised their grievances. Sapapula declared that Guilherme was the enemy of everybody in the village. A man called Kasosi (7), a sister's son of Wasuka (15), stepped forward to claim that Guilherme had attacked him and injured him. Apparently Guilherme, while having illicit rum in his own house, had beaten up Kasosi for possessing rum. Both Maria, Paulo's wife, and Nahoka, Sapapula's wife, joined in the argument. The only man who seemed in any way favourable to Guilherme was Kapapelo (see List II, p. 55), a mother's brother of his, who was also a 'brother' of Lusase (see List II, p. 55). Antonio Pires came down heavily against Guilherme, at which the latter declared that he owed obedience only to the post and ran off.

Towards the end of the argument Luciano (the former fiancé of Anna) and Jeremias (the Protestant catechist from Simbwyikoka) came to the priest to ask for the repayment of the bridewealth.

On the 25th Lusase, the chief of Gumba, happened to visit

[2] The legal obligation for natives to possess passes is not enforced with the zeal which applies in South Africa.

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Epalanga. Told what had happened, he said that he would keep out of it, and that he had advised Guilherme to live elsewhere. In the afternoon of the same day, as heavy rain was falling, a number of people ran up and bounded on to my veranda. These included Anna, another girl (I think a sister of hers) both rather frightened, Simbwyikoka, Luciano, Paulo and some others. Anna said that Simbwyikoka was a sorcerer[3] and would kill her, and sooner than be killed by sorcery she would jump in the river. Simbwyikoka and Luciano had come to Epalanga to try and recover the 250 escudos which had been paid over in bridewealth. The catechist tried to intervene saying 'The catechist is the chief[4] of everybody in the village', but nobody paid any attention to him. Eventually, as the girl continued to threaten to jump in the river, I contributed 200 escudos, and so those involved left satisfied.

Early the following day I heard that Guilherme had returned from the post with two policemen to arrest various people. Those arrested were Sapapula, his cross-cousins Epalata (5), and Wasuka, and the latter's son Kuseka, Kasosi, Paulo, Pedro the catechist, Bartolomeu (32), Paulo's assistant in school matters, and his son Eugenio. Eugenio and Kuseka were arrested for not paying taxes and their fathers were arrested presumably for their supposed responsibility. Epalata was arrested for a similar alleged offence on the part of one of his sons, who was away as a labourer.

When I came to Guilherme's house a lengthy wrangle was going on from which I select some themes. Guilherme denied that he had planned to burn the catechetical school, the anthropologist's house, and his own house. (These charges were almost certainly invented.)

Paulo said that he had baptized a dying son of Guilherme, who, despite this, had not shown him any respect. He also denied that he had committed adultery with Guilherme's wife. (This would in any case be most unlikely owing to Paulo's blindness, resulting from an eye disease.)

Sapapula declared angrily: 'I gave Guilherme land here but

[3] This accusation was regarded simply as the product of fear and nothing more was heard of it.

[4] He used the word applied to chiefs of Gumba and other sub-chiefdom.

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578 Guilherme isn't grateful'—(then to Guilherme) 'I did no harm, I gave you everything, and you beat me.' This arguing eventually died down.

A little later another quarrel sprang up between Wasuka, and Kapapelo, Guilherme's mother's brother and witness. Wasuka declared that Kapapelo had committed adultery with his wife and must be killed. Kapapelo indignantly denied this.

The same day the catechist went to the mission to find the priest Antonio Pires to ask him to support the case against Guilherme. He returned to say that Padre Pires had been moved to the Bailundo Mission, but that he had been given a letter from the mission to the post setting out the case.

Guilherme in the evening came to my house to pay back the 200 escudos which I had paid to Simbwyikoka for the bride-wealth given for Anna. He had raised the 200 escudos from Paulo (his cross-cousin) and from Bartolomeu (his 'brother'), both of whom were under arrest (although free to walk about the village) through Guilherme's actions.

The following day (27th January) the policeman moved off with Guilherme and the others, Bartolomeu, Eugenio, Epalata, Wasuka, Kuseka, Kasosi, Paulo, Pedro Chiquete Santos (the catechist) and Sapapula.

About noon the next day I found that Paulo and the catechist had returned to Epalanga and heard from them what had happened. On the way Guilherme had declared that his violent temper was to blame in having so many people arrested, apologized, and promised to go to another village. He pulled
[762] out a knife and threatened to commit suicide if this proposal was not accepted. This appeal was directed mainly to the catechist, and was reinforced by Guilherme's wife, who also threatened suicide and appealed to the catechist's feelings by pointing out that she had had two of her children baptized. This was accepted, and accordingly all turned back to the village except for Guilherme, Bartolomeu, his son Eugenio, and Wasuka's son Kuseka. Eugenio and Kuseka had been arrested
[648] for not paying taxes, a matter of more interest to the *chefe* than the village brawl for which the others had been arrested. Eugenio and Kuseka were considered by the *chefe* not to be yet old enough for payment of tax, and Guilherme produced some

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story to explain the non-appearance of the others which satisfied the *chefe*.

The catechist was somewhat criticized for not having pushed on with the case, and thereby perhaps getting Guilherme landed in jail. Guilherme did move out of the village in February and settled near the outskirts of the Protestant village of Kalungwengwe. Kapapelo also set about moving out of Epalanga.

In the conflict which has just been described, there are three disputes, the question of the bridewealth which involved Luciano, Simbwyikoka, Guilherme, and the anthropologist, the quarrel between Paulo and Guilherme, and the subsequent uprising against Guilherme which takes its signal from Paulo's reference of the dispute to the priest.

The question of bridewealth repayment is subordinate to, indeed enclosed within, the main dispute. It does illustrate one point central to the problem of Umbundu social control, the absence of any court machinery. Jeremias and Luciano had tried to recover it by appealing to the priest; later Luciano and Simbwyikoka attempted to get it back by coming and demanding it, that is by self-help. Another extremely significant aspect of the social structure is revealed by this 'enclosed' case. Guilherme after a bitter dispute with Paulo which has ended in the arrest of Paulo and Bartolomeu borrows 200 escudos from them as a kinsman. This indicates that kinship ties can survive and function despite a quarrel which they do not check or prevent, a point which will be developed later in an examination of how kinship affects and is affected by a dispute.

The conflict cannot be viewed as simply a dispute between individuals, nor as a dispute between the holders of opposed roles. Guilherme was generally regarded as lacking 'sense' (*olondunge*), the quality, greatly admired by the Ovimbundu, of good judgement and decent social behaviour, and he confessed himself to be at fault. Yet he could not have acted in the way he did unless he had been a government headman, nor would the uprising against him have taken the form it did had he not held an office dependent on the post. There is, however, no necessary conflict between a government headman and the catechist or

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elder of the school in the sense that there is no sphere where their duties overlap and where they must compete.

The roles of government headmen and of officials of the school are complementary. It is through the chief and the government headman that the Ovimbundu pay their taxes and fines, are recruited as contract labourers and are called to road service, are arrested for crimes and misdemeanours and are entered on official records. It is through the catechists and elders of the school that the Ovimbundu find the expression of village unity by which at the same time they are linked to the whites and to the rest of the world on the religious level. The missions bring the Ovimbundu closer to the whites than does the administration, without the administration's predominant interest in making demands.[5]

While at the level of the total Angolan political system the administration is more powerful than the missions, the position of the catechist or elder of the school is stronger at the local level because the catechist and the elder represent the catechetical school which is the only social grouping existing on a village basis, whereas the government headman in fact represents no social group but is simply an executant of the orders of the *chefe*. Hence the catechist owing to this representative role and to his contact with the mission (which is much closer than that of the government headman) can lead the people and invoke the aid of the mission against abuses on the part of chiefs or government headmen. This would not be the case if the post gave firm backing to its local agents and turned a deaf ear to communications from the missions. Opposition to an overbearing government headman is then likely to be led by the leaders of the 'school', who can count on the backing of the mission, if they have a good case, to intervene for them at the post. The relative importance in a village of the catechist and elder of the school varies according to such factors as personality. The way in which the catechist was ignored when he tried to intervene in the dispute over the bridewealth shows that the catechist cannot claim authority in disputes as a matter of course.

[5] The missions impose fees and a yearly levy on their adherents which are small compared to the official taxes.

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627 servants in Portugal and Angola;[8] sociologically it reflects the
648 lack of any system of bureaucratic administration at the local
571 level and the isolation of the *chefes* from the people. The uncertainties of taking a case to the post are such that it is thought desirable to have some backing (such as the letter the catechist got from the mission) from a representative of the 'civilized' community and in the absence of any other 'civilized' person the mission becomes the patron of all natives, whatever their religious allegiance.

578 The importance of this case, then, is its illustration of what
627 may happen in a conflict between a catechist or elder of the
571 school and a government headman. The limited nature of their powers, and the fact that their roles are not competitive, make a conflict between them, so long as it is not extended to pull in other people, necessarily confined to indirect attacks. If either party wishes to bring down the other he must appeal to the post or to the mission. The government headman can pull people in by accusing them at the post of not paying taxes or creating a disturbance, or by recommending them for contract labour. His position is not so strong as his dependence on the post might suggest, since the intervention of the mission, at the request of the villagers, can bring him down.

Within this main 'political' dispute is the quarrel over bridewealth, which is illuminating both in indicating the absence of legal mechanisms at the village level, and in showing how kinship ties continue to function at the height of a bitter quarrel. Both these points will be noticed again in the accounts of later disputes.

3. *Kapapelo and Sapapula*

578 The next case involved Sapapula and Kapapelo and was
627 again to end in an averted appeal to the *chefe de posto*. On the 21st of February Sapapula, Sahuke (see List II, p. 56), Waruka, Luanga (21), and others went from Epalanga to the house of Justino, who had called them there to settle a dispute. Justino

[8] An inhabitant of Lisbon, wishing to emigrate to Canada, wooed the maid of a former official of the British Embassy. Discovering that this would get him nowhere, he transferred his affections to the maid of one of the staff of the American Embassy. The implications are interesting.

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was a man of fifty or more, who lived in Portuguese style making money from coffee and other crops. He claimed to be an *assimilado* (African with the status of a Portuguese citizen) but in actual fact he was not one. He had employed a man called Kusumula, who lived in Epalanga and was the brother of Kapapelo's wife.

To appreciate the point of Justino's complaint, it is necessary to explain the significance of certain terms indicative of ethnic and social status. Otjimbundu is the singular of Ovimbundu, a people defined by the use of the Umbundu language. It is also used to refer to any black person (thus I was often asked whether there were Ovimbundu [i.e. Africans] in England), and is therefore equivalent to the Portuguese *preto* (black), which when used of a person has a rather pejorative sense like 'native' in other parts of Africa. Livingstone, writing a hundred years ago, remarks of one area in Angola; 'The people under him (the chief) are divided into a number of classes. . . . They are also divided into gentlemen and little gentlemen, and, though quite black, speak of themselves as white men and of the others, who may not wear shoes, as "blacks".'[7] Justino's complaint was that Sapapula had referred to him as a *preto qualquer* or in Umbundu (Sapapula did not speak Portuguese), *otjimbundu tjange*, a mere black.

Justino delivered a speech when the people from Epalanga had settled on the veranda of his house in which he declared with much force that he was not an Otjimbundu '*Ame otjimbundulo*.' This accusation was based on information given him by Kusumula, who alleged that Sapapula had said to government headmen that Kusumula could be recruited for road work, as he worked not for a white (a term applied also to *assimilado*) but for a mere black.

I give the main lines of the ensuing argument. Sapapula denied that he had called Justino a black. Kusumula claimed that Sapapula was always picking on him. Sapapula declared that he had founded the village, and that Kusumula wanted to break it up. Kapapelo said that he had at one time given medicine to a girl and Sapapula had told Jaime to kill him because he might have seduced her. Kutenga Lussase, the chief

[7] Livingstone, *Missionary Travels and Researches*, p. 411.

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of Gumba who had also turned up, intervened and denounced Kusumula for not wishing to work for the post, and then brought the case back to Sapapula's alleged slander of Justino. The latter intervened again here to say that he had been slandered. Sapapula, by now very excited, denied this and said that Kusumula and Kapapelo wanted to break up the village. This was followed by three people trying to talk at once. Justino strolled round to the back of his house. Sapapula and Kapapelo wrangled.

Justino was not the only person to find this tedious. Paulo suggested that we should go. Kapapelo complained that Saviel, a sister's son of Sapapula, had made advances to his wife. Sapapula continued to declare that Kapapelo must not break up the village. Kutenga Lusase criticized Kapapelo for not working for the post. Gonçalve (18) intervened to refer back to the visit of the priest, Antonio Pires, and said that he had left with the words (i.e. he had come to a decision). Gonçalve was a pagan. The wrangling continued until Justino returned, told Sapapula not to insult him again and not to be angry with Kusumula. Sapapula said that Kusumula had left the village (Epalanga) and so would not be needed for the post again (that is, Sapapula would not be any longer responsible for him), and that he had never been angry with Kapapelo. Nahoka, Sapapula's wife, said that Kapapelo was not *ukuafeka* 'a man of the country'. Justino then dismissed the gathering, telling Sapapula to buy a bottle of wine for the elders who had come with him.

Kapapelo and Kusumula were not connected with the post as Guilherme was, nor with the mission as Paulo was. Kusumula was the employee of Justino and had thus an opportunity to appeal to him by accusing Sapapula of denying his status. It is not particularly significant whether Sapapula had actually said this or not. The accusation is important since it is a reflection of a common Umbundu way of attacking one's enemies, by accusing them of some offence against a 'civilized' person. Thus, to refer back to the earlier dispute between Paulo and Guilherme, the latter found it necessary to deny that he had planned to set fire to the catechetical school and the anthropologist's house, charges which were intended to weigh heavily with the *chefe*. Hence, when a quarrel between natives comes to a civilized

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person, it is likely that the details will be re-organized to gain his attention and support.

It is also notable that Sapapula was ready to accept Justino's right to hold a case on the matter. The acceptance and even readiness (as appears later) on Sapapula's part that Justino should hear cases is partly again a result of the lack of any legal machinery on the village level, partly an aspect of the 'patron-client' situation which has so often marked 'civilized'-native relations in Angola. No doubt much in Justino's behaviour arose from the taste he showed at times for settling cases, which led to a certain number of local cases being referred to him, and his readiness to settle them may not have been particularly common among *assimilados*.

Much of the actual case consisted of accusations and counter-accusations between Sapapula and Kapapelo with other people intervening. There is a kind of attempt to establish a balance of wrongs, Kusumula claiming that Sapapula was always picking on him when there was a call for labour from the post, Kapapelo accusing Sapapula of inciting Jaime to kill him and Sapapula's sister's son Saviel of planning to seduce his wife. Sapapula had accused Kusumula and Kapapelo of trying to break the village. Lusase intervened rather against Kusumula and Kapapelo, who was his 'brother'. As previously, the demands of the post for labour are regarded as being used by their local executants in a discriminating way.

On the evening of the same day, as I was calling round the village, I found Kapapelo at the door of Sapapula's kitchen. Apparently he had arrived drunk and had threatened to kill himself. Sapapula was greatly enraged at this, as were his women folk, Nahoka, his wife, Wumba, his daughter, and Nayangu, his 'sister', who vigorously abused Kapapelo. They warned Sapapula not to accept food from Kapapelo, lest the latter use it as a means of sorcery. Kapapelo complained that Nahoka had called him a slave thus expanding the hint contained in her previous enigmatic remark that Kapapelo was not a man of the country.

On the next day, Wednesday the 22nd, Sapapula had intended to go again to Justino's to settle his case with Kapapelo, but there was a funeral to which a large number of people went.

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627 to the post. Somebody said to me 'Lusase wants a fine to be paid so that he can get something from it' (the chief traditionally [681] having a right to commission on a fine paid in a dispute which he had settled). Eventually the dispute did not go to the post, as Kapapelo paid a fine, and the matter dropped.

A great deal of detail has been given here, but it can be shown that consistencies can be extracted from what seems complete confusion.

578 Kapapelo had, no doubt, as was said, under the influence of drink, decided to carry on his conflict with Sapapula after the gathering at Justino's and had arrived at Sapapula's threatening to commit suicide. The threat of suicide was here [762] used as Guilherme had used it to put an opponent in a difficult position, but it infuriated Sapapula, who decided that he must try and get another hearing. He therefore turned again to 627 Justino, although the latter had previously decided against him; thus implying that even a possibly unfavourable judge is acceptable, rather than let a squabble continue indefinitely.

Eventually, owing to Justino's refusal to hear the case, what I have called a 'moot' was got together, a body which lacked any deciding, dominating figure; but represented the local community. This became concerned with the question of the 578 relation of Kapapelo and Sapapula as affected by the action of Kapapelo in respect of Sapapula's wife Nahoka. As has been mentioned in the chapter on marriage, the relation between a [837] man and his wife's lover is one of mystically manifested hostility. Sapapula by accusing Kapapelo of desiring to seduce his wife was indicating a very serious state of hostility between the two men; and one can only explain Kapapelo's confession to something of which he was not guilty as a mark of his hostility to Sapapula. Kapapelo was accused by Sapapula of attempting to do him a grievous wrong, and Kapapelo claimed that he had in fact done this wrong. Nahoka denied that she had wronged her husband, and produced evidence of her assertion. Before considering her arguments, it must be noted what were the interests of the other people involved in the case.

627 It might be suggested that Kafelo, Lusase, and Ngombe had to some extent the function of judges or at least arbitrators, and Sapapula had indeed invited Ngombe to give his opinion (I

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do not know how Kafelo and Lusase came to hear of the case). In practice, their role was that of any other spectator in trying to bring about a settlement, although a chief has, as was noted, the right to a commission on any indemnification. The right of spectators to intervene is not based on any particular relationship to those involved nor on any reputation for wisdom. There is in fact no organized routine for determining who may and who must turn up and who may and who must speak. Spectators and speakers are simply members of the neighbourhood community, some related to Sapapula, some simply fellow-villagers, and it is natural that in present Umbundu society, lacking clearly-defined social groups, the crowd that assembles on such an occasion should look like a chance gathering. Its lack of recognized procedure, of accepted leadership, and of specific criteria of recruitment are all typical of the neighbourhood community among the contemporary Ovimbundu.

Despite the 'unorganized' character of this gathering, there exists evidently a set of generally accepted symbolic values, which are accepted by Christian and pagan, by young and old. Thus Nahoka claimed as evidence that she had not committed adultery her meal with Kapapelo's wife, and the latter in turn offered as evidence that adultery had been committed a statement that her husband had made a gift of soap to Nahoka. These actions provide presumptive evidence of innocence or guilt since an adulterer or adulteress may not eat under apparently mystical sanctions with the spouse of the person with whom he or she has committed adultery, and the giving of gifts by a man to a woman implies a sexual relationship. These actions were presumably recognized as convincing evidence in the days when there existed a formal court system, and continue to be recognized as such at the present day.

The nature of contemporary social relations, as being the end-product of a series of acts between individuals rather than as the content of jural norms defined by status, is also revealed in the dispute, particularly in the episode at Justino's. Sapapula does not complain that Kapapelo had not behaved as a villager should to his headman, but that he had not been grateful for having been given land. Kapapelo's complaint that Saviel, Sapapula's sister's son, had attempted to seduce his wife was,

like his accusation that Sapapula had incited Jaime to kill him, an attempt to portray himself not as an ungrateful recipient of Sapapula's goodness but a much suffering victim of his malevolence.

Although the moot reflects the existing social structure and values there are occasional reminiscences of the former social system. Thus Ngombe seems to have been acting according to a traditional but non-effective pattern in giving a long, judicial, summing up, which had no practical effect. Again, when Sapapula accused Kapapelo of wishing to break up the village it is probable that he was thinking of the old villages socially defined by the agnatic tie and physically enclosed by a stockade rather than the physically and socially amorphous villages of the present day. Values such as these survive in the minds of individuals when the associated social forms have disintegrated. They are brought out on occasions analogous to those in which they were formerly used, but are not nowadays decisive in the way they would have been.

The quarrel between Kapapelo and Sapapula is different from the other cases, since the meeting held to discuss it is held without the presence of a 'civilized' person and it pivots about a question of adultery or rather attempted adultery, a subject which has hitherto appeared marginally as a subject for insults. The case is held without the presence of a 'civilized' person, and this is from necessity, not from choice. Sapapula had tried to have the case heard by Justino, and Kapapelo was eventually brought to terms by Sapapula's threat to refer the matter to the post. While the moot shows us the community acting to uphold social control, such action is regarded as an unsatisfactory substitute for a decision by somebody who could, as Gonçalve said of Antonio Pires, 'leave with the words', that is, settle the case.

Adultery has previously occurred as an accusation thrown in during a squabble that has begun with something else. Thus Guilherme accused Paulo and Wasuka accused Kapapelo of adultery because they were angry with them; they were not angry with them because they thought they had committed adultery with their wives. It is parallel to the suggestions that Kapapelo was a sorcerer, an insult not an accusation. It now

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occurs, whether in intention as declared by Sapapula and Nahoka, as accomplished as claimed by Kapapelo, as the substance of the conflict between the two men.

To sum up, Kapapelo had originally been aligned with his kinsman Guilherme against Sapapula, who had then shown hostility to Kapapelo, and especially to his wife's brother Kusumula. The latter had counter-attacked by accusing Sapapula before Justino, and there the matter might have rested if Kapapelo had not tried to attack Sapapula again, by making the threat to commit suicide at his kitchen door. This led to the moot at which the charge of attempted adultery was made, and at which Sapapula intended to, and succeeded in, taming Kapapelo.

4. *Lusase, Sapapula, and Luanga*

In this case, individuals previously met, notably Sapapula, and Lusase reappear, this time as enemies. The principal scenes are first an attempt by a kinsman of Lusase's to recover a debt from Sapapula, secondly an attack by Lusase on Sapapula, thirdly a decision by the *chefe de posto* in favour of Sapapula, fourthly a fresh complaint to the post by Luanga against Lusase, fifthly a post decision in favour of Luanga, sixthly and finally reconciliation of Luanga and Lusase.

This chain of disputes had begun actually before the episodes mentioned in the last case. On the 19th February, Ndonga a kinsman of Lusase (whom he had helped to power), arrived in Epalanga and tied up Sapapula, as a result of the latter not paying a debt. I produced the money and for the present no more was heard of it. Lusase said that he did not know what went on in the villages, when the matter was mentioned to him.

On 13th May, Simbwyikoka, a former chief whose village was near Sapapula's, was holding a ceremony in which a bull had been killed. Sapapula had taken part in the ceremony and had been responsible for sending a leg of the bull (the chief's traditional prerogative) not to Lusase but to Kafelo, who, although he had been deposed in 1954, had the advantage over Lusase of having passed through the royal rituals, and

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having been elected according to traditional rules. Lusase was angry at this, turned up at the ceremony, and attacked Sapapula.

The following morning Epalanga buzzed with indignation. Gregorio, the chief of Menga, and Mandumba, Sapapula's son, had arrived at Epalanga to express their support, and Gregorio asked me* to write a letter to the Mission to get its support against Lusase at the post. I said that I would go to the chief's village to persuade Lusase to seek a reconciliation. The elder Wasuka, a cross-cousin of Sapapula, declared that even if Lusase offered five cattle in compensation they would not be accepted, and Sapapula's supporters portrayed him as a much injured man, repeatedly the victim of the Guilherme, Kapapelo, Lusase, Ndonga clique. My offer to go to the chief's village fell through when we heard that Lusase was now no longer there, but near, apparently at Simbwyikoka's.

I suggested that the moot should be held at Simbwyikoka's since the case had begun there; the others said 'No, let him come over here.' The crowd settled down in the open space before my house. News was then brought to us that Lusase refused to come over and insisted on the people coming to him, declaring that he ruled all, and did not obey the anthropologist but only the *chefe*. Accordingly everybody got up and walked over to Simbwyikoka's. Here we leant that Lusase had fled. Kambungo[10], an elder of Menga and kinsmen of Sapapula, declared that somebody who behaved like this could not be chief. Gregorio the chief of Menga became involved in an argument with Ndonga, who he said was responsible for installing Lusase. This Ndonga denied. This, incidentally, was the first time that I had heard that Lusase was not properly elected. As previously noted on the fall of Kafelo, Lusase had arrived at the post and announced himself as being the new chief. The Gumba people did not protest about this for fear of possible reactions from the post.

It now became known that Lusase could not be found.

* It may be suggested that my interventions were not in accordance with anthropological etiquette. It is difficult to see what else I could have done; it is, after all, the local custom for 'civilized' persons to provide letters of recommendation, and a refusal on my part would not have been understood.

[10] He has been mentioned in Chapter V.

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People said that he had fled to the house of his sister's son Guilherme en route for the post; Gregorio now said to me that Lusase had made advances to Nahoka, trying to seduce her by saying that Sapapula was old. 627

On the same day Sapapula left for the post with, as his witnesses, Nahoka and Wasuka carrying a letter of recommendation from me. At the post the *chefe* took his part and told Lusase 'Sapapula is your father' and made Lusase kneel down to seek pardon. Sapapula said that he wished to move across the river into Menga, where he had formerly lived. The *chefe* told him to stay at Epalanga (because of the anthropologist's presence there), but transferred Epalanga administratively from Gumba to Chicunda. This settlement pleased the Epalanga people. It may be added that had Sapapula actually crossed over, a number of householders, including Paulo, would not have followed him. 648 [631]

Despite the *chefe's* acts it was not certain whether the change was to be given effect immediately or only after the *chefe's* annual visit; hence some more wrangling took place over the question of where Epalanga was situated for such purposes as the payment of fines for rum-brewing.

Luanga, who shared with Sapapula the title of Epalanga, came to my house on the night of the 27th June to ask for a letter to the *chefe de posto*. He told me that Lusase wanted to take away his title of Epalanga and send him to contract (non-voluntary) labour. I suggested that we should go together to see Lusase at his village on the following day. The next morning he decided not to go to the chief but to go straight to the post with his wife Adriana. He told me that when Lusase became chief in 1954, he and his 'brother' Mwehombo had bought the title of Epalanga (held under Kafelo by Sapapula) which they held jointly. Luanga had paid for this two pigs equal to 1,000 escudos (about £12. 10s. in British currency) and other things as well. Luanga's motive was not political power (which the present-day chief lacks and of which his ministers have even less) nor prestige, but because he would thus be exempt from contract labour. Luanga said that he did not mind going to contract labour, but insisted on having back what he had paid to Lusase. I said I would write a letter to say that he should not 578 631 648 [634]

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578 631 648 go to contract labour and accordingly he left for the post with my letter.

Luanga returned quite satisfied a few days later, the *chefe* having decided in his favour. Two days later he went to the 578 chief's village to complain of Lusase's actions. With him came 631 Bartolomeu and Paulo. Ngombe, as Mwekalia, and thereby responsible for the relations between chief and people, acted as the presiding figure, more chairman than judge, although he spoke for some time on the case. Lusase defended himself by saying that it was not he but somebody else who had recommended Luanga for contract labour. This explanation was accepted by Luanga. Bartolomeu and Paulo received small sums of money from Lusase for acting as witnesses, and later Luanga left with Lusase for another village. Here they effected the succession of a man to his father's title of Mbesi (another ministerial position). Luanga was much pleased with his share of the fee.

578 Not only the personalities but many of the features of previous cases reappear here. Of the ways of acting which people choose, 627 Ndonga and Lusase use self-help, Ndonga to recover a debt, 648 and Lusase to uphold his prestige. Against Lusase, as against Kapapelo, a moot was formed. Lusase like Guilherme insisted on his responsibility to the post alone, when the opposition seemed to be using a 'civilized' person of a different category. Final decisions are obtained by appeals to the post but the risky nature of such procedures is shown by the desire to get a letter of recommendation. Luanga believed that Lusase had got him sent to contract labour just as Francisco believed (correctly) that Guilherme had got him recruited. Ngombe as Mwekalia is more successful here as arbitrator than in the moot at Kapapelo's. Finally we see the contrast again between the survival of formal recognition in symbol of the prestige of chieftancy (the episode of the bull's leg) and its actual impotence [634] caught between *chefe* and people. The specific issue in this dispute turns on a conflict between a chief and his people, and it shows how a chief can be defeated in the same way that the first dispute showed a government headman being defeated.

627 Lusase's opponents had, as previously, other means of influ- 648 encing the post. Gregorio had proposed getting a letter from the

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mission to give Sapapula's case, and, as things worked out, it was the anthropologist who was made the 'civilized' focus for the opposition to Lusase as Antonio Pires had been made the focus of the opposition to Guilherme. Lusase, like Guilherme, reacted by saying that he owed allegiance only to the *chefe de posto*, and running off to the post.

Luanga's case shows how desire to get out of contract labour may give a new reason for taking a ministerial title, and also once again how sending someone to contract labour is regarded as a means of injuring those whom one dislikes.

I have spoken of the conflict between Lusase and Sapapula as being a conflict between a chief and his people, and this is true in so far as it shows how opposition forms against a chief and how he can be checked. It is therefore of importance as indicating the position of the chief in the contemporary social system. The people themselves interpreted the dispute as being essentially one between individuals—Lusase's behaviour was attributed to his lust for Nahoka, and Gregorio entered the dispute not as the ruler of the neighbouring chiefdom of Menga but as a friend of Sapapula. The interpretation of what is a political conflict as a quarrel between individuals may be explained as being due to the relatively limited nature of the role of chief (Lusase) and of traditional headman (Sapapula) which therefore do not predominate in the social status of the individual. (In this particular case, had I got Lusase's viewpoint he would probably have said that he was defending his dignity as chief, whereas Sapapula did not regard Lusase as being really chief.) The lack of a formal court system or even of an articulated political system at the local level has brought into desuetude the old legal and political idioms and the Ovimbundu have not yet learnt new terms from the Portuguese.

5. *Social Control and Social Structure in the Dispute*

I now return to the points mentioned at the beginning of this chapter. It is hardly necessary to underline the decayed state of the traditional system of authority. Lusase had, at the time of the quarrel between Guilherme and Paulo, expressed his

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than the catechists and 'elders of the school'; yet the weakness of the agents of the post before a local opposition led, not by such traditional figures as Kafelo and Sapapula, but by the school functionaries, has been demonstrated. The post accepts intervention by the mission in supporting disputants, and the mission is ready to help not only its disputants but any native who has a strong case—that is, it has a generalized relation of patronage to all natives.[12] Hence, since in a serious dispute people look round for a 'civilized' patron, the mission is the one most likely to be appealed to, and these appeals usually go through its local agents.

While the symbiosis of two societies, one ruling, the other ruled, is a common feature of modern Africa, the extremely limited nature of the role delegated by the administration to the native authority, the 'patron-client' tie linking 'civilized' persons to the natives, and the opportunity given to patrons to intervene in cases before the *chefe*, seem to be distinctive features of Portuguese colonization.[13]

The third aspect of the social structure mentioned in the introductory section was the role in disputes of kinship ties. It has been earlier noted that Sapapula's supporters regarded him as a victim of a concerted alliance by Guilherme, Kapapelo, Lusase, and Ndonga. In fact Lusase had avoided getting involved in the dispute between Guilherme and Paulo, had supported Sapapula against Kapapelo, and had disclaimed responsibility for Ndonga's act. The present social structure is not one in which groups of kin habitually co-operate;[14] and it is possible that this belief in a coalition against Sapapula reflects memories of the old social structure.

Kinship ties between individuals seem neither to restrain them from quarrelling nor to be liable to permanent disruption as a result of quarrels. By August 1956 Kasoi was once again

[12] It is felt in administrative circles that the advancement of the African is mainly the responsibility of the missions.

[13] Anybody who knows the Portuguese well will acknowledge the importance given to personal influence (*conhecimento*) and the lack of esteem for bureaucratic (in the Weberian sense) procedures.

[14] See Chapters IV and VII for details on the kinship core and on general aspects of kinship. The support which Sapapula received was not confined to his own kinship core—thus Gregorio who enthusiastically supported Sapapula was not even a kinsman.

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on good terms with Guilherme, who was a 'father' of his, and even earlier in June part of the celebrations which marked the marriage of Paulo's son Jose to Pungu, a girl from Namba, whose mother had at one time been married to Kapapelo, took place at the latter's house. Most strikingly of all, as has been noted, Guilherme could borrow money from Bartolomeu and Paulo at the height of their quarrel. The kinship bond exists outside of and, it might be said, at a deeper level than, the quarrel, and the rebukes hurled at an adversary reflect this. Paulo did not complain that Guilherme was a bad cross-cousin; instead he complained that Guilherme was not grateful to him for having baptized his dying child. The motive for co-operation or conflict in everyday life is to be found not in the tracing of genealogies but in the tally of reciprocal services and grievances between two individuals.

It may be claimed that this portrait of the kinship system which emerges from the disputes as being loosely structured and lacking defined obligations, but providing an underlying continuity, is very similar to that given in Chapter VII, which was based on questioning and the observation of everyday life.

The significance of the conjugal bond appears both positively in the way Luanga and Sapapula both take their wives to the post as witnesses, and negatively in the way the hostility of Kapapelo and Lusase to Sapapula is interpreted as being inspired by lust for his wife. Even the accusations of adultery so readily hurled about in disputes reflect the stereotype of the adulterer as the arch-enemy, and likewise the arch-enemy of the moment as at least a potential adulterer.

One question remains to be answered. Was Epalanga a particularly rebellious, squabbling, divided, village, because of the presence of an unusual number of aggressive individuals? It is not possible to estimate the number of disputes per village, and the disputes which have been described were the most important of which I had personal knowledge. They were touched off by personal antagonisms rather than by structural contradictions. Yet they tie in with what has been said of the Umbundu social structure in earlier chapters to such a degree that they seem to reflect the lines along which any case of the sort would proceed. The weakness of the chiefs, stripped of

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578 traditional sanctions and lacking official confidences, the power-
626 less prestige of the traditional headman, the lack of defined
178 village unity, the role of the catechetical school and its officials, who have come to represent the village as a whole, the loosely structured yet stabilizing kinship system, all described in earlier chapters, have re-emerged as parts of a reasonably effective system of social control within which people quarrel and by which their quarrels are settled. It is possible for the villagers by appealing to patrons to check tyrannical behaviour on the part of chief and headmen and to get a fair hearing at the post. Within the local community disputants, once their anger has blown over, may be reunited by the ties of kinship and affinity.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

attitude toward one's blood relations than by quoting Mrs. 602
Hoernlé:

> Here, then, is a large body of kin drawn intimately into contact with the lives of each generation. Looking out into the world from his own home, the Bantu child knows where he may seek hospitality and succour of every kind; where, also, he may of right be called upon to render assistance in case of need. The barriers of reserve shutting off human beings from one another are largely down so far as these classes of relatives are concerned, so that for economic assistance, for friendly counsel, in time of sorrow and in time of joy, these are the natural categories of people to turn to, the core of people with whom one is close-knit from birth in a web of reciprocal rights and duties.[1]

The Kin

Relatives by Marriage. Marriage profoundly alters the relation- 581
ship of those who enter into it, that is, the two families. It must be entered into with great care and with due regard for all factors concerned in order that the balance of life may be maintained. It seems that the financial arrangements (*ilombo*) are designed to restore to the bride's family an equivalence for her loss, since marriage is patrilocal. The Ovimbundu consider mutual respect between the two families to be a necessary basis for a successful marriage. Respect (*esumbilo*) is the reason assigned by thoughtful [593]
Ovimbundu for the various avoidances (*oku liyuvuila*) enjoined upon the principals and their respective families. In the first place, the husband and wife must show their respect for each other by avoiding certain actions as, for example, either one speaking the name of the other.

This mutual respect finds its most dramatic symbol in the treat- 606
ment which the husband must accord his mother-in-law, the bride her father-in-law. They must avoid seeing each other, and if it is necessary to converse, it must be done out of sight, or with gaze averted. Both husband and wife must also avoid pronouncing the names of the parents-in-law. By the principle of extended relationships, this behaviour applies to the relations of the husband and the wife with *all* their parents-in-law of the opposite sex. As all the mother's 'sisters' are 'mother', so to the husband they are all *ndatembo* (mother-in-law). Likewise, the father's 'brothers' all

[1] In Schapera, op. cit., 1937, p. 73.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

hardship and the cruelty of the initiation camps have their parallel 881
in the trading and slave-raiding expeditions of the past, but this 174
is practically the only recognizable likeness. May it not be that initiation camps were adopted or revived to fill the lacuna that came about when trading expeditions ceased? As an 'educational institution' they do not seem to fit into the culture.

Whether with or without initiation rites, adolescence is largely 882
preparation for marriage and full adult life. Traditionally, adolescence is not a time of conflict or of stress. Young people who as children had already assumed in considerable degree the responsibilities of life met the onset of puberty and made the transition to adult life without fuss or flourish. On the whole there was relatively small chance for conflict between the generations, since the place of each is recognized as mutually complementary. Nor was there competition between the sexes. This ordered and well-balanced society began to change with the rubber trade, and with the beginning of the present century changes have come rapidly. Contract and *corvée* labour have brought profound changes, especially for the young men. As for the girls, a few have gone to the towns; relatively few however, other than those who attend a boarding-school, lead a life essentially different from that which has been traditionally theirs. Conflict between the generations, adolescence as a period of stress, delinquence, hysteria, and other problems, some of them characteristic of our own culture, are beginning to appear among the young people of the mission schools. I feel that these manifestations are quite uncharacteristic of Umbundu culture.

As for adult life, there are no recognized divisions or separate 885
periods. Adulthood comes with marriage and marriage is only 581
recognized as fully complete with the birth of a child. The early years of marriage and family rearing are years of much hard work with less time for leisure or enjoyment than either before or after. It is not postponed, however, on that account. If the young man marries relatively late, it is largely because of the very considerable economic burdens involved. Singleness is coveted by no one. The Umbundu ideal is mature life when one may have acquired competence, but at any rate is assured of descendants and care in old age. There is not, however, any ceremonial status such as the fixing of the wax ring among the Thonga,[1] nor does the mature Ocimbundu cease to do manual labour. There may be some

[1] Junod, op. cit., 1927, vol. i, p. 129 f.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

885 preference for a polygynous household at this age, but no definite
581 tradition which urges one 'to become lord and master of a complete circular village'.[1] Women are happiest while carrying a baby on the back.

[538]

Onyima yiwa ka yi mõlĩ omõlã,
Back good (yet) it does not see a child,

888 wails a childless woman. No grandmother is satisfied without herself caring for at least one grandchild. Old age is subject to its own burden of the years but among the Ovimbundu the aged are treated with much respect and deference.

SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS V–VII

561 THE periods in the life of an Ocimbundu may be summarized as follows:

1. The 'Marginal' Period of the First Week (*ocitete*) until the funicle drops.
2. The Baby Proper (second week until about seventh month) (*oñaña*) (from turning black until sitting alone).
3. The Sitting-baby or Toddler (*ocisembe*) (from sitting alone until mastery of walking and completion of weaning).
4. Early Childhood (from weaning until about 9 years) (*oneñe*). Period of socio-psychological education.
5. Later Childhood (from about 9 until puberty) (*omõlã*). Period of technical training and assumption of economic responsibility.
6. Adolescence (from puberty until marriage). Period of preparation for marriage and full adulthood.
7. First Year of Marriage, during which the bride completes her training under her mother-in-law's guidance.
8. Full Adulthood (from birth of first child).

[1] Junod, op. cit., 1927, vol. i, p. 127.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

Marriages may also be ended by the wife leaving her husband. 586
This may be the consequence of quarrels; however at times a woman may just run off without any apparent reason. Her husband may go to her kin and bring her back or may just get married again—such an episode may occur after many years of a marriage which has previously appeared happy. People 587
who have been married previously can be married again according to the pattern described previously. Middle-aged and elderly people would leave out the festivities and would just have the meal together, or simply count themselves as married by the payment of the bridewealth.

There does exist a formal ceremony of divorce in which 586
maize flour is smeared on the upper part of the face by the husband, and this will take place in the presence of representatives of the wife's kin. A man will do this when his wife has shown herself disrespectful to him or has quarrelled with his kin or her co-wife. As the Ovimbundu regard marriage as [581]
being for the procreation of children, a barren wife should be, [842]
they say, sent away but often in practice this is not done, if the wife is otherwise satisfactory.

Legally, the Portuguese administration recognizes both the 582
customary marriage and the Catholic marriage ceremony. The Catholic missions report to the post people who, having been married in church, then make customary marriages, and these may be subjected to such sanctions as being sent to contract labour. The Protestant church marriages are not apparently legally recognized but they are subject to the authority of the Protestant church courts which grant divorces on certain grounds. The *chefe de posto* on his annual visit to take the check on the census may get angry with polygynists, but in fact no very effective administrative action exists with regard to indigenous marriage.

The motives given for polygynous marriage are the desire 595
to have many children and (in the case of a chief) the need to have cooks to provide hospitality for guests. Large-scale polygyny is thought to be rather funny; I was told, as something amusing, that the former chief Mbati had 17 wives. Kafelo, the former chief of Gumba, had 6 wives, the highest number of continuing polygynous marriages I found. In Epalanga out of

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

responsible for the children, especially during their early years, but they are frequently sent 'to the *olusia*', i.e. to the mother's brother for at least a part of their education. Herein has arisen a conflict between the claims of the paternal household and the maternal kinship group. Economic and other forces seem to have favoured the former so that 'During these days in which we stand, things have changed somewhat so that as between children and their parents, they work for their fathers for they say, "A child is strong with his *olase* and less so with his *olusia*." Nowadays a man teaches a child work and also looks out for his education that he may advance properly. His mother's brothers (*va usaua*) have no longer much power as of old.'[1]

Bearing in mind their bilateral nature and the fact that every Ocimbundu belongs at the same time to his paternal (*olase*) and to his maternal (*olusia*) groups, the functions of these kinship groups may be summarized as follows:

Olase	*Olusia*
SOCIAL	
Consists of local residence units; succession of village and tribal offices from father to son, or elder to younger brother.	Extended family organization; office of family head descends from mother's brother to sister's son; children belong.
Marriage allowed between cross-cousins and other relatives of non-parallel descent; couple lives at groom's father's village.	*Marriage preferred* between cross-cousins and other relatives of non-parallel descent; children belong to mother's *olusia*.
EDUCATIONAL	
Responsibility for education of young children, especially in social usage.	Responsibility sometimes assumed in later childhood, especially for technical phases.
ECONOMIC	
Ownership and inheritance of land. (Passed from father to son or elder to younger brother.)	Ownership and inheritance of more largely negotiable and movable property, as e.g. trade goods, cattle, &c. (passed from mother's brother to sister's son).

[1] Raul Kavina Evambi, op. cit.

1; Childs M-S (1934-1940) 1949 FF 13 Mbundu FF 13

ing to the wife all the relationships which are the husband's and vice versa. Thus by courtesy the parents-in-law are spoken of not as *ndatembo*, but *Mai* (my mother) and *Tate* (my father). The same extension also applies to all of the kin of the spouse and for all kinship terms both direct and reciprocal. Another reason for this is the mutual respect which is a principal basis of the Umbundu marriage.[1]

606 551

There remains one important matter necessary to an understanding of the Umbundu concept of relationship by marriage. To the Ovimbundu the proper, or at least the most desirable, marriage is a marriage within the circle of kin. 'Formerly people never married unless they were related, that is to say, unless they touched the blood together. If in the mother's kin (*kolusina*), only on the side of the bow (i.e. male line). If in the father's kin (*kolusa*), only on the side of the basket (i.e. female line).'[2] Upon closer consideration it becomes evident which of the relatives one may marry. It would not be possible to marry any who are classed as brother, sister, father, mother, grandparent, child, or grandchild, for such a union would involve incest (*oku ndi*). The relatives whom one may marry are, then, those of one's own age-level who belong to classes other than the above-mentioned. An ideal mate of one's own generation is a cross-cousin classed as *Epalume* or *Cepua* (Class A. 4, p. 47). Beside this, a woman may marry one classed as her mother's brother (Class D. 3, p. 48), and a man one classed as his father's sister (Class D. 4, p. 48), if of appropriate age. One may also marry an *ocimumbu* (Class J. 2, p. 49). Hambly remarked that 'cross-cousin marriage . . . is the functional form among the Ovimbundu'.[3] This is true, but only in part, for not only are there many relatives other than his cross-cousin whom an Ocimbundu may marry, but the financial arrangements are quite other than those usually associated with the cross-cousin marriage.

582

[1] While I do not pretend to believe that 'respect' is the only or even the main reason for the observances described, it seems sufficiently important to receive the attention which I have given it.

[2] Verbatim translation of statement by Liholote Semikanjo, elder of the school village at Ngando (Kasonga).

[3] Hambly, op. cit., p. 194. In reporting the replies of his informant as to whom he could marry, with regard to the marriage of father's sister's daughter, the reply was that it was possible but not desirable 'because the children will be stupid'. The reason assigned was evidently taken from European ideas, but the reply also indicates a preference for marriage within the clans, which I have also find from many but not from all informants.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1949) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

582 Cross-cousin marriage of the type practised by the Sotho[1] or Venda[2] tribes is quite foreign to Umbundu life. It is possible that the Ovimbundu formerly had some such type of cross-cousin marriage, but not for a very long time. Among the seventy-five schedules which I have collected illustrating marriage arrangements there are a few describing marriages which took place about ninety years ago. Magyar also wrote of the financial arrangements made for marriage in Viye about 1850.[3] Both of these sources, together with native tradition, indicate that, at least with regard to the financial arrangements, the cross-cousin type of marriage has not been practised by the Ovimbundu for more than one hundred
582 years. On the other hand, the Ovimbundu know nothing of the
171 exogamous marriage demanded by the Herero,[4] the Zulu,[5] &c. The Umbundu ideal includes marriage with a cross-cousin, but also goes out into the wider kinship group, as does the type of marriage of the Thonga,[6] which in turn is linked with that of the Ndau and the Shona group.[7]

582 The Umbundu principle that only 'those whose blood has
174 touched', or who can 'count' relatives in common, has for a very long time admitted of liberal application. There are cases on record of individuals belonging to regions as widely separated as Ciyaka and Ngalangi contracting marriage *after* having properly 'counted' their common relationship. These cases refer to grandparents of the present generation. It is probable that the diverse racial and cultural elements which have fused to form the Ovimbundu people long ago made imperative the broadening of the cross-cousin type of marriage to the 'ideal' or 'classic' form of (present) Umbundu tradition. An analogous process (with modifications) has continued to operate until to-day this very ideal of marriage within the kinship group is losing its hold in favour of yet more 'liberal' practices.

601 In summary, the Umbundu terminology for the relative by marriage and also the connexion between the ideas of relation by marriage and relation by blood may be seen by the following:

[1] W. M. Eiselen, 'Preferential Marriage: Correlation of the various modes among the Bantu of South Africa', *Africa*, 1928, pp. 413–28.
[2] H. A. Stayt, *The Bavenda* (London, 1931), chaps. xi and xv.
[3] Magyar, op. cit., p. 282 f.
[4] Vedder in Hahn *et al.*, op. cit., p. 187; Irle, op. cit., p. 89.
[5] Krige, op. cit., pp. 34–5. [6] Junod, op. cit., vol. i, pp. 253–64.
[7] Hoernlé in Shapera, op. cit., p. 93 f.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

601 III. TABLES OF RELATIVES WITH WHOM MARRIAGE IS PREFERRED

A. *Of Ego's Generation: Either Man or Woman*

Term	*Relationship*	*Reciprocal term*
Epalume or cepuse	cross-cousins of all degrees (see list Table I. A. 4, p. 47)	*epalume or cepuse*

B. *Of First Ascendant Generation: Man Speaking*

Tatekili	father's 'sister' (see list Table I. D. 4, p. 48)	*ocimumbe*

C. *Of First Ascendant Generation: Woman Speaking*

Mamu	mother's 'brothers' (see list Table I. D. 3, p. 48)	*ocimumbe*

D. *Of First Descendant Generation: Man or Woman Speaking*

Ocimumbe	mother's 'brother's' or father's 'sister's grandchild'	*mamu* or *tatekili*

591 582 Many writers have noted that, among other purposes, the financial arrangements serve to give the bride a status in the village of her husband. In a system of preferential kinship marriage, this is a desideratum, although for other reasons than those operating in a system where the wife comes as a comparative stranger. In a system such as this of the Ovimbundu, it is evident that many of the relatives by marriage are already blood relatives. This is perhaps one reason why the avoidances with regard to 'in-laws' are less rigidly held to than in a society such as the Zulu, which holds strictly to exogamous marriage.[1]

182 601 Another factor which makes for stability of marriage is the bilineal kinship system (*epata*). This system offers to the wife an initial security not usually found where descent is unilineal, or even where there has been a one-sided development of one line of descent at the expense of the other. The bilineal system is an important factor in the preservation of social stability. Through it the household and the village are links in the chain which even yet binds the Ovimbundu into a social whole.

Sorcery

182 794 Umbundu society is subject to various forces which threaten its cohesion and stability both from without and from within. Some of the external forces have been touched upon.[2] Chief of the

[1] Krige, op. cit., p. 29 f. [2] *Supra*, pp. v, 26.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

182 621 in a somewhat decadent state, the Umbundu village has up to the present maintained its status as a local kinship unit.

182 592 602 The household is not a solitary unit but a part of the village. Since it is constituted by marriage, it embodies the union of at least two kinship groups. The attitudes and behaviour patterns within the Umbundu household are basically those universally recognized. In common with the households of most Bantu cultures, it differs from the European model in that it extends its attitudes and behaviour patterns to the wider kinship groupings by means of a classificatory system of relationship.

613 182 In the wider kinship groupings (*epata*), the Ovimbundu recognize both the maternal (*olusina*) and the paternal (*olase*) lines of descent. The functions of the latter have been largely local, residential, social, and religious, with succession (of status) in the male line. The function of the former has been cohesive over a larger territory, with a recognized head in whom has been vested both religious and economic functions. Both his office and the inheritance of property descend in the female line. Much of the power, economic and personal, formerly held by the *olusina*, in the person of the mother's brother, seems to be passing at the present time to the *olase*, in the person of the father. The bilineal kinship system has been a strongly cohesive social force.

182 [582] The form of marriage practised by the Ovimbundu is of the two-way cross-cousin type in both lines of kin and in three generations. It seems to be an individual type developed in the particular social and economic situation of the Ovimbundu. As a contract between two families and as a new venture, the marriage relation demands that great attention be given to attitudes and behaviour patterns which emphasize mutual respect.

[561] The hierarchy of age is a very real factor in the Umbundu social structure. Age-set 'schools' have not existed generally throughout the tribes, but there are associations of coevals. This is largely a cohesive force.

754 Sorcery is the most important disruptive force at work *within* Umbundu society. Working as it does, within kinship groups, and inasmuch as it seems to be on the increase, sorcery embodies a real danger to social cohesion.

184 178 Homogeneity has never been an attribute of the Ovimbundu as regards their racial or cultural make-up. The slave-trade injected other and more diverse elements, and recent movements and

833 chiefly for marriage. Indeed, marriage is the beginning of adulthood; no Ocimbundu is considered fully an adult until married.

841 Where the initiation camps have not taken hold, i.e. among the great majority of the people, it is the father's sister (*apuhãi*) whose duty it is, at least in theory, to tell her brother's daughter how she should take care of herself during the times of menstrual flow. Actually a girl generally learns such things from observation and from girls of the immediately superior age-group, her sisters and cousins. She will not need to be told that during those times a girl or woman must not even touch anything belonging to a man and especially she must have nothing to do with preparing his food. This period is known as 'sitting on the ground' (*oku tumãlã pon*) since that is what a woman is supposed to do at that time. Modern usage has also taken that phrase to mean 'unemployment'.[1]

582 In the house which the boy or young man has built for himself, one of the most characteristic customs of adolescence among the Ovimbundu takes place: the trial marriage. There are several Umbundu names for this custom, as *oku tumisa* (lit. to cause to send), referring to the fact that the young man sends a male friend or relative both to ask permission of the girl's mother and also to bring the girl each night to his hut. Names for the correlative but all-inclusive custom are *uponji*, the girl being called *eponji*; and *uvaini*, the girl being called *ombaini*. A young man may first *tumisa* at about seventeen to eighteen years of age, but he must have acquired enough to make small presents to the girl and to her parents and he must have or have in prospect money or goods sufficient to make the betrothal payment.[2] This payment is known as *itambelo*, 'enticements', or *oku lapula ikuehume*, 'chasing away jealousies'. This indicates that the custom of *uvaini* is definitely regarded as a prelude to marriage. For this reason, the term 'trial [836] marriage' is preferred to that of 'premarital sexual intercourse'. The nature of the intercourse, moreover, is carefully circumscribed. 'When the respective parents have agreed, then those of the girl will warn her saying, Should that boy be bad, and want to play with your cloth, even though it be late at night, run away.'[3] In such a case the boy's parents would take him to task and require that for the time being he sleep in their kitchen and so under

[1] For early notice of this cf. Magyar, op. cit., p. 284.
[2] From 10,00 to 30,00 *Angolares* according to locality, family, status, &c.
[3] From a manuscript dictated by R. Kalupetsha of Ngalangi.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

observation, and not in his own house. During that time he will not be allowed to *tumisa*. Or again, 'the girl's parents may warn her saying, Should the boy try *to sting*[1] you, do not let him: do not stay, but run away.'[2] All informants stress the point that the chief purpose of the custom is that the two young people may come to know each other as well as possible with marriage in view. There are severe sanctions against premarital pregnancy; fines to be paid by the young man or his family, lessened desirability for the girl in marriage, and a distinction in the ceremony between brides who are virgin and those who are not. Proofs of virginity are required on the marriage morning. Those families and regions which have girls' initiation camps include in the procedure a test of virginity.[3] There are not the periodic tests of virginity which are found among the Zulus, Mpondos, &c.,[4] but the Ovimbundu do not expect that the contact will be as close as these other tribes evidently do.[5] The closest parallel which I know is with the (American) colonial custom of 'bundling'.

It is said that the custom of *upoji* has been in a decadent state for a long time. This is not only because of its having been misunderstood and forbidden by the church or the missions.[6] Although this is partly the case, the chief difficulty came from the time of the rubber trade (1874–1900) when young men began without ceremony to go to the kitchens to sleep with girls instead of properly arranging matters. Whether their affluence made them reckless (i.e. of expected fines, &c.), or whether they were aping Europeans or the customs of other tribes, is not known. At any rate, it is said that for large numbers of people this put an end to propriety. Numbers of Europeans began to settle in the country from 1891 (Viye) and 1903 (Bailundu and elsewhere), and from then until now casual relations have very greatly increased year by year.[7] That the Ovimbundu have held to their traditional forms

[1] *Lamuma*, euphemism for *tumisa*.
[2] From a statement by R. Kavita Evambi of Ciyaka.
[3] A pullet's egg is used for the test (manuscript by R. Kavita Evambi).
[4] Krige in Schapera, 1937, op. cit., p. 110 f.
[5] Among the songs which I have collected are two sung by girls to tease the young men and with references to nights spent in *upoji*.
[6] *Uvaisi* has been used in translations for 'fornication' or 'adultery' and used so persistently that it has now nearly come to have those meanings. The *Umbundu-English Vocabulary* (1911) gave a correct definition for *upoji* but not for *upoji*; its references to *ombuisi* and *uvaisi* are likewise in error, while *tumisa* is not listed.
[7] Information from R. Kalupetuka and others.

1: Child M-5 (1934-1940) 1940 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

The extent to which the order of the *vakuacisoko* exists at present or has existed among the Ovimbundu would be a very interesting subject of inquiry. It is certain that the institution does not exist throughout the territory but only in certain families which belong to the order and pass on membership in it by heredity. Whether there are certain regions where it is or was in the past more strongly held to is not known. It seems to be or to have been more strongly entrenched among the cattle-rearing people to the south, but it is also said to have been practised in Lupolo (Libolo) and even in the region of Luanda.[1] Among the Ovimbundu it seems to have been stronger in the past than at present. Few if any practising members of the set are now known. All 'coevals' or members of the set were in duty bound to render mutual assistance. All had mutual rights to the property of the others without complaint or remedy. These mutual rights seem to have been extended to the extreme limit of having intercourse with each other's wives, nor did the injury or even the death of one brought about by another allow the injured family to seek revenge or legal redress. It was the duty of *vakuacisoko* to bury their fellows, themselves digging the grave and attending to all expenses not already supplied by the family. Theirs was also the duty of burying strangers without family who would not be buried by others fearing defilement or responsibility for their debts. Bastos gives a tradition ascribing the origin of this institution to a wager laid between two chiefs.[2] It seems more probable, however, that it is connected with circumcision and tribal initiation. An analogous set of rights and duties is said to have existed among the Herero between 'coevals' circumcised at the same time.[3]

Tribal initiation for both boys (*oku lisevia evumbu*) and girls (*uso usakili*) is carried on in camps or 'schools' in the southern and south-eastern tribes of the Ovimbundu. These camps are regularly held in Kalukembe, Kakonda, and Ngalangi. Sporadic instances of individual camps have also occurred recently in Viye, Bailundu, Sambu, Wambu, Cingolo, and Cikuma. Even in those regions where camps are regularly held, only the children of certain families enter. It seems that there has been some passing on of the custom by heredity and, in general, there is intermarriage only between families and individuals who adhere to the initiation

[1] Bastos, 1909, op. cit., pp. 67–70.
[2] Ibid., p. 69 f.
[3] Vedder in Hahn *et al.*, op. cit., p. 178.

1: Childs M-S (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

had Portuguese names, and tradition speaks of a great accession of mulatto stock, which also is confirmed by observation.

The Umbundu-speaking border groups are interesting. Ngamba was formerly occupied by the Songo and has been peopled by Ovimbundu coming from near the capital of Viye only within the past forty years. Cengi, Sanga, Namba, and Kasongi on the northern flank of Bailundu have probably all only recently become Umbundu-speaking groups. Kasongi is one of the largest groups which paid tribute to Bailundu, and has had a line of Umbundu-speaking kings for more than a hundred years; but judging from genealogical evidence the bulk of the people have not been Ovimbundu that long. Civula is another large group and its uncertain feudal status has been noted. Perhaps the most interesting of the border groups, at least from a linguistic standpoint, is Kalukembe. The royal house seems to have come from Ciyaka and it has been claimed that in Kalukembe the kingship is inherited by the mother's brother's son. This is not supported by the only local traditional history which I have been able to secure and requires further investigation. At any rate it is through the maternal line that the commoners of all the Umbundu-speaking groups inherit, and it is noteworthy that this is also true of the kingship among the 'Bangala' and the Ambo tribes.[1] The 'Bangala' people have clan organizations and are exogamous, so that they may marry in any of the related 'Bangala' groups, and for this purpose they include the Kalukembe but not others of the Ovimbundu.[2] Finally, the variations with which Umbundu is spoken in Kalukembe[3] point to closer connexions with the language-group of the 'Bangala'. There are certain areas which at the present day seem to be undergoing a linguistic 'Umbundu-ization'. This is most evident in the coast towns such as Novo Redondo, Lobito, Catumbela, Benguela,

[1] See Estermann, 'Notas Etnográficas sôbre os povos do Distrito da Huíla' in *Boletim Geral das Colónias*, fev. 1935, p. 63; Hahn, *et al.*, *The Native Tribes of South West Africa*, p. 8.

[2] This last item was learned from Mulondo people. The above-cited article deals only with the people of the District of Huíla, while 'Bangala' people live also in other adjoining districts.

[3] Compare Umbundu language work of H. Chatelain and others of the 'Mission Philafricaine' in Kalukembe, as versus illustrations of Umbundu used by Johnston, Meinhof, *et al.* Evidently the native 'Mohongo' taken to Paris by Homburger of the Mission Rohan-Chabot, was a native of Kalukembe, for the 'Bailundu' vocabulary taken from him is of the Kalukembe variation. (See *Mission Rohan-Chabot*, v. III, f. 1.)

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Magyar's account of the Viye legend is of interest since it suggests a direct link between the movements of the Ovimbundu ancestors and contemporary migrations of the Lunda in the Congo basin and western Angola.[1] Magyar relates that the forefathers of the Viye came from the land of the Moropa (or Lunda[2]) under the two chiefs Kinguri and Schakambindi, conquered the Songo, and settled on the Luando river, engaging in agriculture between raids. The tribe subsequently sub-divided, one group going southwards to the Kukema river, where Ngangela were living, to found the chiefdom of Viye.

Ngalangi tradition is the only one which attempts a creation myth. Feti, the first chief of Ngalangi, is said to have "come down from above"; having no wives, he went to a lagoon of the Kunene river and caught them as they came out of the reeds. Sons of Feti drove out the Ngangela from what is now Ngalangi country, and founded their principal village.[3] Childs estimates that this must have taken place in about 1750. The village was later attacked unsuccessfully by Ngangela, and this is one of the very few traditions which mention resistance met by the invaders.

Wambu. The first chief, Wambu Kalunga, is said to have come from Sela country, north-west of Bailundu. The Nganda, who now live south-west of Umbundu country and are of Southern Bantu stock, were previously living in Wambu country. The founder of the Ciyaka royal family is said to have been a relative of Wambu Kalunga, and to have driven out the Nkumbe (also of Southern Bantu stock) from Ciyaka country, probably during the first half of the seventeenth century. Wambu Kalunga is said to have been also the progenitor of the dynasties of *Cingolo*, *Citeta* or *Cikuma*, *Kalukembe*, *Elende* and *Ekeleta*.[4]

Kakonda, the founder of the Kakonda kingdom, was of northern stock, but born in Ngalangi, whence he was sold as a slave to Benguella. He escaped with his wife, Cilombo, and set up the present kingdom in about 1760.

Ongi, *Sungo*, *Nambo* and *Kasongi* on the northern flank of Bailundu have only recently become Umbundu-speaking. *Kasongi*, one of the largest Bailundu tributaries, has however had a line of Umbundu-speaking chiefs for more than 100 years. *Civula* was listed by Magyar as tributary to Ciyaka. *Kalukembe* is of interest in that it is more clearly linked than other sections of the Ovimbundu with the Nganda-Ambo group. Factors which point to this closer link include: the similarities in language between the two groups; the inheritance of the Kalukembe kingship in the external line, as among the Nganda-Ambo group, and not in the paternal line, as among other Ovimbundu;[5] and the fact that the Nganda-Ambo, who have an exogamous clan organisation, may marry in any of the related Nganda-Ambo groups, and for this purpose include Kalukembe but not other Ovimbundu.[6]

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631
[643]
[582]

(1) McCulloch 1951, op.cit., 2221., 2712.
(2) Nina da Carvalho 1890, p.66.
(3) According to the same legend, where the Ngalangi rested their loads of food and household goods, stalks took root and became the sycamore figs which to this day encircle the capital village. This circle of trees is a characteristic of the older Ngangela villages.
(4) Childs op.cit., pp.178, 225.
(5) Although descent among Ovimbundu commoners is in the maternal line.
(6) Childs, op.cit., p.179.

611 dispersed. Both groups have ritual leaders, whose offices are quite dis-
613 tinct. Barnes' suggestion[1] is that the two groups must be father's patrilineage and mother's matrilineage, with the qualification mentioned below.

613 The *oluse* consists of a large number of village groups, some of which
recognise mutual relationship,[2] but with no recognised head (other than
622 the village headmen) except in the case of the royal families. Land is owned by the *oluse* and passed on within it from father to son, or from
[428] elder to younger brother. Succession to village or tribal office, from village headman to king, descends in the same way.[3] Ritual leadership within the *oluse* lies with the village headman, who is in charge of the
[346] spirit-hut *(etosho)* of the guardian spirit of the village (or of the nuclear *oluse* within the village), and who officiates at regular village worship, including agricultural festivals.

613 The *oluina*, on the other hand, is a dispersed and apparently larger
428 group, whose members live with their various paternal lines of descent. The size of the *oluina* is unknown; Childs merely refers to it as a "large
604 and widespread organisation, with a recognised head". The office of head of the *oluina (ukulu wepata)* descends from mother's brother to sister's son. Negotiable and moveable property, including cattle and trade goods, is owned by the *oluina* and inherited by the sister's son. Formerly the mother's elder brother had great powers over his sister's sons, and was even able to pawn them or sell them into slavery, to meet his own debts.
[592] The patrilocal household is usually responsible for training children, especially during their early years, but they are frequently sent to the *oluina* (i.e. to the mother's brother) for at least a part of their educa-
[586] tion. At death or divorce of parents, children go to the *oluina*.

The head *(ukulu wepata)* of the *oluina* is usually both the legal and
43 spiritual head of the group, although today the two functions are often divided. He is in charge of the spirit hut *(etosho)* of the guardian
782 spirit of the *oluina* (of whom there may be more than one, and of whom he becomes one after death). He leads the *oluina* in propitiatory rituals carried out in case of illness, death, or other misfortunes within the group, or in prayers made for desired economic advantages. (Apparently no regular rituals are carried out by the *oluina*.) The *ukulu wepata* may or may not be at the same time a village headman; if he is, he will be priest of two lines and have charge of two spirit huts; if he is not, there may be two (or more) priests in the village, each in charge of the spirit-hut of his *oluse* or *oluina*.

The omBIB yohanji and the omBIB yohamba

613 The *oluse* and the *oluina* are both divided into male and female
"sides": the *omBIB yohanji* (the side of the bow) and the *omBIB yohamba*
602 (the side of the basket). It has been noted above that uterine brothers
582 and sisters belong to the same *oluse* and *oluina*, but to the male or female side in each, according to sex. The composition of these "sides" is

(1) Loc.cit.
(2) If some villages within the *oluse* cannot trace mutual relationship, the *oluse* should perhaps be called a patri-clan rather than a patrilineage.
(3) But see below, p.29.

however not at all clear. They seem to group simply all the male members and all the female members of the olose and of the olosne; but this conflicts with the information given on marriage.[1] A man may marry into the male side of his mother's kin or into the female side of his father's kin. Hence there must be some women in the male side, and, presumably, some men in the female side. A man cannot marry a parallel cousin, but he may marry: 613 602 582

(a) a father's sister. She presumably belongs to the female side of the olose, which presents no difficulty.

(b) a sister's daughter. She appears to belong to the female side of ego's mother's kin, while a man should marry into the male side of his mother's kin.

(c) a female cross-cousin. If the olose and the olosne were merely father's patrilineage and mother's matrilineage, as has been suggested, cross-cousins are excluded from both groups. In a footnote,[2] however, Childs seems to imply that mother's brother's daughter belongs to ego's mother's kin. Barnes therefore suggests that children of men of the matrilineage may be included in the olosne, falling into the male side irrespective of sex, and similarly the olose may include in the female side all the children of women of the patrilineage. By this hypothesis:

(a) a sister's daughter would fall into the female side of ego's olose.

(b) a mother's brother's daughter would fall into the male side of ego's olosne.

(c) a father's sister's daughter would fall into the female side of the olose.

The descent system: summary 602 613 611

The descent system suggested may then be summarised thus:

(1) olose (father's kin)

(a) *ondlil yohonji* (male side): all men in the patrilineage.

(b) *ondlil yohambo* (female side): all women in the patrilineage, and all sons and daughters of women in the patrilineage.

(2) olosne (mother's kin)

(a) *ondlil yohambo* (female side): all women in the matrilineage.

(b) *ondlil yohonji* (male side): all men in matrilineage, and all sons and daughters of all men in the matrilineage.

According to this hypothesis every person belongs to four distinct groups. A man must belong not only to the male side of the two groups centred in the father's patrilineage and the mother's matrilineage, but also to the male side of his father's matrilineal group and to the female side of his mother's patrilineal group. There are still only two systems

(1) Childs, op.cit., p.58. (2) P.XX, fn.3.

L11 of groups, but a man belongs to two groups within each system. Similar
L13 membership is required for a woman. A man shares with all his children his membership of the male side of his mother's matrilineal group, and
L02 shares with his sons membership of the male side of his father's patrilineal group. His daughters belong to his father's patrilineal group but to its female side. He does not transmit to his children membership of his father's matrilineal group or his mother's patrilineal group.(1) This is illustrated by the diagram on page 21.

L01 Kinship terminology

Patterns of behaviour between all blood relatives find their prototypes in the household. The following list of kinship terms is selected from the more detailed list given by Childs.(2)

Term		Reciprocal
nai	mother, mother's sister, etc.	ueolange
tate	father, father's brother, etc.	ueolange
tatekai	("female father") father's sister	ocimumbo cange
ami	mother's brother	ocimumbo cange
Rusange	older brother or sister, and male or female parallel cousin, if older than ego	wanjange
Ruto -	eldest brother (of family or household)	wanjange
(epolume (epolume (epoue	male or female cross-cousin	epolume, epolume, or epoue
mukai	sister or female parallel cousin (M.S.)(3)	mume
ebuale	" " " " (W.S.)	ebuale
mukulu	grandmother, grandparents' sister	mukulu yange
ukulu	grandfather, grandparents' brother	mukulu yange

Note: (a) There is no word used exclusively for "brother" by a man, although a woman may use mume in this sense. Rusange and wanjange are used by either men or women for older or younger brothers or sisters.

(b) mukulu and ukulu are sometimes used interchangeably for persons of either sex.

MARRIAGE

●582 Marriage within the kin group

The most desirable marriage is marriage within the circle of kin, i.e. (as noted above) into the male line of the olume or the female line of the olume. (There appears to be a preference for marriage within the olume.(4)) One may not marry one classed as brother, sister, father, mother, grandparent, child or grandchild, for such a union would involve

(1) This paragraph is largely quoted from Bemba, loc.cit.
(2) pp.47-9.
(3) M.S. = man speaking, W.S. = woman speaking.
(4) Childs, op.cit., p.53, note 5.

582 incest (*oku ndo*). But one may marry relatives of one's own age-level who belong to classes other than those mentioned, i.e. cross-cousins and, on other age-levels, father's sister or sister's daughter. It is said that formerly marriage never took place except between persons who could trace relationship in this way. Today this principle is very liberal in its application.[1] (It would be interesting to have estimates of the number of men who do marry first degree cross-cousins, father's sisters, or sister's daughters, as distinct from classificatory relatives of these classes, and the number who marry outside the *olusa* or *olutna*.)

583 Marriage was formerly arranged by the mother's brother (i.e. by the *olutna*), but today there is a tendency for fathers to arrange their daughters' marriages and to receive their marriage payment. (And also, occasionally, to assist their sons in providing marriage payment.)[2] *Ilumbo*, or marriage payment, was formerly paid in cattle, blankets, etc.[3] Today it is usually paid in cash, the amount being determined by the status of the bride.[4]

Polygyny

621 585 In the sample village (Ngundo, Kasongi chiefdom) described by Childs, of a total of 48 households,

(a) 10 households were polygynous; of these 9 contained only 2 wives or concubines, and the tenth, that of the headman, contained four wives and one concubine,

(b) 27 households were monogynous, and 3 more were occupied by widowers, all formerly monogynous. (The remaining households were occupied by 7 widows and one young unmarried man.)

Childs notes that the proportion of polygynous households in Kasongi chiefdom is probably higher than in other parts of Ovimbundu country for two reasons: the comparatively low marriage-payment in Kasongi as compared with other areas, and the proximity of Kasongi to Esele country, which has long been a source of supply for slave concubines. (Of the 10 polygynous households in Ngundo 5 contained at least 1 Esele concubine.)[5]

Avoidance between in-laws

602 Mutual respect (*ensubilo*) between the two kin groups involved is considered a necessary basis for a successful marriage, and is the reason given for the various avoidances (*oku liyusila*) enjoined upon the principals and their respective relatives. These avoidances may be summarised:-

573 (a) A husband and wife must avoid using each other's names.

601 (b) The term *ositanda* is used for parents-in-law of either sex, and reciprocally for sons-in-law or daughters-in-law. The term is extended to all those whom one's spouse calls "mother", "father" or "child" (Childs, p.52) and apparently also to those whom one's spouse calls sons, *tatekai* or

(1) Childs, p.54.
(2) Essie, 1945.
(3) Cashen, 1944, p.45.
(4) Childs, personal communication.
(5) Childs, page 30.

and young manhood, and to which he will bring his wife. In this house a kind of trial marriage *(eponji)* takes place. The young man will *oku tumisa* ("cause to send") a male friend to ask permission of a girl's mother and also to bring her to his house each night. The girl is called *eponji*. (The custom may also be called *uwaisi*, the girl *oabaisi*.) A young man may first tumisa at about seventeen or eighteen years, if he has sufficient money or goods to make the "betrothal" payment (*itambelo* - "enticements" or *oku lapula ikuelume* - "chasing away jealousies"). The amount of the payment (which is made to the girl's parents) varies with locality, wealth and status, but is usually about one tenth of the amount of the marriage payment proper. The amounts of both payments are increasing rapidly.[1] The nature of the intercourse is carefully circumscribed, and the girl is warned by her mother not to let intromission take place. Proofs of virginity are required on the marriage morning, and there are severe sanctions against premarital pregnancy. Childs' informants stressed that the chief purpose of the custom is that the two young people should get to know each other as well as possible with marriage in view. Ennis however[2] states that uwaisi does not necessarily lead to marriage and may be entered upon without the intention of marriage; the girl may leave the man if she does not like him, and if the uwaisi is broken off both may marry other persons without any difficulties.

INITIATION[3]

Tribal initiation for boys *(oku liseviso evanbu)* and girls *(uso wokai)* is carried on in camps or "schools" in the southern and south-eastern Umbundu chiefdoms, especially in Kalukembe, Kakonda, and Ngalangi. Sporadic instances of individual camps have also occurred recently in Viye, Bailundu, Sambu, Wambu, Cingolo and Cikuma. Even in regions where camps are regularly held, only the children of certain families enter. There appears to have been some passing on of the custom by heredity, and, in general, there is intermarriage only between families and individuals who adhere to the initiation rites. It is not known whether the rites have been taken over by the Ovimbundu from neighbouring peoples, or whether they represent a custom formerly widespread in Umbundu country. Initiation camps are not mentioned by the earlier writers.

Childs gives little information about what goes on in initiation camps, apart from pointing out that in making a definite break from the routine of life they contrast with other aspects of Umbundu education, and that "the hardship and cruelty of initiation camps have their parallel in the trading and slave-raiding expeditions of the past." His statement that "as an 'educational institution' [the initiation camps] do not seem to fit into the culture" is not very clear. From the few details given by Hambly[4] Umbundu camps appear to be identical with those of the tribes to the east, and here one of the most important aspects of the camps is their ritually-emphasised contrast with regular life.[5]

(1) Childs, personal communication.
(2) 1945.
(3) Childs, op.cit., pp.115-7.
(4) (2) 1934, pp.226f.
(5) See McCulloch, 1951, pp.85-91.

Vakuacisoko (lit. "those of the set")[1]

Childs considers that the custom of *vacuacisoko* is probably connected with circumcision and initiation. It does not exist throughout the territory but only in certain families who belong to the order and are said to pass it on by heredity. It seems to have been stronger in the past, but few practising members of the set are now known. All 'coevals' or members of the set were in duty bound to render mutual assistance, and all had mutual rights to the property of the others without complaint or remedy. These rights seem to have included that of having intercourse with each other's wives. Injury or even death of one member brought about by another did not allow the injured family to seek revenge or legal redress. It was the duty of the *vacuacisoko* to bury their fellows, themselves digging the grave and attending to all the expenses ordinarily supplied by the family of the deceased. They also had the duty of burying strangers without family who would not be buried by others for fear of defilement or responsibility for their debts.[2] Childs describes the *vacuacisoko* associations as "age-grade sets",[3] but gives no further explanation.

"With or without initiation rites, adolescence is largely preparation for marriage and full adult life. Traditionally, adolescence is not a time of conflict or stress....Contract and *corvée* labour have brought profound changes, especially for the young men. As for the girls, a few have gone into the towns; relatively few, however, other than those who attend a boarding-school, lead a life essentially different from that which has been traditionally theirs."[4]

MARRIAGE

Available information concerning degrees of relationship in which marriage is permitted, marriage-payment, polygyny and divorce has been given above.[5] Evambi[6] and Hambly[7] describe some of the customs and ceremonies connected with marriage.

For three nights after the commencement of the marriage ceremony the girl sleeps with her own parents, while the married woman and six unmarried girls whom she has chosen as her attendants sleep in the house of her husband. On the fourth day she moves to the man's house, bringing her cooking utensils. For the first month, according to Hambly, or, according to Evambi, the first year, i.e. until the grain is ripe in her new fields, she lives with her husband's mother or aunt, in whose kitchen she cooks food each night to send to her husband in the *onjango*. When her first child is two or three months old, a present of a pig passes from the girl's mother to her husband.

Childs[8] adds that adulthood comes with marriage, and marriage is only recognised as complete when the first child has been born. A child or an adolescent is only a "potential" person (*omunu*) and the permanency

(1) Childs, op.cit., p.115.
(2) Those who buried a man were considered responsible for his debts. Hence corpses were often placed in trees.
(3) Childs, op.cit., p.59.
(4) Ibid., p.117.
(5) Pp.20f.
(6) 1938.
(7) 1934, pp.180f.
(8) Op.cit., pp.119-20.

VI. SOCIAL LIFE

Sexual Relations

COURTSHIP

There is a certain humor and quaintness of language used by Ngonga in describing sexual relations of the Ovimbundu. So far as possible the interpreter's style of expression has been preserved because of its value in revealing the native attitude. 584 836

When a man begins to like a girl, he looks at her for several days. Perhaps the boy will talk to the girl who will tell him to go to her father and mother. The boy must ask the parents for a friendship, which may last for one or two years. During this time the boy must not do anything to the girl, and if he tries she ought to tell her parents. If a baby were born to them in this time it would be a shameful thing. After the boy has told the parents that he wishes to marry the girl he must find something to give to them. The girl must have agreed to marriage before the boy asks the parents. The first token may be no more than a ball of wax or a present of salt. This token says, "The girl is mine," and no other boy will ask for her because it is understood that she is promised to somebody. In former days there were restrictions against marriage with other tribes, but in eastern Angola at the present day the Ovimbundu occasionally marry with the Vachokue. [582

Soon the boy will start building a house on his father's plot, because he intends to bring the girl to his father's land. The boy must at this stage make a further present to the parents of the girl. In the old days he would take about five kilos of salt; but now he will take a bottle of Portuguese wine, two or three blankets, or a piece of cloth. The people who carry the present must be the brother, father, or a male cousin of the suitor. These relatives will say, "This is the day we have come for our boy's wife." Then the parents will examine the things. Perhaps they will say, "You must bring a better blanket." The father or the girl's mother's brother must call the relatives of the girl to a council (*onjango*) where the relatives of the boy and girl are gathered. 584 481

The parents say, "We are taking these things for our daughter; we hope she will be a good girl and not shame us. She is a good girl to us and we hope she will be a good girl in your house." The girl's parents turn to her and say, "We should like to hear that you are hospitable; give food to your husband's relatives when they visit you." 584 577

613 *mai* (or *oluina*) mean "family of my mother." These terms seem to indicate a bilateral rather than a unilateral lineage. Inquiry did not show that there were totems for the mother's or the father's people, or that marriage into any particular local group was com-
631 manded or enjoined. A village is a unit under the administration of a chief (*sekulu*) and as such is part of a large group of villages forming a kingdom ruled by a king (*osoma*), but such village units are concerned with government and warfare, not with exogamy.

613 In tracing descent an Ocimbundu gives the names of relatives of
565 both the father and mother, but commoners are unlikely to know the names of their relatives beyond the grandparent class. The children of a king were at one time able to recite many generations
[582] of ancestors along both parental lines. But if the king had married a commoner, as he was allowed to do after choosing his first wife from the royal line, the children knew only the genealogy of their father. This is obvious since the commoner mother would not be likely to know her line of descent. The son of a village chief (*sekulu*) may marry a commoner, but, according to Ngonga, the *sekulu*, his father, "would have a very good look at her."

582 Ngonga had not heard of the marriage of brothers and sisters,
565 not even in the royal family; the idea of such a union was new and repulsive to him. In Umbundu society there would be no necessity for such a marriage as that of brother and sister or other close relative, because members of a royal family of one part of the country could intermarry with members of a royal family in some area far away. There might, for example, be marriages between the royal families of Bailundu and Ngalangi, which are two principal kingships of the Ovimbundu confederacy.

835 When asked what would be the fate of a man who committed
684 incest with his blood daughter or uterine sister, Ngonga said he would be killed by his brother or by his mother's brother. If he escaped he would have to go far away so that his people could never see him again. If a fine were accepted for incest, the culprit would have to pay his own kin "because he had shamed them."

601 Table A, Ngonga's Own Generation, calls attention to a plurality of terms for brother and sister according to the relative ages of the speaker and the person addressed. Moreover, there is a term for direct address and another which is used when speaking of a brother or sister.

Ngonga was questioned with regard to forms of address for his brothers and sisters other than the children of his uterine mother.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

601 Table A indicates a wide use of the word *nawa* for "in laws" of the speaker's generation. Thus Ngonga calls the wives and husbands of his brothers and sisters *nawa* without distinguishing them in any way. The term *nawa* has a still wider connotation for it includes Ngonga's father's brother's son's wife, and his father's sister's daughter's husband. Ngonga's wife said that she uses the word *nawa* for all the brothers and sisters of her husband, for all the children of her husband's father's brother, her husband's father's sister's children, her husband's mother's brother's children, and her husband's mother's sister's children. Reciprocally, all these people call Ngonga's wife *nawa*.

605 582 Table A introduces the question of cross-cousin marriage, which is the functional form among the Ovimbundu. My informant said that he calls his mother's sister's children brothers and sisters, therefore he could not marry the girls. Neither are his father's brother's daughters eligible for marriage with him. The table shows the truth of this, for Ngonga calls his father's brother's daughter *mukai*, meaning "sister"; she addresses him as *kota* or *kuwa* ("brother"). Ngonga also addresses his father's brother's son by the term *manjange* ("younger brother") or *kuwange* ("older brother") according to the relative ages of the speaker and the person addressed.

When Ngonga was asked whether he could marry a daughter of his mother's brother, he replied, "I could marry her very well indeed." A marriage of Ngonga with his father's sister's daughter would be permissible but Ngonga said the marriage is not regarded as a good one "because the children will be stupid." Ngonga could marry his mother's brother's daughter's daughter, or his mother's brother's son's daughter. It would also be permissible for Ngonga to marry his father's sister's daughter's daughter, or his father's sister's son's daughter.

604 601 Ngonga said, "My father's brother is my father, and my mother's sister is my mother." When questioned further my informant said that a marriage with daughters of these relatives would make him *ocinyama*, which means "an animal." Relatives would say, "You have shamed the family." It will be noted from Table B, First Generation of Ngonga's Ascendants, that Ngonga's father's brother calls him *omolange*, meaning "my child," for which the reciprocal is *tate* ("father"). Ngonga's father's brother's wife is *mai* ("mother"), and she calls him *omolange* ("my child"). Ngonga distinguishes between his mother's oldest sister (*mai yukulu*), and his mother's

5: Hambly E-5 (1929-30) 1934 FP 13 Mbundu FP13

326 merly obtained. Blacksmiths now smelt scrap-iron from European sources.

[582] Among the Ovimbundu, blacksmiths are restricted in marriage only by those kinship laws arising from their classificatory system of relationships, and the operation of a system of cross-cousin marriage. The smiths are not an endogamous group, and the occupation is not hereditary.

But despite these differences, which are not quite in harmony with the general body of custom relating to Negro blacksmiths, the Ovimbundu preserve ritual which is part of a widely distributed attitude toward workers in iron.

When a boy begins his training he should be about eighteen years of age and physically robust. He is required to collect and soften fragments of iron in the charcoal fire, to work the bellows, and to beat iron on the anvil, but for a time he is not allowed to make implements, the chief of which are hoe blades and axe heads. At the end of two years the novice asks his master to examine him, and preparations are made for an inauguration ceremony should the youth have proved sufficiently skilled to become an independent blacksmith.

326 782 On the day of initiation the boy has to buy four chickens, two male and two female, one pup, and a goat. The master blacksmith has already made a complete set of tools for presentation to his pupil, but the big hammer (onjundo) is not quite completed until the day of initiation. While the final touches are being given to this object the novice stands still on a small stone anvil which is situated between the forge and the large anvil.

When the hammer is completed, and while it is still red hot, it is thrust into the belly of the pup provided by the novice. The goat and the four chickens are killed and some of their blood is sprinkled over the new tools which are gathered in a heap. The blacksmiths invite their friends to feast on the flesh of the sacrificed animals.

326 553 The boy remains standing on the anvil[1] until the master says, "You may speak and tell us what name you want." Perhaps the boy says, "I am Ndumbu;" then the people clap hands and trill with their fingers in their open mouths. My interpreter said, "The boy will work hard and people will pay him. He used to work hard but his master took the pay."

326 778 Near the large anvil may be seen one or more wooden figures which are still regarded as essential to the work of the blacksmith. I was informed that a blacksmith owes his skill to the aid of a spirit of some person he has killed, and that this spirit uses the wooden figure as a dwelling place. If this information is reliable the wooden figure is of the nature of a shrine, but I was not able to learn of any ceremony for inducing a spirit into the wooden figure. The impression left was that the spirit of the murdered person re-

1 [i.e., on the day of initiation of apprentice blacksmith. -- Analyst]

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

[1874-1911]

groups emerged. The information on the cult of the matrilineal 613
spirits which might have thrown some light on matrilineal conflicts and integration, is confused. Both Hastings and Mrs. Tucker state that the matrilineal spirits are always malevolent, but this is not confirmed by my informants,[83] and it may be that they were referring to the traditional belief that sorcery was [254] only practised between members of a matrilineal group. Although, as has been stated, a man looked to his matrilineal 613 kin for economic aid, he might travel with his father (who had 437 first claim on his services), or with his mother's brother or some other kinsman; indeed while his father was still alive he might travel and trade on his own account.[84] The matrilineal group (in this area at least) was not a unit from which trading teams were formed, but rather a means for providing financial assistance when needed for those engaged in trading. It is of course possible that in some areas of Umbundu country the matrilineal kin groups were significant in the organization of trading caravans.

Another institution whose form can be described but whose 502 ● function cannot be properly known is that of preferential marriage with certain categories of kin. Childs states that the categories were cross-cousins (both patrilateral and matrilateral), the sister's daughter, and the father's sister, and indicates that the cross-cousin marriages were not generally with first-cousins. My informants generally denied that it had been permitted to marry a father's sister, but confirmed his other statements. They added that an indemnification was paid by [503] the bridegroom to the bride's family 'to cut the blood',[85] and [601] that the kinship terms were replaced by affinal. This suggests that these marriages may have been intended to restore distant kinship ties by turning them into affinal ties and so renewing them for the next generation, but how this would operate cannot even be guessed.

[83] Hastings, p. 87; L. S. Tucker, 'The Divining Basket of the Ovimbundu', *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, 1940, pp. 171–201.

[84] Informants.

[85] This was paid down to 1949 or so in the area where I was. It was about 20 escudos, much less than bridewealth. It was formerly referred to by the Umbundu term for 'fine' (*ocinda*), as was the payment made on the death of a non-kinswoman wife.

601 wife of Ernesto (6). Patrilateral 'father' to Paula (24) and Saviel (11). Affinally related to Mwehombo, a 'sister' of whom he had married.

Wayangu, paternal half-brother of Mwehombo, resident at Epalanga till the end of 1955, wife's father to Aspirante (1) had married a sister (not clear whether own or classificatory) of Lusase.

3. *Kinship and marriage in the village setting*

621 The foregoing tabulated information and the charts indicate the two main principles of integration in Epalanga, as in other Umbundu villages, the settling of individuals near senior kinsmen and the existence of a number of intra-village marriage ties.

621 For a clearer outline of village structure to appear, it is 602 necessary to give a brief sketch of the contemporary kinship system which will be discussed more thoroughly in later chapters. This is cognatic, with little distinction between patrilineal [592] and matrilineal kin, the elementary family being the basic [591] household unit, the individual being permitted to settle with [582] any category of kin, and a high percentage of preferential marriages.[7]

591 The right of settling where one pleases, as 'the heart chooses', is recognized even in children. Minessi, the 7-year-old son of Gonçalve (18), used generally to eat at the household of his father's sister Paulina, the wife of Joaõ (20). Gonçalve said about this to me 'He is very fond of his father's sister.'

While the traditional norm by which a man lived in his father's village is still remembered, at least by older men, a

[7] Childs (p. 56) states that it is permitted to marry a cross-cousin on either side, a sister's daughter, and a father's sister. My informants generally agreed that the marriage with a father's sister was not and had not been permitted. Marriage is not permitted with 'true' kin of these categories. Padre Feltin, the superior of the Bimbe Catholic Mission who knew of the existence of these marriages, told me that very few Umbundu marriages came within the prohibited (a prohibition removable by a dispensation) degrees of kinship laid down by the Catholic Church (that is, up to, and including, third cousins). Such marriages in the past might have been with geographically as well as socially distant kin. Childs quotes a case of a marriage arranged, after the discovery of a kinship tie, between partners living as far apart as Chyaka (Quiaca) and Ngalangi (Galangue).

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father does not exercise great authority over his grown sons even if they live in the same village, nor does their living in different villages lead to a breach in personal relations. Sapapula who told me that a man should stay in his father's village till the latter's death had four sons, none of whom lived in Epalanga. Two lived in Menga (where Sapapula had lived up to 1946) and maintained friendly contact with their father. One who lived in Cela seemed socially as well as geographically more remote, and the fourth was a labour migrant given up for lost.

The preferential marriages[8] have continued in practice when most of the other institutions of the old kinship system have disintegrated. Their function is to multiply the relationships between individuals living in a particular neighbourhood, and to limit the socio-geographical range within which marriage partners are selected. Of a sample of 121 existing marriages 87, that is 70.3%, were with cross-cousins, and only 13.7% were with non-kinswomen.[9]

Even some of the non-kin marriages fitted into the general pattern of increasing ties within a limited social field. Thus in Epalanga Jaime (19) had married Delfina, a brother's daughter to Ndjoleya. They were not kinsfolk yet this fitted in with the pattern of kin marriages in increasing links between different kinship cores in the village. Similarly Costa (26) and his wife Nakalende were not agreed (when questioned separately) as to whether they were kinsfolk, but this is not really significant since

[8] I had been inclined to interpret these marriages as functions of the relations between kin groups. Dr. Mary Douglas has suggested to me that these marriages were in the past not related to any system of kin groups but had, as at the present day, the function of multiplying the kinship ties within a limited field. I do not know of any clear evidence which could at this time settle the point.

[9] I count here as kin marriages those between sakuetiende, funeral friends, who though not kinsfolk tend to be assimilated to cross-cousins in social usage. 'Cross-cousin' tends to be at the present time a blanket category, and I have repeatedly found asking men about their wife's kinship status that they would first give some other term and then change to 'cross-cousin'. [Epalume]. This explains why under present conditions the percentage of cross-cousin marriages in relation to the total number of marriages seems to be rising. Thus in 56 marriages (existing or terminated) contracted by 23 men who had taken part in the caravan trade, while the percentage of marriages with non-kinswomen was slightly smaller (12.5) the figure of marriages with cross-cousins was very much smaller (41.5) and the figure of marriages with kin other than cross-cousins, sister's daughters, and sakuetiende was much higher (23 %) compared to the contemporary figure of 5%.

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512 their marriage also fits a general pattern of Umbundu marriage, 621 a choice made within a limited range joining together individuals of different kinship cores.

The multiplication of ties and their concentration within a neighbourhood by this means do not prevent a man from having kin and affines a day or two's journey away. It has earlier been indicated that the population of Epalanga was from quite a wide area. Yet the consequences of previous preferential marriages (thus Paulo and Saviel were related both patrilaterally and matrilaterally) and the trend towards the establishment of new marriage ties had created a complicated mesh of linkages that has been described within a not particularly stable village population, whose senior residents had been there for only ten years. To use again the anthropological metaphor of kinship as a network, the network can have odd strings running out quite a way, but in a village the different ties will be bound up in a knot.

602 The long-range ties (with such obvious exceptions as those 166 with kin living in cities) are not the result of the range of kin spreading wider and wider under modern conditions. The evidence of pedigrees indicates that kinship and marriage links between individuals in, and actual migration to and from Gumba and Cassongue, Cela, and Namba, date back well into the nineteenth century. There is far less evidence of connections and migration between Gumba and areas to the south and east. This geographical aspect of social relations persists at the present day.

621 It has been indicated that the high proportion of preferential marriages creates a certain local stability, since many marriages are with people living close to. Yet the basic stability lies not so much in the relative stability of a local population, but in the pattern by which links of distant kinship are changed into marriage ties and new bonds are speedily established among the fortuitously assembled population of a new village.

4. *Headmen and Kinship Cores*

622 I now turn to the other principle of village integration, the settling of individuals near senior kinsmen. In the previous

604 621 On the village level, however, the importance of the mother's brother tie and of the tie between matrilateral 'brothers' becomes very apparent. None of Sapapula's four sons had settled in Epalanga, and his only classificatory 'son' was Gonçalve, own son to Mwehombo, Sapapula's matrilateral 'brother'. Seven household heads were sister's sons of Sapapula. This trend for matrilateral ties to predominate is marked also in Katembo and Mbunga, but less evident at Belem. Indeed, 'neo-matrilinearity' as a principle of village structure may be a general and not simply a local feature of Umbundu society, since Mr. C. M. N. White[11] has found that the settlements of Ovimbundu within Northern Rhodesia are marked by a predominance of matrilateral ties. This is referable to the contemporary kinship system in which the father-son tie is predominantly a personal one, with a limited extension of attitudes to classificatory fathers, whereas a man's relation with a mother's brother seems little affected by the question of genealogical distance. Perhaps the relations between the group of agnatic kin were so closely tied to the old village structure that when it broke up it disintegrated also the wider agnatic ties. Yet at the same time such matrilineal institutions as matrilineal inheritance and the non-repayment of loans among matrikin have weakened or disappeared.

[593] 602 178

591 Running counter to this principle of settling in the village of a senior kinsman who is likely to belong to one's matrikin, is the principle of cross-cousin marriage. 'If you have married your cross-cousin when your son grows up he will see a cross-cousin here, a cross-cousin there, and so he will stay.' That is, a man will stay in his father's village not simply by virtue of the father-son tie but because he will be surrounded by kinsmen. The relation between cross-cousins is one of equality and solidarity, expressed in joking and in burial services. To say that one stays in a place because one has cross-cousins at hand is to indicate an ideal of equal relations with a circle of kinsmen rather than attachment to the following of an important kinsman.

[592] [605] [602]

591 602 These two principles co-exist in actual social life. A man will recognize and respect a number of senior kinsmen living in his

[11] In letters.

CHAPTER VIII

MARRIAGE

1. *The Significance of Preferential Marriage*

Informants say that it is permissible to marry a classificatory cross-cousin, are divided as to the permissibility of marriage with a classificatory sister's daughter, and generally disapprove of marriage with other kin categories, or with true kin of these two categories. Indeed, kinsfolk who marry seem usually not to have any traceable common ancestor.[1] Up to recently,[2] a man marrying a kinswoman had to pay an indemnification of, say, 20 escudos to 'cut the blood'. This changed the kin relationship into an affinal one. 582

It has been previously stated that preferential marriages have an important social role to play in keeping kinsfolk together and multiplying the ties of kinship and affinity. If this is to be proved, it is necessary to show what the people themselves think of preferential marriages, what proportion of the marriages are between kinsfolk, whether this proportion has decreased under modern conditions, and how it relates to the contemporary kinship system. [112]

Several reasons may be given for choosing a cross-cousin bride. The bridewealth is likely to be lower, the girl is more likely to stay and not run away, if one cannot find another girl there will always be a cross-cousin to marry, and, old men point out, one will not be fined if a cross-cousin bride dies.

[1] This statement does not depend simply on my own information. Padre Feltin, superior of the Bimbe mission, who knew of the existence of these marriages told me that very few Umbundu marriages were between kin within the degrees of kinship prohibited (a prohibition removable by a dispensation) by the Catholic Church. Marriage with a first cousin is not infrequent both in Portugal itself and among the white Portuguese in Angola. [115]

[2] About 1948.

582 Another explanation, which I have quoted earlier, is that if one marries a kinswoman, one's children, when they grow up, will not leave, since they see 'a cross-cousin here, a cross-cousin there'.

All these reasons are no doubt to some extent valid. There are no fixed limits for bridewealth and no doubt some bride-
[583] wealths paid in a cross-cousin marriage are higher than some paid in marriages between non-kin; however, it is generally held that a kinsman is less demanding over the question of bridewealth than a non-kinsman. There is some evidence that cross-cousin marriages are more stable than those with non-kinsfolk. The high proportion of cross-cousin marriages naturally leads to an individual tending, when considering the possibility of marriage, to think of his female kin, even though there is no individual girl whom he is expected to marry.

768 The custom of fining a man whose wife had died was noted among the Ovimbundu a hundred years ago by Ladislau Magyar; in recent times it seems to have disappeared from most of Umbundu country. Its survival in Gumba up to the last few years may be related to the links existing between Gumba and the northern non-Umbundu peoples, who apparently practise it to this day.

582 The last of the explanations given may be translated thus, 'Cross-cousin marriage means that the children will have the same individuals as both patrikin and matrikin. They will remain in their father's village, where he is living with his kin and will not be inclined to return to their matrikin.' This line of argument comes close to the 'observer' explanation previously offered that preferential marriage greatly increases the number of social relations within a neighbourhood. The Ovimbundu do not see this aspect of cross-cousin marriage, and this fits their
[829] lack of any 'model' of their own society as a whole, which is in turn a consequence of the rapid social change they have experienced. However, they do see cross-cousin marriage as increasing the number of ties which exist for an individual in his village and neighbourhood.

602 The diagrams and information contained in Chapter IV have already indicated how individuals are linked by marriage ties, and in Chapter VII the way in which brothers-in-law may

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live next to each other has been noted as a new development, 602
impossible in the days of agnatic residence groups. It will be remembered how in listing the kinship cores of Epalanga, Joaõ was placed among the kin of Mbati and Mwehombo with which he had become associated through his marriage to Paulina, although he had come to Epalanga through his relationship to Sapapula.

I have earlier described the preferential marriages as giving 582
'stability' to the kinship system and as providing a limit on 602
the spread of affinal ties. In what does this stability consist, and how far is there really a limit?

The stability given by the marriage system is not the sum of the stability of individual marriages. Nor is it more than partially a local stability; marriages are not limited to a small geographical range, although the network of marriages between kin is very significant in local relations and even 'long distance' marriages which renew links with Cela and Namba reflect long-standing contacts of marriage and migration. The stability lies in the 'pattern' by which new preferential marriages are constantly being made.

The socio-geographical range over which wives are found does not differ appreciably from the socio-geographical range over which kin ties exist, which, as has been noted in Chapter IV[1], links Gumba strongly to Cassongue, Cela, and Namba, rather than with areas to the south and east, and this range does not seem to be expanding under modern conditions. Migrant labourers do not return to Gumba with wives from other areas. The only definite exception I knew to this rule was provided by Sawaisi, a traditional village headman, who had travelled on the caravans and had subsequently been a soldier. Stationed at Luanda he had there married three Kimbundu women with [646]
whom he returned to Gumba, where they were still living with him during my stay.

The preference for kinship marriage is not a limiting factor on marriage in the way that a rule of endogamy is, since a number of marriages occur with non-kinswomen. It is a limiting factor in the way that it gives an additional significance to kinship, since in the choice of a wife the distinction between kin and

[1] See p. 58.

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non-kin, which is not marked in ordinary social life, becomes important. Kinship marriages transform 'distant' kin ties into close affinal ties which will in the next generation become close kinship ties.

It is extremely difficult even to guess how this system operated in the past. Did the high rate of preferential marriages have the same function formerly as now? Or has the institution continued in being, while its function relative to the total society has changed? The testimony of that informant of Dr. Childs who told him that formerly all marriages were kin marriages and that patrilaterally one only married on 'the side of the basket' and matrilaterally only on 'the side of the bow'[4] has led Professor Barnes to suggest[5] that the preferential marriages functioned as links between descent groups. Both Dr. Childs and myself, however, have found that 'the side of the bow' and 'the side of the basket' are simply synonyms for '*olusu*' and '*olusina*'.[6] Moreover, my informants did not confirm his statement since they denied the right of marriage with a father's sister, and the quantitative information shows that even in the past some marriages were with non-kinswomen, and that others were with categories of kin theoretically forbidden, so that, then as now, the preferential marriages were with distant kinswomen rather than with a specific category of kin.

[114]

If, however, kinship marriages in the past operated as they now do, it is difficult to see their relation to the patrilineal and matrilineal groups. A clue to a solution is surely given by the custom of 'cutting the blood', which destroyed kinship to begin affinity. Marriages were arranged, it may be suggested, with those people who were still just kin, and who probably often were also geographically as well as socially distant so that the number of ties outside the sub-chiefdom might be increased, a matter of importance for long-distance traders. Later, Portuguese rule made travel no longer dependent on such long range contacts. Meanwhile the disintegration of the agnatic residence

[4] The exact words are 'Formerly people never married unless they were related, that is to say unless they touched the blood together. If in the mother's kin (*k'olusu*) only on the side of the bow (i.e. male line). If in the father's kin (*k'olusu*) only on the side of the basket (i.e. female line)'. See Childs, pp. 53–56.

[5] Review of Childs in *Man*, 1950, pp. 126–8.

[6] Dr. Childs was speaking to me apropos of Barnes's interpretation.

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groups began to make the socio-geographical function of these marriages no longer the renewal of ties with distant kin but the holding together of the local community no longer held in the firm framework of the old local organization. 582 602

Several explanations can therefore be given for preferential marriages. From the point of view of the man making such a marriage there are economic advantages in the probably lower bridewealth and, formerly, the avoidance of the fine payable on the death of a non-related wife. The marriage itself is more likely to be stable, and a man's children are more likely to stay with him if they have other kin close at hand. The local mobility of the Ovimbundu to some extent assists marital stability, since a bride arriving in a village may well find there other kin than her husband and his relatives, and may find such relatives helpful to her. 582

From an observer's view-point, preferential marriage is important on the village and neighbourhood level by multiplying social links within them. Its importance for the kinship system lies in its giving significance to the distinction between kin and non-kin and in keeping kinsfolk together without either localization of kinship groups or villages with strong headmen.

2. *Husband, Wife, and Household*

Traditionally the Ovimbundu lived chastely till marriage, and there existed sanctions in the form of fines, alterations in the marriage ceremony, and mystically caused illness, against unchastity.[7] The force of these sanctions has weakened in modern times;[8] however, many Ovimbundu remain chaste until marriage. 836 684

The age of marriage is about twenty-two for a man, and about eighteen for a girl. In Gumba there is some tendency to marry younger at about 16–17. Villagers in Epalanga ascribed this to contract labour, that is, to the necessity of a contract labourer having to have someone to cook for him. This is a point which will be considered later in reference to the wife's services to her 582

[7] Hastings, p. 121. Childs, p. 113.

[8] Childs, loc. cit., and fieldwork.

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582 husband. Another explanation is that this is a northern practice which has spread into Gumba.[9]

584 A young man who wishes to marry approaches the girl of his choice and asks her to marry him. He then asks her parents for their permission. The consent of both partners and of their parents is required now as in the past, though parental consent may often be evaded by running off to the towns and getting married there. After that negotiations are conducted with a senior kinsman as intermediary. Before the marriage can take 583 place, bridewealth must be paid over. It is this that gives the right to claim damages for adultery. When asked why bridewealth is paid, informants are likely to say that it compensates the father for the expense of the bringing up of his daughter.

[178] The amount of bridewealth paid has been rising. Two informants said that four yards (metres) of cloth and a bottle of rum formed the bridewealth in the time of the rubber trade. Others suggested as the bridewealth of that period a hoe and a few sleeping-mats. Alternatively seashells or even Portuguese coins, which were not then used in transactions among the Ovimbundu, were employed. These bridewealth objects were obtained from outside Umbundu country and had a certain rarity value, unlike the other objects which were very common. In the early thirties Hastings also mentioned the bridewealth as consisting of four yards of cloth, a bottle of rum, plus a kerchief given to her father's sister.[10] Money seems to have come in as a regular part of bridewealth about 1940.

When Cypriano married in 1949 Rosa, a sister's daughter, he paid 200 escudos (about £2. 10s.), a black cloth to her mother, and a small pig to her father. When Pedro Epalanga Chimbalanya married, near the Bimbe mission, in 1955 he paid 400 escudos, one cloth of six metres, a head cloth, a woman's blouse, and a bottle of rum. When in 1956 Daniel married Feliciana, a sister's daughter of Ndjoleya and his cross-cousin, he paid 400 escudos, whereas when Jose the son of Paulo married in the same year he paid 300 escudos also for a cross-cousin.

The bridewealth should be paid to the father. If however, a

[9] Explanation given by Padre Feltin.
[10] Hastings, p. 25.

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593 178 Going round the houses at night one meets in one house a man and his wife sitting together talking, in another a group of men and women sitting round a fire. This is a very definite change from traditional pattern of social life in which men and women sat in separate groups, a pattern which is still observed at funerals.[14] A man who has a case at the post is likely to take with him his wife as a witness. A husband has the right to beat 593 his wife, and she should show respect to him. In fact wife-beating is rare, and the relationship seems from observation to be often one of mutual affection and close companionship. Informants were divided as to whether one can joke with one's wife—some people may fear that she will cease to respect her husband if he jokes with her—but conversationally an Umbundu wife often seems to enjoy an easy familiarity with her husband. A wife may occasionally go and stay with her relatives, and in the neighbourhood she may pay calls on kinsfolk, friends, or co-villagers, without her husband. This contrasts with the way the white and mulatto wives of traders follow the custom of rural Portugal by staying more or less permanently in the house.

The wife has her own fields, and her own granary. If the marriage is polygamous, each wife has her field and granary. [294] Her husband may help her in her fields, although he also has fields of his own. The maize in the husband's granary is sold to [434] produce money to pay tax and to buy clothing for both husband and wife, and the maize in the wife's granary is used for food. If her husband is away a woman will buy her clothes from her own granary. The cooking of maize has not only a nutritive importance but also a social one since it is considered the service, which is specifically wifely. Thus, the explanation I was given 582 for the lower age of marriage emphasizes this—I should explain that people returning from contract labour are sent first to the post at which they were recruited and may have to do an additional fortnight's work there. 'It is because of the hardship.[15] In the past one married only when one was fully grown. Now it is necessary to have somebody who will send food to the post when you come back.' 'Perhaps,' I suggested, 'your mother

[14] Childs, pp. 32, 33.
[15] *Ohali*, a word often used with regard to administrative demands.

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could send food.' 'Perhaps your mother is dead, and she has to think of your father.' A man should not cook for himself in a village, by a rule of convention which has no sanction attached, although he may do so when away working.

Clearing fields, house-building, and thatching are men's work, as are brick-making, fishing, hunting, mat-making, sewing, and woodwork. Beer-brewing, cooking, maize-pounding, and water and firewood gathering are women's work. Men and women can work together in most forms of agriculture, sowing, hoeing, harvesting, feeding small stock and treating tobacco. The division of labour is based on ideas of what is natural and fitting, not on any sanctions, mystical or otherwise. Nor is the division always strictly observed. A man may fetch water if his wife is ill, or simply away visiting relatives, and I have seen an adolescent boy pounding out maize on a pounding-block.

A man should look after his sick wife. There is a song which is sung about the married couples of the village, each being named in turn, which tells how the husband went to the post and his wife climbed a tree to get some fruit down. She fell down and hurt herself and then wailed because there was nobody to look after her. A woman who is ill for some time will return to her kin to get better.

The husband does not attend his wife's funeral, but washes himself all over, and then has to lie down asleep, or as if sleeping, during the funeral. Grains of maize and other crops may be, but are not always, even at pagan funerals, thrown over a woman's coffin as it is taken to the cemetery. A man should leave his old home when his wife dies, although this rule is neglected nowadays, certainly by the owners of brick houses. After a year or two, a widower should *oku wonga*, pile up stones on his wife's grave, a duty which has behind it a vague mystical sanction of illness. The widow of a hunter should be buried beside her husband even though after his death she has married again.[17]

A widow may marry again about six months after the funeral. The exception to this is the *inakulu*, the chief's main wife. Formerly, it was permitted for a widow to marry her husband's

[17] A case of this occurred during my stay.

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Marriages may also be ended by the wife leaving her husband. 586
This may be the consequence of quarrels; however at times a woman may just run off without any apparent reason. Her husband may go to her kin and bring her back or may just get married again—such an episode may occur after many years of a marriage which has previously appeared happy. People 587
who have been married previously can be married again according to the pattern described previously. Middle-aged and elderly people would leave out the festivities and would just have the meal together, or simply count themselves as married by the payment of the bridewealth.

There does exist a formal ceremony of divorce in which 586
maize flour is smeared on the upper part of the face by the husband, and this will take place in the presence of representatives of the wife's kin. A man will do this when his wife has shown herself disrespectful to him or has quarrelled with his kin or her co-wife. As the Ovimbundu regard marriage as [581]
being for the procreation of children, a barren wife should be, [842]
they say, sent away but often in practice this is not done, if the wife is otherwise satisfactory.

Legally, the Portuguese administration recognizes both the 582
customary marriage and the Catholic marriage ceremony. The Catholic missions report to the post people who, having been married in church, then make customary marriages, and these may be subjected to such sanctions as being sent to contract labour. The Protestant church marriages are not apparently legally recognized but they are subject to the authority of the Protestant church courts which grant divorces on certain grounds. The *chefe de posto* on his annual visit to take the check on the census may get angry with polygynists, but in fact no very effective administrative action exists with regard to indigenous marriage.

The motives given for polygynous marriage are the desire 595
to have many children and (in the case of a chief) the need to have cooks to provide hospitality for guests. Large-scale polygyny is thought to be rather funny; I was told, as something amusing, that the former chief Mbati had 17 wives. Kafelo, the former chief of Gumba, had 6 wives, the highest number of continuing polygynous marriages I found. In Epalanga out of

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604 This strong pull towards the mother's brother is, however, marked on the level of village relationships as has been already noted. It is possible that with regard to co-operation on the [607] domestic plane the tie between a man and his wife's full or half siblings is stronger than that with his sister's children. This 607 argument would claim that the tie created by marriage between a man and his wife's full or half siblings is one of the strongest in the Umbundu social structure, and as a further proof (albeit not quantitively assessed) may be quoted the frequency with which two households close together turn out to belong to a man and his wife's brother.

In the first section of this chapter it was argued that the high 582 602 rate of preferential marriages greatly increased the number of social ties between individuals in a neighbourhood, and brought a renewal of ties with distant kin. In this section various aspects 593 of the relationship between husband and wife have been examined. Husband and wife co-operate economically and outside working hours may pass their evenings together. In a dispute taken to the post a man is likely to take his wife as a witness. Mystically sanctioned obligations do exist between husband and wife. While the elementary family is the main 592 domestic type, households headed by women are also found and there is a certain amount of mobility of children between households. The tie of a man with his wife's siblings, particu- [607] larly when they are children, is significant for the domestic organization of households.

582 Marriage is indeed the pivotal institution of the Umbundu 602 kinship system. The preferential marriages do not link descent 621 groups to one another; rather they bring about the local concentration of kin which makes out of many vague and insecure links a strongly-woven community in which both husband and wife can live with relatives near at hand.

593 Of the personal relationship between husband and wife it would be impossible to say as an anthropologist has of another African people, 'Here people looked for little in marriage. A man would turn to his sixteenth cousin twice removed before he turned to his wife.'[88] A man shares with his wife his work and leisure, is linked to her by mystical obligations which are not

[88] Elenore Smith Bowen, *Return to Laughter*, London, 1954, p. 117.

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ended by her death, and can rely on her testimony in a case. 582
Even though adultery is reputedly frequent it is deplored and, [837]
as will be shown in a discussion of disputes, a man's hostility to another will be ascribed to thwarted lust for the latter's wife. The conjugal bond is the closest social relation that can exist between adults, and therefore the very type of personal enmity is provided by the adulterer or would-be adulterer.

I am here emphasizing the factors which strengthen the 582
conjugal bond; at the end of the previous chapter I emphasized 602
the strength which the brother-sister tie possessed under changed 178
conditions. The balance between these two ties is to be seen in the way in which a man and his wife's brother are often next *door neighbours and the best of friends. It may be suggested* that this balance reflects the part-peasant part-proletarian condition of the Ovimbundu, the emergence of the conjugal family with its importance as the working team for the cultivation of cash crops, and the 'reshaping of' the brother-sister tie with the absence of husbands as labourers. It seems probable from the example of the substantial coffee-growers that had the Ovimbundu become full-time cultivators there would have been a strong trend towards isolated households and the weakening of the 'neo-matrilineal' pull which operates in the villages.

It is then the marriage tie which holds the vague, amorphous, kinship system together; it is against this vagueness that the marriage bond appears as the closest and most definite relation that can exist between two adults; and the change-over from trade to an economy based on wage-labour and cash agriculture has been accompanied by a transition from a double-descent kinship system to one in which the emergence of the elementary family co-exists with a certain pull towards matrilineal kin.

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by the people under Paulo's leadership on Guilherme's position. 578
Guilherme counter-attacks by using his relationship with the post but finds himself forced to seek a reconciliation with the people of Epalanga.

The quarrel had begun with the proposed marriage of Anna, a step-daughter of Guilherme, and a member of his household, to Luciano, a son of the former chief Simbwyikoka and an inhabitant of the latter's village. Guilherme had no effective religious affiliation but Anna had been baptized as a Catholic, her godmother being Maria, the wife of Paulo. Luciano on the other hand was the elder of the Protestant catechetical school in Simbwyikoka village. Paulo therefore intervened to stop the marriage in accordance with the rule made by the Catholic [582] missions against marriage with non-Catholics. Guilherme, angry at this, decided to pick on Pedro Nendi (see List II, p. 55) and Francisco Lyonjanga, sons of Mbati, and therefore wife's brothers to Paulo. Pedro Nendi had been at one time a Catholic catechist but had since been dismissed. Francisco was at the time of my arrival in Epalanga moving out of his village to settle near Pedro in a hamlet near the village. He worked as assistant to Abel Pinheiro, an African carpenter, who lived a little further along the road to Chicunda and who was employed by a white living elsewhere. Guilherme accordingly reported to the post that the two brothers had never gone to contract labour and got a policeman to come with an order for [648] them to be brought to the post for contract labour. The policeman arrived and got Francisco, but Pedro was away visiting relatives at Nova Lisboa. Francisco then claimed that he was in fact employed by a white and was therefore exempt from contract labour. At that time Antonio Pires, an African priest from the *Missão Católica de Bimbe*, was visiting Epalanga as part of a tour through the villages. Accordingly, on the morning of the 16th January 1956, Francisco came to my house where the priest had been breakfasting with me, and stated his case. This action brought the dispute between Guilherme and Paulo for the first time within the sphere of a representative of the civilized community. The priest told Francisco to get a letter from his employer to the post. Francisco duly arrived at the post with a letter, but forgot to bring his

582 incest *(oku ndo)*. But one may marry relatives of one's own age-level who belong to classes other than those mentioned, i.e. cross-cousins and, on other age-levels, father's sister or sister's daughter. It is said that formerly marriage never took place except between persons who could trace relationship in this way. Today this principle is very liberal in its application.(1) (It would be interesting to have estimates of the number of men who do marry first degree cross-cousins, father's sisters, or sister's daughters, as distinct from classificatory relatives of these classes, and the number who marry outside the *oluse* or *oluina*.)

● 583 Marriage was formerly arranged by the mother's brother (i.e. by the *oluina*), but today there is a tendency for fathers to arrange their daughters' marriages and to receive their marriage payment. (And also, occasionally, to assist their sons in providing marriage payment.)(2) *Ilombo*, or marriage payment, was formerly paid in cattle, blankets etc.(3) Today it is usually paid in cash, the amount being determined by the status of the bride.(4)

Polygyny

621 595 In the sample village (Ngendo, Kasongi chiefdom) described by Childs, of a total of 48 households,

(a) 10 households were polygynous; of these 9 contained only 2 wives or concubines, and the tenth, that of the headman, contained four wives and one concubine,

(b) 27 households were monogynous, and 3 more were occupied by widowers, all formerly monogynous. (The remaining households were occupied by 7 widows and one young unmarried man.)

Childs notes that the proportion of polygynous households in Kasongi chiefdom is probably higher than in other parts of Ovimbundu country for two reasons: the comparatively low marriage-payment in Kasongi as compared with other areas, and the proximity of Kasongi to Esele country, which has long been a source of supply for slave concubines. (Of the 10 polygynous households in Ngendo 5 contained at least 1 Esele concubine.)(5)

Avoidance between in-laws

602 Mutual respect *(esumbilo)* between the two kin groups involved is considered a necessary basis for a successful marriage, and is the reason given for the various avoidances *(oku liyuvuila)* enjoined upon the principals and their respective relatives. These avoidances may be summarised:-

593 (a) A husband and wife must avoid using each other's names.

606 (b) The term *ndatembo* is used for parents-in-law of either sex, and reciprocally for sons-in-law or daughters-in-law. The term is extended to all those whom one's spouse calls "mother", "father" or "child" (Childs, p.52) and apparently also to those whom one's spouse calls *nanu*, *tatekai* or

(1) Childs, p.54.
(2) Fanis, 1945.
(3) Cushman, 1944, p.45.
(4) Childs, personal communication.
(5) Childs, page 30.

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[1874-1911]

groups emerged. The information on the cult of the matrilineal spirits which might have thrown some light on matrilineal conflicts and integration, is confused. Both Hastings and Mrs. Tucker state that the matrilineal spirits are always malevolent, but this is not confirmed by my informants,[83] and it may be that they were referring to the traditional belief that sorcery was only practised between members of a matrilineal group. Although, as has been stated, a man looked to his matrilineal kin for economic aid, he might travel with his father (who had first claim on his services), or with his mother's brother or some other kinsman; indeed while his father was still alive he might travel and trade on his own account.[84] The matrilineal group (in this area at least) was not a unit from which trading teams were formed, but rather a means for providing financial assistance when needed for those engaged in trading. It is of course possible that in some areas of Umbundu country the matrilineal kin groups were significant in the organization of trading caravans.

Another institution whose form can be described but whose function cannot be properly known is that of preferential marriage with certain categories of kin. Childs states that the categories were cross-cousins (both patrilateral and matrilateral), the sister's daughter, and the father's sister, and indicates that the cross-cousin marriages were not generally with first-cousins. My informants generally denied that it had been permitted to marry a father's sister, but confirmed his other statements. They added that an indemnification was paid by the bridegroom to the bride's family 'to cut the blood',[85] and that the kinship terms were replaced by affinal. This suggests that these marriages may have been intended to restore distant kinship ties by turning them into affinal ties and so renewing them for the next generation, but how this would operate cannot even be guessed.

[83] Hastings, p. 87; L. S. Tucker, 'The Divining Basket of the Ovimbundu', *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, 1940, pp. 171–201.

[84] Informants.

[85] This was paid down to 1949 or so in the area where I was. It was about 20 escudos, much less than bridewealth. It was formerly referred to by the Umbundu term for 'fine' (*ocimbu*), as was the payment made on the death of a non-kinswoman wife.

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Luveli's income from bricklaying. The laying of the bricks that form a modern villager's house may bring 100 escudos.

The basic cash need of an Otjimbundu, then, is for money to pay government demands and to provide clothing for his wife and children, who seem more likely than the men to get new clothing every year.[5] Add to this the possibility of other calls (e.g. provision for a relative's funeral) a desirable income even for this low level of consumption would be 400 escudos (£5) and a more prosperous villager might earn and spend double the amount. Exceptional individuals still remaining within the normal conditions of Umbundu cultural and social life, such as Kambungo, may earn from 2,000 to 3,000 escudos a year, perhaps even more, from agriculture. Maize is the foundation of the agricultural economy, but Kambungo's remark that maize did not pay seems to reflect a trend to find other openings such as growing coffee, which is, however, subject to difficulties of climate.

Within the villages there is some trade in handmade objects such as pottery, sleeping-mats, and sticks for stirring mush, and there are quite a number of bricklayers, carpenters, and tailors (proprietors of sewing-machines) who have acquired European skills which bring them money. These craftsmen are, on payment of a fee of 250 escudos (a figure given me by a tailor), exempt from contract labour.

Many European residents seem to think that the only European products natives desire are cloths, clothing, and wine. This is not so; villagers wanted me to sell them kerosene for lamps, D.D.T. powder for their hair, and soap. It is interesting that the occasions on which an Otjimbundu would accumulate large (for him) sums all fall outside the maize-for-cloth pattern of trading. These occasions are bridewealth payment (and counting all expenses this may well come to 800 escudos—£10 or more), which is a traditional due, the purchase of bicycles (according to place of purchase from 1,200 escudos [£15] to 1,500 escudos [£18. 15. 0]) which are prestige-giving objects, and the trading journeys to buy cattle. Kambungo had

[5] The trader whose opinions I have previously quoted (Senhor Alberto Oliveira Mendes of Chicunda), remarked, 'It is the women who save us. The men make a shirt last for three or four years but the women get something new every year.'

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The rules about avoidance at night are still kept. The prohibitions on a man borrowing his father's clothes and sleeping in the same room as his father seem to survive. The prohibition on a child speaking the name of his father or mother reported by Childs is not, and was not formerly, found in this area. It is, however, wrong for a child to address his parents by name. 593 551

Children begin to work in the fields when they are about six. Occasionally boys of 10 to 11 go to the coffee fields for two months work, but usually boys do not go out to work until they are about 14 or 15. 857

A boy going out to work should ask his father's permission to go though this is not always done. Returning from work whether contract labour or voluntary work a boy should bring presents to his relatives. He would be expected to give something, say, a jacket, to his father, and a cloth to his mother, on returning from voluntary work and a shirt to his father on coming back from contract labour. These gifts should be made in kind. Money lent from son to father should be repaid, though it is wrong for a son to enforce payment by appealing to the post for policemen. A father may give money to his son for bridewealth, and may suggest a choice of bride. He cannot constrain, nor could he in the past, his son and daughter to a marriage they do not wish. 593 [583]

A man cannot be said to have real authority over his grown sons. The stated norm is that a man's sons stay in the same village till he dies. He has no power to make them do so, and they are not condemned by public opinion if they live elsewhere. A man's attitude to classificatory 'fathers' is determined by the age, status, and personalities of those involved, rather than by jural rights and obligations. I have found men unable to tell me what had become of their own brothers' children. 604

Formerly when the father of an adolescent boy died he would join the household of a father's brother. Nowadays this would be much less likely, as it is common for such a boy to settle with other categories of kin, notably siblings and maternal kinsfolk. A man is free to stay with his brothers if he wishes, or to leave them. 768

While the tie between full brothers is held to be the strongest, as regards classificatory brothers there seems to be a slight 602

582 Another explanation, which I have quoted earlier, is that if one marries a kinswoman, one's children, when they grow up, will not leave, since they see 'a cross-cousin here, a cross-cousin there'.

All these reasons are no doubt to some extent valid. There are no fixed limits for bridewealth and no doubt some bride-
[583] wealths paid in a cross-cousin marriage are higher than some paid in marriages between non-kin; however, it is generally held that a kinsman is less demanding over the question of bridewealth than a non-kinsman. There is some evidence that cross-cousin marriages are more stable than those with non-kinsfolk. The high proportion of cross-cousin marriages naturally leads to an individual tending, when considering the possibility of marriage, to think of his female kin, even though there is no individual girl whom he is expected to marry.

768 The custom of fining a man whose wife had died was noted among the Ovimbundu a hundred years ago by Ladislau Magyar; in recent times it seems to have disappeared from most of Umbundu country. Its survival in Gumba up to the last few years may be related to the links existing between Gumba and the northern non-Umbundu peoples, who apparently practise it to this day.

582 The last of the explanations given may be translated thus, 'Cross-cousin marriage means that the children will have the same individuals as both patrikin and matrikin. They will remain in their father's village, where he is living with his kin and will not be inclined to return to their matrikin.' This line of argument comes close to the 'observer' explanation previously offered that preferential marriage greatly increases the number of social relations within a neighbourhood. The Ovimbundu do not see this aspect of cross-cousin marriage, and this fits their
[829] lack of any 'model' of their own society as a whole, which is in turn a consequence of the rapid social change they have experienced. However, they do see cross-cousin marriage as increasing the number of ties which exist for an individual in his village and neighbourhood.

602 The diagrams and information contained in Chapter IV have already indicated how individuals are linked by marriage ties, and in Chapter VII the way in which brothers-in-law may

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582 husband. Another explanation is that this is a northern practice which has spread into Gumba.[9]

584 A young man who wishes to marry approaches the girl of his choice and asks her to marry him. He then asks her parents for their permission. The consent of both partners and of their parents is required now as in the past, though parental consent may often be evaded by running off to the towns and getting married there. After that negotiations are conducted with a senior kinsman as intermediary. Before the marriage can take 583 place, bridewealth must be paid over. It is this that gives the right to claim damages for adultery. When asked why bridewealth is paid, informants are likely to say that it compensates the father for the expense of the bringing up of his daughter.

[178] The amount of bridewealth paid has been rising. Two informants said that four yards (metres) of cloth and a bottle of rum formed the bridewealth in the time of the rubber trade. Others suggested as the bridewealth of that period a hoe and a few sleeping-mats. Alternatively seashells or even Portuguese coins, which were not then used in transactions among the Ovimbundu, were employed. These bridewealth objects were obtained from outside Umbundu country and had a certain rarity value, unlike the other objects which were very common. In the early thirties Hastings also mentioned the bridewealth as consisting of four yards of cloth, a bottle of rum, plus a kerchief given to her father's sister.[10] Money seems to have come in as a regular part of bridewealth about 1940.

When Cypriano married in 1949 Rosa, a sister's daughter, he paid 200 escudos (about £2. 10s.), a black cloth to her mother, and a small pig to her father. When Pedro Epalanga Chimbalanya married, near the Bimbe mission, in 1955 he paid 400 escudos, one cloth of six metres, a head cloth, a woman's blouse, and a bottle of rum. When in 1956 Daniel married Feliciana, a sister's daughter of Ndjoleya and his cross-cousin, he paid 400 escudos, whereas when Jose the son of Paulo married in the same year he paid 300 escudos also for a cross-cousin.

The bridewealth should be paid to the father. If however, a

[9] Explanation given by Padre Feltin.
[10] Hastings, p. 95.

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man has four daughters he will receive the bridewealth only for the two oldest. The mother's brother will receive the bridewealth for the third sister and a brother for the fourth. If the father is dead, the payment is made to a mother's brother or a brother real or classificatory. To some extent the size of the bridewealth is a reflection of the status of the girl—thus on the railway line 1,000 escudos (£12. 10s.) might be paid for a girl who could read and write. In my own area a Gumba man might pay more for a girl from Ndjandju than for a Cela girl because Ndjandju is regarded, owing to its proximity to the mission, as being more civilized. There exist also counter-gifts. Ndjoleya, who as mother's brother received the bridewealth for Feliciana, gave a pig to Daniel, and it is customary for a pig to be given to the husband by his wife's father on the birth of their first child.[11]

The Umbundu word for marriage *oku kwela* is applied both to customary marriage and to Christian marriage. To distinguish between the two, Portuguese words are taken over, *amigar* (originally, to live in concubinage) being used for the customary marriage, and *casar* (to marry) being used for marriage in church. The use of *amigar* of a particular marriage implies that the people making it are pagans, or Christians who have omitted the church ceremony for one reason or another. In Gumba the church marriage, while it gives status among Christians is not an important occasion in the local milieu, and people who have been through the church marriage but who have not made the *uvala*, the traditional wedding feast, are not permitted by their senior kin to cohabit. Around the mission the church ceremony is regarded as the important thing, and the *uvala* seems to be thought of simply as a party. Traditionally and usually at the present day the *uvala* is held in the dry season.

In the wedding feast there are a number of variations between one occasion and another, but a general outline can

[11] Hastings, p. 110, states that a year or two after the birth of the first child another pig is given which is called the pig of cutting off. The giving and the accepting of this severes all responsibilities between the families. The women can no more be returned to her father's people for misdemeanour—only in the case of the death of her husband will she be taken back.

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Epalanga. Told what had happened, he said that he would keep out of it, and that he had advised Guilherme to live elsewhere. In the afternoon of the same day, as heavy rain was falling, a number of people ran up and bounded on to my veranda. These included Anna, another girl (I think a sister of hers) both rather frightened, Simbwyikoka, Luciano, Paulo and some others. Anna said that Simbwyikoka was a sorcerer[3] and would kill her, and sooner than be killed by sorcery she would jump in the river. Simbwyikoka and Luciano had come to Epalanga to try and recover the 250 escudos which had been paid over in bridewealth. The catechist tried to intervene saying 'The catechist is the chief[4] of everybody in the village', but nobody paid any attention to him. Eventually, as the girl continued to threaten to jump in the river, I contributed 200 escudos, and so those involved left satisfied.

Early the following day I heard that Guilherme had returned from the post with two policemen to arrest various people. Those arrested were Sapapula, his cross-cousins Epalata (5), and Wasuka, and the latter's son Kuseka, Kasosi, Paulo, Pedro the catechist, Bartolomeu (32), Paulo's assistant in school matters, and his son Eugenio. Eugenio and Kuseka were arrested for not paying taxes and their fathers were arrested presumably for their supposed responsibility. Epalata was arrested for a similar alleged offence on the part of one of his sons, who was away as a labourer.

When I came to Guilherme's house a lengthy wrangle was going on from which I select some themes. Guilherme denied that he had planned to burn the catechetical school, the anthropologist's house, and his own house. (These charges were almost certainly invented.)

Paulo said that he had baptized a dying son of Guilherme, who, despite this, had not shown him any respect. He also denied that he had committed adultery with Guilherme's wife. (This would in any case be most unlikely owing to Paulo's blindness, resulting from an eye disease.)

Sapapula declared angrily: 'I gave Guilherme land here but

[3] This accusation was regarded simply as the product of fear and nothing more was heard of it.

[4] He used the word applied to chiefs of Gumba and other sub-chiefdom.

VI. SOCIAL LIFE

Sexual Relations

COURTSHIP

There is a certain humor and quaintness of language used by Ngonga in describing sexual relations of the Ovimbundu. So far as possible the interpreter's style of expression has been preserved because of its value in revealing the native attitude. 584 836

When a man begins to like a girl, he looks at her for several days. Perhaps the boy will talk to the girl who will tell him to go to her father and mother. The boy must ask the parents for a friendship, which may last for one or two years. During this time the boy must not do anything to the girl, and if he tries she ought to tell her parents. If a baby were born to them in this time it would be a shameful thing. After the boy has told the parents that he wishes to marry the girl he must find something to give to them. The girl must have agreed to marriage before the boy asks the parents. The first token may be no more than a ball of wax or a present of salt. This token says, "The girl is mine," and no other boy will ask for her because it is understood that she is promised to somebody. In former days there were restrictions against marriage with other tribes, but in eastern Angola at the present day the Ovimbundu occasionally marry with the Vacholkue. [582

Soon the boy will start building a house on his father's plot, because he intends to bring the girl to his father's land. The boy must at this stage make a further present to the parents of the girl. In the old days he would take about five kilos of salt; but now he will take a bottle of Portuguese wine, two or three blankets, or a piece of cloth. The people who carry the present must be the brother, father, or a male cousin of the suitor. These relatives will say, "This is the day we have come for our boy's wife." Then the parents will examine the things. Perhaps they will say, "You must bring a better blanket." The father or the girl's mother's brother must call the relatives of the girl to a council (*onjango*) where the relatives of the boy and girl are gathered. 584 481

The parents say, "We are taking these things for our daughter; we hope she will be a good girl and not shame us. She is a good girl to us and we hope she will be a good girl in your house." The girl's parents turn to her and say, "We should like to hear that you are hospitable; give food to your husband's relatives when they visit you." 584 577

584 you." There is no infant betrothal. There is not and never was any
[567] compulsion of a girl in marriage, but slave girls were disposed of in marriage by their masters.

832 A girl is not allowed to do anything to show that she loves a boy, for it would be a great shame for her to tell the boy that she loves him. Often a girl who prefers a boy will pretend that she does not like him. The Ovimbundu have a story which states that a man said, "I will
[539] bring my cow to the green grass"; he did so, but the cow would not eat. This expresses the idea that a boy would not like a girl who confessed a preference for him.

MARRIAGE

585 The prospective bride chooses one married woman and six unmarried girls to accompany her to the house prepared by her husband. Here a feast consisting of a pig and some chickens is provided by the husband for the relatives of both families. For three nights the girl returns to the house of her parents while the boy sleeps at his home. The married woman and six girls sleep at the house prepared by the bridegroom. During these days beer is provided by the boy's parents. The prospective husband is ironically addressed as *sandombua*. *Ndombua* means bridegroom, *sa* is an abbreviation of *isia* meaning father. The term "father bridegroom" refers to the fact that the youth is a potential husband only; the marriage has not been consummated.

On the fourth day the bride brings her supply of domestic utensils. These are the cooking pots (*olombia*); the wooden spoons (*ovito*); the brush of grass for sweeping (*olueyo*); some meal; also the pounder (*upi*). For the first month the wife is not allowed to cook in her own home; she cooks food in the home of her husband's parents and sends
[269] it to the council house (*onjango*) where her husband takes his meals with other men according to Umbundu custom. At the end of the first month of married life the mother of the husband invites any three old women who have been happily married to lay the hearth
[782] stones in the new home. Each of the old women brings a stone for the hearth. A chicken is killed and its blood is sprinkled on the hearth stones. While the young wife is preparing food at the new hearth, she is helped by the old women. If the girl is stirring with the big wooden spoon, one of the old women places her own hands over those of the girl. There is this kind of guidance in every action.

I understand that at the present day virginity in a bride is not so highly valued as in former days. The old custom was an examination

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582 husband. Another explanation is that this is a northern practice which has spread into Gumba.[9]

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[10] Hastings, p. 95.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

On nights when there is little or no moonlight, the evening gatherings in the village sometimes, although not always, follow the sex division, with the men and boys in the *onjango*, and the women and girls at one or more of the kitchens. Discussion of affairs, with youth listening to age, is the usual order, but the time is often passed in the recital of folk-tales or in propounding riddles. 562 517

Riddles are more especially a field of youth but age also enjoys hearing the answers given. A favourite occupation of the men, especially by day, is *ocela*, a game known all over Africa and in other parts of the world as well.[1] Junod calls it 'the national game of Africa'.[2] 524 171

The Ovimbundu have brought recreation to the service of their work. Europeans are often irritated by the amount of conversation which Ovimbundu carry on during working hours, but on consideration it may be found that were it not for the conversation and other psychological aids, the work might be quite unendurable. This is especially the case with regard to road work and many types of contract labour. Road songs and work songs are of real help in keeping up morale and in prolonging endurance. Most of them seem to have been developed in the days of the caravan trade, but they have not been forgotten and are now used on many occasions. 461 [533]

A word about ceremonial occasions before leaving the social life of the village. Some rites and ceremonies are celebrated so quietly that they are not even social occasions. Most of them, however, are very social. This is especially true of funerals and post-mortuary rites. During visits to Ngendo I was able to witness two post-mortuary rites and the funeral of an important person of a near-by village. Other ceremonial occasions, such as weddings and a return from a trading expedition, also call for much sociability, but funerals and post-mortuary rites are the social occasions which occupy the most time and attention and make for the greatest conviviality. 764 [585]

[1] Known under the name *Mancala*, which is evidently a Bantu word, or taken from one; cf. the Umbundu *oku mangala*, to play. Hambly mentions *ocela*, op. cit., p. 219. See also Nevinson, op. cit., p. 91. The *New Standard Dictionary* (Funk and Wagnalls) attributes to Arabian origin both the game and the word *Mankalah*.

[2] H. A. Junod, *The Life of a South African Tribe*, 2nd ed., vol. i, p. 345 f.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

observation, and not in his own house. During that time he will 582
not be allowed to *tumisa*. Or again, 'the girl's parents may warn her saying, Should the boy try *to sting*[1] you, do not let him: do not stay, but run away.'[2] All informants stress the point that the chief purpose of the custom is that the two young people may come to know each other as well as possible with marriage in view. There are severe sanctions against premarital pregnancy; fines to be paid by the young man or his family, lessened desirability for the girl in marriage, and a distinction in the ceremony between brides who are virgin and those who are not. Proofs of virginity are required on the marriage morning. Those families and regions which have [585]
girls' initiation camps include in the procedure a test of virginity.[3] There are not the periodic tests of virginity which are found among the Zulus, Mpondos, &c.,[4] but the Ovimbundu do not expect that the contact will be as close as these other tribes evidently do.[5] The closest parallel which I know is with the (American) colonial custom of 'bundling'.

It is said that the custom of *uponji* has been in a decadent state /78
for a long time. This is not only because of its having been mis- 836
understood and forbidden by the church or the missions.[6] Although this is partly the case, the chief difficulty came from the time of the rubber trade (1874–1900) when young men began without ceremony to go to the kitchens to sleep with girls instead of properly arranging matters. Whether their affluence made them reckless (i.e. of expected fines, &c.), or whether they were apeing Europeans or the customs of other tribes, is not known. At any rate, it is said that for large numbers of people this put an end to propriety. Numbers of Europeans began to settle in the country from 1891 (Viye) and 1903 (Bailundu and elsewhere), and from then until now casual relations have very greatly increased year by year.[7] That the Ovimbundu have held to their traditional forms

[1] *Lumana*, euphemism for immission.

[2] From a statement by R. Kavita Evambi of C[illegible]

[3] A pullet's egg is used for the test (manuscript by R. Kavita Evambi).

[4] Krige in Schapera, 1937, op. cit., p. 110 f.

[5] Among the songs which I have collected are two sung by girls to tease the young men and with references to nights spent in *uponji*.

[6] *Uvaisi* has been used in translations for 'fornication' or 'adultery' and used so persistently that it has now nearly come to have those meanings. The *Umbundu-English Vocabulary* (1911) gave a correct definition for *eponji* but not for *uponji*; its references to *ombaisi* and *uvaisi* are likewise in error, while *tumisa* is not listed.

[7] Information from R. Kalupeteka and others.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

PLATE XIII

797

Photo. D. G. Rideout

a. Baptismal service by the Rev. J. H. Cilūlū

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b. Umbundu wedding, new-style Elende church in the background

[Facing p. 154]

882 and young manhood, and to which he will bring his wife. In this house a kind of trial marriage *(uponji)* takes place. The young man will *oku tumisa* ("cause to send") a male friend to ask permission of a girl's mother and
582 also to bring her to his house each night. The girl is called *eponji*. (The custom may also be called *uvaisi*, the girl *ombaisi*.) A young man may first tumisa at about seventeen or eighteen years, if he has sufficient money or goods to make the "betrothal" payment (*itambelo* - "enticements" or *oku lupula ikuelume* - "chasing away jealousies"). The amount of the payment (which is made to the girl's parents) varies with locality, wealth and status, but is usually about one tenth of the amount of the marriage payment proper. The amounts of both payments are increasing rapidly.[1] The nature of the intercourse is carefully circumscribed, and the girl is
[133] warned by her mother not to let intromission take place. Proofs of vir-
585 ginity are required on the marriage morning, and there are severe sanctions against premarital pregnancy. Childs' informants stressed that the chief purpose of the custom is that the two young people should get to know each other as well as possible with marriage in view. Ennis however[2] states that *uvaisi* does not necessarily lead to marriage and may be entered upon without the intention of marriage; the girl may leave the man if she does not like him, and if the *uvaisi* is broken off both may marry other persons without any difficulties.

INITIATION[3]

881 Tribal initiation for boys *(oku lisevisa evamba)* and girls *(uso wakai)*
171 is carried on in camps or "schools" in the southern and south-eastern Umbundu chiefdoms, especially in Kalukembe, Kakonda, and Ngalangi. Sporadic instances of individual camps have also occurred recently in Viye, Bailundu, Sambu, Wambu, Cingolo and Cikuma. Even in regions where camps are regularly held, only the children of certain families enter. There appears to have been some passing on of the custom by heredity, and, in general, there is intermarriage only between families and individuals who adhere to the initiation rites. It is not known whether the rites have been taken over by the Ovimbundu from neighbouring peoples, or whether they represent a custom formerly widespread in Umbundu country. Initiation camps are not mentioned by the earlier writers.

Childs gives little information about what goes on in initiation camps, apart from pointing out that in making a definite break from the routine of life they contrast with other aspects of Umbundu education, and that "the hardship and cruelty of initiation camps have their parallel in the trading and slave-raiding expeditions of the past." His statement that "as an 'educational institution' [the initiation camps] do not seem to fit into the culture" is not very clear. From the few details given by Hambly[4] Umbundu camps appear to be identical with those of the tribes to the east, and here one of the most important aspects of the camps is their ritually-emphasised contrast with regular life.[5]

(1) Childs, personal communication.
(2) 1945.
(3) Childs, op.cit., pp.115-7.
(4) (2) 1934, pp.226f.
(5) See McCulloch, 1951, pp.85-91.

Vakuacisoko (lit. "those of the set")[1]

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Childs considers that the custom of *vacuacisoko* is probably connected with circumcision and initiation. It does not exist throughout the territory but only in certain families who belong to the order and are said to pass it on by heredity. It seems to have been stronger in the past, but few practising members of the set are now known. All 'coevals' or members of the set were in duty bound to render mutual assistance, and all had mutual rights to the property of the others without complaint or remedy. These rights seem to have included that of having intercourse with each other's wives. Injury or even death of one member brought about by another did not allow the injured family to seek revenge or legal redress. It was the duty of the *vacuacisoko* to bury their fellows, themselves digging the grave and attending to all the expenses ordinarily supplied by the family of the deceased. They also had the duty of burying strangers without family who would not be buried by others for fear of defilement or responsibility for their debts.[2] Childs describes the *vacuacisoko* associations as "age-grade sets",[3] but gives no further explanation.

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"With or without initiation rites, adolescence is largely preparation for marriage and full adult life. Traditionally, adolescence is not a time of conflict or stress....Contract and *corvée* labour have brought profound changes, especially for the young men. As for the girls, a few have gone into the towns; relatively few, however, other than those who attend a boarding-school, lead a life essentially different from that which has been traditionally theirs."[4]

MARRIAGE

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Available information concerning degrees of relationship in which marriage is permitted, marriage-payment, polygyny and divorce has been given above.[5] Evambi[6] and Hambly[7] describe some of the customs and ceremonies connected with marriage.

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For three nights after the commencement of the marriage ceremony the girl sleeps with her own parents, while the married woman and six unmarried girls whom she has chosen as her attendants sleep in the house of her husband. On the fourth day she moves to the man's house, bringing her cooking utensils. For the first month, according to Hambly, or, according to Evambi, the first year, i.e. until the grain is ripe in her new fields, she lives with her husband's mother or aunt, in whose kitchen she cooks food each night to send to her husband in the *onjango*. When her first child is two or three months old, a present of a pig passes from the girl's mother to her husband. [606]

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Childs[8] adds that adulthood comes with marriage, and marriage is only recognised as complete when the first child has been born. A child or an adolescent is only a "potential" person *(omunu)* and the permanency

(1) Childs, op.cit., p.115.
(2) Those who buried a man were considered responsible for his debts. Hence corpses were often placed in trees.
(3) Childs, op.cit., p.59.
(4) Ibid., p.117.
(5) Pp.20f.
(6) 1938.
(7) 1934, pp.180f.
(8) Op.cit., pp.119-20.

584 you." There is no infant betrothal. There is not and never was any
[567] compulsion of a girl in marriage, but slave girls were disposed of in marriage by their masters.

832 A girl is not allowed to do anything to show that she loves a boy, for it would be a great shame for her to tell the boy that she loves him. Often a girl who prefers a boy will pretend that she does not like him. The Ovimbundu have a story which states that a man said, "I will
[539] bring my cow to the green grass"; he did so, but the cow would not eat. This expresses the idea that a boy would not like a girl who confessed a preference for him.

MARRIAGE

585 The prospective bride chooses one married woman and six unmarried girls to accompany her to the house prepared by her husband. Here a feast consisting of a pig and some chickens is provided by the husband for the relatives of both families. For three nights the girl returns to the house of her parents while the boy sleeps at his home. The married woman and six girls sleep at the house prepared by the bridegroom. During these days beer is provided by the boy's parents. The prospective husband is ironically addressed as *sandombua*. *Ndombua* means bridegroom, *sa* is an abbreviation of *isia* meaning father. The term "father bridegroom" refers to the fact that the youth is a potential husband only; the marriage has not been consummated.

On the fourth day the bride brings her supply of domestic utensils. These are the cooking pots (*olombia*); the wooden spoons (*ovito*); the brush of grass for sweeping (*olueyo*); some meal; also the pounder (*upi*). For the first month the wife is not allowed to cook in her own home; she cooks food in the home of her husband's parents and sends
[264] it to the council house (*onjango*) where her husband takes his meals with other men according to Umbundu custom. At the end of the first month of married life the mother of the husband invites any three old women who have been happily married to lay the hearth
[782] stones in the new home. Each of the old women brings a stone for the hearth. A chicken is killed and its blood is sprinkled on the hearth stones. While the young wife is preparing food at the new hearth, she is helped by the old women. If the girl is stirring with the big wooden spoon, one of the old women places her own hands over those of the girl. There is this kind of guidance in every action.

I understand that at the present day virginity in a bride is not so highly valued as in former days. The old custom was an examination

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

of the girl by her husband, and if she were not a virgin he took a hot 585
stick from the fire and burned a hole through her loin cloth. "The girl began to cry, but she had to take the burned cloth to her mother." In such an instance there does not seem to be an idea of guilt. The husband had accepted something that was damaged, and the payment of a pig by the girl's parents reunited the two young people. In former days, also at present, there are boy and girl companions who sleep together, supposedly without having sexual connections, [836]
although they may be seventeen years of age. The girl calls the boy *ombaisi*, and he calls her by the same name. The Ovimbundu [842]
understand something of the physiology of conception; the woman is, however, regarded as only a receiving vessel. "The man puts something into her which grows."

Husband and wife do not sleep in the same bed during the wife's 841
menstrual period; the wife sleeps on a mat at the side of her husband's bed. A woman who is menstruating never cooks food, but women give mutual aid in this matter. A man with more than one wife 595
sleeps either four nights or seven nights with each; the four-night cycle is more usual than the seven-night cycle among the Ovimbundu. Each wife has a separate hut and kitchen. There is no wife lending, 837
but a visitor may be provided with a widow or even with an un- [574]
married girl. Then the man would have to pay the woman.

Ngonga was able to give information with regard to homosexual- 838
ity. "There are men who want men, and women who want women." Ngonga says he has heard people talk about it, and "they think this very bad." A woman has been known to make an artificial penis for use with another woman. The medicine-man will sometimes dress as a woman. Ngonga, who has seen a man dress as a woman, stated that the man arranged his cloth like that of a woman, put palm oil on his hair, and joined the women to pound corn on the rocks. "The other people laughed and spoke bad words to him. His brother, father, and uncle beat him," but without producing reformation.

DIVORCE

There are many grounds on which a man may secure a divorce, 586
but it does not follow that divorce is frequent. On the contrary the evidence indicates that the majority of difficulties are overcome by a compromise between the relations of the husband and those of the wife. The main causes of dissatisfaction with a wife are want of ability in cultivating her garden, physical weakness, a habit of thieving from the gardens of other women, incompetence in cooking,

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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man has four daughters he will receive the bridewealth only for the two oldest. The mother's brother will receive the bridewealth for the third sister and a brother for the fourth. If the father is dead, the payment is made to a mother's brother or a brother real or classificatory. To some extent the size of the bridewealth is a reflection of the status of the girl—thus on the railway line 1,000 escudos (£12. 10s.) might be paid for a girl who could read and write. In my own area a Gumba man might pay more for a girl from Ndjandju than for a Cela girl because Ndjandju is regarded, owing to its proximity to the mission, as being more civilized. There exist also counter-gifts. Ndjoleya, who as mother's brother received the bridewealth for Feliciana, gave a pig to Daniel, and it is customary for a pig to be given to the husband by his wife's father on the birth of their first child.[11]

The Umbundu word for marriage *oku kwela* is applied both to customary marriage and to Christian marriage. To distinguish between the two, Portuguese words are taken over, *amigar* (originally, to live in concubinage) being used for the customary marriage, and *casar* (to marry) being used for marriage in church. The use of *amigar* of a particular marriage implies that the people making it are pagans, or Christians who have omitted the church ceremony for one reason or another. In Gumba the church marriage, while it gives status among Christians is not an important occasion in the local milieu, and people who have been through the church marriage but who have not made the *uvala*, the traditional wedding feast, are not permitted by their senior kin to cohabit. Around the mission the church ceremony is regarded as the important thing, and the *uvala* seems to be thought of simply as a party. Traditionally and usually at the present day the *uvala* is held in the dry season.

In the wedding feast there are a number of variations between one occasion and another, but a general outline can

[11] Hastings, p. 110, states that a year or two after the birth of the first child another pig is given which is called the pig of cutting off. The giving and the accepting of this severes all responsibilities between the families. The women can no more be returned to her father's people for misdemeanour—only in the case of the death of her husband will she be taken back.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

585 be described.[18] The bride, if she belongs to another village, will arrive in the evening accompanied by some girls who are kin to her. She sits down on the bed in the house of the bridegroom with her companions. A crowd of people of the village and neighbourhood dance in and about the hut and people come in to talk to the bride. The bridegroom may also come in and sit on the bed with friends, but he will not take any particular notice of his bride. The dancing will go on till well into the night. This usually happens on a Saturday night so that the main part of the festivity will fall on the Sunday which all Ovimbundu, Christian or pagan, observe as a day of rest.

On the Sunday morning little will happen, though there may be some dancing and the bride and her companions will comb one another's hair. In the afternoon (usually about four), the time being told by the sun, comes the procession and the feast. For the procession bride and bridegroom walk together, both dressed in as European style of clothing as can be obtained. The procession advances dancing and singing, with the exception of the bridegroom and bride whose sedateness is striking. On the way an archway may be erected, made of branches. Under this, concealed in a blanket, will be lying the father's sister or other senior kinswoman of the groom to whom he will make a present of money. Continuing, the couple will arrive at an enclosure built for the purpose with a wooden framework covered over on the sides with branches with leaves on and mats, where a table is laid in European style at which the customary Umbu-
[263] ndu food, mush made from maize flour, and relish (that is almost anything, meat or vegetables, which is not mush) is served. Others besides the bride and bridegroom are allowed into the enclosure—this is not a private rite. It is at this point that *oku fwikisa* takes place, that is, the feeding of affines to break down avoidances. Food is served to the guests on basket plates, one plate per village represented. The actual serving will be done by kinsmen or friends of the bridegroom. After the meal will come further dancing.

The next day a party of kin and fellow-villagers may set out

[18] For accounts of the traditional marriage ceremony see Hastings, pp. 94–101 and R. K. Evambi. 'The Marriage Customs of the Ovimbundu', *Africa*, 1958, pp. 342–8.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

for the bride's village. Here they may be greeted with formal speeches of welcome in Portuguese, a usage copied from the reception of missionaries. 585

One only turns up to a wedding if one has been invited, and not everybody who is a kinsman living in the neighbourhood is invited. Nor is there any marked distinction between kin and non-kin in the ceremony, except for the ending of avoidances and the recognition of the father's sister, who is recompensed for her services as nursemaid. Village membership is significantly recognized in the distribution of food, and the sending of the party to the bride's home to represent the bridegroom's village.

Umbundu marriage is virilocal, although a certain number of marriages are within the village. Apart from such marriages, it seems to be rare to find a man settling in a village because his wife has kin there. 591

Although during the early months of the marriage the bridegroom's mother may supervise the bride's work, the individual household is essentially an independent unit[13] and was not even in the past merged with other household units to form a 'grandfamily'. This independence is not isolation. I have only a very few times seen houses with any sort of compound about them. Much of domestic life, eating, working, resting, talking, may be done out of doors in front of the house. Paying visits is a great feature of village life especially when the day's work is over, although there is also a term *oku pasula*, to visit in the morning, referring to what are usually just short calls, involving the exchange of greetings. Perhaps the opportunity of calling and being called on is one of the factors maintaining the village as a social unit. The idea that a man should not eat with his wife still survives to some extent so that questions on this topic receive contradictory answers. Observation shows that even among the men who travelled on the caravans, eating with one's wife is the general practice. 592 594 264

One of the most striking features of Umbundu domestic life is the close companionship which exists between husband and wife and which is unquestionably a modern development.[14] 593 178

[13] See Magyar, pp. 281–3.

[14] The role of the *Ondjango* as described by Childs and Hastings indicates that a man's normal companions both for eating and recreation were other men.

611 dispersed. Both groups have ritual leaders, whose offices are quite dis-
613 tinct. Barnes' suggestion[1] is that the two groups must be father's patrilineage and mother's matrilineage, with the qualification mentioned below.

613 The *oluse* consists of a large number of village groups, some of which recognise mutual relationship,[2] but with no recognised head (other than
622 the village headmen) except in the case of the royal families. Land is owned by the *oluse* and passed on within it from father to son, or from
[428] elder to younger brother. Succession to village or tribal office, from village headman to king, descends in the same way.[3] Ritual leadership within the *oluse* lies with the village headman, who is in charge of the
[346] spirit-hut *(etambo)* of the guardian spirit of the village (or of the nuclear *oluse* within the village), and who officiates at regular village worship, including agricultural festivals.

613 The *oluina*, on the other hand, is a dispersed and apparently larger
428 group, whose members live with their various paternal lines of descent. The size of the *oluina* is unknown; Childs merely refers to it as a "large
604 and widespread organization, with a recognized head". The office of head of the *oluina (ukulu wepata)* descends from mother's brother to sister's son. Negotiable and moveable property, including cattle and trade goods, is owned by the *oluina* and inherited by the sister's son. Formerly the mother's elder brother had great powers over his sister's sons, and was even able to pawn them or sell them into slavery, to meet his own debts.
[592] The patrilocal household is usually responsible for training children, especially during their early years, but they are frequently sent to the *oluina* (i.e. to the mother's brother) for at least a part of their educa-
[586] tion. At death or divorce of parents, children go to the *oluina*.

The head *(ukulu wepata)* of the *oluina* is usually both the legal and
43 spiritual head of the group, although today the two functions are often divided. He is in charge of the spirit hut *(etambo)* of the guardian
782 spirit of the *oluina* (of whom there may be more than one, and of whom he becomes one after death). He leads the *oluina* in propitiatory rituals carried out in case of illness, death, or other misfortunes within the group, or in prayers made for desired economic advantages. (Apparently no regular rituals are carried out by the *oluina*.) The *ukulu wepata* may or may not be at the same time a village headman; if he is, he will be priest of two lines and have charge of two spirit huts; if he is not, there may be two (or more) priests in the village, each in charge of the spirit-hut of his *oluse* or *oluina*.

The onēlē yohonji and the onēlē yohumba

613 The *oluse* and the *oluina* are both divided into male and female
602 "sides": the *onēlē yohonji* (the side of the bow) and the *onēlē yohumba*
582 (the side of the basket). It has been noted above that uterine brothers and sisters belong to the same *oluse* and *oluina*, but to the male or female side in each, according to sex. The composition of these "sides" is

(1) Loc.cit.
(2) If some villages within the *oluse* cannot trace mutual relationship, the *oluse* should perhaps be called a petri-clan rather than a patrilineage.
(3) But see below, p.29.

for murder as two oxen and two slaves; for adultery, two oxen, a pig, and a slave.) Today a man who has committed adultery sometimes takes the woman and all children under three years of age, but this is for the husband to decide. An adulterer with one of the chief's wives was castrated but not killed, and the castration might be compounded for a high fine, while he, his sisters, and the sons of his sisters would become slaves of the chief.(1) Hambly states finally that "Criminal law did not distinguish between responsibility for intentional and unintentional offences."(2) 682 684 671

There is no information regarding the kinds of cases tried or the punishments given in the courts of village headmen or sub-chiefs today.

INHERITANCE

It has been noted above that moveable property is inherited in the maternal line, land in the paternal line.(3) The eldest brother of the deceased's mother has the first claim and is responsible for settling disputes. He may distribute the property to the mother of the deceased, the maternal grandfather, or to a brother of the deceased, but is not compelled to do this. Women never inherit cattle or land, although the sisters of a deceased woman usually receive most of her household utensils (the rest belong to her husband). A widow goes to the house of (? marries) the eldest brother of the deceased or her own maternal uncle, or she may return to her father's village. Apparently her children accompany her, although one would expect them to go to her brother.(4) 428 768

DIVORCE

Divorce appears to be infrequent; grounds for divorce are many, but difficulties are often overcome by a compromise between the two kin groups concerned. Causes for dissatisfaction on the part of a husband include his wife's incompetence, dishonesty, physical weakness, or infidelity (in the last case today a fine from the adulterer is usually accepted and the marriage continues). Barrenness is not a ground for divorce; usually the husband takes a second wife, but the first maintains her position as head wife. Sterility in the male is sometimes suspected, in which case the husband may try another girl, with his wife's consent, or the woman another man. A woman may divorce a man if he is impotent (not sterile), or if he ill-treats her, but not because he is unfaithful. If for any of these reasons the woman returns to her family, the latter are expected to return the marriage payment, although they may wait until another suitor appears who will pay the deserted husband. Whether the initiative in divorce is taken by the woman or the man, the marriage is not annulled until a renunciatory ceremony has been carried out by the husband, the wife, and the wife's father, in the presence of the village headman. The husband receives from his wife's father a roll of tobacco and a pig, and then places leaves(5) and palm oil on his wife's back; he then slaps his wife's back saying "It is finished". 586 [842]

(1) Hambly, op.cit., p.203. (2) Loc.cit.
(3) See above, p.18, and Childs, 1949, p.44.
(4) Hambly, (2) 1934, p.199.
(5) The leaf used is of the apu tree; the same leaf is tied to the pole of the ritual of a new village, as a sign of divorce from the old site. (Childs, 1949, p.38; this is the only context in which Childs mentions divorce.)

586 When a woman divorces her husband to marry another man, she takes to her home all children under three years of age; other children go to the home of her parents.[1] There is no information concerning the fate of children when the man divorces his wife.

[691] Divorce cases are apparently brought before the court of the village headman only where the return of the marriage payment to the husband is long delayed or in some way unsatisfactory.[2]

LAND TENURE

423 There is virtually no information on Umbundu land usage. Childs states that land is inherited in the paternal line, i.e. by brother or son. Hambly suggests that "The right to land depends on its use and allotment by a chief (?) at the time of founding a village," and that "Rights seem to have been well defined and there was always enough room for a stranger". The meaning of neither of these statements is very clear.[3]

DOMESTIC SLAVERY

567 [672] Slaves were formerly taken in war, and, until very recently, as a result of a person's inability to pay his debts. In such a case not the debtor, but the debtor's sister's children were taken as slaves by the creditor. If the debt was paid later, the children were set free.[4] Today children instead of being sold into slavery may be expected to work for the creditor to pay off the debts of the mother's brother.[5] Childs writes "Slaves or former slaves have a status within the household or village which to the ordinary observer does not differ from that of the children: they are treated much as the children and they may carry on in all matters social and economic as though they were members of the family". He adds however that when there is a call for labour, the lot falls more often to a slave or a pawn.[6] Hambly, however, notes that formerly the master had rights of punishment including the death sentence, although an ill-treated slave might appeal to the village headman. Slave women were frequently taken as concubines, but were not lent out as prostitutes. A slave woman who married a free man would revert to her master along with her children when her husband died. All children of slaves became slaves of the master, who could dispose of the girls in marriage. If he himself married a slave girl, she would, at his death, become the property of his eldest brother and her children would go with her, although in some instances the woman and children might go to the mother's brother's son.

[727] It seems likely (although it is nowhere stated) that there was a clear distinction between slaves captured in war and slaves taken as a result of a debt; possibly the information quoted above from Hambly refers mainly to war captives.

(1) Hambly, op.cit., pp.182-3. (2) Ibid., p.183.
(3) Hambly, op.cit., p.201. Hambly states here that the system of land distribution is described in a later section of his book, but this section merely refers back to these remarks.
(4) Bastos (1909, p.33) adds that if a father redeemed his children, the maternal uncle lost his right to sell them into slavery.
(5) Hambly, op.cit., p.205. (6) 1949, p.42.

of the girl by her husband, and if she were not a virgin he took a hot 585
stick from the fire and burned a hole through her loin cloth. "The girl began to cry, but she had to take the burned cloth to her mother." In such an instance there does not seem to be an idea of guilt. The husband had accepted something that was damaged, and the payment of a pig by the girl's parents reunited the two young people. In former days, also at present, there are boy and girl companions who sleep together, supposedly without having sexual connections, [836]
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Husband and wife do not sleep in the same bed during the wife's 841
menstrual period; the wife sleeps on a mat at the side of her husband's bed. A woman who is menstruating never cooks food, but women give mutual aid in this matter. A man with more than one wife 595
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married girl. Then the man would have to pay the woman.

Ngonga was able to give information with regard to homosexual- 838
ity. "There are men who want men, and women who want women." Ngonga says he has heard people talk about it, and "they think this very bad." A woman has been known to make an artificial penis for use with another woman. The medicine-man will sometimes dress as a woman. Ngonga, who has seen a man dress as a woman, stated that the man arranged his cloth like that of a woman, put palm oil on his hair, and joined the women to pound corn on the rocks. "The other people laughed and spoke bad words to him. His brother, father, and uncle beat him," but without producing reformation.

DIVORCE

There are many grounds on which a man may secure a divorce, 586
but it does not follow that divorce is frequent. On the contrary the evidence indicates that the majority of difficulties are overcome by a compromise between the relations of the husband and those of the wife. The main causes of dissatisfaction with a wife are want of ability in cultivating her garden, physical weakness, a habit of thieving from the gardens of other women, incompetence in cooking,

586 bad temper, too much talking, some physical defect arising from childbirth, and infidelity. But the husband usually accepts payment from the adulterer, and in that event divorce is not sought.

595 586 If a mother has no milk, there is a likelihood that her children will die in infancy; this is a cause for divorce. Barrenness gives great dissatisfaction, but is not necessarily a cause for divorce. Usually the husband marries another girl, while the first wife retains her position as head-wife. With regard to frigidity my informant said [833] that sometimes "a married woman does not want her husband to do those things which husbands like to do, or she may want him very seldom." The husband is so angry that he may go away hunting for a long time. The husband may tell some old people, who talk to the girl. If his wife is a good cook, the husband may keep her and secure another girl as a second wife. Sometimes the husband ties the hands of the girl if she resists him. If a wife is returned to her parents on the grounds of her frigidity her husband does not receive compensatory payment, but he hopes that another man will take the girl and pay him for her.

842 Sterility of the male is sometimes suspected, in which case the husband tries another girl, possibly with his wife's consent. The wife may be allowed to have relations with another man in the hope of producing children. The evidence shows that there is definite experiment to test barrenness of the woman and sterility of the male.

In case of impotence (not sterility of the male sperm) the wife leaves her husband. In event of barrenness the woman visits a medicine-man, who gives her a charm consisting of two cowrie shells on a strip of leather which she wears round her neck; a potion also will be given her. If the barren condition is due to malevolence of spirits, the face of the woman is painted with streaks of red and white. Such a woman is said to gain *ocitumba*. *Tumba* means "a swell," "a rise."

586 A woman may divorce her husband if he does not treat her well. [837] If he beats her or refuses to give her cloth and palm oil, she will leave him; but she will not leave him if he is merely unfaithful. If a woman is unhappy with her husband, she will tell her people about the trouble. Her father and mother may say, "Go and try again."

After a year the woman may still be unhappy, in which case she goes to her parents. The husband visits his wife's parents to ask why she has left him. The parents give reasons and offer to return the token he presented for the girl. The return of the husband's tokens is usually long delayed because the parents of the girl are

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

hoping that another man will ask for their daughter; this new suitor will have to make payment to the deserted husband. The chief of the village is not consulted unless the return of the husband's presents is long delayed or is in some way unsatisfactory. A woman who claims even remote relationship with the royal family is treated well, because her husband is afraid of the influence which may be used against him. A woman who returns to her parents takes with her the articles she contributed to the home; these are pottery, corn baskets, a wooden pounder, and wooden spoons. If a wife returns to her parents without telling her husband that she intends going, he will beat her if he finds her packing up her utensils.

The procedure of divorce contains a very human element. When a man has fully decided that he would like to divorce his wife, he will first of all inform his parents of his intention. The parents may advise their son to try the girl for a longer time.

On the contrary, the parents of the man may be mischief-makers. Sometimes the parents will say to the husband, "Do you know that your wife is doing these things? It is better you should send her away." If the man is fond of his wife, he will take her to another place where his parents cannot watch her. When a woman divorces her husband to marry another man, she takes to her new home all children under three years of age. Older children go to the home of her parents.

The chief of the village has to witness the final ceremony of divorcing a woman; but the husband and wife, also the wife's father, are the principal people concerned in the divorce ceremony. The husband receives from his wife's father a roll of tobacco and a pig, then he places leaves and palm oil on the back of his wife. He slaps her back saying, "It is finished," after which the woman goes to her father or to another man.

When a woman takes the initiative and has declared her intention of divorcing her husband, she returns to her parents as described; but the divorce cannot be completed until the husband has been persuaded to perform this ceremony of slapping her back and making a ceremonial renunciation in public.

PREGNANCY AND CHILDBIRTH

When a woman finds that she is pregnant, she makes and drinks an infusion prepared from bark fiber. This is to insure the removal of all stringy matter at delivery. Formerly a husband was not

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

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customary marriage and the Catholic marriage ceremony. The Catholic missions report to the post people who, having been married in church, then make customary marriages, and these may be subjected to such sanctions as being sent to contract labour. The Protestant church marriages are not apparently legally recognized but they are subject to the authority of the Protestant church courts which grant divorces on certain grounds. The *chefe de posto* on his annual visit to take the check on the census may get angry with polygynists, but in fact no very effective administrative action exists with regard to indigenous marriage.

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to have many children and (in the case of a chief) the need to have cooks to provide hospitality for guests. Large-scale polygyny is thought to be rather funny; I was told, as something amusing, that the former chief Mbati had 17 wives. Kafelo, the former chief of Gumba, had 6 wives, the highest number of continuing polygynous marriages I found. In Epalanga out of

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youngest sister (*mai yumalele*). Ngonga's father's oldest brother is *tate yukulu*. 604 601

Thus far Ngonga was clear about his eligibility for marriage, and in addition to this he was sure that he could not marry a sister of his wife while his wife was alive, but he could marry his wife's sister, after the death of his wife. The wives of a deceased elder brother are divided among his younger brothers, or a man may inherit the wife of his mother's brother. Ngonga always laughed heartily at the idea of marrying a woman much older than himself. He did not know whether he could marry certain older people of the *ndatembo* and *maikulu* class but thought the idea amusing because of their age. 587

In discussing law, inheritance, and slavery, the importance of the mother's brother will be indicated, and for this relative there is the term *manu* (or *inanu*). The *manu* calls Ngonga *ocimumba cange*, but he calls Ngonga's wife *ndatembo*. Ngonga's mother's brother's wife, also Ngonga's father's sister, are *aphai*, which my informant interpreted as a "female father." 604

The use of the word *nawa* has been explained in such a way as to show that Ngonga's wife uses this term for a large class of relatives by marriage who are of the same generation as her husband, while these people reciprocally use the word *nawa*. Ngonga uses the word *nawa* in exactly the same way for corresponding relatives of his wife. 601

This term *nawa* is not to be confused with the term *ndatembo* whose connotation is indicated by the following examples. The wife of Ngonga applies the term *ndatembo* to certain of her husband's relations who are not of his generation. Thus she calls Ngonga's mother *ndatembo* when speaking of her, but she addresses her mother-in-law as *mai* ("mother"), while *ndatembo* describes the relationship between Ngonga's wife and his father. Moreover, Ngonga's wife uses *ndatembo* to describe her husband's father's brother's wife, and Ngonga's wife is called *ndatembo* by her husband's father's sister, her husband's father's sister's husband, and her husband's mother's brother. These are relatives by marriage but they are not of the same generation as her husband.

Table C, Second Generation of Ngonga's Ascendants, gives no particular difficulty. *Maikulu* includes the paternal grandmother, the father's father's sister (great aunt), the maternal grandmother, the mother's mother's brother's wife, and the mother's mother's sister. Therefore *maikulu* is a class name for the second generation of female ascendants.

A mourning widow must leave her hair loose and undressed, and she has to wear a cloth which conceals her from crown to sole. For three days she is obliged to sleep close to the corpse of her husband with only a stick between them. The stick, which is about the length of the bed, is laid between the widow and the corpse. During this time she has no food, and her wailing is expected to be almost continuous day and night. When the corpse is tied and prepared for burial the widow says farewell to it. Relatives support the corpse and make it advance toward her, while she herself is held in the position of a bound corpse, and is supported by relatives who make her confront the dead body of her husband. The widow does not go to the funeral. 765

Mourning continues after the funeral, with fasting and periodical wailing at three o'clock in the afternoon, and again twelve hours later. At the end of a month of mourning the widow lies for one night in the place where the corpse of her husband lay the night before burial. At the beer-drinking which marks the end of the period of mourning a medicine-man guides the hand of the widow as she dips a ladle into the beer pot and distributes the beverage.

The widow may stay with her mother's brother or she may return to her parents, but she must not become the wife of another man until a year has elapsed. The second husband will make a present to the widow's parents or others who have taken her, but this gift will not be as valuable as if the groom were taking a virgin. 768 587

Tree burial I have not seen, but heard of it near Ngalangi, and it has recently taken place at Cileso. Tree burial is the method for disposing of the corpse of a person who has died in debt. Any one who gives interment to a corpse assumes responsibility for the debts; hence tree burial is the most convenient way of disposal. 766 672

An Ocimbundu from Bailundu said that in that district the child is taken from the womb of a woman who has died pregnant. Food is placed on the lips of the removed foetus so that it will not induce the death of other pregnant women. Near Ngalangi a pregnant woman would be buried with the point of a long stick on her abdomen, and after the grave had been filled a blow would be given to the top of the stick. 766

The foregoing are the principal points of importance in the funeral rites of commoners. Ceremonies connected with the death and burial of medicine-men, kings, chiefs, and hunters require separate consideration. [565]

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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607 have a kinsman's obligation to lend money in case of need if he has it, and it is said that one should only work very occasionally with a brother-in-law. When I asked which a woman preferred, her husband or her brother, men told me that she liked both equally, and the fact that a man and his wife's brother often live close together confirms that there is relatively little for them to quarrel over. A woman does not establish close ties with any of her affines. Formerly, when a man died 587 leaving a widow (and according to some informants a small child) a patrilateral cross-cousin of his might marry her. My informants, however, denied that a sororate had existed even in the past.[27]

605 Cross-cousins are the relatives with whom solidarity is most strongly felt. When I asked about the relationship between full siblings I was told 'They like each other just as cross-cousins do.' Now that it is no longer customary for agnatic kin to live together, it is often said that it is good to live near cross-cousins.

608 Formerly funeral friendship (*ukwatjisoko*) was part of an alliance between sub-chiefdoms, which were not contiguous. Nowadays, since people move about the country, funeral friendships may be regarded as another category of kinship—when one asks a man his relationship with somebody else this may be given. There is a tendency to regard *vakwatjisoko*, funeral friends, as being a sort of cross-cousins since both per- [764] form funeral services. This survival of funeral friendship, as a tie between individuals and as a haphazard means of supplying undertakers, exists in Gumba. In Ndjandju, which is the sub-chiefdom in which the Missão Católica de Bimbe is built, the *tjisoko* relationship is now established between two neighbouring [628] villages and is apparently the normal means of performing burials, and the permitted theft of small livestock regularly takes place.

606 Between parents-in-law and children-in-law the relation was and is one of restraint. This is most marked in the relations between in-laws of opposite sex, and least between the mother-in-law and daughter-in-law.

[27] See Albino Alves under (*o*)*mingandjo*, for evidence of a sororate in some Umbundu areas.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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could send food.' 'Perhaps your mother is dead, and she has to think of your father.' A man should not cook for himself in a village, by a rule of convention which has no sanction attached, although he may do so when away working.

Clearing fields, house-building, and thatching are men's work, as are brick-making, fishing, hunting, mat-making, sewing, and woodwork. Beer-brewing, cooking, maize-pounding, and water and firewood gathering are women's work. Men and women can work together in most forms of agriculture, sowing, hoeing, harvesting, feeding small stock and treating tobacco. The division of labour is based on ideas of what is natural and fitting, not on any sanctions, mystical or otherwise. Nor is the division always strictly observed. A man may fetch water if his wife is ill, or simply away visiting relatives, and I have seen an adolescent boy pounding out maize on a pounding-block.

A man should look after his sick wife. There is a song which is sung about the married couples of the village, each being named in turn, which tells how the husband went to the post and his wife climbed a tree to get some fruit down. She fell down and hurt herself and then wailed because there was nobody to look after her. A woman who is ill for some time will return to her kin to get better.

The husband does not attend his wife's funeral, but washes himself all over, and then has to lie down asleep, or as if sleeping, during the funeral. Grains of maize and other crops may be, but are not always, even at pagan funerals, thrown over a woman's coffin as it is taken to the cemetery. A man should leave his old home when his wife dies, although this rule is neglected nowadays, certainly by the owners of brick houses. After a year or two, a widower should *oku wonga*, pile up stones on his wife's grave, a duty which has behind it a vague mystical sanction of illness. The widow of a hunter should be buried beside her husband even though after his death she has married again.[17]

A widow may marry again about six months after the funeral. The exception to this is the *inakulu*, the chief's main wife. Formerly, it was permitted for a widow to marry her husband's

[17] A case of this occurred during my stay.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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587 patrilateral cross-cousin, the reason for this being apparently to enable him to look after the children. Other marriages of a widow with her dead husband's kin were and are forbidden under pain of mystical sanctions. Thus, marriage with one's [684] dead wife's sister would lead to the latter's death through her sister's spirit. Illness or death was suggested as the penalty for marriage with a mother's brother's widow, although I know of two cases of such marriages happening. The reason for this prohibition against any marriage by a widow or widower with the kin of a deceased spouse is given as being that it is wrong to mix the blood.

684 Adultery is subject to mystical sanctions in the illness called *ondjamba* which seems to involve swelling of the legs. This afflicts not the guilty party but the other spouse (whether husband or wife) and the children.[18] I was also told by some informants that this illness affected the other spouse if there were no children; if there were children adultery would endanger their lives and the life of the innocent spouse. Some people do not believe in this nowadays; however the line [183] between believers and non-believers cannot be equalled with that between pagan and Christian or old and young. It is of course impossible to say how frequent adultery is in any community. Informants complain of the frequency of adultery. It should be noted that public opinion seems to condemn it strongly, and men who have discovered their wives being unfaithful usually send them away. The adulterer has to pay a heavy fine, assuming that he does not move away. The usual figure given for a fine was two cattle and a big pig, though in practice the fine would be smaller; in one case in 1948 it was 200 escudos (£2 10s.) and a pig. The word for the man who commits adultery with one's wife, or who marries one's ex-wife, is *tjikwelume* (he of jealousy) a word already referred to in the account of the kinship terminology. There is a rule against eating with him and if one goes to his funeral it is said that one's own death will soon follow. There is a similar rule against a woman eating with the wife of a man with whom she has committed adultery.

[18] For a detailed discussion of this concept, see Hastings, pp. 111–25. It is not nowadays believed that it afflicts people guilty of pre-marital sexual relations.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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MARRIAGE

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1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

601 III. TABLES OF RELATIVES WITH WHOM MARRIAGE IS PREFERRED

A. *Of Ego's Generation: Either Man or Woman*

Term	*Relationship*	*Reciprocal term*
Epalume or *cepua*	cross-cousins of all degrees (see list Table I. A. 4, p. 47)	*epalume* or *cepua*

B. *Of First Ascendant Generation: Man Speaking*

Tatekãi	father's 'sister' (see list Table I. D. 4, p. 48)	*ocimumba*

C. *Of First Ascendant Generation: Woman Speaking*

Manu	mother's 'brothers' (see list Table I. D. 3, p. 48)	*ocimumba*

D. *Of First Descendant Generation: Man or Woman Speaking*

Ocimumba	mother's 'brother's' or father's 'sister's grandchild'	*manu* or *tatekãi*

591 582 Many writers have noted that, among other purposes, the financial arrangements serve to give the bride a status in the village of her husband. In a system of preferential kinship marriage, this is a desideratum, although for other reasons than those operating in a system where the wife comes as a comparative stranger. In a system such as this of the Ovimbundu, it is evident that many of the relatives by marriage are already blood relatives. This is perhaps one reason why the avoidances with regard to 'in-laws' are less rigidly held to than in a society such as the Zulu, which holds strictly to exogamous marriage.[1]

182 601 Another factor which makes for stability of marriage is the bilineal kinship system (*epata*). This system offers to the wife an initial security not usually found where descent is unilineal, or even where there has been a one-sided development of one line of descent at the expense of the other. The bilineal system is an important factor in the preservation of social stability. Through it the household and the village are links in the chain which even yet binds the Ovimbundu into a social whole.

Sorcery

182 754 Umbundu society is subject to various forces which threaten its cohesion and stability both from without and from within. Some of the external forces have been touched upon.[2] Chief of the

[1] Krige, op. cit., p. 29 f. [2] *Supra*, pp. v, 26.

there was a great metal industry in Viye, where hoes were made for trade with the interior; later the wholesale manufacture of hoes was taken over by Ndulu, where there are the best and most easily accessible deposits of iron. In exchange for hoes they received palm-oil or cattle from other regions, or salt, rum, or goods from the coast. Other regional specialisations were :- Kasongi and the Sele country for palm-oil, Cikuma for beeswax, cattle from Ngalangi, Kalukembe, and, further south, corn-meal from Ciyaka, Civula and Bailundu.(1) 438 [316]

SOCIAL ORGANISATION AND POLITICAL STRUCTURE

KINSHIP AND DESCENT

The Ovimbundu appear to have a system of double descent which has not yet been fully reported and analysed, and whose nature is not very clear from existing accounts. The following outline is based on information given by Childs,(2) who unfortunately details the functions but not the composition of the kin groups concerned. In a review(3) of Childs' book, Barnes has formulated a descent system which would be congruent with Childs' description, and his suggestions are outlined here. 611 114

The epata

Childs translates *epata* as "blood relatives", and his use of the term suggests that it may have either a general or a limited sense. Thus he writes (p.42): "Nearly all of the villagers belong to the same *epata* or extended family, which includes both lines of descent. Most of them belong to the father's family *(oluse)*, and the mother's family *(oluina)* may also be represented." And, in another context, (p.44): "When an Ocimbundu speaks of his *epata* (family) in the sense of a large and widespread organization with a recognized head....it is generally his *oluina* [mother's family] to which he refers." 596

The oluse and the oluina

Every Ocimbundu belongs in the first instance to two distinct kin groupings: the *oluse*, to whom he is related through his father, and the *oluina* to whom he is related through his mother. Uterine brothers and sisters belong to the same *oluse* and *oluina*, but to the male and female side respectively, according to sex. (see below.) A difficulty has arisen because both Hambly(4) and Childs appear to regard *both groups* as bilateral. Hambly states explicitly that the *oluse*, or *epata lia tate* (family of my father) includes *all* relatives on the father's side, and the *oluina* or *epata lia mai* (family of my mother) *all* relatives on the mother's side. Childs writes (p.45) "Bearing in mind *their bilateral nature* ..... the functions of [the *oluse* and the *oluina*] may be summarised...". But from his summary it is obvious that the *oluse* and the *oluina* cannot be bilateral groups, neither can they have parallel descent systems of any kind. Marriage is patrilocal, and the *oluse* forms a local unit while the *oluina* is 611 613 [591]

(1) Childs, 1949, p.205. (2) 1949, pp.42-6.
(3) Man, September 1950, p.127. (4) Op.cit., pp.191-2.

606 ocisumbo (since Childs states (p.55) that it includes every relative of the generation of the spouse's parents.) *Ndatembo* must avoid: (i) speaking each other's names. This may be accomplished by using the names compounded from those of children (thus *Nakambotia* and *Sakambotia* are the father and mother of Kambotia) or by using the terms which one's spouse uses, i.e. *mai*, *tate*, *nanu* etc. (ii) seeing each other, if they are of opposite sex; if it is necessary to converse, it must be done out of sight, or with gaze averted. (iii) eating with each other. (This applies only to regular meals and not to casual refreshment.)

607 (c) The term *nawa* is used reciprocally for all the spouse's relatives of one's own generation, including those classed as "sister", "brother" and "cross-cousin". Between the *nawa* the only avoidance enjoined is that they may not eat regular meals in each other's presence; otherwise they are on "free and easy" terms".

"Avoidance of meeting ... is especially difficult for the bride who comes to live in a village of her husband's people, a large proportion of the men of which may be *ndatembo* to her. The prohibition may be lifted by .. a simple ceremony, in which each rubs a little oil on the other ... Avoidance of eating in each other's presence may be done away with after some months by sacrificing a chicken and feeding it ceremonially .. to the *ndatembo* or *nawa* ... It is especially important that the ceremonies be carried through with respect *(esumbilo)*."(1)

A note on the kinship system

613 421 178 There is a tendency today for the claims of the *oluse*, the land-owning group, to supplant those of the property-owning *oluina*; one important reason for this is the change from trade to agriculture as the most important economic activity. With European influence also conflicts have arisen over rights to children. Childs states(2) that the bilineal kinship system has been a factor leading to social stability, especially stability of marriage, but he does not elaborate this statement.

LOCAL GROUPS(3)

592 595 *The "household"*, consisting of a man, his wife or wives and children, and such other related or unrelated dependants as may be attached to this basic group, is the basis of the village. The word *onjo* (house) may be used for this group, i.e. to include the various houses which a man may have established by marriage, or it may be used for the house of any one of his wives. Each wife has her own hut, granary, chickens, and fields for her children and herself, and the husband has no house of his own unless he is village headman or the head of an *oluina*, in which case he has a spirit-hut *(etembo)* in which he may sometimes pass the night. Sons when they marry form their own households, usually in their father's village. The size of the household varies greatly according to wealth and status. Some recent kings have had as many as 12 wives. But it has been noted above that, in Childs' typical village, out of 48 households only 10

[591] [554]

(1) Childs, p.52.
(2) Ibid., p.56; see also ibid. pp.70, 45, 50 etc.
(3) This section is based on Childs, 1949, pp.25-41.

621 The total number of households is 44, or 48 including those of the four section heads. It should be noted that there is a discrepancy in Child's
592 figures (apart from an obvious misprint):[1] in another context he writes
114 that section B contains only 12 houses (not even *households*), while from this table it would appear that section B has 15 household heads, including that of the section head; and section C is said to have 6 households, while only 4 (again counting the section head) are accounted for in this table.

591 Childs states[2] that the incidence of patrilocal marriage in Ngendo
114 is fairly typical of Umbundu country, but unfortunately gives little information regarding the relationship of the various spouses to each other or concerning the location of the villages from which they came. Matrilocal marriage is recognised as a possibility: of the three relatives by marriage listed above, one was a husband of a daughter of the headman, another the widow of a younger brother of the headman, who should have been inherited by a younger brother (?) or a mother's brother of the deceased, or, failing that, could have returned to her father's village. Of those listed above as sisters' children, two were widows who had come to live in the village with their mother's brothers.[3]

POLITICAL STRUCTURE

The village headman[4]

622 The village headman *(sekulu yimbo)* is also the head of the *oluse*
793 which forms the nucleus of the village group, and is related agnatically to most of the householders. He alone may speak of the village as *imbo*
782 *liange* (my village); the heads of sections, who are also called *sekulu*[5] may speak possessively only of their own sections *(ocitiwila cange)*, and other villagers speak only of "our village" *(imbo lietu)*.[6] The headman functions as both priest and legal head of the village. As priest he has in his compound the *etambo* (spirit hut), in which the insignia of office are kept, and in which he prays to the ancestral spirits. Upon occasion he may sleep there, usually offering a prayer to the spirits when he wakes during the night. The *etambo* may also be
[346] used as a lodging place for respected guests, or as a store-house for possessions not used every day. Childs states that he officiates at regular village worship, including agricultural festivals; Hambly adds that he may lead the people in offering sacrifices when epidemics of
613 sickness break out in the village. It has been noted above[7] that it is the function of the *oluina* head to lead such rituals when illness occurs within the *oluina*. In general the village head is responsible for
[622] matters - particularly agriculture and public health - which affect the whole village; individuals, both for protection and for help and other

(1) Childs, op.cit., p.28, line 27, where "twenty-four" should read "forty-four".
(2) On the basis of the 192 genealogies and 74 marriage-schedules which he collected. He does not, unfortunately, give examples or show how the comparison was made.
(3) Based on Childs, op.cit., pp.25-31.
(4) This section is based on Childs, op.cit., pp.36-7.
(5) It has been noted above that *sekulu* is used for all men (and some women) of the grandfather's generation.
(6) op.cit., p.283. (7) p.18.

Kukululu or *sekululu*. These terms are applicable to my father's father's brother, my father's father's brother's wife; my father's father's sister's husband; and my mother's father (the reciprocal *onekulu* describes the reciprocals, brother's son's son; husband's brother's son's son; wife's brother's son's son; daughter's son). 601

Maikulu. This designation, which is derived from *mai*, meaning mother, and *kulu*, an old person, is applied to my father's mother (reciprocal, *onekulu yange*, son's son). *Maikulu* also means my father's father's sister; my mother's mother; my mother's mother's brother's wife; and my mother's mother's sister (the reciprocal is *onekulu* which equals the English reciprocals brother's son's son; daughter's son; husband's daughter's child; and sister's daughter's child).

This completes the second generation of ascendants.

NOTE: Ngonga's wife uses the names *maikulu* and *kukululu* for those relatives of her husband to whom Ngonga himself applies those terms. These relatives call Ngonga's wife *onekulu*.

TABLE D

(*See Table E IV and V, also Table F II, IV and V*)

SOME OF NGONGA'S DESCENDANTS

Nunulu or *useli* is my first-born son. Other sons are *omola*, meaning child. *Omola ulume* means a male child. *Omola ukai* is a female child. *Useli* also means a first daughter (the reciprocal for these terms is *tate*, meaning father).

Omolange means my child. I apply the word, not only to my own children, but to my elder brother's son (reciprocal, *tate*, father's younger brother); to my elder brother's daughter; and to my younger brother's son.

Ndatembo. The word is applied to my son's wife; my daughter's husband; my elder brother's son's wife; my elder brother's daughter's husband; and my younger brother's son's wife (the same word *ndatembo* is used for the reciprocals of these terms; namely, husband's father; wife's father; husband's father's younger brother; wife's father's younger brother; and husband's father's elder brother).

The foregoing classificatory system of relationship is not peculiar 601
to the Ovimbundu, but is a cultural trait of many Bantu-speaking 171
and some Sudanic-speaking Negroes. The similarity of the Umbundu system to those of surrounding peoples in Rhodesia and the Congo will be pointed out in chapters dealing with culture contacts.

When describing marriage rites reference was made to the fact 591
that a wife goes to live near her husband's relatives; the system is therefore patrilocal. The limited family consists of husband and 592
wife (or wives) with their children. The greatest number of wives (595)
observed in the family of a commoner was four, and in the family [597]
of a king eleven. A household sometimes contains adopted children, [567]
also domestic slaves (pawns) who are working to pay off debts for 596
their maternal uncles. An extended family may include a grandfather and his wife, his sons, their wives and children, and his unmarried daughters, with classes and nomenclatures mentioned in the foregoing tables.

The phrase *epata lia tate* (or *alase*) means "family of my father" 613
and includes all relatives on the father's side. The words *epata lia*

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[1874-1911]

THE OVIMBUNDU UNDER TWO SOVEREIGNTIES

593 It was then the father who normally exercised authority over
591 a boy, and on the father's death a child or youth would join the household of a father's brother. Yet the right of a sister's son to
604 the inheritance of the movable property and to grants from his mother's brother was counterbalanced by the latter's right to sell his uterine nephew into slavery, a fate from which the father could save his son by ransoming him, in which case the mother's brother would no longer have this right.[86] In this society, the mother's brother—sister's son relationship was fundamentally an economic one, in which the sister's son received assistance in the trade and inherited his uncle's gains in this trade, but could himself be transformed into a source of capital.

182 I now summarize the evidence on Umbundu social control and its relation with the trading economy. It is clear that the Ovimbundu belonged to the number of those African societies
[642] with pyramidal[87] political systems and formal codes and courts of law, even though there exists uncertainty as to the relative power of the kingdoms and the sub-chiefdoms. Social control
182 also operated through the kinship system, authority at the
613 village level being in the hands of the head of the patrilineal group backed by the public opinion expressed in the men's house, and the dispersed matrilineal groups having sanctions in the right of sale of a sister's son and in the accusations of sorcery brought against those who failed to use wealth to aid
182 their relatives. For the caravan trade to have attained the
631 importance it did there must also have existed something of a *pax Umbunduca* stimulated by the existence of such ties as that between *tjisoko* partners and the 'international' hospitality shown to diviners, hunters, and smiths. Evidence of this *pax Umbunduca* is provided by the organization of caravans, and by the establishment of marriage ties between persons in different kingdoms, and between different royal houses.[88]
[721] However, warfare was not unknown between the different

[86] Childs, p. 44, and my informants.

[87] See Fortes and Evans-Pritchard, Introduction to *African Political Systems*.

[88] Hastings (p. 1) notes a marriage between the daughter of a king of Ele and Ekwikwi, king of Bailundo (1876–95). Childs (p. 171) notes that Kalukuluwa, king of Ndulu, was a sister's son of a king of Bailundo.

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601 wife of Ernesto (6). Patrilateral 'father' to Paula (24) and Saviel (11). Affinally related to Mwehombo, a 'sister' of whom he had married.

Wayangu, paternal half-brother of Mwehombo, resident at Epalanga till the end of 1955, wife's father to Aspirante (1) had married a sister (not clear whether own or classificatory) of Lusase.

3. *Kinship and marriage in the village setting*

621 The foregoing tabulated information and the charts indicate the two main principles of integration in Epalanga, as in other Umbundu villages, the settling of individuals near senior kinsmen and the existence of a number of intra-village marriage ties.

621 602 For a clearer outline of village structure to appear, it is necessary to give a brief sketch of the contemporary kinship system which will be discussed more thoroughly in later chapters. This is cognatic, with little distinction between patrilineal and matrilineal kin, the elementary family being the basic household unit, the individual being permitted to settle with any category of kin, and a high percentage of preferential marriages.[7]

[592] [591] [582]

591 The right of settling where one pleases, as 'the heart chooses', is recognized even in children. Minessi, the 7-year-old son of Gonçalve (18), used generally to eat at the household of his father's sister Paulina, the wife of Joaõ (20). Gonçalve said about this to me 'He is very fond of his father's sister.'

While the traditional norm by which a man lived in his father's village is still remembered, at least by older men, a

[7] Childs (p. 56) states that it is permitted to marry a cross-cousin on either side, a sister's daughter, and a father's sister. My informants generally agreed that the marriage with a father's sister was not and had not been permitted. Marriage is not permitted with 'true' kin of these categories. Padre Feltin, the superior of the Bimbe Catholic Mission who knew of the existence of these marriages, told me that very few Umbundu marriages came within the prohibited (a prohibition removable by a dispensation) degrees of kinship laid down by the Catholic Church (that is, up to, and including, third cousins). Such marriages in the past might have been with geographically as well as socially distant kin. Childs quotes a case of a marriage arranged, after the discovery of a kinship tie, between partners living as far apart as Ciyaka (Quiaca) and Ngalangi (Galangue).

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father does not exercise great authority over his grown sons even if they live in the same village, nor does their living in different villages lead to a breach in personal relations. Sapapula who told me that a man should stay in his father's village till the latter's death had four sons, none of whom lived in Epalanga. Two lived in Menga (where Sapapula had lived up to 1946) and maintained friendly contact with their father. One who lived in Cela seemed socially as well as geographically more remote, and the fourth was a labour migrant given up for lost.

The preferential marriages[8] have continued in practice when most of the other institutions of the old kinship system have disintegrated. Their function is to multiply the relationships between individuals living in a particular neighbourhood, and to limit the socio-geographical range within which marriage partners are selected. Of a sample of 121 existing marriages 87, that is 70.3%, were with cross-cousins, and only 13.7% were with non-kinswomen.[9]

Even some of the non-kin marriages fitted into the general pattern of increasing ties within a limited social field. Thus in Epalanga Jaime (19) had married Delfina, a brother's daughter to Ndjoleya. They were not kinsfolk yet this fitted in with the pattern of kin marriages in increasing links between different kinship cores in the village. Similarly Costa (26) and his wife Nakalende were not agreed (when questioned separately) as to whether they were kinsfolk, but this is not really significant since

[8] I had been inclined to interpret these marriages as functions of the relations between kin groups. Dr. Mary Douglas has suggested to me that these marriages were in the past not related to any system of kin groups but had, as at the present day, the function of multiplying the kinship ties within a limited field. I do not know of any clear evidence which could at this time settle the point.

[9] I count here as kin marriages those between *sakwatjiuka*, funeral friends, who though not kinsfolk tend to be assimilated to cross-cousins in social usage. 'Cross-cousin' tends to be at the present time a blanket category, and I have repeatedly found asking men about their wife's kinship status that they would first give some other term and then change to 'cross-cousin'. [Epalume]. This explains why under present conditions the percentage of cross-cousin marriages in relation to the total number of marriages seems to be rising. Thus in 56 marriages (existing or terminated) contracted by 23 men who had taken part in the caravan trade, while the percentage of marriages with non-kinswomen was slightly smaller (12.5) the figure of marriages with cross-cousins was very much smaller (42.9) and the figure of marriages with kin other than cross-cousins, sister's daughters, and *sakwatjiuka* was much higher (25 %) compared to the contemporary figure of 5%.

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word 'otjitawila' is given by Dr. Childs[11] as being used for a section of the village; however, I have not found this word known locally. 621

It may be asked how typical Epalanga is of other villages. In size it is larger than usual, having 36 households. (The average number, using figures from 14 villages, is 18.36 households; the largest, Epalanga, had 36 and the smallest 5.) In structure other villages presented the same picture of ill-defined kinship cores held together by a network of kin and affinal ties, with village headmen emerging by a varying collection of claims, of which the most significant seemed to be a position as the principal focus of kinship ties.

5. *Kinsmen and the Choice of Residence*

When one asks a man why he has settled in a particular village, a common enough answer is that he has settled there because he has 'family' there. When asked who his 'family' (the Portuguese word *familia* is used even by non-Portuguese speakers) is, he will give the name of a senior kinsman, or he may give more than one name. He may even give the name of somebody living outside the village. Thus in Epalanga when I asked Bartolomeu why he had settled there he replied that it was because of his mother's brother Lusase who was not an Epalanga resident. It was therefore not practicable for me, as I had at one time intended, to find which categories of kin are most likely to be settled with, by asking individuals in villages I censused, and obtaining percentages. 591 602

It is possible to indicate some of the 'pulls' which affect a choice of residence. In the traditional system, when a boy's father died he would settle with a father's brother. Nowadays, it is generally expected that he will settle with his mother's brother, this being the answer given by informants when asked where he will go. In practice, the pull of the mother's brother's household for a child does not seem to be so strong. In Epalanga, out of thirteen persons under 20 who had neither father nor mother resident in the village, only one was living with a mother's brother. 591

[11] See Childs, pp. 36–37.

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On the village level, however, the importance of the mother's brother tie and of the tie between matrilateral 'brothers' becomes very apparent. None of Sapapula's four sons had settled in Epalanga, and his only classificatory 'son' was Gonçalve, own son to Mwehombo, Sapapula's matrilateral 'brother'. Seven household heads were sister's sons of Sapapula. This trend for matrilateral ties to predominate is marked also in Katembo and Mbunga, but less evident at Belem. Indeed, 'neo-matrilinearity' as a principle of village structure may be a general and not simply a local feature of Umbundu society, since Mr. C. M. N. White[12] has found that the settlements of Ovimbundu within Northern Rhodesia are marked by a predominance of matrilateral ties. This is referable to the contemporary kinship system in which the father-son tie is predominantly a personal one, with a limited extension of attitudes to classificatory fathers, whereas a man's relation with a mother's brother seems little affected by the question of genealogical distance. Perhaps the relations between the group of agnatic kin were so closely tied to the old village structure that when it broke up it disintegrated also the wider agnatic ties. Yet at the same time such matrilineal institutions as matrilineal inheritance and the non-repayment of loans among matrikin have weakened or disappeared.

Running counter to this principle of settling in the village of a senior kinsman who is likely to belong to one's matrikin, is the principle of cross-cousin marriage. 'If you have married your cross-cousin when your son grows up he will see a cross-cousin here, a cross-cousin there, and so he will stay.' That is, a man will stay in his father's village not simply by virtue of the father-son tie but because he will be surrounded by kinsmen. The relation between cross-cousins is one of equality and solidarity, expressed in joking and in burial services. To say that one stays in a place because one has cross-cousins at hand is to indicate an ideal of equal relations with a circle of kinsmen rather than attachment to the following of an important kinsman.

These two principles co-exist in actual social life. A man will recognize and respect a number of senior kinsmen living in his

[12] In letters.

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neighbourhood and will explain his choice of residence by 591
quoting the names of one or more of these; yet the weaving 602
together of so many strands of kinship and affinity, ultimately
through marriage links, is what gives the local population its [621]
relative degree of stability. It should be emphasized that the 602
integration established within a village by the network of 621
kinship and affinal ties is dependent on the integration created 631
by the same amorphous network which runs through and
beyond the sub-chiefdom. It is this network into which the 60
individual is woven by multiple ties that absorbs the neo-
matrilineal pull apparent to some degree in choice of residence
and keeps the system essentially cognatic.

The use of the word *familia* reflects this situation. A man may 602
say of a particular senior kinsman 'He is my *familia*', that is, my
kinsman, my most important kinsman with whom I have
settled, yet also he may say 'My *familia* is in Cela', that is, the
greater part of my kinsmen live in Cela. When Bartolomeu
explained that he had settled where he did because of Lusase,
he was perhaps combining the two kinds of references. He had [591]
settled in Gumba because he had a large number of kinsmen
there among whom Lusase was pre-eminent. A man explaining
the locality of his *familia* in the wider sense will associate it with
a particular sub-chiefdom—'My family is all in Menga'—
when he is outside it; when he is in it he is more likely to refer to
a particular village.

Although individuals living in a village may have come there 621
through several kinship sources yet the majority of them will
probably have some kinship or affinal tie with the traditional
headman. This collection of individual ties does not provide the 622
headman with a body of followers, nor is having a large number 602
of dependants a value of contemporary Umbundu culture. If
it were felt that the best thing to be in life is the patron of a
body of kinsmen and followers, headmanship would survive as a
predominant influence in local life despite the collapse of its
political and legal responsibilities. In fact not even old men feel
this way.

The idea of the village as a corporate group with a jural and 621
political personality rather than a residential unit has not 78
survived the break-up of agnatic solidarity, the disappearance

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114 One anthropologist, Mr. W. D. Hambly, and two missionaries

with anthropological knowledge and interests, Dr. Daniel A. Hastings and Dr. Gladwyn Murray Childs, have written on Umbundu kinship.[3] Mr. Hambly's main interest was in material culture and the conditions of his fieldwork were not such as to give him much evidence on the kinship system.[4] Both Dr. Hastings and Dr. Childs recognized the central importance of kinship in Umburdu social life, but have outlined the kinship ties and kinship groups rather than given a detailed analysis.

602 Mr. Hambly states that 'The phrase *Epata Lia Tate* (or *Oluse*) means "family of my father" and includes all relatives on the father's side. The words *Epata Lia Mai* (or *Oluina*) mean "family of my mother".'[5] This could mean that the Umbundu kinship system is bilateral. He states that inheritance is matrilineal and marriage virilocal, a situation consistent with such a matrilineal kinship system as that of the Bakongo.[6]

613 622 Dr. Hastings, whose thesis was completed the year before the publication of Hambly's book, makes it clear that there are two sets of kin groups. 'Over each village is a ruling elder who is the head of the kinship group of that village since all who reside in the village are generally related to him and to each other patrilineally. This elder, greatly revered, is considered the patriarch of that local group. Residence being patrilocal, [59] the office of an elder is hereditary through the male line.'[7] He 613 then goes on to contrast with this, 'the matrilineal sib to which each member is linked, though he may be living in a village away from his sib group.'[8] This group is a clearly defined

[3] Works cited in footnotes to Chapter I. There is a typescript of Hastings's thesis in the library of the International African Institute, London.

[4] Mr. Hambly spent five months in the country, and used as his interpreter and main informant an English-speaking Otjimbundu. He seems simply to have visited villages without living in them. Dr. Childs and Dr. Hastings had both spent several years as 'bush' missionaries Dr. Childs had actually taken over from Dr. Hastings work in the area to the north-west of Bailundo in the direction of Bimbe, and had subsequently obtained information in Cassongue. He later obtained a good deal of material from African pastors, teachers and schoolboys.

[5] Hambly, pp. 131–2.

[6] For the Bakongo see the discussion by A. I. Richards, in Radcliffe-Brown and Forde, pp. 213–27. Anthropologists have more than once suggested to the author that the Umbundu system was not of the 'double-descent' category but some combination of virilocal marriage and matrilineal descent.

[7] Hastings, p. 16.

[8] Ibid.

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leaning towards matrilateral rather than patrilateral brothers. The classificatory kinship terminology, and the lack of genealogies and kinship groups, means that a man knows a great many classificatory brothers living in his neighbourhood of whom he vaguely recognizes some as 'close' others as 'distant', but with whom his relations are not especially significant. A boy or girl who loses his or her parents is fairly likely, judging from the evidence of Epalanga households, to settle with a full- or half-brother or sister.

Formerly, owing to virilocal marriage, a sister was geographically separated from her brother, and even if widowed or divorced would not necessarily return to his village, but might go to her mother's brother.[24] With this geographical separation went a situation of possible conflict, since the brother could sell his sister's children to recoup his own debts, and the shadow of sorcery fears seems to have touched this relationship.[25] The suppression of the rubber and slave trades and the subsequent disintegration of the kinship groups have removed the economic pressures which made for conflict between matrilineal kin and the residence rules which divided people locally into groups of agnates and their wives. The brother-sister tie has therefore changed its content, since it is released from the heavy pressures formerly active in the matrilineal kin groups.

It would be wrong to produce any such generalization as 'a woman must always be under the guardianship of a male relative'. A woman who is widowed or divorced or whose husband is away working will tend, however, to develop a particular link with the male head of some household, her own kinsman usually, except in the case of a labour migrant's wife, when it may be a kinsman of her husband. Thus in Epalanga, Augusto (25) aided the household of his absent full brother Julio (29).

Aid is most likely to be given to a kinsman's wife when the two households are close together. The underlying idea seems to be to keep the kinsman's household together rather than any duty of aiding an affine. For a widow or divorced woman or the

[24] Childs, pp. 23–37.

[25] H. W. Nevinson (*A Modern Slavery*) gives a complicated story which suggests this possibility (p. 101).

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6. *Descent, Inheritance and Succession*

There is little interest in genealogical detail among contemporary Ovimbundu, which is not surprising since there exists no system of descent groups in which the position of the individual may be genealogically defined nor does affiliation to a particular line of descent give status *vis-à-vis* people of less eminent descent. Pedigrees are traced (in either line) for only two to four ascending generations though one man I met could name ancestors for nine ascending generations. 602

Despite this vagueness and lack of interest in the articulation of relationships, Ovimbundu will say that such-and-such a kinsman is 'close' and such-and-such is 'distant' even though they cannot fit this into a genealogical framework. 'Closeness' and 'nearness' are not simply used to refer to geographical proximity or social co-operation, since there may be much mutual assistance between kinsmen who are 'distant'. One might speak of a blurred edge of kinship not clearly defined in categories of kin but not non-kinsmen. A man may speak of somebody on this 'blurred edge' thus: 'He must be a kinsman but I don't know how.' Similarly the *vakwatjisoko*[1] are a class of people who are not definitely kin, and not non-kin. [608]

There is little formalized distinction between patrikin and matrikin. There is a certain matrilateral pull in the choice of residence, a man being, as has been noted, more likely to settle with a mother's brother than with a 'father'. I had the impression that a man is more likely to settle with a matrilateral 'brother' than with a patrilateral one, but it would be very difficult to establish this by quantitative methods owing to the complexity of the factors affecting residence. As a man tends to settle where he has a number of kin rather than in the shelter of one particular kinsman, this trend does not lead to the formation of matrilineal clusters of kin. The majority of informants still consider that sorcery can only be practised among matrilineal kin but for various reasons it may be said that the fear of sorcery is not significant in kinship relations.[88] 602 591 602 754

[88] It may be suggested that the disappearance of the matrilineal groups which imposed a co-operation involving exacting demands has been paralleled by the decline of sorcery, the mystical reflection of underlying tensions. How is the fact that several informants told me that sorcery had declined since the days of the [178]

[1] [i.e., funeral friends -- Analyst]

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for the bride's village. Here they may be greeted with formal speeches of welcome in Portuguese, a usage copied from the reception of missionaries. 585

One only turns up to a wedding if one has been invited, and not everybody who is a kinsman living in the neighbourhood is invited. Nor is there any marked distinction between kin and non-kin in the ceremony, except for the ending of avoidances and the recognition of the father's sister, who is recompensed for her services as nursemaid. Village membership is significantly recognized in the distribution of food, and the sending of the party to the bride's home to represent the bridegroom's village.

Umbundu marriage is virilocal, although a certain number of marriages are within the village. Apart from such marriages, it seems to be rare to find a man settling in a village because his wife has kin there. 591

Although during the early months of the marriage the bridegroom's mother may supervise the bride's work, the individual household is essentially an independent unit[13] and was not even in the past merged with other household units to form a 'grandfamily'. This independence is not isolation. I have only a very few times seen houses with any sort of compound about them. Much of domestic life, eating, working, resting, talking, may be done out of doors in front of the house. Paying visits is a great feature of village life especially when the day's work is over, although there is also a term *oku pasula*, to visit in the morning, referring to what are usually just short calls, involving the exchange of greetings. Perhaps the opportunity of calling and being called on is one of the factors maintaining the village as a social unit. The idea that a man should not eat with his wife still survives to some extent so that questions on this topic receive contradictory answers. Observation shows that even among the men who travelled on the caravans, eating with one's wife is the general practice. 592 594 264

One of the most striking features of Umbundu domestic life is the close companionship which exists between husband and wife and which is unquestionably a modern development.[14] 593 178

[13] See Magyar, pp. 281–3.

[14] The role of the *Ongango* as described by Childs and Hastings indicates that a man's normal companions both for eating and recreation were other men.

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At the other end of the age-scale it is not easy always to tell to what household a child is attached. Small children may often eat with kin other than their own parents if they like them and thus share in the lives of two households. Children and adolescents may go on visits to kin and this may lead to permanent residence. This familiarity with other households is not confined to children. Although, as has been stated, eating with one's wife is the usual practice, it is by no means uncommon to see two or more men eating together, either because the wife of one of them is away or simply to be sociable. 592 264

This right of children to move about, coupled with such other factors[80] as the relatively high divorce rate, tends to bring about quite a high proportion of children who live with kin other than their own parents. Out of 70 under 20's in Epalanga (out of a total population of 148), 34 had both parents living in Epalanga,[81] 23 had one parent living in Epalanga and 13 had neither parent living in Epalanga. Of the 23 who had only one parent living in Epalanga, 7 lived with their father and 16 with their mother. Those 7 living with their father were all over 14, thus confirming the norm given by informants that young children on the death of the mother go to their mother's kin until they 'have sense', that is, are about 12 or 13, when they return to their father. Of the 13 who were living with neither parent, 2 (boys) were living with a cross-cousin (father's sister's son, for whom the term 'father' can be used), 1 (boy) with a patrilateral 'father,' 2 (1 girl, 1 small boy) with a mother's mother, 4 (3 boys, 1 girl) with a sister's husband, 1 (boy) with a paternal half-brother, 1 with a fiancé's father, 1 (boy) with a mother's brother, and on 1 (girl) I have no information. 591

These figures are too small to base any very strong argument on them. It is, however, notable that only 1 of the 12 children on whom information was obtained was living with a mother's brother, whereas 4 were living with a brother-in-law. This seems to conflict with statements made earlier as to the present-day trend of individuals to settle with their mother's brothers.

[80] Childs notes about the traditional system that the sending of children to stay with kin or friends for a year or two was common (pp. 104-5).

[81] This figure includes one case where although both parents lived in Epalanga they were separated.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

621 592 Going on to the marital status of the villagers, I found that the forty-eight households were to be classified as follows:

Monogynous	27	(including 7 at the school)
Widowers (all formerly monogynous)	3	(" 1 ")
Widows	7	(" 4 ")
Young (unmarried) man	1	(at the school)
Polygynous	10	
Total	48	

Whether a similar proportion of monogynous to polygynous households would also be found more widely among the Ovimbundu is a question which could only be settled by extensive 595 demographic studies.[1] My impression is that the proportion of 592 polygynous to monogynous households is higher in the region of Kasonge than in other Umbundu areas for the following reasons:

1. The proximity of Kasonge to the Esele country which has long been a source of supply for concubines (slaves). (Five of the ten polygynous householders in Ngendo included at least one Esele concubine.)
2. The comparatively low bride-price in Kasonge as compared to other areas.

The South African Census for 1921 showed that at that time only one man in eight was polygynous.[2] My impression is that the proportion among the Ovimbundu is no greater and that economic factors will soon do away with any considerable polygyny.

In each of the ten polygynous households in Ngendo save one, there were only two wives or concubines. The one exception was

112 [1] The census of 1940 gives more reliable figures and more details than were previously available, but it does not provide a basis for studies of this order. The number or proportion of polygamous unions among the 'uncivilized population' was not recorded. For the whole colony, the division of the native population by sex is given as follows: males, 1,733,328, females, 1,932,501 (op. cit., vol. i, p. 78 f.); and for the Ovimbundu (*Mbundo*), as follows: males, 636,583, females, 694,504 (op. cit., vol. ix, p. 22 f.). Owing to the migration of labourers, and especially to the system known as 'contract labour', certain areas (of recruitment) show a large excess of females over males (as much as 4 to 1 in the 20–29 age-groups of certain areas), while certain (receiving) areas show a corresponding excess of males over females (4 to 1 in several areas and even 22 to 1 in one area, for the same age-groups) (op. cit., vol. iii, *passim*). On this subject, *vide* R. R. Kuczynski, *Colonial Population* (London, 1937), and *Population Movements* (ibid., 1936); both summarized in the *Rhodes-Livingstone Journal*, no. 2.

[2] Quoted by P. A. W. Cook, *The Education of a South African Tribe* (Cape Town; Juta, 1934), p. 2.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

the household of the headman Sikililẽ, who had had four wives and 595
one young Esele concubine. At the time of my last visit (1936), 592
however, there were only two wives and the concubine, one wife having died, and another having gone to her people.

To complete the picture of the villagers, their numbers were as 621
follows:

Village	Men	Women	Children: Male	Children: Female	Total
In Sikililẽ's village . .	24	35	31	37	127
In Ciyanda . . .	5	8	2	4	19
In Kanjengo . . .	3	6	3	1	13
At the School . . .	10	11	10	6	37
Total . . .	42	60	46	48	
	Adults: 102		Children: 94[1]		196

In Sikililẽ's village there were domestic animals as follows: 621
9 head of cattle, 13 goats, 20 sheep, 100 pigs, and about 100 463
chickens. There was practically no professional specialization; [231]
there were almost no specialists living in the village: no blacksmith or carpenter, no mat-maker, but only one 'hunter of meat', and three 'hunters of (bee-) hives'. As to the women, all could make baskets, and there were several who had made pottery, but were not doing so at the time.

Pigs, chickens, and dogs roamed the village, functioning as a 364
D.S.C. and a sewer system combined. Were it not for these scavengers the villages of the Ovimbundu would present an even more untidy spectacle than is the case. There is no other regular [514]
disposal of refuse, nor are there any latrines or privies.[2]

It will be seen that there is practically no division of labour as 621
between households: each is practically a self-contained unit. The 476

[1] It was reported that in addition to the children then living, these same households had lost 57 by death (29 males and 28 females).

[2] At Ngendo the school village had two or three enclosed pit privies. The Umbundu euphemism for defecate, 'go to the bush' (*oku enda kusenge*), is revealing. Even more revealing is a proverb which advises one not to burn his bridges behind him, but literally it runs as follows:

Nda ua lisinga huti, Si endi hosyima onjo,
Nda o ha tiitili ji?

If you foreswear yourself saying, I shall not go behind the house,
Then will you go (to) urinate where?

There is a more shocking version which, however, may not be really authentic. 838

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

CHAPTER III

KINSHIP

The Household

592 THE basis of the village and of the whole Umbundu kinship structure is the household consisting of a man, his wife or wives and their children, together with such other related or unrelated dependants as may be attached and live together in a single compound. The Umbundu word for the household is *ocikumba*, which includes domestic animals and possessions as well as the persons who make up the group, but nowadays this word is rarely, if ever, heard. The word *onjo*, which means 'house', is also used in the sense of household and to include the one or more 'houses' which a man has established by marriage. The housing arrangements of the household and its relation to the other households and to the headman of the village have been noted. The chief facts to remember are that each wife has her own hut, granary, chickens, and fields for her children and herself; and that the husband has no house of his own save a spirit hut (*etambo*), in case he is village headman or a family elder. There is not the same [595] relation between the rank of the wives and the position of their houses with relation to the cattle kraal, which is found among the cattle-raising Southern Bantu, nor are there the same distinctions of precedence. The eldest child (*nuñulū*) of his father, of whatever wife or concubine, takes precedence over all who are born later. It is nevertheless true among commoners that the first wife legally married is the chief wife. The number of persons belonging to a single household may vary greatly. Magyar stated that his father-in-law Kayaya Kayangula (king of Viye *c.* 1847–50) had seventeen sons and forty-four daughters.[1] Some recent kings have had as many as twelve wives and concubines, but I do not know of any having had even half as many children as Kayangula had. The only large household in the village of Ngendo was that of the headman, Sikūlū, with five wives and concubines, and fifteen children (most of whom were already grown at the time of my visits). The largest of the other households in that village had

[1] Magyar, op. cit., p. 260.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

only five children living, and the largest polygynous household 592
had only four, but many children had died in infancy.

The attitudes within the household are much like those found 593
universally between members of the same 'family'. Children respect and love both parents. Perhaps there is a little more respect for the father and a little more love for the mother, but this distinction is not carried to the extent which seems to be the case in more strongly patrilineal societies. The respect which a child has for his parents is plainly shown in his refusal under ordinary circumstances to speak their names. 'Even a child on being asked to tell the name of his father or his mother, will reply saying, "*Tate* (my father) indeed is his name." And if one asks again, saying, "Your mother, what is her name?" the child will reply saying, "*Mai* (my mother) indeed is her name."'[1] The sex 857
division of Umbundu life begins within the household when very early in life the boys begin to be trained by their elder brothers, fathers, and other male relatives, while the girls remain or go about with their mothers, elder sisters, and other female relatives. Only the very small boys and girls (say under six or eight) play together. The age distinctions of Umbundu society are learned with the child's first attempts at language. Either his elder brother or sister he calls *huvange*, and he soon learns that the brother or sister younger than himself is *manjange*. Brothers and sisters, siblings or children of the same parents, 'are replicas of one another in social relationship, and . . . socially identical'[2] for practical purposes. Among Ovimbundu the principal differences are due to the two factors of age and sex. The influence of age is funda- 593
mental and is easily demonstrated by the fact that there is no word 561
for 'brother' but instead for 'elder brother' or 'younger brother'. Within the household the factor of sex is ever present, but there is not the invidious distinction found among some of the more strongly patrilineal societies such as the Zulu[2] which reserves the more respectful term for the brother. Umbundu applies the terms *hana* and *manja*[3] to brothers and sisters without distinction of sex. There are the additional terms *kota* (elder brother), *mbuale* (sister), and the reciprocal terms *mume* (brother, spoken

[1] R. Kavita Evambé, from an Umbundu manuscript.
[2] E. J. Krige, *The Social System of the Zulus* (London: Longmans, 1936), p. 24.
[3] These are the root terms without the possessive suffixes.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

601

E. *Second Ascendant Generation: Either Man or Woman the Speaker*

Term	*Relation*	*Reciprocal term*
1. *Maikulu*[1] (*Nyokulu*)	grandmother, both maternal and paternal grandmother's sister grandfather's sister	*onekulu yange*
2. *Sekulu*[1] (*Tatekulu*)	grandfather, both maternal and paternal grandfather's brother grandmother's brother	*onekulu yange*

F. *Third Ascendant Generation*

Kuku	all relatives of this generation	*onekuluila* or *omokolole yange*

G. *Fourth Ascendant Generation*

Kukulu's	all relatives of this generation	*onene yange*

H. *Fifth Ascendant Generation*

Kukululu	all relatives of this generation	*onei yange*

I. *Sixth Ascendant Generation*

Ku	all relatives of this generation	*oneka yange*

J. *First Descendant Generation*

1. *Omälinge*	my own child woman's sister's child man's brother's child mother's sister's grandchild father's brother's grandchild	*tate* or *mäi*
mälili or *uveli*	first-born child	
2. *Ocimumbe*	woman's brother's child man's sister's child mother's brother's grandchild father's sister's grandchild	*tatehäi* or *mama*

The kinship terms for further descendant generations will be found in the column of 'reciprocal terms' given above. It does not seem necessary to repeat them.

602 592 The patterns of behaviour between these many blood relatives find their prototypes in the patterns of the household. Love for

[1] *Maikulu* and *Sekulu* are sometimes used interchangeably for persons of either sex. Each has only the two personal forms. The forms in parenthesis are but little used. *Inakulu* is used for the queen.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

602 592 the mother who bore me and the consideration naturally expected from her cannot, in the nature of things, be given or received by *all* of the elder and younger mothers in exactly equal degree, but the type of behaviour is similar. The elder sister who carried her younger brother about on her back when she herself could hardly more than walk, or the elder brother who first taught his younger brother to make and set his little traps, has a warmth of regard which he cannot extend with just the same force to fifty or one hundred younger brothers, but nevertheless the pattern will be of the same sort if and when similar opportunity offers. The same may be said for the younger and the elder fathers, and again for the *tatekãi*, the 'female father'. But here elements other than 605 604 the early household patterns enter as also with *manu*, the mother's brother. Chief of these other elements is the fact that these two classes of relatives, together with the *va cepua*, i.e. cross-cousins (mostly children of the *manu* and *tatekãi* classes), and also the *ovimumba* (plural) (one's own nephews along similar lines of descent), are all potential spouses or potential relatives-in-law.[1] The relations of *ocimumba* (sister's son) and *manu* (mother's brother) in Umbundu society follow a pattern not exactly like any other set of relationships in any society of which I know. Suggestions of this have already been given. The *manu* shares his sister's desire for the advancement of her son, and if the nephew has had a part of his education in the uncle's home or on his trading expeditions, the relationship will have become closer. It may be, however, that the uncle's own difficulties may lead him to exploit 602 178 his nephew rather than to attend only to his advancement.[2] The ties of the paternal group tend to be strengthened at the expense of the maternal family and it seems that the increasing localization of the Umbundu family with the supplanting of trade by agriculture (as a man's full-time occupation) has furthered this process.

602 It is very important for one who would understand the Ovimbundu to look upon the Umbundu kinship structure with the eyes of an Ocimbundu. If one brought up to other ideas and other relationships finds this difficult, that is all the more reason for making the effort. I cannot better summarize the Umbundu

[1] See *infra*, pp. 52 ff.

[2] This is one of several points where the commercial tendencies seem to come into conflict with the patterns of the kinship group.

1: Childs M-5 (1824-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

182 621 in a somewhat decadent state, the Umbundu village has up to the present maintained its status as a local kinship unit.

182 592 602 The household is not a solitary unit but a part of the village. Since it is constituted by marriage, it embodies the union of at least two kinship groups. The attitudes and behaviour patterns within the Umbundu household are basically those universally recognized. In common with the households of most Bantu cultures, it differs from the European model in that it extends its attitudes and behaviour patterns to the wider kinship groupings by means of a classificatory system of relationship.

613 182 In the wider kinship groupings (*epata*), the Ovimbundu recognize both the maternal (*oluina*) and the paternal (*oluse*) lines of descent. The functions of the latter have been largely local, residential, social, and religious, with succession (of status) in the male line. The function of the former has been cohesive over a larger territory, with a recognized head in whom has been vested both religious and economic functions. Both his office and the inheritance of property descend in the female line. Much of the power, economic and personal, formerly held by the *oluina*, in the person of the mother's brother, seems to be passing at the present time to the *oluse*, in the person of the father. The bilineal kinship system has been a strongly cohesive social force.

182 [582] The form of marriage practised by the Ovimbundu is of the two-way cross-cousin type in both lines of kin and in three generations. It seems to be an individual type developed in the particular social and economic situation of the Ovimbundu. As a contract between two families and as a new venture, the marriage relation demands that great attention be given to attitudes and behaviour patterns which emphasize mutual respect.

[561] The hierarchy of age is a very real factor in the Umbundu social structure. Age-set 'schools' have not existed generally throughout the tribes, but there are associations of coevals. This is largely a cohesive force.

754 Sorcery is the most important disruptive force at work *within* Umbundu society. Working as it does, within kinship groups, and inasmuch as it seems to be on the increase, sorcery embodies a real danger to social cohesion.

184 178 Homogeneity has never been an attribute of the Ovimbundu as regards their racial or cultural make-up. The slave-trade injected other and more diverse elements, and recent movements and

611 dispersed. Both groups have ritual leaders, whose offices are quite dis-
613 tinct. Barnes' suggestion[1] is that the two groups must be father's patrilineage and mother's matrilineage, with the qualification mentioned below.

613 The *oluse* consists of a large number of village groups, some of which
622 recognise mutual relationship,[2] but with no recognised head (other than the village headman) except in the case of the royal families. Land is owned by the *oluse* and passed on within it from father to son, or from
[428] elder to younger brother. Succession to village or tribal office, from village headman to king, descends in the same way.[3] Ritual leadership within the *oluse* lies with the village headman, who is in charge of the
[346] spirit-hut *(etambo)* of the guardian spirit of the village (or of the nuclear *oluse* within the village), and who officiates at regular village worship, including agricultural festivals.

613 The *oluina*, on the other hand, is a dispersed and apparently larger
428 group, whose members live with their various paternal lines of descent. The size of the *oluina* is unknown; Childs merely refers to it as a "large
604 and widespread organization, with a recognized head". The office of head of the *oluina (ukulu wepata)* descends from mother's brother to sister's son. Negotiable and moveable property, including cattle and trade goods, is owned by the *oluina* and inherited by the sister's son. Formerly the mother's elder brother had great powers over his sister's sons, and was even able to pawn them or sell them into slavery, to meet his own debts.
[592] The patrilocal household is usually responsible for training children, especially during their early years, but they are frequently sent to the *oluina* (i.e. to the mother's brother) for at least a part of their educa-
[586] tion. At death or divorce of parents, children go to the *oluina*.

The head *(ukulu wepata)* of the *oluina* is usually both the legal and
43 spiritual head of the group, although today the two functions are often divided. He is in charge of the spirit hut *(etambo)* of the guardian
782 spirit of the *oluina* (of whom there may be more than one, and of whom he becomes one after death). He leads the *oluina* in propitiatory rituals carried out in case of illness, death, or other misfortunes within the group, or in prayers made for desired economic advantages. (Apparently no regular rituals are carried out by the *oluina*.) The *ukulu wepata* may or may not be at the same time a village headman; if he is, he will be priest of two lines and have charge of two spirit huts; if he is not, there may be two (or more) priests in the village, each in charge of the spirit-hut of his *oluse* or *oluina*.

The onẽlẽ yohonji and the onẽlẽ yohumba

613 The *oluse* and the *oluina* are both divided into male and female
602 "sides": the *onẽlẽ yohonji* (the side of the bow) and the *onẽlẽ yohumba* (the side of the basket). It has been noted above that uterine brothers
582 and sisters belong to the same *oluse* and *oluina*, but to the male or female side in each, according to sex. The composition of these "sides" is

(1) Loc.cit.
(2) If some villages within the *oluse* cannot trace mutual relationship, the *oluse* should perhaps be called a patri-clan rather than a patrilineage.
(3) But see below, p.29.

601 ocimumbo (since Childs states (p.55) that it includes every relative of the generation of the spouse's parents.) *Ndatembo* must avoid: (i) speaking each other's names. This may be accomplished by using the names compounded from those of children (thus *Nakembotia* and *Sakembotia* are the father and mother of Kembotia) or by using the terms which one's spouse uses, i.e. *mai, tate, mamu* etc. (ii) seeing each other, if they are of opposite sex; if it is necessary to converse, it must be done out of sight, or with gaze averted. (iii) eating with each other. (This applies only to regular meals and not to casual refreshment.)

607 (c) The term *nawa* is used reciprocally for all the spouse's relatives of one's own generation, including those classed as "sister", "brother" and "cross-cousin". Between the *nawa* the only avoidance enjoined is that they may not eat regular meals in each other's presence; otherwise they are on "free and easy" terms".

"Avoidance of meeting ... is especially difficult for the bride who comes to live in a village of her husband's people, a large proportion of the men of which may be *ndatembo* to her. The prohibition may be lifted by .. a simple ceremony, in which each rubs a little oil on the other ... Avoidance of eating in each other's presence may be done away with after some months by sacrificing a chicken and feeding it ceremonially .. to the *ndatembo* or *nawa* ... It is especially important that the ceremonies be carried through with respect *(esumbilo)*."(1)

A note on the kinship system

613 421 178 There is a tendency today for the claims of the *olusa*, the land-owning group, to supplant those of the property-owning *olusa*; one important reason for this is the change from trade to agriculture as the most important economic activity. With European influence also conflicts have arisen over rights to children. Childs states(2) that the bilineal kinship system has been a factor leading to social stability, especially stability of marriage, but he does not elaborate this statement.

LOCAL GROUPS(3)

592 595 *The "household"*, consisting of a man, his wife or wives and children, and such other related or unrelated dependants as may be attached to this basic group, is the basis of the village. The word *onjo* (house) may be used for this group, i.e. to include the various houses which a man may have established by marriage, or it may be used for the house of any one of his wives. Each wife has her own hut, granary, chickens, and fields for her children and herself, and the husband has no house of his own unless he is village headman or the head of an *olusa*, in which case he has a spirit-hut *(etembo)* in which he may sometimes pass the night. Sons when they marry form their own households, usually in their father's village. The size of the household varies greatly according to wealth and status. Some recent kings have had as many as 12 wives. But it has been noted above that, in Childs' typical village, out of 48 households only 10

[591] [554]

(1) Childs, p.52.
(2) Ibid., p.56; see also ibid. pp.70, 45, 50 etc.
(3) This section is based on Childs, 1949, pp.25-41.

were polygynous and only one of these contain more than two wives.[1]

The village or *tabo* (plural *ovatabo*) may consist of from 5 to 500 such households, the heads of which are usually related agnatically to each other. Most, but not all, of the larger villages are *olombala* (villages of chiefs or sub-chiefs). These are said to have had formerly as many as 5,000 inhabitants,[2] but today few have as many as 3,000, and there is a general tendency towards smaller villages and even isolated households.[3] There are in general two quite different types of Umbundu village according to the terrain on which they are built. Those on the plains, where there is room to spread out, tend towards a circular shape, with the *ocila* and *onjango* (see below) near the centre. The various sections of the village may appear as quarters of a single whole, or they may be spread out haphazardly. Mountain villages[4] may have houses built on ledges almost one on top of the other. Here there is often no room or no suitable soil within the palisades for gardens or for the dancing-floor *(ocila)*, which are found outside the palisade. Different sections of the village tend to string themselves out horizontally along the mountain-side, or to find successive ledges.

The typical village of Ngendo described by Childs, in Kasongi chiefdom, *etumbu* (sub-chiefdom) of Ekongo, is of an intermediate type, built on a slope. Ngendo has 196 inhabitants, of whom 42 are men, 60 are women, and 94 children. The village is divided into four smaller sections or wards (*ovitawila* pl.), of which the largest, that of the village headman *(sekulu)* has 127 inhabitants, while the other three have 19, 13 and 37 inhabitants respectively. The word *tabo* (village) may also be used for either of the two larger sections by themselves. Each section has its own elder, but the dancing-floor *(ocila)*, which is the centre of village life, is in the headman's section. The *ocila* is primarily a place for recreation, but religious functions also are held in it, and formal cases tried. Formerly most villages had a second communal building, the *onjango* or "Men's Club House",[5] whose importance was almost as great as that of the *ocila*. Here all the men, youths and boys gathered for the evening meal, and here guests were entertained, lesser judicial cases settled, and the day's work and gossip discussed, while young boys, sitting in the background, gained much of their knowledge of tribal history and custom.[6] Today the *onjango* exists and maintains its former function chiefly in parts of Ngalangi, Viye and possibly Ndulu. It does not exist in Childs' typical village, where the "Men's Club" holds only occasional meetings on the rocks behind the headman's house, and where the common evening meal no longer takes place. The reason suggested for the disappearance of the *onjango* is lack of leisure owing to demands for road work (in the immediate vicinity of Ngendo), for contract labour, involving absences of from six months to a year,[7] and the difficulty of securing tax-money.

(1) And polygyny is thought to be more frequent here than in other areas. See above, p.23.
(2) According to Magyar, 1851.
(3) Childs, op.cit., p.25, fn.1. Childs does not suggest any reason for this tendency.
(4) Formerly many villages were built on mountains for defence, and capital villages of this type may still be seen.
(5) The "Men's Club" seems to be simply a gathering of all the adult men (and possibly also the juveniles) of the village.
(6) Childs, op.cit.; Cashmore, 1944; Hambly, (2) 1934.
(7) Most of the labour on the Benguella Railway is Umbundu, and many Ovimbundu travel to the Union of South Africa for work. (Childs, op.cit., p.10, et.al.)

621 The total number of households is 44, or 48 including those of the four section heads. It should be noted that there is a discrepancy in Childs's
● 592 figures (apart from an obvious misprint):[1] in another context he writes
114 that section B contains only 12 houses (not even *households*), while from this table it would appear that section B has 15 household heads, including that of the section head; and section C is said to have 6 households, while only 4 (again counting the section head) are accounted for in this table.

591 Childs states[2] that the incidence of patrilocal marriage in Ngendo
114 is fairly typical of Umbundu country, but unfortunately gives little information regarding the relationship of the various spouses to each other or concerning the location of the villages from which they came. Matrilocal marriage is recognised as a possibility: of the three relatives by marriage listed above, one was a husband of a daughter of the headman, another the widow of a younger brother of the headman, who should have been inherited by a younger brother (?) or a mother's brother of the deceased, or, failing that, could have returned to her father's village. Of those listed above as sisters' children, two were widows who had come to live in the village with their mother's brothers.[3]

POLITICAL STRUCTURE

The village headman[4]

622 The village headman *(sekulu yimbo)* is also the head of the *oluse*
793 which forms the nucleus of the village group, and is related agnatically to most of the householders. He alone may speak of the village as *imbo*
782 *liange* (my village); the heads of sections, who are also called *sekulu*[5] may speak possessively only of their own sections *(ocitiwila cange)*, and other villagers speak only of "our village" *(imbo lietu)*.[6] The headman functions as both priest and legal head of the village. As priest he has in his compound the *etambo* (spirit hut), in which the insignia of office are kept, and in which he prays to the ancestral spirits. Upon occasion he may sleep there, usually offering a prayer to the spirits when he wakes during the night. The *etambo* may also be
[341] used as a lodging place for respected guests, or as a store-house for possessions not used every day. Childs states that he officiates at regular village worship, including agricultural festivals; Hambly adds that he may lead the people in offering sacrifices when epidemics of
613 sickness break out in the village. It has been noted above[7] that it is the function of the *oluina* head to lead such rituals when illness occurs within the *oluina*. In general the village head is responsible for
[622] matters - particularly agriculture and public health - which affect the whole village; individuals, both for protection and for help and other

(1) Childs, op.cit., p.28, line 27, where "twenty-four" should read "forty-four".
(2) On the basis of the 192 genealogies and 74 marriage-schedules which he collected. He does not, unfortunately, give examples or show how the comparison was made.
(3) Based on Childs, op.cit., pp.25-31.
(4) This section is based on Childs, op.cit., pp.36-7.
(5) It has been noted above that *sekulu* is used for all men (and some women) of the grandfather's generation.
(6) op.cit., p.283.
(7) p.18.

Kakululu or *sekululu*. These terms are applicable to my father's father's brother, my father's father's brother's wife; my father's father's sister's husband; and my mother's father (the reciprocal *onekulu* describes the reciprocals, brother's son's son; husband's brother's son's son; wife's brother's son's son; daughter's son). 601

Maikulu. This designation, which is derived from *mai*, meaning mother, and *kulu*, an old person, is applied to my father's mother (reciprocal, *onekulu yange*, son's son). *Maikulu* also means my father's father's sister; my mother's mother; my mother's mother's brother's wife; and my mother's mother's sister (the reciprocal is *onekulu* which equals the English reciprocals brother's son's son; daughter's son; husband's daughter's child; and sister's daughter's child).

This completes the second generation of ascendants.

NOTE: Ngonga's wife uses the names *maikulu* and *kakululu* for those relatives of her husband to whom Ngonga himself applies those terms. These relatives call Ngonga's wife *onekulu*.

TABLE D

(*See Table E IV and V, also Table F II, IV and V*)

SOME OF NGONGA'S DESCENDANTS

Nunulu or *useli* is my first-born son. Other sons are *omola*, meaning child. *Omola ulume* means a male child. *Omola ukai* is a female child. *Useli* also means a first daughter (the reciprocal for these terms is *tate*, meaning father).

Omolange means my child. I apply the word, not only to my own children, but to my elder brother's son (reciprocal, *tate*, father's younger brother); to my elder brother's daughter; and to my younger brother's son.

Ndatembo. The word is applied to my son's wife; my daughter's husband; my elder brother's son's wife; my elder brother's daughter's husband; and my younger brother's son's wife (the same word *ndatembo* is used for the reciprocals of these terms; namely, husband's father; wife's father; husband's father's younger brother; wife's father's younger brother; and husband's father's elder brother).

The foregoing classificatory system of relationship is not peculiar to the Ovimbundu, but is a cultural trait of many Bantu-speaking and some Sudanic-speaking Negroes. The similarity of the Umbundu system to those of surrounding peoples in Rhodesia and the Congo will be pointed out in chapters dealing with culture contacts. 601 171

When describing marriage rites reference was made to the fact that a wife goes to live near her husband's relatives; the system is therefore patrilocal. The limited family consists of husband and wife (or wives) with their children. The greatest number of wives observed in the family of a commoner was four, and in the family of a king eleven. A household sometimes contains adopted children, also domestic slaves (pawns) who are working to pay off debts for their maternal uncles. An extended family may include a grandfather and his wife, his sons, their wives and children, and his unmarried daughters, with classes and nomenclatures mentioned in the foregoing tables. 591 592 [595] [597] [567] 596

The phrase *epata lia tate* (or *aluse*) means "family of my father" and includes all relatives on the father's side. The words *epata lia* 613

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CHIEFS AND HEADMEN IN GUMBA

The tasks of recruiting contract labourers and road-workers and of getting fines and taxes paid, and such other duties as the arranging of compulsory purchase of tickets for the travelling cinema (showing patriotic films) are carried out through a long process of argument, attempted evasion, and pressure, between the chief, the government headmen, and the locally influential people, traditional headmen, catechists, and anyone else who can get himself listened to. Persons actually picked for contract labour or road work may make quite a fuss about it, but as such numbers are recruited it is ultimately accepted resignedly. It is not really practicable for a chief to discriminate in favour of his kinsman owing to the heavy demands for labour and the likelihood of such discrimination being reported at the post, as happened to Simbwyikoka. Demands for labour may fall heavily on some households. Thus one Epalanga household consisted of a man, his daughter by an earlier marriage, his wife and her baby daughter. The man had been taken for contract labour, his wife had been called to road work, and the adolescent daughter was carrying sisal[14] to the post. A kinsman of the household head attempted to arrange for some watch to be kept over the gardens lest animals should get in.

There were four government headmen in Gumba during my stay. Theoretically they are village headmen. The villages in which official records group Ovimbundu do not conform to the actual villages in which Ovimbundu live. Anybody moving from one village to another has to pay a fee; as the Ovimbundu move about quite frequently and no attempt is made to enforce this rule locally, the result is this discrepancy between paper and real villages.

The government headman's duties are those already described for the chief. As with the chief, there is only sufficient backing from the post for him to carry out the orders he receives; he does not receive power to enable him to exercise political leadership and judicial authority at the local level, nor is he a representative of the post in the villages. His interests and values are linked to those of his neighbours rather than to the post. It is through the chief and the government headmen

[14] Some villages are obliged to grow sisal and take it to the post without payment.

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[Village of Epalanga]

cluster was much more autonomous *vis-à-vis* Sapapula than were the members of the Mbati-Mwehombo grouping through the more numerous and closer kin ties; yet it would be wrong to regard Ndjoleya's kin as isolated.[4] This greater autonomy was a matter of degree rather than kind. 621

With regard to geographical origin, it is evident that the population had been recruited from over quite a wide area. Of the 36 household heads 7 were born in Cela of whom 6 had come from Cela to Gumba, and 1 had been born in Cela, then come to Gumba, then moved to Menga and then returned to Gumba. 3 household heads had come from Utende to Gumba, and 2 had come from Namba. 12 had come to Epalanga from Cassongue. 7 household heads (including 2 who had subsequently lived in Cassongue) had at one time lived in Katembo (the village associated with Mbati). 1 householder was apparently born in Gumba but had no Katembo link. 2 household heads were from Ndjandju (one having lived in Cassongue after leaving Ndjandju, the other being the catechist) and 1 was from Chicunda. On the origins of 5 household heads I have no information. 166 592

My information on Epalanga suffers from a number of gaps. Some genealogical information collected was lost. Too frequently I neglected to ask if a particular relationship was patrilateral or matrilateral, nor did I enquire sufficiently as to whether particular marriages were between kinsfolk or not. 114

These deficiencies to some extent 'fit' the kinship system. A kinship tie may exist between two people which is significant in the social relations between them, yet they may not be sure as to whether it is patrilateral or matrilateral, or even as to what is the category of kinship involved. Thus a resident of Simbwyikoka's village told me one day that Simbwyikoka was his 'brother', some time later he was a brother-in-law, and after this again said that he was a 'brother'. 692

There is also confusion over pedigrees. The pedigree which Simbwyikoka gave me in December 1955 differed from the one that he gave me in April 1956. Two people who claim to be

[4] Ndjoleya once referred to himself as *Ouakula yimbo* (elder of the *imbo*) this being a case of *imbo* used for a cluster within a village. Ndjoleya's folk recognized Sapapula as being head of the village.

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601 wife of Ernesto (6). Patrilateral 'father' to Paula (24) and Saviel (11). Affinally related to Mwehombo, a 'sister' of whom he had married.

Wayangu, paternal half-brother of Mwehombo, resident at Epalanga till the end of 1955, wife's father to Aspirante (1) had married a sister (not clear whether own or classificatory) of Lusase.

3. *Kinship and marriage in the village setting*

621 The foregoing tabulated information and the charts indicate the two main principles of integration in Epalanga, as in other Umbundu villages, the settling of individuals near senior kinsmen and the existence of a number of intra-village marriage ties.

621 602 For a clearer outline of village structure to appear, it is necessary to give a brief sketch of the contemporary kinship system which will be discussed more thoroughly in later chapters. This is cognatic, with little distinction between patrilineal [592] and matrilineal kin, the elementary family being the basic [591] household unit, the individual being permitted to settle with [582] any category of kin, and a high percentage of preferential marriages.[7]

591 The right of settling where one pleases, as 'the heart chooses', is recognized even in children. Minessi, the 7-year-old son of Gonçalve (18), used generally to eat at the household of his father's sister Paulina, the wife of Joaõ (20). Gonçalve said about this to me 'He is very fond of his father's sister.'

While the traditional norm by which a man lived in his father's village is still remembered, at least by older men, a

[7] Childs (p. 36) states that it is permitted to marry a cross-cousin on either side, a sister's daughter, and a father's sister. My informants generally agreed that the marriage with a father's sister was not and had not been permitted. Marriage is not permitted with 'true' kin of these categories. Padre Feltin, the superior of the Bimbe Catholic Mission who knew of the existence of these marriages, told me that very few Umbundu marriages came within the prohibited (a prohibition removable by a dispensation) degrees of kinship laid down by the Catholic Church (that is, up to, and including, third cousins). Such marriages in the past might have been with geographically as well as socially distant kin. Childs quotes a case of a marriage arranged, after the discovery of a kinship tie, between partners living as far apart as Ciyaka (Quiaca) and Ngalangi (Galangue).

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spent 10,000 escudos, he told me, in buying shells to trade in Kwanyama country and even if this be regarded as an exaggeration such an expedition will cost at least several hundred escudos.

I have not so far discussed labour migration and its economic consequences. There are three ways of going out to work: being recruited for 'contract labour', which involves selection by the chief and government headmen who send people to the post whence they are directed to wherever they are required; being recruited by labour-recruiters who visit villages with their lorries; and travelling, usually on foot, to find work. Contract labour is for a year, which may be followed by a fortnight's work at the post to which the *contratados* are returned. The coffee plantations of Amboim and Seles are important centres for voluntary labour from Gumba and neighbouring chiefdoms. Women, and boys from ten years up, go to work there for spells which may be only two months. However, even in Gumba whose people have a reputation for backwardness and for lack of enthusiasm for going away to work, there is nothing at all surprising in meeting men who have learnt a few words of English in Johannesburg.

Of the 36 household heads of Epalanga, 9 were women, and 8 were men who for one reason or another (elders, cripples, the catechist) would not leave the village. Of the other 19, 6 were absent as labourers during some part of my stay, and this figure excludes individuals who were not expected home within a year. In the cities there are large numbers of permanently or semi-permanently urbanized Ovimbundu, who have largely lost contact with their home villages. Some people who have spent years in the towns may come home—in Epalanga there were at least five women who had visited cities.

Although almost all able-bodied men and many women have lived outside the context of village life as servants to Europeans, as labourers on plantations, and as urban workers, it would be a mistake to think of the rural areas of the Benguela Highland, as being labour reservoirs economically dependent on the towns. It seems that prices of manufactured goods are lower near the railway line and in the cities; hence a man returning from wage labour may buy cloths, a bicycle, a sewing-machine, or a

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for the bride's village. Here they may be greeted with formal speeches of welcome in Portuguese, a usage copied from the reception of missionaries. 585

One only turns up to a wedding if one has been invited, and not everybody who is a kinsman living in the neighbourhood is invited. Nor is there any marked distinction between kin and non-kin in the ceremony, except for the ending of avoidances and the recognition of the father's sister, who is recompensed for her services as nursemaid. Village membership is significantly recognized in the distribution of food, and the sending of the party to the bride's home to represent the bridegroom's village.

Umbundu marriage is virilocal, although a certain number of marriages are within the village. Apart from such marriages, it seems to be rare to find a man settling in a village because his wife has kin there. 591

Although during the early months of the marriage the bridegroom's mother may supervise the bride's work, the individual household is essentially an independent unit[13] and was not even in the past merged with other household units to form a 'grandfamily'. This independence is not isolation. I have only a very few times seen houses with any sort of compound about them. Much of domestic life, eating, working, resting, talking, may be done out of doors in front of the house. Paying visits is a great feature of village life especially when the day's work is over, although there is also a term *oku pasula*, to visit in the morning, referring to what are usually just short calls, involving the exchange of greetings. Perhaps the opportunity of calling and being called on is one of the factors maintaining the village as a social unit. The idea that a man should not eat with his wife still survives to some extent so that questions on this topic receive contradictory answers. Observation shows that even among the men who travelled on the caravans, eating with one's wife is the general practice. 592 574 264

One of the most striking features of Umbundu domestic life is the close companionship which exists between husband and wife and which is unquestionably a modern development.[14] 593 178

[13] See Magyar, pp. 261–3.

[14] The role of the *Ondjango* as described by Childs and Hastings indicates that a man's normal companions both for eating and recreation were other men.

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595 17 married men, 5 were polygynists. It is a common practice for a man with two wives to keep one in one village, another in another. Relations between co-wives are expected to be somewhat strained, as the very word for co-wife, *osepekai* (she of the jealousy of women) indicates. When I asked if a woman would help a co-wife who had run short of grain I was told that she would not help but would jeer at the other woman. There is no defined division of duties between wives in a polygynous household. It is interesting to note that the missions are not criticized for imposing monogamy—indeed the Catholic catechist of Epalanga thought he had found a good argument against the Protestants by accusing them sincerely but inaccurately of allowing polygynous marriages. The idea of Catholic marriage as indissoluble is difficult for many Ovimbundu converts.

592 While the most common form of household is that of the elementary family, the fact that not all widows or divorcées are absorbed into such households leads to the appearance of households under women heads of which there were 9 (out of a total of 36) in Epalanga. Such a household may be two- (mother, children) or three-generation groups (grandmother, daughter(s), grandchildren). Of these 9 households 2 were composed of a grandmother, who was effective head of the household, her children, and the children of a daughter; 1 was similarly composed but with the grandmother rather pushed into the background as in households with male heads; 3 were composed of women and their own child, or children; 1 was composed of a woman and a grandchild; and 2 consisted of women living alone. The adolescent sons of such a household will tend to become associated with the house of some male kinsman, probably a mother's brother. It is not always clear to what extent individuals associated with a particular household in fact participate in its activities. Thus it is not infrequent to find the elderly mother of the husband or wife living in a hut of her own behind the main hut or huts of the household, and in Epalanga there were four of these attached mothers. They do not exercise any authority over their sons, or sons-in-law.[19]

[19] Tumbu, the mother of Maria, the wife of Paulo (24), and of Jaime (19) lived in a hut near both households, and it would have been difficult to say to which she was attached, to her son's, or her son-in-law's.

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At the other end of the age-scale it is not easy always to tell to what household a child is attached. Small children may often eat with kin other than their own parents if they like them and thus share in the lives of two households. Children and adolescents may go on visits to kin and this may lead to permanent residence. This familiarity with other households is not confined to children. Although, as has been stated, eating with one's wife is the usual practice, it is by no means uncommon to see two or more men eating together, either because the wife of one of them is away or simply to be sociable. 592 264

This right of children to move about, coupled with such other factors[20] as the relatively high divorce rate, tends to bring about quite a high proportion of children who live with kin other than their own parents. Out of 70 under 20's in Epalanga (out of a total population of 148), 34 had both parents living in Epalanga,[21] 23 had one parent living in Epalanga and 13 had neither parent living in Epalanga. Of the 23 who had only one parent living in Epalanga, 7 lived with their father and 16 with their mother. Those 7 living with their father were all over 14, thus confirming the norm given by informants that young children on the death of the mother go to their mother's kin until they 'have sense', that is, are about 12 or 13, when they return to their father. Of the 13 who were living with neither parent, 2 (boys) were living with a cross-cousin (father's sister's son, for whom the term 'father' can be used), 1 (boy) with a patrilateral 'father,' 2 (1 girl, 1 small boy) with a mother's mother, 4 (3 boys, 1 girl) with a sister's husband, 1 (boy) with a paternal half-brother, 1 with a fiancé's father, 1 (boy) with a mother's brother, and on 1 (girl) I have no information. 591

These figures are too small to base any very strong argument on them. It is, however, notable that only 1 of the 12 children on whom information was obtained was living with a mother's brother, whereas 4 were living with a brother-in-law. This seems to conflict with statements made earlier as to the present-day trend of individuals to settle with their mother's brothers.

[20] Childs notes about the traditional system that the sending of children to stay with kin or friends for a year or two was common (pp. 104–5).

[21] This figure includes one case where although both parents lived in Epalanga they were separated.

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604 This strong pull towards the mother's brother is, however, marked on the level of village relationships as has been already noted. It is possible that with regard to co-operation on the [607] domestic plane the tie between a man and his wife's full or half siblings is stronger than that with his sister's children. This 607 argument would claim that the tie created by marriage between a man and his wife's full or half siblings is one of the strongest in the Umbundu social structure, and as a further proof (albeit not quantitively assessed) may be quoted the frequency with which two households close together turn out to belong to a man and his wife's brother.

582 602 In the first section of this chapter it was argued that the high rate of preferential marriages greatly increased the number of social ties between individuals in a neighbourhood, and brought a renewal of ties with distant kin. In this section various aspects 593 of the relationship between husband and wife have been examined. Husband and wife co-operate economically and outside working hours may pass their evenings together. In a dispute taken to the post a man is likely to take his wife as a witness. Mystically sanctioned obligations do exist between husband and wife. While the elementary family is the main 592 domestic type, households headed by women are also found and there is a certain amount of mobility of children between households. The tie of a man with his wife's siblings, particu- [607] larly when they are children, is significant for the domestic organization of households.

582 602 621 Marriage is indeed the pivotal institution of the Umbundu kinship system. The preferential marriages do not link descent groups to one another; rather they bring about the local concentration of kin which makes out of many vague and insecure links a strongly-woven community in which both husband and wife can live with relatives near at hand.

593 Of the personal relationship between husband and wife it would be impossible to say as an anthropologist has of another African people, 'Here people looked for little in marriage. A man would turn to his sixteenth cousin twice removed before he turned to his wife.'[22] A man shares with his wife his work and leisure, is linked to her by mystical obligations which are not

[22] Elenore Smith Bowen, *Return to Laughter*, London, 1954, p. 117.

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only five children living, and the largest polygynous household 592
had only four, but many children had died in infancy.

The attitudes within the household are much like those found 593
universally between members of the same 'family'. Children respect and love both parents. Perhaps there is a little more respect for the father and a little more love for the mother, but this distinction is not carried to the extent which seems to be the case in more strongly patrilineal societies. The respect which a child has for his parents is plainly shown in his refusal under ordinary circumstances to speak their names. 'Even a child on being asked to tell the name of his father or his mother, will reply saying, "*Tate* (my father) indeed is his name." And if one asks again, saying, "Your mother, what is her name?" the child will reply saying, "*Mai* (my mother) indeed is her name."'[1] The sex 857
division of Umbundu life begins within the household when very early in life the boys begin to be trained by their elder brothers, fathers, and other male relatives, while the girls remain or go about with their mothers, elder sisters, and other female relatives. Only the very small boys and girls (say under six or eight) play together. The age distinctions of Umbundu society are learned with the child's first attempts at language. Either his elder brother or sister he calls *huvange*, and he soon learns that the brother or sister younger than himself is *manjange*. Brothers and sisters, siblings or children of the same parents, 'are replicas of one another in social relationship, and . . . socially identical'[2] for practical purposes. Among Ovimbundu the principal differences are due to the two factors of age and sex. The influence of age is funda- 593
mental and is easily demonstrated by the fact that there is no word 561
for 'brother' but instead for 'elder brother' or 'younger brother'. Within the household the factor of sex is ever present, but there is not the invidious distinction found among some of the more strongly patrilineal societies such as the Zulu[2] which reserves the more respectful term for the brother. Umbundu applies the terms *huva* and *manja*[3] to brothers and sisters without distinction of sex. There are the additional terms *kota* (elder brother), *mbuale* (sister), and the reciprocal terms *mume* (brother, spoken

[1] R. Kavita Evambi, from an Umbundu manuscript.
[2] E. J. Krige, *The Social System of the Zulus* (London: Longmans, 1936), p. 24.
[3] These are the root terms without the possessive suffixes.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

593 [561] only by a sister), and *mukāi* (sister, spoken only by a brother). In a polygynous household each of the wives is mother to all the children and each of the children is *huva* or *manja*[1] to all the others. 848 567 Illegitimate children are not stigmatized but since they belong to the mother they have a distinct designation.[2] Slaves or former slaves have a status within the household and village which to the ordinary observer does not differ from that of the children: they are treated much as the children and they may carry on in all matters social and economic much as though they were members of the family. I have noticed, however, that when there is a call for labour, the lot falls oftener to one of these 'children-born-by-day'[3] whether he was a war-captive or a pawn.

567 595 178 Both slavery and the polygynous household, two institutions manifestly and intimately inter-related, are still a part of the Umbundu social structure, but neither the one nor the other now has the importance which it formerly had. Neither of these institutions is part of the present and personal experience of the great majority of Umbundu households.

Kinship

596 602 621 *Blood Relatives* (*Epata*). The relationships of the wider kinship groups are for the most part extensions of those of the household. The child learns them very early in life owing to the fact that the village community into which he is born is only a part of this larger kinship group. Nearly all of the villagers belong to the same *epata* or extended family, which includes both lines of descent. Most of them belong to the father's family (*oluse*), and the mother's family (*oluina*) may also be represented. The fact is that most of the adults of the village are father or mother to nearly every child and most of the children are brothers or sisters. Those of his coevals who do not bear this relation to him are otherwise related and are also potential spouses or potential relatives-in-law.

[1] This distinction *yesepakaĩ* (lit. 'of the jealousy of women') may be made but it is not applied in ordinary speech.

[2] *Omõlã a ngenda-la-ina* (lit. 'child of goes-with-mother').

[3] *Omãlã-ve-citiva-lutanya.* Cf. 'child of my calves', Luganda expression and attitudes, L. P. Mair, *An African People in the Twentieth Century* (London, 1934), p. 32 f.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

attitude toward one's blood relations than by quoting Mrs. 602
Hoernlé:

> Here, then, is a large body of kin drawn intimately into contact with the lives of each generation. Looking out into the world from his own home, the Bantu child knows where he may seek hospitality and succour of every kind; where, also, he may of right be called upon to render assistance in case of need. The barriers of reserve shutting off human beings from one another are largely down so far as these classes of relatives are concerned, so that for economic assistance, for friendly counsel, in time of sorrow and in time of joy, these are the natural categories of people to turn to, the core of people with whom one is close-knit from birth in a web of reciprocal rights and duties.[1]

The Kin

Relatives by Marriage. Marriage profoundly alters the relation- 581
ship of those who enter into it, that is, the two families. It must be entered into with great care and with due regard for all factors concerned in order that the balance of life may be maintained. It seems that the financial arrangements (*ilombo*) are designed to restore to the bride's family an equivalence for her loss, since marriage is patrilocal. The Ovimbundu consider mutual respect between the two families to be a necessary basis for a successful marriage. Respect (*esumbilo*) is the reason assigned by thoughtful [593]
Ovimbundu for the various avoidances (*oku liyuvuila*) enjoined upon the principals and their respective families. In the first place, the husband and wife must show their respect for each other by avoiding certain actions as, for example, either one speaking the name of the other.

This mutual respect finds its most dramatic symbol in the treat- 606
ment which the husband must accord his mother-in-law, the bride her father-in-law. They must avoid seeing each other, and if it is necessary to converse, it must be done out of sight, or with gaze averted. Both husband and wife must also avoid pronouncing the names of the parents-in-law. By the principle of extended relationships, this behaviour applies to the relations of the husband and the wife with *all* their parents-in-law of the opposite sex. As all the mother's 'sisters' are 'mother', so to the husband they are all *ndatembo* (mother-in-law). Likewise, the father's 'brothers' all

[1] In Schapera, op. cit., 1937, p. 73.

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among the Ovimbundu is 'grudge-building'. This is probably 154
fairly common and often eventuates either in sorcery or in suspicion 578
of sorcery. There is special danger of this type of reaction between men and women who have an in-law relation to each other. This is probably a principal reason for the avoidance with which these relations are so carefully hedged and the respectful treatment mutually enjoined.[1] Grudges are sometimes inherited through several generations. According to folk-tales, children sometimes bear grudges against their parents for real or fancied ill treatment.[2]

Recognized outlets for anger in frankly 'extroverted' form are found in war and raiding parties, in the hunt, and in lawsuits. War is no longer resorted to but up to the present day anger still finds a recognized expression in actions at law. One of the commonest of such actions is the accusation of sorcery (*oku sunga owanga*) already touched upon above. Church councils and meetings have taken over some functions of the traditional courts of law and this is probably one reason for the decidedly stormy sessions which sometimes occur.

The importance of wit and humour as an outlet for anger has 154
been recognized. 'The ability to turn one's anger into a jest goes 522
with the trait of insight . . . and is sometimes appropriately called 828
"the saving sense of humour".'[3] That the Ovimbundu have this ability and use it often and to good advantage is very much in their favour. May not this be one indication of a considerable degree of insight which many observers have noted in the Umbundu character?[4] I would not claim that the Ovimbundu have made any very remarkable attainments in the social control of anger: their achievements in that direction may be slight when compared to some of the more advanced peoples, as, for example, the Scandinavians, the Hollanders, or the English. What is remarkable, however, is that they have frankly recognized the necessity for such control more clearly than have some supposedly more advanced peoples.

Adjustments in family life are held to be resolutions of what 593
are ultimately sex conflicts.[5] Marital adjustments are of prime

[1] See *supra*, pp. 57 ff.

[2] Cf. *Journal of American Folk-Lore Society*, 1922, vol. 35, no. 6, p. 123 f.

[3] Allport, op. cit., p. 344.

[4] Some writers have attributed to negroes a quality of 'insight' superior to that possessed by whites, cf. article 'Insight, &c.' in the *Atlantic Monthly*, Sept. 1938.

[5] Allport, op. cit., pp. 345–53.

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593 importance, but treatment of that subject must be reserved for
[562] another time. The balance maintained in the Umbundu social system, which has already been noted,[1] together with woman's important position in the economic sphere, give to the women and girls a relatively satisfactory place in Umbundu society. It has also been noted that woman's sphere has suffered less disintegration than has man's. Although the girl may have somewhat less freedom than the boy, her personal prospects are more stable, and in the long run more satisfactory.

Adjustments between parents and children among the Ovimbundu are relatively satisfactory. The fact that there are no specific father–daughter or mother–son avoidances or taboos, beyond the general laws of incest which nearly all cultures maintain, indicates an absence of strain in these relationships. In our own society adult–child fixations, and particularly the parent–child fixations, with the consequent repressions, are very common and are held to be responsible, at least in part, for much trouble including difficulties of adjustment at pubescence.[2] In traditional Umbundu society such fixations occur very infrequently, if at all.[3] In this context we should be reminded of the following factors:

[855]
1. The early and continued close association of the child largely (although not exclusively) with the parent of the same sex.[4]
2. The association of the child with many (classificatory) 'fathers' and 'mothers' which may result in a partial transfer of affection.[2]
3. The absence of fondling, kissing, and other close bodily contact in display of affection.[5]

157 The picture in these respects is not unlike that of the Samoans given by Margaret Mead.[6] In some other respects it is quite different but it is similar in the apparent absence of a period of adolescent *Sturm und Drang*. What actual correlations there may be between parent–child fixations and a period of adolescent stress I do not know. The absence of any such period has been reported

[1] *Vide supra*, p. 43.
[2] Cf. Allport, op. cit., pp. 355 ff.
[3] The proverbial inability of a widow properly to rear a child (*vide supra*, p. 102) may indicate difficulties of this sort.
[4] *Vide supra*, p. 98.
[5] No display of affection whatever is congenial to the Ovimbundu, except to babies and between adolescent age-mates of the same sex.
[6] Op. cit., chap. x.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

from several primitive cultures,[1] and some experimental studies seem to indicate that it is less general in the United States than had previously been supposed.[2] It is recognized that in this country parent–child fixations have produced many pathological cases.[3] With the practical absence of such fixations among the Ovimbundu, no such group of pathological cases exists. This is a clear gain, but there is also probably a loss, in that there seems to be a corresponding scarcity of the more or less introverted idealistic persons, 'the tender-minded class described by William James'.[4]

Ovimbundu parents proverbially love their eldest child (*nuñulũ*) in a special way,[5] but there is not in their family situation as much invidious distinction as that which in ours often produces the domineering eldest child, the inadequate youngest, and others in the sequence with feelings of neglect or 'rejection'. The Umbundu family situation almost inevitably involves less sharpness of distinction, for although the eldest child may be loved in a special way he deals not only with his parents but with other relatives of their generation and with elder (classificatory) siblings and cross-cousins of his own generation. So, also, the last or youngest child of a sequence would hardly sense himself the youngest since there will almost certainly be younger (classificatory) siblings and cross-cousins toward whom he in turn will act as his elders acted toward him.[6] In a normal Umbundu family situation the problem of the 'only child', so acute in America, is almost inconceivable.

Some Ovimbundu, not only as children but also as younger siblings and as secondary wives, do suffer from feelings of neglect and rejection. I have not noted this from biographical or other direct evidence, except from observation of resentment on the part of younger siblings of fagging by their elders. Evidence exists, however, in the frequency of the Cinderella motif in Umbundu folk-tales. Many are the fables in which Little Hare (*Kandimba*), Little Tortoise (*Kambeu*), or Little Weasel (*Kavili*) gets the better of his stupid elders, represented by almost any and all of the larger

[1] Cf. Mead, loc. cit., Fortes, op. cit., p. 9.

[2] Gardner and Lois B. Murphy, *Experimental Social Psychology* (New York: Harpers, 1931), pp. 429–32.

[3] Allport, op. cit., p. 362.

[4] Quoted from Allport, op. cit., p. 362.

[5] Cf. the proverb: *Epungu liwa konendela; omõlã sole kumuñulũ*, '(Of) corn best the first fruits; (of) children (you) love the first born'.

[6] This seems to be the state of affairs quite generally in societies having a classificatory kinship system. Cf. M. Mead, op. cit., chaps. iii, iv.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

157 animals.[1] Other tales with frankly human protagonists portray
538 the same theme,[2] and there are a number of Umbundu adapta-
593 tions and variations of such European versions of this theme as Cinderella, Snow White, &c. In some tales, such as 'Kalitangi', the hero escaped as an infant from an agreement made by his mother before his birth with another expectant mother that they would both destroy their offspring. Does this indicate a resentment of, or a protest against, child-sacrifice in certain Umbundu rites? I mention this as one possible source for the feeling of neglect and 'rejection' which, however, does not seem to be as acute or as widespread as in our own society.[3] The exact situation could only be determined by careful and extensive investigation.

593 Adjustments between siblings among the Ovimbundu on the
152 whole are relatively satisfactory. Resentment on the part of the younger does sometimes occur as indicated above. Overt sibling
[643] conflict has also arisen quite frequently in the royal families because of disputes over the succession. Instances of this latter type of conflict may be found in narratives of the early missionaries,[4] in diaries of Silva Porto,[5] and in other early sources. Conflict from jealousy arising out of the parent–child relationship, however, seems to be relatively rare. In a kinship society regulated by the hierarchy of age, jealousy between siblings does not quite fit into the picture. The two most common terms for jealousy over personal relations refer strictly to sexual jealousy: *esepa*, woman's jealousy; and *ukuelume*, jealousy on the part of a man. The other terms are somewhat more applicable but they belong less to household affairs. The meaning of *onya* is jealousy and envy, while *ocipululu* is covetousness and so belongs to the economic sphere.

572 Friendship, especially between age-mates or 'coevals', has played
[554] and continues to play an important role in Umbundu social adjustments. Such differences as social station, family, distance of habitation, and even diversity of language and culture are easily bridged by friendship. Many friendships were formed on trading

[1] Cf. *Journal of the American Folk-Lore Society*, 1922, vol. 35, nos. 1 and 18, pp. 116 f., 140 ff.

[2] The tale of *Ñaña la hota liaye* (Baby and his elder sister) referred to *supra*, p. 84.

[3] Investigations of the 'foster-child phantasy', feelings of neglect, 'rejection', &c., reported by Murphy, op. cit., p. 415 f.; and by Allport, op. cit., p. 364 f.

[4] *Missionary Herald*, 1888, p. 242 f.

[5] In *Boletim da Sociedade de Geografia de Lisboa*, 1885, 1886.

582 incest *(oku ndo)*. But one may marry relatives of one's own age-level who belong to classes other than those mentioned, i.e. cross-cousins and, on other age-levels, father's sister or sister's daughter. It is said that formerly marriage never took place except between persons who could trace relationship in this way. Today this principle is very liberal in its application.(1) (It would be interesting to have estimates of the number of men who do marry first degree cross-cousins, father's sisters, or sister's daughters, as distinct from classificatory relatives of these classes, and the number who marry outside the *oluse* or *oluina*.)

583 Marriage was formerly arranged by the mother's brother (i.e. by the *oluina*), but today there is a tendency for fathers to arrange their daughters' marriages and to receive their marriage payment. (And also, occasionally, to assist their sons in providing marriage payment.)(2) *Ilombo*, or marriage payment, was formerly paid in cattle, blankets etc.(3) Today it is usually paid in cash, the amount being determined by the status of the bride.(4)

Polygyny

621 595 In the sample village (Ngendo, Kasongi chiefdom) described by Childs, of a total of 48 households,

(a) 10 households were polygynous; of these 9 contained only 2 wives or concubines, and the tenth, that of the headman, contained four wives and one concubine,

(b) 27 households were monogynous, and 3 more were occupied by widowers, all formerly monogynous. (The remaining households were occupied by 7 widows and one young unmarried man.)

Childs notes that the proportion of polygynous households in Kasongi chiefdom is probably higher than in other parts of Ovimbundu country for two reasons: the comparatively low marriage-payment in Kasongi as compared with other areas, and the proximity of Kasongi to Esele country, which has long been a source of supply for slave concubines. (Of the 10 polygynous households in Ngendo 5 contained at least 1 Esele concubine.)(5)

Avoidance between in-laws

602 Mutual respect *(esumbilo)* between the two kin groups involved is considered a necessary basis for a successful marriage, and is the reason given for the various avoidances *(oku liyuvuilo)* enjoined upon the principals and their respective relatives. These avoidances may be summarised:-

593 (a) A husband and wife must avoid using each other's names.

602 (b) The term *ndisembo* is used for parents-in-law of either sex, and reciprocally for sons-in-law or daughters-in-law. The term is extended to all those whom one's spouse calls "mother", "father" or "child" (Childs, p.52) and apparently also to those whom one's spouse calls *nanu*, *tatekai* or

(1) Childs, p.54.
(2) Panis, 1945.
(3) Cushman, 1944, p.45.
(4) Childs, personal communication.
(5) Childs, page 50.

843 supposed to have intercourse with his wife during her pregnancy, but this custom of continence is declining.

A pregnant woman in particular must not steal. If she does so, her child will refuse to be born until some one present at the confinement goes out and steals something.

Eating the flesh of a hare during pregnancy will give the baby a split lip. If the flesh of the owl is eaten, the baby will have large round eyes.

The expectant mother must not sit on a mortar, a pestle, or a piece of rock; if she does so, labor will be prolonged.

[261] A pregnant woman takes earth from just outside her door. She drinks this in water so that the placenta will be delivered whole.

A pregnant woman is not supposed to carry anything in her cloth. If she does so, the child will have a long head.

A pregnant woman is a potential corpse. A man ought not to quarrel with his pregnant wife and if she says angry things to him he should not reply. He would not speak to a corpse in anger; on the contrary, he would respect a corpse; he must, therefore, respect a pregnant woman. It is a bad omen to see a pregnant woman up in a tree. A man who sees such a woman is expected to shoot her.

[593] If a pregnant woman has scolded her husband and is sorry, she goes out to the fields. There she gets her cloth covered with burrs then returns home. If her husband begins to pick off the burrs there is reconciliation.

842 There are several arrangements whereby a woman who has borne only girls may secure male births, provided she can find a woman who has borne only boys and is anxious to have a girl. The simplest way of reversing the births is for the women to exchange belts. The belt is a string, or possibly a plaited fiber girdle an inch in width which is worn next to the body. From this string depends the woman's lower garment. A second way of reversing the births is for the women to make an exchange of food through a hole in the wall of a hut. The food is handed in on a basket tray. The woman inside the hut receives the food while standing with her back to the hole; she then places the food under the bed. The tray is handed back through the hole by the recipient who still keeps her back to the aperture. There is a third method whereby a woman who has borne boys may be made to bear girls, and *vice versa*. The woman who has borne only boys gives to the woman who has borne only girls, an arrow, a knife, a bow, and an ax. The articles given in return are a pounding stick, a broom, a tray and a basket. The value

105 562 domestic equipment. Ritual enters into the introduction of the bride to her home, as was shown by explaining the functions of three elderly women, who erect the fireplace, bring new fire from the chief's house, and assist the bride in a ceremonial way. If a husband has reason to doubt the virginity of his bride, he bores a hole in her cloth with a firebrand, and makes her carry the cloth to her parents. But the marriage is not necessarily invalidated, since the husband is reconciled by a return of some portion of his gifts to the parents.

543 105 Some light is thrown on the ethics of family life by considering the meeting which takes place in the men's council house (*onjango*) before the bride goes to her new home. Here in the presence of relatives from both families the father of the bride says, "We are taking these things for our daughter, we hope she will not shame us." He turns to his daughter, enjoining her to be hospitable, never forgetting to feed her husband's people when they call.

Minor incidents help in a study of the psychology of family life. When husband and wife have quarreled, the latter goes away for a few hours into the bush and arranges that a number of burrs shall be clinging to her dress when she returns. If her husband silently and spontaneously picks these from her cloth, amicable feeling is restored.

Analysis of the grounds for divorce shows that women have their rights, though the male is in the more favorable position. In Rome the legal rights of a matron were slender, but in actual practice she held an important and honorable position. Similarly the status of an Ocimbundu woman is higher than the divorce laws imply.

The human side of family differences was well brought out by studying the interference and indirect influence of relatives on the relationship of husband and wife. Details have been given indicating that divorce is not entirely a matter of adjustment between families; the village chief may be called upon to act as arbiter. The final ceremony of repudiation, at which the husband slaps his wife's back saying, "It is finished," is a public rite. There is here a close connection between family consent and public ratification.

Although a woman may return to her parents under certain conditions which justify the divorce of the husband, parents are not anxious to encourage this practice. Marriage tokens would have to be returned to the husband of their daughter; moreover there might be a difficulty in securing another husband. In this instance a conflict occurs between parental obligations and cupidity. This is again shown by the argument which always arises respecting

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

the custody of a widow. The father, the brother, or the maternal uncle of the widow may take her. In the words of my interpreter, each says, "It is better that you should take her," and at last someone says, "I will take her." 105 593

A chief of Ngalangi revealed the most important aspect of polygyny when he apologized for the fact that only five of his eleven wives were present. The chief was anxious to emphasize the fact that he had eleven wives, though six were at work in the fields. 595

When one considers the prestige of village chiefs, and further reflects on the desirability of maintaining this power within family groups, the institution of polygyny becomes more understandable. In addition there is the necessity of having women to cultivate the fields. A polygynous system does not necessarily cause domestic conflict, because each wife has her own hut, fireplace, and utensils. Custom obliges a chief to spend four nights in each hut in regular sequence.

A first and principal wife is not offended by the introduction of other wives, for these reduce her own labor and announce the fact that she is the principal wife of a wealthy man. When photographing the king of Ngalangi with his wives, I observed that he sent the principal wife from the group in order to adorn herself with a piece of cloth whose value was greater than that of the clothing worn by any of the others. Among the Vakuanyama it was noticeable that the principal wife wore a head-dress of clay with five horns; and in addition to this she had costly necklaces of ostrich-eggshell beads, also more of the coveted *omba* shells than were allowed to other wives. In this way the prestige of the first or great wife is preserved.

The persistence of custom, the force of education through suggestion in early years, and the power of social attitudes, are well illustrated by the survival of kinship terms and the classificatory system of relationships, with its marriage prohibitions and sanctions of an arbitrary kind. The strength of the mores and the fundamental nature of this system of relationship in determining marriage, descent, succession, and inheritance, are indicated by the fact that the system is unaltered after three centuries of contact with Europeans. 602

The rights of a mother's brother extend so far as a sale of his sister's children to redeem his own debts; and reciprocally he is responsible for the conduct of his sister's children, even to the extent of paying fines for the thefts they may commit. This prerogative and responsibility of the maternal uncle is fundamental, and around the trait cluster points of law and legal procedure.

[1874-1911]

THE OVIMBUNDU UNDER TWO SOVEREIGNTIES

593 It was then the father who normally exercised authority over
591 a boy, and on the father's death a child or youth would join the household of a father's brother. Yet the right of a sister's son to
604 the inheritance of the movable property and to grants from his mother's brother was counterbalanced by the latter's right to sell his uterine nephew into slavery, a fate from which the father could save his son by ransoming him, in which case the mother's brother would no longer have this right.[86] In this society, the mother's brother—sister's son relationship was fundamentally an economic one, in which the sister's son received assistance in the trade and inherited his uncle's gains in this trade, but could himself be transformed into a source of capital.

182 I now summarize the evidence on Umbundu social control and its relation with the trading economy. It is clear that the Ovimbundu belonged to the number of those African societies
[642] with pyramidal[87] political systems and formal codes and courts of law, even though there exists uncertainty as to the relative power of the kingdoms and the sub-chiefdoms. Social control
182 also operated through the kinship system, authority at the
613 village level being in the hands of the head of the patrilineal group backed by the public opinion expressed in the men's house, and the dispersed matrilineal groups having sanctions in the right of sale of a sister's son and in the accusations of sorcery brought against those who failed to use wealth to aid their relatives. For the caravan trade to have attained the
182 importance it did there must also have existed something of a
631 *pax Umbunduca* stimulated by the existence of such ties as that between *tjiseko* partners and the 'international' hospitality shown to diviners, hunters, and smiths. Evidence of this *pax Umbunduca* is provided by the organization of caravans, and by the establishment of marriage ties between persons in different kingdoms, and between different royal houses.[88]
[721] However, warfare was not unknown between the different

[86] Childs, p. 44, and my informants.

[87] See Fortes and Evans-Pritchard, Introduction to *African Political Systems*.

[88] Hastings (p. 1) notes a marriage between the daughter of a king of Bie and Ekwikwi, king of Balundo (1876–93). Childs (p. 171) notes that Kakulukuru, king of Ndulu, was a sister's son of a king of Balundo.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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father does not exercise great authority over his grown sons even if they live in the same village, nor does their living in different villages lead to a breach in personal relations. Sapapula who told me that a man should stay in his father's village till the latter's death had four sons, none of whom lived in Epalanga. Two lived in Menga (where Sapapula had lived up to 1946) and maintained friendly contact with their father. One who lived in Cela seemed socially as well as geographically more remote, and the fourth was a labour migrant given up for lost.

The preferential marriages[8] have continued in practice when most of the other institutions of the old kinship system have disintegrated. Their function is to multiply the relationships between individuals living in a particular neighbourhood, and to limit the socio-geographical range within which marriage partners are selected. Of a sample of 121 existing marriages 87, that is 70.3%, were with cross-cousins, and only 13.7% were with non-kinswomen.[9]

Even some of the non-kin marriages fitted into the general pattern of increasing ties within a limited social field. Thus in Epalanga Jaime (19) had married Delfina, a brother's daughter to Ndjoleya. They were not kinsfolk yet this fitted in with the pattern of kin marriages in increasing links between different kinship cores in the village. Similarly Costa (26) and his wife Nakalende were not agreed (when questioned separately) as to whether they were kinsfolk, but this is not really significant since

[8] I had been inclined to interpret these marriages as functions of the relations between kin groups. Dr. Mary Douglas has suggested to me that these marriages were in the past not related to any system of kin groups but had, as at the present day, the function of multiplying the kinship ties within a limited field. I do not know of any clear evidence which could at this time settle the point.

[9] I count here as kin marriages those between sakasiñoda, funeral friends, who though not kinsfolk tend to be assimilated to cross-cousins in social usage. 'Cross-cousin' tends to be at the present time a blanket category, and I have repeatedly found asking men about their wife's kinship status that they would first give some other term and then change to 'cross-cousin'. [Epalunie]. This explains why under present conditions the percentage of cross-cousin marriages in relation to the total number of marriages seems to be rising. Thus in 56 marriages (existing or terminated) contracted by 23 men who had taken part in the caravan trade, while the percentage of marriages with non-kinswomen was slightly smaller (12.5) the figure of marriages with cross-cousins was very much smaller (42.9) and the figure of marriages with kin other than cross-cousins, sister's daughters, and sakasiñoda was much higher (25 %) compared to the contemporary figure of 5%.

604 621 On the village level, however, the importance of the mother's brother tie and of the tie between matrilateral 'brothers' becomes very apparent. None of Sapapula's four sons had settled in Epalanga, and his only classificatory 'son' was Gonçalve, own son to Mwehombo, Sapapula's matrilateral 'brother'. Seven household heads were sister's sons of Sapapula. This trend for matrilateral ties to predominate is marked also in Katembo and Mbunga, but less evident at Belem. Indeed, 'neo-matrilinearity' as a principle of village structure may be a general and not simply a local feature of Umbundu society, since Mr. C. M. N. White[13] has found that the settlements of Ovimbundu within Northern Rhodesia are marked by a predominance of matrilateral ties. This is referable to the contemporary kinship system in which the father-son tie is predominantly a personal one, with a limited extension of attitudes to classificatory fathers, whereas a man's relation with a mother's brother seems little affected by the question of genealogical distance. Perhaps the relations between the group of agnatic kin were so closely tied to the old village structure that when it broke up it disintegrated also the wider agnatic ties. Yet at the same time such matrilineal institutions as matrilineal inheritance and the non-repayment of loans among matrikin have weakened or disappeared.

[593] 602 170

591 Running counter to this principle of settling in the village of a senior kinsman who is likely to belong to one's matrikin, is the principle of cross-cousin marriage. 'If you have married your cross-cousin when your son grows up he will see a cross-cousin here, a cross-cousin there, and so he will stay.' That is, a man will stay in his father's village not simply by virtue of the father-son tie but because he will be surrounded by kinsmen. The relation between cross-cousins is one of equality and solidarity, expressed in joking and in burial services. To say that one stays in a place because one has cross-cousins at hand is to indicate an ideal of equal relations with a circle of kinsmen rather than attachment to the following of an important kinsman.

[582] [605] [602]

591 602 These two principles co-exist in actual social life. A man will recognise and respect a number of senior kinsmen living in his

[13] In letters.

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gramophone in a town rather than at a trader's near his home village. Most of the money paid for purchases at the stores is money raised by selling crops or livestock. Through labour migration there is, however, some transmission of skills; it is easy to find bricklayers and carpenters of a sort even in Gumba.

Money, rather than barter, is the principal means of exchange among the villages in the selling of local products, and even of meat from pigs. Payment for labour service, such as assistance in house-building and in bringing in maize, is made in beer, except among Protestants who substitute a meal. There is also a custom by which a household which finds, probably at the end of the dry season, that it has not enough maize will make beer to exchange on a particular day for maize.

Ties of kinship and friendship have some economic significance. A kinsman will help with house-building without expecting payment; likewise a man who has a cleared field which he does not want to use may sell it for 200 escudos (£2. 10s.) but would give it free to a kinsman. A man may make a charge for lending his bicycle, though this varies with individuals; he certainly would not do so if it were lent to a friend. Loans between kinsmen should be repaid, and a tailor with a sewing-machine will make the same charges to relatives as to non-kinsmen.

There are few occasions for groups to work together. The unit of consumption and production is the domestic family. Even here, the husband, each wife, and the adolescents have their own fields, though a man may help his wife. Such other occasions of mutual help, in clearing a field, which may occur between friends or kinsmen, will only bring a few, often only two of them.

The Ovimbundu I knew were (with exceptions) not avaricious or grasping; thus, beer might be given to people who have not actually worked in house-building parties. It is regarded as a moral duty to pay one's monetary debts as soon as possible. On various occasions I lent money to people who were pressed and I received back all the money lent. Borrowers insisted that borrowings should be written down, and that the paper on which it was written should be given to them when they paid, or destroyed. Making money and being rich are regarded with

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601 with Adolfo, the small son of Jaime, his wife's brother, but when asked what relation Adolfo was to him, became confused and said, 'My son, my sister's son.'

601 184 There exist marked variations in terminology in Umbundu country.[16] For instance, *sekulu* seems to be used for mother's brother only in north-western Umbundu country. Elsewhere *mesu*[17] is used for mother's brother, and *sekulu* is used for grandfather. At Caconda, where there has been strong Portuguese [172] influence since the eighteenth century, only the Portuguese kinship terms are known.[18]

601 621

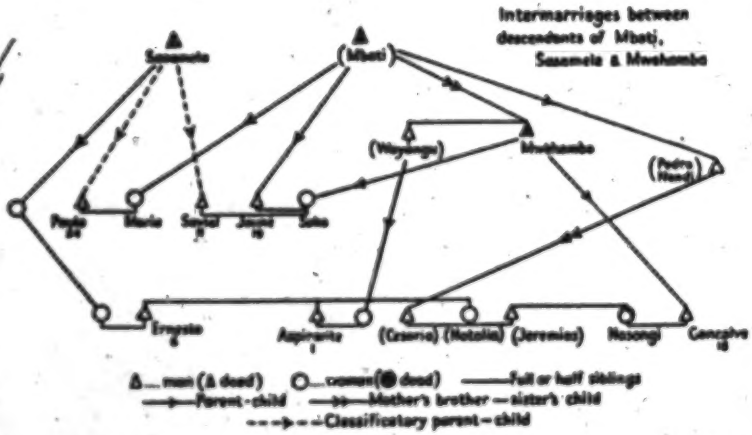

CHART 2. Mbati, Mwehombo and some of their kin. For Mbati (dead, non-member) and Mwehombo (dead, former member) see Chapter III, section 1. For Sasamela (dead, former member) and Cesario, Jeremias, Natalia, Pedro Nendi, and Wayangu (all living non-members) see List II (pp. 55–6). The rest of the individuals named on the chart are members of Epalanga. Paulo and Saviel were 'brothers', both patrilaterally and matrilaterally.

3. *Kinship Norms*

593 In this section I shall describe the relations that existed within the elementary family in the time of the rubber trade. A man

[16] For other lists of kinship terms see Hastings, pp. 83–85. Childs, pp. 47–58. M. Howse, *Umbundu Lessons* (Dondi, 1935), Vol. II, pp. 195–7.
[17] Etymologically, *mesu* seems to mean 'mother-person'.
[18] Private information.

[text continues on p. 98]

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A man did not eat or chat with his eldest son or his daughters. Nor did a woman eat or chat with her sons. By 'chatting' I mean a prolonged conversation. It was not forbidden for people in these relationships to speak to one another. Nor could a man eat or joke with his sister (although chatting was permitted) or be alone with her at night. A grown man could not sleep in the same room as his father, except perhaps on a journey, nor could he wear his father's clothes while he was still alive. A grown woman might sleep in the same room as her mother, provided they were far apart.

The reason for these avoidances is usually given simply as 'shame' (*osoi*) although I have also heard it said in explanation of the father-eldest son avoidance 'If you don't have an eldest son you can't have a family', that is, it is the birth of his eldest son which gives a man status as a father. There seems to be no formalized norm of behaviour towards the *Kwanula*, but it is said that the youngest child is the parent's favourite.[19] When I asked what would happen if a man was alone with his mother at night the answer given was, 'Your father would be angry.'

It is evident that these avoidances would limit the role of the elementary family as an associational unit. This was further 575 limited by the institution of the men's house in which the men and boys from the age of seven or so upwards eat together. In this way, a boy was associated from childhood with the body of agnatic kinsmen from whose conversation he received much of his education in matters ranging from table manners to history.

593 The authority of a man over his grown sons does not seem to have been very marked. A father had first claim on the services of his adolescent son in the caravan trade; if his father did not need him a lad could travel with another kinsman and a grown man could trade on his own account. Nor did a father apparently control his son's access to land, since this was allocated by [622] the village headman. There was, however, one very important service a father could perform for his son, that of ransoming him when the latter's mother's brother wished to sell him as a

[19] I am not sure if the *kwanula* is the youngest child, either male or female, or the youngest child provided that he is male. I think the latter.

[1874-1911]

slave. Once ransomed a boy could not be sold again. If, however, the father was displeased with his son's behaviour he could refuse to ransom him. When a man died, his adolescent sons would go to the household of a classificatory father and the children who did not yet 'have sense' would go with the widow to her kin, returning to their agnatic kin when they were older. 593 768

4. *Analysis of the Old Kinship System*

The ethnography of the Ovimbundu does show that there existed a double-descent kinship system, each individual belonging to both a local patrilineal group, and a dispersed matrilineal group, in which movable property is inherited. So great has been the impact of social change that not only have these groups disappeared but it is practically impossible to gain additional information on them by direct questions about their nature and functions. The information on kinship norms does give a somewhat clearer picture. 611 613 [422] 613 178

Within the village there was a very strong emphasis on the unity and solidarity of the men of the village. The men's house was the main social centre of the village where the men ate, received guests, and listened to cases. It was about it rather than about the person of the headman that ritual clustered.[20] The elementary family was not the unit of domestic consumption, and it is clear, from the taboos regarding contact with women kin, and the evidence as to the social life of the man's house that there was little recreational contact between the sexes. The concept of *ondjamba*[21] shows that the elementary family of husband, wife, and children, was morally and ritually significant, but many of the educational, nutritive, and recreational functions frequently associated with it were here attached to the men's house. 575 594 575

The strength of the agnatic ties in this society seems to have lain in the solidarity of the men of the village rather than in the patriarchal authority of fathers over sons. A son was economically independent of his father since he could trade on his own while his father was still living; the most powerful social sanction in the hands of kinsmen, that of being sold as a slave, was 593 [602] [604]

[20] For these rituals see Hastings, pp. 73–76, and Childs, p. 38.
[21] *Ondjamba* will be discussed more fully in the next chapter.

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[1874-1911]

593 604 in the hands of the mother's brother, though the father could, if he wished, intervene; and a man could establish a shrine of his own while his father lived.

613 It is not altogether easy to see how the matrilineal group maintained its cohesion. It was not the working team on which the caravan trade operated since a man's father had first claim on his services, and he could travel with other relatives. Within it alone loans need not be repaid and accusations of sorcery were made; with this in mind, it is evident why, as Dr. Hastings tells us, people tended to avoid the company of their matrikin, [578] and why most disputes arose in the matrilineal groups.[22] It 613 seems that probably the key to the functioning of the matri- 437 lineal groups lies in the details, not now recoverable, of the economy of the caravan trade. As everybody, however successful, was in danger at some time or another of incurring heavy losses,[23] an arrangement by which anybody who was in difficulties could call on his kin for help would be generally acceptable. The association of mutual aid of this sort with matrilineal rather than patrilineal kin would spread losses geographically and would exclude conflicts over currency and movable property from village life. Moreover, the dispersal of the matrilineal kin would provide an individual with business contacts over a considerable area.

5. *Contemporary Kinship Norms*

593 Much of this has disappeared. The men's house is no longer 264 the dining-room of the village male population. Men now often 178 eat with their wives and children though attitudes and practice of this vary between households. People in their twenties knew of the existence of these avoidance rules but it seems that the rules forbidding sons to eat with their mother and eldest sons and daughters to eat with their father are now generally ignored.

[692] [22] Hastings, pp. 18, 87. Disputes within the matrilineal group could be, and very often were, referred to the sub-chief and king. The account of legal proceedings in Hastings (pp. 139-51) suggests that a high proportion of the cases heard by the kings were to do with sorcery. In such cases the social extension of the matrilineal group beyond the area of the sub-chiefdom and the wider political integration achieved by the kingdoms 'co-operated' in preserving a range of social relations beyond the sub-chiefdom.

[23] Apropos of losses Childs quotes Magyar as saying that the Ovimbundu traded for excitement rather than gain (p. 204).

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The rules about avoidance at night are still kept. The prohibitions on a man borrowing his father's clothes and sleeping in the same room as his father seem to survive. The prohibition on a child speaking the name of his father or mother reported by Childs is not, and was not formerly, found in this area. It is, however, wrong for a child to address his parents by name.

Children begin to work in the fields when they are about six. Occasionally boys of 10 to 11 go to the coffee fields for two months work, but usually boys do not go out to work until they are about 14 or 15.

A boy going out to work should ask his father's permission to go though this is not always done. Returning from work whether contract labour or voluntary work a boy should bring presents to his relatives. He would be expected to give something, say, a jacket, to his father, and a cloth to his mother, on returning from voluntary work and a shirt to his father on coming back from contract labour. These gifts should be made in kind. Money lent from son to father should be repaid, though it is wrong for a son to enforce payment by appealing to the post for policemen. A father may give money to his son for bridewealth, and may suggest a choice of bride. He cannot constrain, nor could he in the past, his son and daughter to a marriage they do not wish.

A man cannot be said to have real authority over his grown sons. The stated norm is that a man's sons stay in the same village till he dies. He has no power to make them do so, and they are not condemned by public opinion if they live elsewhere. A man's attitude to classificatory 'fathers' is determined by the age, status, and personalities of those involved, rather than by jural rights and obligations. I have found men unable to tell me what had become of their own brothers' children.

Formerly when the father of an adolescent boy died he would join the household of a father's brother. Nowadays this would be much less likely, as it is common for such a boy to settle with other categories of kin, notably siblings and maternal kinsfolk. A man is free to stay with his brothers if he wishes, or to leave them.

While the tie between full brothers is held to be the strongest, as regards classificatory brothers there seems to be a slight

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602 leaning towards matrilateral rather than patrilateral brothers. The classificatory kinship terminology, and the lack of genealogies and kinship groups, means that a man knows a great many classificatory brothers living in his neighbourhood of whom he vaguely recognizes some as 'close' others as 'distant', but with whom his relations are not especially significant. A boy or girl who loses his or her parents is fairly likely, judging from the [266] evidence of Epalanga households, to settle with a full- or half-brother or sister.

602 591 178 Formerly, owing to virilocal marriage, a sister was geographically separated from her brother, and even if widowed or divorced would not necessarily return to his village, but might go to her mother's brother.[24] With this geographical separation went a situation of possible conflict, since the brother could sell his sister's children to recoup his own debts, and the shadow of sorcery fears seems to have touched this relationship.[25] The suppression of the rubber and slave trades and the subsequent disintegration of the kinship groups have removed the economic pressures which made for conflict between matrilineal kin and the residence rules which divided people locally into groups of agnates and their wives. The brother-sister tie has therefore [593] changed its content, since it is released from the heavy pressures formerly active in the matrilineal kin groups.

562 It would be wrong to produce any such generalization as 'a woman must always be under the guardianship of a male relative'. A woman who is widowed or divorced or whose husband is away working will tend, however, to develop a particular link with the male head of some household, her own kinsman usually, except in the case of a labour migrant's wife, when it may be a kinsman of her husband. Thus in Epalanga, Augusto (25) aided the household of his absent full brother Julio (29).

602 Aid is most likely to be given to a kinsman's wife when the two households are close together. The underlying idea seems to be to keep the kinsman's household together rather than any duty of aiding an affine. For a widow or divorced woman or the

[24] Childs, pp. 25–37.

[25] H. W. Nevinson (*A Modern Slavery*) gives a complicated story which suggests this possibility (p. 101).

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wife of a 'lost' labour migrant the tie with the brother or other 602
kinsman will be more important, though the degree to which there is contact between the two households will vary.

It would seem that the present significance of the brother- 593
sister tie is due to the frequency and likelihood of husbands being away from villages as labourers. The strength of this tie gives added significance to the mother's brother—sister's son tie.

A sister's son traditionally inherited his mother's brother's 604
movable property, and during his lifetime might borrow from him without need of repayment. Against this, the mother's brother had the right to sell his sister's son as a slave and it was he who was considered most likely, both traditionally and at the present day, to practise sorcery against his sister's son. My [254]
informants were divided as to whether the sister's son can practise sorcery against his mother's brother. However, it was stated by Hastings[26] and by my informants that sorcery was only practised between matrilineal kin. It is not easy to see how in the past the relationship between a man and his mother's brothers operated—to what extent a man had particular expectations and obligations to one particular mother's brother rather than to the whole set of senior matrilineal kin.

At the present time the content of the relationship between mother's brother and sister's son seems very fluid, depending on age and personal compatibility. An important difference arises between one's attitude to 'mother's brothers' and to 'fathers'. There is no strong tie with one's mother's own brother, as there is with one's own father; on the other hand, a boy whose father has died is regarded as much more likely to go to the house of a classificatory mother's brother than to the house of a classificatory father, although, as has been noted, children and adolescents may settle with kin of other categories.

Traditionally the relationship between a man and his wife's 607
brother was distant and reserved, the two men being forbidden to eat together or joke. Nowadays the relations between a man and his wife's full or half brother are often very friendly; quite often when one finds two households close together they turn out to belong to men related in this way.

A brother-in-law is not regarded as a kinsman—he does not

[26] Hastings, p. 87.

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for the bride's village. Here they may be greeted with formal speeches of welcome in Portuguese, a usage copied from the reception of missionaries. 585

One only turns up to a wedding if one has been invited, and not everybody who is a kinsman living in the neighbourhood is invited. Nor is there any marked distinction between kin and non-kin in the ceremony, except for the ending of avoidances and the recognition of the father's sister, who is recompensed for her services as nursemaid. Village membership is significantly recognized in the distribution of food, and the sending of the party to the bride's home to represent the bridegroom's village.

Umbundu marriage is virilocal, although a certain number of marriages are within the village. Apart from such marriages, it seems to be rare to find a man settling in a village because his wife has kin there. 591

Although during the early months of the marriage the bridegroom's mother may supervise the bride's work, the individual household is essentially an independent unit[13] and was not even in the past merged with other household units to form a 'grandfamily'. This independence is not isolation. I have only a very few times seen houses with any sort of compound about them. Much of domestic life, eating, working, resting, talking, may be done out of doors in front of the house. Paying visits is a great feature of village life especially when the day's work is over, although there is also a term *oku pasula*, to visit in the morning, referring to what are usually just short calls, involving the exchange of greetings. Perhaps the opportunity of calling and being called on is one of the factors maintaining the village as a social unit. The idea that a man should not eat with his wife still survives to some extent so that questions on this topic receive contradictory answers. Observation shows that even among the men who travelled on the caravans, eating with one's wife is the general practice. 592 574 264

One of the most striking features of Umbundu domestic life is the close companionship which exists between husband and wife and which is unquestionably a modern development.[14] 593 178

[13] See Magyar, pp. 281–3.

[14] The role of the *Quanga* as described by Childs and Hastings indicates that a man's normal companions both for eating and recreation were other men.

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593 178 Going round the houses at night one meets in one house a man and his wife sitting together talking, in another a group of men and women sitting round a fire. This is a very definite change from traditional pattern of social life in which men and women sat in separate groups, a pattern which is still observed at funerals.[15] A man who has a case at the post is likely to take with him his wife as a witness. A husband has the right to beat 593 his wife, and she should show respect to him. In fact wife-beating is rare, and the relationship seems from observation to be often one of mutual affection and close companionship. Informants were divided as to whether one can joke with one's wife—some people may fear that she will cease to respect her husband if he jokes with her—but conversationally an Umbundu wife often seems to enjoy an easy familiarity with her husband. A wife may occasionally go and stay with her relatives, and in the neighbourhood she may pay calls on kinsfolk, friends, or co-villagers, without her husband. This contrasts with the way the white and mulatto wives of traders follow the custom of rural Portugal by staying more or less permanently in the house.

The wife has her own fields, and her own granary. If the marriage is polygamous, each wife has her field and granary. [248] Her husband may help her in her fields, although he also has fields of his own. The maize in the husband's granary is sold to [434] produce money to pay tax and to buy clothing for both husband and wife, and the maize in the wife's granary is used for food. If her husband is away a woman will buy her clothes from her own granary. The cooking of maize has not only a nutritive importance but also a social one since it is considered the service, which is specifically wifely. Thus, the explanation I was given 582 for the lower age of marriage emphasizes this—I should explain that people returning from contract labour are sent first to the post at which they were recruited and may have to do an additional fortnight's work there. 'It is because of the hardship.[16] In the past one married only when one was fully grown. Now it is necessary to have somebody who will send food to the post when you come back.' 'Perhaps,' I suggested, 'your mother

[15] Childs, pp. 32, 35.
[16] *Ohali*, a word often used with regard to administrative demands.

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could send food.' 'Perhaps your mother is dead, and she has to think of your father.' A man should not cook for himself in a village, by a rule of convention which has no sanction attached, although he may do so when away working.

Clearing fields, house-building, and thatching are men's work, as are brick-making, fishing, hunting, mat-making, sewing, and woodwork. Beer-brewing, cooking, maize-pounding, and water and firewood gathering are women's work. Men and women can work together in most forms of agriculture, sowing, hoeing, harvesting, feeding small stock and treating tobacco. The division of labour is based on ideas of what is natural and fitting, not on any sanctions, mystical or otherwise. Nor is the division always strictly observed. A man may fetch water if his wife is ill, or simply away visiting relatives, and I have seen an adolescent boy pounding out maize on a pounding-block.

A man should look after his sick wife. There is a song which is sung about the married couples of the village, each being named in turn, which tells how the husband went to the post and his wife climbed a tree to get some fruit down. She fell down and hurt herself and then wailed because there was nobody to look after her. A woman who is ill for some time will return to her kin to get better.

The husband does not attend his wife's funeral, but washes himself all over, and then has to lie down asleep, or as if sleeping, during the funeral. Grains of maize and other crops may be, but are not always, even at pagan funerals, thrown over a woman's coffin as it is taken to the cemetery. A man should leave his old home when his wife dies, although this rule is neglected nowadays, certainly by the owners of brick houses. After a year or two, a widower should *oku wonga*, pile up stones on his wife's grave, a duty which has behind it a vague mystical sanction of illness. The widow of a hunter should be buried beside her husband even though after his death she has married again.[17]

A widow may marry again about six months after the funeral. The exception to this is the *inakulu*, the chief's main wife. Formerly, it was permitted for a widow to marry her husband's

[17] A case of this occurred during my stay.

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604 This strong pull towards the mother's brother is, however, marked on the level of village relationships as has been already noted. It is possible that with regard to co-operation on the [607] domestic plane the tie between a man and his wife's full or half siblings is stronger than that with his sister's children. This 607 argument would claim that the tie created by marriage between a man and his wife's full or half siblings is one of the strongest in the Umbundu social structure, and as a further proof (albeit not quantitively assessed) may be quoted the frequency with which two households close together turn out to belong to a man and his wife's brother.

582 602 In the first section of this chapter it was argued that the high rate of preferential marriages greatly increased the number of social ties between individuals in a neighbourhood, and brought a renewal of ties with distant kin. In this section various aspects 593 of the relationship between husband and wife have been examined. Husband and wife co-operate economically and outside working hours may pass their evenings together. In a dispute taken to the post a man is likely to take his wife as a witness. Mystically sanctioned obligations do exist between husband and wife. While the elementary family is the main 592 domestic type, households headed by women are also found and there is a certain amount of mobility of children between households. The tie of a man with his wife's siblings, particu- [607] larly when they are children, is significant for the domestic organization of households.

582 602 621 Marriage is indeed the pivotal institution of the Umbundu kinship system. The preferential marriages do not link descent groups to one another; rather they bring about the local concentration of kin which makes out of many vague and insecure links a strongly-woven community in which both husband and wife can live with relatives near at hand.

593 Of the personal relationship between husband and wife it would be impossible to say as an anthropologist has of another African people, 'Here people looked for little in marriage. A man would turn to his sixteenth cousin twice removed before he turned to his wife.'[22] A man shares with his wife his work and leisure, is linked to her by mystical obligations which are not

[22] Elenore Smith Bowen, *Return to Laughter*, London, 1954, p. 117.

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on good terms with Guilherme, who was a 'father' of his, and even earlier in June part of the celebrations which marked the marriage of Paulo's son Jose to Pungu, a girl from Namba, whose mother had at one time been married to Kapapelo, took place at the latter's house. Most strikingly of all, as has been noted, Guilherme could borrow money from Bartolomeu and Paulo at the height of their quarrel. The kinship bond exists outside of and, it might be said, at a deeper level than, the quarrel, and the rebukes hurled at an adversary reflect this. Paulo did not complain that Guilherme was a bad cross-cousin; instead he complained that Guilherme was not grateful to him for having baptized his dying child. The motive for co-operation or conflict in everyday life is to be found not in the tracing of genealogies but in the tally of reciprocal services and grievances between two individuals.

It may be claimed that this portrait of the kinship system which emerges from the disputes as being loosely structured and lacking defined obligations, but providing an underlying continuity, is very similar to that given in Chapter VII, which was based on questioning and the observation of everyday life.

The significance of the conjugal bond appears both positively in the way Luanga and Sapapula both take their wives to the post as witnesses, and negatively in the way the hostility of Kapapelo and Lusase to Sapapula is interpreted as being inspired by lust for his wife. Even the accusations of adultery so readily hurled about in disputes reflect the stereotype of the adulterer as the arch-enemy, and likewise the arch-enemy of the moment as at least a potential adulterer.

One question remains to be answered. Was Epalanga a particularly rebellious, squabbling, divided, village, because of the presence of an unusual number of aggressive individuals? It is not possible to estimate the number of disputes per village, and the disputes which have been described were the most important of which I had personal knowledge. They were touched off by personal antagonisms rather than by structural contradictions. Yet they tie in with what has been said of the Umbundu social structure in earlier chapters to such a degree that they seem to reflect the lines along which any case of the sort would proceed. The weakness of the chiefs, stripped of

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[1874-1911]

slave. Once ransomed a boy could not be sold again. If, however, the father was displeased with his son's behaviour he could refuse to ransom him. When a man died, his adolescent sons would go to the household of a classificatory father and the children who did not yet 'have sense' would go with the widow to her kin, returning to their agnatic kin when they were older.

4. *Analysis of the Old Kinship System*

The ethnography of the Ovimbundu does show that there existed a double-descent kinship system, each individual belonging to both a local patrilineal group, and a dispersed matrilineal group, in which movable property is inherited. So great has been the impact of social change that not only have these groups disappeared but it is practically impossible to gain additional information on them by direct questions about their nature and functions. The information on kinship norms does give a somewhat clearer picture.

Within the village there was a very strong emphasis on the unity and solidarity of the men of the village. The men's house was the main social centre of the village where the men ate, received guests, and listened to cases. It was about it rather than about the person of the headman that ritual clustered.[80] The elementary family was not the unit of domestic consumption, and it is clear, from the taboos regarding contact with women kin, and the evidence as to the social life of the man's house that there was little recreational contact between the sexes. The concept of *ondjamba*[81] shows that the elementary family of husband, wife, and children, was morally and ritually significant, but many of the educational, nutritive, and recreational functions frequently associated with it were here attached to the men's house.

The strength of the agnatic ties in this society seems to have lain in the solidarity of the men of the village rather than in the patriarchal authority of fathers over sons. A son was economically independent of his father since he could trade on his own while his father was still living; the most powerful social sanction in the hands of kinsmen, that of being sold as a slave, was

[80] For these rituals see Hastings, pp. 75-76, and Childs, p. 29.
[81] *Ondjamba* will be discussed more fully in the next chapter.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

621 592 Going on to the marital status of the villagers, I found that the forty-eight households were to be classified as follows:

Monogynous	27 (including 7 at the school)
Widowers (all formerly monogynous)	3 (" 1 ")
Widows	7 (" 4 ")
Young (unmarried) man	1 (at the school)
Polygynous	10
Total	48

Whether a similar proportion of monogynous to polygynous households would also be found more widely among the Ovimbundu is a question which could only be settled by extensive 595 demographic studies.[1] My impression is that the proportion of 592 polygynous to monogynous households is higher in the region of Kasonge than in other Umbundu areas for the following reasons:

1. The proximity of Kasonge to the Esele country which has long been a source of supply for concubines (slaves). (Five of the ten polygynous householders in Ngendo included at least one Esele concubine.)
2. The comparatively low bride-price in Kasonge as compared to other areas.

The South African Census for 1921 showed that at that time only one man in eight was polygynous.[2] My impression is that the proportion among the Ovimbundu is no greater and that economic factors will soon do away with any considerable polygyny.

In each of the ten polygynous households in Ngendo save one, there were only two wives or concubines. The one exception was

112 [1] The census of 1940 gives more reliable figures and more details than were previously available, but it does not provide a basis for studies of this order. The number or proportion of polygamous unions among the 'uncivilized population' was not recorded. For the whole colony, the division of the native population by sex is given as follows: males, 1,733,328, females, 1,932,501 (op. cit., vol. i, p. 78 f.); and for the Ovimbundu (*Mbundu*), as follows: males, 636,583, females, 694,504 (op. cit., vol. ix, p. 22 f.). Owing to the migration of labourers, and especially to the system known as 'contract labour', certain areas (of recruitment) show a large excess of females over males (as much as 4 to 1 in the 20–29 age-groups of certain areas), while certain (receiving) areas show a corresponding excess of males over females (4 to 1 in several areas and even 22 to 1 in one area, for the same age-groups) (op. cit., vol. iii, *passim*). On this subject, *vide* R. R. Kuczynski, *Colonial Population* (London, 1937), and *Population Movements* (ibid., 1936); both summarized in the *Rhodes-Livingstone Journal*, no. 2.

[2] Quoted by P. A. W. Cook, *The Education of a South African Tribe* (Cape Town; Juta, 1934), p. 3.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

the household of the headman Sikīlīlē, who had had four wives and one young Esele concubine. At the time of my last visit (1936), however, there were only two wives and the concubine, one wife having died, and another having gone to her people.

To complete the picture of the villagers, their numbers were as follows:

Village	Men	Women	Children: Male	Children: Female	Total
In Sikīlīlē's village	24	35	31	37	127
In Ciyanda	5	8	2	4	19
In Kanjengo	3	6	3	1	13
At the School	10	11	10	6	37
Total	42	60	46	48	
	Adults: 102		Children: 94[1]		196

In Sikīlīlē's village there were domestic animals as follows: 9 head of cattle, 13 goats, 20 sheep, 100 pigs, and about 100 chickens. There was practically no professional specialization; there were almost no specialists living in the village: no blacksmith or carpenter, no mat-maker, but only one 'hunter of meat', and three 'hunters of (bee-) hives'. As to the women, all could make baskets, and there were several who had made pottery, but were not doing so at the time.

Pigs, chickens, and dogs roamed the village, functioning as a D.S.C. and a sewer system combined. Were it not for these scavengers the villages of the Ovimbundu would present an even more untidy spectacle than is the case. There is no other regular disposal of refuse, nor are there any latrines or privies.[2]

It will be seen that there is practically no division of labour as between households: each is practically a self-contained unit. The

[1] It was reported that in addition to the children then living, these same households had lost 57 by death (29 males and 28 females).

[2] At Ngando the school village had two or three enclosed pit privies. The Umbundu euphemism for defecate, 'go to the bush' (*aku enda kuenge*), is revealing. Even more revealing is a proverb which advises one not to burn his bridges behind him, but literally it runs as follows:

Nda wa lisinga kuti, Ñi endi kuyimwa ongo,
Nda o ha ñilili pi?

If you forswear yourself saying, I shall not go behind the house,
Then will you go (to) urinate where?

There is a more shocking version which, however, may not be really authentic.

CHAPTER III

KINSHIP

The Household

592 THE basis of the village and of the whole Umbundu kinship structure is the household consisting of a man, his wife or wives and their children, together with such other related or unrelated dependants as may be attached and live together in a single compound. The Umbundu word for the household is *ocikumba*, which includes domestic animals and possessions as well as the persons who make up the group, but nowadays this word is rarely, if ever, heard. The word *onjo*, which means 'house', is also used in the sense of household and to include the one or more 'houses' which a man has established by marriage. The housing arrangements of the household and its relation to the other households and to the headman of the village have been noted. The chief facts to remember are that each wife has her own hut, granary, chickens, and fields for her children and herself; and that the husband has no house of his own save a spirit hut (*etambo*), in case he is village headman or a family elder. There is not the same [595] relation between the rank of the wives and the position of their houses with relation to the cattle kraal, which is found among the cattle-raising Southern Bantu, nor are there the same distinctions of precedence. The eldest child (*ewŭlŭ*) of his father, of whatever wife or concubine, takes precedence over all who are born later. It is nevertheless true among commoners that the first wife legally married is the chief wife. The number of persons belonging to a single household may vary greatly. Magyar stated that his father-in-law Kayaya Kayangula (king of Viye *c.* 1847–50) had seventeen sons and forty-four daughters.[1] Some recent kings have had as many as twelve wives and concubines, but I do not know of any having had even half as many children as Kayangula had. The only large household in the village of Ngendo was that of the headman, Sikîllî, with five wives and concubines, and fifteen children (most of whom were already grown at the time of my visits). The largest of the other households in that village had

[1] Magyar, op. cit., p. 260.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

593 only by a sister), and *mukãi* (sister, spoken only by a brother). In
[561] a polygynous household each of the wives is mother to all the children and each of the children is *hwa* or *manja*[1] to all the others.
848 Illegitimate children are not stigmatized but since they belong to
567 the mother they have a distinct designation.[2] Slaves or former slaves have a status within the household and village which to the ordinary observer does not differ from that of the children: they are treated much as the children and they may carry on in all matters social and economic much as though they were members of the family. I have noticed, however, that when there is a call for labour, the lot falls oftener to one of these 'children-born-by-day'[3] whether he was a war-captive or a pawn.

567 Both slavery and the polygynous household, two institutions
595 manifestly and intimately inter-related, are still a part of the
178 Umbundu social structure, but neither the one nor the other now has the importance which it formerly had. Neither of these institutions is part of the present and personal experience of the great majority of Umbundu households.

Kinship

596 *Blood Relatives* (*Epata*). The relationships of the wider kinship
602 groups are for the most part extensions of those of the household.
621 The child learns them very early in life owing to the fact that the village community into which he is born is only a part of this larger kinship group. Nearly all of the villagers belong to the same *epata* or extended family, which includes both lines of descent. Most of them belong to the father's family (*olume*), and the mother's family (*olaina*) may also be represented. The fact is that most of the adults of the village are father or mother to nearly every child and most of the children are brothers or sisters. Those of his coevals who do not bear this relation to him are otherwise related and are also potential spouses or potential relatives-in-law.

[1] This distinction *youpahai* (lit. '*of* the jealousy of women') may be made but it is not applied in ordinary speech.

[2] *Omõlõ a ngundu-la-ku* (lit. 'child *of* goes-with-mother').

[3] *Omõlõ-ua-vitiua-hetanya*. Cf. 'child of my calves', Luganda expression and attitudes, L. P. Mair, *An African People in the Twentieth Century* (London, 1934), p. 32 f.

582 incest *(oku ndo)*. But one may marry relatives of one's own age-level who belong to classes other than those mentioned, i.e. cross-cousins and, on other age-levels, father's sister or sister's daughter. It is said that formerly marriage never took place except between persons who could trace relationship in this way. Today this principle is very liberal in its application.(1) (It would be interesting to have estimates of the number of men who do marry first degree cross-cousins, father's sisters, or sister's daughters, as distinct from classificatory relatives of these classes, and the number who marry outside the *olure* or *olusa*.)

583 Marriage was formerly arranged by the mother's brother (i.e. by the *olusa*), but today there is a tendency for fathers to arrange their daughters' marriages and to receive their marriage payment. (And also, occasionally, to assist their sons in providing marriage payment.)(2) *Ilombo*, or marriage payment, was formerly paid in cattle, blankets etc.(3) Today it is usually paid in cash, the amount being determined by the status of the bride.(4)

Polygyny

621 595 In the sample village (Ngendo, Rasongi chiefdom) described by Childs, of a total of 49 households,

(a) 10 households were polygynous; of these 9 contained only 2 wives or concubines, and the tenth, that of the headman, contained four wives and one concubine,

(b) 27 households were monogynous, and 3 more were occupied by widowers, all formerly monogynous. (The remaining households were occupied by 7 widows and one young unmarried man.)

Childs notes that the proportion of polygynous households in Rasongi chiefdom is probably higher than in other parts of Cwisbundu country for two reasons: the comparatively low marriage-payment in Rasongi as compared with other areas, and the proximity of Rasongi to Esele country, which has long been a source of supply for slave concubines. (Of the 10 polygynous households in Ngendo 5 contained at least 1 Esele concubine.)(5)

Avoidance between in-laws

602 Mutual respect *(ezumbilo)* between the two kin groups involved is considered a necessary basis for a successful marriage, and is the reason given for the various avoidances *(oku lyuwaila)* enjoined upon the principals and their respective relatives. These avoidances may be summarised:-

593 (a) A husband and wife must avoid using each other's names.

601 (b) The term *ndatesebo* is used for parents-in-law of either sex, and reciprocally for sons-in-law or daughters-in-law. The term is extended to all those whom one's spouse calls "mother", "father" or "child" (Childs, p.52) and apparently also to those whom one's spouse calls *ganu*, *tatebai* or

(1) Childs, p.34.
(2) Panic, 1945.
(3) Graham, 1944, p.45.
(4) Childs, personal communication.
(5) Childs, page 30.

601 ocimumbo (since Childs states (p.55) that it includes every relative of the generation of the spouse's parents.) *Ndotembo* must avoid: (i) speaking each other's name. This may be accomplished by using the names compounded from those of children (thus *Nakembotia* and *Sakembotia* are the father and mother of *Kambotia*) or by using the terms which one's spouse uses, i.e. *mai*, *tata*, *sonu* etc. (ii) seeing each other, if they are of opposite sex; if it is necessary to converse, it must be done out of sight, or with gaze averted. (iii) eating with each other. (This applies only to regular meals and not to casual refreshment.)

607 (c) The term *nawa* is used reciprocally for all the spouse's relatives of one's own generation, including those classed as "sister", "brother" and "cross-cousin". Between the *nawa* the only avoidance enjoined is that they may not eat regular meals in each other's presence; otherwise they are on "free and easy" terms".

"Avoidance of meeting ... is especially difficult for the bride who comes to live in a village of her husband's people, a large proportion of the men of which may be *ndotembo* to her. The prohibition may be lifted by .. a simple ceremony, in which each rubs a little oil on the other ... Avoidance of eating in each other's presence may be done away with after some months by sacrificing a chicken and feeding it ceremonially .. to the *ndotembo* or *nawa* ... It is especially important that the ceremonies be carried through with respect *(esumbilo)*."[1]

A note on the kinship system

613 421 178 There is a tendency today for the claim of the *olume*, the land-owning group, to supplant those of the property-owning *olaina*; one important reason for this is the change from trade to agriculture as the most important economic activity. With European influence also conflicts have arisen over rights to children. Childs states[2] that the bilineal kinship system has been a factor leading to social stability, especially stability of marriage, but he does not elaborate this statement.

LOCAL GROUPS[3]

592 595 The "household", consisting of a man, his wife or wives and children, and such other related or unrelated dependants as may be attached to this basic group, is the basis of the village. The word *onjo* (house) may be used for this group, i.e. to include the various houses which a man may have established by marriage, or it may be used for the house of any one of his wives. Each wife has her own hut, granary, chickens, and fields for her children and herself, and the husband has no house of his own unless he is village headman or the head of an *olaina*, in which case he has a spirit-hut *(etambo)* in which he may sometimes pass the night. Sons [591] when they marry form their own households, usually in their father's village. The size of the household varies greatly according to wealth and [554] status. Some recent kings have had as many as 12 wives. But it has been noted above that, in Childs' typical village, out of 49 households only 10

(1) Childs, p.52.
(2) Ibid., p.56; see also ibid. pp.70, 61, 80 etc.
(3) This section is based on Childs, 1949, pp.35-41.

were polygynous and only one of these contain more than two wives.[1] 592 595

The village or tabo (plural ovitabo) may consist of from 5 to 500 such households, the heads of which are usually related agnatically to each other. Most, but not all, of the larger villages are olombala (villages of chiefs or sub-chiefs). These are said to have had formerly as many as 5,000 inhabitants,[2] but today few have as many as 3,000, and there is a general tendency towards smaller villages and even isolated households.[3] There are in general two quite different types of Umbundu village according to the terrain on which they are built. Those on the plains, where there is room to spread out, tend towards a circular shape, with the ocila and onjango (see below) near the centre. The various sections of the village may appear as quarters of a single whole, or they may be spread out haphazardly. Mountain villages[4] may have houses built on ledges almost one on top of the other. Here there is often no room or no suitable soil within the palisades for gardens or for the dancing-floor (ocila), which are found outside the palisade. Different sections of the village tend to string themselves out horizontally along the mountain-side, or to find successive ledges. 621 [178] 621 361

The typical village of Ngendo described by Childs, in Kasongi chiefdom, etumbu (sub-chiefdom) of Ekongo, is of an intermediate type, built on a slope. Ngendo has 196 inhabitants, of whom 42 are men, 60 are women, and 94 children. The village is divided into four smaller sections or wards (ovitawila pl.), of which the largest, that of the village headman (sokulu) has 127 inhabitants, while the other three have 19, 13 and 37 inhabitants respectively. The word tabo (village) may also be used for either of the two larger sections by themselves. Each section has its own elder, but the dancing-floor (ocila), which is the centre of village life, is in the headman's section. The ocila is primarily a place for recreation, but religious functions also are held in it, and formal cases tried. Formerly most villages had a second communal building, the onjango or "Men's Club House"[5] whose importance was almost as great as that of the ocila. Here all the men, youths and boys gathered for the evening meal, and here guests were entertained, lesser judicial cases settled, and the day's work and gossip discussed, while young boys, sitting in the background, gained much of their knowledge of tribal history and custom.[6] Today the onjango exists and maintains its former function chiefly in parts of Ngalangi, Viye and possibly Ndulu. It does not exist in Childs' typical village, where the "Men's Club" holds only occasional meetings on the rocks behind the headman's house, and where the common evening meal no longer takes place. The reason suggested for the disappearance of the onjango is lack of leisure owing to demands for road work (in the immediate vicinity of Ngendo), for contract labour, involving absences of from six months to a year,[7] and the difficulty of securing tax-money. 621 [344] [461]

(1) And polygyny is thought to be more frequent here than in other areas. See above, p.23.
(2) According to Bagyar, 1891.
(3) Childs, op.cit., p.35, fn.1. Childs does not suggest any reason for this tendency.
(4) Formerly many villages were built on mountains for defence, and capital villages of this type may still be seen.
(5) The "Men's Club" seems to be simply a gathering of all the adult men (and possibly also the juveniles) of the village.
(6) Childs, op.cit.; Chatelain, 1894; Bagyar, (2) 1894.
(7) Most of the labour on the Benguella Railway is Umbundu, and many Ovimbundu travel to the Union of South Africa for work. (Childs, op.cit., p.38, et.al.)

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

302 A principal wife builds up her
[595] hair into five high cones. Vacholue women mass their hair into
171 separate balls shaped and held by clay and red coloring matter. I know of no hairdressing for Vacholue men, but ornamental wooden combs are sometimes used.

304 In only one place have I seen a nose pin worn, namely, the Esele country of Vila Nova de Selles. The fashion is out of date, but women of only twenty-five years of age have the septum of the nose bored; evidently the custom has not been obsolete for a long period (Plate LXXV, Fig. 1).

177 The most popular European importations are blue cloth with
439 white spots, metal hair combs, beads, and bright metal crosses
301 bearing a figure of the Virgin Mary with the infant Jesus. This ornament has penetrated to districts far away from Christian missions, and its wide dispersal shows that a newly introduced and attractive ornament from a foreign source may readily be accepted by tribes of different cultures.

517 There are interesting points of psychology in the attitude of the
301 Ovimbundu toward European importations. Only a few patterns of cloth are favored, and there is no sale for any other design. Some designs are thought to be appropriate for young girls while others are favored by older women. The same may be said of colored beads, for whereas both blue and white beads are the usual decoration for young women and immature girls, red beads are worn chiefly by the elderly women.

178 A consideration of personal ornament establishes the general truth that in scarification, hairdressing, tooth mutilation, the use of red powder and grease, the anointing of the hair with palm oil, and the wearing of trade cloth, leather, or bark cloth, there is little exchange of styles. There are diffusions in language and other cultural traits, but decorative elements which have for a long period been regarded as distinctive of tribal life are rigidly preserved.

312 bananas, but one could not say that irrigation is generally practised, even when circumstances permit.

245 The papaya and the banana are increasingly cultivated, but they are by no means generally distributed. Here and there I [249] have seen a little sugar-cane cultivated by natives for their own [244] use. Near the main railway natives may be seen selling their products, which include cabbages and tomatoes. Some natives are today planting the guava tree which yields sweet palatable fruits. The fruits *olosia* are collected from the *usia* tree. When ripe, the fruit is yellow, round, and about two inches in diameter. These fruits are gathered in September, and the kernels, which are about the size of walnuts, are eaten uncooked. No fruits are collected for storage. *Olombala* fruits ripen in October, when they are eaten raw.

264 Each wife sends the food which she has cooked in her own kitchen to the *onjango* ("council house"). After carrying the food to this house of assembly, where the men meet each evening, the women return to their houses to eat alone, or with the young children.

343 When there is a plurality of wives each has her own house and 252 kitchen. Ngonga states that separate kitchens built outside the [978] living houses are becoming more rare. The poor have their kitchens in the living room because they cannot provide separate structures for living and cooking.

264 The first meal is taken between five and six o'clock in the morning, 262 the most usual food being meal sprinkled on boiling water to form 252 a paste which is eaten with sweet potatoes. A mush of beans is eaten at night; generally there is no meal at midday. Three pounds of cooked beans are eaten by a person for one meal. Over the cooking pots leaves are placed to keep in the steam, especially when the pot contains sweet potatoes. I have made a meal from the sticky, gluey paste which results from sprinkling meal on boiling water. The chief objection to this food is the unpleasant quantity of grit in the meal, owing to the fact that it is pounded on the rocks. Manioc and sugar-cane are chewed at irregular intervals of the day.

262 The amount of meat consumed by the Ovimbundu is small in comparison with the quantity of vegetable food used. This adoption of diet of a particular kind is largely a matter of habit, and there is no good reason why meat should not form a larger proportion of the food supply. The Ovimbundu do not kill their cattle for food though they will eat the meat of oxen which have died from natural causes.

of the girl by her husband, and if she were not a virgin he took a hot 585
stick from the fire and burned a hole through her loin cloth. "The girl began to cry, but she had to take the burned cloth to her mother." In such an instance there does not seem to be an idea of guilt. The husband had accepted something that was damaged, and the payment of a pig by the girl's parents reunited the two young people. In former days, also at present, there are boy and girl companions who sleep together, supposedly without having sexual connections, [836]
although they may be seventeen years of age. The girl calls the boy *ombaisi*, and he calls her by the same name. The Ovimbundu [842]
understand something of the physiology of conception; the woman is, however, regarded as only a receiving vessel. "The man puts something into her which grows."

Husband and wife do not sleep in the same bed during the wife's 841
menstrual period; the wife sleeps on a mat at the side of her husband's bed. A woman who is menstruating never cooks food, but women give mutual aid in this matter. A man with more than one wife 595
sleeps either four nights or seven nights with each; the four-night cycle is more usual than the seven-night cycle among the Ovimbundu. Each wife has a separate hut and kitchen. There is no wife lending, 837
but a visitor may be provided with a widow or even with an un- [574]
married girl. Then the man would have to pay the woman.

Ngonga was able to give information with regard to homosexual- 838
ity. "There are men who want men, and women who want women." Ngonga says he has heard people talk about it, and "they think this very bad." A woman has been known to make an artificial penis for use with another woman. The medicine-man will sometimes dress as a woman. Ngonga, who has seen a man dress as a woman, stated that the man arranged his cloth like that of a woman, put palm oil on his hair, and joined the women to pound corn on the rocks. "The other people laughed and spoke bad words to him. His brother, father, and uncle beat him," but without producing reformation.

DIVORCE

There are many grounds on which a man may secure a divorce, 586
but it does not follow that divorce is frequent. On the contrary the evidence indicates that the majority of difficulties are overcome by a compromise between the relations of the husband and those of the wife. The main causes of dissatisfaction with a wife are want of ability in cultivating her garden, physical weakness, a habit of thieving from the gardens of other women, incompetence in cooking,

586 bad temper, too much talking, some physical defect arising from childbirth, and infidelity. But the husband usually accepts payment from the adulterer, and in that event divorce is not sought.

585 586 If a mother has no milk, there is a likelihood that her children will die in infancy; this is a cause for divorce. Barrenness gives great dissatisfaction, but is not necessarily a cause for divorce. Usually the husband marries another girl, while the first wife retains her position as head-wife. With regard to frigidity my informant said [833] that sometimes "a married woman does not want her husband to do those things which husbands like to do, or she may want him very seldom." The husband is so angry that he may go away hunting for a long time. The husband may tell some old people, who talk to the girl. If his wife is a good cook, the husband may keep her and secure another girl as a second wife. Sometimes the husband ties the hands of the girl if she resists him. If a wife is returned to her parents on the grounds of her frigidity her husband does not receive compensatory payment, but he hopes that another man will take the girl and pay him for her.

842 Sterility of the male is sometimes suspected, in which case the husband tries another girl, possibly with his wife's consent. The wife may be allowed to have relations with another man in the hope of producing children. The evidence shows that there is definite experiment to test barrenness of the woman and sterility of the male.

In case of impotence (not sterility of the male sperm) the wife leaves her husband. In event of barrenness the woman visits a medicine-man, who gives her a charm consisting of two cowrie shells on a strip of leather which she wears round her neck; a potion also will be given her. If the barren condition is due to malevolence of spirits, the face of the woman is painted with streaks of red and white. Such a woman is said to gain *ocitumba*. *Tumba* means "a swell," "a rise."

586 A woman may divorce her husband if he does not treat her well. [837] If he beats her or refuses to give her cloth and palm oil, she will leave him; but she will not leave him if he is merely unfaithful. If a woman is unhappy with her husband, she will tell her people about the trouble. Her father and mother may say, "Go and try again."

After a year the woman may still be unhappy, in which case she goes to her parents. The husband visits his wife's parents to ask why she has left him. The parents give reasons and offer to return the token he presented for the girl. The return of the husband's tokens is usually long delayed because the parents of the girl are

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

Kukululu or *sekululu*. These terms are applicable to my father's father's brother, my father's father's brother's wife; my father's father's sister's husband; and my mother's father (the reciprocal *onekulu* describes the reciprocals, brother's son's son; husband's brother's son's son; wife's brother's son's son; daughter's son). 601

Maikulu. This designation, which is derived from *mai*, meaning mother, and *kulu*, an old person, is applied to my father's mother (reciprocal, *onekulu yange*, son's son). *Maikulu* also means my father's father's sister; my mother's mother; my mother's mother's brother's wife; and my mother's mother's sister (the reciprocal is *onekulu* which equals the English reciprocals brother's son's son; daughter's son; husband's daughter's child; and sister's daughter's child).

This completes the second generation of ascendants.

NOTE: Ngonga's wife uses the names *maikulu* and *kukululu* for those relatives of her husband to whom Ngonga himself applies those terms. These relatives call Ngonga's wife *onekulu*.

TABLE D

(*See Table E IV and V, also Table F II, IV and V*)

SOME OF NGONGA'S DESCENDANTS

Nunulu or *useli* is my first-born son. Other sons are *omola*, meaning child. *Omola ulume* means a male child. *Omola ukai* is a female child. *Useli* also means a first daughter (the reciprocal for these terms is *tate*, meaning father).

Omolange means my child. I apply the word, not only to my own children, but to my elder brother's son (reciprocal, *tate*, father's younger brother); to my elder brother's daughter; and to my younger brother's son.

Ndatembo. The word is applied to my son's wife; my daughter's husband; my elder brother's son's wife; my elder brother's daughter's husband; and my younger brother's son's wife (the same word *ndatembo* is used for the reciprocals of these terms; namely, husband's father; wife's father; husband's father's younger brother; wife's father's younger brother; and husband's father's elder brother).

The foregoing classificatory system of relationship is not peculiar 601
to the Ovimbundu, but is a cultural trait of many Bantu-speaking 171
and some Sudanic-speaking Negroes. The similarity of the Umbundu system to those of surrounding peoples in Rhodesia and the Congo will be pointed out in chapters dealing with culture contacts.

When describing marriage rites reference was made to the fact 591
that a wife goes to live near her husband's relatives; the system is therefore patrilocal. The limited family consists of husband and 592
wife (or wives) with their children. The greatest number of wives [595]
observed in the family of a commoner was four, and in the family of a king eleven. A household sometimes contains adopted children, [597]
also domestic slaves (pawns) who are working to pay off debts for [567]
their maternal uncles. An extended family may include a grand- 596
father and his wife, his sons, their wives and children, and his unmarried daughters, with classes and nomenclatures mentioned in the foregoing tables.

The phrase *epata lia tate* (or *aluse*) means "family of my father" 613
and includes all relatives on the father's side. The words *epata lia*

567 people, especially if they were from outside the Ovimbundu, was one of absolute and abject servitude.

The master had rights of punishment including a death sentence; but Ngonga says that a slave could appeal to the headman of the village if he were starved and cruelly treated. All children of a slave became slaves of the master. As the slave had no property he could not pay a fine; the master would pay the fine then relieve his feelings by beating the slave. Instead of paying the fine the master might sell the slave.

Slaves were not branded or marked in any way. Ngonga has seen runaway slaves hunted with dogs. A slave was not allowed to buy his own freedom. A master could dispose of his slave girls in marriage; for instance, a young girl might be sold to an old man. The condition of the slave is well expressed in Ngonga's own words: "The slave worked hard at everything, then the master said he had done nothing."

Slaves used to go to war to fight with their masters against an enemy. A slave might become a blacksmith or a hunter, two very esteemed occupations, but all his work would be for the master. Ngonga says there was no slave market belonging to the Ovimbundu, but every man knew where he could buy a slave. Slaves could act as witnesses in a trial. Slave women were not lent out for prostitu-
[585] tion. A slave owner did not have promiscuous intercourse with his
[768] slave women, but he chose two or three girls as concubines. A slave girl who was married to a free man would revert to her master along with her children when her husband died. If a master had married his own slave woman she would, at his death, become the property of his eldest brother and her children would go with her. In some instances the slave woman and her children would be given to the son of her master's brother.

VILLAGE ORGANIZATION

361 When choosing a site for a new village, a preference is shown for a hillside, though woods or valleys are at times selected. The foot of cliffs is a favorite site. In addition to the shade afforded by the cliff there was in time past the advantage of being hidden from the view of enemies. Further shelter was afforded by the planting of wild fig trees. Sometimes an *ombala* ("capital") was rendered picturesque by the planting of trees which grow to a great size; such a plan was followed at the *ombala* of Ngalangi.

Caves in the wall of a cliff, likewise rugged hillsides, gave a place of retreat for women and children during an attack. Usually there

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

the custody of a widow. The father, the brother, or the maternal uncle of the widow may take her. In the words of my interpreter, each says, "It is better that you should take her," and at last someone says, "I will take her." 105 593

A chief of Ngalangi revealed the most important aspect of polygyny when he apologized for the fact that only five of his eleven wives were present. The chief was anxious to emphasize the fact that he had eleven wives, though six were at work in the fields. 595

When one considers the prestige of village chiefs, and further reflects on the desirability of maintaining this power within family groups, the institution of polygyny becomes more understandable. In addition there is the necessity of having women to cultivate the fields. A polygynous system does not necessarily cause domestic conflict, because each wife has her own hut, fireplace, and utensils. Custom obliges a chief to spend four nights in each hut in regular sequence.

A first and principal wife is not offended by the introduction of other wives, for these reduce her own labor and announce the fact that she is the principal wife of a wealthy man. When photographing the king of Ngalangi with his wives, I observed that he sent the principal wife from the group in order to adorn herself with a piece of cloth whose value was greater than that of the clothing worn by any of the others. Among the Vakuanyama it was noticeable that the principal wife wore a head-dress of clay with five horns; and in addition to this she had costly necklaces of ostrich-eggshell beads, also more of the coveted *omba* shells than were allowed to other wives. In this way the prestige of the first or great wife is preserved.

The persistence of custom, the force of education through suggestion in early years, and the power of social attitudes, are well illustrated by the survival of kinship terms and the classificatory system of relationships, with its marriage prohibitions and sanctions of an arbitrary kind. The strength of the mores and the fundamental nature of this system of relationship in determining marriage, descent, succession, and inheritance, are indicated by the fact that the system is unaltered after three centuries of contact with Europeans. 602

The rights of a mother's brother extend so far as a sale of his sister's children to redeem his own debts; and reciprocally he is responsible for the conduct of his sister's children, even to the extent of paying fines for the thefts they may commit. This prerogative and responsibility of the maternal uncle is fundamental, and around the trait cluster points of law and legal procedure.

5: Hambly E-5 (1929-30)1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

containing the head and attaching it to a pole by which it was supported 439
on the shoulders of two bearers. Then followed a series of questions from 787
the village chief (sekulu), and answers were supposed to be given through forward or backward swinging of the pole. A forward swing was affirmative, and a backward swing was negative. I have seen this procedure followed with a coffin supported as described, and the questions related to the cause of death.

The head of a king would be asked, "Do you want an ox for sacrifice? We will give you one." "Do you want a new skin for your head? We will give you one." Such was the ceremony for bringing spiritual aid to what was otherwise a commercial undertaking.

A wooden figure of a female decorated with black feathers was an indispensable part of the equipment of a medicine-man who accompanied a caravan. When in doubt with regard to the path he knelt at the parting of the ways and consulted the figure. Replies came in a falsetto voice attained by plugging his nostrils. Horns containing a mixture of fat, charcoal, and other substances were carried so that they might be planted near a camping ground to drive away thieves and leopards. These horns are still used and are obtainable.

At the present day a belated Ocimbundu, who fears the sun may set 789
before he reaches the next village, will take some earth from an ant hill. This earth he places in the fork of a tree saying, "O sun wait for me a little while."

Examination of the culture of the Ovimbundu, combined with observa- 101
tions on the Umbundu language and somatic traits, indicate that the Ovim- 241
bundu are a part of the Bantu peoples of southwest Africa. They have, however, taken advantage of the open Benguela highlands to develop their system of agriculture far beyond that which is usually carried on by Negroes in forest clearings.

In agricultural work a clear division of labor is observed. Men clear 241
timber and burn the bush, after which hoe cultivation is in the hands of 562
women, though men assist with the harvest. Unmarried girls help in the fields and each has a piece of ground whose products are the cultivator's personal property. This gives unmarried girls a measure of economic independence. Usually a girl spends the proceeds of her work in buying trinkets and palm-oil for personal decoration. Under their system of poly- 595
gyny each wife has her own field, utensils, and a separate hut with its fire 562
and cooking arrangements. The husband visits each hut for four consecutive nights, though in some districts there is a seven night cycle. Men always take evening meals in the mens' council house (onjango) in the center (to notice the tombs of hunters, which consist of cairns of stones enclosing a) 1/k

1/k [Printer's error: This sentance refers to p. 159. -- Analyst]

5: Hambly E-5 (1929-30) 1934 FP 13 Mbundu FP13

595 562 of the village. The meals are brought there by those wives who are at the time cohabiting with their husbands. But an exception is made in case of menstruation, for a woman is not allowed to cook or handle food during her period. At such times the preparation and transfer of food is carried out by another wife, and of course the time comes when such a service can be 241 requited. I found no survival of agricultural rites such as offering first fruits or other similar ceremony.

In some tribes of Sudanic and Bantu Negroes agricultural rites are important in relation to sowing and harvest, since land is in the first place the property of dead ancestors, but so far as my inquiries go such rites are not now known to the Ovimbundu. Maize may be pounded only on rocks that have been consecrated by the medicine-man: he kills a chicken and sprinkles [462 the surface of the rock with its blood. Only women may pound corn, and a 838] youth who persisted in dressing as a woman and pounding on the rocks was beaten by his relatives. This information gave a clue to homosexual practices, but the information obtained was meager.

231 In connection with the care of domestic animals many tempting digressions present themselves, but I am concerned only with beliefs, ritual, and division of labor. Chickens are of ritual importance since they provide the least expensive sacrifice, and in connection with industries the piacular use of chickens will presently be mentioned. For sacrificial purposes a goat is preferred to a sheep since it makes more noise; but the reason for this is not clear, though making a surmise I would say that the noise better appeases ancestral spirits to whom most sacrifices are made. Pigs are kept, but I did not hear of them being used for sacrifice. The animals so far mentioned have little or no attention. Goats fend entirely for themselves; so also do sheep. Chickens receive maize from women and children, who also gather the eggs. Pigs receive maize and mush from cooking pots or that discarded in making beer, but they depend largely on foraging in refuse pits.

The castration of pigs and bulls is the work of a male specialist who receives a fee of four yards of cloth for operating on the latter animal, but only a small gift of tobacco or similar recognition for castrating a pig.

The Ovimbundu have acquired cattle of the long-horned Damara breed, and in connection with the care of these some important points of ritual and division of labor should be recorded. The herding of cattle is [462] exclusively the work of males, and I am not aware that women have any 234 tasks connected with cattle. Only in recent times have some male owners of cattle begun to milk the cows. This they do somewhat stealthily, deceiving the cow from time to time by allowing the calf to suck for a few moments. If asked why milk is not used, the owners say that calves deprived of suck-

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

Marriages may also be ended by the wife leaving her husband. 586
This may be the consequence of quarrels; however at times a woman may just run off without any apparent reason. Her husband may go to her kin and bring her back or may just get married again—such an episode may occur after many years of a marriage which has previously appeared happy. People 587
who have been married previously can be married again according to the pattern described previously. Middle-aged and elderly people would leave out the festivities and would just have the meal together, or simply count themselves as married by the payment of the bridewealth.

There does exist a formal ceremony of divorce in which 588
maize flour is smeared on the upper part of the face by the husband, and this will take place in the presence of representatives of the wife's kin. A man will do this when his wife has shown herself disrespectful to him or has quarrelled with his kin or her co-wife. As the Ovimbundu regard marriage as [581]
being for the procreation of children, a barren wife should be, [842]
they say, sent away but often in practice this is not done, if the wife is otherwise satisfactory.

Legally, the Portuguese administration recognizes both the 582
customary marriage and the Catholic marriage ceremony. The Catholic missions report to the post people who, having been married in church, then make customary marriages, and these may be subjected to such sanctions as being sent to contract labour. The Protestant church marriages are not apparently legally recognized but they are subject to the authority of the Protestant church courts which grant divorces on certain grounds. The *chefe de posto* on his annual visit to take the check on the census may get angry with polygynists, but in fact no very effective administrative action exists with regard to indigenous marriage.

The motives given for polygynous marriage are the desire 595
to have many children and (in the case of a chief) the need to have cooks to provide hospitality for guests. Large-scale polygyny is thought to be rather funny; I was told, as something amusing, that the former chief Mbati had 17 wives. Kafelo, the former chief of Gumba, had 6 wives, the highest number of continuing polygynous marriages I found. In Epalanga out of

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595 17 married men, 5 were polygynists. It is a common practice for a man with two wives to keep one in one village, another in another. Relations between co-wives are expected to be somewhat strained, as the very word for co-wife, *osepekai* (she of the jealousy of women) indicates. When I asked if a woman would help a co-wife who had run short of grain I was told that she would not help but would jeer at the other woman. There is no defined division of duties between wives in a polygynous household. It is interesting to note that the missions are not criticized for imposing monogamy—indeed the Catholic catechist of Epalanga thought he had found a good argument against the Protestants by accusing them sincerely but inaccurately of allowing polygynous marriages. The idea of Catholic marriage as indissoluble is difficult for many Ovimbundu converts.

592 While the most common form of household is that of the elementary family, the fact that not all widows or divorcées are absorbed into such households leads to the appearance of households under women heads of which there were 9 (out of a total of 36) in Epalanga. Such a household may be two- (mother, children) or three-generation groups (grandmother, daughter(s), grandchildren). Of these 9 households 2 were composed of a grandmother, who was effective head of the household, her children, and the children of a daughter; 1 was similarly composed but with the grandmother rather pushed into the background as in households with male heads; 3 were composed of women and their own child, or children; 1 was composed of a woman and a grandchild; and 2 consisted of women living alone. The adolescent sons of such a household will tend to become associated with the house of some male kinsman, probably a mother's brother. It is not always clear to what extent individuals associated with a particular household in fact participate in its activities. Thus it is not infrequent to find the elderly mother of the husband or wife living in a hut of her own behind the main hut or huts of the household, and in Epalanga there were four of these attached mothers. They do not exercise any authority over their sons, or sons-in-law.[19]

[19] Tumbu, the mother of Maria, the wife of Paulo (24), and of Jaime (19) lived in a hut near both households, and it would have been difficult to say to which she was attached, to her son's, or her son-in-law's.

593 only by a sister), and *wukhi* (sister, spoken only by a brother). In
[561] a polygynous household each of the wives is mother to all the children and each of the children is *kuwa* or *manja*[1] to all the others.
848 Illegitimate children are not stigmatized but since they belong to
567 the mother they have a distinct designation.[2] Slaves or former slaves have a status within the household and village which to the ordinary observer does not differ from that of the children: they are treated much as the children and they may carry on in all matters social and economic much as though they were members of the family. I have noticed, however, that when there is a call for labour, the lot falls oftener to one of these 'children-born-by-day'[3] whether he was a war-captive or a pawn.

567 Both slavery and the polygynous household, two institutions
595 manifestly and intimately inter-related, are still a part of the
178 Umbundu social structure, but neither the one nor the other now has the importance which it formerly had. Neither of these institutions is part of the present and personal experience of the great majority of Umbundu households.

Kinship

596 *Blood Relatives* (*Epata*). The relationships of the wider kinship
602 groups are for the most part extensions of those of the household.
621 The child learns them very early in life owing to the fact that the village community into which he is born is only a part of this larger kinship group. Nearly all of the villagers belong to the same *epata* or extended family, which includes both lines of descent. Most of them belong to the father's family (*olase*), and the mother's family (*olaina*) may also be represented. The fact is that most of the adults of the village are father or mother to nearly every child and most of the children are brothers or sisters. Those of his coevals who do not bear this relation to him are otherwise related and are also potential spouses or potential relatives-in-law.

[1] This distinction *yonpuhul* (lit. 'of the jealousy of women') may be made but it is not applied in ordinary speech.

[2] *Omalli a ngunda-la-ana* (lit. 'child of grass-with-mother').

[3] *Omalli-ua-vilinu-hatanga*. Cf. 'child of my calves', Luganda expression and attitudes, L. P. Mair, *An African People in the Twentieth Century* (London, 1934), p. 32 f.

there was a great metal industry in Viye, where hoes were made for trade with the interior; later the wholesale manufacture of hoes was taken over by Ndulo, where there are the best and most easily accessible deposits of iron. In exchange for hoes they received palm-oil or cattle from other regions, or salt, rum, or goods from the coast. Other regional specialisations were :- Ganangi and the Sele country for palm-oil, Cibuma for beeswax, cattle from Ngolangi, Kalukembe, and, further south, corn-meal from Ciyaka, Civula and Bailundu.[1] 438 [316]

SOCIAL ORGANISATION AND POLITICAL STRUCTURE

KINSHIP AND DESCENT

The Ovimbundu appear to have a system of double descent which has not yet been fully reported and analysed, and whose nature is not very clear from existing accounts. The following outline is based on information given by Childs,[2] who unfortunately details the functions but not the composition of the kin groups concerned. In a review[3] of Childs' book, Barnes has formulated a descent system which would be congruent with Childs' description, and his suggestions are outlined here. 611 114

The epata

Childs translates epata as "blood relatives", and his use of the term suggests that it may have either a general or a limited sense. Thus he writes (p.47): "Nearly all of the villagers belong to the same epata or extended family, which includes both lines of descent. Most of them belong to the father's family *(olusa)*, and the mother's family *(olutna)* may also be represented." And, in another context, (p.44): "When an Ovimbundu speaks of his epata (family) in the sense of a large and widespread organisation with a recognised head....it is generally his olutna [mother's family] to which he refers." 596

The olusa and the olutna

Every Ovimbundu belongs in the first instance to two distinct kin groupings: the *olusa*, to whom he is related through his father, and the olutna to whom he is related through his mother. Uterine brothers and sisters belong to the same *olusa* and *olutna*, but to the male and female side respectively, according to sex. (see below.) A difficulty has arisen because both Bumby[4] and Childs appear to regard both groups as bilateral. Bumby states explicitly that the olusa, or epata lia tate (family of my father) includes *all* relatives on the father's side, and the olutna or epata lia nai (family of my mother) *all* relatives on the mother's side. Childs writes (p.45) "Bearing in mind *their bilateral nature* ..... the functions of [the *olusa* and the *olutna*] may be summarised...". But from his summary it is obvious that the *olusa* and the olutna cannot be bilateral groups, neither can they have parallel descent systems of any kind. Marriage is patrilocal, and the olusa forms a local unit while the olutna is 611 613 [591]

(1) Childs, 1949, p.35.
(2) 1949, pp.43-6.
(3) Man, September 1950, p.127.
(4) Op.cit., pp.195-9.

Kukulula or *sekulula*. These terms are applicable to my father's father's brother, my father's father's brother's wife; my father's father's sister's husband; and my mother's father (the reciprocal *ovekulu* describes the reciprocals, brother's son's son; husband's brother's son's son; wife's brother's son's son; daughter's son). 601

Moikulu. This designation, which is derived from *mai*, meaning mother, and *kulu*, an old person, is applied to my father's mother (reciprocal, *ovekulu ponge*, son's son). *Moikulu* also means my father's father's sister; my mother's mother; my mother's mother's brother's wife; and my mother's mother's sister (the reciprocal is *ovekulu* which equals the English reciprocals brother's son's son; daughter's son; husband's daughter's child; and sister's daughter's child).

This completes the second generation of ascendants.

NOTE: Ngonga's wife uses the names *moikulu* and *kukulula* for those relatives of her husband to whom Ngonga himself applies those terms. These relatives call Ngonga's wife *ovekulu*.

TABLE D

(*See Table E IV and V, also Table F II, IV and V*)

SONS OF NGONGA'S DESCENDANTS

Nawala or *useli* is my first-born son. Other sons are *ovocia*, meaning child. *Ovocia ulume* means a male child. *Ovocia ulioi* is a female child. *Useli* also means a first daughter (the reciprocal for these terms is *tate*, meaning father).

Ovolonge means my child. I apply the word, not only to my own children, but to my elder brother's son (reciprocal, *tate*, father's younger brother); to my elder brother's daughter; and to my younger brother's son.

Ndatembo. The word is applied to my son's wife; my daughter's husband; my elder brother's son's wife; my elder brother's daughter's husband; and my younger brother's son's wife (the same word *ndatembo* is used for the reciprocals of these terms; namely, husband's father; wife's father; husband's father's younger brother; wife's father's younger brother; and husband's father's elder brother).

The foregoing classificatory system of relationship is not peculiar to the Ovimbundu, but is a cultural trait of many Bantu-speaking and some Sudanic-speaking Negroes. The similarity of the Umbundu system to those of surrounding peoples in Rhodesia and the Congo will be pointed out in chapters dealing with culture contacts. 601 171

When describing marriage rites reference was made to the fact that a wife goes to live near her husband's relatives; the system is therefore patrilocal. The limited family consists of husband and wife (or wives) with their children. The greatest number of wives observed in the family of a commoner was four, and in the family of a king eleven. A household sometimes contains adopted children, also domestic slaves (pawns) who are working to pay off debts for their maternal uncles. An extended family may include a grandfather and his wife, his sons, their wives and children, and his unmarried daughters, with classes and nomenclatures mentioned in the foregoing tables. 591 592 [595] [597] [567] 596

The phrase *epata lia tate* (or *alate*) means "family of my father" and includes all relatives on the father's side. The words *epata lia* 613

of this symbolism relating to occupations of males and females 842
respectively, is obvious.

Many women bear children when they are away in the fields, but 844
help at home is often given. The mothers of the wife and of the husband may not be present at the confinement. No childless woman may be near during the confinement or convalescence. The father may not be present or "the child would be ashamed to be born." Before and during her pregnancy a woman feeds her husband with a prickly plant which is mixed in his food; this makes him faithful 784
to her.

The abdomen is bound after delivery in order to keep the uterus in position. There is a very small amount of bleeding after childbirth; in fact the flow of blood is quite finished in two or three days. The nearer the diet comes to that of the white man the greater the bleeding at delivery. A pregnant woman may not beat a drum, or she will bear a drum. A woman who sees the blood from circumcision of a male will not have any children.

When a female child is born, the umbilical cord is cut with a hoe to ensure that the female will be a good worker in the field. The cord of a male is cut with an arrow to insure good hunting. A newly born child receives a drink of beer, and a cord is tied round its waist. This is not for support; it is the string from which, much later, the lower garment hangs. Girls do not menstruate until they are fifteen 841
or even seventeen years of age. During the months after first menstruation a girl advances rapidly from childhood to womanhood.

The medicines that women take to secure abortions are bitter. 847
A woman will refuse quinine because she thinks it will cause abortion. It is certain that twins are welcome among the Ovimbundu, but there are special observances connected with their birth and death. A twin 845
birth is not thought to imply dual fatherhood. Twins are called Njamba ("elephant") and Hosi ("lion"). Although twins are of opposite sexes each receives one of the two names. Njamba is the first born, and Hosi is the second to be delivered. The medicine-man holds a ceremony to cure the mother of twins. The afterbirth of twins is placed in two gourds and carried outside the village for burial by two midwives. The mother of twins must wear round her neck the horn of an antelope given by the medicine-man. She has to blow this when crossing a river, meeting a crowd of people, or seeing a hawk overhead. People laugh at her and in fun say that she is a pig or a bitch. "The woman says the same kind of words to them." Children may be adopted, but they never really 597

597 belong to the foster parents. When an adopted girl marries, half the presents from the husband are given to the natural parents, and the other half to the foster parents.

845 In a case of triple birth at Ngalangi two infants died at birth; the other succumbed after three months. In another instance a woman bore three children and in the vernacular of my informant "something which was nothing," but all died. In a third case of triple birth a woman had a boy and two girls. The boy died at the age of fifteen [126] years; the girls grew up and bore children. Albinos do not find it easy to obtain wives. I was told that an albino man at Ngalangi could not find a wife until he married a widow who had several children, because unmarried girls of his own age did not want him. One of the charms collected has to be worn by a woman who has triplets. The object is a rattle (*olusangu*), which the woman shakes when she meets any one. If she gave an ordinary greeting the children would die.

115 The greater part of this information was obtained at Ngalangi by interrogating women who were questioned in Umbundu by Mrs. McDowell. At Elende I asked my interpreter Ngonga to interrogate 843 his wife. According to Ngonga a woman must visit a female practitioner in the first month of her pregnancy. The face and the body of the pregnant woman are painted with red, black, and white spots. This means that she will have no difficulty in bearing children, neither will she have any sickness during the nine months of gestation. "When her belly hurts" (i.e., the quickening), the woman goes to the same female *ocimbanda*, who paints lines of white, red, and black across her breast.

751 The *ocimbanda* gives the woman a necklace consisting of a strip of leather to which two cowries are attached. Experience proves that such a necklace is difficult to buy. If the woman has a necklace of this kind which was worn by her grandmother, it is a very powerful aid to conception, a relief in painful menstruation, and a means of securing easy delivery and normal gestation. I could not find any trace of an idea relating to the entry of a soul, ancestral or otherwise, into the foetus.

841 *Ongunda* is the name for a disease of the genitalia; but Ngonga used the word to describe abdominal pain suffered by a woman who has had no children. By this I suppose he means painful menstruation. The curative root which is given is called *kapumbua*.

847 Abortion is never secured by mechanical means. The medicine (*ikwala*) is made from the root of a plant that is boiled in water and

Kukululu or *ukululu*. These terms are applicable to my father's father's brother, my father's father's brother's wife; my father's father's sister's husband; and my mother's father (the reciprocal *ouekulu* describes the reciprocals, brother's son's son; husband's brother's son's son; wife's brother's son's son; daughter's son). 601

Mukulu. This designation, which is derived from *wui*, meaning mother, and *kulu*, an old person, is applied to my father's mother (reciprocal, *ouekulu* pempe, son's son). *Mukulu* also means my father's father's sister; my mother's mother; my mother's mother's brother's wife; and my mother's mother's sister (the reciprocal is *ouekulu* which equals the English reciprocals brother's son's son; daughter's son; husband's daughter's child; and sister's daughter's child).

This completes the second generation of ascendants.

NOTE: Ngonga's wife uses the names *mukulu* and *kukululu* for those relatives of her husband to whom Ngonga himself applies those terms. These relatives call Ngonga's wife *ouekulu*.

TABLE D

(*See Table E IV and V, also Table F II, IV and V*)

SONS OF NGONGA'S DESCENDANTS

Nuwulu or *uwili* is my first-born son. Other sons are *ovuolu*, meaning child. *Ovuolu olumue* means a male child. *Ovuolu ukui* is a female child. *Uwili* also means a first daughter (the reciprocal for these terms is *tata*, meaning father).

Ouolonge means my child. I apply the word, not only to my own children, but to my elder brother's son (reciprocal, *tata*, father's younger brother); to my elder brother's daughter; and to my younger brother's son.

Ndaimbu. The word is applied to my son's wife; my daughter's husband; my elder brother's son's wife; my elder brother's daughter's husband; and my younger brother's son's wife (the same word *ndaimbu* is used for the reciprocals of these terms; namely, husband's father; wife's father; husband's father's younger brother; wife's father's younger brother; and husband's father's elder brother).

The foregoing classificatory system of relationship is not peculiar 601
to the Ovimbundu, but is a cultural trait of many Bantu-speaking 171
and some Sudanic-speaking Negroes. The similarity of the Umbundu system to those of surrounding peoples in Rhodesia and the Congo will be pointed out in chapters dealing with culture contacts.

When describing marriage rites reference was made to the fact 591
that a wife goes to live near her husband's relatives; the system is therefore patrilocal. The limited family consists of husband and 592
wife (or wives) with their children. The greatest number of wives (595)
observed in the family of a commoner was four, and in the family of a king eleven. A household sometimes contains adopted children, [597] ●
also domestic slaves (pawns) who are working to pay off debts for [567]
their maternal uncles. An extended family may include a grand- 596
father and his wife, his sons, their wives and children, and his unmarried daughters, with classes and nomenclatures mentioned in the foregoing tables.

The phrase *epata lia tate* (or *alate*) means "family of my father" 613
and includes all relatives on the father's side. The words *epata lia*

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60/ wife of Ernesto (6). Patrilateral 'father' to Paula (24) and Saviel (11). Affinally related to Mwehombo, a 'sister' of whom he had married.

Wayangu, paternal half-brother of Mwehombo, resident at Epalanga till the end of 1953, wife's father to Aspirante (1) had married a sister (not clear whether own or classificatory) of Lussase.

3. *Kinship and marriage in the village setting*

62/ The foregoing tabulated information and the charts indicate the two main principles of integration in Epalanga, as in other Umbundu villages, the settling of individuals near senior kinamen and the existence of a number of intra-village marriage ties.

62/ 102 For a clearer outline of village structure to appear, it is necessary to give a brief sketch of the contemporary kinship system which will be discussed more thoroughly in later chapters. This is cognatic, with little distinction between patrilineal and matrilineal kin, the elementary family being the basic household unit, the individual being permitted to settle with any category of kin, and a high percentage of preferential marriages.[1]

59/ The right of settling where one pleases, as 'the heart chooses', is recognized even in children. Minesi, the 7-year-old son of Gonçalve (18), used generally to eat at the household of his father's sister Paulina, the wife of Joaõ (20). Gonçalve said about this to me 'He is very fond of his father's sister.'

While the traditional norm by which a man lived in his father's village is still remembered, at least by older men, a

[1] Childs (p. 38) states that it is permitted to marry a cross-cousin on either side, a sister's daughter, and a father's sister. My informants generally agreed that the marriage with a father's sister was not and had not been permitted. Marriage is not permitted with 'true' kin of these categories. Padre Feltin, the superior of the Bimbe Catholic Mission who knew of the existence of these marriages, told me that very few Umbundu marriages came within the prohibited (a prohibition removable by a dispensation) degrees of kinship laid down by the Catholic Church (that is, up to, and including, third cousins). Such marriages in the past might have been with geographically as well as socially distant kin. Childs quotes a case of a marriage arranged, after the discovery of a kinship tie, between partners living as far apart as Chyaka (Quiaca) and Ngalangi (Galangue).

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neighbourhood and will explain his choice of residence by quoting the names of one or more of these; yet the weaving together of so many strands of kinship and affinity, ultimately through marriage links, is what gives the local population its relative degree of stability. It should be emphasized that the integration established within a village by the network of kinship and affinal ties is dependent on the integration created by the same amorphous network which runs through and beyond the sub-chiefdom. It is this network into which the individual is woven by multiple ties that absorbs the neo-matrilineal pull apparent to some degree in choice of residence and keeps the system essentially cognatic.

The use of the word *familia* reflects this situation. A man may say of a particular senior kinsman 'He is my *familia*', that is, my kinsman, my most important kinsman with whom I have settled, yet also he may say 'My *familia* is in Cela', that is, the greater part of my kinsmen live in Cela. When Bartolomeu explained that he had settled where he did because of Luaase, he was perhaps combining the two kinds of references. He had settled in Gumba because he had a large number of kinsmen there among whom Luaase was pre-eminent. A man explaining the locality of his *familia* in the wider sense will associate it with a particular sub-chiefdom—'My family is all in Menga'—when he is outside it; when he is in it he is more likely to refer to a particular village.

Although individuals living in a village may have come there through several kinship sources yet the majority of them will probably have some kinship or affinal tie with the traditional headman. This collection of individual ties does not provide the headman with a body of followers, nor is having a large number of dependants a value of contemporary Umbundu culture. If it were felt that the best thing to be in life is the patron of a body of kinsmen and followers, headmanship would survive as a predominant influence in local life despite the collapse of its political and legal responsibilities. In fact not even old men feel this way.

The idea of the village as a corporate group with a jural and political personality rather than a residential unit has not survived the break-up of agnatic solidarity, the disappearance

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

175 565 Evidently royal persons could then be easily distinguished from the commoners.

565 178 The question naturally arises how far may a similar distinction be observed at the present time. The genealogical tables presented may answer the question. It may be seen that intermarriage of commoners and royalty has proceeded to such a degree that the differences have been greatly dimmed, if not quite erased. Furthermore, the loss of the political power which the royal families formerly held has levelled down distinctions until they have largely lost their meaning. This loss again has hastened the process of intermarriage with commoners. While there are some distinctive practices which persist, they may now pertain to or be practised by certain members of a family only, or in some instances, and not in others. These refer especially to inheritance and to the naming of children.

121 By 'social structure' is meant the more or less permanent framework of relationships between members of a community which manifests itself in an ordered group-life, with reciprocal rights and duties, privileges and obligations, of members, determining behaviour-patterns . . . and moulding the feelings, thoughts, and conduct of members according to these patterns, so that it is only in and through them that the individual can achieve his personal self-realization and participate in the satisfactions offered by the life of his community.

This framework of social organization, or social structure, is permanent compared with the stream of human lives that, in the succession of the generations, flows through it. Each new generation finds it there, as an inheritance from untold generations of his predecessors. Yet the framework of social structure is not absolutely rigid or fixed for all time, but is itself a thing of growth, capable of variation in detail, sometimes giving birth to new developments, at other times undergoing disintegration and decay.[1]

101 [401] The genealogical tables which I have collected are fairly representative of the major divisions or 'tribes' of the Ovimbundu. The only 'tribes' not represented are those of the border regions of Namba, Sanga, Cikomba, and Kalukembe, none of which save the last are numerically important. These border groups themselves offer an interesting field of study and particularly in that they may provide cultural and linguistic bridges between the Ovimbundu and their neighbors.

[1] A. W. Hoernlé in Schapera, *The Bantu-Speaking Tribes of South Africa* (London: Routledge, 1937), p. 67 f.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

Tables of Umbundu Terms of Blood Relationship

A. *Ego's Own Generation: Man or Woman the Speaker*

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Term	*Relation*	*Reciprocal term*
1. *Huvange*[1]	my elder brother my elder sister mother's sister's child (if older than Ego) father's brother's child (if older than Ego) mother's mother's sister's grandchild (if older than Ego) mother's father's brother's grandchild (if older than Ego) father's father's brother's grandchild (if older than Ego) father's mother's sister's grandchild (if older than Ego)	*manjange*
2. *Kota*[2]	eldest brother (of household or of family)	*manjange*
3. *Manjange*	my younger brother my younger sister all relatives listed under '1.' (if *younger* than Ego)	*huvange* or *kota*
4. *Epalume*[3] *Upalume*[3] *Cepua*[4]	mother's brother's child father's sister's child mother's mother's brother's grandchild mother's father's sister's grandchild father's father's sister's grandchild father's mother's brother's grandchild	*epalume*, *upalume*, or *cepua*

B. *Man the Speaker*

1. *Mukõ*[1]	sister all female relatives listed under 'A. 1, 2, and 3'	*mume*

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[1] *Huvange*, my elder brother; *huvetu*, our elder brother.
Huvove, thy elder brother; *huvene*, your elder brother.
Huvaye, his elder brother; *huvavo*, their elder brother.

In Viye *huva* is not now used commonly and *manja* is used without discrimination for both elder and younger brothers. This may be due to European influences. At any rate the Bantu usage has reasserted itself by appropriating *kota* (q.v. *infra*) in place of *huva*, and by using the political term *epalanga* for the true sense of *manja*.

[2] *Kota* and *epalume* belong to the sixth class of nouns, *epalume liange*, *kota liange*, &c.

[3] *Upalume*, *mukõ*, and *mume* belong to the first class, *upalume wange*, *mukõ wove*, *mume waye*, &c. Use of the three terms for cross-cousins seems to be indiscriminate.

[4] *Cepua* belongs to the fourth class, *cepua cetu*, &c.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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C. *Woman the Speaker*

Term	*Relation*	*Reciprocal term*
1. *Mume*[1]	brother all male relatives listed under 'A. 1, 2, and 3'	*mukãi*
2. *Mbuale*[2]	sister all female relatives listed under 'A. 1, 2, and 3'	*mbuale*

D. *First Ascendant Generation: Either Man or Woman the Speaker*

1. *Maĩ*[3]	my (uterine) mother (my father's other wives) mother's sister mother's mother's sister's daughter mother's father's brother's daughter father's father's brother's daughter father's mother's sister's daughter	*omolange*
2. *Tate*[4]	my father (any subsequent husbands of my mother) father's brother father's father's brother's son father's mother's sister's son mother's mother's sister's son mother's father's brother's son	*omolange*
3. *Manu*[5]	mother's brother mother's mother's brother's son mother's father's sister's son father's father's sister's son father's mother's brother's son	*ocimumba cange*
4. *Tatekãi*[6]	father's sister father's mother's brother's daughter father's father's sister's daughter mother's father's sister's daughter mother's mother's brother's daughter	*ocimumba cange*

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[1] See note 3, p. 47.

[2] *Mbuale* belongs to the fifth class, *mbuale yange*, &c.

[3] *Maĩ*, my mother; *inetu*, our mother.
Nyohõ, thy mother; *inene*, your mother.
Inaye, his mother; *inavo*, their mother.

[4] *Tate*, my father; *isietu*, our father.
So, thy father; *isiene*, your father.
Isiaye, his father; *isiavo*, their father.

[5] *Manu*, my mother's brother; *manu yetu*, our mother's brother.
Nyohõnu, thy mother's brother; *nyohõnu yene*, your mother's brother.
Inanu, his mother's brother; *inanu yavo*, their mother's brother.

[6] *Tatekãi*, my father's sister.
Sohãi, thy father's sister.
Apahaĩ, his father's sister.
Plural forms as for *Manu*, &c.

Hambly had only this form for the third person and dropped out a vowel with a resulting form impossible for Umbundu of *Aphai*. *Vide* op. cit., pp. 190, 196, 198, 199.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

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E. *Second Ascendant Generation: Either Man or Woman the Speaker*

Term	Relation	Reciprocal term
1. *Maikulu*[1] (*Nyokulu*)	grandmother, both maternal and paternal grandmother's sister grandfather's sister	*onekulu yange*
2. *Sekulu*[1] (*Tatekulu*)	grandfather, both maternal and paternal grandfather's brother grandmother's brother	*onekulu yange*

F. *Third Ascendant Generation*

Kuku	all relatives of this generation	*onekuluila* or *omokolole yange*

G. *Fourth Ascendant Generation*

Kukululu	all relatives of this generation	*onene yange*

H. *Fifth Ascendant Generation*

Kukululua	all relatives of this generation	*onei yange*

I. *Sixth Ascendant Generation*

Ku	all relatives of this generation	*oneha yange*

J. *First Descendant Generation*

1. *Omōlānge*	my own child woman's sister's child man's brother's child mother's sister's grandchild father's brother's grandchild	*tate* or *mōi*
mūlulū or *uveli*	first-born child	
2. *Ocimumba*	woman's brother's child man's sister's child mother's brother's grandchild father's sister's grandchild	*tatehāli* or *mamu*

The kinship terms for further descendant generations will be found in the column of 'reciprocal terms' given above. It does not seem necessary to repeat them.

602 592 The patterns of behaviour between these many blood relatives find their prototypes in the patterns of the household. Love for

[1] *Maikulu* and *Sekulu* are sometimes used interchangeably for persons of either sex. Each has only the two personal forms. The forms in parenthesis are but little used. *Isakulu* is used for the queen.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

582 Cross-cousin marriage of the type practised by the Sotho[1] or Venda[2] tribes is quite foreign to Umbundu life. It is possible that the Ovimbundu formerly had some such type of cross-cousin marriage, but not for a very long time. Among the seventy-five schedules which I have collected illustrating marriage arrangements there are a few describing marriages which took place about ninety years ago. Magyar also wrote of the financial arrangements made for marriage in Viye about 1850.[3] Both of these sources, together with native tradition, indicate that, at least with regard to the financial arrangements, the cross-cousin type of marriage has not been practised by the Ovimbundu for more than one hundred
582 years. On the other hand, the Ovimbundu know nothing of the
171 exogamous marriage demanded by the Herero,[4] the Zulu,[5] &c. The Umbundu ideal includes marriage with a cross-cousin, but also goes out into the wider kinship group, as does the type of marriage of the Thonga,[6] which in turn is linked with that of the Ndau and the Shona group.[7]

582 The Umbundu principle that only 'those whose blood has
174 touched', or who can 'count' relatives in common, has for a very long time admitted of liberal application. There are cases on record of individuals belonging to regions as widely separated as Ciyaka and Ngalangi contracting marriage *after* having properly 'counted' their common relationship. These cases refer to grandparents of the present generation. It is probable that the diverse racial and cultural elements which have fused to form the Ovimbundu people long ago made imperative the broadening of the cross-cousin type of marriage to the 'ideal' or 'classic' form of (present) Umbundu tradition. An analogous process (with modifications) has continued to operate until to-day this very ideal of marriage within the kinship group is losing its hold in favour of yet more 'liberal' practices.

601 In summary, the Umbundu terminology for the relative by marriage and also the connexion between the ideas of relation by marriage and relation by blood may be seen by the following:

[1] W. M. Eiselen, 'Preferential Marriage: Correlation of the various modes among the Bantu of South Africa', *Africa*, 1928, pp. 413–28.
[2] H. A. Stayt, *The Bavenda* (London, 1931), chaps. xi and xv.
[3] Magyar, op. cit., p. 282 f.
[4] Vedder in Hahn *et al.*, op. cit., p. 187; Irle, op. cit., p. 89.
[5] Krige, op. cit., pp. 34–5. [6] Junod, op. cit., vol. i, pp. 253–64.
[7] Hoernlé in Shapera, op. cit., p. 93 f.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

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II. Table of Umbundu Terms of Relationship by Marriage

A. *Ego's Own Generation: Man Speaking*

Term	*Relationship*	*Reciprocal term*
1. *Ukãi wange*	my wife	*veyange*[1]
2. *Nãwã*	sister-in-law every 'sister' and 'brother' of wife every *epalume* (cross-cousin) of wife in short: every relative of wife of her own generation (see Table I. A, B, p. 47 f.)	*nãwã*[2]

B. *First Ascendant Generation: Either Man or Woman the Speaker*

1. *Ndatembo*	patent-in-law every relative of spouse of this generation (see list in Table I. D, p. 48 f.)	*ndatembo*[3]
2. *Mai*	applied by courtesy to everyone whom spouse so classifies	*omolange*
3. *Tate*	applied by courtesy to everyone whom spouse so classifies	*omolange*
4. *Manu*	applied by courtesy to everyone whom spouse so classifies	*ocimumba*[3]
5. *Tatehaĩ*	applied by courtesy to everyone whom spouse so classifies	*ocimumba*

C. *Second, Third, and Further Ascendant Generations*

Each spouse applies and receives the terms respectively applied and received by the other, with corresponding sexual differentiations.

D. *Descendant Generations*

Each spouse applies and receives the terms respectively applied and received by the other, with corresponding sexual differentiations.

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[1] *Veyange*, my husband, *veyove*, thy husband, &c.

[2] Affinal terms are applied from the time of the formal betrothal. In marriage of the preferential kinship type affinal terms replace the consanguineal. After marriage, or, more generally, after the ceremonies for doing away with avoidances, then the courtesy terms are applied.

[3] Hambly in his summary table—op. cit., p. 199—gives the meaning given here as the only meaning for *ocimumba*, but this is only a secondary meaning (see p. 47 f.). He also errs in his use of the following: *Mbuale* (used only by females), *Kulu* (not a relationship term), *Kukululu* (means great-great-grandparent), *Aphai* (should be *Apãhãi* with the two other forms, see p. 48), *Cikulume* (should be *cikuelume*).

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

601 III. TABLES OF RELATIVES WITH WHOM MARRIAGE IS PREFERRED

A. *Of Ego's Generation: Either Man or Woman*

Term	*Relationship*	*Reciprocal term*
Epahene or *cepua*	cross-cousins of all degrees (see list Table I. A. 4, p. 47)	*epahene* or *cepua*

B. *Of First Ascendant Generation: Man Speaking*

Tatehli	father's 'sister' (see list Table I. D. 4, p. 48)	*ocinumbu*

C. *Of First Ascendant Generation: Woman Speaking*

Mamu	mother's 'brothers' (see list Table I. D. 3, p. 48)	*ocinumbu*

D. *Of First Descendant Generation: Man or Woman Speaking*

Ocinumbu	mother's 'brother's' or father's 'sister's grandchild'	*mamu* or *tatehli*

591 582 Many writers have noted that, among other purposes, the financial arrangements serve to give the bride a status in the village of her husband. In a system of preferential kinship marriage, this is a desideratum, although for other reasons than those operating in a system where the wife comes as a comparative stranger. In a system such as this of the Ovimbundu, it is evident that many of the relatives by marriage are already blood relatives. This is perhaps one reason why the avoidances with regard to 'in-laws' are less rigidly held to than in a society such as the Zulu, which holds strictly to exogamous marriage.[1]

182 601 Another factor which makes for stability of marriage is the bilineal kinship system (*epata*). This system offers to the wife an initial security not usually found where descent is unilineal, or even where there has been a one-sided development of one line of descent at the expense of the other. The bilineal system is an important factor in the preservation of social stability. Through it the household and the village are links in the chain which even yet binds the Ovimbundu into a social whole.

Sorcery

182 754 Umbundu society is subject to various forces which threaten its cohesion and stability both from without and from within. Some of the external forces have been touched upon.[2] Chief of the

[1] Krige, op. cit., p. 29 f. [2] *Supra*, pp. v, 26.

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[p. 67]

GENEALOGICAL TABLE

showing the ascendants and descendants of Madaleno Cipa Ukuahamba and his wife Felicia Ngeve

Great-grand-parents; Great-great-grand-parents, &c.

VI. Ku — Nenjamba

V. va Kukululua — Kalunga — Waliena; Naindimba — Soma Cikulukepa I

IV. va Kukululu — Nakalunga — Sakalunga; Nacikulukepa — Cikepa; Soma Ndumbu

III. va Kuku — Cilembe — Salombendo; Navoyo — Mbala Kalunga; Helo — Soma Cikulukepa II; Cimuinã — Soma Citata

Grand-parents

II. va Sekulu — Lombendo — Moko; Nambimbi — Sehimba; Kandiyo — Kahala

Mothers and fathers

I. va Mai kuenda; va Tate — Kuayela — Soma Liwaniks; Mbulika — Citata Ukuahamba

6 younger siblings: Cinakutẽlã, Cinakulingi, Tutula, Cangendela, Nangusi, Cipulukolo, Katumbu, Kalei, Moko

1 older and 8 younger siblings: Cinakul, Cipondiya, Cokovenda, Cinapanga, Cowiee, Sehimba, Ngalafa, Nanana, Ehimba, Ungunda, Ngeve

Ego's own generation

Ame

Malulu, Kangusio, Ngeve, Ndondi, Kapombo, Cipondiya, Notolo, Kanganjo, Lumingu, Sapalalo, Kaita, Vitimbongs, Capeseka

Malesu †††† Cipa, Mbundu †

Njinga, Citata, Rosa, Daniel, Kahala, Nambenga, Kuayela, Lombendo

Children, Grandchildren, Great-grand-children, &c.

I. Omãlã
II. Olonekulu
III. Olonekulila
IV. Olonefie
V. Olonef
VI. Oloneka

Names joined by the dash are spouses: to the left, the wife; to the right, the husband.
Soma Cikulukepa I and II, and Soma Liwaniks ruled the Kingdom of Elende.
Soma Ndumbu and Soma Citata ruled the Kingdom of Cikuma, the *ombala* of which is named Ndumbu.
† indicates a sibling deceased, older or younger according to position.

611 of groups, but a man belongs to two groups within each system. Similar
613 membership is required for a woman. A man shares with all his children his membership of the male side of his mother's matrilineal group, and
602 shares with his own membership of the male side of his father's patrilineal group. His daughters belong to his father's patrilineal group but to its female side. He does not transmit to his children membership of his father's matrilineal group or his mother's patrilineal group.(1) This is illustrated by the diagram on page 21.

601 *Kinship terminology*

Patterns of behaviour between all blood relatives find their prototypes in the household. The following list of kinship terms is selected from the more detailed list given by Childs.(2)

Term		Reciprocal
nai	mother, mother's sister, etc.	*ceolungu*
tate	father, father's brother, etc.	*ceolungu*
tatekai	("female father") father's sister	*ocimumbo cungu*
mamu	mother's brother	*ocimumbo cungu*
hasungu	older brother or sister, and male or female parallel cousin, if older than ego	*wanjungu*
kuta	eldest brother (of family or household)	*wanjungu*
(epolume *(apolume* *(epuu*	male or female cross-cousin	*epolume, apolume, or epuu*
mukai	sister or female parallel cousin (M.S.)(3)	*mamu*
ebuale	" " " " (W.S.)	*ebuale*
mukulu	grandmother, grandparents' sister	*mukulu yungu*
sekulu	grandfather, grandparents' brother	*mukulu yungu*

Note: (a) There is no word used exclusively for "brother" by a man, although a woman may use *mamu* in this sense. *Hasungu* and *wanjungu* are used by either men or women for elder or younger brothers or sisters.

(b) *mukulu* and *sekulu* are sometimes used interchangeably for persons of either sex.

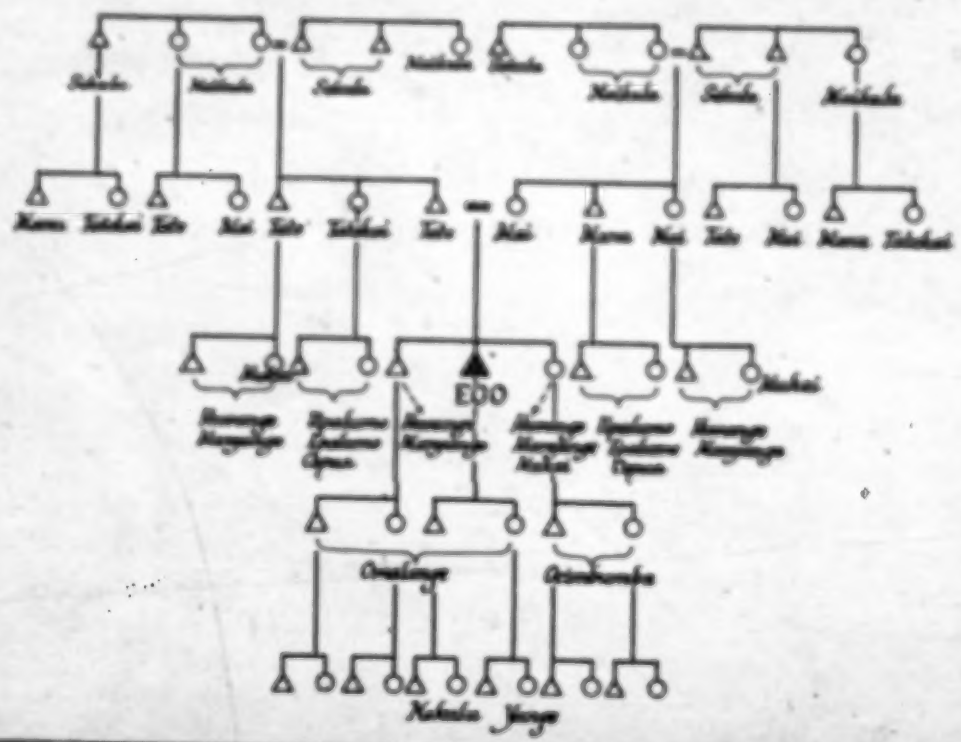
MARRIAGE

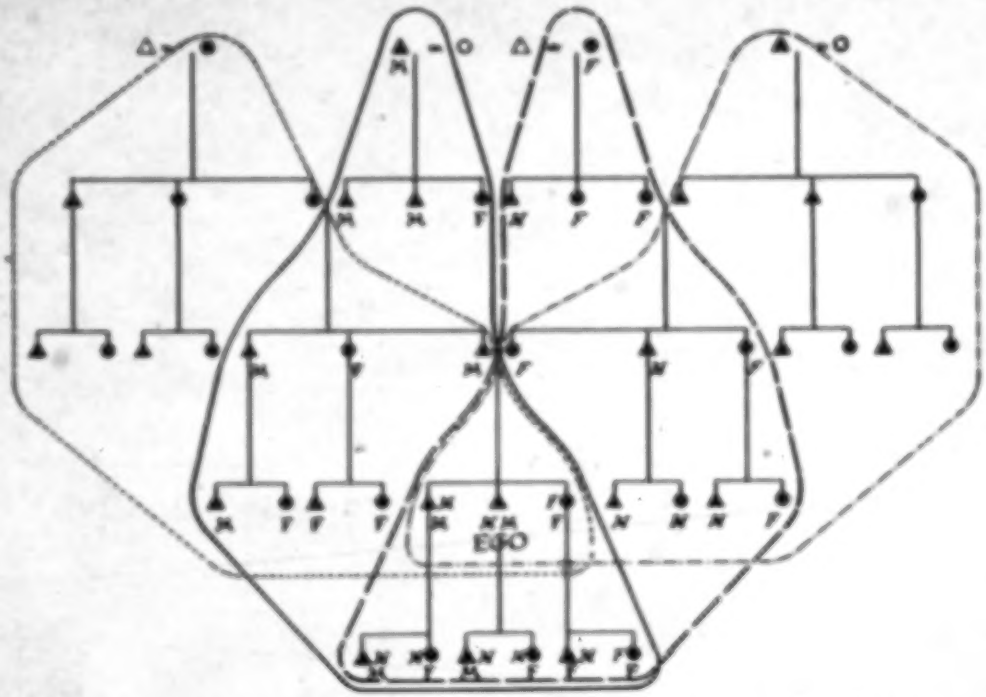
582 *Marriage within the kin group*

The most desirable marriage is marriage within the circle of kin, i.e. (as noted above) into the male line of the olume or the female line of the olume. (There appears to be a preference for marriage within the olume.(4)) One may not marry one classed as brother, sister, father, mother, grandparent, child or grandchild, for such a union would involve

(1) This paragraph is largely quoted from Barnes, loc.cit.
(2) pp.47-9.
(3) M.S. = man speaking, W.S. = woman speaking.
(4) Childs, op.cit., p.51, note 3.

UMBUNDU KINSHIP TERMINOLOGY





EGOS 4 KIN GROUPS. 1. —— - Oluse. M - Male side. F - female side.
2. — — - Oluina. M - Male side. F - female side. 3 — — Mother's paternal kin. 4 - - - Father's maternal kin. (Male and female sides for 3 & 4 not shown.)

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Ondjiwong at the site the boy and girl cut and plant the

first pole, which is to be a part of the new etumbo (spirit hut). The boy and girl must take part ceremonially in each operation of building the hut, and when it is built they ignite the new fire. A hen and a cock are killed, cooked on the new fire, and eaten inside the etumbo by all who have taken part in building it. The headman and his wife must remain on the new site to keep the fire alight; other villagers may commute from the old village or erect temporary grass shelters on the new site. Houses are built by the occupants themselves, although men may give each other mutual help, for which there is a gift of food and beer. The onjango is usually built by the communal labour of all boys and men, and on its completion a simple ritual is performed to promote harmony within and to welcome the spirits, who are believed to sleep in the onjango and to take part in all discussions within it.[1]

The village group: composition

Childs describes the relationship of the villagers of Ngundu to each other as typical of Lubundu country. Most of the heads of households are related agnatically to their respective section-heads (who are presumably also related agnatically to each other, since the village is based on the olusa group). Childs does not however discuss the relation of section heads to each other or to the village headman. He gives a table in which the householders are divided into six categories according to their relationship to their various section-heads:

1.	Patrepal relatives of section head:	Section A (headman's)	21
		" B	8
		" C	2
		" D	3
			34
2.	Matrepal relatives of section head:	Section B	4
		" C	1
		" D	1
			6
3.	Matares' sons (or daughters)[2]	Section B	4
		" C	1
			5
4.	Relatives by marriage	Section A	2
		" B	1
			3
5.	Relationship not definitely known	Section B	1
6.	Former slaves	Section A	1
		" B	1
			2

(1) This section is based on Childs, 1949, pp.27-9.
(2) The ovimbi, of course, have been included as matepal relatives and patepal relatives, since they belong both to the olusa and to the olutas.

h: Hambly E-6 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

is pounded") and Ciengu ("a small bird with a long tail"). A boy may be Kangwe ("the little leopard"). 553 551

Names sometimes give an indication of descent. Ngonga's full name is Ngonga Kalei Liahuka, Ngonga ("eagle"), Kalei ("one who works for the king"), Liahuka (the father's surname). Ngonga's sister is Cinyafiala ("the old basket"). This was the name of her father's father's sister. As the father of Cinyafiala is Liahuka, the daughter is surnamed Yaliahuka (ya, "of"). The father chooses the names of the three first children whether boys or girls. The mother chooses the name of the fourth child whether male or female. If the child is a boy, the mother probably chooses the name of her brother or of her father's brother. When a first son is born, the father usually gives the name of his father; for example, Ngonga's father's father was Ngonga. If the first baby is a girl the father chooses the name of his sister. Ages are not known, but reckoning of age goes back five years by counting the number of times maize has been sown; maize is planted each October. The period from sowing to sowing is ulima.

If a man has a child by a woman who is not a wife or a concubine, the woman keeps the child for eight or ten years. The man must give the mother a cloth in which to carry her illegitimate baby, also oil for her hair. Sometimes the girl will go to the father of her child to be his concubine, but her parents will not let her do so if he has a bad reputation. To bear a child out of wedlock is a disgrace. 849

TERMS OF RELATIONSHIP

In preparing the following tables Ngonga was the ego, or, male speaker, and each term is given in relation to himself, with its reciprocal. The tables give firstly Ngonga's own generation, then his ascendants, and finally some of his descendants. Tables E and F are diagrammatic forms of tables A–D. 601

TABLE A

(*See Table E III*)

NGONGA'S OWN GENERATION

Terms in italics are Umbundu names either for persons or for kindred classes. Reciprocals are placed in brackets; W.S. means, "woman speaking."

Uhai wange is my wife; *uketa*, which means "spouse," is a modern form of address for husbands and wives when speaking to each other (*wepange*, my husband).

Kota or *kasa* is my elder brother (*mame wange* or *manja*, younger brother).

Kota or *kasange* is my elder sister. An elder brother speaking to his sister calls her by name, or he uses the term *ukuala*. When speaking of her he says *ukalai wange* (*mame wange* or *manjange*, younger brother). The same terms are used in the same way to apply to my father's brother's son, and my

601 father's brother's daughter. Similarly the terms *manja* or *hoia* are applied to my mother's sister's son. The former is used if this relative is younger than myself; the latter term is employed if the relative is older than myself. *Mukui* is the term for my mother's sister's daughter (reciprocal, *manja*, *hoia*, or *hoia*, means mother's sister's son). *Manjonge* is a general name for a mother's sister's child, male or female.

Upulume describes my father's sister's son (*upulume*, mother's brother's son). The word is also applied to my father's sister's daughter. Marriage with a father's sister's daughter is permissible, but it is not favored since the offspring of such a union may be stupid. *Upulume* also designates my mother's brother's daughter, who, according to custom, is regarded as the most suitable spouse for me.

Cepui ceape. This term is applied to any child of my mother's brother and to any child of my father's sister (reciprocal, *cepui ceape*).

Nawa. The term is used as follows: for my older brother's wife; (W.S.) my husband's younger brother; my younger brother's wife; (W.S.) my husband's older brother; my older sister's husband; my wife's younger brother; my younger sister's husband; my wife's older brother; my father's brother's son's wife; (W.S.) my husband's father's brother's son; my father's brother's daughter's husband; my wife's father's brother's son; my father's sister's son's wife; (W.S.) my husband's mother's brother's son; my father's sister's daughter's husband; my wife's mother's brother's son; my mother's brother's son's wife; (W.S.) my husband's father's sister's son; my mother's brother's daughter's husband; my wife's father's sister's son; my mother's sister's son's wife; (W.S.) my husband's mother's sister's son, my mother's sister's daughter's husband, my wife's mother's sister's son.

This completes the terms of relationship for Ngonga's own generation.

TABLE B

(See Table E II and IV, also Table F II)

FIRST GENERATION OF NGONGA'S ASCENDANTS

Tata. The term is applied to my father; my father's brother; and my mother's sister's husband (the word *omolonge*, my child, is the Umbundu reciprocal for the English reciprocal terms, son, brother's son, wife's sister's son).

Mai. The word is applied to my uterine mother, my mother's sister, and my father's brother's wife (again the Umbundu *omolonge* is the reciprocal for the English reciprocals, son, sister's son, and [W.S.] husband's brother's son).

Apkai means my father's sister, and the term is said to designate a "female father." My mother's brother's wife is also *apkai* (the Umbundu reciprocal for either male or female is *ocimamba ceape*, which is the equivalent of the English reciprocals, brother's son and husband's sister's son).

Mana or *tanna* is my mother's brother (reciprocal is *ocimamba ceape*, which means sister's son).

Cilulume. The term is applied to my father's sister's husband (the reciprocal, *ocimamba ceape*, means wife's brother's son).

This completes the first generation of Ngonga's ascendants.

TABLE C

(See Table E I and F I)

SECOND GENERATION OF NGONGA'S ASCENDANTS

Sekula peape. The term is applied to my father's father, and literally means my older father (the reciprocal is *ocekula peape*, meaning son's son).

Sekula. The word designates my mother's mother's brother, and my mother's mother's sister's husband (the reciprocal, *ocekula*, means sister's daughter's son, and wife's sister's daughter's son).

Kululale or *ukulale*. These terms are applicable to my father's father's brother, my father's father's brother's wife; my father's father's sister's husband; and my mother's father (the reciprocal *ewekule* describes the reciprocals, brother's son's son; husband's brother's son's son; wife's brother's son's son; daughter's son). 601

Mokkule. This designation, which is derived from *wai*, meaning mother, and *kulu*, an old person, is applied to my father's mother (reciprocal, *ewekule* pempe, son's son). *Mokkule* also means my father's father's sister; my mother's mother; my mother's mother's brother's wife; and my mother's mother's sister (the reciprocal is *ewekule* which equals the English reciprocals brother's son's son; daughter's son; husband's daughter's child; and sister's daughter's child).

This completes the second generation of ascendants.

NOTE: Ngonga's wife uses the names *mokkule* and *kululale* for those relatives of her husband to whom Ngonga himself applies these terms. These relatives call Ngonga's wife *ewekule*.

TABLE D

(*See Table E IV and V, also Table F II, IV and V*)

SONS OF NGONGA'S DESCENDANTS

Nawala or *uwili* is my first-born son. Other sons are *ewola*, meaning child. *Owola alume* means a male child. *Owola akai* is a female child. *Uwili* also means a first daughter (the reciprocal for these terms is *tata*, meaning father).

Owolaupe means my child. I apply the word, not only to my own children, but to my elder brother's son (reciprocal, *tata*, father's younger brother); to my elder brother's daughter; and to my younger brother's son.

Ndatembe. The word is applied to my son's wife; my daughter's husband; my elder brother's son's wife; my elder brother's daughter's husband; and my younger brother's son's wife (the same word *ndatembe* is used for the reciprocals of these terms; namely, husband's father; wife's father; husband's father's younger brother; wife's father's younger brother; and husband's father's elder brother).

The foregoing classificatory system of relationship is not peculiar 601
to the Ovimbundu, but is a cultural trait of many Bantu-speaking 171
and some Sudanic-speaking Negroes. The similarity of the Umbundu system to those of surrounding peoples in Rhodesia and the Congo will be pointed out in chapters dealing with culture contacts.

When describing marriage rites reference was made to the fact 591
that a wife goes to live near her husband's relatives; the system is therefore patrilocal. The limited family consists of husband and 592
wife (or wives) with their children. The greatest number of wives (595)
observed in the family of a commoner was four, and in the family of a king eleven. A household sometimes contains adopted children, [597]
also domestic slaves (pawns) who are working to pay off debts for [567]
their maternal uncles. An extended family may include a grand- 596
father and his wife, his sons, their wives and children, and his unmarried daughters, with classes and nomenclatures mentioned in the foregoing tables.

The phrase *epata lia tata* (or *alusa*) means "family of my father" 613
and includes all relatives on the father's side. The words *epata lia*

613 wasi (or olusia) mean "family of my mother." These terms seem to indicate a bilateral rather than a unilateral lineage. Inquiry did not show that there were totems for the mother's or the father's people, or that marriage into any particular local group was com-
631 manded or enjoined. A village is a unit under the administration of a chief (*sekulu*) and as such is part of a large group of villages forming a kingdom ruled by a king (*seosso*), but such village units are concerned with government and warfare, not with exogamy.

613 In tracing descent an Ocimbundu gives the names of relatives of
565 both the father and mother, but commoners are unlikely to know the names of their relatives beyond the grandparent class. The children of a king were at one time able to recite many generations
[582] of ancestors along both parental lines. But if the king had married a commoner, as he was allowed to do after choosing his first wife from the royal line, the children knew only the genealogy of their father. This is obvious since the commoner mother would not be likely to know her line of descent. The son of a village chief (*sekulu*) may marry a commoner, but, according to Ngonga, the *sekulu*, his father, "would have a very good look at her."

582 Ngonga had not heard of the marriage of brothers and sisters,
565 not even in the royal family; the idea of such a union was new and repulsive to him. In Umbundu society there would be no necessity for such a marriage as that of brother and sister or other close relative, because members of a royal family of one part of the country could intermarry with members of a royal family in some area far away. There might, for example, be marriages between the royal families of Bailundu and Ngalangi, which are two principal kingships of the Ovimbundu confederacy.

835 When asked what would be the fate of a man who committed
684 incest with his blood daughter or uterine sister, Ngonga said he would be killed by his brother or by his mother's brother. If he escaped he would have to go far away so that his people could never see him again. If a fine were accepted for incest, the culprit would have to pay his own kin "because he had shamed them."

601 Table A, Ngonga's Own Generation, calls attention to a plurality of terms for brother and sister according to the relative ages of the speaker and the person addressed. Moreover, there is a term for direct address and another which is used when speaking of a brother or sister.

Ngonga was questioned with regard to forms of address for his brothers and sisters other than the children of his uterine mother.

Ngonga actually has a brother by his father's first wife, and for this male he uses the same terms as for his uterine brothers. The same terms are used for uterine sisters and sisters begotten by his father through wives other than his uterine mother. Ngonga said, "If people ask you which sister or which brother you can explain it in words." 601

A wife of Ngonga's father, other than Ngonga's uterine mother, is called *moi yesepakui*; that is, "the mother who is jealous of my mother." *Moi* means "mother," and the remainder of the term is a derivative from the word *esepa*, meaning "woman's jealousy." If two women *A* and *B* desire to marry the same man and only *A* is successful, *B* calls *A sepakui*. Under similar circumstances a man would call his successful rival *ukuelume cose*.

There is a distinct word for man's jealousy. In explaining this Ngonga said, "When I see my wife look at another man, I have *ukuelume* ["man's jealousy"] in my heart."

If on the death of Ngonga's father, his mother married again this male would be called by Ngonga *tate yesepakui* ("the father who is jealous").

A wife calls the children of the family, who are not her own, *omala esepakui*; that is, "the children who are jealous of the other children." A mother-in-law taboo operates. Conversation between mother-in-law and son-in-law must always be carried on while the speakers stand back to back. 606

The foregoing note on a mother-in-law taboo has been supplemented by a letter from Dr. Merlin W. Ennis of Elende, Angola (August, 1931). "Mother-in-law and father-in-law taboos seem to be directed against seeing each other. The persons involved may not see each other. If they meet on the path, one steps aside and turns the back while the other passes on. The one passing by goes through the motions of seeing no one. If it is necessary to converse on some subject, they sit looking in different directions, or one sits out of doors and the other within, around the corner of the door. This holds equally for a man and his son's wife, and for a woman and her daughter's husband. A man may see and talk with his daughter's husband, and a woman may see and speak to her son's wife, but no son-in-law may eat with a father-in-law, likewise daughters-in-law and mothers-in-law may not eat together. Brothers-in-law may not eat together unless they have gone through a certain ceremony; this also holds for sisters-in-law."

601 Table A indicates a wide use of the word *nawa* for "in laws" of the speaker's generation. Thus Ngonga calls the wives and husbands of his brothers and sisters *nawa* without distinguishing them in any way. The term *nawa* has a still wider connotation for it includes Ngonga's father's brother's son's wife, and his father's sister's daughter's husband. Ngonga's wife said that she uses the word *nawa* for all the brothers and sisters of her husband, for all the children of her husband's father's brother, her husband's father's sister's children, her husband's mother's brother's children, and her husband's mother's sister's children. Reciprocally, all these people call Ngonga's wife *nawa*.

605 582 Table A introduces the question of cross-cousin marriage, which is the functional form among the Ovimbundu. My informant said that he calls his mother's sister's children brothers and sisters, therefore he could not marry the girls. Neither are his father's brother's daughters eligible for marriage with him. The table shows the truth of this, for Ngonga calls his father's brother's daughter *wakai*, meaning "sister"; she addresses him as *kota* or *hawa* ("brother"). Ngonga also addresses his father's brother's son by the term *manjange* ("younger brother") or *hasange* ("older brother") according to the relative ages of the speaker and the person addressed.

When Ngonga was asked whether he could marry a daughter of his mother's brother, he replied, "I could marry her very well indeed." A marriage of Ngonga with his father's sister's daughter would be permissible but Ngonga said the marriage is not regarded as a good one "because the children will be stupid." Ngonga could marry his mother's brother's daughter's daughter, or his mother's brother's son's daughter. It would also be permissible for Ngonga to marry his father's sister's daughter's daughter, or his father's sister's son's daughter.

604 601 Ngonga said, "My father's brother is my father, and my mother's sister is my mother." When questioned further my informant said that a marriage with daughters of these relatives would make him *ocisyama*, which means "an animal." Relatives would say, "You have shamed the family." It will be noted from Table B, First Generation of Ngonga's Ascendants, that Ngonga's father's brother calls him *omolange*, meaning "my child," for which the reciprocal is *tate* ("father"). Ngonga's father's brother's wife is *mai* ("mother"), and she calls him *omolange* ("my child"). Ngonga distinguishes between his mother's oldest sister (*mai yulula*), and his mother's

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youngest sister (*mai yamalale*). Ngonga's father's oldest brother is *tate yakulu*. 604 601

Thus far Ngonga was clear about his eligibility for marriage, and in addition to this he was sure that he could not marry a sister of his wife while his wife was alive, but he could marry his wife's sister, after the death of his wife. The wives of a deceased elder brother are divided among his younger brothers, or a man may inherit the wife of his mother's brother. Ngonga always laughed heartily at the idea of marrying a woman much older than himself. He did not know whether he could marry certain older people of the *ndatembo* and *maikulu* class but thought the idea amusing because of their age. 587

In discussing law, inheritance, and slavery, the importance of the mother's brother will be indicated, and for this relative there is the term *manu* (or *isanu*). The *manu* calls Ngonga *ocimumba cange*, but he calls Ngonga's wife *ndatembo*. Ngonga's mother's brother's wife, also Ngonga's father's sister, are *aphai*, which my informant interpreted as a "female father." 604

The use of the word *nawa* has been explained in such a way as to show that Ngonga's wife uses this term for a large class of relatives by marriage who are of the same generation as her husband, while these people reciprocally use the word *nawa*. Ngonga uses the word *nawa* in exactly the same way for corresponding relatives of his wife. 601

This term *nawa* is not to be confused with the term *ndatembo* whose connotation is indicated by the following examples. The wife of Ngonga applies the term *ndatembo* to certain of her husband's relations who are not of his generation. Thus she calls Ngonga's mother *ndatembo* when speaking of her, but she addresses her mother-in-law as *mai* ("mother"), while *ndatembo* describes the relationship between Ngonga's wife and his father. Moreover, Ngonga's wife uses *ndatembo* to describe her husband's father's brother's wife, and Ngonga's wife is called *ndatembo* by her husband's father's sister, her husband's father's sister's husband, and her husband's mother's brother. These are relatives by marriage but they are not of the same generation as her husband.

Table C, Second Generation of Ngonga's Ascendants, gives no particular difficulty. *Maikulu* includes the paternal grandmother, the father's father's sister (great aunt), the maternal grandmother, the mother's mother's brother's wife, and the mother's mother's sister. Therefore *maikulu* is a class name for the second generation of female ascendants.

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TABLE E

MALE SPEAKER'S DIRECT LINE OF RELATIONSHIPS

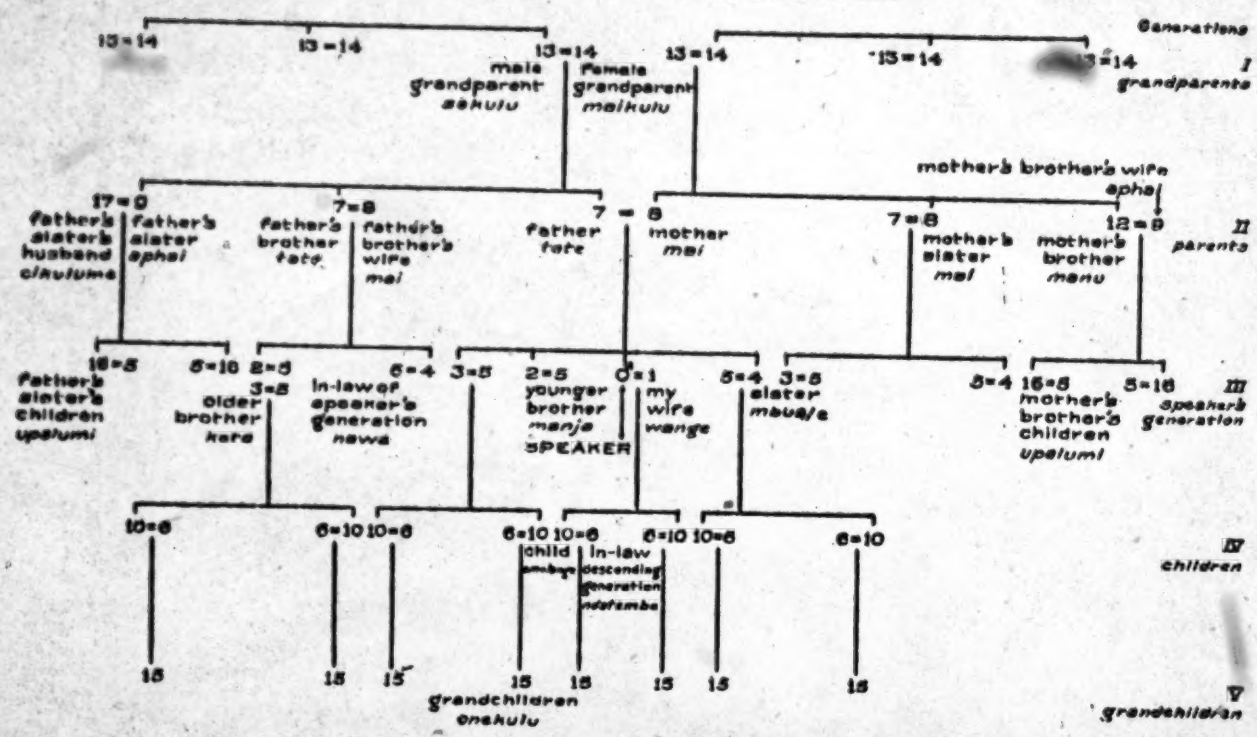
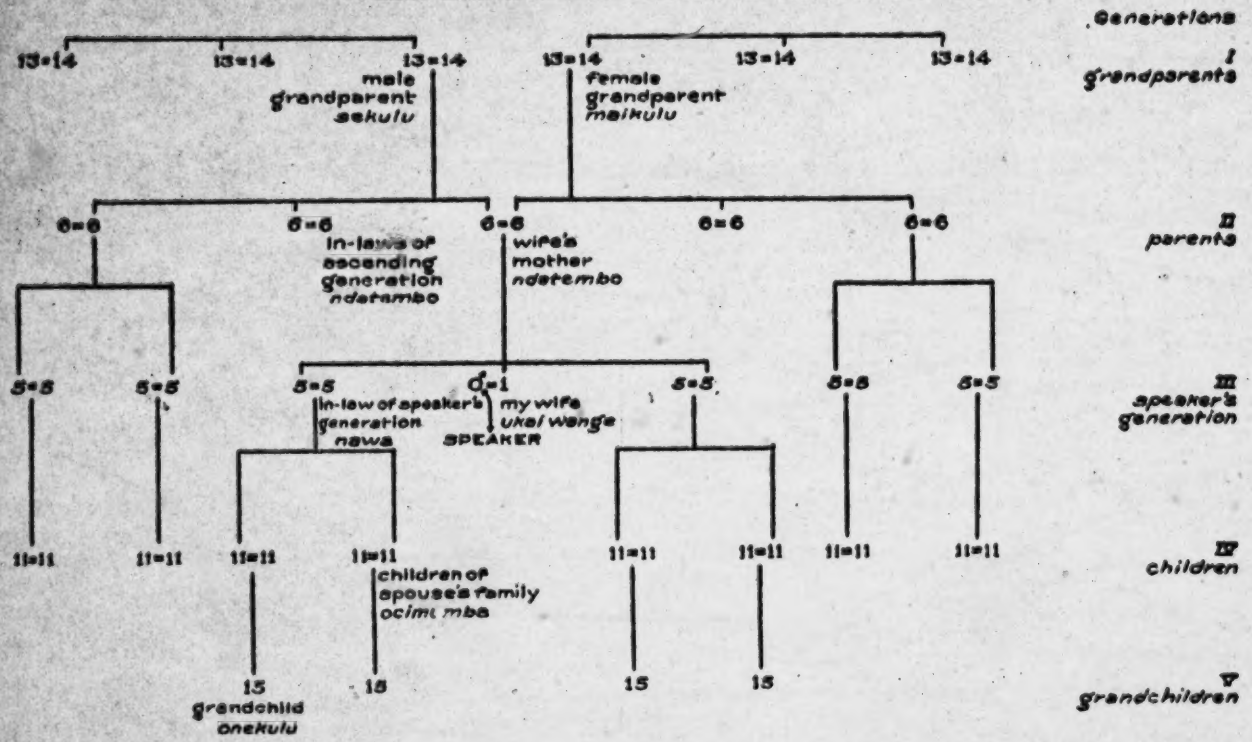


TABLE F

DIRECT LINE OF RELATIONSHIPS OF SPEAKER'S WIFE



601 *Sekulu* includes the father's father, the mother's mother's brother, and the mother's mother's sister's husband. The terms *sekululu* and *kukululu* were used by Ngonga as being synonymous, and therefore they have the same connotation. With regard to the term *maikulu* Ngonga seemed clear, but in reply to questions concerning the reason for having the terms *kukululu* and *sekululu*, he was evidently confused. At last he said, "It does not matter, they are the same people." Ngonga never hesitated in giving the reciprocal for all these terms, which is in every instance *onekulu*. These terms may have been correlated with different functions which have now become obsolete.

604 601 The two most important collateral relatives in the parent's generation are the father's sister (*aphai*) and the mother's brother (*manu*). The term for father's sister means "female father." As such her relations to ego are similar to those of a father, consequently it is not considered right to marry her daughters. The mother's brother, on the other hand, is without doubt ego's most important relative. The two are linked by a series of reciprocal duties and obligations. Marriage of a mother's brother's daughter, or a mother's brother's widow, is a correct procedure. The value of the more important reciprocal duties is indicated in the following sections on law and government.

602 171 There was no possibility of devoting more time to the matter of relationship terms, but there is here sufficient to indicate the remarkable persistence of the kinship system in spite of three centuries of contact with the Portuguese and other Europeans. Moreover, the information gleaned by interrogation of Ngonga and his wife gives the main points for comparison with systems of a similar kind that have been given for Ashanti, Uganda, and Rhodesia, by Rattray, Roscoe, and Smith and Dale respectively. These kinship systems are the same both in general principles and in considerable detail.

601 The foregoing notes and tables were studied by Mr. Zachary Taylor of the University of Chicago, who prepared Tables E and F. Mr. F. Eggan offered useful criticisms. The Arabic numerals on these charts refer to the numbers used to designate terms of relationship on the list on page 199. The ego or speaker is Ngonga, [115] my interpreter, whose direct line of relationships is shown in Table E, while Table F indicates the terms used by Ngonga for his wife's relatives. The levels numbered in Roman numerals on Tables E and F indicate the generation stratification as follows:

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I. Grandparents.
II. Parents.
III. Speaker's generation.
IV. Children.
V. Grandchildren.

Numbers on the left of the sign (=) refer to males, those on the right, to females.

The terms of relationship used in Tables E and F are as follows:

1. *Ukai wange.* My wife (vocative). Ngonga's wife calls him *weyange*, my husband.
2. *Mume, manja, manjange.* Younger brother.
3. *Kota, kusa.* Older brother.
4. *Mbuale.* Sister (vocative). *Mukai wange.* Sister (nonvocative).
5. *Nosa.* In-laws of speaker's generation.
6. *Ndaiembo.* In-laws of ascending or descending generation.
7. *Tate.* Father.
8. *Mai.* Mother.
9. *Aphai.* Father's sister (female father).
10. *Omolange.* Child, used for speaker's family only.
11. *Ocisumbo.* Children of spouse's family.
12. *Manu, inanu.* Mother's brother (direct ascendant).
13. *Kulu.* An old person in grandparent's and grandchild's generation.
    Sekulu, kukululu. Male grandparents.
14. *Mcikulu.* Female grandparents.
15. *Onekulu.* Grandchild of either sex.
16. *Upalume.* Mother's brother's or father's sister's children.
17. *Cikulume.* Father's sister's husband.

NOTE: Age distinctions are made chiefly in the speaker's own generation.

LAW AND GOVERNMENT

In dealing with marriage rites it was stated that a woman had to contribute certain articles to the home; these are the utensils that she uses in her daily work. The baskets, pottery, pounders, and brushes may seem insignificant, but nevertheless there are rules regulating their disposal at death. Her husband will retain some of the articles; the remainder will be shared among the deceased woman's sisters. 428 422

The disposal of a widow is a matter for discussion among the relatives. The husband makes no bequest to his widow and children, though the children may receive a small gift of a pig or some corn. The property of a man is bequeathed to his mother's brother or to his sister's sons. The eldest brother of the deceased or the maternal uncle of the widow takes her to his house along with her children. If her father is alive he may take her. Ngonga says that each responsible relative says, "It is better that you should take her"; at last some one says, "I will take her." 768

When explaining the system of inheritance Ngonga was clear on two points. In the first place wives and children of the deceased are 428

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E. Torday's paper, "Dualism in Western Bantu Religion and Social Organization," is an admirable summary of a wide background of Bantu beliefs with which those of the Ovimbundu agree in detail. Torday (VI) has also given a summary of Bantu sexual relations. His summary of prenuptial relationships of boys and girls, the system of polygyny, and domestic arrangements in general, indicates that records made among the Ovimbundu are but a sample of an extensive and homogeneous series of Bantu sex customs. 171

With regard to the classificatory system of relationships and cross-cousin marriage, sufficient quotations have been given to indicate that the system of the Ovimbundu is one which is paralleled in Rhodesia, the Congo basin, and still more remote regions. To the instances given should be added corroborative examples from J. Roscoe (The Baganda, p. 109), R. S. Rattray (Ashanti, p. 29), and H. A. Stayt (The Bavenda, pp. 172–184). L. H. Buxton and R. S. Rattray have offered a theory to explain the kinship system and cross-cousin marriage in Ashanti (*Jour. African Soc.*, XXIV, p. 83; Religion and Art in Ashanti, p. 318). 171 601

In Africa a classificatory system of relationships is particularly characteristic of the Bantu area. The system is Semitic and Hamitic. It is not reported among the Bushmen, but is in vogue among the Nama Hottentots. The wide distribution of a classificatory system, with variations, and its importance in tribal life, suggest antiquity (see Hoernlé, II, and B. Z. Seligman, III).

H. Baumann (I) has prepared maps showing the distribution of customs affecting descent of property in Africa. Investigation among the Ovimbundu proves that their scheme of inheritance of property is part of a more widely distributed system. Baumann (pp. 66, 127) states that in the Kasai valley and the Cabinda Enclave the rights of the mother's brother are expressed in his control of his sister's children. The power of the maternal uncle in Ovimbundu families was reported, and it was stated that he has the right to sell his sister's children for redemption of his debts. Baumann's map further indicates an area in which property descends, not to a wife or children, but to a mother's brother, or to the sons of the deceased man's oldest sister. The social system of the Ovimbundu is definitely a part of this cultural matrix, which extends to the north and northeast of the Ovimbundu but, according to Baumann's record, not to the south of Angola. In the south of Angola among pastoral people a system of succession and inheritance in the male line prevails, and 171 428

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[1874-1911]

groups emerged. The information on the cult of the matrilineal spirits which might have thrown some light on matrilineal conflicts and integration, is confused. Both Hastings and Mrs. Tucker state that the matrilineal spirits are always malevolent, but this is not confirmed by my informants,[83] and it may be that they were referring to the traditional belief that sorcery was only practised between members of a matrilineal group. Although, as has been stated, a man looked to his matrilineal kin for economic aid, he might travel with his father (who had first claim on his services), or with his mother's brother or some other kinsman; indeed while his father was still alive he might travel and trade on his own account.[84] The matrilineal group (in this area at least) was not a unit from which trading teams were formed, but rather a means for providing financial assistance when needed for those engaged in trading. It is of course possible that in some areas of Umbundu country the matrilineal kin groups were significant in the organization of trading caravans.

Another institution whose form can be described but whose function cannot be properly known is that of preferential marriage with certain categories of kin. Childs states that the categories were cross-cousins (both patrilateral and matrilateral), the sister's daughter, and the father's sister, and indicates that the cross-cousin marriages were not generally with first-cousins. My informants generally denied that it had been permitted to marry a father's sister, but confirmed his other statements. They added that an indemnification was paid by the bridegroom to the bride's family 'to cut the blood',[85] and that the kinship terms were replaced by affinal. This suggests that these marriages may have been intended to restore distant kinship ties by turning them into affinal ties and so renewing them for the next generation, but how this would operate cannot even be guessed.

[83] Hastings, p. 87; L. S. Tucker, 'The Divining Basket of the Ovimbundu', *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, 1940, pp. 171–201.

[84] Informants.

[85] This was paid down to 1949 or so in the area where I was. It was about 20 cowries, much less than bridewealth. It was formerly referred to by the Umbundu words for 'blue' (*ulinda*), as was the payment made on the death of a non-kinsman with.

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CHAPTER IV

THE INTERNAL STRUCTURE OF VILLAGES

1. *The Village Epalanga*

In this chapter the internal social relations of the village and the relevance to them of the headman will be examined.

Epalanga, which has been mentioned as associated with Sapapula, the Epalanga of the former chief Kafelo, was a village of 148 inhabitants living in 36 households. Its houses stretched from near the River Keve (or Cuvo) to near the track leading to Chicunda, a distance of between half and two-thirds of a mile. Its layout is of the untidy scattered sort typical of most Umbundu villages, indeed its size leads it to be more scattered and spread out than is usual. Houses are surrounded by their own gardens in which maize and other crops are grown, and there are a number of stretches of bush in between homesteads.

Four main sources of origin (as regards kinship ties not as regards localities) for Epalanga may be noted. The largest 'kinship core'[1] was composed of Sapapula and his kin numbering 16 households. The second largest was that of the kin of Mwehombo (who was a matrilateral 'brother'[2] of Sapapula) and Mbati the former chief of Gumba and mother's brother

[1] This term seems more satisfactory than 'cluster' which has a local meaning, or 'group' which suggests an unilineal descent group. It is not intended to give a term indicating a unit with defined boundaries. Childs notes that *imbo* (village) can also be used as a word for a cluster of houses within a village. He also gives the word *ochimbo* for a ward within a village. This word was not known locally.

[2] I have employed inverted commas to indicate classificatory use of terms which for European refer to the members of the elementary family, e.g. matrilateral 'brother'. I have not done so where the classificatory use relates to a term not associated with the elementary family, e.g. mother's brother. In ordinary social life there is no great distinction between a 'true' and a 'classificatory' mother's brother.

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[Village of Epalanga]

602 'close' kin may not be able to indicate the set of genealogical[8] links between them and will not be at all surprised or even interested by this; hence it is impossible to draw up a genealogy of Epalanga. I have attempted to show the very complicated 128 network of relationships by a series of charts—one big chart would have so many cross-cutting lines as to be largely unintelligible.

Three charts are given to illustrate particular sections of the mesh of kin and affinal ties. They are not intended as exhaustive records of the relationship of any one kinship core or of any single individual. Rather, they are intended to give a general impression of how the proliferation of the strands of kinship [621] and marriage brings about a complicated and formless patchwork in which everybody is included.

2. *Information on Household Heads*

601 List I. Residents of Epalanga as of December 1956. Female 621 household heads are indicated by a star against their names. The numbers are used on the map of the village (see p. 50).

Sapapula's Kinship Core

1. Aspirante, sister's son of Sapapula, son-in-law of Wayangu.
2. *Avilo, sister's daughter of Sapapula, 'sister' to Tjingonene (31).
3. Batista, son of Epalata (5) and husband of a sister of Kasosi (7).
4. Bernacio, son-in-law of Sapapula, 'son' to Kasosi (7).
5. Epalata, matrilateral cross-cousin of Sapapula.
6. Ernesto, sister's son of Sapapula, full brother of Aspirante (1) married to a daughter's daughter of Sasamela (see List II).
7. Kasosi, 'grandson' of Sapapula through being sister's son[9] to Wasuka (15). A 'son' to Guilherme and 'father' to Bernacio (4).

[8] Ovimbundu even traditionally seem to have been little interested in genealogies. (Information from Dr. G. M. Childs.)

[9] According to Umbundu kinship terminology, Wasuka being a matrilateral cross-cousin of Sapapula could call him 'father' and Kasosi could call his mother's brother's (Wasuka) father 'grandfather'.

[cf. charts on pp. 91, 96, 97, in Category 116-Analyst]

[Village of Epalanga]

THE INTERNAL STRUCTURE OF VILLAGES

8. *Natjingendele, cross-cousin of Sapapula, had formerly lived at the other end of Epalanga near her 'brother' Ndjoleya (30). 601 621
9. Patientia, 'brother' of Sapapula's wife Nahoka.
10. Sapapula, sister's son of Mbati, 'brother' of Luanga (21) and Mwehombo, not related to Ndjoleya (30) or Lusase.
11. Saviel, sister's son of Sapapula married to Soko, a daughter of Mwehombo. By an earlier marriage he had become affinally related to Tjingonene (31).
12. *Sendje, mother of Nahoka, Sapapula's wife.
13. Tjamwanga, matrilateral cross-cousin of Sapapula and paternal half-brother of Epalata (5).
14. Tjimbandongo, son of Epalata (5) and therefore a classificatory 'grandson' of Sapapula.
15. Wasuka, matrilateral cross-cousin of Sapapula, and 'brother' of Epalata (5).
16. *Wimbu, a widow, sister's daughter of Sapapula, her husband had been a mother's brother of Luanga (21).

The Mbati-Mwehombo kinship core

17. Armandio, sister's son of Mwehombo (and of Sapapula).
18. Gonçalve, own son of Mwehombo (therefore 'son' of Sapapula).
19. Jaime, son of Mbati—cross-cousin of Mwehombo, formerly married to Soko (daughter of Mwehombo) who was now the wife of Saviel (11), later married to Delfina, a brother's daughter of Ndjoleya.
20. Joaõ, cross-cousin of Sapapula. He tended, however, to be associated with the Mbati-Mwehombo kinship core, owing to his marriage to Paulina, daughter of Mwehombo, and full sister of Gonçalve (18).
21. Luanga, matrilateral 'brother' to Mwehombo (and also to Sapapula) patrilateral 'brother' to Ndjoleya. Luanga's wife Muhongo was a 'sister' of Maria, the wife of Paulo (24).
22. Manuel, sister's son of Mwehombo, his first wife had been a sister (not known if real or classificatory) of Maria, Paulo's wife (24).

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[Village of Epalanga]

601 23. *Nahenge, cross-cousin of Sapapula, and sister of Joaõ (20).
621 24. Paulo, 'elder of the catechetical school', sister's son of Mwehombo (and of Sapapula). His wife Maria was a daughter of Mbati.

Ndjoleya's kinship core

25. Augusto, sister's son to Ndjoleya, his wife Luisa was a daughter (by an earlier marriage) of Nalivonga, daughter of Sapapula and wife of Bernacio (4).
26. Costa, 'brother' of Ndjoleya (30), and husband of Nakalende, a cross-cousin of Paulo (24).
27. Cypriano, sister's son of Ndjoleya (30).
28. Ferreira, 'brother' of Ndjoleya (30).
29. Julio, sister's son of Ndjoleya and full brother of Augusto (25).
30. Ndjoleya, one of his wives was a sister (not known whether real or classificatory) of Bernacio, another a full sister of one of Mwehombo's wives.
31. *Tjingonene, 'sister' of Ndjoleya, by another path 'sister' of Avilo. Her daughter Feliciana was a cross-cousin of Nahoka, the wife of Sapapula, and had married Daniel, a sister's son of Lusase.

Persons with kin links to Lusase

32. Bartolomeu, sister's son of Lusase and also of Sapapula, 'son' of Wasuka (15), cross-cousin of Ndjoleya and also of Paulo (24).
33. *Nalundu, matrilateral 'sister' of Bartolomeu.

Other residents

34. *Nasemela, widow of Sasamela. (See List II).
35. Pedro Tjikete Santos, catechist.
36. *Tjambo, 'sister' of Bartolomeu (32), not included with him in the group linked to Lusase, since although she had formerly lived near his house, she moved to be near Tjimbandongo (14), whose 'mother' she was.

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List II.. Persons not living in Epalanga at the end of 1956, but significant for intra-village ties. 601

Angelo, son of Sasamela (q.v.) and therefore mother's brother to Teresa (wife of Ernesto (6) and daughter's daughter to Sasamela), had married Njamba, daughter (by another marriage) of Nakalende the wife of Costa (26).

Antonio Kasoma, patrilaterally a 'grandson' of Mbati had married three wives, one a daughter of Tjingonene (31), one a daughter of Sapapula, and one a sister's daughter of Guilherme. A 'brother' of his (not known if real or classificatory) had been an earlier husband of Nakalende, the wife of Costa (26). Kapapelo was a matrilateral cross-cousin of his.

Guilherme, sister's son of Kapapelo and Lusase, 'brother' to Bartolomeu (32) 'son' to Wazuka (15), 'father' to Kasosi (7) and 'grandson' to Sahuke.

Jeremias, Protestant catechist of Simbwyikoka village, wife's brother to Gonçalve (18), former husband of Natalia the sister of Aspirante (1) and Ernesto (6).

Kapapelo, 'brother' of Lusase, mother's brother of Bartolomeu (32) and Guilherme, patrilateral cross-cousin of Luanga (21), and matrilateral cross-cousin of Antonio Kasoma. Formerly married to the mother of Pungu, the fiancée of José the son of Paulo (24).

Lusase, chief of Gumba, 1954–1956, 'brother' to Kapapelo and Sahuke, mother's brother to Bartolomeu (32) and Guilherme. Another sister's son, Daniel of Kamupa, had married Feliciana, the daughter of Tjingonene (31), and cross-cousin of Nahoka the wife of Sapapula.

Pedro Nendi, son of Mbati and half-brother of Maria, wife of Paulo (24) and Jaime (19). His mother Wumba had after Mbati's death married Sahuke. Pedro Nendi lived in a hamlet just outside Epalanga. In it also lived his sister's son Cesario who was married to Natalia, a full sister of Aspirante (1) and Ernesto (6), and former wife of Jeremias (q.v.).

Sahuke, matrilateral 'brother' of Sapapula, and cross-cousin of Epalanta (5). As noted he was a 'brother' of Lusase and a step-father to Pedro Nendi, also a 'brother' of Sasamela, a sister's son of Mbati and a mother's brother of Bartolomeu (32).

Sasamela, father of Angelo and grandfather of Teresa, the

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wife of Ernesto (6). Patrilateral 'father' to Paula (24) and Saviel (11). Affinally related to Mwehombo, a 'sister' of whom he had married.

Wayangu, paternal half-brother of Mwehombo, resident at Epalanga till the end of 1955, wife's father to Aspirante (1) had married a sister (not clear whether own or classificatory) of Lusase.

3. *Kinship and marriage in the village setting*

The foregoing tabulated information and the charts indicate the two main principles of integration in Epalanga, as in other Umbundu villages, the settling of individuals near senior kinsmen and the existence of a number of intra-village marriage ties.

For a clearer outline of village structure to appear, it is necessary to give a brief sketch of the contemporary kinship system which will be discussed more thoroughly in later chapters. This is cognatic, with little distinction between patrilineal and matrilineal kin, the elementary family being the basic household unit, the individual being permitted to settle with any category of kin, and a high percentage of preferential marriages.[7]

The right of settling where one pleases, as 'the heart chooses', is recognized even in children. Minessi, the 7-year-old son of Gonçalve (18), used generally to eat at the household of his father's sister Paulina, the wife of Joaõ (20). Gonçalve said about this to me 'He is very fond of his father's sister.'

While the traditional norm by which a man lived in his father's village is still remembered, at least by older men, a

[7] Childs (p. 56) states that it is permitted to marry a cross-cousin on either side, a sister's daughter, and a father's sister. My informants generally agreed that the marriage with a father's sister was not and had not been permitted. Marriage is not permitted with 'true' kin of these categories. Padre Feltin, the superior of the Bimbe Catholic Mission who knew of the existence of these marriages, told me that very few Umbundu marriages came within the prohibited (a prohibition removable by a dispensation) degrees of kinship laid down by the Catholic Church (that is, up to, and including, third cousins). Such marriages in the past might have been with geographically as well as socially distant kin. Childs quotes a case of a marriage arranged, after the discovery of a kinship tie, between partners living as far apart as Ciyaka (Quiaca) and Ngalangi (Galangue).

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father does not exercise great authority over his grown sons even if they live in the same village, nor does their living in different villages lead to a breach in personal relations. Sapapula who told me that a man should stay in his father's village till the latter's death had four sons, none of whom lived in Epalanga. Two lived in Menga (where Sapapula had lived up to 1946) and maintained friendly contact with their father. One who lived in Cela seemed socially as well as geographically more remote, and the fourth was a labour migrant given up for lost.

The preferential marriages[8] have continued in practice when most of the other institutions of the old kinship system have disintegrated. Their function is to multiply the relationships between individuals living in a particular neighbourhood, and to limit the socio-geographical range within which marriage partners are selected. Of a sample of 121 existing marriages 87, that is 70.3%, were with cross-cousins, and only 13.7% were with non-kinswomen.[9]

Even some of the non-kin marriages fitted into the general pattern of increasing ties within a limited social field. Thus in Epalanga Jaime (19) had married Delfina, a brother's daughter to Ndjoleya. They were not kinsfolk yet this fitted in with the pattern of kin marriages in increasing links between different kinship cores in the village. Similarly Costa (26) and his wife Nakalende were not agreed (when questioned separately) as to whether they were kinsfolk, but this is not really significant since

[8] I had been inclined to interpret these marriages as functions of the relations between kin groups. Dr. Mary Douglas has suggested to me that these marriages were in the past not related to any system of kin groups but had, as at the present day, the function of multiplying the kinship ties within a limited field. I do not know of any clear evidence which could at this time settle the point.

[9] I count here as kin marriages those between *sakusefiuka*, funeral friends, who though not kinsfolk tend to be assimilated to cross-cousins in social usage. 'Cross-cousin' tends to be at the present time a blanket category, and I have repeatedly found asking men about their wife's kinship status that they would first give some other term and then change to 'cross-cousin'. [Epahuma]. This explains why under present conditions the percentage of cross-cousin marriages in relation to the total number of marriages seems to be rising. Thus in 56 marriages (existing or terminated) contracted by 23 men who had taken part in the caravan trade, while the percentage of marriages with non-kinswomen was slightly smaller (12.5) the figure of marriages with cross-cousins was very much smaller (42.9) and the figure of marriages with kin other than cross-cousins, sister's daughters, and *sakusefiuka* was much higher (25 %) compared to the contemporary figure of 5%.

6;Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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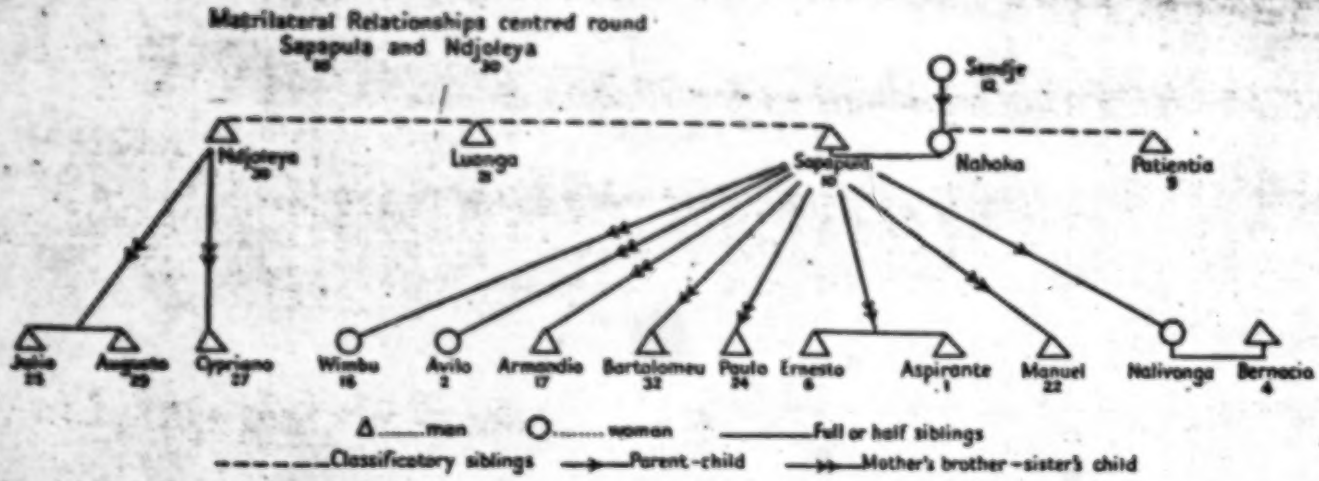

CHART 1. This shows the relationships centred round Sapapula (10) and Ndjoleya (30), the leading personalities of the village. Although they were not directly related there was a link through Luanga (21), who was matrilaterally a 'brother' of Sapapula, and patrilaterally of Ndjoleya. All are living members of the village.

Fig. 91

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social unit. 'All descendants of the same great-great-grandmother speak of themselves as a group (matrilineally descended), by the term *Imoslietu*, i.e. "children from a common source".'[9] Dr. Hastings did not apply the concept of double-descent to this society but regarded it as being matrilineal with patrilineal trimmings. After noting the patrilineal succession to the chiefdom, virilocal residence after marriage, and social preference for patrilineal kinsman, Dr. Hastings states: 'Apart from these apparent indications which might mislead one into concluding that the Ovimbundu are patronymic [*sic*], every other behaviour is obviously linked up as far as social attitudes and relations of the living are concerned within the matrilineal sib.'[10] 613 [611]

The neat tabulation by Dr. Childs[11] of the functions of the two kin groups, when considered in conjunction with the passages cited from Hastings, seems to provide quite clear proof that it is correct to apply the category 'double-descent kinship system' to that formerly prevailing among the Ovimbundu. [611]

2. *Kinship Terms* 601

Tate	my father	Extended to all brothers, real or classificatory, of a father, all men married to a 'mother', and to the father's sister's son, particularly if he has been your father's heir.
So	your father	
Iso	his father	
Mai	my mother	Extended to all sisters, real or classificatory, of a mother, and to all wives of any 'father'.
Nyoho	your mother	
Ina	his mother	
Sekulu	mother's brother	Extended to any brother, real or classificatory, of a mother, and to the husband of any *apahai*.
Apahai[12]	my father's sister, his father's sister,	Extended to any sister of any father and the wife of any *sekulu*.
Sohai	your father's sister	

[9] Ibid., p. 83. *Imoslietu* literally means 'our womb'.
[10] Ibid., p. 87.
[11] Childs, pp. 45–46.
[12] *Tatekai* (father-woman), used in other parts of Umbundu country for 'my father's sister', is not found in Gumba.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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601 The reciprocal of *tate* and *mai* is *omola* (child), usually with the possessive pronoun. *Nungulu* is used for the first-born son, and *kwasula* for the youngest. The reciprocal of both *sekulu* and *apahai* is *otjimumba*. Elder sibling is *huva*, younger sibling is *mandja*, both used with the possessive pronouns. *Kota* seems to have meant formerly the eldest sibling but it is now equivalent to *huva*. *Mukai* is sister, man speaking, and *mume* is brother, woman speaking.

Epalume, pl. *apalume*, cross-cousin
K'oluse patrilateral cross-cousin
K'oluina matrilateral cross-cousin

Makulu[13] is used for 'grandfather' and very often for grandmother, though for the latter there is a separate term, *inakulu*; the reciprocal is *onekulu*.

Nawa brother-in-law, sister-in-law. Extended to all siblings, real or classificatory, of a wife, the husband of any female sibling, and the siblings of such a husband.

Ndatembo father-in-law, mother-in-law;
son-in-law, daughter-in-law.
Ndatembo is used only in reference; to address these affines one uses *tate* and *mai*.

Tjikwelume[14] sister's daughter's husband, sometimes father's sister's husband. The wife's mother's brother may be regarded as a mother's brother or as a *ndatembo*.

[602] *Tjisoko* (funeral friend) is used as a kinship term both in address and reference. This is an abbreviation of the more correct *ukwatjisoko*, of which the plural is *vakwatjisoko*.

The term for wife is *ukai* (woman) or *ufeko* (girl), the latter being perhaps more frequent. *Vey'yange* (my husband) is used as a term of reference by a woman rather than *ulume* (man, husband). Husband and wife would address each other by name or '*a ukuetu*' (O friend). If an individual is both an affine and a kinsman the affinal ties take precedence.

[13] Elsewhere *Sekulu* is used for 'grandfather'.
[14] Albino Alves, Vol. I, p. 448, gives *Tjikwelume* as sister's son.

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KINSHIP

Osanto or *osiala* (namesake) is used as a kinship term, both in address and as reference. 601

Oluse and *oluina*, which were formerly the words for the agnatic and matrilineal kin group, now mean the patrikin, that is, all to whom one is paternally related, and the matrikin, all to whom one is matrilaterally related. A man, describing a particular tie, may say that it is 'in the matrikin of my father', that is, the relative is a matrilineal kinsman of his father. The terms *onele yohondji* ('the side of the bow') and *onele yohumba* ('the side of the basket') are equivalents of *oluse* and *oluina*.[15] The term *epata* may be used in a general sense for kin but it has very often a primary reference to the matrikin. *Familia* (from the Portuguese) means kin in general but it may mean 'kinsman' with reference to a single individual: 'So-and-so is (or is not) my *Familia*.' *Ngandi* (which also means 'So-and-so,' equivalent to the Portuguese *fulano*) means kinsman and *usitwe* is kinship. 602 [177]

The use of Portuguese terms is now frequent even among those who do not speak Portuguese. The terms most frequently taken into the Umbundu language are *mano* which is used to mean 'elder brother,' and *mana* which is used to mean 'elder sister,' both terms being used by either sex, *primo* (feminine *prima*), cousin, which is used as an equivalent of *epalume* (cross-cousin), *tio* (uncle), which is now used more frequently than *sekulu*, and *cunhado* (feminine *cunhada*) brother-in-law or sister-in-law, used in the same way as is *nawa*. Ovimbundu villagers talking Portuguese will apply the Portuguese terms in Umbundu style. Thus *irmaõ* (brother) will be used as an equivalent of *mandja* (younger sibling of either sex), and *irmaõ mais velho* (older brother) will be used as an equivalent of *huwa* (elder sibling of either sex). Similarly *tia* (aunt) will be used as an equivalent of *apahai*. 601 177

The rules about which term may be used in a particular defined relationship (e.g. my wife's mother's brother) are not clearly and exclusively defined. What is more surprising is that a man may not be certain what is the category in which he should class a kinsman with whom he has frequent contacts. Thus Paulo, the elder of the school at Epalanga, often played 601

[15] As noted previously in the references to Chapter I these terms do not seem to have referred to descent groups.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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601 with Adolfo, the small son of Jaime, his wife's brother, but when asked what relation Adolfo was to him, became confused and said, 'My son, my sister's son.'

601 There exist marked variations in terminology in Umbundu 184 country.[16] For instance, *sekulu* seems to be used for mother's brother only in north-western Umbundu country. Elsewhere *mamu*[17] is used for mother's brother, and *sekulu* is used for grandfather. At Caconda, where there has been strong Portuguese [172] influence since the eighteenth century, only the Portuguese kinship terms are known.[18]

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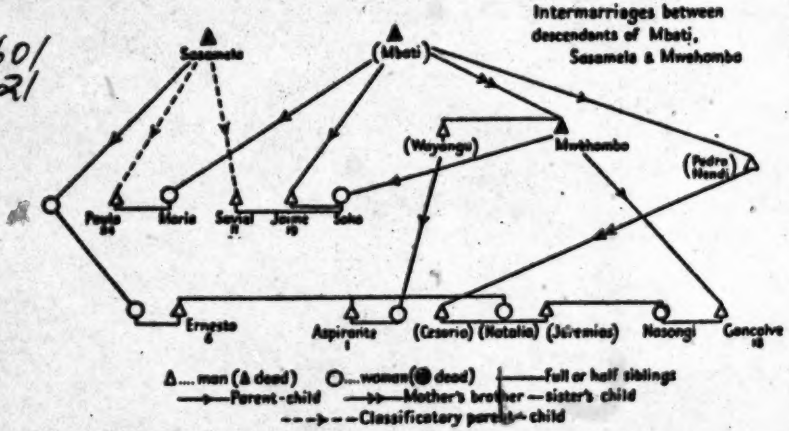

CHART 2. Mbati, Mwehombo and some of their kin. For Mbati (dead, non-member) and Mwehombo (dead, former member) see Chapter III, section 1. For Sasamela (dead, former member) and Cesario, Jeremias, Natalia, Pedro Nendi, and Wayangu (all living non-members) see List II (pp. 55–6). The rest of the individuals named on the chart are members of Epalanga. Paulo and Saviel were 'brothers', both patrilaterally and matrilaterally.

3. *Kinship Norms*

593 In this section I shall describe the relations that existed within the elementary family in the time of the rubber trade. A man

[16] For other lists of kinship terms see Hastings, pp. 82–83. Childs, pp. 47–56. M. Howse, *Umbundu Lessons* (Dondi, 1955), Vol. II, pp. 195–7.
[17] Etymologically, *mamu* seems to mean 'mother-person'.
[18] Private information.

[text continues on p. 98]

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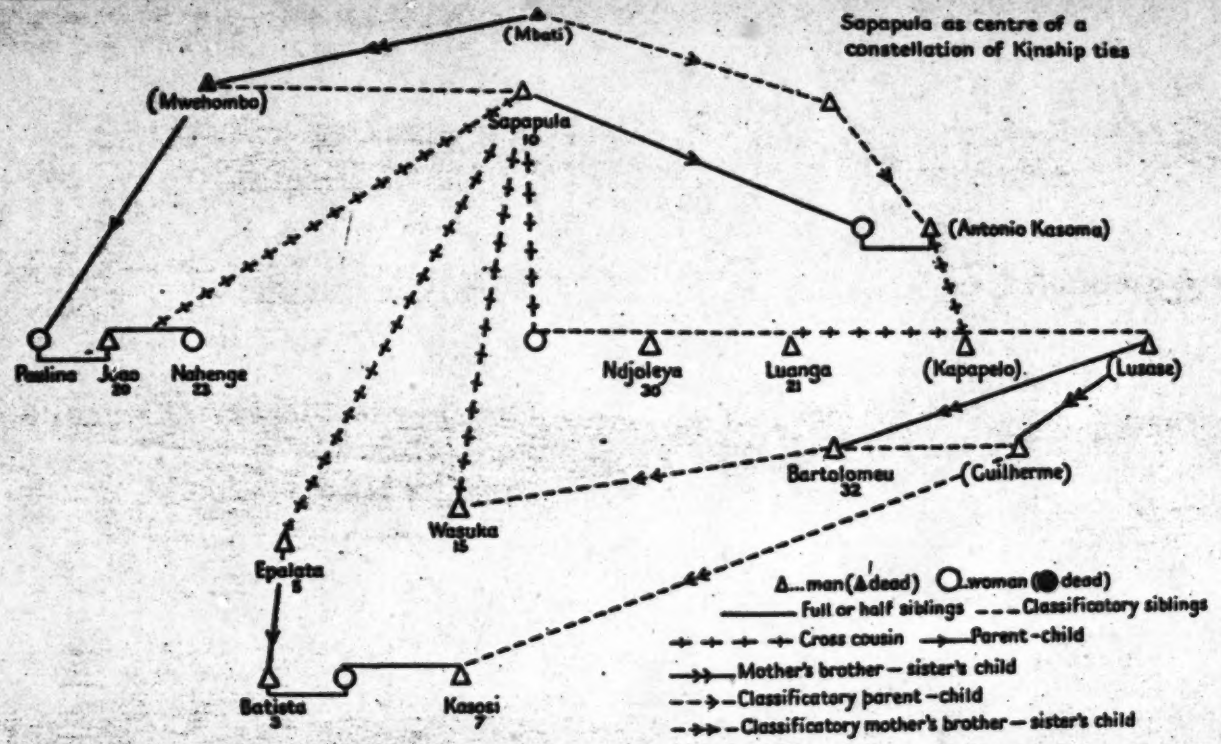

CHART 3. Sapapula as the centre of a constellation of kinship ties. It is interesting to note how, in view of the conflict described in Chapter IX, Sapapula is linked to Guilherme, Kapapelo, and Lusase by several paths. All are living members of Epalanga except for Mbati and Mwehombo (for whom see note to Chart 2) and Antonio Kasoma, Guilherme, Kapapelo, and Lusase. For details on these living non-members see List II, pp. 55–6. Not all ties existing between these individuals have been shown.

Correction. The relation of Bartolomeu and Guilherme to Lusase and of Mwehombo to Mbati should be that of classificatory sister's sons.

.: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

621 four households with six houses. The school village had been laid
but in rectangular fashion without any palisade and with eucalyptus
[346] trees planted around the sides. The school was at the centre and
the elder's house at the upper corner. These two larger buildings
and one other were built of adobe, while the rest of the twelve
houses were of wattle and daub, identical with those in the other
wards except that all were rectangular. There were a few very
[312] small gardens watered by an irrigation ditch. The people of this
village had river gardens, and their fields were mostly to the south
between the village and the highway. Just to the east of the main
[797] village and beside one of the water-holes, a Roman Catholic
catechist had established himself, but as yet he had neither village
nor school.

The Villagers

● 602 Turning now to the people living in this village, it was interest-
621 ing to find that all save the households of two former slaves and the
Roman Catholic catechist, were related to each other, either by
blood or by marriage. Sekulu Cipange of Ciyanda summed the
matter up when he said, 'Likuluta Samikanjo (the Protestant elder)
is my younger brother (*manjange*), for in our Umbundu country
(we) people do not build together (i.e. in the same village) unless
we are blood relatives.' In order to determine the exact relation-
ships and other facts regarding the demography of this village,
I took the names of all householders and their wives, and inquired
their relationships to the elders of the respective wards. This
[115] information was supplied by Njomba, a son of Sekulu Sikīlīlē, and
by Sekulu Likuluta Samikanjo. In addition to those of the four
elders, there were twenty-four households. The relationship
of each of the householders to their respective elders may be sum-
marized as follows:

A. *Paternal relatives*

In Sikīlīlē's village	21	
„ Ciyanda	1	
„ Kanjengo's ward	2	
„ School village	2	
	—	26

B. *Maternal relatives*

In Ciyanda	1	
„ Kanjengo's ward	1	
„ School village	4	
	—	6

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

C. *Sister's sons (or daughters)*[1]		
In Ciyanda	1	
„ School village	4	
		5
D. *Relatives by marriage*		
In Sikīlīlē's	2	
„ School village	1	
		3
E. *Relationship not exactly determined*[2]		
In School village	2	
		2
F. *Former slaves*		
In Sikīlīlē's	1	
„ School village	1	
		2
Total of householders		44

621
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The above figures show more precisely than would several pages of explanation the family nature of the Umbundu village. That the Ovimbundu are patrilocal was noted by Hambly.[3] Whether the proportions which the above figures indicate would hold for all the Ovimbundu could only be determined by gathering similar data over widely representative areas. The same approximate distribution holds for the families represented by 192 genealogies and 74 marriage-schedules which I have collected. Matrilocal residence or residence in the wife's village has always been recognized by the Ovimbundu as a possibility, although less desirable than the ideal of patrilocal marriage and residence. Of the two householders in Sekulu Sikīlīlē's village who were related to him by marriage, one was the husband of a daughter and the other a [768] widow of a younger brother, who should have been inherited by a younger brother or a mother's brother of the deceased. Failing that, she might have returned to her father's people, but her having settled in the village of her husband's elder brother is no cause for surprise. My experience leads me to believe that Ngendo is an approximately fair sample of the present strength of patrilocal residence among the Ovimbundu. That the Protestant school village is a real part of this kinship unit is an important fact, the significance of which will be discussed later.

[1] The two daughters were widows who had come to live with their mother's brothers.

[2] In these two cases relationship was declared to exist, but I failed to find its nature.

[3] Hambly, op. cit., p. 191.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

593 only by a sister), and *mukãi* (sister, spoken only by a brother). In
[561] a polygynous household each of the wives is mother to all the children and each of the children is *huva* or *manja*[1] to all the others.
848 Illegitimate children are not stigmatized but since they belong to
567 the mother they have a distinct designation.[2] Slaves or former slaves have a status within the household and village which to the ordinary observer does not differ from that of the children: they are treated much as the children and they may carry on in all matters social and economic much as though they were members of the family. I have noticed, however, that when there is a call for labour, the lot falls oftener to one of these 'children-born-by-day'[3] whether he was a war-captive or a pawn.

567 Both slavery and the polygynous household, two institutions
595 manifestly and intimately inter-related, are still a part of the
178 Umbundu social structure, but neither the one nor the other now has the importance which it formerly had. Neither of these institutions is part of the present and personal experience of the great majority of Umbundu households.

Kinship

596 *Blood Relatives* (*Epata*). The relationships of the wider kinship
• 602 groups are for the most part extensions of those of the household.
621 The child learns them very early in life owing to the fact that the village community into which he is born is only a part of this larger kinship group. Nearly all of the villagers belong to the same *epata* or extended family, which includes both lines of descent. Most of them belong to the father's family (*oluse*), and the mother's family (*oluina*) may also be represented. The fact is that most of the adults of the village are father or mother to nearly every child and most of the children are brothers or sisters. Those of his coevals who do not bear this relation to him are otherwise related and are also potential spouses or potential relatives-in-law.

[1] This distinction *yesepakaĩ* (lit. 'of the jealousy of women') may be made but it is not applied in ordinary speech.

[2] *Omõlã a ngenda-la-ina* (lit. 'child of goes-with-mother').

[3] *Omãlã-va-citima-lutanya*. Cf. 'child of my calves', Luganda expression and attitudes, L. P. Mair, *An African People in the Twentieth Century* (London, 1934), p. 32 f.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

Oluse	*Oluina*
RELIGIOUS	
Regular village worship including agricultural festivals; village headman is also priest.	Family observances including occasional propitiations in case of illness, death, or other misfortunes; for desired economic advantages; mortuary rites. Family head is also priest.

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Classificatory System of Relationship. The relationships of the wider kinship groups are quite largely extensions of those of the household, but the Ovimbundu, in common with all people who have a classificatory system, extend these relationships not only further but in quite different ways than do those who have the European (Roman) system. One who would understand the Ovimbundu must understand the Umbundu family from the inside—not as from motives of mere intellectual curiosity but as an Ocimbundu understands it. In order to demonstrate this family structure it will be necessary to present tables and diagrams. Hambly did a very creditable piece of work toward demonstrating the structure of the Umbundu family.[1] I doubt that anyone staying among them an equally short period of time, not knowing their language, could have done better in this respect unless he had come to the task with very exceptional preparation. It is only just to state this and I feel that it is necessary because so far as I am aware, in the five years since it was published, the book has received no adequate appraisal or review.[2] It must be said, however, that Hambly made some noticeable errors in his use of kinship terms owing to the fact that he did not learn the Umbundu language, and that he evidently failed to understand certain points with regard to the social structure.

For greater clarity and precision I am presenting in separate tables the terms which refer to blood relationship and those which refer to relationship by marriage.

[1] W. D. Hambly, op. cit., pp. 189–99.

[2] This book was reviewed in *Africa*, 1935, pp. 391–3, but the reviewer had no first-hand knowledge of the people or their language, which was perhaps his reason for taking up three-fourths of the space at his disposal with questions of orthography. E. W. Smith has taken note of the book (*Africa: What Do We Know of It?*, p. 71), but only to say that it 'is chiefly useful for its description of the material culture'.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

601

E. *Second Ascendant Generation: Either Man or Woman the Speaker*

Term	*Relation*	*Reciprocal term*
1. *Maikulu*[1] (*Nyokulu*)	grandmother, both maternal and paternal grandmother's sister grandfather's sister	*onekulu yange*
2. *Sekulu*[1] (*Tatekulu*)	grandfather, both maternal and paternal grandfather's brother grandmother's brother	*onekulu yange*

F. *Third Ascendant Generation*

Kuku	all relatives of this generation	*onekuluila* or *omoholole yange*

G. *Fourth Ascendant Generation*

Kukululu	all relatives of this generation	*onene yange*

H. *Fifth Ascendant Generation*

Kukululua	all relatives of this generation	*onei yange*

I. *Sixth Ascendant Generation*

Ku	all relatives of this generation	*oneka yange*

J. *First Descendant Generation*

1. *Omōlānge*	my own child woman's sister's child man's brother's child mother's sister's grandchild father's brother's grandchild	*tate* or *mōi*
mululū or *uveli*	first-born child	
2. *Ocimumba*	woman's brother's child man's sister's child mother's brother's grandchild father's sister's grandchild	*tatehōi* or *mamu*

The kinship terms for further descendant generations will be found in the column of 'reciprocal terms' given above. It does not seem necessary to repeat them.

602 592 The patterns of behaviour between these many blood relatives find their prototypes in the patterns of the household. Love for

[1] *Maikulu* and *Sekulu* are sometimes used interchangeably for persons of either sex. Each has only the two personal forms. The forms in parenthesis are but little used. *Inakulu* is used for the queen.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

602 592 the mother who bore me and the consideration naturally expected from her cannot, in the nature of things, be given or received by *all* of the elder and younger mothers in exactly equal degree, but the type of behaviour is similar. The elder sister who carried her younger brother about on her back when she herself could hardly more than walk, or the elder brother who first taught his younger brother to make and set his little traps, has a warmth of regard which he cannot extend with just the same force to fifty or one hundred younger brothers, but nevertheless the pattern will be of the same sort if and when similar opportunity offers. The same may be said for the younger and the elder fathers, and again for the *tatekãi*, the 'female father'. But here elements other than 605 the early household patterns enter as also with *manu*, the mother's 604 brother. Chief of these other elements is the fact that these two classes of relatives, together with the *va cepua*, i.e. cross-cousins (mostly children of the *manu* and *tatekãi* classes), and also the *ovimumba* (plural) (one's own nephews along similar lines of descent), are all potential spouses or potential relatives-in-law.[1] The relations of *ocimumba* (sister's son) and *manu* (mother's brother) in Umbundu society follow a pattern not exactly like any other set of relationships in any society of which I know. Suggestions of this have already been given. The *manu* shares his sister's desire for the advancement of her son, and if the nephew has had a part of his education in the uncle's home or on his trading expeditions, the relationship will have become closer. It may be, however, that the uncle's own difficulties may lead him to exploit his nephew rather than to attend only to his advancement.[2] The 602 178 ties of the paternal group tend to be strengthened at the expense of the maternal family and it seems that the increasing localization of the Umbundu family with the supplanting of trade by agriculture (as a man's full-time occupation) has furthered this process.

It is very important for one who would understand the Ovi- 602 mbundu to look upon the Umbundu kinship structure with the eyes of an Ocimbundu. If one brought up to other ideas and other relationships finds this difficult, that is all the more reason for making the effort. I cannot better summarize the Umbundu

[1] See *infra*, pp. 52 ff.

[2] This is one of several points where the commercial tendencies seem to come into conflict with the patterns of the kinship group.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

attitude toward one's blood relations than by quoting Mrs. Hoernlé: 602

> Here, then, is a large body of kin drawn intimately into contact with the lives of each generation. Looking out into the world from his own home, the Bantu child knows where he may seek hospitality and succour of every kind; where, also, he may of right be called upon to render assistance in case of need. The barriers of reserve shutting off human beings from one another are largely down so far as these classes of relatives are concerned, so that for economic assistance, for friendly counsel, in time of sorrow and in time of joy, these are the natural categories of people to turn to, the core of people with whom one is close-knit from birth in a web of reciprocal rights and duties.[1]

The Kin

Relatives by Marriage. Marriage profoundly alters the relationship of those who enter into it, that is, the two families. It must be entered into with great care and with due regard for all factors concerned in order that the balance of life may be maintained. It seems that the financial arrangements (*ilombo*) are designed to restore to the bride's family an equivalence for her loss, since marriage is patrilocal. The Ovimbundu consider mutual respect between the two families to be a necessary basis for a successful marriage. Respect (*esumbilo*) is the reason assigned by thoughtful Ovimbundu for the various avoidances (*oku liyuvuila*) enjoined upon the principals and their respective families. In the first place, the husband and wife must show their respect for each other by avoiding certain actions as, for example, either one speaking the name of the other. 581 [593]

This mutual respect finds its most dramatic symbol in the treatment which the husband must accord his mother-in-law, the bride her father-in-law. They must avoid seeing each other, and if it is necessary to converse, it must be done out of sight, or with gaze averted. Both husband and wife must also avoid pronouncing the names of the parents-in-law. By the principle of extended relationships, this behaviour applies to the relations of the husband and the wife with *all* their parents-in-law of the opposite sex. As all the mother's 'sisters' are 'mother', so to the husband they are all *ndatembo* (mother-in-law). Likewise, the father's 'brothers' all 606

[1] In Schapera, op. cit., 1937, p. 73.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

182 621 in a somewhat decadent state, the Umbundu village has up to the present maintained its status as a local kinship unit.

182 592 602 The household is not a solitary unit but a part of the village. Since it is constituted by marriage, it embodies the union of at least two kinship groups. The attitudes and behaviour patterns within the Umbundu household are basically those universally recognized. In common with the households of most Bantu cultures, it differs from the European model in that it extends its attitudes and behaviour patterns to the wider kinship groupings by means of a classificatory system of relationship.

613 182 In the wider kinship groupings (*epata*), the Ovimbundu recognize both the maternal (*oluina*) and the paternal (*oluse*) lines of descent. The functions of the latter have been largely local, residential, social, and religious, with succession (of status) in the male line. The function of the former has been cohesive over a larger territory, with a recognized head in whom has been vested both religious and economic functions. Both his office and the inheritance of property descend in the female line. Much of the power, economic and personal, formerly held by the *oluina*, in the person of the mother's brother, seems to be passing at the present time to the *oluse*, in the person of the father. The bilineal kinship system has been a strongly cohesive social force.

182 [582] The form of marriage practised by the Ovimbundu is of the two-way cross-cousin type in both lines of kin and in three generations. It seems to be an individual type developed in the particular social and economic situation of the Ovimbundu. As a contract between two families and as a new venture, the marriage relation demands that great attention be given to attitudes and behaviour patterns which emphasize mutual respect.

[561] The hierarchy of age is a very real factor in the Umbundu social structure. Age-set 'schools' have not existed generally throughout the tribes, but there are associations of coevals. This is largely a cohesive force.

754 Sorcery is the most important disruptive force at work *within* Umbundu society. Working as it does, within kinship groups, and inasmuch as it seems to be on the increase, sorcery embodies a real danger to social cohesion.

184 178 Homogeneity has never been an attribute of the Ovimbundu as regards their racial or cultural make-up. The slave-trade injected other and more diverse elements, and recent movements and

611 dispersed. Both groups have ritual leaders, whose offices are quite dis-
613 tinct. Barnes' suggestion[1] is that the two groups must be father's patrilineage and mother's matrilineage, with the qualification mentioned below.

613 The *oluse* consists of a large number of village groups, some of which recognise mutual relationship,[2] but with no recognised head (other than
622 the village headmen) except in the case of the royal families. Land is owned by the *oluse* and passed on within it from father to son, or from
[428] elder to younger brother. Succession to village or tribal office, from village headman to king, descends in the same way.[3] Ritual leadership within the *oluse* lies with the village headman, who is in charge of the
[346] spirit-hut *(etambo)* of the guardian spirit of the village (or of the nuclear *oluse* within the village), and who officiates at regular village worship, including agricultural festivals.

613 The *oluina*, on the other hand, is a dispersed and apparently larger group, whose members live with their various paternal lines of descent.
428 The size of the *oluina* is unknown; Childs merely refers to it as a "large
604 and widespread organization, with a recognized head". The office of head of the *oluina (ukulu wepata)* descends from mother's brother to sister's son. Negotiable and moveable property, including cattle and trade goods, is owned by the *oluina* and inherited by the sister's son. Formerly the mother's elder brother had great powers over his sister's sons, and was even able to pawn them or sell them into slavery, to meet his own debts.
[592] The patrilocal household is usually responsible for training children, especially during their early years, but they are frequently sent to the *oluina* (i.e. to the mother's brother) for at least a part of their educa-
[586] tion. At death or divorce of parents, children go to the *oluina*.

The head *(ukulu wepata)* of the *oluina* is usually both the legal and
613 spiritual head of the group, although today the two functions are often divided. He is in charge of the spirit hut *(etambo)* of the guardian
782 spirit of the *oluina* (of whom there may be more than one, and of whom he becomes one after death). He leads the *oluina* in propitiatory rituals carried out in case of illness, death, or other misfortunes within the group, or in prayers made for desired economic advantages. (Apparently no regular rituals are carried out by the *oluina*.) The *ukulu wepata* may or may not be at the same time a village headman; if he is, he will be priest of two lines and have charge of two spirit huts; if he is not, there may be two (or more) priests in the village, each in charge of the spirit-hut of his *oluse* or *oluina*.

The onēlē yohonji and the onēlē yohumba

613 The *oluse* and the *oluina* are both divided into male and female "sides": the *onēlē yohonji* (the side of the bow) and the *onēlē yohumba*
● 602 (the side of the basket). It has been noted above that uterine brothers
582 and sisters belong to the same *oluse* and *oluina*, but to the male or female side in each, according to sex. The composition of these "sides" is

(1) Loc.cit.
(2) If some villages within the *oluse* cannot trace mutual relationship, the *oluse* should perhaps be called a patri-clan rather than a patrilineage.
(3) But see below, p.29.

however not at all clear. They seem to group simply all the male members and all the female members of the *oluse* and of the *oluina*; but this conflicts with the information given on marriage.(1) A man may marry into the male side of his mother's kin or into the female side of his father's kin. Hence there must be some women in the male side, and, presumably, some men in the female side. A man cannot marry a parallel cousin, but he may marry: 613 602 582

(a) a father's sister. She presumably belongs to the female side of the *oluse*, which presents no difficulty.

(b) a sister's daughter. She appears to belong to the female side of ego's mother's kin, while a man should marry into the male side of his mother's kin.

(c) a female cross-cousin. If the *oluse* and the *oluina* were merely father's patrilineage and mother's matrilineage, as has been suggested, cross-cousins are excluded from both groups. In a footnote,(2) however, Childs seems to imply that mother's brother's daughter belongs to ego's mother's kin. Barnes therefore suggests that children of men of the matrilineage may be included in the *oluina*, falling into the male side irrespective of sex, and similarly the *oluse* may include in the female side all the children of women of the patrilineage. By this hypothesis:

(a) a sister's daughter would fall into the female side of ego's *oluse*.

(b) a mother's brother's daughter would fall into the male side of ego's *oluina*.

(c) a father's sister's daughter would fall into the female side of the *oluse*.

The descent system: summary 602

The descent system suggested may then be summarised thus: 613 611

(1) *oluse* (father's kin)

(a) *onēlē yohonji* (male side): all men in the patrilineage.

(b) *onēlē yohumba* (female side): all women in the patrilineage, and all sons and daughters of women in the patrilineage.

(2) *oluina* (mother's kin)

(a) *onēlē yohumba* (female side): all women in the matrilineage.

(b) *onēlē yohonji* (male side): all men in matrilineage, and all sons and daughters of all men in the matrilineage.

According to this hypothesis every person belongs to four distinct groups. A man must belong not only to the male side of the two groups centred in the father's patrilineage and the mother's matrilineage, but also to the male side of his father's matrilineal group and to the female side of his mother's patrilineal group. There are still only two systems

(1) Childs, op.cit., p.53. (2) P.53, fn.3.

611 of groups, but a man belongs to two groups within each system. Similar membership is required for a woman. A man shares with all his children
613 his membership of the male side of his mother's matrilineal group, and shares with his sons membership of the male side of his father's patri-
602 lineal group. His daughters belong to his father's patrilineal group but to its female side. He does not transmit to his children membership of his father's matrilineal group or his mother's patrilineal group.(1) This is illustrated by the diagram on page 21.

601 *Kinship terminology*

Patterns of behaviour between all blood relatives find their prototypes in the household. The following list of kinship terms is selected from the more detailed list given by Childs.(2)

Term		*Reciprocal*
mai	mother, mother's sister, etc.	*omolange*
tate	father, father's brother, etc.	*omolange*
tatekai	("female father") father's sister	*ocimumba cange*
manu	mother's brother	*ocimumba cange*
huvange	elder brother or sister, and male or female parallel cousin, if older than ego	*manjange*
kota	eldest brother (of family or household)	*manjange*
(epalume *(upalume* *(cepua*	male or female cross-cousin	*epalume, upalume,* or *cepua*
mukai	sister or female parallel cousin (M.S.)(3)	*mume*
mbuale	" " " " (W.S.)	*mbuale*
maikulu	grandmother, grandparents' sister	*onekulu yange*
sekulu	grandfather, grandparents' brother	*onekulu yange*

Note: (a) There is no word used exclusively for "brother" by a man, although a woman may use *mume* in this sense. *Huvange* and *manjange* are used by either men or women for elder or younger brothers or sisters.

(b) *maikulu* and *sekulu* are sometimes used interchangeably for persons of either sex.

MARRIAGE

582 *Marriage within the kin group*

The most desirable marriage is marriage within the circle of kin, i.e. (as noted above) into the male line of the *oluina* or the female line of the *oluse*. (There appears to be a preference for marriage within the *oluina*.(4)) One may not marry one classed as brother, sister, father, mother, grandparent, child or grandchild, for such a union would involve

(1) This paragraph is largely quoted from Barnes, loc.cit.
(2) pp.47-9.
(3) M.S. = man speaking, W.S. = woman speaking.
(4) Childs, op.cit., p.53, note 3.

582 incest *(oku ndo)*. But one may marry relatives of one's own age-level who belong to classes other than those mentioned, i.e. cross-cousins and, on other age-levels, father's sister or sister's daughter. It is said that formerly marriage never took place except between persons who could trace relationship in this way. Today this principle is very liberal in its application.[1] (It would be interesting to have estimates of the number of men who do marry first degree cross-cousins, father's sisters, or sister's daughters, as distinct from classificatory relatives of these classes, and the number who marry outside the *oluse* or *oluina*.)

583 Marriage was formerly arranged by the mother's brother (i.e. by the *oluina*), but today there is a tendency for fathers to arrange their daughters' marriages and to receive their marriage payment. (And also, occasionally, to assist their sons in providing marriage payment.)[2] *Ilombo*, or marriage payment, was formerly paid in cattle, blankets etc.[3] Today it is usually paid in cash, the amount being determined by the status of the bride.[4]

Polygyny

621 595 In the sample village (Ngendo, Kasongi chiefdom) described by Childs, of a total of 48 households,

(a) 10 households were polygynous; of these 9 contained only 2 wives or concubines, and the tenth, that of the headman, contained four wives and one concubine,

(b) 27 households were monogynous, and 3 more were occupied by widowers, all formerly monogynous. (The remaining households were occupied by 7 widows and one young unmarried man.)

Childs notes that the proportion of polygynous households in Kasongi chiefdom is probably higher than in other parts of Ovimbundu country for two reasons: the comparatively low marriage-payment in Kasongi as compared with other areas, and the proximity of Kasongi to Esele country, which has long been a source of supply for slave concubines. (Of the 10 polygynous households in Ngendo 5 contained at least 1 Esele concubine.)[5]

Avoidance between in-laws

● 602 Mutual respect *(esumbilo)* between the two kin groups involved is considered a necessary basis for a successful marriage, and is the reason given for the various avoidances *(oku liyuvuila)* enjoined upon the principals and their respective relatives. These avoidances may be summarised:-

593 (a) A husband and wife must avoid using each other's names.

601 (b) The term *ndatembo* is used for parents-in-law of either sex, and reciprocally for sons-in-law or daughters-in-law. The term is extended to all those whom one's spouse calls "mother", "father" or "child" (Childs, p.52) and apparently also to those whom one's spouse calls *nanu*, *tatekai* or

(1) Childs, p.54.
(2) Ennis, 1945.
(3) Cushman, 1944, p.45.
(4) Childs, personal communication.
(5) Childs, page 30.

601 *Sekulu* includes the father's father, the mother's mother's brother, and the mother's mother's sister's husband. The terms *sekululu* and *kukululu* were used by Ngonga as being synonymous, and therefore they have the same connotation. With regard to the term *maikulu* Ngonga seemed clear, but in reply to questions concerning the reason for having the terms *kukululu* and *sekululu*, he was evidently confused. At last he said, "It does not matter, they are the same people." Ngonga never hesitated in giving the reciprocal for all these terms, which is in every instance *onekulu*. These terms may have been correlated with different functions which have now become obsolete.

604 601 The two most important collateral relatives in the parent's generation are the father's sister (*aphai*) and the mother's brother (*manu*). The term for father's sister means "female father." As such her relations to ego are similar to those of a father, consequently it is not considered right to marry her daughters. The mother's brother, on the other hand, is without doubt ego's most important relative. The two are linked by a series of reciprocal duties and obligations. Marriage of a mother's brother's daughter, or a mother's brother's widow, is a correct procedure. The value of the more important reciprocal duties is indicated in the following sections on law and government.

602 171 There was no possibility of devoting more time to the matter of relationship terms, but there is here sufficient to indicate the remarkable persistence of the kinship system in spite of three centuries of contact with the Portuguese and other Europeans. Moreover, the information gleaned by interrogation of Ngonga and his wife gives the main points for comparison with systems of a similar kind that have been given for Ashanti, Uganda, and Rhodesia, by Rattray, Roscoe, and Smith and Dale respectively. These kinship systems are the same both in general principles and in considerable detail.

601 The foregoing notes and tables were studied by Mr. Zachary Taylor of the University of Chicago, who prepared Tables E and F. Mr. F. Eggan offered useful criticisms. The Arabic numerals on these charts refer to the numbers used to designate terms of relationship on the list on page 199. The ego or speaker is Ngonga, [115] my interpreter, whose direct line of relationships is shown in Table E, while Table F indicates the terms used by Ngonga for his wife's relatives. The levels numbered in Roman numerals on Tables E and F indicate the generation stratification as follows:

764 The interpretation of the chanting is "God has cheated me of a life." That is, God gave a life and he has taken it.

My interpreter, who was a relative of the deceased boy, explained to the people that I was seriously interested. This was necessary, [123] as they were afraid of ridicule and hostile opinion. I sat down by the father of the dead boy and talked with him through my interpreter. In the meantime I observed that the corpse was in a cloth-covered box slung on a pole, which was supported on the shoulders of two men who stood very close to the drummers. The bearers remained immovable except for the occasional changing of the coffin pole from one shoulder to another. At intervals women came out from the group to dance near the coffin, one, two, or three at a time. One boy was particularly energetic in leaping in front of the corpse. When the performers had danced they returned to the crowd from which other persons immediately advanced. These detached and spontaneous performances each lasted about two minutes.

After two hours the bearers of the coffin moved away, followed on one side by some of the men, on the other side by a few women. A large number of men and women remained behind with the drummers. The music and the solo dancing continued. The corpse was removed to a place about a hundred yards from the spot where the initial ceremonies had been performed. The bearers still held the coffin on their shoulders, while men and women seated themselves on each side of the bier. This part of the proceeding was solemn and there was little conversation, though tobacco-smoking continued among both men and women (Plate XLV, Fig. 1).

A woman about forty-five years of age held a plate of corn meal in her hand while she stood close to the corpse and in line with the bier. She addressed the corpse very earnestly and paused intermittently for a reply. While speaking, the woman looked intently at the foremost of the bearers, who both stood immovable with their heads inclined forward and eyes directed to the ground.

764 My interpreter (Ngonga) said that the woman addressing the corpse was the oldest sister of the father of the dead boy, and that 602 she was asking the spirit of the dead boy why he died. Here Ngonga threw a side light on family relationships.

The father of the dead boy was the son of Ngonga's mother's brother. The dead boy used to call Ngonga *tate* ("my father"); Ngonga called him *omolānge* ("my child"). When the woman had addressed the corpse an old man took her place. He held up the

plate of meal and earnestly asked questions. Lukuma was the name of the father of the dead boy. The old man who addressed the corpse was the brother of Lukuma's mother. Ngonga explained that the woman addresses the corpse, "to give him sense so that he will not be ashamed to tell all about it"; that is, about the manner of his death. The old man said to the corpse, "*Etali* ["today"] *omolānge* ["my boy"] *tu yongola* ["we want"] *oku* ["you"] *tu* ["us"] *sanjuisa* ["make glad"] *o tu* ["to us"] *sapuila* ["tell"] *muele* ["indeed"] *cosi* ["all"] *ca* ["that"] *ku upa* ["you take"] *kilu lieve* ["from earth"]. 764 602

The pause which followed a question was intended to give the corpse time to reply. It is supposed that if the answer is in the negative the spirit causes the pole to swing slightly backward. An affirmative answer is given if the spirit makes the pole swing forward. The old man demanded, "Is it witchcraft that hates us and killed you? If it is witchcraft, come to the front." I could see no swing of the corpse on the pole, but Ngonga said that he could see the coffin swing backward to indicate a negative answer. I suspected that the interrogator of the corpse gave a signal to the bearers, indicating that the coffin was to be made to swing, but I could see no signal or movement of the coffin. While the corpse was interrogated, males among the spectators spoke to the old man who was asking the questions. Ngonga explained that these men were suggesting questions which might be asked respecting the cause of death. A witness in the crowd would say, "You have forgotten this," or "You have forgotten that." 764 787

The next question was one that calls for a detailed explanation. *Sambulu* is a bad spirit which is able to cause death when crying women and children offend him by their wailing. The mother of the dead boy was a slave whose husband was absent from the village for a time. During this period the master of the woman threatened to sell her; consequently she went to a Christian mission with her children, one of whom was the boy now deceased. The woman and children were crying, hence the possibility that the evil *Sambulu* had at that time entered the person of the boy whose funeral rites were now in progress. The woman had visited the mission a year ago, but this lapse of time apparently made no difference to the possibility that *Sambulu* had entered one of the children. The spirit made a negative answer to this ingenious suggestion and eventually indicated that death was due to a "bad belly." If no answer is returned affirmatively, recourse is made to the medicine-man, who carries out divination. The details of this method are described [776] [797]

the custody of a widow. The father, the brother, or the maternal uncle of the widow may take her. In the words of my interpreter, each says, "It is better that you should take her," and at last someone says, "I will take her." 105 593

A chief of Ngalangi revealed the most important aspect of polygyny when he apologized for the fact that only five of his eleven wives were present. The chief was anxious to emphasize the fact that he had eleven wives, though six were at work in the fields. 595

When one considers the prestige of village chiefs, and further reflects on the desirability of maintaining this power within family groups, the institution of polygyny becomes more understandable. In addition there is the necessity of having women to cultivate the fields. A polygynous system does not necessarily cause domestic conflict, because each wife has her own hut, fireplace, and utensils. Custom obliges a chief to spend four nights in each hut in regular sequence.

A first and principal wife is not offended by the introduction of other wives, for these reduce her own labor and announce the fact that she is the principal wife of a wealthy man. When photographing the king of Ngalangi with his wives, I observed that he sent the principal wife from the group in order to adorn herself with a piece of cloth whose value was greater than that of the clothing worn by any of the others. Among the Vakuanyama it was noticeable that the principal wife wore a head-dress of clay with five horns; and in addition to this she had costly necklaces of ostrich-eggshell beads, also more of the coveted *omba* shells than were allowed to other wives. In this way the prestige of the first or great wife is preserved.

The persistence of custom, the force of education through suggestion in early years, and the power of social attitudes, are well illustrated by the survival of kinship terms and the classificatory system of relationships, with its marriage prohibitions and sanctions of an arbitrary kind. The strength of the mores and the fundamental nature of this system of relationship in determining marriage, descent, succession, and inheritance, are indicated by the fact that the system is unaltered after three centuries of contact with Europeans. 602

The rights of a mother's brother extend so far as a sale of his sister's children to redeem his own debts; and reciprocally he is responsible for the conduct of his sister's children, even to the extent of paying fines for the thefts they may commit. This prerogative and responsibility of the maternal uncle is fundamental, and around the trait cluster points of law and legal procedure.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

114 could be observed. Eventually I decided to work in the Bimbe
121 area, in the extreme north-western corner of Umbundu country.
184 The census[10] indicated that Bimbe had a smaller white popula-
[162] tion than any comparable area of Umbundu country, and people who knew it considered that it was one of the areas most likely to retain a relatively conservative social life.

114 In Bimbe I settled in the village of Epalanga in the chiefdom
121 of Gumba. The advantage of Gumba lay in the conservatism
184 for which its people were noted in other chiefdoms; its dis-
101 advantage lay in its proximity to the northern boundary of Umbundu speech and culture, which led me to collect some items of ethnographic information not typical of Umbundu country.[11] On the whole, I am satisfied that the people of Gumba were in the past as in the present Ovimbundu in both speech and way of life.[12]

121 Many of my discoveries were at first negative ones. I could not find any evidence that there was a double system of kinship groups actually in existence; the villages were not composed of agnatic kin; the chief seemed lacking in power. Nor was it easy to obtain detailed information about the past even from old
181 men. There is little interest nowadays in history, nor are the old social institutions regarded, even by those who once participated in them, as being necessarily better than those of the present day. The reason for this attitude seems to lie in Umbundu social psychology with its readiness to accept European authority and
121 values. Interesting as the motivations behind this attitude are, this 'cultural amnesia' caused me much disappointment. I found it much easier to get texts on the caravan trade, and on ceremonial practices and proverbs, than on the political and kinship systems. The inadequacies of the information I received on the political system may be explained by the fact that Gumba is on the fringe of the area tributary to the old kingdom of

[10] Of 1950.

[602] [11] The payment of fines by a man to his dead wife's kin had been formerly practised in Gumba, and still is further north. It does not seem to have been known in living memory elsewhere in Umbundu country.

[12] The northern limit of Umbundu speech is now somewhere to the north of the administrative post of Cela. As there has not been substantial migration from the south, it is reasonable to assume that it is many years since the Gumba–Cela boundary was also the language boundary.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

[1874-1911]

631 764 funerals (though these burials could be undertaken by the cross-cousins of the deceased). When *vakwatjisoko* came to their partner-chiefdom for a funeral they had the right to steal small live-stock, such as chickens, or pigeons, but not cattle, goats, or [837] pigs. An *ukwatjisoko* could sleep with the wives of his *vakwatjisoko* partners without being sued for damages.[68]

631 [602] The ties of kinship and affinity crossed the boundaries of the sub-chiefdoms and even of the kingdoms.[69] The members [463] [574] of the three spirit-protected professions, blacksmithing, divining, and hunting recognized obligations of hospitality to co-professionals from other parts of the country.[70] Again the caravans were so large that they must have involved people [437] from many sub-chiefdoms, which presupposes a wide range of contacts.

182 It may be said that the picture given here is contradictory and inadequate. How can the existence of large kingdoms be reconciled to the extreme insecurity described by old men? How do the wealthy caravan organizers fit into the political system? What sort of politics were there in the kingdoms? It is not easy to answer these questions owing to the lack of evidence, and, probably, because the kingdoms were already in decline during the latter part of the rubber trade period. Indeed, the impression that accounts of the Ovimbundu in the nineteenth century give is that of adventure, battle, commerce, migration —a vigorous rather than a stable society.[71]

61 114 The kinship system is perhaps the field of Umbundu society which has aroused most interest among anthropologists. Childs and Hastings have written much that is interesting on the old double-descent grouping but as, with the kinship system, the form has been described rather than the functioning and it is

[68] Informants. The account in Childs, pp. 114–15 differs considerably. For this institution elsewhere in Angola see Estermann, 'Clans et alliances de clans', *Anthropos*, 1952.

[69] Childs, p. 54.

[70] Informants.

[71] Magyar describes the king and his courtiers as being extremely despotic towards the villagers, and states that their despotism depended on their having a standing military force called 'Sons of the Elephant' (pp. 278–80). Later accounts do not mention this, and Childs notes (p. 209) that at the height of the rubber trade it was more difficult for the kings to recruit armies for their wars.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

[Village of Epalanga]

cluster was much more autonomous *vis-à-vis* Sapapula than were the members of the Mbati-Mwehombo grouping through the more numerous and closer kin ties; yet it would be wrong to regard Ndjoleya's kin as isolated.[4] This greater autonomy was a matter of degree rather than kind. 621

With regard to geographical origin, it is evident that the population had been recruited from over quite a wide area. Of the 36 household heads 7 were born in Cela of whom 6 had come from Cela to Gumba, and 1 had been born in Cela, then come to Gumba, then moved to Menga and then returned to Gumba. 3 household heads had come from Utende to Gumba, and 2 had come from Namba. 12 had come to Epalanga from Cassongue. 7 household heads (including 2 who had subsequently lived in Cassongue) had at one time lived in Katembo (the village associated with Mbati). 1 householder was apparently born in Gumba but had no Katembo link. 2 household heads were from Ndjandju (one having lived in Cassongue after leaving Ndjandju, the other being the catechist) and 1 was from Chicunda. On the origins of 5 household heads I have no information. 166 592

My information on Epalanga suffers from a number of gaps. Some genealogical information collected was lost. Too frequently I neglected to ask if a particular relationship was patrilateral or matrilateral, nor did I enquire sufficiently as to whether particular marriages were between kinsfolk or not. 114

These deficiencies to some extent 'fit' the kinship system. A kinship tie may exist between two people which is significant in the social relations between them, yet they may not be sure as to whether it is patrilateral or matrilateral, or even as to what is the category of kinship involved. Thus a resident of Simbwyikoka's village told me one day that Simbwyikoka was his 'brother', some time later he was a brother-in-law, and after this again said that he was a 'brother'. 602

There is also confusion over pedigrees. The pedigree which Simbwyikoka gave me in December 1955 differed from the one that he gave me in April 1956. Two people who claim to be

[4] Ndjoleya once referred to himself as *Osikulu yinke* (elder of the *inke*) this being a case of *inke* used for a cluster within a village. Ndjoleya's folk recognized Sapapula as being head of the village.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

[Village of Epalanga]

602 'close' kin may not be able to indicate the set of genealogical[5] links between them and will not be at all surprised or even interested by this; hence it is impossible to draw up a genealogy of Epalanga. I have attempted to show the very complicated 128 network of relationships by a series of charts—one big chart would have so many cross-cutting lines as to be largely unintelligible.

Three charts are given to illustrate particular sections of the mesh of kin and affinal ties. They are not intended as exhaustive records of the relationship of any one kinship core or of any single individual. Rather, they are intended to give a general impression of how the proliferation of the strands of kinship [621] and marriage brings about a complicated and formless patchwork in which everybody is included.

2. *Information on Household Heads*

601 List I. Residents of Epalanga as of December 1956. Female 621 household heads are indicated by a star against their names. The numbers are used on the map of the village (see p. 50).

Sapapula's Kinship Core

1. Aspirante, sister's son of Sapapula, son-in-law of Wayangu.
2. *Avilo, sister's daughter of Sapapula, 'sister' to Tjingonene (31).
3. Batista, son of Epalata (5) and husband of a sister of Kasosi (7).
4. Bernacio, son-in-law of Sapapula, 'son' to Kasosi (7).
5. Epalata, matrilateral cross-cousin of Sapapula.
6. Ernesto, sister's son of Sapapula, full brother of Aspirante (1) married to a daughter's daughter of Sasamela (see List II).
7. Kasosi, 'grandson' of Sapapula through being sister's son[6] to Wasuka (15). A 'son' to Guilherme and 'father' to Bernacio (4).

[5] Ovimbundu even traditionally seem to have been little interested in genealogies. (Information from Dr. G. M. Childs.)

[6] According to Umbundu kinship terminology, Wasuka being a matrilateral cross-cousin of Sapapula could call him 'father' and Kasosi could call his mother's brother's (Wasuka) father 'grandfather'.

[cf. charts on pp. 91, 96, 97, in category 116-Analyst]

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wife of Ernesto (6). Patrilateral 'father' to Paula (24) and Saviel (11). Affinally related to Mwehombo, a 'sister' of whom he had married.

Wayangu, paternal half-brother of Mwehombo, resident at Epalanga till the end of 1955, wife's father to Aspirante (1) had married a sister (not clear whether own or classificatory) of Lusase.

3. *Kinship and marriage in the village setting*

The foregoing tabulated information and the charts indicate the two main principles of integration in Epalanga, as in other Umbundu villages, the settling of individuals near senior kinsmen and the existence of a number of intra-village marriage ties.

For a clearer outline of village structure to appear, it is necessary to give a brief sketch of the contemporary kinship system which will be discussed more thoroughly in later chapters. This is cognatic, with little distinction between patrilineal and matrilineal kin, the elementary family being the basic household unit, the individual being permitted to settle with any category of kin, and a high percentage of preferential marriages.[7]

The right of settling where one pleases, as 'the heart chooses', is recognized even in children. Minessi, the 7-year-old son of Gonçalve (18), used generally to eat at the household of his father's sister Paulina, the wife of Joaõ (20). Gonçalve said about this to me 'He is very fond of his father's sister.'

While the traditional norm by which a man lived in his father's village is still remembered, at least by older men, a

[7] Childs (p. 56) states that it is permitted to marry a cross-cousin on either side, a sister's daughter, and a father's sister. My informants generally agreed that the marriage with a father's sister was not and had not been permitted. Marriage is not permitted with 'true' kin of these categories. Padre Feltin, the superior of the Bimbe Catholic Mission who knew of the existence of these marriages, told me that very few Umbundu marriages came within the prohibited (a prohibition removable by a dispensation) degrees of kinship laid down by the Catholic Church (that is, up to, and including, third cousins). Such marriages in the past might have been with geographically as well as socially distant kin. Childs quotes a case of a marriage arranged, after the discovery of a kinship tie, between partners living as far apart as Ciyaka (Quiaca) and Ngalangi (Galangue).

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582 621 their marriage also fits a general pattern of Umbundu marriage, a choice made within a limited range joining together individuals of different kinship cores.

The multiplication of ties and their concentration within a neighbourhood by this means do not prevent a man from having kin and affines a day or two's journey away. It has earlier been indicated that the population of Epalanga was from quite a wide area. Yet the consequences of previous preferential marriages (thus Paulo and Saviel were related both patrilaterally and matrilaterally) and the trend towards the establishment of new marriage ties had created a complicated mesh of linkages that has been described within a not particularly stable village population, whose senior residents had been there for only ten years. To use again the anthropological metaphor of kinship as a network, the network can have odd strings running out quite a way, but in a village the different ties will be bound up in a knot.

602 166 The long-range ties (with such obvious exceptions as those with kin living in cities) are not the result of the range of kin spreading wider and wider under modern conditions. The evidence of pedigrees indicates that kinship and marriage links between individuals in, and actual migration to and from Gumba and Cassongue, Cela, and Namba, date back well into the nineteenth century. There is far less evidence of connections and migration between Gumba and areas to the south and east. This geographical aspect of social relations persists at the present day.

621 It has been indicated that the high proportion of preferential marriages creates a certain local stability, since many marriages are with people living close to. Yet the basic stability lies not so much in the relative stability of a local population, but in the pattern by which links of distant kinship are changed into marriage ties and new bonds are speedily established among the fortuitously assembled population of a new village.

4. *Headmen and Kinship Cores*

622 I now turn to the other principle of village integration, the settling of individuals near senior kinsmen. In the previous

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word 'otjitawila' is given by Dr. Childs[11] as being used for a section of the village; however, I have not found this word known locally. 621

It may be asked how typical Epalanga is of other villages. In size it is larger than usual, having 36 households. (The average number, using figures from 14 villages, is 18.36 households; the largest, Epalanga, had 36 and the smallest 5.) In structure other villages presented the same picture of ill-defined kinship cores held together by a network of kin and affinal ties, with village headmen emerging by a varying collection of claims, of which the most significant seemed to be a position as the principal focus of kinship ties.

5. *Kinsmen and the Choice of Residence*

When one asks a man why he has settled in a particular village, a common enough answer is that he has settled there because he has 'family' there. When asked who his 'family' (the Portuguese word *familia* is used even by non-Portuguese speakers) is, he will give the name of a senior kinsman, or he may give more than one name. He may even give the name of somebody living outside the village. Thus in Epalanga when I asked Bartolomeu why he had settled there he replied that it was because of his mother's brother Lusase who was not an Epalanga resident. It was therefore not practicable for me, as I had at one time intended, to find which categories of kin are most likely to be settled with, by asking individuals in villages I censused, and obtaining percentages. 591 602

It is possible to indicate some of the 'pulls' which affect a choice of residence. In the traditional system, when a boy's father died he would settle with a father's brother. Nowadays, it is generally expected that he will settle with his mother's brother, this being the answer given by informants when asked where he will go. In practice, the pull of the mother's brother's household for a child does not seem to be so strong. In Epalanga, out of thirteen persons under 20 who had neither father nor mother resident in the village, only one was living with a mother's brother. 591

[11] See Childs, pp. 36–37.

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604 621 On the village level, however, the importance of the mother's brother tie and of the tie between matrilateral 'brothers' becomes very apparent. None of Sapapula's four sons had settled in Epalanga, and his only classificatory 'son' was Gonçalve, own son to Mwehombo, Sapapula's matrilateral 'brother'. Seven household heads were sister's sons of Sapapula. This trend for matrilateral ties to predominate is marked also in Katembo and Mbunga, but less evident at Belem. Indeed, 'neo-matrilinearity' as a principle of village structure may be a general and not simply a local feature of Umbundu society, since Mr. C. M. N. White[12] has found that the settlements of Ovimbundu within Northern Rhodesia are marked by a predominance of matrilateral ties. This is referable to the contemporary kinship system in which the father-son tie is predominantly a personal one, with a limited extension of attitudes to classificatory fathers, whereas a man's relation with a mother's brother seems little affected by the question of genealogical distance. Perhaps the relations between the group of agnatic kin were so closely tied to the old village structure that when it broke up it disintegrated also the wider agnatic ties. Yet at the same time such matrilineal institutions as matrilineal inheritance and the non-repayment of loans among matrikin have weakened or disappeared.

[593] 602 178

591 Running counter to this principle of settling in the village of a senior kinsman who is likely to belong to one's matrikin, is the principle of cross-cousin marriage. 'If you have married your cross-cousin when your son grows up he will see a cross-cousin here, a cross-cousin there, and so he will stay.' That is, a man will stay in his father's village not simply by virtue of the father-son tie but because he will be surrounded by kinsmen. The relation between cross-cousins is one of equality and solidarity, expressed in joking and in burial services. To say that one stays in a place because one has cross-cousins at hand is to indicate an ideal of equal relations with a circle of kinsmen rather than attachment to the following of an important kinsman.

[582] [605] [602]

591 602 These two principles co-exist in actual social life. A man will recognize and respect a number of senior kinsmen living in his

[12] In letters.

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neighbourhood and will explain his choice of residence by quoting the names of one or more of these; yet the weaving together of so many strands of kinship and affinity, ultimately through marriage links, is what gives the local population its relative degree of stability. It should be emphasized that the integration established within a village by the network of kinship and affinal ties is dependent on the integration created by the same amorphous network which runs through and beyond the sub-chiefdom. It is this network into which the individual is woven by multiple ties that absorbs the neo-matrilineal pull apparent to some degree in choice of residence and keeps the system essentially cognatic.

The use of the word *família* reflects this situation. A man may say of a particular senior kinsman 'He is my *família*', that is, my kinsman, my most important kinsman with whom I have settled, yet also he may say 'My *família* is in Cela', that is, the greater part of my kinsmen live in Cela. When Bartolomeu explained that he had settled where he did because of Lusase, he was perhaps combining the two kinds of references. He had settled in Gumba because he had a large number of kinsmen there among whom Lusase was pre-eminent. A man explaining the locality of his *família* in the wider sense will associate it with a particular sub-chiefdom—'My family is all in Menga'—when he is outside it; when he is in it he is more likely to refer to a particular village.

Although individuals living in a village may have come there through several kinship sources yet the majority of them will probably have some kinship or affinal tie with the traditional headman. This collection of individual ties does not provide the headman with a body of followers, nor is having a large number of dependants a value of contemporary Umbundu culture. If it were felt that the best thing to be in life is the patron of a body of kinsmen and followers, headmanship would survive as a predominant influence in local life despite the collapse of its political and legal responsibilities. In fact not even old men feel this way.

The idea of the village as a corporate group with a jural and political personality rather than a residential unit has not survived the break-up of agnatic solidarity, the disappearance

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gramophone in a town rather than at a trader's near his home village. Most of the money paid for purchases at the stores is money raised by selling crops or livestock. Through labour migration there is, however, some transmission of skills; it is easy to find bricklayers and carpenters of a sort even in Gumba.

Money, rather than barter, is the principal means of exchange among the villages in the selling of local products, and even of meat from pigs. Payment for labour service, such as assistance in house-building and in bringing in maize, is made in beer, except among Protestants who substitute a meal. There is also a custom by which a household which finds, probably at the end of the dry season, that it has not enough maize will make beer to exchange on a particular day for maize.

Ties of kinship and friendship have some economic significance. A kinsman will help with house-building without expecting payment; likewise a man who has a cleared field which he does not want to use may sell it for 200 escudos (£2. 10s.) but would give it free to a kinsman. A man may make a charge for lending his bicycle, though this varies with individuals; he certainly would not do so if it were lent to a friend. Loans between kinsmen should be repaid, and a tailor with a sewing-machine will make the same charges to relatives as to non-kinsmen.

There are few occasions for groups to work together. The unit of consumption and production is the domestic family. Even here, the husband, each wife, and the adolescents have their own fields, though a man may help his wife. Such other occasions of mutual help, in clearing a field, which may occur between friends or kinsmen, will only bring a few, often only two of them.

The Ovimbundu I knew were (with exceptions) not avaricious or grasping; thus, beer might be given to people who have not actually worked in house-building parties. It is regarded as a moral duty to pay one's monetary debts as soon as possible. On various occasions I lent money to people who were pressed and I received back all the money lent. Borrowers insisted that borrowings should be written down, and that the paper on which it was written should be given to them when they paid, or destroyed. Making money and being rich are regarded with

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unambiguous approval, though there is a certain undertone suggesting cunning in the verb *oku lunguka* (to be shrewd) used about prosperous people. The old suspicion of sorcery attaching to people who were more successful farmers than their neighbours[6] seems to have disappeared. While a prosperous villager would be expected to lend money to a poorer kinsman (provided the latter was not known as a bad debtor) yet, the situation which occurs in other parts of Africa, where, as Dr. V. W. Turner notes of the Mwinilunga Ndembu, prosperous Africans 'find themselves increasingly embarrassed by the demands of their kin for presents in cash and kind'[7], would not arise among the Ovimbundu, who would regard such demands as being unjustified, even outrageous.

Wealthy Ovimbundu may spend some of their wealth on clothing and on drink. Cattle-buying has been noted as a form of capital investment and the same term may be used of small stock buying. Another way of disposing of money is by building a house of bricks with the assistance of a bricklayer. A plough may be, but rarely is, bought by two men joining together to pool their money. Generally speaking, the agricultural technology of the Ovimbundu has been little changed since 1911 except for the spread of the techniques of coffee-growing.

It has been noted earlier that the Ovimbundu play an important part in the economic life of Angola both as cultivators and labourers. In this chapter an attempt has been made to show how at the local level it is the cultivation of cash crops, rather than migration for wage labour, which incorporates villagers into the commercial economy of modern Angola. The main source of money in rural areas is the trader's store, which is also the main recipient of money, apart from the administration. While trade both between Ovimbundu and between Ovimbundu and other tribes survives on a minor scale, the social institutions associated with the rubber trade, the large caravans, the non-repayable loans within the matrilineal group, and the obligations of wealthy traders to assist their kin, have disappeared. The contemporary social structure with the

[6] Childs, pp. 106–8.

[7] V. W. Turner, op. cit., p. 135.

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114 One anthropologist, Mr. W.D. Hambly, and two missionaries

with anthropological knowledge and interests, Dr. Daniel A. Hastings and Dr. Gladwyn Murray Childs, have written on Umbundu kinship.[3] Mr. Hambly's main interest was in material culture and the conditions of his fieldwork were not such as to give him much evidence on the kinship system.[4] Both Dr. Hastings and Dr. Childs recognized the central importance of kinship in Umbundu social life, but have outlined the kinship ties and kinship groups rather than given a detailed analysis.

602 Mr. Hambly states that 'The phrase *Epata Lia Tate* (or *Oluse*) means "family of my father" and includes all relatives on the father's side. The words *Epata Lia Mai* (or *Oluina*) mean "family of my mother".'[5] This could mean that the Umbundu kinship system is bilateral. He states that inheritance is matrilineal and marriage virilocal, a situation consistent with such a matrilineal kinship system as that of the Bakongo.[6]

613 622 Dr. Hastings, whose thesis was completed the year before the publication of Hambly's book, makes it clear that there are two sets of kin groups. 'Over each village is a ruling elder who is the head of the kinship group of that village since all who reside in the village are generally related to him and to each other patrilineally. This elder, greatly revered, is considered the patriarch of that local group. Residence being patrilocal, [59] the office of an elder is hereditary through the male line.'[7] He 613 then goes on to contrast with this, 'the matrilineal sib to which each member is linked, though he may be living in a village away from his sib group.'[8] This group is a clearly defined

[3] Works cited in footnotes to Chapter I. There is a typescript of Hastings's thesis in the library of the International African Institute, London.

[4] Mr. Hambly spent five months in the country, and used as his interpreter and main informant an English-speaking Otjimbundu. He seems simply to have visited villages without living in them. Dr. Childs and Dr. Hastings had both spent several years as 'bush' missionaries. Dr. Childs had actually taken over from Dr. Hastings work in the area to the north-west of Bailundo in the direction of Bimbe, and had subsequently obtained information in Cassongue. He later obtained a good deal of material from African pastors, teachers and schoolboys.

[5] Hambly, pp. 191–2.

[6] For the Bakongo see the discussion by A. I. Richards, in Radcliffe-Brown and Forde, pp. 213–21. Anthropologists have more than once suggested to the author that the Umbundu system was not of the 'double-descent' category but some combination of virilocal marriage and matrilineal descent.

[7] Hastings, p. 16.

[8] Ibid.

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601 The reciprocal of *tate* and *mai* is *omola* (child), usually with the possessive pronoun. *Nungulu* is used for the first-born son, and *kwasula* for the youngest. The reciprocal of both *sekulu* and *apahai* is *otjimumba*. Elder sibling is *huva*, younger sibling is *mandja*, both used with the possessive pronouns. *Kota* seems to have meant formerly the eldest sibling but it is now equivalent to *huva*. *Mukai* is sister, man speaking, and *mume* is brother, woman speaking.

Epalume, pl. *apalume*, cross-cousin
K'oluse patrilateral cross-cousin
K'oluina matrilateral cross-cousin

Makulu[13] is used for 'grandfather' and very often for grandmother, though for the latter there is a separate term, *inakulu*; the reciprocal is *onekulu*.

Nawa brother-in-law, sister-in-law. Extended to all siblings, real or classificatory, of a wife, the husband of any female sibling, and the siblings of such a husband.

Ndatembo father-in-law, mother-in-law;
son-in-law, daughter-in-law.
Ndatembo is used only in reference; to address these affines one uses *tate* and *mai*.

Tjikwelume[14] sister's daughter's husband, sometimes father's sister's husband. The wife's mother's brother may be regarded as a mother's brother or as a *ndatembo*.

[602] *Tjisoko* (funeral friend) is used as a kinship term both in address and reference. This is an abbreviation of the more correct *ukwatjisoko*, of which the plural is *vakwatjisoko*.

The term for wife is *ukai* (woman) or *ufeko* (girl), the latter being perhaps more frequent. *Vey'yange* (my husband) is used as a term of reference by a woman rather than *ulume* (man, husband). Husband and wife would address each other by name or '*a ukuetu*' (O friend). If an individual is both an affine and a kinsman the affinal ties take precedence.

[13] Elsewhere *Sekulu* is used for 'grandfather'.
[14] Albino Alves, Vol. I, p. 448, gives *Tjikwelume* as sister's son.

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Osanto or *osiala* (namesake) is used as a kinship term, both in address and as reference. 601

Oluse and *oluina*, which were formerly the words for the agnatic and matrilineal kin group, now mean the patrikin, that is, all to whom one is paternally related, and the matrikin, all to whom one is matrilaterally related. A man, describing a particular tie, may say that it is 'in the matrikin of my father', that is, the relative is a matrilineal kinsman of his father. The terms *onele yohondji* ('the side of the bow') and *onele yohumba* ('the side of the basket') are equivalents of *oluse* and *oluina*.[18] The term *epata* may be used in a general sense for kin but it has very often a primary reference to the matrikin. *Família* (from the Portuguese) means kin in general but it may mean 'kinsman' with reference to a single individual: 'So-and-so is (or is not) my *Familia*.' *Ngandi* (which also means 'So-and-so,' equivalent to the Portuguese *fulano*) means kinsman and *usitwe* is kinship. 602 [177]

The use of Portuguese terms is now frequent even among those who do not speak Portuguese. The terms most frequently taken into the Umbundu language are *mano* which is used to mean 'elder brother,' and *mana* which is used to mean 'elder sister,' both terms being used by either sex, *primo* (feminine *prima*), cousin, which is used as an equivalent of *epalume* (cross-cousin), *tio* (uncle), which is now used more frequently than *sekulu*, and *cunhado* (feminine *cunhada*) brother-in-law or sister-in-law, used in the same way as is *nawa*. Ovimbundu villagers talking Portuguese will apply the Portuguese terms in Umbundu style. Thus *irmaõ* (brother) will be used as an equivalent of *mandja* (younger sibling of either sex), and *irmaõ mais velho* (older brother) will be used as an equivalent of *huwa* (elder sibling of either sex). Similarly *tia* (aunt) will be used as an equivalent of *apahai*. 601 177

The rules about which term may be used in a particular defined relationship (e.g. my wife's mother's brother) are not clearly and exclusively defined. What is more surprising is that a man may not be certain what is the category in which he should class a kinsman with whom he has frequent contacts. Thus Paulo, the elder of the school at Epalanga, often played 601

[18] As noted previously in the references to Chapter I these terms do not seem to have referred to descent groups.

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slave. Once ransomed a boy could not be sold again. If, however, the father was displeased with his son's behaviour he could refuse to ransom him. When a man died, his adolescent sons wouldgo to the household of a classificatory father and the children who did not yet 'have sense' would go with the widow to her kin, returning to their agnatic kin when they were older. 593 768

4. *Analysis of the Old Kinship System*

The ethnography of the Ovimbundu does show that there existed a double-descent kinship system, each individual belonging to both a local patrilineal group, and a dispersed matrilineal group, in which movable property is inherited. So great has been the impact of social change that not only have these groups disappeared but it is practically impossible to gain additional information on them by direct questions about their nature and functions. The information on kinship norms does give a somewhat clearer picture. 611 613 [422] 613 178

Within the village there was a very strong emphasis on the unity and solidarity of the men of the village. The men's house was the main social centre of the village where the men ate, received guests, and listened to cases. It was about it rather than about the person of the headman that ritual clustered.[20] The elementary family was not the unit of domestic consumption, and it is clear, from the taboos regarding contact with women kin, and the evidence as to the social life of the man's house that there was little recreational contact between the sexes. The concept of *ondjamba*[21] shows that the elementary family of husband, wife, and children, was morally and ritually significant, but many of the educational, nutritive, and recreational funcions frequently associated with it were here attached to the mens house. 575 594 575

The strength of the agnatic ties in this society seems to have lain in the solidarity of the men of the village rather than in the patriarchal authority of fathers over sons. A son was economically independent of his father since he could trade on his own while his father was still living; the most powerful social sanction in the hands of kinsmen, that of being sold as a slave, was 593 [602] [604]

[20] For these rituals see Hastings, pp. 73–76, and Childs, p. 39.
[21] Ondjamba will be discussed more fully in the next chapter.

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The rules about avoidance at night are still kept. The prohibitions on a man borrowing his father's clothes and sleeping in the same room as his father seem to survive. The prohibition on a child speaking the name of his father or mother reported by Childs is not, and was not formerly, found in this area. It is, however, wrong for a child to address his parents by name. 593 551

Children begin to work in the fields when they are about six. Occasionally boys of 10 to 11 go to the coffee fields for two months work, but usually boys do not go out to work until they are about 14 or 15. 857

A boy going out to work should ask his father's permission to go though this is not always done. Returning from work whether contract labour or voluntary work a boy should bring presents to his relatives. He would be expected to give something, say, a jacket, to his father, and a cloth to his mother, on returning from voluntary work and a shirt to his father on coming back from contract labour. These gifts should be made in kind. Money lent from son to father should be repaid, though it is wrong for a son to enforce payment by appealing to the post for policemen. A father may give money to his son for bridewealth, and may suggest a choice of bride. He cannot constrain, nor could he in the past, his son and daughter to a marriage they do not wish. 593 [583]

A man cannot be said to have real authority over his grown sons. The stated norm is that a man's sons stay in the same village till he dies. He has no power to make them do so, and they are not condemned by public opinion if they live elsewhere. A man's attitude to classificatory 'fathers' is determined by the age, status, and personalities of those involved, rather than by jural rights and obligations. I have found men unable to tell me what had become of their own brothers' children. 604

Formerly when the father of an adolescent boy died he would join the household of a father's brother. Nowadays this would be much less likely, as it is common for such a boy to settle with other categories of kin, notably siblings and maternal kinsfolk. A man is free to stay with his brothers if he wishes, or to leave them. 768

While the tie between full brothers is held to be the strongest, as regards classificatory brothers there seems to be a slight 602

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602 leaning towards matrilateral rather than patrilateral brothers. The classificatory kinship terminology, and the lack of genealogies and kinship groups, means that a man knows a great many classificatory brothers living in his neighbourhood of whom he vaguely recognizes some as 'close' others as 'distant', but with whom his relations are not especially significant. A boy or girl [268] who loses his or her parents is fairly likely, judging from the evidence of Epalanga households, to settle with a full- or half-brother or sister.

602 591 178 Formerly, owing to virilocal marriage, a sister was geographically separated from her brother, and even if widowed or divorced would not necessarily return to his village, but might go to her mother's brother.[24] With this geographical separation went a situation of possible conflict, since the brother could sell his sister's children to recoup his own debts, and the shadow of sorcery fears seems to have touched this relationship.[25] The suppression of the rubber and slave trades and the subsequent disintegration of the kinship groups have removed the economic pressures which made for conflict between matrilineal kin and the residence rules which divided people locally into groups of agnates and their wives. The brother-sister tie has therefore [593] changed its content, since it is released from the heavy pressures formerly active in the matrilineal kin groups.

562 It would be wrong to produce any such generalization as 'a woman must always be under the guardianship of a male relative'. A woman who is widowed or divorced or whose husband is away working will tend, however, to develop a particular link with the male head of some household, her own kinsman usually, except in the case of a labour migrant's wife, when it may be a kinsman of her husband. Thus in Epalanga, Augusto (25) aided the household of his absent full brother Julio (29).

602 Aid is most likely to be given to a kinsman's wife when the two households are close together. The underlying idea seems to be to keep the kinsman's household together rather than any duty of aiding an affine. For a widow or divorced woman or the

[24] Childs, pp. 25–37.

[25] H. W. Nevinson (*A Modern Slavery*) gives a complicated story which suggests this possibility (p. 101).

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wife of a 'lost' labour migrant the tie with the brother or other 602
kinsman will be more important, though the degree to which there is contact between the two households will vary.

It would seem that the present significance of the brother- 593
sister tie is due to the frequency and likelihood of husbands being away from villages as labourers. The strength of this tie gives added significance to the mother's brother—sister's son tie.

A sister's son traditionally inherited his mother's brother's 604
movable property, and during his lifetime might borrow from him without need of repayment. Against this, the mother's brother had the right to sell his sister's son as a slave and it was he who was considered most likely, both traditionally and at the present day, to practise sorcery against his sister's son. My [254]
informants were divided as to whether the sister's son can practise sorcery against his mother's brother. However, it was stated by Hastings[36] and by my informants that sorcery was only practised between matrilineal kin. It is not easy to see how in the past the relationship between a man and his mother's brothers operated—to what extent a man had particular expectations and obligations to one particular mother's brother rather than to the whole set of senior matrilineal kin.

At the present time the content of the relationship between mother's brother and sister's son seems very fluid, depending on age and personal compatibility. An important difference arises between one's attitude to 'mother's brothers' and to 'fathers'. There is no strong tie with one's mother's own brother, as there is with one's own father; on the other hand, a boy whose father has died is regarded as much more likely to go to the house of a classificatory mother's brother than to the house of a classificatory father, although, as has been noted, children and adolescents may settle with kin of other categories.

Traditionally the relationship between a man and his wife's 607
brother was distant and reserved, the two men being forbidden to eat together or joke. Nowadays the relations between a man and his wife's full or half brother are often very friendly; quite often when one finds two households close together they turn out to belong to men related in this way.

A brother-in-law is not regarded as a kinsman—he does not

[36] Hastings, p. 87.

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6. *Descent, Inheritance and Succession*

There is little interest in genealogical detail among contemporary Ovimbundu, which is not surprising since there exists no system of descent groups in which the position of the individual may be genealogically defined nor does affiliation to a particular line of descent give status *vis-à-vis* people of less eminent descent. Pedigrees are traced (in either line) for only two to four ascending generations though one man I met could name ancestors for nine ascending generations. 602

Despite this vagueness and lack of interest in the articulation of relationships, Ovimbundu will say that such-and-such a kinsman is 'close' and such-and-such is 'distant' even though they cannot fit this into a genealogical framework. 'Closeness' and 'nearness' are not simply used to refer to geographical proximity or social co-operation, since there may be much mutual assistance between kinsmen who are 'distant'. One might speak of a blurred edge of kinship not clearly defined in categories of kin but not non-kinsmen. A man may speak of somebody on this 'blurred edge' thus: 'He must be a kinsman but I don't know how.' Similarly the *vakwatjisoko*[1] are a class of people who are not definitely kin, and not non-kin. [608]

There is little formalized distinction between patrikin and matrikin. There is a certain matrilateral pull in the choice of residence, a man being, as has been noted, more likely to settle with a mother's brother than with a 'father'. I had the impression that a man is more likely to settle with a matrilateral 'brother' than with a patrilateral one, but it would be very difficult to establish this by quantitative methods owing to the complexity of the factors affecting residence. As a man tends to settle where he has a number of kin rather than in the shelter of one particular kinsman, this trend does not lead to the formation of matrilineal clusters of kin. The majority of informants still consider that sorcery can only be practised among matrilineal kin but for various reasons it may be said that the fear of sorcery is not significant in kinship relations.[18] 602 591 602 754

[18] It may be suggested that the disappearance of the matrilineal groups which imposed a co-operation involving exacting demands has been paralleled by the decline of sorcery, the mystical reflection of underlying tensions. How is the fact that several informants told me that sorcery had declined since the days of the [178]

[1] [i.e., funeral friends -- Analyst]

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Inheritance of movable goods was traditionally entirely matrilineal. Today informants are confused as to what ought to be done. Inquiry about particular cases will reveal that often no movable property was left by the deceased, it having been used to pay for such expenses of the illness and funeral as the purchase of medicines and the buying of animals to be slaughtered at the feasts.

Where there is movable property, the transmission of it to the heirs is carried out in a rather informalized way, as so often happens in Umbundu social activities. The actual division of property is undertaken by a kinsman of the deceased. This should apparently be the most senior kinsman. It may be a cross-cousin or 'brother' or a sister's son.[29] How it is decided who is the senior kinsman, and who are fitted to participate in the share-out is not very clear. Nor does it seem that there is any effective device against the sharer-out giving himself the lion's share, except the general pressures and reciprocities of kinship. The principle accepted in the share-out is that inheritance should be a reflection of the relations which existed with the dead man, and also be a reward of funeral services. Nothing is kept for kin who are away working, and a son who did not keep in contact with his father would be omitted from the share-out.

By inheritance a man can increase his small stock of possessions. He is unlikely to receive anything much in the way of money, and since there is no land shortage, and, as yet, little in the way of valuable immovable property such as brick

rubber trade to be reconciled with the statement by Childs that fear of sorcery was increasing (Childs pp. 57–58)? I suggest that the final disintegration of the old kinship groups may have been marked by particularly sharp social tensions, but that once these groups were in fact dissolved and a new form of social relations established the fear of sorcery may have declined. It should also be remembered that as indicated in Chapter V the present-day economic values of the Ovimbundu do not lead to expectations that a prosperous individual will share his wealth with poorer kinsmen, as was the case in the time of the rubber trade. Hence accusations of sorcery based on disappointed expectations of generosity are unlikely to arise.

Another aspect of the question which cannot be explored here in detail is the lack of agreement on the causality of classes of happenings or individual events. Thus one informant will say that a woman's pains in childbirth are due to sorcerers among her kin, another will say that they are caused by God (as we would say, are natural).

[29] Hambly, pp. 199–200.

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houses, coffee plants and so on there is little likelihood of disputes arising about the inheritance of land claims. A woman's property should be given to her sisters, after her children have had their cut. In one case a man inherited his sister's debts but allowed her children to inherit her property, 'lest they be sad'. A wife's fields return to her husband.

Inheritance is then a process by which the relations of certain kin, both sons and sister's sons, with the deceased are recognized by the transmission of his property. As with other aspects of Umbundu kinship, while the existence of the kinship tie provides the basis on which to found a relationship, its content is determined by the nature of the contacts between the individuals involved and the services given.

Although there is a definite tendency for men of chiefly stock to have longer pedigrees than other individuals there is no chiefly genealogy. When Paulo, the elder of the school of Epalanga, told me that had he not been blind he might have been chief of Gumba, he quoted the names of four chiefs to whom he was related. The chieftancy is not tied to a lineage, but can be held by any individual who can claim links with a former chief or chiefs. People 'of the blood of the chiefs' in no sense form a differentiated group of aristocrats significant in social life.

In similar fashion membership of the spirit-linked professions and of certain cults seems to have been a matter of succession of one individual to the role of another.[30] Membership of the hunting and smithing professions descended patrilineally, but if a hunter or smith had no son his position could be succeeded to by a daughter's son.[31]

7. *Kinship in a Changing Society*

From this, and from other chapters, a picture of Umbundu kinship may emerge as something so blurred, confused, and confusing, as hardly to merit the term 'kinship system', yet at

[30] i.e. rather than admission to a corporate group of hunters. A man can inherit his father's hunting spirit before the latter's death; in Epalanga Batista had received the hunting spirit of his father Epalata.

[31] My informants were not agreed as to whether a sister's son could inherit in default of a son.

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602 183 the same time clearly an important part of social life. Kinship norms are confused, as is the correct term to use in a particular relationship. Ritual and jural sanctions are lacking, as are institutions based on the regular co-operation of groups of kinsmen. Yet a man likes to live with kinsfolk and there is a tendency for kin to cluster together in a neighbourhood.

602 621 By the very facts, that so many of a man's neighbours are his kinsmen, and that there is very little marked differentiation between the behaviour towards different categories of kin, kinship is robbed of any great specificity of content. It might be said that it is the quantity rather than the quality of kinship ties that makes kinship significant in establishing a 'sense of community' in a neighbourhood, in that the multiplicity of local kin ties creates some identification between a man's range of kin and his neighbourhood. At the same time a kinship tie provides a basis on which a closer relationship may be built by reciprocal services. It appears that the inheritance of property 602 428 recognizes kinship in this way by recognizing claims not on the basis of strict genealogical proximity but on the quality of the relationship.

128 A discussion of marriage and the household must be left to the next chapter. The outline given of the present kinship system is sufficiently clear to begin an examination of the reasons for the changes. This must rely to some extent on speculation, owing to a lack of information on the actual working of the kinship system while it was in transition to its present form.

613 178 The key change is the disappearance of the kinship groups. These, it seems, disappeared because of their high degree of dependence on the particular type of economy existing before 1911. It has already been argued that the distinction between the patrikin and the matrikin is an attempt to isolate economic claims and conflicts from village and political relationships, and that the giving of loans without right of repayment within the matrikin was called for by a trading system in which credit played an important part. With the end of the trade the wealth passing through Umbundu hands declined sharply, and there was neither need for funds to meet trading losses nor currency to provide them. A man obtained money either by growing crops

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helped by his wife and children or by going out to work. Neither means of making money involves regular co-operation with a body of kinsmen. The occasional co-operation needed in situations of financial crisis or mutual help for some particular job can be provided by those of a man's numerous kinsfolk with whom he has established ties of amity above the mere recognition of relationship.[32]

The disappearance of the matrilineal group was a logical consequence of the disappearance of its *raison d'être*. With the disappearance of the matrilineal group, there was no longer any need to preserve the distinctive nature of the agnatic group. It is quite possible to suppose that the village might have preserved its patrilineal base if other factors had come into play. Such possible factors would be a shortage of land, danger of attack from enemies, or the use by the headman of his political power to keep control over his patrikin.[33]

A question of some significance arises from the differences of attitude to a man's 'fathers' and to his 'mother's brothers' which has been noted earlier on. From the literature it might seem that the link between agnates was very strong, and that it is surprising that it should have broken up so completely. It may be suggested that the unity of agnatic kin was expressed in the idiom of relations between villagers rather than of relations between kin, and that within the village there was not necessarily much greater solidarity between siblings than between distant agnates. The solidarity of paternal siblings was then, granting this hypothesis, a reflection of the wider solidarity of the village. When the village disintegrated the close ties between brothers disintegrated also.

The unity of the matrikin was perhaps expressed to a much greater degree in a kinship idiom.[34] This is perhaps one of the

[32] The amount of aid an individual can mobilize in case of need depends to a very great extent on personal factors. It should be emphasised that it is personal co-operation over a number of years rather than any genealogical nearness that inclines a man to be helpful. While helpfulness to kinsfolk is a norm of Umbundu ethics, it is possible in practice to provide excuses for non-co-operation.

[33] The rapid disintegration of the indigenous system of authority after the middle thirties may reasonably be linked with the decay of agnatic ties of residence.

[34] 'When an Ocimbundu speaks of his family (*epata*) in the sense of a large and widespread organization with a recognised head in some elder, it is generally his *ekina* to which he refers.' Childs, p. 44.

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reasons behind the 'neo-matrilineal' pull in residence, the other being the new relationship between brother and sister, with its consequent influence on the mother's brother—sister's son relationship.

In this chapter on the kinship system the preferential marriages have not been discussed at length, but without them the contemporary kinship system would not tie up as it does with the local organization. The next chapter complements this one.

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582 Another explanation, which I have quoted earlier, is that if one marries a kinswoman, one's children, when they grow up, will not leave, since they see 'a cross-cousin here, a cross-cousin there'.

All these reasons are no doubt to some extent valid. There are no fixed limits for bridewealth and no doubt some bride-
[583] wealths paid in a cross-cousin marriage are higher than some paid in marriages between non-kin; however, it is generally held that a kinsman is less demanding over the question of bridewealth than a non-kinsman. There is some evidence that cross-cousin marriages are more stable than those with non-kinsfolk. The high proportion of cross-cousin marriages naturally leads to an individual tending, when considering the possibility of marriage, to think of his female kin, even though there is no individual girl whom he is expected to marry.

768 The custom of fining a man whose wife had died was noted among the Ovimbundu a hundred years ago by Ladislau Magyar; in recent times it seems to have disappeared from most of Umbundu country. Its survival in Gumba up to the last few years may be related to the links existing between Gumba and the northern non-Umbundu peoples, who apparently practise it to this day.

582 The last of the explanations given may be translated thus, 'Cross-cousin marriage means that the children will have the same individuals as both patrikin and matrikin. They will remain in their father's village, where he is living with his kin and will not be inclined to return to their matrikin.' This line of argument comes close to the 'observer' explanation previously offered that preferential marriage greatly increases the number of social relations within a neighbourhood. The Ovimbundu do not see this aspect of cross-cousin marriage, and this fits their
[829] lack of any 'model' of their own society as a whole, which is in turn a consequence of the rapid social change they have experienced. However, they do see cross-cousin marriage as increasing the number of ties which exist for an individual in his village and neighbourhood.

602 The diagrams and information contained in Chapter IV have already indicated how individuals are linked by marriage ties, and in Chapter VII the way in which brothers-in-law may

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live next to each other has been noted as a new development, impossible in the days of agnatic residence groups. It will be remembered how in listing the kinship cores of Epalanga, Joaõ was placed among the kin of Mbati and Mwehombo with which he had become associated through his marriage to Paulina, although he had come to Epalanga through his relationship to Sapapula. 602

I have earlier described the preferential marriages as giving 582 'stability' to the kinship system and as providing a limit on 602 the spread of affinal ties. In what does this stability consist, and how far is there really a limit?

The stability given by the marriage system is not the sum of the stability of individual marriages. Nor is it more than partially a local stability; marriages are not limited to a small geographical range, although the network of marriages between kin is very significant in local relations and even 'long distance' marriages which renew links with Cela and Namba reflect long-standing contacts of marriage and migration. The stability lies in the 'pattern' by which new preferential marriages are constantly being made.

The socio-geographical range over which wives are found does not differ appreciably from the socio-geographical range over which kin ties exist, which, as has been noted in Chapter IV[3], links Gumba strongly to Cassongue, Cela, and Namba, rather than with areas to the south and east, and this range does not seem to be expanding under modern conditions. Migrant labourers do not return to Gumba with wives from other areas. The only definite exception I knew to this rule was provided by Sawaisi, a traditional village headman, who had travelled on the caravans and had subsequently been a soldier. Stationed at Luanda he had there married three Kimbundu women with [640] whom he returned to Gumba, where they were still living with him during my stay.

The preference for kinship marriage is not a limiting factor on marriage in the way that a rule of endogamy is, since a number of marriages occur with non-kinswomen. It is a limiting factor in the way that it gives an additional significance to kinship, since in the choice of a wife the distinction between kin and

[3] See p. 58.

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583 602 non-kin, which is not marked in ordinary social life, becomes important. Kinship marriages transform 'distant' kin ties into close affinal ties which will in the next generation become close kinship ties.

It is extremely difficult even to guess how this system operated in the past. Did the high rate of preferential marriages have the same function formerly as now? Or has the institution continued in being, while its function relative to the total society has changed? The testimony of that informant of Dr. Childs who told him that formerly all marriages were kin marriages and that patrilaterally one only married on 'the side of the basket' and matrilaterally only on 'the side of the bow'[4] has led Professor Barnes to suggest[5] that the preferential [114] marriages functioned as links between descent groups. Both Dr. Childs and myself, however, have found that 'the side of the bow' and 'the side of the basket' are simply synonyms for '*oluse*' and '*oluina*'.[6] Moreover, my informants did not confirm his statement since they denied the right of marriage with a father's sister, and the quantitative information shows that even in the past some marriages were with non-kinswomen, and that others were with categories of kin theoretically forbidden, so that, then as now, the preferential marriages were with distant kinswomen rather than with a specific category of kin.

If, however, kinship marriages in the past operated as they now do, it is difficult to see their relation to the patrilineal and matrilineal groups. A clue to a solution is surely given by the custom of 'cutting the blood', which destroyed kinship to begin affinity. Marriages were arranged, it may be suggested, with those people who were still just kin, and who probably often were also geographically as well as socially distant so that the number of ties outside the sub-chiefdom might be increased, a matter of importance for long-distance traders. Later, Portuguese rule made travel no longer dependent on such long range contacts. Meanwhile the disintegration of the agnatic residence

[4] The exact words are 'Formerly people never married unless they were related, that is to say unless they touched the blood together. If in the mother's kin (*k'oluina*) only on the side of the bow (i.e. male line). If in the father's kin (*k'oluse*) only on the side of the basket (i.e. female line)'. See Childs, pp. 53–56.

[5] Review of Childs in *Man*, 1950, pp. 126–8.

[6] Dr. Childs was speaking to me apropos of Barnes's interpretation.

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groups began to make the socio-geographical function of these 582
marriages no longer the renewal of ties with distant kin but the 602
holding together of the local community no longer held in the firm framework of the old local organization.

Several explanations can therefore be given for preferential 582
marriages. From the point of view of the man making such a marriage there are economic advantages in the probably lower bridewealth and, formerly, the avoidance of the fine payable on the death of a non-related wife. The marriage itself is more likely to be stable, and a man's children are more likely to stay with him if they have other kin close at hand. The local mobility of the Ovimbundu to some extent assists marital stability, since a bride arriving in a village may well find there other kin than her husband and his relatives, and may find such relatives helpful to her.

From an observer's view-point, preferential marriage is important on the village and neighbourhood level by multiplying social links within them. Its importance for the kinship system lies in its giving significance to the distinction between kin and non-kin and in keeping kinsfolk together without either localization of kinship groups or villages with strong headmen.

2. *Husband, Wife, and Household*

Traditionally the Ovimbundu lived chastely till marriage, 836
and there existed sanctions in the form of fines, alterations in 684
the marriage ceremony, and mystically caused illness, against unchastity.[7] The force of these sanctions has weakened in modern times;[8] however, many Ovimbundu remain chaste until marriage.

The age of marriage is about twenty-two for a man, and about 582
eighteen for a girl. In Gumba there is some tendency to marry younger at about 16–17. Villagers in Epalanga ascribed this to contract labour, that is, to the necessity of a contract labourer having to have someone to cook for him. This is a point which will be considered later in reference to the wife's services to her

[7] Hastings, p. 181. Childs, p. 113.

[8] Childs, loc. cit., and fieldwork.

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604 This strong pull towards the mother's brother is, however, marked on the level of village relationships as has been already noted. It is possible that with regard to co-operation on the [607] domestic plane the tie between a man and his wife's full or half siblings is stronger than that with his sister's children. This 607 argument would claim that the tie created by marriage between a man and his wife's full or half siblings is one of the strongest in the Umbundu social structure, and as a further proof (albeit not quantitively assessed) may be quoted the frequency with which two households close together turn out to belong to a man and his wife's brother.

582 602 In the first section of this chapter it was argued that the high rate of preferential marriages greatly increased the number of social ties between individuals in a neighbourhood, and brought a renewal of ties with distant kin. In this section various aspects 593 of the relationship between husband and wife have been examined. Husband and wife co-operate economically and outside working hours may pass their evenings together. In a dispute taken to the post a man is likely to take his wife as a witness. Mystically sanctioned obligations do exist between husband and wife. While the elementary family is the main 592 domestic type, households headed by women are also found and there is a certain amount of mobility of children between households. The tie of a man with his wife's siblings, particu- [607] larly when they are children, is significant for the domestic organization of households.

582 602 621 Marriage is indeed the pivotal institution of the Umbundu kinship system. The preferential marriages do not link descent groups to one another; rather they bring about the local concentration of kin which makes out of many vague and insecure links a strongly-woven community in which both husband and wife can live with relatives near at hand.

593 Of the personal relationship between husband and wife it would be impossible to say as an anthropologist has of another African people, 'Here people looked for little in marriage. A man would turn to his sixteenth cousin twice removed before he turned to his wife.'[22] A man shares with his wife his work and leisure, is linked to her by mystical obligations which are not

[22] Eleanor Smith Bowen, *Return to Laughter*, London, 1954, p. 117.

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ended by her death, and can rely on her testimony in a case. Even though adultery is reputedly frequent it is deplored and, as will be shown in a discussion of disputes, a man's hostility to another will be ascribed to thwarted lust for the latter's wife. The conjugal bond is the closest social relation that can exist between adults, and therefore the very type of personal enmity is provided by the adulterer or would-be adulterer.

I am here emphasizing the factors which strengthen the conjugal bond; at the end of the previous chapter I emphasized the strength which the brother-sister tie possessed under changed conditions. The balance between these two ties is to be seen in the way in which a man and his wife's brother are often next door neighbours and the best of friends. It may be suggested that this balance reflects the part-peasant part-proletarian condition of the Ovimbundu, the emergence of the conjugal family with its importance as the working team for the cultivation of cash crops, and the 'reshaping of' the brother-sister tie with the absence of husbands as labourers. It seems probable from the example of the substantial coffee-growers that had the Ovimbundu become full-time cultivators there would have been a strong trend towards isolated households and the weakening of the 'neo-matrilineal' pull which operates in the villages.

It is then the marriage tie which holds the vague, amorphous, kinship system together; it is against this vagueness that the marriage bond appears as the closest and most definite relation that can exist between two adults; and the change-over from trade to an economy based on wage-labour and cash agriculture has been accompanied by a transition from a double-descent kinship system to one in which the emergence of the elementary family co-exists with a certain pull towards matrilineal kin.

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story to explain the non-appearance of the others which satisfied the *chefe*.

The catechist was somewhat criticized for not having pushed on with the case, and thereby perhaps getting Guilherme landed in jail. Guilherme did move out of the village in February and settled near the outskirts of the Protestant village of Kalungwengwe. Kapapelo also set about moving out of Epalanga.

In the conflict which has just been described, there are three disputes, the question of the bridewealth which involved Luciano, Simbwyikoka, Guilherme, and the anthropologist, the quarrel between Paulo and Guilherme, and the subsequent uprising against Guilherme which takes its signal from Paulo's reference of the dispute to the priest.

The question of bridewealth repayment is subordinate to, indeed enclosed within, the main dispute. It does illustrate one point central to the problem of Umbundu social control, the absence of any court machinery. Jeremias and Luciano had tried to recover it by appealing to the priest; later Luciano and Simbwyikoka attempted to get it back by coming and demanding it, that is by self-help. Another extremely significant aspect of the social structure is revealed by this 'enclosed' case. Guilherme after a bitter dispute with Paulo which has ended in the arrest of Paulo and Bartolomeu borrows 200 escudos from them as a kinsman. This indicates that kinship ties can survive and function despite a quarrel which they do not check or prevent, a point which will be developed later in an examination of how kinship affects and is affected by a dispute.

The conflict cannot be viewed as simply a dispute between individuals, nor as a dispute between the holders of opposed roles. Guilherme was generally regarded as lacking 'sense' (*olondunge*), the quality, greatly admired by the Ovimbundu, of good judgement and decent social behaviour, and he confessed himself to be at fault. Yet he could not have acted in the way he did unless he had been a government headman, nor would the uprising against him have taken the form it did had he not held an office dependent on the post. There is, however, no necessary conflict between a government headman and the catechist or

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than the catechists and 'elders of the school'; yet the weakness of the agents of the post before a local opposition led, not by such traditional figures as Kafelo and Sapapula, but by the school functionaries, has been demonstrated. The post accepts intervention by the mission in supporting disputants, and the mission is ready to help not only its disputants but any native who has a strong case—that is, it has a generalized relation of patronage to all natives.[12] Hence, since in a serious dispute people look round for a 'civilized' patron, the mission is the one most likely to be appealed to, and these appeals usually go through its local agents.

While the symbiosis of two societies, one ruling, the other ruled, is a common feature of modern Africa, the extremely limited nature of the role delegated by the administration to the native authority, the 'patron-client' tie linking 'civilized' persons to the natives, and the opportunity given to patrons to intervene in cases before the *chefe*, seem to be distinctive features of Portuguese colonization.[13]

The third aspect of the social structure mentioned in the introductory section was the role in disputes of kinship ties. It has been earlier noted that Sapapula's supporters regarded him as a victim of a concerted alliance by Guilherme, Kapapelo, Lusase, and Ndonga. In fact Lusase had avoided getting involved in the dispute between Guilherme and Paulo, had supported Sapapula against Kapapelo, and had disclaimed responsibility for Ndonga's act. The present social structure is not one in which groups of kin habitually co-operate;[14] and it is possible that this belief in a coalition against Sapapula reflects memories of the old social structure.

Kinship ties between individuals seem neither to restrain them from quarrelling nor to be liable to permanent disruption as a result of quarrels. By August 1956 Kasosi was once again

[12] It is felt in administrative circles that the advancement of the African is mainly the responsibility of the missions.

[13] Anybody who knows the Portuguese well will acknowledge the importance given to personal influence (*cunha*) and the lack of esteem for bureaucratic (in the Weberian sense) procedures.

[14] See Chapters IV and VII for details on the kinship cores and on general aspects of kinship. The support which Sapapula received was not confined to his own kinship core—thus Gregorio who enthusiastically supported Sapapula was not even a kinsman.

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on good terms with Guilherme, who was a 'father' of his, and even earlier in June part of the celebrations which marked the marriage of Paulo's son Jose to Pungu, a girl from Namba, whose mother had at one time been married to Kapapelo, took place at the latter's house. Most strikingly of all, as has been noted, Guilherme could borrow money from Bartolomeu and Paulo at the height of their quarrel. The kinship bond exists outside of and, it might be said, at a deeper level than, the quarrel, and the rebukes hurled at an adversary reflect this. Paulo did not complain that Guilherme was a bad cross-cousin; instead he complained that Guilherme was not grateful to him for having baptized his dying child. The motive for co-operation or conflict in everyday life is to be found not in the tracing of genealogies but in the tally of reciprocal services and grievances between two individuals.

It may be claimed that this portrait of the kinship system which emerges from the disputes as being loosely structured and lacking defined obligations, but providing an underlying continuity, is very similar to that given in Chapter VII, which was based on questioning and the observation of everyday life.

The significance of the conjugal bond appears both positively in the way Luanga and Sapapula both take their wives to the post as witnesses, and negatively in the way the hostility of Kapapelo and Lusase to Sapapula is interpreted as being inspired by lust for his wife. Even the accusations of adultery so readily hurled about in disputes reflect the stereotype of the adulterer as the arch-enemy, and likewise the arch-enemy of the moment as at least a potential adulterer.

One question remains to be answered. Was Epalanga a particularly rebellious, squabbling, divided, village, because of the presence of an unusual number of aggressive individuals? It is not possible to estimate the number of disputes per village, and the disputes which have been described were the most important of which I had personal knowledge. They were touched off by personal antagonisms rather than by structural contradictions. Yet they tie in with what has been said of the Umbundu social structure in earlier chapters to such a degree that they seem to reflect the lines along which any case of the sort would proceed. The weakness of the chiefs, stripped of

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

602 592 the mother who bore me and the consideration naturally expected from her cannot, in the nature of things, be given or received by *all* of the elder and younger mothers in exactly equal degree, but the type of behaviour is similar. The elder sister who carried her younger brother about on her back when she herself could hardly more than walk, or the elder brother who first taught his younger brother to make and set his little traps, has a warmth of regard which he cannot extend with just the same force to fifty or one hundred younger brothers, but nevertheless the pattern will be of the same sort if and when similar opportunity offers. The same may be said for the younger and the elder fathers, and again for the *tatekāi*, the 'female father'. But here elements other than 605 604 the early household patterns enter as also with *manu*, the mother's brother. Chief of these other elements is the fact that these two classes of relatives, together with the *va cepua*, i.e. cross-cousins (mostly children of the *manu* and *tatekāi* classes), and also the *ovimumba* (plural) (one's own nephews along similar lines of descent), are all potential spouses or potential relatives-in-law.[1] The relations of *ocimumba* (sister's son) and *manu* (mother's brother) in Umbundu society follow a pattern not exactly like any other set of relationships in any society of which I know. Suggestions of this have already been given. The *manu* shares his sister's desire for the advancement of her son, and if the nephew has had a part of his education in the uncle's home or on his trading expeditions, the relationship will have become closer. It may be, however, that the uncle's own difficulties may lead him to exploit his nephew rather than to attend only to his advancement.[2] The 602 178 ties of the paternal group tend to be strengthened at the expense of the maternal family and it seems that the increasing localization of the Umbundu family with the supplanting of trade by agriculture (as a man's full-time occupation) has furthered this process.

602 It is very important for one who would understand the Ovimbundu to look upon the Umbundu kinship structure with the eyes of an Ocimbundu. If one brought up to other ideas and other relationships finds this difficult, that is all the more reason for making the effort. I cannot better summarize the Umbundu

[1] See *infra*, pp. 52 ff.

[2] This is one of several points where the commercial tendencies seem to come into conflict with the patterns of the kinship group.

1 Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

291 The practice and teaching of modesty seem to have been chang-
554 ing considerably for a long time. The influence of Europeans has doubtless had its effect, but more fundamental, it seems, has been the effect of increasingly generalized use of clothing, a process which began perhaps 200 years ago, but is yet far from complete. The time when boy or girl may begin to wear clothing is determined less by age than by the economic status of his family. There seems to be no shame (on the part of the child) connected with late wearing of clothes, but once a child has begun to wear a cloth, he or she is taught that it is shameful to take it off in the presence of those who are older. That this attitude is not of recent origin is attested by its appearance in a biographical narrative which goes back sixty years or more.[1] A large proportion of the women have only enough cloth for workaday wear for a short skirt, so that they leave the torso bare, but once one becomes accustomed to covering the torso always, she would be ashamed not to. This feeling belongs more to the field of economic status than to that of modesty. This shows up clearly in the strong objection to being ragged (*epêl*), which has nothing to do with modesty but rather with economic status. The narrative concludes the teaching of social usage with this observation: 'From the time that children first enter into the school of understanding (*olondunge*), parents recognize that it is proper to respect them, rather than to revile them or tell them that which is evil.'

868 3. *Training in skills.* Before the age of eight or nine, children acquire few definite skills. Many of their games, however, are in imitation of adult activities, and adults recognize their preparatory nature and value. The little girl in caring for her younger sibling acquires certain skills, but with little or no definite adult guidance. Little boys begin early to make and set traps and snares under the tuition of an elder sibling or cousin. The first rat or bird caught belongs to the tutor. Games of many sorts are played: games with sides, round games, games with an 'It', imaginative games, and competitive games; games demanding skill, especially with dances of some intricacy. Games in imitation of animals are favourites, including 'bird calls', in which very ingenious words are set to the bird songs.

604 4. The Ovimbundu have a custom somewhat comparable to
867 what Vedder calls '*child insurance*' among the Herero,[2] i.e., the

[1] From a manuscript by Daniel Kalei of Bailundu.
[2] In Hahn *et al.*, op. cit., p. 177.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

sending of children to stay with relatives or friends. The Ovimbundu consider it definitely an educational device. From the age of six or seven years children are sent singly or in pairs to spend as much as one or two years in the home of the mother's brother. If conditions are favourable they may also be sent to stay with the father's sister or brother, and girls (other than the first-born) may be sent to the mother's mother. Formerly, prominent families arranged for their sons to stay in the king's capital. These periods spent away from home may continue well into adolescence. Not only relatives but also friends, blood-brothers, and *vakuacisoko* (members of a certain communal order)[1] exchange children for certain periods in this way. This custom is by no means dead. It is now being carried on even within the Christian community. Its educational purpose is obvious.

604 867 [608]

Later Childhood

(*From about nine years until puberty*)

There is no definite time which marks the transition from early to later childhood, but there are marked differences between the two periods. The chief criterion is one of physical development for as soon as the child is physically able, he will begin to assume a definite role in the work of the adult community. This rarely comes before nine years of age and may be somewhat delayed. Soon after a child gets the permanent teeth, a notch in the form of an inverted V (Λ) is chipped between the two upper front incisors.[2] This is a sort of national mark which many people omit to give their children at present. The line of observance is not sharply drawn as between Christians and non-Christians, as with the Herero.[3]

858 [304]

Formerly, the beginning of the period was well marked for the boy by his first trip with a trading caravan. Most of the present older generation have had this experience and nearly every man of the present middle-aged generation as well. Nowadays the boy of this age may begin to work in the fields with his father, he may begin to learn a trade, or he may be sent to school. Few Ovimbundu put their children in school before this age, and they evidently do not believe that younger children would profit by the instruction

868

[1] See *infra*, p. 114 f.
[2] See Hambly, op. cit., Plates XLIX and LIV.
[3] Vedder in Hahn *et al.*, op. cit., p. 177 f.

233 The cattle herd obtains most of its food by grazing, but in the dry season the grass withers. Childs states[1] that "Herding has been a [609] function of the sister's son, and even now there is a reluctance on the part of the boys to herd for their fathers."

235 462 [844] Chickens are owned and looked after by both men and women, but other animals only by men. Boys may have small stock of their own, and a boy's economic independence most frequently begins with his owning a chicken.

231 Hambly states that goats are more common than any other animal, and that every family has one or more. These animals are not fed or watered, but are allowed to wander to find their own sustenance. Goats are not milked. Young males are castrated. The goat is frequently used in sacrifices. Sheep also are allowed to find their own food; the males are not castrated. Pigs are cared for comparatively carefully, receiving water and a daily supply of sweet potatoes and their leaves, together with some corn. Male pigs are castrated.[2]

APICULTURE[3]

[439] Beeswax was an important item of trade in the caravan days, and is still sold to Portuguese traders' stores, where it is massed into large rectangular cakes for export. Honey is eaten alone or with manioc, and [762] a fermented beer called *ochase* is made by adding honey to corn-beer. [273] Fibre strainers are used for cleaning the wax, and large shallow baskets [252] are employed for drying the honey in the sun.

Large cylindrical hives, which are private property, are placed high in the trees. These are made by removing a cylinder of bark and lashing the halves together with strands of bark, forming a hive which has a diameter of one foot.

In Elende honey is removed from the hives during the months of August and December. One man ascends the tree in order to lower the hive with a long rope of bark or plaited fibre, while beneath the tree men are prepared to take the hive, which is opened over a smoky fire.

ARTS AND CRAFTS

326 782 *Smithing.* The profession of blacksmith or *ocivinda* is an important one, and, like hunting and divining, is sacred and is entered with special ritual. Often, but not always, these three professions are passed on by inheritance. For smithing two years' apprenticeship to a member of the profession is necessary, and is usually entered upon at the age of eighteen. At the end of this period the master examines his pupil, and makes tools for him, especially the heavy hammer or *onjundo* which is regarded as symbolic of his craft. For the inauguration ceremony the boy provides four chickens (2 male, 2 female), a dog, and a goat; the blood of these animals is sprinkled on his tools, and their flesh is eaten at a feast [553] attended by the villagers. Throughout the procedure the boy remains standing on the small anvil. Finally he is asked to choose his professional name; he then steps down from the anvil a qualified blacksmith.

(1) Childs, 1949, p.109. (2) Hambly, op.cit., p.154.
(3) Hambly, (4) 1934.

611 dispersed. Both groups have ritual leaders, whose offices are quite dis-
613 tinct. Barnes' suggestion[1] is that the two groups must be father's patrilineage and mother's matrilineage, with the qualification mentioned below.

613 The *oluse* consists of a large number of village groups, some of which
recognise mutual relationship,[2] but with no recognised head (other than
622 the village headmen) except in the case of the royal families. Land is owned by the *oluse* and passed on within it from father to son, or from
[428] elder to younger brother. Succession to village or tribal office, from village headman to king, descends in the same way.[3] Ritual leadership within the *oluse* lies with the village headman, who is in charge of the
[346] spirit-hut *(etambo)* of the guardian spirit of the village (or of the nuclear *oluse* within the village), and who officiates at regular village worship, including agricultural festivals.

613 The *oluina*, on the other hand, is a dispersed and apparently larger
428 group, whose members live with their various paternal lines of descent. The size of the *oluina* is unknown; Childs merely refers to it as a "large
604 and widespread organization, with a recognized head". The office of head of the *oluina (ukulu wepata)* descends from mother's brother to sister's son. Negotiable and moveable property, including cattle and trade goods, is owned by the *oluina* and inherited by the sister's son. Formerly the mother's elder brother had great powers over his sister's sons, and was even able to pawn them or sell them into slavery, to meet his own debts.
[592] The patrilocal household is usually responsible for training children, especially during their early years, but they are frequently sent to the *oluina* (i.e. to the mother's brother) for at least a part of their educa-
[582] tion. At death or divorce of parents, children go to the *oluina*.

The head *(ukulu wepata)* of the *oluina* is usually both the legal and
43 spiritual head of the group, although today the two functions are often divided. He is in charge of the spirit hut *(etambo)* of the guardian
782 spirit of the *oluina* (of whom there may be more than one, and of whom he becomes one after death). He leads the *oluina* in propitiatory rituals carried out in case of illness, death, or other misfortunes within the group, or in prayers made for desired economic advantages. (Apparently no regular rituals are carried out by the *oluina*.) The *ukulu wepata* may or may not be at the same time a village headman; if he is, he will be priest of two lines and have charge of two spirit huts; if he is not, there may be two (or more) priests in the village, each in charge of the spirit-hut of his *oluse* or *oluina*.

The onĕlĕ yohonji and the onĕlĕ yohumba

613 The *oluse* and the *oluina* are both divided into male and female
"sides": the *onĕlĕ yohonji* (the side of the bow) and the *onĕlĕ yohumba*
602 (the side of the basket). It has been noted above that uterine brothers
582 and sisters belong to the same *oluse* and *oluina*, but to the male or female side in each, according to sex. The composition of these "sides" is

(1) Loc.cit.
(2) If some villages within the *oluse* cannot trace mutual relationship, the *oluse* should perhaps be called a patri-clan rather than a patrilineage.
(3) But see below, p.29.

862 "The practice of leaving the ocisemba in the village by day makes his elder sibling[1] responsible for much of his education.....She herself may not be more than six or seven years old and consequently cannot be expected to 'educate' her charge very thoroughly. She interests herself in his walking and talking and he will initate her in many things."[2]

863 General instruction in cleanliness begins at this age, although sphincter control may have begun much earlier, since the mother feels every movement made by the baby on her back.

145 After weaning the physical development of the child proceeds more slowly than that of European peoples, and Childs believes that this may be due to deficiencies in diet.[3]

CHILDHOOD AND EDUCATION

857 From the time a child is able to walk until he is about nine years old he continues seeing the same people as before, but he becomes less de-
861 pendent upon the elder sister or cousin who helped him, and begins his life-long association with his age-mates. The sex-division of society starts for him at this stage: from about eight years boys begin to eat in the *onjango* with their fathers, girls continuing in the kitchen with their mothers. After about eight years the father becomes largely responsible for the education of boys, the mother for that of girls. During this period the child's education may be summarised under three heads:

869 (a) *Psychological*, chiefly fear of real or imaginary dangers. This is imparted by mother, elder siblings, and perhaps by a grandmother; there is a tendency for the teaching of fear to be done by women.[4]

867 (b) *Social*, chiefly usages of etiquette and acquaintance with the kinship structure and its requirements. A child of about eight is supposed to know his social status and all the etiquette that pertains to it. In the *onjango* the hierarchy of age is observed, honoured guests and old men being served first, and so on all down the line. With the decline of the *onjango*, there has been a great decline in the teaching of etiquette and social usage, and this naturally affects boys rather than girls.

864 Little direct sex teaching is attempted, and adults are reticent in speaking of sexual matters in the presence of children. But since children live with their parents in one-roomed houses, it is inevitable that children should sometimes observe intercourse.

868 (c) *Training in skills*: Children are taught few definite skills before the age of eight or nine, but many of their games are in imitation of adult activities.

● 604 From the age of six or seven years children are usually sent to spend
857 one or two years with the mother's brother. They may also be sent to the father's sister or brother for a period, and, in the case of girls, to the mother's mother. Formerly prominent families sent their children for a

(1) Either a brother or sister may act as nurse.
(2) Childs, op.cit., p.95. (3) Ibid., p.97.
(4) Childs actually writes " 'the side of the basket' " (p.100), but seems to be referring simply to female relatives.

time to the village of the paramount chief. These periods spent away from home continue into adolescence. Not only relatives, but also friends, blood-brothers and vakuwisoko (see below) exchange children in this way. 604 857

Later childhood

No definite time marks the transition from early to later childhood, but there are marked differences between the two stages. As soon as the child is physically able, he begins to assume a definite role in the community. Soon after a child gets his permanent teeth, a notch in the form of an inverted V is chipped between the two upper front incisors. Formerly the beginning of the period was marked for the boy by his first trip with a trading caravan; today a boy of this age may begin to work in the fields with his father, or begin to learn a trade, or be sent to school. A girl starts to learn field-work and housework. 852 858

Professions

A boy is expected to learn the profession or *ocipinduko* in which his father or his mother's brother is expert, and after that, should he wish to learn some other side-line profession, he may apprentice himself. All children, both boys and girls, are expected to learn to cultivate, but that is not counted as a profession. The principal *ovipinduko* (professions) listed by Childs are: for girls, basket-making, pottery-making, medical practice and divination; for boys, mat-making, wood-working, rope-making, thatching, fishing, apiculture, hunting, smithing, and medical practice and divination. The last three, as has been mentioned above, are "sacred" and entered under special conditions. 462 868 [463]

"Later childhood, then, is the period of technical training during which it is expected that a large amount of economic responsibility will be assumed. A child begins to own property even before this, and from the beginning of childhood will be accounted legally responsible for his actions. It is recognised, however, that he should not be set tasks beyond the experience or ability of his age and that the full responsibility of adulthood will come only with marriage."(1) 866 [672]

The coming of European commerce, industry, and government has created new types of employment for boys and men, some of which cause a prolonged absence from the village and a loosening or severing of kinship ties. There are no estimates of the number of persons employed by Europeans, or the average length of their absence from home. 178 466

ADOLESCENCE(2)

Childs found that the onset of puberty was late among the Ovimbundu, coming between fourteen and sixteen years for girls and between fifteen and seventeen years for boys. Soon after puberty young people generally stop sleeping in the parents' house. The girls congregate in kitchens and each boy builds himself a house, in which he will live through adolescence 882

(1) Childs, op.cit., p.110.
(2) Based on Childs, op.cit., pp.98-9 and 111-18.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

He draws the crescentic arrowhead (p. 123) still common among the Ovimbundu and Vachokue; the double iron gong (p. 122): and the musical bow, which he calls a viola (p. 121). 175 114 [534]

Sogaur states that iron-working had an advanced technique at Dindo, more than half a century ago. According to Sogaur, the blacksmith was using scrap iron from European sources (II, p. 14). 175 326

Perhaps the most valuable of Chatelain's books is "Fifty Folk Tales of Angola." The stories are accompanied by translations and ethnological notes, the most important of which are references to the carrying of a corpse on a pole; the building of a cairn of stones over the corpse of a hunter; matrilineal descent and the power of the maternal uncle over the persons of his nieces and nephews (sisters' children). My observations included some details respecting the pawning of a sister's children to redeem the debts of their mother's brother. Chatelain adds that sisters' children are successors to private property and chieftainship (pp. 8–10). My notes agree that property is inherited by children of a deceased man's sister, but my informants said that a new chieftain is normally the eldest son of the principal wife of the dead chief. Chatelain's folklore stories, fifty in number, relate chiefly to animals; this was the only kind of story told to me, but W. C. Bell has recorded a few tales of another type. 173 [114] [764] [611] [604] [428] [538]

Marquardsen (1928) devotes only one-fourth of his book to the ethnology of Angola, which he treats in a very general way; there is no section dealing specifically with any particular tribe. The author calls attention to Chapman's observation of rock paintings of South African Bushman type, between Cuma and Luimbale in northwest Angola. I have elsewhere remarked on the occasional occurrence of physical types which show a strain of Bushman blood. Today Bushmen penetrate southern Angola from the Kalahari (Plate LXIX, Figs. 1, 2), but their presence in times past or present does not affect the course of history or the data of ethnology to an appreciable extent. 114 177 [531] [144]

Marquardsen gives some notes of a general kind on Vaheneca, Mahuila and other tribes of southwest Angola. The suggestion is feasible that the Umbundu name Suku, for a supreme being, is the same as the Nzambi of Lunda and the Congo. Marquardsen refers to the importance of the maternal uncle in Umbundu society, to the poison ordeal, and to the burial of an Umbundu chief in oxhide, all of which points were recorded in my observations at Elende. 114 101

Ferreira Diniz's book is unobtainable, but, judging from the summary given in *Anthropos* (XX, 1925, pp. 321–331), the information was collected by a questionnaire widely distributed among adminis-

601 Table A indicates a wide use of the word *nawa* for "in laws" of the speaker's generation. Thus Ngonga calls the wives and husbands of his brothers and sisters *nawa* without distinguishing them in any way. The term *nawa* has a still wider connotation for it includes Ngonga's father's brother's son's wife, and his father's sister's daughter's husband. Ngonga's wife said that she uses the word *nawa* for all the brothers and sisters of her husband, for all the children of her husband's father's brother, her husband's father's sister's children, her husband's mother's brother's children, and her husband's mother's sister's children. Reciprocally, all these people call Ngonga's wife *nawa*.

605 582 Table A introduces the question of cross-cousin marriage, which is the functional form among the Ovimbundu. My informant said that he calls his mother's sister's children brothers and sisters, therefore he could not marry the girls. Neither are his father's brother's daughters eligible for marriage with him. The table shows the truth of this, for Ngonga calls his father's brother's daughter *mukai*, meaning "sister"; she addresses him as *kota* or *huwa* ("brother"). Ngonga also addresses his father's brother's son by the term *manjange* ("younger brother") or *huwange* ("older brother") according to the relative ages of the speaker and the person addressed.

When Ngonga was asked whether he could marry a daughter of his mother's brother, he replied, "I could marry her very well indeed." A marriage of Ngonga with his father's sister's daughter would be permissible but Ngonga said the marriage is not regarded as a good one "because the children will be stupid." Ngonga could marry his mother's brother's daughter's daughter, or his mother's brother's son's daughter. It would also be permissible for Ngonga to marry his father's sister's daughter's daughter, or his father's sister's son's daughter.

604 601 Ngonga said, "My father's brother is my father, and my mother's sister is my mother." When questioned further my informant said that a marriage with daughters of these relatives would make him *ocinyama*, which means "an animal." Relatives would say, "You have shamed the family." It will be noted from Table B, First Generation of Ngonga's Ascendants, that Ngonga's father's brother calls him *omolange*, meaning "my child," for which the reciprocal is *tate* ("father"). Ngonga's father's brother's wife is *mai* ("mother"), and she calls him *omolange* ("my child"). Ngonga distinguishes between his mother's oldest sister (*mai yukula*), and his mother's

youngest sister (*mai yamalele*). Ngonga's father's oldest brother is *tate yukulu*. 604 601

Thus far Ngonga was clear about his eligibility for marriage, and in addition to this he was sure that he could not marry a sister of his wife while his wife was alive, but he could marry his wife's sister, after the death of his wife. The wives of a deceased elder brother are divided among his younger brothers, or a man may inherit the wife of his mother's brother. Ngonga always laughed heartily at the idea of marrying a woman much older than himself. He did not know whether he could marry certain older people of the *ndatembo* and *maikulu* class but thought the idea amusing because of their age. 587

In discussing law, inheritance, and slavery, the importance of the mother's brother will be indicated, and for this relative there is the term *manu* (or *inanu*). The *manu* calls Ngonga *ocimumba cange*, but he calls Ngonga's wife *ndatembo*. Ngonga's mother's brother's wife, also Ngonga's father's sister, are *aphai*, which my informant interpreted as a "female father." 604

The use of the word *nawa* has been explained in such a way as to show that Ngonga's wife uses this term for a large class of relatives by marriage who are of the same generation as her husband, while these people reciprocally use the word *nawa*. Ngonga uses the word *nawa* in exactly the same way for corresponding relatives of his wife. 601

This term *nawa* is not to be confused with the term *ndatembo* whose connotation is indicated by the following examples. The wife of Ngonga applies the term *ndatembo* to certain of her husband's relations who are not of his generation. Thus she calls Ngonga's mother *ndatembo* when speaking of her, but she addresses her mother-in-law as *mai* ("mother"), while *ndatembo* describes the relationship between Ngonga's wife and his father. Moreover, Ngonga's wife uses *ndatembo* to describe her husband's father's brother's wife, and Ngonga's wife is called *ndatembo* by her husband's father's sister, her husband's father's sister's husband, and her husband's mother's brother. These are relatives by marriage but they are not of the same generation as her husband.

Table C, Second Generation of Ngonga's Ascendants, gives no particular difficulty. *Maikulu* includes the paternal grandmother, the father's father's sister (great aunt), the maternal grandmother, the mother's mother's brother's wife, and the mother's mother's sister. Therefore *maikulu* is a class name for the second generation of female ascendants.

601 *Sekulu* includes the father's father, the mother's mother's brother, and the mother's mother's sister's husband. The terms *sekululu* and *kukululu* were used by Ngonga as being synonymous, and therefore they have the same connotation. With regard to the term *maikulu* Ngonga seemed clear, but in reply to questions concerning the reason for having the terms *kukululu* and *sekululu*, he was evidently confused. At last he said, "It does not matter, they are the same people." Ngonga never hesitated in giving the reciprocal for all these terms, which is in every instance *onekulu*. These terms may have been correlated with different functions which have now become obsolete.

604 601 The two most important collateral relatives in the parent's generation are the father's sister (*aphai*) and the mother's brother (*manu*). The term for father's sister means "female father." As such her relations to ego are similar to those of a father, consequently it is not considered right to marry her daughters. The mother's brother, on the other hand, is without doubt ego's most important relative. The two are linked by a series of reciprocal duties and obligations. Marriage of a mother's brother's daughter, or a mother's brother's widow, is a correct procedure. The value of the more important reciprocal duties is indicated in the following sections on law and government.

602 171 There was no possibility of devoting more time to the matter of relationship terms, but there is here sufficient to indicate the remarkable persistence of the kinship system in spite of three centuries of contact with the Portuguese and other Europeans. Moreover, the information gleaned by interrogation of Ngonga and his wife gives the main points for comparison with systems of a similar kind that have been given for Ashanti, Uganda, and Rhodesia, by Rattray, Roscoe, and Smith and Dale respectively. These kinship systems are the same both in general principles and in considerable detail.

601 The foregoing notes and tables were studied by Mr. Zachary Taylor of the University of Chicago, who prepared Tables E and F. Mr. F. Eggan offered useful criticisms. The Arabic numerals on these charts refer to the numbers used to designate terms of relationship on the list on page 199. [115] The ego or speaker is Ngonga, my interpreter, whose direct line of relationships is shown in Table E, while Table F indicates the terms used by Ngonga for his wife's relatives. The levels numbered in Roman numerals on Tables E and F indicate the generation stratification as follows:

428 not entitled to inheritance of land, cattle, or anything else belonging to the dead man. The greater part of the property would be bequeathed to the eldest brother of the deceased's mother.

428 604 768 There appears to be discussion as to the distribution of property, but the maternal uncle is responsible for settling disputes. He himself has the first claim, and in Ngonga's words, "If there are quarrels about the cattle, land, and other things, the mother's eldest brother will settle them."

The mother's brother has rights over his sister's children even to the extent of pawning them to pay his own debts. On the other hand the maternal uncle is responsible for the conduct of his sister's children. He would have to pay fines incurred by thefts they committed, and he provides for his sister's son a wife who is either his daughter or his widow.

Ngonga stated that the maternal uncle does not invariably take all the property of a deceased nephew for himself. He may give something to the deceased's mother, the deceased's maternal grandfather, or to a brother of the deceased. Such gifts appear to be the outcome of good will on the part of the dead man's maternal uncle; [421] there is no compulsion. Women never inherit cattle or rights to the use of land.

423 692 622 The king is the head of the legal system, though his activities as such are not so great as those of the village headman (*sekulu*). The *olosekulu* (there are usually more than one) of a village witness the final act in a divorce ceremony. They used to have charge of trials for theft, murder, adultery, likewise the right of settling arguments concerning the ownership of land. It was the *sekulu* who distributed the land to the extended families when a new village site was opened. The maternal uncles settled the minor divisions among the limited families.

643 There are many kings among the Ovimbundu, but I thought that there was a tendency to confuse the titles of *osoma* ("king") and *sekulu* ("headman" or "chief" of a village). The jurisdiction of a king is so well known that any person is able to say under which king he lives. Ngonga said definitely that a man of the Ovimbundu who was under the jurisdiction of a certain king would have to obey the commands of a visiting king, provided they were not in any way disapproved of by the king to whom first allegiance was due.

643 [465] A chief may demand labor for the building of his house or the cultivation of his land. He does not pay for this but usually gives beer to the workers; sometimes he secures the labor and gives nothing in return.

in return. Even a slave used to have rights of appeal to the king 000 643
if he were starved and beaten without cause. The king was the prime 177
mover in warfare. The whole legal system is at this time directly under Portuguese administration though the kings and chiefs have minor powers. Ngonga says that complainants who are dissatisfied with the decision of their own chief go to the Fort, meaning of course the Portuguese military post, or office of the Administrador.

There is no doubt that in former days the responsibility for crime 672
and debt was transferred to a relative in the absence of the delinquent. 604
If a thief escaped, responsibility would rest with a brother, a father or a son. The mother's brother was often held to be responsible for the misdeeds and debts of his sister's children. The mother's brother has rights that extend to the sale of his sister's children to pay his debts. For this reason Ngonga says, "If I have done wrong and they cannot catch me it is right that he (mother's brother) should pay for me."

I supposed the case of Ngonga having stolen a cow; he has been caught but escapes. Ngonga said that the man from whom he had stolen the animal would go to his (Ngonga's) mother's brother in order to name the price required for the cow, or any other possession which had been stolen. If the mother's brother thought the price reasonable he would pay. On the contrary, if the price claimed were [692]
too high the mother's brother would appeal, first to the village chief, then if necessary to the king.

Ownership of land does not appear to have been a source of dis- 423
pute. Apparently land was distributed by the chief as explained in dealing with village organization. Rights seem to have been well defined and there was always enough land for a stranger. When a [426]
man was going away on a trading journey he might lend his land to another who would agree to cultivate it and take the produce for a year. I was unable to satisfy myself that land is now, or was in time past held to be the property of dead ancestors. The right to land depends on its use and allotment by a chief at the time of founding a village. A man who intended to be absent would make [437]
a payment so that he might leave his goods at the house of another. The chief would settle any disputes arising from these arrangements.

The complainant in a suit is called *ombile*, the defendant is *ovilue*. 695
The name for a witness is *uvangi*. In the old days a false witness had to make recompense to the man about whom he had told a lie; he would probably have a beating as well. A master was in every 672
way responsible for the actions of a slave. The degree of responsi-

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THE OVIMBUNDU UNDER TWO SOVEREIGNTIES

It was then the father who normally exercised authority over a boy, and on the father's death a child or youth would join the household of a father's brother. Yet the right of a sister's son to the inheritance of the movable property and to grants from his mother's brother was counterbalanced by the latter's right to sell his uterine nephew into slavery, a fate from which the father could save his son by ransoming him, in which case the mother's brother would no longer have this right.[86] In this society, the mother's brother—sister's son relationship was fundamentally an economic one, in which the sister's son received assistance in the trade and inherited his uncle's gains in this trade, but could himself be transformed into a source of capital.

I now summarize the evidence on Umbundu social control and its relation with the trading economy. It is clear that the Ovimbundu belonged to the number of those African societies with pyramidal[87] political systems and formal codes and courts of law, even though there exists uncertainty as to the relative power of the kingdoms and the sub-chiefdoms. Social control also operated through the kinship system, authority at the village level being in the hands of the head of the patrilineal group backed by the public opinion expressed in the men's house, and the dispersed matrilineal groups having sanctions in the right of sale of a sister's son and in the accusations of sorcery brought against those who failed to use wealth to aid their relatives. For the caravan trade to have attained the importance it did there must also have existed something of a *pax Umbunduca* stimulated by the existence of such ties as that between *tjiseko* partners and the 'international' hospitality shown to diviners, hunters, and smiths. Evidence of this *pax Umbunduca* is provided by the organization of caravans, and by the establishment of marriage ties between persons in different kingdoms, and between different royal houses.[88] However, warfare was not unknown between the different

[86] Childs, p. 44, and my informants.

[87] See Fortes and Evans-Pritchard, Introduction to *African Political Systems*.

[88] Hastings (p. 1) notes a marriage between the daughter of a king of Bie and Ekwikwi, king of Bailundo (1876–93). Childs (p. 171) notes that Kalukuru, king of Ndulu, was a sister's son of a king of Bailundo.

604 621 On the village level, however, the importance of the mother's brother tie and of the tie between matrilateral 'brothers' becomes very apparent. None of Sapapula's four sons had settled in Epalanga, and his only classificatory 'son' was Gonçalve, own son to Mwehombo, Sapapula's matrilateral 'brother'. Seven household heads were sister's sons of Sapapula. This trend for matrilateral ties to predominate is marked also in Katembo and Mbunga, but less evident at Belem. Indeed, 'neo-matrilinearity' as a principle of village structure may be a general and not simply a local feature of Umbundu society, since Mr. C. M. N. White[18] has found that the settlements of Ovimbundu within Northern Rhodesia are marked by a predominance of matrilateral ties. This is referable to the contemporary kinship system in which the father-son tie is predominantly a personal one, with a limited extension of attitudes to classificatory fathers, whereas a man's relation with a mother's brother seems little affected by the question of genealogical distance. Perhaps the relations between the group of 602 178 agnatic kin were so closely tied to the old village structure that when it broke up it disintegrated also the wider agnatic ties. Yet at the same time such matrilineal institutions as matrilineal inheritance and the non-repayment of loans among matrikin have weakened or disappeared.

591 Running counter to this principle of settling in the village of a senior kinsman who is likely to belong to one's matrikin, is the principle of cross-cousin marriage. 'If you have married your cross-cousin when your son grows up he will see a cross-cousin here, a cross-cousin there, and so he will stay.' That is, a man will stay in his father's village not simply by virtue of the father-son tie but because he will be surrounded by kinsmen. The relation between cross-cousins is one of equality and solidarity, expressed in joking and in burial services. To say that one stays in a place because one has cross-cousins at hand is to indicate an ideal of equal relations with a circle of kinsmen rather than attachment to the following of an important kinsman.

591 602 These two principles co-exist in actual social life. A man will recognize and respect a number of senior kinsmen living in his

[18] In letters.

[1874-1911]

slave. Once ransomed a boy could not be sold again. If, however, the father was displeased with his son's behaviour he could refuse to ransom him. When a man died, his adolescent sons would go to the household of a classificatory father and the children who did not yet 'have sense' would go with the widow to her kin, returning to their agnatic kin when they were older. 593 768

4. *Analysis of the Old Kinship System*

The ethnography of the Ovimbundu does show that there existed a double-descent kinship system, each individual belonging to both a local patrilineal group, and a dispersed matrilineal group, in which movable property is inherited. So great has been the impact of social change that not only have these groups disappeared but it is practically impossible to gain additional information on them by direct questions about their nature and functions. The information on kinship norms does give a somewhat clearer picture. 611 613 [622] 613 729

Within the village there was a very strong emphasis on the unity and solidarity of the men of the village. The men's house was the main social centre of the village where the men ate, received guests, and listened to cases. It was about it rather than about the person of the headman that ritual clustered.[20] The elementary family was not the unit of domestic consumption, and it is clear, from the taboos regarding contact with women kin, and the evidence as to the social life of the man's house that there was little recreational contact between the sexes. The concept of *ondjamba*[21] shows that the elementary family of husband, wife, and children, was morally and ritually significant, but many of the educational, nutritive, and recreational functions frequently associated with it were here attached to the men's house. 575 594 575

The strength of the agnatic ties in this society seems to have lain in the solidarity of the men of the village rather than in the patriarchal authority of fathers over sons. A son was economically independent of his father since he could trade on his own while his father was still living; the most powerful social sanction in the hands of kinsmen, that of being sold as a slave, was 593 [602] [604]

[20] For these rituals see Hastings, pp. 73–76, and Childs, p. 39.
[21] *Ondjamba* will be discussed more fully in the next chapter.

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[1874-1911]

593 604 in the hands of the mother's brother, though the father could, if he wished, intervene; and a man could establish a shrine of his own while his father lived.

613 It is not altogether easy to see how the matrilineal group maintained its cohesion. It was not the working team on which the caravan trade operated since a man's father had first claim on his services, and he could travel with other relatives. Within it alone loans need not be repaid and accusations of sorcery were made; with this in mind, it is evident why, as Dr. Hastings tells us, people tended to avoid the company of their matrikin, [578] and why most disputes arose in the matrilineal groups.[22] It 613 seems that probably the key to the functioning of the matri- 437 lineal groups lies in the details, not now recoverable, of the economy of the caravan trade. As everybody, however successful, was in danger at some time or another of incurring heavy losses,[23] an arrangement by which anybody who was in difficulties could call on his kin for help would be generally acceptable. The association of mutual aid of this sort with matrilineal rather than patrilineal kin would spread losses geographically and would exclude conflicts over currency and movable property from village life. Moreover, the dispersal of the matrilineal kin would provide an individual with business contacts over a considerable area.

5. *Contemporary Kinship Norms*

593 Much of this has disappeared. The men's house is no longer 264 the dining-room of the village male population. Men now often 170 eat with their wives and children though attitudes and practice of this vary between households. People in their twenties knew of the existence of these avoidance rules but it seems that the rules forbidding sons to eat with their mother and eldest sons and daughters to eat with their father are now generally ignored.

[692] [22] Hastings, pp. 18, 87. Disputes within the matrilineal group could be, and very often were, referred to the sub-chief and king. The account of legal proceedings in Hastings (pp. 139–51) suggests that a high proportion of the cases heard by the kings were to do with sorcery. In such cases the social extension of the matrilineal group beyond the area of the sub-chiefdom and the wider political integration achieved by the kingdoms 'co-operated' in preserving a range of social relations beyond the sub-chiefdom.

[23] Apropos of losses Childs quotes Magyar as saying that the Ovimbundu traded for enjoyment rather than gain (p. 204).

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The rules about avoidance at night are still kept. The prohibitions on a man borrowing his father's clothes and sleeping in the same room as his father seem to survive. The prohibition on a child speaking the name of his father or mother reported by Childs is not, and was not formerly, found in this area. It is, however, wrong for a child to address his parents by name. 593 551

Children begin to work in the fields when they are about six. Occasionally boys of 10 to 11 go to the coffee fields for two months work, but usually boys do not go out to work until they are about 14 or 15. 857

A boy going out to work should ask his father's permission to go though this is not always done. Returning from work whether contract labour or voluntary work a boy should bring presents to his relatives. He would be expected to give something, say, a jacket, to his father, and a cloth to his mother, on returning from voluntary work and a shirt to his father on coming back from contract labour. These gifts should be made in kind. Money lent from son to father should be repaid, though it is wrong for a son to enforce payment by appealing to the post for policemen. A father may give money to his son for bridewealth, and may suggest a choice of bride. He cannot constrain, nor could he in the past, his son and daughter to a marriage they do not wish. 593 [583]

A man cannot be said to have real authority over his grown sons. The stated norm is that a man's sons stay in the same village till he dies. He has no power to make them do so, and they are not condemned by public opinion if they live elsewhere. A man's attitude to classificatory 'fathers' is determined by the age, status, and personalities of those involved, rather than by jural rights and obligations. I have found men unable to tell me what had become of their own brothers' children. 604

Formerly when the father of an adolescent boy died he would join the household of a father's brother. Nowadays this would be much less likely, as it is common for such a boy to settle with other categories of kin, notably siblings and maternal kinsfolk. A man is free to stay with his brothers if he wishes, or to leave them. 768

While the tie between full brothers is held to be the strongest, as regards classificatory brothers there seems to be a slight 602

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wife of a 'lost' labour migrant the tie with the brother or other 602
kinsman will be more important, though the degree to which there is contact between the two households will vary.

It would seem that the present significance of the brother- 593
sister tie is due to the frequency and likelihood of husbands being away from villages as labourers. The strength of this tie gives added significance to the mother's brother—sister's son tie.

A sister's son traditionally inherited his mother's brother's 604
movable property, and during his lifetime might borrow from him without need of repayment. Against this, the mother's brother had the right to sell his sister's son as a slave and it was he who was considered most likely, both traditionally and at the present day, to practise sorcery against his sister's son. My [254]
informants were divided as to whether the sister's son can practise sorcery against his mother's brother. However, it was stated by Hastings[88] and by my informants that sorcery was only practised between matrilineal kin. It is not easy to see how in the past the relationship between a man and his mother's brothers operated—to what extent a man had particular expectations and obligations to one particular mother's brother rather than to the whole set of senior matrilineal kin.

At the present time the content of the relationship between mother's brother and sister's son seems very fluid, depending on age and personal compatibility. An important difference arises between one's attitude to 'mother's brothers' and to 'fathers'. There is no strong tie with one's mother's own brother, as there is with one's own father; on the other hand, a boy whose father has died is regarded as much more likely to go to the house of a classificatory mother's brother than to the house of a classificatory father, although, as has been noted, children and adolescents may settle with kin of other categories.

Traditionally the relationship between a man and his wife's 607
brother was distant and reserved, the two men being forbidden to eat together or joke. Nowadays the relations between a man and his wife's full or half brother are often very friendly; quite often when one finds two households close together they turn out to belong to men related in this way.

A brother-in-law is not regarded as a kinsman—he does not

[88] Hastings, p. 87.

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604 This strong pull towards the mother's brother is, however, marked on the level of village relationships as has been already noted. It is possible that with regard to co-operation on the [607] domestic plane the tie between a man and his wife's full or half siblings is stronger than that with his sister's children. This 607 argument would claim that the tie created by marriage between a man and his wife's full or half siblings is one of the strongest in the Umbundu social structure, and as a further proof (albeit not quantitively assessed) may be quoted the frequency with which two households close together turn out to belong to a man and his wife's brother.

In the first section of this chapter it was argued that the high 582 602 rate of preferential marriages greatly increased the number of social ties between individuals in a neighbourhood, and brought a renewal of ties with distant kin. In this section various aspects 593 of the relationship between husband and wife have been examined. Husband and wife co-operate economically and outside working hours may pass their evenings together. In a dispute taken to the post a man is likely to take his wife as a witness. Mystically sanctioned obligations do exist between husband and wife. While the elementary family is the main 582 domestic type, households headed by women are also found and there is a certain amount of mobility of children between households. The tie of a man with his wife's siblings, particu- [607] larly when they are children, is significant for the domestic organization of households.

582 Marriage is indeed the pivotal institution of the Umbundu 602 kinship system. The preferential marriages do not link descent 621 groups to one another; rather they bring about the local concentration of kin which makes out of many vague and insecure links a strongly-woven community in which both husband and wife can live with relatives near at hand.

593 Of the personal relationship between husband and wife it would be impossible to say as an anthropologist has of another African people, 'Here people looked for little in marriage. A man would turn to his sixteenth cousin twice removed before he turned to his wife.'[22] A man shares with his wife his work and leisure, is linked to her by mystical obligations which are not

[22] Elenore Smith Bowen, *Return to Laughter*, London, 1954, p. 115.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

602 the mother who bore me and the consideration naturally expected
592 from her cannot, in the nature of things, be given or received by *all* of the elder and younger mothers in exactly equal degree, but the type of behaviour is similar. The elder sister who carried her younger brother about on her back when she herself could hardly more than walk, or the elder brother who first taught his younger brother to make and set his little traps, has a warmth of regard which he cannot extend with just the same force to fifty or one hundred younger brothers, but nevertheless the pattern will be of the same sort if and when similar opportunity offers. The same may be said for the younger and the elder fathers, and again
605 for the *tatekãi*, the 'female father'. But here elements other than
604 the early household patterns enter as also with *manu*, the mother's brother. Chief of these other elements is the fact that these two classes of relatives, together with the *va cepua*, i.e. cross-cousins (mostly children of the *manu* and *tatekãi* classes), and also the *ovimumba* (plural) (one's own nephews along similar lines of descent), are all potential spouses or potential relatives-in-law.[1] The relations of *ocimumba* (sister's son) and *manu* (mother's brother) in Umbundu society follow a pattern not exactly like any other set of relationships in any society of which I know. Suggestions of this have already been given. The *manu* shares his sister's desire for the advancement of her son, and if the nephew has had a part of his education in the uncle's home or on his trading expeditions, the relationship will have become closer. It may be, however, that the uncle's own difficulties may lead him to exploit his nephew rather than to attend only to his advancement.[2] The
602 ties of the paternal group tend to be strengthened at the expense
178 of the maternal family and it seems that the increasing localization of the Umbundu family with the supplanting of trade by agriculture (as a man's full-time occupation) has furthered this process.

It is very important for one who would understand the Ovi-
602 mbundu to look upon the Umbundu kinship structure with the eyes of an Ocimbundu. If one brought up to other ideas and other relationships finds this difficult, that is all the more reason for making the effort. I cannot better summarise the Umbundu

[1] See *infra*, pp. 52 ff.

[2] This is one of several points where the commercial tendencies seem to come into conflict with the patterns of the kinship group.

601 Table A indicates a wide use of the word *nawa* for "in laws" of the speaker's generation. Thus Ngonga calls the wives and husbands of his brothers and sisters *nawa* without distinguishing them in any way. The term *nawa* has a still wider connotation for it includes Ngonga's father's brother's son's wife, and his father's sister's daughter's husband. Ngonga's wife said that she uses the word *nawa* for all the brothers and sisters of her husband, for all the children of her husband's father's brother, her husband's father's sister's children, her husband's mother's brother's children, and her husband's mother's sister's children. Reciprocally, all these people call Ngonga's wife *nawa*.

605 582 Table A introduces the question of cross-cousin marriage, which is the functional form among the Ovimbundu. My informant said that he calls his mother's sister's children brothers and sisters, therefore he could not marry the girls. Neither are his father's brother's daughters eligible for marriage with him. The table shows the truth of this, for Ngonga calls his father's brother's daughter *mukai*, meaning "sister"; she addresses him as *kota* or *hwa* ("brother"). Ngonga also addresses his father's brother's son by the term *manjange* ("younger brother") or *hwange* ("older brother") according to the relative ages of the speaker and the person addressed.

When Ngonga was asked whether he could marry a daughter of his mother's brother, he replied, "I could marry her very well indeed." A marriage of Ngonga with his father's sister's daughter would be permissible but Ngonga said the marriage is not regarded as a good one "because the children will be stupid." Ngonga could marry his mother's brother's daughter's daughter, or his mother's brother's son's daughter. It would also be permissible for Ngonga to marry his father's sister's daughter's daughter, or his father's sister's son's daughter.

604 601 Ngonga said, "My father's brother is my father, and my mother's sister is my mother." When questioned further my informant said that a marriage with daughters of these relatives would make him *ocinyama*, which means "an animal." Relatives would say, "You have shamed the family." It will be noted from Table B, First Generation of Ngonga's Ascendants, that Ngonga's father's brother calls him *omolange*, meaning "my child," for which the reciprocal is *tate* ("father"). Ngonga's father's brother's wife is *mai* ("mother"), and she calls him *omolange* ("my child"). Ngonga distinguishes between his mother's oldest sister (*mai yalula*), and his mother's

604 621 On the village level, however, the importance of the mother's brother tie and of the tie between matrilateral 'brothers' becomes very apparent. None of Sapapula's four sons had settled in Epalanga, and his only classificatory 'son' was Gonçalve, own son to Mwehombo, Sapapula's matrilateral 'brother'. Seven household heads were sister's sons of Sapapula. This trend for matrilateral ties to predominate is marked also in Katembo and Mbunga, but less evident at Belem. Indeed, 'neo-matrilinearity' as a principle of village structure may be a general and not simply a local feature of Umbundu society, since Mr. C. M. N. White[13] has found that the settlements of Ovimbundu within Northern Rhodesia are marked by a predominance of matrilateral ties. This is referable to the contemporary kinship system in which the father-son tie is predominantly a personal one, with a limited extension of attitudes to classificatory fathers, whereas a man's relation with a mother's brother seems little affected by the question of genealogical distance. Perhaps the relations between the group of agnatic kin were so closely tied to the old village structure that when it broke up it disintegrated also the wider agnatic ties. Yet at the same time such matrilineal institutions as matrilineal inheritance and the non-repayment of loans among matrikin have weakened or disappeared.

[593] 602 178

591 Running counter to this principle of settling in the village of a senior kinsman who is likely to belong to one's matrikin, is the principle of cross-cousin marriage. 'If you have married your cross-cousin when your son grows up he will see a cross-cousin here, a cross-cousin there, and so he will stay.' That is, a man will stay in his father's village not simply by virtue of the father-son tie but because he will be surrounded by kinsmen. The relation between cross-cousins is one of equality and solidarity, expressed in joking and in burial services. To say that one stays in a place because one has cross-cousins at hand is to indicate an ideal of equal relations with a circle of kinsmen rather than attachment to the following of an important kinsman.

[582] [603] [602]

591 602 These two principles co-exist in actual social life. A man will recognize and respect a number of senior kinsmen living in his

[13] In letters.

have a kinsman's obligation to lend money in case of need if he has it, and it is said that one should only work very occasionally with a brother-in-law. When I asked which a woman preferred, her husband or her brother, men told me that she liked both equally, and the fact that a man and his wife's brother often live close together confirms that there is relatively little for them to quarrel over. A woman does not establish close ties with any of her affines. Formerly, when a man died leaving a widow (and according to some informants a small child) a patrilateral cross-cousin of his might marry her. My informants, however, denied that a sororate had existed even in the past.[57]

Cross-cousins are the relatives with whom solidarity is most strongly felt. When I asked about the relationship between full siblings I was told 'They like each other just as cross-cousins do.' Now that it is no longer customary for agnatic kin to live together, it is often said that it is good to live near cross-cousins.

Formerly funeral friendship (*akwatjiseke*) was part of an alliance between sub-chiefdoms, which were not contiguous. Nowadays, since people move about the country, funeral friendships may be regarded as another category of kinship—when one asks a man his relationship with somebody else this may be given. There is a tendency to regard *akwatjiseke*, funeral friends, as being a sort of cross-cousins since both perform funeral services. This survival of funeral friendship, as a tie between individuals and as a haphazard means of supplying undertakers, exists in Gumba. In Ndjandju, which is the sub-chiefdom in which the Missão Católica de Bimbe is built, the *tjiseke* relationship is now established between two neighbouring villages and is apparently the normal means of performing burials, and the permitted theft of small livestock regularly takes place.

Between parents-in-law and children-in-law the relation was and is one of restraint. This is most marked in the relations between in-laws of opposite sex, and least between the mother-in-law and daughter-in-law.

[57] See Albino Alves under (*o*)*ndjandjo*, for evidence of a sororate in some Umbundu areas.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

attitude toward one's blood relations than by quoting Mrs. 602
Hoernlé:

> Here, then, is a large body of kin drawn intimately into contact with the lives of each generation. Looking out into the world from his own home, the Bantu child knows where he may seek hospitality and succour of every kind; where, also, he may of right be called upon to render assistance in case of need. The barriers of reserve shutting off human beings from one another are largely down so far as these classes of relatives are concerned, so that for economic assistance, for friendly counsel, in time of sorrow and in time of joy, these are the natural categories of people to turn to, the core of people with whom one is close-knit from birth in a web of reciprocal rights and duties.[1]

The Kin

Relatives by Marriage. Marriage profoundly alters the relation- 581
ship of those who enter into it, that is, the two families. It must be entered into with great care and with due regard for all factors concerned in order that the balance of life may be maintained. It seems that the financial arrangements (*ilombo*) are designed to restore to the bride's family an equivalence for her loss, since marriage is patrilocal. The Ovimbundu consider mutual respect between the two families to be a necessary basis for a successful marriage. Respect (*esumbilo*) is the reason assigned by thoughtful [593]
Ovimbundu for the various avoidances (*oku liyuvuila*) enjoined upon the principals and their respective families. In the first place, the husband and wife must show their respect for each other by avoiding certain actions as, for example, either one speaking the name of the other.

This mutual respect finds its most dramatic symbol in the treat- 606
ment which the husband must accord his mother-in-law, the bride her father-in-law. They must avoid seeing each other, and if it is necessary to converse, it must be done out of sight, or with gaze averted. Both husband and wife must also avoid pronouncing the names of the parents-in-law. By the principle of extended relationships, this behaviour applies to the relations of the husband and the wife with *all* their parents-in-law of the opposite sex. As all the mother's 'sisters' are 'mother', so to the husband they are all *ndatembo* (mother-in-law). Likewise, the father's 'brothers' all

[1] In Schapera, op. cit., 1937, p. 73.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

606 being 'father', to the wife they are *ndatembo* (father-in-law). All relatives whom one considers as 'parents' are parents-in-law to one's spouse, and conversely, all whom one considers as one's 'children' are *ndatembo* (sons-in-law or daughters-in-law) to the spouse. To all these relatives-in-law is due the same pattern of respectful behaviour. Avoidance of seeing each other applies only between the *va ndatembo* of opposite sex. There is the additional prohibition that they may not eat in each other's presence. This avoidance is further extended to include one's *ndatembo* of the same sex, ~~and also~~ one's *nãwã* (relatives-in-law of one's own generation). With the *nãwã*, however, one is otherwise on free and easy terms.[1] The prohibition on eating does not apply to drinking beer or to other such casual refreshment, but only to 'hot food', i.e. to regular meals.

606 788 Avoidance of meeting (*oku liyuvuila kocipala*, lit. 'avoiding each other to the face') is especially difficult for the bride who comes to live in a village of her husband's people, a large proportion of the men of which may be *ndatembo* to her. The prohibition may be lifted by going through a simple ceremony in which each rubs a little oil on the other. The woman rubs oil on the breast, the face, and the right arm of her *ndatembo*, while he in turn rubs oil from the same dish on her breast and on the braids of her forehead. Avoidance of eating in each other's presence may be done away with after some months by sacrificing a chicken and feeding it ceremonially together with maize porridge to the *ndatembo* or *nãwã* (throwing it into her mouth, mouthful by mouthful), with the attendance of the immediate family. It is especially important that these ceremonies be carried through with respect (*esumbilo*).

The avoidance of the name, whether of husband and wife, or of the parents-in-law, must be maintained: the names must not be pronounced. Many euphemisms are resorted to when it becomes 606 necessary to speak of or to these relatives-in-law. This is one 551 reason why the parents themselves take the name of their first-born, prefixing *Na*, 'mother of', and *Sa*, 'father of'. Thus the parents of *Kambõtiã* are known as *Nakambõtiã* and *Sakambõtiã*. This name may be pronounced. This is also probably one reason for extend-

[1] See the folk-tale in which the man who knows the speech of the red ants gives away his knowledge by laughing out *while his sister-in-law is braiding his hair*.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

ing to the wife all the relationships which are the husband's and vice versa. Thus by courtesy the parents-in-law are spoken of not as *ndatembo*, but *Mai* (my mother) and *Tate* (my father). The same extension also applies to all of the kin of the spouse and for all kinship terms both direct and reciprocal. Another reason for this is the mutual respect which is a principal basis of the Umbundu marriage.[1]

There remains one important matter necessary to an understanding of the Umbundu concept of relationship by marriage. To the Ovimbundu the proper, or at least the most desirable, marriage is a marriage within the circle of kin. 'Formerly people never married unless they were related, that is to say, unless they touched the blood together. If in the mother's kin (*koluina*), only on the side of the bow (i.e. male line). If in the father's kin (*koluse*), only on the side of the basket (i.e. female line).'[2] Upon closer consideration it becomes evident which of the relatives one may marry. It would not be possible to marry any who are classed as brother, sister, father, mother, grandparent, child, or grandchild, for such a union would involve incest (*oku ndõ*). The relatives whom one may marry are, then, those of one's own age-level who belong to classes other than the above-mentioned. An ideal mate of one's own generation is a cross-cousin classed as *Epalume* or *Cepua* (Class A. 4, p. 47). Beside this, a woman may marry one classed as her mother's brother (Class D. 3, p. 48), and a man one classed as his father's sister (Class D. 4, p. 48), if of appropriate age. One may also marry an *ocimumba* (Class J. 2, p. 49). Hambly remarked that 'cross-cousin marriage . . . is the functional form among the Ovimbundu'.[3] This is true, but only in part, for not only are there many relatives other than his cross-cousin whom an Ocimbundu may marry, but the financial arrangements are quite other than those usually associated with the cross-cousin marriage.

[1] While I do not pretend to believe that 'respect' is the only or even the main reason for the observances described, it seems sufficiently important to receive the attention which I have given it.

[2] Verbatim translation of statement by Likuluta Samikanjo, elder of the school village at Ngendo (Kasonge).

[3] Hambly, op. cit., p. 194. In reporting the replies of his informant as to whom he could marry, with regard to the marriage of father's sister's daughter, the reply was that it was possible but not desirable 'because the children will be stupid'. The reason assigned was evidently taken from European ideas, but the reply also indicates a preference for marriage *within* the *oluina*, which I have also had from many but not from all informants.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

hood was a day when he and an elder brother set off for the fields 857
and almost ran into a party of raiders. The scolding which they 861
received was not forgotten.

The practice of leaving the *ocisembe* in the village by day makes his elder sibling responsible for much of his education. This is the beginning of a close bond which lasts through life. She herself may not be more than six or seven years old and consequently cannot be expected to 'educate' her little charge very thoroughly. She interests herself in his walking and talking and he will imitate her in many things, but the rest of 'conscious education' must be attended to by the parents.

Cleanliness. Instruction in cleanliness begins at this age, but I fear 863
that it is lacking either in intensity or in persistence for its effect seems to be rather long-delayed. Small babies are not washed very often but their bodies and heads are anointed with palm-oil against infestation with the various parasites of the tropics. Anointing the body continues to be a part of the toilet of the Ocimbundu through life. When palm-oil is scarce, such afflictions as common itch are more prevalent. Nowadays, in the well-appointed household, the *ocisembe* has his hands and face washed before breakfast. If such a connexion between washing and eating were always and everywhere maintained, habits of personal cleanliness might be more widespread. Brushing the teeth may be begun in imitation of mother. Sphincter training is begun very early, for the mother feels every muscular movement made or attempted by the baby on her back. Hence she is apt to know when it is necessary to take him down for defecation. If and when this procedure is followed through with regularity and persistence early sphincter control may be established, but too often this is not the case. Establishment of bladder control is apt to come even more uncertainly as a favourite proverb concerning the weather indicates:

[538]

Ilu lia soka ndetaho lioñaña.
The sky is like the bottom of a baby.

The Ovimbundu do not associate these bodily functions with shame to the extent which is the case in our culture, but euphemisms are used in place of the exact terminology.[1] If an

[1] There are prohibitions regarding these functions during visits to relatives- 606
in-law with whom one has respect-relations, also to the bride during the wedding 514
ceremonies. (See Folk-tales nos. 12 and 13 of the short collection in the *Journal*

1: Childi M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

863 *ocisimbe* defecates on the bed he will be slapped that he may not repeat, but less flagrant breaches do not seem to call for punishment.

868 *Language.* The progress of toddlers in language mastery is rapid. Some mispronunciations are allowed. Some children pronounce correctly more rapidly than do others. Correct use of the language including mastery of the complicated grammatical structure, however, is mastered much earlier than is the case with English-speaking children. One could almost say as does Father Van Wing of the Kongo child: 'À quatre ans il parle mieux sa belle langue Kikongo, qu'un Européen de douze ans ne parle la sienne.'[1] The baby's earliest babblings, as well as his later evident imitations of his elders, are all recognized as his attempts at self-expression which as a matter of course will straighten themselves out in due time.[2] Parents speak to their children in a tone distinctly different from that employed in ordinary adult conversation, but they rarely if ever use the baby's own mispronunciations or 'baby-talk' as do Europeans and Americans. This, and the fact that young children have much more practice than have our children, owing to the constant companionship of their elders, seems to be the secret of their rapid progress. Whether the nature of the language itself has any effect would be an interesting subject for investigation.

867 *Manners* are also taken on quickly during this time. Toddlers are not expected to practise any very wide range of the social niceties, but what they do, they do correctly. They give and receive with both hands. They both give and answer greetings with proper terms of respect. An outsider, however, can rarely observe such behaviour naturally in the young child. He has been so

606 514 *of the American Folk-Lore Society*, vol. xxxv, pp. 129 ff.) The terms used are as follows:

Exact terms	*Euphemisms*
To urinate, *oku sūsū* (urine, *ovūsū*)	*oku talamēlāho*, lit. 'to stand to something'.
	oku litapela, lit. 'to water oneself' (said of a child when it wets itself or its bed).
To defecate, *oku nia* (feces, *emiña*)	*oku enda kusenge*, lit. 'to go to the bush'.
	oku enda kafeka, lit. 'to go to the country'.

The verb *oku nia* is used as a strong or profane expletive or interjectory phrase, especially in the first person with *etaili* (to-day), as *Etaili nda nia*. The verb is usually only left off.

Études Bakongo, p. 262.

Cf. the proverb: *Wa sema, wa imba: wa tumbuka, wa popia*, 'He mispronounces, he sings: he babbles, he speaks.'

582 incest *(oku ndo)*. But one may marry relatives of one's own age-level who belong to classes other than those mentioned, i.e. cross-cousins and, on other age-levels, father's sister or sister's daughter. It is said that formerly marriage never took place except between persons who could trace relationship in this way. Today this principle is very liberal in its application.(1) (It would be interesting to have estimates of the number of men who do marry first degree cross-cousins, father's sisters, or sister's daughters, as distinct from classificatory relatives of these classes, and the number who marry outside the *oluse* or *oluina*.)

583 Marriage was formerly arranged by the mother's brother (i.e. by the *oluina*), but today there is a tendency for fathers to arrange their daughters' marriages and to receive their marriage payment. (And also, occasionally, to assist their sons in providing marriage payment.)(2) *Ilombo*, or marriage payment, was formerly paid in cattle, blankets etc.(3) Today it is usually paid in cash, the amount being determined by the status of the bride.(4)

Polygyny

621 595 In the sample village (Ngendo, Kasongi chiefdom) described by Childs, of a total of 48 households,

(a) 10 households were polygynous; of these 9 contained only 2 wives or concubines, and the tenth, that of the headman, contained four wives and one concubine,

(b) 27 households were monogynous, and 3 more were occupied by widowers, all formerly monogynous. (The remaining households were occupied by 7 widows and one young unmarried man.)

Childs notes that the proportion of polygynous households in Kasongi chiefdom is probably higher than in other parts of Ovimbundu country for two reasons: the comparatively low marriage-payment in Kasongi as compared with other areas, and the proximity of Kasongi to Esele country, which has long been a source of supply for slave concubines. (Of the 10 polygynous households in Ngendo 5 contained at least 1 Esele concubine.)(5)

Avoidance between in-laws

602 Mutual respect *(esumbilo)* between the two kin groups involved is considered a necessary basis for a successful marriage, and is the reason given for the various avoidances *(oku liyuvuila)* enjoined upon the principals and their respective relatives. These avoidances may be summarised:-

593 (a) A husband and wife must avoid using each other's names.

602 (b) The term *ndatembo* is used for parents-in-law of either sex, and reciprocally for sons-in-law or daughters-in-law. The term is extended to all those whom one's spouse calls "mother", "father" or "child" (Childs, p.52) and apparently also to those whom one's spouse calls *nanu*, *tatekai* or

(1) Childs, p.54.
(2) Fanis, 1945.
(3) Cushman, 1944, p.45.
(4) Childs, personal communication.
(5) Childs, page 50.

601 ocisumbo (since Childs states (p.55) that it includes every relative of the generation of the spouse's parents.) *Ndatembo* must avoid: (i) speaking each other's names. This may be accomplished by using the names compounded from those of children (thus *Nakembotia* and *Sakembotia* are the father and mother of Kembotia) or by using the terms which one's spouse uses, i.e. *mai, tate, nanu* etc. (ii) seeing each other, if they are of opposite sex; if it is necessary to converse, it must be done out of sight, or with gaze averted. (iii) eating with each other. (This applies only to regular meals and not to casual refreshment.)

607 (c) The term *nawa* is used reciprocally for all the spouse's relatives of one's own generation, including those classed as "sister", "brother" and "cross-cousin". Between the *nawa* the only avoidance enjoined is that they may not eat regular meals in each other's presence; otherwise they are on "free and easy" terms".

"Avoidance of meeting ... is especially difficult for the bride who comes to live in a village of her husband's people, a large proportion of the men of which may be *ndatembo* to her. The prohibition may be lifted by .. a simple ceremony, in which each rubs a little oil on the other ... Avoidance of eating in each other's presence may be done away with after some months by sacrificing a chicken and feeding it ceremonially .. to the *ndatembo* or *nawa* ... It is especially important that the ceremonies be carried through with respect *(esumbilo)*."(1)

A note on the kinship system

613 There is a tendency today for the claims of the *olume*, the land-
421 owning group, to supplant those of the property-owning *oluina*; one import-
178 ant reason for this is the change from trade to agriculture as the most important economic activity. With European influence also conflicts have arisen over rights to children. Childs states(2) that the bilineal kinship system has been a factor leading to social stability, especially stability of marriage, but he does not elaborate this statement.

LOCAL GROUPS(3)

The "household", consisting of a man, his wife or wives and children,
592 and such other related or unrelated dependants as may be attached to this
595 basic group, is the basis of the village. The word *onjo* (house) may be used for this group, i.e. to include the various houses which a man may have established by marriage, or it may be used for the house of any one of his wives. Each wife has her own hut, granary, chickens, and fields for her children and herself, and the husband has no house of his own unless he is village headman or the head of an *oluina*, in which case he has
[591] a spirit-hut *(etembo)* in which he may sometimes pass the night. Sons when they marry form their own households, usually in their father's vil-
[554] lage. The size of the household varies greatly according to wealth and status. Some recent kings have had as many as 12 wives. But it has been noted above that, in Childs' typical village, out of 48 households only 10

(1) Childs, p.52.
(2) Ibid., p.56; see also ibid. pp.70, 45, 50 etc.
(3) This section is based on Childs, 1949, pp.25-41.

Vakuacisoko (lit. "those of the set")[1]

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Childs considers that the custom of *vacuacisoko* is probably connected with circumcision and initiation. It does not exist throughout the territory but only in certain families who belong to the order and are said to pass it on by heredity. It seems to have been stronger in the past, but few practising members of the set are now known. All 'coevals' or members of the set were in duty bound to render mutual assistance, and all had mutual rights to the property of the others without complaint or remedy. These rights seem to have included that of having intercourse with each other's wives. Injury or even death of one member brought about by another did not allow the injured family to seek revenge or legal redress. It was the duty of the *vacuacisoko* to bury their fellows, themselves digging the grave and attending to all the expenses ordinarily supplied by the family of the deceased. They also had the duty of burying strangers without family who would not be buried by others for fear of defilement or responsibility for their debts.[2] Childs describes the *vacuacisoko* associations as "age-grade sets",[3] but gives no further explanation.

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"With or without initiation rites, adolescence is largely preparation for marriage and full adult life. Traditionally, adolescence is not a time of conflict or stress....Contract and *corvée* labour have brought profound changes, especially for the young men. As for the girls, a few have gone into the towns; relatively few, however, other than those who attend a boarding-school, lead a life essentially different from that which has been traditionally theirs."[4]

MARRIAGE

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Available information concerning degrees of relationship in which marriage is permitted, marriage-payment, polygyny and divorce has been given above.[5] Evambi[6] and Hambly[7] describe some of the customs and ceremonies connected with marriage.

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For three nights after the commencement of the marriage ceremony the girl sleeps with her own parents, while the married woman and six unmarried girls whom she has chosen as her attendants sleep in the house of her husband. On the fourth day she moves to the man's house, bringing her cooking utensils. For the first month, according to Hambly, or, according to Evambi, the first year, i.e. until the grain is ripe in her new fields, she lives with her husband's mother or aunt, in whose kitchen she cooks food each night to send to her husband in the *onjongo*. When her first child is two or three months old, a present of a pig passes from the girl's mother to her husband.

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Childs[8] adds that adulthood comes with marriage, and marriage is only recognised as complete when the first child has been born. A child or an adolescent is only a "potential" person (*ocunu*) and the permanency

(1) Childs, op.cit., p.115.
(2) Those who buried a man were considered responsible for his debts. Hence corpses were often placed in trees.
(3) Childs, op.cit., p.59.
(4) Ibid., p.117.
(5) Pp.20f.
(6) 1938.
(7) 1934, pp.180f.
(8) Op.cit., pp.119-20.

Ngonga actually has a brother by his father's first wife, and for this male he uses the same terms as for his uterine brothers. The same terms are used for uterine sisters and sisters begotten by his father through wives other than his uterine mother. Ngonga said, "If people ask you which sister or which brother you can explain it in words." 601

A wife of Ngonga's father, other than Ngonga's uterine mother, is called *mai yesepakui*; that is, "the mother who is jealous of my mother." *Mai* means "mother," and the remainder of the term is a derivative from the word *esepa*, meaning "woman's jealousy." If two women *A* and *B* desire to marry the same man and only *A* is successful, *B* calls *A sepakui*. Under similar circumstances a man would call his successful rival *cikuelume cose*.

There is a distinct word for man's jealousy. In explaining this Ngonga said, "When I see my wife look at another man, I have *ukuelume* ["man's jealousy"] in my heart."

If on the death of Ngonga's father, his mother married again this male would be called by Ngonga *tate yesepakui* ("the father who is jealous").

A wife calls the children of the family, who are not her own, *omala vesepakui*; that is, "the children who are jealous of the other children." A mother-in-law taboo operates. Conversation between mother-in-law and son-in-law must always be carried on while the speakers stand back to back. 606

The foregoing note on a mother-in-law taboo has been supplemented by a letter from Dr. Merlin W. Ennis of Elende, Angola (August, 1931). "Mother-in-law and father-in-law taboos seem to be directed against seeing each other. The persons involved may not see each other. If they meet on the path, one steps aside and turns the back while the other passes on. The one passing by goes through the motions of seeing no one. If it is necessary to converse on some subject, they sit looking in different directions, or one sits out of doors and the other within, around the corner of the door. This holds equally for a man and his son's wife, and for a woman and her daughter's husband. A man may see and talk with his daughter's husband, and a woman may see and speak to her son's wife, but no son-in-law may eat with a father-in-law, likewise daughters-in-law and mothers-in-law may not eat together. Brothers-in-law may not eat together unless they have gone through a certain ceremony; this also holds for sisters-in-law."

have a kinsman's obligation to lend money in case of need if he has it, and it is said that one should only work very occasionally with a brother-in-law. When I asked which a woman preferred, her husband or her brother, men told me that she liked both equally, and the fact that a man and his wife's brother often live close together confirms that there is relatively little for them to quarrel over. A woman does not establish close ties with any of her affines. Formerly, when a man died leaving a widow (and according to some informants a small child) a patrilateral cross-cousin of his might marry her. My informants, however, denied that a sororate had existed even in the past.[17]

Cross-cousins are the relatives with whom solidarity is most strongly felt. When I asked about the relationship between full siblings I was told 'They like each other just as cross-cousins do.' Now that it is no longer customary for agnatic kin to live together, it is often said that it is good to live near cross-cousins.

Formerly funeral friendship (*ukwetjiseka*) was part of an alliance between sub-chiefdoms, which were not contiguous. Nowadays, since people move about the country, funeral friendships may be regarded as another category of kinship—when one asks a man his relationship with somebody else this may be given. There is a tendency to regard *ukwetjiseka*, funeral friends, as being a sort of cross-cousins since both perform funeral services. This survival of funeral friendship, as a tie between individuals and as a haphazard means of supplying undertakers, exists in Gumba. In Ndjandju, which is the sub-chiefdom in which the Missão Católica de Bimbe is built, the *tjiseka* relationship is now established between two neighbouring villages and is apparently the normal means of performing burials, and the permitted theft of small livestock regularly takes place.

Between parents-in-law and children-in-law the relation was and is one of restraint. This is most marked in the relations between in-laws of opposite sex, and least between the mother-in-law and daughter-in-law.

[17] See *Albino Alves* under *(o)ndjangulo*, for evidence of a sororate in some Umbundu areas.

man has four daughters he will receive the bridewealth only for the two oldest. The mother's brother will receive the bridewealth for the third sister and a brother for the fourth. If the father is dead, the payment is made to a mother's brother or a brother real or classificatory. To some extent the size of the bridewealth is a reflection of the status of the girl—thus on the railway line 1,000 escudos (£12. 10s.) might be paid for a girl who could read and write. In my own area a Gumba man might pay more for a girl from Ndjandju than for a Cela girl because Ndjandju is regarded, owing to its proximity to the mission, as being more civilized. There exist also counter-gifts. Ndjoleya, who as mother's brother received the bridewealth for Feliciana, gave a pig to Daniel, and it is customary for a pig to be given to the husband by his wife's father on the birth of their first child.[11]

The Umbundu word for marriage *ola kuela* is applied both to customary marriage and to Christian marriage. To distinguish between the two, Portuguese words are taken over, *amigar* (originally, to live in concubinage) being used for the customary marriage, and *casar* (to marry) being used for marriage in church. The use of *amigar* of a particular marriage implies that the people making it are pagans, or Christians who have omitted the church ceremony for one reason or another. In Gumba the church marriage, while it gives status among Christians is not an important occasion in the local milieu, and people who have been through the church marriage but who have not made the *usala*, the traditional wedding feast, are not permitted by their senior kin to cohabit. Around the mission the church ceremony is regarded as the important thing, and the *usala* seems to be thought of simply as a party. Traditionally and usually at the present day the *usala* is held in the dry season.

In the wedding feast there are a number of variations between one occasion and another, but a general outline can

[11] Hastings, p. 110, states that a year or two after the birth of the first child another pig is given which is called the pig of cutting off. The giving and the accepting of this severs all responsibilities between the families. The woman can no more be returned to her father's people for misbehaviour—only in the case of the death of her husband will she be taken back.

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wife of a 'lost' labour migrant the tie with the brother or other kinsman will be more important, though the degree to which there is contact between the two households will vary. 602

It would seem that the present significance of the brother-sister tie is due to the frequency and likelihood of husbands being away from villages as labourers. The strength of this tie gives added significance to the mother's brother—sister's son tie. 593

A sister's son traditionally inherited his mother's brother's movable property, and during his lifetime might borrow from him without need of repayment. Against this, the mother's brother had the right to sell his sister's son as a slave and it was he who was considered most likely, both traditionally and at the present day, to practise sorcery against his sister's son. My informants were divided as to whether the sister's son can practise sorcery against his mother's brother. However, it was stated by Hastings[26] and by my informants that sorcery was only practised between matrilineal kin. It is not easy to see how in the past the relationship between a man and his mother's brothers operated—to what extent a man had particular expectations and obligations to one particular mother's brother rather than to the whole set of senior matrilineal kin. 604 [254]

At the present time the content of the relationship between mother's brother and sister's son seems very fluid, depending on age and personal compatibility. An important difference arises between one's attitude to 'mother's brothers' and to 'fathers'. There is no strong tie with one's mother's own brother, as there is with one's own father; on the other hand, a boy whose father has died is regarded as much more likely to go to the house of a classificatory mother's brother than to the house of a classificatory father, although, as has been noted, children and adolescents may settle with kin of other categories.

Traditionally the relationship between a man and his wife's brother was distant and reserved, the two men being forbidden to eat together or joke. Nowadays the relations between a man and his wife's full or half brother are often very friendly; quite often when one finds two households close together they turn out to belong to men related in this way. 607

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[26] Hastings, p. 87.

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[87] See Alfaiate Abreu under (*e*)*ndengendje*, for evidence of a sororate in some Umbundu areas.

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This strong pull towards the mother's brother is, however, marked on the level of village relationships as has been already noted. It is possible that with regard to co-operation on the domestic plane the tie between a man and his wife's full or half siblings is stronger than that with his sister's children. This argument would claim that the tie created by marriage between a man and his wife's full or half siblings is one of the strongest in the Umbundu social structure, and as a further proof (albeit not quantitively assessed) may be quoted the frequency with which two households close together turn out to belong to a man and his wife's brother.

In the first section of this chapter it was argued that the high rate of preferential marriages greatly increased the number of social ties between individuals in a neighbourhood, and brought a renewal of ties with distant kin. In this section various aspects of the relationship between husband and wife have been examined. Husband and wife co-operate economically and outside working hours may pass their evenings together. In a dispute taken to the post a man is likely to take his wife as a witness. Mystically sanctioned obligations do exist between husband and wife. While the elementary family is the main domestic type, households headed by women are also found and there is a certain amount of mobility of children between households. The tie of a man with his wife's siblings, particularly when they are children, is significant for the domestic organization of households.

Marriage is indeed the pivotal institution of the Umbundu kinship system. The preferential marriages do not link descent groups to one another; rather they bring about the local concentration of kin which makes out of many vague and insecure links a strongly-woven community in which both husband and wife can live with relatives near at hand.

Of the personal relationship between husband and wife it would be impossible to say as an anthropologist has of another African people, 'Here people looked for little in marriage. A man would turn to his sixteenth cousin twice removed before he turned to his wife.'[22] A man shares with his wife his work and leisure, is linked to her by mystical obligations which are not

[22] Eleanore Smith Bowen, *Return to Laughter*, London, 1954, p. 115.

1: Childr M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

sending of children to stay with relatives or friends. The Ovimbundu consider it definitely an educational device. From the age of six or seven years children are sent singly or in pairs to spend as much as one or two years in the home of the mother's brother. If conditions are favourable they may also be sent to stay with the father's sister or brother, and girls (other than the first-born) may be sent to the mother's mother. Formerly, prominent families arranged for their sons to stay in the king's capital. These periods spent away from home may continue well into adolescence. Not only relatives but also friends, blood-brothers, and *vakuacisoko* (members of a certain communal order)[1] exchange children for certain periods in this way. This custom is by no means dead. It is now being carried on even within the Christian community. Its educational purpose is obvious.

Later Childhood

(*From about nine years until puberty*)

There is no definite time which marks the transition from early to later childhood, but there are marked differences between the two periods. The chief criterion is one of physical development for as soon as the child is physically able, he will begin to assume a definite role in the work of the adult community. This rarely comes before nine years of age and may be somewhat delayed. Soon after a child gets the permanent teeth, a notch in the form of an inverted V (Λ) is chipped between the two upper front incisors.[2] This is a sort of national mark which many people omit to give their children at present. The line of observance is not sharply drawn as between Christians and non-Christians, as with the Herero.[3]

Formerly, the beginning of the period was well marked for the boy by his first trip with a trading caravan. Most of the present older generation have had this experience and nearly every man of the present middle-aged generation as well. Nowadays the boy of this age may begin to work in the fields with his father, he may begin to learn a trade, or he may be sent to school. Few Ovimbundu put their children in school before this age, and they evidently do not believe that younger children would profit by the instruction

[1] See *infra*, p. 114 f.
[2] See Hambly, op. cit., Plates XLIX and LIV.
[3] Vedder in Hahn *et al.*, op. cit., p. 177 f.

expeditions. Many blood-brotherhoods were doubtless undertaken purely from motives of friendship.[1] The *vakuocioko* is a friendly institution. The Ovimbundu are a friendly people.

Identification is a strikingly important feature of Umbundu social adjustments and of the whole learning process. Children overtly identify themselves with older siblings, with parents, with other older relatives both living and dead, with friends of their parents, with the village headman, or even the king.[2] This perhaps is the process involved in that which the Ovimbundu name reincarnation. It is largely through identification that character appears to run in families. This is why boys are so keen to learn the professions of their fathers or their mother's brothers. Identification with their seniors in social position and economic activity more closely cements the unity of the child-adult sphere and gives the children yet another urge to enter into adult life and assume complete responsibility as quickly as possible.

'Inferiority Conflict' has probably been present in Umbundu life for a long time, perhaps since the rubber trade (1874), perhaps even longer. When a people's activity is keyed to so high a pitch there will be some individuals who find themselves inadequate. There are a number of proverbs which ridicule the stay-at-homes or those 'too lazy' to undertake the exceedingly arduous trading expeditions. European domination has set new paces and crested new frustrations, with one result, that 'inferiority conflicts' are probably on the increase. Many individual instances could be cited. A particularly striking one of my observation is of a man whose suffering from epileptic seizures had induced attitudes of inferiority. The conflict was exacerbated by his selection as a hospital assistant, in which position the responsibility required was plainly beyond his ability.[3] Individuals suffering from any physical disability find life difficult among such an aggressive people.

If the disability is great the handicapped individual generally finds the adjustment beyond his powers. I have observed a number of severely crippled individuals brought up in traditional kinship groups, and all of them were suffering from overt inferiority conflicts. All of these individuals had adopted compensatory

[1] Although the rite seems to have connotations of sorcery.

[2] Among the Tallensi, according to Fortes, identification is only with older siblings, with parents, and with 'the clan' (op. cit., pp. 46 ff.).

[3] Epilepsy (*ocisoya*) is considered by the Ovimbundu as a visitation of the spirits and is much feared.

B. Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FF13 Mbundu FF13

drunk. The concoction is described in Umbundu as *ikemba ioku* 847
tendiaepo ino ("medicine to take away belly").

When the monthly period begins too early in life, the medicine- 841
man recommends that the young girl should wear the cowrie necklace worn by her mother's mother.

A deformed child is destroyed, but not if it has been allowed to 847
survive the first day.

If male triplets are born, two stay permanently with the mother. 851
At the age of five years one child goes to the king, whose child he becomes.

When a woman has had relationships with more than one man, 837
she will die in childbirth unless the medicine-man is called to cure her.

In a Vachokue village of eastern Angola I bought a female wooden 532
figure. It was explained that this would be nursed by a woman, one 845
of whose twins was dead, in order to induce another conception. 842
Moreover, the nursing of the figure prevents the death of the second twin. The Ovimbundu also use these wooden figurines for replacing dead twins (p. 163).

Children are suckled for a long time; even those of three years and 853
older come to the breast. There are instances in which milk is present but lacking the nutritive qualities; then the baby is likely to die. The matter is simpler when a mother gives no milk at all because the baby is given to another woman, but not necessarily to a woman who is suckling a child. A baby whose mother has no milk may be given to a woman who has not borne a child for many years, and the sucking of the child quickly induces a milk supply. This is agreed upon by informants at Ngalangi and Elende who have seen a child nursed by a woman with withered breasts. Protection is given to the fontanelle by covering it with a vegetable gum which hardens.

Near the chief village of the Vangangella at Ngalangi there is a 842
mound decorated with feathers and painted wooden posts (Plate 789
XCII, Fig. 1). Childless women are placed on the mound which is near a river. They are covered with mud, after which the medicine-man sings songs and administers potions. The women go home and are made to sit on mounds in their kitchens. These mounds, which are made in rows, like earth heaped up after hoeing a trench, may be a symbol of successful agriculture and human fertility.

On looking into the subject of blood brotherhood I found that an 608
exchange of blood between two males who swore mutual fidelity was at one time common. At the present day an exchange of blood is

608 sometimes made between husband and wife, at night and in secret. People say that those who exchange blood will die at the same time.

NAMING

553 551 In addition to the words chosen to describe twins, there are some points of importance in connection with the naming of children. The father and mother change their names when the first child, male or female, is born, but there is no change of name at the birth of subsequent children. In a certain family the name of the first child, a girl, was Vitundo. The name of her father, which was Cingandu, was abandoned; he became Savitundo, "the father of Vitundo." The mother's name of Viscleia was changed to Navitundo, "the mother of Vitundo."

If the first child dies, the parents dislike their names; they therefore revert to their original names. When another baby is born, the parents again change their names in the way described. A posthumous child is called Lusati. A child born after twins is Kasinda, which means "to push." Twins are called the Lion and the Elephant, or the Elephant and the Hippopotamus. There are no secret names. The names of the dead must not be mentioned; the deceased is referred to as "the one who has gone." Children may change their own names at the age of about sixteen years, and actually do so if their names are distasteful to them. Ngonga's friend, named Katito ("little"), changed his name to Mukayita (meaning not known). Ngonga's sister, named Ndumbila (meaning not known), changed her name to Cilingobenda, which means "It is a pity." I met a chief near Bailundu who was called Kandimba, meaning "the Little Hare."

There may be a change of name during sickness. A man now named Katahali suffered sickness in addition to other misfortunes. His sickness recurred, so he changed his name from Kopiongo to Katahali. The meaning of the former name is not known. The new name, Ka tala chali, means "He who has seen trouble"; Katahali is an abbreviation. Another instance of change of name, also in the village of Cilembo, was that of a man who changed his name from Lumingu to Kaibemba, which means "the one who lives by medicine"; because without medicine he would have died. A sick child may receive a bad name, for instance, the name Pig. If one or more children have died a subsequent child receives an ugly name with a bad meaning. There is no totemism, but children may be named after animals. A girl is sometimes named Kambundu ("a little frog"). Other names for females are Esenje ("the rock where corn

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

171 428 this method is characteristic of many pastoral tribes of south and east Africa.

171 611 The Ovimbundu are situated between two systems of reckoning descent, succession, and inheritance; namely, the Negro system of the Congo region, and that of the eastern and southern cattle-keeping people. In view of the culture contacts described in Chapter X, the mixed system of the Ovimbundu is intelligible.

On the one hand the Ovimbundu emphasize the rights of the mother's brother while denying inheritance to a wife and her children, but in royal families the eldest son of the principal wife succeeds to kingship. Among commoners descent is reckoned through both the father and the mother. Therefore the inference is that the [174] Ovimbundu have, by virtue of their position and contacts, made a blending of two distinct social systems, one of which gives succession to office in the male line, while the other gives inheritance in the female line. In their system of burial rites for kings the Ovimbundu follow the usages of the pastoral area.

171 608 Exchange of blood is an Umbundu custom resembling that which occurs widely in Negro Africa. This exchange of blood is the typical Negro form of the blood brotherhood. Another rite is the Hamitic custom of drinking a mixture of blood and milk; this the Ovimbundu do not practise.

171 241 The hoe-cultivation practised by Ovimbundu women is in agreement with Baumann's association of hoe-culture and matriarchal conditions, the latter being indicated by the importance of the mother's brother. These concomitant factors are shown by Baumann (II, p. 292) to be characteristic of a wide area in the Congo basin. To this area may be added the whole of central Angola.

171 567 The factors of slavery among the Ovimbundu are in agreement with all that is known of the treatment of slaves in the Congo area and farther west Africa. Slaves of the Ovimbundu taken in warfare were treated with less consideration than those who passed into slavery to redeem a debt. There was also discrimination in favor of slaves taken in local quarrels among the Ovimbundu themselves. The killing and eating of slaves in north Angola is a custom whose early occurrence has already been noted.

AFRICAN PUBERTY RITES

171 881 Initiation ceremonies for boys and girls are at present well preserved among the Vachokue of eastern Angola; for a period such ceremonies declined among the Ovimbundu, but there is now a

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607 have a kinsman's obligation to lend money in case of need if he has it, and it is said that one should only work very occasionally with a brother-in-law. When I asked which a woman preferred, her husband or her brother, men told me that she liked both equally, and the fact that a man and his wife's brother often live close together confirms that there is relatively little for them to quarrel over. A woman does not establish close ties with any of her affines. Formerly, when a man died 587 leaving a widow (and according to some informants a small child) a patrilateral cross-cousin of his might marry her. My informants, however, denied that a sororate had existed even in the past.[27]

605 Cross-cousins are the relatives with whom solidarity is most strongly felt. When I asked about the relationship between full siblings I was told 'They like each other just as cross-cousins do.' Now that it is no longer customary for agnatic kin to live together, it is often said that it is good to live near cross-cousins.

608 Formerly funeral friendship (*ukwatjisoko*) was part of an alliance between sub-chiefdoms, which were not contiguous. Nowadays, since people move about the country, funeral friendships may be regarded as another category of kinship—when one asks a man his relationship with somebody else this may be given. There is a tendency to regard *vakwatjisoko*, funeral friends, as being a sort of cross-cousins since both per- [764] form funeral services. This survival of funeral friendship, as a tie between individuals and as a haphazard means of supplying undertakers, exists in Gumba. In Ndjandju, which is the sub-chiefdom in which the Missão Católica de Bimbe is built, the *tjisoko* relationship is now established between two neighbouring [628] villages and is apparently the normal means of performing burials, and the permitted theft of small livestock regularly takes place.

606 Between parents-in-law and children-in-law the relation was and is one of restraint. This is most marked in the relations between in-laws of opposite sex, and least between the mother-in-law and daughter-in-law.

[27] See Albino Alves under (*o*)*mingandjo*, for evidence of a sororate in some Umbundu areas.

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6. *Descent, Inheritance and Succession*

There is little interest in genealogical detail among contemporary Ovimbundu, which is not surprising since there exists no system of descent groups in which the position of the individual may be genealogically defined nor does affiliation to a particular line of descent give status *vis-à-vis* people of less eminent descent. Pedigrees are traced (in either line) for only two to four ascending generations though one man I met could name ancestors for nine ascending generations. 602

Despite this vagueness and lack of interest in the articulation of relationships, Ovimbundu will say that such-and-such a kinsman is 'close' and such-and-such is 'distant' even though they cannot fit this into a genealogical framework. 'Closeness' and 'nearness' are not simply used to refer to geographical proximity or social co-operation, since there may be much mutual assistance between kinsmen who are 'distant'. One might speak of a blurred edge of kinship not clearly defined in categories of kin but not non-kinsmen. A man may speak of somebody on this 'blurred edge' thus: 'He must be a kinsman but I don't know how.' Similarly the *vakwatjisoko*[1] are a class of people who are not definitely kin, and not non-kin. [608]

There is little formalized distinction between patrikin and matrikin. There is a certain matrilateral pull in the choice of residence, a man being, as has been noted, more likely to settle with a mother's brother than with a 'father'. I had the impression that a man is more likely to settle with a matrilateral 'brother' than with a patrilateral one, but it would be very difficult to establish this by quantitative methods owing to the complexity of the factors affecting residence. As a man tends to settle where he has a number of kin rather than in the shelter of one particular kinsman, this trend does not lead to the formation of matrilineal clusters of kin. The majority of informants still consider that sorcery can only be practised among matrilineal kin but for various reasons it may be said that the fear of sorcery is not significant in kinship relations.[18] 602 591 602 754

[18] It may be suggested that the disappearance of the matrilineal groups which imposed a co-operation involving exacting demands has been paralleled by the decline of sorcery, the mystical reflection of underlying tensions. How is the fact that several informants told me that sorcery had declined since the days of the [178]

[1] [i.e., funeral friends -- analyst]

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that the Government is benevolent even if its agents are not, and men say that they like the Europeans. There are other opposed currents of feeling, though; thus a cook to a European family said to me, 'The Portuguese do not wish us to learn' and a villager declared, 'The Portuguese say to the English that the Ovimbundu have tails.'[29] The great mass of the Ovimbundu seemed to be without political consciousness, or desire for independence; there is little nostalgia for the days of the caravans, and it is widely felt that the present is better than the past, since there is more contact with Europeans.

Traders in the neighbourhood were relatively few, compared to other parts of Umbundu country. At Chicunda there were three trading stores and people who did not like them went across the river to Cassongue. Traders try to prevent natives who live in their neighbourhood from dealing at other stores where they can get better prices, but this is not always effective. Some Ovimbundu realize that variations of price levels are related to such factors as proximity to the railway line. The traders are criticized for paying their servants low wages as compared with those paid in the coastal cities. Although there is a great deal of mutual suspicion between the traders and the Ovimbundu which is expressed in the arguing and haggling that takes place in the stores, there is none of the fear so noticeable in the people's attitudes to the *chefes*. Many traders have a smattering of Umbundu, and have a certain affection for the local people. Economically, the role of the traders is to receive the maize and other products grown locally for transport to the railway line, and to distribute trade goods to the villages. Their presence is also important in preventing the rise of any other system of trading by markets or pedlars.

The principal goods sold are blankets, cloths, and clothing of all sorts, including fancy items such as sun-glasses. There are also a good many bottles of wine, and also oil-lamps and kerosene tins, and electric torches. For literates or would-be literates, there are pens, pencils, writing-papers and slates. Such goods as bicycles, gramophones, and sewing-machines are generally

[29] i.e. The Portuguese say the Ovimbundu are savages and keep them from contact with other Europeans. The Bailundo area had not (up to September 1961) been affected by the revolt. However, a marked change in this attitude of submissiveness seems to have taken place.

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[1874-1911]

631 564 funerals (though these burials could be undertaken by the cross-cousins of the deceased). When *vakwatjisoko* came to their partner-chiefdom for a funeral they had the right to steal small live-stock, such as chickens, or pigeons, but not cattle, goats, or pigs. An *ukwatjisoko* could sleep with the wives of his *vakwatjisoko* partners without being sued for damages.[68] [837]

631 [602] The ties of kinship and affinity crossed the boundaries of the sub-chiefdoms and even of the kingdoms.[69] The members of the three spirit-protected professions, blacksmithing, divining, and hunting recognized obligations of hospitality to co-professionals from other parts of the country.[70] Again the caravans were so large that they must have involved people from many sub-chiefdoms, which presupposes a wide range of contacts. [463] [574] [437]

182 It may be said that the picture given here is contradictory and inadequate. How can the existence of large kingdoms be reconciled to the extreme insecurity described by old men? How do the wealthy caravan organizers fit into the political system? What sort of politics were there in the kingdoms? It is not easy to answer these questions owing to the lack of evidence, and, probably, because the kingdoms were already in decline during the latter part of the rubber trade period. Indeed, the impression that accounts of the Ovimbundu in the nineteenth century give is that of adventure, battle, commerce, migration —a vigorous rather than a stable society.[71]

●61 114 The kinship system is perhaps the field of Umbundu society which has aroused most interest among anthropologists. Childs and Hastings have written much that is interesting on the old double-descent grouping but as, with the kinship system, the form has been described rather than the functioning and it is

[68] Informants. The account in Childs, pp. 114–15 differs considerably. For this institution elsewhere in Angola see Estermann, 'Clans et alliances de clans', *Anthropos*, 1952.

[69] Childs, p. 54.

[70] Informants.

[71] Magyar describes the king and his courtiers as being extremely despotic towards the villagers, and states that their despotism depended on their having a standing military force called 'Sons of the Elephant' (pp. 278–80). Later accounts do not mention this, and Childs notes (p. 209) that at the height of the rubber trade it was more difficult for the kings to recruit armies for their wars.

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[1874-1911]

not now possible for field work to supply the gaps in the written material.[73]

The traditional kinship system had neither clans nor segmenting lineages. The patrilineal group (*oluse*) was localized in a village, the group head being at the same time a village headman. Patrilineal ties do not seem to have been recognized between villages.[73] This social independence of the agnatically united village was reflected in the surrounding palisade, in the close clustering of the houses (nowadays much more spread out) and in the village institutions of the dancing-floor and the men's house (*ondjango*). It was here that all the men and boys, from seven or eight up, ate. Hastings writes, 'Each woman, after preparing the meal, takes or sends the portion which is for the male members of her family. This food is common property. As soon as enough has arrived some responsible member among the men will have it divided among the boys. For days a man may never taste of the food which is prepared by his wife.'[74] The men's house was also a club, and a court-room, where minor cases were decided. It was through this localized body of patrikin that an individual claimed land and residence rights and through it that he participated in the political system.[75]

The matrilineal group (the *oluina*) was composed of the descendants of a common great-great-grandmother.[76] According to Childs, it had a head who might also at times be a village headman,[77] and it was presumably the matrilineal group head who settled the disputes over property which Hambly says

[73] For an attempt at reconstructing Umbundu kinship on the basis of Childs's book see J. A. Barnes's review of *Umbundu Kinship and Character* in *Man*, 1950, pp. 126–128. It may be mentioned that the terms 'the side of the bow' and 'the side of the basket' are used simply to mean 'patrilateral kin' and 'matrilateral kin' (Dr. Childs, private information, and my own inquiries).

[74] A rather ambiguous phrase in Childs p. 43 ('The *olusu* consists of a large number of local village groups'), which might be interpreted as meaning that villages were patrilineally grouped into clans, seems really to mean simply that the village is the *olusu* unit.

[75] Hastings, p. 77.

[76] Ibid., p. 18. Childs, pp. 43–44.

[77] Hastings, p. 83, states that the matrilineal group consists of the descendants of a common great-great-great-grandmother (that is, five generations), and on p. 91 says that it consists of a group 'linked by a common great-great-grandmother'.

[77] Childs, p. 44.

1: Chilo M-S (1924-1940) 1940 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

responsible for the children, especially during their early years, but they are frequently sent 'to the *olaisa*', i.e. to the mother's brother for at least a part of their education. Herein has arisen a conflict between the claims of the paternal household and the maternal kinship group. Economic and other forces seem to have favoured the former so that 'During these days in which we stand, things have changed somewhat so that as between children and their parents, they work for their fathers for they say, "A child is strong with his *olase* and less so with his *olaisa*." Nowadays a man teaches a child work and also looks out for his education that he may advance properly. His mother's brothers (*ou isanu*) have no longer much power as of old.'[1]

Bearing in mind their bilateral nature and the fact that every Ocimbundu belongs at the same time to his paternal (*olase*) and to his maternal (*olaisa*) groups, the functions of these kinship groups may be summarized as follows:

Olase	*Olaisa*
SOCIAL	
Consists of local residence units; succession of village and tribal offices from father to son, or elder to younger brother.	Extended family organization; office of family head descends from mother's brother to sister's son; children belong.
Marriage allowed between cross-cousins and other relatives of non-parallel descent; couple lives at groom's father's village.	*Marriage preferred* between cross-cousins and other relatives of non-parallel descent; children belong to mother's *olaisa*.
EDUCATIONAL	
Responsibility for education of young children, especially in social usage.	Responsibility sometimes assumed in later childhood, especially for technical phases.
ECONOMIC	
Ownership and inheritance of land. (Passed from father to son or elder to younger brother.)	Ownership and inheritance of more largely negotiable and movable property, as e.g. trade goods, cattle, &c. (passed from mother's brother to sister's son).

[1] Raul Kavita Evambi, op. cit.

there was a great metal industry in Viye, where hoes were made for trade with the interior; later the wholesale manufacture of hoes was taken over by Ndulu, where there are the best and most easily accessible deposits of iron. In exchange for hoes they received palm-oil or cattle from other regions, or salt, rum, or goods from the coast. Other regional specialisations were :- Ekonda and the Sele country for palm-oil, Cibuma for firewood, cattle from Kalanji, Kalchembe, and, further south, corn-meal from Civuka, Civula and Bailundu.[1] 438 [316]

SOCIAL ORGANISATION AND POLITICAL STRUCTURE

KINSHIP AND DESCENT

The Ovimbundu appear to have a system of double descent which has not yet been fully reported and analysed, and whose nature is not very clear from existing accounts. The following outline is based on information given by Childs,[2] who unfortunately details the functions but not the composition of the kin groups concerned. In a review[3] of Childs' book, Barnes has formulated a descent system which would be congruent with Childs' description, and his suggestions are outlined here. 611 114

The epata

Childs translates epata as "blood relatives", and his use of the term suggests that it may have either a general or a limited sense. Thus he writes (p.42): "Nearly all of the villagers belong to the same epata or extended family, which includes both lines of descent. Most of them belong to the father's family *(olume)*, and the mother's family *(olumo)* may also be represented." And, in another context, (p.44): "When an Ovimbundu speaks of his epata (family) in the sense of a large and widespread organization with a recognized head....it is generally his *olumo* [mother's family] to which he refers." 596

The olume and the olumo

Every Ovimbundu belongs in the first instance to two distinct kin groupings: the *olume*, to whom he is related through his father, and the *olumo* to whom he is related through his mother. Uterine brothers and sisters belong to the same *olume* and *olumo*, but to the male and female side respectively, according to sex. (see below.) A difficulty has arisen because both Hambly[4] and Childs appear to regard both groups as bilateral. Hambly states explicitly that the *olume*, or epata *lio tete* (family of my father) includes *all* relatives on the father's side, and the *olumo* or epata *lio ami* (family of my mother) *all* relatives on the mother's side. Childs writes (p.45) "Bearing in mind *their bilateral nature* ..... the functions of [the *olume* and the *olumo*] may be summarized...". But from his summary it is obvious that the *olume* and the *olumo* cannot be bilateral groups, neither can they have parallel descent systems of any kind. Marriage is patrilocal, and the *olume* forms a local unit while the *olumo* is 611 613 [591]

(1) Childs, 1949, p.25.
(2) Ibid., pp.42-6.
(3) Man, September 1952, p.127.
(4) Op.cit., pp.193-2.

611 dispersed. Both groups have ritual leaders, whose offices are quite dis-
613 tinct. Barnes' suggestion[1] is that the two groups must be father's patrilineage and mother's matrilineage, with the qualification mentioned below.

613 The *olusa* consists of a large number of village groups, some of which
622 recognise mutual relationship,[2] but with no recognised head (other than the village headman) except in the case of the royal families. Land is
[428] owned by the *olusa* and passed on within it from father to son, or from elder to younger brother. Succession to village or tribal office, from village headman to king, descends in the same way.[3] Ritual leadership within the *olusa* lies with the village headman, who is in charge of the
[346] spirit-hut *(etombo)* of the guardian spirit of the village (or of the nuclear *olusa* within the village), and who officiates at regular village worship, including agricultural festivals.

613 The *olutna*, on the other hand, is a dispersed and apparently larger
428 group, whose members live with their various paternal lines of descent. The size of the *olutna* is unknown; Childs merely refers to it as a "large
604 and widespread organisation, with a recognised head". The office of head of the *olutna* *(ukulu wepata)* descends from mother's brother to sister's son. Negotiable and moveable property, including cattle and trade goods, is owned by the *olutna* and inherited by the sister's son. Formerly the mother's elder brother had great powers over his sister's sons, and was even able to pawn them or sell them into slavery, to meet his own debts.
[592] The patrilocal household is usually responsible for training children, especially during their early years, but they are frequently sent to the
[582] *olutna* (i.e. to the mother's brother) for at least a part of their education. At death or divorce of parents, children go to the *olutna*.

43 The head *(ukulu wepata)* of the *olutna* is usually both the legal and
782 spiritual head of the group, although today the two functions are often divided. He is in charge of the spirit hut *(etombo)* of the guardian spirit of the *olutna* (of whom there may be more than one, and of whom he becomes one after death). He leads the *olutna* in propitiatory rituals carried out in case of illness, death, or other misfortunes within the group, or in prayers made for desired economic advantages. (Apparently no regular rituals are carried out by the *olutna*.) The *ukulu wepata* may or may not be at the same time a village headman; if he is, he will be priest of two lines and have charge of two spirit huts; if he is not, there may be two (or more) priests in the village, each in charge of the spirit-hut of his *olusa* or *olutna*.

The ondili yokunji and the ondili yokumbo

613 The *olusa* and the *olutna* are both divided into male and female
602 "sides": the *ondili yokunji* (the side of the bow) and the *ondili yokumbo* (the side of the basket). It has been noted above that uterine brothers
582 and sisters belong to the same *olusa* and *olutna*, but to the male or female side in each, according to sex. The composition of these "sides" is

(1) Loc.cit.
(2) If some villages within the *olusa* cannot trace mutual relationship, the *olusa* should perhaps be called a petri-clan rather than a patrilineage.
(3) But see below, p.29.

however not at all clear. They seem to group simply all the male members and all the female members of the *oluse* and of the *olusa*; but this conflicts with the information given on marriage.(1) A man may marry into the male side of his mother's kin or into the female side of his father's kin. Hence there must be some women in the male side, and, presumably, some men in the female side. A man cannot marry a parallel cousin, but he may marry:

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(a) a father's sister. She presumably belongs to the female side of the *oluse*, which presents no difficulty.

(b) a sister's daughter. She appears to belong to the female side of ego's mother's kin, while a man should marry into the male side of his mother's kin.

(c) a female cross-cousin. If the *oluse* and the *olusa* were merely father's patrilineage and mother's matrilineage, as has been suggested, cross-cousins are excluded from both groups. In a footnote,(2) however, Childs seems to imply that mother's brother's daughter belongs to ego's mother's kin. Barnes therefore suggests that children of men of the matrilineage may be included in the *olusa*, falling into the male side irrespective of sex, and similarly the *oluse* may include in the female side all the children of women of the patrilineage. By this hypothesis:

(a) a sister's daughter would fall into the female side of ego's *oluse*.

(b) a mother's brother's daughter would fall into the male side of ego's *olusa*.

(c) a father's sister's daughter would fall into the female side of the *oluse*.

The descent system: summary

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The descent system suggested may then be summarised thus:

(1) *oluse* (father's kin)

(a) *andlê yokunji* (male side): all men in the patrilineage.

(b) *andlê yokumbe* (female side): all women in the patrilineage, and all sons and daughters of women in the patrilineage.

(2) *olusa* (mother's kin)

(a) *andlê yokumbe* (female side): all women in the matrilineage.

(b) *andlê yokunji* (male side): all men in matrilineage, and all sons and daughters of all men in the matrilineage.

According to this hypothesis every person belongs to four distinct groups. A man must belong not only to the male side of the two groups centred in the father's patrilineage and the mother's matrilineage, but also to the male side of his father's matrilineal group and to the female side of his mother's patrilineal group. There are still only two systems

(1) Childs, op.cit., p.53. (2) P.55, fn.3.

611 of groups, but a man belongs to two groups within each system. Similar
613 membership is required for a woman. A man shares with all his children his membership of the male side of his mother's matrilineal group, and
602 shares with his sons membership of the male side of his father's patrilineal group. His daughters belong to his father's patrilineal group but to its female side. He does not transmit to his children membership of his father's matrilineal group or his mother's patrilineal group.[1] This is illustrated by the diagram on page 21.

601 *Kinship terminology*

Patterns of behaviour between all blood relatives find their prototypes in the household. The following list of kinship terms is selected from the more detailed list given by Childs.[2]

Term		*Reciprocal*
nai	mother, mother's sister, etc.	*omolenge*
tate	father, father's brother, etc.	*omolenge*
tatekai	("female father") father's sister	*ocimumbo cange*
mamu	mother's brother	*ocimumbo cange*
huvange	elder brother or sister, and male or female parallel cousin, if older than ego	*sanjange*
kota	eldest brother (of family or household)	*sanjange*
(epolume *(upolume* *(cepue*	male or female cross-cousin	*epolume, upolume,* or *cepue*
nukai	sister or female parallel cousin (W.S.)[3]	*nuae*
abuole	" " " " (M.S.)	*abuole*
mokulu	grandmother, grandparents' sister	*omokulu yange*
sekulu	grandfather, grandparents' brother	*omokulu yange*

Note: (a) There is no word used exclusively for "brother" by a man, although a woman may use *nuae* in this sense. *Huvange* and *sanjange* are used by either men or women for older or younger brothers or sisters.

(b) *mokulu* and *sekulu* are sometimes used interchangeably for persons of either sex.

MARRIAGE

582 *Marriage within the kin group*

The most desirable marriage is marriage within the circle of kin, i.e. (as noted above) into the male line of the oluina or the female line of the oluse. (There appears to be a preference for marriage within the oluina.[4]) One may not marry one classed as brother, sister, father, mother, grandparent, child or grandchild, for such a union would involve

(1) This paragraph is largely quoted from Barnes, loc.cit.
(2) pp.47-9.
(3) M.S. = man speaking, W.S. = woman speaking.
(4) Childs, op.cit., p.50, note 3.

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Crossing at the side the boy and girl cut and plant 776

first pole, which is to be a part of the new otambo (spirit hut). The boy 346
and girl must take part ceremonially in each operation of building the hut,
and when it is built they ignite the new fire. A hen and a cock are
killed, cooked on the new fire, and eaten inside the otambo by all who have
taken part in building it. The headman and his wife must remain on the
new site to keep the fire alight; other villagers may commute from the old 361
village or erect temporary grass shelters on the new site. Houses are 342
built by the occupants themselves, although men may give each other mutual 344
help, for which there is a gift of food and beer. The ovimbo is usually [476]
built by the communal labour of all boys and men, and on its completion a
simple ritual is performed to promote harmony within and to welcome the
spirits, who are believed to sleep in the ovimbo and to take part in all [782]
discussions within it.[1]

The village group: composition

Childs describes the relationship of the villagers of Ngundu to each 621
other as typical of Mbundu country. Most of the heads of households are 611
related agnatically to their respective section-heads (who are presumably
also related agnatically to each other, since the village is based on the
clan group); Childs does not however discuss the relation of section
heads to each other or to the village headman. He gives a table in which
the householders are divided into six categories according to their rela-
tionship to their various section-heads:

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1. Patrpal relatives of section head: Section A (headman's)
2. Matrpal relatives of section head: Section B
3. Natives' sons (or daughters)[2] Section B
4. Relatives by marriage Section A
5. Relationship not definitely known Section B
6. Former slaves Section A

(1) This section is based on Childs, 1949, pp.27-8.
(2) Sons could, of course, have been included as matrpal relatives and patrpal relatives, since they belong both to the clan and to the clans.

He draws the crescentic arrowhead (p. 123) still common among the Ovimbundu and Wachipkue; the double iron gong (p. 122): and the musical bow, which he calls a viola (p. 121). 175 114 [534]

Sogaur states that iron-working had an advanced technique at Dindo, more than half a century ago. According to Sogaur, the blacksmith was using scrap iron from European sources (II, p. 14). 175 326

Perhaps the most valuable of Chatelain's books is "Fifty Folk Tales of Angola." The stories are accompanied by translations and ethnological notes, the most important of which are references to the carrying of a corpse on a pole; the building of a cairn of stones over the corpse of a hunter; matrilineal descent and the power of the maternal uncle over the persons of his nieces and nephews (sisters' children). My observations included some details respecting the pawning of a sister's children to redeem the debts of their mother's brother. Chatelain adds that sisters' children are successors to private property and chieftainship (pp. 8–10). My notes agree that property is inherited by children of a deceased man's sister, but my informants said that a new chieftain is normally the eldest son of the principal wife of the dead chief. Chatelain's folklore stories, fifty in number, relate chiefly to animals; this was the only kind of story told to me, but W. C. Bell has recorded a few tales of another type. 173 [114] [764] [611] [604] [428] [538]

Marquardsen (1928) devotes only one-fourth of his book to the ethnology of Angola, which he treats in a very general way; there is no section dealing specifically with any particular tribe. The author calls attention to Chapman's observation of rock paintings of South African Bushman type, between Cuma and Luimbale in northwest Angola. I have elsewhere remarked on the occasional occurrence of physical types which show a strain of Bushman blood. Today Bushmen penetrate southern Angola from the Kalahari (Plate LXIX, Figs. 1, 2), but their presence in times past or present does not affect the course of history or the data of ethnology to an appreciable extent. 114 177 [531] [144]

Marquardsen gives some notes of a general kind on Vabeneca, Mahuila and other tribes of southwest Angola. The suggestion is feasible that the Umbundu name Suku, for a supreme being, is the same as the Nzambi of Lunda and the Congo. Marquardsen refers to the importance of the maternal uncle in Umbundu society, to the poison ordeal, and to the burial of an Umbundu chief in cowhide, all of which points were recorded in my observations at Elende. 114 107

Ferreira Dinis's book is unobtainable, but, judging from the summary given in *Anthropos* (XX, 1925, pp. 321–331), the information was collected by a questionnaire widely distributed among adminis-

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FF13 Mbundu FF13

171 428 this method is characteristic of many pastoral tribes of south and east Africa.

171 611 The Ovimbundu are situated between two systems of reckoning descent, succession, and inheritance; namely, the Negro system of the Congo region, and that of the eastern and southern cattle-keeping people. In view of the culture contacts described in Chapter X, the mixed system of the Ovimbundu is intelligible.

On the one hand the Ovimbundu emphasize the rights of the mother's brother while denying inheritance to a wife and her children, but in royal families the eldest son of the principal wife succeeds to kingship. Among commoners descent is reckoned through both the father and the mother. Therefore the inference is that the [174] Ovimbundu have, by virtue of their position and contacts, made a blending of two distinct social systems, one of which gives succession to office in the male line, while the other gives inheritance in the female line. In their system of burial rites for kings the Ovimbundu follow the usages of the pastoral area.

171 608 Exchange of blood is an Umbundu custom resembling that which occurs widely in Negro Africa. This exchange of blood is the typical Negro form of the blood brotherhood. Another rite is the Hamitic custom of drinking a mixture of blood and milk; this the Ovimbundu do not practise.

171 291 The hoe-cultivation practised by Ovimbundu women is in agreement with Baumann's association of hoe-culture and matriarchal conditions, the latter being indicated by the importance of the mother's brother. These concomitant factors are shown by Baumann (II, p. 292) to be characteristic of a wide area in the Congo basin. To this area may be added the whole of central Angola.

171 567 The factors of slavery among the Ovimbundu are in agreement with all that is known of the treatment of slaves in the Congo area and farther west Africa. Slaves of the Ovimbundu taken in warfare were treated with less consideration than those who passed into slavery to redeem a debt. There was also discrimination in favor of slaves taken in local quarrels among the Ovimbundu themselves. The killing and eating of slaves in north Angola is a custom whose early occurrence has already been noted.

AFRICAN PUBERTY RITES

171 481 Initiation ceremonies for boys and girls are at present well preserved among the Vacholue of eastern Angola; for a period such ceremonies declined among the Ovimbundu, but there is now a

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

CHAPTER VII

KINSHIP

1. *General Aspects*

128 A good deal has been said about the contemporary kinship system in Chapter IV, where it was discussed from the point of view of the local organization rather than in its own right. This chapter must, therefore, to some extent, refer to information already presented in Chapters I and IV, since there are three problems to be discussed—the form of the old kinship [121] system, the form of the present kinship system, and the reasons for the changes from one system to the other.

The following approach will be adopted: the ethnographic sources for Umbundu kinship will be examined, information will then be given on the kinship norms formerly valid, and an attempt will then be made to give a coherent sketch of the system then existing. After this, reference will be made to the actual operation of present-day kinship norms and the significance of descent and inheritance. Then factors in the transition between the two systems will be brought forward.

611 It has been generally accepted by commentators on the ethnographic material that the traditional Umbundu kinship system is of the type called a 'double-descent' system.[1] 'Descent' is used by British anthropologists to imply membership of a group involving rights and duties.[2] Hence, it can only be claimed that the Ovimbundu possessed such a system if there existed two sets of kin groups, and not simply some combination of matrilineal inheritance and virilocal residence at marriage.

One anthropologist, Mr. W. D. Hambly, and two missionaries

[next continues on p.92]

[1] For other African double-descent systems see *African Systems of Kinship and Marriage*, ed. Radcliffe-Brown and Forde (Oxford, 1950), pp. 79, 183–210.

[2] The word seems to have been first used in this sense by W. H. R. Rivers.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

social unit. 'All descendants of the same great-great-grandmother speak of themselves as a group (matrilineally descended), by the term *Imolietu*, i.e. "children from a common source".'[9] Dr. Hastings did not apply the concept of double-descent to this society but regarded it as being matrilineal with patrilineal trimmings. After noting the patrilineal succession to the chiefdom, virilocal residence after marriage, and social preference for patrilineal kinsman, Dr. Hastings states: 'Apart from these apparent indications which might mislead one into concluding that the Ovimbundu are patronymic [*sic*], every other behaviour is obviously linked up as far as social attitudes and relations of the living are concerned within the matrilineal sib.'[10]

The neat tabulation by Dr. Childs[11] of the functions of the two kin groups, when considered in conjunction with the passages cited from Hastings, seems to provide quite clear proof that it is correct to apply the category 'double-descent kinship system' to that formerly prevailing among the Ovimbundu.

2. *Kinship Terms*

Tate *So* *Iso*	my father your father his father	Extended to all brothers, real or classificatory, of a father, all men married to a 'mother', and to the father's sister's son, particularly if he has been your father's heir.
Mai *Nyoko* *Ina*	my mother your mother his mother	Extended to all sisters, real or classificatory, of a mother, and to all wives of any 'father'.
Sekulu	mother's brother	Extended to any brother, real or classificatory, of a mother, and to the husband of any *apahai*.
Apahai[12] *Sohai*	my father's sister, his father's sister, your father's sister	Extended to any sister of any father and the wife of any *sekulu*.

[9] Ibid., p. 83. *Imolietu* actually means 'our womb'.
[10] Ibid., p. 87.
[11] Childs, pp. 43–46.
[12] *Tatakai* (father-woman), used in other parts of Umbundu country for 'my father's sister', is not found in Gumbu.

[1874-1911]

slave. Once ransomed a boy could not be sold again. If, however, the father was displeased with his son's behaviour he could refuse to ransom him. When a man died, his adolescent sons would go to the household of a classificatory father and the children who did not yet 'have sense' would go with the widow to her kin, returning to their agnatic kin when they were older.

4. *Analysis of the Old Kinship System*

The ethnography of the Ovimbundu does show that there existed a double-descent kinship system, each individual belonging to both a local patrilineal group, and a dispersed matrilineal group, in which movable property is inherited. So great has been the impact of social change that not only have these groups disappeared but it is practically impossible to gain additional information on them by direct questions about their nature and functions. The information on kinship norms does give a somewhat clearer picture.

Within the village there was a very strong emphasis on the unity and solidarity of the men of the village. The men's house was the main social centre of the village where the men ate, received guests, and listened to cases. It was about it rather than about the person of the headman that ritual clustered.[88] The elementary family was not the unit of domestic consumption, and it is clear, from the taboos regarding contact with women kin, and the evidence as to the social life of the man's house that there was little recreational contact between the sexes. The concept of *ondjonda*[89] shows that the elementary family of husband, wife, and children, was morally and ritually significant, but many of the educational, nutritive, and recreational functions frequently associated with it were here attached to the men's house.

The strength of the agnatic ties in this society seems to have lain in the solidarity of the men of the village rather than in the patriarchal authority of fathers over sons. A son was economically independent of his father since he could trade on his own while his father was still living; the most powerful social sanction in the hands of kinsmen, that of being sold as a slave, was

[88] For these rituals see Hastings, pp. 75–76, and Childs, p. 39.
[89] *Ondjonda* will be discussed more fully in the next chapter.

1: Childs M-5 (1934-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

Kinship groupings: *olute* and *olutina*.[1] Every Ocimbundu 613
belongs to an *olute*, i.e. his father's kin, and to an *olutina*, i.e. his mother's kin. Each of these family groupings is divided into male and female lines (*onthi yohongi*, 'the side of the bow'; *onthi yohumba*, 'the side of the basket'). Uterine brothers and sisters belong to the same *olute* and *olutina*, and to the male or female 'side' respectively, according to sex. It is of great importance to get a clear idea of this bilateral nature of these kinship groupings. Every student of [171]
ethnology will note the similarity of this division to the Herero [197]
oruzo and *eanda*.[2] Considering the affinities between the Herero and Umbundu languages, I think that these conceptions are probably related. Further study of other peoples of this Western Bantu zone may reveal cultural and racial as well as linguistic affinities.[3] The *olute* and *olutina* of the Ovimbundu follow their own pattern.

The *olute* consists of a large number of local village groups, 613
some of which recognize mutual relationships, but with no recog- 825
nized headship save in the case of the several royal families. The 621
only suggestion of any totemic relation or origin is with the royal families which have in common several taboos with regard to certain animals the flesh of which may not be eaten, nor the skins used, &c. Chief of these animals are the *ongulungu* (bushbuck, *Tragelaphus scriptus*), the *ocisema*[4] (the waterbuck, *Cobus defessa*

[1] *Olu-ute*, perhaps 'the place of father', the root *se* being equivalent to the forms *ta*, *so*, *tsia*; *olu-tina*, perhaps 'the place of mother'.

[2] See Vedder, pp. 185 ff. (in *The Native Tribes of South West Africa*): 'The Herero nation is divided into 2 large family groups . . . the Herero belongs to the *oruzo* of his father and also to the *eanda* of his mother.' J. Irle, *Die Herero* (Gütersloh, 1906), pp. 87–93.

[3] An interesting study of the VaNyaneka, one of the cattle-rearing people living between Ambo and Umbundu territory, was recently published: A. Lang et C. Tastevin, *La Tribu des Va-Nyaneka* (Mission Rohan-Chabot, Tome V), Corbeil: Impr. Crétin. This volume was not available in England or the U.S.A. until 1940, and could not therefore have been used in the present study. I may now say, however, that the authors' treatment of the social structure is not such that it would help to solve the problem in question. The clans are described only from the standpoint of totemism. The maternal line of descent (*e-anda*) is briefly mentioned (p. 45), but not the corresponding paternal line. The authors' evident lack of familiarity with other Bantu material is a great drawback. The system used for the transcription of the vernacular is most confusing, owing to an evident lack of understanding of the Bantu phonetic and grammatical genius with consequent procrustean attempts to force it into foreign forms.

[4] The king's sons may not eat flesh of the *ocisema* lest they should *sema sema*, 'have an impediment of speech'. This may be simply a taboo on grounds of similar sounding (or the absence)

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

613 825 621 *penricei*), and *ovinyama viakasa* (animals having paws, from the lion down). No other *oluse* has any such rules. The chief function of the *oluse* is as a local residence group. Within the *oluse* there is no inheritance of property but only succession to office, which from the king to the village headman is from father to son, or from elder to younger brother, with only as much recognition of primogeniture as belongs to the general idea of the hierarchy of age. Succession to office is further affected by the democratic tendencies already noted with regard to the kingly succession.[1] The character of the *oluse* as a series of local groups is further borne out by the character of its priesthood, which lies wholly with the village headmen.

613 The *oluina* is not a local group, since its members for the most part live in the villages of their several lines of paternal descent—each with his *oluse*. When an Ocimbundu speaks of his family (*epata*) in the sense of a large and widespread organization with a recognized head in some elder, it is generally his *oluina* to which he refers. This family elder (*ukulu wepata*) is generally both the legal and spiritual head of the family. He is the family high-priest in charge of the spirit-hut (*etambo*) of the family guardian spirit (*osande*)[2] of whom there may be more than one and of whom he may become one after death. This family head is generally the eldest in the maternal line. In these days the priestly and the legal functions may be divided considering the advantages of having for legal head one who knows the ways of this world, while the spiritual head needs rather to be acquainted with the spirit-world. [428] Property is inherited through the *oluina* from mother's brother to 613 sister's son.[3] Only the *oluina* is an organization in the wider or 178 more than local sense, and it is to it that the children belong. Formerly the mother's elder brother had great powers over his sister's sons and was even able to pawn them or sell them into slavery to meet his own debts.[4] The patrilocal household is

[1] See *supra*, p. 22 f.

[2] The head of an *oluina* may or may not be a village headman. In case he is, he will be priest of two lines and have two spirit-huts. There may be more than one spirit-hut in a single village.

[3] This fact was noted by A. Bastos, *Traços Gerais sôbre a Ethnografia do Districto de Benguella* (Lisboa, 1909), p. 33 (par. 39°).

[4] This has been noted by a number of writers. Bastos, op. cit., p. 29 (par. 26°) adds that once a father has redeemed his son, the maternal uncle can never sell him again. Cf. *ovumali potestas* among the Ba-Ila, E. W. Smith and A. M. Dale, *The Ila-Speaking Peoples* (London, 1920), vol. i, p. 320.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

responsible for the children, especially during their early years, but they are frequently sent 'to the *oluina*', i.e. to the mother's brother for at least a part of their education. Herein has arisen a conflict between the claims of the paternal household and the maternal kinship group. Economic and other forces seem to have favoured the former so that 'During these days in which we stand, things have changed somewhat so that as between children and their parents, they work for their fathers for they say, "A child is strong with his *oluse* and less so with his *oluina*." Nowadays a man teaches a child work and also looks out for his education that he may advance properly. His mother's brothers (*va inanu*) have no longer much power as of old.'[1]

Bearing in mind their bilateral nature and the fact that every Ocimbundu belongs at the same time to his paternal (*oluse*) and to his maternal (*oluina*) groups, the functions of these kinship groups may be summarized as follows:

Oluse	*Oluina*
SOCIAL	
Consists of local residence units; succession of village and tribal offices from father to son, or elder to younger brother.	Extended family organization; office of family head descends from mother's brother to sister's son; children belong.
Marriage allowed between cross-cousins and other relatives of non-parallel descent; couple lives at groom's father's village.	*Marriage preferred* between cross-cousins and other relatives of non-parallel descent; children belong to mother's *oluina*.
EDUCATIONAL	
Responsibility for education of young children, especially in social usage.	Responsibility sometimes assumed in later childhood, especially for technical phases.
ECONOMIC	
Ownership and inheritance of land. (Passed from father to son or elder to younger brother.)	Ownership and inheritance of more largely negotiable and movable property, as e.g. trade goods, cattle, &c. (passed from mother's brother to sister's son).

[1] Raul Kavita Evambi, op. cit.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

Oluse	*Oluina*
RELIGIOUS	
Regular village worship including agricultural festivals; village headman is also priest.	Family observances including occasional propitiations in case of illness, death, or other misfortunes; for desired economic advantages; mortuary rites. Family head is also priest.

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Classificatory System of Relationship. The relationships of the wider kinship groups are quite largely extensions of those of the household, but the Ovimbundu, in common with all people who have a classificatory system, extend these relationships not only further but in quite different ways than do those who have the European (Roman) system. One who would understand the Ovimbundu must understand the Umbundu family from the inside—not as from motives of mere intellectual curiosity but as an Ocimbundu understands it. In order to demonstrate this family structure it will be necessary to present tables and diagrams. Hambly did a very creditable piece of work toward demonstrating the structure of the Umbundu family.[1] I doubt that anyone staying among them an equally short period of time, not knowing their language, could have done better in this respect unless he had come to the task with very exceptional preparation. It is only just to state this and I feel that it is necessary because so far as I am aware, in the five years since it was published, the book has received no adequate appraisal or review.[2] It must be said, however, that Hambly made some noticeable errors in his use of kinship terms owing to the fact that he did not learn the Umbundu language, and that he evidently failed to understand certain points with regard to the social structure.

For greater clarity and precision I am presenting in separate tables the terms which refer to blood relationship and those which refer to relationship by marriage.

[1] W. D. Hambly, op. cit., pp. 189–99.

[2] This book was reviewed in *Africa*, 1935, pp. 391–3, but the reviewer had no first-hand knowledge of the people or their language, which was perhaps his reason for taking up three-fourths of the space at his disposal with questions of orthography. E. W. Smith has taken note of the book (*Africa: What Do We Know of It?*, p. 71), but only to say that it 'is chiefly useful for its description of the material culture'.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

182 621 in a somewhat decadent state, the Umbundu village has up to the present maintained its status as a local kinship unit.

182 592 602 The household is not a solitary unit but a part of the village. Since it is constituted by marriage, it embodies the union of at least two kinship groups. The attitudes and behaviour patterns within the Umbundu household are basically those universally recognized. In common with the households of most Bantu cultures, it differs from the European model in that it extends its attitudes and behaviour patterns to the wider kinship groupings by means of a classificatory system of relationship.

613 182 In the wider kinship groupings (*epata*), the Ovimbundu recognize both the maternal (*oluina*) and the paternal (*oluse*) lines of descent. The functions of the latter have been largely local, residential, social, and religious, with succession (of status) in the male line. The function of the former has been cohesive over a larger territory, with a recognized head in whom has been vested both religious and economic functions. Both his office and the inheritance of property descend in the female line. Much of the power, economic and personal, formerly held by the *oluina*, in the person of the mother's brother, seems to be passing at the present time to the *oluse*, in the person of the father. The bilineal kinship system has been a strongly cohesive social force.

182 [582] The form of marriage practised by the Ovimbundu is of the two-way cross-cousin type in both lines of kin and in three generations. It seems to be an individual type developed in the particular social and economic situation of the Ovimbundu. As a contract between two families and as a new venture, the marriage relation demands that great attention be given to attitudes and behaviour patterns which emphasize mutual respect.

[561] The hierarchy of age is a very real factor in the Umbundu social structure. Age-set 'schools' have not existed generally throughout the tribes, but there are associations of coevals. This is largely a cohesive force.

754 Sorcery is the most important disruptive force at work *within* Umbundu society. Working as it does, within kinship groups, and inasmuch as it seems to be on the increase, sorcery embodies a real danger to social cohesion.

184 178 Homogeneity has never been an attribute of the Ovimbundu as regards their racial or cultural make-up. The slave-trade injected other and more diverse elements, and recent movements and

there was a great metal industry in Viye, where hoes were made for trade with the interior; later the wholesale manufacture of hoes was taken over by Ndulu, where there are the best and most easily accessible deposits of iron. In exchange for hoes they received palm-oil or cattle from other regions, or salt, rum, or goods from the coast. Other regional specialisations were :- Kasongi and the Sele country for palm-oil, Cikuma for beeswax, cattle from Ngalangi, Kalukembe, and, further south, corn-meal from Ciyaka, Civula and Bailundu.(1) 438 [316]

SOCIAL ORGANISATION AND POLITICAL STRUCTURE

KINSHIP AND DESCENT

The Ovimbundu appear to have a system of double descent which has not yet been fully reported and analysed, and whose nature is not very clear from existing accounts. The following outline is based on information given by Childs,(2) who unfortunately details the functions but not the composition of the kin groups concerned. In a review(3) of Childs' book, Barnes has formulated a descent system which would be congruent with Childs' description, and his suggestions are outlined here. 611 114

The epata

Childs translates *epata* as "blood relatives", and his use of the term suggests that it may have either a general or a limited sense. Thus he writes (p.42): "Nearly all of the villagers belong to the same *epata* or extended family, which includes both lines of descent. Most of them belong to the father's family *(oluse)*, and the mother's family *(oluina)* may also be represented." And, in another context, (p.44): "When an Ocimbundu speaks of his *epata* (family) in the sense of a large and widespread organization with a recognized head....it is generally his *oluina* [mother's family] to which he refers." 596

The oluse and the oluina

Every Ocimbundu belongs in the first instance to two distinct kin groupings: the *oluse*, to whom he is related through his father, and the *oluina* to whom he is related through his mother. Uterine brothers and sisters belong to the same *oluse* and *oluina*, but to the male and female side respectively, according to sex. (see below.) A difficulty has arisen because both Hambly(4) and Childs appear to regard *both groups* as bilateral. Hambly states explicitly that the *oluse*, or *epata lia tate* (family of my father) includes *all* relatives on the father's side, and the *oluina* or *epata lia mai* (family of my mother) *all* relatives on the mother's side. Childs writes (p.45) "Bearing in mind *their bilateral nature* ..... the functions of [the *oluse* and the *oluina*] may be summarised...". But from his summary it is obvious that the *oluse* and the *oluina* cannot be bilateral groups, neither can they have parallel descent systems of any kind. Marriage is patrilocal, and the *oluse* forms a local unit while the *oluina* is 611 613 [591]

(1) Childs, 1949, p.205.
(2) 1949, pp.42-6.
(3) Man, September 1950, p.127.
(4) Op.cit., pp.191-2.

611 dispersed. Both groups have ritual leaders, whose offices are quite dis-
613 tinct. Barnes' suggestion[1] is that the two groups must be father's patrilineage and mother's matrilineage, with the qualification mentioned below.

613 The *oluse* consists of a large number of village groups, some of which
622 recognise mutual relationship,[2] but with no recognised head (other than the village headmen) except in the case of the royal families. Land is owned by the *oluse* and passed on within it from father to son, or from
[428] elder to younger brother. Succession to village or tribal office, from village headman to king, descends in the same way.[3] Ritual leadership within the *oluse* lies with the village headman, who is in charge of the
[346] spirit-hut *(etambo)* of the guardian spirit of the village (or of the nuclear *oluse* within the village), and who officiates at regular village worship, including agricultural festivals.

613 The *oluina*, on the other hand, is a dispersed and apparently larger
428 group, whose members live with their various paternal lines of descent. The size of the *oluina* is unknown; Childs merely refers to it as a "large
604 and widespread organization, with a recognized head". The office of head of the *oluina (ukulu wepata)* descends from mother's brother to sister's son. Negotiable and moveable property, including cattle and trade goods, is owned by the *oluina* and inherited by the sister's son. Formerly the mother's elder brother had great powers over his sister's sons, and was even able to pawn them or sell them into slavery, to meet his own debts.
[592] The patrilocal household is usually responsible for training children, especially during their early years, but they are frequently sent to the *oluina* (i.e. to the mother's brother) for at least a part of their educa-
[586] tion. At death or divorce of parents, children go to the *oluina*.

The head *(ukulu wepata)* of the *oluina* is usually both the legal and
613 spiritual head of the group, although today the two functions are often divided. He is in charge of the spirit hut *(etambo)* of the guardian
782 spirit of the *oluina* (of whom there may be more than one, and of whom he becomes one after death). He leads the *oluina* in propitiatory rituals carried out in case of illness, death, or other misfortunes within the group, or in prayers made for desired economic advantages. (Apparently no regular rituals are carried out by the *oluina*.) The *ukulu wepata* may or may not be at the same time a village headman; if he is, he will be priest of two lines and have charge of two spirit huts; if he is not, there may be two (or more) priests in the village, each in charge of the spirit-hut of his *oluse* or *oluina*.

The onēlē yohonji and the onēlē yohumba

613 The *oluse* and the *oluina* are both divided into male and female
602 "sides": the *onēlē yohonji* (the side of the bow) and the *onēlē yohumba*
582 (the side of the basket). It has been noted above that uterine brothers and sisters belong to the same *oluse* and *oluina*, but to the male or female side in each, according to sex. The composition of these "sides" is

(1) Loc.cit.
(2) If some villages within the *oluse* cannot trace mutual relationship, the *oluse* should perhaps be called a patri-clan rather than a patrilineage.
(3) But see below, p.29.

however not at all clear. They seem to group simply all the male members and all the female members of the *oluse* and of the *oluina*; but this conflicts with the information given on marriage.[1] A man may marry into the male side of his mother's kin or into the female side of his father's kin. Hence there must be some women in the male side, and, presumably, some men in the female side. A man cannot marry a parallel cousin, but he may marry: 613 602 582

(a) a father's sister. She presumably belongs to the female side of the *oluse*, which presents no difficulty.

(b) a sister's daughter. She appears to belong to the female side of ego's mother's kin, while a man should marry into the male side of his mother's kin.

(c) a female cross-cousin. If the *oluse* and the *oluina* were merely father's patrilineage and mother's matrilineage, as has been suggested, cross-cousins are excluded from both groups. In a footnote,[2] however, Childs seems to imply that mother's brother's daughter belongs to ego's mother's kin. Barnes therefore suggests that children of men of the matrilineage may be included in the *oluina*, falling into the male side irrespective of sex, and similarly the *oluse* may include in the female side all the children of women of the patrilineage. By this hypothesis:

(a) a sister's daughter would fall into the female side of ego's *oluse*.

(b) a mother's brother's daughter would fall into the male side of ego's *oluina*.

(c) a father's sister's daughter would fall into the female side of the *oluse*.

The descent system: summary 602

The descent system suggested may then be summarised thus: 613 611

(1) *oluse* (father's kin)

(a) *onēlē yohonji* (male side): all men in the patrilineage.

(b) *onēlē yohumba* (female side): all women in the patrilineage, and all sons and daughters of women in the patrilineage.

(2) *oluina* (mother's kin)

(a) *onēlē yohumba* (female side): all women in the matrilineage.

(b) *onēlē yohonji* (male side): all men in matrilineage, and all sons and daughters of all men in the matrilineage.

According to this hypothesis every person belongs to four distinct groups. A man must belong not only to the male side of the two groups centred in the father's patrilineage and the mother's matrilineage, but also to the male side of his father's matrilineal group and to the female side of his mother's patrilineal group. There are still only two systems

(1) Childs, op.cit., p.53. (2) P.53, fn.3.

611 of groups, but a man belongs to two groups within each system. Similar
613 membership is required for a woman. A man shares with all his children his membership of the male side of his mother's matrilineal group, and
602 shares with his sons membership of the male side of his father's patrilineal group. His daughters belong to his father's patrilineal group but to its female side. He does not transmit to his children membership of his father's matrilineal group or his mother's patrilineal group.(1) This is illustrated by the diagram on page 21.

601 *Kinship terminology*

Patterns of behaviour between all blood relatives find their prototypes in the household. The following list of kinship terms is selected from the more detailed list given by Childs.(2)

Term		*Reciprocal*
mai	mother, mother's sister, etc.	*omolange*
tate	father, father's brother, etc.	*omolange*
tatekai	("female father") -father's sister	*ocimumbo cange*
mamu	mother's brother	*ocimumbo cange*
hwange	elder brother or sister, and male or female parallel cousin, if older than ego	*manjange*
kote	eldest brother (of family or household)	*manjange*
(epolume *(upolume* *(cepue*	male or female cross-cousin	*epolume, upolume,* or *cepue*
mukai	sister or female parallel cousin (M.S.)(3)	*mume*
mbuale	" " " " (W.S.)	*mbuale*
meikulu	grandmother, grandparents' sister	*onekulu yange*
sekulu	grandfather, grandparents' brother	*onekulu yange*

Note: (a) There is no word used exclusively for "brother" by a man, although a woman may use *mume* in this sense. *Hwange* and *manjange* are used by either men or women for elder or younger brothers or sisters.

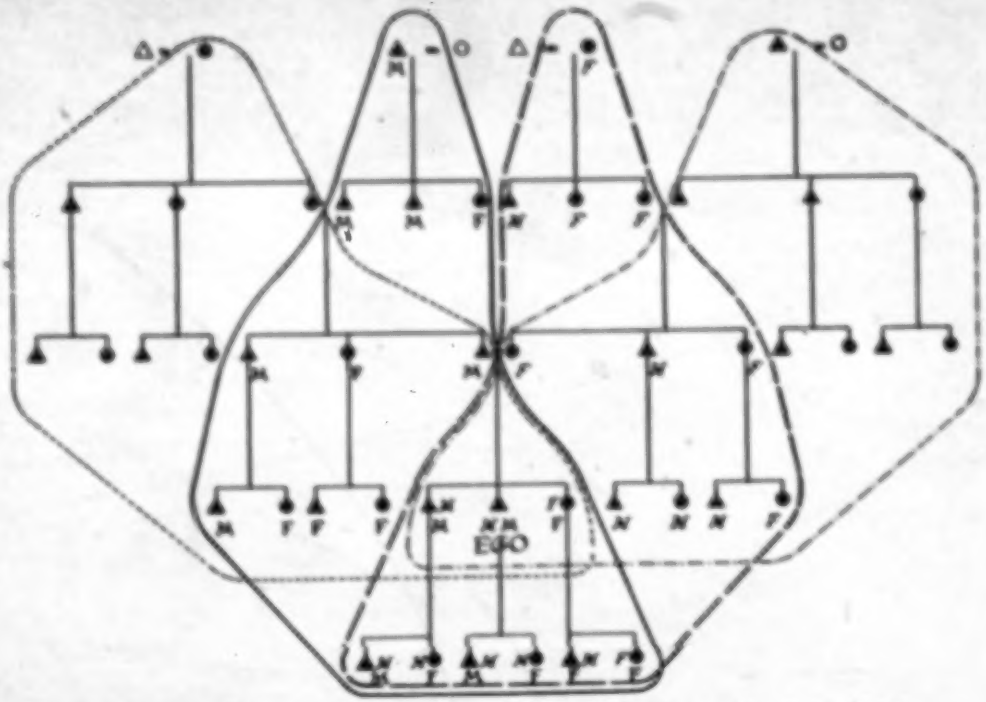
(b) *meikulu* and *sekulu* are sometimes used interchangeably for persons of either sex.

MARRIAGE

582 *Marriage within the kin group*

The most desirable marriage is marriage within the circle of kin, i.e. (as noted above) into the male line of the *oluine* or the female line of the *oluse*. (There appears to be a preference for marriage within the *oluine*.(4)) One may not marry one classed as brother, sister, father, mother, grandparent, child or grandchild, for such a union would involve

(1) This paragraph is largely quoted from Barnes, loc.cit.
(2) pp.47-9.
(3) M.S. = man speaking, W.S. = woman speaking.
(4) Childs, op.cit., p.53, note 3.



EGOS 4 KIN GROUPS. 1.—— - Oluse. M - Male side. F - Female side.
2.— — - Olsina. M - Male side. F - Female side. 3 — — Mother's paternal kin. 4 - - - Father's maternal kin. (Male and female sides for 3 & 4 not shown.)

104
613

601 ocisumbo (since Childs states (p.55) that it includes every relative of the generation of the spouse's parents.) *Ndatembo* must avoid: (i) speaking each other's names. This may be accomplished by using the names compounded from those of children (thus *Nakambotia* and *Sakambotia* are the father and mother of Kambotia) or by using the terms which one's spouse uses, i.e. *nai, tata, nana* etc. (ii) seeing each other, if they are of opposite sex; if it is necessary to converse, it must be done out of sight, or with gaze averted. (iii) eating with each other. (This applies only to regular meals and not to casual refreshment.)

607 (c) The term *nawa* is used reciprocally for all the spouse's relatives of one's own generation, including those classed as "sister", "brother" and "cross-cousin". Between the *nawa* the only avoidance enjoined is that they may not eat regular meals in each other's presence; otherwise they are on "free and easy" terms".

"Avoidance of meeting ... is especially difficult for the bride who comes to live in a village of her husband's people, a large proportion of the men of which may be *ndatembo* to her. The prohibition may be lifted by .. a simple ceremony, in which each rubs a little oil on the other ... Avoidance of eating in each other's presence may be done away with after some months by sacrificing a chicken and feeding it ceremonially .. to the *ndatembo* or *nawa* ... It is especially important that the ceremonies be carried through with respect *(esumbilo)*."(1)

A note on the kinship system

613 421 178 There is a tendency today for the claim of the *oluse*, the land-owning group, to supplant those of the property-owning *oluina*; one important reason for this is the change from trade to agriculture as the most important economic activity. With European influence also conflicts have arisen over rights to children. Childs states(2) that the bilineal kinship system has been a factor leading to social stability, especially stability of marriage, but he does not elaborate this statement.

LOCAL GROUPS(3)

The "household", consisting of a man, his wife or wives and children, and such other related or unrelated dependants as may be attached to this basic group, is the basis of the village. The word *enjo* (house) may be used for this group, i.e. to include the various houses which a man may have established by marriage, or it may be used for the house of any one of his wives. Each wife has her own hut, granary, chickens, and fields for her children and herself, and the husband has no house of his own unless he is village headman or the head of an *oluina*, in which case he has a spirit-hut *(etembo)* in which he may sometimes pass the night. Sons when they marry form their own households, usually in their father's village. The size of the household varies greatly according to wealth and status. Some recent kings have had as many as 12 wives. But it has been noted above that, in Childs' typical village, out of 48 households only 10

592 595 [591] [554]

(1) Childs, p.52.
(2) Ibid., p.56; see also ibid. pp.70, 45, 50 etc.
(3) This section is based on Childs, 1949, pp.25-41.

621 The total number of households is 44, or 49 including those of the four
592 section heads. It should be noted that there is a discrepancy in Childs's
114 figures (apart from an obvious misprint):[1] in another context he writes that section B contains only 12 houses (not even *households*), while from this table it would appear that section B has 15 household heads, including that of the section head; and section C is said to have 6 households, while only 4 (again counting the section head) are accounted for in this table.

591 Childs states[2] that the incidence of patrilocal marriage in Ngendo
114 is fairly typical of Umbundu country, but unfortunately gives little information regarding the relationship of the various spouses to each other or concerning the location of the villages from which they came. Matrilocal marriage is recognised as a possibility: of the three relatives by marriage listed above, one was a husband of a daughter of the headman, another the widow of a younger brother of the headman, who should have been inherited by a younger brother (?) or a mother's brother of the deceased, or, failing that, could have returned to her father's village. Of those listed above as sisters' children, two were widows who had come to live in the village with their mother's brothers.[3]

POLITICAL STRUCTURE

The village headman[4]

622 The village headman *(sekulu yimbo)* is also the head of the *olume*
793 which forms the nucleus of the village group, and is related agnatically to most of the householders. He alone may speak of the village as *imbo*
782 *liange* (my village); the heads of sections, who are also called *sekulu*[5] may speak possessively only of their own sections *(ocitiwila cange)*, and other villagers speak only of "our village" *(imbo lietu)*.[6] The headman functions as both priest and legal head of the village. As priest he has in his compound the *etambo* (spirit hut), in which the insignia of office are kept, and in which he prays to the ancestral spirits. Upon occasion he may sleep there, usually offering a prayer to the spirits when he wakes during the night. The *etambo* may also be
[34L] used as a lodging place for respected guests, or as a store-house for possessions not used every day. Childs states that he officiates at regular village worship, including agricultural festivals; Hambly adds that he may lead the people in offering sacrifices when epidemics of
● 613 sickness break out in the village. It has been noted above[7] that it is the function of the *olume* head to lead such rituals when illness occurs within the *olume*. In general the village head is responsible for
[622] matters - particularly agriculture and public health - which affect the whole village; individuals, both for protection and for help and other

(1) Childs, op.cit., p.28, line 27, where "twenty-four" should read "forty-four".
(2) On the basis of the 192 genealogies and 74 marriage-schedules which he collected. He does not, unfortunately, give examples or show how the comparison was made.
(3) Based on Childs, op.cit., pp.25-31.
(4) This section is based on Childs, op.cit., pp.36-7.
(5) It has been noted above that *sekulu* is used for all men (and some women) of the grandf[illegible]r's generation.
(6) op.cit., p.[illegible]. (7) p.38.

29

advancement, will go to the head of their olaine to ask for his intercession with the spirits.[1] 613

As legal head of the village, the ochola yiako presides over both the more serious cases, which are held before the whole village on the dance-floor, and the simpler ones, which require the attendance only of those concerned, together with their respective elders, and may be taken up either in the *onjango* or in the headman's own courtyard. Bambly seems to suggest that all the section-heads sit with the village headman as a kind of council, but does not give details. He states also that the olocebulo (sing. *sekulu*) of the village formerly had charge of trials for murder, theft, adultery, and arguments over land,[2] and points out that they were more active in the legal system than the chiefs.[3] This is even more true today, when the village court of justice continues to function in spite of political and administrative changes, although the offices of chiefs and to some extent of sub-chiefs have largely decayed. 622 623 691 [77]

Other functions of the village headman include: the distribution of land to the various families when new village sites are opened;[4] the direction of the communal fire-hunts;[5] and, today, the collecting of taxes from the villagers and the direction and organisation of labour to work on the roads.[6] But however numerous the headman's official duties, he usually finds some time to attend to his own affairs, whether he is a farmer, hunter, or trader.[7] 622 423 651 466 [463]

Succession to headmanship is usually from father to son or from elder to younger brother, "with only as much recognition of primogeniture as belongs to the general ... hierarchy of age."[8] Succession is, however, affected by the "democratic" tendencies in succession to chieftainship.[9] 622 693

The Chief (osoma or sova)[10]

The Ovimbundu are grouped in 22 chiefdoms, of which half were in the past generally tributary to the more powerful chiefs.[11] At the same time each chiefdom had its separate government and could be considered as a unit in itself. Effective European occupation and direct rule have atrophied the chiefly office among the Ovimbundu, until today chiefs survive as little more than "living museum pieces".[12] Childs[13] enumerates the functions of the chieffly office as follows: 631 643 [77]

(a) *Religious.* The chief's ancestral spirits were the principal chiefdom deities, and the king was high-priest as well as the visible "vice-regent and incarnation" of the spirits. 643 793 769

(1) Childs, personal communication.
(2) The maternal uncle is responsible for settling disputes over property which occur within the olaine. (Bambly op.cit., p.206).
(3) Ibid.
(4) Ibid.
(5) Cashman, op.cit., p.115.
(6) Ibid., p.121.
(7) Childs, op.cit., p.36.
(8) Ibid., p.44.
(9) Ibid.
(10) Osoma means chief or king. *Sova* is the personalized form used with the name. This the Portuguese writers have corrupted into sova or soba. (Childs, personal communication)
(11) See above, p.2.
(12) Childs, op.cit., p.20.
(13) Ibid.

769 They intimate their wishes to their descendants only through slight illness, usually asking for honour to be paid to them by a feast, or by some descendant carrying on their profession.

Ovande is the spirit of the much-honoured founder of the family,(1) and is always beneficent, bringing good fortune and warning his descendants of danger. Humbly and Tucker agree that *Ekisi* is the same kind of spirit as *Ovande* (although Humbly does not give *Ovande* this special meaning). Tucker writes that *Ekisi* is a benevolent spirit who calls the villagers together at night, and gives them advice through a medium (?), whom he enters without the latter's going into the usual trance. *Kandundu* according to Tucker is an *ekisi* who holds the leading position among the ancestral spirits owing to his seniority. Humbly describes a shrine to *Kandundu* at Bailundu; anyone who sees the contents of the shrine is supposed to become blind. He writes that *Kandundu* is thought of as "the spirit of dreaming who makes swellings on the body", but gives no further explanation. According to Tucker *Kandundu* is an especially powerful *ondele*, and ceremonies performed for him have many distinctive features.

776 769 [778]

Hunt, the spirit of the hunt, has his own shrine and priest in the village of the (paramount?) chief. His hut is very large, since all the meat of the hunts is placed in it. In front of it dances are held, and poles are decorated with skulls and other trophies of hunting. Before the door there is a carved figure of *Samaba*, the spirit who chases the game towards the hunter. A man whose ritual name is *Kapila*, and a woman called *Kumja*(2) are in charge of the spirit-hut of *Hunt*, and make supplication to him for success in hunting. Hunters living elsewhere but in an *ombala* or head village do not have persons bearing these ritual names, but their dogs are often called *Hunt*, *Samaba*, *Kapila* or *Kumja*.

324 776 778 [553]

The most dreaded spirits are the *otulopokupuko*, who may be spirits of still-born babies or foetuses, mental defectives, maltreated slaves, or persons, especially children, killed by sorcery. When a person has been found guilty of killing a child by sorcery or witchcraft, he is sentenced to "restore life" to it, which he does by substituting for it a child from his own family: if the deceased child is a girl, he must give an ox as well. The child is treated with great respect by his new family. If however the parents do not ask the sorcerer or witch for restitution, the child becomes an *okulupokupoko*, and may return to "eat" other children, at the command of the sorcerer who has killed it.

775 754

RITUAL

It has been noted that the village headman acts as priest for the *olusu*, the group of paternally-related persons who form the basis of the village group, while the head of the *olume* acts as priest for his dispersed, maternally-related group.(3) There is little detailed information on the religious duties of these priests. Cushman(4) describes the village headman as making public prayers each morning to Suku. Childs however points out(5) that it is more usual for the headman to spend a

793 613

(1) i.e. of either the *olusu* or the *olume*. (Childs, personal communication)
(2) According to Childs, (1949, p.21) *Kumja* is a hunting goddess.
(3) See above, p.29.
(4) 1944, p.51. (5) Personal communication.

night in the *ombo* praying to or communing with ancestral spirits, when the occasion arises; Suku is regarded as too remote to receive prayers. 693 613

While cooking, a woman may spill a little meal on the ground for the spirits; at a meal, a person may spill a little food or beer for the same purpose. A portion of the meat at a feast may likewise be sacrificed, but it is often a less desirable portion, such as the intestines.[1] 782

Agricultural rituals were held before planting, at which time the headman and his wife had intercourse in their field and sacred seed from the chief's granary was distributed, a few grains to be mixed with the seed to be planted on each plot. When the maize began to ripen a few ears were sent to the chief before any were eaten.[2] 241 789

DIVINING[3]

The word *ocimbanda* is used both for a diviner and for a maker of medicines. To distinguish the two, the diviner may be called *ocimbanda cangunde* ("of the basket"), the herbalist *ocimbanda cuviti* ("of trees or sticks"). Some practitioners are both diviner and herbalist. A female diviner is called *combula*.[4] An *ocimbanda* frequently specialises in a certain kind of case;[5] and among the members of the profession there are many degrees of proficiency. One may work only in his own village, another may be consulted on matters of concern to the whole district or chiefdom; others go on professional journeys carrying their baskets, and accumulate profits in animals and cloth. The greater the reputation of the diviner, the greater the charges he makes for his services. 791 759

The tasks of the *ocimbanda* are:-

(a) To discover the cause of sickness, death, or any evil which has befallen the individual or the community. Sickness and death are always believed to be due either to the workings of spirits who are demanding sacrifices, or to living enemies who have malicious spirits under their control or who have bought potent charms. The diviner, after consulting the spirit who speaks in and through his basket, names the spirit who is causing the trouble and tells the victim what its demands are, or, if the enemy is a living person, indicates in a general manner from whence the trouble comes, e.g. to a woman "Your baskets are too well made; you are hated because of them", or, to a man, "This illness was found on a journey taken to collect a debt". If requested, the diviner makes a countercharm to offset that which has caused the ill. 787 753

(b) To interpret omens and dreams.

(c) To give advice on personal problems.

(d) To dispense medicines and charms.

(e) To bring or withhold rain, or to see who is guilty of withholding it. [789]

(1) Ibid., see also Cushman, loc.cit.
(2) Childs, personal communication.
(3) Based on Tucker, 1948.
(4) Buakly, (3) 1954.
(5) Ibid.

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Kakulale or *sekulale*. These terms are applicable to my father's father's brother, my father's father's brother's wife; my father's father's sister's husband; and my mother's father (the reciprocal *ovakulu* describes the reciprocals, brother's son's son; husband's brother's son's son; wife's brother's son's son; daughter's son). 601

Mokulu. This designation, which is derived from *uai*, meaning mother, and *kulu*, an old person, is applied to my father's mother (reciprocal, *ovakulu* *ponge*, son's son). *Mokulu* also means my father's father's sister; my mother's mother; my mother's mother's brother's wife; and my mother's mother's sister (the reciprocal is *ovakulu* which equals the English reciprocals brother's son's son; daughter's son; husband's daughter's child; and sister's daughter's child).

This completes the second generation of ascendants.

NOTE: Ngunga's wife uses the names *mokulu* and *kakulale* for those relatives of her husband to whom Ngunga himself applies these terms. These relatives call Ngunga's wife *ovakulu*.

TABLE D

(See Table E IV and V, also Table F II, IV and V)

SONS OF NOONGA'S DESCENDANTS

Nuwala or *uwili* is my first-born son. Other sons are *omolo*, meaning child. *Omolo alume* means a male child. *Omolo akai* is a female child. *Uwili* also means a first daughter (the reciprocal for these terms is *tate*, meaning father).

Omolange means my child. I apply the word, not only to my own children, but to my elder brother's son (reciprocal, *tate*, father's younger brother); to my elder brother's daughter; and to my younger brother's son.

Ndatembe. The word is applied to my son's wife; my daughter's husband; my elder brother's son's wife; my elder brother's daughter's husband; and my younger brother's son's wife (the same word *ndatembe* is used for the reciprocals of these terms; namely, husband's father; wife's father; husband's father's younger brother; wife's father's younger brother; and husband's father's elder brother).

The foregoing classificatory system of relationship is not peculiar 601
to the Ovimbundu, but is a cultural trait of many Bantu-speaking 171
and some Sudanic-speaking Negroes. The similarity of the Umbundu system to those of surrounding peoples in Rhodesia and the Congo will be pointed out in chapters dealing with culture contacts.

When describing marriage rites reference was made to the fact 591
that a wife goes to live near her husband's relatives; the system is
therefore patrilocal. The limited family consists of husband and 592
wife (or wives) with their children. The greatest number of wives (595)
observed in the family of a commoner was four, and in the family
of a king eleven. A household sometimes contains adopted children, [597]
also domestic slaves (pawns) who are working to pay off debts for [567]
their maternal uncles. An extended family may include a grand- 596
father and his wife, his sons, their wives and children, and his unmarried daughters, with classes and nomenclatures mentioned in the foregoing tables.

The phrase *epata lia tate* (or *alase*) means "family of my father" 613
and includes all relatives on the father's side. The words *epata lia*

613 *mai* (or *olusa*) mean "family of my mother." These terms seem to indicate a bilateral rather than a unilateral lineage. Inquiry did not show that there were totems for the mother's or the father's people, or that marriage into any particular local group was com-
631 manded or enjoined. A village is a unit under the administration of a chief (*sekulu*) and as such is part of a large group of villages forming a kingdom ruled by a king (*seesa*), but such village units are concerned with government and warfare, not with exogamy.

613 In tracing descent an Ocimbundu gives the names of relatives of
565 both the father and mother, but commoners are unlikely to know the names of their relatives beyond the grandparent class. The children of a king were at one time able to recite many generations
[582] of ancestors along both parental lines. But if the king had married a commoner, as he was allowed to do after choosing his first wife from the royal line, the children knew only the genealogy of their father. This is obvious since the commoner mother would not be likely to know her line of descent. The son of a village chief (*sekulu*) may marry a commoner, but, according to Ngonga, the *sekulu*, his father, "would have a very good look at her."

582 Ngonga had not heard of the marriage of brothers and sisters,
565 not even in the royal family; the idea of such a union was new and repulsive to him. In Umbundu society there would be no necessity for such a marriage as that of brother and sister or other close relative, because members of a royal family of one part of the country could intermarry with members of a royal family in some area far away. There might, for example, be marriages between the royal families of Bailundu and Ngalangi, which are two principal kingships of the Ovimbundu confederacy.

835 When asked what would be the fate of a man who committed
684 incest with his blood daughter or uterine sister, Ngonga said he would be killed by his brother or by his mother's brother. If he escaped he would have to go far away so that his people could never see him again. If a fine were accepted for incest, the culprit would have to pay his own kin "because he had shamed them."

601 Table A, Ngonga's Own Generation, calls attention to a plurality of terms for brother and sister according to the relative ages of the speaker and the person addressed. Moreover, there is a term for direct address and another which is used when speaking of a brother or sister.

Ngonga was questioned with regard to forms of address for his brothers and sisters other than the children of his uterine mother.

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not now possible for field work to supply the gaps in the written material.[73]

The traditional kinship system had neither clans nor segmenting lineages. The patrilineal group (*oluse*) was localized in a village, the group head being at the same time a village headman. Patrilineal ties do not seem to have been recognized between villages.[73] This social independence of the agnatically united village was reflected in the surrounding palisade, in the close clustering of the houses (nowadays much more spread out) and in the village institutions of the dancing-floor and the men's house (*ondjango*). It was here that all the men and boys, from seven or eight up, ate. Hastings writes, 'Each woman, after preparing the meal, takes or sends the portion which is for the male members of her family. This food is common property. As soon as enough has arrived some responsible member among the men will have it divided among the boys. For days a man may never taste of the food which is prepared by his wife.'[74] The men's house was also a club, and a court-room, where minor cases were decided. It was through this localized body of patrikin that an individual claimed land and residence rights and through it that he participated in the political system.[75]

The matrilineal group (the *oluina*) was composed of the descendants of a common great-great-grandmother.[76] According to Childs, it had a head who might also at times be a village headman,[77] and it was presumably the matrilineal group head who settled the disputes over property which Hambly says

[73] For an attempt at reconstructing Umbundu kinship on the basis of Childs's book see J. A. Barnes's review of *Umbundu Kinship and Character* in *Man*, 1950, pp. 126–128. It may be mentioned that the terms 'the side of the bow' and 'the side of the basket' are used simply to mean 'patrilateral kin' and 'matrilateral kin' (Dr. Childs, private information, and my own inquiries).

[74] A rather ambiguous phrase in Childs p. 43 ('The *olusе* consists of a large number of local village groups'), which might be interpreted as meaning that villages were patrilineally grouped into clans, seems really to mean simply that the village is the *olusе* unit.

[75] Hastings, p. 77.

[76] Ibid., p. 16. Childs, pp. 43–44.

[77] Hastings, p. 83, states that the matrilineal group consists of the descendants of a common great-great-great-grandmother (that is, five generations), and on p. 91 says that it consists of a group 'linked by a common great-great-grandmother'.

[77] Childs, p. 44.

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613 could be resolved in the matrilineal group.[78] Hastings, who gives the most detailed account of the matrilineal groups, which he calls sibs, tells us, 'There can be no exaction of fines or taking of slaves between the members of a sib group—the group members are supposed to pay each other's debts, and one who has wealth and refuses so to communicate may be secretly poisoned by the others. It is within the group of matrilineal sibs that most compacts, whether social or economic, are formed and operate. The same is true even of malevolent plots and anti-
[75] social practices, such as killing by witchcraft.'[79]

Clearly, the matrilineal groups in which the rich had to pool
612 613 their wealth with poorer kinsfolk and in which trading arrange-
937 ments[80] were made indicate the adaptation of the kinship system to the needs of the trade. It may be suggested that one of the functions of the double descent system was to separate the fields of village and chiefdom relations, established through patrilineal ties, from the field of commerce, credit, and the inheritance of wealth gained by trade. Thus the conflicts in which a man would be involved in one set of relations would not involve his other set of ties, and this distribution of stresses must have limited the strains set up by disputes. The distinction between the local group and the commercial group would also prevent heavy losses from trade striking a whole village simultaneously.[81] The credit institutions demanded by a trading
[452] system in which debt was frequently incurred were fitted into the kinship system, and associated with a device for levelling those who had become prosperous in the trade.

613 Unhappily the disintegration of the traditional social struc-
[175] ture, and the accompanying loss of knowledge of it, prevented me from adding to, or even corroborating entirely, the written material on the form of the matrilineal groups.[82] It is not at all evident how the groups maintained integration, or how new

[78] Hambly, p. 200.

[79] Ibid., p. 92.

[80] Dr. Childs suggested to me that the core of the caravans might be composed of kin. However, the caravans were so large that they clearly could not be organised on a kinship basis. See also Serpa Pinto, p. 165.

[81] This point was suggested to me by Dr. Mary Douglas.

[82] I did not obtain any information on the size of the matrilineal group, the existence of heads of the groups, and the degree to which it was a congregation.

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groups emerged. The information on the cult of the matrilineal 613
spirits which might have thrown some light on matrilineal conflicts and integration, is confused. Both Hastings and Mrs. Tucker state that the matrilineal spirits are always malevolent, but this is not confirmed by my informants,[83] and it may be that they were referring to the traditional belief that sorcery was [254] only practised between members of a matrilineal group. Although, as has been stated, a man looked to his matrilineal 613 kin for economic aid, he might travel with his father (who had 437 first claim on his services), or with his mother's brother or some other kinsman; indeed while his father was still alive he might travel and trade on his own account.[84] The matrilineal group (in this area at least) was not a unit from which trading teams were formed, but rather a means for providing financial assistance when needed for those engaged in trading. It is of course possible that in some areas of Umbundu country the matrilineal kin groups were significant in the organization of trading caravans.

Another institution whose form can be described but whose 582 function cannot be properly known is that of preferential marriage with certain categories of kin. Childs states that the categories were cross-cousins (both patrilateral and matrilateral), the sister's daughter, and the father's sister, and indicates that the cross-cousin marriages were not generally with first-cousins. My informants generally denied that it had been permitted to marry a father's sister, but confirmed his other statements. They added that an indemnification was paid by [583] the bridegroom to the bride's family 'to cut the blood',[85] and 601 that the kinship terms were replaced by affinal. This suggests that these marriages may have been intended to restore distant kinship ties by turning them into affinal ties and so renewing them for the next generation, but how this would operate cannot even be guessed.

[83] Hastings, p. 87; L. S. Tucker, 'The Divining Basket of the Ovimbundu', *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, 1940, pp. 171–201.

[84] Informants.

[85] This was paid down to 1949 or so in the area where I was. It was about 20 escudos, much less than bridewealth. It was formerly referred to by the Umbundu term for 'fine' (*osimba*), as was the payment made on the death of a non-kinswoman wife.

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THE OVIMBUNDU UNDER TWO SOVEREIGNTIES

593 It was then the father who normally exercised authority over
591 a boy, and on the father's death a child or youth would join the household of a father's brother. Yet the right of a sister's son to
604 the inheritance of the movable property and to grants from his mother's brother was counterbalanced by the latter's right to sell his uterine nephew into slavery, a fate from which the father could save his son by ransoming him, in which case the mother's brother would no longer have this right.[86] In this society, the mother's brother—sister's son relationship was fundamentally an economic one, in which the sister's son received assistance in the trade and inherited his uncle's gains in this trade, but could himself be transformed into a source of capital.

182 I now summarize the evidence on Umbundu social control and its relation with the trading economy. It is clear that the Ovimbundu belonged to the number of those African societies
[642] with pyramidal[87] political systems and formal codes and courts of law, even though there exists uncertainty as to the relative power of the kingdoms and the sub-chiefdoms. Social control
182 also operated through the kinship system, authority at the
●613 village level being in the hands of the head of the patrilineal group backed by the public opinion expressed in the men's house, and the dispersed matrilineal groups having sanctions in the right of sale of a sister's son and in the accusations of sorcery brought against those who failed to use wealth to aid their relatives. For the caravan trade to have attained the
182 importance it did there must also have existed something of a
631 *pax Umbunduca* stimulated by the existence of such ties as that between *tjisoko* partners and the 'international' hospitality shown to diviners, hunters, and smiths. Evidence of this *pax Umbunduca* is provided by the organization of caravans, and by the establishment of marriage ties between persons in different kingdoms, and between different royal houses.[88]
[721] However, warfare was not unknown between the different

[86] Childs, p. 44, and my informants.

[87] See Fortes and Evans-Pritchard, Introduction to *African Political Systems*.

[88] Hastings (p. 1) notes a marriage between the daughter of a king of Bie and Ekwikwi, king of Bailundo (1876–93). Childs (p. 171) notes that Kalulukusu, king of Ndulu, was a sister's son of a king of Bailundo.

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114 One anthropologist, Mr. W.D. Hambly, and two missionaries

with anthropological knowledge and interests, Dr. Daniel A. Hastings and Dr. Gladwyn Murray Childs, have written on Umbundu kinship.[3] Mr. Hambly's main interest was in material culture and the conditions of his fieldwork were not such as to give him much evidence on the kinship system.[4] Both Dr. Hastings and Dr. Childs recognized the central importance of kinship in Umbundu social life, but have outlined the kinship ties and kinship groups rather than given a detailed analysis.

602 Mr. Hambly states that 'The phrase *Epata Lia Tate* (or *Oluse*) means "family of my father" and includes all relatives on the father's side. The words *Epata Lia Mai* (or *Oluina*) mean "family of my mother".'[5] This could mean that the Umbundu kinship system is bilateral. He states that inheritance is matrilineal and marriage virilocal, a situation consistent with such a matrilineal kinship system as that of the Bakongo.[6]

613 622 Dr. Hastings, whose thesis was completed the year before the publication of Hambly's book, makes it clear that there are two sets of kin groups. 'Over each village is a ruling elder who is the head of the kinship group of that village since all who reside in the village are generally related to him and to each other patrilineally. This elder, greatly revered, is considered the patriarch of that local group. Residence being patrilocal, [59] the office of an elder is hereditary through the male line.'[7] He 613 then goes on to contrast with this, 'the matrilineal sib to which each member is linked, though he may be living in a village away from his sib group.'[8] This group is a clearly defined

[3] Works cited in footnotes to Chapter I. There is a typescript of Hastings's thesis in the library of the International African Institute, London.

[4] Mr. Hambly spent five months in the country, and used as his interpreter and main informant an English-speaking Otjimbundu. He seems simply to have visited villages without living in them. Dr. Childs and Dr. Hastings had both spent several years as 'bush' missionaries. Dr. Childs had actually taken over from Dr. Hastings work in the area to the north-west of Bailundo in the direction of Bimbe, and had subsequently obtained information in Cassongue. He later obtained a good deal of material from African pastors, teachers and schoolboys.

[5] Hambly, pp. 191–2.

[6] For the Bakongo see the discussion by A. I. Richards, in Radcliffe-Brown and Forde, pp. 213–21. Anthropologists have more than once suggested to the author that the Umbundu system was not of the 'double-descent' category but some combination of virilocal marriage and matrilineal descent.

[7] Hastings, p. 16.

[8] Ibid.

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social unit. 'All descendants of the same great-great-grandmother speak of themselves as a group (matrilineally descended), by the term *Imolietu*, i.e. "children from a common source".'[9] Dr. Hastings did not apply the concept of double-descent to this society but regarded it as being matrilineal with patrilineal trimmings. After noting the patrilineal succession to the chiefdom, virilocal residence after marriage, and social preference for patrilineal kinsman, Dr. Hastings states: 'Apart from these apparent indications which might mislead one into concluding that the Ovimbundu are patronymic [*sic*], every other behaviour is obviously linked up as far as social attitudes and relations of the living are concerned within the matrilineal sib.'[10]

The neat tabulation by Dr. Childs[11] of the functions of the two kin groups, when considered in conjunction with the passages cited from Hastings, seems to provide quite clear proof that it is correct to apply the category 'double-descent kinship system' to that formerly prevailing among the Ovimbundu.

2. *Kinship Terms*

Tate	my father	Extended to all brothers, real or classificatory, of a father, all men married to a 'mother', and to the father's sister's son, particularly if he has been your father's heir.
So	your father	
Iso	his father	
Mai	my mother	Extended to all sisters, real or classificatory, of a mother, and to all wives of any 'father'.
Nyoho	your mother	
Ina	his mother	
Sekulu	mother's brother	Extended to any brother, real or classificatory, of a mother, and to the husband of any *apahai*.
Apahai[12]	my father's sister, his father's sister,	Extended to any sister of any father and the wife of any *sekulu*.
Sohai	your father's sister	

[9] Ibid., p. 83. *Imolietu* actually means 'our womb'.
[10] Ibid., p. 87.
[11] Childs, pp. 45–46.
[12] *Tatakai* (father-woman), used in other parts of Umbundu country for 'my father's sister', is not found in Gumba.

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slave. Once ransomed a boy could not be sold again. If, however, the father was displeased with his son's behaviour he could refuse to ransom him. When a man died, his adolescent sons would go to the household of a classificatory father and the children who did not yet 'have sense' would go with the widow to her kin, returning to their agnatic kin when they were older. 593 768

4. *Analysis of the Old Kinship System*

The ethnography of the Ovimbundu does show that there existed a double-descent kinship system, each individual belonging to both a local patrilineal group, and a dispersed matrilineal group, in which movable property is inherited. So great has been the impact of social change that not only have these groups disappeared but it is practically impossible to gain additional information on them by direct questions about their nature and functions. The information on kinship norms does give a somewhat clearer picture. 611 613 [422] 613 178

Within the village there was a very strong emphasis on the unity and solidarity of the men of the village. The men's house was the main social centre of the village where the men ate, received guests, and listened to cases. It was about it rather than about the person of the headman that ritual clustered.[20] The elementary family was not the unit of domestic consumption, and it is clear, from the taboos regarding contact with women kin, and the evidence as to the social life of the man's house that there was little recreational contact between the sexes. The concept of *ondjamba*[21] shows that the elementary family of husband, wife, and children, was morally and ritually significant, but many of the educational, nutritive, and recreational functions frequently associated with it were here attached to the men's house. 575 594 575

The strength of the agnatic ties in this society seems to have lain in the solidarity of the men of the village rather than in the patriarchal authority of fathers over sons. A son was economically independent of his father since he could trade on his own while his father was still living; the most powerful social sanction in the hands of kinsmen, that of being sold as a slave, was 593 [602] [604]

[20] For these rituals see Hastings, pp. 73–76, and Childs, p. 39.
[21] *Ondjamba* will be discussed more fully in the next chapter.

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593 604 in the hands of the mother's brother, though the father could, if he wished, intervene; and a man could establish a shrine of his own while his father lived.

613 It is not altogether easy to see how the matrilineal group maintained its cohesion. It was not the working team on which the caravan trade operated since a man's father had first claim on his services, and he could travel with other relatives. Within it alone loans need not be repaid and accusations of sorcery were made; with this in mind, it is evident why, as Dr. Hastings tells us, people tended to avoid the company of their matrikin, [578] and why most disputes arose in the matrilineal groups.[22] It 613 seems that probably the key to the functioning of the matri- 437 lineal groups lies in the details, not now recoverable, of the economy of the caravan trade. As everybody, however successful, was in danger at some time or another of incurring heavy losses,[23] an arrangement by which anybody who was in difficulties could call on his kin for help would be generally acceptable. The association of mutual aid of this sort with matrilineal rather than patrilineal kin would spread losses geographically and would exclude conflicts over currency and movable property from village life. Moreover, the dispersal of the matrilineal kin would provide an individual with business contacts over a considerable area.

5. *Contemporary Kinship Norms*

593 Much of this has disappeared. The men's house is no longer 264 the dining-room of the village male population. Men now often 178 eat with their wives and children though attitudes and practice of this vary between households. People in their twenties knew of the existence of these avoidance rules but it seems that the rules forbidding sons to eat with their mother and eldest sons and daughters to eat with their father are now generally ignored.

[692] [22] Hastings, pp. 18, 87. Disputes within the matrilineal group could be, and very often were, referred to the sub-chief and king. The account of legal proceedings in Hastings (pp. 139–51) suggests that a high proportion of the cases heard by the kings were to do with sorcery. In such cases the social extension of the matrilineal group beyond the area of the sub-chiefdom and the wider political integration achieved by the kingdoms 'co-operated' in preserving a range of social relations beyond the sub-chiefdom.

[23] Apropos of losses Childs quotes Magyar as saying that the Ovimbundu traded for excitement rather than gain (p. 204).

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602 the same time clearly an important part of social life. Kinship
183 norms are confused, as is the correct term to use in a particular relationship. Ritual and jural sanctions are lacking, as are institutions based on the regular co-operation of groups of kinsmen. Yet a man likes to live with kinsfolk and there is a tendency for kin to cluster together in a neighbourhood.

602 By the very facts, that so many of a man's neighbours are his
621 kinsmen, and that there is very little marked differentiation between the behaviour towards different categories of kin, kinship is robbed of any great specificity of content. It might be said that it is the quantity rather than the quality of kinship ties that makes kinship significant in establishing a 'sense of community' in a neighbourhood, in that the multiplicity of local kin ties creates some identification between a man's range of kin and his neighbourhood. At the same time a kinship tie provides a basis on which a closer relationship may be built by reciprocal services. It appears that the inheritance of property
602 recognizes kinship in this way by recognizing claims not on the
428 basis of strict genealogical proximity but on the quality of the relationship.

128 A discussion of marriage and the household must be left to the next chapter. The outline given of the present kinship system is sufficiently clear to begin an examination of the reasons for the changes. This must rely to some extent on speculation, owing to a lack of information on the actual working of the kinship system while it was in transition to its present form.

613 The key change is the disappearance of the kinship groups.
178 These, it seems, disappeared because of their high degree of dependence on the particular type of economy existing before 1911. It has already been argued that the distinction between the patrikin and the matrikin is an attempt to isolate economic claims and conflicts from village and political relationships, and that the giving of loans without right of repayment within the matrikin was called for by a trading system in which credit played an important part. With the end of the trade the wealth passing through Umbundu hands declined sharply, and there was neither need for funds to meet trading losses nor currency to provide them. A man obtained money either by growing crops

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helped by his wife and children or by going out to work. Neither means of making money involves regular co-operation with a body of kinsmen. The occasional co-operation needed in situations of financial crisis or mutual help for some particular job can be provided by those of a man's numerous kinsfolk with whom he has established ties of amity above the mere recognition of relationship.[32] 613 178

The disappearance of the matrilineal group was a logical consequence of the disappearance of its *raison d'être*. With the disappearance of the matrilineal group, there was no longer any need to preserve the distinctive nature of the agnatic group. It is quite possible to suppose that the village might have preserved its patrilineal base if other factors had come into play. Such possible factors would be a shortage of land, danger of attack from enemies, or the use by the headman of his political power to keep control over his patrikin.[33]

A question of some significance arises from the differences of attitude to a man's 'fathers' and to his 'mother's brothers' which has been noted earlier on. From the literature it might seem that the link between agnates was very strong, and that it is surprising that it should have broken up so completely. It may be suggested that the unity of agnatic kin was expressed in the idiom of relations between villagers rather than of relations between kin, and that within the village there was not necessarily much greater solidarity between siblings than between distant agnates. The solidarity of paternal siblings was then, granting this hypothesis, a reflection of the wider solidarity of the village. When the village disintegrated the close ties between brothers disintegrated also. 602 178

The unity of the matrikin was perhaps expressed to a much greater degree in a kinship idiom.[34] This is perhaps one of the

[32] The amount of aid an individual can mobilize in case of need depends to a very great extent on personal factors. It should be emphasized that it is personal co-operation over a number of years rather than any genealogical nearness that inclines a man to be helpful. While helpfulness to kinsfolk is a norm of Umbundu ethics, it is possible in practice to provide excuses for non-co-operation. [476]

[33] The rapid disintegration of the indigenous system of authority after the middle thirties may reasonably be linked with the decay of agnatic ties of residence.

[34] 'When an Ocimbundu speaks of his family (*epata*) in the sense of a large and widespread organization with a recognized head in some elder, it is generally his *ekina* to which he refers.' Childs, p. 44.

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with that which has already been reviewed, might make it possible 103
to determine the demography of the Benguela Highland prior to 167
the formation of the Umbundu kingdoms. It is also further evidence as to the demographic make-up of the Ovimbundu. Some of these recurring place-names evidently represent elements which now constitute separate entities outside the Umbundu kingdoms, although they probably made contributions to the formation of those kingdoms. Others represent elements which probably moved away from the earlier invasions from the north but stayed in their new sites to amalgamate with later arrivals. Some may represent successive splittings-off from a stock which thus settled at various places. Many recurrent place-names could be shown both in this region and outside the language-grouping.

Attitudes toward Other Tribes. Attitudes of the Ovimbundu 619
towards the various neighbouring tribes are instructive. Mention 186
has already been made of the attitude of the southern 'Bangala' 101
people in their inclusion of the Ovimbundu of Kalukembe within their own system of exogamy. The Ovimbundu recognize a common humanity with the peoples who are their neighbours both on the south and on the north. They are all *omanu*,[1] people, or even *vakuetu*, comrades. Similar recognition is not extended to the eastern and south-eastern neighbours who are lumped together under the derogatory term of 'va Ngangela' or *ovingangela*.[2] This eastern region as far as the Great Lakes was the happy hunting-ground of the slave-traders from Viye and from Bailundu. There is a term *olongoya* which is applied to the northern neighbours, but without the derogatory connotation of 'Ngangela'. *Olongoya* has a linguistic connotation as did *barbaroi* in the Greek, and refers to the fact that these neighbours speak what is to the Ovimbundu an unintelligible language. How much of rationalization there may be in these attitudes and prejudices one cannot say, but it seems that in them there is some recognition of tribal origins and relationships, of the fact that across the Benguela Highland migrations have swept from north to south.

Conclusion. In consideration of the above evidence, it is now 174
possible to draw conclusions concerning the origin of the Ovi- 167

[1] *Omanu* is the Umbundu equivalent for the Nguni *abantu*, which has come to be applied to the whole language family.

[2] This Umbundu attitude is best illustrated by the proverb 'As a grass hut is not a house, so an *ocingangela* (singular) is not a person (*omunu*).'

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631 ones. This situation was reported by Magyar, when he wrote,
635 'Quibanda (should be Civanda) to the east has 500 villages. The Chief has great power. He sends tribute every year to the king of Bailundu but is himself fully independent.'[1] Magyar described about 15 *atumbu* or '*ovikandscho*',[2] as he called them, of Bailundu.
[161] He estimated the population of Bailundu at 450,000, and for all the kingdoms of the Ovimbundu 1,200,000,[3] figures which are
[175] probably not very different from present-day facts. The report and description of the 'Capitania de Benguella' in 1799 said that the king of Bailundu dominated 2,056 villages; the king of Viye, 886; and the king of Ngalangi, 900; and listed their 'feudos' respectively as 82, 54, and 78.[4] My list of the Ngalangi *atumbu* shows 112. In Bailundu about 20 *atumbu* were ruled by members of the royal family, including heirs apparent or expectant, and the queen (*Inakulu*), who also had her own establishment.[5] About 20 were ruled by other court officials.

621 Most of these *atumbu* are still recognized as such or as *olombala*.[6]
622 Their decay has not been as great as that of the *ombala*[6] of their
177 liege lord, for they still fulfil certain functions in native life. They have also been given new functions by the administrative authorities.
[651] The minor chiefs as well as village headmen are all required to assist in assessing and collecting the native tax, and also in recruiting labour for government works and for contracts. In some areas they receive in return the remission of their own taxes. In some areas they are required to wear uniforms. On the dancing floors
[692] of most of these minor *olombala* courts are still held, justice determined, and (to a limited extent) fines 'eaten'. Such judgements are not officially recognized or allowed by the European authorities. The African, however, often finds that European courts do not meet his needs or accord with his concepts of justice.

[1] Magyar, op. cit., p. 389.

[2] Umbundu *ovikanjo* (plural), 'branches', a term which through commercial or European influence is applied to the *atumbu*.

[3] For these figures and for descriptions of the several kingdoms, see Magyar, op. cit., chap. ix.

[4] *Annaes Mar. e Col.*, 4a Ser., pp. 155 ff.

[5] Magyar, op. cit., p. 390.

[6] *Olombala*, plural of *ombala*, a capital village or chief's residence.

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The Village

Among the Ovimbundu the outstanding social and political unit 621 at the present time is the village (*imbo*, plural *ovaimbo*). The village 622 may consist of from 5 to 500 households,[1] the heads of which are in the great majority of cases related to each other in the male line. Each village has a headman or elder (*sekulu*, literally 'grandfather' or 'elder father') who is liiterally, according to Umbundu kinship usage, the patriarch of the villagers. He was formerly responsible for his village to the sub-chief, and through him to the king. At the present time, the administrative authorities hold the village headmen responsible for matters relating to taxes, labour recruiting, &c. The present decay of this office and of village life varies very greatly from region to region. Nearly everywhere matters of purely local concern are not directly interfered with, and the headman continues his patriarchal government, assisted by a council of all (male) householders.

Ngendo, a typical village. The village of Ngendo lies at about 621 14° 40′ east, 11° 40′ south,, about thirty-five miles south-west of the [131] Keve, where that river crosses the fifteenth parallel, and about sixty miles in a direct line from the Atlantic Ocean. Its altitude is about 1,650 metres, and the ground on which it is built slopes down to a small stream of the Keve system. Directly across the [712] stream to the north rises the granite outcrop on which may be seen the ruined fortress of Usengo. Ngendo belongs to the tribe of Kasongi, *etumbu* of Ekongo. It is about fifteen miles north-west of the administrative post of Cassongue and about two miles from the motor road which connects that post and points farther inland with the district capital and port of Novo Redondo.

The most striking feature of this village is the fact that it consists of four smaller units or wards (*ovitawila*, plural), each of which appears to be quite self-contained. The four together make up the village (*imbo*), which name is also applied to either of the two larger units by themselves. Each unit has its own elder, but

[1] Most, but not all, of the larger villages are *olombala* (q.v., *supra*), but even these are not as large now as they formerly were. In 1850 the *ombala* of Bailundu was said to have 5,000 inhabitants (Magyar, op. cit.). At the present time there is probably no village with more than 3,000 inhabitants, and few of that size. The tendency seems to be toward smaller villages, and there is even some movement toward isolated households and farmsteads after the fashion of so many of the Southern Bantu.

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•621 they recognize Sekulu Sikillā, the elder of the largest unit, as the village headman. Only in his village is there a dancing floor [345] (*ocilā*),[1] which is the centre of village life, social, legal, and recreational. As the name indicates, it is first and foremost a place for recreation, but here also religious functions are held since they involve so much dancing and drinking, and here formal cases are tried. The *ocilā* is the heart of the village.

345 *The Men's Club-House.* Ngendo does not have that other important Umbundu institution, the Men's Club House (*onjango*).[2] The *onjango* is, or was, hardly less important than the *ocilā*. Perhaps before it fell to its present state of disuse, its place was of even greater importance, for in the *onjango* all the men, youths, [262] and boys gathered day by day for the evening meal. From all the kitchens came baskets of stiff corn porridge (*iputa*), and dishes of relish (*ombelela*)[3] which all shared, from the most honoured guest or the village elders, down to the naked, ash-whitened little boys just old enough (say from seven or eight years) to leave the kitchens [574] to their mothers and sisters. In the *onjango* guests were entertained, judicial cases of lesser import were settled, the day's work and gossip discussed, and youth was educated by precept and example in nearly everything from traditional history to etiquette. The *onjango* was dining-room, living-room, court, school, hotel, and club, all in one. For some of the Ovimbundu it continues to function. Upon inquiry I found that in all Kasonge there were hardly ten villages where the *onjango* existed and retained its [466] former functions. The reasons which my informants assigned are that the demands for road work (in the immediate region), for contract labour (involving absences of from six months to two years), and the difficulty of securing tax-money, did not leave the leisure required for the common meal in the *onjango*. When I 345 made wider inquiries as to localities where the *onjango* now exists 178 and retains its former functions, it seems that this institution is widely decadent. According to my information, the regions where it continues to function are chiefly in Ngalangi, in Viye, and

104 [1] *Ocilā* comes from the verb *okw cilā*, to dance.

[2] *Onjango* has been traced to the verb *okw vongula*, to converse, but I am doubtful of this derivation. It has been called 'The Palaver House', but this is an evident misnomer, for the *onjango* is much more than that.

[3] *Ombelela* is a word to cover any dish which may be eaten with the porridge staple. It may be meat, beans, mushrooms, or greens, and is preferred with gravy into which pieces of the stiff porridge may be dipped (*okw miña*).

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perhaps in Ndulu. In Ngendo the Men's Club had taken over the 345
rocks just behind the headman's household for its meeting-place, 178
but the meetings were only occasional and there was no common meal.

The Village Plan

To speak of the plan of an Umbundu village may seem a con- 361
tradiction in terms, so haphazard seems the relation of houses,
gardens, &c., to each other. Some houses are circular, but the [342]
majority are more nearly rectangular in shape. There is a palisade [417]
of hardwood sticks surrounding all the village except that side of
the headman's household which is adjacent to the rocks used
for a club-house. The headman had not bothered to keep up his
own part of the fence since his only garden was a small tobacco
plot fenced in by itself. The village is itself divided up by the 621
palisades which shut off one compound from another, each com- 343
pound containing the houses of from one to three households.
Between the palisades are paths which lead on to the dancing floor [363]
and out of the village. In the village of Sekulu Sikiliĩ there were
twenty-five households with thirty-two houses in all. Each house
(*onjo*) had its own granary (*onila*), and small chicken-coop built
on stilts, and of all the houses only six had separate kitchens
(*ocimo*). Nearly every household had separate pens for the pigs,
goats, and sheep for the night. At one side of the headman's
compound there was a common corral for the nine cattle which
the villagers owned. Only the headman had a spirit-hut (*etambo*), [346]
used also for a storehouse, for entertaining a guest, and for his own
bedroom should he sleep apart from his wives. Within the several 621
compounds were small gardens of tobacco and of maize and beans, 244
and just outside the village were two separate tobacco gardens.
Just a few paces to the west was a small patch of wheat belonging
to a man in the smallest ward. There was one household of two
houses quite outside the palisades appropriately belonging to a
man named *Kulika* (meaning 'Being-alone'). The water-holes [312]
and pounding rocks where meal was ground were between the [252]
several units of the village and were used in common. The
fields were off to the east at from thirty minutes' to an hour's [241]
walk. The two smaller wards of Ciyanda and Kanjengo were so
small that they were like two or three compounds by themselves. 621
The former had six households with eight houses, and the latter

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621 four households with six houses. The school village had been laid
but in rectangular fashion without any palisade and with eucalyptus
[346] trees planted around the sides. The school was at the centre and
the elder's house at the upper corner. These two larger buildings
and one other were built of adobe, while the rest of the twelve
houses were of wattle and daub, identical with those in the other
wards except that all were rectangular. There were a few very
[312] small gardens watered by an irrigation ditch. The people of this
village had river gardens, and their fields were mostly to the south
between the village and the highway. Just to the east of the main
[797] village and beside one of the water-holes, a Roman Catholic
catechist had established himself, but as yet he had neither village
nor school.

The Villagers

662 Turning now to the people living in this village, it was interest-
621 ing to find that all save the households of two former slaves and the
Roman Catholic catechist, were related to each other, either by
blood or by marriage. Sekulu Cipange of Ciyanda summed the
matter up when he said, 'Likuluta Samikanjo (the Protestant elder)
is my younger brother (*manjange*), for in our Umbundu country
(we) people do not build together (i.e. in the same village) unless
we are blood relatives.' In order to determine the exact relation-
ships and other facts regarding the demography of this village,
I took the names of all householders and their wives, and inquired
their relationships to the elders of the respective wards. This
[115] information was supplied by Njomba, a son of Sekulu Sikilīlē, and
by Sekulu Likuluta Samikanjo. In addition to those of the four
elders, there were twenty-four households. The relationship
of each of the householders to their respective elders may be sum-
marized as follows:

A. *Paternal relatives*		
In Sikilīlē's village	21	
„ Ciyanda	1	
„ Kanjengo's ward	2	
„ School village	2	
	—	26
B. *Maternal relatives*		
In Ciyanda	1	
„ Kanjengo's ward	1	
„ School village	4	
	—	6

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C. *Sister's sons (or daughters)*[1]		
In Ciyanda	1	
„ School village	4	
	—	5
D. *Relatives by marriage*		
In Sikilile's	2	
„ School village	1	
	—	3
E. *Relationship not exactly determined*[2]		
In School village	2	
	—	2
F. *Former slaves*		
In Sikilile's	1	
„ School village	1	
	—	2
Total of householders		44

621
602

The above figures show more precisely than would several pages of explanation the family nature of the Umbundu village. That the Ovimbundu are patrilocal was noted by Hambly.[3] Whether the proportions which the above figures indicate would hold for all the Ovimbundu could only be determined by gathering similar data over widely representative areas. The same approximate distribution holds for the families represented by 192 genealogies and 74 marriage-schedules which I have collected. Matrilocal residence or residence in the wife's village has always been recognized by the Ovimbundu as a possibility, although less desirable than the ideal of patrilocal marriage and residence. Of the two householders in Sekulu Sikilile's village who were related to him by marriage, one was the husband of a daughter and the other a [768] widow of a younger brother, who should have been inherited by a younger brother or a mother's brother of the deceased. Failing that, she might have returned to her father's people, but her having settled in the village of her husband's elder brother is no cause for surprise. My experience leads me to believe that Ngendo is an approximately fair sample of the present strength of patrilocal residence among the Ovimbundu. That the Protestant school village is a real part of this kinship unit is an important fact, the significance of which will be discussed later.

[1] The two daughters were widows who had come to live with their mother's brothers.

[2] In these two cases relationship was declared to exist, but I failed to find its nature.

[3] Hambly, op. cit., p. 191.

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621 592 Going on to the marital status of the villagers, I found that the forty-eight households were to be classified as follows:

Monogynous	27	(including 7 at the school)
Widowers (all formerly monogynous)	3	(" 1 ")
Widows	7	(" 4 ")
Young (unmarried) man	1	(at the school)
Polygynous	10	
Total	48	

Whether a similar proportion of monogynous to polygynous households would also be found more widely among the Ovimbundu is a question which could only be settled by extensive 595 demographic studies.[1] My impression is that the proportion of 592 polygynous to monogynous households is higher in the region of Kasonge than in other Umbundu areas for the following reasons:

1. The proximity of Kasonge to the Esele country which has long been a source of supply for concubines (slaves). (Five of the ten polygynous householders in Ngendo included at least one Esele concubine.)
2. The comparatively low bride-price in Kasonge as compared to other areas.

The South African Census for 1921 showed that at that time only one man in eight was polygynous.[2] My impression is that the proportion among the Ovimbundu is no greater and that economic factors will soon do away with any considerable polygyny.

In each of the ten polygynous households in Ngendo save one, there were only two wives or conculbines. The one exception was

112 [1] The census of 1940 gives more reliable figures and more details than were previously available, but it does not provide a basis for studies of this order. The number or proportion of polygamous unions among the 'uncivilized population' was not recorded. For the whole colony, the division of the native population by sex is given as follows: males, 1,733,328, females, 1,932,501 (op. cit., vol. i, p. 78 f.); and for the Ovimbundu (*Mbundo*), as follows: males, 636,583, females, 694,504 (op. cit., vol. ix, p. 22 f.). 'Owing to the migration of labourers, and especially to the system known as contract labour', certain areas (of recruitment) show a large excess of females over males (as much as 4 to 1 in the 20–29 age-groups of certain areas), while certain (receiving) areas show a corresponding excess of males over females (4 to 1 in several areas and even 22 to 1 in one area, for the same age-groups) (op. cit., vol. iii, *passim*). On this subject, *vide* R. R. Kuczynski, *Colonial Population* (London, 1937), and *Population Movements* (ibid., 1936); both summarized in the *Rhodes-Livingstone Journal*, no. 2.

[2] Quoted by P. A. W. Cook, *The Education of a South African Tribe* (Cape Town; Juta, 1934), p. 3.

the household of the headman Sikiliĩ, who had had four wives and 595
one young Esele concubine. At the time of my last visit (1936), 592
however, there were only two wives and the concubine, one wife having died, and another having gone to her people.

To complete the picture of the villagers, their numbers were as 621
follows:

Village	Men	Women	Children		Total
			Male	Female	
In Sikiliĩ's village . .	24	35	31	37	127
In Ciyanda . . .	5	8	2	4	19
In Kanjengo . . .	3	6	3	1	13
At the School . . .	10	11	10	6	37
Total . . .	42	60	46	48	
	Adults: 102		Children: 94[1]		196

In Sikiliĩ's village there were domestic animals as follows: 621
9 head of cattle, 13 goats, 20 sheep, 100 pigs, and about 100 463
chickens. There was practically no professional specialization; [231]
there were almost no specialists living in the village: no blacksmith or carpenter, no mat-maker, but only one 'hunter of meat', and three 'hunters of (bee-) hives'. As to the women, all could make baskets, and there were several who had made pottery, but were not doing so at the time.

Pigs, chickens, and dogs roamed the village, functioning as a 364
D.S.C. and a sewer system combined. Were it not for these scavengers the villages of the Ovimbundu would present an even more untidy spectacle than is the case. There is no other regular [514]
disposal of refuse, nor are there any latrines or privies.[2]

It will be seen that there is practically no division of labour as 621
between households: each is practically a self-contained unit. The 476

[1] It was reported that in addition to the children then living, these same households had lost 57 by death (29 males and 28 females).

[2] At Ngendo the school village had two or three enclosed pit privies. The Umbundu euphemism for defecate, 'go to the bush' (*oku enda kusenge*), is revealing. Even more revealing is a proverb which advises one not to burn his bridges behind him, but literally it runs as follows:

Nda wa lisinga kuti, Si endi konyima onjo,
Nda o ka sitila pi?

If you forswear yourself saying, I shall not go behind the house,
Then will you go (to) urinate where?

There is a more shocking version which, however, may not be really authentic. 338

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621 common meal was formerly a great bond of village unity. Mutual
476 help within the village and the family group is practised on many occasions. There are a number of folk-tales designed to show the evil consequences of refusing to lend, whether beer-pots or more valued assistance. Many proverbs enjoin the necessity of prompt and effectual mutual helpfulness and co-operation, as e.g.

U o popela ukuavo ongandu ka lula.

[538] (He who saves another (from) a crocodile does not undress.)

476 The mechanism of co-operation, the round of daily life in village and field, together with the cycles of food and of work, are properly subjects of further study. Here the purpose is to show the definitely family nature of the village and of its life. To the [181] casual observer the Ovimbundu appear as severe individualists. Indeed, they are individualistic to a degree, but they have worked out mechanisms of mutual helpfulness and co-operation which functioned both on political lines under the aegis of the king and within the kinship units.

Social Life of the Village

517 The two foci of the village life are the Men's Club and the
521 Dancing Floor. Even though no *onjango* may have been built, the
562 Men's Club will find a place in which to carry on, at least when there may be fine weather. Leisure may be limited, but time for conversation will be found. Europeans often express wonder at the amount of conversation which goes on between Africans, for they cannot understand what people of apparently such limited opportunities and with what seems like so narrow an outlook may have to discuss at such great length. As for the Ovimbundu, there is nothing which is a greater hardship than lack of opportunity for conversation with their fellows. Under primitive conditions this is more especially true of the men, who, in their villages, are always surrounded by members of their own family group. Owing to their peculiar position in the village and their household pre-occupations, the women's social propensities may find less outlet in these public gatherings. When the villagers gather on the dancing floor and the gourds of beer go round, they always separate according to sex. Whether the occasion be formal or informal, I have seen the discussion carried to great lengths, with the pipe passed between the men, while the women sat silently by,

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361 A few words from the childhood recollections of Paulino
166 Ngonga Liahuka[1] bring out the facts.

787 One day we noticed that Sekulu Upalandanda[2] and my father went to the mountain of Kalilonge saying, 'We go to look around (and find out) whether the spirits (*olosande*) have agreed to our moving there.' Then another day we saw that the fathers were coming out of the spirit huts (*atambo*, plural), with the sacred chests (*ovimbangu*, plural), saying, 'We go to start a new village.' When they had arrived under the mountain of Kalilonge, they said, 'The spirits have agreed.' Then when everyone had moved, the elder, whose name had been Upalandanda at Muenesi, now changed his name, declaring, 'I am *Cilembo-camunda* (Shadow of Mountain). From that time the place was called Cilembo.

● 621 On seeking a new site the headman's fire in the old village is put out and the procession starts: a girl carries the sacred chest
[778] (*ocimbangu*) containing the relics (*ociye*) and the balls of iguana skin, and a boy the sacred bows.[3] They lead the way to the site
[346] selected where they cut a pole[4] suitable for a house-wall (*ekoso*), and tie a leaf of the *upu*[5] tree to it, dig a hole into which they put mud made by rain-water (*onata yondombo*),[6] and then together they lift the stick and let it fall into the hole. This is the beginning of the spirit hut (*etambo*), the first house to be built on the new site. The boy and the girl must take part ceremonially in each operation
[372] of building the hut. After that they together ignite (*oku tiafula*)[7] the new fire. A hen and a cock are killed, cooked on the new fire, and eaten inside the *etambo* by all who have taken part in the building. The headman and his wife cannot return to the old village but must camp at the new site (*itula*) and keep the new fire alight.
342 In building their houses, the villagers may commute (*oku usala*)
621 from the old site, but often the distance is too great to do this, and

[1] Of Ciya'ka, ordained pastor of Elende Church in 1930. He was Hambly's chief informant.

[2] Sekulu Upalandanda was the younger brother of Ngonga's father's father, and therefore grandfather to Ngonga.

[776] [3] The bow (*ohonji*) of each ascendant who is now a guardian spirit (*osande*) of the family.

[4] When this first pole is cut, the axe should first be pointed toward the cardinal directions.

[824] [5] A leaf of the *upu* tree is used in the divorce ceremony. Its use here is a sign of divorce from the old site.

[6] Literally, 'mud of the rainy season'.

[7] This was formerly done with a fire drill (*vide* Hambly, op. cit., Plate XXXV), but not for a number of years now. When I showed the above picture to a group of 150 young men of 17 to 25 years of age, not one of them even knew what it was.

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therefore the usual procedure is to erect temporary grass-covered huts (*olosingi*, plural) on the new site, in which they will live while building their houses. Each hearth-fire must be ignited from the headman's fire.

The houses are built by the occupants themselves. The men's club house is built by the communal labour of all men and boys with a simple ritual designed to promote concord within, and to ensure that the spirits (*olosande*) may find it a congenial abode. The spirits regularly attend the discussions in the *onjango*, and there receive their daily portions. There also they are believed to sleep.

At the first opportunity a hunt will be held and the meat brought to the spirit-hut. The girl who carried the sacred chest receives the heart and the boy the head. At this time, while a pot of sour beer (non-alcoholic) (*ocisangua*) is being brewed, the girl sits quietly in communion (*oku felevela*) with the spirits. With these physical and spiritual preparations the village community makes ready its home, a home which may seem poor and meagre to the eyes of outsiders, but to a member of the community it is home indeed and evokes in him, when absent, a feeling of great home-sickness (*ongeva*). As the Umbundu version of 'Home, Sweet Home' puts it:

Koliene, koliene, nda ku li ombambi ha yota
To your own, to your own, if there is cold you can warm yourself,

nda ku li onjala ha panga.
if there is hunger you can arrange.

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593 only by a sister), and *mukãi* (sister, spoken only by a brother). In
[561] a polygynous household each of the wives is mother to all the children and each of the children is *huva* or *manja*[1] to all the others.
848 Illegitimate children are not stigmatized but since they belong to
567 the mother they have a distinct designation.[2] Slaves or former slaves have a status within the household and village which to the ordinary observer does not differ from that of the children: they are treated much as the children and they may carry on in all matters social and economic much as though they were members of the family. I have noticed, however, that when there is a call for labour, the lot falls oftener to one of these 'children-born-by-day'[3] whether he was a war-captive or a pawn.

567 Both slavery and the polygynous household, two institutions
595 manifestly and intimately inter-related, are still a part of the
178 Umbundu social structure, but neither the one nor the other now has the importance which it formerly had. Neither of these institutions is part of the present and personal experience of the great majority of Umbundu households.

Kinship

596 *Blood Relatives* (*Epata*). The relationships of the wider kinship
602 groups are for the most part extensions of those of the household.
621 The child learns them very early in life owing to the fact that the village community into which he is born is only a part of this larger kinship group. Nearly all of the villagers belong to the same *epata* or extended family, which includes both lines of descent. Most of them belong to the father's family (*oluse*), and the mother's family (*oluina*) may also be represented. The fact is that most of the adults of the village are father or mother to nearly every child and most of the children are brothers or sisters. Those of his coevals who do not bear this relation to him are otherwise related and are also potential spouses or potential relatives-in-law.

[1] This distinction *yesepakaĩ* (lit. 'of the jealousy of women') may be made but it is not applied in ordinary speech.

[2] *Omõlã a ngenda-la-ina* (lit. 'child of goes-with-mother').

[3] *Omõlã-va-citiwa-lutanya*. Cf. 'child of my calves', Luganda expression and attitudes, L. P. Mair, *An African People in the Twentieth Century* (London, 1934), p. 32 f.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

Kinship groupings: *oluse* and *oluina*.[1] Every Ocimbundu belongs to an *oluse*, i.e. his father's kin, and to an *oluina*, i.e. his mother's kin. Each of these family groupings is divided into male and female lines (*onēlē yohonji*, 'the side of the bow'; *onēlē yohumba*, 'the side of the basket'). Uterine brothers and sisters belong to the same *oluse* and *oluina*, and to the male or female 'side' respectively, according to sex. It is of great importance to get a clear idea of this bilateral nature of these kinship groupings. Every student of ethnology will note the similarity of this division to the Herero *oruzo* and *eanda*.[2] Considering the affinities between the Herero and Umbundu languages, I think that these conceptions are probably related. Further study of other peoples of this Western Bantu zone may reveal cultural and racial as well as linguistic affinities.[3] The *oluse* and *oluina* of the Ovimbundu follow their own pattern.

The *oluse* consists of a large number of local village groups, some of which recognize mutual relationships, but with no recognized headship save in the case of the several royal families. The only suggestion of any totemic relation or origin is with the royal families which have in common several taboos with regard to certain animals the flesh of which may not be eaten, nor the skins used, &c. Chief of these animals are the *ongulungu* (bushbuck, *Tragelaphus scriptus*), the *ocisema*[4] (the waterbuck, *Cobus defessa*

[1] *Olu-se*, perhaps 'the place of father', the root *se* being equivalent to the forms *sa*, *so*, *isia*; *olu-ina*, perhaps 'the place of mother'.

[2] See Vedder, pp. 185 ff. (in *The Native Tribes of South West Africa*): 'The Herero nation is divided into 2 large family groups . . . the Herero belongs to the *oruzo* of his father and also to the *eanda* of his mother.' J. Irle, *Die Herero* (Gutersloh, 1906), pp. 87–93.

[3] An interesting study of the VaNyaneka, one of the cattle-rearing people living between Ambo and Umbundu territory, was recently published: A. Lang et C. Tastevin, *La Tribu des Va-Nyaneka* (Mission Rohan-Chabot, Tome V), Corbeil: Impr. Créto. This volume was not available in England or the U.S.A. until 1940, and could not therefore have been used in the present study. I may now say, however, that the authors' treatment of the social structure is not such that it would help to solve the problem in question. The clans are described only from the standpoint of totemism. The maternal line of descent (*e-anda*) is briefly mentioned (p. 45), but not the corresponding paternal line. The authors' evident lack of familiarity with other Bantu material is a great drawback. The system used for the transcription of the vernacular is most confusing, owing to an evident lack of understanding of the Bantu phonetic and grammatical genius with consequent procrustean attempts to force it into foreign forms.

[4] The king's sons may not eat flesh of the *ocisema* lest they should *sema sema*, 'have an impediment of speech'. This may be simply a taboo on grounds of similia similibus (or the obverse).

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

613 825 621 *penricei*), and *ovinyama viakasa* (animals having paws, from the lion down). No other *oluse* has any such rules. The chief function of the *oluse* is as a local residence group. Within the *oluse* there is no inheritance of property but only succession to office, which from the king to the village headman is from father to son, or from elder to younger brother, with only as much recognition of primogeniture as belongs to the general idea of the hierarchy of age. Succession to office is further affected by the democratic tendencies already noted with regard to the kingly succession.[1] The character of the *oluse* as a series of local groups is further borne out by the character of its priesthood, which lies wholly with the village headmen.

613 The *oluina* is not a local group, since its members for the most part live in the villages of their several lines of paternal descent—each with his *oluse*. When an Ocimbundu speaks of his family (*epata*) in the sense of a large and widespread organization with a recognized head in some elder, it is generally his *oluina* to which he refers. This family elder (*ukulu wepata*) is generally both the legal and spiritual head of the family. He is the family high-priest in charge of the spirit-hut (*etambo*) of the family guardian spirit (*osande*)[2] of whom there may be more than one and of whom he may become one after death. This family head is generally the eldest in the maternal line. In these days the priestly and the legal functions may be divided considering the advantages of having for legal head one who knows the ways of this world, while the spiritual head needs rather to be acquainted with the spirit-world. [428] Property is inherited through the *oluina* from mother's brother to 613 sister's son.[3] Only the *oluina* is an organization in the wider or 178 more than local sense, and it is to it that the children belong. Formerly the mother's elder brother had great powers over his sister's sons and was even able to pawn them or sell them into slavery to meet his own debts.[4] The patrilocal household is

[1] See *supra*, p. 22 f.

[2] The head of an *oluina* may or may not be a village headman. In case he is, he will be priest of two lines and have two spirit-huts. There may be more than one spirit-hut in a single village.

[3] This fact was noted by A. Bastos, *Traços Geraes sôbre a Ethnografia do Districto de Benguella* (Lisboa, 1909), p. 33 (par. 39°).

[4] This has been noted by a number of writers. Bastos, op. cit., p. 29 (par. 26°) adds that once a father has redeemed his son, the maternal uncle can never sell him again. Cf. *avunculi potestas* among the Ba-Ila, E. W. Smith and A. M. Dale, *The Ila-Speaking Peoples* (London, 1920), vol. i, p. 320.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

there must be a responsible senior and, hence as a matter of course, 561
the following is accepted:

Ndalu hokuluko la Vava: [538]
Fire is not older than water:

Ciyo wa pindikapo.
Potsherd (or frying-pan) passes between (i.e. keeps the peace).

As potsherd (or frying-pan) keeps water from putting out fire and fire from consuming water, so the elder keeps the peace between the young of relatively equal status.

The hierarchy of age is taken as a matter of course and circum- 561
cision camps or other formal 'schools' are not considered necessary 881
to reinforce an attitude which no one would dream of disputing. At the present time there is quite a vogue for circumcision camps (*vakuevamba*) in the southern or south-eastern half of the country. Some affirm that these are new-fangled notions coming in from neighbouring tribes. Others declare the institution to be very old. The Ngalangi people say that they have always had both *evamba* for the boys and *uso wakãi* for the girls. Some tribes require *evamba* [643]
of the king before he may rule. Even where the institution is not in vogue, there are associations of coevals (*vakuacisoko*) whose members have definite rights and duties toward each other. These matters are treated more fully in a later chapter. Inasmuch 561
as these age-grade sets are both age and sex divisions, they contain 182
some elements of social cleavage, but their association with the economic and political sides of life makes them a strongly cohesive force for society.

Umbundu Social Structure: Summary

Summarizing the evidence of the present chapter, I wish only to 182
tie in a few of the more important threads so that the pattern of the 621
Umbundu social structure may be seen at a glance.

Although the Ovimbundu no longer maintain the political life which formerly existed, there are elements of cohesion which still give reality to their social organism. These elements all centre in or spring from the kinship group.

With regard to the village, two facts stand out:

1. The Umbundu village is a local kinship unit, with the villagers quite literally the children of the headman-patriarch.
2. Although its political, religious, and social functions may be

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

182 in a somewhat decadent state, the Umbundu village has up
621 to the present maintained its status as a local kinship unit.

182 The household is not a solitary unit but a part of the village.
592 Since it is constituted by marriage, it embodies the union of at
602 least two kinship groups. The attitudes and behaviour patterns within the Umbundu household are basically those universally recognized. In common with the households of most Bantu cultures, it differs from the European model in that it extends its attitudes and behaviour patterns to the wider kinship groupings by means of a classificatory system of relationship.

613 In the wider kinship groupings (*epata*), the Ovimbundu recognize
182 both the maternal (*oluina*) and the paternal (*oluse*) lines of descent. The functions of the latter have been largely local, residential, social, and religious, with succession (of status) in the male line. The function of the former has been cohesive over a larger territory, with a recognized head in whom has been vested both religious and economic functions. Both his office and the inheritance of property descend in the female line. Much of the power, economic and personal, formerly held by the *oluina*, in the person of the mother's brother, seems to be passing at the present time to the *oluse*, in the person of the father. The bilineal kinship system has been a strongly cohesive social force.

182 The form of marriage practised by the Ovimbundu is of the
[582] two-way cross-cousin type in both lines of kin and in three generations. It seems to be an individual type developed in the particular social and economic situation of the Ovimbundu. As a contract between two families and as a new venture, the marriage relation demands that great attention be given to attitudes and behaviour patterns which emphasize mutual respect.

[561] The hierarchy of age is a very real factor in the Umbundu social structure. Age-set 'schools' have not existed generally throughout the tribes, but there are associations of coevals. This is largely a cohesive force.

754 Sorcery is the most important disruptive force at work *within* Umbundu society. Working as it does, within kinship groups, and inasmuch as it seems to be on the increase, sorcery embodies a real danger to social cohesion.

184 Homogeneity has never been an attribute of the Ovimbundu as
178 regards their racial or cultural make-up. The slave-trade injected other and more diverse elements, and recent movements and

582 incest *(oku ndo)*. But one may marry relatives of one's own age-level who belong to classes other than those mentioned, i.e. cross-cousins and, on other age-levels, father's sister or sister's daughter. It is said that formerly marriage never took place except between persons who could trace relationship in this way. Today this principle is very liberal in its application.(1) (It would be interesting to have estimates of the number of men who do marry first degree cross-cousins, father's sisters, or sister's daughters, as distinct from classificatory relatives of these classes, and the number who marry outside the *oluse* or *oluina*.)

583 Marriage was formerly arranged by the mother's brother (i.e. by the *oluina*), but today there is a tendency for fathers to arrange their daughters' marriages and to receive their marriage payment. (And also, occasionally, to assist their sons in providing marriage payment.)(2) *Ilombo*, or marriage payment, was formerly paid in cattle, blankets etc.(3) Today it is usually paid in cash, the amount being determined by the status of the bride.(4)

Polygyny

● 621 595 In the sample village (Ngendo, Kasongi chiefdom) described by Childs, of a total of 48 households,

(a) 10 households were polygynous; of these 9 contained only 2 wives or concubines, and the tenth, that of the headman, contained four wives and one concubine,

(b) 27 households were monogynous, and 3 more were occupied by widowers, all formerly monogynous. (The remaining households were occupied by 7 widows and one young unmarried man.)

Childs notes that the proportion of polygynous households in Kasongi chiefdom is probably higher than in other parts of Ovimbundu country for two reasons: the comparatively low marriage-payment in Kasongi as compared with other areas, and the proximity of Kasongi to Esele country, which has long been a source of supply for slave concubines. (Of the 10 polygynous households in Ngendo 5 contained at least 1 Esele concubine.)(5)

Avoidance between in-laws

602 Mutual respect *(esunbilo)* between the two kin groups involved is considered a necessary basis for a successful marriage, and is the reason given for the various avoidances *(oku liyuvuila)* enjoined upon the principals and their respective relatives. These avoidances may be summarised:-

593 (a) A husband and wife must avoid using each other's names.

601 (b) The term *ndatembo* is used for parents-in-law of either sex, and reciprocally for sons-in-law or daughters-in-law. The term is extended to all those whom one's spouse calls "mother", "father" or "child" (Childs, p.52) and apparently also to those whom one's spouse calls *nanu*, *tatekai* or

(1) Childs, p.54.
(2) Fanis, 1945.
(3) Cushman, 1944, p.45.
(4) Childs, personal communication.
(5) Childs, page 30.

were polygynous and only one of these contain more than two wives.[1] 592 595

The village or imbo (plural *ovaimbo*) may consist of from 5 to 500 such households, the heads of which are usually related agnatically to each other. Most, but not all, of the larger villages are *olombala* (villages of chiefs or sub-chiefs). These are said to have had formerly as many as 5,000 inhabitants,[2] but today few have as many as 3,000, and there is a general tendency towards smaller villages and even isolated households.[3] There are in general two quite different types of Umbundu village according to the terrain on which they are built. Those on the plains, where there is room to spread out, tend towards a circular shape, with the *ocila* and *onjango* (see below) near the centre. The various sections of the village may appear as quarters of a single whole, or they may be spread out haphazardly. Mountain villages[4] may have houses built on ledges almost one on top of the other. Here there is often no room or no suitable soil within the palisades for gardens or for the dancing-floor *(ocila)*, which are found outside the palisade. Different sections of the village tend to string themselves out horizontally along the mountain-side, or to find successive ledges. 621 ● [178] 621 361

The typical village of Ngendo described by Childs, in Kasongi chiefdom, *etumbu* (sub-chiefdom) of Ekongo, is of an intermediate type, built on a slope. Ngendo has 196 inhabitants, of whom 42 are men, 60 are women, and 94 children. The village is divided into four smaller sections or wards (*ovitawila* pl.), of which the largest, that of the village headman *(sekulu)* has 127 inhabitants, while the other three have 19, 13 and 37 inhabitants respectively. The word *imbo* (village) may also be used for either of the two larger sections by themselves. Each section has its own elder, but the dancing-floor *(ocila)*, which is the centre of village life, is in the headman's section. The *ocila* is primarily a place for recreation, but religious functions also are held in it, and formal cases tried. Formerly most villages had a second communal building, the *onjango* or "Men's Club House",[5] whose importance was almost as great as that of the *ocila*. Here all the men, youths and boys gathered for the evening meal, and here guests were entertained, lesser judicial cases settled, and the day's work and gossip discussed, while young boys, sitting in the background, gained much of their knowledge of tribal history and custom.[6] Today the *onjango* exists and maintains its former function chiefly in parts of Ngalangi, Viye and possibly Ndulu. It does not exist in Childs' typical village, where the "Men's Club" holds only occasional meetings on the rocks behind the headman's house, and where the common evening meal no longer takes place. The reason suggested for the disappearance of the *onjango* is lack of leisure owing to demands for road work (in the immediate vicinity of Ngendo), for contract labour, involving absences of from six months to a year,[7] and the difficulty of securing tax-money. 621 [344] [461]

(1) And polygyny is thought to be more frequent here than in other areas. See above, p.23.
(2) According to Magyar, 1851.
(3) Childs, op.cit., p.25, fn.1. Childs does not suggest any reason for this tendency.
(4) Formerly many villages were built on mountains for defence, and capital villages of this type may still be seen.
(5) The "Men's Club" seems to be simply a gathering of all the adult men (and possibly also the juveniles) of the village.
(6) Childs, op.cit.; Cushman, 1944; Hambly, (2) 1934.
(7) Most of the labour on the Benguella Railway is Umbundu, and many Ovimbundu travel to the Union of South Africa for work. (Childs, op.cit., p.10, et.al.)

621 Ngendo is surrounded by a stick palisade except on that side of the headman's household which is adjacent to the rocks used as a club-house. The village itself (and each section) is divided up into compounds, each of which contains one to three houses,[1] and palisades divide one compound [363] from the next; between are paths leading to the *ocila* and out of the village. Small gardens for tobacco, maize and beans are within the compounds, and the larger fields lie outside the village at from thirty minutes' to an hour's walk. In the headman's section of Ngendo there are 25 households containing 32 houses in all. Each house has its own granary *(osila)* and a small chicken-coop built on stilts, and of all the houses [343] only six have separate kitchens *(ociwo)*. Most households had separate pens for pigs, goats and sheep for the night,[2] and at one side of the headman's compound there is a common corral for the nine cattle owned by the section. Only the headman had a spirit-hut *(etambo)*, used also as a [622] storehouse, for entertaining his guests, and for his own use should he wish to sleep apart from his wives.

621 Chiefs' villages or *olombala* (singular *ombala*) are often surrounded by a belt of tall trees.[3] The chief's compound (the *ilombe*) is larger than 361 those of other villagers, and, according to Hambly,[4] usually contains: 643 the chief's house, which always has a separate sleeping-room; a house and a kitchen for each of his wives; a tomb for the burial of the chief and his wives; a house of meditation for the chief, and pens for pigs and chickens.

342 Umbundu houses are usually circular, but sometimes rectangular, and made of wattle and daub, with thatched roofs. Sometimes huts are divided by matting into a living-room and a sleeping-room. Cooking is often done [343] in the house itself, but sometimes a separate hut is built as a kitchen.[5]

345 The *onjango* (the Men's Club House) consists of a cone-shaped roof set on stout hardwood poles instead of a wall, and left open so that those for whom there may be no place inside may still see and hear what takes place within.[6]

361 Villages are moved when fields are exhausted and others are not available nearby[7] or, more often, when there has been illness or death in the [768] village, which implies that some action displeasing to the spirits has been committed. (No information is available concerning the usual length 776 of life of a village.) When the new site is chosen, the headman's fire 778 in the old village is extinguished, and a procession starts, led by a boy carrying the sacred bows *(ohonji)* of each ascendant who is now a guardian 796 spirit of the family (i.e. the *oluse*), and a girl carrying the sacred chest *(ocimbangu)* containing the relics *(ociye)* and the balls of iguana skin.[8] On arriving at the site the boy and girl cut and plant the

(1) In this section there were 13 goats, 20 sheep, 100 pigs and about 100 chickens. (Childs, op.cit. p.31) (2) Ibid.
(3) Hambly, (2) 1934, p.206 *et.al.* It was a custom of the Ngangela peoples to plant trees round the village and dedicate them to deceased chiefs. (See McCulloch 1950, p.68.) There is no evidence that the trees surrounding Umbundu villages have any ritual significance, although the custom may have been taken over from the conquered Ngangela peoples.
(4) Op.cit., p.208. (5) Ibid., p.10
(6) Childs, personal communication.
(7) Due often to European settlement. (8) See below, p.47.

On arriving at the site the boy and girl cut and plant the first pole, which is to be a part of the new *etambo* (spirit hut). The boy and girl must take part ceremonially in each operation of building the hut, and when it is built they ignite the new fire. A hen and a cock are killed, cooked on the new fire, and eaten inside the *etambo* by all who have taken part in building it. The headman and his wife must remain on the new site to keep the fire alight; other villagers may commute from the old village or erect temporary grass shelters on the new site. Houses are built by the occupants themselves, although men may give each other mutual help, for which there is a gift of food and beer. The *onjango* is usually built by the communal labour of all boys and men, and on its completion a simple ritual is performed to promote harmony within and to welcome the spirits, who are believed to sleep in the *onjango* and to take part in all discussions within it.(1)

The village group: composition

Childs describes the relationship of the villagers of Ngendo to each other as typical of Umbundu country. Most of the heads of households are related agnatically to their respective section-heads (who are presumably also related agnatically to each other, since the village is based on the *oluse* group); Childs does not however discuss the relation of section heads to each other or to the village headman. He gives a table in which the householders are divided into six categories according to their relationship to their various section-heads:

1.	Paternal relatives of section head:	Section A (headman's)	21
		" B	2
		" C	1
		" D	2
			26
2.	Maternal relatives of section head:	Section B	4
		" C	1
		" D	1
			6
3.	Sisters' sons (or daughters)(2)	Section B	4
		" C	1
			5
4.	Relatives by marriage	Section A	2
		" B	1
			3
5.	Relationship not definitely known	Section B	2
6.	Former slaves	Section A	1
		" B	1
			2

(1) This section is based on Childs, 1949, pp.37-9.
(2) Who could, of course, have been included as maternal relatives and paternal relatives, since they belong both to the *oluse* and to the *olusina*.

621 The total number of households is 44, or 48 including those of the four section heads. It should be noted that there is a discrepancy in Child's
592 figures (apart from an obvious misprint):[1] in another context he writes
114 that section B contains only 12 houses (not even *households*), while from this table it would appear that section B has 15 household heads, including that of the section head; and section C is said to have 6 households, while only 4 (again counting the section head) are accounted for in this table.

591 Childs states[2] that the incidence of patrilocal marriage in Ngendo
114 is fairly typical of Umbundu country, but unfortunately gives little information regarding the relationship of the various spouses to each other or concerning the location of the villages from which they came. Matrilocal marriage is recognised as a possibility: of the three relatives by marriage listed above, one was a husband of a daughter of the headman, another the widow of a younger brother of the headman, who should have been inherited by a younger brother (?) or a mother's brother of the deceased, or, failing that, could have returned to her father's village. Of those listed above as sisters' children, two were widows who had come to live in the village with their mother's brothers.[3]

POLITICAL STRUCTURE

The village headman[4]

622 The village headman *(sekulu yimbo)* is also the head of the *oluse*
793 which forms the nucleus of the village group, and is related agnatically to most of the householders. He alone may speak of the village as *imbo*
782 *liange* (my village); the heads of sections, who are also called *sekulu*[5] may speak possessively only of their own sections *(ocitiwila cange)*, and other villagers speak only of "our village" *(imbo lietu)*.[6] The headman functions as both priest and legal head of the village. As priest he has in his compound the *etambo* (spirit hut), in which the insignia of office are kept, and in which he prays to the ancestral spirits. Upon occasion he may sleep there, usually offering a prayer to the spirits when he wakes during the night. The *etambo* may also be
[346] used as a lodging place for respected guests, or as a store-house for possessions not used every day. Childs states that he officiates at regular village worship, including agricultural festivals; Hambly adds that he may lead the people in offering sacrifices when epidemics of
613 sickness break out in the village. It has been noted above[7] that it is the function of the *oluina* head to lead such rituals when illness occurs within the *oluina*. In general the village head is responsible for
[622] matters - particularly agriculture and public health - which affect the whole village; individuals, both for protection and for help and other

(1) Childs, op.cit., p.28, line 27, where "twenty-four" should read "forty-four".
(2) On the basis of the 192 genealogies and 74 marriage-schedules which he collected. He does not, unfortunately, give examples or show how the comparison was made.
(3) Based on Childs, op.cit., pp.25-31.
(4) This section is based on Childs, op.cit., pp.36-7.
(5) It has been noted above that *sekulu* is used for all men (and some women) of the grandfather's generation.
(6) op.cit., p.283. (7) p.18.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

114 trative posts. I agree that people between Caconda and Huila
101 represent a racial mixture of the Ovimbundu and the Ovambo. The record speaks of painting-houses for girls at Cabinda, an item which agrees with reports from other sources. The jottings concerning tribes from Cabinda to the far south of Angola are too vague to be used in ethnological work with confidence.

There are many points on which the work of A. Schachtzabel should be consulted for the purpose of making comparisons with my [621] own observations. The chief of these are a note and photograph on [281] village construction (p. 130); the musical bow (p. 32); the loom [775] (plate VI); transmigration of the soul of a chief into an animal (p. 51); [524] and the game of mancala (p. 52). My observations of initiation at [881] Katoko, Ngalangi, and Cangamba agree well with that of Schachtzabel at Katoko, but I was able to obtain more detail and more [283] numerous photographs of the ritual of initiation. The spinning of cotton (p. 143) is exactly the process so frequently witnessed now at Elende. Iron-working (p. 111) appears to be comparable with the technique at Elende, but Schachtzabel seems to have missed the ritual. I was not so fortunate as this author in finding the old type of iron-smelting furnace in use.

114 The work of Statham is devoted primarily to hunting and descrip-
136 tions of plant and animal life. The chapter given to a casual description of people among whom he passed is not useful as ethnology; but the book is of service in providing a background of natural history. Information on the tsetse fly in Angola (p. 294) assists ethnological work by showing the determining effect of this biological factor. [231] Presence of the fly is prohibitive to cattle-keeping, therefore cattle are not kept along the river courses which are infested with this pest.

114 Alexander Barns made no pretence of writing more than a travel book; nevertheless he publishes photographs of ethnological value, gives useful historical summaries, and deals with economic problems of production and transportation.

114 Tucker's book "Drums in the Darkness," though written to
175 interest the American public in mission work, contains many ethnological statements. The chief of these relate to the structure of the compound (p. 37); the dress of women (p. 39); naming of twins and triplets; and other items which agree well with data from the district in which I worked. There are notes on drum signals (p. 74) and [202] cannibalism (p. 77). Apparently drum signals were in use at Bihé half a century ago. Forty years ago a slave was killed and eaten [266] at the installation ceremonies for a new king, a point that was noted

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

361 At the present time one type of village is surrounded by stout stakes ten or more feet high set in a roughly circular plan. The arrangement of alleyways within the village is complicated without following any symmetrical plan. A visitor sees only a labyrinth of passages between high poles, with here and there a rectangular wooden 417 gate at intervals along the passages. The door itself is made from 335 four stout heavy planks which are roughly hewn and as a rule undecorated, but occasionally I have seen the panels of a door carved with [531] designs representing the breasts of a woman; or there may have been simple geometrical patterns. The top ends of the door panels are massive spheres of wood bored through with holes. Through the holes in the tops of these panels a pintle is passed in such a way that the door is suspended from above. During the daytime the lower ends of the panels are raised to the level of the lintel. They are there supported on a Y-shaped upright which is erected in front of the doorway. At night the planks are removed from this support and allowed to hang downward in the doorway. There is a sliding cross-piece to push over the lower ends. The same arrangement is sometimes used to make a door for a hut. This old type of village doorway, common twenty years ago, is becoming increasingly rare.

342 The house of a king or a chief is larger than that of a commoner. 644 The enclosure which contains a king's house and the other buildings 621 is named *elombe*, while *epandavailo* is the word used to describe the entrance to this compound. The *elombe* is built by men and women who receive no payment. There is a ceremony when the compound is opened. The house of the chief, Kandimba Sanjahulu, near Bailundu, is rectangular, with mud walls raised on a platform of earth and stones. Whitewash has been applied to the outside of the walls and some ornament is given in the form of painted blue crosses. Complete study of structural types and the planning of internal [113] divisions has been made by F. and W. Jaspert, of the Städtisches Völkermuseum, Frankfort.

644 At a village near Cuma the house of the chief differed from the dwellings of commoners in being somewhat larger. The house had been abandoned, not because the chief died there, but because the chieftainship had been transferred to an adjacent village. The tomb, which will be described in connection with funeral rites, was a few yards from the house. This mausoleum was surrounded by a high wooden palisade, to a stake of which were attached the horns of an ox killed at the funeral feast, while the jawbone lay in the enclosure

338 feet. A trench about eighteen inches deep is dug for the poles (*akoso*), which form the framework. The wattle work is tied to the uprights with strong strips of red bark before the plastering is begun.
341 The old type of Umbundu house was round, but most of the houses
171 now show a transition to square or rectangular forms (Plate XLIV, Fig. 2).

[531] Exterior wall-painting is found only in the northern districts of Angola (Plate LXXXIX, Fig. 2). Between Saurimo and Malange in the north, rectangular, painted houses are frequently seen. Wall-painting is a cultural trait from the Congo region where that form of decoration is common.

796 The method of forming a village site and the right of the chief to
621 allot land have been described. The house of the chief is the first to be erected. There is drinking of beer to celebrate the completion of the village, and the pots of beer have to be stirred with the claws of chickens; these have been killed to provide blood for sprinkling the walls of the new houses. Village chiefs go through the process of stirring and drinking. The medicine-man drinks first, then he offers the cup to the chief.

344 The communal house is built by the united efforts of all men of
476 the village. Ngonga says, "The king never helps with any of the
[485] building, but he talks very much." The guest house is also built
644 by communal labor. The king of the *ombala* of Ngalangi told me that a king always uses the house of his predecessor, which must not be pulled down. No repairs are permitted and the house is used until it is absolutely untenable.

354 The interior of a commoner's house has three hearth stones in the
342 middle of the floor, which is of hard mud beaten down with a heavy wooden implement called *ocikandulo*. The ceremonial placing of the stones has been described in discussing marriage. There is no chimney, consequently the walls and roof are blackened with smoke. The junction of roof and walls provides pockets for the reception of small articles. On the floor near the walls may be several large beer pots. The dark smoky interior is almost intolerable. The sleeping
352 room is sometimes separated from the living room by matting. The bed is made from a cross-work of sticks supported on four Y-shaped posts, one at each corner. On the bed are coarse sleeping mats and possibly a modern blanket.

356 The miscellaneous contents of the hut are gourds, dippers, cooking
252 pots of several sizes, pounders, and baskets. In many of the huts I found cooking going on in the general room, but frequently a sepa-

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[1874-1911]

not now possible for field work to supply the gaps in the written material.[72]

The traditional kinship system had neither clans nor segmenting lineages. The patrilineal group (*oluse*) was localized in a village, the group head being at the same time a village headman. Patrilineal ties do not seem to have been recognized between villages.[73] This social independence of the agnatically united village was reflected in the surrounding palisade, in the close clustering of the houses (nowadays much more spread out) and in the village institutions of the dancing-floor and the men's house (*ondjango*). It was here that all the men and boys, from seven or eight up, ate. Hastings writes, 'Each woman, after preparing the meal, takes or sends the portion which is for the male members of her family. This food is common property. As soon as enough has arrived some responsible member among the men will have it divided among the boys. For days a man may never taste of the food which is prepared by his wife.'[74] The men's house was also a club, and a court-room, where minor cases were decided. It was through this localized body of patrikin that an individual claimed land and residence rights and through it that he participated in the political system.[75]

The matrilineal group (the *oluina*) was composed of the descendants of a common great-great-grandmother.[76] According to Childs, it had a head who might also at times be a village headman,[77] and it was presumably the matrilineal group head who settled the disputes over property which Hambly says

[72] For an attempt at reconstructing Umbundu kinship on the basis of Childs's book see J. A. Barnes's review of *Umbundu Kinship and Character* in *Man*, 1950, pp. 126–128. It may be mentioned that the terms 'the side of the bow' and 'the side of the basket' are used simply to mean 'patrilateral kin' and 'matrilateral kin' (Dr. Childs, private information, and my own inquiries).

[73] A rather ambiguous phrase in Childs p. 43 ('The *oluse* consists of a large number of local village groups'), which might be interpreted as meaning that villages were patrilineally grouped into clans, seems really to mean simply that the village is the *oluse* unit.

[74] Hastings, p. 77.

[75] Ibid., p. 16. Childs, pp. 43–44.

[76] Hastings, p. 83, states that the matrilineal group consists of the descendants of a common great-great-great-grandmother (that is, five generations), and on p. 91 says that it consists of a group 'linked by a common great-great-grandmother'.

[77] Childs, p. 44.

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government headman is not the same person as the traditional 622
headman he may become involved in quarrels unless he is careful to accept the position of the traditional headman; and both government headman and traditional headman may find it wise to be on good terms with the catechist and the elder of the school.

It is fairly simple to define the obligations of the government headman. Discussing the position of the traditional headman vague words such as 'influence' and 'prestige' must be used to describe a vague position. Indeed a purely synchronic picture would be inadequate, since the present position of the traditional headmen and the contemporary village organization must be understood against a historical background.

3. *Headmen and Their Villages*

In the time of the rubber trade the village headman was both the leader of a body of agnatic kinsmen and the representative of his village in the wider political system, the village headmen sitting with the chief to judge cases. Both Childs and Hambly emphasize the importance of the judicial role of the village headmen. Childs states that the village headman was also a ritual leader, being responsible for 'regular village worship including agricultural festivals'.[16] I have found no evidence of such ceremonies on a village basis. The only ritual which, according to my older informants, the village headman should perform for his people is communing with his ancestor spirits in the spirit hut during a village hunt, and this information was not confirmed by all my older informants. It may be added that I found no evidence of any installation rite for a new headman.

It may be assumed that a good deal of the old village structure 178
survived till the middle or end of the 1930's. Dr. Childs in his 621
description of the village of Ngendo (Cassongue) as it was in 1935–6 indicated that agnatic kinship was the main principle of village recruitment, and that this was typical of other Umbundu villages.[17] In Gumba it was still possible at this time

[16] Childs, p. 46.

[17] Ibid., pp. 25–37.

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178 621 for individuals to build up large villages—thus Simbwyikoka encouraged people to settle at Mwekalia to make it a large village. It may also be suggested that the power of the village 622 headmen was to some extent linked with the power of the chief, since the headmen were associated politically with the chief, and would from this, tend to gain authority in their dealings with their fellow villagers. The village headmen also lacked any real competition from other types of leadership. Mbati had kept relations with the post in his own hands, and there were therefore no government headmen. The first catechist had arrived in Mbati's village in 1928, but cannot have met with [797] much lasting success as there are few baptized Christians over thirty-five in Gumba.

622 554 Other factors at the time strengthening the position of the village headmen were the low rate of labour migration[18] and the fact that practically every man over forty at the time of Simbwyikoka's accession had participated in the rubber trade. This meant that many of the best known caravan leaders were still in full vigour, and enjoyed a prestige based on the first-hand knowledge of the middle-aged and older men.

178 Between this period of the middle thirties and the beginning of my own fieldwork twenty years had passed and many changes had taken place. The status of the chief had sharply [634] declined and he was now assisted by the four government headmen. Every village except the chief's village had a Catholic or Protestant catechist, and there had been a marked trend [797] towards learning catechism in preparation for baptism, which had begun about 1946. Hence the catechetical school was usually attended by the majority of under twenty-five's in the village.

621 Agnatic kinship had ceased to be the principle of village membership. Nor can it be said that headmen build up villages by getting people to settle at a particular spot. It is not always easy even to find the headman, village population is not very stable, and a man can settle with any category of kin.

622 124 To discover the traditional headman required careful phrasing of questions. When I visited a village and asked for the *osekulu yimbo* (the traditional phrase for the village headman) I

[18] Ibid., p. 274.

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622 villagers a certain, not very marked, respect, which may be increased by such factors as kinship ties between him and them, and his personal qualities.

621 Nor is the village itself clearly defined as a social unit. It does not possess any corporate rights over fishing and hunting sites, or control access to firewood gathering. A man may hold land in two villages. It is rarely that a village acts or is treated as a unit. The two main occasions on which the village is thus 'represented' are at marriages and in the context of the catechetical school. The party which goes from the bridegroom's village to the bride's represents her village, to the other village; [628] at the wedding feast food is given out on large basket plates, one for each village represented among the guests.

797 The role of the catechetical school as representative of the village as a whole will be discussed in another chapter; here it should be noted that the ceremonial reception of visiting missionaries by the 'school people' of the village has been evidently copied to some extent from the welcome given to the bridegroom's party, and this has in turn copied certain features from the welcoming of missionaries—notably the use of speeches in Portuguese.

361 The hamlets[20] and isolated households do not indicate a modernizing 'individualistic' trend away from village life, since 'conservative' and 'progressive' people are to be found in both units of residence. The Ovimbundu, whether educated 621 or illiterate, when talking about themselves (particularly in 829 comparison with the Kimbundu of Northern Angola) emphasize that they are a village-dwelling people, and for them the real values of village life seem to be the sociability and mutual help that a man living among his kin can enjoy. By settling in a village one indicates where the pull of kinship ties is strongest rather than any particular allegiance to the village headman.

[20] I use this term for a settlement with les than four households.

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CHAPTER IV

THE INTERNAL STRUCTURE OF VILLAGES

1. *The Village Epalanga*

In this chapter the internal social relations of the village and the relevance to them of the headman will be examined.

Epalanga, which has been mentioned as associated with Sapapula, the Epalanga of the former chief Kafelo, was a village of 148 inhabitants living in 36 households. Its houses stretched from near the River Keve (or Cuvo) to near the track leading to Chicunda, a distance of between half and two-thirds of a mile. Its layout is of the untidy scattered sort typical of most Umbundu villages, indeed its size leads it to be more scattered and spread out than is usual. Houses are surrounded by their own gardens in which maize and other crops are grown, and there are a number of stretches of bush in between homesteads.

Four main sources of origin (as regards kinship ties not as regards localities) for Epalanga may be noted. The largest 'kinship core'[1] was composed of Sapapula and his kin numbering 16 households. The second largest was that of the kin of Mwehombo (who was a matrilateral 'brother'[2] of Sapapula) and Mbati the former chief of Gumba and mother's brother

[1] This term seems more satisfactory than 'cluster' which has a local meaning, or 'group' which suggests an unilineal descent group. It is not intended to give a term indicating a unit with defined boundaries. Childs notes that *imbo* (village) can also be used as a word for a cluster of houses within a village. He also gives the word *ocitundu* for a ward within a village. This word was not known locally.

[2] I have employed inverted commas to indicate classificatory use of terms which for European refer to the members of the elementary family, e.g. matrilateral 'brother'. I have not done so where the classificatory use relates to a term not associated with the elementary family, e.g. mother's brother. In ordinary social life there is no great distinction between a 'true' and a 'classificatory' mother's brother.

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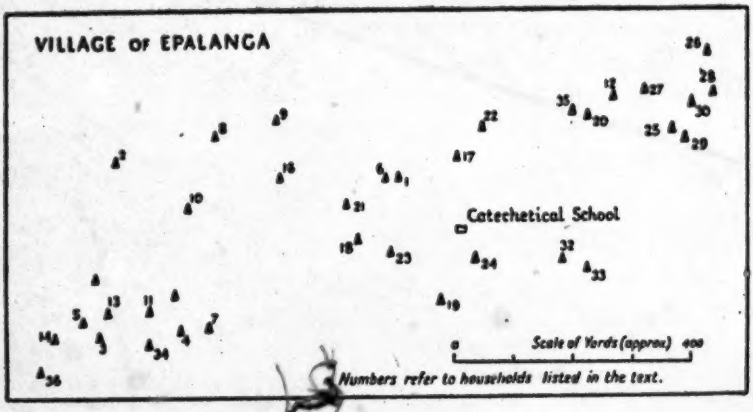
[Village of Epalanga]

621 of both Mwehombo and Sapapula. The third grouping was that of Ndjoleya (who was not directly related to Mwhombo or Sapapula) and his kin. Finally there were some people who were linked to Lusase (chief of Gumba 1954–6) who was not and had apparently never been an inhabitant of Epalanga, plus a few individuals who cannot be fitted on to any kinship core.

361



621 To some extent these differences of origin tended to be represented in the lay-out of the village. Sapapula's kin lived at the end of the village nearest the river, the kin of Mbati and Mwehombo lived in the centre of the village, and Ndjoleya's kinship core was to be found at the end of Epalanga by the Chicunda track. However, comparison of the list given below with the plan of the village show that the correspondence between core membership and the part of the village resided in is by no means total.[3]

In actual social life the differences between the cores to a large extent disappears. People from all cores take part in such activities as dances, funerals, house-building, and hunts, and this is facilitated by the numerous ties of kinship and marriage which exist between members of the different cores. Ndjoleya's

[3] Thus, Sendje, Sapapula's wife's mother, lived at Ndjoleya's end of the village. Ndjoleya had formerly lived at the other end of the village, but had moved. His 'sister', Tjingonene, still lived near his old home.

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[Village of Epalanga]

cluster was much more autonomous *vis-à-vis* Sapapula than were the members of the Mbati-Mwehombo grouping through the more numerous and closer kin ties; yet it would be wrong to regard Ndjoleya's kin as isolated.[4] This greater autonomy was a matter of degree rather than kind. 621

With regard to geographical origin, it is evident that the population had been recruited from over quite a wide area. Of the 36 household heads 7 were born in Cela of whom 6 had come from Cela to Gumba, and 1 had been born in Cela, then come to Gumba, then moved to Menga and then returned to Gumba. 3 household heads had come from Utende to Gumba, and 2 had come from Namba. 12 had come to Epalanga from Cassongue. 7 household heads (including 2 who had subsequently lived in Cassongue) had at one time lived in Katembo (the village associated with Mbati). 1 householder was apparently born in Gumba but had no Katembo link. 2 household heads were from Ndjandju (one having lived in Cassongue after leaving Ndjandju, the other being the catechist) and 1 was from Chicunda. On the origins of 5 household heads I have no information. 166 592

My information on Epalanga suffers from a number of gaps. Some genealogical information collected was lost. Too frequently I neglected to ask if a particular relationship was patrilateral or matrilateral, nor did I enquire sufficiently as to whether particular marriages were between kinsfolk or not. 114

These deficiencies to some extent 'fit' the kinship system. A kinship tie may exist between two people which is significant in the social relations between them, yet they may not be sure as to whether it is patrilateral or matrilateral, or even as to what is the category of kinship involved. Thus a resident of Simbwyikoka's village told me one day that Simbwyikoka was his 'brother', some time later he was a brother-in-law, and after this again said that he was a 'brother'. 602

There is also confusion over pedigrees. The pedigree which Simbwyikoka gave me in December 1955 differed from the one that he gave me in April 1956. Two people who claim to be

[4] Ndjoleya once referred to himself as *Ossuls yimbo* (elder of the *imbo*) this being a case of *imbo* used for a cluster within a village. Ndjoleya's folk recognized Sapapula as being head of the village.

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[Village of Epalanga]

602 'close' kin may not be able to indicate the set of genealogical[5] links between them and will not be at all surprised or even interested by this: hence it is impossible to draw up a genealogy of Epalanga. I have attempted to show the very complicated 128 network of relationships by a series of charts—one big chart would have so many cross-cutting lines as to be largely unintelligible.

Three charts are given to illustrate particular sections of the mesh of kin and affinal ties. They are not intended as exhaustive records of the relationship of any one kinship core or of any single individual. Rather, they are intended to give a general impression of how the proliferation of the strands of kinship [621] and marriage brings about a complicated and formless patchwork in which everybody is included.

2. *Information on Household Heads*

601 List I. Residents of Epalanga as of December 1956. Female 621 household heads are indicated by a star against their names. The numbers are used on the map of the village (see p. 50).

Sapapula's Kinship Core

1. Aspirante, sister's son of Sapapula, son-in-law of Wayangu.
2. *Avilo, sister's daughter of Sapapula, 'sister' to Tjingonene (31).
3. Batista, son of Epalata (5) and husband of a sister of Kasosi (7).
4. Bernacio, son-in-law of Sapapula, 'son' to Kasosi (7).
5. Epalata, matrilateral cross-cousin of Sapapula.
6. Ernesto, sister's son of Sapapula, full brother of Aspirante (1) married to a daughter's daughter of Sasamela (see List II).
7. Kasosi, 'grandson' of Sapapula through being sister's son[6] to Wasuka (15). A 'son' to Guilherme and 'father' to Bernacio (4).

[5] Ovimbundu even traditionally seem to have been little interested in genealogies. (Information from Dr. G. M. Childs.)

[6] According to Umbundu kinship terminology, Wasuka being a matrilateral cross-cousin of Sapapula could call him 'father' and Kasosi could call his mother's brother's (Wasuka) father 'grandfather'.

2 [cf. charts on pp. 91, 96, 97, in Category 116-Analyst]

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[Village of Epalanga]

8. *Natjingendele, cross-cousin of Sapapula, had formerly lived at the other end of Epalanga near her 'brother' Ndjoleya (30). 601 621
9. Patientia, 'brother' of Sapapula's wife Nahoka.
10. Sapapula, sister's son of Mbati, 'brother' of Luanga (21) and Mwehombo, not related to Ndjoleya (30) or Lusase.
11. Saviel, sister's son of Sapapula married to Soko, a daughter of Mwehombo. By an earlier marriage he had become affinally related to Tjingonene (31).
12. *Sendje, mother of Nahoka, Sapapula's wife.
13. Tjamwanga, matrilateral cross-cousin of Sapapula and paternal half-brother of Epalata (5).
14. Tjimbandongo, son of Epalata (5) and therefore a classificatory 'grandson' of Sapapula.
15. Wasuka, matrilateral cross-cousin of Sapapula, and 'brother' of Epalata (5).
16. *Wimbu, a widow, sister's daughter of Sapapula, her husband had been a mother's brother of Luanga (21).

The Mbati-Mwehombo kinship core

17. Armandio, sister's son of Mwehombo (and of Sapapula).
18. Gonçalve, own son of Mwehombo (therefore 'son' of Sapapula).
19. Jaime, son of Mbati—cross-cousin of Mwehombo, formerly married to Soko (daughter of Mwehombo) who was now the wife of Saviel (11), later married to Delfina, a brother's daughter of Ndjoleya.
20. Joaõ, cross-cousin of Sapapula. He tended, however, to be associated with the Mbati-Mwehombo kinship core, owing to his marriage to Paulina, daughter of Mwehombo, and full sister of Gonçalve (18).
21. Luanga, matrilateral 'brother' to Mwehombo (and also to Sapapula) patrilateral 'brother' to Ndjoleya. Luanga's wife Muhongo was a 'sister' of Maria, the wife of Paulo (24).
22. Manuel, sister's son of Mwehombo, his first wife had been a sister (not known if real or classificatory) of Maria, Paulo's wife (24).

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[Village of Epalanga]

601 23. *Nahenge, cross-cousin of Sapapula, and sister of Joaõ (20).
602 24. Paulo, 'elder of the catechetical school', sister's son of Mwehombo (and of Sapapula). His wife Maria was a daughter of Mbati.

Ndjoleya's kinship core

25. Augusto, sister's son to Ndjoleya, his wife Luisa was a daughter (by an earlier marriage) of Nalivonga, daughter of Sapapula and wife of Bernacio (4).
26. Costa, 'brother' of Ndjoleya (30), and husband of Nakalende, a cross-cousin of Paulo (24).
27. Cypriano, sister's son of Ndjoleya (30).
28. Ferreira, 'brother' of Ndjoleya (30).
29. Julio, sister's son of Ndjoleya and full brother of Augusto (25).
30. Ndjoleya, one of his wives was a sister (not known whether real or classificatory) of Bernacio, another a full sister of one of Mwehombo's wives.
31. *Tjingonene, 'sister' of Ndjoleya, by another path 'sister' of Avilo. Her daughter Feliciana was a cross-cousin of Nahoka, the wife of Sapapula, and had married Daniel, a sister's son of Lusase.

Persons with kin links to Lusase

32. Bartolomeu, sister's son of Lusase and also of Sapapula, 'son' of Wasuka (15), cross-cousin of Ndjoleya and also of Paulo (24).
33. *Nalundu, matrilateral 'sister' of Bartolomeu.

Other residents

34. *Nasemela, widow of Sasamela. (See List II).
35. Pedro Tjikete Santos, catechist.
36. *Tjambo, 'sister' of Bartolomeu (32), not included with him in the group linked to Lusase, since although she had formerly lived near his house, she moved to be near Tjimbandongo (14), whose 'mother' she was.

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601 wife of Ernesto (6). Patrilateral 'father' to Paula (24) and Saviel (11). Affinally related to Mwehombo, a 'sister' of whom he had married.

Wayangu, paternal half-brother of Mwehombo, resident at Epalanga till the end of 1955, wife's father to Aspirante (1) had married a sister (not clear whether own or classificatory) of Lusase.

3. *Kinship and marriage in the village setting*

621 The foregoing tabulated information and the charts indicate the two main principles of integration in Epalanga, as in other Umbundu villages, the settling of individuals near senior kinsmen and the existence of a number of intra-village marriage ties.

621 For a clearer outline of village structure to appear, it is
602 necessary to give a brief sketch of the contemporary kinship system which will be discussed more thoroughly in later chapters. This is cognatic, with little distinction between patrilineal
[592] and matrilineal kin, the elementary family being the basic
[591] household unit, the individual being permitted to settle with
[582] any category of kin, and a high percentage of preferential marriages.[7]

591 The right of settling where one pleases, as 'the heart chooses', is recognized even in children. Minessi, the 7-year-old son of Gonçalve (18), used generally to eat at the household of his father's sister Paulina, the wife of Joaõ (20). Gonçalve said about this to me 'He is very fond of his father's sister.'

While the traditional norm by which a man lived in his father's village is still remembered, at least by older men, a

[7] Childs (p. 56) states that it is permitted to marry a cross-cousin on either side, a sister's daughter, and a father's sister. My informants generally agreed that the marriage with a father's sister was not and had not been permitted. Marriage is not permitted with 'true' kin of these categories. Padre Feltin, the superior of the Bimbe Catholic Mission who knew of the existence of these marriages, told me that very few Umbundu marriages came within the prohibited (a prohibition removable by a dispensation) degrees of kinship laid down by the Catholic Church (that is, up to, and including, third cousins). Such marriages in the past might have been with geographically as well as socially distant kin. Childs quotes a case of a marriage arranged, after the discovery of a kinship tie, between partners living as far apart as Ciyaka (Quiaca) and Ngalangi (Galangue).

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father does not exercise great authority over his grown sons even if they live in the same village, nor does their living in different villages lead to a breach in personal relations. Sapapula who told me that a man should stay in his father's village till the latter's death had four sons, none of whom lived in Epalanga. Two lived in Menga (where Sapapula had lived up to 1946) and maintained friendly contact with their father. One who lived in Cela seemed socially as well as geographically more remote, and the fourth was a labour migrant given up for lost.

The preferential marriages[8] have continued in practice when most of the other institutions of the old kinship system have disintegrated. Their function is to multiply the relationships between individuals living in a particular neighbourhood, and to limit the socio-geographical range within which marriage partners are selected. Of a sample of 121 existing marriages 87, that is 70.3%, were with cross-cousins, and only 13.7% were with non-kinswomen.[9]

Even some of the non-kin marriages fitted into the general pattern of increasing ties within a limited social field. Thus in Epalanga Jaime (19) had married Delfina, a brother's daughter to Ndjoleya. They were not kinsfolk yet this fitted in with the pattern of kin marriages in increasing links between different kinship cores in the village. Similarly Costa (26) and his wife Nakalende were not agreed (when questioned separately) as to whether they were kinsfolk, but this is not really significant since

[8] I had been inclined to interpret these marriages as functions of the relations between kin groups. Dr. Mary Douglas has suggested to me that these marriages were in the past not related to any system of kin groups but had, as at the present day, the function of multiplying the kinship ties within a limited field. I do not know of any clear evidence which could at this time settle the point.

[9] I count here as kin marriages those between *sakwatjiuka*, funeral friends, who though not kinsfolk tend to be assimilated to cross-cousins in social usage. 'Cross-cousin' tends to be at the present time a blanket category, and I have repeatedly found asking men about their wife's kinship status that they would first give some other term and then change to 'cross-cousin'. [Epalume]. This explains why under present conditions the percentage of cross-cousin marriages in relation to the total number of marriages seems to be rising. Thus in 56 marriages (existing or terminated) contracted by 23 men who had taken part in the caravan trade, while the percentage of marriages with non-kinswomen was slightly smaller (12.5) the figure of marriages with cross-cousins was very much smaller (42.9) and the figure of marriages with kin other than cross-cousins, sister's daughters, and *sakwatjiuka* was much higher (25 %) compared to the contemporary figure of 5%.

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582 their marriage also fits a general pattern of Umbundu marriage,
621 a choice made within a limited range joining together individuals of different kinship cores.

The multiplication of ties and their concentration within a neighbourhood by this means do not prevent a man from having kin and affines a day or two's journey away. It has earlier been indicated that the population of Epalanga was from quite a wide area. Yet the consequences of previous preferential marriages (thus Paulo and Saviel were related both patrilaterally and matrilaterally) and the trend towards the establishment of new marriage ties had created a complicated mesh of linkages that has been described within a not particularly stable village population, whose senior residents had been there for only ten years. To use again the anthropological metaphor of kinship as a network, the network can have odd strings running out quite a way, but in a village the different ties will be bound up in a knot.

602 The long-range ties (with such obvious exceptions as those
166 with kin living in cities) are not the result of the range of kin spreading wider and wider under modern conditions. The evidence of pedigrees indicates that kinship and marriage links between individuals in, and actual migration to and from Gumba and Cassongue, Cela, and Namba, date back well into the nineteenth century. There is far less evidence of connections and migration between Gumba and areas to the south and east. This geographical aspect of social relations persists at the present day.

621 It has been indicated that the high proportion of preferential marriages creates a certain local stability, since many marriages are with people living close to. Yet the basic stability lies not so much in the relative stability of a local population, but in the pattern by which links of distant kinship are changed into marriage ties and new bonds are speedily established among the fortuitously assembled population of a new village.

4. *Headmen and Kinship Cores*

622 I now turn to the other principle of village integration, the settling of individuals near senior kinsmen. In the previous

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763 Mwehombo, and elder of the school, a post he would certainly have lost had this come to the ears of the missionaries. Attitudes to the verdict are interesting. Sapapula assured me that [754] Mwehombo had killed many people by sorcery both sons and sisters' sons; Luanga did not see the contradiction which I pointed out to him of his saying both that Mwehombo was good and that he had practised sorcery; Gonçalve, Mwehombo's son, appeared sceptical of the verdict, as did Aspirante, Sapapula's sister's son who was married to a daughter of Mwehombo's half-brother, Wayangu.

764 The verdict did not prevent Mwehombo having an impressive funeral. He was buried according to his wishes in the traditional hammock placed in the circular grave, instead of the modern coffin placed in the modern oblong grave. As a caravan-leader he was buried by the track to Chicunda at the point where the path to Epalanga branched off. A low thatched [237] covering was erected over his grave with the horns of the beast killed at the funeral on it. In 1956 Gonçalve and Pedro Nendi, son of Mbati and therefore a cross-cousin of Mwehombo, replaced this by a concrete memorial in the form of a cross with the base inscribed in Portuguese 'Simon Mwehombo Native of Gumba Great Man died 13th January 1955.'

797 Thus Mwehombo had twice undergone conversion from pagan to Christian, once as he lay dying and once after death. 754 His posthumous conviction for sorcery affected neither the form of funeral, nor the continued residence of his kin in the village. His conviction for sorcery was a reflection of the social strains in which he had been involved, not the opening of another cycle 621 of conflict. The kinship cores are not segments opposing one 571 another as in a lineage system; they possess no clearly defined boundaries[10] or continuing existence in time. Their existence is dependent on the persons around whom the cores have formed, and on their deaths they lack any integrating principles. Mwehombo dead, his kinsfolk mostly found no objection in continuing to live in the village where his rival now lived as undisputed traditional headman.

621 There is no word in Umbundu for these groupings. The

[10] For example I have included José in the Mwehombo-Mbati kinship core, on the basis of association, but he came to the village through a tie with Sapapula.

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word 'otjitawila' is given by Dr. Childs[11] as being used for a 621
section of the village; however, I have not found this word known locally.

It may be asked how typical Epalanga is of other villages. In size it is larger than usual, having 36 households. (The average number, using figures from 14 villages, is 18.36 households; the largest, Epalanga, had 36 and the smallest 5.) In structure other villages presented the same picture of ill-defined kinship cores held together by a network of kin and affinal ties, with village headmen emerging by a varying collection of claims, of which the most significant seemed to be a position as the principal focus of kinship ties.

5. *Kinsmen and the Choice of Residence*

When one asks a man why he has settled in a particular 591
village, a common enough answer is that he has settled there 602
because he has 'family' there. When asked who his 'family' (the Portuguese word *família* is used even by non-Portuguese speakers) is, he will give the name of a senior kinsman, or he may give more than one name. He may even give the name of somebody living outside the village. Thus in Epalanga when I asked Bartolomeu why he had settled there he replied that it was because of his mother's brother Lusase who was not an Epalanga resident. It was therefore not practicable for me, as I had at one time intended, to find which categories of kin are most likely to be settled with, by asking individuals in villages I censused, and obtaining percentages.

It is possible to indicate some of the 'pulls' which affect a 591
choice of residence. In the traditional system, when a boy's father died he would settle with a father's brother. Nowadays, it is generally expected that he will settle with his mother's brother, this being the answer given by informants when asked where he will go. In practice, the pull of the mother's brother's household for a child does not seem to be so strong. In Epalanga, out of thirteen persons under 20 who had neither father nor mother resident in the village, only one was living with a mother's brother.

[11] See Childs, pp. 36–37.

604 On the village level, however, the importance of the mother's
621 brother tie and of the tie between matrilateral 'brothers' becomes very apparent. None of Sapapula's four sons had settled in Epalanga, and his only classificatory 'son' was Gonçalve, own son to Mwehombo, Sapapula's matrilateral 'brother'. Seven household heads were sister's sons of Sapapula. This trend for matrilateral ties to predominate is marked also in Katembo and Mbunga, but less evident at Belem. Indeed, 'neo-matrilinearity' as a principle of village structure may be a general and not simply a local feature of Umbundu society, since Mr. C. M. N. White[12] has found that the settlements of Ovimbundu within Northern Rhodesia are marked by a predominance of matrilateral ties. This is referable to the contemporary kinship system in which the father-son tie is
[593] predominantly a personal one, with a limited extension of attitudes to classificatory fathers, whereas a man's relation with a mother's brother seems little affected by the question of genealogical distance. Perhaps the relations between the group of
602 agnatic kin were so closely tied to the old village structure that
178 when it broke up it disintegrated also the wider agnatic ties. Yet at the same time such matrilineal institutions as matrilineal inheritance and the non-repayment of loans among matrikin have weakened or disappeared.

591 Running counter to this principle of settling in the village of a senior kinsman who is likely to belong to one's matrikin, is
[582] the principle of cross-cousin marriage. 'If you have married your cross-cousin when your son grows up he will see a cross-cousin here, a cross-cousin there, and so he will stay.' That is, a man will stay in his father's village not simply by virtue of the father-son tie but because he will be surrounded by kinsmen.
[605] The relation between cross-cousins is one of equality and solidarity, expressed in joking and in burial services. To say that one stays in a place because one has cross-cousins at hand is to
[602] indicate an ideal of equal relations with a circle of kinsmen rather than attachment to the following of an important kinsman.

591 These two principles co-exist in actual social life. A man will
602 recognize and respect a number of senior kinsmen living in his

[12] In letters.

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neighbourhood and will explain his choice of residence by quoting the names of one or more of these; yet the weaving together of so many strands of kinship and affinity, ultimately through marriage links, is what gives the local population its relative degree of stability. It should be emphasized that the integration established within a village by the network of kinship and affinal ties is dependent on the integration created by the same amorphous network which runs through and beyond the sub-chiefdom. It is this network into which the individual is woven by multiple ties that absorbs the neo-matrilineal pull apparent to some degree in choice of residence and keeps the system essentially cognatic.

The use of the word *familia* reflects this situation. A man may say of a particular senior kinsman 'He is my *familia*', that is, my kinsman, my most important kinsman with whom I have settled, yet also he may say 'My *familia* is in Cela', that is, the greater part of my kinsmen live in Cela. When Bartolomeu explained that he had settled where he did because of Lusase, he was perhaps combining the two kinds of references. He had settled in Gumba because he had a large number of kinsmen there among whom Lusase was pre-eminent. A man explaining the locality of his *familia* in the wider sense will associate it with a particular sub-chiefdom—'My family is all in Menga'—when he is outside it; when he is in it he is more likely to refer to a particular village.

Although individuals living in a village may have come there through several kinship sources yet the majority of them will probably have some kinship or affinal tie with the traditional headman. This collection of individual ties does not provide the headman with a body of followers, nor is having a large number of dependants a value of contemporary Umbundu culture. If it were felt that the best thing to be in life is the patron of a body of kinsmen and followers, headmanship would survive as a predominant influence in local life despite the collapse of its political and legal responsibilities. In fact not even old men feel this way.

The idea of the village as a corporate group with a jural and political personality rather than a residential unit has not survived the break-up of agnatic solidarity, the disappearance

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621 178 of the men's house, and the headman's loss of status. The new institution of the catechetical school does not revive village solidarity in this form. The contemporary Ovimbundu do not live in a 'village headman society' comparable to those of British Central Africa,[13] since the concept and manifestations of village solidarity around a headman are so notably deficient. 356 Reference may also be made to the economic ethics of the Ovimbundu with their approval of making money and the [426] belief that all loans even within the circle of the elementary family should be repaid, that is, wealth is seen by all as an end in itself rather than a means of obtaining personal loyalties.

622 178 In the previous chapter it was shown how the traditional headmanship is no longer a significant legal and political institution. In this chapter I have tried to indicate that it lacks sources of authority and prestige within the village.

The line of argument has involved reference to the contemporary kinship system of which an outline has been given. 128 This will be more fully discussed in later chapters, when a more detailed comparison of present institutions with the traditional kinship system will be made.

[13] For an example of these societies see J. C. Mitchell, *The Yao Village*, Manchester 1956.

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More usually they are followed and sometimes

preceded by singing, and dancing. There are a certain number 797
of 'school' songs as distinct from hymns, which are semi- or 533
non-religious in nature, which are taught by the catechist and are sung on these occasions with other Umbundu traditional songs. There seems to be little composition of songs by present day Ovimbundu nor do they know popular Portuguese songs.

The school itself, the centre of these activities, is generally 797
built of adobe bricks in the shape of a church. In any village [346]
where there is a fair number of school people it will be the largest building in the village and even in villages of mixed Christian and pagan population the school building tends to be in the centre of the village, a topographical reflection of the social significance of the catechist and the catechetical school. In the school men and women are separated, men on the right, women on the left, a custom also found in some Angolan parish churches.

The catechist's presence is a mark of the identity of the 797
village. The catechetical school is the only institution which 621
groups people of different domestic groups on a village-wide basis, and in which people participate in a wider set of social relations on a village and not on an individual basis, as people are linked to kinsmen, or to the post or to an employer. One can and does associate oneself with a village if one does not belong geographically to it but simply attends its school. Thus Fernando considered himself as belonging to the village of Ngolo Catolica whose catechetical school he attended, although his house was well away from the main village, being much nearer the Protestant village of Vila Graça, where indeed he had kinsmen. When I asked a woman where she lived she replied by giving the name of the village catechist. The only occasions on which a group of people represent one village *vis-à-vis* another are in connection with the travels of missionaries, and in the wedding feasts, which will be described in another chapter.

A missionary on leaving one village for another has his 797
luggage carried by the school people of the village where he 484
has been staying, who will march singing, with perhaps a boy banging on a drum. When they get to the next village they will be greeted at the entrance into the village by the catechist and

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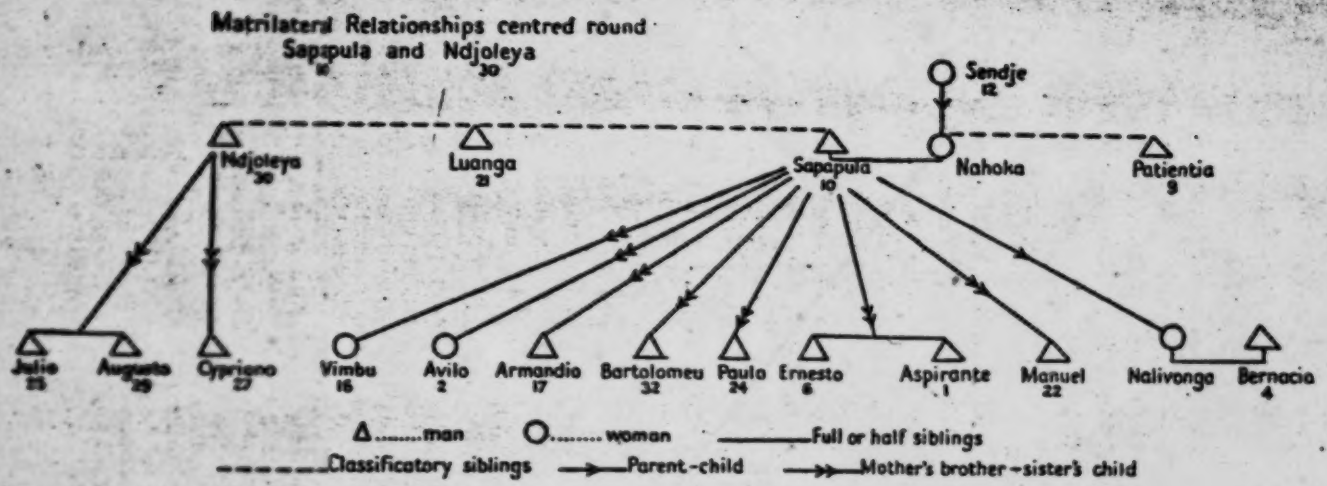

CHART 1. This shows the relationships centred round Sapapula (10) and Ndjoleya (30), the leading personalities of the village. Although they were not directly related there was a link through Luanga (21), who was matrilaterally a 'brother' of Sapapula, and patrilaterally of Ndjoleya. All are living members of the village.

[fig. 91]

601
621

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with Adolfo, the small son of Jaime, his wife's brother, but when asked what relation Adolfo was to him, became confused and said, 'My son, my sister's son.'

There exist marked variations in terminology in Umbundu country.[16] For instance, *sekulu* seems to be used for mother's brother only in north-western Umbundu country. Elsewhere *manu*[17] is used for mother's brother, and *sekulu* is used for grandfather. At Caconda, where there has been strong Portuguese influence since the eighteenth century, only the Portuguese kinship terms are known.[18]

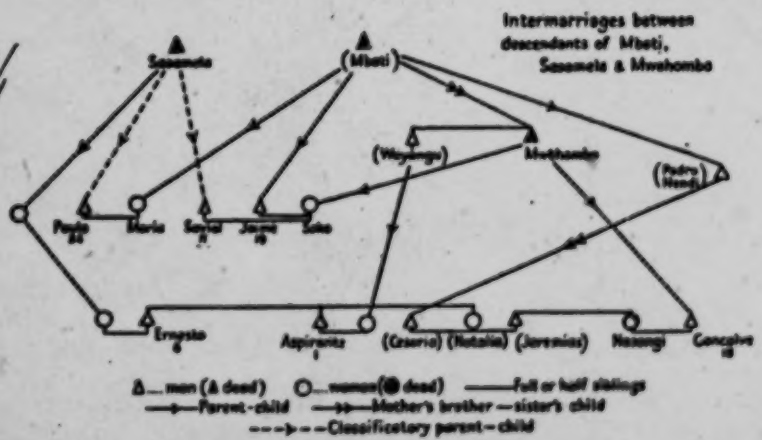

CHART 2. Mbati, Mwehombo and some of their kin. For Mbati (dead, non-member) and Mwehombo (dead, former member) see Chapter III, section 1. For Sasamela (dead, former member) and Cesario, Jeremias, Natalia, Pedro Nendi, and Wayangu (all living non-members) see List II (pp. 55–6). The rest of the individuals named on the chart are members of Epalanga. Paulo and Saviel were 'brothers', both patrilaterally and matrilaterally.

3. *Kinship Norms*

In this section I shall describe the relations that existed within the elementary family in the time of the rubber trade. A man

[16] For other lists of kinship terms see Hastings, pp. 83–85. Childs, pp. 47–56. M. Howse, *Umbundu Lessons* (Dondi, 1955), Vol. II, pp. 195–7.

[17] Etymologically, *manu* seems to mean 'mother-person'.

[18] Private information.

[text continues on p. 98]

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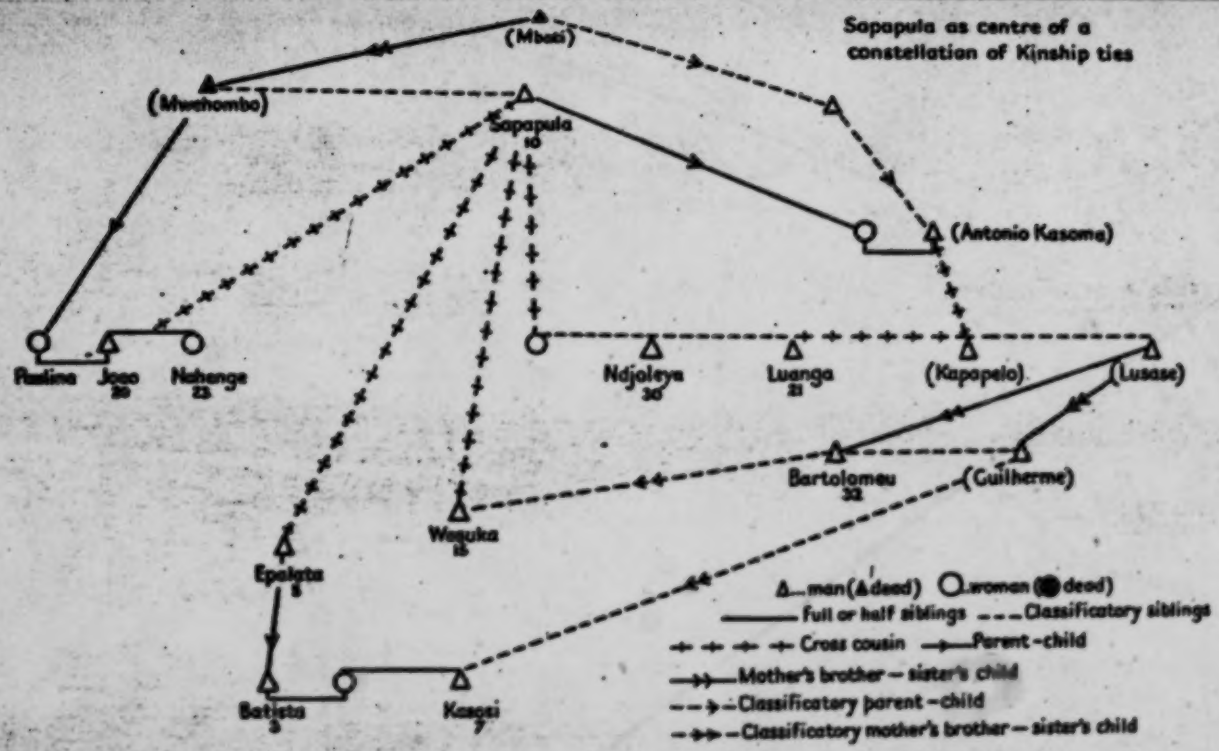

CHART 3. Sapapula as the centre of a constellation of kinship ties. It is interesting to note how, in view of the conflict described in Chapter IX, Sapapula is linked to Guilherme, Kapapelo, and Lusase by several paths. All are living members of Epalanga except for Mbati and Mwehombo (for whom see note to Chart 2) and Antonio Kasoma, Guilherme, Kapapelo, and Lusase. For details on these living non-members see List II, pp. 55–6. Not all ties existing between these individuals have been shown.

Correction. The relation of Bartolomeu and Guilherme to Lusase and of Mwehombo to Mbati should be that of classificatory sister's sons.

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602 the same time clearly an important part of social life. Kinship
183 norms are confused, as is the correct term to use in a particular relationship. Ritual and jural sanctions are lacking, as are institutions based on the regular co-operation of groups of kinsmen. Yet a man likes to live with kinsfolk and there is a tendency for kin to cluster together in a neighbourhood.

602 By the very facts, that so many of a man's neighbours are his
621 kinsmen, and that there is very little marked differentiation between the behaviour towards different categories of kin, kinship is robbed of any great specificity of content. It might be said that it is the quantity rather than the quality of kinship ties that makes kinship significant in establishing a 'sense of community' in a neighbourhood, in that the multiplicity of local kin ties creates some identification between a man's range of kin and his neighbourhood. At the same time a kinship tie provides a basis on which a closer relationship may be built by reciprocal services. It appears that the inheritance of property
602 recognizes kinship in this way by recognizing claims not on the
428 basis of strict genealogical proximity but on the quality of the relationship.

128 A discussion of marriage and the household must be left to the next chapter. The outline given of the present kinship system is sufficiently clear to begin an examination of the reasons for the changes. This must rely to some extent on speculation, owing to a lack of information on the actual working of the kinship system while it was in transition to its present form.

613 The key change is the disappearance of the kinship groups.
178 These, it seems, disappeared because of their high degree of dependence on the particular type of economy existing before 1911. It has already been argued that the distinction between the patrikin and the matrikin is an attempt to isolate economic claims and conflicts from village and political relationships, and that the giving of loans without right of repayment within the matrikin was called for by a trading system in which credit played an important part. With the end of the trade the wealth passing through Umbundu hands declined sharply, and there was neither need for funds to meet trading losses nor currency to provide them. A man obtained money either by growing crops

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This strong pull towards the mother's brother is, however, marked on the level of village relationships as has been already noted. It is possible that with regard to co-operation on the domestic plane the tie between a man and his wife's full or half siblings is stronger than that with his sister's children. This argument would claim that the tie created by marriage between a man and his wife's full or half siblings is one of the strongest in the Umbundu social structure, and as a further proof (albeit not quantitively assessed) may be quoted the frequency with which two households close together turn out to belong to a man and his wife's brother.

In the first section of this chapter it was argued that the high rate of preferential marriages greatly increased the number of social ties between individuals in a neighbourhood, and brought a renewal of ties with distant kin. In this section various aspects of the relationship between husband and wife have been examined. Husband and wife co-operate economically and outside working hours may pass their evenings together. In a dispute taken to the post a man is likely to take his wife as a witness. Mystically sanctioned obligations do exist between husband and wife. While the elementary family is the main domestic type, households headed by women are also found and there is a certain amount of mobility of children between households. The tie of a man with his wife's siblings, particularly when they are children, is significant for the domestic organization of households.

Marriage is indeed the pivotal institution of the Umbundu kinship system. The preferential marriages do not link descent groups to one another; rather they bring about the local concentration of kin which makes out of many vague and insecure links a strongly-woven community in which both husband and wife can live with relatives near at hand.

Of the personal relationship between husband and wife it would be impossible to say as an anthropologist has of another African people, 'Here people looked for little in marriage. A man would turn to his sixteenth cousin twice removed before he turned to his wife.'[22] A man shares with his wife his work and leisure, is linked to her by mystical obligations which are not

[22] Elenore Smith Bowen, *Return to Laughter*, London, 1954, p. 117.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

631 ones. This situation was reported by Magyar, when he wrote,
635 'Quibanda (should be Civanda) to the east has 500 villages. The Chief has great power. He sends tribute every year to the king of Bailundu but is himself fully independent.'[1] Magyar described about 15 *atumbu* or '*ovikandscho*',[2] as he called them, of Bailundu.
[161] He estimated the population of Bailundu at 450,000, and for all the kingdoms of the Ovimbundu 1,200,000,[3] figures which are probably not very different from present-day facts. The report
[175] and description of the 'Capitania de Benguella' in 1799 said that the king of Bailundu dominated 2,056 villages; the king of Viye, 886; and the king of Ngalangi, 900; and listed their 'feudos' respectively as 82, 54, and 78.[4] My list of the Ngalangi *atumbu* shows 112. In Bailundu about 20 *atumbu* were ruled by members of the royal family, including heirs apparent or expectant, and the queen (*Inakulu*), who also had her own establishment.[5] About 20 were ruled by other court officials.

621 Most of these *atumbu* are still recognized as such or as *olombala*.[6]
• 622 Their decay has not been as great as that of the *ombala*[6] of their
177 liege lord, for they still fulfil certain functions in native life. They have also been given new functions by the administrative authorities.
[651] The minor chiefs as well as village headmen are all required to assist in assessing and collecting the native tax, and also in recruiting labour for government works and for contracts. In some areas they receive in return the remission of their own taxes. In some areas they are required to wear uniforms. On the dancing floors
[692] of most of these minor *olombala* courts are still held, justice determined, and (to a limited extent) fines 'eaten'. Such judgements are not officially recognized or allowed by the European authorities. The African, however, often finds that European courts do not meet his needs or accord with his concepts of justice.

[1] Magyar, op. cit., p. 389.

[2] Umbundu *ovihanjo* (plural), 'branches', a term which through commercial or European influence is applied to the *atumbu*.

[3] For these figures and for descriptions of the several kingdoms, see Magyar, op. cit., chap. ix.

[4] *Annaes Mar. e Col.*, 4a Ser., pp. 155 ff.

[5] Magyar, op. cit., p. 390.

[6] *Olombala*, plural of *ombala*, a capital village or chief's residence.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

The Village

Among the Ovimbundu the outstanding social and political unit at the present time is the village (*imbo*, plural *ovaimbo*). The village may consist of from 5 to 500 households,[1] the heads of which are in the great majority of cases related to each other in the male line. Each village has a headman or elder (*sekulu*, literally 'grandfather' or 'elder father') who is literally, according to Umbundu kinship usage, the patriarch of the villagers. He was formerly responsible for his village to the sub-chief, and through him to the king. At the present time, the administrative authorities hold the village headmen responsible for matters relating to taxes, labour recruiting, &c. The present decay of this office and of village life varies very greatly from region to region. Nearly everywhere matters of purely local concern are not directly interfered with, and the headman continues his patriarchal government, assisted by a council of all (male) householders.

Ngendo, a typical village. The village of Ngendo lies at about 14° 40′ east, 11° 40′ south, about thirty-five miles south-west of the Keve, where that river crosses the fifteenth parallel, and about sixty miles in a direct line from the Atlantic Ocean. Its altitude is about 1,650 metres, and the ground on which it is built slopes down to a small stream of the Keve system. Directly across the stream to the north rises the granite outcrop on which may be seen the ruined fortress of Usengo. Ngendo belongs to the tribe of Kasongi, *etumbu* of Ekongo. It is about fifteen miles north-west of the administrative post of Cassongue and about two miles from the motor road which connects that post and points farther inland with the district capital and port of Novo Redondo.

The most striking feature of this village is the fact that it consists of four smaller units or wards (*ovitawila*, plural), each of which appears to be quite self-contained. The four together make up the village (*imbo*), which name is also applied to either of the two larger units by themselves. Each unit has its own elder, but

[1] Most, but not all, of the larger villages are *olombala* (q.v., *supra*), but even these are not as large now as they formerly were. In 1850 the *ombala* of Bailundu was said to have 5,000 inhabitants (Magyar, op. cit.). At the present time there is probably no village with more than 3,000 inhabitants, and few of that size. The tendency seems to be toward smaller villages, and there is even some movement toward isolated households and farmsteads after the fashion of so many of the Southern Bantu.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

The Village Headman

622 The village headman (*Sekulu yimbo*) is in a very real sense the father of the villagers. Considering their relationship to him as shown by the survey of Ngendo, it is no surprise to find that to nearly all of the householders the headman is quite literally either 'father' (*tate*) or 'elder brother' (*kota*). The headman is literally the patriarch. He is also therefore the village priest. His com-
[769] pound is the only one in the village which has a spirit hut (*etambo*). In this hut the elder prays to ancestral spirits and holds communion (*oku felevela*) with them. In case of need, he may spend an entire night or more so occupied, but he will often offer a prayer when he awakens during the night. This hut is also used as a store-room for possessions not used every day and here are kept the insignia of office. The elder may sleep in this hut at any time when he is not sleeping with one of his wives, and here also he may lodge respected guests.

622 The headman functions as a Justice of the Peace for the village.
692 The graver and more difficult cases are heard before the whole village on the dance-floor, while the simpler ones which require the attendance only of those concerned, together with their respective elders, are taken up either in the *onjango* or in the headman's own courtyard. Through all and in spite of all political and administrative changes, the village court of justice continues and will continue to function.

622 It is evident from the above that a headman may have much or
554 little to do in attending to the affairs of his village, depending on several factors, such as the number of the villagers, their attitudes and disposition toward each other, relations with neighbouring villages, the demands made upon the village by the authorities, &c. However numerous may be his 'official duties', he will still find some time to attend to his own affairs, whether he be a farmer, a hunter, or a trader. In former times and before he became village headman, Sikililẽ was a trader and caravan leader (*ofumbelo*, Portuguese: *pombeiro*), and made many trips to the regions of Ngangela. As a headman he returned to farming and although he seemed to be quite old at the time of my visits, he had a creditable little plot of tobacco. It may be of interest to note that only the headman may speak of the village as 'my village' (*imbo liange*). The heads of the little wards may speak thus possessively only of

1; Childs M-S (1934-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 18

their own wards, 'my ward' (*ocitanila cange*). The other villagers will speak only of 'our village' (*imbo lietu*). 622 554

There are, in general, two quite different and distinct types of Umbundu village according to the terrain on which they are built. The villages of the plains have room to spread out and tend toward a circular shape, with the dancing floor and men's club house near the centre. The wards may appear as quarters of a single whole or they may be added on in haphazard fashion. The villages of the mountains must conform to the possibilities of the terrain. Formerly, many villages were built on mountains for defence, and capital villages of this type may still be seen with the houses built on ledges and rocks almost one on top of the other. In this type of village, there is often not sufficient or sufficiently good soil for even small garden plots within the palisades. Occasionally one of these mountain villages may be found which has not even room within it for the dancing floor, which will in this case be found outside the palisade. If the site is not too severely confined, the wards of the mountain village tend either to string themselves out horizontally along the mountain-side, or to find successive ledges. The village of Ngendo is of an intermediate type, built as it is, on a slope. Sikilile's village was first built as near the stream as possible. The wards later added themselves on, each a little higher than the one before. The school village, which was built last, got the highest and most hygienic site. 361

Moving a Village

Villages may be moved for any one of several reasons. When fields are worn out and others are not available[1] near by, a village may be moved to a site more conveniently located. More often, however, the reason assigned is that there has been much illness or death, that the old site is polluted, that its 'air is bad', which to the Ovimbundu means that some action displeasing to the spirits has been committed which has brought on these misfortunes. This will generally have been determined by divination, as will also the spirits' consent to the proposed new site. A site which has long been occupied is of course fertile soil. Since old sites are generally cultivated to good advantage this fact should not be overlooked as a possible additional reason for moving. 361 166 [768] [787]

[1] Nowadays European settlement often pre-empts such lands. [177]

2: McCulloch FP13 Mbundu FP13

622, 643

/For ceremonial activities of the village headman and chief see 793. /

611 dispersed. Both groups have ritual leaders, whose offices are quite dis-
613 tinct. Barnes' suggestion[1] is that the two groups must be father's patrilineage and mother's matrilineage, with the qualification mentioned below.

613 The *oluse* consists of a large number of village groups, some of which recognise mutual relationship,[2] but with no recognised head (other than
● 622 the village headmen) except in the case of the royal families. Land is owned by the *oluse* and passed on within it from father to son, or from
[428] elder to younger brother. Succession to village or tribal office, from village headman to king, descends in the same way.[3] Ritual leadership within the *oluse* lies with the village headman, who is in charge of the
[346] spirit-hut *(etambo)* of the guardian spirit of the village (or of the nuclear *oluse* within the village), and who officiates at regular village worship, including agricultural festivals.

613 The *oluina*, on the other hand, is a dispersed and apparently larger
428 group, whose members live with their various paternal lines of descent. The size of the *oluina* is unknown; Childs merely refers to it as a "large
604 and widespread organization, with a recognized head". The office of head of the *oluina (ukulu wepata)* descends from mother's brother to sister's son. Negotiable and moveable property, including cattle and trade goods, is owned by the *oluina* and inherited by the sister's son. Formerly the mother's elder brother had great powers over his sister's sons, and was even able to pawn them or sell them into slavery, to meet his own debts.
[592] The patrilocal household is usually responsible for training children, especially during their early years, but they are frequently sent to the *oluina* (i.e. to the mother's brother) for at least a part of their educa-
[588] tion. At death or divorce of parents, children go to the *oluina*.

613 The head *(ukulu wepata)* of the *oluina* is usually both the legal and spiritual head of the group, although today the two functions are often
782 divided. He is in charge of the spirit hut *(etambo)* of the guardian spirit of the *oluina* (of whom there may be more than one, and of whom he becomes one after death). He leads the *oluina* in propitiatory rituals carried out in case of illness, death, or other misfortunes within the group, or in prayers made for desired economic advantages. (Apparently no regular rituals are carried out by the *oluina*.) The *ukulu wepata* may or may not be at the same time a village headman; if he is, he will be priest of two lines and have charge of two spirit huts; if he is not, there may be two (or more) priests in the village, each in charge of the spirit-hut of his *oluse* or *oluina*.

The onẽlẽ yohonji and the onẽlẽ yohumba

613 The *oluse* and the *oluina* are both divided into male and female
602 "sides": the *onẽlẽ yohonji* (the side of the bow) and the *onẽlẽ yohumba*
582 (the side of the basket). It has been noted above that uterine brothers and sisters belong to the same *oluse* and *oluina*, but to the male or female side in each, according to sex. The composition of these "sides" is

(1) Loc.cit.
(2) If some villages within the *oluse* cannot trace mutual relationship, the *oluse* should perhaps be called a patri-clan rather than a patrilineage.
(3) But see below, p.29.

621 Ngendo is surrounded by a stick palisade except on that side of the headman's household which is adjacent to the rocks used as a club-house. The village itself (and each section) is divided up into compounds, each of which contains one to three houses,(1) and palisades divide one compound
[363] from the next; between are paths leading to the *ocila* and out of the village. Small gardens for tobacco, maize and beans are within the compounds, and the larger fields lie outside the village at from thirty minutes' to an hour's walk. In the headman's section of Ngendo there are 25 households containing 32 houses in all. Each house has its own granary
[343] *(ocila)* and a small chicken-coop built on stilts, and of all the houses only six have separate kitchens *(ociso)*. Most households had separate pens for pigs, goats and sheep for the night,(2) and at one side of the headman's compound there is a common corral for the nine cattle owned by
● [622] the section. Only the headman had a spirit-hut *(etambo)*, used also as a storehouse, for entertaining his guests, and for his own use should he wish to sleep apart from his wives.

621 Chiefs' villages or *olombala* (singular *ombala*) are often surrounded by
361 a belt of tall trees.(3) The chief's compound (the *iloabe*) is larger than those of other villagers, and, according to Hambly,(4) usually contains:
643 the chief's house, which always has a separate sleeping-room; a house and a kitchen for each of his wives; a tomb for the burial of the chief and his wives; a house of meditation for the chief, and pens for pigs and chickens.

342 Umbundu houses are usually circular, but sometimes rectangular, and made of wattle and daub, with thatched roofs. Sometimes huts are divided by matting into a living-room and a sleeping-room. Cooking is often done
[343] in the house itself, but sometimes a separate hut is built as a kitchen.(5)

345 The *onjango* (the Men's Club House) consists of a cone-shaped roof set on stout hardwood poles instead of a wall, and left open so that those for whom there may be no place inside may still see and hear what takes place within.(6)

361 Villages are moved when fields are exhausted and others are not available nearby(7) or, more often, when there has been illness or death in the
[768] village, which implies that some action displeasing to the spirits has been committed. (No information is available concerning the usual length
776 of life of a village.) When the new site is chosen, the headman's fire in the old village is extinguished, and a procession starts, led by a boy
774 carrying the sacred bows *(ohonji)* of each ascendant who is now a guardian
796 spirit of the family (i.e. the *oluse*), and a girl carrying the sacred chest *(ocimbangu)* containing the relics *(ociye)* and the balls of iguana skin.(8) On arriving at the site the boy and girl cut and plant the

(1) In this section there were 13 goats, 20 sheep, 100 pigs and about 100 chickens. (Childs, op.cit. p.31) (2) Ibid.
(3) Hambly, (2) 1934, p.206 et.al. It was a custom of the Ngangela peoples to plant trees round the village and dedicate them to deceased chiefs. (See McCulloch 1950, p.68.) There is no evidence that the trees surrounding Umbundu villages have any ritual significance, although the custom may have been taken over from the conquered Ngangela peoples.
(4) Op.cit., p.208. (5) Ibid., p.10
(6) Childs, personal communication.
(7) Due often to European settlement. (8) See below, p.47.

621 The total number of households is 44, or 48 including those of the four
592 section heads. It should be noted that there is a discrepancy in Child's
114 figures (apart from an obvious misprint):[1] in another context he writes that section B contains only 12 houses (not even *households*), while from this table it would appear that section B has 15 household heads, including that of the section head; and section C is said to have 6 households, while only 4 (again counting the section head) are accounted for in this table.

591 Childs states[2] that the incidence of patrilocal marriage in Ngendo
114 is fairly typical of Umbundu country, but unfortunately gives little information regarding the relationship of the various spouses to each other or concerning the location of the villages from which they came. Matrilocal marriage is recognised as a possibility: of the three relatives by marriage listed above, one was a husband of a daughter of the headman, another the widow of a younger brother of the headman, who should have been inherited by a younger brother (?) or a mother's brother of the deceased, or, failing that, could have returned to her father's village. Of those listed above as sisters' children, two were widows who had come to live in the village with their mother's brothers.[3]

POLITICAL STRUCTURE

The village headman[4]

622 The village headman *(sekulu yimbo)* is also the head of the *oluse*
793 which forms the nucleus of the village group, and is related agnatically to most of the householders. He alone may speak of the village as *imbo*
782 *liange* (my village); the heads of sections, who are also called *sekulu*[5] may speak possessively only of their own sections *(ocitiwila cange)*, and other villagers speak only of "our village" *(imbo lietu)*.[6] The headman functions as both priest and legal head of the village. As priest he has in his compound the *etambo* (spirit hut), in which the insignia of office are kept, and in which he prays to the ancestral spirits. Upon occasion he may sleep there, usually offering a prayer to the spirits when he wakes during the night. The *etambo* may also be
[34L] used as a lodging place for respected guests, or as a store-house for possessions not used every day. Childs states that he officiates at regular village worship, including agricultural festivals; Hambly adds that he may lead the people in offering sacrifices when epidemics of
613 sickness break out in the village. It has been noted above[7] that it is the function of the *oluina* head to lead such rituals when illness occurs within the *oluina*. In general the village head is responsible for
[622] matters - particularly agriculture and public health - which affect the whole village; individuals, both for protection and for help and other

(1) Childs, op.cit., p.28, line 27, where "twenty-four" should read "forty-four".
(2) On the basis of the 192 genealogies and 74 marriage-schedules which he collected. He does not, unfortunately, give examples or show how the comparison was made.
(3) Based on Childs, op.cit., pp.25-31.
(4) This section is based on Childs, op.cit., pp.36-7.
(5) It has been noted above that *sekulu* is used for all men (and some women) of the grandfather's generation.
(6) op.cit., p.283. (7) p.18.

29

advancement, will go to the head of their *oluina* to ask for his intercession with the spirits.[1] 613

As legal head of the village, the *sekulu yimbo* presides over both the more serious cases, which are held before the whole village on the dance-floor, and the simpler ones, which require the attendance only of those concerned, together with their respective elders, and may be taken up either in the *onjango* or in the headman's own courtyard. Hambly seems to suggest that all the section-heads act with the village headman as a kind of council, but does not give details. He states also that the *olosekulu* (sing. *sekulu*) of the village formerly had charge of trials for murder, theft, adultery, and arguments over land,[2] and points out that they were more active in the legal system than the chiefs.[3] This is even more true today, when the village court of justice continues to function in spite of political and administrative changes, although the offices of chiefs and to some extent of sub-chiefs have largely decayed. 622 623 691 [177]

Other functions of the village headman include: the distribution of land to the various families when new village sites are opened;[4] the direction of the communal fire-hunts;[5] and, today, the collecting of taxes from the villagers and the direction and organisation of labour to work on the roads.[6] But however numerous the headman's official duties, he usually finds some time to attend to his own affairs, whether he is a farmer, hunter, or trader.[7] 622 423 651 466 [463]

Succession to headmanship is usually from father to son or from elder to younger brother, "with only as much recognition of primogeniture as belongs to the general ... hierarchy of age."[8] Succession is, however, affected by the "democratic" tendencies in succession to chieftainship.[9] 622 643

The Chief (osona or sova)[10]

The Ovimbundu are grouped in 22 chiefdoms, of which half were in the past generally tributary to the more powerful chiefs.[11] At the same time each chiefdom had its separate government and could be considered as a unit in itself. Effective European occupation and direct rule have atrophied the chiefly office among the Ovimbundu, until today chiefs survive as little more than "living museum pieces".[12] Childs[13] enumerates the functions of the chiefly office as follows: 631 643 [177]

(a) *Religious.* The chief's ancestral spirits were the principal chiefdom deities, and the king was high-priest as well as the visible "vice-regent and incarnation" of the spirits. 643 793 769

(1) Childs, personal communication.
(2) The maternal uncle is responsible for settling disputes over property which occur within the *oluina*. (Hambly op.cit., p.200).
(3) Ibid. (4) Ibid.
(5) Cashman, op.cit., p.115. (6) Ibid., p.121.
(7) Childs, op.cit., p.36. (8) Ibid., p.44.
(9) Ibid.
(10) *Osona* means chief or king. *Sona* is the personalised form used with the name. This the Portuguese writers have corrupted into *sova* or *soba*. (Childs, personal communication)
(11) See above, p.2.
(12) Childs, op.cit., p.20. (13) Ibid.

428 not entitled to inheritance of land, cattle, or anything else belonging to the dead man. The greater part of the property would be bequeathed to the eldest brother of the deceased's mother.

428 604 768 There appears to be discussion as to the distribution of property, but the maternal uncle is responsible for settling disputes. He himself has the first claim, and in Ngonga's words, "If there are quarrels about the cattle, land, and other things, the mother's eldest brother will settle them."

The mother's brother has rights over his sister's children even to the extent of pawning them to pay his own debts. On the other hand the maternal uncle is responsible for the conduct of his sister's children. He would have to pay fines incurred by thefts they committed, and he provides for his sister's son a wife who is either his daughter or his widow.

Ngonga stated that the maternal uncle does not invariably take all the property of a deceased nephew for himself. He may give something to the deceased's mother, the deceased's maternal grandfather, or to a brother of the deceased. Such gifts appear to be the outcome of good will on the part of the dead man's maternal uncle; there is no compulsion. Women never inherit cattle or rights to the use of land. [421]

423 692 622 The king is the head of the legal system, though his activities as such are not so great as those of the village headman (*sekulu*). The *olosekulu* (there are usually more than one) of a village witness the final act in a divorce ceremony. They used to have charge of trials for theft, murder, adultery, likewise the right of settling arguments concerning the ownership of land. It was the *sekulu* who distributed the land to the extended families when a new village site was opened. The maternal uncles settled the minor divisions among the limited families.

643 There are many kings among the Ovimbundu, but I thought that there was a tendency to confuse the titles of *osoma* ("king") and *sekulu* ("headman" or "chief" of a village). The jurisdiction of a king is so well known that any person is able to say under which king he lives. Ngonga said definitely that a man of the Ovimbundu who was under the jurisdiction of a certain king would have to obey the commands of a visiting king, provided they were not in any way disapproved of by the king to whom first allegiance was due.

643 [465] A chief may demand labor for the building of his house or the cultivation of his land. He does not pay for this but usually gives beer to the workers; sometimes he secures the labor and gives nothing in return.

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for lack of effectiveness following a series of quarrels. His successor was Tjilombo a government headman and the leading personality of the village of Tjisangu. Such, then, is the recent history of Gumba.

2. *Chiefs, Government Headmen, and Traditional Headmen*

I have outlined the succession of chiefs in Gumba, and the villages with which they were associated. I have noted that nowadays there are government headmen as well as the traditional headmen. I wish now to indicate what authority the chiefs and the two sorts of headmen have and how this is related to the villages.

The sub-chiefdom is a recognized administrative unit. The census, and the annual check on the census, are taken on a sub-chiefdom basis, as are the collection of taxes and the recruitment of workers for contract labour, road work, and jobs to be done at the post. The sub-chief and the government headmen have to visit the post once a month. The *chefe de posto* (head of post = District Officer) will normally only visit each sub-chiefdom once a year for the check on the census. He may send orders for the recruitment of labourers or the arrest of an offender by one of the policemen who live at the post. His principal contact with the people comes in the adjudicating of disputes which the people are quite ready to carry to the post—the Bimbe *chefe*, whose area included Gumba, told me that hearing cases was his main occupation. Very few *chefes* have anything more than a smattering of the Umbundu language, and they have only the vaguest knowledge of the culture and social usages—for instance they may be aware of the classificatory extension of kinship terms and the association of leopardskins with chieftancy. The *chefes* are moved about fairly frequently and their names and personalitie tare not known to the people. As the people associate the post with demands for taxes, fines, and labour services, and are only likely to visit the post when recruited as non-voluntary labourers or to have their photographs taken for identity cards, it is not surprising that fear is the predominant emotion they feel towards the *chefe*.

The staff of the post consists of the interpreter, an African

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with primary and possibly some secondary education, the clerks who have primary schooling, and the policemen, who are often illiterate. The police are locally recruited and are provided with their keep, from the farm attached to the post, and with uniforms. They are usually—by no means always—illiterate. The interpreter, clerks, and police tend to identify themselves with the *chefe* as against the people; however, a policeman may be influenced in his relations with the villagers by gifts and friendship.

The size of population of sub-chiefdoms varies. The 1950 census gave the total 'non-civilized' population of the Bailundo *concelho* as being 246,045, and the number of sub-chiefdoms as 82,[9] that is, an average of 3,000 individuals per sub-chiefdom. The *chefe* of Bimbe told me in August 1956 that Gumba had 800 taxpayers, and Chicunda had 700. Putting the proportion of taxpayers as 1 to 6 (on the basis of Epalanga proportions) this gives 4,800 as the population figure for Gumba and 4,200 as the figure for Chicunda. Even if the proportion of 1 to 5 be taken as the proportion between taxpayers and total population this gives us 4,000 as the figure for Gumba and 3,500 as the figure for Chicunda. I do not know what the local density of population is; in the Bailundo *concelho* as a whole it is 16–17 individuals per square kilometre.[10]

The chief and government headmen are the main channel of conveying demands and orders from the post to the villagers. They receive in return the remission of their taxes. Their dependence on the post is not, however, sufficient to give them a position of marked superiority in their locality for the following reasons. They are unable to control all relations between the post and the people; anybody who has a dispute on hand may take it direct to the post. In village life their influence can always be counterbalanced by that of the catechists and 'elders of the school' whose contact with the missions is much closer than that of the chiefs and government headmen with the post. They also lack economic resources; the exemption from taxes (which the Catholic catechists share)

[9] See Gálvao and Selvagem, pp. 384–5. For Angolan population density see Egerton, pp. 36–37.

[10] My own estimate from figures given by Galvão and Selvagem.

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does not give them any claim to financial assistance from the 634
people, or control over natural resources, such as land rights. 622
The only prerogative of this sort that the chief has is the right to the leg of an antelope killed in a hunt or a bull killed in a commemoration rite—and this is of symbolic rather than economic importance.

Nor, finally, does the post give the chiefs prestige and 640
support.[11] Five successive chiefs of Gumba had been deposed 634
by the post, and it is not uncommon for chiefs and government 622
headmen to be beaten or otherwise punished (for instance by being made to work for a fortnight at the post) for their shortcomings. They have in fact just sufficient power to carry out the commands of the *chefe* and to do nothing more. They are not disliked by the local people for doing what the *chefe* tells them to do, but any attempt at dictatorial behaviour on their part will stir up opposition which may lead to their downfall.

The relations between white *chefe* and black chief vary 648
according to individuals and neighbourhoods. Sometimes the 634
chefe will allow the chief to be chosen according to tradition; at other times he will impose a candidate of his own. A *chefe* may hear any cases that are brought to the post, or he may delegate the power of hearing minor cases to the chiefs. Some *chefes* will regard the chiefs with hostility as being enemies of their own people; others will abstain under any circumstances from beating a chief, as they feel their power should be supported. Here I describe the situation as it was in Gumba and in Bimbe generally.

A visit to a chief's village in Gumba or elsewhere will give an 634
opportunity of meeting those residents who hold the ministerial 178
titles, of gazing under overshadowing trees at the enclosure in 769
which are kept the skulls of former chiefs, and perhaps of seeing the chief and some of his cronies dance to a drum in commemoration of one of his predecessors. Ministers, skulls, dances, and drum are symbols of chiefly nostalgia rather than of political power. The ceremonies have little interest for the people in general, and many of them have been abandoned by the chief. Lusase's first wife had not, as custom demanded,

[11] For criticism of this policy by two Portuguese with administrative experience see Galvão and Selvagem, p. 213.

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The tasks of recruiting contract labourers and road-workers 626
and of getting fines and taxes paid, and such other duties as the 466
arranging of compulsory purchase of tickets for the travelling [208]
cinema (showing patriotic films) are carried out through a long
process of argument, attempted evasion, and pressure, between
the chief, the government headmen, and the locally influential
people, traditional headmen, catechists, and anyone else who
can get himself listened to. Persons actually picked for contract
labour or road work may make quite a fuss about it, but as
such numbers are recruited it is ultimately accepted resignedly.
It is not really practicable for a chief to discriminate in favour [634]
of his kinsman owing to the heavy demands for labour and the
likelihood of such discrimination being reported at the post, as
happened to Simbwyikoka. Demands for labour may fall
heavily on some households. Thus one Epalanga household [592]
consisted of a man, his daughter by an earlier marriage, his
wife and her baby daughter. The man had been taken for
contract labour, his wife had been called to road work, and the
adolescent daughter was carrying sisal[14] to the post. A kinsman
of the household head attempted to arrange for some watch to
be kept over the gardens lest animals should get in.

There were four government headmen in Gumba during my 622
stay. Theoretically they are village headmen. The villages in
which official records group Ovimbundu do not conform to the 166
actual villages in which Ovimbundu live. Anybody moving
from one village to another has to pay a fee; as the Ovimbundu
move about quite frequently and no attempt is made to enforce
this rule locally, the result is this discrepancy between paper and
real villages.

The government headman's duties are those already des- 622
cribed for the chief. As with the chief, there is only sufficient 648
backing from the post for him to carry out the orders he re- 634
ceives; he does not receive power to enable him to exercise
political leadership and judicial authority at the local level,
nor is he a representative of the post in the villages. His interests
and values are linked to those of his neighbours rather than to
the post. It is through the chief and the government headmen

[14] Some villages are obliged to grow sisal and take it to the post without payment. [248]

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that the administration gets labour and money from the villagers, and largely though not exclusively through them that the villagers keep in touch with the post which politically integrates them into Angola and legally provides sanctions which they do not possess. The government headmen do not supervise on behalf of the post the daily life of their fellow-villagers. The government laws—such as the prohibition of beer- and rum-brewing and grass-burning (for hunts)—which if enforced would bring about a certain number of changes in Umbundu social life, are not enforced for many reasons—the administration makes no real attempt to suppress these uses as opposed to levying annual fines[15] per head, the government headmen go in for these customs themselves, and they lack the power to achieve this enforcement. Were the government to introduce policies involving some reorganization of the social life they would need a stronger form of local authority. Under the present circumstances, however, the powers and status of the chief and government headmen are quite consistent with the demands made on them by the post.

There were four government headmen in Gumba in 1955–6, Guilherme, Lupassa, Tjilombo (who became chief after the deposition of Lusase), and Walivanga. Guilherme was in 1955 living in Epalanga. Some people thought he should live in Kamupa which had been founded by his mother's brother Lusase—however, when he left Epalanga in 1956 he settled near the Protestant village of Kalungwengwe. His change of residence had been the result of violent quarrels with Paulo and other Epalanga people. Lupassa lived in Katembo, and was a sister's son of Kaluywa, who was the traditional headman. I do not think Lupassa was the dominating personality in Katembo. Tjilombo was on the other hand the leading personality in Tjisangu, many of its people being related to him. Walivanga was similarly linked by kin or affinal ties to the majority of the people of Belem.

The foregoing paragraph raises the question of the relationship of the government headman to the traditional headmen. A man who is both a government headman and a traditional headman is in a fairly strong position in his village; when the

[15] Each fine is about 10–20 escudos (2/6d.–5/-).

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government headman is not the same person as the traditional headman he may become involved in quarrels unless he is careful to accept the position of the traditional headman; and both government headman and traditional headman may find it wise to be on good terms with the catechist and the elder of the school. 622

It is fairly simple to define the obligations of the government headman. Discussing the position of the traditional headman vague words such as 'influence' and 'prestige' must be used to describe a vague position. Indeed a purely synchronic picture would be inadequate, since the present position of the traditional headmen and the contemporary village organization must be understood against a historical background.

3. *Headmen and Their Villages*

In the time of the rubber trade the village headman was both the leader of a body of agnatic kinsmen and the representative of his village in the wider political system, the village headmen sitting with the chief to judge cases. Both Childs and Hambly emphasize the importance of the judicial role of the village headmen. Childs states that the village headman was also a ritual leader, being responsible for 'regular village worship including agricultural festivals'.[16] I have found no evidence of such ceremonies on a village basis. The only ritual which, according to my older informants, the village headman should perform for his people is communing with his ancestor spirits in the spirit hut during a village hunt, and this information was not confirmed by all my older informants. It may be added that I found no evidence of any installation rite for a new headman.

It may be assumed that a good deal of the old village structure survived till the middle or end of the 1930's. Dr. Childs in his description of the village of Ngendo (Cassongue) as it was in 1935–6 indicated that agnatic kinship was the main principle of village recruitment, and that this was typical of other Umbundu villages.[17] In Gumba it was still possible at this time 178 621

[16] Childs, p. 46.

[17] Ibid., pp. 25–37.

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for individuals to build up large villages—thus Simbwyikoka encouraged people to settle at Mwekalia to make it a large village. It may also be suggested that the power of the village headmen was to some extent linked with the power of the chief, since the headmen were associated politically with the chief, and would from this, tend to gain authority in their dealings with their fellow villagers. The village headmen also lacked any real competition from other types of leadership. Mbati had kept relations with the post in his own hands, and there were therefore no government headmen. The first catechist had arrived in Mbati's village in 1928, but cannot have met with much lasting success as there are few baptized Christians over thirty-five in Gumba.

Other factors at the time strengthening the position of the village headmen were the low rate of labour migration[16] and the fact that practically every man over forty at the time of Simbwyikoka's accession had participated in the rubber trade. This meant that many of the best known caravan leaders were still in full vigour, and enjoyed a prestige based on the first-hand knowledge of the middle-aged and older men.

Between this period of the middle thirties and the beginning of my own fieldwork twenty years had passed and many changes had taken place. The status of the chief had sharply declined and he was now assisted by the four government headmen. Every village except the chief's village had a Catholic or Protestant catechist, and there had been a marked trend towards learning catechism in preparation for baptism, which had begun about 1946. Hence the catechetical school was usually attended by the majority of under twenty-five's in the village.

Agnatic kinship had ceased to be the principle of village membership. Nor can it be said that headmen build up villages by getting people to settle at a particular spot. It is not always easy even to find the headman, village population is not very stable, and a man can settle with any category of kin.

To discover the traditional headman required careful phrasing of questions. When I visited a village and asked for the *osekulu yimbo* (the traditional phrase for the village headman) I

[16] Ibid., p. 214.

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might be told that he lived elsewhere. This would turn out to be a reference to the government headman. A request for the *esekulu* (literally elder father, hence elder or headman) might also bring me in contact with the 'elder of the school', the representative of the local Christians. I therefore began to ask for 'the old one' (*ukulu*), or to inquire 'Who built first?' or 'Who settles disputes?', when I wanted to find out who was the traditional headman.

Even these questions did not necessarily get a clear answer. Thus the village of Kamupa had been founded by Lusase, its government headman was Guilherme, and, as neither of these was living near, minor disputes were referred to two old men who lived in the village. Apart from the government headmen, there are also traditional headmen recognized by the post, who did not have the privileges and the duties of the former. It may happen in a particular village that the man recognized as traditional headman by the post is not the same person as the real traditional headman recognized by the village. This was the case in Epalanga, where Sapapula was unquestionably the headman recognized by the villagers but the duties of dealing with policemen fell to Luanga. In the local discussions as to the recruitment of road-workers, and so on, Sapapula had much more influence than Luanga.

The position of the traditional headman nowadays lacks clearly defined powers, or symbolic value. A village is frequently known by its founder's name. The headman is the only person who can speak of 'my village' as opposed to 'our village'.[19] The firing of the long grass in the dry season which marks the beginning of the great communal hunts is theoretically begun by the village headman, though this is not always adhered to in practice. The headman does not take any active part in leading the hunt, nor are the people who go on a communal hunt necessarily confined to the inhabitants of one village. He has 'to show land' to new-comers to the village. This reflects a moral responsibility to his people rather than control of land tenure, since there is always spare land away from the villages which anybody can cultivate. He also has the responsibility of hearing minor disputes. He receives from the

[19] Ibid., pp. 36–37.

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622 villagers a certain, not very marked, respect, which may be increased by such factors as kinship ties between him and them, and his personal qualities.

621 Nor is the village itself clearly defined as a social unit. It does not possess any corporate rights over fishing and hunting sites, or control access to firewood gathering. A man may hold land in two villages. It is rarely that a village acts or is treated as a unit. The two main occasions on which the village is thus 'represented' are at marriages and in the context of the catechetical school. The party which goes from the bridegroom's village to the bride's represents her village, to the other village; [628] at the wedding feast food is given out on large basket plates, one for each village represented among the guests.

797 The role of the catechetical school as representative of the village as a whole will be discussed in another chapter; here it should be noted that the ceremonial reception of visiting missionaries by the 'school people' of the village has been evidently copied to some extent from the welcome given to the bridegroom's party, and this has in turn copied certain features from the welcoming of missionaries—notably the use of speeches in Portuguese.

361 The hamlets[20] and isolated households do not indicate a modernizing 'individualistic' trend away from village life, since 'conservative' and 'progressive' people are to be found in both units of residence. The Ovimbundu, whether educated 621 or illiterate, when talking about themselves (particularly in 829 comparison with the Kimbundu of Northern Angola) emphasize that they are a village-dwelling people, and for them the real values of village life seem to be the sociability and mutual help that a man living among his kin can enjoy. By settling in a village one indicates where the pull of kinship ties is strongest rather than any particular allegiance to the village headman.

[20] I use this term for a settlement with less than four households.

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their marriage also fits a general pattern of Umbundu marriage, a choice made within a limited range joining together individuals of different kinship cores.

The multiplication of ties and their concentration within a neighbourhood by this means do not prevent a man from having kin and affines a day or two's journey away. It has earlier been indicated that the population of Epalanga was from quite a wide area. Yet the consequences of previous preferential marriages (thus Paulo and Saviel were related both patrilaterally and matrilaterally) and the trend towards the establishment of new marriage ties had created a complicated mesh of linkages that has been described within a not particularly stable village population, whose senior residents had been there for only ten years. To use again the anthropological metaphor of kinship as a network, the network can have odd strings running out quite a way, but in a village the different ties will be bound up in a knot.

The long-range ties (with such obvious exceptions as those with kin living in cities) are not the result of the range of kin spreading wider and wider under modern conditions. The evidence of pedigrees indicates that kinship and marriage links between individuals in, and actual migration to and from Gumba and Cassongue, Cela, and Namba, date back well into the nineteenth century. There is far less evidence of connections and migration between Gumba and areas to the south and east. This geographical aspect of social relations persists at the present day.

It has been indicated that the high proportion of preferential marriages creates a certain local stability, since many marriages are with people living close to. Yet the basic stability lies not so much in the relative stability of a local population, but in the pattern by which links of distant kinship are changed into marriage ties and new bonds are speedily established among the fortuitously assembled population of a new village.

4. *Headmen and Kinship Cores*

I now turn to the other principle of village integration, the settling of individuals near senior kinsmen. In the previous

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In the previous

chapter I have indicated that the position of headman is today 622
a somewhat shadowy one, and that the headman emerges rather than succeeds by virtue of various grounds; the main ones being official recognition, some tie to the local chief, the presence of a core of one's kinsmen, a claim to be the first resident, and personality. During my stay Sapapula was as much a headman of Epalanga as anyone can reasonably be these days, yet his position had not always gone unchallenged.

In 1954 he had found himself in danger of being displaced 622
by his matrilateral 'brother' Mwehombo. Both men, apparently, claimed that they had founded the village, both had substantial cores of kinsfolk in the village, and both possessed strong personalities. Sapapula by holding the ministerial title of Epalanga to Kafelo had had a stronger position in village affairs. This prop to his power was taken away when Kafelo was deposed from the chiefdom, and Luanga and Mwehombo purchased the title of Epalanga from Lusase. 665

In this partnership Mwehombo must have been the leading personality, Luanga being extremely amiable but not at all domineering or energetic. Mwehombo's idea was presumably to establish himself as recognized headman of Epalanga, and to obtain whatever advantages were to be gained from an association with Lusase. Luanga's aim, from what he told me, was to escape contract labour by having a position as a traditional headman and title-holder. Titles will still be sought after, [554]
although the substance of power has gone, so long as they can confer some prestige or protection from administrative labour demands. It was not customary for the role of Epalanga to be held by two people jointly.

Mwehombo died shortly after this. He had been baptized 763
by the name of Simon when dying on January 13th 1955, when his social personality began its posthumous career. At the inquest, which was held according to the old Umbundu pattern in which the corpse suspended in a hammock from a pole held by two men was supposed to answer questions by the way it swung, it was found that Mwehombo had suffered the pro- [554]
verbial fate of the sorcerer in being killed by the spirit he had [561]
used to kill others.

The role of the questioner was taken by Paulo, sister's son to

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neighbourhood and will explain his choice of residence by quoting the names of one or more of these; yet the weaving together of so many strands of kinship and affinity, ultimately through marriage links, is what gives the local population its relative degree of stability. It should be emphasized that the integration established within a village by the network of kinship and affinal ties is dependent on the integration created by the same amorphous network which runs through and beyond the sub-chiefdom. It is this network into which the individual is woven by multiple ties that absorbs the neo-matrilineal pull apparent to some degree in choice of residence and keeps the system essentially cognatic.

The use of the word *familia* reflects this situation. A man may say of a particular senior kinsman 'He is my *familia*', that is, my kinsman, my most important kinsman with whom I have settled, yet also he may say 'My *familia* is in Cela', that is, the greater part of my kinsmen live in Cela. When Bartolomeu explained that he had settled where he did because of Lusase, he was perhaps combining the two kinds of references. He had settled in Gumba because he had a large number of kinsmen there among whom Lusase was pre-eminent. A man explaining the locality of his *familia* in the wider sense will associate it with a particular sub-chiefdom—'My family is all in Menga'—when he is outside it; when he is in it he is more likely to refer to a particular village.

Although individuals living in a village may have come there through several kinship sources yet the majority of them will probably have some kinship or affinal tie with the traditional headman. This collection of individual ties does not provide the headman with a body of followers, nor is having a large number of dependants a value of contemporary Umbundu culture. If it were felt that the best thing to be in life is the patron of a body of kinsmen and followers, headmanship would survive as a predominant influence in local life despite the collapse of its political and legal responsibilities. In fact not even old men feel this way.

The idea of the village as a corporate group with a jural and political personality rather than a residential unit has not survived the break-up of agnatic solidarity, the disappearance

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of the men's house, and the headman's loss of status. The new institution of the catechetical school does not revive village solidarity in this form. The contemporary Ovimbundu do not live in a 'village headman society' comparable to those of British Central Africa,[13] since the concept and manifestations of village solidarity around a headman are so notably deficient. Reference may also be made to the economic ethics of the Ovimbundu with their approval of making money and the belief that all loans even within the circle of the elementary family should be repaid, that is, wealth is seen by all as an end in itself rather than a means of obtaining personal loyalties.

In the previous chapter it was shown how the traditional headmanship is no longer a significant legal and political institution. In this chapter I have tried to indicate that it lacks sources of authority and prestige within the village.

The line of argument has involved reference to the contemporary kinship system of which an outline has been given. This will be more fully discussed in later chapters, when a more detailed comparison of present institutions with the traditional kinship system will be made.

[13] For an example of these societies see J. C. Mitchell, *The Yao Village*, Manchester 1956.

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114 One anthropologist, Mr. W. D. Hambly, and two missionaries

with anthropological knowledge and interests, Dr. Daniel A. Hastings and Dr. Gladwyn Murray Childs, have written on Umbundu kinship.[3] Mr. Hambly's main interest was in material culture and the conditions of his fieldwork were not such as to give him much evidence on the kinship system.[4] Both Dr. Hastings and Dr. Childs recognized the central importance of kinship in Umbundu social life, but have outlined the kinship ties and kinship groups rather than given a detailed analysis.

602 Mr. Hambly states that 'The phrase *Epata Lia Tate* (or *Oluse*) means "family of my father" and includes all relatives on the father's side. The words *Epata Lia Mai* (or *Oluina*) mean "family of my mother".'[5] This could mean that the Umbundu kinship system is bilateral. He states that inheritance is matrilineal and marriage virilocal, a situation consistent with such a matrilineal kinship system as that of the Bakongo.[6]

613 622 Dr. Hastings, whose thesis was completed the year before the publication of Hambly's book, makes it clear that there are two sets of kin groups. 'Over each village is a ruling elder who is the head of the kinship group of that village since all who reside in the village are generally related to him and to each other patrilineally. This elder, greatly revered, is considered the patriarch of that local group. Residence being patrilocal, [591] the office of an elder is hereditary through the male line.'[7] He 613 then goes on to contrast with this, 'the matrilineal sib to which each member is linked, though he may be living in a village away from his sib group.'[8] This group is a clearly defined

[3] Works cited in footnotes to Chapter I. There is a typescript of Hastings's thesis in the library of the International African Institute, London.

[4] Mr. Hambly spent five months in the country, and used as his interpreter and main informant an English-speaking Otjimbundu. He seems simply to have visited villages without living in them. Dr. Childs and Dr. Hastings had both spent several years as 'bush' missionaries. Dr. Childs had actually taken over from Dr. Hastings work in the area to the north-west of Bailundo in the direction of Bimbe, and had subsequently obtained information in Cassongue. He later obtained a good deal of material from African pastors, teachers and schoolboys.

[5] Hambly, pp. 191–2.

[6] For the Bakongo see the discussion by A. I. Richards, in Radcliffe-Brown and Forde, pp. 213–21. Anthropologists have more than once suggested to the author that the Umbundu system was not of the 'double-descent' category but some combination of virilocal marriage and matrilineal descent.

[7] Hastings, p. 16.

[8] Ibid.

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[1874-1911]

A man did not eat or chat with his eldest son or his daughters. Nor did a woman eat or chat with her sons. By 'chatting' I mean a prolonged conversation. It was not forbidden for people in these relationships to speak to one another. Nor could a man eat or joke with his sister (although chatting was permitted) or be alone with her at night. A grown man could not sleep in the same room as his father, except perhaps on a journey, nor could he wear his father's clothes while he was still alive. A grown woman might sleep in the same room as her mother, provided they were far apart.

The reason for these avoidances is usually given simply as 'shame' (*osoi*) although I have also heard it said in explanation of the father-eldest son avoidance 'If you don't have an eldest son you can't have a family', that is, it is the birth of his eldest son which gives a man status as a father. There seems to be no formalized norm of behaviour towards the *Kwasula*, but it is said that the youngest child is the parent's favourite.[19] When I asked what would happen if a man was alone with his mother at night the answer given was, 'Your father would be angry.'

It is evident that these avoidances would limit the role of the elementary family as an associational unit. This was further 575 limited by the institution of the men's house in which the men and boys from the age of seven or so upwards eat together. In this way, a boy was associated from childhood with the body of agnatic kinsmen from whose conversation he received much of his education in matters ranging from table manners to history.

593 The authority of a man over his grown sons does not seem to have been very marked. A father had first claim on the services of his adolescent son in the caravan trade; if his father did not need him a lad could travel with another kinsman and a grown man could trade on his own account. Nor did a father apparently control his son's access to land, since this was allocated by [623] the village headman. There was, however, one very important service a father could perform for his son, that of ransoming him when the latter's mother's brother wished to sell him as a

[19] I am not sure if the *kwasula* is the youngest child, either male or female, or the youngest child provided that he is male. I think the latter.

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elder of the school in the sense that there is no sphere where their duties overlap and where they must compete.

The roles of government headmen and of officials of the school are complementary. It is through the chief and the government headman that the Ovimbundu pay their taxes and fines, are recruited as contract labourers and are called to road service, are arrested for crimes and misdemeanours and are entered on official records. It is through the catechists and elders of the school that the Ovimbundu find the expression of village unity by which at the same time they are linked to the whites and to the rest of the world on the religious level. The missions bring the Ovimbundu closer to the whites than does the administration, without the administration's predominant interest in making demands.[5]

While at the level of the total Angolan political system the administration is more powerful than the missions, the position of the catechist or elder of the school is stronger at the local level because the catechist and the elder represent the catechetical school which is the only social grouping existing on a village basis, whereas the government headman in fact represents no social group but is simply an executant of the orders of the *chefs*. Hence the catechist owing to this representative role and to his contact with the mission (which is much closer than that of the government headman) can lead the people and invoke the aid of the mission against abuses on the part of chiefs or government headmen. This would not be the case if the post gave firm backing to its local agents and turned a deaf ear to communications from the missions. Opposition to an overbearing government headman is then likely to be led by the leaders of the 'school', who can count on the backing of the mission, if they have a good case, to intervene for them at the post. The relative importance in a village of the catechist and elder of the school varies according to such factors as personality. The way in which the catechist was ignored when he tried to intervene in the dispute over the bridewealth shows that the catechist cannot claim authority in disputes as a matter of course.

[5] The missions impose fees and a yearly levy on their adherents which are small compared to the official taxes.

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The transformation of the dispute between Guilherme and Paulo into what amounted to both a trial of, and an uprising against, the government headman is not purely accidental but is a natural consequence of the principle latent in the social organization by which the 'school' leaders complement and can check the chief and government headman.

The case also indicates the limited nature of their roles. Both Paulo (by preventing Anna's marriage) and Guilherme (by getting Francisco sent to contract labour) can strike at the other through the lawful exercise of their authority; any real attack on the other's position involves an appeal to either mission or post, and hence brings about a trial of some sort. Guilherme finding that the quasi-trial before the priest went against him, tried to bring the case before the post, but realizing that this also was likely to go against him came to terms with his enemies. That is, any determined attempt to solve a dispute is likely to involve at least the threat of a reference to the post or the mission.

The power of the priest to intervene in the actions of the agents of the post is limited. Thus Antonio Pires did not intervene in the case of Francisco but advised him to get a letter from his employer. It is, however, notable that the missionaries are not simply appealed to by Catholics. Protestants like Jeremias and Luciano, and pagans like Kasosi and Sapapula, were ready to appeal to the priest although the initiative came from Paulo. That this is so is a convincing argument for the claim which has been made that the catechetical school represents the whole village, although it could also be claimed that it reflects rather an aspect of 'civilized'-native relations in the total Angolan system, clientship, as the typical form of relations between the two groups, with the missions being the patrons *par excellence* to whom all natives are at least potentially clients. The general well-being of all natives is the concern of the missions, who are therefore liable to be appealed to in such cases as this.

In particular cases where there is another patron to appeal to his aid will be sought. This patron-client situation will crop up again in the account of subsequent disputes. Its origin historically lies in the history of attitudes to employees and to

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mission to give Sapapula's case, and, as things worked out, it was the anthropologist who was made the 'civilized' focus for the opposition to Lusase as Antonio Pires had been made the focus of the opposition to Guilherme. Lusase, like Guilherme, reacted by saying that he owed allegiance only to the *chefe de posto*, and running off to the post.

Luanga's case shows how desire to get out of contract labour may give a new reason for taking a ministerial title, and also once again how sending someone to contract labour is regarded as a means of injuring those whom one dislikes.

I have spoken of the conflict between Lusase and Sapapula as being a conflict between a chief and his people, and this is true in so far as it shows how opposition forms against a chief and how he can be checked. It is therefore of importance as indicating the position of the chief in the contemporary social system. The people themselves interpreted the dispute as being essentially one between individuals—Lusase's behaviour was attributed to his lust for Nahoka, and Gregorio entered the dispute not as the ruler of the neighbouring chiefdom of Menga but as a friend of Sapapula. The interpretation of what is a political conflict as a quarrel between individuals may be explained as being due to the relatively limited nature of the role of chief (Lusase) and of traditional headman (Sapapula) which therefore do not predominate in the social status of the individual. (In this particular case, had I got Lusase's viewpoint he would probably have said that he was defending his dignity as chief, whereas Sapapula did not regard Lusase as being really chief.) The lack of a formal court system or even of an articulated political system at the local level has brought into desuetude the old legal and political idioms and the Ovimbundu have not yet learnt new terms from the Portuguese.

5. *Social Control and Social Structure in the Disputes*

I now return to the points mentioned at the beginning of this chapter. It is hardly necessary to underline the decayed state of the traditional system of authority. Lusase had, at the time of the quarrel between Guilherme and Paulo, expressed his

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178 intention of staying out of the dispute, just in the same way as
634 he said, when Ndonga's action was reported to him, that he did not know what went on in the villages. That is, Lusase disclaimed any general responsibility for maintaining law and order in the sub-chiefdom. He had turned up at the case before Justino and at the moot by Kapapelo's house, when Nahoka had pointed out that it was he, and not Kafelo, who was effectively chief. The very fact that such a remark could be made indicates a weakness in Lusase's position, and his lack of authority is further illustrated by his being but one of a crowd of would-be conciliators.

It was, indeed, Lusase's position with relation to Kafelo that brought about his quarrel with Sapapula. Lusase, on meeting Kafelo at Kapapelo's, had bowed to him, and must have been uneasily aware that public opinion held that Kafelo 'had finished', had completed the cycle of chiefly rites, whereas Lusase was just 'the *chefe de posto's* boy'. It is unlikely that there would be among the Ovimbundu developed forms of the situation reported from some colonial areas by which one person acts as chief or headman *vis-à-vis* the government while another is the real chief or headman with effective power over the people, if only because so much of the content of chieftancy today is simply post work. Yet a chief differs from a government headman precisely because of the surviving prestige which clings to the capital village, the skulls of the dead chiefs, the titled ministers, and the drums, and it was such an expression of prestige which Sapapula gave to Kafelo and denied to Lusase. Not surprisingly Lusase reacted to this sharp evidence of the weakness of his position. In acting as he did, he made things worse; since he lacked any local means of imposing his will by force, or mobilizing moral support, he had to fall back on the post.

178 This weakening of the chieftancy is, of course, only part of the
127 general disintegration of the old social system. Sapapula, in
[622] personality and prestige, was the equal of any traditional headman in the neighbourhood, and was consulted by the chief and government headmen when fines or roadworkers were required from Epalanga. Yet it was Paulo and not Sapapula who launched the attack on Guilherme, an attack speedily supported

29

advancement, will go to the head of their *oluina* to ask for his intercession with the spirits.[1] 613

As legal head of the village, the *sekulu yimbo* presides over both the more serious cases, which are held before the whole village on the dance-floor, and the simpler ones, which require the attendance only of those concerned, together with their respective elders, and may be taken up either in the *onjongo* or in the headman's own courtyard. Hambly seems to suggest that all the section-heads act with the village headman as a kind of council, but does not give details. He states also that the *olosekulu* (sing. *sekulu*) of the village formerly had charge of trials for murder, theft, adultery, and arguments over land,[2] and points out that they were more active in the legal system than the chiefs.[3] This is even more true today, when the village court of justice continues to function in spite of political and administrative changes, although the offices of chiefs and to some extent of sub-chiefs have largely decayed. 622 623 691 [177]

Other functions of the village headman include: the distribution of land to the various families when new village sites are opened;[4] the direction of the communal fire-hunts;[5] and, today, the collecting of taxes from the villagers and the direction and organisation of labour to work on the roads.[6] But however numerous the headman's official duties, he usually finds some time to attend to his own affairs, whether he is a farmer, hunter, or trader.[7] 622 423 651 466 [463]

Succession to headmanship is usually from father to son or from elder to younger brother, "with only as much recognition of primogeniture as belongs to the general ... hierarchy of age."[8] Succession is, however, affected by the "democratic" tendencies in succession to chieftainship.[9] 622 643

The Chief (*osoma* or *sova*)[10]

The Ovimbundu are grouped in 22 chiefdoms, of which half were in the past generally tributary to the more powerful chiefs.[11] At the same time each chiefdom had its separate government and could be considered as a unit in itself. Effective European occupation and direct rule have atrophied the chiefly office among the Ovimbundu, until today chiefs survive as little more than "living museum pieces".[12] Childs[13] enumerates the functions of the chiefly office as follows: 631 643 [177]

(a) *Religious.* The chief's ancestral spirits were the principal chiefdom deities, and the king was high-priest as well as the visible "vice-regent and incarnation" of the spirits. 643 793 769

(1) Childs, personal communication.
(2) The maternal uncle is responsible for settling disputes over property which occur within the *oluina*. (Hambly op.cit., p.200).
(3) Ibid.
(4) Ibid.
(5) Cushman, op.cit., p.115.
(6) Ibid., p.121.
(7) Childs, op.cit., p.36.
(8) Ibid., p.44.
(9) Ibid.
(10) *Osoma* means chief or king. *Sova* is the personalised form used with the name. This the Portuguese writers have corrupted into sova or soba. (Childs, personal communication)
(11) See above, p.2.
(12) Childs, op.cit., p.20.
(13) Ibid.

534 Another musical bow named *ekolowa* is of simple construction, consisting of a strip of cane from 54 to 70 cm long and 2 cm wide. At each end of the cane is a projection. A string, when tightly stretched between these projections, pulls the cane into the form of a bow. The performer, placing one end of the bow in his mouth, plucks the string with his thumb and forefinger (Plate XXII, Fig. 7).

Two rubbing instruments are used by the Ovimbundu. *Ogolanda* is a large gourd with a slit in the top along which there is a board cut into sixteen notches. The rubbing of a short stick along these notches produces a sound which is greatly amplified by the gourd resonator. The second instrument of this type is in the form of a wooden bow having its thickest part notched for rubbing with a stick (Plate XXII, Figs. 3, 8).

533 Only specialists are skilled in composing songs, and both men and women are composers. The younger people sometimes go to the old people to learn songs which were popular a generation ago. There are no professional itinerant story-tellers.

There is a chant for funerals which has been quoted in the appropriate section, but no special wedding songs are used. The Ovimbundu have satirical songs humorously describing individual [626] foibles and peculiarities, and as usual in Negro communities a satirical song is feared by thieves, adulterers, or other offenders.

[726] In former days when men were on the warpath they sang, *Okaimbo ketu katito eteke tu lisanumbula tu tandako.* ("Our village is little today, we attack, we extend.") Another war song is *Ocisonde ci likoka ove o kasi vonjila tumdamo.* ("Red ant that creeps along, you who are in the way, get out.")

[484] When men on the march came to a camping ground occupied by another caravan, they sang as a challenge, *Cinene nye? Cinene onjamba kakuli okachama kavela ukuavo.* ("What is the largest? There is no animal largest. The largest is the elephant.")

During hauling and carrying, men sing, *Yende, yende chale, ocimboto lomala vaco.* ("Let it go, let it go, the crab, the frog, with its children.")

482 Lifting loads is always accompanied by noises which suggest that someone is injured. Part of the men make deep grunts to which their companions answer with prolonged groans.

INITIATION

867 Evidence bearing on initiatory rites in Angola shows that the 881 ceremonies are arranged as a process of incorporation into the

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The tasks of recruiting contract labourers and road-workers 626
and of getting fines and taxes paid, and such other duties as the 466
arranging of compulsory purchase of tickets for the travelling [208]
cinema (showing patriotic films) are carried out through a long
process of argument, attempted evasion, and pressure, between
the chief, the government headmen, and the locally influential
people, traditional headmen, catechists, and anyone else who
can get himself listened to. Persons actually picked for contract
labour or road work may make quite a fuss about it, but as
such numbers are recruited it is ultimately accepted resignedly.
It is not really practicable for a chief to discriminate in favour [234]
of his kinsman owing to the heavy demands for labour and the
likelihood of such discrimination being reported at the post, as
happened to Simbwyikoka. Demands for labour may fall
heavily on some households. Thus one Epalanga household [592]
consisted of a man, his daughter by an earlier marriage, his
wife and her baby daughter. The man had been taken for
contract labour, his wife had been called to road work, and the
adolescent daughter was carrying sisal[14] to the post. A kinsman
of the household head attempted to arrange for some watch to
be kept over the gardens lest animals should get in.

There were four government headmen in Gumba during my 622
stay. Theoretically they are village headmen. The villages in
which official records group Ovimbundu do not conform to the 166
actual villages in which Ovimbundu live. Anybody moving
from one village to another has to pay a fee; as the Ovimbundu
move about quite frequently and no attempt is made to enforce
this rule locally, the result is this discrepancy between paper and
real villages.

The government headman's duties are those already des- 622
cribed for the chief. As with the chief, there is only sufficient 648
backing from the post for him to carry out the orders he re- 634
ceives; he does not receive power to enable him to exercise
political leadership and judicial authority at the local level,
nor is he a representative of the post in the villages. His interests
and values are linked to those of his neighbours rather than to
the post. It is through the chief and the government headmen

[14] Some villages are obliged to grow sisal and take it to the post without payment. [248]

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CHAPTER IX

SOCIAL CONTROL

1. *Introduction*

121 In this chapter I shall describe and analyse three disputes which reveal the working of social control in present-day 626 Umbundu society. The first dispute is between an elder of the school and a government headman, the second is between a traditional headman and a villager with the intervention of a local self-styled *assimilado*[1], and the third arose from a quarrel between an irregularly installed chief and a traditional headman.

The points which it is hoped will arise from the analysis of [178] the material are the disappearance or extreme weakness of the traditional institutions of social control, the way in which the Ovimbundu appeal to the members of the 'civilized' community for decisions or support in cases, and how kinship ties affect the relations between persons involved in a dispute.

2. *Guilherme and Paulo*

578 The parties principally involved in the first dispute were Paulo (24. See List of Epalanga residents), the elder of the school at Epalanga, and his cross-cousin Guilherme (see List II, p. 55), a government headman then living in Epalanga, Francisco, a son of the former chief Mbati and wife's brother to Paulo, and Sapapula (10), the headman and reputed founder of Epalanga. The sequence of the dispute is first a quarrel between Paulo and Guilherme. Guilherme then attacks Paulo through his wife's brother Francisco. This brings about a general attack

[1] The fact that Justino was not actually an assimilado is not relevant, since he used the belief of the local people that he was.

2 [assimilado is an African governing Portuguese citizenship -- Brafut]

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on good terms with Guilherme, who was a 'father' of his, and even earlier in June part of the celebrations which marked the marriage of Paulo's son Jose to Pungu, a girl from Namba, whose mother had at one time been married to Kapapelo, took place at the latter's house. Most strikingly of all, as has been noted, Guilherme could borrow money from Bartolomeu and Paulo at the height of their quarrel. The kinship bond exists outside of and, it might be said, at a deeper level than, the quarrel, and the rebukes hurled at an adversary reflect this. Paulo did not complain that Guilherme was a bad cross-cousin; instead he complained that Guilherme was not grateful to him for having baptized his dying child. The motive for co-operation or conflict in everyday life is to be found not in the tracing of genealogies but in the tally of reciprocal services and grievances between two individuals.

It may be claimed that this portrait of the kinship system which emerges from the disputes as being loosely structured and lacking defined obligations, but providing an underlying continuity, is very similar to that given in Chapter VII, which was based on questioning and the observation of everyday life.

The significance of the conjugal bond appears both positively in the way Luanga and Sapapula both take their wives to the post as witnesses, and negatively in the way the hostility of Kapapelo and Lusase to Sapapula is interpreted as being inspired by lust for his wife. Even the accusations of adultery so readily hurled about in disputes reflect the stereotype of the adulterer as the arch-enemy, and likewise the arch-enemy of the moment as at least a potential adulterer.

One question remains to be answered. Was Epalanga a particularly rebellious, squabbling, divided, village, because of the presence of an unusual number of aggressive individuals? It is not possible to estimate the number of disputes per village, and the disputes which have been described were the most important of which I had personal knowledge. They were touched off by personal antagonisms rather than by structural contradictions. Yet they tie in with what has been said of the Umbundu social structure in earlier chapters to such a degree that they seem to reflect the lines along which any case of the sort would proceed. The weakness of the chiefs, stripped of

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traditional sanctions and lacking official confidences, the powerless prestige of the traditional headman, the lack of defined village unity, the role of the catechetical school and its officials, who have come to represent the village as a whole, the loosely structured yet stabilizing kinship system, all described in earlier chapters, have re-emerged as parts of a reasonably effective system of social control within which people quarrel and by which their quarrels are settled. It is possible for the villagers by appealing to patrons to check tyrannical behaviour on the part of chief and headmen and to get a fair hearing at the post. Within the local community disputants, once their anger has blown over, may be reunited by the ties of kinship and affinity.

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story to explain the non-appearance of the others which satisfied the *chefe*.

The catechist was somewhat criticized for not having pushed on with the case, and thereby perhaps getting Guilherme landed in jail. Guilherme did move out of the village in February and settled near the outskirts of the Protestant village of Kalungwengwe. Kapapelo also set about moving out of Epalanga.

In the conflict which has just been described, there are three disputes, the question of the bridewealth which involved Luciano, Simbwyikoka, Guilherme, and the anthropologist, the quarrel between Paulo and Guilherme, and the subsequent uprising against Guilherme which takes its signal from Paulo's reference of the dispute to the priest.

The question of bridewealth repayment is subordinate to, indeed enclosed within, the main dispute. It does illustrate one point central to the problem of Umbundu social control, the absence of any court machinery. Jeremias and Luciano had tried to recover it by appealing to the priest; later Luciano and Simbwyikoka attempted to get it back by coming and demanding it, that is by self-help. Another extremely significant aspect of the social structure is revealed by this 'enclosed' case. Guilherme after a bitter dispute with Paulo which has ended in the arrest of Paulo and Bartolomeu borrows 200 escudos from them as a kinsman. This indicates that kinship ties can survive and function despite a quarrel which they do not check or prevent, a point which will be developed later in an examination of how kinship affects and is affected by a dispute.

The conflict cannot be viewed as simply a dispute between individuals, nor as a dispute between the holders of opposed roles. Guilherme was generally regarded as lacking 'sense' (*olondunge*), the quality, greatly admired by the Ovimbundu, of good judgement and decent social behaviour, and he confessed himself to be at fault. Yet he could not have acted in the way he did unless he had been a government headman, nor would the uprising against him have taken the form it did had he not held an office dependent on the post. There is, however, no necessary conflict between a government headman and the catechist or

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elder of the school in the sense that there is no sphere where their duties overlap and where they must compete.

The roles of government headmen and of officials of the school are complementary. It is through the chief and the government headman that the Ovimbundu pay their taxes and fines, are recruited as contract labourers and are called to road service, are arrested for crimes and misdemeanours and are entered on official records. It is through the catechists and elders of the school that the Ovimbundu find the expression of village unity by which at the same time they are linked to the whites and to the rest of the world on the religious level. The missions bring the Ovimbundu closer to the whites than does the administration, without the administration's predominant interest in making demands.[5]

While at the level of the total Angolan political system the administration is more powerful than the missions, the position of the catechist or elder of the school is stronger at the local level because the catechist and the elder represent the catechetical school which is the only social grouping existing on a village basis, whereas the government headman in fact represents no social group but is simply an executant of the orders of the *chefe*. Hence the catechist owing to this representative role and to his contact with the mission (which is much closer than that of the government headman) can lead the people and invoke the aid of the mission against abuses on the part of chiefs or government headmen. This would not be the case if the post gave firm backing to its local agents and turned a deaf ear to communications from the missions. Opposition to an overbearing government headman is then likely to be led by the leaders of the 'school', who can count on the backing of the mission, if they have a good case, to intervene for them at the post. The relative importance in a village of the catechist and elder of the school varies according to such factors as personality. The way in which the catechist was ignored when he tried to intervene in the dispute over the bridewealth shows that the catechist cannot claim authority in disputes as a matter of course.

[5] The missions impose fees and a yearly levy on their adherents which are small compared to the official taxes.

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SOCIAL CONTROL

The transformation of the dispute between Guilherme and Paulo into what amounted to both a trial of, and an uprising against, the government headman is not purely accidental but is a natural consequence of the principle latent in the social organization by which the 'school' leaders complement and can check the chief and government headman. 627 797 622 571

The case also indicates the limited nature of their roles. Both Paulo (by preventing Anna's marriage) and Guilherme (by getting Francisco sent to contract labour) can strike at the other through the lawful exercise of their authority; any real attack on the other's position involves an appeal to either mission or post, and hence brings about a trial of some sort. Guilherme finding that the quasi-trial before the priest went against him, tried to bring the case before the post, but realizing that this also was likely to go against him came to terms with his enemies. That is, any determined attempt to solve a dispute is likely to involve at least the threat of a reference to the post or the mission.

The power of the priest to intervene in the actions of the agents of the post is limited. Thus Antonio Pires did not intervene in the case of Francisco but advised him to get a letter from his employer. It is, however, notable that the missionaries are not simply appealed to by Catholics. Protestants like Jeremias and Luciano, and pagans like Kasosi and Sapapula, were ready to appeal to the priest although the initiative came from Paulo. That this is so is a convincing argument for the claim which has been made that the catechetical school represents the whole village, although it could also be claimed that it reflects rather an aspect of 'civilized'-native relations in the total Angolan system, clientship, as the typical form of relations between the two groups, with the missions being the patrons *par excellence* to whom all natives are at least potentially clients. The general well-being of all natives is the concern of the missions, who are therefore liable to be appealed to in such cases as this. 627 797 571 [648]

In particular cases where there is another patron to appeal to his aid will be sought. This patron-client situation will crop up again in the account of subsequent disputes. Its origin historically lies in the history of attitudes to employees and to 627 648 571

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627 servants in Portugal and Angola;[8] sociologically it reflects the
648 lack of any system of bureaucratic administration at the local
571 level and the isolation of the *chefes* from the people. The uncertainties of taking a case to the post are such that it is thought desirable to have some backing (such as the letter the catechist got from the mission) from a representative of the 'civilized' community and in the absence of any other 'civilized' person the mission becomes the patron of all natives, whatever their religious allegiance.

578 The importance of this case, then, is its illustration of what
627 may happen in a conflict between a catechist or elder of the
571 school and a government headman. The limited nature of their powers, and the fact that their roles are not competitive, make a conflict between them, so long as it is not extended to pull in other people, necessarily confined to indirect attacks. If either party wishes to bring down the other he must appeal to the post or to the mission. The government headman can pull people in by accusing them at the post of not paying taxes or creating a disturbance, or by recommending them for contract labour. His position is not so strong as his dependence on the post might suggest, since the intervention of the mission, at the request of the villagers, can bring him down.

Within this main 'political' dispute is the quarrel over bridewealth, which is illuminating both in indicating the absence of legal mechanisms at the village level, and in showing how kinship ties continue to function at the height of a bitter quarrel. Both these points will be noticed again in the accounts of later disputes.

3. *Kapapelo and Sapapula*

578 The next case involved Sapapula and Kapapelo and was
627 again to end in an averted appeal to the *chefe de posto*. On the 21st of February Sapapula, Sahuke (see List II, p. 56), Wasuka, Luanga (21), and others went from Epalanga to the house of Justino, who had called them there to settle a dispute. Justino

[8] An inhabitant of Lisbon, wishing to emigrate to Canada, wooed the maid of a former official of the British Embassy. Discovering that this would get him nowhere, he transferred his affections to the maid of one of the staff of the American Embassy. The implications are interesting.

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was a man of fifty or more, who lived in Portuguese style making money from coffee and other crops. He claimed to be an *assimilado* (African with the status of a Portuguese citizen) but in actual fact he was not one. He had employed a man called Kusumula, who lived in Epalanga and was the brother of Kapapelo's wife.

To appreciate the point of Justino's complaint, it is necessary to explain the significance of certain terms indicative of ethnic and social status. Otjimbundu is the singular of Ovimbundu, a people defined by the use of the Umbundu language. It is also used to refer to any black person (thus I was often asked whether there were Ovimbundu [i.e. Africans] in England), and is therefore equivalent to the Portuguese *preto* (black), which when used of a person has a rather pejorative sense like 'native' in other parts of Africa. Livingstone, writing a hundred years ago, remarks of one area in Angola; 'The people under him (the chief) are divided into a number of classes. . . . They are also divided into gentlemen and little gentlemen, and, though quite black, speak of themselves as white men and of the others, who may not wear shoes, as "blacks".'[7] Justino's complaint was that Sapapula had referred to him as a *preto qualquer* or in Umbundu (Sapapula did not speak Portuguese), *otjimbundu tjango*, a mere black.

Justino delivered a speech when the people from Epalanga had settled on the veranda of his house in which he declared with much force that he was not an Otjimbundu '*Ame sitjimbunduko*.' This accusation was based on information given him by Kusumula, who alleged that Sapapula had said to government headmen that Kusumula could be recruited for road work, as he worked not for a white (a term applied also to *assimilados*) but for a mere black.

I give the main lines of the ensuing argument. Sapapula denied that he had called Justino a black. Kusumula claimed that Sapapula was always picking on him. Sapapula declared that he had founded the village, and that Kusumula wanted to break it up. Kapapelo said that he had at one time given medicine to a girl and Sapapula had told Jaime to kill him because he might have seduced her. Kutenga Lusase, the chief

[7] Livingstone, *Missionary Travels and Researches*, p. 411.

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of Gumba who had also turned up, intervened and denounced Kusumula for not wishing to work for the post, and then brought the case back to Sapapula's alleged slander of Justino. The latter intervened again here to say that he had been slandered. Sapapula, by now very excited, denied this and said that Kusumula and Kapapelo wanted to break up the village. This was followed by three people trying to talk at once. Justino strolled round to the back of his house. Sapapula and Kapapelo wrangled.

Justino was not the only person to find this tedious. Paulo suggested that we should go. Kapapelo complained that Saviel, a sister's son of Sapapula, had made advances to his wife. Sapapula continued to declare that Kapapelo must not break up the village. Kutenga Lusase criticized Kapapelo for not working for the post. Gonçalve (18) intervened to refer back to the visit of the priest, Antonio Pires, and said that he had left with the words (i.e. he had come to a decision). Gonçalve was a pagan. The wrangling continued until Justino returned, told Sapapula not to insult him again and not to be angry with Kusumula. Sapapula said that Kusumula had left the village (Epalanga) and so would not be needed for the post again (that is, Sapapula would not be any longer responsible for him), and that he had never been angry with Kapapelo. Nahoka, Sapapula's wife, said that Kapapelo was not *ukwafeka* 'a man of the country'. Justino then dismissed the gathering, telling Sapapula to buy a bottle of wine for the elders who had come with him.

Kapapelo and Kusumula were not connected with the post as Guilherme was, nor with the mission as Paulo was. Kusumula was the employee of Justino and had thus an opportunity to appeal to him by accusing Sapapula of denying his status. It is not particularly significant whether Sapapula had actually said this or not. The accusation is important since it is a reflection of a common Umbundu way of attacking one's enemies, by accusing them of some offence against a 'civilized' person. Thus, to refer back to the earlier dispute between Paulo and Guilherme, the latter found it necessary to deny that he had planned to set fire to the catechetical school and the anthropologist's house, charges which were intended to weigh heavily with the *chefe*. Hence, when a quarrel between natives comes to a civilized

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person, it is likely that the details will be re-organized to gain his attention and support.

It is also notable that Sapapula was ready to accept Justino's right to hold a case on the matter. The acceptance and even readiness (as appears later) on Sapapula's part that Justino should hear cases is partly again a result of the lack of any legal machinery on the village level, partly an aspect of the 'patron-client' situation which has so often marked 'civilized'-native relations in Angola. No doubt much in Justino's behaviour arose from the taste he showed at times for settling cases, which led to a certain number of local cases being referred to him, and his readiness to settle them may not have been particularly common among *assimilados*.

Much of the actual case consisted of accusations and counter-accusations between Sapapula and Kapapelo with other people intervening. There is a kind of attempt to establish a balance of wrongs, Kusumula claiming that Sapapula was always picking on him when there was a call for labour from the post, Kapapelo accusing Sapapula of inciting Jaime to kill him and Sapapula's sister's son Saviel of planning to seduce his wife. Sapapula had accused Kusumula and Kapapelo of trying to break the village. Lusase intervened rather against Kusumula and Kapapelo, who was his 'brother'. As previously, the demands of the post for labour are regarded as being used by their local executants in a discriminating way.

On the evening of the same day, as I was calling round the village, I found Kapapelo at the door of Sapapula's kitchen. Apparently he had arrived drunk and had threatened to kill himself. Sapapula was greatly enraged at this, as were his women folk, Nahoka, his wife, Wumba, his daughter, and Nayangu, his 'sister', who vigorously abused Kapapelo. They warned Sapapula not to accept food from Kapapelo, lest the latter use it as a means of sorcery. Kapapelo complained that Nahoka had called him a slave thus expanding the hint contained in her previous enigmatic remark that Kapapelo was not a man of the country.

On the next day, Wednesday the 22nd, Sapapula had intended to go again to Justino's to settle his case with Kapapelo, but there was a funeral to which a large number of people went.

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Moreover, Justino did not want to bother any more with the case, and said that anybody who went on with it was just vindictive. It had been proposed to hold a moot at Sapapula's house, but this was impracticable as Kapapelo would not come. Accordingly, on the afternoon of the 23rd February, a number of people gathered at Kapapelo's house. The gathering at first consisted of Sapapula, Sahuke, and Kafelo (the former chief) who sat close together joined by the anthropologist and his interpreter Pedro Chimbalanya Epalanga, two men from Menga, one of them a son of Sapapula, Nahoka, Nayangu, and Wumba respectively (as previously mentioned), Sapapula's wife, 'sister', and daughter, Lusase the *de facto* chief of Gumba, Ngombe the Mwekalia at his court, Alexandro a son of Mwehombo, temporarily visiting Epalanga, and four people from Ndjoleya's end of Epalanga, Augusto (25) (grandson-in-law of Sapapula), Costa (26), Ferreira (28), and Filemeno, who later moved to Belem. Other people turned up later, including Ndjoleya (30) himself. My point in quoting these names is to show that the crowd which turned up to the moot was not composed either of Sapapula's kin or of his co-villagers as exclusive groups.

Lusase was not received with any great respect, but bowed low to Kafelo. Ngombe explained that he had been invited as a guest.[8] Sapapula explained to Ngombe what had happened at Justino's. By this time Epalata, Luanga, Paulo, and Wasuka had arrived. Sapapula alleged that Kapapelo had wanted to seduce Nahoka, but that she had refused, and that Kapapelo had then wanted to kill him so that he could then obtain Nahoka. The conversation between Kapapelo and Nahoka had been in the woods so that he had no witnesses. Sapapula, who was now very angry, finished his speech by declaring that he had given land to Kapapelo. Meanwhile more people arrived.

Ngombe now spoke discussing the evidence and summing up very much against Kapapelo. Lusase spoke, avoiding the

[8] On another occasion, three elders from Gumba (one of them Sinhovyikoka) were invited to Chicunda to arbitrate a case. Ngombe's appearance here in fact was not significant, except perhaps as showing the discrepancy between ideas about cases and the reality.

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question of Kapapelo's intention towards Nahoka, but criticized Kapapelo for reopening his quarrel with Sapapula. Kapapelo (who did not strike me as particularly intelligent) was wandering about more or less ignoring the criticisms which had been made of him, which greatly annoyed the assembly. At length, Kapapelo, urged to speak by Lusase, did so. 627

Kapapelo stated that he had committed adultery with Nahoka, Sapapula's wife, and asked to be fined for adultery. This created a fresh uproar. Nahoka got up and said that the question was within the competence of Lusase since he and not Kafelo was now the chief. She denied that she had committed adultery. As evidence against this, she pointed out that Kapapelo's wife had visited her house to eat mush, and that Kapapelo's conduct when he came to Sapapula's kitchen showed that she had not committed adultery. Antonio Kasoma (see List II, p. 55) said that it was necessary to decide how much Kapapelo should pay. [684]

Kapapelo's wife joined in to support her husband's confession, saying that Kapapelo had given Nahoka soap. Sapapula declared that Kapapelo was worthless, and had received everything he had from Sapapula. Some people called on Kapapelo to work sorcery. Kafelo suggested that Kapapelo should pay 150 escudos (£1. 17s. 6d.). The meeting now broke up, some people saying that the post should be informed and that Kapapelo had (illicit) rum in his house. One of the Menga men said that in the past even attempted seductions were punished. Sapapula demanded a payment of 500 escudos or a big pig, for Kapapelo's offences of not showing respect to Sapapula, and attempting adultery. He seemed more inclined, however, to take the case to the post, since (he claimed) Kapapelo was threatening to kill him. Kapapelo refused to pay.

The argument now swirled round, Kapapelo wavering between paying and not paying, Sapapula wavering between going to the post and being ready to accept a fine. Kafelo and Lusase both favoured a payment. People said that Guilherme was responsible for this. Paulo, Kusumula and Ndjoleya all urged Kapapelo to pay. Sapapula had now moved off, and was eventually followed by everybody else. Various wrangles continued over the question of paying a fine or having recourse

627 to the post. Somebody said to me 'Lusase wants a fine to be paid so that he can get something from it' (the chief traditionally [681] having a right to commission on a fine paid in a dispute which he had settled). Eventually the dispute did not go to the post, as Kapapelo paid a fine, and the matter dropped.

A great deal of detail has been given here, but it can be shown that consistencies can be extracted from what seems complete confusion.

578 Kapapelo had, no doubt, as was said, under the influence of drink, decided to carry on his conflict with Sapapula after the gathering at Justino's and had arrived at Sapapula's threatening to commit suicide. The threat of suicide was here [762] used as Guilherme had used it to put an opponent in a difficult position, but it infuriated Sapapula, who decided that he must try and get another hearing. He therefore turned again to 627 Justino, although the latter had previously decided against him; thus implying that even a possibly unfavourable judge is acceptable, rather than let a squabble continue indefinitely.

Eventually, owing to Justino's refusal to hear the case, what I have called a 'moot' was got together, a body which lacked any deciding, dominating figure, but represented the local community. This became concerned with the question of the 578 relation of Kapapelo and Sapapula as affected by the action of Kapapelo in respect of Sapapula's wife Nahoka. As has been mentioned in the chapter on marriage, the relation between a [837] man and his wife's lover is one of mystically manifested hostility. Sapapula by accusing Kapapelo of desiring to seduce his wife was indicating a very serious state of hostility between the two men; and one can only explain Kapapelo's confession to something of which he was not guilty as a mark of his hostility to Sapapula. Kapapelo was accused by Sapapula of attempting to do him a grievous wrong, and Kapapelo claimed that he had in fact done this wrong. Nahoka denied that she had wronged her husband, and produced evidence of her assertion. Before considering her arguments, it must be noted what were the interests of the other people involved in the case.

627 It might be suggested that Kafelo, Lusase, and Ngombe had to some extent the function of judges or at least arbitrators, and Sapapula had indeed invited Ngombe to give his opinion (I

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do not know how Kafelo and Lusase came to hear of the case). In practice, their role was that of any other spectator in trying to bring about a settlement, although a chief has, as was noted, the right to a commission on any indemnification. The right of spectators to intervene is not based on any particular relationship to those involved nor on any reputation for wisdom. There is in fact no organized routine for determining who may and who must turn up and who may and who must speak. Spectators and speakers are simply members of the neighbourhood community, some related to Sapapula, some simply fellow-villagers, and it is natural that in present Umbundu society, lacking clearly-defined social groups, the crowd that assembles on such an occasion should look like a chance gathering. Its lack of recognized procedure, of accepted leadership, and of specific criteria of recruitment are all typical of the neighbourhood community among the contemporary Ovimbundu.

Despite the 'unorganized' character of this gathering, there exists evidently a set of generally accepted symbolic values, which are accepted by Christian and pagan, by young and old. Thus Nahoka claimed as evidence that she had not committed adultery her meal with Kapapelo's wife, and the latter in turn offered as evidence that adultery had been committed a statement that her husband had made a gift of soap to Nahoka. These actions provide presumptive evidence of innocence or guilt since an adulterer or adulteress may not eat under apparently mystical sanctions with the spouse of the person with whom he or she has committed adultery, and the giving of gifts by a man to a woman implies a sexual relationship. These actions were presumably recognized as convincing evidence in the days when there existed a formal court system, and continue to be recognized as such at the present day.

The nature of contemporary social relations, as being the end-product of a series of acts between individuals rather than as the content of jural norms defined by status, is also revealed in the dispute, particularly in the episode at Justino's. Sapapula does not complain that Kapapelo had not behaved as a villager should to his headman, but that he had not been grateful for having been given land. Kapapelo's complaint that Saviel, Sapapula's sister's son, had attempted to seduce his wife was,

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like his accusation that Sapapula had incited Jaime to kill him, an attempt to portray himself not as an ungrateful recipient of Sapapula's goodness but a much suffering victim of his malevolence.

Although the moot reflects the existing social structure and values there are occasional reminiscences of the former social system. Thus Ngombe seems to have been acting according to a traditional but non-effective pattern in giving a long, judicial, summing up, which had no practical effect. Again, when Sapapula accused Kapapelo of wishing to break up the village it is probable that he was thinking of the old villages socially defined by the agnatic tie and physically enclosed by a stockade rather than the physically and socially amorphous villages of the present day. Values such as these survive in the minds of individuals when the associated social forms have disintegrated. They are brought out on occasions analogous to those in which they were formerly used, but are not nowadays decisive in the way they would have been.

The quarrel between Kapapelo and Sapapula is different from the other cases, since the meeting held to discuss it is held without the presence of a 'civilized' person and it pivots about a question of adultery or rather attempted adultery, a subject which has hitherto appeared marginally as a subject for insults. The case is held without the presence of a 'civilized' person, and this is from necessity, not from choice. Sapapula had tried to have the case heard by Justino, and Kapapelo was eventually brought to terms by Sapapula's threat to refer the matter to the post. While the moot shows us the community acting to uphold social control, such action is regarded as an unsatisfactory substitute for a decision by somebody who could, as Gonçalve said of Antonio Pires, 'leave with the words', that is, settle the case.

Adultery has previously occurred as an accusation thrown in during a squabble that has begun with something else. Thus Guilherme accused Paulo and Wasuka accused Kapapelo of adultery because they were angry with them; they were not angry with them because they thought they had committed adultery with their wives. It is parallel to the suggestions that Kapapelo was a sorcerer, an insult not an accusation. It now

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occurs, whether in intention as declared by Sapapula and Nahoka, as accomplished as claimed by Kapapelo, as the substance of the conflict between the two men.

To sum up, Kapapelo had originally been aligned with his kinsman Guilherme against Sapapula, who had then shown hostility to Kapapelo, and especially to his wife's brother Kusumula. The latter had counter-attacked by accusing Sapapula before Justino, and there the matter might have rested if Kapapelo had not tried to attack Sapapula again, by making the threat to commit suicide at his kitchen door. This led to the moot at which the charge of attempted adultery was made, and at which Sapapula intended to, and succeeded in, taming Kapapelo.

4. *Lusase, Sapapula, and Luanga*

In this case, individuals previously met, notably Sapapula, and Lusase reappear, this time as enemies. The principal scenes are first an attempt by a kinsman of Lusase's to recover a debt from Sapapula, secondly an attack by Lusase on Sapapula, thirdly a decision by the *chefe de posto* in favour of Sapapula, fourthly a fresh complaint to the post by Luanga against Lusase, fifthly a post decision in favour of Luanga, sixthly and finally reconciliation of Luanga and Lusase.

This chain of disputes had begun actually before the episodes mentioned in the last case. On the 19th February, Ndonga a kinsman of Lusase (whom he had helped to power), arrived in Epalanga and tied up Sapapula, as a result of the latter not paying a debt. I produced the money and for the present no more was heard of it. Lusase said that he did not know what went on in the villages, when the matter was mentioned to him.

On 13th May, Simbwyikoka, a former chief whose village was near Sapapula's, was holding a ceremony in which a bull had been killed. Sapapula had taken part in the ceremony and had been responsible for sending a leg of the bull (the chief's traditional prerogative) not to Lusase but to Kafelo, who, although he had been deposed in 1954, had the advantage over Lusase of having passed through the royal rituals, and

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having been elected according to traditional rules. Lusase was angry at this, turned up at the ceremony, and attacked Sapapula.

The following morning Epalanga buzzed with indignation. Gregorio, the chief of Menga, and Mandumba, Sapapula's son, had arrived at Epalanga to express their support, and Gregorio asked me[9] to write a letter to the Mission to get its support against Lusase at the post. I said that I would go to the chief's village to persuade Lusase to seek a reconciliation. The elder Wasuka, a cross-cousin of Sapapula, declared that even if Lusase offered five cattle in compensation they would not be accepted, and Sapapula's supporters portrayed him as a much injured man, repeatedly the victim of the Guilherme, Kapapelo, Lusase, Ndonga clique. My offer to go to the chief's village fell through when we heard that Lusase was now no longer there, but near, apparently at Simbwyikoka's.

I suggested that the moot should be held at Simbwyikoka's since the case had begun there; the others said 'No, let him come over here.' The crowd settled down in the open space before my house. News was then brought to us that Lusase refused to come over and insisted on the people coming to him, declaring that he ruled all, and did not obey the anthropologist but only the *chefe*. Accordingly everybody got up and walked over to Simbwyikoka's. Here we leant that Lusase had fled. Kambungo[10], an elder of Menga and kinsmen of Sapapula, declared that somebody who behaved like this could not be chief. Gregorio the chief of Menga became involved in an argument with Ndonga, who he said was responsible for installing Lusase. This Ndonga denied. This, incidentally, was the first time that I had heard that Lusase was not properly elected. As previously noted on the fall of Kafelo, Lusase had arrived at the post and announced himself as being the new chief. The Gumba people did not protest about this for fear of possible reactions from the post.

It now became known that Lusase could not be found.

[9] It may be suggested that my interventions were not in accordance with anthropological etiquette. It is difficult to see what else I could have done; it is, after all, the local custom for 'civilized' persons to provide letters of recommendation, and a refusal on my part would not have been understood.

[10] He has been mentioned in Chapter V.

People said that he had fled to the house of his sister's son Guilherme en route for the post; Gregorio now said to me that Lusase had made advances to Nahoka, trying to seduce her by saying that Sapapula was old. 627

On the same day Sapapula left for the post with, as his witnesses, Nahoka and Wasuka carrying a letter of recommendation from me. At the post the *chefe* took his part and told Lusase 'Sapapula is your father' and made Lusase kneel down to seek pardon. Sapapula said that he wished to move across the river into Menga, where he had formerly lived. The *chefe* told him to stay at Epalanga (because of the anthropologist's presence there), but transferred Epalanga administratively from Gumba to Chicunda. This settlement pleased the Epalanga people. It may be added that had Sapapula actually crossed over, a number of householders, including Paulo, would not have followed him. 648 [631]

Despite the *chefe's* acts it was not certain whether the change was to be given effect immediately or only after the *chefe's* annual visit; hence some more wrangling took place over the question of where Epalanga was situated for such purposes as the payment of fines for rum-brewing.

Luanga, who shared with Sapapula the title of Epalanga, came to my house on the night of the 27th June to ask for a letter to the *chefe de posto*. He told me that Lusase wanted to take away his title of Epalanga and send him to contract (non-voluntary) labour. I suggested that we should go together to see Lusase at his village on the following day. The next morning he decided not to go to the chief but to go straight to the post with his wife Adriana. He told me that when Lusase became chief in 1954, he and his 'brother' Mwehombo had bought the title of Epalanga (held under Kafelo by Sapapula) which they held jointly. Luanga had paid for this two pigs equal to 1,000 escudos (about £12. 10s. in British currency) and other things as well. Luanga's motive was not political power (which the present-day chief lacks and of which his ministers have even less) nor prestige, but because he would thus be exempt from contract labour. Luanga said that he did not mind going to contract labour, but insisted on having back what he had paid to Lusase. I said I would write a letter to say that he should not 578 631 648 [634]

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578 631 648 go to contract labour and accordingly he left for the post with my letter.

Luanga returned quite satisfied a few days later, the *chefe* having decided in his favour. Two days later he went to the 578 631 chief's village to complain of Lusase's actions. With him came Bartolomeu and Paulo. Ngombe, as Mwekalia, and thereby responsible for the relations between chief and people, acted as the presiding figure, more chairman than judge, although he spoke for some time on the case. Lusase defended himself by saying that it was not he but somebody else who had recommended Luanga for contract labour. This explanation was accepted by Luanga. Bartolomeu and Paulo received small sums of money from Lusase for acting as witnesses, and later Luanga left with Lusase for another village. Here they effected the succession of a man to his father's title of Mbesi (another ministerial position). Luanga was much pleased with his share of the fee.

578 Not only the personalities but many of the features of previous cases reappear here. Of the ways of acting which people choose, 627 Ndonga and Lusase use self-help, Ndonga to recover a debt, 648 and Lusase to uphold his prestige. Against Lusase, as against Kapapelo, a moot was formed. Lusase like Guilherme insisted on his responsibility to the post alone, when the opposition seemed to be using a 'civilized' person of a different category. Final decisions are obtained by appeals to the post but the risky nature of such procedures is shown by the desire to get a letter of recommendation. Luanga believed that Lusase had got him sent to contract labour just as Francisco believed (correctly) that Guilherme had got him recruited. Ngombe as Mwekalia is more successful here as arbitrator than in the moot at Kapapelo's. Finally we see the contrast again between the survival of formal recognition in symbol of the prestige of chieftancy (the episode of the bull's leg) and its actual impotence [634] caught between *chefe* and people. The specific issue in this dispute turns on a conflict between a chief and his people, and it shows how a chief can be defeated in the same way that the first dispute showed a government headman being defeated.

627 Lusase's opponents had, as previously, other means of influ- 648 encing the post. Gregorio had proposed getting a letter from the

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mission to give Sapapula's case, and, as things worked out, it was the anthropologist who was made the 'civilized' focus for the opposition to Lusase as Antonio Pires had been made the focus of the opposition to Guilherme. Lusase, like Guilherme, reacted by saying that he owed allegiance only to the *chefe de posto*, and running off to the post.

Luanga's case shows how desire to get out of contract labour may give a new reason for taking a ministerial title, and also once again how sending someone to contract labour is regarded as a means of injuring those whom one dislikes.

I have spoken of the conflict between Lusase and Sapapula as being a conflict between a chief and his people, and this is true in so far as it shows how opposition forms against a chief and how he can be checked. It is therefore of importance as indicating the position of the chief in the contemporary social system. The people themselves interpreted the dispute as being essentially one between individuals—Lusase's behaviour was attributed to his lust for Nahoka, and Gregorio entered the dispute not as the ruler of the neighbouring chiefdom of Menga but as a friend of Sapapula. The interpretation of what is a political conflict as a quarrel between individuals may be explained as being due to the relatively limited nature of the role of chief (Lusase) and of traditional headman (Sapapula) which therefore do not predominate in the social status of the individual. (In this particular case, had I got Lusase's viewpoint he would probably have said that he was defending his dignity as chief, whereas Sapapula did not regard Lusase as being really chief.) The lack of a formal court system or even of an articulated political system at the local level has brought into desuetude the old legal and political idioms and the Ovimbundu have not yet learnt new terms from the Portuguese.

5. *Social Control and Social Structure in the Disputes*

I now return to the points mentioned at the beginning of this chapter. It is hardly necessary to underline the decayed state of the traditional system of authority. Lusase had, at the time of the quarrel between Guilherme and Paulo, expressed his

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178 634 intention of staying out of the dispute, just in the same way as he said, when Ndonga's action was reported to him, that he did not know what went on in the villages. That is, Lusase disclaimed any general responsibility for maintaining law and order in the sub-chiefdom. He had turned up at the case before Justino and at the moot by Kapapelo's house, when Nahoka had pointed out that it was he, and not Kafelo, who was effectively chief. The very fact that such a remark could be made indicates a weakness in Lusase's position, and his lack of authority is further illustrated by his being but one of a crowd of would-be conciliators.

It was, indeed, Lusase's position with relation to Kafelo that brought about his quarrel with Sapapula. Lusase, on meeting Kafelo at Kapapelo's, had bowed to him, and must have been uneasily aware that public opinion held that Kafelo 'had finished', had completed the cycle of chiefly rites, whereas Lusase was just 'the *chefe de posto's* boy'. It is unlikely that there would be among the Ovimbundu developed forms of the situation reported from some colonial areas by which one person acts as chief or headman *vis-à-vis* the government while another is the real chief or headman with effective power over the people, if only because so much of the content of chieftancy today is simply post work. Yet a chief differs from a government headman precisely because of the surviving prestige which clings to the capital village, the skulls of the dead chiefs, the titled ministers, and the drums, and it was such an expression of prestige which Sapapula gave to Kafelo and denied to Lusase. Not surprisingly Lusase reacted to this sharp evidence of the weakness of his position. In acting as he did, he made things worse; since he lacked any local means of imposing his will by force, or mobilizing moral support, he had to fall back on the post.

178 This weakening of the chieftancy is, of course, only part of the 127 general disintegration of the old social system. Sapapula, in personality and prestige, was the equal of any traditional head- [623] man in the neighbourhood, and was consulted by the chief and government headmen when fines or roadworkers were required from Epalanga. Yet it was Paulo and not Sapapula who launched the attack on Guilherme, an attack speedily supported

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by other villagers. Nor does residence in a village or sub-chiefdom compel or limit participation in a dispute. Neither Ndjoleya nor any of his kin participated in the dispute between Paulo and Guilherme. Gregorio came from Menga to support his friend Sapapula against Lusase, acting as a private individual, and not as the chief of Menga intervening in the internal politics of a neighbouring sub-chiefdom.

The social institutions participated in exclusively by Ovimbundu (i.e. the system of kinship and marriage and the local organization) do not provide machinery for resolving disputes. Therefore, binding decisions must be obtained from a representative of the 'civilized' society, and much importance attaches to setting out the details of the case in such a way as to gain the interest of this representative. It would seem likely from this that all cases will pass into the hands of the *chefe*, and that those 'natives' who are most closely linked to the post—the chief and the government headmen—will therefore be the most influential people in indigenous society. In fact, as the disputes show, this does not happen. Cases are taken to other 'civilized' persons—the priest Antonio Pires and the *soi-disant assimilado* Justino—and Lusase, instead of making up on the bureaucratic roundabouts what he has lost on the traditional swings, falls heavily off both.

The willingness of villagers to submit their cases to Justino and the mission rather than to the post is a result of the much closer personal contact which exists with them, and their lack of direct punitive sanctions. Any case referred to the *chefe* is thought liable to produce uncertain consequences. It was because of this that the people of Gumba did not dare to complain to the post about Lusase's usurpation; for this reason, too, Guilherme, knowing the *chefe* trusted him no more than any other native, sought reconciliation before getting to the post. The chief and government headman neither enjoy official confidence nor control access to the post.

On the level of the total Angolan society the State is obviously more powerful than the Church. On the local level the chief and government headmen have more executive power[11]

[11] The capacity to give orders backed by force; but this only applies to orders received from the post.

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than the catechists and 'elders of the school'; yet the weakness of the agents of the post before a local opposition led, not by such traditional figures as Kafelo and Sapapula, but by the school functionaries, has been demonstrated. The post accepts intervention by the mission in supporting disputants, and the mission is ready to help not only its disputants but any native who has a strong case—that is, it has a generalized relation of patronage to all natives.[12] Hence, since in a serious dispute people look round for a 'civilized' patron, the mission is the one most likely to be appealed to, and these appeals usually go through its local agents.

While the symbiosis of two societies, one ruling, the other ruled, is a common feature of modern Africa, the extremely limited nature of the role delegated by the administration to the native authority, the 'patron-client' tie linking 'civilized' persons to the natives, and the opportunity given to patrons to intervene in cases before the *chefe*, seem to be distinctive features of Portuguese colonization.[13]

The third aspect of the social structure mentioned in the introductory section was the role in disputes of kinship ties. It has been earlier noted that Sapapula's supporters regarded him as a victim of a concerted alliance by Guilherme, Kapapelo, Lusase, and Ndonga. In fact Lusase had avoided getting involved in the dispute between Guilherme and Paulo, had supported Sapapula against Kapapelo, and had disclaimed responsibility for Ndonga's act. The present social structure is not one in which groups of kin habitually co-operate;[14] and it is possible that this belief in a coalition against Sapapula reflects memories of the old social structure.

Kinship ties between individuals seem neither to restrain them from quarrelling nor to be liable to permanent disruption as a result of quarrels. By August 1956 Kasosi was once again

[12] It is felt in administrative circles that the advancement of the African is mainly the responsibility of the missions.

[13] Anybody who knows the Portuguese well will acknowledge the importance given to personal influence (*cunha*) and the lack of esteem for bureaucratic (in the Weberian sense) procedures.

[14] See Chapters IV and VII for details on the kinship cores and on general aspects of kinship. The support which Sapapula received was not confined to his own kinship core—thus Gregorio who enthusiastically supported Sapapula was not even a kinsman.

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villagers a certain, not very marked, respect, which may be increased by such factors as kinship ties between him and them, and his personal qualities.

Nor is the village itself clearly defined as a social unit. It does not possess any corporate rights over fishing and hunting sites, or control access to firewood gathering. A man may hold land in two villages. It is rarely that a village acts or is treated as a unit. The two main occasions on which the village is thus 'represented' are at marriages and in the context of the catechetical school. The party which goes from the bridegroom's village to the bride's represents her village, to the other village; at the wedding feast food is given out on large basket plates, one for each village represented among the guests.

The role of the catechetical school as representative of the village as a whole will be discussed in another chapter; here it should be noted that the ceremonial reception of visiting missionaries by the 'school people' of the village has been evidently copied to some extent from the welcome given to the bridegroom's party, and this has in turn copied certain features from the welcoming of missionaries—notably the use of speeches in Portuguese.

The hamlets[20] and isolated households do not indicate a modernizing 'individualistic' trend away from village life, since 'conservative' and 'progressive' people are to be found in both units of residence. The Ovimbundu, whether educated or illiterate, when talking about themselves (particularly in comparison with the Kimbundu of Northern Angola) emphasize that they are a village-dwelling people, and for them the real values of village life seem to be the sociability and mutual help that a man living among his kin can enjoy. By settling in a village one indicates where the pull of kinship ties is strongest rather than any particular allegiance to the village headman.

[20] I use this term for a settlement with less than four households.

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maize from these beds is for home consumption, and it comes at a time when maize supplies are running low, and some people have to rely on manioc. The *ombanda* type is sown in September and early October. Then the main fields (*ovapya*, plural of *epya*) are sown in October and November, and only after this is maize sown in the gardens round the houses. In December and January the people are busy hoeing the fields and in February the sowing of beans takes place, continuing into March. This is followed by the harvesting of the gardens in the village, and by the gathering of the maize in the fields, the maize then being placed in field huts to dry. This takes place in March and April, and with its ending the dry season has come.

The dry season is the time for travelling to see relatives and for getting married, since the burden of work is much reduced. May is a good time to clear the bush and then and in later months there is time to build houses. During the dry season there was much more chance of finding people at home, and there were far more festive occasions. This is also a time when men and women can practise crafts such as basketry, fish-trap making, pottery, and so on. In July, the maize dried in the field hut is pounded and brought back to the village, whence it is taken to the traders for sale. The pounding and carrying is often the work of parties of friends and relatives who are rewarded with beer. Occasionally somebody's maize is collected like this well into September, but most people finish in August. By August the grass has grown very high, and the firing of it is the beginning of large-scale hunts in which men and boys from several villages may join together. Hunts may be undertaken by individuals or by groups at other times of the year either as a hobby or to kill a destructive wild pig (in which case the hunt will be undertaken by a group of people). September is a good month for fishing. The fire has cleared the stream valleys which can now be sown, thus starting off the year's cycle again.

There is no shortage of land, and hence questions of land rights seldom come up in social relations. A village headman has no rights over land outside his village, and even within a village there are strips of bush from which a new garden can be cut. Land is very occasionally sold. For instance a man return-

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607 have a kinsman's obligation to lend money in case of need if he has it, and it is said that one should only work very occasionally with a brother-in-law. When I asked which a woman preferred, her husband or her brother, men told me that she liked both equally, and the fact that a man and his wife's brother often live close together confirms that there is relatively little for them to quarrel over. A woman does not establish close ties with any of her affines. Formerly, when a man died 587 leaving a widow (and according to some informants a small child) a patrilateral cross-cousin of his might marry her. My informants, however, denied that a sororate had existed even in the past.[27]

605 Cross-cousins are the relatives with whom solidarity is most strongly felt. When I asked about the relationship between full siblings I was told 'They like each other just as cross-cousins do.' Now that it is no longer customary for agnatic kin to live together, it is often said that it is good to live near cross-cousins.

608 Formerly funeral friendship (*ukwatjisoko*) was part of an alliance between sub-chiefdoms, which were not contiguous. Nowadays, since people move about the country, funeral friendships may be regarded as another category of kinship—when one asks a man his relationship with somebody else this may be given. There is a tendency to regard *vakwatjisoko*, funeral friends, as being a sort of cross-cousins since both per- [764] form funeral services. This survival of funeral friendship, as a tie between individuals and as a haphazard means of supplying undertakers, exists in Gumba. In Ndjandju, which is the sub-chiefdom in which the Missão Católica de Bimbe is built, the *tjisoko* relationship is now established between two neighbouring [628] villages and is apparently the normal means of performing burials, and the permitted theft of small livestock regularly takes place.

606 Between parents-in-law and children-in-law the relation was and is one of restraint. This is most marked in the relations between in-laws of opposite sex, and least between the mother-in-law and daughter-in-law.

[27] See Albino Alves under (*o*)*mingandjo*, for evidence of a sororate in some Umbundu areas.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13
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'Kimbundu', Imbangala, &c.). The Esele and the Mbuí, on the north-west, may belong to the Western Province but they have not yet been surely classified.[1]

These neighbouring peoples have been listed only as background for studying the Ovimbundu. Linguistically the Ovimbundu belong to South Africa even as their country geographically is a part of it. 'In respect of climate and vegetation Angola is essentially a borderland and may be regarded as the area of mergence of several distinct zones which attain their fullest development outside the Colony.'[2] Since the Benguela Highland comprises the north-western ridges of the South African sub-continental plateau, it is not surprising that its inhabitants should be the northernmost of the Southern Bantu.[3]

European Administration, Communications, Missions

A 631

As a Portuguese colony, Angola is governed under the Ministry of Colonies in Lisbon by a Governor-General whose residence is Luanda, the capital of the colony since 1576. For administrative purposes the colony is divided into five provinces, each with a governor in charge. These are divided into thirteen districts which in turn are divided into circumscriptions and these again into administrative areas. The country of the Ovimbundu is divided between the provinces of Benguela, Bié, and Huila in the districts of Benguela, Huambo, Cuanza-Sul, Bié, and Huila. 'Direct rule' is the method of administration and native political

A M 631

[1] Ibid.

[2] Walter Fitzgerald, *Africa, a Social, Economic and Political Geography of its Major Regions* (London: Methuen, 1934).

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[3] The general census of 1940 (*vide supra*, p. 7, note 2) showed the population as follows:

Whites . .	44,083
Mixed . .	28,035
Blacks . .	3,665,829
Others . .	63
	3,738,010 (op. cit., vol. i, p. 78 f.)

Of the various tribal divisions, the Ovimbundu ('Mbundo') are listed with 1,331,087 (op. cit., vol. ix, p. 23). Owing to the mistaken inclusion of several small tribal groups, this number should probably be reduced by at least 150,000, but on the other hand there are without doubt more Ovimbundu than this last number who have emigrated to neighbouring colonies and to the Union of South Africa.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

Ovimbundu and their neighbours. I have no tables representative of the Umbundu-speaking *diaspora* at the coast and in other outlying regions. There is an interesting and significant article in *Africa*[1] on those of these *diaspora* which are settled in the Mossamedes–Lubango area. The author has done all that could be expected within the limits of an article necessarily short, and it is to be hoped that subsequent writings may clear up matters left in doubt, especially with regard to the present social structure of the groups described.[2]

The social structure described in this chapter is that of the main body of the Ovimbundu. I may say that from observations and from a study of the genealogical tables collected, I have concluded that the structure of kinship and of social life is fairly homogeneous throughout the several tribes.

The Tribe

A complete enumeration of the Umbundu-speaking tribes or kingdoms with descriptions of their reciprocal relations is included in Chapter XII. Almost half of the twenty-two kingdoms were generally tributaries of one of the larger or more powerful kings, so that for practical purposes the Ovimbundu may be divided into eight or ten tribal groups. Although more than half of the Umbundu kingdoms may be said to be feudatories of the larger ones, it is nevertheless true that each of them had its own separate

[1] C. Estermann, 'Coutumes des Mbali du Sud d'Angola', *Africa*, Jan. 1939, pp. 74–86. The author states that their language is Kimbundu (of Luanda-Malange), but the examples which he gives show that although there are words borrowed from Kimbundu, from Portuguese, and from other sources, the structure both of verbs and of nouns and the method of 'Bantuization' of Portuguese words belong to Umbundu. These people may declare their language to be 'Kimbundu' in imitation of the European usage. So did the native 'Mohongo' taken to Paris by the Mission Rohan-Chabot (*Angola et Rhodesie*, Paris, 1914). I have personally ascertained that Umbundu is commonly spoken in Mossamedes and may also say that the samples of the language given in this article show it to be much the same as that spoken in the cities of Benguela, Lobito, &c. It would be better if an orthography more nearly like that recommended by the International African Institute were used. The term 'Mbali' (va Mbali, Mambari, Ovimbali) is an Umbundu term used for nearly one hundred years to designate those who imitate the Europeans or who live at or near the European towns which are collectively designated by the cognate term—*Lupali*. (For 'Mambari', &c., *vide* Livingstone, *Missionary Travels and Researches in South Africa*, pp. 91 f., 271, 324, &c.)

[2] e.g., who is the '*tante* de la jeune mariée ou la "marraine" des noces'? (op. cit., p. 78).

631 life and each could be taken as a unit complete in itself. Individual studies and comparisons of one with another would provide much valuable material. Familiarity with individuals and groups belong-
[184] ing to all the major tribal groups, and study of their folk-lore and customs has led me to conclude that as in language, so in social structure and in culture, the differences are of small account. In offering illustrative material, I shall give its tribal source.

The King

643 To describe the royal office and functions it would be necessary
177 to use the past tense. That reason, along with others, leads me to exclude this subject from the present study. Effective European occupation of the country and government by direct rule[1] have atrophied the royal office among the Ovimbundu until to-day kings survive as hardly more than living museum pieces. This being the case, I shall only enumerate the royal functions, very briefly characterize them, and pass on to describe other and living parts of the Umbundu social organism.

643 The principal functions of the royal office were:

776 1. *Religious.* The spirits of the king's ancestors were the principal national deities. The king was not only high priest but also the visible vice-regent and incarnation of the spirits. The
[778] sacrifices at the royal shrine, *kakokoto* (literally, at the skulls), the place of the royal skulls, were for the nation in order:

643 (*a*) *To control the elements*, i.e. to ensure a sufficient supply of
372 rain and avoid the dangers caused by hail, by lightning, &c. Also
789 to control fire by providing a new fire properly (ceremonially) kindled from which everyone took his fire. A king's reign was spoken of as 'during the Water of Lord So-and-so' (*Kovava a Ñalã Ngandi*), or 'during the Fire of Lord So-and-so' (*Kondalu ya Ñalã Ngandi*).

241 (*b*) *To ensure fertility*, toward which desideratum the royal
644 marriage had great influence. The queen's special province was agriculture and her kitchen was sanctified by human sacrifice to
[782] guarantee the national food supply. Ceremonially treated seed was distributed to be mixed with the seed of each granary.

[1] 'Direct rule' is applied in most parts of Africa where European settlement is the predominant consideration and also where centralized government is the ideal. 'Indirect rule' is best illustrated in the Gold Coast, Nigeria, Uganda, and Tanganyika Territory.

1: Childs M-S (1934-1940) 1940 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

This so-called democratic streak is also abundantly attested by folk-tales which give incidental and intimate pictures of petty details in the life of kings. There is one in which a king gives instructions for caring for his field while he is absent on a war party; another which tells of a fine levied on a man who while hiding up a tree accidentally urinated on a king; another, of a king who in a time of hunger himself climbed a tree for the *epáli* fruit and nearly starved when the prop by which he had climbed was taken away. Recent arrivals in Africa upon meeting some king just coming up from work in his fields may at first conclude, as did I, that this extreme of 'democracy' is due to the low estate to which royalty has fallen in these latter days, but these historical and legendary references show that this 'democracy', such as it is, is not a degeneration but an essential part of the picture. 643 174

With this I shall have to leave royalty. I trust that enough of the picture has been given, and enough also to show what inherent interest would lie in a study of such a Divine King who is at the same time a sort of 'democratic' leader. Should 'indirect rule' ever come to this part of Africa, a resurrection of the royal office would be the order of the day as has been the case in Tanganyika Territory and in the Belgian Congo. For this additional reason an early and a thorough treatment of the subject is to be desired.

Sub-Tribes

Each of the kings of the Ovimbundu was an overlord, for the tribe was made up of a number of sub-tribes called *otumbu* (plural), a word derived from the verb *oku tumbulala*, to transplant. Some of these princes, whether of the blood-royal or not, themselves established dynasties, while others were newly appointed and promoted from time to time. Some of the *otumbu* were ruled by court officials not of royal birth, while others belonged to separate dynasties some of which were natives of the respective regions, at least more anciently native than was the paramount royal family. The kingdom of Bailundu had about 200 *otumbu*, each of which had from 3 to 300 villages or more, and a number of the larger *otumbu* were themselves made up of several smaller 631 635 [643]

Lacerda in *Annaes Mar. e Col.*, 3 Ser., p. 488 f.; L. Magyar, *Reisen in Süd-Afrika* (tr. Hundslvy, Pesth, 1859), p. 278.

1: Childs M-S (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

631 ones. This situation was reported by Magyar, when he wrote,
635 'Quibanda (should be Civanda) to the east has 500 villages. The Chief has great power. He sends tribute every year to the king of Bailundu but is himself fully independent.'[1] Magyar described about 15 *atumbu* or '*ovikandachi*',[2] as he called them, of Bailundu.
[161] He estimated the population of Bailundu at 450,000, and for all the kingdoms of the Ovimbundu 1,200,000,[3] figures which are
[175] probably not very different from present-day facts. The report and description of the 'Capitania de Benguella' in 1799 said that the king of Bailundu dominated 2,056 villages; the king of Viye, 886; and the king of Ngalangi, 900; and listed their 'feudos' respectively as 82, 54, and 78.[4] My list of the Ngalangi *atumbu* shows 112. In Bailundu about 20 *atumbu* were ruled by members of the royal family, including heirs apparent or expectant, and the queen (*Inakulu*), who also had her own establishment.[5] About 20 were ruled by other court officials.

621 Most of these *atumbu* are still recognized as such or as *olombala*.[6]
622 Their decay has not been as great as that of the *ombala*[6] of their
177 liege lord, for they still fulfil certain functions in native life. They have also been given new functions by the administrative authorities.
[651] The minor chiefs as well as village headmen are all required to assist in assessing and collecting the native tax, and also in recruiting labour for government works and for contracts. In some areas they receive in return the remission of their own taxes. In some areas they are required to wear uniforms. On the dancing floors
[692] of most of these minor *olombala* courts are still held, justice determined, and (to a limited extent) fines 'eaten'. Such judgements are not officially recognized or allowed by the European authorities. The African, however, often finds that European courts do not meet his needs or accord with his concepts of justice.

[1] Magyar, op. cit., p. 389.

[2] Umbundu *ovikanjo* (plural), 'branches', a term which through commercial or European influence is applied to the *atumbu*.

[3] For these figures and for descriptions of the several kingdoms, see Magyar, op. cit., chap. ix.

[4] *Annaes Mar. e Col.*, 4a Ser., pp. 155 ff.

[5] Magyar, op. cit., p. 390.

[6] *Olombala*, plural of *ombala*, a capital village or chief's residence.

1: Childs M-S (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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TRIBAL DIVISIONS AND HISTORY OF THE OVIMBUNDU

Heavy continuous line indicates elevation of 1,500 metres (4,900 ft.).

Broken lines indicate Umbundu political boundaries.

⊙ Principal capital towns (olombale) numbered 1 to 14.

1a, 1b, 1c, 1d, 1e, 1f, 1g, 1h, tributaries of Bailundu; 2a, tributaries (Ngangula) of Viye; 3a, tributaries of Ngalangi; 3a, tributary of Civula; 4a, tributary of Wambu.

Portuguese presidios with dates of founding (numbered I—XIV).

[Facing p. 167]

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

172 fied towns of the natives as *quipacar*, a word adapted from the Umbundu word *ocimbaka*, meaning a wall. The word for the palisade with which their villages are now enclosed is *olambo*. Until evidence is adduced to the contrary, it seems that we must conclude that the stone-walled ruins found throughout the Umbundu country were built by Ovimbundu or by their immediate (Bantu) predecessors. As the ruins of Rhodesia and Mozambique seem to have been built by Bantu under Arab or Malay influences, so the Ovimbundu may have modelled their fortifications on the Portuguese forts which they had seen at Caconda, at the coast, along the Kuanza River, or even the walls with which individual traders fortified their establishments. These various forts were first built between 1575 and 1603, and it is probable that individual Ovimbundu themselves took part in some of the building operations.

Tribal Divisions of the Ovimbundu

•631 101 Before going on with Umbundu history let us fix in mind the principal kingdoms, tribes, or divisions of the Ovimbundu and their present location with reference to one another and to their other neighbours. This may most easily be seen with the aid of the accompanying map.[1] Their mutual relations prior to effective Portuguese occupation, whether of dependence or independence, are also shown. These are the divisions the Ovimbundu were found to have at the beginning of the present century, and these are the divisions still recognized by them, although they no longer retain their former political significance. It is of interest to find that according to Ladislau Magyar, who lived in and travelled through the Umbundu country from 1849 until 1857,[2] essentially these same divisions were then in existence. Under date of 1 August 1799 the Governor of Benguela reported on the 'provinces' and people in the hinterland.[3] It is significant to find that the divisions of the Ovimbundu were then essentially the same as they are

[1] Facing p. 164.

[2] Ladislau Magyar, *Reisen in Süd-Afrika* (tr. Hunfalvy), Pesth, 1859. Magyar made 'Quipeyo' (Cipeyo) a part of Bailundu and Sambu a sort of tributary. 'Quibala' (Civula), he said, paid tribute to 'Quiyaka' (Ciyaka).

[3] See *Annaes Maritimos e Coloniaes*, 4a Ser., pp. 147–61 (*parte não official*). This report made 'Quipeyo' tributary to Huambo, 'Onduru' (Ndulu) to Bailundu. Several kingdoms, later tributaries of Ciyaka, were listed as independent.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

101 to-day.[1] The principal Umbundu-speaking groups may be listed
631 as follows:

I. *Independent kingdoms* (in approximate order of their present population):

Mbailundu (*Bailundo*).
Viye (*Bie* or *Bihe*).
Wambu (*Huambo*, *Huamba*, or even *Hambo*).
Ciyaka (*Quiyaca* or *Quiaca*).
Ngalangi (*Galangue*).
Civula[2] (*Quibula*).
Ndulu[2] (*Andulo*, *Ondulo* or even *Ondura*).
Cingolo (*Quingolo*).
Kalukembe (*Caluquembe*, *Caluguembe*, or even *Caluqueme*).
Sambu[2] (*Sambo* or *Sambos*).
Ekekete (*Quiquete*).
Kakonda or Cilombo-coñoma (*Caconda* or *Quilombo*).
Citata (*Quitata*).

[636] II. *Kingdoms generally tributary but not integral parts of the kingdoms to which they owed allegiance*:

Kasongi (*Cassongue*)—generally a tributary of Bailundu.
Ngalanga (*Galanga*)—generally a tributary of Bailundu.
Civanda (*Quibanda*)—generally a tributary of Bailundu.
Namba—generally a tributary of Bailundu.
Sanga—generally a tributary of Bailundu.
Cenge (*Chiengue*)—generally a tributary of Bailundu.
Cipeyo (*Quipeyo*)—a tributary of Bailundu or Wambu.
Mbongo (*Bongo*)—generally a tributary of Wambu.
Elende (*Lende*)—generally a tributary of Ciyaka.

167 Nearly all of these groups are listed in the report of 1799 to
174 which we have referred, and many of them may be identified on the map of 1776. How long before that had they lived in these their present homes? Since it is already well established that none of the Southern Bantu are autochthonous, we shall not stop to ask

[1] Neither of these accounts mentioned Kasongi, which, according to genealogical evidence, is probably one of the most recently formed of the Umbundu-speaking groups. Both accounts made the non-Umbundu-speaking regions of 'Quibala' (Cipala), Mussende, and Cella tributaries of Bailundu. This was the state of affairs as late as 1893.

[2] See *supra*, p. 167, n. 2.

THE OVIMBUNDU OF ANGOLA

GROUPING AND DEMOGRAPHY

NOMENCLATURE

101 The name *Ovimbundu*, which possibly derives from the same root as *muntu*, seems to have been adopted as a tribal name in fairly recent times, the various groups being formerly known separately as Bailundu, Ciyaka, Viye etc. Correct rendering in native usage is Ovimbundu (singular *Ovimbundu*).[1] variations include mbundu, a'bundu, vimbundu, quimbundu, *kimbundu*[2] etc. *Mbundu* is correctly used adjectivally and to refer to the language.[3] In referring to the tribe the prefixes Ovi- and Ori- are usually retained today to avoid confusion with the *Kimbundu* (also called *Ambundu*, *Ngola* or *Ndongo*) tribe, located north of the Ovimbundu in Luanda, and related linguistically to the peoples of the Kongo group.[4]

The terms *Wakuanano* (*Vakuanano*, *Vaniano*, or *Nuano*) and *Ovimboli* (*Mbari*, *Mambari*, *Mboli*) are sometimes used in the literature as alternative names for the Ovimbundu. *Nuano* means "up-country", *Vakuanano* "people of the north".[5] Both van Balch[6] and Guthrie[7] give it as an alternative name for the Ovimbundu as a whole, while earlier writers restrict its application to one or other group within the tribe. Thus Serpa Pinto[8] and Capello and Ivens[9] use it for the inhabitants of the southern part of the plateau, between Cacundo and Cilengo country.[10] Magyar, on the other hand, uses it as an alternative name for the Bailundu group, who "because of their bravery, are celebrated far and wide, under the feared name *Nuano*".[11]

Mboli, or more correctly *Ovimboli*, is correctly an Umbundu term for those who imitate Europeans, or who live near European towns, which are collectively called *lapoli*.[12] It is frequently used by early writers for example, by Livingstone,[13] to refer to the Ovimbundu of the trading caravans.

GROUPING

101 The Ovimbundu do not have a centralised political organisation, but
631 are divided into a number of chiefdoms, each traditionally under the control of a paramount chief. The following list of chiefdoms is quoted

(1) Childs, 1949, p.xi.
(2) Magyar uses *kimbundu* for the Ovimbundu, but he does not confuse them, as Jaeport does, with the *kimbundu* people.
(3) Childs, loc. cit.
(4) Ibid. Capello and Ivens, 1882 (vol.I, p.25) use a'bundu for the language of the Ovimbundu, to distinguish it from the a'bundu of Luanda. They give *quimbundu* as an alternative for a'bundu, and state that it is a dialect of the *la-nano* language.
(5) Childs, personal communication.
(6) 1949, p.179. (7) 1948.
(8) 1881, vol.I, pp.96, 219. (9) 1882, vol.I, p.97.
(10) See also Chatelain, 1894, p.4 and Marquardsen 1920, map.
(11) 1859, p.385.
(12) Childs, 1949, p.10. (13) 1857, pp.91, 271, 384 etc. See also White, 1949.

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from Child's monograph,[1] alternative spellings which occur in the literature being given in brackets. These divisions closely resemble those described in 1799 by the Governor of Benguella,[2] and by Magyar, who lived in and travelled through Ovimbundu country from 1849 to 1857. Ovimbundu today still think of themselves as belonging to one or other of these groups, although owing to the decay of the power of the chiefs, the divisions have largely lost their political significance.[3] Of the twenty-two Ovimbundu chiefdoms, about half were generally tributary to one or other of the larger and more powerful groups, prior to effective Portuguese occupation.[4]

I. *Independent chiefdoms (in approximate order according to the size of their present populations).*

Bailundo	(Bailundo, bellundo, Balundo, Ballundo)
Viye	(Ovi Ye, Bie, Bihe, Biemo, Biheno)
Ponda	(Bunda, Bundo, Bunda)
Ciyaka	(Quiyaca, Quieca)
Ngalangi	(Galangue, Galange, Galangi, Ngalangi)
Civula	(Quibula)
Ndulu	(Andulo, Ondulo, Ondura)
Cingolo	(Quingulo)
Kalukembe	(Calucembe, Calugembe, Caluquembe)
Sumbu	(Sumbo, Sumbua)
Ekekete	(Quiquete)
Kakonda or Cilombo-comme	(Cacunda or Quilombo)
Citata	(Quitata)

II. *Chiefdoms generally tributary but not integral parts of the chiefdoms to which they owed allegiance.*

Kasongi[5]	(Cassongue).	Generally tributary to Bailundo.
Ngalanga	(Galanga)	" " " "
Civundo	(Quibundo)	" " " "
Numbu		" " " "
Sanga		" " " "
Cenge	(Chienge)	" " " "
Cipeyo	(Quipeyo)	" " " "
		or Ponda.
Mbango	(Bunge).	Generally tributary to Ponda.
Elonda	(Londa).	" " " Ciyaka.

LOCATION

The homeland of the Ovimbundu is the Benguella Highland in west central Angola. Strictly speaking, the Highland comprises those regions which have

(1) 1949, p. 168.
(2) Annaes Maritimos e Coloniaes, 4a. Ser., pp.147-161. (Quoted by Childs)
(3) Childs, personal communication.
(4) i.e. prior to about 1900.
(5) Kasongi is not mentioned by Magyar, and Childs believes it to be one of the most recently-formed groups of Ovimbundu.

3

an elevation of 4,000 feet or more, and the boundaries of Ovimbundu territory closely correspond with this area.[1] Ovimbundu are found also in regions adjoining the Highland, and Umbundu-speaking groups stretch as far as the Atlantic coast-line, between the towns of Loanda and Benguella. Ovimbundu country is divided between the Administrative Provinces of Bie, Benguella, and Huila, in the Districts of Benguella, Huambo, Cuanza Sul, Bie and Huila. 101 631

NEIGHBOURING TRIBES

To the east and south-east of the Ovimbundu are the Lunda, Luchazi, Mbundu, Mbwela, etc., for all of whom the Ovimbundu use the derogatory term Nyangela, or Ganguella in the Portuguese version.[2] The Ovimbundu attitude towards these people is illustrated in the proverb "as a grass hut is not a house, so an ovingangela is not a person".[3] This eastern region was a favourite hunting-ground for slave-traders from Viye and Bailundu. 161 [186]

To the north-east are the Chokwe, Bangala and Songo peoples, who are related to the Lunda group.[4]

To the west and south of the Ovimbundu are cattle-keeping peoples - the Ngandu, Ndombe, Handa, Cilenge, Cipungu, Huila, Nyaneka, Balondo and Humbi. These form a fairly homogeneous cultural group, and are in certain respects similar to the southern Ovimbundu.[5] Childs, following Estermann,[6] uses the collective name "Benguela" in referring to them, but in order to avoid confusion with the Benguela tribe to the north-east, this usage is not adopted here. Still further south are the Ambo and Herero, also cattle-keepers.

The tribes to the north of the Ovimbundu - Esela, Cipala, Lupolo, Ndongo or Kimbundu etc. - belong to the western or Angola 'cluster' of the Congo people.[7] The Esela (Wesela) and Muci (Ambuin) may also belong to this group, but have not yet been surely classified.[8] The northern tribes are sometimes collectively called by the Ovimbundu Olongoyo, a term which implies that they speak a language unintelligible to the Ovimbundu, but which has not the derogatory sense of "Nyangela".[9] Unlike the eastern peoples, the peoples to the south and north of the Ovimbundu are recognised as ovanu (people), or even ukuetu (comrades).[10] [186]

DENSITY

The 1940 Angola Census[11] estimates the number of Ovimbundu (Mbundu) as 1,331,087, of whom 694,504 are females, 636,583 males. Childs[12] points out that this number should be decreased by at least 150,000 owing to the erroneous inclusion of several small non-Ovimbundu tribal groups. 161

(1) See map.
(2) See McCulloch, 1951, p.52.
(3) The term used for "person" in the proverb is ovanu, a "potential" person - a word used for adolescents. See pp. below.
(4) The Bangala are sometimes held to be related to the Congo rather than the Lunda group.
(5) See below, p.
(6) 1935, pp.45-49.
(7) Childs, 1949, p.8.
(8) Ibid.
(9) Ibid. p.189.
(10) Ibid. p.o.
(11) Quoted by Mendes Correia, 1942, p.423, and Barbosa, 1948.
(12) 1949, p.9.

7

Magyar's account of the Viye legend is of interest since it suggests a direct link between the movements of the Ovimbundu ancestors and contemporary migrations of the Lunda in the Congo basin and western Angola.[1] Magyar relates that the forefathers of the Viye came from the land of the Muropo (or Lunda[2]) under the two chiefs Kingori and Schakambindi, conquered the Songo, and settled on the Luando river, engaging in agriculture between raids. The tribe subsequently sub-divided, one group going southwards to the Kuanza river, where Ngangela were living, to found the chiefdom of Viye.

Ngalangi tradition is the only one which attempts a creation myth. Feti, the first chief of Ngalangi, is said to have "come down from above"; having no wives, he went to a lagoon of the Kunene river and caught them as they came out of the reeds. Sona of Feti drove out the Ngangela from what is now Ngalangi country, and founded their principal village.[3] Childs estimates that this must have taken place in about 1750. The village was later attacked unsuccessfully by Ngangela, and this is one of the very few traditions which mention resistance met by the invaders.

Wambu. The first chief, Wambu Kalunga, is said to have come from Sela country, north-west of Bailundo. The Ngunda, who now live south-west of Umbundu country and are of Southern Bantu stock, were previously living in Wambu country. The founder of the Ciyaka royal family is said to have been a relative of Wambu Kalunga, and to have driven out the Nkumbe (also of Southern Bantu stock) from Ciyaka country, probably during the first half of the seventeenth century. Wambu Kalunga is said to have been also the progenitor of the dynasties of *Cingolo*, *Citota* or *Cikuao*, *Kalukembe*, *Elondo* and *Ekutete*.[4]

Kakonda, the founder of the Kakonda kingdom, was of northern stock, but born in Ngalangi, whence he was sold as a slave to Benguella. He escaped with his wife, Cilombo, and set up the present kingdom in about 1760.

Congi, *Songo*, *Nambo* and *Kasongi* on the northern flank of Bailundo have only recently become Umbundu-speaking. *Kasongi*, one of the largest Bailundo tributaries, has however had a line of Umbundu-speaking chiefs for more than 200 years. *Ciondo* was listed by Magyar as tributary to Ciyaka. *Kalukembe* is of interest in that it is more closely linked than other sections of the Ovimbundu with the Ngunda-Ambo group. Factors which point to this closer link include: the similarities in language between the two groups; the inheritance of the Kalukembe kingship in the maternal line, as among the Ngunda-Ambo group, and not in the paternal line, as among other Ovimbundu;[5] and the fact that the Ngunda-Ambo, who have an exogamous clan organisation, may marry in any of the related Ngunda-Ambo groups, and for this purpose include Kalukembe but not other Ovimbundu.[6]

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(1) McCulloch 1951, pp.492., 5202., 5722.
(2) Nina de Carvalho 1950, p.66.
(3) According to the same legend, where the Ngalangi rested their loads of food and household goods, sticks took root and became the sycamore figs which to this day encircle the capital village. This circle of trees is a characteristic of the older Ngangela villages.
(4) Childs op.cit., pp.178, 225.
(5) Although descent among Ovimbundu commoners is in the maternal line.
(6) Childs, op.cit., p.178.

39

advancement, will go to the head of their olusse to ask for his intercession with the spirits.[1] 613

As legal head of the village, the sekulu yimbo presides over both the more serious cases, which are held before the whole village on the dance-floor, and the simpler ones, which require the attendance only of those concerned, together with their respective elders, and may be taken up either in the onjango or in the headman's own courtyard. Hambly seems to suggest that all the section-heads act with the village headman as a kind of council, but does not give details. He states also that the olosekulu (sing. sekulu) of the village formerly had charge of trials for murder, theft, adultery, and arguments over land,[2] and points out that they were more active in the legal system than the chiefs.[3] This is even more true today, when the village court of justice continues to function in spite of political and administrative changes, although the offices of chiefs and to some extent of sub-chiefs have largely decayed. 622 623 691 [177]

Other functions of the village headman include: the distribution of land to the various families when new village sites are opened;[4] the direction of the communal fire-hunts;[5] and, today, the collecting of taxes from the villagers and the direction and organisation of labour to work on the roads.[6] But however numerous the headman's official duties, he usually finds some time to attend to his own affairs, whether he is a farmer, hunter, or trader.[7] 622 423 651 466 [463]

Succession to headmanship is usually from father to son or from elder to younger brother, "with only as much recognition of primogeniture as belongs to the general ... hierarchy of age."[8] Succession is, however, affected by the "democratic" tendencies in succession to chieftainship.[9] 622 693

The Chief (ovana or ovos)[10]

The Ovimbundu are grouped in 22 chiefdoms, of which half were in the past generally tributary to the more powerful chiefs.[11] At the same time each chiefdom had its separate government and could be considered as a unit in itself. Effective European occupation and direct rule have atrophied the chiefly office among the Ovimbundu, until today chiefs survive as little more than "living museum pieces".[12] Childs[13] enumerates the functions of the chiefly office as follows: 631 643 [177]

(a) *Religious.* The chief's ancestral spirits were the principal chiefdom deities, and the king was high-priest as well as the visible "vice-regent and incarnation" of the spirits. 643 773 769

(1) Childs, personal communication.
(2) The maternal uncle is responsible for settling disputes over property which occur within the olusse. (Hambly op.cit., p.200).
(3) Ibid. (4) Ibid.
(5) Graham, op.cit., p.115. (6) Ibid., p.121.
(7) Childs, op.cit., p.30. (8) Ibid., p.44.
(9) Ibid.
(10) Ovana means chief or king. Ovos is the personalized form used with the name. This the Portuguese writers have corrupted into ovos or ovbo. (Childs, personal communication)
(11) See above, p.2.
(12) Childs, op.cit., p.30. (13) Ibid.

lives of chiefs.[1]

The chief's council and court 641

It has been noted that there is a chiefdom council responsible for electing the chief or deposing him, and for sitting with him in law cases. The composition of this council has not been clearly described.[2]

The Sub-chief

The chiefdom[3] was made up of a number of sub-chiefdoms called *otumbu* (sing. *etumbu*); Bailundu had about 200 *otumbu*, each of which had from 3 to more than 300 villages, while a number of the larger *otumbu* were themselves made up of smaller ones. About 20 *otumbu* were ruled by members of the chiefly family, including heirs apparent or expectant, and the chief's wife *(inshala)* had also her own sub-chiefdom.[4] Others were ruled by court officials not of royal birth, who sometimes themselves established dynasties, others again by dynasties native to the respective regions, or at least dynasties longer resident in the area than the chiefly family. Villages of sub-chiefs, like those of chiefs, are known as *olombala*. Most of the *otumbu* are still recognised, and the sub-chiefs have retained more of their old functions than have the chiefs, and have in addition been given new functions. They as well as village headmen are required to assist in assessing and collecting native tax,[5] and also in recruiting labour for government work and for contracts. In some areas they receive in return the remission of their own taxes. On the dancing floor of most of their *olombala* cases are still heard, judgments given and fines received, although such judgments are not officially recognised or allowed by the European authorities.[6]

643 631 [177] [651] [692]

LAW

Courts

Very little information is available. We are told that certain disputes, e.g. concerning inheritance, are settled within the *olonas*;[7] that in the village cases are tried by a council which apparently consists of the section-heads under the leadership of the village headman;[8] and that these village courts continue to function; that certain cases (unspecified) are still unofficially heard in the courts of the sub-chiefs; and that prior to European occupation the paramount chief's decision was final.

691 693

(1) Ibid., p.23. But chiefs were treated with respect; Hambly (1934, p.214) notes that the ancient custom was for commoners to fall on their knees when greeting a chief, and today this still applies to women and children although less often to men.

(2) See Serpa Pinto, 1881, p.167.

(3) Most writers use "kingdom" and "king"; "chief" when used here without qualification refers always to the paramount chief of one of the 22 chiefdoms.

(4) Mayer, 1951, pp.189f, also quoted by Childs, op.cit., p.24.

(5) The amount of the tax levied on all males from 16 years to pay Aps. 300,000 annually. As noted by Childs (p.215-6), it has been steadily increasing. Opportunities for earning are comparatively small in Angola, and now for lack of work, but because of "contract labour" required of all males in addition to taxes. Payment for "contract labour" is considerably below current wages, and it is a great hindrance to productive agricultural activities. (Childs, personal communication)

(6) Childs, op.cit., pp.24-5.

(7) Hambly, (2) 1934, p.200.

(8) See above, p.29.

613 mai (or ôluisa) mean "family of my mother." These terms seem to indicate a bilateral rather than a unilateral lineage. Inquiry did not show that there were totems for the mother's or the father's people, or that marriage into any particular local group was com-
631 manded or enjoined. A village is a unit under the administration of a chief (*sekulu*) and as such is part of a large group of villages forming a kingdom ruled by a king (*ocoso*), but such village units are concerned with government and warfare, not with exogamy.

613 565 In tracing descent an Ocimbundu gives the names of relatives of both the father and mother, but commoners are unlikely to know the names of their relatives beyond the grandparent class. The children of a king were at one time able to recite many generations
[582] of ancestors along both parental lines. But if the king had married a commoner, as he was allowed to do after choosing his first wife from the royal line, the children knew only the genealogy of their father. This is obvious since the commoner mother would not be likely to know her line of descent. The son of a village chief (*sekulu*) may marry a commoner, but, according to Ngonga, the *sekulu*, his father, "would have a very good look at her."

582 565 Ngonga had not heard of the marriage of brothers and sisters, not even in the royal family; the idea of such a union was new and repulsive to him. In Umbundu society there would be no necessity for such a marriage as that of brother and sister or other close relative, because members of a royal family of one part of the country could intermarry with members of a royal family in some area far away. There might, for example, be marriages between the royal families of Bailundu and Ngalangi, which are two principal kingships of the Ovimbundu confederacy.

835 684 When asked what would be the fate of a man who committed incest with his blood daughter or uterine sister, Ngonga said he would be killed by his brother or by his mother's brother. If he escaped he would have to go far away so that his people could never see him again. If a fine were accepted for incest, the culprit would have to pay his own kin "because he had shamed them."

601 Table A, Ngonga's Own Generation, calls attention to a plurality of terms for brother and sister according to the relative ages of the speaker and the person addressed. Moreover, there is a term for direct address and another which is used when speaking of a brother or sister.

Ngonga was questioned with regard to forms of address for his brothers and sisters other than the children of his uterine mother.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

Bailundo.[13] On the kinship system, however, I was even more disappointed. The information which I was given on the matrilineal groups formerly existing was much less than that provided by Hastings,[14] or by Childs,[15] and I have therefore not been able to obtain the detail for which I had hoped on the double-descent system. 121

Like all anthropologists I had a certain number of difficulties in making contact with the people, and to these were added the problems of finding underlying consistencies in a changing society. The Ovimbundu are not interested in genealogies and did not see why I was. My first attempts to take village censuses were regarded with great suspicion, and more than once people refused to give their names. Kinship terms and norms seemed to be and were very confused. Various matters, such as surviving pagan rituals, were concealed from me. My personal relations with the people were very happy, however, and almost everybody who came to know me was prepared to answer my questions at length. 121 123 [62]

My two great problems in the field were to obtain information on the old social structure (which I already knew in outline from the written material), and to see how the present-day society worked. The material in this thesis will be laid out in the following way. The first part will give an outline of Umbundu social structure as it was in the period 1874–1911,[16] that is, the era of the rubber trade. The second part will give a series of chapters on present day Umbundu society, which will provide the information necessary for an understanding of the mechanisms of social control. In the third part a detailed discussion of social control is made, beginning with an examination of a number of disputes. It is shown how the network of kinship and marriage ties in a neighbourhood provide local continuity and stability, while the wider units in which the Ovimbundu now participate are of European origin and control. 121 128

[13] Cassongue and Cela were tributary to Bailundo but were not incorporated into the actual kingdom (Childs, p. 168). Cassongue people say that they are not Va-Mbailundu. [63]

[14] Hastings, Chapter VI.

[15] Hastings gives more information than Childs on the matrilineal kin group.

[16] The period of the rubber trade. Childs, pp. 202–15.

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Adapted from the map facing page 167 in Childs' *Umbundu Kinship and Character.*

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[1874-1911]

rather than any political alliance or opposition, which related the Ovimbundu as a whole to the Portuguese and the other tribes. Informants who remember 'the time of the rubber' talk about it with much more interest and much more detail than about any other aspect of the past, and it is far easier to make an ordered picture out of the narratives of the caravan journeys than to fill in the gaps in the descriptions of the political and kinship systems provided by Childs and Hastings.[57]

Politically the Ovimbundu were divided, as has been said, into several kingdoms. Bailundo, the largest of the kingdoms was divided, according to Childs into about 200 sub-chiefdoms. As it had about half a million inhabitants this would give an average population of about 2,500. While the kingdoms seem to have been more or less stable in number and boundaries from the end of the eighteenth century, the number of sub-chiefdoms seems to have increased. Thus an official Portuguese estimate made in 1799 gives Bailundo as having only 82 sub-chiefdoms, and Galangue, where Childs counted 112 sub-chiefdoms, as having 78. The sub-chiefdom paid tribute to the king, sent men for his armies, and recognized his court as the supreme arbitrator. Some sub-chiefdoms were held by ministers or relatives of the king.[58]

It is, however, not easy on the sparse detail available to decide how much autonomy the sub-chiefdoms really had. Gumba, the area where I worked, was a sub-chiefdom of the Bailundo kingdom, albeit on the north-western frontier, neighbouring Cassongue and Cela, where the people did not call themselves Va-Mbailundu, though their rulers acknowledged the suzerainty of the king of Bailundo. Old men told me of raids from Bailundo for slaves, but I cannot say if this was the result of the period of disorder mentioned, or whether sub-chiefdoms on the border of a kingdom gave only nominal submission and received only nominal protection. In the area where I worked,

[57] This is not intended as a personal reflection on Dr. Childs and the late Dr. Hastings, both of whom deserve the highest praise for their work and for their obvious devotion to the Ovimbundu. Hastings devoted far more space to the magico-religious field than to the kinship system. Likewise Childs's description of kinship is much shorter, much less detailed, and much less satisfactory than his account of childhood and adolescence, or the really outstanding historical chapter.

[58] Magyar, pp. 383–92; Childs, pp. 23–24.

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[1874-1911]

631 634 at least, the effective unit of law and self-defence was formerly the sub-chiefdom.[59]

634 643 In both sub-chiefdom and kingdom the chief (a term used here for both king and sub-chief) passed through a cycle of rites to become truly chief and was surrounded, assisted, and [645] checked by titled ministers.[60] The future chief was selected from persons of chiefly stock. My informants stated that a new chief might be related either patrilineally or matrilineally to former chiefs; all other sources state that the chiefdom can only be held by somebody *patrilineally* of chiefly blood, with the exception of Santos Brandão writing on the Huambo kingdom.[61] The selection was the responsibility of the Mwekalia, whose role was to represent the people *vis-à-vis* the king, an opposition which is expressed in the Umbundu saying 'the chief is a guest, the Mwekalia is a man of the country'. When asked to explain this saying, the Ovimbundu point out that many chiefs come from outside the chiefdom, and also that 'If the chief does something wrong, we can send him away'.[62]

In such a constitutional deposition of the chief which nineteenth century observers describe as taking place fairly frequently,[63] the main responsibility fell on the Mwekalia. The cycle of royal rites consisted of the ceremonial entry of the chief into his capital and his taking of a new name, the rebuilding of certain shrines, a large-scale hunt, the building of an archway intended as a magical defence to the capital, and finally an act

[59] Informants.

[60] For the king and his ministers see especially Hastings, pp. 29–71 (based on Bailundo), and for other details of the royal court see Serpa Pinto, p. 167 (based on Bie).

[61] For references to patrilineal succession see Serpa Pinto, p. 159, Capello and Ivens, *From Benguella to the Territory of Yacca* (London, 1882), p. 81, Hastings, p. 42, Childs, p. 22. Santos Brandão (*Mensário Administrativo*, July–August, 1950) gives a list of the kings of Huambo where there had been two successive royal lines, and this shows several cases of succession by sisters' sons. (The Umbundu text he gives makes this quite clear.)

[62] The underlying idea is not so much that the chiefly stock is of immigrant descent but rather that the people of one chiefdom call somebody from outside to rule over them, who can be sent away if he misbehaves. Of course people living within a chiefdom are not excluded, but this point about the chief being a stranger is very strongly emphasized.

[63] Childs, pp. 22–23 and references given there.

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of ritual cannibalism (*oku lia ekongo*) after which he could not be deposed.[64]

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Hastings in describing the principal ministers of the Bailundo court states that the Mwekalia and the Galamboli or Ngambole (whose function was to remember traditions) were representative of the indigenous pre-Jaga stock, the Kesongo who was the war leader was a slave from another tribe, and the Otjinduli was of immigrant stock, and points out that these represent the three sources from which the Ovimbundu sprang.[65]

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At the sub-chiefdom level some of the titles found in the kingdoms would be found combined, and the chief's court, where cases were judged, was composed both of titled ministers living at the chief's village and of the village headmen (some of whom were also title-holders). The sub-chief represented his people to the outer world, led them in communal ritual and judged, with his councillors,[66] their disputes. Hastings describes a case thus: 'When all the members of the court are seated in a circle, with an empty space in the centre, the plaintiff's counsel then relates the case, after which the lawyer for the defendant does likewise for his side. The chief in turn makes general comments. Lusenje, the official, whose duty it is to keep order at court and to announce the speakers, then calls on the accuser to come forward and make his statement.'[67]

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While the sub-chiefdom was the largest unit in which law and order reigned undisputed, there existed alliances and cross-cutting relationships providing a contact outside its area. There was the *tjisoko* alliance which existed between two sub-chiefdoms which were separated by a third. Gumba sub-chiefdom was thus allied to Ndjandju from which it was separated by Chicunda, and messengers from Gumba and Ndjandju travelled together to Bailundo once a year to carry tribute. Apparently a sub-chiefdom had only one *tjisoko* partner. The relationship was one of funeral friendship; *vakwatjisoko* (*tjisoko* partners) undertook the burial of those who died without kinsfolk and also ordinary

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[64] This is based on information from Gumba. See also Magyar, pp. 270–77; Hastings, pp. 42–45; Childs p. 21.

[65] Hastings, p. 60.

[66] Informants.

[67] Hastings, pp. 142–43.

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[1874-1914]

631 764 funerals (though these burials could be undertaken by the cross-cousins of the deceased). When *vakwatjisoko* came to their partner-chiefdom for a funeral they had the right to steal small live-stock, such as chickens, or pigeons, but not cattle, goats, or [837] pigs. An *ukwatjisoko* could sleep with the wives of his *vakwatjisoko* partners without being sued for damages.[68]

631 [602] The ties of kinship and affinity crossed the boundaries of the sub-chiefdoms and even of the kingdoms.[69] The members [463] [574] of the three spirit-protected professions, blacksmithing, divining, and hunting recognized obligations of hospitality to co-professionals from other parts of the country.[70] Again the caravans were so large that they must have involved people [437] from many sub-chiefdoms, which presupposes a wide range of contacts.

182 It may be said that the picture given here is contradictory and inadequate. How can the existence of large kingdoms be reconciled to the extreme insecurity described by old men? How do the wealthy caravan organizers fit into the political system? What sort of politics were there in the kingdoms? It is not easy to answer these questions owing to the lack of evidence, and, probably, because the kingdoms were already in decline during the latter part of the rubber trade period. Indeed, the impression that accounts of the Ovimbundu in the nineteenth century give is that of adventure, battle, commerce, migration —a vigorous rather than a stable society.[71]

61 114 The kinship system is perhaps the field of Umbundu society which has aroused most interest among anthropologists. Childs and Hastings have written much that is interesting on the old double-descent grouping but as, with the kinship system, the form has been described rather than the functioning and it is

[68] Informants. The account in Childs, pp. 114–15 differs considerably. For this institution elsewhere in Angola see Estermann, 'Clans et alliances de clans', *Anthropos*, 1952.

[69] Childs, p. 54.

[70] Informants.

[71] Magyar describes the king and his courtiers as being extremely despotic towards the villagers, and states that their despotism depended on their having a standing military force called 'Sons of the Elephant' (pp. 278–80). Later accounts do not mention this, and Childs notes (p. 209) that at the height of the rubber trade it was more difficult for the kings to recruit armies for their wars.

[1874-1911]

THE OVIMBUNDU UNDER TWO SOVEREIGNTIES

593 It was then the father who normally exercised authority over
591 a boy, and on the father's death a child or youth would join the household of a father's brother. Yet the right of a sister's son to
604 the inheritance of the movable property and to grants from his mother's brother was counterbalanced by the latter's right to sell his uterine nephew into slavery, a fate from which the father could save his son by ransoming him, in which case the mother's brother would no longer have this right.[86] In this society, the mother's brother—sister's son relationship was fundamentally an economic one, in which the sister's son received assistance in the trade and inherited his uncle's gains in this trade, but could himself be transformed into a source of capital.

182 I now summarize the evidence on Umbundu social control and its relation with the trading economy. It is clear that the Ovimbundu belonged to the number of those African societies
[642] with pyramidal[87] political systems and formal codes and courts of law, even though there exists uncertainty as to the relative power of the kingdoms and the sub-chiefdoms. Social control
182 also operated through the kinship system, authority at the
613 village level being in the hands of the head of the patrilineal group backed by the public opinion expressed in the men's house, and the dispersed matrilineal groups having sanctions in the right of sale of a sister's son and in the accusations of sorcery brought against those who failed to use wealth to aid
182 their relatives. For the caravan trade to have attained the
631 importance it did there must also have existed something of a *pax Umbunduca* stimulated by the existence of such ties as that between *tjisoko* partners and the 'international' hospitality shown to diviners, hunters, and smiths. Evidence of this *pax Umbunduca* is provided by the organization of caravans, and by the establishment of marriage ties between persons in different kingdoms, and between different royal houses.[88]
[721] However, warfare was not unknown between the different

[86] Childs, p. 44, and my informants.

[87] See Fortes and Evans-Pritchard, Introduction to *African Political Systems*.

[88] Hastings (p. 1) notes a marriage between the daughter of a king of Bie and Ekwikwi, king of Bailundo (1876–95). Childs (p. 171) notes that Kalukulunu, king of Ndulu, was a sister's son of a king of Bailundo.

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kingdoms of the Ovimbundu, though more frequently perhaps it was made against the non-Umbundu peoples.[89]

The question of the influence of the trade provides interesting opportunities for comparison. The Ovimbundu were the southernmost of the peoples who in the nineteenth century participated in the trade between the Europeans of the West African coast and the peoples of the interior.[90] In some ways the Ovimbundu seem to have been less influenced by it than were some of the peoples further north. The Ovimbundu did not develop genuine patterns of urban life as in Dahomey or Benin.[91]

Three explanations can be offered for the relative failure of associational groups and urban society to develop. Umbundu crafts were much inferior to those found along the coast of the Gulf of Guinea; there was no indigenous weaving industry, for instance, and the goods which the caravans carried to the interior were all of European or American origin, cloths, guns, and rum.[92] For these goods the Ovimbundu were dependent on the Portuguese settled at the coast or in the Highland and this meant that the Ovimbundu were far from economic autonomy. Again the trade had a relatively short time span—the real boom period lasted only from 1886 to 1900, and earlier on in the 1840's when the beeswax, ivory, and slave trade was flourishing, the Ovimbundu had plenty of time for warfare.

It would, however, be a grave mistake to think that trade had only a marginal influence on Umbundu society. It has been suggested that the form of the double-descent system owes its origin to the necessity to isolate economic relations from other social fields. In the sphere of ritual, there are some remarkable copies of European practices—for instance the holding of a feast in honour of the ancestors at Christmas-time.[93] Many ritual concepts are related to the explanation of business

[89] For information on Umbundu warfare see Magyar, pp. 277–80 and Serpa Pinto, pp. 177–9.

[90] See Balandier, *Sociologie Actuelle de l'Afrique Noire*, Paris, 1955, for a discussion of social change in other areas which had experienced a trade of a similar sort.

[91] For Dahomey see M. J. Herskovits, *Dahomey*, New York, 1938. For Benin see R. Bradbury, *The Benin Kingdom* (Ethnographic Survey of Africa), London, 1957.

[92] Childs, p. 206.

[93] Informants.

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THE CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

Men can go out to work in three ways. By going to look for work in a city or on a plantation, by being recruited in his village by a travelling labour recruiter (*angariador*), or by being recruited through the post for military service or for contract labour (a period of a year's non-voluntary work). 464

Men who are away at work may keep in touch with their kin by letters. These are sent to the nearest Catholic or Protestant mission station according to the religious sympathies of the sender and his kin and are sent from there to the villages. 205

Angola forms an Overseas Province of Portugal, and is therefore subject to the Overseas Ministry in Lisbon. The Overseas Provinces of Portugal are officially declared to be integral parts of Portugal, which is regarded as a nation existing in Europe, Africa, and Asia. The expression 'Here also is Portugal' is often heard in Angola. 648

The inhabitants of Angola are in legal status divided into 'civilized' persons, whether white, mulatto, or black, with Portuguese citizenship, and Portuguese 'natives' or 'uncivilized' persons,[7] this latter category including some 3,000 'uncivilized' mulattoes. The 1950 census gave Angola a total population of 4,145,266 of whom 135,355 were 'civilized'. This category was composed of 78,826 whites, 26,335 mulattoes, and 30,089 Africans, plus a balance of 105 presumably Goans. 641 162

The 'natives' are, unlike the 'civilized', subject to the Labour Code. There is no Native Legal Code, nor does Portuguese law apply to 'natives'. Administrative officers may apply Portuguese law, or native custom as known to them, or their own judgement. 641

The administration is headed by the Governor-General who resides at Luanda. The province of Angola is divided into districts each headed by a district governor. Both the governors-general and the district governors have usually distinguished themselves in the Services or in a legal career. Members of the administrative service are not usually promoted to these posts, although they may attain such positions as that of Secretary of Native Affairs. 631

The districts are in turn sub-divided into *concelhos* (a term

[7] By a law of 1961 Portuguese citizenship has been made universal.

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Some ten years later he was allowed to return to Gumba but died on the way back. 173 634

His successor was Simbwyikoka, who was a mother's brother's son of Mbati, that is in Umbundu terminology a 'son'. Umbundu rules of succession allow anybody to succeed to a chiefdom who is paternally or maternally related to a previous chief, whether or not this relationship is genealogically traceable.[3]

Simbwyikoka was apparently nominated to act as regent during Mbati's absence, and as he did not complete the full cycle of chiefly rites he did not have quite the same prestige among the people as a chief in his own right who 'had finished', that is, had gone through all the rites. It was he who was the last ruler of Gumba to send the annual tribute in the form of a sack of fish to Bailundo, since it was a little after the time of his accession that Kandimba[4] (or Njahulu), the last of the Bailundo royal house to have any real authority over the kingdom, died. [631]

Simbwyikoka had lived at the hamlet of Kamballa in Gumba. When he took up office he did not settle at Mbati's village of Katembo, but established, or rather re-established, as a previous chief had ruled there, his capital[5] on the top of the narrow ridge which cuts off the greater part of Gumba from access by road. It was not possible for many people to settle on this site. Accordingly Simbwyikoka encouraged people to settle at the foot of the ridge, swelling the population of an already existing village. This was called Mwekalia from the headman, who held the office of Mwekalia[6] another ministerial title associated with the chiefly court. 173 634 100

In 1938 Simbwyikoka was deposed by the *chefe* for shielding his dependents from the operation of 'contract labour' (administrative recruitment of non-voluntary labour). About 1944 [648]

[3] My informants. This means that within (and outside) any sub-chiefdom there are a number of potential heirs who in no way receive any special status or form any kind of corporate group from this fact.

[4] Reigned at Bailundo 1911–35. Childs, p. 229

[5] In Umbundu Ombala, often transcribed in Portuguese as Embala.

[6] For the role of Mwekalia see Hastings, p. 59. His statement that the office is matrilineally inherited was not confirmed by my informants. It seems that it can be inherited either patrilineally or matrilineally. The man who was known as Mwekalia and had been headman of the village of that name did not function as such at the chief's court during my stay. A kinsman of his, Ngombe, acted as Mwekalia at the court of Lusase. [114]

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neighbourhood and will explain his choice of residence by quoting the names of one or more of these; yet the weaving together of so many strands of kinship and affinity, ultimately through marriage links, is what gives the local population its relative degree of stability. It should be emphasized that the integration established within a village by the network of kinship and affinal ties is dependent on the integration created by the same amorphous network which runs through and beyond the sub-chiefdom. It is this network into which the individual is woven by multiple ties that absorbs the neo-matrilineal pull apparent to some degree in choice of residence and keeps the system essentially cognatic.

The use of the word *familia* reflects this situation. A man may say of a particular senior kinsman '*He is my familia*', that is, my kinsman, my most important kinsman with whom I have settled, yet also he may say 'My *familia* is in Cela', that is, the greater part of my kinsmen live in Cela. When Bartolomeu explained that he had settled where he did because of Lusase, he was perhaps combining the two kinds of references. He had settled in Gumba because he had a large number of kinsmen—there among whom Lusase was pre-eminent. A man explaining the locality of his *familia* in the wider sense will associate it with a particular sub-chiefdom—'My family is all in Menga'—when he is outside it; when he is in it he is more likely to refer to a particular village.

Although individuals living in a village may have come there through several kinship sources yet the majority of them will probably have some kinship or affinal tie with the traditional headman. This collection of individual ties does not provide the headman with a body of followers, nor is having a large number of dependants a value of contemporary Umbundu culture. If it were felt that the best thing to be in life is the patron of a body of kinsmen and followers, headmanship would survive as a predominant influence in local life despite the collapse of its political and legal responsibilities. In fact not even old men feel this way.

The idea of the village as a corporate group with a jural and political personality rather than a residential unit has not survived the break-up of agnatic solidarity, the disappearance

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occurs, whether in intention as declared by Sapapula and Naboka, as accomplished as claimed by Kapapelo, as the substance of the conflict between the two men.

To sum up, Kapapelo had originally been aligned with his kinsman Guilherme against Sapapula, who had then shown hostility to Kapapelo, and especially to his wife's brother Kussumula. The latter had counter-attacked by accusing Sapapula before Justino, and there the matter might have rested if Kapapelo had not tried to attack Sapapula again, by making the threat to commit suicide at his kitchen door. This led to the moot at which the charge of attempted adultery was made, and at which Sapapula intended to, and succeeded in, taming Kapapelo.

4. *Lusase, Sapapula, and Luanga*

In this case, individuals previously met, notably Sapapula, and Lusase reappear, this time as enemies. The principal scenes are first an attempt by a kinsman of Lusase's to recover a debt from Sapapula, secondly an attack by Lusase on Sapapula, thirdly a decision by the *chefe de posto* in favour of Sapapula, fourthly a fresh complaint to the post by Luanga against Lusase, fifthly a post decision in favour of Luanga, sixthly and finally reconciliation of Luanga and Lusase.

This chain of disputes had begun actually before the episodes mentioned in the last case. On the 19th February, Ndonga a kinsman of Lusase (whom he had helped to power), arrived in Epalanga and tied up Sapapula, as a result of the latter not paying a debt. I produced the money and for the present no more was heard of it. Lusase said that he did not know what went on in the villages, when the matter was mentioned to him.

On 13th May, Simbwyikoka, a former chief whose village was near Sapapula's, was holding a ceremony in which a bull had been killed. Sapapula had taken part in the ceremony and had been responsible for sending a leg of the bull (the chief's traditional prerogative) not to Lusase but to Kafelo, who, although he had been deposed in 1954, had the advantage over Lusase of having passed through the royal rituals, and

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having been elected according to traditional rules. Lusase was angry at this, turned up at the ceremony, and attacked Sapapula.

The following morning Epalanga buzzed with indignation. Gregorio, the chief of Menga, and Mandumba, Sapapula's son, had arrived at Epalanga to express their support, and Gregorio asked me[9] to write a letter to the Mission to get its support against Lusase at the post. I said that I would go to the chief's village to persuade Lusase to seek a reconciliation. The elder Wasuka, a cross-cousin of Sapapula, declared that even if Lusase offered five cattle in compensation they would not be accepted, and Sapapula's supporters portrayed him as a much injured man, repeatedly the victim of the Guilherme, Kapapelo, Lusase, Ndonga clique. My offer to go to the chief's village fell through when we heard that Lusase was now no longer there, but near, apparently at Simbwyikoka's.

I suggested that the moot should be held at Simbwyikoka's since the case had begun there; the others said 'No, let him come over here.' The crowd settled down in the open space before my house. News was then brought to us that Lusase refused to come over and insisted on the people coming to him, declaring that he ruled all, and did not obey the anthropologist but only the *chefe*. Accordingly everybody got up and walked over to Simbwyikoka's. Here we leant that Lusase had fled. Kambungo[10], an elder of Menga and kinsmen of Sapapula, declared that somebody who behaved like this could not be chief. Gregorio the chief of Menga became involved in an argument with Ndonga, who he said was responsible for installing Lusase. This Ndonga denied. This, incidentally, was the first time that I had heard that Lusase was not properly elected. As previously noted on the fall of Kafelo, Lusase had arrived at the post and announced himself as being the new chief. The Gumba people did not protest about this for fear of possible reactions from the post.

It now became known that Lusase could not be found.

[9] It may be suggested that my interventions were not in accordance with anthropological etiquette. It is difficult to see what else I could have done; it is, after all, the local custom for 'civilised' persons to provide letters of recommendation, and a refusal on my part would not have been understood.

[10] He has been mentioned in Chapter V.

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People said that he had fled to the house of his sister's son Guilherme en route for the post; Gregorio now said to me that Lusase had made advances to Nahoka, trying to seduce her by saying that Sapapula was old.

On the same day Sapapula left for the post with, as his witnesses, Nahoka and Wasuka carrying a letter of recommendation from me. At the post the *chefe* took his part and told Lusase 'Sapapula is your father' and made Lusase kneel down to seek pardon. Sapapula said that he wished to move across the river into Menga, where he had formerly lived. The *chefe* told him to stay at Epalanga (because of the anthropologist's presence there), but transferred Epalanga administratively from Gumba to Chicunda. This settlement pleased the Epalanga people. It may be added that had Sapapula actually crossed over, a number of householders, including Paulo, would not have followed him.

Despite the *chefe's* acts it was not certain whether the change was to be given effect immediately or only after the *chefe's* annual visit; hence some more wrangling took place over the question of where Epalanga was situated for such purposes as the payment of fines for rum-brewing.

Luanga, who shared with Sapapula the title of Epalanga, came to my house on the night of the 27th June to ask for a letter to the *chefe de posto*. He told me that Lusase wanted to take away his title of Epalanga and send him to contract (non-voluntary) labour. I suggested that we should go together to see Lusase at his village on the following day. The next morning he decided not to go to the chief but to go straight to the post with his wife Adriana. He told me that when Lusase became chief in 1954, he and his 'brother' Mwehombo had bought the title of Epalanga (held under Kafelo by Sapapula) which they held jointly. Luanga had paid for this two pigs equal to 1,000 escudos (about £12. 10s. in British currency) and other things as well. Luanga's motive was not political power (which the present-day chief lacks and of which his ministers have even less) nor prestige, but because he would thus be exempt from contract labour. Luanga said that he did not mind going to contract labour, but insisted on having back what he had paid to Lusase. I said I would write a letter to say that he should not

578 631 648 go to contract labour and accordingly he left for the post with my letter.

Luanga returned quite satisfied a few days later, the *chefe* having decided in his favour. Two days later he went to the 578 chief's village to complain of Lusase's actions. With him came 631 Bartolomeu and Paulo. Ngombe, as Mwekalia, and thereby responsible for the relations between chief and people, acted as the presiding figure, more chairman than judge, although he spoke for some time on the case. Lusase defended himself by saying that it was not he but somebody else who had recommended Luanga for contract labour. This explanation was accepted by Luanga. Bartolomeu and Paulo received small sums of money from Lusase for acting as witnesses, and later Luanga left with Lusase for another village. Here they effected the succession of a man to his father's title of Mbesi (another ministerial position). Luanga was much pleased with his share of the fee.

578 Not only the personalities but many of the features of previous cases reappear here. Of the ways of acting which people choose, 627 Ndonga and Lusase use self-help, Ndonga to recover a debt, 648 and Lusase to uphold his prestige. Against Lusase, as against Kapapelo, a moot was formed. Lusase like Guilherme insisted on his responsibility to the post alone, when the opposition seemed to be using a 'civilized' person of a different category. Final decisions are obtained by appeals to the post but the risky nature of such procedures is shown by the desire to get a letter of recommendation. Luanga believed that Lusase had got him sent to contract labour just as Francisco believed (correctly) that Guilherme had got him recruited. Ngombe as Mwekalia is more successful here as arbitrator than in the moot at Kapapelo's. Finally we see the contrast again between the survival of formal recognition in symbol of the prestige of chieftancy (the episode of the bull's leg) and its actual impotence [634] caught between *chefe* and people. The specific issue in this dispute turns on a conflict between a chief and his people, and it shows how a chief can be defeated in the same way that the first dispute showed a government headman being defeated.

627 Lusase's opponents had, as previously, other means of influ- 648 encing the post. Gregorio had proposed getting a letter from the

2; McCulloch FP13 Mbundu FP13

632

/The large village, which might legitimately be considered a town, is listed under category 621./

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rather than any political alliance or opposition, which related the Ovimbundu as a whole to the Portuguese and the other tribes. Informants who remember 'the time of the rubber' talk about it with much more interest and much more detail than about any other aspect of the past, and it is far easier to make an ordered picture out of the narratives of the caravan journeys than to fill in the gaps in the descriptions of the political and kinship systems provided by Childs and Hastings.[57]

Politically the Ovimbundu were divided, as has been said, into several kingdoms. Bailundo, the largest of the kingdoms was divided, according to Childs into about 200 sub-chiefdoms. As it had about half a million inhabitants this would give an average population of about 2,500. While the kingdoms seem to have been more or less stable in number and boundaries from the end of the eighteenth century, the number of sub-chiefdoms seems to have increased. Thus an official Portuguese estimate made in 1799 gives Bailundo as having only 82 sub-chiefdoms, and Galangue, where Childs counted 112 sub-chiefdoms, as having 78. The sub-chiefdom paid tribute to the king, sent men for his armies, and recognized his court as the supreme arbitrator. Some sub-chiefdoms were held by ministers or relatives of the king.[58]

It is, however, not easy on the sparse detail available to decide how much autonomy the sub-chiefdoms really had. Gumba, the area where I worked, was a sub-chiefdom of the Bailundo kingdom, albeit on the north-western frontier, neighbouring Cassongue and Cela, where the people did not call themselves Va-Mbailundu, though their rulers acknowledged the suzerainty of the king of Bailundo. Old men told me of raids from Bailundo for slaves, but I cannot say if this was the result of the period of disorder mentioned, or whether sub-chiefdoms on the border of a kingdom gave only nominal submission and received only nominal protection. In the area where I worked,

[57] This is not intended as a personal reflection on Dr. Childs and the late Dr. Hastings, both of whom deserve the highest praise for their work and for their obvious devotion to the Ovimbundu. Hastings devoted far more space to the magico-religious field than to the kinship system. Likewise Childs's description of kinship is much shorter, much less detailed, and much less satisfactory than his account of childhood and adolescence, or the really outstanding historical chapter.

[58] Magyar, pp. 383-92; Childs, pp. 23-24.

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431 434 at least, the effective unit of law and self-defence was formerly the sub-chiefdom.[59]

634 643 In both sub-chiefdom and kingdom the chief (a term used here for both king and sub-chief) passed through a cycle of rites to become truly chief and was surrounded, assisted, and [645] checked by titled ministers.[60] The future chief was selected from persons of chiefly stock. My informants stated that a new chief might be related either patrilineally or matrilineally to former chiefs; all other sources state that the chiefdom can only be held by somebody *patrilineally* of chiefly blood, with the exception of Santos Brandão writing on the Huambo kingdom.[61] The selection was the responsibility of the Mwekalia, whose role was to represent the people *vis-à-vis* the king, an opposition which is expressed in the Umbundu saying 'the chief is a guest, the Mwekalia is a man of the country'. When asked to explain this saying, the Ovimbundu point out that many chiefs come from outside the chiefdom, and also that 'If the chief does something wrong, we can send him away'.[62]

In such a constitutional deposition of the chief which nineteenth century observers describe as taking place fairly frequently,[63] the main responsibility fell on the Mwekalia. The cycle of royal rites consisted of the ceremonial entry of the chief into his capital and his taking of a new name, the rebuilding of certain shrines, a large-scale hunt, the building of an archway intended as a magical defence to the capital, and finally an act

[59] Informants.

[60] For the king and his ministers see especially Hastings, pp. 29–71 (based on Bailundo), and for other details of the royal court see Serpa Pinto, p. 167 (based on Bié).

[61] For references to patrilineal succession see Serpa Pinto, p. 159, Capello and Ivens, *From Benguella to the Territory of Yaca* (London, 1882), p. 81, Hastings, p. 42, Childs, p. 22. Santos Brandão (*Mensário Administrativo*, July–August, 1950) gives a list of the kings of Huambo where there had been two successive royal lines, and this shows several cases of succession by sisters' sons. (The Umbundu text he gives makes this quite clear.)

[62] The underlying idea is not so much that the chiefly stock is of immigrant descent but rather that the people of one chiefdom call somebody from outside to rule over them, who can be sent away if he misbehaves. Of course people living within a chiefdom are not excluded, but this point about the chief being a stranger is very strongly emphasised.

[63] Childs, pp. 22–23 and references given there.

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of ritual cannibalism (*oku lia ekongo*) after which he could not be deposed.[64]

Hastings in describing the principal ministers of the Bailundo court states that the Mwekalia and the Galamboli or Ngambole (whose function was to remember traditions) were representative of the indigenous pre-Jaga stock, the Kesongo who was the war leader was a slave from another tribe, and the Otjinduli was of immigrant stock, and points out that these represent the three sources from which the Ovimbundu sprang.[65]

At the sub-chiefdom level some of the titles found in the kingdoms would be found combined, and the chief's court, where cases were judged, was composed both of titled ministers living at the chief's village and of the village headmen (some of whom were also title-holders). The sub-chief represented his people to the outer world, led them in communal ritual and judged, with his councillors,[66] their disputes. Hastings describes a case thus: 'When all the members of the court are seated in a circle, with an empty space in the centre, the plaintiff's counsel then relates the case, after which the lawyer for the defendant does likewise for his side. The chief in turn makes general comments. Lusenje, the official, whose duty it is to keep order at court and to announce the speakers, then calls on the accuser to come forward and make his statement.'[67]

While the sub-chiefdom was the largest unit in which law and order reigned undisputed, there existed alliances and cross-cutting relationships providing a contact outside its area. There was the *tjisoko* alliance which existed between two sub-chiefdoms which were separated by a third. Gumba sub-chiefdom was thus allied to Ndjandju from which it was separated by Chicunda, and messengers from Gumba and Ndjandju travelled together to Bailundo once a year to carry tribute. Apparently a sub-chiefdom had only one *tjisoko* partner. The relationship was one of funeral friendship; *vakwatjisoko* (*tjisoko* partners) undertook the burial of those who died without kinsfolk and also ordinary

[64] This is based on information from Gumba. See also Magyar, pp. 270–77; Hastings, pp. 43–45; Childs p. 21.

[65] Hastings, p. 60.

[66] Informants.

[67] Hastings, pp. 142–43.

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CHAPTER III

CHIEFS AND HEADMEN IN GUMBA

1. *The History of Gumba*

The historical perspective of Ovimbundu is short. Few, even elders, know of any landmark earlier than the Mutu-ya-Kevela rising of 1902–3, nor even for those who had participated in it did the time of the rubber trade form a Golden Age by which the present is judged. The period about which most was remembered was the reign of Mbati.[1]

Mbati had ruled over both Gumba and Chicunda, a union which had existed only during his lifetime, and which would have given him on present-day population figures 7,500–9,000 subjects.[2] He had managed to keep in his own hands the relations between his people and the government post. Policemen arriving at his capital to recruit labourers were entertained while Mbati's ministers got together the men required. Although an upholder of the traditional rites associated with chieftancy he had been on good terms with the missionaries and allowed a Catholic catechist to settle in his village. One of his sons became a Protestant schoolteacher near the railway line, another entered the Catholic seminary but left and became a policeman in Cela. Many of the numerous progeny provided by his seventeen wives are still living in Gumba.

Mbati's downfall came through his practising the traditional annual ritual cannibalism (*oku lia ekongo*). About 1934–5 he was banished for this to another part of Umbundu country.

[text continues on p. 37]

[1] L. Magyar marks a place called Gumba on his map (opposite to page 1) but puts it to the south of the capital of Bailundo. As he does not seem to have personal knowledge of this area, this does not rule out identification, especially as the Cuvo begins to the south of Bailundo.

[2] For the basis of this estimate see section 2 of this chapter.

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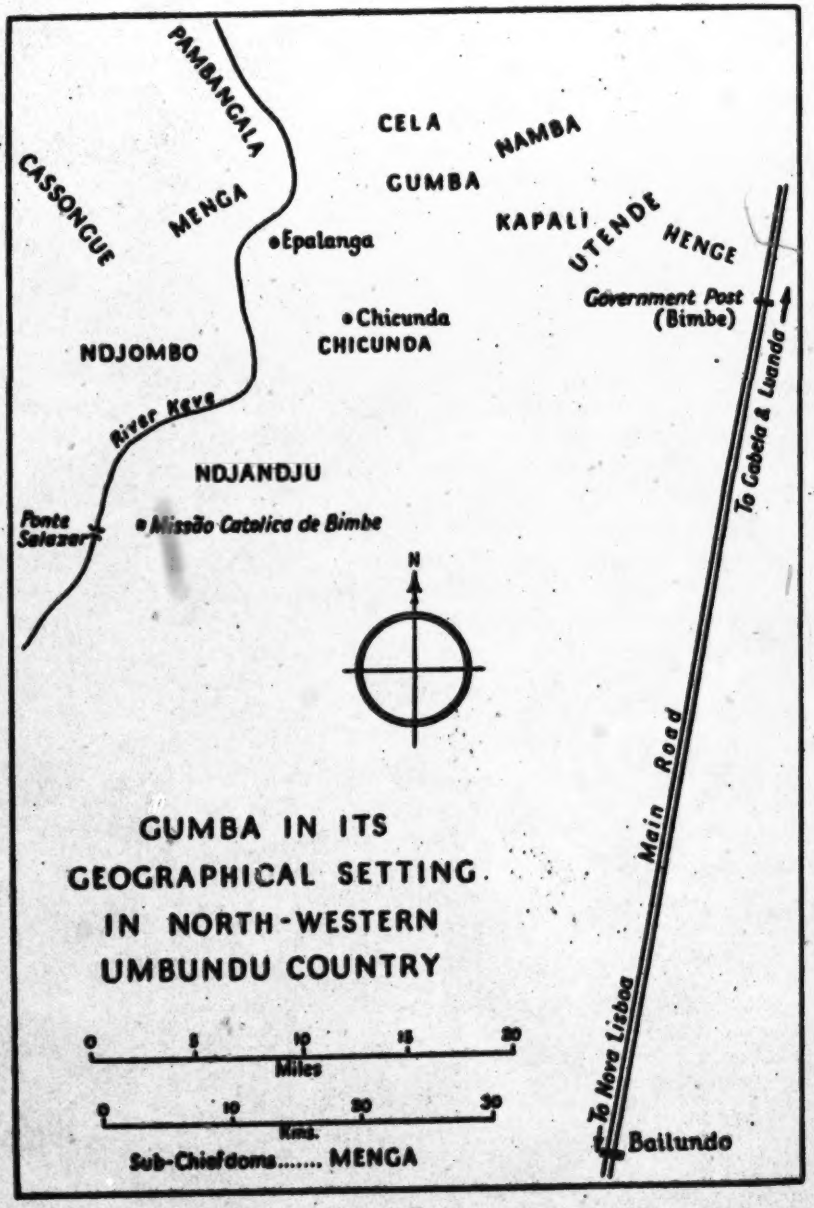

GUMBA IN ITS GEOGRAPHICAL SETTING IN NORTH-WESTERN UMBUNDU COUNTRY

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Some ten years later he was allowed to return to Gumba but died on the way back. 173 634

His successor was Simbwyikoka, who was a mother's brother's son of Mbati, that is in Umbundu terminology a 'son'. Umbundu rules of succession allow anybody to succeed to a chiefdom who is paternally or maternally related to a previous chief, whether or not this relationship is genealogically traceable.[3]

Simbwyikoka was apparently nominated to act as regent during Mbati's absence, and as he did not complete the full cycle of chiefly rites he did not have quite the same prestige among the people as a chief in his own right who 'had finished', that is, had gone through all the rites. It was he who was the last ruler of Gumba to send the annual tribute in the form of a sack of fish to Bailundo, since it was a little after the time of his accession that Kandimba[4] (or Njahulu), the last of the Bailundo royal house to have any real authority over the kingdom, died. [631]

Simbwyikoka had lived at the hamlet of Kamballa in Gumba. When he took up office he did not settle at Mbati's village of Katembo, but established, or rather re-established, as a previous chief had ruled there, his capital[5] on the top of the narrow ridge which cuts off the greater part of Gumba from access by road. It was not possible for many people to settle on this site. Accordingly Simbwyikoka encouraged people to settle at the foot of the ridge, swelling the population of an already existing village. This was called Mwekalia from the headman, who held the office of Mwekalia[6] another ministerial title associated with the chiefly court. 173 634 100

In 1938 Simbwyikoka was deposed by the *chefe* for shielding his dependents from the operation of 'contract labour' (administrative recruitment of non-voluntary labour). About 1944 [648]

[3] My informants. This means that within (and outside) any sub-chiefdom there are a number of potential heirs who in no way receive any special status or form any kind of corporate group from this fact.

[4] Reigned at Bailundo 1911–35. Childs, p. 229

[5] In Umbundu Ombala, often transcribed in Portuguese as Embala.

[6] For the role of Mwekalia see Hastings, p. 59. His statement that the office is matrilineally inherited was not confirmed by my informants. It seems that it can be inherited either patrilineally or matrilineally. The man who was known as Mwekalia and had been headman of the village of that name did not function as such at the chief's court during my stay. A kinsman of his, Ngombe, acted as Mwekalia at the court of Lussac. [114]

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173 634 166 Simbwyikoka founded a new village known by his name. In 1951 one of his sons, Sassungu, founded a new village Sassungu whose population originated with a group of people from his father's village. Simbwyikoka maintained contact with Kamballa, where another son, Felisi, lived and herded Simbwyikoka's cattle.

173 634 [648] The new chief was Kakope, a son of Tjiweka who had been chief of Gumba at the time of the Muta-ya-Kevela rising. He held office for only two years, being deposed by the *chefe* since ill-health made monthly visits to the post difficult for him. He was succeeded by Kafelo, who came to Gumba from Cassongue across the river. Kafelo was a cross-cousin of Mbati and paternal kinsman of Kakope. Having gone through the cycle of chiefly rites, and undertaken Mbati's funeral he was regarded as being fully chief, in a way that Simbwyikoka was not.

The Epalanga[7] of a chief is a minister chosen from among the chief's kin. Kafelo had nominated to this post Sapapula, a matrilateral 'brother' of his and an inhabitant of Menga. Sapapula moved into Gumba and founded the village of [166] Epalanga in 1945–6, where he was joined by various kinsmen. I have heard the foundation of Epalanga ascribed to another man, Mwehombo, who will be mentioned again, and should therefore be introduced. Mwehombo had been minister at the court of Mbati, his mother's brother. After Mbati's death Mwehombo had stayed at Katembo till 1941, when he settled in Menga with his kinsman Sapapula. Mwehombo crossed over to Gumba in 1944.[8]

173 634 648 In 1954 Kafelo was deposed by the *chefe*, as Kafelo had been drunk in his presence. Kutenga Lusase, who had in 1945 founded the village of Kamupa, saw his chance and told the *chefe* that he had been chosen chief according to custom. The people of Gumba did not complain about this to the post, as they were afraid of the consequences. Kutenga Lusase claimed to be related to Mbati and Simbwyikoka and was a matrilateral 'grandson' of Tjiweka. He was not related to Kafelo whose link to Tjiweka was a patrilateral one.

Kutenga Lusase was in his turn deposed by the *chefe* in 1956

[7] Hastings, p. 53.

[8] Information from his 'brother', Luanga.

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for lack of effectiveness following a series of quarrels. His successor was Tjilombo a government headman and the leading personality of the village of Tjisangu. Such, then, is the recent history of Gumba.

2. *Chiefs, Government Headmen, and Traditional Headmen*

I have outlined the succession of chiefs in Gumba, and the villages with which they were associated. I have noted that nowadays there are government headmen as well as the traditional headmen. I wish now to indicate what authority the chiefs and the two sorts of headmen have and how this is related to the villages.

The sub-chiefdom is a recognized administrative unit. The census, and the annual check on the census, are taken on a sub-chiefdom basis, as are the collection of taxes and the recruitment of workers for contract labour, road work, and jobs to be done at the post. The sub-chief and the government headmen have to visit the post once a month. The *chefe de posto* (head of post = District Officer) will normally only visit each sub-chiefdom once a year for the check on the census. He may send orders for the recruitment of labourers or the arrest of an offender by one of the policemen who live at the post. His principal contact with the people comes in the adjudicating of disputes which the people are quite ready to carry to the post—the Bimbe *chefe*, whose area included Gumba, told me that hearing cases was his main occupation. Very few *chefes* have anything more than a smattering of the Umbundu language, and they have only the vaguest knowledge of the culture and social usages—for instance they may be aware of the classificatory extension of kinship terms and the association of leopardskins with chieftancy. The *chefes* are moved about fairly frequently and their names and personalitie ıare not known to the people. As the people associate the post with demands for taxes, fines, and labour services, and are only likely to visit the post when recruited as non-voluntary labourers or to have their photographs taken for identity cards, it is not surprising that fear is the predominant emotion they feel towards the *chefe*.

The staff of the post consists of the interpreter, an African

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with primary and possibly some secondary education, the clerks who have primary schooling, and the policemen, who are often illiterate. The police are locally recruited and are provided with their keep, from the farm attached to the post, and with uniforms. They are usually—by no means always—illiterate. The interpreter, clerks, and police tend to identify themselves with the *chefe* as against the people; however, a policeman may be influenced in his relations with the villagers by gifts and friendship.

The size of population of sub-chiefdoms varies. The 1950 census gave the total 'non-civilized' population of the Bailundo *concelho* as being 246,045, and the number of sub-chiefdoms as 82,[9] that is, an average of 3,000 individuals per sub-chiefdom. The *chefe* of Bimbe told me in August 1956 that Gumba had 800 taxpayers, and Chicunda had 700. Putting the proportion of taxpayers as 1 to 6 (on the basis of Epalanga proportions) this gives 4,800 as the population figure for Gumba and 4,200 as the figure for Chicunda. Even if the proportion of 1 to 5 be taken as the proportion between taxpayers and total population this gives us 4,000 as the figure for Gumba and 3,500 as the figure for Chicunda. I do not know what the local density of population is; in the Bailundo *concelho* as a whole it is 16–17 individuals per square kilometre.[10]

The chief and government headmen are the main channel of conveying demands and orders from the post to the villagers. They receive in return the remission of their taxes. Their dependence on the post is not, however, sufficient to give them a position of marked superiority in their locality for the following reasons. They are unable to control all relations between the post and the people; anybody who has a dispute on hand may take it direct to the post. In village life their influence can always be counterbalanced by that of the catechists and 'elders of the school' whose contact with the missions is much closer than that of the chiefs and government headmen with the post. They also lack economic resources; the exemption from taxes (which the Catholic catechists share)

[9] See Gálvao and Selvagem, pp. 384–3. For Angolan population density see Egerton, pp. 36–37.

[10] My own estimate from figures given by Galvão and Selvagem.

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does not give them any claim to financial assistance from the 634
people, or control over natural resources, such as land rights. 622
The only prerogative of this sort that the chief has is the right to the leg of an antelope killed in a hunt or a bull killed in a commemoration rite—and this is of symbolic rather than economic importance.

Nor, finally, does the post give the chiefs prestige and 648
support.[11] Five successive chiefs of Gumba had been deposed 634
by the post, and it is not uncommon for chiefs and government 622
headmen to be beaten or otherwise punished (for instance by being made to work for a fortnight at the post) for their shortcomings. They have in fact just sufficient power to carry out the commands of the *chefe* and to do nothing more. They are not disliked by the local people for doing what the *chefe* tells them to do, but any attempt at dictatorial behaviour on their part will stir up opposition which may lead to their downfall.

The relations between white *chefe* and black chief vary 648
according to individuals and neighbourhoods. Sometimes the 634
chefe will allow the chief to be chosen according to tradition; at other times he will impose a candidate of his own. A *chefe* may hear any cases that are brought to the post, or he may delegate the power of hearing minor cases to the chiefs. Some *chefes* will regard the chiefs with hostility as being enemies of their own people; others will abstain under any circumstances from beating a chief, as they feel their power should be supported. Here I describe the situation as it was in Gumba and in Bimbe generally.

A visit to a chief's village in Gumba or elsewhere will give an 634
opportunity of meeting those residents who hold the ministerial 178
titles, of gazing under overshadowing trees at the enclosure in 769
which are kept the skulls of former chiefs, and perhaps of seeing the chief and some of his cronies dance to a drum in commemoration of one of his predecessors. Ministers, skulls, dances, and drum are symbols of chiefly nostalgia rather than of political power. The ceremonies have little interest for the people in general, and many of them have been abandoned by the chief. Lusase's first wife had not, as custom demanded,

[11] For criticism of this policy by two Portuguese with administrative experience see Galvão and Selvagem, p. 913.

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634 become *inakulu* (queen) because she feared the unpleasant
178 haunting by the spirits of former queens which is traditionally
769 experienced by the holder of this office.[12] On one occasion
[775] Lusase himself offered to let me into the *akokoto* (the enclosure where the skulls of dead chiefs were kept) for the payment of five or ten escudos (1s. 3d. or 2s. 6d.) although the entry of anybody except the chief and possibly certain of his courtiers appears traditionally to have been forbidden under the penalty of death sent by the spirits. Even the surviving rites are confined to the chief's village; the first-fruits ceremony in which the
[796] whole chiefdom was involved disappeared a number of years ago. The association general in Umbundu country between
634 the chiefs and paganism does not provide an added ritual
771 sanction to the chief's power, but rather links him with what is felt to be a dying past, essentially unimportant, at the present day.

692 The chief may also have some of his time occupied with hearing cases. A good many minor disputes are solved by local adjudication, but there seems to be no specific division between cases that ought to come to the chief and those which can be arbitrated by somebody else. Elders from outside a chiefdom may be invited to adjudicate on a particular case. The old formality of legal procedure has largely disappeared, probably because all disputes at a local level can be carried to the post—hence any ruling by chief or elders is essentially dependent on its acceptance by the disputants.

754 Accusations of sorcery are rather different from other cases since the post does not believe them, although such an accusation is not in itself punishable. Sometimes suspected sorcerers are accused at the post of 'poisoning'.[13] Lusase told me that convicted sorcerers were fined a chicken, a goat and a pig. Gregorio, the chief of Menga, at first said, when I asked about this, that it was not possible to know who was a sorcerer. When, rather to his surprise, I mentioned the traditional basket test, he agreed and explained that people convicted by this test were sent as labourers to the post to satisfy whatever demand was being made for workers.

[12] Informants. See also Hastings, p. 49.

[13] Childs, p. 58.

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The tasks of recruiting contract labourers and road-workers and of getting fines and taxes paid, and such other duties as the arranging of compulsory purchase of tickets for the travelling cinema (showing patriotic films) are carried out through a long process of argument, attempted evasion, and pressure, between the chief, the government headmen, and the locally influential people, traditional headmen, catechists, and anyone else who can get himself listened to. Persons actually picked for contract labour or road work may make quite a fuss about it, but as such numbers are recruited it is ultimately accepted resignedly. It is not really practicable for a chief to discriminate in favour of his kinsman owing to the heavy demands for labour and the likelihood of such discrimination being reported at the post, as happened to Simbwyikoka. Demands for labour may fall heavily on some households. Thus one Epalanga household consisted of a man, his daughter by an earlier marriage, his wife and her baby daughter. The man had been taken for contract labour, his wife had been called to road work, and the adolescent daughter was carrying sisal[14] to the post. A kinsman of the household head attempted to arrange for some watch to be kept over the gardens lest animals should get in.

There were four government headmen in Gumba during my stay. Theoretically they are village headmen. The villages in which official records group Ovimbundu do not conform to the actual villages in which Ovimbundu live. Anybody moving from one village to another has to pay a fee; as the Ovimbundu move about quite frequently and no attempt is made to enforce this rule locally, the result is this discrepancy between paper and real villages.

The government headman's duties are those already described for the chief. As with the chief, there is only sufficient backing from the post for him to carry out the orders he receives; he does not receive power to enable him to exercise political leadership and judicial authority at the local level, nor is he a representative of the post in the villages. His interests and values are linked to those of his neighbours rather than to the post. It is through the chief and the government headmen

[14] Some villages are obliged to grow sisal and take it to the post without payment.

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that the administration gets labour and money from the villagers, and largely though not exclusively through them that the villagers keep in touch with the post which politically integrates them into Angola and legally provides sanctions which they do not possess. The government headmen do not supervise on behalf of the post the daily life of their fellow-villagers. The government laws—such as the prohibition of beer- and rum-brewing and grass-burning (for hunts)—which if enforced would bring about a certain number of changes in Umbundu social life, are not enforced for many reasons—the administration makes no real attempt to suppress these uses as opposed to levying annual fines[15] per head, the government headmen go in for these customs themselves, and they lack the power to achieve this enforcement. Were the government to introduce policies involving some reorganization of the social life they would need a stronger form of local authority. Under the present circumstances, however, the powers and status of the chief and government headmen are quite consistent with the demands made on them by the post.

There were four government headmen in Gumba in 1955–6, Guilherme, Lupassa, Tjilombo (who became chief after the deposition of Lusase), and Walivanga. Guilherme was in 1955 living in Epalanga. Some people thought he should live in Kamupa which had been founded by his mother's brother Lusase—however, when he left Epalanga in 1956 he settled near the Protestant village of Kalungwengwe. His change of residence had been the result of violent quarrels with Paulo and other Epalanga people. Lupassa lived in Katembo, and was a sister's son of Kaluywa, who was the traditional headman. I do not think Lupassa was the dominating personality in Katembo. Tjilombo was on the other hand the leading personality in Tjisangu, many of its people being related to him. Walivanga was similarly linked by kin or affinal ties to the majority of the people of Belem.

The foregoing paragraph raises the question of the relationship of the government headman to the traditional headmen. A man who is both a government headman and a traditional headman is in a fairly strong position in his village; when the

[15] Each fine is about 10–20 escudos (2/6d.–5/-).

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178 621 for individuals to build up large villages—thus Simbwyikoka encouraged people to settle at Mwekalia to make it a large village. It may also be suggested that the power of the village 622 headmen was to some extent linked with the power of the chief, since the headmen were associated politically with the chief, and would from this, tend to gain authority in their dealings with their fellow villagers. The village headmen also lacked any real competition from other types of leadership. Mbati had kept relations with the post in his own hands, and there were therefore no government headmen. The first catechist had [797] arrived in Mbati's village in 1928, but cannot have met with much lasting success as there are few baptized Christians over thirty-five in Gumba.

622 554 Other factors at the time strengthening the position of the village headmen were the low rate of labour migration[18] and the fact that practically every man over forty at the time of Simbwyikoka's accession had participated in the rubber trade. This meant that many of the best known caravan leaders were still in full vigour, and enjoyed a prestige based on the first-hand knowledge of the middle-aged and older men.

178 Between this period of the middle thirties and the beginning of my own fieldwork twenty years had passed and many changes had taken place. The status of the chief had sharply [634] declined and he was now assisted by the four government headmen. Every village except the chief's village had a Catholic or Protestant catechist, and there had been a marked trend [797] towards learning catechism in preparation for baptism, which had begun about 1946. Hence the catechetical school was usually attended by the majority of under twenty-five's in the village.

621 Agnatic kinship had ceased to be the principle of village membership. Nor can it be said that headmen build up villages by getting people to settle at a particular spot. It is not always easy even to find the headman, village population is not very stable, and a man can settle with any category of kin.

622 124 To discover the traditional headman required careful phrasing of questions. When I visited a village and asked for the *asekulu yimbo* (the traditional phrase for the village headman) I

[18] Ibid., p. 214.

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houses, coffee plants and so on there is little likelihood of disputes arising about the inheritance of land claims. A woman's property should be given to her sisters, after her children have had their cut. In one case a man inherited his sister's debts but allowed her children to inherit her property, 'lest they be sad'. A wife's fields return to her husband.

Inheritance is then a process by which the relations of certain kin, both sons and sister's sons, with the deceased are recognized by the transmission of his property. As with other aspects of Umbundu kinship, while the existence of the kinship tie provides the basis on which to found a relationship, its content is determined by the nature of the contacts between the individuals involved and the services given.

Although there is a definite tendency for men of chiefly stock to have longer pedigrees than other individuals there is no chiefly genealogy. When Paulo, the elder of the school of Epalanga, told me that had he not been blind he might have been chief of Gumba, he quoted the names of four chiefs to whom he was related. The chieftancy is not tied to a lineage, but can be held by any individual who can claim links with a former chief or chiefs. People 'of the blood of the chiefs' in no sense form a differentiated group of aristocrats significant in social life.

In similar fashion membership of the spirit-linked professions and of certain cults seems to have been a matter of succession of one individual to the role of another.[20] Membership of the hunting and smithing professions descended patrilineally, but if a hunter or smith had no son his position could be succeeded to by a daughter's son.[21]

7. *Kinship in a Changing Society*

From this, and from other chapters, a picture of Umbundu kinship may emerge as something so blurred, confused, and confusing, as hardly to merit the term 'kinship system', yet at

[20] i.e. rather than admission to a corporate group of hunters. A man can inherit his father's hunting spirit before the latter's death; in Epalanga Batista had received the hunting spirit of his father Epalata.

[21] My informants were not agreed as to whether a sister's son could inherit in default of a son.

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having been elected according to traditional rules. Lusase was angry at this, turned up at the ceremony, and attacked Sapapula.

The following morning Epalanga buzzed with indignation. Gregorio, the chief of Menga, and Mandumba, Sapapula's son, had arrived at Epalanga to express their support, and Gregorio asked me[9] to write a letter to the Mission to get its support against Lusase at the post. I said that I would go to the chief's village to persuade Lusase to seek a reconciliation. The elder Wasuka, a cross-cousin of Sapapula, declared that even if Lusase offered five cattle in compensation they would not be accepted, and Sapapula's supporters portrayed him as a much injured man, repeatedly the victim of the Guilherme, Kapapelo, Lusase, Ndonga clique. My offer to go to the chief's village fell through when we heard that Lusase was now no longer there, but near, apparently at Simbwyikoka's.

I suggested that the moot should be held at Simbwyikoka's since the case had begun there; the others said 'No, let him come over here.' The crowd settled down in the open space before my house. News was then brought to us that Lusase refused to come over and insisted on the people coming to him, declaring that he ruled all, and did not obey the anthropologist but only the *chefe*. Accordingly everybody got up and walked over to Simbwyikoka's. Here we leant that Lusase had fled. Kambungo[10], an elder of Menga and kinsmen of Sapapula, declared that somebody who behaved like this could not be chief. Gregorio the chief of Menga became involved in an argument with Ndonga, who he said was responsible for installing Lusase. This Ndonga denied. This, incidentally, was the first time that I had heard that Lusase was not properly elected. As previously noted on the fall of Kafelo, Lusase had arrived at the post and announced himself as being the new chief. The Gumba people did not protest about this for fear of possible reactions from the post.

It now became known that Lusase could not be found.

[9] It may be suggested that my interventions were not in accordance with anthropological etiquette. It is difficult to see what else I could have done; it is, after all, the local custom for 'civilized' persons to provide letters of recommendation, and a refusal on my part would not have been understood.

[10] He has been mentioned in Chapter V.

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People said that he had fled to the house of his sister's son Guilherme en route for the post; Gregorio now said to me that Lusase had made advances to Nahoka, trying to seduce her by saying that Sapapula was old. 627

On the same day Sapapula left for the post with, as his witnesses, Nahoka and Wasuka carrying a letter of recommendation from me. At the post the *chefe* took his part and told Lusase 'Sapapula is your father' and made Lusase kneel down to seek pardon. Sapapula said that he wished to move across the river into Menga, where he had formerly lived. The *chefe* told him to stay at Epalanga (because of the anthropologist's presence there), but transferred Epalanga administratively from Gumbaa to Chicunda. This settlement pleased the Epalanga people. It may be added that had Sapapula actually crossed over, a number of householders, including Paulo, would not have followed him. 648 [631]

Despite the *chefe's* acts it was not certain whether the change was to be given effect immediately or only after the *chefe's* annual visit; hence some more wrangling took place over the question of where Epalanga was situated for such purposes as the payment of fines for rum-brewing.

Luanga, who shared with Sapapula the title of Epalanga, came to my house on the night of the 27th June to ask for a letter to the *chefe de posto*. He told me that Lusase wanted to take away his title of Epalanga and send him to contract (non-voluntary) labour. I suggested that we should go together to see Lusase at his village on the following day. The next morning he decided not to go to the chief but to go straight to the post with his wife Adriana. He told me that when Lusase became chief in 1954, he and his 'brother' Mwehombo had bought the title of Epalanga (held under Kafelo by Sapapula) which they held jointly. Luanga had paid for this two pigs equal to 1,000 escudos (about £12. 10s. in British currency) and other things as well. Luanga's motive was not political power (which the present-day chief lacks and of which his ministers have even less) nor prestige, but because he would thus be exempt from contract labour. Luanga said that he did not mind going to contract labour, but insisted on having back what he had paid to Lusase. I said I would write a letter to say that he should not 578 631 648 [634]

578 631 648 go to contract labour and accordingly he left for the post with my letter.

Luanga returned quite satisfied a few days later, the *chefe* having decided in his favour. Two days later he went to the 578 chief's village to complain of Lusase's actions. With him came 631 Bartolomeu and Paulo. Ngombe, as Mwekalia, and thereby responsible for the relations between chief and people, acted as the presiding figure, more chairman than judge, although he spoke for some time on the case. Lusase defended himself by saying that it was not he but somebody else who had recommended Luanga for contract labour. This explanation was accepted by Luanga. Bartolomeu and Paulo received small sums of money from Lusase for acting as witnesses, and later Luanga left with Lusase for another village. Here they effected the succession of a man to his father's title of Mbesi (another ministerial position). Luanga was much pleased with his share of the fee.

578 Not only the personalities but many of the features of previous cases reappear here. Of the ways of acting which people choose, 627 Ndonga and Lusase use self-help, Ndonga to recover a debt, 648 and Lusase to uphold his prestige. Against Lusase, as against Kapapelo, a moot was formed. Lusase like Guilherme insisted on his responsibility to the post alone, when the opposition seemed to be using a 'civilized' person of a different category. Final decisions are obtained by appeals to the post but the risky nature of such procedures is shown by the desire to get a letter of recommendation. Luanga believed that Lusase had got him sent to contract labour just as Francisco believed (correctly) that Guilherme had got him recruited. Ngombe as Mwekalia is more successful here as arbitrator than in the moot at Kapapelo's. Finally we see the contrast again between the survival of formal recognition in symbol of the prestige of chieftancy (the episode of the bull's leg) and its actual impotence [634] caught between *chefe* and people. The specific issue in this dispute turns on a conflict between a chief and his people, and it shows how a chief can be defeated in the same way that the first dispute showed a government headman being defeated.

627 Lusase's opponents had, as previously, other means of influ- 648 encing the post. Gregorio had proposed getting a letter from the

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mission to give Sapapula's case, and, as things worked out, it was the anthropologist who was made the 'civilized' focus for the opposition to Lusase as Antonio Pires had been made the focus of the opposition to Guilherme. Lusase, like Guilherme, reacted by saying that he owed allegiance only to the *chefe de poste*, and running off to the post.

Luanga's case shows how desire to get out of contract labour may give a new reason for taking a ministerial title, and also once again how sending someone to contract labour is regarded as a means of injuring those whom one dislikes.

I have spoken of the conflict between Lusase and Sapapula as being a conflict between a chief and his people, and this is true in so far as it shows how opposition forms against a chief and how he can be checked. It is therefore of importance as indicating the position of the chief in the contemporary social system. The people themselves interpreted the dispute as being essentially one between individuals—Lusase's behaviour was attributed to his lust for Nahoka, and Gregorio entered the dispute not as the ruler of the neighbouring chiefdom of Menga but as a friend of Sapapula. The interpretation of what is a political conflict as a quarrel between individuals may be explained as being due to the relatively limited nature of the role of chief (Lusase) and of traditional headman (Sapapula) which therefore do not predominate in the social status of the individual. (In this particular case, had I got Lusase's viewpoint he would probably have said that he was defending his dignity as chief, whereas Sapapula did not regard Lusase as being really chief.) The lack of a formal court system or even of an articulated political system at the local level has brought into desuetude the old legal and political idioms and the Ovimbundu have not yet learnt new terms from the Portuguese.

5. *Social Control and Social Structure in the Disputes*

I now return to the points mentioned at the beginning of this chapter. It is hardly necessary to underline the decayed state of the traditional system of authority. Lusase had, at the time of the quarrel between Guilherme and Paulo, expressed his

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intention of staying out of the dispute, just in the same way as he said, when Ndonga's action was reported to him, that he did not know what went on in the villages. That is, Lusase disclaimed any general responsibility for maintaining law and order in the sub-chiefdom. He had turned up at the case before Justino and at the moot by Kapapelo's house, when Nahoka had pointed out that it was he, and not Kafelo, who was effectively chief. The very fact that such a remark could be made indicates a weakness in Lusase's position, and his lack of authority is further illustrated by his being but one of a crowd of would-be conciliators.

It was, indeed, Lusase's position with relation to Kafelo that brought about his quarrel with Sapapula. Lusase, on meeting Kafelo at Kapapelo's, had bowed to him, and must have been uneasily aware that public opinion held that Kafelo 'had finished', had completed the cycle of chiefly rites, whereas Lusase was just 'the *chefe de posto's* boy'. It is unlikely that there would be among the Ovimbundu developed forms of the situation reported from some colonial areas by which one person acts as chief or headman *vis-à-vis* the government while another is the real chief or headman with effective power over the people, if only because so much of the content of chieftancy today is simply post work. Yet a chief differs from a government headman precisely because of the surviving prestige which clings to the capital village, the skulls of the dead chiefs, the titled ministers, and the drums, and it was such an expression of prestige which Sapapula gave to Kafelo and denied to Lusase. Not surprisingly Lusase reacted to this sharp evidence of the weakness of his position. In acting as he did, he made things worse; since he lacked any local means of imposing his will by force, or mobilizing moral support, he had to fall back on the post.

This weakening of the chieftancy is, of course, only part of the general disintegration of the old social system. Sapapula, in personality and prestige, was the equal of any traditional headman in the neighbourhood, and was consulted by the chief and government headmen when fines or roadworkers were required from Epalanga. Yet it was Paulo and not Sapapula who launched the attack on Guilherme, an attack speedily supported

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This so-called democratic streak is also abundantly attested by folk-tales which give incidental and intimate pictures of petty details in the life of kings. There is one in which a king gives instructions for caring for his field while he is absent on a war party; another which tells of a fine levied on a man who while hiding up a tree accidentally urinated on a king; another, of a king who in a time of hunger himself climbed a tree for the *epōlī* fruit and nearly starved when the prop by which he had climbed was taken away. Recent arrivals in Africa upon meeting some king just coming up from work in his fields may at first conclude, as did I, that this extreme of 'democracy' is due to the low estate to which royalty has fallen in these latter days, but these historical and legendary references show that this 'democracy', such as it is, is not a degeneration but an essential part of the picture. 643 174

With this I shall have to leave royalty. I trust that enough of the picture has been given, and enough also to show what inherent interest would lie in a study of such a Divine King who is at the same time a sort of 'democratic' leader. Should 'indirect rule' ever come to this part of Africa, a resurrection of the royal office would be the order of the day as has been the case in Tanganyika Territory and in the Belgian Congo. For this additional reason an early and a thorough treatment of the subject is to be desired.

Sub-Tribes

Each of the kings of the Ovimbundu was an overlord, for the tribe was made up of a number of sub-tribes called *atumbu* (plural), a word derived from the verb *oku tumbulula*, to transplant. Some of these princes, whether of the blood-royal or not, themselves established dynasties, while others were newly appointed and promoted from time to time. Some of the *atumbu* were ruled by court officials not of royal birth, while others belonged to separate dynasties some of which were natives of the respective regions, at least more anciently native than was the paramount royal family. The kingdom of Bailundu had about 200 *atumbu*, each of which had from 3 to 300 villages or more, and a number of the larger *atumbu* were themselves made up of several smaller 631 635 [643]

Lacerda in *Annaes Mar. e Col.*, 5 Ser., p. 488 f.; L. Magyar, *Reisen in Süd-Afrika* (tr. Hunfalvy, Pesth, 1859), p. 278.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

631 ones. This situation was reported by Magyar, when he wrote,
635 'Quibanda (should be Civanda) to the east has 500 villages. The Chief has great power. He sends tribute every year to the king of Bailundu but is himself fully independent.'[1] Magyar described about 15 *atumbu* or '*ovikandscho*',[2] as he called them, of Bailundu. [161] He estimated the population of Bailundu at 450,000, and for all the kingdoms of the Ovimbundu 1,200,000,[3] figures which are [175] probably not very different from present-day facts. The report and description of the 'Capitania de Benguella' in 1799 said that the king of Bailundu dominated 2,056 villages; the king of Viye, 886; and the king of Ngalangi, 900; and listed their 'feudos' respectively as 82, 54, and 78.[4] My list of the Ngalangi *atumbu* shows 112. In Bailundu about 20 *atumbu* were ruled by members of the royal family, including heirs apparent or expectant, and the queen (*Inakulu*), who also had her own establishment.[5] About 20 were ruled by other court officials.

621 Most of these *atumbu* are still recognized as such or as *olombala*.[6]
622 Their decay has not been as great as that of the *ombala*[6] of their
177 liege lord, for they still fulfil certain functions in native life. They have also been given new functions by the administrative authorities. [651] The minor chiefs as well as village headmen are all required to assist in assessing and collecting the native tax, and also in recruiting labour for government works and for contracts. In some areas they receive in return the remission of their own taxes. In some areas they are required to wear uniforms. On the dancing floors [692] of most of these minor *olombala* courts are still held, justice determined, and (to a limited extent) fines 'eaten'. Such judgements are not officially recognized or allowed by the European authorities. The African, however, often finds that European courts do not meet his needs or accord with his concepts of justice.

[1] Magyar, op. cit., p. 389.

[2] Umbundu *ovikanjo* (plural), 'branches', a term which through commercial or European influence is applied to the *atumbu*.

[3] For these figures and for descriptions of the several kingdoms, see Magyar, op. cit., chap. ix.

[4] *Annaes Mar. e Col.*, 4a Ser., pp. 155 ff.

[5] Magyar, op. cit., p. 390.

[6] *Olombala*, plural of *ombala*, a capital village or chief's residence.

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'robber-baron', established himself[21] and in 1904 there was a minor rising against the Portuguese[22] (not to be confused with the very extensive Bailundo war of 1902–3). In 1908 the government post was founded for Bimbe, and in 1928 the Catholic Mission was established at the point where the Bailundo Mission had the furthest flung catechetical school in that direction. In 1927 the first trader had settled at Chicunda.[23] The areas under the mission and the post do not coincide, but it may be said that Bimbe is the territory bounded on the west by the River Cuvo or Keve and on the east by the main road from Bailundo to Gabela. The southern boundary of the post ran roughly on a line between the post and the Ponte Salazar (which bridges the Cuvo (or Keve) and takes the road into Cassongue), and the northern boundary is formed by a parallel line drawn from the road some way to the south of Cela to the river. In 1956 the post of Bimbe was divided; much of the western part including the Mission was placed under a new post Luvemba.

Chicunda is twenty kilometres beyond the mission, and seven kilometres beyond Chicunda a turning from the main track brings one to the village of Epalanga. Keeping on the track, a further bifurcation, say two and a half kilometres on, gives a track to the left which leads to a small leper colony, and a track leading straight on and sharply upwards to the village of the chief of Gumba.

This village lies at the summit of a sharp ridge which rises up from the ordinary level and then drops abruptly to a neighbourhood inaccessible to motor transport, which forms the greater part of the Gumba chiefdom. The boundary on the other side is a river across which lies Cela.

Such is the lay-out of the area studied. It is up in the north-western corner of the Umbundu country, indeed down by the Mission, people said that the people of Gumba were not Ovimbundu really but 'Olongoya', as the peoples to the north are termed. Many of the people in Gumba had come from

[21] Childs, p. 22.

[22] Information obtained locally. I did not see official records.

[23] Information obtained locally.

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101 to-day.[1] The principal Umbundu-speaking groups may be listed
631 as follows:

I. *Independent kingdoms* (in approximate order of their present population):

Mbailundu (*Bailundo*).
Viye (*Bie* or *Bihe*).
Wambu (*Huambo*, *Huamba*, or even *Hambo*).
Ciyaka (*Quiyaca* or *Quiaca*).
Ngalangi (*Galangue*).
Civula[2] (*Quibula*).
Ndulu[2] (*Andulo*, *Ondulo* or even *Ondura*).
Cingolo (*Quingolo*).
Kalukembe (*Caluquembe*, *Caluguembe*, or even *Caluqueme*).
Sambu[2] (*Sambo* or *Sambos*).
Ekekete (*Quiquete*).
Kakonda or Cilombo-coñoma (*Caconda* or *Quilombo*).
Citata (*Quitata*).

[636] II. *Kingdoms generally tributary but not integral parts of the kingdoms to which they owed allegiance*:

Kasongi (*Cassongue*)—generally a tributary of Bailundu.
Ngalanga (*Galanga*)—generally a tributary of Bailundu.
Civanda (*Quibanda*)—generally a tributary of Bailundu.
Namba—generally a tributary of Bailundu.
Sanga—generally a tributary of Bailundu.
Cenge (*Chiengue*)—generally a tributary of Bailundu.
Cipeyo (*Quipeyo*)—a tributary of Bailundu or Wambu.
Mbongo (*Bongo*)—generally a tributary of Wambu.
Elende (*Lende*)—generally a tributary of Ciyaka.

167 Nearly all of these groups are listed in the report of 1799 to
174 which we have referred, and many of them may be identified on the map of 1776. How long before that had they lived in these their present homes? Since it is already well established that none of the Southern Bantu are autochthonous, we shall not stop to ask

[1] Neither of these accounts mentioned Kasongi, which, according to genealogical evidence, is probably one of the most recently formed of the Umbundu-speaking groups. Both accounts made the non-Umbundu-speaking regions of 'Quibala' (Cipala), Mussende, and Cella tributaries of Bailundu. This was the state of affairs as late as 1893.

[2] See *supra*, p. 167, n. 2.

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THE CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

Men can go out to work in three ways. By going to look for work in a city or on a plantation, by being recruited in his village by a travelling labour recruiter (*angariador*), or by being recruited through the post for military service or for contract labour (a period of a year's non-voluntary work). 464

Men who are away at work may keep in touch with their kin by letters. These are sent to the nearest Catholic or Protestant mission station according to the religious sympathies of the sender and his kin and are sent from there to the villages. 205

Angola forms an Overseas Province of Portugal, and is therefore subject to the Overseas Ministry in Lisbon. The Overseas Provinces of Portugal are officially declared to be integral parts of Portugal, which is regarded as a nation existing in Europe, Africa, and Asia. The expression 'Here also is Portugal' is often heard in Angola. 648

The inhabitants of Angola are in legal status divided into 'civilized' persons, whether white, mulatto, or black, with Portuguese citizenship, and Portuguese 'natives' or 'uncivilized' persons,[7] this latter category including some 3,000 'uncivilized' mulattoes. The 1950 census gave Angola a total population of 4,145,266 of whom 135,355 were 'civilized'. This category was composed of 78,826 whites, 26,335 mulattoes, and 30,089 Africans, plus a balance of 105 presumably Goans. 640 162

The 'natives' are, unlike the 'civilized', subject to the Labour Code. There is no Native Legal Code, nor does Portuguese law apply to 'natives'. Administrative officers may apply Portuguese law, or native custom as known to them, or their own judgement. 641

The administration is headed by the Governor-General who resides at Luanda. The province of Angola is divided into districts each headed by a district governor. Both the governors-general and the district governors have usually distinguished themselves in the Services or in a legal career. Members of the administrative service are not usually promoted to these posts, although they may attain such positions as that of Secretary of Native Affairs. 631

The districts are in turn sub-divided into *concelhos* (a term

[7] By a law of 1961 Portuguese citizenship has been made universal.

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643 common at African courts. A few Umbundu rulers carried on
692 such practices, and especially certain self-constituted robber-barons such as Samakaka, who left Viye after the military occupation and established himself first in Bimbe (Mbimbi), later in Huambo (Wambu), and then at Elende, until taken by the Portuguese authorities in 1903.

643 4. In order to protect himself and the nation, *the king had resort*
754 *to magical means*, some of which would be accounted witchcraft or murder if practised without authority. Such were the ritual murders of *Katõkõlã* (The Strangler), *Oku ipa ukaĩ watimba avali* (killing the woman of two bodies, i.e. pregnant), of the children whose lives were required for building and furnishing the queen's kitchen, &c.

791 5. In order properly to carry out the functions of his office, *the*
643 *king made much use of divination*, for which purpose he had his own diviner (*Citue cosoma*), who was of the blood royal. He also called in or consulted diviners of many regions and of many types, one of the commonest of which was the 'Diviner of the Basket' (*Ocimbanda congombo*).[1]

643 The king was a divine representative and a divine incarnation,
642 but the mode of his succession reveals that he was also a democratically chosen leader. Note has been made of the fact that the royal succession is in the male line, sometimes from father to son, but more often from elder to younger brother, to brother's son, or to one even more distantly related. The election is made by the councillors whose duty it is, ordinarily before the old king's death is announced, but these same councillors may depose an unpopular
[669] king. There have been many revolutions and *coups d'état*. This fact was noted by several early observers, among whom I cite one who wrote in 1837:

> The government of 'Bailundo' is democratic. These heathen mix with the infamous humiliations of the orientals, the unbridled coarseness of the English people at election times in England. The kings defer to and flatter their counsellors; these are they who elevate a king to the throne and also who cast him down.[2]

[1] A rather cursory description of divination as practised by this type of diviner was given by Hambly, op. cit., pp. 274–6. For a fuller treatment, *vide* L. S. Tucker, 'The Divining Basket of the Ovimbundu', *J.R.A.I.* (London), 1940, vol. lxx, pp. 171–201.

[2] C. de Almeida Sandoval in *Annaes do Cons. Ultr.*, Ser. I, p. 519. The reference to English elections reminds one of Dickens. See also P. M. Pinheiro de

000 643 769 782 regent and incarnation" of the spirits. Sacrifices were made at the royal shrine or *kakokoto* ("at the skulls"), where the skulls of past chiefs were kept, in order to:-

[372] (i) control the elements i.e. to ensure a sufficient supply of rain and avoid the dangers caused by storms; also to control fire by providing a new fire ceremonially kindled[1] from which everyone took his fire.

[842] [241] (ii) to ensure fertility, towards which the royal marriage had great influence. The queen's special province was agriculture and her kitchen was sanctified by human sacrifice to guarantee the national food supply. Ceremonially treated seed was distributed to be mixed with the seed of each granary.

643 648 721 [701] (b) *To represent the country in its external relations,* principally to make trade agreements with other chiefs, or to make war on other peoples in order to get tribute and plunder. The war leader *(Kesongo)* has his own residence entirely separate from that of the king, whom he must not meet face to face except on certain ceremonial occasions.[2] Each king must inaugurate his reign with a war, during which or after which he must ceremonially "eat the old one" *(oku lia ekongo)* - who was usually a specially fattened slave [266] cooked with the flesh of the principal animals commonly eaten.[3]

643 692 (c) *To dispense justice.* The chief's court or *olusenje* was the supreme court of the chiefdom. The chief had the final word in any case, but most chiefs acted according to custom.

644 [282] (d) *To protect himself and the chiefdom,* the chief could use "magic" (?) which might have been accounted witchcraft or murder if practised without authority: e.g. the ritual murder of a pregnant woman, or of the children whose lives were required for building and furnishing the queen's kitchen.

643 791 (e) The chief made much use of divination in order to carry out his office. For this purpose he had his own diviner *(citue cosoma)*, who was of the blood royal; but he also consulted diviners of other regions and types.

643 Succession to chiefship is in the male line,[4] from father to son, elder brother to younger brother or brother's son, or sometimes to one more distantly related. The election is made by the councillors whose duty it is (?), ordinarily before the old chief's death is announced. These same councillors may depose an unpopular chief, and there have been many such depositions. This "democratic" tendency of the Ovimbundu has been noted by most writers. Childs points out that it is attested by the fact that a chief (formerly as well as today) works in his own fields, and by folk-tales which give incidental and intimate pictures of petty details in the lives of the chiefs.†

(1) See above, p.26.
(2) In Bailundu he, with certain other officials, was of the stock of slaves of the state *(ovindili viosoma)*.
(3) Childs, p.21. Many early writers refer to the cannibalism of the "Jagas" or "Imbangalas" who are thought to have been the Ovimbundu chiefs. (See above, p.8, and also Lacerda and Ravenstein, quoted by Childs, pp.17ff.)
(4) But *inheritance* is said to follow a different line among chiefs from among commoners; possibly inheritance is also in the paternal line. See Childs p.18.

† See footnote 1, p. 31

[1874-1911]

THE OVIMBUNDU UNDER TWO SOVEREIGNTIES

593 It was then the father who normally exercised authority over
591 a boy, and on the father's death a child or youth would join the household of a father's brother. Yet the right of a sister's son to
604 the inheritance of the movable property and to grants from his mother's brother was counterbalanced by the latter's right to sell his uterine nephew into slavery, a fate from which the father could save his son by ransoming him, in which case the mother's brother would no longer have this right.[86] In this society, the mother's brother—sister's son relationship was fundamentally an economic one, in which the sister's son received assistance in the trade and inherited his uncle's gains in this trade, but could himself be transformed into a source of capital.

182 I now summarize the evidence on Umbundu social control and its relation with the trading economy. It is clear that the Ovimbundu belonged to the number of those African societies
[642] with pyramidal[87] political systems and formal codes and courts of law, even though there exists uncertainty as to the relative power of the kingdoms and the sub-chiefdoms. Social control
182 also operated through the kinship system, authority at the
613 village level being in the hands of the head of the patrilineal group backed by the public opinion expressed in the men's house, and the dispersed matrilineal groups having sanctions in the right of sale of a sister's son and in the accusations of sorcery brought against those who failed to use wealth to aid
182 their relatives. For the caravan trade to have attained the
631 importance it did there must also have existed something of a *pax Umbunduca* stimulated by the existence of such ties as that between *tjisoko* partners and the 'international' hospitality shown to diviners, hunters, and smiths. Evidence of this *pax Umbunduca* is provided by the organization of caravans, and by the establishment of marriage ties between persons in different kingdoms, and between different royal houses.[88]
[721] However, warfare was not unknown between the different

[86] Childs, p. 44, and my informants.

[87] See Fortes and Evans-Pritchard, Introduction to *African Political Systems*.

[88] Hastings (p. 1) notes a marriage between the daughter of a king of Bie and Ekwikwi, king of Bailundo (1876–93). Childs (p. 171) notes that Kakulukusu, king of Ndulu, was a sister's son of a king of Bailundo.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

PLATE II

643

Photo. D. G. Ridout

a. Court procedure: the King and his counsellors (Bailundu)

764

b Mortuary rites at Ngendo

[facing p. 17]

631 life and each could be taken as a unit complete in itself. Individual studies and comparisons of one with another would provide much valuable material. Familiarity with individuals and groups belong-
[184] ing to all the major tribal groups, and study of their folk-lore and customs has led me to conclude that as in language, so in social structure and in culture, the differences are of small account. In offering illustrative material, I shall give its tribal source.

The King

643 To describe the royal office and functions it would be necessary
177 to use the past tense. That reason, along with others, leads me to exclude this subject from the present study. Effective European occupation of the country and government by direct rule[1] have atrophied the royal office among the Ovimbundu until to-day kings survive as hardly more than living museum pieces. This being the case, I shall only enumerate the royal functions, very briefly characterize them, and pass on to describe other and living parts of the Umbundu social organism.

643 The principal functions of the royal office were:

776 1. *Religious.* The spirits of the king's ancestors were the principal national deities. The king was not only high priest but also the visible vice-regent and incarnation of the spirits. The
[778] sacrifices at the royal shrine, *kakokoto* (literally, at the skulls), the place of the royal skulls, were for the nation in order:

643 (*a*) *To control the elements*, i.e. to ensure a sufficient supply of
372 rain and avoid the dangers caused by hail, by lightning, &c. Also
789 to control fire by providing a new fire properly (ceremonially) kindled from which everyone took his fire. A king's reign was spoken of as 'during the Water of Lord So-and-so' (*Kovava a Ñalã Ngandi*), or 'during the Fire of Lord So-and-so' (*Kondalu ya Ñalã Ngandi*).

241 (*b*) *To ensure fertility*, toward which desideratum the royal
644 marriage had great influence. The queen's special province was agriculture and her kitchen was sanctified by human sacrifice to
[782] guarantee the national food supply. Ceremonially treated seed was distributed to be mixed with the seed of each granary.

[1] 'Direct rule' is applied in most parts of Africa where European settlement is the predominant consideration and also where centralized government is the ideal. 'Indirect rule' is best illustrated in the Gold Coast, Nigeria, Uganda, and Tanganyika Territory.

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(*c*) *In hunting*, deities other than the king's ancestors were invoked, especially *Hūvī*, the hunters' god, and *Kuanja*, a goddess, both of which had their own shrines and priests. These may have been connected with the country or with its earlier inhabitants (the kings being recognized as late comers). At the inaugural hunt the offices were assigned. The king's character was supposedly revealed by the sex of the animal killed at this hunt: 'If the duiker[1] is a female, then it is good indeed, but if a male, then the king is a real person but he habitually will become angry to excess' (*Nda ombambi yaco omange ciwa muēlē, puaī nda ulume, Soma omunu puaī o tema tema enene*).

2. *To represent the nation in its external relations*, i.e. (*a*) *To make agreements with other kings to promote trade*, and (*b*) *To make war on other peoples* in order to provide his court with tribute and his warriors with plunder. The war leader (*Kesongo*) had his own residence and establishment entirely separate from that of the king, whom he must not meet face to face except on certain state occasions. In Bailundu he, with certain other officials, was of the stock of the slaves of the state (*ovinduli viosoma*) who came from Luandu in the Songo country. Each king must inaugurate his reign with a war, during or after which he must ceremonially 'eat the old one' (*oku lia ekongo*)—a feast consisting of the flesh of a specially fattened slave cooked with the flesh of the principal animals commonly eaten.

3. *To dispense justice*. In point of time consumed, this question was very important, for it occupied much of the time of both rulers and ruled. Good evidence of this is in the number of proverbs used at court, second only in number to those used for the education of the young. The king's court (*olusenje*) was the supreme court of the nation where cases were continually heard and 'fines eaten' (*oku lia ovimbu*). Cases might be settled either by ordeal or by decision of the king, and there was therefore room for appeal and re-trial. The king's word, however, was final, as the proverb has it: *O popia onganji, o mālāpo osoma*. (The advocate speaks, the king finishes [decides].) The king was not generally arbitrary in his decisions but was bound not only by the customs of his people, but also by the desires of his councillors. Among the legitimate kings of the Ovimbundu there were comparatively few of the revolting and wholesale punishments which were so

[1] The duiker, *ombambi* (*Sīloicapra grimmii leucoprosopus*).

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643 common at African courts. A few Umbundu rulers carried on
692 such practices, and especially certain self-constituted robber-barons such as Samakaka, who left Viye after the military occupation and established himself first in Bimbe (Mbimbi), later in Huambo (Wambu), and then at Elende, until taken by the Portuguese authorities in 1903.

643 4. In order to protect himself and the nation, *the king had resort*
754 *to magical means*, some of which would be accounted witchcraft or murder if practised without authority. Such were the ritual murders of *Katõkõlã* (The Strangler), *Oku ipa ukaĩ watimba avali* (killing the woman of two bodies, i.e. pregnant), of the children whose lives were required for building and furnishing the queen's kitchen, &c.

791 5. In order properly to carry out the functions of his office, *the*
643 *king made much use of divination*, for which purpose he had his own diviner (*Citue cosoma*), who was of the blood royal. He also called in or consulted diviners of many regions and of many types, one of the commonest of which was the 'Diviner of the Basket' (*Ocimbanda congombo*).[1]

643 The king was a divine representative and a divine incarnation,
642 but the mode of his succession reveals that he was also a democratically chosen leader. Note has been made of the fact that the royal succession is in the male line, sometimes from father to son, but more often from elder to younger brother, to brother's son, or to one even more distantly related. The election is made by the councillors whose duty it is, ordinarily before the old king's death is announced, but these same councillors may depose an unpopular
[669] king. There have been many revolutions and *coups d'état*. This fact was noted by several early observers, among whom I cite one who wrote in 1837:

> The government of 'Bailundo' is democratic. These heathen mix with the infamous humiliations of the orientals, the unbridled coarseness of the English people at election times in England. The kings defer to and flatter their counsellors; these are they who elevate a king to the throne and also who cast him down.[2]

[1] A rather cursory description of divination as practised by this type of diviner was given by Hambly, op. cit., pp. 274–6. For a fuller treatment, *vide* L. S. Tucker, 'The Divining Basket of the Ovimbundu', *J.R.A.I.* (London), 1940, vol. lxx, pp. 171–201.

[2] C. de Almeida Sandoval in *Annaes do Cons. Ultr.*, Ser. I, p. 519. The reference to English elections reminds one of Dickens. See also P. M. Pinheiro de

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This so-called democratic streak is also abundantly attested by 643 folk-tales which give incidental and intimate pictures of petty 174 details in the life of kings. There is one in which a king gives instructions for caring for his field while he is absent on a war party; another which tells of a fine levied on a man who while hiding up a tree accidentally urinated on a king; another, of a king who in a time of hunger himself climbed a tree for the *epõlẽ* fruit and nearly starved when the prop by which he had climbed was taken away. Recent arrivals in Africa upon meeting some king just coming up from work in his fields may at first conclude, as did I, that this extreme of 'democracy' is due to the low estate to which royalty has fallen in these latter days, but these historical and legendary references show that this 'democracy', such as it is, is not a degeneration but an essential part of the picture.

With this I shall have to leave royalty. I trust that enough of the picture has been given, and enough also to show what inherent interest would lie in a study of such a Divine King who is at the same time a sort of 'democratic' leader. Should 'indirect rule' ever come to this part of Africa, a resurrection of the royal office would be the order of the day as has been the case in Tanganyika Territory and in the Belgian Congo. For this additional reason an early and a thorough treatment of the subject is to be desired.

Sub-Tribes

Each of the kings of the Ovimbundu was an overlord, for the 631 tribe was made up of a number of sub-tribes called *atumbu* 635 (plural), a word derived from the verb *oku tumbulula*, to transplant. Some of these princes, whether of the blood-royal or not, them- [643] selves established dynasties, while others were newly appointed and promoted from time to time. Some of the *atumbu* were ruled by court officials not of royal birth, while others belonged to separate dynasties some of which were natives of the respective regions, at least more anciently native than was the paramount royal family. The kingdom of Bailundu had about 200 *atumbu*, each of which had from 3 to 300 villages or more, and a number of the larger *atumbu* were themselves made up of several smaller

Lacerda in *Annaes Mar. e Col.*, 5 Ser., p. 488 f.; L. Magyar, *Reisen in Süd-Afrika* (tr. Hunfalvy, Pesth, 1859), p. 278.

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there must be a responsible senior and, hence as a matter of course, 561
the following is accepted:

Ndalu hokuluko la Vava: [538]
Fire is not older than water:

Ciyo wa pindikapo.
Potsherd (or frying-pan) passes between (i.e. keeps the peace).

As potsherd (or frying-pan) keeps water from putting out fire and fire from consuming water, so the elder keeps the peace between the young of relatively equal status.

The hierarchy of age is taken as a matter of course and circum- 561
cision camps or other formal 'schools' are not considered necessary 881
to reinforce an attitude which no one would dream of disputing. At the present time there is quite a vogue for circumcision camps (*vakuevamba*) in the southern or south-eastern half of the country. Some affirm that these are new-fangled notions coming in from neighbouring tribes. Others declare the institution to be very old. The Ngalangi people say that they have always had both *evamba* for the boys and *uso wakãi* for the girls. Some tribes require *evamba* [643] ●
of the king before he may rule. Even where the institution is not in vogue, there are associations of coevals (*vakuacisoko*) whose members have definite rights and duties toward each other. These matters are treated more fully in a later chapter. Inasmuch 561
as these age-grade sets are both age and sex divisions, they contain 182
some elements of social cleavage, but their association with the economic and political sides of life makes them a strongly cohesive force for society.

Umbundu Social Structure: Summary

Summarizing the evidence of the present chapter, I wish only to 182
tie in a few of the more important threads so that the pattern of the 621
Umbundu social structure may be seen at a glance.

Although the Ovimbundu no longer maintain the political life which formerly existed, there are elements of cohesion which still give reality to their social organism. These elements all centre in or spring from the kinship group.

With regard to the village, two facts stand out:

1. The Umbundu village is a local kinship unit, with the villagers quite literally the children of the headman-patriarch.
2. Although its political, religious, and social functions may be

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157 animals.[1] Other tales with frankly human protagonists portray
538 the same theme,[2] and there are a number of Umbundu adapta-
593 tions and variations of such European versions of this theme as Cinderella, Snow White, &c. In some tales, such as 'Kalitangi', the hero escaped as an infant from an agreement made by his mother before his birth with another expectant mother that they would both destroy their offspring. Does this indicate a resentment of, or a protest against, child-sacrifice in certain Umbundu rites? I mention this as one possible source for the feeling of neglect and 'rejection' which, however, does not seem to be as acute or as widespread as in our own society.[3] The exact situation could only be determined by careful and extensive investigation.

593 Adjustments between siblings among the Ovimbundu on the
152 whole are relatively satisfactory. Resentment on the part of the younger does sometimes occur as indicated above. Overt sibling
[643] conflict has also arisen quite frequently in the royal families because of disputes over the succession. Instances of this latter type of conflict may be found in narratives of the early missionaries,[4] in diaries of Silva Porto,[5] and in other early sources. Conflict from jealousy arising out of the parent–child relationship, however, seems to be relatively rare. In a kinship society regulated by the hierarchy of age, jealousy between siblings does not quite fit into the picture. The two most common terms for jealousy over personal relations refer strictly to sexual jealousy: *esepa*, woman's jealousy; and *ukuelume*, jealousy on the part of a man. The other terms are somewhat more applicable but they belong less to household affairs. The meaning of *onya* is jealousy and envy, while *ocipululu* is covetousness and so belongs to the economic sphere.

572 Friendship, especially between age-mates or 'coevals', has played
[554] and continues to play an important role in Umbundu social adjustments. Such differences as social station, family, distance of habitation, and even diversity of language and culture are easily bridged by friendship. Many friendships were formed on trading

[1] Cf. *Journal of the American Folk-Lore Society*, 1922, vol. 35, nos. 1 and 18, pp. 116 f., 140 ff.

[2] The tale of *Ñaña la kota liaye* (Baby and his elder sister) referred to *supra*, p. 84.

[3] Investigations of the 'foster-child phantasy', feelings of neglect, 'rejection', &c., reported by Murphy, op. cit., p. 415 f.; and by Allport, op. cit., p. 364 f.

[4] *Missionary Herald*, 1888, p. 242 f.

[5] In *Boletim da Sociedade de Geografia de Lisboa*, 1885, 1886.

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had Portuguese names, and tradition speaks of a great accession 167
of mulatto stock, which also is confirmed by observation. 173

The Umbundu-speaking border groups are interesting. Ngamba 174
was formerly occupied by the Songo and has been peopled by 173
Ovimbundu coming from near the capital of Viye only within 167
the past forty years. Cengi, Sanga, Namba, and Kasongi on the northern flank of Bailundu have probably all only recently become Umbundu-speaking groups. Kasongi is one of the largest groups which paid tribute to Bailundu, and has had a line of Umbundu-speaking kings for more than a hundred years; but judging from genealogical evidence the bulk of the people have not been Ovimbundu that long. Civula is another large group and its uncertain feudal status has been noted. Perhaps the most interesting of the border groups, at least from a linguistic standpoint, is Kalukembe. The royal house seems to have come from Ciyaka and it has been [643] claimed that in Kalukembe the kingship is inherited by the mother's brother's son. This is not supported by the only local traditional history which I have been able to secure and requires further investigation. At any rate it is through the maternal line that the commoners of all the Umbundu-speaking groups inherit, and it is noteworthy that this is also true of the kingship among the 'Bangala' and the Ambo tribes.[1] The 'Bangala' people have clan [582] organizations and are exogamous, so that they may marry in any of the related 'Bangala' groups, and for this purpose they include the Kalukembe but not others of the Ovimbundu.[2] Finally, the variations with which Umbundu is spoken in Kalukembe[3] point to closer connexions with the language-group of the 'Bangala'. There are certain areas which at the present day seem to be under- 197 going a linguistic 'Umbundu-ization'. This is most evident in the coast towns such as Novo Redondo, Lobito, Catumbela, Benguela,

[1] See Estermann, 'Notas Etnográficas sôbre os povos do Distrito da Huila' in *Boletim Geral das Colónias*, fev. 1935, p. 63; Hahn, *et al.*, *The Native Tribes of South West Africa*, p. 8.

[2] This last item was learned from Mulondo people. The above-cited article deals only with the people of the District of Huila, while 'Bangala' people live also in other adjoining districts.

[3] Compare Umbundu language work of H. Chatelain and others of the 'Mission Philafricaine' in Kalukembe, as versus illustrations of Umbundu used by Johnston, Meinhof, *et al.* Evidently the native 'Mohongo' taken to Paris by Homburger of the Mission Rohan-Chabot, was a native of Kalukembe, for the 'Bailoundou' vocabulary taken from him is of the Kalukembe variation. (See *Mission Rohan-Chabot*, t. III, f. 1.)

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175 178 439 [643] Bailundu (and its dependent states), or through Wambu and Ciyaka, while the road to Luanda lay either through Ndulu or Bailundu, these other kingdoms were not slow in following along the path of commercial success. In Ngalangi the king himself took a very active interest in trade and annually sent a royal caravan to Benguela, taking care to get a pass from the captain of the fort at Caconda. Other kings also adopted the practice of the royal caravan,[1] but the kings of the principal kingdoms were slow to give up raiding, plunder, and warfare as a manner of life[2]—a custom which became distasteful to their subjects in proportion as trade became more profitable and attractive.

In addition to those already named, there were other historical events and policies which contributed toward the development of trade during this period. The abolition in 1834 of the monopoly [567] in ivory,[3] which the royal treasury had held since the beginning, was of great importance, and this, in turn, abetted in perpetuating the slave-trade, now a contraband, for ivory always had been brought from the interior on the backs of slaves, and it must not be supposed that this would suddenly be stopped, especially since ivory had just become much more valuable. According to Bastos,[4] slaves for this contraband trade continued to be cheap and plentiful until the eighties, which was probably due in part to the large supply offered. Another reason was perhaps that the contraband oversea trade was largely in the hands of foreigners—Brazilians, Spaniards, and Americans, who were not always reliable in the matter of paying for their cargoes.[5]

[1] *Omaka*, which had special routines and prerogatives. Other types of caravans were named from the products which they carried or conducted.

[2] See Lopes de Lima, *Ensaios*, part ii, p. 54: 'Bailundo . . . a warlike people, of the race of "Jagas", whose chief is always on a campaign'; Magyar, *Reisen*, many references, but especially pp. 290 ff., 383–420; Silva Porto, op. cit., p. 82 f., 160; *Missionary Herald*, 1883, p. 339; 1884, pp. 145 f., 504 f.; 1885, pp. 279, 375 f.; 1886, p. 228 f.; 1887, p. 106; 1889, pp. 67, 535; 1890, p. 292, &c.

[3] From 1618 (B. Rebelio de Aragão, p. 14) until 1834 (Saldanha da Gama, p. 86), all critics agreed that this monopoly even defeated its own purpose, i.e. revenue; for, they said, the conditions and regulations were so onerous that the natives could not afford to bring ivory to the coast. Available statistics show that there was very little export of ivory until 1835 (Lopes de Lima, *Ensaios*).

[4] A. Bastos, *Monographia de Catumbella*, pp. 18, 25. He gives prices varying from 5$000 to 18$000 or even 20$000, and remarks that slaves were later designated as servants, redeemed ones, contracted labourers, &c. The milreis (1$000) was then worth about $1.10. Monteiro (*vide infra*) says that in the sixties 'a little nigger' could be had for 5s.

[5] J. J. Monteiro, *Angola and the River Congo*, pp. 181–4. Monteiro attributes

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dropped off; of ivory there was no more. From 1893 on, says Bastos, rubber was practically the sole export of the District of Benguela and of its hinterland.[1] In 1891 more than one million milreis' worth of rubber was exported from Benguela, sixteen times as much as was exported only five years before, and three and one-half times the value of the *three* leading exports in 1886. Until 1891 this increase was not at the expense of other exports, but rather in addition to them.

All of this rubber, and the other exports as well, came to the coast in caravans of the Ovimbundu or their neighbours. In its inception and its great development it was an enterprise of the Ovimbundu. Everyone who was able to carry a load joined a caravan. It had always been the custom to take boys on trading expeditions, as young as they could go—say, from their tenth year—as a part of their education. Now girls were also taken and hardly any but the women stayed at home to raise the crops and provide rations for the caravans. European residents experienced great difficulty in securing necessary porters,[2] and this was one reason for finally putting through the wagon-road from Benguela to Caconda.[3] It was extended to Viye during the military campaign of 1890. The fever of the rubber trade reached into all the villages of the land and took in everyone able to travel. Mission schools had been established since 1881, but they had but few pupils until 1900. There were also other reasons for this, but a principal one was the attractiveness of the rubber trade.[4] Even the kings found it more difficult to gather armies for their wars: trade had become more attractive than the possibility of plunder.

Of all the kings who ruled the various Umbundu kingdoms during this time, the one who is best remembered is Ekuikui (II) of Bailundu (1876–93). Tradition has begun to ascribe to him and to his reign some things which properly belong to earlier

[1] Bastos, op. cit., p. 34. He does not include *serviçaes* in the exports, since they all went to the mainland or island plantations, but he remarks that at this time the price rose to even 90$000 (p. 33). The rise in price was perhaps due to the smaller supply owing to the preoccupation of the Ovimbundu with the rubber trade.

[2] See *Missionary Herald*, 1889, p. 350.

[3] *Benguella*, 1891, op. cit., p. 10.

[4] The reports of the governor of Benguela, to which reference has been made, also mentioned this fact, saying that although the American missions were intelligently directed, their results were small, since parents would not send their children to learn while they could pick up loads of rubber (1887, p. 19; 1891, p. 20).

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

times, which is a sure sign of his greatness in Umbundu estimation. Ekuikui's reign marked the end of an era and the beginning of another, not only for the people of Bailundu, but for all the Ovimbundu. The rubber trade had begun just before he came to the stool and his reign saw its intensive development. Tradition is probably right in placing the beginning of intensive agricultural pursuits during Ekuikui's time, for the great development of trade, need for rations for the long journeys, and a market for foodstuffs at the coast provided the necessary stimulus to cultivate beyond immediate seasonal need. Ekuikui carried on the tradition of warfare[1] which was so large a part of his ancestral heritage, but he had the good sense to attempt no large-scale operations either against his relatively powerful Ovimbundu confrères, or against European establishments. There was plenty of provocation[2] and no lack of warlike counsel, but he probably realized that the tenor of the times was against such operations. Had his contemporaries of Viye and his own successors been possessed of equal good sense, the Ovimbundu might have been saved some very difficult times and not a little bloodshed. The military occupation of Viye came about in 1890, after a disastrous war brought on by foolishly high-handed treatment on the part of King Ndunduma[3] and his counsellors of a little expedition bound for the interior under Captain Paiva Couceiro, and of Silva Porto,[4] resulting in the suicide of the latter. The ruler and people of Viye relied on a largely magical defence against Boer sharpshooters and Portuguese field artillery with Krupp guns. When finally Ndunduma came in and gave himself up[5] he was exiled to São Tiago in the Cape Verde Islands,

[1] For King Ekuikui's wars see *Missionary Herald*, 1882, p. 225; 1883, p. 339; 1884, pp. 145 f., 504; 1885, pp. 279, 355, 375; 1889, p. 67; 1890, p. 292.

[2] See op. cit., 1886, pp. 228 f., 452, 508.

[3] *Ndunduma* (Thunderer) was the name assumed by Cikunyu when he took office after a *coup d'état* in 1888 (see *Missionary Herald*, 1889, p. 242 f.).

[4] Antonio Francisco Ferreira da Silva Porto, appointed 'Captain-major and exterior judge' of Bihe in 1885. He had authority only over the European residents, but he knew the country and people well and had tried to bring about a peaceful occupation of the country; neither the Government in Benguela nor the native authorities, however, would take his advice. His suicide brought the importance of the Umbundu country to the fore, and he became a Portuguese national hero.

[5] It was the Rev. W. H. Sanders, in charge of Kamundongo Mission Station, who sought Ndunduma and got him to surrender in order to avoid further slaughter. For a report of this 'war' see *Relatorio do Districto de Benguella*, 1891, pp. 12–14; also *Missionary Herald*, 1891, pp. 47, 63 f., 88, 108 f.; Dr. J. Johnston, *Romance versus Reality in South Central Africa*, pp. 59–63. F. S. Arnot (*Bihe*

OCCUPATION AND OF THE TRADITIONAL THE OVIMBUNDU

[p.225]

NATIVE TRADITIONAL HISTORY AND THE UMBUNDU ROYAL SUCCESSIONS

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'Kinguri' leaves Lunda to seek new home; his subsequent wanderings (Magyar).

Traditional origins of the Imbangala, of the Songo; in 'Libolo', in 'Quibala', &c. (Dias de Carvalho; Ferreira Diniz, &c.).

Ngalangi tradition of Feti the First, who found his wives in the reeds, and how they became the mothers of many peoples.

Wambu-Kalunga, the cannibal chief, founder of Wambu, progenitor of Ciyaka, Cingolo, Citata, Kalukembe, &c.

Ndulu tradition of Katekula-Mengo, elephant-hunter, who left imprints in the rocks of Pungu-a-Ndongo.

Katiavala from the north, comes to Bailundu.

Viye and Kabanda.

UMBUNDU ROYAL SUCCESSIONS

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	Ciyaka	*Ndulu*	*Bailundu*	*Ngalangi*	*Viye*
1650	Cilulu I (*Cihamba*)[2] Kapango				
		Cikolongonjo			
	Atende I Ukolongonjo I	Kavelavela	Mbulu (*Cilivo*)[2]		
1700	Ndumbu I (*Kosya-ya-Cipembe*)[2]	Etande	Katiavala I Njabulu Somendalu		
	Luanjangombe I Mukuku	Cibusya Cingi		(Kasenje)[2] (Cihongo)[2]	Viye (Civava)[2] (Ndalu)[2]
1750	Cilulu II Handa I	(Ndulu)[7]	Cingi I[1] c. 1760–76	Ndumba Visoso	Ulundu
	Ngalangi Katutu I	Kakulukusu[1]			
					Eyambi Njilahulu
1775	Ndumbu II				
			(Cilivo)[2]		
	Kanutumulua				Kangombe[1] 1778–c.1795
	Kamela Ukolongonjo II	Lunanyula		Mulunda	

For notes see page 231.

1:Childs M-5 (1924-1940)1949 F P13 Mbundu F P13

UMBUNDU ROYAL SUCCESSIONS

	Ciyaka	*Ndulu*	*Bailundu*	*Ngalangi*	*Viye*
1795	Atende II				Kawewe
	Cikoko I	Cindele	Ekuikui I Numa I Hundungulu	Kambuenge	Moma (*Vasovava*)[2]
	Kuvombo-inene				
	Ndumbu III	Mbundi	Cisende I Njunjulu Ngungi	Ndumba II (*Cihongo*)[2]	
1835	Handa II (*Kaciyombo*)[2]		Civukuvuku[3]		Mbandus[3] 1833–9
			Utondosi		Kakembembe[3] (*Hundungulu*)[2] 1839–42
1842	Njimbi[4] 1842–50	Siakalembe	Mbonge[3] 1842–61	Ndumba III[3] (*Epope Kateyavilombo*) *c.* 1844–*c.* 1860	Liambula[3] 1842–7
1850	Canja I[4] (*Luanjangombe III*)[2] 1850–70				Kayangula[3] 1847–50 (Mukinda[2]) 1850–7[3]
1857		Luaise		Etumbu Lutate	Nguvengo[3] 1857–9
1861			Cisende II[3] 1861–9 Vasovava[3] 1869–72		Konya Cilemo[3] 1860–83
1870	Njundo[4] 1870–98	Elundu Civava[4] *c.* 1870–*c.* 1890			
			Ekongo-liohombo[3] 1872–6		
1875			Ekuikui II[3] 1876–93	Ndumbu[3]	
1880					Ciponge[3] (*Njambayamina*)[2] 1883–6

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UMBUNDU ROYAL SUCCESSIONS

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	Ciyaka	*Ndulu*	*Bailundu*	*Ngalangi*	*Viye*
1885					Ciyoka[3] 1886–8 Cikunyu[3] (*Ndundumo*)[3] 1888–90
1890		Civange		Ekumbi	Kalufele
			Katisvala II[3] 1893–5		
1895			Numa II[3] 1895–6	Cihonga II	Kaninguluka
		Cipati	Hundungulu Kalakata	Ciyo	
	Cilölö III[4] 1898–1904				
1900		Cisululu Kasuanje	Kalandula		Ciyuka[4] 1901–3
		Siakanjimba	(Mutu-ya Kevela) [3, 7] 1903		Kavova[4] 1903–15
1904	Handa III[4] 1904–11	Ndingilinya	Cisende III[3] 1904–11		
		Sihinga Congolola		Cipala	
1910	Atende III[4] 1911–15		Njahölö[4] 1911–35		
1915	Cikoko[4] 1915–18				Ngungu[4] 1915–28
		Ciscokua		Kangombe	
1920	Cilölö IV[4] 1922–5			Ngangwa	
				Cuvika	

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

UMBUNDU ROYAL SUCCESSIONS

	Ciyaka	*Ndulu*	*Bailundu*	*Ngalangi*	*Viye*
1925				Cikuetekole	
	Handa IV[4] (*Kalumbombo*)[8] 1926–8	Cihopio[4] d. 1935			
				Mbumba-Kambuakatepa	
					Ciyuka[4, 6] 1928–40
	Sakulanda[4] (*Luanjangombe IV*)[8] 1929–39				
1930				Cingelesi[4] 1931–3 Ndumbu II[4] 1933–5	
1935		(Sangombe Esita)[7] 1935–	Musita[4] 1935–8	Congolola[4] 1935–	
			Cinendele[4] 1938–		
	Cilölö V[4] 1939–40				
1940	Tomasi[4] 1940–				

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NOTES

[1] Dates fixed by agreement of native tradition with historical reference.

[2] These names mentioned by European writers; native tradition with reference to them not known.

[3] Dates fixed from historical reference.

[4] Dates from native sources.

[5] Tradition mentions a solar eclipse during this reign, which would be 1886 or 1889.

[6] This is the same king as the one listed for 1901–3: he reigned twice.

[7] The names in parentheses are of men not of royal lines and not regularly enthroned, but usurpers, war leaders, or 'guarders of the stool'.

[8] The italicized names in parentheses after the names of certain kings are appelatives which they took on assuming office.

2: McCulloch
622, 643 ●

FP13 Mbundu FP13

/For ceremonial activities of the village headman and chief see 793. /

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Magyar's account of the Viye legend is of interest since it suggests a direct link between the movements of the Ovimbundu ancestors and contemporary migrations of the Lunda in the Congo basin and western Angola.[1] Magyar relates that the forefathers of the Viye came from the land of the Moropu (or Lunda[2]) under the two chiefs Kinguri and Schakambindi, conquered the Songo, and settled on the Luanda river, engaging in agriculture between raids. The tribe subsequently sub-divided, one group going southwards to the Kukema river, where Ngangela were living, to found the chiefdom of Viye. 173 166

Ngalangi tradition is the only one which attempts a creation myth. Feti, the first chief of Ngalangi, is said to have "come down from above"; having no wives, he went to a lagoon of the Kunene river and caught them as they came out of the reeds. Sons of Feti drove out the Ngangela from what is now Ngalangi country, and founded their principal village.[3] Childs estimates that this must have taken place in about 1750. The village was later attacked unsuccessfully by Ngangela, and this is one of the very few traditions which mention resistance met by the invaders.

Wambu. The first chief, Wambu Kalunga, is said to have come from Sela country, north-west of Bailundu. The Nganda, who now live south-west of Umbundu country and are of Southern Bantu stock, were previously living in Wambu country. The founder of the *Ciyaka* royal family is said to have been a relative of Wambu Kalunga, and to have driven out the Ndombe (also of Southern Bantu stock) from Ciyaka country, probably during the first half of the seventeenth century. Wambu Kalunga is said to have been also the progenitor of the dynasties of *Cingolo*, *Citata* or *Cikuma*, *Kalukembe*, *Elende* and *Eketete*.[4]

Kakonda, the founder of the Kakonda kingdom, was of northern stock, but born in Ngalangi, whence he was sold as a slave to Benguella. He escaped with his wife, Cilombo, and set up the present kingdom in about 1760.

Cengi, *Sanga*, *Nambe* and *Kasongi* on the northern flank of Bailundu have only recently become Umbundu-speaking. *Kasongi*, one of the largest Bailundu tributaries, has however had a line of Umbundu-speaking chiefs for more than 100 years. *Civula* was listed by Magyar as tributary to Ciyaka. *Kalukembe* is of interest in that it is more clearly linked than other sections of the Ovimbundu with the Nganda-Ambo group. Factors which point to this closer link include: the similarities in language between the two groups; the inheritance of the Kalukembe kingship in the maternal line, as among the Nganda-Ambo group, and not in the paternal line, as among other Ovimbundu;[5] and the fact that the Nganda-Ambo, who have an exogamous clan organisation, may marry in any of the related Nganda-Ambo groups, and for this purpose include Kalukembe but not other Ovimbundu.[6] 174 631 [643] [582]

(1) McCulloch 1951, pp.9ff., 32ff., 57ff.
(2) Dias de Carvalho 1890, p.66.
(3) According to the same legend, where the Ngalange rested their loads of food and household goods, sticks took root and became the sycamore figs which to this day encircle the capital village. This circle of trees is a characteristic of the older Ngangela villages.
(4) Childs op.cit., pp.178, 225.
(5) Although descent among Ovimbundu commoners is in the maternal line.
(6) Childs, op.cit., p.179.

621 Ngendo is surrounded by a stick palisade except on that side of the headman's household which is adjacent to the rocks used as a club-house. The village itself (and each section) is divided up into compounds, each of which contains one to three houses,[1] and palisades divide one compound [363] from the next; between are paths leading to the *ocila* and out of the village. Small gardens for tobacco, maize and beans are within the compounds, and the larger fields lie outside the village at from thirty minutes' to an hour's walk. In the headman's section of Ngendo there are 25 households containing 32 houses in all. Each house has its own granary [343] *(osila)* and a small chicken-coop built on stilts, and of all the houses only six have separate kitchens *(ocimo)*. Most households had separate pens for pigs, goats and sheep for the night,[2] and at one side of the headman's compound there is a common corral for the nine cattle owned by the section. Only the headman had a spirit-hut *(etombo)*, used also as a [122] storehouse, for entertaining his guests, and for his own use should he wish to sleep apart from his wives.

621 Chiefs' villages or *olombala* (singular *ombala*) are often surrounded by a belt of tall trees.[3] The chief's compound (the *ilombe*) is larger than 361 those of other villagers, and, according to Hambly,[4] usually contains: 643 the chief's house, which always has a separate sleeping-room; a house and a kitchen for each of his wives; a tomb for the burial of the chief and his wives; a house of meditation for the chief, and pens for pigs and chickens.

342 Umbundu houses are usually circular, but sometimes rectangular, and made of wattle and daub, with thatched roofs. Sometimes huts are divided by matting into a living-room and a sleeping-room. Cooking is often done [343] in the house itself, but sometimes a separate hut is built as a kitchen.[5]

345 The *onjango* (the Men's Club House) consists of a cone-shaped roof set on stout hardwood poles instead of a wall, and left open so that those for whom there may be no place inside may still see and hear what takes place within.[6]

341 Villages are moved when fields are exhausted and others are not available nearby[7] or, more often, when there has been illness or death in the [768] village, which implies that some action displeasing to the spirits has been committed. (No information is available concerning the usual length of life of a village.) When the new site is chosen, the headman's fire 776 in the old village is extinguished, and a procession starts, led by a boy 774 carrying the sacred bows *(ohonji)* of each ascendant who is now a guardian spirit of the family (i.e. the *oluse*), and a girl carrying the sacred 796 chest *(ocisbangu)* containing the relics *(ociye)* and the balls of iguana skin.[8] On arriving at the site the boy and girl cut and plant the

(1) In this section there were 13 goats, 20 sheep, 100 pigs and about 100 chickens. (Childs, op.cit. p.31) (2) Ibid.
(3) Hambly, (2) 1934, p.206 *et.al.* It was a custom of the Ngangela peoples to plant trees round the village and dedicate them to deceased chiefs. (See McCulloch 1950, p.68.) There is no evidence that the trees surrounding Umbundu villages have any ritual significance, although the custom may have been taken over from the conquered Ngangela peoples.
(4) Op.cit., p.208. (5) Ibid., p.10
(6) Childs, personal communication.
(7) Due often to European settlement. (8) See below, p.47.

advancement, will go to the head of their *oluina* to ask for his intercession with the spirits.[1] 613

As legal head of the village, the *sekulu yimbo* presides over both the more serious cases, which are held before the whole village on the dance-floor, and the simpler ones, which require the attendance only of those concerned, together with their respective elders, and may be taken up either in the *onjango* or in the headman's own courtyard. Hambly seems to suggest that all the section-heads act with the village headman as a kind of council, but does not give details. He states also that the *olosekulu* (sing. *sekulu*) of the village formerly had charge of trials for murder, theft, adultery, and arguments over land,[2] and points out that they were more active in the legal system than the chiefs.[3] This is even more true today, when the village court of justice continues to function in spite of political and administrative changes, although the offices of chiefs and to some extent of sub-chiefs have largely decayed. 622 623 691 [177]

Other functions of the village headman include: the distribution of land to the various families when new village sites are opened;[4] the direction of the communal fire-hunts;[5] and, today, the collecting of taxes from the villagers and the direction and organisation of labour to work on the roads.[6] But however numerous the headman's official duties, he usually finds some time to attend to his own affairs, whether he is a farmer, hunter, or trader.[7] 622 423 651 466 [463]

Succession to headmanship is usually from father to son or from elder to younger brother, "with only as much recognition of primogeniture as belongs to the general ... hierarchy of age."[8] Succession is, however, affected by the "democratic" tendencies in succession to chieftainship.[9] 622 643

The Chief (osona or sova)[10]

The Ovimbundu are grouped in 22 chiefdoms, of which half were in the past generally tributary to the more powerful chiefs.[11] At the same time each chiefdom had its separate government and could be considered as a unit in itself. Effective European occupation and direct rule have strophied the chiefly office among the Ovimbundu, until today chiefs survive as little more than "living museum pieces".[12] Childs[13] enumerates the functions of the chiefly office as follows: 631 643 [177]

(a) *Religious*. The chief's ancestral spirits were the principal chiefdom deities, and the king was high-priest as well as the visible "vice-regent and incarnation" of the spirits. 643 793 769

(1) Childs, personal communication.
(2) The maternal uncle is responsible for settling disputes over property which occur within the *olaina*. (Hambly op.cit., p.200).
(3) Ibid.
(4) Ibid.
(5) Cashman, op.cit., p.115.
(6) Ibid., p.121.
(7) Childs, op.cit., p.36.
(8) Ibid., p.44.
(9) Ibid.
(10) *Osona* means chief or king. *Sona* is the personalized form used with the name. This the Portuguese writers have corrupted into *sova* or *soba*. (Childs, personal communication)
(11) See above, p.2.
(12) Childs, op.cit., p.20.
(13) Ibid.

BBD 643 769 782 regent and incarnation" of the spirits. Sacrifices were made at the royal shrine or *kokokoto* ("at the skulls"), where the skulls of past chiefs were kept, in order to:-

[372] (i) control the elements i.e. to ensure a sufficient supply of rain and avoid the dangers caused by storms; also to control fire by providing a new fire ceremonially kindled[1] from which everyone took his fire.

[842] [241] (ii) to ensure fertility, towards which the royal marriage had great influence. The queen's special province was agriculture and her kitchen was sanctified by human sacrifice to guarantee the national food supply. Ceremonially treated seed was distributed to be mixed with the seed of each granary.

643 648 721 [701] (b) *To represent the country in its external relations*, principally to make trade agreements with other chiefs, or to make war on other peoples in order to get tribute and plunder. The war leader *(Kesongo)* has his own residence entirely separate from that of the king, whom he must not meet face to face except on certain ceremonial occasions.[2] Each king must inaugurate his reign with a war, during which or after which he must ceremonially "eat the old one" *(oku lia ekongo)* - who was usually a specially fattened slave cooked with the flesh of the principal animals commonly eaten.[3] [266]

643 692 (c) *To dispense justice.* The chief's court or *olusenje* was the supreme court of the chiefdom. The chief had the final word in any case, but most chiefs acted according to custom.

644 [882] (d) *To protect himself and the chiefdom*, the chief could use "magic" (?) which might have been accounted witchcraft or murder if practised without authority: e.g. the ritual murder of a pregnant woman, or of the children whose lives were required for building and furnishing the queen's kitchen.

643 791 (e) The chief made much use of divination in order to carry out his office. For this purpose he had his own diviner *(citue cosoma)*, who was of the blood royal; but he also consulted diviners of other regions and types.

643 Succession to chiefship is in the male line,[4] from father to son, elder brother to younger brother or brother's son, or sometimes to one more distantly related. The election is made by the councillors whose duty it is (?), ordinarily before the old chief's death is announced. These same councillors may depose an unpopular chief, and there have been many such depositions. This "democratic" tendency of the Ovimbundu has been noted by most writers. Childs points out that it is attested by the fact that a chief (formerly as well as today) works in his own fields, and by folk-tales which give incidental and intimate pictures of petty details in the lives of the chiefs† [842]

(1) See above, p.26.
(2) In Bailundu he, with certain other officials, was of the stock of slaves of the state *(ovindili viossoa)*.
(3) Childs, p.21. Many early writers refer to the cannibalism of the "Jagas" or "Imbangalas" who are thought to have been the Ovimbundu chiefs. (See above, p.8, and also Lacerda and Ravenstein, quoted by Childs, pp.17ff.)
(4) But *inheritance* is said to follow a different line among chiefs from among commoners; possibly inheritance is also in the paternal line. See Childs p.18.

† See footnote 1, p. 31

lives of chiefs.[1]

The chief's council and court 646

It has been noted that there is a chiefdom council responsible for electing the chief or deposing him, and for sitting with him in law cases. The composition of this council has not been clearly described.[2]

The Sub-chief

The chiefdom[3] was made up of a number of sub-chiefdoms called *atumbu* (sing. *etumbu*); Bailundu had about 200 *atumbu*, each of which had from 3 to more than 300 villages, while a number of the larger *atumbu* were themselves made up of smaller ones. About 20 *atumbu* were ruled by members of the chiefly family, including heirs apparent or expectant, and the chief's wife (*inakulu*) had also her own sub-chiefdom.[4] Others were ruled by court officials not of royal birth, who sometimes themselves established dynasties, others again by dynasties native to the respective regions, or at least dynasties longer resident in the area than the chiefly family. Villages of sub-chiefs, like those of chiefs, are known as *olombala*. Most of the *atumbu* are still recognised, and the sub-chiefs have retained more of their old functions than have the chiefs, and have in addition been given new functions. They as well as village headmen are required to assist in assessing and collecting native tax,[5] and also in recruiting labour for government work and for contracts. In some areas they receive in return the remission of their own taxes. On the dancing floor of most of their *olombala* cases are still heard, judgments given and fines received, although such judgments are not officially recognised or allowed by the European authorities.[6]

643 631 [177] [651] [692]

LAW

Courts

Very little information is available. We are told that certain disputes, e.g. concerning inheritance, are settled within the *oluina*;[7] that in the village cases are tried by a council which apparently consists of the section-heads under the leadership of the village headman;[8] and that these village courts continue to function; that certain cases (unspecified) are still unofficially heard in the courts of the sub-chiefs; and that prior to European occupation the paramount chief's decision was final.

691 693

(1) Ibid., p.23. But chiefs were treated with respect; Hambly (1934, p.214) notes that the ancient custom was for commoners to fall on their knees when greeting a chief, and today this still applies to women and children although less often to men.
(2) See Serpa Pinto, 1881, p.167.
(3) Most writers use "kingdom" and "king"; "chief" when used here without qualification refers always to the paramount chief of one of the 22 chiefdoms.
(4) Magyar, 1851, pp.389f, also quoted by Childs, op.cit., p.24.
(5) The amount of the tax levied on all males from 16 years is now Ags. 200,000 annually. As noted by Childs (p.215-6), it has been steadily increasing. Opportunities for earning are comparatively small in Angola, not now for lack of work, but because of "contract labour" required of all males in addition to taxes. Payment for "contract labour" is considerably below current wages, and it is a great hindrance to productive agricultural activities. (Childs, personal communication)
(6) Childs, op.cit., pp.24-5.
(7) Hambly, (2) 1934, p.200.
(8) See above, p.29.

885 and stability of his personality (*unu* - lit. the quality of being a person) is only proved when he enters the state of adulthood at marriage.

DEATH

361 764 Each village has its own burial ground about a mile or so away. The grave is usually dug by the children of the father's sister.(1) The corpse of a commoner is bound in a supine position and placed in a box before interment. It is usual during the funeral to find out the cause of death, i.e. whether it is the work of spirits or of some living enemy. Accusations of sorcery are frequently made. The corpse in its coffin, slung to a pole between two carriers, responds to questions as to who 'ate him' by forward (affirmative) or backward (negative) movements.(2) In the case described by Hambly,(3) the questions were put by the father's sister. The corpse may also cause its bearers to stop in front of a certain house during the procession through the village, thereby indicating that one of the occupants has caused its death.(4) Should the corpse not give a clear answer, the diviner might be called in to discover the cause of the death. Accusations of sorcery, as has been noted above, are often made *within* the circle of kin.(5)

Special cases

766 For *children* the same ceremony was carried out if they were old enough to walk and talk. Otherwise the diviner's services were called upon by the parents. At the death of twins, the mother has to shake a rattle or blow a horn instead of giving the usual greetings to passers-by, as she had to do also while the children were alive.(6)

766 791 At the death of *diviners* and *medicine-men* other members of the profession take charge of the ceremonies. The corpse is tied in a sitting posture and kept thus for three days before burial. No coffin is used. The questioning ceremony is carried out as for a commoner. After the interment the other medicine-men dance "because they have spirit in their heads", and during the dance each eats a living chicken that he carries in his hand. At the side of the grave a dog, a chicken and a goat are killed, and eaten by the mourners. The *ocimbanda*'s power is apparently thought to linger round the grave, which the chief or village-headman may visit to ask for rain and other favours.(7)

224 766 *Hunters* at death are buried in rock tombs (*ombilia* or *osonje*), which are usually placed in commanding positions. The skulls of animals which the hunter has killed are piled on top of the tomb. The bows of the deceased hunter are kept in his successor's "house of bows".

766 643 *Chiefs*, and possibly also *village headmen*, are buried in specially-constructed enclosures in the villages over which they ruled. The tomb is a small hut with a substantial wooden door, which is surrounded by a strongly-built wooden fence, or it may be a cave. The wives of the chief are buried in the same enclosure. The head of a specially selected

(1) Hambly, (2) 1934, p.268.
(2) Childs, 1949, p.57.
(3) Op.cit., p.266.
(4) Childs, loc.cit.
(5) Ibid.
(6) Hambly, op.cit., p.269.
(7) Ibid., p.270.

The head of a specially selected family has the duty of twisting off the head of the chief, and not until this is done is the chief officially dead. The head is buried for a year, then dug up and transferred to a box, which is also kept in the tomb. The head is questioned at times of stress (such as a drought) in the same way that questions are put to the corpse of a commoner. If the head swings forward, a sacrifice may be necessary to remove the drought. The house of a chief is not burnt at his death (but those of commoners are?); neither may it be repaired in any way, but the succeeding chief must live in it until the structure collapses.(1)

[767] 643 765 [787] 768

Mourning for a chief lasts seven days, during which his children and wives wear strips of cxhide on their left wrists. 765

Widows (of chiefs or commoners) must leave their hair loose and wear cloths which conceal them from head to toe. For three days a widow must sleep close to the corpse of her husband, with only a stick between them. During this time she has no food, and her wailing is expected to be almost continuous day and night. When the corpse is tied and prepared for burial relatives support the corpse and make it move towards her so that she may bid it farewell. She does not attend the funeral. At the end of a month of mourning she must lie for one night in the place where her husband lay the night before burial. At the beer-drinking which marks the end of the period of mourning an *ociabanda* guides her hand as she distributes the beer.(2)

(1) Hambly, (2) 1934, p.272.
(2) Hambly, op.cit., p.269. Hambly states that mourning for a chief lasts only seven days, while from this information it appears that commoners are mourned for a whole month.

3:Hambly E-5 (1929-1930)1934 FP3 Mbundu FP3

in the works of Battell, Cavazzi, and other early writers. A description of the whipping of boys at initiation (p. 99) agrees with my own records, but details of the period and place are not given by Tucker. Questioning a corpse (p. 102) is a ceremony I have witnessed and described, but the instance referred to by Tucker relates to the interrogation of the corpse of a chief with regard to his choice of a successor; there are laws of succession, but these may be waived. The ceremony described in my monograph was conducted to discover the cause of death and not to determine succession. If Tucker has any detailed information with regard to puberty ceremonies for girls his reticence is regrettable (p. 142). Tucker says that suicide among women is common (p. 143). A mention of *ocisunji*, a feast for spirits at which meat is offered to idols, is interesting (p. 168) but details are lacking, and the use of the word idols is ambiguous. The information respecting use of charms is corroborative of my own observations in two other centers, Elende and Ngalangi.

The most recent publication on the ethnology of Angola is that of F. and W. Jaspert of the Städtisches Völkermuseum, Frankfort, 1930. Their journey was undertaken primarily to make collections for a museum, but linguistic and ethnological information was recorded among several tribes, notably the Kimbundu, Vachokue, Luchazi, Luimba, and Kusongo. The farthest point attained in a southerly direction was just north of Kipungo, and the general line of march was from Benguela to the northeast, into Lunda. There is very little overlapping in the work of the Jasperts and myself. My itinerary took me to the extreme south into the Vakuanyama country, and to the far east of Moxico among the Vachokue.

My work is presented as a monograph on the Ovimbundu only, and of their culture I treat exclusively, with some reference to the culture contacts observed on all sides of them. The Jasperts do not give an entire section to any one tribe; but combine their information respecting the tribes in a concurrent way, under such subjects as technology, language, and art.

If the sections relating to history and languages are excluded there remain a hundred pages, only one-sixth of which refer to the Ovimbundu; but there is a difficulty in reading through the book without being confused as to the tribe and exact locality under discussion.

The pages devoted to a comparative vocabulary form an important part of the work, and one which I barely touched, though I prepared an outline of Umbundu grammar and made dictaphone records of the

787 532 A common type of small figurine, some of which are female, others asexual, is represented by an illustration (Plate XXI, Fig. 2). Such little carvings are a normal part of the miscellaneous contents of a divination basket described in chapter IX. These figures have been obtained from Elende, Bailundu, and Caconda, all of which are centers of Umbundu culture.

322 532 756 In addition to the figurines described, the collection contains many more whose use may be conjectured. The interrogation of Ovimbundu people indicates clearly that there are specific uses of wooden figures which are consulted by the medicine-man. The foregoing explanations illustrate the nature of the beliefs associated with carved wooden figures, but it is not always possible to elicit a clear account of the specific use of each one.

171 532 Consideration of this aspect of the wood-carver's art has an important bearing on the culture contacts of the Ovimbundu. In studying this question I have instituted comparisons between these figures from the Ovimbundu of Angola and similar figures from the Kasai area of the Congo region (chapter X). The publications of the Musée Congo Belge provide illustrations for comparison with the figures in Field Museum's collection.

The carving of animal forms (Plate XIX, Figs. 1–5) is no more than a means of aesthetic expression resulting from accurate observations of animal life as recorded under "Nature Lore." Inquiry failed to show that figures of animals are, or were at any time, used in rites and ceremonies.

[643] The carrying of a carved stick is essential when a chief is visiting, attending a council in his own village, or receiving visitors. The ornamental paddle (Plate XX, Fig. 8) was owned by the chief of the capital village (*ombala*) of the Vangangella, near Ngalangi.

[765] At the death of a chief his staff of office, with his tobacco-pipe and sleeping mat, are placed in a small house where such relics of deceased chiefs are kept permanently (Plate XLVI, Fig. 1). Plate XX, Fig. 6, shows a staff of this kind which was preserved in a sacred house in the capital village of Ngalangi, and on the same plate are drawn short ornamental clubs which French ethnologists call *bâtons de promenade*, an appropriate name because of their use as part of the full dress equipment.

[276] The Ovimbundu have specialized in the carving of small objects, for, in addition to clubs and staffs, tobacco-pipes and snuff boxes are often elaborately carved (Plate XV, Figs. 2, 4).

428 not entitled to inheritance of land, cattle, or anything else belonging to the dead man. The greater part of the property would be bequeathed to the eldest brother of the deceased's mother.

428 604 768 There appears to be discussion as to the distribution of property, but the maternal uncle is responsible for settling disputes. He himself has the first claim, and in Ngonga's words, "If there are quarrels about the cattle, land, and other things, the mother's eldest brother will settle them."

The mother's brother has rights over his sister's children even to the extent of pawning them to pay his own debts. On the other hand the maternal uncle is responsible for the conduct of his sister's children. He would have to pay fines incurred by thefts they committed, and he provides for his sister's son a wife who is either his daughter or his widow.

Ngonga stated that the maternal uncle does not invariably take all the property of a deceased nephew for himself. He may give something to the deceased's mother, the deceased's maternal grandfather, or to a brother of the deceased. Such gifts appear to be the outcome of good will on the part of the dead man's maternal uncle; there is no compulsion. Women never inherit cattle or rights to the use of land. [421]

423 692 622 The king is the head of the legal system, though his activities as such are not so great as those of the village headman (*sekulu*). The *olosekulu* (there are usually more than one) of a village witness the final act in a divorce ceremony. They used to have charge of trials for theft, murder, adultery, likewise the right of settling arguments concerning the ownership of land. It was the *sekulu* who distributed the land to the extended families when a new village site was opened. The maternal uncles settled the minor divisions among the limited families.

643 There are many kings among the Ovimbundu, but I thought that there was a tendency to confuse the titles of *osoma* ("king") and *sekulu* ("headman" or "chief" of a village). The jurisdiction of a king is so well known that any person is able to say under which king he lives. Ngonga said definitely that a man of the Ovimbundu who was under the jurisdiction of a certain king would have to obey the commands of a visiting king, provided they were not in any way disapproved of by the king to whom first allegiance was due.

643 [465] A chief may demand labor for the building of his house or the cultivation of his land. He does not pay for this but usually gives beer to the workers; sometimes he secures the labor and gives nothing in return.

in return. Even a slave used to have rights of appeal to the king if he were starved and beaten without cause. The king was the prime mover in warfare. The whole legal system is at this time directly under Portuguese administration though the kings and chiefs have minor powers. Ngonga says that complainants who are dissatisfied with the decision of their own chief go to the Fort, meaning of course the Portuguese military post, or office of the Administrador. 000 643 177

There is no doubt that in former days the responsibility for crime and debt was transferred to a relative in the absence of the delinquent. If a thief escaped, responsibility would rest with a brother, a father or a son. The mother's brother was often held to be responsible for the misdeeds and debts of his sister's children. The mother's brother has rights that extend to the sale of his sister's children to pay his debts. For this reason Ngonga says, "If I have done wrong and they cannot catch me it is right that he (mother's brother) should pay for me." 672 604

I supposed the case of Ngonga having stolen a cow; he has been caught but escapes. Ngonga said that the man from whom he had stolen the animal would go to his (Ngonga's) mother's brother in order to name the price required for the cow, or any other possession which had been stolen. If the mother's brother thought the price reasonable he would pay. On the contrary, if the price claimed were too high the mother's brother would appeal, first to the village chief, then if necessary to the king. [692]

Ownership of land does not appear to have been a source of dispute. Apparently land was distributed by the chief as explained in dealing with village organization. Rights seem to have been well defined and there was always enough land for a stranger. When a man was going away on a trading journey he might lend his land to another who would agree to cultivate it and take the produce for a year. I was unable to satisfy myself that land is now, or was in time past held to be the property of dead ancestors. The right to land depends on its use and allotment by a chief at the time of founding a village. A man who intended to be absent would make a payment so that he might leave his goods at the house of another. The chief would settle any disputes arising from these arrangements. 423 [426] [437]

The complainant in a suit is called *ombile*, the defendant is *ovilue*. The name for a witness is *uvangi*. In the old days a false witness had to make recompense to the man about whom he had told a lie; he would probably have a beating as well. A master was in every way responsible for the actions of a slave. The degree of responsi- 695 672

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

686 actually paid to redeem his brother and sister who were sold to pay the debts of his maternal uncle. Officialdom is one thing and actual [177] practice is another. Ngonga is right when he says that people appeal to the native law as laid down by the chief or king. If they are not satisfied they pretend a great respect for Portuguese law and therefore go to the Administrador.

WARFARE AND SLAVERY

648 The Ovimbundu have been for centuries an organized people 726 possessed of a well-developed language, a legal system, and complex social organization. In trade and travel too, the Ovimbundu have been in the vanguard of African tribes. These reasons, in conjunction with the fact of numerical superiority and early contact with the Portuguese, would account for the success of the Ovimbundu in warfare. The defensive federations existing between the ten or twelve main political units, whereby they did not habitually war on each other, helped to assure success. Should the eldest son of a king's • (643) principal wife be thought unsuitable as successor, a competent son of the deceased king was elected by a council of village chiefs.

411 There is no evidence that the Ovimbundu poisoned their weapons, neither do they do so today. The Ovimbundu do not use a shield at the present time, neither is it certain that they had shields in former times. A skin-covered powder-box was carried in the king's train when on the warpath.

718 Signaling-drums were about two feet long. They were made from a cylinder of wood over the ends of which skin was stretched. Signaling, which was accomplished by drumming with the palms of the hands, was the task of boys who resided in the king's compound, except when they accompanied him to war or on a trading journey. There was no system of smoke signaling. The iron war gong was named *ongonge*, but the instrument is nowadays tapped by the assistant of a medicine-man during his performance. In former times the gong was struck in the night to give assurance that the enemy was not in sight.

726 In war the oldest son of a king or of a chief went ahead of the war party accompanied by a few men who wore red leaves on their foreheads.

721 Intertribal jealousies, raiding for cattle and slaves, also reprisals for interference with caravan trade, were the chief causes of conflict with surrounding peoples. There was undoubtedly some internal warfare within the confederacy. The Ovimbundu of Elende, Bail-

577 Lying is strongly disapproved and the liar is called *ohembi*. The Ovimbundu appreciate hospitality (*unu*) which also means generosity. A man who is hospitable is said to be *ongavi*. Greediness, which is disliked, is described by the word *oku sapa* ("to be greedy"). There are standards of honesty in sales and exchanges. A deceiver in trade is *ohembi*.

836 With regard to the relation of the sexes in early years it may be said that, in spite of boy and girl friendships, and the communal sleeping of boys and girls at the home of one of the girls, a man expects to marry a virgin, a point which has been dealt with in describing marriage ceremonies.

Naturally there is a difficulty in obtaining precise information respecting the details of these nocturnal gatherings of boys and girls. Ngonga said that girls inform their parents concerning the house where the night is to be spent, and there is a point of etiquette requiring that girls must not go to a house where boys are staying together.

864 Standards of conduct already described under courtship are a result of direct teaching by parents. Marriage rules and a classificatory system of relationships, with its prohibitive decrees, are taught in the home, in the men's council house, and at initiation ceremonies where such exist. In addition to these sources of instruction there is no doubt an unconscious absorption of ideas and standards. The power of suggestion is always at work through everyday examples.

831 Apart from demands made by tribal custom and direct instruction there are variable personal standards of modesty. Ngonga states [562] that many lascivious stories are told among men, and when the men are drunk, they tell these to women. "Sometimes the women laugh, but the good women do not like to hear these tales."

576 A male commoner when meeting the king bows low, extends his
● 643 arms, claps his palms and says, "*ohosi* ["lion"] *akuku* ["grandfather"]."
565 Only the old people follow the ancient custom of falling on their knees when greeting the king. The Ovimbundu never were in the habit of doing more profound obeisance, but the Vangangella, when greeting one of their kings, rub their chins on the ground and place dust on their chests. Even at the present day a woman or child of the Ovimbundu is expected to kneel when greeting a king, but such an acknowledgment is not now usual in greetings given by a male commoner. The reply of the king to the commoner is "*kalunga*." This word enters into greetings of all kinds. The literal meaning of the word is "the sea," "king," "god," or "death," but the interpretation

of the word depends upon the syllable accented and the context, as further explained in the chapter on the Umbundu language. 576 643 565

A man or woman of the royal family greets the king with the words *na kuku; na* means "lord," and *kuku* is a term used for any old man to whom the speaker intends to show respect. *Kuku* is also applied to a man who stands in the relationship of grandfather. The king is expected to reply to a greeting given by one of the royal family by placing his right hand on his chest and saying twice, "*kalunga.*" There may then follow from the king a question relating to welfare in general. Possibly the king will inquire the object of his subject's journey. A *sekulu* ("chief of a village") greets a king in the same manner as does a commoner, and the king replies as he would to a commoner.

Commoners greet a *sekulu* with the words *na kalunga* ("lord, greeting"). One *sekulu* greets another of the same rank with the one word *kalunga*, accompanied by clapping of the palms. Male commoners clap hands on meeting; this action is accompanied by the word *kalunga*, from each of them. Two female commoners use the word *kalunga* as a greeting, but as a rule they do not clap hands. They do, however, clap their palms when greeting a woman of the royal house.

Boys and girls must greet their fathers, maternal uncles, grandfathers, and other old men with either of the terms *na kuku* or *na kalunga*, the latter being more usual. *Na kuku* would be the appropriate term of respect for any elderly man. Children use the same words (*na kuku*) when addressing any elderly woman, including a grandmother. A usual greeting of a child to the mother, likewise to the mother's sister, would be *kalunga mai* ("greetings, mother"). 561 576

There is no prescribed form of address to the medicine-man. Greetings between a commoner and a medicine-man follow the usage noted for two commoners. Ngonga says, "They will treat him (the medicine-man) like a village chief if he is an old man and good. Perhaps they will say *na kalunga* as if talking to a chief." 576 [854] [756]

In the early morning people pass the greeting *oku lipasula.* This means "we have been like dead, we are awake." The appropriate early morning greeting of a commoner to the king or to a chief is *oku lipasula a kuku.* A usual afternoon greeting is *oku lañisa.* The evening greeting is *oku lieñinga.* [643]

One who desires to pass across a room usually walks in front of other people, but while passing the attitude must not be erect. The thumb and middle finger should be snapped together, while the words

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

rattle made by fixing seed pods on a stick. Rattles of the latter type are sometimes tied to the ankles during dancing and they usually form a part of the medicine-man's outfit (Plate XXII, Fig. 4). From Cangamba a basket rattle of dumb-bell form was obtained; the basket-work receptacles at each end of the connecting rod contain hard seeds (Plate XXII, Fig. 1). 534

At Bailundu three Ovimbundu flute players met a party of visitors whom they accompanied around the native village under the leadership of a chief. The men played the flutes continuously except when the chief was speaking. The wooden flutes varied in length from 20 to 50 cm. The instruments were end-played, and the smallest of them had seven stop-holes. The visitors were conducted from the village by this small orchestra which is a permanent guard of honor for the chief (Plate XL, Fig. 1). 533 643 534

At Cangamba the Vachokue have an instrument consisting of eight slats of wood which vary in length and thickness. These sounding boards are attached to two parallel cords which are kept tight by two assistants. The performer taps the wooden slats with two sticks terminating in balls of wax. This is the well-known marimba, but the gourds which are usually fastened under the slats of wood were absent in this instance. 534 171

The instrument *ocisanji* is played well by only a few men. It consists of a wooden board, often well carved, on which there are from eight to nineteen thin keys of metal. These can be pushed backward and forward in their bridge so as to alter the vibrating length and pitch of the note. The pitch may also be varied by placing small balls of wax on the under side of the keys. When the instrument is held between the palms the player's thumbs are in position for stroking the keys. Sometimes *ocisanji* is played inside a wide gourd (Plate XXII, Fig. 5). 534

The musical bow is called *ombumbumba*. The bridge, which is a small stone, or a piece of wood placed at one end of the bow, keeps the string taut. The gourd is tightly fastened to the bowstring with a loop of string. One end of the bow is sometimes placed in the player's mouth. The left hand holds the bow and presses the gourd to the body, then releases it a little from time to time in order to assist tone and resonance. The player holds in his right hand a reed which is tapped lightly on the bowstring, while the thumb and forefinger of the left hand are used occasionally in pressing on the string to alter its vibrating length (Plate XXII, Fig. 6).

KINGS AND CHIEFS

A chief (village headman) is buried in a specially constructed enclosure in the village over which he ruled (Plate XLV, Fig. 2). The mausoleum is a small hut with a substantial wooden door which is surrounded by a strongly built wooden fence ten feet high. 766 643

I was taken inside a tomb in the capital of Ngalangi, where the king showed the interior of his burial place of kings. There were four mounds of earth, each of which covered the body of a king, and a little distance away were the graves of the principal wives. The hut contained pottery and gourds; also a small fire, which is replenished by an attendant who must not allow it to be extinguished.

Ngonga says that the burial chamber at Elende contains the head of the chief in a box. After one year from the time of burial the box containing the head is opened in order that a libation of beer may be poured over it. Sometimes the head is anointed with palm oil and a new band of cloth is added. These attentions are paid to the head in time of sickness and drought. If the head shows signs of desiccation an ox is killed in order to provide a new piece of skin in which the head is sewn. The tomb is visited by men who come to ask for good fortune when they are departing for a journey to the interior, and these supplicants are led to the tomb by the ruling chief. Near the burial place of the *sekulu* ("village headman") at Elende there was the house of bows (Plate XLVI, Fig. 1), which is typical of several seen in different parts of Angola. These repositories always contain staffs, bows, arrows, sleeping mats, and possibly other articles which belonged to the dead. 769 643 769

The corpse of a king is suspended from the top of the burial hut by a rope which is tightly fastened round his neck. That the king has died is not admitted and the announcement states that "the king has a cold in his head." The head of a specially selected family twists the rope until the head is severed. The twisting is carried out gradually, a little each day, so that a week or more is required for severance. In former times the head was detached by twisting only, but at present a knife is used to hasten the friction of the rope. When the body of the king has fallen into the basket placed underneath to receive it, the people may say that the king is dead and mourning begins. 766 [763] 643

Judging by the arrangement seen at the *ombala* of Ngalangi the bodies are buried in a hut constructed as a burial place for kings, but Ngonga states that the older method was cave burial. The body

766 643 of a dead king would in former times be taken at night by chiefs and interred in one of the caves which are numerous in the rugged hills of the Benguela Highlands. The burial posture for a king is the same as that described for a medicine-man. The severed head is eventually kept in a box, but primarily both head and body are buried, though in separate places. At the end of a year the head is dug up and transferred to its casket.

765 643 Mourning for a king lasts for seven days, during which his children and wives wear strips of oxhide on their left wrists. The village chiefs gather to choose a king from the "blood of kings," though "sometimes a bad man will make himself king without waiting to be chosen." The choice should be in favor of the oldest son of the chief wife, "but if she has stupid sons, a son of another wife of the king will be chosen."

769 643 Sometimes during drought chiefs and their wives go to the grave of a chief where they say, "If you are angry tell us what you want. If you want an ox we will kill one." If they visit the tomb of a king, the king's corpse is asked, "Do you want a new box for your head? We will make one." The oldest chief takes from the tomb the box which contains the head. This is slung on a pole supported on the shoulders of two boys. The head is then questioned in the way described for the funeral of a commoner. The oldest chief offers a sacrifice, if such procedure is demanded by a forward swing of the pole which supports the casket containing the king's head.

768 643 The house is not burned after a death has occurred within, but it is still customary to take down the surrounding fence and to build a new one. The house in which death took place is then used as before. I was informed at the capital of Ngalangi, and by the king himself, that he must continue to use the house of former kings until the structure collapses. No repair work may be done; consequently the house was in a dilapidated condition. Some months after receiving this account at Elende I was in Moxico, several hundred miles away, and learned that at Cangamba the custom of severing the head of a king by suspension and friction prevails in the manner described above.

HUNTERS

224 766 While traveling in the district of Ganda, likewise in the Vasele country in the hinterland of Novó Redondo, one cannot fail to notice the presence of rock tombs (*ombilia* or *osonje*) which are mausoleums of hunters. These are invariably placed in commanding

372 The village chief takes this news to the people, saying, "Tomorrow
791 we must find a goat, a chicken, and a pig, so that we may kill them.
796 Then we must make a new fire." The chief pays for these animals.

Next day the medicine-man starts a fire by the twirling method, and as soon as the fire has been kindled he kills a fowl whose blood is allowed to drop on the fire and the wood near-by. The sacrificial goat and pig are treated in the same way. Sometimes a boy who is learning to be a medicine-man kills these animals. Meat from each of the animals so sacrificed is cooked on this newly made fire, care being taken that each kind of meat is kept in a separate pot. There is no special pottery for this cooking. When the meat is cooked it is tasted by a girl from twelve to fourteen years of age who hands a portion to the chief, who distributes the meat among the village elders (*olosekulu*). The meat from the chicken, which must be fat, is the first to be distributed. A cock or a hen may be chosen, but if the latter is selected it must be *utenda;* that is to say, it must not have arrived at the egg-laying age.

Finally there is a distribution of meat among the villagers who have been present throughout the ceremony. The chief speaks, saying, "We wish good fortune to the new fire." Each person has to take the responsibility for quenching his own fire before the new one is ceremonially made. After the feast each father of a "restricted" family takes away a portion of the newly kindled fire.

796 There is sometimes a ceremonial purification of the village water
364 supply. Water is carried in a block of wood from the nearest stream, and to this water a few drops of blood from the sacrificed animals are added. The idea involved throughout is the renewal of health by the furnishing of new, unadulterated supplies of fire and water.

796 At the inaugural ceremony of a new king a similar proceeding
643 is followed. A chicken is killed for the purpose of supplying blood to sprinkle the new fire and on this occasion there is a ceremonial hunt. The king may or may not join the males of the hunting party; sometimes he sends a substitute.

A girl follows the king or his substitute carrying a basket (*ongalo*) in which round fruits from the tree *olosangu* are contained. Each of the fruits is wrapped round with the skin of the large lizard (*etatu*). The object of the hunt is to kill a male antelope, the duiker (*ombambi*), and a hare (*ondimba*) which may be male or female. The hare is not called *ondimba* on this occasion, but receives the name for elephant (*onjamba*).

The hare is not carried over the shoulder, but has a ceremonial conveyance slung on poles (*owanda*) which are supported on the shoulders of two or even four men. 796 643

Laying the evil of a village on a goat, which is then driven out to die, is an Umbundu custom. The scapegoat ceremony has a cleansing function similar in purpose to the rekindling of fire for the community. Cavazzi pictured and described the scapegoat ceremony in the seventeenth century, and Ngonga informed me that he saw the rite twenty years ago. 783

PROHIBITIONS AND OMENS

There is a taboo against killing *oka kuhu*, which is the yellow-backed duiker. When Ngonga was sick he was forbidden to eat the flesh of the duiker (*ombambi*); neither is this flesh to be eaten by people who suffer from dizziness. In former days women were not allowed to eat eggs. The flesh of sheep and goats is said to be indigestible for children between the ages of three and six years. The flesh of the lion, leopard, and hyena is forbidden as food for the king, but other people may eat it. The king is in fact forbidden to eat the flesh of any animal which has paws; neither may he eat flesh of the bush buck. A medicine-man must not eat flesh of a dog except before a ceremony for curing the sick. The taboo against dog's flesh applies also to the diet of a king. 262 [643]

A woman must not step over the legs of a male, neither must a man step over the legs of a woman; for to do so causes weakness of the knees. A man or woman may step over the legs of a child. 784

Omens are numerous. It is unfortunate to see a snake holding a frog, and the person who observes this should go to the medicine-man at once. When going to a village to be tried by the chief it is bad to meet some one who is carrying a bark rope, as this indicates binding and punishment. If a person who is setting out from home meets a woman carrying corn meal or any other white substance, he or she must take a little of the meal, whiten the face, and all will be well. A fly in the mouth is a good sign, because the fly knows where meat is to be obtained and is trying to lead the way. 787

A stranger visiting a village is pleased when a dog is the first animal to enter the guest house. Dogs are fed, so the entry of a dog is a sign that the visitor will receive food. On the contrary, the appearance of a goat is a bad omen, because goats are not fed; they pick up a frugal living as best they can. Other prohibitions and omens have been mentioned in discussing the pregnancy of women. [574]

5: Hambly E-5 (1929-30) 1934 FP 13 Mbundu FP13

224 hollow chamber. I removed a thin slab of stone which formed an entrance
764 to a tomb of this kind and observed within two skeletons lying supine. On the top of the cairns were skulls of animals killed by the hunter. I noted one instance of the burial of a hunter's dog under a cairn of stones.

825 Three birds are protected by a prohibition. Esuvi is a bird which has
774 power to steal the souls of the dead, so making them die a second death. As usual, no direct explanation was given concerning this second death, but an explanation came later, quite fortuitously. For instance, an old man said he was sick because esuvi had stolen the spirit of his grandfather. This statement is logical, since welfare depends on a beneficent interest of dead ancestors, and it is evident that dying a second death prevents a spirit from exercising a benign influence over the living. Other protected birds are one which supplies feathers from which the decorations of kings and medicine-men are made, and one whose night cry is a warning of death in a village.

226 In fishing, a division of labor is recognized: men use a rod and line, while women drag baskets against the stream or use poison in slow, shallow water. The night before poison is to be used for fishing, husband and wife must avoid intercourse, since intimacy of this kind would make the fish stay together at the bottom of the river. A man who has prepared his rod and line, by transfixing a grasshopper and attaching it to a thin piece of bark,
[539] sings a song which is of the nature of a spell. He says:

> "O fish come and take your good thing.
> Do not send the little fish to spoil the good thing.
> Better you come and take the good thing with all your strength."

439 Up to half a century ago the Ovimbundu were renowned traders whose caravans penetrated deeply into the Congo region and even to the east side of Africa. It is natural, therefore, that some ritual should be connected with
[443] such an important enterprise. At the present day caravans may be seen, but these are local, and most of the carriers are found to be taking their maize, beans, and beeswax to traders' stores. I believe women did not accompany the transcontinental caravans of early days, but today women may be seen in line with the other carriers. Their loads are lighter, being on the average thirty pounds as compared with sixty pounds for a man. Children also carry small loads in the caravan.

439 Ngonga, my chief informant, said that in former times no caravan
987 leader would set out without having consulted the preserved head of a de-
[643] ceased king. Even at present the corpse of a king is suspended by the neck and twisted until the head is severed. The head is sewn in oxhide and preserved in a box. The ancient caravan custom consisted of taking the box

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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[1874-1911]

631 634 at least, the effective unit of law and self-defence was formerly the sub-chiefdom.[59]

634 643 In both sub-chiefdom and kingdom the chief (a term used here for both king and sub-chief) passed through a cycle of rites to become truly chief and was surrounded, assisted, and [645] checked by titled ministers.[60] The future chief was selected from persons of chiefly stock. My informants stated that a new chief might be related either patrilineally or matrilineally to former chiefs; all other sources state that the chiefdom can only be held by somebody *patrilineally* of chiefly blood, with the exception of Santos Brandão writing on the Huambo kingdom.[61] The selection was the responsibility of the Mwekalia, whose role was to represent the people *vis-à-vis* the king, an opposition which is expressed in the Umbundu saying 'the chief is a guest, the Mwekalia is a man of the country'. When asked to explain this saying, the Ovimbundu point out that many chiefs come from outside the chiefdom, and also that 'If the chief does something wrong, we can send him away'.[62]

In such a constitutional deposition of the chief which nineteenth century observers describe as taking place fairly frequently,[63] the main responsibility fell on the Mwekalia. The cycle of royal rites consisted of the ceremonial entry of the chief into his capital and his taking of a new name, the rebuilding of certain shrines, a large-scale hunt, the building of an archway intended as a magical defence to the capital, and finally an act

[59] Informants.

[60] For the king and his ministers see especially Hastings, pp. 29–71 (based on Bailundo), and for other details of the royal court see Serpa Pinto, p. 167 (based on Bie).

[61] For references to patrilineal succession see Serpa Pinto, p. 159, Capello and Ivens, *From Benguella to the Territory of Yaca* (London, 1882), p. 81, Hastings, p. 42, Childs, p. 22. Santos Brandão (*Mensário Administrativo*, July–August, 1950) gives a list of the kings of Huambo where there had been two successive royal lines, and this shows several cases of succession by sisters' sons. (The Umbundu text he gives makes this quite clear.)

[62] The underlying idea is not so much that the chiefly stock is of immigrant descent but rather that the people of one chiefdom call somebody from outside to rule over them, who can be sent away if he misbehaves. Of course people living within a chiefdom are not excluded, but this point about the chief being a stranger is very strongly emphasised.

[63] Childs, pp. 22–23 and references given there.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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[1874-1911]

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of ritual cannibalism (*oku lia ekongo*) after which he could not be deposed.[64]

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Hastings in describing the principal ministers of the Bailundo court states that the Mwekalia and the Galamboli or Ngambole (whose function was to remember traditions) were representative of the indigenous pre-Jaga stock, the Kesongo who was the war leader was a slave from another tribe, and the Otjinduli was of immigrant stock, and points out that these represent the three sources from which the Ovimbundu sprang.[65]

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At the sub-chiefdom level some of the titles found in the kingdoms would be found combined, and the chief's court, where cases were judged, was composed both of titled ministers living at the chief's village and of the village headmen (some of whom were also title-holders). The sub-chief represented his people to the outer world, led them in communal ritual and judged, with his councillors,[66] their disputes. Hastings describes a case thus: 'When all the members of the court are seated in a circle, with an empty space in the centre, the plaintiff's counsel then relates the case, after which the lawyer for the defendant does likewise for his side. The chief in turn makes general comments. Lusenje, the official, whose duty it is to keep order at court and to announce the speakers, then calls on the accuser to come forward and make his statement.'[67]

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While the sub-chiefdom was the largest unit in which law and order reigned undisputed, there existed alliances and cross-cutting relationships providing a contact outside its area. There was the *tjisoko* alliance which existed between two sub-chiefdoms which were separated by a third. Gumba sub-chiefdom was thus allied to Ndjandju from which it was separated by Chicunda, and messengers from Gumba and Ndjandju travelled together to Bailundo once a year to carry tribute. Apparently a sub-chiefdom had only one *tjisoko* partner. The relationship was one of funeral friendship; *vakwatjisoko* (*tjisoko* partners) undertook the burial of those who died without kinsfolk and also ordinary

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[64] This is based on information from Gumba. See also Magyar, pp. 270–77; Hastings, pp. 43–45; Childs p. 81.

[65] Hastings, p. 60.

[66] Informants.

[67] Hastings, pp. 142–43.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

631 life and each could be taken as a unit complete in itself. Individual studies and comparisons of one with another would provide much valuable material. Familiarity with individuals and groups belong-
[184] ing to all the major tribal groups, and study of their folk-lore and customs has led me to conclude that as in language, so in social structure and in culture, the differences are of small account. In offering illustrative material, I shall give its tribal source.

The King

643 To describe the royal office and functions it would be necessary
177 to use the past tense. That reason, along with others, leads me to exclude this subject from the present study. Effective European occupation of the country and government by direct rule[1] have atrophied the royal office among the Ovimbundu until to-day kings survive as hardly more than living museum pieces. This being the case, I shall only enumerate the royal functions, very briefly characterize them, and pass on to describe other and living parts of the Umbundu social organism.

643 The principal functions of the royal office were:

776 1. *Religious.* The spirits of the king's ancestors were the principal national deities. The king was not only high priest but also the visible vice-regent and incarnation of the spirits. The
[778] sacrifices at the royal shrine, *kakokoto* (literally, at the skulls), the place of the royal skulls, were for the nation in order:

643 (*a*) *To control the elements*, i.e. to ensure a sufficient supply of
372 rain and avoid the dangers caused by hail, by lightning, &c. Also to control fire by providing a new fire properly (ceremonially)
789 kindled from which everyone took his fire. A king's reign was spoken of as 'during the Water of Lord So-and-so' (*Kovava a Ñalā Ngandi*), or 'during the Fire of Lord So-and-so' (*Kondalu ya Ñalā Ngandi*).

241 (*b*) *To ensure fertility*, toward which desideratum the royal
● 644 marriage had great influence. The queen's special province was agriculture and her kitchen was sanctified by human sacrifice to
[782] guarantee the national food supply. Ceremonially treated seed was distributed to be mixed with the seed of each granary.

[1] 'Direct rule' is applied in most parts of Africa where European settlement is the predominant consideration and also where centralized government is the ideal. 'Indirect rule' is best illustrated in the Gold Coast, Nigeria, Uganda, and Tanganyika Territory.

NO 643 769 782 regent and incarnation" of the spirits. Sacrifices were made at the royal shrine or *kokokoto* ("at the skulls"), where the skulls of past chiefs were kept, in order to:-

[372] (i) control the elements i.e. to ensure a sufficient supply of rain and avoid the dangers caused by storms; also to control fire by providing a new fire ceremonially kindled(1) from which everyone took his fire.

[842] [241] (ii) to ensure fertility, towards which the royal marriage had great influence. The queen's special province was agriculture and her kitchen was sanctified by human sacrifice to guarantee the national food supply. Ceremonially treated seed was distributed to be mixed with the seed of each granary.

643 648 721 [701] (b) *To represent the country in its external relations,* principally to make trade agreements with other chiefs, or to make war on other peoples in order to get tribute and plunder. The war leader *(Kesongo)* has his own residence entirely separate from that of the king, whom he must not meet face to face except on certain ceremonial occasions.(2) Each king must inaugurate his reign with a war, during which or after which he must ceremonially "eat the old one" *(oku lia ekongo)* - who was usually a specially fattened slave [266] cooked with the flesh of the principal animals commonly eaten.(3)

643 692 (c) *To dispense justice.* The chief's court or *olusenje* was the supreme court of the chiefdom. The chief had the final word in any case, but most chiefs acted according to custom.

● 644 [82] (d) *To protect himself and the chiefdom,* the chief could use "magic" (?) which might have been accounted witchcraft or murder if practised without authority: e.g. the ritual murder of a pregnant woman, or of the children whose lives were required for building and furnishing the queen's kitchen.

643 791 (e) The chief made much use of divination in order to carry out his office. For this purpose he had his own diviner *(citue cosoma)*, who was of the blood royal; but he also consulted diviners of other regions and types.

643 [242] Succession to chiefship is in the male line,(4) from father to son, elder brother to younger brother or brother's son, or sometimes to one more distantly related. The election is made by the councillors whose duty it is (?), ordinarily before the old chief's death is announced. These same councillors may depose an unpopular chief, and there have been many such depositions. This "democratic" tendency of the Ovimbundu has been noted by most writers. Childs points out that it is attested by the fact that a chief (formerly as well as today) works in his own fields, and by folk-tales which give incidental and intimate pictures of petty details in the lives of the chiefs.†

(1) See above, p.26.
(2) In Bailundu he, with certain other officials, was of the stock of slaves of the state *(ovindili viosoma)*.
(3) Childs, p.21. Many early writers refer to the cannibalism of the "Jagas" or "Imbangalas" who are thought to have been the Ovimbundu chiefs. (See above, p.8, and also Lacerda and Ravenstein, quoted by Childs, pp.17ff.)
(4) But *inheritance* is said to follow a different line among chiefs from among commoners; possibly inheritance is also in the paternal line. See Childs p.18.

† See footnote 1, p. 31

361 At the present time one type of village is surrounded by stout stakes ten or more feet high set in a roughly circular plan. The arrangement of alleyways within the village is complicated without following any symmetrical plan. A visitor sees only a labyrinth of passages between high poles, with here and there a rectangular wooden 417 gate at intervals along the passages. The door itself is made from 335 four stout heavy planks which are roughly hewn and as a rule undecorated, but occasionally I have seen the panels of a door carved with [531] designs representing the breasts of a woman; or there may have been simple geometrical patterns. The top ends of the door panels are massive spheres of wood bored through with holes. Through the holes in the tops of these panels a pintle is passed in such a way that the door is suspended from above. During the daytime the lower ends of the panels are raised to the level of the lintel. They are there supported on a Y-shaped upright which is erected in front of the doorway. At night the planks are removed from this support and allowed to hang downward in the doorway. There is a sliding cross-piece to push over the lower ends. The same arrangement is sometimes used to make a door for a hut. This old type of village doorway, common twenty years ago, is becoming increasingly rare.

342 The house of a king or a chief is larger than that of a commoner. 644 The enclosure which contains a king's house and the other buildings 621 is named *elombe*, while *epandavailo* is the word used to describe the entrance to this compound. The *elombe* is built by men and women who receive no payment. There is a ceremony when the compound is opened. The house of the chief, Kandimba Sanjahulu, near Bailundu, is rectangular, with mud walls raised on a platform of earth and stones. Whitewash has been applied to the outside of the walls and some ornament is given in the form of painted blue crosses. Complete study of structural types and the planning of internal [113] divisions has been made by F. and W. Jaspert, of the Städtisches Völkermuseum, Frankfort.

644 At a village near Cuma the house of the chief differed from the dwellings of commoners in being somewhat larger. The house had been abandoned, not because the chief died there, but because the chieftainship had been transferred to an adjacent village. The tomb, which will be described in connection with funeral rites, was a few yards from the house. This mausoleum was surrounded by a high wooden palisade, to a stake of which were attached the horns of an ox killed at the funeral feast, while the jawbone lay in the enclosure

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

(Plate XLV, Fig. 2). The house of bows for holding sacred relics will be described in connection with religion (Plate XLVI, Fig. 1). 644

In former days there used to be a hard mud floor for dancing, centrally placed in the village. 361 335

In the center of the village is the communal house where all men, and boys over four years of age, gather to eat their food, which is sent by the women. This *onjango* is the place of assembly for discussion of village affairs. A house of this kind at Bailundu is circular in form with a diameter of seventeen feet (Plate XLVIII, Fig. 1). In the middle of the *onjango* are stones forming a fireplace. In another such house there were jawbones of oxen. These were suspended from the walls as tokens of the payment of fines. There is no communal house for females. In some villages there is a common kraal for cattle. 344 [681] [417]

The king's compound usually contains: 644

(1) The king's house, which invariably has a separate sleeping room.

(2) A house and kitchen for each of his wives.

(3) A tomb for the burial of kings and their wives.

(4) The house of bows for staffs, bows, mats, and tobacco-pipes of dead chiefs.

(5) A house of meditation for the king (Plate LXXXIX, Fig. 1).

(6) Pens for pigs and chickens.

The guest houses (Plate XLVIII, Fig. 2) that I have seen were not in the king's compound. Granaries, which are conspicuous in every village, have been mentioned in connection with food supply (Plate XLIV, Fig. 1). Each house has its own granary. I have noticed garbage pits containing corn husks and refuse from sweet potatoes, but there is as a rule no organized scheme for disposing of refuse; dogs and pigs are the scavengers. There is no particular place for defecation; people use the bush. [485] 343 364

Every man has a knowledge of house-building. Women do not actually build, but, along with the children, they pour water into the clay pit and carry clay to the men who are plastering the walls. Ngonga says, "People would be surprised to see a woman building a house. They would call her a he-woman." Men help one another in house-building by giving reciprocal service for which there is a gift of food and beer. 462 476 [338]

A deep rectangular clay pit is made as close to the house as possible, and the children thoroughly enjoy puddling the clay with their 338

338 feet. A trench about eighteen inches deep is dug for the poles (*akoso*), which form the framework. The wattle work is tied to the uprights with strong strips of red bark before the plastering is begun.
341 The old type of Umbundu house was round, but most of the houses
171 now show a transition to square or rectangular forms (Plate XLIV, Fig. 2).

[531] Exterior wall-painting is found only in the northern districts of Angola (Plate LXXXIX, Fig. 2). Between Saurimo and Malange in the north, rectangular, painted houses are frequently seen. Wall-painting is a cultural trait from the Congo region where that form of decoration is common.

796 The method of forming a village site and the right of the chief to
621 allot land have been described. The house of the chief is the first to be erected. There is drinking of beer to celebrate the completion of the village, and the pots of beer have to be stirred with the claws of chickens; these have been killed to provide blood for sprinkling the walls of the new houses. Village chiefs go through the process of stirring and drinking. The medicine-man drinks first, then he offers the cup to the chief.

344 The communal house is built by the united efforts of all men of
476 the village. Ngonga says, "The king never helps with any of the
[485] building, but he talks very much." The guest house is also built
644 by communal labor. The king of the *ombala* of Ngalangi told me that a king always uses the house of his predecessor, which must not be pulled down. No repairs are permitted and the house is used until it is absolutely untenable.

354 The interior of a commoner's house has three hearth stones in the
342 middle of the floor, which is of hard mud beaten down with a heavy wooden implement called *ocikandulo*. The ceremonial placing of the stones has been described in discussing marriage. There is no chimney, consequently the walls and roof are blackened with smoke. The junction of roof and walls provides pockets for the reception of small articles. On the floor near the walls may be several large beer pots. The dark smoky interior is almost intolerable. The sleeping
352 room is sometimes separated from the living room by matting. The bed is made from a cross-work of sticks supported on four Y-shaped posts, one at each corner. On the bed are coarse sleeping mats and possibly a modern blanket.

356 The miscellaneous contents of the hut are gourds, dippers, cooking
252 pots of several sizes, pounders, and baskets. In many of the huts I found cooking going on in the general room, but frequently a sepa-

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

[1874-1911]

THE OVIMBUNDU UNDER TWO SOVEREIGNTIES

178 The great distinguishing mark of the Ovimbundu was their participation in the caravan trade. Some of the neighbouring people also engaged in trading journeys (e.g. the Chokwe) but in central Angola the dominant traders were the Ovimbundu by reason of their control of the routes to Benguela and Catumbela, a control which as Livingstone's narrative shows they tried for a while to turn into a monopoly.[43] With this must be linked
177 the greater readiness of the Ovimbundu to adopt European ways, marked by the general adoption of cloths for wear by at latest the mid-nineteenth century.[44]

3. *Economics and Social Structure*

101 This section will describe the economic life and social structure which marked the period of the rubber trade (1874–1911).
436 A genuine currency existed in the form of cloth, and fortunes
439 could be made in it. Serpa Pinto tells us of one Otjimbundu who made £3,500 by trading in the interior and that he had met many men who 'turned over capital of a thousand to twelve hundred pounds sterling',[45] presumably in trade goods since Portuguese currency did not circulate among the Ovim-
361 bundu. At the capitals of the kingdoms genuine towns grew up. Magyar in the middle of the nineteenth century estimated that
[162] 5,000 people lived at Bailundo[46] and the British explorer Cameron who had crossed Africa from Zanzibar says of Ekovongo, the capital of Bie, 'the town of Kagnombe, the largest I came across during my whole journey, being more than three miles in circumference. On arrival I was met by the
344 Kagnombe's secretary, chamberlain, and captain of the guard who wore red waistcoats as a sign of their dignity. The secretary was more ornamental than useful, being unable to write, but a subordinate, a black man and native of Dondo, was better educated and conducted the trade of Kagnombe with the coast'.[47]

[43] Ibid., p. 203.
[44] Ibid., p. 206, referring to Magyar as evidence.
[45] Serpa Pinto, pp. 161–2.
[46] Magyar, p. 391.
[47] V. L. Cameron, *Across Africa*, London, 1877. Vol. II, pp. 206–7.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

[1874-1911]

631 634 at least, the effective unit of law and self-defence was formerly the sub-chiefdom.[59]

634 643 [645] In both sub-chiefdom and kingdom the chief (a term used here for both king and sub-chief) passed through a cycle of rites to become truly chief and was surrounded, assisted, and checked by titled ministers.[60] The future chief was selected from persons of chiefly stock. My informants stated that a new chief might be related either patrilineally or matrilineally to former chiefs; all other sources state that the chiefdom can only be held by somebody *patrilineally* of chiefly blood, with the exception of Santos Brandão writing on the Huambo kingdom.[61] The selection was the responsibility of the Mwekalia, whose role was to represent the people *vis-à-vis* the king, an opposition which is expressed in the Umbundu saying 'the chief is a guest, the Mwekalia is a man of the country'. When asked to explain this saying, the Ovimbundu point out that many chiefs come from outside the chiefdom, and also that 'If the chief does something wrong, we can send him away'.[62]

In such a constitutional deposition of the chief which nineteenth century observers describe as taking place fairly frequently,[63] the main responsibility fell on the Mwekalia. The cycle of royal rites consisted of the ceremonial entry of the chief into his capital and his taking of a new name, the rebuilding of certain shrines, a large-scale hunt, the building of an archway intended as a magical defence to the capital, and finally an act

[59] Informants.

[60] For the king and his ministers see especially Hastings, pp. 29–71 (based on Bailundo), and for other details of the royal court see Serpa Pinto, p. 167 (based on Bie).

[61] For references to patrilineal succession see Serpa Pinto, p. 159, Capello and Ivens, *From Benguella to the Territory of Yacca* (London, 1882), p. 81, Hastings, p. 42, Childs, p. 22. Santos Brandão (*Mensário Administrativo*, July–August, 1950) gives a list of the kings of Huambo where there had been two successive royal lines, and this shows several cases of succession by sisters' sons. (The Umbundu text he gives makes this quite clear.)

[62] The underlying idea is not so much that the chiefly stock is of immigrant descent but rather that the people of one chiefdom call somebody from outside to rule over them, who can be sent away if he misbehaves. Of course people living within a chiefdom are not excluded, but this point about the chief being a stranger is very strongly emphasized.

[63] Childs, pp. 22–23 and references given there.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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of ritual cannibalism (*oku lia ekongo*) after which he could not be deposed.[64]

Hastings in describing the principal ministers of the Bailundo court states that the Mwekalia and the Galamboli or Ngambole (whose function was to remember traditions) were representative of the indigenous pre-Jaga stock, the Kesongo who was the war leader was a slave from another tribe, and the Otjinduli was of immigrant stock, and points out that these represent the three sources from which the Ovimbundu sprang.[65]

At the sub-chiefdom level some of the titles found in the kingdoms would be found combined, and the chief's court, where cases were judged, was composed both of titled ministers living at the chief's village and of the village headmen (some of whom were also title-holders). The sub-chief represented his people to the outer world, led them in communal ritual and judged, with his councillors,[66] their disputes. Hastings describes a case thus: 'When all the members of the court are seated in a circle, with an empty space in the centre, the plaintiff's counsel then relates the case, after which the lawyer for the defendant does likewise for his side. The chief in turn makes general comments. Lusenje, the official, whose duty it is to keep order at court and to announce the speakers, then calls on the accuser to come forward and make his statement.'[67]

While the sub-chiefdom was the largest unit in which law and order reigned undisputed, there existed alliances and cross-cutting relationships providing a contact outside its area. There was the *tjisoko* alliance which existed between two sub-chiefdoms which were separated by a third. Gumba sub-chiefdom was thus allied to Ndjandju from which it was separated by Chicunda, and messengers from Gumba and Ndjandju travelled together to Bailundo once a year to carry tribute. Apparently a sub-chiefdom had only one *tjisoko* partner. The relationship was one of funeral friendship; *vakwatjisoko* (*tjisoko* partners) undertook the burial of those who died without kinsfolk and also ordinary

[64] This is based on information from Gumba. See also Magyar, pp. 270–77; Hastings, pp. 43–45; Childs p. 21.

[65] Hastings, p. 60.

[66] Informants.

[67] Hastings, pp. 142–43.

lives of chiefs.[1]

The chief's council and court 646

It has been noted that there is a chiefdom council responsible for electing the chief or deposing him, and for sitting with him in law cases. The composition of this council has not been clearly described.[2]

The Sub-chief

The chiefdom[3] was made up of a number of sub-chiefdoms called *ombu* (sing. *ombu*); Bailundu had about 200 *ombu*, each of which had from 3 to more than 300 villages, while a number of the larger *ombu* were themselves made up of smaller ones. About 20 *ombu* were ruled by members of the chiefly family, including heirs apparent or expectant, and the chief's wife *(inokulu)* had also her own sub-chiefdom.[4] Others were ruled by court officials not of royal birth, who sometimes themselves established dynasties, others again by dynasties native to the respective regions, or at least dynasties longer resident in the area than the chiefly family. Villages of sub-chiefs, like those of chiefs, are known as *olombale*. Most of the *ombu* are still recognised, and the sub-chiefs have retained more of their old functions than have the chiefs, and have in addition been given new functions. They as well as village headmen are required to assist in assessing and collecting native tax,[5] and also in recruiting labour for government work and for contracts. In some areas they receive in return the remission of their own taxes. On the dancing floor of most of their *olombale* cases are still heard, judgments given and fines received, although such judgments are not officially recognised or allowed by the European authorities.[6]

643 631 [177] [651] [692]

LAW

Courts

Very little information is available. We are told that certain disputes, e.g. concerning inheritance, are settled within the *oluiva*;[7] that in the village cases are tried by a council which apparently consists of the section-heads under the leadership of the village headman;[8] and that these village courts continue to function; that certain cases (unspecified) are still unofficially heard in the courts of the sub-chiefs; and that prior to European occupation the paramount chief's decision was final.

691 693

(1) Ibid., p.23. But chiefs were treated with respect; Hambly (1934, p.214) notes that the ancient custom was for commoners to fall on their knees when greeting a chief, and today this still applies to women and children although less often to men.
(2) See Serpa Pinto, 1881, p.167.
(3) Most writers use "kingdom" and "king"; "chief" when used here without qualification refers always to the paramount chief of one of the 22 chiefdoms.
(4) Magyar, 1851, pp.389f, also quoted by Childs, op.cit., p.24.
(5) The amount of the tax levied on all males from 16 years is now Ags. 200,000 annually. As noted by Childs (p.215-6), it has been steadily increasing. Opportunities for earning are comparatively small in Angola, not now for lack of work, but because of "contract labour" required of all males in addition to taxes. Payment for "contract labour" is considerably below current wages, and it is a great hindrance to productive agricultural activities. (Childs, personal communication)
(6) Childs, op.cit., pp.24-5.
(7) Hambly, (2) 1934, p.200.
(8) See above, p.29.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

(*c*) *In hunting*, deities other than the king's ancestors were invoked, especially *Hūvī*, the hunters' god, and *Kuanja*, a goddess, both of which had their own shrines and priests. These may have been connected with the country or with its earlier inhabitants (the kings being recognized as late comers). At the inaugural hunt the offices were assigned. The king's character was supposedly revealed by the sex of the animal killed at this hunt: 'If the duiker[1] is a female, then it is good indeed, but if a male, then the king is a real person but he habitually will become angry to excess' (*Nda ombambi yaco omange ciwa muēlē, puaī nda ulume, Soma omunu puaī o tema tema enene*).

2. *To represent the nation in its external relations*, i.e. (*a*) *To make agreements with other kings to promote trade*, and (*b*) *To make war on other peoples* in order to provide his court with tribute and his warriors with plunder. The war leader (*Kesongo*) had his own residence and establishment entirely separate from that of the king, whom he must not meet face to face except on certain state occasions. In Bailundu he, with certain other officials, was of the stock of the slaves of the state (*ovinduli viosoma*) who came from Luandu in the Songo country. Each king must inaugurate his reign with a war, during or after which he must ceremonially 'eat the old one' (*oku lia ekongo*)—a feast consisting of the flesh of a specially fattened slave cooked with the flesh of the principal animals commonly eaten.

3. *To dispense justice*. In point of time consumed, this question was very important, for it occupied much of the time of both rulers and ruled. Good evidence of this is in the number of proverbs used at court, second only in number to those used for the education of the young. The king's court (*olusenje*) was the supreme court of the nation where cases were continually heard and 'fines eaten' (*oku lia ovimbu*). Cases might be settled either by ordeal or by decision of the king, and there was therefore room for appeal and re-trial. The king's word, however, was final, as the proverb has it: *O popia onganji, o mālāpo osoma*. (The advocate speaks, the king finishes [decides].) The king was not generally arbitrary in his decisions but was bound not only by the customs of his people, but also by the desires of his councillors. Among the legitimate kings of the Ovimbundu there were comparatively few of the revolting and wholesale punishments which were so

[1] The duiker, *ombambi* (*Silvicapra grimmii leucoprosopus*).

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

teachers who have themselves had traditional training and have maintained their own kinship ties, then we can work out with them sound social methods.

Language teaching is of great importance in the field under consideration. The mission schools have produced remarkable results in their teaching of the Portuguese language, results probably unequalled by schools similarly situated and conditioned elsewhere. Regulations prohibiting the vernacular except in religious instruction, and requiring the use of Portuguese in all schools from the start,[1] have created great difficulties. No responsible person in touch with the situation questions the utility of teaching the language of the European colonial power, but the educational soundness of attempting to use, as a medium from the start, a language which is not used in the home is open to serious question. It is obvious that such a policy must seriously curtail the effectiveness of the school. The vernacular is still allowed for 'religious instruction' but beyond this, almost nothing but instruction in the Portuguese language can be accomplished. This policy compartmentalizes the school work to an unfortunate degree and places such emphasis on the mere acquiring of a language that the whole programme is warped. It is even inefficient as regards the teaching of the language itself, for pupils who have first had systematic instruction in their mother tongue are by that fact better equipped to acquire a European language.[2]

The French colonial authorities, who first applied language regulations of this sort in Africa, have come to realize the necessity for some modifications in practice. Gouverneur-Général Brévié, of Afrique Occidentale Française, in December 1931 stated:

> . . . In order that this system of education may produce the best results immediately, we must not hesitate to have recourse to the local

[1] Enforced since 1922 under the provisions of Decree 77 of 9 Dec., 1921 (*Boletim Oficial* No. 50, 1921). The text with an English translation may be found in *Treaties, Acts, and Regulations relating to Missionary Freedom* (London: International Missionary Council, 1923). A law of April 1938 lays down still more difficult regulations regarding the teaching of Portuguese and includes certain provisions which frankly discriminate between Protestant and Roman Catholic mission schools.

[2] 'in Achimota (Gold Coast) . . . by means of convincing tests it has been established that a child educated in his mother tongue in one year obtains a knowledge of English which otherwise would take him six years to acquire' (Gouverneur-Général Olivier, *Six Ans de Politique Sociale à Madagascar*, chap. v, quoted by Paul Crouzet in the *Educational Yearbook 1931*, p. 472).

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

175 seem to bear the stamp of truth in contrast to the evident fabrications of some and the well-meaning confusion of others.

167 'Jagas' are next reported during the conquest of Benguela[1] in 1617–22 by Manuel Cerveira Pereira. The second and fifth of the five battles described in a contemporary document[2] were with 'Jagas', the latter of which had been an ally of the Portuguese for a time. About this time 'Jagas' were also commonly reported as allies of the Portuguese forces in the conquest of Ndongo and Matamba. References to this state of affairs could be given from many sources, but more significant is the testimony of an eye-witness, one of the conquistadores, who, in a petition to King Philip, dated 16 January 1620, inserted the following:

[648] that the *Jagas* who aid us and are ferocious, who are with us, who are of great effect to overawe the heathen that they may not rise, that Your Majesty should make them a favour of wine, for they desire nothing else, to send them three hogsheads a year at the three principal feasts, for it is necessary to have them for friends, and the said *jagas*, Your Majesty ordering to give them this, they will always give in slaves[3] the value and much more.[4]

Another of the conquistadores also wrote:

The Iacas are stranger folk and who live by robbery and war.

This people came many years ago to these kingdoms and have overrun all the hinterland even to Mozambique. . . .

From them came some to our protection and service, fleeing from their captains. . . .

These people themselves are cruel and great thieves, and were more so after we made use of them: they go about robbing unjustly [*sic*] and captivating the miserable heathen; but, however, the fault is not of the *iaca*, but rather of the governors and captains who command them, and so they should be kept for friends and used well, during the necessary time.[5]

Other contemporary writers could be cited,[6] but enough evidence

[1] The present city of Benguela and its surroundings.

[2] L. Cordeiro (ed.), 1617–22, *Benguella e seu sertão por um Anonymo*, pp. 10, 13; J. J. Lopes de Lima, *Ensaios*, pt. ii, pp. 30 ff.

[3] Lit. 'pieces', a somewhat deprecatory euphemism used in the old Portuguese works.

[4] L. Cordeiro (ed.), 1574–1620, *Da Mina ao Cabo Negro segundo Garcia Mendes Castello Branco*, p. 16 f.

[5] L. Cordeiro (ed.), 1593–1631, *Terras e minas africanas segundo Balthazar Rebello de Aragão*, p. 16 f.

[6] Compare Cavazzi, op. cit., pp. 630 ff.; Duarte Lopes, op. cit., p. 156 f.; Dapper; *Description de l'Afrique*, p. 357 f.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

him off where he would have the double benefit of regular work and Christian doctrine. In 1560 the Bishop of São Thomé wrote that 'he doubted that the people of the kingdom of Angola could be made Catholics unless the King would allow Trade'.[1] The slaves were baptized by the bishop by the boatload—rowed along the wharf of Luanda. The Jesuits profited greatly by the slave-trade, employing continuously three of their own ships. The religious motive was thus early swallowed up by the commercial and profit motive. Commerce was almost entirely taken up with the slave-trade. Four-fifths of the value of all exports were slaves.[2]

During the first hundred years of the Colony of Angola a million slaves were exported,[3] and three million would probably be a very conservative estimate of the total. As long as the oversea slave traffic remained legal, little effort seems to have been made to develop other exports. In spite of protests and until 1832, ivory remained a monopoly of the royal treasury with regulations which discouraged its export. Such products as gum copal and orchilia only began to be exported in 1832–8. The only product of any importance which had also been exported in the time of the slave-trade was bees-wax. The slave-trade was first questioned in 1831, it was formally prohibited in 1836, but for many years enforcement was not accomplished. During the 250 years of the oversea slave-trade, Angola was in reality a dependency of Brazil.[4] When Brazil became independent, there was a movement in Benguela for union with that country.[5] So complete was the commercial domination of Brazil that Lisbon merchants had hardly anything to do with the Angolan trade. Lopes de Lima points out that the colony was also spiritually dominated by Brazil, and attributes the noteworthy religious decadence not only to the preoccupation of the clergy with the slave-trade, but also to the fact that from 1677 until 1845 the diocese of Angola and Congo was a part of the Metropolitan archdiocese of Bahia. The one great fact with regard to Angola of the sixteenth, seventeenth,

[1] It had been a royal monopoly and allowed only through Kongo. This letter is from the National Archives of the Torre do Tombo and quoted by Lopes de Lima, *Ensaios*, p. ix.

[2] Statistics given by Lopes de Lima, *Ensaios*, part i, p. 69 f.

[3] Cadornega, *História Geral das Guerras Angolanas* (1680–1), vol. iii, p. 254 (also quoted by Paiva Manso).

[4] Lopes de Lima, *Ensaios*, part i, p. 74; J. P. Oliveira Martins, *O Brasil e as Colónias Portuguezas*, p. 18.

[5] Lopes de Lima, op. cit., p. 127.

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175* eighteenth, and much of the nineteenth century, then, was the
439 slave-trade.

567 Most of the historical treatises on Angola are little more than chronological lists of battles and expeditions. The relation of
648 these events to the main facts, i.e. to the economic facts, has rarely been made. Two or three presídios were founded with the hope of controlling nearby mineral deposits,[1] whether real or supposed, but all the rest were intended as spearheads for trade or to protect existing trade. Many of the military expeditions were raids with an obvious end in view; others were rearguard actions to protect a more or less successful raid of the same sort; others were retaliations for reprisals or vice versa. Practically all of the soldiers who were free men, from the captain-general down, were also traders, and some who were not free were traders on account of others. There may have been a few expeditions which had less immediate connexion with trade, for there were genuine explorers in those
*175 early days, even as more recently.

726 There would be little interest or profit in cataloguing the military
648 expeditions which had, or seem to have had, contact with the Ovimbundu or with their predecessors in the land during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. There were only a very few of real significance. During the seventeenth century many raids were made from Massangano across Libolo to the edge of or into the Benguela Highland, and likewise there were many actions between the garrisons of Benguela and Caconda and the inhabitants of the plateau. In 1607 Balthazar Rebello de Aragão set out to cross Africa and had to turn back after going eighty leagues, but his own report was so scanty that even the direction he took cannot be determined.[2] In 1645, while the Dutch controlled Luanda and the coast, there was a raid which was said to have reached Bailundu.[3] The very scanty references to this raid give no description of the inhabitants, but since there seems to be no Bailundu tradition with regard to it, I conclude that the present dynasty (beyond the establishment of which tradition hardly goes) must have been founded since that date. About 1650 there was a raid across Libolo as far as the Keve River which found a cattle-rearing

[1] e.g. Benguela Velha and Cambambe.

[2] L. Cordeiro (ed.), 1593–1620, *Terras e minas africanas segundo Balthazar Rebello de Aragão*, p. 15.

[3] *Catálogo dos Governadores*, p. 374; Lopes de Lima, *Ensaios*, part i, p. 99.

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people living there,[1] which also leads me to conclude that the Ovimbundu as we now know them were not there at that date. 175 726

About 1661 there was an expedition from Benguela in order to restore a native ally, the 'Iaga Caconda', against an 'intruding Iaga' who used fire-arms.[2] This is the first record of fire-arms in native hands in the hinterland of Benguela. Muskets and powder were sold from the time of Luanda's founding (1576),[3] but not all tribes took to them quickly.[4] If fire-arms were already in use by natives in the Benguela hinterland in 1661, it is most probable that the founders of the present Umbundu dynasties had them when they came to the country. The first presídio of Caconda was built in 1680, destroyed soon after, and rebuilt nearby in 1685. This was at four or five days' journey from Benguela but not on the Plateau nor within the present Umbundu area. The third presídio, known as Caconda-Nova, was built at its present site in 1769. Most writers have supposed this fort to have been built at its present site in 1685, overlooking the fact that there were not two sites but three.[5] 648 [411] [177]

European Influences 1770–1840. The governor who effected the final moving of Caconda on to the Plateau, D. Francisco de Souza Coutinho, also undertook many other reforms designed to better the economic state of the colony. He brought something of the intentions of the great Marquez de Pombal to this remote tropical dependency. He seems to have been the first governor of Angola to realize the immense superiority of the Benguela Highland, 175 648

[1] Cadornega, op. cit., vol. ii, pp. 42–6.

[2] Cadornega, op. cit., p. 176 f. It is of interest that according to this author (1680) this expedition passed the Bay then known as 'Catumbella of Salt Water' or 'Catumbella of the Oysters'. Jaspert made the error of stating that this Bay (Lobito) was 'discovered by the English' about 1900!

[3] Garcia Mendes Castello Branco (1620) protested against allowing this traffic (*Da Mina ao Cabo Negro*, p. 25).

[4] In 1790 the Ovimbundu used fire-arms very well, but the 'Ganguellas' had not then adopted their use (*Annaes Mar. e Col.*, *5a Ser.*, p. 489).

[5] Lopes de Lima (*Ensaios*) made this error (or omission), and more recent writers have perhaps erred by following him. The correct accounts are given in the *Catálogo dos Governadores*, pp. 396 ff., 416 ff. (also to be found in *Arquivos de Angola*, vol. iii, pp. 507 f., 528). The facts are most clearly brought out by the governor of the District of Benguela in reporting a visit made to Caconda. He gives a short history of the presídio and tells of having seen the ruins of the earlier forts (*Districto de Benguella 1892*, Lisboa, 1894). The report to the Ministry in Lisbon of the governor, D. Francisco Inocencio de Souza Coutinho, explaining (among other things) the moving of this presídio, and dated 18 Oct. 1769, has been published in *Arquivos de Angola*, vol. i, no. 1 (Oct. 1933).

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175* 648 from the point of view of climate, situation, and resources, over the rest of the West African lands with which the Portuguese had relations. He stated in his report[1] that until that time most of the Europeans who entered the Highland were escaped convicts or deserters. He attempted to provide for a more orderly commercial development in these regions not only by building the forts of Caconda-Nova and Novo Redondo,[2] but also by bringing the traders of the interior together at determined places where they could have judges appointed from among themselves, and even parish priests.[3] If the office of 'captain-major and exterior judge'[4] did not originate at this time, at least it was Souza Coutinho who revived it in his appointments and made it a useful instrument for the commercial penetration of the Benguela Highland and of the regions beyond.

Among the regions for which he created such an office was 'Gallangue grande'[5] (Ngalangi). This captaincy-major and the parish of 'S. João Nepomuceno de Gallangue' are mentioned subsequently but only to note the vacancy of both posts. Souza Coutinho was remembered for his many accomplishments, and for his realistic attitudes. He recognized that the law of 1620 prohibiting the entry of traders into the hinterlands[6] was largely a dead letter, and that in so far as it was observed, it only favoured the

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[1] Dated 18 Oct. 1769, loc. cit.

[2] The chief reason for building the latter was to put an end to the contraband trade of the English (see reports of the same governor of 12 Jan. and of 16 May 1769 in op. cit., vol. i, nos. 5 and 6 (Mar. 1936).

[3] Order of 23 Sept. 1769, and report of 12 Jan. 1769 in ibid.; report of 18 Oct. 1769; also *Catálogo dos Governadores*, p. 416 f. (*Arquivos de Angola*, vol. iii, p. 528).

[4] The *capitão mor e juiz de fora* was appointed to represent the government in a region not subject to it nor within the range of military occupation. His chief duty was to keep the peace among the Portuguese subjects of his jurisdiction and to attend to legal and orderly inheritance of their goods when they died. He also was supposed to secure for them as much extra-territorial treatment as the native kings and courts would concede. Compare explanation by Francisco de Salles Ferreira in *Annaes Mar. e Col.*, 1846, p. 118. Long lists of these appointments for the various regions of the interior, together with many contemporary documents, are given by Ralph Delgado, *Ao Sul do Cuanza*.

[5] He gave it the name 'Linhares' after a Portuguese town, but neither this name nor that of 'Contins' for Caconda was kept.

[6] The purpose of this law was not, as Livingstone supposed (*Missionary Travels and Researches*, p. 369), directly humanitarian, but more especially to preserve the trade for residents of the towns and to avoid the necessity for punitive expeditions which the traders' presence in the hinterland had so often motivated.

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foreign buccaneers and other contraband trade in the unoccupied ports of the Congo, Loango, &c. He therefore removed the prohibition[1] and counted on the appointment of captains-major to keep the peace. From this time the hinterlands were legally open to traders—to all Portuguese subjects whether white, black, or brown.

Though the hinterlands were now legally open to all traders, life was not thereby made any easier for them than it had been previously for the 'barefoot traders'[2] who had carried on most of the trade hitherto. Once they went beyond the range of the guns of a presídio, they entered what were practically foreign countries which recognized no European principles of law or of conduct. Those who could afford it built themselves small fortresses and manned them with their slaves. Even so, they had to become vassals and feudatories of some native king and pay tribute according to his good pleasure. Those traders who could not afford such an establishment led a very precarious existence, nor could they long maintain a status above that of the natives of the region. Many of these early traders and their descendants were subsequently incorporated into the Umbundu stock, and in some instances whole communities of them.[3] For one reason or another this increased commercial contact led to further wars with the natives. The war of this period which made the greatest impression upon the Ovimbundu was the campaign of 1774–6, to which allusion has already been made.[4] Memories of this war and of the capture of their respective kings have been preserved in the traditions of Bailundu and of Ndulu,[5] and it also seems that these two peoples learned, for a time at least, that it was safer and more profitable to trade with the Europeans than to raid their establishments. Ciyaka and the neighbouring groups do not seem to have followed suit, for they continued to raid the forts of Caconda, Quilengues, and Huila until fairly recent times; nor do Europeans seem to have penetrated Ciyaka for residence until almost the turn of the present century. But in all the Umbundu kingdoms life

[1] Report of 9 May 1765 in *Arquivos de Angola*, vol. i, nos. 5 and 6.

[2] i.e. native African trading agents.

[3] I have genealogical tables and family histories of some of the present-day descendants. The mixed origin of communities in Kakonda has been noted by several writers. A noteworthy example in Viye is the region called Kamundongo—an old Ndongo (Angola) settlement.

[4] *Supra*, pp. 166, 171, 174.

[5] *Supra*, pp. 170, 171.

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continued to be difficult for the traders, subject as they were to the conditions of primitive custom and belief.[1]

About the time of the above-mentioned military campaign, events took a turn which in the end greatly advanced commercial life in Viye. I refer to the restoration of Kangombe to his 'stool' with the help of the governor, Dom Antonio de Lancastre.[2] This alliance with the Portuguese government was maintained by Kangombe's successors until 1890. In 1782, and perhaps even in 1770, there were so many Portuguese residents that a 'Captain-major and exterior judge of Bihe' was appointed,[3] a post which seems to have been maintained until Silva Porto's suicide in 1890.

Reference has already been made to an account by Paulo Martins Pinheiro de Lacerda, who evidently lived in Ngalangi and in Wambu about 1790,[4] but although this man wrote a good deal about native life, he had little to say about trade, although it was perhaps his own livelihood. I have accounts of two trading expeditions from Benguela to the country of 'Lovar' or 'Lovale' at the head-waters of the Zambezi in 1794 and 1795, undertaken by Alexandre de Silva Teixeira and Jozé da Silva Costa at the instigation of a slave originally from that region.[5] They passed through Bailundu and Viye, but mentioned these regions only to say that the road was already well known to all backwoodsmen (traders). All available evidence seems to indicate that before the close of the eighteenth century the Ovimbundu were becoming, if they had not already become, traders. If trade had not yet taken first place over raiding and warfare, at least it was well-established in their habits of life. Bailundu tradition says that the first traders to offer cloth and beads and fire-arms for slaves and ivory were the Ndongo, the 'barefoot traders' (*pombeiros descalços*). This was doubtless during the very early days of the eighteenth century, or

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[1] Silva Porto's diaries, although referring to a later time, give a good description of difficulties faced (op. cit.). *Soc. Geog. Lisboa, 5a Ser.*

[2] Governor and captain-general, 1772–9. He was the immediate successor of D. Francisco de Souza Coutinho.

[3] For this appointment, which may not have been the first, and the duties of the office, see *Annaes Mar. e Col., 6a Ser.*, p. 118. I have the names of subsequent appointees, and for four of them the following dates of appointment, respectively—1791, 1819, 1838, 1885; also of one previous appointee in 1770 or 1771.

[4] *Supra*, p. 188.

[5] *Arquivos de Angola*, vol. i, no. 4 (Nov. 1935); *Annaes Mar. e Col., 4a Ser.* (1844), p. 159 f.

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even earlier. Long before that the forerunners of the Ovimbundu kings, the 'Jagas', had sold their prisoners to the *pombeiros*. The other side of the national lineage had probably bought salt from Cisama[1] even before the white men came to the land.

Dominant Tendencies 1840–74. The next period in which there was great commercial development among the Ovimbundu began with the fourth decade of the nineteenth century, following upon the abolition of the monopoly in ivory and the development of new products as substitutes for the slave-trade, formally prohibited in 1836. This period saw a considerable increase in the number of traders resident in the region. The new régime at the coast may have caused some to go inland.[2] In Bailundu, and especially in Viye, they were well received by kings and by people who saw in the coming of more Europeans to live among them increased commercial opportunities.[3] For various reasons most of these traders established themselves in Viye,[4] and from this time Viye took first place in trade with the interior and with the coast. But since the caravan road to Benguela must pass either through

[1] Lopes de Lima, *Ensaios*, part ii, p. 55.

[2] Some statistics on these older periods are available, but since they are themselves in disagreement and none of them seem to be very reliable I do not include them here. The Report of the Governor of Benguela for 1799 gives the rather optimistic figure of 78 *whites* (including 5 women) resident in the several interior districts (*Annaes Mar. e Col.*, 1844, p. 161), with correspondingly larger numbers for persons of mixed race and (civilized) blacks. In 1838, according to Lopes de Lima (*Ensaios*, part i, p. 4 f.), the number of *whites* in the same districts was only 14, with no women, and the number of 'brown inhabitants' correspondingly small except in Caconda, for which he gives the number of 2,992—more than in all the rest of the colony! J. R. Graça gave a list of 101 names of inhabitants of Viye alone, 'Portuguese or descendants of Portuguese . . . including 6 *Europeans*'. This was probably near the truth for 1846. Magyar (1849–57) gave very interesting calculations of the population and area of the several Umbundu kingdoms, but no figures on European residents.

[3] A very interesting glimpse of Bailundu in 1837 was given by a political exile, Carlos de Almeida Sandoval (*Annaes do Cons. Ultr., Ia Ser.*, p. 519 f.). Very full accounts of life in Viye have been given by Silva Porto, who first reached Viye in 1840, coming from Luanda (see some of his diaries in *Annaes do Cons. Ultr.*, Ser. I; *Boletim Soc. Geog. Lisboa*, Ser. 5, 6. A small volume of excerpts from Silva Porto's diaries was published in 1942 by the Agência Geral das Colónias under the title *Viagens e apontamentos de um portuense em África*.)

[4] The early continuous connexion of the dynasty with the Luanda government has been mentioned, as also the continuous appointment of a *capitão mor*. The incumbent at the time (appointed 1838) was Francisco José Coimbra, of mixed race from Caconda (*Annaes Mar. e Col.*, 1846, p. 118; *Annaes do Cons. Ultr., Ia Ser.*, p. 112 f.). Both Cameron and the early missionaries mention dealings with his sons. Some of his grandsons and great-grandsons, now reincorporated with the Ovimbundu, still tell of their descent.

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175 439 487 this trail along the face of the cliffs behind Catumbela may still be seen to-day.

I have noted how largely Brazil had absorbed the commerce of 648 439 the colony. This was due in large part, of course, to the slave-trade, but it was also due to the fact that all foreign, i.e. non-Portuguese, ships were prohibited from having any part in the colony's trade, or even from entering its ports. This was an effort to keep all colonial trade for the motherland, and was quite in line with early colonial theory and practice. In this instance it served to enrich Brazil at the expense not only of Angola but also of Portugal itself, and it is rather strange that this ruinous policy should have persisted even after the separation of Brazil. In 1844 the two ports of Luanda and Benguela were opened to ships of all the world. Lopes de Lima remarks[1] that not only did foreign commerce flow in, but Portuguese commerce with the colony also increased greatly. It must not be supposed that Angola at once became a great example of Free Trade, for customs duties remained high. Only the first bars in the fence of monopoly were 175 let down, but for that day it was a great step and it attracted trade. 314 439 In 1869 the first experimental export of raw rubber was made: a very small beginning of a very important movement.[2] The imminent importance of this export was not realized by 'the man on the spot'. In 1870 Silva Porto, tired of accusations of witchcraft by his Ovimbundu neighbours and of the increasing demands

a very truthful and realistic picture of conditions, of events, and of trends, errs in supposing that it was only with the opening of this 'new road' by Silva Porto that caravans from the interior began to come to Catumbela. Magyar, who went inland from Benguela in 1849, took the usual road via Catumbela. Even in 1795, when there was no town at Catumbela, but only a few vegetable farms, Teixeira and Mello started for the interior from there (*Annaes Mar. e Col.*, 1844, p. 159). Their itinerary in detail from Catumbela to Viye is not given, but only distances to Cisanji, to Civula, to Bailundu, and to Viye. Since their route was via Civula and Bailundu, rather than via Ciyaka and Wambu (Huambo), and therefore the route of Silva Porto's 'new' road, I am inclined to believe that the latter was probably a return to a route formerly used. Magyar gives a good description of the route via Ciyaka. The route via Bailundu has been described by scores of writers from Silva Porto through Cameron, the early missionaries (of the A.B.C.F.M.), Nevinson, *et al.*, down to 1910, when the road was abandoned for the Benguela Railway. There are now three motor roads from the Highland to the coast, but none of them follows the old slavers' route except in certain short sections.

[1] *Ensaios*, part i, pp. 78, 135.

[2] Easton, op. cit., p. 24; *Boletim Official*, 1870 (Exports for 1869); *Benguella, Relatório do Districto de*, 1891, p. 29.

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175 ×1853–4, crossed Africa from Benguela to the mouth of the Rovuma.[1]

484 Nor was this the only transcontinental journey effected by
439 Ovimbundu traders.[2] Such long-distance expeditions were not always the most profitable, and certainly the relatively shorter journeys of the time of the rubber trade must have been much more lucrative. Indeed, the judgement of Magyar was that the Ovimbundu generally got more enjoyment and excitement than
175 monetary gain from their expeditions.[3]

439 Mention has been made that the several Umbundu kingdoms
648 fell in line with the trading activities of Bailundu and Viye. By the beginning of the period of great activity this had eventuated in a loose system of alliances or mutual understandings to the effect that the traders and caravans of each would be tolerated in, and allowed passage through, the territory of the other. At times their 'trade-agreements' seem to have embraced all the Umbundu-speaking peoples, but violations were frequent,[4] and complaints of violations seem to have been almost the regular state of affairs
326 as between Viye and the Ciyaka-Cingolo-Citata group. There also
438 developed regional industrial and commercial specializations. In Magyar's time there was a great metal industry at Ekovongo, the
175 capital of Viye, making hoes for trade with the interior,[5] but by 1875 this work seems to have ceased,[6] for although hoes were still

[1] Cakahanga kept a diary which was edited by Silva Porto and published under the title 'Third Voyage' in the *Boletim Official* of Angola, 1856–7, and later in the *Annaes do Cons. Ultr. Ia Ser.* A summary of this diary appeared in the *Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society* of London, 1860, pp. 136–49, but the translator and editor mistakenly believed that Silva Porto had himself crossed Africa, and added to the confusion by calling the Ovimbundu 'Arabs from Zanzibar'. Silva Porto himself only went as far as Naliele, and it seems that there were 'Arabs' or Swahili in the party, but how far they accompanied it is not clear. That the diary was kept by Cakahanga is evident, for the 'Arabs' could write no language known to Silva Porto.

[2] See Magyar, op. cit., p. 297.

[3] Ibid., p. 299. This referred only to Magyar's time, 1849–57, but I feel it to be a judgement capable of wider extension. Serpa Pinto says that in 1878 he met many who 'turned over capital of a thousand to twelve hundred pounds sterling and some even more; one indeed . . . arrived during my sojourn . . . from the interior where he had traded on his own account to the extent of . . . about £3,500!' (op. cit., p. 161 f.). However, there were also losses and often, so that Magyar's dictum is worth remembering.

[4] e.g. see account of dispute between Ekulkui (Bailundu) and Njambayamina (Viye) in *Missionary Herald*, 1886, pp. 228 f., 432, 508; 1887, p. 463.

[5] L. Magyar, op. cit., p. 297.

[6] See negative testimony of Cameron, of Serpa Pinto, and of early missionaries.

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made, there as elsewhere throughout the Umbundu-speaking territory, their wholesale manufacture was only carried on in Ndulu. This was a natural specialization, for the best and most easily accessible deposits of iron ore are in the Ndulu country,[1] whose smiths have become justly famous. In exchange for hoes they received palm-oil or cattle from other regions, or salt, rum, or goods from the coast. Other regional specializations were—Kasongi and the Sele country for palm-oil, Cikuma for bees-wax (also obtained from the interior), cattle from Ngalangi, Kalukembe, Cilengi, and farther south. Ciyaka, Civula, and Bailundu took much corn-meal to the coast in those early days. 'Trade-agreements' were also made beyond the Umbundu-speaking area. At first these were strictly one-way affairs, allowing the Ovimbundu traders to operate in many lands, near and far, since this was to the advantage of the rulers of those lands. At the same time, the men from Bailundu and Viye did and said everything possible to discourage the interior peoples from venturing out on their own account.[2] Later, when the trade, as well as knowledge of the whites and their trade, spread, arrangements were made between the king of Viye and various interior chiefs allowing them to send their own caravans through to the coast, and gifts were exchanged periodically.[3]

Their very early introduction to articles of European use and manufacture has undoubtedly had great influence upon the development of the Ovimbundu. Their early and thorough familiarity with fire-arms certainly played a decisive role in their national formation and subsequent history. The introduction of domestic plants and animals from abroad is an important subject, but too broad for treatment at this time. The early introduction of European-manufactured goods has had profound influences.

[1] See article on smelting and smithing in Ndulu by F. W. Read in *Journal of the African Society*, 1902, pp. 44–9.

[2] Livingstone tells of the displeasure of the Ovimbundu ('Mambari') at meeting the Makololo near Luanda. The Ovimbundu tried to frighten them from trading with the whites with tall tales, making the whites out as impossibly clever magicians and wizards (op. cit., p. 384). Cameron and his east-coast carriers experienced the displeasure of Viye people owing to jealousy of the same sort, but no longer so openly expressed (op. cit., p. 406).

[3] The Musta-Yanvo of Lunda was one of those who had such a 'trade-agreement' with Viye. Silva Porto notes in his diary on 14 Jan. 1880 that an embassy from the Musta-Yanvo had arrived with a tusk of ivory for Cilemo (*Boletim Soc. Geog. Lisboa*, 3a Ser., p. 143).

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times, which is a sure sign of his greatness in Umbundu estimation. Ekuikui's reign marked the end of an era and the beginning of another, not only for the people of Bailundu, but for all the Ovimbundu. The rubber trade had begun just before he came to the stool and his reign saw its intensive development. Tradition is probably right in placing the beginning of intensive agricultural pursuits during Ekuikui's time, for the great development of trade, need for rations for the long journeys, and a market for foodstuffs at the coast provided the necessary stimulus to cultivate beyond immediate seasonal need. Ekuikui carried on the tradition of warfare[1] which was so large a part of his ancestral heritage, but he had the good sense to attempt no large-scale operations either against his relatively powerful Ovimbundu confrères, or against European establishments. There was plenty of provocation[2] and no lack of warlike counsel, but he probably realized that the tenor of the times was against such operations. Had his contemporaries of Viye and his own successors been possessed of equal good sense, the Ovimbundu might have been saved some very difficult times and not a little bloodshed. The military occupation of Viye came about in 1890, after a disastrous war brought on by foolishly high-handed treatment on the part of King Ndunduma[3] and his counsellors of a little expedition bound for the interior under Captain Paiva Couceiro, and of Silva Porto,[4] resulting in the suicide of the latter. The ruler and people of Viye relied on a largely magical defence against Boer sharpshooters and Portuguese field artillery with Krupp guns. When finally Ndunduma came in and gave himself up[5] he was exiled to São Tiago in the Cape Verde Islands,

[1] For King Ekuikui's wars see *Missionary Herald*, 1882, p. 225; 1883, p. 339; 1884, pp. 145 f., 504; 1885, pp. 279, 355, 375; 1889, p. 67; 1890, p. 292.

[2] See op. cit., 1886, pp. 228 f., 452, 508.

[3] *Ndunduma* (Thunderer) was the name assumed by Cikunyu when he took office after a *coup d'état* in 1888 (see *Missionary Herald*, 1889, p. 242 f.).

[4] Antonio Francisco Ferreira da Silva Porto, appointed 'Captain-major and exterior judge' of Bihe in 1885. He had authority only over the European residents, but he knew the country and people well and had tried to bring about a peaceful occupation of the country; neither the Government in Benguela nor the native authorities, however, would take his advice. His suicide brought the importance of the Umbundu country to the fore, and he became a Portuguese national hero.

[5] It was the Rev. W. H. Sanders, in charge of Kamundongo Mission Station, who sought Ndunduma and got him to surrender in order to avoid further slaughter. For a report of this 'war' see *Relatorio do Districto de Benguella*, 1891, pp. 12–14; also *Missionary Herald*, 1891, pp. 47, 63 f., 88, 108 f.; Dr. J. Johnston, *Romance versus Reality in South Central Africa*, pp. 59–63. F. S. Arnot (*Bihe*

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and the country settled down to the rule of 'the Fort' with Ndunduma's successor named by the captain-major. The occupation of Bailundu was effected at that same time,[1] while Ekuikui yet ruled, but for several years only a nominal force was employed.[2] In 1896 Ekuikui's successor, Numa II, attacked the fort, and the captain-major burned the *ombala*[3] in retaliation. From 1890 European traders settled in both Viye and Bailundu in ever-increasing numbers.[4] Then came the 'Bailundu War' of 1902,[5] after which the occupation of the whole Umbundu country was quickly completed.

175X 648 726

The operations of 1890 had only interrupted the ivory trade. The campaign of 1902 completely paralysed trade in and with the interior, and greatly aggravated a depression which the District of Benguela was feeling because of a fall from the high prices which rubber had enjoyed in 1898–9.[6] After the war it seemed that trade would soon regain its former levels, and the export statistics show that for a time it did so, but closer inspection and a consideration of other factors which entered into the situation show that this was the beginning of the end. The price of rubber never regained its former level, so that the high value of exports reported represents an even larger quantity than before. The increased quantity largely represented a greatly debased product, for the native traders and producers understood nothing

175X 439 178 727

175X 439 314

and Garenganze, pp. 19–23) also wrote of these incidents but with more of the personal element and perhaps less accuracy.

[1] *Relatorio, Benguella*, 1892, p. 13 f.

[2] In 1892 there were 2 soldiers in Bailundu, 135 in Viye, 21 in Caconda (*Benguella*, op. cit., 1891, p. 15). Bailundu tradition says that (native) soldiers were first brought in disguised as porters with loads of goods.

[3] *Ombala*, capital village.

[4] A. Bastos, op. cit., pp. 36, 43.

[5] This war was named in Umbundu after the Bailundu war leader, *Mutu ya Kevela*. He is named among the kings, but it was only during the war that he assumed power. The immediate causes were excesses on the part of European residents against the natives, especially in connexion with 'the recruiting of contract labour'. The best work on the subject is in the nature of a report written by the man who was then governor, Cabral Moncada, *A Campanha do Bailundo* (Luanda 1903). General ideas may be had from *Missionary Herald*, 1901, pp. 353, 400, 452 f., 520 f.; 1903, pp. 22 f., 69 f., 122, 211 f.; H. W. Nevinson, op. cit., p. 157 f.; and J. T. Tucker, *Drums in the Darkness*, p. 122 f. The account given by Keiling (*Quarenta Anos de Africa*) is of interest for certain details of this war, but its statements are inaccurate and its judgments unreliable. The missionaries sought to dissuade the natives from taking up arms, and once the fighting had begun they provided medical services for both sides and sent food-supplies to the garrison of the beleaguered Portuguese fort.

[6] A. Bastos, op. cit., p. 39 f.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

It must not be supposed that trade has been abandoned. Every 175 x
sale or exchange of field or garden produce is a serious trading 438
operation. Produce will often be carried a very long way for a very small advantage, or even for no apparent gain. The successively lower economic levels to which the colony, and especially the natives, have fallen since the close of the rubber trade is a factor. Individual trading, involving journeys into even such distant regions as Cvamboland, is a latter-day development since European rule has made for greater personal security.

Another factor which operated to end all large-scale trading 567
operations of the Ovimbundu was the disappearance of the traffic 439
in human beings. It has been shown that even before they ruled over the Ovimbundu the 'Jagas' were leading intermediaries in this traffic, and the Ovimbundu have continued in this role right down to the period under review. Whatever name or form it bore at the coast, in the interior the traffic was the same. At the height of the rubber boom this traffic, along with other activities, suffered a decline, being somewhat less profitable than rubber. At that time came the peak of the rum trade and the demoralization which it brought turned the point of the 'contract labour' traffic in upon the Ovimbundu themselves. Such [669]
Umbundu customs as getting into debt, the pawning of relatives, and also such factors as times of food scarcity, quickly taken advantage of by the traders, served to exacerbate the hardships, and the result was the native uprising of 1902 known as the 'Bailundu Campaign', but extending beyond the limits of Bailundu. The effects of this uprising upon trade have already been noted. Pending investigation of its causes, the export of 'contract labourers' was stopped,[1] but the practice was soon resumed. The scandalous 648
conditions then obtaining in the neighbouring 'Congo Free State' 439
almost from its founding until 1908 greatly aided and abetted the 567
slave-traffic, however much this new frontier may have interfered with trade in ivory and rubber. Trade with the *revoltés* was particularly lucrative to Ovimbundu and other traders of Angola. Powder and arms were an especially important item in this trade.

and just under the rim of the Highland. In 1916 construction stopped at Chinguar (312 miles and on the edge of Viye) until after World War I. It was completed to the Angola frontier in 1929 and the Belgian section finished in 1931, with transcontinental connexion at Elizabethville.

[1] Cabral Moncada, op. cit.; Massano de Amorim, *Relatorio sôbre os acontecimentos do Bailundo* (Loanda, 1903); *Missionary Herald*, 1903, p. 69.

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It was only with the beginning of World War I that trade in powder and fire-arms was stopped. For more than a century Portuguese patriots and thinkers had been insisting upon the necessity for ending the export of man-power, so evidently impoverishing in its effects on the life of the colony.[1] Law succeeded law, and regulation followed regulation, but there was little real change.[2] With the Republic,[3] however, real changes began. Conditions were investigated,[4] and although complete and immediate reform could hardly have been expected, changes did begin. Provisions for manumission upon presentation to authority were made and carried out. Repatriation from island and mainland plantations began to be undertaken. This was the origin of small communities of Cokue and other 'Ngangela' people now living at various points in the Umbundu country. From the plantations they were repatriated to 'their places of origin', which were, however, not their own homes but the places whence they had been sold into servitude. Under various regulatory practices, contract labour has been continued down to the present day. The depression which came to Central Africa in 1930 reduced the demand to a minimum, and for a few years it did not represent a serious problem in the life of the Ovimbundu. There was a time of great activity in road building (approximately 1915–32) when the demands for labour were a serious problem to Umbundu life. Soon after the opening of World War II a strong demand for colonial products revived the industries of Angola and stimulated the creation of new ones. The consequent demand for labour and the means used to supply it have come to constitute the most severe trial which has yet come to the Ovimbundu. Their docility has made this service bear more hardly on them than on some other people of the colony. Their

[1] e.g. Saldanha da Gama, *Memoria*, 1814; Sá da Bandeira, 1839; Lopes de Lima, *Ensaios* (1846), 5 p. xxxviii, 6 f., 44 f.; Casmiro, *Africa Nostra*, p. 60 f.

[2] The principal laws were promulgated as follows: 1836 (Formal abolition of the traffic); 1839 (Authorizing co-operation with the international naval squadron); 1840, 1841, 1845 (Supplementary ordinances); 1875 (Law of Liberation and regulation of contract labour); 1878, 1889 (Further regulations); 1899 (Dealing with 'corrective labour'); 1902, 1903 (Further regulation of recruitment).

[3] Proclaimed in Portugal, 5 Oct., 1910.

[4] A Commission came from Lisbon that same year and took testimony throughout the colony. For conditions just previous to the Republic, see Nevinson, op. cit.; C. A. Swan, *The Slavery of To-day* (1909); H. R. F. Bourne, *Slave Traffic in Portuguese Africa* (1908); W. A. Cadbury, *Labour in Portuguese West Africa* (2nd ed. 1910); C. Harding, *In Remotest Barotseland* (1903).

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651 another small amount were added, so that it is now Ag. 91,00.[1] This is not high in comparison with the figures for the Union of South Africa and some other African territories, but opportunities for earning in Angola are small. Wages and prices of produce are 465 low indeed. These problems of labour and of taxation are much the same in many South and Central African territories. Their present-day poverty bears very hardly upon the Ovimbundu who saw much more prosperous times in the days of their large-scale trading.

423 *Land.* The ownership and occupation of land by natives does not present the acute problem in Angola which it does in several 648 African territories. Natives have not been herded on to reserves, for rigid segregation is not the Portuguese idea, nor has there yet been occupation of land by European settlers on a scale sufficient to encroach upon the land needed by natives, save in a few localities. A large proportion of the concessions provisionally taken out by Europeans in 1919–25 have reverted to the State for failure to meet requirements, as, for example, to bring a stated proportion under cultivation. Many schemes for European colonization in the Benguela Highland have been projected from time to time. The Portuguese law protects the native in his holdings, but since European settlers often find ways to circumvent the intent of the law, and since an increasing European colonization is apt to be a threat to native holdings, a simplification of the machinery whereby the natives may secure sure title to communal or to individual holdings is highly desirable.[2]

423 Whatever else may be said, however, it is good to be able to report that at the present time the Ovimbundu have their land. This fact has been a very important factor in their transition from

[1] About $4.00 at present exchange. In 1937 the economic year was changed to the calendar year, and in most districts payment of an extra half-year's tax was required. About 1941 the tax was again raised, to Ag. 108,00, and in 1945 it was again put up, to 120,00. These figures are for most of the districts inhabited by the Ovimbundu. In some areas, especially frontier areas, the amounts levied are considerably lower.

[2] For the present official status of the questions of administration, land, labour, &c., see Comte J. de Penha-Garcia, *Organisation politique et administrative de l'empire colonial portugais*, Inst. Col. Int'n'l (1936); ibid. (ed.), *Les Colonies portugaises* (1931); a useful summary of the same will be found in Lord Hailey, *An African Survey* (London: 1938), pp. 213–16, 796 f. There is a discussion of these problems in J. T. Tucker, *Angola, Land of the Blacksmith Prince* (1933), chap. 8. See also Valdez dos Santos, *Angola, Coração do Império* (Lisboa: Agência Geral das Colónias, 1945).

BVD 643 769 782 regent and incarnation" of the spirits. Sacrifices were made at the royal shrine or *kokoloto* ("at the skulls"), where the skulls of past chiefs were kept, in order to:-

[372] (i) control the elements i.e. to ensure a sufficient supply of rain and avoid the dangers caused by storms; also to control fire by providing a new fire ceremonially kindled[1] from which everyone took his fire.

[842] [241] (ii) to ensure fertility, towards which the royal marriage had great influence. The queen's special province was agriculture and her kitchen was sanctified by human sacrifice to guarantee the national food supply. Ceremonially treated seed was distributed to be mixed with the seed of each granary.

643 648 721 [701] (b) *To represent the country in its external relations*, principally to make trade agreements with other chiefs, or to make war on other peoples in order to get tribute and plunder. The war leader *(Kesongo)* has his own residence entirely separate from that of the king, whom he must not meet face to face except on certain ceremonial occasions.[2] Each king must inaugurate his reign with a war, during which or after which he must ceremonially "eat the old one" *(oku lia ekongo)* - who was usually a specially fattened slave cooked with the flesh of the principal animals commonly eaten.[3] [266]

643 692 (c) *To dispense justice*. The chief's court or *olusenje* was the supreme court of the chiefdom. The chief had the final word in any case, but most chiefs acted according to custom.

644 [882] (d) *To protect himself and the chiefdom*, the chief could use "magic" (?) which might have been accounted witchcraft or murder if practised without authority: e.g. the ritual murder of a pregnant woman, or of the children whose lives were required for building and furnishing the queen's kitchen.

643 791 (e) The chief made much use of divination in order to carry out his office. For this purpose he had his own diviner *(citue cosoma)*, who was of the blood royal; but he also consulted diviners of other regions and types.

643 [642] Succession to chiefship is in the male line,[4] from father to son, elder brother to younger brother or brother's son, or sometimes to one more distantly related. The election is made by the councillors whose duty it is (?), ordinarily before the old chief's death is announced. These same councillors may depose an unpopular chief, and there have been many such depositions. This "democratic" tendency of the Ovimbundu has been noted by most writers. Childs points out that it is attested by the fact that a chief (formerly as well as today) works in his own fields, and by folk-tales which give incidental and intimate pictures of petty details in the lives of the chiefs.†

(1) See above, p.28.

(2) In Bailundu he, with certain other officials, was of the stock of slaves of the state *(ovindili viosoma)*.

(3) Childs, p.21. Many early writers refer to the cannibalism of the "Jagas" or "Imbangalas" who are thought to have been the Ovimbundu chiefs. (See above, p.6, and also Lacerda and Navenstein, quoted by Childs, pp.17ff.)

(4) But inheritance is said to follow a different line among chiefs from among commoners; possibly inheritance is also in the paternal line. See Childs p.18.

† See footnote 1, p. 31

686 actually paid to redeem his brother and sister who were sold to pay the debts of his maternal uncle. Officialdom is one thing and actual [177] practice is another. Ngonga is right when he says that people appeal to the native law as laid down by the chief or king. If they are not satisfied they pretend a great respect for Portuguese law and therefore go to the Administrador.

WARFARE AND SLAVERY

648 The Ovimbundu have been for centuries an organized people 726 possessed of a well-developed language, a legal system, and complex social organization. In trade and travel too, the Ovimbundu have been in the vanguard of African tribes. These reasons, in conjunction with the fact of numerical superiority and early contact with the Portuguese, would account for the success of the Ovimbundu in warfare. The defensive federations existing between the ten or twelve main political units, whereby they did not habitually war on each other, helped to assure success. Should the eldest son of a king's (643) principal wife be thought unsuitable as successor, a competent son of the deceased king was elected by a council of village chiefs.

411 There is no evidence that the Ovimbundu poisoned their weapons, neither do they do so today. The Ovimbundu do not use a shield at the present time, neither is it certain that they had shields in former times. A skin-covered powder-box was carried in the king's train when on the warpath.

718 Signaling-drums were about two feet long. They were made from a cylinder of wood over the ends of which skin was stretched. Signaling, which was accomplished by drumming with the palms of the hands, was the task of boys who resided in the king's compound, except when they accompanied him to war or on a trading journey. There was no system of smoke signaling. The iron war gong was named *ongonge*, but the instrument is nowadays tapped by the assistant of a medicine-man during his performance. In former times the gong was struck in the night to give assurance that the enemy was not in sight.

726 In war the oldest son of a king or of a chief went ahead of the war party accompanied by a few men who wore red leaves on their foreheads.

721 Intertribal jealousies, raiding for cattle and slaves, also reprisals for interference with caravan trade, were the chief causes of conflict with surrounding peoples. There was undoubtedly some internal warfare within the confederacy. The Ovimbundu of Elende, Bail-

175 that the Church participated actively (T. Lewis, The Old Kingdom of Kongo, *Geog. Journ.*, 1908, pp. 598–600).

Political influence of the Portuguese, working often through the agency of Jesuit priests, led to factions within the Congo Empire, and the resulting disturbances caused movements of peoples that affected the whole of northern Angola and the population of the Benguela Highlands.

Portuguese penetration of the hinterland of Angola, especially from Loanda to Bihé, was concerned with attempts to subjugate native tribes, the establishment of trading posts, and the encouragement of the slave trade (S. Marquardsen, Angola, 1928, pp. 6–10).

439 721 The value of the Portuguese as allies of Umbundu caravans from Bihé lay in their ability to supply guns and powder to their native henchmen, who gave something more than military service in return. In response to Portuguese demand for slaves and ivory, Umbundu caravans made long journeys into the Congo basin, Rhodesia, south and southwest Angola, and possibly across Africa to lakes Tanganyika and Nyasa. The arms supplied in exchange for ivory and slaves must have helped the Ovimbundu in all their predatory excursions.

• 648 Thus the Ovimbundu were, in the early centuries of contact with the Portuguese, invaders encouraged in the building up of their tribal life and resources. Never were the Portuguese strong enough completely to subjugate northern Angola. Relationships with natives, especially the Bihéan section of the Ovimbundu, were directed toward alliances on a commercial basis. The political result of this was a combination of the Portuguese and the stronger tribes for the exploitation of the weaker.

167 177 The historical ethnology of the southwest Congo is so complex that the elements are difficult to disentangle. The number of tribes concerned is great, and their movements are not easy to follow; but a gradual extension of people from the Congo in a southwesterly direction through Lunda to the Benguela Highlands (1600–1800) seems to be the summation of all the conflict. I regard the Ovimbundu as the most southerly branch of these mass movements, during which they received a discipline that enabled them to make their home in central Angola, despite opposition from the Portuguese and earlier arrivals.

114 For these conclusions reliance has been placed on the extensive field work and historical analyses of E. Torday and T. A. Joyce, whose "Notes on the Ethnography of the Bambala" (*J.R.A.I.*, XXXV, pp. 398–426) have proved of particular value in this connection.

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tinued to engage in warfare. However, trade became increasingly important as the Ovimbundu realized the advantage of their position in between the coastal towns of Benguela and Catumbela, and the tribes of the interior. By the middle of the nineteenth century Ovimbundu were travelling throughout the area bounded by the Congo River, the Great Lakes and the Kalahari, and even transcontinental journeys were made. The Ovimbundu carried with them cloths, guns, and rum which they exchanged for ivory, slaves, and wax, to which must be added corn and palm-oil, these latter, however, obtained not from the far interior but from inside or near Umbundu land. The safety of the Umbundu caravans was preserved by the negotiation of treaties with the local rulers, and by agreements (not always satisfactorily kept) between the different Umbundu kingdoms.[25]

From about 1874 rubber became important in Umbundu trade, and it is in the period from then until 1911,[26] when the caravan trade collapsed, that the Ovimbundu knew a prosperity which they have hardly recovered today.[27] It is in this period too that there occurred both the loss of Umbundu independence and the establishment of the missions. In 1890 Ndunduma, the king of Bie, was defeated and deposed, and in 1896 Numa, the king of Bailundo attacked, disastrously, the fort which his predecessors had allowed to be established near the capital. In 1902–3 a widespread revolt, known as the Bailundo war, broke out against the Portuguese, the traders being killed, and the forts besieged. The reasons for this revolt, whose leader Mutuya-Kevela was a minister of the Bailundo court, seem to have been injustices on the part of the white population, and possibly a fall in rubber prices. After 1903 the remaining parts of Umbundu country were brought under effective European rule,

[25] Magyar, pp. 292–9; Childs, pp. 203–5.

[26] Childs following A. Bastos, *Monografia de Catumbella* (*Bol. Soc. Geog. Lisboa*, 1910, pp. 74–81, 105–9, 141–5, 180–5, 225–8, 251–5, 279–85) divides the rubber trade into three periods: the rise of the trade 1874–86, the boom 1886–1900, and the decline 1900–11.

[27] I have heard it said by old men who had taken part in the caravan journeys, and by a local mulatto trader that the Ovimbundu of that period had more clothes than they have now. For Angolan economics after 1911 see Henrique Galvão and Carlos Selvagem, *Império Ultramarino Português*, Vol. III, pp. 124–39, Lisbon, 1952, and Clement Egerton, *Angola in Perspective*, London, 1957, pp. 106–13.

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175 and the European population greatly increased.[28] In some areas
148 at this time a confused situation arose, in which 'robber barons', white and black, tyrannized over chiefs and villagers
[567] and engaged in the still vigorous slave trade, which now had acquired a few disguises on the coast.[29]

In 1911 the rubber trade ended, and about the same time slavery and the slave trade were effectively suppressed.[30] From this time onwards, too, civil administration began to be effective
[496] and the Benguela Railway became the most important link between the coast and the interior.[31] The trade disappeared, powers of the chiefs declined. The missions, both Catholic and
[297] Protestant, which had relatively little influence during the rubber trade period, gained more and more converts.[32]

101 2. *Ethnography*

Between the Ovimbundu and the sea lie the Hanya, the Nganda, and the Tjisanji tribes of whom little is known except that the Hanya and Nganda seem to be culturally related to the Ovimbundu.[33] To the south are the Nyaneka-Humbi group, cattle-keeping peoples who are culturally and linguistically related to the Ovimbundu, but who did not participate in the
[177] trade.[34] To the east lie the Ngangela[35], the Luimbi, and the

[28] Childs, pp. 210–11.

[29] For an account of Umbundu country at this time see H. W. Nevison, *A Modern Slavery*, New York, 1906. In Gumba I was told that Mutu-ya-Kevela the leader of the 1902–3 revolt had raided villages for slaves but that Samakaka whom Childs (p. 22) describes as a robber baron was spoken of favourably.

[30] Slavery had been legally suppressed from 1878. The slaves were called by other names but no effective change was made till 1910. See A. Bastos, *Monografia de Catumbella* in *Bol. Soc. Geog. Lisboa*, 1910 (pp. 74–81, 105–9, 141–55, 182–3, 225–8, 251–3, 279–5).

[31] Childs, p. 228.

[32] Ibid., pp. 220–23. Personal information.

[33] Ibid., p. 8.

[34] On these peoples see Estermann, *Etnografia do Sudoeste de Angola*, Vol. II.

[35] A tribe using this word as the root of the tribal name is to be found to the south-east of Umbundu country in the area round Vila Artur de Paiva. Padre A. Van Horrik, formerly of the Missão Católica de Cubango, tells me that the map contained in M. McCulloch, *The Southern Lunda and Related Peoples*, (London, 1951) should show the Ngangela as occupying much of the area actually assigned to the Mbwela and the south-eastern Ovimbundu. Mbwela does not seem to be the name any tribe uses for itself (Private information, Estermann and Van Horrik).

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[1874-1911]

rather than any political alliance or opposition, which related the Ovimbundu as a whole to the Portuguese and the other tribes. Informants who remember 'the time of the rubber' talk about it with much more interest and much more detail than about any other aspect of the past, and it is far easier to make an ordered picture out of the narratives of the caravan journeys than to fill in the gaps in the descriptions of the political and kinship systems provided by Childs and Hastings.[57]

Politically the Ovimbundu were divided, as has been said, into several kingdoms. Bailundo, the largest of the kingdoms was divided, according to Childs into about 200 sub-chiefdoms. As it had about half a million inhabitants this would give an average population of about 2,500. While the kingdoms seem to have been more or less stable in number and boundaries from the end of the eighteenth century, the number of sub-chiefdoms seems to have increased. Thus an official Portuguese estimate made in 1799 gives Bailundo as having only 82 sub-chiefdoms, and Galangue, where Childs counted 112 sub-chiefdoms, as having 78. The sub-chiefdom paid tribute to the king, sent men for his armies, and recognized his court as the supreme arbitrator. Some sub-chiefdoms were held by ministers or relatives of the king.[58]

It is, however, not easy on the sparse detail available to decide how much autonomy the sub-chiefdoms really had. Gumba, the area where I worked, was a sub-chiefdom of the Bailundo kingdom, albeit on the north-western frontier, neighbouring Cassongue and Cela, where the people did not call themselves Va-Mbailundu, though their rulers acknowledged the suzerainty of the king of Bailundo. Old men told me of raids from Bailundo for slaves, but I cannot say if this was the result of the period of disorder mentioned, or whether sub-chiefdoms on the border of a kingdom gave only nominal submission and received only nominal protection. In the area where I worked,

[57] This is not intended as a personal reflection on Dr. Childs and the late Dr. Hastings, both of whom deserve the highest praise for their work and for their obvious devotion to the Ovimbundu. Hastings devoted far more space to the magico-religious field than to the kinship system. Likewise Childs's description of kinship is much shorter, much less detailed, and much less satisfactory than his account of childhood and adolescence, or the really outstanding historical chapter.

[58] Magyar, pp. 385–92; Childs, pp. 23–24.

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Men can go out to work in three ways. By going to look for work in a city or on a plantation, by being recruited in his village by a travelling labour recruiter (*angariador*), or by being recruited through the post for military service or for contract labour (a period of a year's non-voluntary work). 464

Men who are away at work may keep in touch with their kin by letters. These are sent to the nearest Catholic or Protestant mission station according to the religious sympathies of the sender and his kin and are sent from there to the villages. 205

Angola forms an Overseas Province of Portugal, and is therefore subject to the Overseas Ministry in Lisbon. The Overseas Provinces of Portugal are officially declared to be integral parts of Portugal, which is regarded as a nation existing in Europe, Africa, and Asia. The expression 'Here also is Portugal' is often heard in Angola. 648

The inhabitants of Angola are in legal status divided into 'civilized' persons, whether white, mulatto, or black, with Portuguese citizenship, and Portuguese 'natives' or 'uncivilized' persons,[7] this latter category including some 3,000 'uncivilized' mulattoes. The 1950 census gave Angola a total population of 4,145,266 of whom 135,355 were 'civilized'. This category was composed of 78,826 whites, 26,335 mulattoes, and 30,089 Africans, plus a balance of 105 presumably Goans. 641 162

The 'natives' are, unlike the 'civilized', subject to the Labour Code. There is no Native Legal Code, nor does Portuguese law apply to 'natives'. Administrative officers may apply Portuguese law, or native custom as known to them, or their own judgement. 641

The administration is headed by the Governor-General who resides at Luanda. The province of Angola is divided into districts each headed by a district governor. Both the governors-general and the district governors have usually distinguished themselves in the Services or in a legal career. Members of the administrative service are not usually promoted to these posts, although they may attain such positions as that of Secretary of Native Affairs. 631

The districts are in turn sub-divided into *concelhos* (a term

[7] By a law of 1961 Portuguese citizenship has been made universal.

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meet other Angolan Protestants through such occasions as the Congress of Evangelical Youth, held at Malange in 1955.

While the Catholic missions are not tied to the Ovimbundu in the same way as the Protestants the number of their adherents falls sharply when the Umbundu boundary is reached. Responsiveness to missionary activity is a mark of the Ovimbundu today just as was participation in the caravan trade. Indeed, the main common possession of the Ovimbundu, the Umbundu language, is, as a literary vehicle and object of study, almost a missionary monopoly. Both missions produce a monthly magazine in Umbundu and Portuguese, and several books of a religious or educational nature have been published with Umbundu on one side and Portuguese on the other as legally required. The dictionaries and grammars are almost all of missionary authorship.

Acceptance of Christianity has also significance for Umbundu self-consciousness. The majority of Ovimbundu have come under missionary influence in varying degrees, and conversion to Christianity makes Ovimbundu feel closer to Europeans and superior to other African peoples. I have heard African priests claim that the Ovimbundu are the best people in Angola, largely on this ground, and at Lobito and Luanda tensions have been felt in the Protestant community between Ovimbundu and members of other tribes.[11]

The Ovimbundu live under economic, political, and religious systems introduced and controlled by Europeans. Yet trader, official, and missionary are all dependent on the Ovimbundu. The 'civilized' and the native live in symbiosis, and the two basic problems of this study are the nature of this symbiosis, and its relation to the social system of the native population themselves. To see this symbiosis in perspective it is necessary to describe what occupations and statuses Africans can hold.

The strict segregation of black and white found in South Africa is alien to Portuguese traditions. There is a lack of almost all forms of public segregation between white and non-white.[12]

[11] Personal information.

[12] In the racial discrimination that does exist the mulattoes generally count as whites. It is said to be difficult for a full African to obtain accommodation in a Luanda hotel, but the situation for mulattoes is quite different.

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mines are widely known to people. Although Ovimbundu Protestants are often referred to as 'America' a word used both as an adjective and a plural noun, they (that is, of course villagers, not educated men such as the pastors or teachers) have no clear idea of the existence of, still less any identification with, the United States.

Like the other parts of Umbundu country Bimbe has experienced much missionary activity. The Catholic Mission of Bimbe has had a great deal of influence, the catechists teaching catechism and leading daily prayers in the villages, which the priests visit once or twice a year, and at such feasts as Christmas and Easter great crowds attend the Church services.

The Protestants depend on the pastoral centres of Henge and Luvemba, which are regularly visited by a missionary from Bailundo. Both here and throughout the Highland Catholics are more numerous than Protestants, but in some sub-chiefdoms Protestants are in the majority, notably in Kapali and round Henge. I have already mentioned the differences between Catholic and Protestant missionary organization. At the local level a number of differences can be noticed, in such matters as the neater, more planned appearance of the Protestant villages which have far more rudimentary[28] (pre-primary) schools than the Catholics. These schools are entirely financed by the Protestant villagers; among the Catholics while there is a desire for more schooling there is a lack of the drive that the Protestants show. A *chefe de posto* said that Protestants spoke Portuguese better than Catholics; and the Protestants are more 'Europeanizing' in their outlook.

The *chefes de posto* visit each sub-chiefdom only once a year. As the relations between the *chefes* and the people are usually concerned with the gathering of fines and taxes, the recruitment of labour, and the arrest and punishment of offenders, it is not surprising that the people regard the *chefe* with fear and mistrust. Yet there is a genuine acceptance of Portuguese rule. Thus villagers sing the Portuguese National Anthem at parties, the Portuguese flag is a meaningful symbol, and there is a belief

[28] Rudimentary education is a course intended for natives at a pre-primary level. It includes teaching of Portuguese, and also some instruction in agriculture and hygiene.

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that the Government is benevolent even if its agents are not, and men say that they like the Europeans. There are other opposed currents of feeling, though; thus a cook to a European family said to me, 'The Portuguese do not wish us to learn' and a villager declared, 'The Portuguese say to the English that the Ovimbundu have tails.'[28] The great mass of the Ovimbundu seemed to be without political consciousness, or desire for independence; there is little nostalgia for the days of the caravans, and it is widely felt that the present is better than the past, since there is more contact with Europeans.

Traders in the neighbourhood were relatively few, compared to other parts of Umbundu country. At Chicunda there were three trading stores and people who did not like them went across the river to Cassongue. Traders try to prevent natives who live in their neighbourhood from dealing at other stores where they can get better prices, but this is not always effective. Some Ovimbundu realize that variations of price levels are related to such factors as proximity to the railway line. The traders are criticized for paying their servants low wages as compared with those paid in the coastal cities. Although there is a great deal of mutual suspicion between the traders and the Ovimbundu which is expressed in the arguing and haggling that takes place in the stores, there is none of the fear so noticeable in the people's attitudes to the *chefes*. Many traders have a smattering of Umbundu, and have a certain affection for the local people. Economically, the role of the traders is to receive the maize and other products grown locally for transport to the railway line, and to distribute trade goods to the villages. Their presence is also important in preventing the rise of any other system of trading by markets or pedlars.

The principal goods sold are blankets, cloths, and clothing of all sorts, including fancy items such as sun-glasses. There are also a good many bottles of wine, and also oil-lamps and kerosene tins, and electric torches. For literates or would-be literates, there are pens, pencils, writing-papers and slates. Such goods as bicycles, gramophones, and sewing-machines are generally

[28] i.e. The Portuguese say the Ovimbundu are savages and keep them from contact with other Europeans. The Balundu area had not (up to September 1961) been affected by the revolt. However, a marked change in the attitude of sub-missiveness seems to have taken place.

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bought in the towns, and men returning from South Africa are said to bring all sorts of goods including typewriters. The traders do not lend money though they sometimes give credit. The living standards of the traders are often low, some being unable to buy a truck, and having therefore to come to terms with someone who has one. I have even heard of traders having to eat the staple Umbundu mush (*pirão* in Portuguese).

While the traders play an extremely important role in the local economy they do not establish any permanent face-to-face relationship with the natives outside their household and store, because they are not interested in them and have no reason to be. This does not apply in the same way to African *assimilados*, actual or self-styled, of whom there were a few in the neighbourhood, who lived more or less in Portuguese style. Of these one in particular, Justino, made a hobby of settling disputes, and will therefore re-appear later on. Their main source of revenue was coffee-growing, and they would occasionally have local labour working for them. As they tend to identify themselves with the 'civilized' population, their attitude to the natives is not unlike that of the traders, but culturally and linguistically they are linked to the Ovimbundu villagers, and if of local origin will have kinship links too.

This group is significant because it is in the total social structure of Angola a link between the 'civilized' and 'non-civilized' communities. Both the *assimilados* and those pseudo-*assimilados* who have persuaded the natives that they are *assimilados*, identify themselves with the whites but are also linked much more closely with the natives than any other group. As the division into 'civilized' and 'non-civilized' is legally sanctioned on the grounds of culture not race, a group which participates to some degree in the cultures of both sections must be of great significance in the study of the means by which the whole society is integrated. In the neighbourhood where I worked this group of Europeanized Africans were few in numbers,** both absolutely and in relation to other parts of Angola.

** I only know of one genuine *assimilado* in the neighbourhood though there were others who claimed to be such. Galvão and Selvagem (p. 408) remark of the Cazengo concelho of northern Angola, 'The great number of civilized negroes, some planters incorporated in the European economic system, hastened the disintegration and confusion of the tribal institutions.'

[assimilados are Africans possessing Portuguese citizenship -- Analyst]

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CHAPTER III

CHIEFS AND HEADMEN IN GUMBA

1. *The History of Gumba*

The historical perspective of Ovimbundu is short. Few, even elders, know of any landmark earlier than the Mutu-ya-Kevela rising of 1902–3, nor even for those who had participated in it did the time of the rubber trade form a Golden Age by which the present is judged. The period about which most was remembered was the reign of Mbati.[1]

Mbati had ruled over both Gumba and Chicunda, a union which had existed only during his lifetime, and which would have given him on present-day population figures 7,500–9,000 subjects.[2] He had managed to keep in his own hands the relations between his people and the government post. Policemen arriving at his capital to recruit labourers were entertained while Mbati's ministers got together the men required. Although an upholder of the traditional rites associated with chieftancy he had been on good terms with the missionaries and allowed a Catholic catechist to settle in his village. One of his sons became a Protestant schoolteacher near the railway line, another entered the Catholic seminary but left and became a policeman in Cela. Many of the numerous progeny provided by his seventeen wives are still living in Gumba.

Mbati's downfall came through his practising the traditional annual ritual cannibalism (*olu lia ekenge*). About 1934–5 he was banished for this to another part of Umbundu country.

[text continues on p. 37]

[1] L. Magyar marks a place called Gumba on his map (opposite to page 1) but puts it to the south of the capital of Bailundo. As he does not seem to have personal knowledge of this area, this does not rule out identification, especially as the Cuve begins to the south of Bailundo.

[2] For the basis of this estimate see section 2 of this chapter.

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Some ten years later he was allowed to return to Gumba but died on the way back.

His successor was Simbwyikoka, who was a mother's brother's son of Mbati, that is in Umbundu terminology a 'son'. Umbundu rules of succession allow anybody to succeed to a chiefdom who is paternally or maternally related to a previous chief, whether or not this relationship is genealogically traceable.[3]

Simbwyikoka was apparently nominated to act as regent during Mbati's absence, and as he did not complete the full cycle of chiefly rites he did not have quite the same prestige among the people as a chief in his own right who 'had finished', that is, had gone through all the rites. It was he who was the last ruler of Gumba to send the annual tribute in the form of a sack of fish to Bailundo, since it was a little after the time of his accession that Kandimba[4] (or Njahulu), the last of the Bailundo royal house to have any real authority over the kingdom, died.

Simbwyikoka had lived at the hamlet of Kamballa in Gumba. When he took up office he did not settle at Mbati's village of Katembo, but established, or rather re-established, as a previous chief had ruled there, his capital[5] on the top of the narrow ridge which cuts off the greater part of Gumba from access by road. It was not possible for many people to settle on this site. Accordingly Simbwyikoka encouraged people to settle at the foot of the ridge, swelling the population of an already existing village. This was called Mwekalia from the headman, who held the office of Mwekalia[6] another ministerial title associated with the chiefly court.

In 1938 Simbwyikoka was deposed by the *chefe* for shielding his dependents from the operation of 'contract labour' (administrative recruitment of non-voluntary labour). About 1944

[3] My informants. This means that within (and outside) any sub-chiefdom there are a number of potential heirs who in no way receive any special status or form any kind of corporate group from this fact.

[4] Reigned at Bailundo 1911–35. Childs, p. 109

[5] In Umbundu Ombala, often transcribed in Portuguese as Embala.

[6] For the role of Mwekalia see Hastings, p. 39. His statement that the office is matrilineally inherited was not confirmed by my informants. It seems that it can be inherited either patrilineally or matrilineally. The man who was known as Mwekalia and had been headman of the village of that name did not function as such at the chief's court during my stay. A kinsman of his, Ngombe, acted as Mwekalia at the court of Lessue.

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173 634 Simbwyikoka founded a new village known by his name. In 1951 one of his sons, Sassungu, founded a new village Sassungu whose population originated with a group of people from his father's village. Simbwyikoka maintained contact with Kamballa, where another son, Felisi, lived and herded Simbwyikoka's cattle.

173 634 [648] The new chief was Kakope, a son of Tjiweka who had been chief of Gumba at the time of the Muta-ya-Kevela rising. He held office for only two years, being deposed by the *chefe* since ill-health made monthly visits to the post difficult for him. He was succeeded by Kafelo, who came to Gumba from Cassongue across the river. Kafelo was a cross-cousin of Mbati and paternal kinsman of Kakope. Having gone through the cycle of chiefly rites, and undertaken Mbati's funeral he was regarded as being fully chief, in a way that Simbwyikoka was not.

The Epalanga[7] of a chief is a minister chosen from among the chief's kin. Kafelo had nominated to this post Sapapula, a matrilateral 'brother' of his and an inhabitant of Menga. Sapapula moved into Gumba and founded the village of [266] Epalanga in 1945–6, where he was joined by various kinsmen. I have heard the foundation of Epalanga ascribed to another man, Mwehombo, who will be mentioned again, and should therefore be introduced. Mwehombo had been minister at the court of Mbati, his mother's brother. After Mbati's death Mwehombo had stayed at Katembo till 1941, when he settled in Menga with his kinsman Sapapula. Mwehombo crossed over to Gumba in 1944.[8]

173 634 648 In 1954 Kafelo was deposed by the *chefe*, as Kafelo had been drunk in his presence. Kutenga Lusase, who had in 1945 founded the village of Kamupa, saw his chance and told the *chefe* that he had been chosen chief according to custom. The people of Gumba did not complain about this to the post, as they were afraid of the consequences. Kutenga Lusase claimed to be related to Mbati and Simbwyikoka and was a matrilateral 'grandson' of Tjiweka. He was not related to Kafelo whose link to Tjiweka was a patrilateral one.

Kutenga Lusase was in his turn deposed by the *chefe* in 1956

[7] Hastings, p. 55.

[8] Information from his 'brother', Lusanga.

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for lack of effectiveness following a series of quarrels. His successor was Tjilombo a government headman and the leading personality of the village of Tjisangu. Such, then, is the recent history of Gumba.

2. *Chiefs, Government Headmen, and Traditional Headmen*

I have outlined the succession of chiefs in Gumba, and the villages with which they were associated. I have noted that nowadays there are government headmen as well as the traditional headmen. I wish now to indicate what authority the chiefs and the two sorts of headmen have and how this is related to the villages.

The sub-chiefdom is a recognized administrative unit. The census, and the annual check on the census, are taken on a sub-chiefdom basis, as are the collection of taxes and the recruitment of workers for contract labour, road work, and jobs to be done at the post. The sub-chief and the government headmen have to visit the post once a month. The *chefe de posto* (head of post = District Officer) will normally only visit each sub-chiefdom once a year for the check on the census. He may send orders for the recruitment of labourers or the arrest of an offender by one of the policemen who live at the post. His principal contact with the people comes in the adjudicating of disputes which the people are quite ready to carry to the post—the Bimbe *chefe*, whose area included Gumba, told me that hearing cases was his main occupation. Very few *chefes* have anything more than a smattering of the Umbundu language, and they have only the vaguest knowledge of the culture and social usages—for instance they may be aware of the classificatory extension of kinship terms and the association of leopardskins with chieftancy. The *chefes* are moved about fairly frequently and their names and personalitie ıare not known to the people. As the people associate the post with demands for taxes, fines, and labour services, and are only likely to visit the post when recruited as non-voluntary labourers or to have their photographs taken for identity cards, it is not surprising that fear is the predominant emotion they feel towards the *chefe*.

The staff of the post consists of the interpreter, an African

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634 with primary and possibly some secondary education, the
648 clerks who have primary schooling, and the policemen, who are often illiterate. The police are locally recruited and are provided with their keep, from the farm attached to the post, and with uniforms. They are usually—by no means always—illiterate. The interpreter, clerks, and police tend to identify themselves with the *chefe* as against the people; however, a policeman may be influenced in his relations with the villagers by gifts and friendship.

634 The size of population of sub-chiefdoms varies. The 1950
161 census gave the total 'non-civilized' population of the Bailundo *concelho* as being 246,045, and the number of sub-chiefdoms as 82,[9] that is, an average of 3,000 individuals per sub-chiefdom. The *chefe* of Bimbe told me in August 1956 that Gumba had 800 taxpayers, and Chicunda had 700. Putting the proportion of taxpayers as 1 to 6 (on the basis of Epalanga proportions) this gives 4,800 as the population figure for Gumba and 4,200 as the figure for Chicunda. Even if the proportion of 1 to 5 be taken as the proportion between taxpayers and total population this gives us 4,000 as the figure for Gumba and 3,500 as the figure for Chicunda. I do not know what the local density of population is; in the Bailundo *concelho* as a whole it is 16–17 individuals per square kilometre.[10]

634 The chief and government headmen are the main channel of
648 conveying demands and orders from the post to the villagers.
622 They receive in return the remission of their taxes. Their dependence on the post is not, however, sufficient to give them a position of marked superiority in their locality for the following reasons. They are unable to control all relations between the post and the people; anybody who has a dispute on hand may take it direct to the post. In village life their
634 influence can always be counterbalanced by that of the
622 catechists and 'elders of the school' whose contact with the
[992] missions is much closer than that of the chiefs and government headmen with the post. They also lack economic resources; the exemption from taxes (which the Catholic catechists share)

[9] See Gálvao and Selvagem, pp. 364-5. For Angolan population density see Egerton, pp. 36-37.

[10] My own estimate from figures given by Gálvão and Selvagem.

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does not give them any claim to financial assistance from the 634
people, or control over natural resources, such as land rights. 622
The only prerogative of this sort that the chief has is the right to the leg of an antelope killed in a hunt or a bull killed in a commemoration rite—and this is of symbolic rather than economic importance.

Nor, finally, does the post give the chiefs prestige and 634
support.[11] Five successive chiefs of Gumba had been deposed 634
by the post, and it is not uncommon for chiefs and government 622
headmen to be beaten or otherwise punished (for instance by being made to work for a fortnight at the post) for their shortcomings. They have in fact just sufficient power to carry out the commands of the *chefe* and to do nothing more. They are not disliked by the local people for doing what the *chefe* tells them to do, but any attempt at dictatorial behaviour on their part will stir up opposition which may lead to their downfall.

The relations between white *chefe* and black chief vary 648
according to individuals and neighbourhoods. Sometimes the 634
chefe will allow the chief to be chosen according to tradition; at other times he will impose a candidate of his own. A *chefe* may hear any cases that are brought to the post, or he may delegate the power of hearing minor cases to the chiefs. Some *chefes* will regard the chiefs with hostility as being enemies of their own people; others will abstain under any circumstances from beating a chief, as they feel their power should be supported. Here I describe the situation as it was in Gumba and in Bimbe generally.

A visit to a chief's village in Gumba or elsewhere will give an 634
opportunity of meeting those residents who hold the ministerial 678
titles, of gazing under overshadowing trees at the enclosure in 769
which are kept the skulls of former chiefs, and perhaps of seeing the chief and some of his cronies dance to a drum in commemoration of one of his predecessors. Ministers, skulls, dances, and drum are symbols of chiefly nostalgia rather than of political power. The ceremonies have little interest for the people in general, and many of them have been abandoned by the chief. Lussae's first wife had not, as custom demanded,

[11] For criticism of this policy by two Portuguese with administrative experience see Galvão and Selvagem, p. 613.

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The tasks of recruiting contract labourers and road-workers and of getting fines and taxes paid, and such other duties as the arranging of compulsory purchase of tickets for the travelling cinema (showing patriotic films) are carried out through a long process of argument, attempted evasion, and pressure, between the chief, the government headmen, and the locally influential people, traditional headmen, catechists, and anyone else who can get himself listened to. Persons actually picked for contract labour or road work may make quite a fuss about it, but as such numbers are recruited it is ultimately accepted resignedly. It is not really practicable for a chief to discriminate in favour of his kinsman owing to the heavy demands for labour and the likelihood of such discrimination being reported at the post, as happened to Simbwyikoka. Demands for labour may fall heavily on some households. Thus one Epalanga household consisted of a man, his daughter by an earlier marriage, his wife and her baby daughter. The man had been taken for contract labour, his wife had been called to road work, and the adolescent daughter was carrying sisal[14] to the post. A kinsman of the household head attempted to arrange for some watch to be kept over the gardens lest animals should get in.

There were four government headmen in Gumba during my stay. Theoretically they are village headmen. The villages in which official records group Ovimbundu do not conform to the actual villages in which Ovimbundu live. Anybody moving from one village to another has to pay a fee; as the Ovimbundu move about quite frequently and no attempt is made to enforce this rule locally, the result is this discrepancy between paper and real villages.

The government headman's duties are those already described for the chief. As with the chief, there is only sufficient backing from the post for him to carry out the orders he receives; he does not receive power to enable him to exercise political leadership and judicial authority at the local level, nor is he a representative of the post in the villages. His interests and values are linked to those of his neighbours rather than to the post. It is through the chief and the government headmen

[14] Some villages are obliged to grow sisal and take it to the post without payment.

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that the administration gets labour and money from the villagers, and largely though not exclusively through them that the villagers keep in touch with the post which politically integrates them into Angola and legally provides sanctions which they do not possess. The government headmen do not supervise on behalf of the post the daily life of their fellow-villagers. The government laws—such as the prohibition of beer- and rum-brewing and grass-burning (for hunts)—which if enforced would bring about a certain number of changes in Umbundu social life, are not enforced for many reasons—the administration makes no real attempt to suppress these uses as opposed to levying annual fines[15] per head, the government headmen go in for these customs themselves, and they lack the power to achieve this enforcement. Were the government to introduce policies involving some reorganization of the social life they would need a stronger form of local authority. Under the present circumstances, however, the powers and status of the chief and government headmen are quite consistent with the demands made on them by the post.

There were four government headmen in Gumba in 1955–6, Guilherme, Lupassa, Tjilombo (who became chief after the deposition of Lusase), and Walivanga. Guilherme was in 1955 living in Epalanga. Some people thought he should live in Kamupa which had been founded by his mother's brother Lusase—however, when he left Epalanga in 1956 he settled near the Protestant village of Kalungwengwe. His change of residence had been the result of violent quarrels with Paulo and other Epalanga people. Lupassa lived in Katembo, and was a sister's son of Kaluywa, who was the traditional headman. I do not think Lupassa was the dominating personality in Katembo. Tjilombo was on the other hand the leading personality in Tjisangu, many of its people being related to him. Walivanga was similarly linked by kin or affinal ties to the majority of the people of Belem.

The foregoing paragraph raises the question of the relationship of the government headman to the traditional headmen. A man who is both a government headman and a traditional headman is in a fairly strong position in his village; when the

[15] Each fine is about 10-20 escudos (1/6d.–3/-).

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Luveli's income from bricklaying. The laying of the bricks that form a modern villager's house may bring 100 escudos.

The basic cash need of an Otjimbundu, then, is for money to pay government demands and to provide clothing for his wife and children, who seem more likely than the men to get new clothing every year.[8] Add to this the possibility of other calls (e.g. provision for a relative's funeral) a desirable income even for this low level of consumption would be 400 escudos (£5) and a more prosperous villager might earn and spend double the amount. Exceptional individuals still remaining within the normal conditions of Umbundu cultural and social life, such as Kambungo, may earn from 2,000 to 3,000 escudos a year, perhaps even more, from agriculture. Maize is the foundation of the agricultural economy, but Kambungo's remark that maize did not pay seems to reflect a trend to find other openings such as growing coffee, which is, however, subject to difficulties of climate.

Within the villages there is some trade in handmade objects such as pottery, sleeping-mats, and sticks for stirring mush, and there are quite a number of bricklayers, carpenters, and tailors (proprietors of sewing-machines) who have acquired European skills which bring them money. These craftsmen are, on payment of a fee of 250 escudos (a figure given me by a tailor), exempt from contract labour.

Many European residents seem to think that the only European products natives desire are cloths, clothing, and wine. This is not so; villagers wanted me to sell them kerosene for lamps, D.D.T. powder for their hair, and soap. It is interesting that the occasions on which an Otjimbundu would accumulate large (for him) sums all fall outside the maize-for-cloth pattern of trading. These occasions are bridewealth payment (and counting all expenses this may well come to 800 escudos—£10 or more), which is a traditional due, the purchase of bicycles (according to place of purchase from 1,200 escudos [£15] to 1,500 escudos [£18. 15. 0]) which are prestige-giving objects, and the trading journeys to buy cattle. Kambungo had

[8] The trader whose opinions I have previously quoted (Senhor Alberto Oliveira Mendes of Chicuma), remarked, 'It is the women who save us. The men make a shirt last for three or four years but the women get something new every year.'

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181 Making money and being rich are regarded with

unambiguous approval, though there is a certain undertone suggesting cunning in the verb *ulu lunguka* (to be shrewd) used about prosperous people. The old suspicion of sorcery attaching to people who were more successful farmers than their neighbours[8] seems to have disappeared. While a prosperous villager would be expected to lend money to a poorer kinsman (provided the latter was not known as a bad debtor) yet, the situation which occurs in other parts of Africa, where, as Dr. V. W. Turner notes of the Mwinilunga Ndembu, prosperous Africans 'find themselves increasingly embarrassed by the demands of their kin for presents in cash and kind'[9], would not arise among the Ovimbundu, who would regard such demands as being unjustified, even outrageous.

Wealthy Ovimbundu may spend some of their wealth on clothing and on drink. Cattle-buying has been noted as a form of capital investment and the same term may be used of small stock buying. Another way of disposing of money is by building a house of bricks with the assistance of a bricklayer. A plough may be, but rarely is, bought by two men joining together to pool their money. Generally speaking, the agricultural technology of the Ovimbundu has been little changed since 1911 except for the spread of the techniques of coffee-growing.

It has been noted earlier that the Ovimbundu play an important part in the economic life of Angola both as cultivators and labourers. In this chapter an attempt has been made to show how at the local level it is the cultivation of cash crops, rather than migration for wage labour, which incorporates villagers into the commercial economy of modern Angola. The main source of money in rural areas is the trader's store, which is also the main recipient of money, apart from the administration. While trade both between Ovimbundu and between Ovimbundu and other tribes survives on a minor scale, the social institutions associated with the rubber trade, the large caravans, the non-repayable loans within the matrilineal group, and the obligations of wealthy traders to assist their kin, have disappeared. The contemporary social structure with the

[8] Childs, pp. 106-8.
[9] V. W. Turner, op. cit., p. 135.

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even in non-religious matters has influence with the post, and can through this influence effect the arrest of diviners and baptized polygamists, or intervene on the side of somebody called before the post.

A catechist may be removed from his position by the mission for incompetence, or for moral failings, such as unchastity or rum-brewing on an extensive scale. He may also become involved in quarrels with his people, who may say that he is bad-tempered, while he will say that they are disobedient. Such a dispute will be referred to the mission where an attempt will be made to persuade the two parties to sink their differences. If this fails, the catechist may return to his old village, but may become a catechist elsewhere if the circumstances have not been such as to destroy the mission's confidence in him.

There are other ways in which the catechist represents his village. The post may impose certain responsibilities; thus the catechist may be told to record all live births in the village for the purposes of official statistics. The catechist will try and keep on good terms with the policemen who live at the post and visit the villages. The catechist of Epalanga gave a chicken to a visiting policeman and explained that this was a general practice in order that catechists visiting the post for the annual check on their papers should find a policeman who would be good to them. However, a catechist will object to attempts to associate him with the more unpopular activities of the post. Thus when a policeman came to the Epalanga catechist and asked him to help in recruiting labourers, the latter was rather angry. 'My work is to teach doctrine, not to seize people.' Similarly, when visiting a Protestant village once I asked where the government headman lived and was told in rather an irritated tone, 'No, we have nothing of the post here. We have only the school.'

The sense of responsibility which the catechist feels for his village is sometimes counterbalanced by his lack of effective power. Thus in the dry season of 1956 a bridge near Epalanga which was crossed by the track to Chicunda was broken down. Pedro Chiquete Santos thought that this might bring punishment on the villagers, and accordingly appealed for volunteers to repair it. He also asked Jeremias, the Protestant catechist of

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servant of mine explaining how the Mwekalia chose the chief said, giving me a comparison: 'The Bishop of Nova Lisboa thinks "This priest has sense" and so makes him the superior of a mission'.[6] The disintegration of the old political system, and the association of its representatives with the ritual values which are no longer very significant for the mass of Ovimbundu, has destroyed the old pyramid of authority and prestige. The people associate demands and punishment, for which they seem to receive very little in return, with the post. Many draw a distinction between the actual *chefe* and the government, which they regard as benevolent and ignorant of the behaviour of its representatives. Despite such expressions of loyalty as the singing of the Portuguese national anthem at village parties the 'government' is too distant and shadowy for the Ovimbundu to have much knowledge of it. Nor has the post tried effectively to build up new types of bureaucratic authority in the villages—the government headmen are not given sufficient backing or responsibility by the post to do more than execute its orders.

Hence, the establishment of new types of grouping and leadership at the local level has been the work of the missions, and it is through the missions that these new groupings are articulated on to the total Angolan social system. The missionaries, who provide this articulation between the 'civilized' society and the local organization of the natives, form the section of the 'civilized' population which most satisfies, in its relations with the people, the expectations of the Africans.

To use another term, it is within the Catholic and Protestant Churches that Ovimbundu most clearly identify themselves. Baptism identifies an individual by giving him a name, hence Christians object to non-baptized people identifying themselves in this way. To an individual baptism is significant since it is concerned with his destiny. By it also he identifies himself with the 'civilized' population and achieves a new status superior to that of the pagans. The newly-born child of Christian parents will be given a Christian name and also an Umbundu name from one already held by a dead kinsman.[7] A few villagers

[6] Actually responsibility for appointing superiors of missions largely belongs to the superior of the Nova Lisboa district of the Congregação do Espírito Santo.

[7] For Umbundu names, see Elizabeth Ennis, *African Studies* (Johannesburg) March 1945.

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795 551 attempt to take on European surnames. Alternatively, a man may take his father's name and attempt to use it as a surname. Thus Joaõ Batista Tjindandi, a resident of Epalanga, had received Joaõ Batista in baptism, and had taken Tjindandi, his father's name, as a surname. This is, however, not at all a general trend. Even a village of mixed Christian-pagan population may be known by the name of its school, identifying itself by its Christian name.

795 554 A man identifies himself also with social change and with progress by 'entering the school'. When a small girl, whom I asked if she had 'entered into the school' replied 'Not at all', her elder sister's husband remarked: 'She is asleep'. In the general Angolan society the religious referent is the most status-giving type of reference that most Ovimbundu can give. 186 554 There is no very marked feeling in the superiority of one area of Umbundu country to another nor even is there a marked sense of the superiority of Ovimbundu to other tribes—thus the Kimbundu will be highly praised for the degree of European culture they have acquired. The very word Ovimbundu is used as an equivalent of '*pretos*' (blacks) a word not used of 'civilized' Africans, since it is indicative of the lowest colour-class. As a Christian, a man has a status which he shares with Europeans.

797 648 He can also identify himself not only in a general way with the Europeans but more particularly with the general church organization. There is much closer contact between the authority-figures of the church organization and the people than between the authority-figures of the administration and the natives. Thus all Catholics in the Nova Lisboa diocese are confirmed by the Bishop of Nova Lisboa, and have seen him—similarly many of the Protestant Ovimbundu know of Dr. Childs, the headmaster of the Protestant secondary school at Dondi, through having heard him preach at a conference. Some Christian villagers would know the names of pioneer missionaries. Little is known by the people about the personalities or duties of the senior members of their administration, and even their titles are not properly understood.

795 648 The religious differences which exist at local level have no marked significance in the relations of natives to the post. In certain circumstances a pagan may appeal to a Christian

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catechist or missionary for support at the post. There is no tendency to confine government appointments to chiefdoms and headmanships to Catholics.[8] However, the Protestant catechists are, unlike the Catholic catechists, not exempt from taxes.[9]

The Ovimbundu no longer possess a coherent political system of their own. They cannot, owing to the nature of their relations with the post and their ignorance of the higher administration, regard the Government as being their representative; the only wide-range systems with which they can identify themselves are the missions. It is through them that the individual is promised eternal life, that the village receives a new type of identity and unity, and that the Ovimbundu as a people participate with the 'civilized' population in ritual communities cutting across the boundaries of culture and geography.

The objection may be made that it is only the Christians who could effectively be represented by the missions and that in Epalanga and Gumba generally baptized Christians formed a minority. It has, however, been previously noted how the school may give its name to a village of mixed population. The catechist will represent both Christians and pagans when he is concerned with the post or with the mission. Moreover, the percentage of pagans in Gumba is far higher than in the rest of Bimbe to which they are linked by the Umbundu language and culture, by administrative divisions, and by a wide range of personal contacts.

It may, then, be asserted, that the catechetical schools and the wider groupings which they build up are the social groups most significant for Umbundu integration on any scale wider than that of the household.

[8] In Gumba the chief and government headman were pagan. There are government-recognised Protestant chiefs elsewhere in Umbundu country.

[9] In some parts of Angola the Catholic catechists are not automatically granted exemption but have to have obtained certain other qualifications, e.g. a certain degree of literacy.

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live next to each other has been noted as a new development, impossible in the days of agnatic residence groups. It will be remembered how in listing the kinship cores of Epalanga, Joaõ was placed among the kin of Mbati and Mwehombo with which he had become associated through his marriage to Paulina, although he had come to Epalanga through his relationship to Sapapula. 602

I have earlier described the preferential marriages as giving 'stability' to the kinship system and as providing a limit on the spread of affinal ties. In what does this stability consist, and how far is there really a limit? 582 602

The stability given by the marriage system is not the sum of the stability of individual marriages. Nor is it more than partially a local stability; marriages are not limited to a small geographical range, although the network of marriages between kin is very significant in local relations and even 'long distance' marriages which renew links with Cela and Namba reflect long-standing contacts of marriage and migration. The stability lies in the 'pattern' by which new preferential marriages are constantly being made.

The socio-geographical range over which wives are found does not differ appreciably from the socio-geographical range over which kin ties exist, which, as has been noted in Chapter IV[3], links Gumba strongly to Cassongue, Cela, and Namba, rather than with areas to the south and east, and this range does not seem to be expanding under modern conditions. Migrant labourers do not return to Gumba with wives from other areas. The only definite exception I knew to this rule was provided by Sawaisi, a traditional village headman, who had travelled on the caravans and had subsequently been a soldier. Stationed at Luanda he had there married three Kimbundu women with whom he returned to Gumba, where they were still living with him during my stay. [640]

The preference for kinship marriage is not a limiting factor on marriage in the way that a rule of endogamy is, since a number of marriages occur with non-kinswomen. It is a limiting factor in the way that it gives an additional significance to kinship, since in the choice of a wife the distinction between kin and

[3] See p. 58.

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by the people under Paulo's leadership on Guilherme's position. 578
Guilherme counter-attacks by using his relationship with the post but finds himself forced to seek a reconciliation with the people of Epalanga.

The quarrel had begun with the proposed marriage of Anna, a step-daughter of Guilherme, and a member of his household, to Luciano, a son of the former chief Simbwyikoka and an inhabitant of the latter's village. Guilherme had no effective religious affiliation but Anna had been baptized as a Catholic, her godmother being Maria, the wife of Paulo. Luciano on the other hand was the elder of the Protestant catechetical school in Simbwyikoka village. Paulo therefore intervened to stop the marriage in accordance with the rule made by the Catholic [582] missions against marriage with non-Catholics. Guilherme, angry at this, decided to pick on Pedro Nendi (see List II, p. 55) and Francisco Lyonjanga, sons of Mbati, and therefore wife's brothers to Paulo. Pedro Nendi had been at one time a Catholic catechist but had since been dismissed. Francisco was at the time of my arrival in Epalanga moving out of his village to settle near Pedro in a hamlet near the village. He worked as assistant to Abel Pinheiro, an African carpenter, who lived a little further along the road to Chicunda and who was employed by a white living elsewhere. Guilherme accordingly reported to the post that the two brothers had never gone to contract labour and got a policeman to come with an order for [648] them to be brought to the post for contract labour. The policeman arrived and got Francisco, but Pedro was away visiting relatives at Nova Lisboa. Francisco then claimed that he was in fact employed by a white and was therefore exempt from contract labour. At that time Antonio Pires, an African priest from the *Missão Católica de Bimbe*, was visiting Epalanga as part of a tour through the villages. Accordingly, on the morning of the 16th January 1956, Francisco came to my house where the priest had been breakfasting with me, and stated his case. This action brought the dispute between Guilherme and Paulo for the first time within the sphere of a representative of the civilized community. The priest told Francisco to get a letter from his employer to the post. Francisco duly arrived at the post with a letter, but forgot to bring his

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578 pass[8] and was sent to contract labour. The *chefe* apparently informed his employer that he could get other carpenters from the post.

Paulo, then acting in his official capacity as elder of the school, had intervened in a projected marriage in which Guilherme had received the bridewealth. Guilherme, acting in his official capacity, had attacked Paulo's wife's brothers Francisco and Pedro. The dispute had now been brought within [792] the sphere of the mission (as represented by the priest Antonio [648] Pires) and of the administration which had ordered the recruitment of the two men. The conflict between Guilherme and Paulo was now to widen out to include several other people.

On the 21st January the strain between Guilherme and Paulo showed itself again in violent quarrelling, from which I learnt about the broken engagement of Anna. Paulo said that he would refer the matter to Antonio Pires when the priest came back.

On the morning of the 24th the question was brought before Antonio Pires, the catechist Pedro Chiquete Santos (35), Paulo, and Guilherme all speaking in turn. Then other people raised their grievances. Sapapula declared that Guilherme was the enemy of everybody in the village. A man called Kasosi (7), a sister's son of Wasuka (15), stepped forward to claim that Guilherme had attacked him and injured him. Apparently [273] Guilherme, while having illicit rum in his own house, had beaten up Kasosi for possessing rum. Both Maria, Paulo's wife, and Nahoka, Sapapula's wife, joined in the argument. The only man who seemed in any way favourable to Guilherme was Kapapelo (see List II, p. 55), a mother's brother of his, who was also a 'brother' of Lusase (see List II, p. 55). Antonio Pires came down heavily against Guilherme, at which the latter declared that he owed obedience only to the post and ran off.

Towards the end of the argument Luciano (the former fiancé of Anna) and Jeremias (the Protestant catechist from Simbwyikoka) came to the priest to ask for the repayment of the bridewealth.

On the 25th Lusase, the chief of Gumba, happened to visit

[648] [8] The legal obligation for natives to possess passes is not enforced with the zeal which applies in South Africa.

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Epalanga. Told what had happened, he said that he would keep out of it, and that he had advised Guilherme to live elsewhere. In the afternoon of the same day, as heavy rain was falling, a number of people ran up and bounded on to my veranda. These included Anna, another girl (I think a sister of hers) both rather frightened, Simbwyikoka, Luciano, Paulo and some others. Anna said that Simbwyikoka was a sorcerer[3] and would kill her, and sooner than be killed by sorcery she would jump in the river. Simbwyikoka and Luciano had come to Epalanga to try and recover the 250 escudos which had been paid over in bridewealth. The catechist tried to intervene saying 'The catechist is the chief[4] of everybody in the village', but nobody paid any attention to him. Eventually, as the girl continued to threaten to jump in the river, I contributed 200 escudos, and so those involved left satisfied.

Early the following day I heard that Guilherme had returned from the post with two policemen to arrest various people. Those arrested were Sapapula, his cross-cousins Epalata (5), and Wasuka, and the latter's son Kuseka, Kasosi, Paulo, Pedro the catechist, Bartolomeu (32), Paulo's assistant in school matters, and his son Eugenio. Eugenio and Kuseka were arrested for not paying taxes and their fathers were arrested presumably for their supposed responsibility. Epalata was arrested for a similar alleged offence on the part of one of his sons, who was away as a labourer.

When I came to Guilherme's house a lengthy wrangle was going on from which I select some themes. Guilherme denied that he had planned to burn the catechetical school, the anthropologist's house, and his own house. (These charges were almost certainly invented.)

Paulo said that he had baptized a dying son of Guilherme, who, despite this, had not shown him any respect. He also denied that he had committed adultery with Guilherme's wife. (This would in any case be most unlikely owing to Paulo's blindness, resulting from an eye disease.)

Sapapula declared angrily: 'I gave Guilherme land here but

[3] This accusation was regarded simply as the product of fear and nothing more was heard of it.

[4] He used the word applied to chiefs of Gumba and other sub-chiefdoms.

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Guilherme isn't grateful'—(then to Guilherme) 'I did no harm, I gave you everything, and you beat me.' This arguing eventually died down.

A little later another quarrel sprang up between Wasuka, and Kapapelo, Guilherme's mother's brother and witness. Wasuka declared that Kapapelo had committed adultery with his wife and must be killed. Kapapelo indignantly denied this.

The same day the catechist went to the mission to find the priest Antonio Pires to ask him to support the case against Guilherme. He returned to say that Padre Pires had been moved to the Bailundo Mission, but that he had been given a letter from the mission to the post setting out the case.

Guilherme in the evening came to my house to pay back the 200 escudos which I had paid to Simbwyikoka for the bride-wealth given for Anna. He had raised the 200 escudos from Paulo (his cross-cousin) and from Bartolomeu (his 'brother'), both of whom were under arrest (although free to walk about the village) through Guilherme's actions.

The following day (27th January) the policeman moved off with Guilherme and the others, Bartolomeu, Eugenio, Epalata, Wasuka, Kuseka, Kasosi, Paulo, Pedro Chiquete Santos (the catechist) and Sapapula.

About noon the next day I found that Paulo and the catechist had returned to Epalanga and heard from them what had happened. On the way Guilherme had declared that his violent temper was to blame in having so many people arrested, apologized, and promised to go to another village. He pulled out a knife and threatened to commit suicide if this proposal was not accepted. This appeal was directed mainly to the catechist, and was reinforced by Guilherme's wife, who also threatened suicide and appealed to the catechist's feelings by pointing out that she had had two of her children baptized. This was accepted, and accordingly all turned back to the village except for Guilherme, Bartolomeu, his son Eugenio, and Wasuka's son Kuseka. Eugenio and Kuseka had been arrested for not paying taxes, a matter of more interest to the *chefe* than the village brawl for which the others had been arrested. Eugenio and Kuseka were considered by the *chefe* not to be yet old enough for payment of tax, and Guilherme produced some

SOCIAL CONTROL

The transformation of the dispute between Guilherme and Paulo into what amounted to both a trial of, and an uprising against, the government headman is not purely accidental but is a natural consequence of the principle latent in the social organization by which the 'school' leaders complement and can check the chief and government headman.

The case also indicates the limited nature of their roles. Both Paulo (by preventing Anna's marriage) and Guilherme (by getting Francisco sent to contract labour) can strike at the other through the lawful exercise of their authority; any real attack on the other's position involves an appeal to either mission or post, and hence brings about a trial of some sort. Guilherme finding that the quasi-trial before the priest went against him, tried to bring the case before the post, but realizing that this also was likely to go against him came to terms with his enemies. That is, any determined attempt to solve a dispute is likely to involve at least the threat of a reference to the post or the mission.

The power of the priest to intervene in the actions of the agents of the post is limited. Thus Antonio Pires did not intervene in the case of Francisco but advised him to get a letter from his employer. It is, however, notable that the missionaries are not simply appealed to by Catholics. Protestants like Jeremias and Luciano, and pagans like Kasoi and Sapapula, were ready to appeal to the priest although the initiative came from Paulo. That this is so is a convincing argument for the claim which has been made that the catechetical school represents the whole village, although it could also be claimed that it reflects rather an aspect of 'civilised'-native relations in the total Angolan system, clientship, as the typical form of relations between the two groups, with the missions being the patrons *par excellence* to whom all natives are at least potentially clients. The general well-being of all natives is the concern of the missions, who are therefore liable to be appealed to in such cases as this.

In particular cases where there is another patron to appeal to his aid will be sought. This patron-client situation will crop up again in the account of subsequent disputes. Its origin historically lies in the history of attitudes to employees and to

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627 servants in Portugal and Angola;[1] sociologically it reflects the
648 lack of any system of bureaucratic administration at the local
571 level and the isolation of the *chefe* from the people. The uncertainties of taking a case to the post are such that it is thought desirable to have some backing (such as the letter the catechist got from the mission) from a representative of the 'civilized' community and in the absence of any other 'civilized' person the mission becomes the patron of all natives, whatever their religious allegiance.

578 The importance of this case, then, is its illustration of what
627 may happen in a conflict between a catechist or elder of the
571 school and a government headman. The limited nature of their powers, and the fact that their roles are not competitive, make a conflict between them, so long as it is not extended to pull in other people, necessarily confined to indirect attacks. If either party wishes to bring down the other he must appeal to the post or to the mission. The government headman can pull people in by accusing them at the post of not paying taxes or creating a disturbance, or by recommending them for contract labour. His position is not so strong as his dependence on the post might suggest, since the intervention of the mission, at the request of the villagers, can bring him down.

Within this main 'political' dispute is the quarrel over bridewealth, which is illuminating both in indicating the absence of legal mechanisms at the village level, and in showing how kinship ties continue to function at the height of a bitter quarrel. Both these points will be noticed again in the accounts of later disputes.

3. *Kapapelo and Sapapula*

578 The next case involved Sapapula and Kapapelo and was
627 again to end in an averted appeal to the *chefe de posto*. On the 21st of February Sapapula, Sabuke (see List II, p. 56), Wanuka, Luanga (21), and others went from Epalanga to the house of Justino, who had called them there to settle a dispute. Justino

[1] An inhabitant of Lisbon, wishing to emigrate to Canada, wooed the maid of a former official of the British Embassy. Discovering that this would get him nowhere, he transferred his affections to the maid of one of the staff of the American Embassy. The implications are interesting.

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People said that he had fled to the house of his sister's son Guilherme en route for the post; Gregorio now said to me that Lusase had made advances to Nahoka, trying to seduce her by saying that Sapapula was old.

On the same day Sapapula left for the post with, as his witnesses, Nahoka and Wazuka carrying a letter of recommendation from me. At the post the *chefe* took his part and told Lusase 'Sapapula is your father' and made Lusase kneel down to seek pardon. Sapapula said that he wished to move across the river into Menga, where he had formerly lived. The *chefe* told him to stay at Epalanga (because of the anthropologist's presence there), but transferred Epalanga administratively from Gumba to Chicunda. This settlement pleased the Epalanga people. It may be added that had Sapapula actually crossed over, a number of householders, including Paulo, would not have followed him.

Despite the *chefe's* acts it was not certain whether the change was to be given effect immediately or only after the *chefe's* annual visit; hence some more wrangling took place over the question of where Epalanga was situated for such purposes as the payment of fines for rum-brewing.

Luanga, who shared with Sapapula the title of Epalanga, came to my house on the night of the 27th June to ask for a letter to the *chefe de posto*. He told me that Lusase wanted to take away his title of Epalanga and send him to contract (non-voluntary) labour. I suggested that we should go together to see Lusase at his village on the following day. The next morning he decided not to go to the chief but to go straight to the post with his wife Adriana. He told me that when Lusase became chief in 1954, he and his 'brother' Mwehombo had bought the title of Epalanga (held under Kafelo by Sapapula) which they held jointly. Luanga had paid for this two pigs equal to 1,000 escudos (about £12. 10s. in British currency) and other things as well. Luanga's motive was not political power (which the present-day chief lacks and of which his ministers have even less) nor prestige, but because he would thus be exempt from contract labour. Luanga said that he did not mind going to contract labour, but insisted on having back what he had paid to Lusase. I said I would write a letter to say that he should not

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go to contract labour and accordingly he left for the post with my letter.

Luanga returned quite satisfied a few days later, the *chefe* having decided in his favour. Two days later he went to the chief's village to complain of Lusase's actions. With him came Bartolomeu and Paulo. Ngombe, as Mwekalia, and thereby responsible for the relations between chief and people, acted as the presiding figure, more chairman than judge, although he spoke for some time on the case. Lusase defended himself by saying that it was not he but somebody else who had recommended Luanga for contract labour. This explanation was accepted by Luanga. Bartolomeu and Paulo received small sums of money from Lusase for acting as witnesses, and later Luanga left with Lusase for another village. Here they effected the succession of a man to his father's title of Mbesi (another ministerial position). Luanga was much pleased with his share of the fee.

Not only the personalities but many of the features of previous cases reappear here. Of the ways of acting which people choose, Ndonga and Lusase use self-help, Ndonga to recover a debt, and Lusase to uphold his prestige. Against Lusase, as against Kapapelo, a moot was formed. Lusase like Guilherme insisted on his responsibility to the post alone, when the opposition seemed to be using a 'civilized' person of a different category. Final decisions are obtained by appeals to the post but the risky nature of such procedures is shown by the desire to get a letter of recommendation. Luanga believed that Lusase had got him sent to contract labour just as Francisco believed (correctly) that Guilherme had got him recruited. Ngombe as Mwekalia is more successful here as arbitrator than in the moot at Kapapelo's. Finally we see the contrast again between the survival of formal recognition in symbol of the prestige of chieftancy (the episode of the bull's leg) and its actual impotence caught between *chefe* and people. The specific issue in this dispute turns on a conflict between a chief and his people, and it shows how a chief can be defeated in the same way that the first dispute showed a government headman being defeated.

Lusase's opponents had, as previously, other means of influencing the post. Gregorio had proposed getting a letter from the

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mission to give Sapapula's case, and, as things worked out, it was the anthropologist who was made the 'civilized' focus for the opposition to Lusase as Antonio Pires had been made the focus of the opposition to Guilherme. Lusase, like Guilherme, reacted by saying that he owed allegiance only to the *chefe de posto*, and running off to the post.

Luanga's case shows how desire to get out of contract labour may give a new reason for taking a ministerial title, and also once again how sending someone to contract labour is regarded as a means of injuring those whom one dislikes.

I have spoken of the conflict between Lusase and Sapapula as being a conflict between a chief and his people, and this is true in so far as it shows how opposition forms against a chief and how he can be checked. It is therefore of importance as indicating the position of the chief in the contemporary social system. The people themselves interpreted the dispute as being essentially one between individuals—Lusase's behaviour was attributed to his lust for Nahoka, and Gregorio entered the dispute not as the ruler of the neighbouring chiefdom of Menga but as a friend of Sapapula. The interpretation of what is a political conflict as a quarrel between individuals may be explained as being due to the relatively limited nature of the role of chief (Lusase) and of traditional headman (Sapapula) which therefore do not predominate in the social status of the individual. (In this particular case, had I got Lusase's viewpoint he would probably have said that he was defending his dignity as chief, whereas Sapapula did not regard Lusase as being really chief.) The lack of a formal court system or even of an articulated political system at the local level has brought into desuetude the old legal and political idioms and the Ovimbundu have not yet learnt new terms from the Portuguese.

3. *Social Control and Social Structure in the Disputes*

I now return to the points mentioned at the beginning of this chapter. It is hardly necessary to underline the decayed state of the traditional system of authority. Lusase had, at the time of the quarrel between Guilherme and Paulo, expressed his

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by other villagers. Nor does residence in a village or sub-chiefdom compel or limit participation in a dispute. Neither Ndjoleya nor any of his kin participated in the dispute between Paulo and Guilherme. Gregorio came from Menga to support his friend Sapapula against Lusase, acting as a private individual, and not as the chief of Menga intervening in the internal politics of a neighbouring sub-chiefdom.

The social institutions participated in exclusively by Ovimbundu (i.e. the system of kinship and marriage and the local organization) do not provide machinery for resolving disputes. Therefore, binding decisions must be obtained from a representative of the 'civilized' society, and much importance attaches to setting out the details of the case in such a way as to gain the interest of this representative. It would seem likely from this that all cases will pass into the hands of the *chefe*, and that those 'natives' who are most closely linked to the post—the chief and the government headmen—will therefore be the most influential people in indigenous society. In fact, as the disputes show, this does not happen. Cases are taken to other 'civilized' persons—the priest Antonio Pires and the *sei-disant assimilado* Justino—and Lusase, instead of making up on the bureaucratic roundabouts what he has lost on the traditional swings, falls heavily off both.

The willingness of villagers to submit their cases to Justino and the mission rather than to the post is a result of the much closer personal contact which exists with them, and their lack of direct punitive sanctions. Any case referred to the *chefe* is thought liable to produce uncertain consequences. It was because of this that the people of Gumba did not dare to complain to the post about Lusase's usurpation; for this reason, too, Guilherme, knowing the *chefe* trusted him no more than any other native, sought reconciliation before getting to the post. The chief and government headman neither enjoy official confidence nor control access to the post.

On the level of the total Angolan society the State is obviously more powerful than the Church. On the local level the chief and government headmen have more executive power[11]

[11] The capacity to give orders backed by force; but this only applies to orders received from the post.

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than the catechists and 'elders of the school'; yet the weakness of the agents of the post before a local opposition led, not by such traditional figures as Kafelo and Sapapula, but by the school functionaries, has been demonstrated. The post accepts intervention by the mission in supporting disputants, and the mission is ready to help not only its disputants but any native who has a strong case—that is, it has a generalized relation of patronage to all natives.[18] Hence, since in a serious dispute people look round for a 'civilized' patron, the mission is the one most likely to be appealed to, and these appeals usually go through its local agents.

While the symbiosis of two societies, one ruling, the other ruled, is a common feature of modern Africa, the extremely limited nature of the role delegated by the administration to the native authority, the 'patron-client' tie linking 'civilized' persons to the natives, and the opportunity given to patrons to intervene in cases before the *chefe*, seem to be distinctive features of Portuguese colonization.[19]

The third aspect of the social structure mentioned in the introductory section was the role in disputes of kinship ties. It has been earlier noted that Sapapula's supporters regarded him as a victim of a concerted alliance by Guilherme, Kapapelo, Lusase, and Ndonga. In fact Lusase had avoided getting involved in the dispute between Guilherme and Paulo, had supported Sapapula against Kapapelo, and had disclaimed responsibility for Ndonga's act. The present social structure is not one in which groups of kin habitually co-operate;[20] and it is possible that this belief in a coalition against Sapapula reflects memories of the old social structure.

Kinship ties between individuals seem neither to restrain them from quarrelling nor to be liable to permanent disruption as a result of quarrels. By August 1956 Kasoi was once again

[18] It is felt in administrative circles that the advancement of the African is entirely the responsibility of the missions.

[19] Anybody who knows the Portuguese well will acknowledge the importance given to personal influence (*peste*) and the lack of esteem for bureaucratic (in the Weberian sense) procedures.

[20] See Chapters IV and VII for details on the kinship term and on general aspects of kinship. The support which Sapapula received was not confined to his own kinship core—thus Gregorio who enthusiastically supported Sapapula was not even a kinsman.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

631 ones. This situation was reported by Magyar, when he wrote,
635 'Quibanda (should be Civanda) to the east has 500 villages. The Chief has great power. He sends tribute every year to the king of Bailundu but is himself fully independent.'[1] Magyar described about 15 *atumbu* or '*ovikundscho*',[2] as he called them, of Bailundu. [161] He estimated the population of Bailundu at 450,000, and for all the kingdoms of the Ovimbundu 1,200,000,[3] figures which are [175] probably not very different from present-day facts. The report and description of the 'Capitania de Benguella' in 1799 said that the king of Bailundu dominated 2,056 villages; the king of Viye, 886; and the king of Ngalangi, 900; and listed their 'feudos' respectively as 82, 54, and 78.[4] My list of the Ngalangi *atumbu* shows 112. In Bailundu about 20 *atumbu* were ruled by members of the royal family, including heirs apparent or expectant, and the queen (*Inakulu*), who also had her own establishment.[5] About 20 were ruled by other court officials.

621 Most of these *atumbu* are still recognized as such or as *olombala*.[6]
622 Their decay has not been as great as that of the *ombala*[6] of their
177 liege lord, for they still fulfil certain functions in native life. They have also been given new functions by the administrative authorities. [651] The minor chiefs as well as village headmen are all required to assist in assessing and collecting the native tax, and also in recruiting labour for government works and for contracts. In some areas they receive in return the remission of their own taxes. In some areas they are required to wear uniforms. On the dancing floors [692] of most of these minor *olombala* courts are still held, justice determined, and (to a limited extent) fines 'eaten'. Such judgements are not officially recognized or allowed by the European authorities. The African, however, often finds that European courts do not meet his needs or accord with his concepts of justice.

[1] Magyar, op. cit., p. 389.

[2] Umbundu *ovikuwjo* (plural), 'branches', a term which through commercial or European influence is applied to the *atumbu*.

[3] For these figures and for descriptions of the several kingdoms, see Magyar, op. cit., chap. ix.

[4] *Annaes Mar. e Col.*, 42 Ser., pp. 155 ff.

[5] Magyar, op. cit., p. 390.

[6] *Olombala*, plural of *ombala*, a capital village or chief's residence.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

geographic position in the centre of the colony has also made it harder for them to evade it. Nevertheless, many have emigrated. In 1941 and again in 1944, when the writer visited South Africa, he found thousands of Ovimbundu on the Rand and many more in the Rhodesias and the Congo. Many are also known to have gone to the South-West Territory and to Bechuanaland, and some even to such distant points as Natal's north coast and French Equatorial Africa.[1]

175 464 467 [167]

Recent Developments

Currency, in the sense of money, is quite a recent introduction to the Ovimbundu. To the end of their trading activities, cloth ('trade goods') was the standard of exchange. Although dependence upon world markets caused prices to fluctuate with the course of the rubber trade, as we have seen, there was not, however, the great range which follows the fluctuations of the money market through a course of inflation and deflation. The Ovimbundu had had some dealings in money before the time of World War I, when there was a silver coinage, so that the depreciation which set in about 1921 was all the more confusing to them. This is not the place to discuss the finances and banking of Angola, but it must be noted that the conversion of the 'Escudo' into the 'Angolar' in 1928 at the rate of Ag. 0,80 to Esc. 1 $00 greatly increased the sense of confusion among the natives. This was only to be expected when the native tax remained at Ag. 80,00 where it was Esc. 80,00 before, whereas daily wages to contract labourers became Ag. 0,80 where before they were Esc. 1 $00. The confusion was considerable.[2]

436 [457] [651] [465]

Taxes began to be levied soon after military occupation, but for some years they were very small, especially in relation to opportunities for earning. When the head-tax reached Esc. 80,00 it remained at that figure for some years. In 1935 a 'work tax' and

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[1] This state of affairs is frequently and quite freely commented upon in the Angola papers. For a recent notice see local correspondence entitled 'Noticias do Cuma' in the *Voz do Planalto* (Nova Lisboa) for 17 Aug. 1946. One of the most serious recent indictments is contained in an article in *O Paralim*, Luanda, 5 Nov. 1945, by Pedro J. Alves Correia. This distinguished writer asserts that the present labour policy is 'killing the goose which lays the golden egg'.

[2] For finance, currency, banking, and economic conditions in general, see Department of Overseas Trade, *Economic Conditions in Angola*, H.M.S.O., 1929. There are also reports for 1923 and 1925, but the one for 1929 covers the previous decade.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FF13 Mbundu FF13

651 another small amount were added, so that it is now Ag. 91,00.[1] This is not high in comparison with the figures for the Union of South Africa and some other African territories, but opportunities for earning in Angola are small. Wages and prices of produce are 465 low indeed. These problems of labour and of taxation are much the same in many South and Central African territories. Their present-day poverty bears very hardly upon the Ovimbundu who saw much more prosperous times in the days of their large-scale trading.

423 *Land.* The ownership and occupation of land by natives does not present the acute problem in Angola which it does in several 648 African territories. Natives have not been herded on to reserves, for rigid segregation is not the Portuguese idea, nor has there yet been occupation of land by European settlers on a scale sufficient to encroach upon the land needed by natives, save in a few localities. A large proportion of the concessions provisionally taken out by Europeans in 1919–25 have reverted to the State for failure to meet requirements, as, for example, to bring a stated proportion under cultivation. Many schemes for European colonization in the Benguela Highland have been projected from time to time. The Portuguese law protects the native in his holdings, but since European settlers often find ways to circumvent the intent of the law, and since an increasing European colonization is apt to be a threat to native holdings, a simplification of the machinery whereby the natives may secure sure title to communal or to individual holdings is highly desirable.[2]

423 Whatever else may be said, however, it is good to be able to report that at the present time the Ovimbundu have their land. This fact has been a very important factor in their transition from

[1] About $4.00 at present exchange. In 1937 the economic year was changed to the calendar year, and in most districts payment of an extra half-year's tax was required. About 1941 the tax was again raised, to Ag. 108,00, and in 1945 it was again put up, to 120,00. These figures are for most of the districts inhabited by the Ovimbundu. In some areas, especially frontier areas, the amounts levied are considerably lower.

[2] For the present official status of the questions of administration, land, labour, &c., see Comte J. de Penha-Garcia, *Organisation politique et administrative de l'empire colonial portugais*, Inst. Col. Int'n'l (1936); ibid. (ed.), *Les Colonies portugaises* (1931); a useful summary of the same will be found in Lord Hailey, *An African Survey* (London: 1938), pp. 213–16, 796 f. There is a discussion of these problems in J. T. Tucker, *Angola, Land of the Blacksmith Prince* (1933), chap. 8. See also Valdez dos Santos, *Angola, Coração do Império* (Lisboa: Agência Geral das Colónias, 1945).

29

advancement, will go to the head of their olosse to ask for his intercession with the spirits.[1] 613

As legal head of the village, the sekula yimbo presides over both the more serious cases, which are held before the whole village on the dance-floor, and the simpler ones, which require the attendance only of those concerned, together with their respective elders, and may be taken up either in the enjango or in the headman's own courtyard. Bushby seems to suggest that all the section-heads act with the village headman as a kind of council, but does not give details. He states also that the olosekula (sing. sekula) of the village formerly had charge of trials for murder, theft, adultery, and arguments over land,[2] and points out that they were more active in the legal system than the chiefs.[3] This is even more true today, when the village court of justice continues to function in spite of political and administrative changes, although the offices of chiefs and to some extent of sub-chiefs have largely decayed. 622 623 691 [77]

Other functions of the village headman include: the distribution of land to the various families when new village sites are opened,[4] the direction of the communal fire-hunts;[5] and, today, the collecting of taxes from the villagers and the direction and organisation of labour to work on the roads.[6] But however numerous the headman's official duties, he usually finds some time to attend to his own affairs, whether he is a farmer, hunter, or trader.[7] 622 623 651 466 [463]

Succession to headmanship is usually from father to son or from elder to younger brother, "with only as much recognition of primogeniture as belongs to the general ... hierarchy of age."[8] Succession is, however, affected by the "democratic" tendencies in succession to chieftainship.[9] 622 693

The Chief (ocoma or ovo)[10]

The Ovimbundu are grouped in 22 chiefdoms, of which half were in the past generally tributary to the more powerful chiefs.[11] At the same time each chiefdom had its separate government and could be considered as a unit in itself. Effective European occupation and direct rule have atrophied the chiefly office among the Ovimbundu, until today chiefs survive as little more than "living museum pieces".[12] Childs[13] enumerates the functions of the chiefly office as follows: 631 643 [77]

(a) *Religious.* The chief's ancestral spirits were the principal chiefdom deities, and the king was high-priest as well as the visible "vice-regent and incarnation" of the spirits. 643 713 769

(1) Childs, personal communication.
(2) The maternal uncle is responsible for settling disputes over property which occur within the olosse. (Bushby op.cit., p.207).
(3) Ibid. (4) Ibid.
(5) Cookson, op.cit., p.125. (6) Ibid., p.121.
(7) Childs, op.cit., p.56. (8) Ibid., p.44.
(9) Ibid.
(10) Ocoma means chief or king. Ovo is the personalized form used with the name. This the Portuguese writers have corrupted into ovos or ochs. (Childs, personal communication)
(11) See above, p.2.
(12) Childs, op.cit., p.56. (13) Ibid.

lives of chiefs.[1]

The chief's council and court 641

It has been noted that there is a chiefdom council responsible for electing the chief or deposing him, and for sitting with him in law cases. The composition of this council has not been clearly described.[2]

The Sub-chief

The chiefdom[3] was made up of a number of sub-chiefdoms called otumbu (sing. otumbu); Bailundu had about 200 otumbu, each of which had from 3 to more than 300 villages, while a number of the larger otumbu were themselves made up of smaller ones. About 20 otumbu were ruled by members of the chiefly family, including heirs apparent or expectant, and the chief's wife (*ovakulu*) had also her own sub-chiefdom.[4] Others were ruled by court officials not of royal birth, who sometimes themselves established dynasties, others again by dynasties native to the respective regions, or at least dynasties longer resident in the area than the chiefly family. Villages of sub-chiefs, like those of chiefs, are known as olombolo. Most of the otumbu are still recognised, and the sub-chiefs have retained more of their old functions than have the chiefs, and have in addition been given new functions. They as well as village headmen are required to assist in assessing and collecting native tax,[5] and also in recruiting labour for government work and for contracts. In some areas they receive in return the remission of their own taxes. On the dancing floor of most of their olombolo cases are still heard, judgments given and fines received, although such judgments are not officially recognised or allowed by the European authorities.[6]

643 631 [177] [151] [152]

LAW

Courts

Very little information is available. We are told that certain disputes, e.g. concerning inheritance, are settled within the olonas;[7] that in the village cases are tried by a council which apparently consists of the section-heads under the leadership of the village headman;[8] and that these village courts continue to function; that certain cases (unspecified) are still unofficially heard in the courts of the sub-chiefs; and that prior to European occupation the paramount chief's decision was final.

691 693

(1) Ibid., p.23. But chiefs were treated with respect; Bently (1936, p.214) notes that the ancient custom was for commoners to fall on their knees when greeting a chief, and today this still applies to women and children although less often to men. (2) See Serpa Pinto, 1881, p.167.

(3) Most writers use "kingdom" and "king"; "chief" then used here without qualification refers always to the paramount chief of one of the 22 chiefdoms.

(4) Magyar, 1851, pp.289f, also quoted by Childs, op.cit., p.24.

(5) The amount of the tax levied on all males from 16 years is now Aga. 200,000 annually. As noted by Childs (p.215-6), it has been steadily increasing. Opportunities for earning are comparatively small in Angola, not now for lack of work, but because of "contract labour" required of all males in addition to taxes. Payment for "contract labour" is considerably below current wages, and it is a great hindrance to productive agricultural activities. (Childs, personal communication) (6) Childs, op.cit., pp.24-5.

(7) Bently, (2) 1936, p.200. (8) See above, p.29.

226 spear eight feet long, the end of which consisted of ten sharp prongs
962 of palm stem (Plate LXXIII, Fig. 1).

Near Cangamba in eastern Angola, fishing in the Kwando River
[171] occupied numerous men and women of the mixed tribes in the district, namely, Vachokue, Luchazi, and Babunda. Men paddled into midstream in small bark canoes from which fishing operations were directed. The fishermen carried small conical string nets, which were attached to stakes in such a way that the openings of the nets faced upstream. Vachokue women, working in pairs, dragged baskets against the current (Plate LXXXV, Figs. 1, 2).

AGRICULTURE AND COOKING

343 *Osila* is the Umbundu word for the granary which stands on
243 wooden supports (Plate XLIV, Fig. 1); this *osila* is for the restricted family, and there is one *osila* for every house. The Ovimbundu store their corn in bulk, but in the Esele country I noted that the cobs themselves were carefully packed. Each Ocimbundu girl culti-
[432] vates a small patch of ground, the produce of which she is at liberty to sell in order to buy brass ornaments, beads, and palm oil.

In addition to maize, barley, oats, and wheat, with here and
241 there a little rye, are occasionally grown. There are three colors of beans, red, white, and black. There is no attempt to keep the varieties
[651] separate, so they cross-fertilize freely. The Ovimbundu try to
[438] cultivate a surplus of beans and maize which they use to pay their taxes to the Portuguese, likewise to sell at the stores of traders.

252 Corn is pounded on the rock which has been used for generations
512 after it has been consecrated by sprinkling the blood of a chicken. Pounding begins as early as five o'clock in the morning, before sunrise, and from that time to sunset the pounding-rock is in use. The
[521] rock is evidently regarded as a meeting place for social intercourse; it is undoubtedly the center of village gossip so far as the women are concerned (Plate XXXVI, Fig. 2).

As corn alone is considered a poor food, it is sprinkled on boiling water to which beans are added. Cooking goes on from early morning to sunset over a slow fire. Children sometimes receive as their evening meal a thick plastic cake of mushed corn to which green leaves of a squash are added.

252 There are five kinds of manioc resembling one another in general appearance, but the Ovimbundu distinguish the plants, and reserve for each what they consider to be appropriate preparation. The method varies for sweet and bitter varieties of manioc.

undu, and Ngalangi are said to have had conflicts. In time past, 721
as at the present day, a king reigned over territory which was
extensive but definitely delimited for purposes of administration.
Encroachment of one king on the rights of taxation and administra- 651
tion of another led to raids and reprisals. Village chiefs collected
taxes in the form of agricultural produce and gave these to the king,
who personally visited a village from which payments had not been
made. A folklore story begins, "The people had not paid taxes
so the king came to the village and told them a parable."

A king, if young, accompanied his people on the warpath. There 726
was, however, a permanent leader named *kesongo*, a derivative from [701
songola ("to lead"). The declaration of war, likewise the tactics,
were discussed by a council of *olosekulu* ("village chiefs") in the
ombala ("capital") where the king had, and still has, a royal com-
pound. If war had been conducted among sections of the Ovim- 727
bundu, the defeated people had to pay taxes and tribute; moreover,
their women and cattle were taken. In event of a successful war
against the Vachokue there was plundering of cattle and women,
but it was not found practicable to exact periodical payments
from the enemy.

The subject of warfare is intimately related to that of slavery. 686
There was until very recent times a domestic slavery which followed 567
from the inability of a person to pay his debts. In connection with 672
this reduction of free persons to a condition of slavery there are
several points of exceptional interest. The debtor himself is not
taken as a slave, neither are his wife or children. The correct proce-
dure is a sale of his sister's children; but more frequently the children
themselves are taken by the creditor. "The debtor's sister will say
nothing because this is the law of the Ovimbundu." If payment of
the debt is made later, the children are set free. Usually the word
pawning is used by ethnologists to describe this proceeding.

Further consideration of Ngonga's payment to his mother's
brother clarifies the facts of domestic slavery. "I paid for them,
I took their place," said my interpreter. The payment for the
return of these two children was two oxen. The girl, who was ten
years of age when she was taken to pay the debt, was returned to
her people when she was a woman with three children. Ngonga's
brother was not actually taken from his home. He was made to
pay his mother's brother's debt by working for the creditor. In
general, these domestic slaves were not ill treated, though their
rights were limited. The position of slaves taken from a hostile 567

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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5// pairs of shorts cost 70 escudos each. Two kerchiefs for women cost 50 escudos each.

Total income recorded is 2,870 escudos (£35. 17. 6). Total expenditure recorded is 2,255 escudos (£28. 3. 9). It should be noted that Kambungo, while not living in Portuguese style, was considered wealthy for an Otjimbundu and that much of his income, for instance from the sale of the ten sheep, was from exceptional sales which could not be annually repeated. As regards livestock Kambungo had five head of cattle, five chickens, four sheep and two ducks.

More typical would be the year's expenditure of Pedro Musungu, an inhabitant of a Protestant village, who had bought two cloths, each of four metres and each costing 50 escudos (about 12s 6d.) for his wife, and for each of his four children two cloths, one 25 escudos the other 30. He had bought a hoe for 7½ escudos, a book for the same. To this total expendi-
[651] ture should be added the tax (180 escudos) plus the communal fines levied each year for burning the grass and so on which may come to 40 escudos or more. The total expenditure then would be about 555 escudos (£6. 18. 9). It was not possible to calculate his income since he could not remember how many sacks he had sold to the traders. He had, however, raised 200 escudos by selling a pig and had got 40 escudos for two kilos of coffee, though most of the coffee he planted had not produced berries.

A yet poorer household was that of Cypriano, a villager of Epalanga with a wife and two young children. His maize crop in 1956 had gone to pay debts to traders, for the 1955 maize harvest had been very poor. He had got tax-money by making pounding-blocks, and pounding-sticks (for beating out maize), but could not remember how much he had earned thus. Although Cypriano's stock amounted to one sow and one hen,
[292] he and his wife had a set of smart clothes for special occasions, like all Ovimbundu.

Much better off was Luveli, who like Cypriano combined a craft with agriculture. He had sold ten kilos of coffee for 20 escudos each, as well as twelve sacks of maize at 25 escudos each and two sacks of potatoes at 20 escudos each, making a total agricultural revenue of 540 escudos, to which must be added

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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In the previous

chapter I have indicated that the position of headman is today 622
a somewhat shadowy one, and that the headman emerges rather than succeeds by virtue of various grounds; the main ones being official recognition, some tie to the local chief, the presence of a core of one's kinsmen, a claim to be the first resident, and personality. During my stay Sapapula was as much a headman of Epalanga as anyone can reasonably be these days, yet his position had not always gone unchallenged.

In 1954 he had found himself in danger of being displaced 622
by his matrilateral 'brother' Mwehombo. Both men, apparently, claimed that they had founded the village, both had 665
substantial cores of kinsfolk in the village, and both possessed strong personalities. Sapapula by holding the ministerial title of Epalanga to Kafelo had had a stronger position in village affairs. This prop to his power was taken away when Kafelo was deposed from the chiefdom, and Luanga and Mwehombo purchased the title of Epalanga from Lusase.

In this partnership Mwehombo must have been the leading personality, Luanga being extremely amiable but not at all domineering or energetic. Mwehombo's idea was presumably to establish himself as recognized headman of Epalanga, and to obtain whatever advantages were to be gained from an association with Lusase. Luanga's aim, from what he told me, was to escape contract labour by having a position as a traditional headman and title-holder. Titles will still be sought after, [554]
although the substance of power has gone, so long as they can confer some prestige or protection from administrative labour demands. It was not customary for the role of Epalanga to be held by two people jointly.

Mwehombo died shortly after this. He had been baptized 763
by the name of Simon when dying on January 13th 1955, when his social personality began its posthumous career. At the inquest, which was held according to the old Umbundu pattern in which the corpse suspended in a hammock from a pole held by two men was supposed to answer questions by the way it swung, it was found that Mwehombo had suffered the pro- [554]
verbial fate of the sorcerer in being killed by the spirit he had [561]
used to kill others.

The role of the questioner was taken by Paulo, sister's son to

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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In one part of Umbundu country in 1955, a contra-acultura-

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[668]

tive movement arose which combined features found in cargo-cults and anti-witchcraft campaigns,[13] social activities usually regarded as products of a malaise in the relations between Europeans and an indigenous society.[14] The Ovimbundu whom I knew were not ready to take the initiative in their dealings with the 'civilized' population; but it would be wrong to regard the system of social control that I have tried to describe as being true for much more than a very small area of Umbundu country and a very limited extent of time.

[13] The movement began at Bela Vista on the railway line and spread over south-eastern Umbundu country into the Ngangela area. Its leaders were men and women who called themselves saints and claimed to have died and come to life again. They announced that all sorcery would cease, and those who continued it would die in an unusual way. They forbade the wearing of black clothes and ordered the killing of black livestock (fowls and pigs). They also forbade the growing of maize for sale. It was stated that rain would come from heaven to kill the whites (according to some accounts only the bad whites) and the blacks would then have their goods. This movement was spread through the catechetical schools. It was eventually repressed by administrative action. Private information. Also article in *O Apostolado*, Luanda, Oct. 27, 1956.

[14] See A. I. Richards, 'A Modern Movement of Witchfinders', *Africa*, Oct. 1935.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

643 common at African courts. A few Umbundu rulers carried on
692 such practices, and especially certain self-constituted robber-barons such as Samakaka, who left Viye after the military occupation and established himself first in Bimbe (Mbimbi), later in Huambo (Wambu), and then at Elende, until taken by the Portuguese authorities in 1903.

643 4. In order to protect himself and the nation, *the king had resort*
754 *to magical means*, some of which would be accounted witchcraft or murder if practised without authority. Such were the ritual murders of *Katōkōlā* (The Strangler), *Oku ipa ukaí watimba avali* (killing the woman of two bodies, i.e. pregnant), of the children whose lives were required for building and furnishing the queen's kitchen, &c.

791 5. In order properly to carry out the functions of his office, *the*
643 *king made much use of divination*, for which purpose he had his own diviner (*Citue cosoma*), who was of the blood royal. He also called in or consulted diviners of many regions and of many types, one of the commonest of which was the 'Diviner of the Basket' (*Ocimbanda congombo*).[1]

643 The king was a divine representative and a divine incarnation,
642 but the mode of his succession reveals that he was also a democratically chosen leader. Note has been made of the fact that the royal succession is in the male line, sometimes from father to son, but more often from elder to younger brother, to brother's son, or to one even more distantly related. The election is made by the councillors whose duty it is, ordinarily before the old king's death is announced, but these same councillors may depose an unpopular
[669] king. There have been many revolutions and *coups d'état*. This fact was noted by several early observers, among whom I cite one who wrote in 1837:

> The government of 'Bailundo' is democratic. These heathen mix with the infamous humiliations of the orientals, the unbridled coarseness of the English people at election times in England. The kings defer to and flatter their counsellors; these are they who elevate a king to the throne and also who cast him down.[2]

[1] A rather cursory description of divination as practised by this type of diviner was given by Hambly, op. cit., pp. 274–6. For a fuller treatment, *vide* L. S. Tucker, 'The Divining Basket of the Ovimbundu', *J.R.A.I.* (London), 1940, vol. lxx, pp. 171–201.

[2] C. de Almeida Sandoval in *Annaes do Cons. Ultr.*, Ser. I, p. 519. The reference to English elections reminds one of Dickens. See also P. M. Pinheiro de

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

It must not be supposed that trade has been abandoned. Every sale or exchange of field or garden produce is a serious trading operation. Produce will often be carried a very long way for a very small advantage, or even for no apparent gain. The successively lower economic levels to which the colony, and especially the natives, have fallen since the close of the rubber trade is a factor. Individual trading, involving journeys into even such distant regions as Ovamboland, is a latter-day development since European rule has made for greater personal security. 175 438

Another factor which operated to end all large-scale trading operations of the Ovimbundu was the disappearance of the traffic in human beings. It has been shown that even before they ruled over the Ovimbundu the 'Jagas' were leading intermediaries in this traffic, and the Ovimbundu have continued in this role right down to the period under review. Whatever name or form it bore at the coast, in the interior the traffic was the same. At the height of the rubber boom this traffic, along with other activities, suffered a decline, being somewhat less profitable than rubber. At that time came the peak of the rum trade and the demoralization which it brought turned the point of the 'contract labour' traffic in upon the Ovimbundu themselves. Such Umbundu customs as getting into debt, the pawning of relatives, and also such factors as times of food scarcity, quickly taken advantage of by the traders, served to exacerbate the hardships, and the result was the native uprising of 1902 known as the 'Bailundu Campaign', but extending beyond the limits of Bailundu. The effects of this uprising upon trade have already been noted. Pending investigation of its causes, the export of 'contract labourers' was stopped,[1] but the practice was soon resumed. The scandalous conditions then obtaining in the neighbouring 'Congo Free State' almost from its founding until 1908 greatly aided and abetted the slave-traffic, however much this new frontier may have interfered with trade in ivory and rubber. Trade with the *revoltés* was particularly lucrative to Ovimbundu and other traders of Angola. Powder and arms were an especially important item in this trade. 567 439 [669] 648 439 567

and just under the rim of the Highland. In 1916 construction stopped at Chinguar (312 miles and on the edge of Viye) until after World War I. It was completed to the Angola frontier in 1929 and the Belgian section finished in 1931, with transcontinental connexion at Elizabethville.

[1] Cabral Moncada, op. cit.; Massano de Amorim, *Relatorio sôbre os acontecimentos do Bailundo* (Loanda, 1903); *Missionary Herald*, 1903, p. 69.

for murder as two oxen and two slaves; for adultery, two oxen, a pig, and a slave.) Today a man who has committed adultery sometimes takes the woman and all children under three years of age, but this is for the husband to decide. An adulterer with one of the chief's wives was castrated but not killed, and the castration might be compounded for a high fine, while he, his sisters, and the sons of his sisters would become slaves of the chief.(1) Hambly states finally that "Criminal law did not distinguish between responsibility for intentional and unintentional offences."(2) 682 684 671

There is no information regarding the kinds of cases tried or the punishments given in the courts of village headmen or sub-chiefs today.

INHERITANCE

It has been noted above that moveable property is inherited in the maternal line, land in the paternal line.(3) The eldest brother of the deceased's mother has the first claim and is responsible for settling disputes. He may distribute the property to the mother of the deceased, the maternal grandfather, or to a brother of the deceased, but is not compelled to do this. Women never inherit cattle or land, although the sisters of a deceased woman usually receive most of her household utensils (the rest belong to her husband). A widow goes to the house of (? marries) the eldest brother of the deceased or her own maternal uncle, or she may return to her father's village. Apparently her children accompany her, although one would expect them to go to her brother.(4) 428 768

DIVORCE

Divorce appears to be infrequent; grounds for divorce are many, but difficulties are often overcome by a compromise between the two kin groups concerned. Causes for dissatisfaction on the part of a husband include his wife's incompetence, dishonesty, physical weakness, or infidelity (in the last case today a fine from the adulterer is usually accepted and the marriage continues). Barrenness is not a ground for divorce; usually the husband takes a second wife, but the first maintains her position as head wife. Sterility in the male is sometimes suspected, in which case the husband may try another girl, with his wife's consent, or the woman another man. A woman may divorce a man if he is impotent (not sterile), or if he ill-treats her, but not because he is unfaithful. If for any of these reasons the woman returns to her family, the latter are expected to return the marriage payment, although they may wait until another suitor appears who will pay the deserted husband. Whether the initiative in divorce is taken by the woman or the man, the marriage is not annulled until a renunciatory ceremony has been carried out by the husband, the wife, and the wife's father, in the presence of the village headman. The husband receives from his wife's father a roll of tobacco and a pig, and then places leaves(5) and palm oil on his wife's back; he then slaps his wife's back saying "It is finished". 586 [842]

(1) Hambly, op.cit., p.202. (2) Loc.cit.
(3) See above, p.18, and Childs, 1949, p.44.
(4) Hambly, (2) 1934, p.199.
(5) The leaf used is of the apu tree; the same leaf is tied to the pole of the strain of a new village, as a sign of divorce from the old site. (Childs, 1949, p.38; this is the only context in which Childs mentions divorce.)

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Social Life

fines were in their hands. If he murdered one of the royal family 682
he was killed after he had paid the fine." The punishment of a woman [562]
who has committed a murder is the same as that for a man.

Ombulangu is the name given to trial by poison ordeal. The 695
medicine-man holds out both his hands, in each of which there is a potato, only one of which is poisoned. The accused man says, "If I have done this thing, this potato will be poison for me. If I have not done this thing, this potato will be food for me." The complainant says, "If this is not the man who poisoned my brother, this potato will be poison for me." They sit in front of the medicine-man, and each must take the potato in the hand opposite to him. The poison makes a man very sick. His mouth swells so that he cannot speak.

When a woman was accused of murder her son or her brother [562]
would take her place in the poison ordeal. A boy of fifteen years of age would have the same treatment as a man. "I don't think a girl would kill anybody. I never heard about it," said Ngonga. It appears that resort was made to a medicine-man when the accused was thought to have committed murder by poison or magic. If the murderer used weapons, the accuser, who was usually a relative, was entitled to kill him with the kind of weapon used for the crime.

The penalties for adultery were the same as those for murder. 684
The woman appears to have escaped punishment, except that "her husband would not have her any more." The male adulterer had to pay the husband; if he could not pay or escape, the husband had the right to kill him. In the old days the price for adultery was two oxen, a pig, and a slave. At the present day a man who has committed adultery and made payment, possibly takes the woman and all children under three years of age. The husband has the right to decide whether the adulterer has the privilege of taking the woman and her children. An adulterer with one of the king's wives was castrated but not killed. He might, instead of mutilation, pay a very [567]
high price, while he himself along with his sisters and the sons of his sisters, would become slaves of the king. If a man could not pay, he might be sold as a slave in order to provide money for the fine. Criminal law did not distinguish between responsibility for inten- [671]
tional and unintentional offences.

It is very difficult to say how much of the old law survives. One 681
feels that underneath the ostensible Portuguese rule there is an active 177
native life that is resisting subjugation.

Only two years ago Ngonga paid an ox to prevent one of his female 686
relatives from being pawned. Within the past ten years Ngonga has

Nevertheless, the idea of crime is well developed, and there are many actions which are punishable because they contravene the laws of the tribe. Adultery is a crime on a par with theft; but adultery is not a sin. Suku, the supreme being, issues no commands. Ancestral spirits are concerned only with sacrifice and homage to themselves. There is no theory of punishment or reward in a future life according to conduct on earth. 776 688

Perhaps *ekandu* is the only word which could express sin. An Ocimbundu would say that murder is the chief *ekandu*. "*Ekandu* is to make anything have a bad time." To send a stranger along the wrong path is *ekandu*. It would be *ekandu* to throw an animal on the fire. It is *ekandu* if a man is guilty of fornication with his wife's sister. Such an act is said to be *ekandu* only if the wife's sister is visiting the house of the culprit. The male defaulter is regarded as blameless, but the people of the village from which the wife's sister came would be expected to pay the wronged wife. Sexual offences against young children are very serious. In fact the death penalty or banishment would be inflicted, and such offences are given by the Ovimbundu as examples of *ekandu*. [681] [684]

This subject of moral responsibility leads naturally into the question of laws and penalties. There are among the Ovimbundu well-defined moral codes and clearly formulated tribal laws which have been described in chapter VI. 676

FUNERAL RITES

COMMONERS

In the village of Cilenma in the district of Elende I witnessed the funeral rites of a boy aged twelve years. When a few hundred yards from the village, I heard sounds of drumming coming from a secluded place in the tall grass. On reaching the clearing four drummers were seen, each of whom held a tubular drum between his legs; these drums were of different lengths. The man on the left of the drumming squad played with an up and down movement of his left hand only, to provide the bass tone. Other drummers played with the palms and fingers of both hands. Thirty feet from the drummers stood a group of women who always started the rhythm for the drums by clapping their hands, and the hand-clapping continued as an accompaniment for the drums. 764

Near-by, men were seated on the ground, while a large number of women walked about or sat on the ground chatting and smoking their pipes. The general impression was not one of solemnity.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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do not know how Kafelo and Lusase came to hear of the case). In practice, their role was that of any other spectator in trying to bring about a settlement, although a chief has, as was noted, the right to a commission on any indemnification. The right of spectators to intervene is not based on any particular relationship to those involved nor on any reputation for wisdom. There is in fact no organized routine for determining who may and who must turn up and who may and who must speak. Spectators and speakers are simply members of the neighbourhood community, some related to Sapapula, some simply fellow-villagers, and it is natural that in present Umbundu society, lacking clearly-defined social groups, the crowd that assembles on each an occasion should look like a chance gathering. Its lack of recognized procedure, of accepted leadership, and of specific criteria of recruitment are all typical of the neighbourhood community among the contemporary Ovimbundu.

Despite the 'unorganized' character of this gathering, there exists evidently a set of generally accepted symbolic values, which are accepted by Christian and pagan, by young and old. Thus Nahoka claimed as evidence that she had not committed adultery her meal with Kapapelo's wife, and the latter in turn offered as evidence that adultery had been committed a statement that her husband had made a gift of soap to Nahoka. These actions provide presumptive evidence of innocence or guilt since an adulterer or adulteress may not eat under apparently mystical sanctions with the spouse of the person with whom he or she has committed adultery, and the giving of gifts by a man to a woman implies a sexual relationship. These actions were presumably recognized as convincing evidence in the days when there existed a formal court system, and continue to be recognized as such at the present day.

The nature of contemporary social relations, as being the end-product of a series of acts between individuals rather than as the content of jural norms defined by status, is also revealed in the dispute, particularly in the episode at Justino's. Sapapula does not complain that Kapapelo had not behaved as a villager should to his headman, but that he had not been grateful for having been given land. Kapapelo's complaint that Saviel, Sapapula's sister's son, had attempted to seduce his wife was,

682 527 Hambly and Childs seem to suggest that any case might be referred to the chief for his decision: "Even a slave used to have rights of appeal to the king if he were starved or beaten without cause".[1] Neither describes the composition of the courts or the mechanism of appeal.

Legal procedure

695 Childs writes rather obscurely "Cases might be settled by ordeal or by decision of the king, and there was therefore room for appeal and retrial".[2]

One kind of ordeal, the ombulungu or poison ordeal, is described by Hambly.[3] It was used (only?) when the accused was thought to have committed murder by poison or sorcery. (If weapons were used, the accuser, usually a relative of the deceased, had the right to kill the murderer with the same kind of weapon.) If a woman were accused in this way, her son or brother would take her place in the poison ordeal.

The complainant in a suit is called ombile, the defendant ovilor, and the witness ovungi. Cushman states that no evidence is ever ruled out of court, and that each witness is required to give a complete account of all his dealings with the persons concerned in the case, so that the court may know on which side he is likely to be prejudiced.[4] Hambly[5] adds that formerly a witness had to make recompense to the man about whom he had told a lie, and probably received a beating as well. According to Cushman an Umbundu court may find that both parties are to blame in a case, and may fine or penalise both according to the degree of guilt. "If the chief is not satisfied, he simply gets up and leaves the court circle. This indicates that the evidence has not been satisfactory and more must be presented."[6]

● 672 In the absence of the delinquent, responsibility for crime was formerly transferred to a relative. If a thief escaped, responsibility would rest with a brother, a father, or a son. The mother's brother was often held responsible for the misdeeds of his sister's children, and would be expected to pay their debts.[7]

Punishments

685 A thief was punished by a beating and a fine paid to the persons from whom he had stolen.[8] An habitual thief was sold into slavery. He might be redeemed, but only if the authorities considered his reformation complete.[9] Murder was punishable by death, although this penalty might
682 be avoided by a heavy fine paid to the relatives, usually the mother,
694 mother's brother, or sister's son of the deceased. If the victim were of the royal family, the murderer might be put to death after the payment of the fine. The punishment for women murderers was the same as for men.[10] In adultery the woman was not punished, but a man was punished in the same way as a murderer, i.e. by death or a heavy fine. (Hambly gives the fine

(1) Hambly, op.cit., p.291.
(2) 1949, p.21.
(3) op.cit., p.202.
(4) 1944, pp.38-9.
(5) op.cit., p.201.
(6) 1944, p.39.
(7) Hambly, op.cit., p.201.
(8) Ibid., p.202.
(9) Cushman, 1944, p.39.
(10) Hambly, op.cit., pp.200-3.

586 When a woman divorces her husband to marry another man, she takes to her home all children under three years of age; other children go to the home of her parents.[1] There is no information concerning the fate of children when the man divorces his wife.

[591] Divorce cases are apparently brought before the court of the village headman only where the return of the marriage payment to the husband is long delayed or in some way unsatisfactory.[2]

LAND TENURE

923 There is virtually no information on Umbundu land usage. Childs states that land is inherited in the paternal line, i.e. by brother or son. Humbly suggests that "The right to land depends on its use and allotment by a chief (?) at the time of founding a village," and that "Rights seem to have been well defined and there was always enough room for a stranger". The meaning of neither of these statements is very clear.[3]

DOMESTIC SLAVERY

587 [592] Slaves were formerly taken in war, and, until very recently, as a result of a person's inability to pay his debts. In such a case not the debtor, but the debtor's sister's children were taken as slaves by the creditor. If the debt was paid later, the children were set free.[4] Today children instead of being sold into slavery may be expected to work for the creditor to pay off the debts of the mother's brother.[5] Childs writes "Slaves or former slaves have a status within the household or village which to the ordinary observer does not differ from that of the children: they are treated much as the children and they may carry on in all matters social and economic as though they were members of the family". He adds however that when there is a call for labour, the lot falls more often to a slave or a pawn.[6] Humbly, however, notes that formerly the master had rights of punishment including the death sentence, although an ill-treated slave might appeal to the village headman. Slave women were frequently taken as concubines, but were not lent out as prostitutes. A slave woman who married a free man would revert to her master along with her children when her husband died. All children of slaves became slaves of the master, who could dispose of the girls in marriage. If he himself married a slave girl, she would, at his death, become the property of his eldest brother and her children would go with her, although in some instances the woman and children might go to the mother's brother's son.

[727] It seems likely (although it is nowhere stated) that there was a clear distinction between slaves captured in war and slaves taken as a result of a debt; possibly the information quoted above from Humbly refers mainly to war captives.

(1) Humbly, op.cit., pp.182-3. (2) Ibid., p.193.
(3) Humbly, op.cit., p.201. Humbly states here that the system of land distribution is described in a later section of his book, but this section merely refers back to these remarks.
(4) Bastos (1906, p.33) adds that if a father redeemed his children, the maternal uncle lost his right to sell them into slavery.
(5) Humbly, op.cit., p.205. (6) 1945, p.42.

time to the village of the paramount chief. These periods spent away from home continue into adolescence. Not only relatives, but also friends, blood-brothers and vakuacisoko (see below) exchange children in this way. 604 857

Later childhood

No definite time marks the transition from early to later childhood, but there are marked differences between the two stages. As soon as the child is physically able, he begins to assume a definite role in the community. Soon after a child gets his permanent teeth, a notch in the form of an inverted V is chipped between the two upper front incisors. Formerly the beginning of the period was marked for the boy by his first trip with a trading caravan; today a boy of this age may begin to work in the fields with his father, or begin to learn a trade, or be sent to school. A girl starts to learn field-work and housework. 852 858

Professions

A boy is expected to learn the profession or occupation in which his father or his mother's brother is expert, and after that, should he wish to learn some other side-line profession, he may apprentice himself. All children, both boys and girls, are expected to learn to cultivate, but that is not counted as a profession. The principal occupations (professions) listed by Childs are: for girls, basket-making, pottery-making, medical practice and divination; for boys, mat-making, wood-working, rope-making, thatching, fishing, apiculture, hunting, smithing, and medical practice and divination. The last three, as has been mentioned above, are "sacred" and entered under special conditions. 462 868 [463]

"Later childhood, then, is the period of technical training during which it is expected that a large amount of economic responsibility will be assumed. A child begins to own property even before this, and from the beginning of childhood will be accounted legally responsible for his actions. It is recognised, however, that he should not be set tasks beyond the experience or ability of his age and that the full responsibility of adulthood will come only with marriage."(1) 866 [672]

The coming of European commerce, industry, and government has created new types of employment for boys and men, some of which cause a prolonged absence from the village and a loosening or severing of kinship ties. There are no estimates of the number of persons employed by Europeans, or the average length of their absence from home. 178 466

ADOLESCENCE(2)

Childs found that the onset of puberty was late, among the Ovimbundu, coming between fourteen and sixteen years for girls and between fifteen and seventeen years for boys. Soon after puberty young people generally stop sleeping in the parents' house. The girls congregate in kitchens and each boy builds himself a house, in which he will live through adolescence 882

(1) Childs, op.cit., p.110.
(2) Based on Childs, op.cit., pp.58-9 and 111-12.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FF13 Mbundu FF13

in return. Even a slave used to have rights of appeal to the king 643
if he were starved and beaten without cause. The king was the prime 177
mover in warfare. The whole legal system is at this time directly under Portuguese administration though the kings and chiefs have minor powers. Ngunga says that complainants who are dissatisfied with the decision of their own chief go to the Fort, meaning of course the Portuguese military post, or office of the Administrador.

There is no doubt that in former days the responsibility for crime 672
and debt was transferred to a relative in the absence of the delinquent. 604
If a thief escaped, responsibility would rest with a brother, a father or a son. The mother's brother was often held to be responsible for the misdeeds and debts of his sister's children. The mother's brother has rights that extend to the sale of his sister's children to pay his debts. For this reason Ngunga says, "If I have done wrong and they cannot catch me it is right that he (mother's brother) should pay for me."

I supposed the case of Ngunga having stolen a cow; he has been caught but escapes. Ngunga said that the man from whom he had stolen the animal would go to his (Ngunga's) mother's brother in order to name the price required for the cow, or any other possession which had been stolen. If the mother's brother thought the price reasonable he would pay. On the contrary, if the price claimed were [692]
too high the mother's brother would appeal, first to the village chief, then if necessary to the king.

Ownership of land does not appear to have been a source of dis- 423
pute. Apparently land was distributed by the chief as explained in dealing with village organization. Rights seem to have been well defined and there was always enough land for a stranger. When a [426]
man was going away on a trading journey he might lend his land to another who would agree to cultivate it and take the produce for a year. I was unable to satisfy myself that land is now, or was in time past held to be the property of dead ancestors. The right to land depends on its use and allotment by a chief at the time of [437]
founding a village. A man who intended to be absent would make a payment so that he might leave his goods at the house of another. The chief would settle any disputes arising from these arrangements.

The complainant in a suit is called *ombile*, the defendant is *ovilue*. 695
The name for a witness is *usangi*. In the old days a false witness had to make recompense to the man about whom he had told a lie; he would probably have a beating as well. A master was in every 672
way responsible for the actions of a slave. The degree of responsi-

672 bility of women is mentioned in describing the penalties for adultery and theft.

562 The penalties for offences against the king were undoubtedly
681 more severe than those imposed for the same offences against a commoner. Ngonga says that the punishments for crimes against a chief or medicine-man were, and are now, the same as the penalties for offences against any other person. It seems, however, that if the chief were a very powerful man, he could claim penalties which would have been appropriate for offences against a king.

695 A thief was punished by beating, in addition to which he would have to pay a fine to the people from whom he had stolen, but he rarely escaped without the beating. The thief would be beaten just as much for stealing one animal as he would for stealing many. If a woman stole from her neighbor's garden, those who caught her would tie her and take her to her husband, who would pay compensation and then beat her. A child caught stealing would be taken to the maternal uncle or to his own father. If a woman stole from relations she would probably have no punishment other than a beating. Her husband would have to compensate the relations. Stealing honey from hives is an offence that is punished according to the general laws relating to theft.

696 If a man was sentenced to a death penalty, or to a beating, there was an official appointed by the king or by the chief to see the sentence carried out. This representative was called *ukuenje welombe* which means "the servant, or minister, of the court."

682 Ngonga described the penalty for murder saying, "It was a terrible thing they did to the murderer. A tight triangle of wood was fastened on to his neck by a peg and to this a cord was attached so that he was suspended to the roof with his feet barely touching the ground. In some instances his head was placed through a hole in the door of his house while his body was inside the hut. He had very little food or water and people threw things at him. He was kept tied up for a month to see whether he could pay something. Suppose he could not pay, and nobody would pay for him, he was taken outside the village where his head was cut off. If he had many possessions, he said on the first day, 'If you will take this thing off my neck I will pay two oxen and two slaves.' The payment would be made, not to the wife or children of the murdered man, but to the brother of the mother of the murdered man, or to the mother of the murdered man, or to the son of a sister of the victim. If the murderer agreed to make the payment the people kept him tied up until the

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undu, and Ngalangi are said to have had conflicts. In time past, as at the present day, a king reigned over territory which was extensive but definitely delimited for purposes of administration. Encroachment of one king on the rights of taxation and administration of another led to raids and reprisals. Village chiefs collected taxes in the form of agricultural produce and gave these to the king, who personally visited a village from which payments had not been made. A folklore story begins, "The people had not paid taxes so the king came to the village and told them a parable." 721 651

A king, if young, accompanied his people on the warpath. There was, however, a permanent leader named *kesongo*, a derivative from *songola* ("to lead"). The declaration of war, likewise the tactics, were discussed by a council of *olosekulu* ("village chiefs") in the *ombala* ("capital") where the king had, and still has, a royal compound. If war had been conducted among sections of the Ovimbundu, the defeated people had to pay taxes and tribute; moreover, their women and cattle were taken. In event of a successful war against the Vachokue there was plundering of cattle and women, but it was not found practicable to exact periodical payments from the enemy. 726 [701 727

The subject of warfare is intimately related to that of slavery. There was until very recent times a domestic slavery which followed from the inability of a person to pay his debts. In connection with this reduction of free persons to a condition of slavery there are several points of exceptional interest. The debtor himself is not taken as a slave, neither are his wife or children. The correct procedure is a sale of his sister's children; but more frequently the children themselves are taken by the creditor. "The debtor's sister will say nothing because this is the law of the Ovimbundu." If payment of the debt is made later, the children are set free. Usually the word pawning is used by ethnologists to describe this proceeding. 686 567 672

Further consideration of Ngonga's payment to his mother's brother clarifies the facts of domestic slavery. "I paid for them, I took their place," said my interpreter. The payment for the return of these two children was two oxen. The girl, who was ten years of age when she was taken to pay the debt, was returned to her people when she was a woman with three children. Ngonga's brother was not actually taken from his home. He was made to pay his mother's brother's debt by working for the creditor. In general, these domestic slaves were not ill treated, though their rights were limited. The position of slaves taken from a hostile 567

A mourning widow must leave her hair loose and undressed, and 765
she has to wear a cloth which conceals her from crown to sole. For three days she is obliged to sleep close to the corpse of her husband with only a stick between them. The stick, which is about the length of the bed, is laid between the widow and the corpse. During this time she has no food, and her wailing is expected to be almost continuous day and night. When the corpse is tied and prepared for burial the widow says farewell to it. Relatives support the corpse and make it advance toward her, while she herself is held in the position of a bound corpse, and is supported by relatives who make her confront the dead body of her husband. The widow does not go to the funeral.

Mourning continues after the funeral, with fasting and periodical wailing at three o'clock in the afternoon, and again twelve hours later. At the end of a month of mourning the widow lies for one night in the place where the corpse of her husband lay the night before burial. At the beer-drinking which marks the end of the period of mourning a medicine-man guides the hand of the widow as she dips a ladle into the beer pot and distributes the beverage.

The widow may stay with her mother's brother or she may return 768
to her parents, but she must not become the wife of another man until a year has elapsed. The second husband will make a present 587
to the widow's parents or others who have taken her, but this gift will not be as valuable as if the groom were taking a virgin.

Tree burial I have not seen, but heard of it near Ngalangi, and 766
it has recently taken place at Cileso. Tree burial is the method for 672
disposing of the corpse of a person who has died in debt. Any one who gives interment to a corpse assumes responsibility for the debts; hence tree burial is the most convenient way of disposal.

An Ocimbundu from Bailundu said that in that district the 766
child is taken from the womb of a woman who has died pregnant. Food is placed on the lips of the removed foetus so that it will not induce the death of other pregnant women. Near Ngalangi a pregnant woman would be buried with the point of a long stick on her abdomen, and after the grave had been filled a blow would be given to the top of the stick.

The foregoing are the principal points of importance in the [565]
funeral rites of commoners. Ceremonies connected with the death and burial of medicine-men, kings, chiefs, and hunters require separate consideration.

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It is very difficult to say how much of the old law survives. One 681
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native life that is resisting subjugation.

Only two years ago Ngonga paid an ox to prevent one of his female 686
relatives from being pawned. Within the past ten years Ngonga has

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

(Plate XLV, Fig. 2). The house of bows for holding sacred relics will be described in connection with religion (Plate XLVI, Fig. 1). 644

In former days there used to be a hard mud floor for dancing, centrally placed in the village. 361 335

In the center of the village is the communal house where all men, and boys over four years of age, gather to eat their food, which is sent by the women. This *onjango* is the place of assembly for discussion of village affairs. A house of this kind at Bailundu is circular in form with a diameter of seventeen feet (Plate XLVIII, Fig. 1). In the middle of the *onjango* are stones forming a fireplace. In another such house there were jawbones of oxen. These were suspended from the walls as tokens of the payment of fines. There is no communal house for females. In some villages there is a common kraal for cattle. 344 [681] [417]

The king's compound usually contains: 644

(1) The king's house, which invariably has a separate sleeping room.

(2) A house and kitchen for each of his wives.

(3) A tomb for the burial of kings and their wives.

(4) The house of bows for staffs, bows, mats, and tobacco-pipes of dead chiefs.

(5) A house of meditation for the king (Plate LXXXIX, Fig. 1).

(6) Pens for pigs and chickens.

The guest houses (Plate XLVIII, Fig. 2) that I have seen were not in the king's compound. Granaries, which are conspicuous in every village, have been mentioned in connection with food supply (Plate XLIV, Fig. 1). Each house has its own granary. I have noticed garbage pits containing corn husks and refuse from sweet potatoes, but there is as a rule no organized scheme for disposing of refuse; dogs and pigs are the scavengers. There is no particular place for defecation; people use the bush. [485] 343 364

Every man has a knowledge of house-building. Women do not actually build, but, along with the children, they pour water into the clay pit and carry clay to the men who are plastering the walls. Ngonga says, "People would be surprised to see a woman building a house. They would call her a he-woman." Men help one another in house-building by giving reciprocal service for which there is a gift of food and beer. 462 476 [338]

A deep rectangular clay pit is made as close to the house as possible, and the children thoroughly enjoy puddling the clay with their 338

Nevertheless, the idea of crime is well developed, and there are many actions which are punishable because they contravene the laws of the tribe. Adultery is a crime on a par with theft; but adultery is not a sin. Suku, the supreme being, issues no commands. Ancestral spirits are concerned only with sacrifice and homage to themselves. There is no theory of punishment or reward in a future life according to conduct on earth. 771 688

Perhaps *ekandu* is the only word which could express sin. An Ocimbundu would say that murder is the chief *ekandu*. "*Ekandu* is to make anything have a bad time." To send a stranger along the wrong path is *ekandu*. It would be *ekandu* to throw an animal on the fire. It is *ekandu* if a man is guilty of fornication with his wife's sister. Such an act is said to be *ekandu* only if the wife's sister is visiting the house of the culprit. The male defaulter is regarded as blameless, but the people of the village from which the wife's sister came would be expected to pay the wronged wife. Sexual offences against young children are very serious. In fact the death penalty or banishment would be inflicted, and such offences are given by the Ovimbundu as examples of *ekandu*. 681 [684]

This subject of moral responsibility leads naturally into the question of laws and penalties. There are among the Ovimbundu well-defined moral codes and clearly formulated tribal laws which have been described in chapter VI. 671

FUNERAL RITES

COMMONERS

In the village of Cilema in the district of Elende I witnessed the funeral rites of a boy aged twelve years. When a few hundred yards from the village, I heard sounds of drumming coming from a secluded place in the tall grass. On reaching the clearing four drummers were seen, each of whom held a tubular drum between his legs; these drums were of different lengths. The man on the left of the drumming squad played with an up and down movement of his left hand only, to provide the bass tone. Other drummers played with the palms and fingers of both hands. Thirty feet from the drummers stood a group of women who always started the rhythm for the drums by clapping their hands, and the hand-clapping continued as an accompaniment for the drums. 764

Near-by, men were seated on the ground, while a large number of women walked about or sat on the ground chatting and smoking their pipes. The general impression was not one of solemnity.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

that the administration gets labour and money from the villagers, and largely though not exclusively through them that the villagers keep in touch with the post which politically integrates them into Angola and legally provides sanctions which they do not possess. The government headmen do not supervise on behalf of the post the daily life of their fellow-villagers. The government laws—such as the prohibition of beer- and rum-brewing and grass-burning (for hunts)—which if enforced would bring about a certain number of changes in Umbundu social life, are not enforced for many reasons—the administration makes no real attempt to suppress these uses as opposed to levying annual fines[15] per head, the government headmen go in for these customs themselves, and they lack the power to achieve this enforcement. Were the government to introduce policies involving some reorganization of the social life they would need a stronger form of local authority. Under the present circumstances, however, the powers and status of the chief and government headmen are quite consistent with the demands made on them by the post.

There were four government headmen in Gumba in 1955–6, Guilherme, Lupassa, Tjilombo (who became chief after the deposition of Lusase), and Walivanga. Guilherme was in 1955 living in Epalanga. Some people thought he should live in Kamupa which had been founded by his mother's brother Lusase—however, when he left Epalanga in 1956 he settled near the Protestant village of Kalungwengwe. His change of residence had been the result of violent quarrels with Paulo and other Epalanga people. Lupassa lived in Katembo, and was a sister's son of Kaluywa, who was the traditional headman. I do not think Lupassa was the dominating personality in Katembo. Tjilombo was on the other hand the leading personality in Tjisangu, many of its people being related to him. Walivanga was similarly linked by kin or affinal ties to the majority of the people of Belem.

The foregoing paragraph raises the question of the relationship of the government headman to the traditional headmen. A man who is both a government headman and a traditional headman is in a fairly strong position in his village; when the

[15] Each fine is about 10–20 escudos (2/6d.–3/-).

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

627 to the post. Somebody said to me 'Lusase wants a fine to be paid so that he can get something from it' (the chief traditionally [681] having a right to commission on a fine paid in a dispute which he had settled). Eventually the dispute did not go to the post, as Kapapelo paid a fine, and the matter dropped.

A great deal of detail has been given here, but it can be shown that consistencies can be extracted from what seems complete confusion.

578 Kapapelo had, no doubt, as was said, under the influence of drink, decided to carry on his conflict with Sapapula after the gathering at Justino's and had arrived at Sapapula's threatening to commit suicide. The threat of suicide was here [762] used as Guilherme had used it to put an opponent in a difficult position, but it infuriated Sapapula, who decided that he must try and get another hearing. He therefore turned again to 627 Justino, although the latter had previously decided against him; thus implying that even a possibly unfavourable judge is acceptable, rather than let a squabble continue indefinitely.

Eventually, owing to Justino's refusal to hear the case, what I have called a 'moot' was got together, a body which lacked any deciding, dominating figure, but represented the local community. This became concerned with the question of the 578 relation of Kapapelo and Sapapula as affected by the action of Kapapelo in respect of Sapapula's wife Nahoka. As has been mentioned in the chapter on marriage, the relation between a [837] man and his wife's lover is one of mystically manifested hostility. Sapapula by accusing Kapapelo of desiring to seduce his wife was indicating a very serious state of hostility between the two men; and one can only explain Kapapelo's confession to something of which he was not guilty as a mark of his hostility to Sapapula. Kapapelo was accused by Sapapula of attempting to do him a grievous wrong, and Kapapelo claimed that he had in fact done this wrong. Nahoka denied that she had wronged her husband, and produced evidence of her assertion. Before considering her arguments, it must be noted what were the interests of the other people involved in the case.

627 It might be suggested that Kafelo, Lusase, and Ngombe had to some extent the function of judges or at least arbitrators, and Sapapula had indeed invited Ngombe to give his opinion (I

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

754 attacks also upon the persons or possessions of enemies. This type of sorcery in a very common form involves the enslavement of the spirit of another person, often a child of one's own family or kin.[1] The person whose spirit is used may be killed either by violent or by magical means. Sorcery of this type is much feared, but if wealth supposedly gained by this means is used for the benefit of the kin, the sorcerer may be tolerated or even protected in the exercise of his black art. Beneficiaries do not often have qualms concerning the source of the benefits received. One who, by reason of his family connexions or his own power, has secured a strong position may escape interference. Jealousy or grudges, however, often bring out accusations from within the circle of kin. 754 Accusations may also be made by outsiders. With the decline in 682 influence which the tribal courts have suffered, and their inability to inflict capital punishment, sorcery is less frequently punished than formerly. The consequent reductions in the number of innocent victims is a gain. This same cause has operated, how- [177] ever, to increase dealings in, and fear of, sorcery. Most of the cases brought to European courts, and even to the Church, under the name of 'poisoning' are in reality accusations of sorcery.

178 In the foregoing brief note it has not been possible adequately 754 to treat the subject, but it will be seen that sorcery has long been a divisive influence in Umbundu life. It sometimes seriously affects the cohesion of the household and the larger kinship groups. Economic, political, and other forces now seem to be acting to increase the incidence of sorcery, the influence of which is probably a considerable factor in the present rapid disintegration of the Umbundu social structure.

The Hierarchy of Age

561 Passing references have been made to associations of coevals. The Ovimbundu recognize very definitely the hierarchy of age and consider orderly society quite impossible without it. One of the keenest criticisms of the European and his ways is contained in the aphorism:

Kundele ka ku li ukulu.
[538] In 'civilization' there is no senior.

To Umbundu wisdom this is an impossible state of affairs;

[1] The Umbundu term is *oku andeha*; *vide* ref. *infra*, p. 107, n. 1.

000 643 769 782 regent and incarnation" of the spirits. Sacrifices were made at the royal shrine or *kokoloto* ("at the skulls"), where the skulls of past chiefs were kept, in order to:-

[372] (i) control the elements i.e. to ensure a sufficient supply of rain and avoid the dangers caused by storms; also to control fire by providing a new fire ceremonially kindled[1] from which everyone took his fire.

[842] [241] (ii) to ensure fertility, towards which the royal marriage had great influence. The queen's special province was agriculture and her kitchen was sanctified by human sacrifice to guarantee the national food supply. Ceremonially treated seed was distributed to be mixed with the seed of each granary.

643 648 721 [701] (b) *To represent the country in its external relations*, principally to make trade agreements with other chiefs, or to make war on other peoples in order to get tribute and plunder. The war leader *(Kesongo)* has his own residence entirely separate from that of the king, whom he must not meet face to face except on certain ceremonial occasions.[2] Each king must inaugurate his reign with a war, during which or after which he must ceremonially "eat the old one" *(oku lia ekongo)* - who was usually a specially fattened slave [266] cooked with the flesh of the principal animals commonly eaten.[3]

643 692 (c) *To dispense justice.* The chief's court or *olusenje* was the supreme court of the chiefdom. The chief had the final word in any case, but most chiefs acted according to custom.

644 [882] (d) *To protect himself and the chiefdom*, the chief could use "magic" (?) which might have been accounted witchcraft or murder if practised without authority: e.g. the ritual murder of a pregnant woman, or of the children whose lives were required for building and furnishing the queen's kitchen.

643 791 (e) The chief made much use of divination in order to carry out his office. For this purpose he had his own diviner *(citue cososo)*, who was of the blood royal; but he also consulted diviners of other regions and types.

643 Succession to chiefship is in the male line,[4] from father to son, elder brother to younger brother or brother's son, or sometimes to one more distantly related. The election is made by the councillors whose duty it is (?), ordinarily before the old chief's death is announced. These same councillors may depose an unpopular chief, and there have been many such [642] depositions. This "democratic" tendency of the Ovimbundu has been noted by most writers. Childs points out that it is attested by the fact that a chief (formerly as well as today) works in his own fields, and by folk-tales which give incidental and intimate pictures of petty details in the lives of the chiefs*

(1) See above, p.26.
(2) In Bailundu he, with certain other officials, was of the stock of slaves of the state *(ovindili viososo)*.
(3) Childs, p.21. Many early writers refer to the cannibalism of the "Jagas" or "Imbangalas" who are thought to have been the Ovimbundu chiefs. (See above, p.8, and also Lacerda and Ravenstein, quoted by Childs, pp.17ff.)
(4) But *inheritance* is said to follow a different line among chiefs from among commoners; possibly inheritance is also in the paternal line. See Childs p.18.

* See footnote 1, p. 31

692 Hambly and Childs seem to suggest that any case might be referred to the
527 chief for his decision: "Even a slave used to have rights of appeal to the king if he were starved or beaten without cause".(1) Neither describes the composition of the courts or the mechanism of appeal.

Legal procedure

695 Childs writes rather obscurely "Cases might be settled by ordeal or by decision of the king, and there was therefore room for appeal and retrial".(2)

One kind of ordeal, the *ombulungu* or poison ordeal, is described by Hambly:(3) It was used (only?) when the accused was thought to have committed murder by poison or sorcery. (If weapons were used, the accuser, usually a relative of the deceased, had the right to kill the murderer with the same kind of weapon.) If a woman were accused in this way, her son or brother would take her place in the poison ordeal.

The complainant in a suit is called *ombile*, the defendant *ovilue*, and the witness *uvungi*. Cushman states that no evidence is ever ruled out of court, and that each witness is required to give a complete account of all his dealings with the persons concerned in the case, so that the court may know on which side he is likely to be prejudiced.(4) Hambly(5) adds that formerly a witness had to make recompense to the man about whom he had told a lie, and probably received a beating as well. According to Cushman an Umbundu court may find that both parties are to blame in a case, and may fine or penalise both according to the degree of guilt. "If the chief is not satisfied, he simply gets up and leaves the court circle. This indicates that the evidence has not been satisfactory and more must be presented."(6)

672 In the absence of the delinquent, responsibility for crime was formerly transferred to a relative. If a thief escaped, responsibility would rest with a brother, a father, or a son. The mother's brother was often held responsible for the misdeeds of his sister's children, and would be expected to pay their debts.(7)

Punishments

685 A thief was punished by a beating and a fine paid to the persons from whom he had stolen.(8) An habitual thief was sold into slavery. He might be redeemed, but only if the authorities considered his reformation complete.(9) Murder was punishable by death, although this penalty might
● 682 be avoided by a heavy fine paid to the relatives, usually the mother,
684 mother's brother, or sister's son of the deceased. If the victim were of the royal family, the murderer might be put to death after the payment of the fine. The punishment for women murderers was the same as for men.(10) In adultery the woman was not punished, but a man was punished in the same way as a murderer, i.e. by death or a heavy fine. (Hambly gives the fine

(1) Hambly, op.cit., p.201.
(2) 1949, p.21.
(3) op.cit., p.203.
(4) 1944, pp.38-9.
(5) op.cit., p.201.
(6) 1944, p.39.
(7) Hambly, op.cit., p.201.
(8) Ibid., p.202.
(9) Cushman, 1944, p.39.
(10) Hambly, op.cit., pp.202-3.

for murder as two oxen and two slaves; for adultery, two oxen, a pig, and a slave.) Today a man who has committed adultery sometimes takes the woman and all children under three years of age, but this is for the husband to decide. An adulterer with one of the chief's wives was castrated but not killed, and the castration might be compounded for a high fine, while he, his sisters, and the sons of his sisters would become slaves of the chief.(1) Hambly states finally that "Criminal law did not distinguish between responsibility for intentional and unintentional offences."(2) 682 684 671

There is no information regarding the kinds of cases tried or the punishments given in the courts of village headmen or sub-chiefs today.

INHERITANCE

It has been noted above that moveable property is inherited in the maternal line, land in the paternal line.(3) The eldest brother of the deceased's mother has the first claim and is responsible for settling disputes. He may distribute the property to the mother of the deceased, the maternal grandfather, or to a brother of the deceased, but is not compelled to do this. Women never inherit cattle or land, although the sisters of a deceased woman usually receive most of her household utensils (the rest belong to her husband). A widow goes to the house of (? marries) the eldest brother of the deceased or her own maternal uncle, or she may return to her father's village. Apparently her children accompany her, although one would expect them to go to her brother.(4) 428 768

DIVORCE

Divorce appears to be infrequent; grounds for divorce are many, but difficulties are often overcome by a compromise between the two kin groups concerned. Causes for dissatisfaction on the part of a husband include his wife's incompetence, dishonesty, physical weakness, or infidelity (in the last case today a fine from the adulterer is usually accepted and the marriage continues). Barrenness is not a ground for divorce; usually the husband takes a second wife, but the first maintains her position as head wife. Sterility in the male is sometimes suspected, in which case the husband may try another girl, with his wife's consent, or the woman another man. A woman may divorce a man if he is impotent (not sterile), or if he ill-treats her, but not because he is unfaithful. If for any of these reasons the woman returns to her family, the latter are expected to return the marriage payment, although they may wait until another suitor appears who will pay the deserted husband. Whether the initiative in divorce is taken by the woman or the man, the marriage is not annulled until a renunciatory ceremony has been carried out by the husband, the wife, and the wife's father, in the presence of the village headman. The husband receives from his wife's father a roll of tobacco and a pig, and then places leaves(5) and palm oil on his wife's back; he then slaps his wife's back saying "It is finished". 586 [842]

(1) Hambly, op.cit., p.203. (2) Loc.cit.
(3) See above, p.18, and Childs, 1949, p.44.
(4) Hambly, (2) 1934, p.199.
(5) The leaf used is of the apu tree; the same leaf is tied to the pole of the ifemba of a new village, as a sign of divorce from the old site. (Childs, 1949, p.38; this is the only context in which Childs mentions divorce.)

672 bility of women is mentioned in describing the penalties for adultery and theft.

562 The penalties for offences against the king were undoubtedly
681 more severe than those imposed for the same offences against a commoner. Ngonga says that the punishments for crimes against a chief or medicine-man were, and are now, the same as the penalties for offences against any other person. It seems, however, that if the chief were a very powerful man, he could claim penalties which would have been appropriate for offences against a king.

685 A thief was punished by beating, in addition to which he would have to pay a fine to the people from whom he had stolen, but he rarely escaped without the beating. The thief would be beaten just as much for stealing one animal as he would for stealing many. If a woman stole from her neighbor's garden, those who caught her would tie her and take her to her husband, who would pay compensation and then beat her. A child caught stealing would be taken to the maternal uncle or to his own father. If a woman stole from relations she would probably have no punishment other than a beating. Her husband would have to compensate the relations. Stealing honey from hives is an offence that is punished according to the general laws relating to theft.

696 If a man was sentenced to a death penalty, or to a beating, there was an official appointed by the king or by the chief to see the sentence carried out. This representative was called *ukuenje welombe* which means "the servant, or minister, of the court."

682 Ngonga described the penalty for murder saying, "It was a terrible thing they did to the murderer. A tight triangle of wood was fastened on to his neck by a peg and to this a cord was attached so that he was suspended to the roof with his feet barely touching the ground. In some instances his head was placed through a hole in the door of his house while his body was inside the hut. He had very little food or water and people threw things at him. He was kept tied up for a month to see whether he could pay something. Suppose he could not pay, and nobody would pay for him, he was taken outside the village where his head was cut off. If he had many possessions, he said on the first day, 'If you will take this thing off my neck I will pay two oxen and two slaves.' The payment would be made, not to the wife or children of the murdered man, but to the brother of the mother of the murdered man, or to the mother of the murdered man, or to the son of a sister of the victim. If the murderer agreed to make the payment the people kept him tied up until the

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fines were in their hands. If he murdered one of the royal family 682
he was killed after he had paid the fine." The punishment of a woman [562]
who has committed a murder is the same as that for a man.

Ombulungu is the name given to trial by poison ordeal. The 695
medicine-man holds out both his hands, in each of which there is a potato, only one of which is poisoned. The accused man says, "If I have done this thing, this potato will be poison for me. If I have not done this thing, this potato will be food for me." The complainant says, "If this is not the man who poisoned my brother, this potato will be poison for me." They sit in front of the medicine-man, and each must take the potato in the hand opposite to him. The poison makes a man very sick. His mouth swells so that he cannot speak.

When a woman was accused of murder her son or her brother [562]
would take her place in the poison ordeal. A boy of fifteen years of age would have the same treatment as a man. "I don't think a girl would kill anybody. I never heard about it," said Ngonga. It appears that resort was made to a medicine-man when the accused was thought to have committed murder by poison or magic. If the murderer used weapons, the accuser, who was usually a relative, was entitled to kill him with the kind of weapon used for the crime.

The penalties for adultery were the same as those for murder. 684
The woman appears to have escaped punishment, except that "her husband would not have her any more." The male adulterer had to pay the husband; if he could not pay or escape, the husband had the right to kill him. In the old days the price for adultery was two oxen, a pig, and a slave. At the present day a man who has committed adultery and made payment, possibly takes the woman and all children under three years of age. The husband has the right to decide whether the adulterer has the privilege of taking the woman and her children. An adulterer with one of the king's wives was castrated but not killed. He might, instead of mutilation, pay a very [567]
high price, while he himself along with his sisters and the sons of his sisters, would become slaves of the king. If a man could not pay, he might be sold as a slave in order to provide money for the fine. Criminal law did not distinguish between responsibility for inten- [671]
tional and unintentional offences.

It is very difficult to say how much of the old law survives. One 681
feels that underneath the ostensible Portuguese rule there is an active 177
native life that is resisting subjugation.

Only two years ago Ngonga paid an ox to prevent one of his female 686
relatives from being pawned. Within the past ten years Ngonga has

whole supernatural world... The divining basket is the concrete medium through which the spirits reveal their will to their descendants on earth, and warn them of dangers, human or supernatural".[1] 787

SORCERERS AND WITCHES

Sorcerers and witches are not clearly distinguished. Both are called olongunga, and have powers over one or more malignant spirits whom they can send anywhere to kill, steal, or torment. These "familiar spirits" are sometimes called *otulo ndumba*, and are held responsible for all mysterious disappearances of maize, beans and other possessions, as well as for many illnesses and deaths. Some sorcerers are said to own small images which they send out at night. Others are said to dance naked at night at the door of the intended victim's house. When sorcery involves killing by physical means, portions of the victim's body may be used to make "medicine" or charms.[2] 754 776

A person may be a sorcerer without knowing it, and may deny it when accused by the diviner. If he does so, he and his accuser undergo the *ombulungu* (poison test),[3] to discover who is in the right.[4] Concerning accusation of sorcery, Childs writes "Any marked success ... by an individual, especially when such success has been achieved by an individual alone or in partnership, but not in co-operation with a number of persons, often brings on suspicion of sorcery. Should the results of such success be distributed widely....suspicion is less likely to arise....An open accusation of sorcery *(oku sunga owanga)* is a very serious matter and will not often be made lightly. Such accusations are made both within and across kinship lines. Affinal relatives are quite often accused of sorcery, and suspicion frequently rests upon wives whose kinship connexions are in distant regions...".[5] 754 683 [578]

The tendency or aptitude for sorcery is supposed to be inherited by a daughter, or a son, or a nephew from the mother, uterine or classificatory, from the mother's brother etc. It is said that older relatives take younger ones as apprentices and partners.[6] The aim of a person who consciously takes up sorcery is said usually to be economic advancement. A very common form involves the enslavement of the spirit of another person, often a child of one's own family or kin group; the victim may be killed by either physical or magical means. Childs points out that sorcery is one of the greatest internally disruptive forces within the kin group and social system of the Ovimbundu. He notes that jealousy and grudges often bring accusations from within the circle of kin, but does not describe what happens when the charges have been made and verified. Especially in view of his statement that economic, political and other forces now seem to be acting to increase the incidence of sorcery,[7] it would be interesting to have information concerning its possible connection with segmentation of lineages or village groups, or its relation to tensions between the paternal and maternal groups of relatives. 754 [829] 754 578

(1) Tucker, op.cit., p.201.
(2) Childs, personal communication.
(3) The *ombulungu* is administered by the medicine-man, and causes sickness but not death. See Tucker, op.cit., and Hambly, (2) 1934, p.203.
(4) Tucker, op.cit.
(5) Childs, 1949, p.57.
(6) Childs, personal communication.
(7) Childs, 1949, p.58.

683 One of the commonest forms of punishment for sorcery was, and still is, banishment. Only the chief could pronounce the death penalty. Charges of sorcery are sometimes brought today to civil courts and to church courts under the guise of "poisoning".(1)

781 There are obvious gaps in the information on Umbundu religion and magic e.g. on spirits other than those of ancestors; on ritual connected
776 with the ancestors; on productive and protective magic; on the work of the medicine-man as distinct from the diviner, and on the functions of
171 the two separate offices of family priest. From existing accounts, however, Umbundu magico-religious concepts would appear to have much in common with those of the peoples to the east of the Plateau, and many of the words used for these concepts (*ngombo*, *ohumbo*, *wanga*, *ngonga* e.g.) are in fact the same. These peoples have been described in another section of the Survey.(2)

THE LIFE CYCLE

852 Childs' chapters on infancy, childhood, and adolescence form the
114 main part of his book, and his treatment of the subject is much more detailed and on a deeper level than information offered by other writers,(3) and should be consulted.

BIRTH

844 A woman remains in her husband's village for the birth of her children. During the first birth, she is generally assisted by older women of the village, usually relatives of the husband. No man is present unless delayed labour entails the presence of a medical practitioner, or a
[845] diviner. Difficult delivery is said to be caused by broken taboos, adultery on the part of the mother, sorcery, or the woman's own refusal to give birth. There is little ceremony connected with childbirth, and a woman may give birth to her second and later children alone when she is
[846] in the fields. There is a customary lying-in period until the cord falls from the navel, but this is frequently ignored today.

845 *Twins* are welcomed but are considered prodigies whose birth requires the administrations of an *ocinbanda*.(4) Soon after the birth, and every month while the children are growing, the whole village takes part in a ceremony to preserve their lives. In the case of triplets, one is given to the paramount chief.(5)

553 *Naming* usually takes place, in the case of a first-born, on the day of its birth. Childs notes several factors:

(a) The name *(onduko)* should have been borne by a relative, whether living or dead, whose character and [illegible] of well-being are satisfactory; sometimes the child may be considered the re-incarnation of the deceased relative after whom he is named.†

(1) Childs, personal communication. (2) McCulloch, 1951, pp.72-83.
(3) Hambly, (2) 1934, pp.212-33, and Cushman, 1944.
(4) Ennis, 1945. (5) Childs, 1949, p.83.

† [Childs, op. cit., p. 87.]

682 Hambly and Childs seem to suggest that any case might be referred to the
567 chief for his decision: "Even a slave used to have rights of appeal to the king if he were starved or beaten without cause".(1) Neither describes the composition of the courts or the mechanism of appeal.

Legal procedure

695 Childs writes rather obscurely "Cases might be settled by ordeal or by decision of the king, and there was therefore room for appeal and retrial".(2)

One kind of ordeal, the *ombulungu* or poison ordeal, is described by Hambly:(3) It was used (only?) when the accused was thought to have committed murder by poison or sorcery. (If weapons were used, the accuser, usually a relative of the deceased, had the right to kill the murderer with the same kind of weapon.) If a woman were accused in this way, her son or brother would take her place in the poison ordeal.

The complainant in a suit is called *ombile*, the defendant *ovilue*, and the witness *uvangi*. Cushman states that no evidence is ever ruled out of court, and that each witness is required to give a complete account of all his dealings with the persons concerned in the case, so that the court may know on which side he is likely to be prejudiced.(4) Hambly(5) adds that formerly a witness had to make recompense to the man about whom he had told a lie, and probably received a beating as well. According to Cushman an Umbundu court may find that both parties are to blame in a case, and may fine or penalise both according to the degree of guilt. "If the chief is not satisfied, he simply gets up and leaves the court circle. This indicates that the evidence has not been satisfactory and more must be presented."(6)

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Punishments

685 A thief was punished by a beating and a fine paid to the persons from whom he had stolen.(8) An habitual thief was sold into slavery. He might be redeemed, but only if the authorities considered his reformation complete.(9) Murder was punishable by death, although this penalty might
682 be avoided by a heavy fine paid to the relatives, usually the mother,
684 mother's brother, or sister's son of the deceased. If the victim were of the royal family, the murderer might be put to death after the payment of the fine. The punishment for women murderers was the same as for men.(10) In adultery the woman was not punished, but a man was punished in the same way as a murderer, i.e. by death or a heavy fine. (Hambly gives the fine

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(7) Hambly, op.cit., p.201.
(8) Ibid., p.202.
(9) Cushman, 1944, p.39.
(10) Hambly, op.cit., pp.202-3.

for murder as two oxen and two slaves; for adultery, two oxen, a pig, and a slave.) Today a man who has committed adultery sometimes takes the woman and all children under three years of age, but this is for the husband to decide. An adulterer with one of the chief's wives was castrated but not killed, and the castration might be compounded for a high fine, while he, his sisters, and the sons of his sisters would become slaves of the chief.(1) Hambly states finally that "Criminal law did not distinguish between responsibility for intentional and unintentional offences."(2) 682 684 671

There is no information regarding the kinds of cases tried or the punishments given in the courts of village headmen or sub-chiefs today.

INHERITANCE

It has been noted above that moveable property is inherited in the maternal line, land in the paternal line.(3) The eldest brother of the deceased's mother has the first claim and is responsible for settling disputes. He may distribute the property to the mother of the deceased, the maternal grandfather, or to a brother of the deceased, but is not compelled to do this. Women never inherit cattle or land, although the sisters of a deceased woman usually receive most of her household utensils (the rest belong to her husband). A widow goes to the house of (? marries) the eldest brother of the deceased or her own maternal uncle, or she may return to her father's village. Apparently her children accompany her, although one would expect them to go to her brother.(4) 428 768

DIVORCE

Divorce appears to be infrequent; grounds for divorce are many, but difficulties are often overcome by a compromise between the two kin groups concerned. Causes for dissatisfaction on the part of a husband include his wife's incompetence, dishonesty, physical weakness, or infidelity (in the last case today a fine from the adulterer is usually accepted and the marriage continues). Barrenness is not a ground for divorce; usually the husband takes a second wife, but the first maintains her position as head wife. Sterility in the male is sometimes suspected, in which case the husband may try another girl, with his wife's consent, or the woman another man. A woman may divorce a man if he is impotent (not sterile), or if he ill-treats her, but not because he is unfaithful. If for any of these reasons the woman returns to her family, the latter are expected to return the marriage payment, although they may wait until another suitor appears who will pay the deserted husband. Whether the initiative in divorce is taken by the woman or the man, the marriage is not annulled until a renunciatory ceremony has been carried out by the husband, the wife, and the wife's father, in the presence of the village headman. The husband receives from his wife's father a roll of tobacco and a pig, and then places leaves(5) and palm oil on his wife's back; he then slaps his wife's back saying "It is finished". 586 [842]

(1) Hambly, op.cit., p.203. (2) Loc.cit.
(3) See above, p.18, and Childs, 1949, p.44.
(4) Hambly, (2) 1934, p.199.
(5) The leaf used is of the apu tree; the same leaf is tied to the pole of the etambo of a new village, as a sign of divorce from the old site. (Childs, 1949, p.38; this is the only context in which Childs mentions divorce.)

613 *mai* (or *oluina*) mean "family of my mother." These terms seem to indicate a bilateral rather than a unilateral lineage. Inquiry did not show that there were totems for the mother's or the father's people, or that marriage into any particular local group was com-
631 manded or enjoined. A village is a unit under the administration of a chief (*sekulu*) and as such is part of a large group of villages forming a kingdom ruled by a king (*osoma*), but such village units are concerned with government and warfare, not with exogamy.

613 In tracing descent an Ocimbundu gives the names of relatives of
565 both the father and mother, but commoners are unlikely to know the names of their relatives beyond the grandparent class. The children of a king were at one time able to recite many generations
[582] of ancestors along both parental lines. But if the king had married a commoner, as he was allowed to do after choosing his first wife from the royal line, the children knew only the genealogy of their father. This is obvious since the commoner mother would not be likely to know her line of descent. The son of a village chief (*sekulu*) may marry a commoner, but, according to Ngonga, the *sekulu*, his father, "would have a very good look at her."

582 Ngonga had not heard of the marriage of brothers and sisters,
565 not even in the royal family; the idea of such a union was new and repulsive to him. In Umbundu society there would be no necessity for such a marriage as that of brother and sister or other close relative, because members of a royal family of one part of the country could intermarry with members of a royal family in some area far away. There might, for example, be marriages between the royal families of Bailundu and Ngalangi, which are two principal kingships of the Ovimbundu confederacy.

835 When asked what would be the fate of a man who committed
incest with his blood daughter or uterine sister, Ngonga said he would
● 684 be killed by his brother or by his mother's brother. If he escaped he would have to go far away so that his people could never see him again. If a fine were accepted for incest, the culprit would have to pay his own kin "because he had shamed them."

601 Table A, Ngonga's Own Generation, calls attention to a plurality of terms for brother and sister according to the relative ages of the speaker and the person addressed. Moreover, there is a term for direct address and another which is used when speaking of a brother or sister.

Ngonga was questioned with regard to forms of address for his brothers and sisters other than the children of his uterine mother.

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Social Life

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he was killed after he had paid the fine." The punishment of a woman [562]
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Ombulungu is the name given to trial by poison ordeal. The 695
medicine-man holds out both his hands, in each of which there is a potato, only one of which is poisoned. The accused man says, "If I have done this thing, this potato will be poison for me. If I have not done this thing, this potato will be food for me." The complainant says, "If this is not the man who poisoned my brother, this potato will be poison for me." They sit in front of the medicine-man, and each must take the potato in the hand opposite to him. The poison makes a man very sick. His mouth swells so that he cannot speak.

When a woman was accused of murder her son or her brother [562]
would take her place in the poison ordeal. A boy of fifteen years of age would have the same treatment as a man. "I don't think a girl would kill anybody. I never heard about it," said Ngonga. It appears that resort was made to a medicine-man when the accused was thought to have committed murder by poison or magic. If the murderer used weapons, the accuser, who was usually a relative, was entitled to kill him with the kind of weapon used for the crime.

The penalties for adultery were the same as those for murder. 684
The woman appears to have escaped punishment, except that "her husband would not have her any more." The male adulterer had to pay the husband; if he could not pay or escape, the husband had the right to kill him. In the old days the price for adultery was two oxen, a pig, and a slave. At the present day a man who has committed adultery and made payment, possibly takes the woman and all children under three years of age. The husband has the right to decide whether the adulterer has the privilege of taking the woman and her children. An adulterer with one of the king's wives was castrated but not killed. He might, instead of mutilation, pay a very [567]
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It is very difficult to say how much of the old law survives. One 681
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native life that is resisting subjugation.

Only two years ago Ngonga paid an ox to prevent one of his female 686
relatives from being pawned. Within the past ten years Ngonga has

Nevertheless, the idea of crime is well developed, and there are many actions which are punishable because they contravene the laws of the tribe. Adultery is a crime on a par with theft; but adultery is not a sin. Suku, the supreme being, issues no commands. Ancestral spirits are concerned only with sacrifice and homage to themselves. There is no theory of punishment or reward in a future life according to conduct on earth. 771 688

Perhaps *ekandu* is the only word which could express sin. An Ocimbundu would say that murder is the chief *ekandu*. "*Ekandu* is to make anything have a bad time." To send a stranger along the wrong path is *ekandu*. It would be *ekandu* to throw an animal on the fire. It is *ekandu* if a man is guilty of fornication with his wife's sister. Such an act is said to be *ekandu* only if the wife's sister is visiting the house of the culprit. The male defaulter is regarded as blameless, but the people of the village from which the wife's sister came would be expected to pay the wronged wife. Sexual offences against young children are very serious. In fact the death penalty or banishment would be inflicted, and such offences are given by the Ovimbundu as examples of *ekandu*. 681 [684]

This subject of moral responsibility leads naturally into the question of laws and penalties. There are among the Ovimbundu well-defined moral codes and clearly formulated tribal laws which have been described in chapter VI. 671

FUNERAL RITES

COMMONERS

In the village of Cilema in the district of Elende I witnessed the funeral rites of a boy aged twelve years. When a few hundred yards from the village, I heard sounds of drumming coming from a secluded place in the tall grass. On reaching the clearing four drummers were seen, each of whom held a tubular drum between his legs; these drums were of different lengths. The man on the left of the drumming squad played with an up and down movement of his left hand only, to provide the bass tone. Other drummers played with the palms and fingers of both hands. Thirty feet from the drummers stood a group of women who always started the rhythm for the drums by clapping their hands, and the hand-clapping continued as an accompaniment for the drums. 764

Near-by, men were seated on the ground, while a large number of women walked about or sat on the ground chatting and smoking their pipes. The general impression was not one of solemnity.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

groups began to make the socio-geographical function of these 582
marriages no longer the renewal of ties with distant kin but the 602
holding together of the local community no longer held in the firm framework of the old local organization.

Several explanations can therefore be given for preferential 582
marriages. From the point of view of the man making such a marriage there are economic advantages in the probably lower bridewealth and, formerly, the avoidance of the fine payable on the death of a non-related wife. The marriage itself is more likely to be stable, and a man's children are more likely to stay with him if they have other kin close at hand. The local mobility of the Ovimbundu to some extent assists marital stability, since a bride arriving in a village may well find there other kin than her husband and his relatives, and may find such relatives helpful to her.

From an observer's view-point, preferential marriage is important on the village and neighbourhood level by multiplying social links within them. Its importance for the kinship system lies in its giving significance to the distinction between kin and non-kin and in keeping kinsfolk together without either localization of kinship groups or villages with strong headmen.

2. *Husband, Wife, and Household*

Traditionally the Ovimbundu lived chastely till marriage, 836
and there existed sanctions in the form of fines, alterations in 684
the marriage ceremony, and mystically caused illness, against unchastity.[7] The force of these sanctions has weakened in modern times;[8] however, many Ovimbundu remain chaste until marriage.

The age of marriage is about twenty-two for a man, and about 582
eighteen for a girl. In Gumba there is some tendency to marry younger at about 16–17. Villagers in Epalanga ascribed this to contract labour, that is, to the necessity of a contract labourer having to have someone to cook for him. This is a point which will be considered later in reference to the wife's services to her

[7] Hastings, p. 121. Childs, p. 119.

[8] Childs, loc. cit., and fieldwork.

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587 patrilateral cross-cousin, the reason for this being apparently to enable him to look after the children. Other marriages of a widow with her dead husband's kin were and are forbidden under pain of mystical sanctions. Thus, marriage with one's [684] dead wife's sister would lead to the latter's death through her sister's spirit. Illness or death was suggested as the penalty for marriage with a mother's brother's widow, although I know of two cases of such marriages happening. The reason for this prohibition against any marriage by a widow or widower with the kin of a deceased spouse is given as being that it is wrong to mix the blood.

684 Adultery is subject to mystical sanctions in the illness called *ondjamba* which seems to involve swelling of the legs. This afflicts not the guilty party but the other spouse (whether husband or wife) and the children.[18] I was also told by some informants that this illness affected the other spouse if there were no children; if there were children adultery would endanger their lives and the life of the innocent spouse. Some [183] people do not believe in this nowadays; however the line between believers and non-believers cannot be equalled with that between pagan and Christian or old and young. It is of course impossible to say how frequent adultery is in any community. Informants complain of the frequency of adultery. It should be noted that public opinion seems to condemn it strongly, and men who have discovered their wives being unfaithful usually send them away. The adulterer has to pay a heavy fine, assuming that he does not move away. The usual figure given for a fine was two cattle and a big pig, though in practice the fine would be smaller; in one case in 1948 it was 200 escudos (£2 10s.) and a pig. The word for the man who commits adultery with one's wife, or who marries one's ex-wife, is *tjikwelume* (he of jealousy) a word already referred to in the account of the kinship terminology. There is a rule against eating with him and if one goes to his funeral it is said that one's own death will soon follow. There is a similar rule against a woman eating with the wife of a man with whom she has committed adultery.

[18] For a detailed discussion of this concept, see Hastings, pp. 111–25. It is not nowadays believed that it afflicts people guilty of pre-marital sexual relations.

question of Kapapelo's intention towards Nahoka, but criticized Kapapelo for reopening his quarrel with Sapapula. Kapapelo (who did not strike me as particularly intelligent) was wandering about more or less ignoring the criticisms which had been made of him, which greatly annoyed the assembly. At length, Kapapelo, urged to speak by Lusase, did so. 627

Kapapelo stated that he had committed adultery with Nahoka, Sapapula's wife, and asked to be fined for adultery. This created a fresh uproar. Nahoka got up and said that the question was within the competence of Lusase since he and not Kafelo was now the chief. She denied that she had committed adultery. As evidence against this, she pointed out that Kapapelo's wife had visited her house to eat mush, and that Kapapelo's conduct when he came to Sapapula's kitchen showed that she had not committed adultery. Antonio Kasoma (see List II, p. 55) said that it was necessary to decide how much Kapapelo should pay. [644]

Kapapelo's wife joined in to support her husband's confession, saying that Kapapelo had given Nahoka soap. Sapapula declared that Kapapelo was worthless, and had received everything he had from Sapapula. Some people called on Kapapelo to work sorcery. Kafelo suggested that Kapapelo should pay 150 escudos (£1. 17s. 6d.). The meeting now broke up, some people saying that the post should be informed and that Kapapelo had (illicit) rum in his house. One of the Menga men said that in the past even attempted seductions were punished. Sapapula demanded a payment of 500 escudos or a big pig, for Kapapelo's offences of not showing respect to Sapapula, and attempting adultery. He seemed more inclined, however, to take the case to the post, since (he claimed) Kapapelo was threatening to kill him. Kapapelo refused to pay.

The argument now swirled round, Kapapelo wavering between paying and not paying, Sapapula wavering between going to the post and being ready to accept a fine. Kafelo and Lusase both favoured a payment. People said that Guilherme was responsible for this. Paulo, Kusumula and Ndjoleya all urged Kapapelo to pay. Sapapula had now moved off, and was eventually followed by everybody else. Various wrangles continued over the question of paying a fine or having recourse

692 Hambly and Childs seem to suggest that any case might be referred to the
567 chief for his decision: "Even a slave used to have rights of appeal to the king if he were starved or beaten without cause".[1] Neither describes the composition of the courts or the mechanism of appeal.

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672 bility of women is mentioned in describing the penalties for adultery and theft.

562 The penalties for offences against the king were undoubtedly
681 more severe than those imposed for the same offences against a commoner. Ngonga says that the punishments for crimes against a chief or medicine-man were, and are now, the same as the penalties for offences against any other person. It seems, however, that if the chief were a very powerful man, he could claim penalties which would have been appropriate for offences against a king.

685 A thief was punished by beating, in addition to which he would have to pay a fine to the people from whom he had stolen, but he rarely escaped without the beating. The thief would be beaten just as much for stealing one animal as he would for stealing many. If a woman stole from her neighbor's garden, those who caught her would tie her and take her to her husband, who would pay compensation and then beat her. A child caught stealing would be taken to the maternal uncle or to his own father. If a woman stole from relations she would probably have no punishment other than a beating. Her husband would have to compensate the relations. Stealing honey from hives is an offence that is punished according to the general laws relating to theft.

696 If a man was sentenced to a death penalty, or to a beating, there was an official appointed by the king or by the chief to see the sentence carried out. This representative was called *ukuenje welombe* which means "the servant, or minister, of the court."

682 Ngonga described the penalty for murder saying, "It was a terrible thing they did to the murderer. A tight triangle of wood was fastened on to his neck by a peg and to this a cord was attached so that he was suspended to the roof with his feet barely touching the ground. In some instances his head was placed through a hole in the door of his house while his body was inside the hut. He had very little food or water and people threw things at him. He was kept tied up for a month to see whether he could pay something. Suppose he could not pay, and nobody would pay for him, he was taken outside the village where his head was cut off. If he had many possessions, he said on the first day, 'If you will take this thing off my neck I will pay two oxen and two slaves.' The payment would be made, not to the wife or children of the murdered man, but to the brother of the mother of the murdered man, or to the mother of the murdered man, or to the son of a sister of the victim. If the murderer agreed to make the payment the people kept him tied up until the

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Only two years ago Ngonga paid an ox to prevent one of his female 686
relatives from being pawned. Within the past ten years Ngonga has

686 actually paid to redeem his brother and sister who were sold to pay the debts of his maternal uncle. Officialdom is one thing and actual [177] practice is another. Ngonga is right when he says that people appeal to the native law as laid down by the chief or king. If they are not satisfied they pretend a great respect for Portuguese law and therefore go to the Administrador.

WARFARE AND SLAVERY

648 726 The Ovimbundu have been for centuries an organized people possessed of a well-developed language, a legal system, and complex social organization. In trade and travel too, the Ovimbundu have been in the vanguard of African tribes. These reasons, in conjunction with the fact of numerical superiority and early contact with the Portuguese, would account for the success of the Ovimbundu in warfare. The defensive federations existing between the ten or twelve main political units, whereby they did not habitually war on each other, helped to assure success. Should the eldest son of a king's (643) principal wife be thought unsuitable as successor, a competent son of the deceased king was elected by a council of village chiefs.

411 There is no evidence that the Ovimbundu poisoned their weapons, neither do they do so today. The Ovimbundu do not use a shield at the present time, neither is it certain that they had shields in former times. A skin-covered powder-box was carried in the king's train when on the warpath.

718 Signaling-drums were about two feet long. They were made from a cylinder of wood over the ends of which skin was stretched. Signaling, which was accomplished by drumming with the palms of the hands, was the task of boys who resided in the king's compound, except when they accompanied him to war or on a trading journey. There was no system of smoke signaling. The iron war gong was named *ongonge*, but the instrument is nowadays tapped by the assistant of a medicine-man during his performance. In former times the gong was struck in the night to give assurance that the enemy was not in sight.

726 In war the oldest son of a king or of a chief went ahead of the war party accompanied by a few men who wore red leaves on their foreheads.

721 Intertribal jealousies, raiding for cattle and slaves, also reprisals for interference with caravan trade, were the chief causes of conflict with surrounding peoples. There was undoubtedly some internal warfare within the confederacy. The Ovimbundu of Elende, Bail-

undu, and Ngalangi are said to have had conflicts. In time past, 721
as at the present day, a king reigned over territory which was
extensive but definitely delimited for purposes of administration.
Encroachment of one king on the rights of taxation and administra- 651
tion of another led to raids and reprisals. Village chiefs collected
taxes in the form of agricultural produce and gave these to the king,
who personally visited a village from which payments had not been
made. A folklore story begins, "The people had not paid taxes
so the king came to the village and told them a parable."

A king, if young, accompanied his people on the warpath. There 726
was, however, a permanent leader named *kesongo*, a derivative from [701
songola ("to lead"). The declaration of war, likewise the tactics,
were discussed by a council of *olosekulu* ("village chiefs") in the
ombala ("capital") where the king had, and still has, a royal com-
pound. If war had been conducted among sections of the Ovim- 727
bundu, the defeated people had to pay taxes and tribute; moreover,
their women and cattle were taken. In event of a successful war
against the Vachokue there was plundering of cattle and women,
but it was not found practicable to exact periodical payments
from the enemy.

The subject of warfare is intimately related to that of slavery. 686
There was until very recent times a domestic slavery which followed 567
from the inability of a person to pay his debts. In connection with 672
this reduction of free persons to a condition of slavery there are
several points of exceptional interest. The debtor himself is not
taken as a slave, neither are his wife or children. The correct proce-
dure is a sale of his sister's children; but more frequently the children
themselves are taken by the creditor. "The debtor's sister will say
nothing because this is the law of the Ovimbundu." If payment of
the debt is made later, the children are set free. Usually the word
pawning is used by ethnologists to describe this proceeding.

Further consideration of Ngonga's payment to his mother's
brother clarifies the facts of domestic slavery. "I paid for them,
I took their place," said my interpreter. The payment for the
return of these two children was two oxen. The girl, who was ten
years of age when she was taken to pay the debt, was returned to
her people when she was a woman with three children. Ngonga's
brother was not actually taken from his home. He was made to
pay his mother's brother's debt by working for the creditor. In
general, these domestic slaves were not ill treated, though their
rights were limited. The position of slaves taken from a hostile 567

775 suffers sickness or misfortune if an ancestral spirit dies a second death. A person who has bad health says, "The spirit of my grandfather has been caught by *Esuvi*." The name of the good spirit *Osande* is used by a person who is suffering. Such a one says, "I have no more *Osande*." These instances clearly reveal a belief in the dependence of human welfare on the interest of benevolent ancestral spirits.

775 791 753 After a lapse of three months I asked Ngonga again about *Osande* and *Ondele*. He confirmed what he had previously said, but spoke in the plural of these spirits; good spirits are called *Olosande*, bad spirits are called *Olondele*. The medicine-man will visit a hut to foretell the future, and while there he puts a concoction in an image to which he addresses questions. He plugs his nostrils, then in a falsetto voice feigns answers from the image. The father of a family, or possibly the mother's brother, may kill an animal in front of the hut on this occasion. He then says to *Olosande*, "We hope when [761] we kill this there will be no more sickness." The Ovimbundu are afraid of death, and they therefore sacrifice to *Olosande*, asking that there shall be no death in the family.

775 I do not know whether the Ovimbundu distinguish multiple souls as some Negro tribes do. The part of a man which does not die is sometimes called *utima*, which is the word for heart. Dr. M. W. Ennis says that the *utima* and the *omuenyo* are both names of the spirit existing in a living body. Ngonga seems certain that every person irrespective of age, rank, and sex has a spirit, but I could find no evidence that the Ovimbundu visualize a separation of ranks or sexes after death. When a man kills himself he is buried 762 near a river so that his spirit will go to the sea, and for the same 775 reason a murdered man is buried near a river. At Ngalangi I inquired from other Ovimbundu people concerning suicide. Women who commit suicide generally do so by hanging or drowning. Men stab themselves in the heart or use a flintlock gun, the trigger of which they pull with their toes. It is feared that the spirit of a suicide will return to induce another suicide in the family, therefore there is anxiety to rid the community of these spirits.

RELIGIOUS BELIEFS AND CONDUCT

771 688 The Ovimbundu have many high standards of conduct, some of which have been mentioned in dealing with the education of children. There is, however, no idea of sin. That is to say, there are no commands laid down by some authority which is more than human.

Nevertheless, the idea of crime is well developed, and there are many actions which are punishable because they contravene the laws of the tribe. Adultery is a crime on a par with theft; but adultery is not a sin. Suku, the supreme being, issues no commands. Ancestral spirits are concerned only with sacrifice and homage to themselves. There is no theory of punishment or reward in a future life according to conduct on earth. 771 688

Perhaps *ekandu* is the only word which could express sin. An Ocimbundu would say that murder is the chief *ekandu*. "*Ekandu* is to make anything have a bad time." To send a stranger along the wrong path is *ekandu*. It would be *ekandu* to throw an animal on the fire. It is *ekandu* if a man is guilty of fornication with his wife's sister. Such an act is said to be *ekandu* only if the wife's sister is visiting the house of the culprit. The male defaulter is regarded as blameless, but the people of the village from which the wife's sister came would be expected to pay the wronged wife. Sexual offences against young children are very serious. In fact the death penalty or banishment would be inflicted, and such offences are given by the Ovimbundu as examples of *ekandu*. 681 [684]

This subject of moral responsibility leads naturally into the question of laws and penalties. There are among the Ovimbundu well-defined moral codes and clearly formulated tribal laws which have been described in chapter VI. 671

FUNERAL RITES

COMMONERS

In the village of Cilema in the district of Elende I witnessed the funeral rites of a boy aged twelve years. When a few hundred yards from the village, I heard sounds of drumming coming from a secluded place in the tall grass. On reaching the clearing four drummers were seen, each of whom held a tubular drum between his legs; these drums were of different lengths. The man on the left of the drumming squad played with an up and down movement of his left hand only, to provide the bass tone. Other drummers played with the palms and fingers of both hands. Thirty feet from the drummers stood a group of women who always started the rhythm for the drums by clapping their hands, and the hand-clapping continued as an accompaniment for the drums. 764

Near-by, men were seated on the ground, while a large number of women walked about or sat on the ground chatting and smoking their pipes. The general impression was not one of solemnity.

29

advancement, will go to the head of their *oluina* to ask for his intercession with the spirits.[1] 613

As legal head of the village, the *sekulu yimbo* presides over both the more serious cases, which are held before the whole village on the dance-floor, and the simpler ones, which require the attendance only of those concerned, together with their respective elders, and may be taken up either in the *onjango* or in the headman's own courtyard. Hambly seems to suggest that all the section-heads act with the village headman as a kind of council, but does not give details. He states also that the *olosekulu* (sing. *sekulu*) of the village formerly had charge of trials for murder, theft, adultery, and arguments over land,[2] and points out that they were more active in the legal system than the chiefs.[3] This is even more true today, when the village court of justice continues to function in spite of political and administrative changes, although the offices of chiefs and to some extent of sub-chiefs have largely decayed. 622 623 691 [177]

Other functions of the village headman include: the distribution of land to the various families when new village sites are opened;[4] the direction of the communal fire-hunts;[5] and, today, the collecting of taxes from the villagers and the direction and organisation of labour to work on the roads.[6] But however numerous the headman's official duties, he usually finds some time to attend to his own affairs, whether he is a farmer, hunter, or trader.[7] 622 423 651 466 [463]

Succession to headmanship is usually from father to son or from elder to younger brother, "with only as much recognition of primogeniture as belongs to the general ... hierarchy of age."[8] Succession is, however, affected by the "democratic" tendencies in succession to chieftainship.[9] 622 643

The Chief (osoma or *sova)*[10]

The Ovimbundu are grouped in 22 chiefdoms, of which half were in the past generally tributary to the more powerful chiefs.[11] At the same time each chiefdom had its separate government and could be considered as a unit in itself. Effective European occupation and direct rule have atrophied the chiefly office among the Ovimbundu, until today chiefs survive as little more than "living museum pieces".[12] Childs[13] enumerates the functions of the chiefly office as follows: 631 643 [177]

(a) *Religious.* The chief's ancestral spirits were the principal chiefdom deities, and the king was high-priest as well as the visible "vice-regent and incarnation" of the spirits. 643 793 769

(1) Childs, personal communication.
(2) The maternal uncle is responsible for settling disputes over property which occur within the *oluina*. (Hambly op.cit., p.200).
(3) Ibid. (4) Ibid.
(5) Cushman, op.cit., p.115. (6) Ibid., p.121.
(7) Childs, op.cit., p.36. (8) Ibid., p.44.
(9) Ibid.
(10) *Osoma* means chief or king. *Soma* is the personalised form used with the name. This the Portuguese writers have corrupted into *sova* or *soba*. (Childs, personal communication)
(11) See above, p.2.
(12) Childs, op.cit., p.20. (13) Ibid.

lives of chiefs.[1]

The chief's council and court 642

It has been noted that there is a chiefdom council responsible for electing the chief or deposing him, and for sitting with him in law cases. The composition of this council has not been clearly described.[2]

The Sub-chief

The chiefdom[3] was made up of a number of sub-chiefdoms called *atumbu* (sing. *etumbu*); Bailundu had about 200 *atumbu*, each of which had from 3 to more than 300 villages, while a number of the larger *atumbu* were themselves made up of smaller ones. About 20 *atumbu* were ruled by members of the chiefly family, including heirs apparent or expectant, and the chief's wife *(inakulu)* had also her own sub-chiefdom.[4] Others were ruled by court officials not of royal birth, who sometimes themselves established dynasties, others again by dynasties native to the respective regions, or at least dynasties longer resident in the area than the chiefly family. Villages of sub-chiefs, like those of chiefs, are known as *olombala*. Most of the *atumbu* are still recognised, and the sub-chiefs have retained more of their old functions than have the chiefs, and have in addition been given new functions. They as well as village headmen are required to assist in assessing and collecting native tax,[5] and also in recruiting labour for government work and for contracts. In some areas they receive in return the remission of their own taxes. On the dancing floor of most of their *olombala* cases are still heard, judgments given and fines received, although such judgments are not officially recognised or allowed by the European authorities.[6]

643 631 [177] [651] [692]

LAW

Courts

Very little information is available. We are told that certain disputes, e.g. concerning inheritance, are settled within the *oluina*;[7] that in the village cases are tried by a council which apparently consists of the section-heads under the leadership of the village headman;[8] and that these village courts continue to function; that certain cases (unspecified) are still unofficially heard in the courts of the sub-chiefs; and that prior to European occupation the paramount chief's decision was final.

691 693

(1) Ibid., p.23. But chiefs were treated with respect; Hambly (1934, p.214) notes that the ancient custom was for commoners to fall on their knees when greeting a chief, and today this still applies to women and children although less often to men. (2) See Serpa Pinto, 1881, p.167.
(3) Most writers use "kingdom" and "king"; "chief" when used here without qualification refers always to the paramount chief of one of the 22 chiefdoms.
(4) Magyar, 1851, pp.389f, also quoted by Childs, op.cit., p.24.
(5) The amount of the tax levied on all males from 16 years is now Ags. 200,000 annually. As noted by Childs (p.215-6), it has been steadily increasing. Opportunities for earning are comparatively small in Angola, not now for lack of work, but because of "contract labour" required of all males in addition to taxes. Payment for "contract labour" is considerably below current wages, and it is a great hindrance to productive agricultural activities. (Childs, personal communication) (6) Childs, op.cit., pp.24-5.
(7) Hambly, (2) 1934, p.200. (8) See above, p.29.

586 When a woman divorces her husband to marry another man, she takes to her home all children under three years of age; other children go to the home of her parents.(1) There is no information concerning the fate of children when the man divorces his wife.

[591] Divorce cases are apparently brought before the court of the village headman only where the return of the marriage payment to the husband is long delayed or in some way unsatisfactory.(2)

LAND TENURE

423 There is virtually no information on Umbundu land usage. Childs states that land is inherited in the paternal line, i.e. by brother or son. Hambly suggests that "The right to land depends on its use and allotment by a chief (?) at the time of founding a village," and that "Rights seem to have been well defined and there was always enough room for a stranger". The meaning of neither of these statements is very clear.(3)

DOMESTIC SLAVERY

567 [572] Slaves were formerly taken in war, and, until very recently, as a result of a person's inability to pay his debts. In such a case not the debtor, but the debtor's sister's children were taken as slaves by the creditor. If the debt was paid later, the children were set free.(4) Today children instead of being sold into slavery may be expected to work for the creditor to pay off the debts of the mother's brother.(5) Childs writes "Slaves or former slaves have a status within the household or village which to the ordinary observer does not differ from that of the children: they are treated much like children and they may carry on in all matters social and economic as though they were members of the family". He adds however that when there is a call for labour, the lot falls more often to a slave or a pawn.(6) Hambly, however, notes that formerly the master had rights of punishment including the death sentence, although an ill-treated slave might appeal to the village headman. Slave women were frequently taken as concubines, but were not lent out as prostitutes. A slave woman who married a free man would revert to her master along with her children when her husband died. All children of slaves became slaves of the master, who could dispose of the girls in marriage. If he himself married a slave girl, she would, at his death, become the property of his eldest brother and her children would go with her, although in some instances the woman and children might go to the mother's brother's son.

[727] It seems likely (although it is nowhere stated) that there was a clear distinction between slaves captured in war and slaves taken as a result of a debt; possibly the information quoted above from Hambly refers mainly to war captives.

(1) Hambly, op.cit., pp.182-3. (2) Ibid., p.183.
(3) Hambly, op.cit., p.201. Hambly states here that the system of land distribution is described in a later section of his book, but this section merely refers back to these remarks.
(4) Bastos (1909, p.33) adds that if a father redeemed his children, the maternal uncle lost his right to sell them into slavery.
(5) Hambly, op.cit., p.205. (6) 1940, p.42.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

(*c*) *In hunting*, deities other than the king's ancestors were 776
invoked, especially *Hũvĩ*, the hunters' god, and *Kuanja*, a goddess, 224
both of which had their own shrines and priests. These may have 643
been connected with the country or with its earlier inhabitants (the kings being recognized as late comers). At the inaugural hunt the offices were assigned. The king's character was supposedly [787]
revealed by the sex of the animal killed at this hunt: 'If the duiker[1] is a female, then it is good indeed, but if a male, then the king is a real person but he habitually will become angry to excess' (*Nda ombambi yaco omange ciwa muẽlẽ, puaĩ nda ulume, Soma omunu puaĩ o tema tema enene*).

2. *To represent the nation in its external relations*, i.e. (*a*) *To make* 643
agreements with other kings to promote trade, and (*b*) *To make war* 648
on other peoples in order to provide his court with tribute and his 701
warriors with plunder. The war leader (*Kesongo*) had his own residence and establishment entirely separate from that of the king, whom he must not meet face to face except on certain state occasions. In Bailundu he, with certain other officials, was of the stock of the slaves of the state (*ovinduli viosoma*) who came from Luandu in the Songo country. Each king must inaugurate his [721]
reign with a war, during or after which he must ceremonially 'eat the old one' (*oku lia ekongo*)—a feast consisting of the flesh of a [266]
specially fattened slave cooked with the flesh of the principal animals commonly eaten.

3. *To dispense justice*. In point of time consumed, this question 643
was very important, for it occupied much of the time of both 692
rulers and ruled. Good evidence of this is in the number of proverbs used at court, second only in number to those used for the education of the young. The king's court (*olusenje*) was the supreme court of the nation where cases were continually heard and 'fines eaten' (*oku lia ovimbu*). Cases might be settled either [695]
by ordeal or by decision of the king, and there was therefore room for appeal and re-trial. The king's word, however, was final, as the proverb has it: *O popia onganji, o mãlãpo osoma*. (The advocate speaks, the king finishes [decides].) The king was not generally arbitrary in his decisions but was bound not only by the customs of his people, but also by the desires of his councillors. Among the legitimate kings of the Ovimbundu there were comparatively few of the revolting and wholesale punishments which were so

[1] The duiker, *ombambi* (*Silvicapra grimmii leucoprosopus*).

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

643 common at African courts. A few Umbundu rulers carried on
692 such practices, and especially certain self-constituted robber-barons such as Samakaka, who left Viye after the military occupation and established himself first in Bimbe (Mbimbi), later in Huambo (Wambu), and then at Elende, until taken by the Portuguese authorities in 1903.

643 4. In order to protect himself and the nation, *the king had resort*
754 *to magical means*, some of which would be accounted witchcraft or murder if practised without authority. Such were the ritual murders of *Katõkõlã* (The Strangler), *Oku ipa ukaĩ watimba avali* (killing the woman of two bodies, i.e. pregnant), of the children whose lives were required for building and furnishing the queen's kitchen, &c.

791 5. In order properly to carry out the functions of his office, *the*
643 *king made much use of divination*, for which purpose he had his own diviner (*Citue cosoma*), who was of the blood royal. He also called in or consulted diviners of many regions and of many types, one of the commonest of which was the 'Diviner of the Basket' (*Ocimbanda congombo*).[1]

643 The king was a divine representative and a divine incarnation,
642 but the mode of his succession reveals that he was also a democratically chosen leader. Note has been made of the fact that the royal succession is in the male line, sometimes from father to son, but more often from elder to younger brother, to brother's son, or to one even more distantly related. The election is made by the councillors whose duty it is, ordinarily before the old king's death is announced, but these same councillors may depose an unpopular
[669] king. There have been many revolutions and *coups d'état*. This fact was noted by several early observers, among whom I cite one who wrote in 1837:

> The government of 'Bailundo' is democratic. These heathen mix with the infamous humiliations of the orientals, the unbridled coarseness of the English people at election times in England. The kings defer to and flatter their counsellors; these are they who elevate a king to the throne and also who cast him down.[2]

[1] A rather cursory description of divination as practised by this type of diviner was given by Hambly, op. cit., pp. 274–6. For a fuller treatment, *vide* L. S. Tucker, 'The Divining Basket of the Ovimbundu', *J.R.A.I.* (London), 1940, vol. lxx, pp. 171–201.

[2] C. de Almeida Sandoval in *Annaes do Cons. Ultr.*, Ser. I, p. 519. The reference to English elections reminds one of Dickens. See also P. M. Pinheiro de

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

631 ones. This situation was reported by Magyar, when he wrote,
635 'Quibanda (should be Civanda) to the east has 500 villages. The Chief has great power. He sends tribute every year to the king of Bailundu but is himself fully independent.'[1] Magyar described about 15 *atumbu* or '*ovikandscho*',[2] as he called them, of Bailundu.
[161] He estimated the population of Bailundu at 450,000, and for all the kingdoms of the Ovimbundu 1,200,000,[3] figures which are
[175] probably not very different from present-day facts. The report and description of the 'Capitania de Benguella' in 1799 said that the king of Bailundu dominated 2,056 villages; the king of Viye, 886; and the king of Ngalangi, 900; and listed their 'feudos' respectively as 82, 54, and 78.[4] My list of the Ngalangi *atumbu* shows 112. In Bailundu about 20 *atumbu* were ruled by members of the royal family, including heirs apparent or expectant, and the queen (*Inakulu*), who also had her own establishment.[5] About 20 were ruled by other court officials.

621 Most of these *atumbu* are still recognized as such or as *olombala*.[6]
622 Their decay has not been as great as that of the *ombala*[6] of their
177 liege lord, for they still fulfil certain functions in native life. They have also been given new functions by the administrative authorities.
[651] The minor chiefs as well as village headmen are all required to assist in assessing and collecting the native tax, and also in recruiting labour for government works and for contracts. In some areas they receive in return the remission of their own taxes. In some areas they are required to wear uniforms. On the dancing floors
[692] of most of these minor *olombala* courts are still held, justice determined, and (to a limited extent) fines 'eaten'. Such judgements are not officially recognized or allowed by the European authorities. The African, however, often finds that European courts do not meet his needs or accord with his concepts of justice.

[1] Magyar, op. cit., p. 389.

[2] Umbundu *ovikanjo* (plural), 'branches', a term which through commercial or European influence is applied to the *atumbu*.

[3] For these figures and for descriptions of the several kingdoms, see Magyar, op. cit., chap. ix.

[4] *Annaes Mar. e Col.*, 4a Ser., pp. 155 ff.

[5] Magyar, op. cit., p. 390.

[6] *Olombala*, plural of *ombala*, a capital village or chief's residence.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

The Village Headman

622 The village headman (*Sekulu yimbo*) is in a very real sense the father of the villagers. Considering their relationship to him as shown by the survey of Ngendo, it is no surprise to find that to nearly all of the householders the headman is quite literally either 'father' (*tate*) or 'elder brother' (*kota*). The headman is literally the patriarch. He is also therefore the village priest. His com-
[769] pound is the only one in the village which has a spirit hut (*etambo*). In this hut the elder prays to ancestral spirits and holds communion (*oku felevela*) with them. In case of need, he may spend an entire night or more so occupied, but he will often offer a prayer when he awakens during the night. This hut is also used as a store-room for possessions not used every day and here are kept the insignia of office. The elder may sleep in this hut at any time when he is not sleeping with one of his wives, and here also he may lodge respected guests.

622 The headman functions as a Justice of the Peace for the village.
692 The graver and more difficult cases are heard before the whole village on the dance-floor, while the simpler ones which require the attendance only of those concerned, together with their respective elders, are taken up either in the *onjango* or in the headman's own courtyard. Through all and in spite of all political and administrative changes, the village court of justice continues and will continue to function.

622 It is evident from the above that a headman may have much or
554 little to do in attending to the affairs of his village, depending on several factors, such as the number of the villagers, their attitudes and disposition toward each other, relations with neighbouring villages, the demands made upon the village by the authorities, &c. However numerous may be his 'official duties', he will still find some time to attend to his own affairs, whether he be a farmer, a hunter, or a trader. In former times and before he became village headman, Sikililẽ was a trader and caravan leader (*ofumbelo*, Portuguese: *pombeiro*), and made many trips to the regions of Ngangela. As a headman he returned to farming and although he seemed to be quite old at the time of my visits, he had a creditable little plot of tobacco. It may be of interest to note that only the headman may speak of the village as 'my village' (*imbo liange*). The heads of the little wards may speak thus possessively only of

000 643 769 782 regent and incarnation" of the spirits. Sacrifices were made at the royal shrine or *kokokoto* ("at the skulls"), where the skulls of past chiefs were kept, in order to:-

[372] (i) control the elements i.e. to ensure a sufficient supply of rain and avoid the dangers caused by storms; also to control fire by providing a new fire ceremonially kindled(1) from which everyone took his fire.

[842] [241] (ii) to ensure fertility, towards which the royal marriage had great influence. The queen's special province was agriculture and her kitchen was sanctified by human sacrifice to guarantee the national food supply. Ceremonially treated seed was distributed to be mixed with the seed of each granary.

643 648 721 [701] (b) *To represent the country in its external relations*, principally to make trade agreements with other chiefs, or to make war on other peoples in order to get tribute and plunder. The war leader *(Kesongo)* has his own residence entirely separate from that of the king, whom he must not meet face to face except on certain ceremonial occasions.(2) Each king must inaugurate his reign with a war, during which or after which he must ceremonially "eat the old one" *(oku lia ekongo)* - who was usually a specially fattened slave cooked with the flesh of the principal animals commonly eaten.(3) [266]

643 692 (c) *To dispense justice.* The chief's court or *olusenje* was the supreme court of the chiefdom. The chief had the final word in any case, but most chiefs acted according to custom.

644 [882] (d) *To protect himself and the chiefdom*, the chief could use "magic" (?) which might have been accounted witchcraft or murder if practised without authority: e.g. the ritual murder of a pregnant woman, or of the children whose lives were required for building and furnishing the queen's kitchen.

643 791 (e) The chief made much use of divination in order to carry out his office. For this purpose he had his own diviner *(citue cosoma)*, who was of the blood royal; but he also consulted diviners of other regions and types.

643 Succession to chiefship is in the male line,(4) from father to son, elder brother to younger brother or brother's son, or sometimes to one more distantly related. The election is made by the councillors whose duty it is (?), ordinarily before the old chief's death is announced. These same councillors may depose an unpopular chief, and there have been many such depositions. This "democratic" tendency of the Ovimbundu has been noted [642] by most writers. Childs points out that it is attested by the fact that a chief (formerly as well as today) works in his own fields, and by folk-tales which give incidental and intimate pictures of petty details in the lives of the chiefs.*

(1) See above, p.26.
(2) In Bailundu he, with certain other officials, was of the stock of slaves of the state *(ovindili viososo)*.
(3) Childs, p.21. Many early writers refer to the cannibalism of the "Jagas" or "Imbangalas" who are thought to have been the Ovimbundu chiefs. (See above, p.8, and also Lacerda and Ravenstein, quoted by Childs, pp.17ff.)
(4) But *inheritance* is said to follow a different line among chiefs from among commoners; possibly inheritance is also in the paternal line. See Childs p.18.

* See footnote 1, p. 31

lives of chiefs.[1]

The chief's council and court 646

It has been noted that there is a chiefdom council responsible for electing the chief or deposing him, and for sitting with him in law cases. The composition of this council has not been clearly described.[2]

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643 631 [177] [651] [692]

LAW

Courts

Very little information is available. We are told that certain disputes, e.g. concerning inheritance, are settled within the *oluina*;[7] that in the village cases are tried by a council which apparently consists of the section-heads under the leadership of the village headman;[8] and that these village courts continue to function; that certain cases (unspecified) are still unofficially heard in the courts of the sub-chiefs; and that prior to European occupation the paramount chief's decision was final.

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(1) Ibid., p.23. But chiefs were treated with respect; Hambly (1934, p.214) notes that the ancient custom was for commoners to fall on their knees when greeting a chief, and today this still applies to women and children although less often to men. (2) See Serpa Pinto, 1881, p.167.
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(5) The amount of the tax levied on all males from 16 years is now Ags. 200,000 annually. As noted by Childs (p.215-6), it has been steadily increasing. Opportunities for earning are comparatively small in Angola, not now for lack of work, but because of "contract labour" required of all males in addition to taxes. Payment for "contract labour" is considerably below current wages, and it is a great hindrance to productive agricultural activities. (Childs, personal communication) (6) Childs, op.cit., pp.24-5.
(7) Hambly, (2) 1934, p.200. (8) See above, p.29.

682 Hambly and Childs seem to suggest that any case might be referred to the
527 chief for his decision: "Even a slave used to have rights of appeal to the king if he were starved or beaten without cause".[1] Neither describes the composition of the courts or the mechanism of appeal.

Legal procedure

695 Childs writes rather obscurely "Cases might be settled by ordeal or by decision of the king, and there was therefore room for appeal and retrial".[2]

One kind of ordeal, the *ombulungu* or poison ordeal, is described by Hambly:[3] It was used (only?) when the accused was thought to have committed murder by poison or sorcery. (If weapons were used, the accuser, usually a relative of the deceased, had the right to kill the murderer with the same kind of weapon.) If a woman were accused in this way, her son or brother would take her place in the poison ordeal.

The complainant in a suit is called *ombile*, the defendant *ovilue*, and the witness *uvangi*. Cushman states that no evidence is ever ruled out of court, and that each witness is required to give a complete account of all his dealings with the persons concerned in the case, so that the court may know on which side he is likely to be prejudiced.[4] Hambly[5] adds that formerly a witness had to make recompense to the man about whom he had told a lie, and probably received a beating as well. According to Cushman an Umbundu court may find that both parties are to blame in a case, and may fine or penalise both according to the degree of guilt. "If the chief is not satisfied, he simply gets up and leaves the court circle. This indicates that the evidence has not been satisfactory and more must be presented."[6]

672 In the absence of the delinquent, responsibility for crime was formerly transferred to a relative. If a thief escaped, responsibility would rest with a brother, a father, or a son. The mother's brother was often held responsible for the misdeeds of his sister's children, and would be expected to pay their debts.[7]

Punishments

685 A thief was punished by a beating and a fine paid to the persons from whom he had stolen.[8] An habitual thief was sold into slavery. He might be redeemed, but only if the authorities considered his reformation complete.[9] Murder was punishable by death, although this penalty might
682 be avoided by a heavy fine paid to the relatives, usually the mother,
684 mother's brother, or sister's son of the deceased. If the victim were of the royal family, the murderer might be put to death after the payment of the fine. The punishment for women murderers was the same as for men.[10] In adultery the woman was not punished, but a man was punished in the same way as a murderer, i.e. by death or a heavy fine. (Hambly gives the fine

(1) Hambly, op.cit., p.201.
(2) 1949, p.21.
(3) op.cit., p.203.
(4) 1944, pp.38-9.
(5) op.cit., p.201.
(6) 1944, p.39.
(7) Hambly, op.cit., p.201.
(8) Ibid., p.202.
(9) Cushman, 1944, p.39.
(10) Hambly, op.cit., pp.202-3.

428 not entitled to inheritance of land, cattle, or anything else belonging to the dead man. The greater part of the property would be bequeathed to the eldest brother of the deceased's mother.

428 604 768 There appears to be discussion as to the distribution of property, but the maternal uncle is responsible for settling disputes. He himself has the first claim, and in Ngonga's words, "If there are quarrels about the cattle, land, and other things, the mother's eldest brother will settle them."

The mother's brother has rights over his sister's children even to the extent of pawning them to pay his own debts. On the other hand the maternal uncle is responsible for the conduct of his sister's children. He would have to pay fines incurred by thefts they committed, and he provides for his sister's son a wife who is either his daughter or his widow.

Ngonga stated that the maternal uncle does not invariably take all the property of a deceased nephew for himself. He may give something to the deceased's mother, the deceased's maternal grandfather, or to a brother of the deceased. Such gifts appear to be the outcome of good will on the part of the dead man's maternal uncle; [421] there is no compulsion. Women never inherit cattle or rights to the use of land.

423 692 622 The king is the head of the legal system, though his activities as such are not so great as those of the village headman (*sekulu*). The *olosekulu* (there are usually more than one) of a village witness the final act in a divorce ceremony. They used to have charge of trials for theft, murder, adultery, likewise the right of settling arguments concerning the ownership of land. It was the *sekulu* who distributed the land to the extended families when a new village site was opened. The maternal uncles settled the minor divisions among the limited families.

643 There are many kings among the Ovimbundu, but I thought that there was a tendency to confuse the titles of *osoma* ("king") and *sekulu* ("headman" or "chief" of a village). The jurisdiction of a king is so well known that any person is able to say under which king he lives. Ngonga said definitely that a man of the Ovimbundu who was under the jurisdiction of a certain king would have to obey the commands of a visiting king, provided they were not in any way disapproved of by the king to whom first allegiance was due.

643 [465] A chief may demand labor for the building of his house or the cultivation of his land. He does not pay for this but usually gives beer to the workers; sometimes he secures the labor and gives nothing in return.

in return. Even a slave used to have rights of appeal to the king 000 643
if he were starved and beaten without cause. The king was the prime 177
mover in warfare. The whole legal system is at this time directly under Portuguese administration though the kings and chiefs have minor powers. Ngonga says that complainants who are dissatisfied with the decision of their own chief go to the Fort, meaning of course the Portuguese military post, or office of the Administrador.

There is no doubt that in former days the responsibility for crime 672
and debt was transferred to a relative in the absence of the delinquent. 604
If a thief escaped, responsibility would rest with a brother, a father or a son. The mother's brother was often held to be responsible for the misdeeds and debts of his sister's children. The mother's brother has rights that extend to the sale of his sister's children to pay his debts. For this reason Ngonga says, "If I have done wrong and they cannot catch me it is right that he (mother's brother) should pay for me."

I supposed the case of Ngonga having stolen a cow; he has been caught but escapes. Ngonga said that the man from whom he had stolen the animal would go to his (Ngonga's) mother's brother in order to name the price required for the cow, or any other possession which had been stolen. If the mother's brother thought the price reasonable he would pay. On the contrary, if the price claimed were [692]
too high the mother's brother would appeal, first to the village chief, then if necessary to the king.

Ownership of land does not appear to have been a source of dis- 423
pute. Apparently land was distributed by the chief as explained in dealing with village organization. Rights seem to have been well defined and there was always enough land for a stranger. When a [426]
man was going away on a trading journey he might lend his land to another who would agree to cultivate it and take the produce for a year. I was unable to satisfy myself that land is now, or was in time past held to be the property of dead ancestors. The right to land depends on its use and allotment by a chief at the time of founding a village. A man who intended to be absent would make [437]
a payment so that he might leave his goods at the house of another. The chief would settle any disputes arising from these arrangements.

The complainant in a suit is called *ombile*, the defendant is *ovilue*. 695
The name for a witness is *uvangi*. In the old days a false witness had to make recompense to the man about whom he had told a lie; he would probably have a beating as well. A master was in every 672
way responsible for the actions of a slave. The degree of responsi-

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

634 become *inakulu* (queen) because she feared the unpleasant
178 haunting by the spirits of former queens which is traditionally
269 experienced by the holder of this office.[12] On one occasion
[775] Lusase himself offered to let me into the *akokoto* (the enclosure where the skulls of dead chiefs were kept) for the payment of five or ten escudos (1s. 3d. or 2s. 6d.) although the entry of anybody except the chief and possibly certain of his courtiers appears traditionally to have been forbidden under the penalty of death sent by the spirits. Even the surviving rites are confined to the chief's village; the first-fruits ceremony in which the
[796] whole chiefdom was involved disappeared a number of years ago. The association general in Umbundu country between
634 the chiefs and paganism does not provide an added ritual
771 sanction to the chief's power, but rather links him with what is felt to be a dying past, essentially unimportant, at the present day.

692 The chief may also have some of his time occupied with hearing cases. A good many minor disputes are solved by local adjudication, but there seems to be no specific division between cases that ought to come to the chief and those which can be arbitrated by somebody else. Elders from outside a chiefdom may be invited to adjudicate on a particular case. The old formality of legal procedure has largely disappeared, probably because all disputes at a local level can be carried to the post—hence any ruling by chief or elders is essentially dependent on its acceptance by the disputants.

754 Accusations of sorcery are rather different from other cases since the post does not believe them, although such an accusation is not in itself punishable. Sometimes suspected sorcerers are accused at the post of 'poisoning'.[13] Lusase told me that convicted sorcerers were fined a chicken, a goat and a pig. Gregorio, the chief of Menga, at first said, when I asked about this, that it was not possible to know who was a sorcerer. When, rather to his surprise, I mentioned the traditional basket test, he agreed and explained that people convicted by this test were sent as labourers to the post to satisfy whatever demand was being made for workers.

[12] Informants. See also Hastings, p. 43.

[13] Childs, p. 58.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

of the school seems considerably stronger than that of their Catholic counterparts. This impression is gained by visits to Protestant villages and to episodes like that just quoted, where the Protestant catechist had more success than the Catholic in recruiting volunteers for work on the bridge. The reasons for this lie in the organization of the Protestant Church, which owes its origin to Congregationalist missionaries, and in which the distribution of power differs from that in the Catholic Church. The white missionaries exercise only a supervisory role over the work of the Native Church which is responsible for pastoral activity in the villages. The African clergy of the Native Church are entirely dependent financially on their people.

Compared with Catholicism, Protestantism lays much less stress on the sacraments of baptism and communion and much more on Bible-reading and the religious knowledge of the individual. Hence the teaching role of the catechist is more strongly stressed among the Protestants. For example, the Protestant catechists teach girls as well as boys to read and write. His dependence on the clergy is reduced; indeed, owing to the lay participation in the Umbundu Native Church he exercises some control over them. Among the Ovimbundu, as elsewhere in the world, the 'pyramidal' form of Catholicism is absent in Protestantism in which the position of the clergy is weaker and that of the lay leaders strengthened.

The relative autonomy of the Umbundu Native Church *vis-à-vis* the white missionaries and the disintegration of the traditional system of authority have given judicial powers to its officials. Dr. Childs has written in a recent article:[2] 'In Angola . . . the breakdown of traditional authority has been so rapid that the social life of the villages is now very near to complete anarchy . . . the missions and churches have been compelled to take over. Church leaders—catechists, deacons, and pastors—have taken on judicial functions. Church meetings, both local and regional, have become courts and councils.' He goes on to describe the legalistic attitudes and casuistical morality which is associated with these developments, and suggests that the lack of opportunity for political activity

[2] G. M. Childs, *International Review of Missions*, April 1958.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

[1874-1911]

593 604 in the hands of the mother's brother, though the father could, if he wished, intervene; and a man could establish a shrine of his own while his father lived.

613 It is not altogether easy to see how the matrilineal group maintained its cohesion. It was not the working team on which the caravan trade operated since a man's father had first claim on his services, and he could travel with other relatives. Within it alone loans need not be repaid and accusations of sorcery were made; with this in mind, it is evident why, as Dr. Hastings tells us, people tended to avoid the company of their matrikin, [578] and why most disputes arose in the matrilineal groups.[22] It 613 seems that probably the key to the functioning of the matri- 437 lineal groups lies in the details, not now recoverable, of the economy of the caravan trade. As everybody, however successful, was in danger at some time or another of incurring heavy losses,[23] an arrangement by which anybody who was in difficulties could call on his kin for help would be generally acceptable. The association of mutual aid of this sort with matrilineal rather than patrilineal kin would spread losses geographically and would exclude conflicts over currency and movable property from village life. Moreover, the dispersal of the matrilineal kin would provide an individual with business contacts over a considerable area.

5. *Contemporary Kinship Norms*

593 Much of this has disappeared. The men's house is no longer 264 the dining-room of the village male population. Men now often 178 eat with their wives and children though attitudes and practice of this vary between households. People in their twenties knew of the existence of these avoidance rules but it seems that the rules forbidding sons to eat with their mother and eldest sons and daughters to eat with their father are now generally ignored.

[22] Hastings, pp. 18, 87. Disputes within the matrilineal group could be, and very often were, referred to the sub-chief and king. The account of legal proceedings in Hastings (pp. 139–51) suggests that a high proportion of the cases heard by the kings were to do with sorcery. In such cases the social extension of the matrilineal group beyond the area of the sub-chiefdom and the wider political integration achieved by the kingdoms 'co-operated' in preserving a range of social relations beyond the sub-chiefdom. [692]

[23] Apropos of losses Childs quotes Magyar as saying that the Ovimbundu traded for excitement rather than gain (p. 204).

lives of chiefs.[1]

The chief's council and court 646

It has been noted that there is a chiefdom council responsible for electing the chief or deposing him, and for sitting with him in law cases. The composition of this council has not been clearly described.[2]

The Sub-chief

The chiefdom[3] was made up of a number of sub-chiefdoms called *atumbu* (sing. *etumbu*); Bailundu had about 200 *atumbu*, each of which had from 3 to more than 300 villages, while a number of the larger *atumbu* were themselves made up of smaller ones. About 20 *atumbu* were ruled by members of the chiefly family, including heirs apparent or expectant, and the chief's wife *(inakulu)* had also her own sub-chiefdom.[4] Others were ruled by court officials not of royal birth, who sometimes themselves established dynasties, others again by dynasties native to the respective regions, or at least dynasties longer resident in the area than the chiefly family. Villages of sub-chiefs, like those of chiefs, are known as *olombala*. Most of the *atumbu* are still recognised, and the sub-chiefs have retained more of their old functions than have the chiefs, and have in addition been given new functions. They as well as village headmen are required to assist in assessing and collecting native tax,[5] and also in recruiting labour for government work and for contracts. In some areas they receive in return the remission of their own taxes. On the dancing floor of most of their *olombala* cases are still heard, judgments given and fines received, although such judgments are not officially recognised or allowed by the European authorities.[6]

643 631 [177] [651] [692]

LAW

Courts

Very little information is available. We are told that certain disputes, e.g. concerning inheritance, are settled within the *oluina*;[7] that in the village cases are tried by a council which apparently consists of the section-heads under the leadership of the village headman;[8] and that these village courts continue to function; that certain cases (unspecified) are still unofficially heard in the courts of the sub-chiefs; and that prior to European occupation the paramount chief's decision was final.

691 693

(1) Ibid., p.23. But chiefs were treated with respect; Hambly (1934, p.214) notes that the ancient custom was for commoners to fall on their knees when greeting a chief, and today this still applies to women and children although less often to men.
(2) See Serpa Pinto, 1881, p.167.
(3) Most writers use "kingdom" and "king"; "chief" when used here without qualification refers always to the paramount chief of one of the 22 chiefdoms.
(4) Magyar, 1851, pp.389f, also quoted by Childs, op.cit., p.24.
(5) The amount of the tax levied on all males from 16 years is now Ags. 200,000 annually. As noted by Childs (p.215-6), it has been steadily increasing. Opportunities for earning are comparatively small in Angola, not now for lack of work, but because of "contract labour" required of all males in addition to taxes. Payment for "contract labour" is considerably below current wages, and it is a great hindrance to productive agricultural activities. (Childs, personal communication)
(6) Childs, op.cit., pp.24-5.
(7) Hambly, (2) 1934, p.200.
(8) See above, p.29.

night in the *etambo* praying to or communing with ancestral spirits, when the occasion arises; Suku is regarded as too remote to receive prayers. 693 613

While cooking, a woman may spill a little meal on the ground for the spirits; at a meal, a person may spill a little food or beer for the same purpose. A portion of the meat at a feast may likewise be sacrificed, but it is often a less desirable portion, such as the intestines.[1] 782

Agricultural rituals were held before planting, at which time the headman and his wife had intercourse in their field and sacred seed from the chief's granary was distributed, a few grains to be mixed with the seed to be planted on each plot. When the maize began to ripen a few ears were sent to the chief before any were eaten.[2] 241 789

DIVINERS[3]

The word *ocimbanda* is used both for a diviner and for a maker of medicines. To distinguish the two, the diviner may be called *ocimbanda congombo* ("of the basket"), the herbalist *ocimbanda coviti* ("of trees or sticks"). Some practitioners are both diviner and herbalist. A female diviner is called *combula*.[4] An *ocimbanda* frequently specialises in a certain kind of case;[5] and among the members of the profession there are many degrees of proficiency. One may work only in his own village, another may be consulted on matters of concern to the whole district or chiefdom; others go on professional journeys carrying their baskets, and accumulate profits in animals and cloth. The greater the reputation of the diviner, the greater the charges he makes for his services. 791 759

The tasks of the *ocimbanda* are:-

(a) To discover the cause of sickness, death, or any evil which has befallen the individual or the community. Sickness and death are always believed to be due either to the workings of spirits who are demanding sacrifices, or to living enemies who have malicious spirits under their control or who have bought potent charms. The diviner, after consulting the spirit who speaks in and through his basket, names the spirit who is causing the trouble and tells the victim what its demands are, or, if the enemy is a living person, indicates in a general manner from whence the trouble comes, e.g. to a woman "Your baskets are too well made; you are hated because of them", or, to a man, "This illness was found on a journey taken to collect a debt". If requested, the diviner makes a countercharm to offset that which has caused the ill. 787 753

(b) To interpret omens and dreams.

(c) To give advice on personal problems.

(d) To dispense medicines and charms.

(e) To bring or withhold rain, or to see who is guilty of withholding it. [789]

(1) Ibid., see also Cashman, loc.cit.
(2) Childs, personal communication.
(3) Based on Tucker, 1940.
(4) Beasley, (3) 1934.
(5) Ibid.

The use of caterpillars as food is noted (p.416): "A man cut open [262]
a large cocoon, extracted the contents, and smacked his lips with 171
great gusto." My field notes mention the use of caterpillars as food. 175

Capello and Ivens (1877–80) remark on the burial places of [766]
hunters which are distinguishable by the skulls of antelopes, buffalo, and hippopotamuses, stuck on upright poles, mixed with skulls of oxen killed in honor of the defunct. The writers noted that a heap of stones protected the body. I photographed two types of cairn in the regions of Ganda and Luimbale respectively. Capello and Ivens are not precise in their locality, but I judge it to have been Long. 17° E. and Lat. 13° S., a considerable distance from my own observations (Plates XXXII, Fig. 1; LXXIV, Fig. 1).

I photographed the stilt-walkers at the final stages of the initiation [481]
ceremonies at Cangamba. These men had no costumes; on the [292]
contrary they were almost naked but were covered with white clay. Capello and Ivens (p. 295), saw a stilt-walker with a feathered mask and a netting costume. Such attire I saw on an Uluchazi medicine-man, but not on the stilt-walkers (Plate LXXXI, Figs. 1, 2).

I was unable to obtain information about the stilt-walkers, but 693
Capello states that they castigated misdemeanants, punished shameless women, and accused criminals. Capello and Ivens were 187 miles to the northwest of my area of observation. The Uluchazi medicine-man, who appeared with the stilt-walkers during my visits, was said to make bad magic for women. The men ignored him but women gathered round in a derisive way; they quickly scattered when he pursued them.

Serpa Pinto, who made his journey across Angola in 1878, has 175
so many references to customs and objects still extant, that I propose 114
to tabulate his observations because of their value in showing the preservation of indigenous traits in spite of Portuguese contacts.

The body of a chief is buried with a covering of oxhide. Many 175
oxen are sacrificed at the death of a king. The heir to the deceased 766
is bound to sacrifice his whole herd in order to regale his people and give peace to the departed (S. Pinto, I, p. 63). The Ovimbundu conform at the present time to similar methods of burial and sacrifice.

Near Huambo, Serpa Pinto saw in every village a kind of "temple 175
for conversation." This is the *onjango*, that I have described and [345]
photographed (Plate XLVIII, Fig. 1). It is the house in which all males foregather for the evening meal, which is brought by their women (I, p. 96).

The gathering and eating of caterpillars is described. This con- [262]
tinues today (I, p. 120).

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

(*c*) *In hunting*, deities other than the king's ancestors were invoked, especially *Hũvĩ*, the hunters' god, and *Kuanja*, a goddess, both of which had their own shrines and priests. These may have been connected with the country or with its earlier inhabitants (the kings being recognized as late comers). At the inaugural hunt the offices were assigned. The king's character was supposedly revealed by the sex of the animal killed at this hunt: 'If the duiker[1] is a female, then it is good indeed, but if a male, then the king is a real person but he habitually will become angry to excess' (*Nda ombambi yaco omange ciwa muẽlẽ, puaĩ nda ulume, Soma omunu puaĩ o tema tema enene*).

2. *To represent the nation in its external relations*, i.e. (*a*) *To make agreements with other kings to promote trade*, and (*b*) *To make war on other peoples* in order to provide his court with tribute and his warriors with plunder. The war leader (*Kesongo*) had his own residence and establishment entirely separate from that of the king, whom he must not meet face to face except on certain state occasions. In Bailundu he, with certain other officials, was of the stock of the slaves of the state (*ovinduli viosomẽ*) who came from Luandu in the Songo country. Each king must inaugurate his reign with a war, during or after which he must ceremonially 'eat the old one' (*oku lia ekongo*)—a feast consisting of the flesh of a specially fattened slave cooked with the flesh of the principal animals commonly eaten.

3. *To dispense justice*. In point of time consumed, this question was very important, for it occupied much of the time of both rulers and ruled. Good evidence of this is in the number of proverbs used at court, second only in number to those used for the education of the young. The king's court (*olusenje*) was the supreme court of the nation where cases were continually heard and 'fines eaten' (*oku lia ovimbu*). Cases might be settled either by ordeal or by decision of the king, and there was therefore room for appeal and re-trial. The king's word, however, was final, as the proverb has it: *O popia onganji, o mãlãpo osoma*. (The advocate speaks, the king finishes [decides].) The king was not generally arbitrary in his decisions but was bound not only by the customs of his people, but also by the desires of his councillors. Among the legitimate kings of the Ovimbundu there were comparatively few of the revolting and wholesale punishments which were so

[1] The duiker, *ombambi* (*Silvicapra grimmii leucoprosopus*).

692 527 Hambly and Childs seem to suggest that any case might be referred to the chief for his decision: "Even a slave used to have rights of appeal to the king if he were starved or beaten without cause".(1) Neither describes the composition of the courts or the mechanism of appeal.

Legal procedure

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One kind of ordeal, the *ombulungu* or poison ordeal, is described by Hambly:(3) It was used (only?) when the accused was thought to have committed murder by poison or sorcery. (If weapons were used, the accuser, usually a relative of the deceased, had the right to kill the murderer with the same kind of weapon.) If a woman were accused in this way, her son or brother would take her place in the poison ordeal.

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(1) Hambly, op.cit., p.201.
(2) 1949, p.21.
(3) op.cit., p.203.
(4) 1944, pp.38-9.
(5) op.cit., p.201.
(6) 1944, p.39.
(7) Hambly, op.cit., p.201.
(8) Ibid., p.202.
(9) Cushman, 1944, p.39.
(10) Hambly, op.cit., pp.202-3.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

As early as 1600 there were cattle as far north as Benguela, and the Jaggas regarded these as a most valuable part of their plunder. Palms are a characteristic part of the vegetation of Angola north of the Benguela Highlands. Evidently the Jaggas moved extensively in northern Angola because they cut down palms for making wine (Battell, p. 30). The usual method is to tap the top of a standing tree, but the Jaggas were an itinerant people who did not cultivate palms. 175 171 [824]

Sprinkling the blood of sacrificed animals on a newly kindled fire I have mentioned in connection with Umbundu rites celebrating the founding of a new village. The Jaggas carried out this ceremony before a raiding expedition, when cows and other animals were sacrificed (Battell, p. 33). Battell mentions the use of red *tukula* wood for personal decoration. This wood (*Pterocarpus tinctorius*) is used in many parts of Angola at the present time. [824]

Reference to Battell confirms the information given to me in relation to an old iron gong obtained at Ngalangi. He says (p. 20), "The general did strike his gong, which is an instrument of war that soundeth like a bell, and presently made an oration with a loud voice." [534]

Battell reported that the Jaggas wore beads of ostrich eggshell. Ravenstein, the editor of this volume in the Hakluyt Series, seems to doubt this statement, saying, "There are no ostriches in Angola, and as to beads made of ostrich eggs I can give no explanation." I noted the presence of captive ostriches in southern Angola as far north as Gambos. The Vakuanyama women greatly value their long necklaces of ostrich-eggshell beads. Necklaces made in the north of Angola are traded to the south and conversely, each kind of necklace having a high value due to remoteness of origin. This instance, like many other points, confirms the reliability of Battell's observations in Angola. [237] [114]

Father Jerome Merolla (1682) describes the poison ordeal which was used from the Congo estuary to San Salvador (Churchills' Voyages, II, p. 675). "The aforesaid oath is administered to the supposed traitor by a sort of wizard, who, making a certain composition out of the juices of herbs, serpent's flesh, pulp of fruits, and divers other things, gives it to the supposed delinquent to drink. If guilty (as they tell you) he will immediately fall down in a swoon or trembling to the ground." The marimba was used, and a double iron gong was carried before a chief and struck by an attendant. [695]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

The foregoing facts, when compared with field work among the Ovimbundu, indicate that the old culture of the Congo and northern Angola bears a strong resemblance to Umbundu culture at the present day. A more detailed analysis of this resemblance is made in chapter X. 174

The following notes dealing with exploration in Angola (1800–1930) are adduced for critical comparison with my own observations among the Ovimbundu. 175 171

The work of Sir R. F. Burton describing the exploration of Lacerda and other Portuguese pioneers, is more useful for geographical than for ethnological information. Lacerda's journey to Czambe, south of Lake Moero, was performed in 1798. A mention of veneration for the dead and consultation of the deceased on all occasions of war or of good fortune, is made (p. 127). These are important points in the present tribal life of the Ovimbundu. [114] [769]

Bowditch (1824) writes from information given to him by Almeida and Saldanha. There are valuable references to the Vacilenge, a people adjacent to the Ovimbundu, who refused to kill their cattle, "rather than do which they will endure famine to extremity." This note was made about Long. 15° E. and Lat. 15° S. (p. 34). The cattle were milked, and cattle-raiding by the Ovimbundu was common at this time. Many present-day Ovimbundu do not milk their cattle, but the Vacilenge still follow their milking custom observed before 1824. 175 101 234

Livingstone's journey through northeast and northern Angola in 1853 contains references to the Vachokue who seemed bent on plunder (I, p. 370). Livingstone noted cotton spinning, which I recorded as an occupation of males of the Ovimbundu at Elende. Livingstone, like other early travelers, encountered caravans of Bihéans (Ovimbundu) bearing elephants' tusks and beeswax, commodities, which, along with slaves, formed the chief merchandise of these caravans from the Benguela Highlands (p. 466). Livingstone notes and sketches (Plate XIII, Fig. 10) the double-handled hoe (p. 442) which is still used. 175 171 [283] [439] [412]

J. J. Monteiro (I, p. 61) saw the poison ordeal administered. The poison itself was prepared from the thick hard bark of a large tree (*Erythrophlaeum guineense*). The place of observation was Mongue Grande, just south of the Congo estuary, and again Monteiro was present when the poison cup was given to two women at Ambrizette. Of this ordeal there is more to be said when discussing the culture contacts of the Ovimbundu, because the ordeal is a basic factor of [695] [824]

3. Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

175 [316] [325] Serpa Pinto saw shafts for the working of iron ore in the neighborhood of Cubango. The ore was mixed with charcoal and smelted in shallow pits. It is stated that the iron was sometimes tempered with ox-grease and salt. The bellows are of the type made at Elende (I, p. 128). Of the tempering process I have no confirmation.

175 787 [764] Somewhere near Bihé Serpa Pinto saw the ceremony of questioning a corpse which was made to sway to and fro, the people believing all the while that it does so without human intervention. The diviner declared that the soul of a dead person will tell who caused the death (I, p. 130). I observed and photographed this ceremony (Plate XLV, Fig. 1).

[695] The ordeal of the poison cup is described; blood-letting, and divination by shaking articles in a basket are also mentioned. Pinto says that in the articles that appear uppermost the diviner reads what his hearers are desirous of learning of the past, present, or future. Sorcery and rain-making are likewise briefly mentioned (I, p. 132). The divination basket, the poison ordeal, and rain-making, are Umbundu cultural traits today.

171 224 Here Pinto illustrates the existing practice of mounting the skulls of animals killed by a hunter on a pole in the village. There is a further reference to this custom among the Ambuellas (I, p. 333). These instances, combined with those personally noted, give a wide distribution for the practice (I, p. 177).

175 [304] Pinto saw the operation of tooth mutilation among the Luimba. The operation was performed with a knife which was struck by repeated light blows (I, p. 209).

[711] Pinto illustrates arrowheads in use in 1879 (I, pp. 277, 346). These are exactly the same as those made and used in 1929 (Plate XVII, Figs. 1–9).

[412] Axes used by the Luchazi are sketched with a detail that shows the old forms to persist without alteration (II, p. 36).

[321] Water-pipes made from horns and gourds by the Luina of eastern Angola are of the forms now used in that region, also by the Ovimbundu of the present day (II, pp. 33, 37).

175 114 For use in checking and supplementing my observations Serpa Pinto's book was found to be of the greatest service, though the precise locality was sometimes difficult to identify. This explorer, in common with others, scattered his ethnological observations among descriptions of the route and botanical, zoological, and other notes.

Lux traveled from Loanda due east, following the Kwanza on the northern bank between 9° and 10° S. Lat., and so into Lunda.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

in return. Even a slave used to have rights of appeal to the king if he were starved and beaten without cause. The king was the prime mover in warfare. The whole legal system is at this time directly under Portuguese administration though the kings and chiefs have minor powers. Ngonga says that complainants who are dissatisfied with the decision of their own chief go to the Fort, meaning of course the Portuguese military post, or office of the Administrador. 000 643 177

There is no doubt that in former days the responsibility for crime and debt was transferred to a relative in the absence of the delinquent. If a thief escaped, responsibility would rest with a brother, a father or a son. The mother's brother was often held to be responsible for the misdeeds and debts of his sister's children. The mother's brother has rights that extend to the sale of his sister's children to pay his debts. For this reason Ngonga says, "If I have done wrong and they cannot catch me it is right that he (mother's brother) should pay for me." 672 604

I supposed the case of Ngonga having stolen a cow; he has been caught but escapes. Ngonga said that the man from whom he had stolen the animal would go to his (Ngonga's) mother's brother in order to name the price required for the cow, or any other possession which had been stolen. If the mother's brother thought the price reasonable he would pay. On the contrary, if the price claimed were too high the mother's brother would appeal, first to the village chief, then if necessary to the king. [692]

Ownership of land does not appear to have been a source of dispute. Apparently land was distributed by the chief as explained in dealing with village organization. Rights seem to have been well defined and there was always enough land for a stranger. When a man was going away on a trading journey he might lend his land to another who would agree to cultivate it and take the produce for a year. I was unable to satisfy myself that land is now, or was in time past held to be the property of dead ancestors. The right to land depends on its use and allotment by a chief at the time of founding a village. A man who intended to be absent would make a payment so that he might leave his goods at the house of another. The chief would settle any disputes arising from these arrangements. 423 [426] [437]

The complainant in a suit is called *ombile*, the defendant is *ovilue*. The name for a witness is *uvangi*. In the old days a false witness had to make recompense to the man about whom he had told a lie; he would probably have a beating as well. A master was in every way responsible for the actions of a slave. The degree of responsi- 695 672

PG. 203

Social Life

fines were in their hands. If he murdered one of the royal family 682
he was killed after he had paid the fine." The punishment of a woman [562]
who has committed a murder is the same as that for a man.

Ombulungu is the name given to trial by poison ordeal. The 695
medicine-man holds out both his hands, in each of which there is a potato, only one of which is poisoned. The accused man says, "If I have done this thing, this potato will be poison for me. If I have not done this thing, this potato will be food for me." The complainant says, "If this is not the man who poisoned my brother, this potato will be poison for me." They sit in front of the medicine-man, and each must take the potato in the hand opposite to him. The poison makes a man very sick. His mouth swells so that he cannot speak.

When a woman was accused of murder her son or her brother [562]
would take her place in the poison ordeal. A boy of fifteen years of age would have the same treatment as a man. "I don't think a girl would kill anybody. I never heard about it," said Ngonga. It appears that resort was made to a medicine-man when the accused was thought to have committed murder by poison or magic. If the murderer used weapons, the accuser, who was usually a relative, was entitled to kill him with the kind of weapon used for the crime.

The penalties for adultery were the same as those for murder. 684
The woman appears to have escaped punishment, except that "her husband would not have her any more." The male adulterer had to pay the husband; if he could not pay or escape, the husband had the right to kill him. In the old days the price for adultery was two oxen, a pig, and a slave. At the present day a man who has committed adultery and made payment, possibly takes the woman and all children under three years of age. The husband has the right to decide whether the adulterer has the privilege of taking the woman and her children. An adulterer with one of the king's wives was
castrated but not killed. He might, instead of mutilation, pay a very [567]
high price, while he himself along with his sisters and the sons of his sisters, would become slaves of the king. If a man could not pay, he might be sold as a slave in order to provide money for the fine.
Criminal law did not distinguish between responsibility for inten- [671]
tional and unintentional offences.

It is very difficult to say how much of the old law survives. One 681
feels that underneath the ostensible Portuguese rule there is an active 177
native life that is resisting subjugation.

Only two years ago Ngonga paid an ox to prevent one of his female 686
relatives from being pawned. Within the past ten years Ngonga has

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

not an Ocimbundu, was dressed in only a skirt of cloth, and his equipment consisted of a reed whistle and a hair switch made from a cow's tail. 791

The dance was a slow revolution without any violent leaping. The man held his arms upward, fully extended, and went through the motions of drawing rain from above; then he made slow arm movements suggestive of spreading the rain all around. At times he stood quite still and gave a shrill whistle. The hair switch was constantly twirled and flourished.

POISON ORDEAL

Evidence presented in chapters VI and VII will show that the poison ordeal is a widely spread Negro trait, and that administration of the ordeal is connected with legal proceedings during which the poison cup is usually given to the suspects or litigants by a medicine-man. 695 791

This ordeal as practised among the Ovimbundu and other people of Angola is in conformity with the general Negro procedure. Ngonga thinks that the poison ordeal of the old type is still practised secretly. According to the old law the poison cup affected an innocent man by making him vomit, while the guilty person succumbed.

Ngonga states that a form of poison ordeal which exists today is as follows: The medicine-man holds out two potatoes, one of which is poisoned while the other is innocuous. The poisoned man does not die but he becomes so ill that he confesses his guilt. This use of potatoes has been fully described in connection with legal procedure (chapter VI).

The guilt or innocence of suspects is tested by giving poison to chickens brought to the medicine-man by the accused men. He whose chicken dies is the guilty person.

CEREMONIAL FIRE

New fire is made during epidemic sickness, at the accession of a king, and at the building of a new village. On such occasions the twirling method is employed. The fire made is called *ondalu*, which is the ordinary word for fire. 372 791 796

When an epidemic of sickness occurs the chief of the village takes a present of eight yards of cloth to the medicine-man and asks the cause of the visitation. The medicine-man replies, "Your fire is dirty and worn out, you must have new fire."

4:Dorsey E-4, 5 (no date)1899 FP13 Mbundu FP13

Still another form of fetish for protection are two small images also 778 known as *ovitekas*. They, like the other *ovitekas* described above[1] are of wood, but are rudely carved from two round pieces of wood about sixteen inches long. No attempt has been made to represent the human form in any detail, only the face, neck, and arms being indicated. The face of both images has been besmeared with some reddish black pigment. These were placed where the path to the village branches off to the caravan road. A small hut before which they stood was built for them, about two feet square, and between two and three feet high, with a thatched grass roof. Within was a shelf on which from time to time was placed food, corn, and a small gourd of beer. This was done to appease certain spirits which were supposed to be angry with the village and were causing sickness.

For the so-called poison test three medicines are employed. The 695 first and most common is known as the *ombambu*, a drug obtained 278 from the country east of the Quanza River, and represented in the collection by a piece of bark. It has the property of a powerful spinal irritant, and it is said that a very small quantity will produce death. There is a current belief among the Ovimbundu that if a bird alights upon the *ombambu* tree it will fall down dead. The second drug, or *ombambu*, employed in the poison test is obtained from the Bihe country, and is represented by several roots. It is taken in the form of a decoction. The third test is known as *onsunga*. This is a mixture of powdered herbs, and is obtained from the country of the Ganguellas. With these three drugs should be mentioned a small gourd, *okopo*, used by the ocimbanda in mixing the medicines, and from which during the poison test the parties drink. The test medicines are stirred with the foot of a small antelope. Occasion for the administering of the poison may arise in various ways. Frequently one person will accuse another of being a witch. The accused may deny it, and appeal to the poison test to prove his innocency. They go to the chief, who calls an ocimbanda, who mixes up a concoction in a gourd, and both the accuser and accused drink. If the draughts make one sick and he vomits, he is acquitted; and if the other one becomes very sick and does not vomit, he is said to be the witch. This same test is often appealed to in other matters where one affirms and another denies. A man may drink by proxy, that is, he may have a friend drink the poison in his stead, or, more frequently, a slave drinks for his master.

Finally, it must be noticed that the ocimbandu is also a medicine- 791 man. He undoubtedly possesses some really valuable remedies, but 757 there is so much of the fetishistic cult bound up in the administering of the remedies that when they do help a person the credit of

[1] [Cf. p. 185. -- Analyst]

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

[1874-1911]

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of ritual cannibalism (*oku lia ekongo*) after which he could not be deposed.[64]

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Hastings in describing the principal ministers of the Bailundo court states that the Mwekalia and the Galamboli or Ngambole (whose function was to remember traditions) were representative of the indigenous pre-Jaga stock, the Kesongo who was the war leader was a slave from another tribe, and the Otjinduli was of immigrant stock, and points out that these represent the three sources from which the Ovimbundu sprang.[65]

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At the sub-chiefdom level some of the titles found in the kingdoms would be found combined, and the chief's court, where cases were judged, was composed both of titled ministers living at the chief's village and of the village headmen (some of whom were also title-holders). The sub-chief represented his people to the outer world, led them in communal ritual and judged, with his councillors,[66] their disputes. Hastings describes a case thus: 'When all the members of the court are seated in a circle, with an empty space in the centre, the plaintiff's counsel then relates the case, after which the lawyer for the defendant does likewise for his side. The chief in turn makes general comments. Lusenje, the official, whose duty it is to keep order at court and to announce the speakers, then calls on the accuser to come forward and make his statement.'[67]

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While the sub-chiefdom was the largest unit in which law and order reigned undisputed, there existed alliances and cross-cutting relationships providing a contact outside its area. There was the *tjisoko* alliance which existed between two sub-chiefdoms which were separated by a third. Gumba sub-chiefdom was thus allied to Ndjandju from which it was separated by Chicunda, and messengers from Gumba and Ndjandju travelled together to Bailundo once a year to carry tribute. Apparently a sub-chiefdom had only one *tjisoko* partner. The relationship was one of funeral friendship; *vakwatjisoko* (*tjisoko* partners) undertook the burial of those who died without kinsfolk and also ordinary

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[64] This is based on information from Gumba. See also Magyar, pp. 270–77; Hastings, pp. 43–45; Childs p. 21.

[65] Hastings, p. 60.

[66] Informants.

[67] Hastings, pp. 142–43.

672 bility of women is mentioned in describing the penalties for adultery and theft.

562 The penalties for offences against the king were undoubtedly
681 more severe than those imposed for the same offences against a commoner. Ngonga says that the punishments for crimes against a chief or medicine-man were, and are now, the same as the penalties for offences against any other person. It seems, however, that if the chief were a very powerful man, he could claim penalties which would have been appropriate for offences against a king.

685 A thief was punished by beating, in addition to which he would have to pay a fine to the people from whom he had stolen, but he rarely escaped without the beating. The thief would be beaten just as much for stealing one animal as he would for stealing many. If a woman stole from her neighbor's garden, those who caught her would tie her and take her to her husband, who would pay compensation and then beat her. A child caught stealing would be taken to the maternal uncle or to his own father. If a woman stole from relations she would probably have no punishment other than a beating. Her husband would have to compensate the relations. Stealing honey from hives is an offence that is punished according to the general laws relating to theft.

696 If a man was sentenced to a death penalty, or to a beating, there was an official appointed by the king or by the chief to see the sentence carried out. This representative was called *ukuenje welombe* which means "the servant, or minister, of the court."

682 Ngonga described the penalty for murder saying, "It was a terrible thing they did to the murderer. A tight triangle of wood was fastened on to his neck by a peg and to this a cord was attached so that he was suspended to the roof with his feet barely touching the ground. In some instances his head was placed through a hole in the door of his house while his body was inside the hut. He had very little food or water and people threw things at him. He was kept tied up for a month to see whether he could pay something. Suppose he could not pay, and nobody would pay for him, he was taken outside the village where his head was cut off. If he had many possessions, he said on the first day, 'If you will take this thing off my neck I will pay two oxen and two slaves.' The payment would be made, not to the wife or children of the murdered man, but to the brother of the mother of the murdered man, or to the mother of the murdered man, or to the son of a sister of the victim. If the murderer agreed to make the payment the people kept him tied up until the

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

(*c*) *In hunting*, deities other than the king's ancestors were invoked, especially *Hũvĩ*, the hunters' god, and *Kuanja*, a goddess, both of which had their own shrines and priests. These may have been connected with the country or with its earlier inhabitants (the kings being recognized as late comers). At the inaugural hunt the offices were assigned. The king's character was supposedly revealed by the sex of the animal killed at this hunt: 'If the duiker[1] is a female, then it is good indeed, but if a male, then the king is a real person but he habitually will become angry to excess' (*Nda ombambi yaco omange ciwa muẽlẽ, puaĩ nda ulume, Soma omunu puaĩ o tema tema enene*).

2. *To represent the nation in its external relations*, i.e. (*a*) *To make agreements with other kings to promote trade*, and (*b*) *To make war on other peoples* in order to provide his court with tribute and his warriors with plunder. The war leader (*Kesongo*) had his own residence and establishment entirely separate from that of the king, whom he must not meet face to face except on certain state occasions. In Bailundu he, with certain other officials, was of the stock of the slaves of the state (*ovinduli viosoma*) who came from Luandu in the Songo country. Each king must inaugurate his reign with a war, during or after which he must ceremonially 'eat the old one' (*oku lia ekongo*)—a feast consisting of the flesh of a specially fattened slave cooked with the flesh of the principal animals commonly eaten.

3. *To dispense justice*. In point of time consumed, this question was very important, for it occupied much of the time of both rulers and ruled. Good evidence of this is in the number of proverbs used at court, second only in number to those used for the education of the young. The king's court (*olusenje*) was the supreme court of the nation where cases were continually heard and 'fines eaten' (*oku lia ovimbu*). Cases might be settled either by ordeal or by decision of the king, and there was therefore room for appeal and re-trial. The king's word, however, was final, as the proverb has it: *O popia onganji, o mãlãpo osoma*. (The advocate speaks, the king finishes [decides].) The king was not generally arbitrary in his decisions but was bound not only by the customs of his people, but also by the desires of his councillors. Among the legitimate kings of the Ovimbundu there were comparatively few of the revolting and wholesale punishments which were so

[1] The duiker, *ombambi* (*Silvicapra grimmii leucoprosopus*).

880 643 769 782 regent and incarnation" of the spirits. Sacrifices were made at the royal shrine or *kakokoto* ("at the skulls"), where the skulls of past chiefs were kept, in order to:-

[372] (i) control the elements i.e. to ensure a sufficient supply of rain and avoid the dangers caused by storms; also to control fire by providing a new fire ceremonially kindled[1] from which everyone took his fire.

[842] [241] (ii) to ensure fertility, towards which the royal marriage had great influence. The queen's special province was agriculture and her kitchen was sanctified by human sacrifice to guarantee the national food supply. Ceremonially treated seed was distributed to be mixed with the seed of each granary.

643 648 721 [701] (b) *To represent the country in its external relations,* principally to make trade agreements with other chiefs, or to make war on other peoples in order to get tribute and plunder. The war leader *(Kesongo)* has his own residence entirely separate from that of the king, whom he must not meet face to face except on certain ceremonial occasions.[2] Each king must inaugurate his reign with a war, during which or after which he must ceremonially "eat the old one" *(oku lia ekongo)* - who was usually a specially fattened slave [266] cooked with the flesh of the principal animals commonly eaten.[3]

643 692 (c) *To dispense justice.* The chief's court or *olusenje* was the supreme court of the chiefdom. The chief had the final word in any case, but most chiefs acted according to custom.

644 [882] (d) *To protect himself and the chiefdom,* the chief could use "magic" (?) which might have been accounted witchcraft or murder if practised without authority: e.g. the ritual murder of a pregnant woman, or of the children whose lives were required for building and furnishing the queen's kitchen.

643 791 (e) The chief made much use of divination in order to carry out his office. For this purpose he had his own diviner *(citue cosoma)*, who was of the blood royal; but he also consulted diviners of other regions and types.

643 Succession to chiefship is in the male line,[4] from father to son, elder brother to younger brother or brother's son, or sometimes to one more distantly related. The election is made by the councillors whose duty it is (?), ordinarily before the old chief's death is announced. These same councillors may depose an unpopular chief, and there have been many such [642] depositions. This "democratic" tendency of the Ovimbundu has been noted by most writers. Childs points out that it is attested by the fact that a chief (formerly as well as today) works in his own fields, and by folk-tales which give incidental and intimate pictures of petty details in the lives of the chiefs†

(1) See above, p.26.
(2) In Bailundu he, with certain other officials, was of the stock of slaves of the state *(ovindili viossoa)*.
(3) Childs, p.21. Many early writers refer to the cannibalism of the "Jagas" or "Imbangalas" who are thought to have been the Ovimbundu chiefs. (See above, p.8, and also Lacerda and Navenstein, quoted by Childs, pp.17ff.)
(4) But *inheritance* is said to follow a different line among chiefs from among commoners; possibly inheritance is also in the paternal line. See Childs p.18.

† See footnote 1, p. 31

undu, and Ngalangi are said to have had conflicts. In time past, 721
as at the present day, a king reigned over territory which was
extensive but definitely delimited for purposes of administration.
Encroachment of one king on the rights of taxation and administra- 651
tion of another led to raids and reprisals. Village chiefs collected
taxes in the form of agricultural produce and gave these to the king,
who personally visited a village from which payments had not been
made. A folklore story begins, "The people had not paid taxes
so the king came to the village and told them a parable."

A king, if young, accompanied his people on the warpath. There 726
was, however, a permanent leader named *kesongo*, a derivative from [701
songola ("to lead"). The declaration of war, likewise the tactics,
were discussed by a council of *olosekulu* ("village chiefs") in the
ombala ("capital") where the king had, and still has, a royal com-
pound. If war had been conducted among sections of the Ovim- 727
bundu, the defeated people had to pay taxes and tribute; moreover,
their women and cattle were taken. In event of a successful war
against the Vachokue there was plundering of cattle and women,
but it was not found practicable to exact periodical payments
from the enemy.

The subject of warfare is intimately related to that of slavery. 686
There was until very recent times a domestic slavery which followed 567
from the inability of a person to pay his debts. In connection with 672
this reduction of free persons to a condition of slavery there are
several points of exceptional interest. The debtor himself is not
taken as a slave, neither are his wife or children. The correct proce-
dure is a sale of his sister's children; but more frequently the children
themselves are taken by the creditor. "The debtor's sister will say
nothing because this is the law of the Ovimbundu." If payment of
the debt is made later, the children are set free. Usually the word
pawning is used by ethnologists to describe this proceeding.

Further consideration of Ngonga's payment to his mother's
brother clarifies the facts of domestic slavery. "I paid for them,
I took their place," said my interpreter. The payment for the
return of these two children was two oxen. The girl, who was ten
years of age when she was taken to pay the debt, was returned to
her people when she was a woman with three children. Ngonga's
brother was not actually taken from his home. He was made to
pay his mother's brother's debt by working for the creditor. In
general, these domestic slaves were not ill treated, though their
rights were limited. The position of slaves taken from a hostile 567

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

The Ovimbundu are not ordinary cannibals, if indeed that term may be applied to any people in Africa, nor do the commoners of the Ovimbundu ever eat human flesh on their own account, but no king may ever reign or be considered as regularly enthroned until he has 'eaten Ekongo'.[1] The cannibalism traditionally ascribed to Wambu-Kalunga is also a case in point.[2] Other human sacrifices practised by the 'Jagas' and described by Battell also have their counterparts in the practices of the Umbundu kingdoms.[3] The mode of the burial of the dead described by Battell[4] is essentially that which has been used, at least until the last few years, for the kings and the other 'holy'[5] men of the Ovimbundu, except that where rock caves are available the use of them has been adopted and in Kasongi cairns were used. The sitting posture and the sacrifice of wives or slaves and cattle (or of substitutes) are the important points, and these have everywhere been used for the classes mentioned, until quite recently.

The custom of keeping boys captured from the enemy and training them to be fearless warriors amid the terrors of the country has a parallel in the Umbundu custom of the king's slaves,[6] who came from another land[7] and would therefore do the king's bidding without fear, favour, or consideration of family feeling. They often reached high position and certain of the king's ministers always came from among them. There seem to be many recollections of the 'Jagas' in the customs of the kings' sons.[8] Names of certain of the officials seem to have survived, as, for example, Mani (*muēlē*) Lumbo, Mani-Curio (*Muēkalia*), Golambolo (*Ngalamboli*), Tendala (*Candala*), Ukuetambo,[9] &c. Careful linguistic studies would doubtless reveal many remains of the speech

[1] *Oku lia Ekongo*—lit. 'to eat the Old One'. This is a ritual feast in which the flesh of a specially fattened slave is eaten mixed with the flesh of various animals. See Ravenstein, op. cit., p. 33, note 3. Magyar described this custom, calling it '*Ouri-Kongo*', op. cit., pp. 275 ff.

[2] See *supra*, p. 176.

[3] Compare Ravenstein, op. cit.

[4] Op. cit., p. 34 f.

[5] 'Holy' in the sense of spirit possessed—the king, the hunter, the medical practitioner, and the smith.

[6] *Ocinduli cosoma*, singular. May there be some recollection of 'Kinguri' (= Cinguli) in this word?

[7] In Bailundu the *ovinduli viosoma* (plural) came mostly from Luandu, i.e. the Songo country across the Kuanza—further evidence of connexion with Lunda emigrants.

[8] *Omālā volosoma*, used collectively of all the royal families of the Ovimbundu.

[9] Cavazzi, op. cit., pp. 206 f., 211.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

The Village

Among the Ovimbundu the outstanding social and political unit at the present time is the village (*imbo*, plural *ovaimbo*). The village may consist of from 5 to 500 households,[1] the heads of which are in the great majority of cases related to each other in the male line. Each village has a headman or elder (*sekulu*, literally 'grandfather' or 'elder father') who is literally, according to Umbundu kinship usage, the patriarch of the villagers. He was formerly responsible for his village to the sub-chief, and through him to the king. At the present time, the administrative authorities hold the village headmen responsible for matters relating to taxes, labour recruiting, &c. The present decay of this office and of village life varies very greatly from region to region. Nearly everywhere matters of purely local concern are not directly interfered with, and the headman continues his patriarchal government, assisted by a council of all (male) householders.

Ngendo, a typical village. The village of Ngendo lies at about 14° 40′ east, 11° 40′ south, about thirty-five miles south-west of the Keve, where that river crosses the fifteenth parallel, and about sixty miles in a direct line from the Atlantic Ocean. Its altitude is about 1,650 metres, and the ground on which it is built slopes down to a small stream of the Keve system. Directly across the stream to the north rises the granite outcrop on which may be seen the ruined fortress of Usengo. Ngendo belongs to the tribe of Kasongi, *etumbu* of Ekongo. It is about fifteen miles north-west of the administrative post of Cassongue and about two miles from the motor road which connects that post and points farther inland with the district capital and port of Novo Redondo.

The most striking feature of this village is the fact that it consists of four smaller units or wards (*ovitawila*, plural), each of which appears to be quite self-contained. The four together make up the village (*imbo*), which name is also applied to either of the two larger units by themselves. Each unit has its own elder, but

[1] Most, but not all, of the larger villages are *olombala* (q.v., *supra*), but even these are not as large now as they formerly were. In 1850 the *ombala* of Bailundu was said to have 5,000 inhabitants (Magyar, op. cit.). At the present time there is probably no village with more than 3,000 inhabitants, and few of that size. The tendency seems to be toward smaller villages, and there is even some movement toward isolated households and farmsteads after the fashion of so many of the Southern Bantu.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

are small streams of pure water falling down the cliffs and hillsides. 361
Near Bailundu and Ngalangi, villages still retain their defences which consist of high poles set in a trench.

Judging from sites visited at Elende there was a pre-Ovimbundu 172
stone-building culture. One of the sites has such a commanding 712
view over extensive plains and valleys that the position would be almost impregnable. At the present day the line of fortifications is well marked by stone walls three feet high. These are composed of boulders to which the builders had ready access on adjacent hillsides. Large stones were no doubt rolled from the slopes to the small plateau chosen as a building site. This small plain lies midway between the hill crest and the valley.

At present this old site, which is enclosed by lichen-covered walls, is overgrown by tall grass and trees attaining twenty feet in height. Photography would be uninstructive unless a preliminary clearance were made—a formidable task owing to the density of vegetation.

In the center of the enclosure is a group of transported boulders possibly marking the site of a place of assembly. A search among the long grass reveals stone slabs and cylindrical crushers which were used for grinding grain over a very long period, as may be seen by the wear on the base stone; some thick stones are so worn as to be almost perforated. Weather-worn stones that were probably used as scrapers, are to be found. Surface potsherds are of the material of which present-day Ovimbundu women make their cooking pots. These sherds mark the places now used by small nomadic bands, hence the surface pottery may have no connection with a pre-Umbundu culture.

In the vicinity of this walled stone village are hillside cairns marking the sites of graves. These have been robbed by medicine-men in search of material for their charms.

The Ovimbundu have no traditions regarding the site, neither is there legendary or other evidence to show that the Ovimbundu ever made their villages of stone. The raising of a cairn of stones over [764]
the body of a hunter is, however, a present-day practice near Ganda and in the Esele country.

If a site cannot be systematically worked, it is better left alone until scientific investigation is possible. The preliminary clearance of grass and timber would be a long process. The archaeological material recovered from such a site would be of a uniform and simple kind. There is no evidence of anything beyond an elementary stone age culture.

3. Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

686 actually paid to redeem his brother and sister who were sold to pay the debts of his maternal uncle. Officialdom is one thing and actual [177] practice is another. Ngonga is right when he says that people appeal to the native law as laid down by the chief or king. If they are not satisfied they pretend a great respect for Portuguese law and therefore go to the Administrador.

WARFARE AND SLAVERY

648 The Ovimbundu have been for centuries an organized people 726 possessed of a well-developed language, a legal system, and complex social organization. In trade and travel too, the Ovimbundu have been in the vanguard of African tribes. These reasons, in conjunction with the fact of numerical superiority and early contact with the Portuguese, would account for the success of the Ovimbundu in warfare. The defensive federations existing between the ten or twelve main political units, whereby they did not habitually war on each other, helped to assure success. Should the eldest son of a king's [643] principal wife be thought unsuitable as successor, a competent son of the deceased king was elected by a council of village chiefs.

411 There is no evidence that the Ovimbundu poisoned their weapons, neither do they do so today. The Ovimbundu do not use a shield at the present time, neither is it certain that they had shields in former times. A skin-covered powder-box was carried in the king's train when on the warpath.

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721 Intertribal jealousies, raiding for cattle and slaves, also reprisals for interference with caravan trade, were the chief causes of conflict with surrounding peoples. There was undoubtedly some internal warfare within the confederacy. The Ovimbundu of Elende, Bail-

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

(*c*) *In hunting*, deities other than the king's ancestors were invoked, especially *Hūvī*, the hunters' god, and *Kuanja*, a goddess, both of which had their own shrines and priests. These may have been connected with the country or with its earlier inhabitants (the kings being recognized as late comers). At the inaugural hunt the offices were assigned. The king's character was supposedly revealed by the sex of the animal killed at this hunt: 'If the duiker[1] is a female, then it is good indeed, but if a male, then the king is a real person but he habitually will become angry to excess' (*Nda ombambi yaco omange ciwa muēlē, puaī nda ulume, Soma omunu puaī o tema tema enene*).

2. *To represent the nation in its external relations*, i.e. (*a*) *To make agreements with other kings to promote trade*, and (*b*) *To make war on other peoples* in order to provide his court with tribute and his warriors with plunder. The war leader (*Kesongo*) had his own residence and establishment entirely separate from that of the king, whom he must not meet face to face except on certain state occasions. In Bailundu he, with certain other officials, was of the stock of the slaves of the state (*ovinduli viosoma*) who came from Luandu in the Songo country. Each king must inaugurate his reign with a war, during or after which he must ceremonially 'eat the old one' (*oku lia ekongo*)—a feast consisting of the flesh of a specially fattened slave cooked with the flesh of the principal animals commonly eaten.

3. *To dispense justice*. In point of time consumed, this question was very important, for it occupied much of the time of both rulers and ruled. Good evidence of this is in the number of proverbs used at court, second only in number to those used for the education of the young. The king's court (*olusenje*) was the supreme court of the nation where cases were continually heard and 'fines eaten' (*oku lia ovimbu*). Cases might be settled either by ordeal or by decision of the king, and there was therefore room for appeal and re-trial. The king's word, however, was final, as the proverb has it: *O popia onganji, o mālāpo osoma*. (The advocate speaks, the king finishes [decides].) The king was not generally arbitrary in his decisions but was bound not only by the customs of his people, but also by the desires of his councillors. Among the legitimate kings of the Ovimbundu there were comparatively few of the revolting and wholesale punishments which were so

[1] The duiker, *ombambi* (*Silvicapra grimmii leucoprosopus*).

EARLY HISTORY

175 The earliest records of native migration in what is now Angola concern the warrior hordes of Jagas (Jaggas, Jakas, Iagges, Giaghis, Giaki, Ayaka etc.), who from about 1560 onwards were reported in north-western Angola and the adjacent Kingdom of Congo.(1) Various attempts have been made to identify the Jagas. Van Wing(2) and Torday(3) hold that the name is derived from the Bayaka tribe on the middle Kwango; Battell's account would seem to identify them with the Bangala (Imbangala) of Jaga Cassange, who are known to have been invading western Angola at this time. Childs points to suggestive links of the Jagas with Ovimbundu dynasties: e.g. the Ciyaka group of Ovimbundu, who recognise the region of Cassange as the location of their earliest ancestral tombs. He also shows that certain Jaga customs as described by the earlier writers resemble those connected with Ovimbundu kingship. Childs suggests that the name *Jaga* (which seems to derive from the verb "to fight" -*oku yaka*; "they fight" = *a yaka* or *vayaka*) was originally a name given to these hordes or to their leaders by the African peoples whom they fought and conquered.(4)

175 177 European contacts with the people of the Benguella Highland took place in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, before the migrations had settled down. Dutch and Portuguese raids took place in 1645, 1650 and 1661, and since fire-arms appear to have been used at that time by the Africans, it seems likely that Umbundu dynasties had them when they came into the region.(5) In 1760 the throwing open of the hinterland to European traders(6) led to greatly increased commercial contact, and this in turn gave rise to wars between the native rulers and the Portuguese. In 1774-6 a war was fought between the Portuguese and their native allies and the kings of Bailundu and Cingolo. Ciyaka and neighbouring kingdoms continued to raid the European garrisons until recent times, and Europeans appear not to have penetrated Ciyaka until almost the turn of the present century.

[921]

THE DEVELOPMENT OF OVIMBUNDU TRADE

175 439 There are indications that before the end of the eighteenth century the Ovimbundu were becoming, or had become, traders. The slave-trade was formally prohibited in 1836,(7) and subsequently European traders began to move inland in greater numbers in search of ivory, settling especially in Bailundu and Viye. This began a period of great commercial development among the Ovimbundu, the principal commodities being ivory, beeswax, and, in the third quarter of the century, rubber.(8) Trading caravans of the Ovimbundu (under the names *Nambari*, *Eiheans*, *Bailundus*, or *Mbundus*) became

(1) See especially Battell, pp.19f. (2) 1921, p.106.
(3) 1925, map facing p.282.
(4) Childs, op.cit., pp.185-6. (5) Ibid., p.195.
(6) Entry of European traders to the hinterland had been forbidden by law in 1620, although the law had become largely a dead letter.
(7) Although contraband slave-trade continued until late in the nineteenth century, the slaves being used for the transport of ivory and other goods from the hinterland to the coast.
(8) These were at first one-way agreements, allowing Ovimbundu to trade in many lands, since it was to the advantage of the rulers of these countries. The Ovimbundu are said in fact to have discouraged the tribes to the east from venturing out on their own account. See Livingstone 1857, p.384, Cameron 1877, p.406.

known throughout the territory bounded by the Congo river, the Great Lakes, and the Kalahari desert. Most other Ovimbundu kingdoms fell into line with the trading activities of Bailundu and Viye. By the middle of the century this had resulted in a loose system of alliances and mutual understandings to the effect that the traders and caravans of each kingdom would be permitted to enter or travel through the others. At time these "trade-agreements" seem to have embraced all the Umbundu-speaking peoples, but violations were frequent, especially between Viye and the Ciyaka-Cingola-Citata group. Trade-agreements were also made beyond the Umbundu-speaking area, e.g. with the Mwata Yamvo of the Lunda.(1) 175 439 [484]

From roughly the turn of the twentieth century the large-scale trading activities of the Ovimbundu declined. Military occupation of Viye and Bailundu took place in 1890, and from that date European traders began to settle in Viye and Bailundu in ever-increasing numbers. In 1902 the Bailundu war occurred, after which the occupation of the whole of Umbundu country was quickly completed. This campaign paralysed trade, which was already suffering because of a great fall in rubber prices. Other factors which hastened the decline of Ovimbundu trading activities(2) include the famine in Ngangela country in 1911, the disappearance of illicit slave-traffic, and, finally, the building of the Benguella Railway (commenced in 1904), which put an end to the porterage and trading caravans of former days.(3) [721] [456]

LANGUAGE

"Umbundu is usually(4) associated with Ambo, Herero and kindred languages. It would however seem that more comparative study is required to show how real this apparent relationship is: it appears to be especially based on the fact that Umbundu uses prefixial o- with many of its noun classes. In general structure, however, Umbundu shows remarkable similarity in grammar and vocabulary to Luena, Luchazi and other languages of the Ganguella [Ngangela] group. 197

Features of Umbundu which are worthy of note are:-

i. Presence of nasal vowels before and after 'l', 'h', 'v' and 'w'.

ii. In certain nasal compounds, subtraction occurs, involving the second consonant, but not the nasal, e.g. muntù is realised as *omunu*.

iii. Compared with the Lunda-Luena languages Umbundu exhibits an unusually large number of defective verbs.

iv. A vowel system of five vowels.

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(2) For much greater detail concerning the rise and fall of Ovimbundu trade see Childs op.cit., pp.191-215.
(3) Ibid.
(4) Duke 1945, p.101; Guthrie 1948, p.64; Childs 1949, p.8.

110 643 769 782 regent and incarnation" of the spirits. Sacrifices were made at the royal shrine or *kokokoto* ("at the skulls"), where the skulls of past chiefs were kept, in order to:-

[372] (i) control the elements i.e. to ensure a sufficient supply of rain and avoid the dangers caused by storms; also to control fire by providing a new fire ceremonially kindled(1) from which everyone took his fire.

[842] [241] (ii) to ensure fertility, towards which the royal marriage had great influence. The queen's special province was agriculture and her kitchen was sanctified by human sacrifice to guarantee the national food supply. Ceremonially treated seed was distributed to be mixed with the seed of each granary.

643 648 721 [701] (b) *To represent the country in its external relations,* principally to make trade agreements with other chiefs, or to make war on other peoples in order to get tribute and plunder. The war leader *(Kesongo)* has his own residence entirely separate from that of the king, whom he must not meet face to face except on certain ceremonial occasions.(2) Each king must inaugurate his reign with a war, during which or after which he must ceremonially "eat the old one" *(oku lia ekongo)* - who was usually a specially fattened slave cooked with the flesh of the principal animals commonly eaten.(3) [266]

643 692 (c) *To dispense justice.* The chief's court or *olusenje* was the supreme court of the chiefdom. The chief had the final word in any case, but most chiefs acted according to custom.

644 [882] (d) *To protect himself and the chiefdom,* the chief could use "magic" (?) which might have been accounted witchcraft or murder if practised without authority: e.g. the ritual murder of a pregnant woman, or of the children whose lives were required for building and furnishing the queen's kitchen.

643 791 (e) The chief made much use of divination in order to carry out his office. For this purpose he had his own diviner *(citue cosoma)*, who was of the blood royal; but he also consulted diviners of other regions and types.

643 Succession to chiefship is in the male line,(4) from father to son, elder brother to younger brother or brother's son, or sometimes to one more distantly related. The election is made by the councillors whose duty it is (?), ordinarily before the old chief's death is announced. These same councillors may depose an unpopular chief, and there have been many such depositions. This "democratic" tendency of the Ovimbundu has been noted by most writers. Childs points out that it is attested by the fact that a chief (formerly as well as today) works in his own fields, and by folk-tales which give incidental and intimate pictures of petty details in the lives of the chiefs† [642]

(1) See above, p.26.
(2) In Bailundu he, with certain other officials, was of the stock of slaves of the state *(ovindili viossoa)*.
(3) Childs, p.21. Many early writers refer to the cannibalism of the "Jagas" or "Imbangalas" who are thought to have been the Ovimbundu chiefs. (See above, p.8, and also Lacerda and Ravenstein, quoted by Childs, pp.17ff.)
(4) But *inheritance* is said to follow a different line among chiefs from among commoners; possibly inheritance is also in the paternal line. See Childs p.18.

† See footnote 1, p. 31

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

175 that the Church participated actively (T. Lewis, The Old Kingdom of Kongo, *Geog. Journ.*, 1908, pp. 598–600).

Political influence of the Portuguese, working often through the agency of Jesuit priests, led to factions within the Congo Empire, and the resulting disturbances caused movements of peoples that affected the whole of northern Angola and the population of the Benguela Highlands.

Portuguese penetration of the hinterland of Angola, especially from Loanda to Bihé, was concerned with attempts to subjugate native tribes, the establishment of trading posts, and the encouragement of the slave trade (S. Marquardsen, Angola, 1928, pp. 6–10).

439 721 The value of the Portuguese as allies of Umbundu caravans from Bihé lay in their ability to supply guns and powder to their native henchmen, who gave something more than military service in return. In response to Portuguese demand for slaves and ivory, Umbundu caravans made long journeys into the Congo basin, Rhodesia, south and southwest Angola, and possibly across Africa to lakes Tanganyika and Nyasa. The arms supplied in exchange for ivory and slaves must have helped the Ovimbundu in all their predatory excursions.

648 Thus the Ovimbundu were, in the early centuries of contact with the Portuguese, invaders encouraged in the building up of their tribal life and resources. Never were the Portuguese strong enough completely to subjugate northern Angola. Relationships with natives, especially the Bihéan section of the Ovimbundu, were directed toward alliances on a commercial basis. The political result of this was a combination of the Portuguese and the stronger tribes for the exploitation of the weaker.

167 177 The historical ethnology of the southwest Congo is so complex that the elements are difficult to disentangle. The number of tribes concerned is great, and their movements are not easy to follow; but a gradual extension of people from the Congo in a southwesterly direction through Lunda to the Benguela Highlands (1600–1800) seems to be the summation of all the conflict. I regard the Ovimbundu as the most southerly branch of these mass movements, during which they received a discipline that enabled them to make their home in central Angola, despite opposition from the Portuguese and earlier arrivals.

114 For these conclusions reliance has been placed on the extensive field work and historical analyses of E. Torday and T. A. Joyce, whose "Notes on the Ethnography of the Bambala" (*J.R.A.I.*, XXXV, pp. 398–426) have proved of particular value in this connection.

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WARFARE AND SLAVERY

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721 Intertribal jealousies, raiding for cattle and slaves, also reprisals for interference with caravan trade, were the chief causes of conflict with surrounding peoples. There was undoubtedly some internal warfare within the confederacy. The Ovimbundu of Elende, Bail-

undu, and Ngalangi are said to have had conflicts. In time past, 721
as at the present day, a king reigned over territory which was
extensive but definitely delimited for purposes of administration.
Encroachment of one king on the rights of taxation and administra- 651
tion of another led to raids and reprisals. Village chiefs collected
taxes in the form of agricultural produce and gave these to the king,
who personally visited a village from which payments had not been
made. A folklore story begins, "The people had not paid taxes
so the king came to the village and told them a parable."

A king, if young, accompanied his people on the warpath. There 726
was, however, a permanent leader named *kesongo*, a derivative from [701
songola ("to lead"). The declaration of war, likewise the tactics,
were discussed by a council of *olosekulu* ("village chiefs") in the
ombala ("capital") where the king had, and still has, a royal com-
pound. If war had been conducted among sections of the Ovim- 727
bundu, the defeated people had to pay taxes and tribute; moreover,
their women and cattle were taken. In event of a successful war
against the Vachokue there was plundering of cattle and women,
but it was not found practicable to exact periodical payments
from the enemy.

The subject of warfare is intimately related to that of slavery. 686
There was until very recent times a domestic slavery which followed 567
from the inability of a person to pay his debts. In connection with 672
this reduction of free persons to a condition of slavery there are
several points of exceptional interest. The debtor himself is not
taken as a slave, neither are his wife or children. The correct proce-
dure is a sale of his sister's children; but more frequently the children
themselves are taken by the creditor. "The debtor's sister will say
nothing because this is the law of the Ovimbundu." If payment of
the debt is made later, the children are set free. Usually the word
pawning is used by ethnologists to describe this proceeding.

Further consideration of Ngonga's payment to his mother's
brother clarifies the facts of domestic slavery. "I paid for them,
I took their place," said my interpreter. The payment for the
return of these two children was two oxen. The girl, who was ten
years of age when she was taken to pay the debt, was returned to
her people when she was a woman with three children. Ngonga's
brother was not actually taken from his home. He was made to
pay his mother's brother's debt by working for the creditor. In
general, these domestic slaves were not ill treated, though their
rights were limited. The position of slaves taken from a hostile 567

[1874-1911]

THE OVIMBUNDU UNDER TWO SOVEREIGNTIES

593 It was then the father who normally exercised authority over
591 a boy, and on the father's death a child or youth would join the household of a father's brother. Yet the right of a sister's son to
604 the inheritance of the movable property and to grants from his mother's brother was counterbalanced by the latter's right to sell his uterine nephew into slavery, a fate from which the father could save his son by ransoming him, in which case the mother's brother would no longer have this right.[86] In this society, the mother's brother—sister's son relationship was fundamentally an economic one, in which the sister's son received assistance in the trade and inherited his uncle's gains in this trade, but could himself be transformed into a source of capital.

182 I now summarize the evidence on Umbundu social control and its relation with the trading economy. It is clear that the Ovimbundu belonged to the number of those African societies
[642] with pyramidal[87] political systems and formal codes and courts of law, even though there exists uncertainty as to the relative power of the kingdoms and the sub-chiefdoms. Social control
102 also operated through the kinship system, authority at the
613 village level being in the hands of the head of the patrilineal group backed by the public opinion expressed in the men's house, and the dispersed matrilineal groups having sanctions in the right of sale of a sister's son and in the accusations of sorcery brought against those who failed to use wealth to aid
102 their relatives. For the caravan trade to have attained the
631 importance it did there must also have existed something of a *pax Umbundica* stimulated by the existence of such ties as that between *tjisoko* partners and the 'international' hospitality shown to diviners, hunters, and smiths. Evidence of this *pax Umbundica* is provided by the organization of caravans, and by the establishment of marriage ties between persons in different kingdoms, and between different royal houses.[88]
[721] However, warfare was not unknown between the different

[86] Childs, p. 44, and my informants.

[87] See Fortes and Evans-Pritchard, Introduction to *African Political Systems*.

[88] Hastings (p. 1) notes a marriage between the daughter of a king of Bie and Elwikwi, king of Bailundo (1876–95). Childs (p. 171) notes that Kakulukuma, king of Ndulu, was a sister's son of a king of Bailundo.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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kingdoms of the Ovimbundu, though more frequently perhaps it was made against the non-Umbundu peoples.[89]

The question of the influence of the trade provides interesting opportunities for comparison. The Ovimbundu were the southernmost of the peoples who in the nineteenth century participated in the trade between the Europeans of the West African coast and the peoples of the interior.[90] In some ways the Ovimbundu seem to have been less influenced by it than were some of the peoples further north. The Ovimbundu did not develop genuine patterns of urban life as in Dahomey or Benin.[91]

Three explanations can be offered for the relative failure of associational groups and urban society to develop. Umbundu crafts were much inferior to those found along the coast of the Gulf of Guinea; there was no indigenous weaving industry, for instance, and the goods which the caravans carried to the interior were all of European or American origin, cloths, guns, and rum.[92] For these goods the Ovimbundu were dependent on the Portuguese settled at the coast or in the Highland and this meant that the Ovimbundu were far from economic autonomy. Again the trade had a relatively short time span—the real boom period lasted only from 1886 to 1900, and earlier on in the 1840's when the beeswax, ivory, and slave trade was flourishing, the Ovimbundu had plenty of time for warfare.

It would, however, be a grave mistake to think that trade had only a marginal influence on Umbundu society. It has been suggested that the form of the double-descent system owes its origin to the necessity to isolate economic relations from other social fields. In the sphere of ritual, there are some remarkable copies of European practices—for instance the holding of a feast in honour of the ancestors at Christmas-time.[93] Many ritual concepts are related to the explanation of business

[89] For information on Umbundu warfare see Magyar, pp. 277–80 and Serpa Pinto, pp. 177–9.

[90] See Balandier, *Sociologie Actuelle de l'Afrique Noire*, Paris, 1955, for a discussion of social change in other areas which had experienced a trade of a similar sort.

[91] For Dahomey see M. J. Herskovits, *Dahomey*, New York, 1938. For Benin see R. Bradbury, *The Benin Kingdom* (Ethnographic Survey of Africa), London, 1957.

[92] Childs, p. 208.

[93] Informants.

The coastal strip

131 was at times traversed by the Ovimbundu who know of the sea and
484 call it *kalunga*. Bihéan caravans crossed to the coast with slaves, as history shows, but the nature of the coastal strip marks it as a western barrier limiting the expansion of the Ovimbundu in that direction. The coast line itself is of the greatest moment in the consideration of historical factors. From Loanda, Benguela, and
[177] Mossamedes on the coast, the Portuguese penetrated the interior, so making contacts with the Ovimbundu to the encouragement of caravan trade. The importance of this European contact will be seen in subsequent chapters.

The south and southwest parts of Angola are of particular importance in studying the contacts of the Ovimbundu, but to give here the details of the wealthy cattle-keeping culture of these regions, which were accessible through peaceful proximity, trade, and occasional raiding, would be an anticipation of chapter X, "Culture Contacts."
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231 Vachokue, the great distance from central Angola to Rhodesia, and the general dryness of the country to be crossed, discourage the idea that the Ovimbundu obtained their cattle from Rhodesia. If it is

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Being ready to depart, the great Giaga staid us, and desired our boat to pass his men over the river Cova, for he determined to overrun the realm of Benguele, which was on the north side of the river Cova. So we went with him to his camp, which was very orderly, intrenched with piles of wood; we had houses provided for us that night, and many burthens (loads) of palm-wine, cows, goats, and flour. 175 x 167

In the morning before day, the general did strike his *gongo*, which is an instrument of war that soundeth like a bell, and presently made an oration with a loud voice, that all the camp might hear, that he would destroy the Benguelas, with such courageous and vehement speeches as were not to be looked for among the heathen people. And presently they were all in arms, and marched to the river side, where he had provided Gingados.[1] And being ready with our boat and Gingados, the general was fain to beat them back because of the credit who should be first. We carried over eighty men at once, and with our muskets we beat the enemy off, and landed, but many of them were slain. By twelve of the clock all the Gagas were over. [726]

Then the general commanded all his drums, *tavales*, *petes*, *pongos*, and all his instruments of warlike music to strike up, and gave the onset, which was a bloody day for the Benguelas. These Benguelas presently broke, and turned their backs, and a very great number of them were slain, and were taken captives, man, woman and child. The prince, Hombiangymbe, was slain, which was ruler of this country, and more than one hundred of his chief lords, and their heads presented and thrown at the feet of the great Gaga. The men, women and children that were brought in captive alive, and the dead corpses that were brought to be eaten, were strange to behold. For these Gagas are the greatest cannibals and man-eaters that be in the world, for they feed chiefly upon man's flesh (notwithstanding of their) having all the cattle of that country. [727] [266]

They settled themselves in this country and took the spoil of it. We had great trade with these Gagas, five months, and gained greatly by them. . . .

In these five months' space we made three voyages to the city of San Paul, and coming the fourth time we found them not.[2]

On a subsequent voyage Battell was left by 'the Portugals and Mulattos' as a hostage among the 'Benguelas', whence he escaped to 'the Great Gaga', living in his camp and helping to fight his battles during twenty-one months. His description of the life and customs of which he was a daily witness are of great interest, and

[1] 'Gingado', elsewhere spelt 'Iergado', is evidently a misprint for *Jangada*, Portuguese for 'raft'.

[2] Ravenstein, op. cit., pp. 19 ff.

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175x 439 567 648 eighteenth, and much of the nineteenth century, then, was the slave-trade.

Most of the historical treatises on Angola are little more than chronological lists of battles and expeditions. The relation of these events to the main facts, i.e. to the economic facts, has rarely been made. Two or three presídios were founded with the hope of controlling nearby mineral deposits,[1] whether real or supposed, but all the rest were intended as spearheads for trade or to protect existing trade. Many of the military expeditions were raids with an obvious end in view; others were rearguard actions to protect a more or less successful raid of the same sort; others were retaliations for reprisals or vice versa. Practically all of the soldiers who were free men, from the captain-general down, were also traders, and some who were not free were traders on account of others. There may have been a few expeditions which had less immediate connexion with trade, for there were genuine explorers in those early days, even as more recently.

*175 726 648 There would be little interest or profit in cataloguing the military expeditions which had, or seem to have had, contact with the Ovimbundu or with their predecessors in the land during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. There were only a very few of real significance. During the seventeenth century many raids were made from Massangano across Libolo to the edge of or into the Benguela Highland, and likewise there were many actions between the garrisons of Benguela and Caconda and the inhabitants of the plateau. In 1607 Balthazar Rebello de Aragão set out to cross Africa and had to turn back after going eighty leagues, but his own report was so scanty that even the direction he took cannot be determined.[2] In 1645, while the Dutch controlled Luanda and the coast, there was a raid which was said to have reached Bailundu.[3] The very scanty references to this raid give no description of the inhabitants, but since there seems to be no Bailundu tradition with regard to it, I conclude that the present dynasty (beyond the establishment of which tradition hardly goes) must have been founded since that date. About 1650 there was a raid across Libolo as far as the Keve River which found a cattle-rearing

[1] e.g. Benguela Velha and Cambambe.

[2] L. Cordeiro (ed.), 1593–1620, *Terras e minas africanas segundo Balthazar Rebello de Aragão*, p. 15.

[3] *Catálogo dos Governadores*, p. 374; Lopes de Lima, *Ensaios*, part i, p. 99.

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people living there,[1] which also leads me to conclude that the Ovimbundu as we now know them were not there at that date. 175x 726 648

About 1661 there was an expedition from Benguela in order to restore a native ally, the 'Iaga Caconda', against an 'intruding Iaga' who used fire-arms.[2] This is the first record of fire-arms in native hands in the hinterland of Benguela. Muskets and powder were sold from the time of Luanda's founding (1576),[3] but not all tribes took to them quickly.[4] If fire-arms were already in use by natives in the Benguela hinterland in 1661, it is most probable that the founders of the present Umbundu dynasties had them when they came to the country. The first presídio of Caconda was built in 1680, destroyed soon after, and rebuilt nearby in 1685. This was at four or five days' journey from Benguela but not on the Plateau nor within the present Umbundu area. The third presídio, known as Caconda-Nova, was built at its present site in 1769. Most writers have supposed this fort to have been built at its present site in 1685, overlooking the fact that there were not two sites but three.[5] [411] [177]

European Influences 1770–1840. The governor who effected the final moving of Caconda on to the Plateau, D. Francisco de Souza Coutinho, also undertook many other reforms designed to better the economic state of the colony. He brought something of the intentions of the great Marquez de Pombal to this remote tropical dependency. He seems to have been the first governor of Angola to realize the immense superiority of the Benguela Highland, 175+ 648

[1] Cadornega, op. cit., vol. ii, pp. 42–6.

[2] Cadornega, op. cit., p. 176 f. It is of interest that according to this author (1680) this expedition passed the Bay then known as 'Catumbella of Salt Water' or 'Catumbella of the Oysters'. Jaspert made the error of stating that this Bay (Lobito) was 'discovered by the English' about 1900!

[3] Garcia Mendes Castello Branco (1620) protested against allowing this traffic (*Da Mina ao Cabo Negro*, p. 25).

[4] In 1790 the Ovimbundu used fire-arms very well, but the 'Ganguellas' had not then adopted their use (*Annaes Mar. e Col.*, *5a Ser.*, p. 489).

[5] Lopes de Lima (*Ensaios*) made this error (or omission), and more recent writers have perhaps erred by following him. The correct accounts are given in the *Catálogo dos Governadores*, pp. 396 ff., 416 ff. (also to be found in *Arquivos de Angola*, vol. iii, pp. 507 f., 528). The facts are most clearly brought out by the governor of the District of Benguela in reporting a visit made to Caconda. He gives a short history of the presídio and tells of having seen the ruins of the earlier forts (*Districto de Benguella 1892*, Lisboa, 1894). The report to the Ministry in Lisbon of the governor, D. Francisco Inocencio de Souza Coutinho, explaining (among other things) the moving of this presídio, and dated 18 Oct. 1769, has been published in *Arquivos de Angola*, vol. i, no. 1 (Oct. 1933).

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foreign buccaneers and other contraband trade in the unoccupied ports of the Congo, Loango, &c. He therefore removed the prohibition[1] and counted on the appointment of captains-major to keep the peace. From this time the hinterlands were legally open to traders—to all Portuguese subjects whether white, black, or brown.

Though the hinterlands were now legally open to all traders, life was not thereby made any easier for them than it had been previously for the 'barefoot traders'[2] who had carried on most of the trade hitherto. Once they went beyond the range of the guns of a presídio, they entered what were practically foreign countries which recognized no European principles of law or of conduct. Those who could afford it built themselves small fortresses and manned them with their slaves. Even so, they had to become vassals and feudatories of some native king and pay tribute according to his good pleasure. Those traders who could not afford such an establishment led a very precarious existence, nor could they long maintain a status above that of the natives of the region. Many of these early traders and their descendants were subsequently incorporated into the Umbundu stock, and in some instances whole communities of them.[3] For one reason or another this increased commercial contact led to further wars with the natives. The war of this period which made the greatest impression upon the Ovimbundu was the campaign of 1774–6, to which allusion has already been made.[4] Memories of this war and of the capture of their respective kings have been preserved in the traditions of Bailundu and of Ndulu,[5] and it also seems that these two peoples learned, for a time at least, that it was safer and more profitable to trade with the Europeans than to raid their establishments. Ciyaka and the neighbouring groups do not seem to have followed suit, for they continued to raid the forts of Caconda, Quilengues, and Huila until fairly recent times; nor do Europeans seem to have penetrated Ciyaka for residence until almost the turn of the present century. But in all the Umbundu kingdoms life

[1] Report of 9 May 1765 in *Arquivos de Angola*, vol. i, nos. 5 and 6.

[2] i.e. native African trading agents.

[3] I have genealogical tables and family histories of some of the present-day descendants. The mixed origin of communities in Kakonda has been noted by several writers. A noteworthy example in Viye is the region called Kamundongo—an old Ndongo (Angola) settlement.

[4] *Supra*, pp. 166, 171, 174.

[5] *Supra*, pp. 170, 171.

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175x continued to be difficult for the traders, subject as they were to the
●726 conditions of primitive custom and belief.[1]
648 About the time of the above-mentioned military campaign,
648 events took a turn which in the end greatly advanced commercial life
439 in Viye. I refer to the restoration of Kangombe to his 'stool' with the
*175 help of the governor, Dom Antonio de Lancastre.[2] This alliance with the Portuguese government was maintained by Kangombe's successors until 1890. In 1782, and perhaps even in 1770, there were so many Portuguese residents that a 'Captain-major and exterior judge of Bihe' was appointed,[3] a post which seems to have been maintained until Silva Porto's suicide in 1890.

Reference has already been made to an account by Paulo Martins Pinheiro de Lacerda, who evidently lived in Ngalangi and in Wambu about 1790,[4] but although this man wrote a good deal about native life, he had little to say about trade, although it was perhaps his own livelihood. I have accounts of two trading expeditions from Benguela to the country of 'Lovar' or 'Lovale' at the head-waters of the Zambezi in 1794 and 1795, undertaken by Alexandre de Silva Teixeira and Jozé da Silva Costa at the instigation of a slave originally from that region.[5] They passed through Bailundu and Viye, but mentioned these regions only to
[487] say that the road was already well known to all backwoodsmen (traders). All available evidence seems to indicate that before the close of the eighteenth century the Ovimbundu were becoming, if they had not already become, traders. If trade had not yet taken first place over raiding and warfare, at least it was well-established in their habits of life. Bailundu tradition says that the first traders to offer cloth and beads and fire-arms for slaves and ivory were the Ndongo, the 'barefoot traders' (*pombeiros descalços*). This was doubtless during the very early days of the eighteenth century, or

[1] Silva Porto's diaries, although referring to a later time, give a good description of difficulties faced (op. cit.). *Soc. Geog. Lisboa, 5a Ser.*

[2] Governor and captain-general, 1772–9. He was the immediate successor of D. Francisco de Souza Coutinho.

[3] For this appointment, which may not have been the first, and the duties of the office, see *Annaes Mar. e Col.*, 6a *Ser.*, p. 118. I have the names of subsequent appointees, and for four of them the following dates of appointment, respectively—1791, 1819, 1838, 1885; also of one previous appointee in 1770 or 1771.

[4] *Supra*, p. 188.

[5] *Arquivos de Angola*, vol. i, no. 4 (Nov. 1935); *Annaes Mar. e Col.*, 4a *Ser.* (1844), p. 159 f.

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times, which is a sure sign of his greatness in Umbundu estimation. Ekuikui's reign marked the end of an era and the beginning of another, not only for the people of Bailundu, but for all the Ovimbundu. The rubber trade had begun just before he came to the stool and his reign saw its intensive development. Tradition is probably right in placing the beginning of intensive agricultural pursuits during Ekuikui's time, for the great development of trade, need for rations for the long journeys, and a market for foodstuffs at the coast provided the necessary stimulus to cultivate beyond immediate seasonal need. Ekuikui carried on the tradition of warfare[1] which was so large a part of his ancestral heritage, but he had the good sense to attempt no large-scale operations either against his relatively powerful Ovimbundu confrères, or against European establishments. There was plenty of provocation[2] and no lack of warlike counsel, but he probably realized that the tenor of the times was against such operations. Had his contemporaries of Viye and his own successors been possessed of equal good sense, the Ovimbundu might have been saved some very difficult times and not a little bloodshed. The military occupation of Viye came about in 1890, after a disastrous war brought on by foolishly high-handed treatment on the part of King Ndunduma[3] and his counsellors of a little expedition bound for the interior under Captain Paiva Couceiro, and of Silva Porto,[4] resulting in the suicide of the latter. The ruler and people of Viye relied on a largely magical defence against Boer sharpshooters and Portuguese field artillery with Krupp guns. When finally Ndunduma came in and gave himself up[5] he was exiled to São Tiago in the Cape Verde Islands,

[1] For King Ekuikui's wars see *Missionary Herald*, 1882, p. 225; 1883, p. 339; 1884, pp. 145 f., 504; 1885, pp. 279, 355, 375; 1889, p. 67; 1890, p. 292.

[2] See op. cit., 1886, pp. 228 f., 452, 508.

[3] *Ndunduma* (Thunderer) was the name assumed by Cikunyu when he took office after a *coup d'état* in 1888 (see *Missionary Herald*, 1889, p. 242 f.).

[4] Antonio Francisco Ferreira da Silva Porto, appointed 'Captain-major and exterior judge' of Bihe in 1885. He had authority only over the European residents, but he knew the country and people well and had tried to bring about a peaceful occupation of the country; neither the Government in Benguela nor the native authorities, however, would take his advice. His suicide brought the importance of the Umbundu country to the fore, and he became a Portuguese national hero.

[5] It was the Rev. W. H. Sanders, in charge of Kamundongo Mission Station, who sought Ndunduma and got him to surrender in order to avoid further slaughter. For a report of this 'war' see *Relatorio do Districto de Benguella*, 1891, pp. 12–14; also *Missionary Herald*, 1891, pp. 47, 63 f., 88, 108 f.; Dr. J. Johnston, *Romance versus Reality in South Central Africa*, pp. 59–63. F. S. Arnot (*Bihe*

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and the country settled down to the rule of 'the Fort' with Ndunduma's successor named by the captain-major. The occupation of Bailundu was effected at that same time,[1] while Ekuikui yet ruled, but for several years only a nominal force was employed.[2] In 1896 Ekuikui's successor, Numa II, attacked the fort, and the captain-major burned the *ombala*[3] in retaliation. From 1890 European traders settled in both Viye and Bailundu in ever-increasing numbers.[4] Then came the 'Bailundu War' of 1902,[5] after which the occupation of the whole Umbundu country was quickly completed.

The operations of 1890 had only interrupted the ivory trade. The campaign of 1902 completely paralysed trade in and with the interior, and greatly aggravated a depression which the District of Benguela was feeling because of a fall from the high prices which rubber had enjoyed in 1898–9.[6] After the war it seemed that trade would soon regain its former levels, and the export statistics show that for a time it did so, but closer inspection and a consideration of other factors which entered into the situation show that this was the beginning of the end. The price of rubber never regained its former level, so that the high value of exports reported represents an even larger quantity than before. The increased quantity largely represented a greatly debased product, for the native traders and producers understood nothing

and Garenganze, pp. 19–23) also wrote of these incidents but with more of the personal element and perhaps less accuracy.

[1] *Relatorio, Benguella*, 1892, p. 13 f.

[2] In 1892 there were 2 soldiers in Bailundu, 135 in Viye, 21 in Caconda (*Benguella*, op. cit., 1891, p. 15). Bailundu tradition says that (native) soldiers were first brought in disguised as porters with loads of goods.

[3] *Ombala*, capital village.

[4] A. Bastos, op. cit., pp. 36, 43.

[5] This war was named in Umbundu after the Bailundu war leader, *Mutu ya Kevela*. He is named among the kings, but it was only during the war that he assumed power. The immediate causes were excesses on the part of European residents against the natives, especially in connexion with 'the recruiting of contract labour'. The best work on the subject is in the nature of a report written by the man who was then governor, Cabral Moncada, *A Campanha do Bailundo* (Luanda 1903). General ideas may be had from *Missionary Herald*, 1902, pp. 353, 400, 452 f., 520 f.; 1903, pp. 22 f., 69 f., 122, 211 f.; H. W. Nevinson, op. cit., p. 157 f.; and J. T. Tucker, *Drums in the Darkness*, p. 122 f. The account given by Keiling (*Quarenta Anos de Africa*) is of interest for certain details of this war, but its statements are inaccurate and its judgements unreliable. The missionaries sought to dissuade the natives from taking up arms, and once the fighting had begun they provided medical services for both sides and sent food-supplies to the garrison of the beleaguered Portuguese fort.

[6] A. Bastos, op. cit., p. 39 f.

The coastal strip

131 was at times traversed by the Ovimbundu who know of the sea and
484 call it *kalunga*. Bihéan caravans crossed to the coast with slaves, as history shows, but the nature of the coastal strip marks it as a western barrier limiting the expansion of the Ovimbundu in that direction. The coast line itself is of the greatest moment in the consideration of historical factors. From Loanda, Benguela, and
[177] Mossamedes on the coast, the Portuguese penetrated the interior, so making contacts with the Ovimbundu to the encouragement of caravan trade. The importance of this European contact will be seen in subsequent chapters.

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686 actually paid to redeem his brother and sister who were sold to pay the debts of his maternal uncle. Officialdom is one thing and actual [177] practice is another. Ngonga is right when he says that people appeal to the native law as laid down by the chief or king. If they are not satisfied they pretend a great respect for Portuguese law and therefore go to the Administrador.

WARFARE AND SLAVERY

648 The Ovimbundu have been for centuries an organized people 726 possessed of a well-developed language, a legal system, and complex social organization. In trade and travel too, the Ovimbundu have been in the vanguard of African tribes. These reasons, in conjunction with the fact of numerical superiority and early contact with the Portuguese, would account for the success of the Ovimbundu in warfare. The defensive federations existing between the ten or twelve main political units, whereby they did not habitually war on each other, helped to assure success. Should the eldest son of a king's [643] principal wife be thought unsuitable as successor, a competent son of the deceased king was elected by a council of village chiefs.

411 There is no evidence that the Ovimbundu poisoned their weapons, neither do they do so today. The Ovimbundu do not use a shield at the present time, neither is it certain that they had shields in former times. A skin-covered powder-box was carried in the king's train when on the warpath.

718 Signaling-drums were about two feet long. They were made from a cylinder of wood over the ends of which skin was stretched. Signaling, which was accomplished by drumming with the palms of the hands, was the task of boys who resided in the king's compound, except when they accompanied him to war or on a trading journey. There was no system of smoke signaling. The iron war gong was named *ongonge*, but the instrument is nowadays tapped by the assistant of a medicine-man during his performance. In former times the gong was struck in the night to give assurance that the enemy was not in sight.

726 In war the oldest son of a king or of a chief went ahead of the war party accompanied by a few men who wore red leaves on their foreheads.

721 Intertribal jealousies, raiding for cattle and slaves, also reprisals for interference with caravan trade, were the chief causes of conflict with surrounding peoples. There was undoubtedly some internal warfare within the confederacy. The Ovimbundu of Elende, Bail-

undu, and Ngalangi are said to have had conflicts. In time past, 721
as at the present day, a king reigned over territory which was
extensive but definitely delimited for purposes of administration.
Encroachment of one king on the rights of taxation and administra- 651
tion of another led to raids and reprisals. Village chiefs collected
taxes in the form of agricultural produce and gave these to the king,
who personally visited a village from which payments had not been
made. A folklore story begins, "The people had not paid taxes
so the king came to the village and told them a parable."

A king, if young, accompanied his people on the warpath. There 726
was, however, a permanent leader named *kesongo*, a derivative from [701
songola ("to lead"). The declaration of war, likewise the tactics,
were discussed by a council of *olosekulu* ("village chiefs") in the
ombala ("capital") where the king had, and still has, a royal com-
pound. If war had been conducted among sections of the Ovim- 727
bundu, the defeated people had to pay taxes and tribute; moreover,
their women and cattle were taken. In event of a successful war
against the Vachokue there was plundering of cattle and women,
but it was not found practicable to exact periodical payments
from the enemy.

The subject of warfare is intimately related to that of slavery. 686
There was until very recent times a domestic slavery which followed 567
from the inability of a person to pay his debts. In connection with 672
this reduction of free persons to a condition of slavery there are
several points of exceptional interest. The debtor himself is not
taken as a slave, neither are his wife or children. The correct proce-
dure is a sale of his sister's children; but more frequently the children
themselves are taken by the creditor. "The debtor's sister will say
nothing because this is the law of the Ovimbundu." If payment of
the debt is made later, the children are set free. Usually the word
pawning is used by ethnologists to describe this proceeding.

Further consideration of Ngonga's payment to his mother's
brother clarifies the facts of domestic slavery. "I paid for them,
I took their place," said my interpreter. The payment for the
return of these two children was two oxen. The girl, who was ten
years of age when she was taken to pay the debt, was returned to
her people when she was a woman with three children. Ngonga's
brother was not actually taken from his home. He was made to
pay his mother's brother's debt by working for the creditor. In
general, these domestic slaves were not ill treated, though their
rights were limited. The position of slaves taken from a hostile 567

534 Another musical bow named *ekolowa* is of simple construction, consisting of a strip of cane from 54 to 70 cm long and 2 cm wide. At each end of the cane is a projection. A string, when tightly stretched between these projections, pulls the cane into the form of a bow. The performer, placing one end of the bow in his mouth, plucks the string with his thumb and forefinger (Plate XXII, Fig. 7).

Two rubbing instruments are used by the Ovimbundu. *Ogolanda* is a large gourd with a slit in the top along which there is a board cut into sixteen notches. The rubbing of a short stick along these notches produces a sound which is greatly amplified by the gourd resonator. The second instrument of this type is in the form of a wooden bow having its thickest part notched for rubbing with a stick (Plate XXII, Figs. 3, 8).

533 Only specialists are skilled in composing songs, and both men and women are composers. The younger people sometimes go to the old people to learn songs which were popular a generation ago. There are no professional itinerant story-tellers.

There is a chant for funerals which has been quoted in the appropriate section, but no special wedding songs are used. The Ovimbundu have satirical songs humorously describing individual [626] foibles and peculiarities, and as usual in Negro communities a satirical song is feared by thieves, adulterers, or other offenders.

[726] In former days when men were on the warpath they sang, *Okaimbo ketu katito eteke tu lisanumbula tu tandako.* ("Our village is little today, we attack, we extend.") Another war song is *Ocisonde ci likoka ove o kasi vonjila tumdamo.* ("Red ant that creeps along, you who are in the way, get out.")

[484] When men on the march came to a camping ground occupied by another caravan, they sang as a challenge, *Cinene nye? Cinene onjamba kakuli okachama kavela ukuavo.* ("What is the largest? There is no animal largest. The largest is the elephant.")

During hauling and carrying, men sing, *Yende, yende chale, ocimboto lomala vaco.* ("Let it go, let it go, the crab, the frog, with its children.")

482 Lifting loads is always accompanied by noises which suggest that someone is injured. Part of the men make deep grunts to which their companions answer with prolonged groans.

INITIATION

867 Evidence bearing on initiatory rites in Angola shows that the 881 ceremonies are arranged as a process of incorporation into the

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

Being ready to depart, the great Giaga staid us, and desired our boat to pass his men over the river Cova, for he determined to overrun the realm of Benguele, which was on the north side of the river Cova. So we went with him to his camp, which was very orderly, intrenched with piles of wood; we had houses provided for us that night, and many burthens (loads) of palm-wine, cows, goats, and flour. 175 x 167

In the morning before day, the general did strike his *gongo*, which is an instrument of war that soundeth like a bell, and presently made an oration with a loud voice, that all the camp might hear, that he would destroy the Benguelas, with such courageous and vehement speeches as were not to be looked for among the heathen people. And presently they were all in arms, and marched to the river side, where he had provided Gingados.[1] And being ready with our boat and Gingados, the general was fain to beat them back because of the credit who should be first. We carried over eighty men at once, and with our muskets we beat the enemy off, and landed, but many of them were slain. By twelve of the clock all the Gagas were over. [726]

Then the general commanded all his drums, *tavales*, *petes*, *pongos*, and all his instruments of warlike music to strike up, and gave the onset, which was a bloody day for the Benguelas. These Benguelas presently broke, and turned their backs, and a very great number of them were slain, and were taken captives, man, woman and child. The prince, Hombiangymbe, was slain, which was ruler of this country, and more than one hundred of his chief lords, and their heads presented and thrown at the feet of the great Gaga. The men, women and children that were brought in captive alive, and the dead corpses that were brought to be eaten, were strange to behold. For these Gagas are the greatest cannibals and man-eaters that be in the world, for they feed chiefly upon man's flesh (notwithstanding of their) having all the cattle of that country. [727] • [266]

They settled themselves in this country and took the spoil of it. We had great trade with these Gagas, five months, and gained greatly by them. . . .

In these five months' space we made three voyages to the city of San Paul, and coming the fourth time we found them not.[2]

On a subsequent voyage Battell was left by 'the Portugals and Mulattos' as a hostage among the 'Benguelas', whence he escaped to 'the Great Gaga', living in his camp and helping to fight his battles during twenty-one months. His description of the life and customs of which he was a daily witness are of great interest, and

[1] 'Gingado', elsewhere spelt 'Iergado', is evidently a misprint for *Jangada*, Portuguese for 'raft'.

[2] Ravenstein, op. cit., pp. 19 ff.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

and the country settled down to the rule of 'the Fort' with Ndunduma's successor named by the captain-major. The occupation of Bailundu was effected at that same time,[1] while Ekuikui yet ruled, but for several years only a nominal force was employed.[2] In 1896 Ekuikui's successor, Numa II, attacked the fort, and the captain-major burned the *ombala*[3] in retaliation. From 1890 European traders settled in both Viye and Bailundu in ever-increasing numbers.[4] Then came the 'Bailundu War' of 1902,[5] after which the occupation of the whole Umbundu country was quickly completed.

175x 648 726

The operations of 1890 had only interrupted the ivory trade. The campaign of 1902 completely paralysed trade in and with the interior, and greatly aggravated a depression which the District of Benguela was feeling because of a fall from the high prices which rubber had enjoyed in 1898–9.[6] After the war it seemed that trade would soon regain its former levels, and the export statistics show that for a time it did so, but closer inspection and a consideration of other factors which entered into the situation show that this was the beginning of the end. The price of rubber never regained its former level, so that the high value of exports reported represents an even larger quantity than before. The increased quantity largely represented a greatly debased product, for the native traders and producers understood nothing

175x 439 178 727

175x 439 314

and Governance, pp. 19–23) also wrote of these incidents but with more of the personal element and perhaps less accuracy.

[1] *Relatorio, Benguella*, 1892, p. 13 f.

[2] In 1892 there were 2 soldiers in Bailundu, 135 in Viye, 21 in Caconda (*Benguella*, op. cit., 1891, p. 15). Bailundu tradition says that (native) soldiers were first brought in disguised as porters with loads of goods.

[3] *Ombala*, capital village.

[4] A. Bastos, op. cit., pp. 36, 43.

[5] This war was named in Umbundu after the Bailundu war leader, *Mutu ya Kevela*. He is named among the kings, but it was only during the war that he assumed power. The immediate causes were excesses on the part of European residents against the natives, especially in connexion with 'the recruiting of contract labour'. The best work on the subject is in the nature of a report written by the man who was then governor, Cabral Moncada, *A Campanha do Bailundo* (Luanda, 1903). General ideas may be had from *Missionary Herald*, 1902, pp. 353, 400, 452 f., 520 f.; 1903, pp. 22 f., 69 f., 122, 211 f.; H. W. Nevinson, op. cit., p. 157 f.; and J. T. Tucker, *Drums in the Darkness*, p. 122 f. The account given by Keiling (*Quarenta Anos de Africa*) is of interest for certain details of this war, but its statements are inaccurate and its judgements unreliable. The missionaries sought to dissuade the natives from taking up arms, and once the fighting had begun they provided medical services for both sides and sent food-supplies to the garrison of the beleaguered Portuguese fort.

[6] A. Bastos, op. cit., p. 39 f.

586 When a woman divorces her husband to marry another man, she takes to her home all children under three years of age; other children go to the home of her parents.[1] There is no information concerning the fate of children when the man divorces his wife.

[591] Divorce cases are apparently brought before the court of the village headman only where the return of the marriage payment to the husband is long delayed or in some way unsatisfactory.[2]

LAND TENURE

423 There is virtually no information on Umbundu land usage. Childs states that land is inherited in the paternal line, i.e. by brother or son. Hambly suggests that "The right to land depends on its use and allotment by a chief (?) at the time of founding a village," and that "Rights seem to have been well defined and there was always enough room for a stranger". The meaning of neither of these statements is very clear.[3]

DOMESTIC SLAVERY

567 [572] Slaves were formerly taken in war, and, until very recently, as a result of a person's inability to pay his debts. In such a case not the debtor, but the debtor's sister's children were taken as slaves by the creditor. If the debt was paid later, the children were set free.[4] Today children instead of being sold into slavery may be expected to work for the creditor to pay off the debts of the mother's brother.[5] Childs writes "Slaves or former slaves have a status within the household or village which to the ordinary observer does not differ from that of the children: they are treated much as the children and they may carry on in all matters social and economic as though they were members of the family". He adds however that when there is a call for labour, the lot falls more often to a slave or a pawn.[6] Hambly, however, notes that formerly the master had rights of punishment including the death sentence, although an ill-treated slave might appeal to the village headman. Slave women were frequently taken as concubines, but were not lent out as prostitutes. A slave woman who married a free man would revert to her master along with her children when her husband died. All children of slaves became slaves of the master, who could dispose of the girls in marriage. If he himself married a slave girl, she would, at his death, become the property of his eldest brother and her children would go with her, although in some instances the woman and children might go to the mother's brother's son.

●[727] It seems likely (although it is nowhere stated) that there was a clear distinction between slaves captured in war and slaves taken as a result of a debt; possibly the information quoted above from Hambly refers mainly to war captives.

(1) Hambly, op.cit., pp.192-3. (2) Ibid., p.193.
(3) Hambly, op.cit., p.193. Hambly states here that the system of land distribution is described in a later section of his book, but this section merely refers back to these remarks.
(4) Baptes (1906, p.33) adds that if a father redeemed his children, the unusual uncle lost his right to sell them into slavery.
(5) Hambly, op.cit., p.205. (6) Childs, p.42.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

undu, and Ngalangi are said to have had conflicts. In time past, as at the present day, a king reigned over territory which was extensive but definitely delimited for purposes of administration. Encroachment of one king on the rights of taxation and administration of another led to raids and reprisals. Village chiefs collected taxes in the form of agricultural produce and gave these to the king, who personally visited a village from which payments had not been made. A folklore story begins, "The people had not paid taxes so the king came to the village and told them a parable." 721 651

A king, if young, accompanied his people on the warpath. There was, however, a permanent leader named *kesongo*, a derivative from *songola* ("to lead"). The declaration of war, likewise the tactics, were discussed by a council of *olosekula* ("village chiefs") in the *osekula* ("capital") where the king had, and still has, a royal compound. If war had been conducted among sections of the Ovimbundu, the defeated people had to pay taxes and tribute; moreover, their women and cattle were taken. In event of a successful war against the Vachokue there was plundering of cattle and women, but it was not found practicable to exact periodical payments from the enemy. 726 [701 727

The subject of warfare is intimately related to that of slavery. There was until very recent times a domestic slavery which followed from the inability of a person to pay his debts. In connection with this reduction of free persons to a condition of slavery there are several points of exceptional interest. The debtor himself is not taken as a slave, neither are his wife or children. The correct procedure is a sale of his sister's children; but more frequently the children themselves are taken by the creditor. "The debtor's sister will say nothing because this is the law of the Ovimbundu." If payment of the debt is made later, the children are set free. Usually the word pawning is used by ethnologists to describe this proceeding. 686 567 672

Further consideration of Ngonga's payment to his mother's brother clarifies the facts of domestic slavery. "I paid for them, I took their place," said my interpreter. The payment for the return of these two children was two oxen. The girl, who was ten years of age when she was taken to pay the debt, was returned to her people when she was a woman with three children. Ngonga's brother was not actually taken from his home. He was made to pay his mother's brother's debt by working for the creditor. In general, these domestic slaves were not ill treated, though their rights were limited. The position of slaves taken from a hostile 567

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

cages and wooden animals to use as playthings. Girls mold small 524
animals from clay. The bull-roarer is in use as a plaything at Elende.

There is a game of hide and seek for boys. A knife is hidden; then a boy who has been absent for a time enters the ring marked off for the game. His proximity to the knife is indicated by playing on a musical bow. There are taps on the instrument which mean that the knife is far away. On the contrary, when the searcher approaches the hidden knife, the boy with the bow plays a distinctive note, pelala, pelala, meaning "pick it up, pick it up."

Boys readily make a simple apparatus for playing a game of lassoing a hoop. A pliable branch is bent so as to form a circle, then the ends are lashed together with bark strips. The lasso is a piece of rattan or bark having at each end a corncob or a small stick three inches long. One boy bowls the hoop so that it passes in front of, and a few feet away from his opponent, who stands twenty-five feet distant. As the hoop passes in front of him, the boy throws his lasso in such a way that it twines round the hoop and brings it to the ground.

There are dances of many kinds, but Ngonga says that he would 535
not know from the steps only what particular purpose the dance served. Several dances have been described, each in its appropriate section. There are no dances specially arranged to celebrate weddings or births. The funeral dance is described along with other ceremonies relating to interment. The medicine-man dances in connection [789]
with making rain or curing the sick. In order to say why the dance was being performed, it would be necessary to listen to the words of the songs; these are usually chanted in accompaniment to shuffling movements and the rhythm of drums.

Some of the older men and women perform dances and sing songs 535
that are unknown to the younger generation. Dancing is in favor 527
during the months of May and June because there are supplies of maize for making beer. As the dry season advances the maize formerly available for making beer is consumed as food, hence dancing is not so usual. Ngonga says that the old people know a dance which should be performed at new moon "so that there will be no sickness during this moon." Older men dance in commemoration of events [727]
during past wars, while women are spectators, and on these occasions there are beer-drinking and the slaughter of an ox. A group of men keeps up a shuffling dance while an old man relates a war story in a singsong voice. The oldest man is the first to cut the meat, after which each man helps himself.

1: Child: M-S (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

175 439 314

of price fluctuations and sought by every means to maintain the former level of returns. The European traders aided and abetted this process in order to bolster up their credit, for from 1887, when the boom began, most of them were operating on shoe-strings. The result was almost immediate. Benguela rubber was classified as 'third-class' at a price one-fourth the former rate.[1] This was the end of the rubber trade. With the establishment of plantations in the East Indies, in South America, and on the African west coast, which produced a uniformly high quality, the native-produced wild rubber of Angola ceased to have any quotation whatever.[2]

Export statistics show that the totals in quantity and value of rubber exported were nearly as large in 1916 as in 1888, and that in 1918 and 1919 they fell to almost nothing,[3] but for the Ovimbundu the rubber trade ended in 1911—'the year of the great hunger in the Ngangela country'. They remember that many caravans which went out at the beginning of that year's dry season never did return, or that only a few of their stronger members returned—mere skeletons and shadows. *Ngandi*[4] tried to eat wax and died; *Ngandi* killed and ate his younger brother, saying, 'It is better that one of us should live to return, rather than both die.' The caravans usually carried actual rations for only a few days of the outward journey (to last through the 'Hungry Country'), and relied on buying the food needed for the rest of the time. This experience put an end to a trade which was already passing out of the hands of the Ovimbundu—owing to the multiplication of European trading establishments, not only throughout the Umbundu country but even in the 'Ngangela' regions, and the building of the Benguela Railway, which finally put an end to porterage and the trading caravans of former days.[5]

[731] [484]

[1] A. Bastos, op. cit., pp. 40 ff.

[2] In 1942, after the capture of Malaya and the Dutch East Indies by the Japanese and the consequent acute shortage of rubber, the gathering of wild rubber in eastern Angola was resumed, most of the product going to Britain. Some, however, has gone to the national factories at Luanda and in Portugal, and consequently there is a stimulus to maintain the production of wild rubber in the colony, but unless more humane methods are used with the native producers the present limited supply is bound to fall off.

[3] Statistics of export and import are given by F. Trancoso, op. cit. The figures for rubber from 1888 to 1919 are on p. 38.

[4] *Ngandi*, the Umbundu equivalent for 'John Doe' or 'So-and-so'.

[5] The Benguela Railway (*Caminho de Ferro de Benguela*) began construction in 1904; in 1910 it reached Cuma (198 miles) in Ciyaka, well up on the Plateau

1: Childs M-S (1934-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

572 expeditions. Many blood-brotherhoods were doubtless under-
[108] taken purely from motives of friendship.[1] The vakuacisoko is a
[181] friendly institution. The Ovimbundu are a friendly people.

Identification is a strikingly important feature of Umbundu
156 social adjustments and of the whole learning process. Children overtly identify themselves with older siblings, with parents, with other older relatives both living and dead, with friends of their parents, with the village headman, or even the king.[2] This perhaps is the process involved in that which the Ovimbundu name reincarnation. It is largely through identification that character appears to run in families. This is why boys are so keen to learn the professions of their fathers or their mother's brothers. Identification with their seniors in social position and economic activity more closely cements the unity of the child–adult sphere and gives the children yet another urge to enter into adult life and assume complete responsibility as quickly as possible.

158 'Inferiority Conflict' has probably been present in Umbundu life for a long time, perhaps since the rubber trade (1874), perhaps even longer. When a people's activity is keyed to so high a pitch there will be some individuals who find themselves inadequate. There are a number of proverbs which ridicule the stay-at-homes or those 'too lazy' to undertake the exceedingly arduous trading
[177] expeditions. European domination has set new paces and created new frustrations, with one result, that 'inferiority conflicts' are probably on the increase. Many individual instances could be cited. A particularly striking one of my observation is of a man whose suffering from epileptic seizures had induced attitudes of inferiority. The conflict was exacerbated by his selection as a hospital assistant, in which position the responsibility required was plainly beyond his ability.[3] Individuals suffering from any physical disability find life difficult among such an aggressive people.

[132] If the disability is great the handicapped individual generally finds the adjustment beyond his powers. I have observed a number of severely crippled individuals brought up in traditional kinship groups, and all of them were suffering from overt inferiority conflicts. All of these individuals had adopted compensatory

[1] Although the rite seems to have connotations of sorcery.

[2] Among the Tallensi, according to Fortes, identification is only with older siblings, with parents, and with 'the clan' (op. cit., pp. 46 ff.).

[3] Epilepsy (ondwyai) is considered by the Ovimbundu as a visitation of the spirits and is much feared.

164 [732] Deformities resulting from burns are frequent. Cooking pots are unstably placed on logs which form the fire, and, in addition to this, people sleep very near the fire. There is no cerebro-spinal fever. Pneumonia is very common; the result is often fatal. Weakness of the heart is only occasional. Varicose veins are rare. There is no appendicitis.

One cannot fail to notice the prevalence of tropical ulcers among the Ovimbundu. These occur most frequently on the tibia. The [757] big sloughing ulcer makes a large hole which the native fills with clay and a pulp of leaves. Sometimes a bark is pounded to a pulp and used in this way. These ulcers are very obstinate even under skilled treatment. Often after the wound has been healed it will break out again when irritated by the slightest injury. Medical [732] opinion is divided as to the cause of these ulcers. Jiggers are a cause of deformation of the toes, which sometimes fall off or have to be amputated. Cancer is not usual in people under sixty years of age. Superficial cancer is the most common form.

515 Water, even when procurable, is sparingly used by the Ovimbundu. The hands and face may receive a perfunctory wash each day, but the entire body seldom receives this attention.

757 Cupping was observed on two occasions, but I think the operations were performed by the mothers of the children concerned, and not by a medicine-man. The method of using the horns or gourds is illustrated (Plate LXXXVI, Fig. 1). After incisions had been made the cups were applied. The operator sucked the pointed end of the cup, so creating a vacuum, which was maintained by pushing forward with the tip of the tongue a small ball of wax. This wax filled the hole at the pointed end of the cupping horn. The people shown in the photograph are Vachokue, but the method is the same among the Ovimbundu.

At Elende there was a sweat bath in the form of a hole in the ground containing a heap of stones. The stones are heated in a fire, then cold water is thrown over them so that steam arises to the patient, who crouches above the hole covered with a blanket.

In the Vaseie country, also among the Ovimbundu at Elende, I examined corporeal incisions other than tribal marks. The explanation was to the effect that the making of cuts cured pain (Plates XXIV, Fig. 3; LXXVI, Fig. 2).

RAIN-MAKING

791 The rain-maker (*upuli*) is a medicine-man who has specialized in this function. The *upuli*, who was an Ocivokue of Ngonga, and

597 belong to the foster parents. When an adopted girl marries, half the presents from the husband are given to the natural parents, and the other half to the foster parents.

845 In a case of triple birth at Ngalangi two infants died at birth; the other succumbed after three months. In another instance a woman bore three children and in the vernacular of my informant "something which was nothing," but all died. In a third case of triple birth a woman had a boy and two girls. The boy died at the age of fifteen [826] years; the girls grew up and bore children. Albinos do not find it easy to obtain wives. I was told that an albino man at Ngalangi could not find a wife until he married a widow who had several children, because unmarried girls of his own age did not want him. One of the charms collected has to be worn by a woman who has triplets. The object is a rattle (*olusangu*), which the woman shakes when she meets any one. If she gave an ordinary greeting the children would die.

115 The greater part of this information was obtained at Ngalangi by interrogating women who were questioned in Umbundu by Mrs. McDowell. At Elende I asked my interpreter Ngonga to interrogate 843 his wife. According to Ngonga a woman must visit a female practitioner in the first month of her pregnancy. The face and the body of the pregnant woman are painted with red, black, and white spots. This means that she will have no difficulty in bearing children, neither will she have any sickness during the nine months of gestation. "When her belly hurts" (i.e., the quickening), the woman goes to the same female *ocimbanda*, who paints lines of white, red, and black across her breast.

751 The *ocimbanda* gives the woman a necklace consisting of a strip of leather to which two cowries are attached. Experience proves that such a necklace is difficult to buy. If the woman has a necklace of this kind which was worn by her grandmother, it is a very powerful aid to conception, a relief in painful menstruation, and a means of securing easy delivery and normal gestation. I could not find any trace of an idea relating to the entry of a soul, ancestral or otherwise, into the foetus.

841 *Ospanda* is the name for a disease of the genitalia; but Ngonga used the word to describe abdominal pain suffered by a woman who has had no children. By this I suppose he means painful menstruation. The curative root which is given is called *kapembua*.

847 Abortion is never secured by mechanical means. The medicine (*ikenda*) is made from the root of a plant that is boiled in water and

778 The charm *ocoupe* or *ombuiyu* is in the form of small neckbands of plaited fiber to which two or three cowrie shells are fastened. It is worn by women who wish to induce conception. A neckband of this kind which was worn by the maternal grandmother is thought to be specially effective. Sometimes a small rattle, formed from seed pods attached to a stick, is tied to the neckband. The rattle is shaken when the mother of twins meets a friend to whom she is not allowed to give the ordinary greeting.

751 A tortoise shell containing fat and charcoal is worn by the mother of a child who is afflicted by the spirit of *Kandundu*, which may cause the baby to have skin eruptions or a very small amount of hair. In order to cure her child, the mother must eat small quantities of the contents of the shell from time to time. In some sympathetic way the medicinal benefits are transferred to the infant.

756 When dancing, the medicine-man usually wears a goat's beard attached to a circular piece of basketry. This *ocolo* is sometimes fastened on the top of his head. In place of the ax already mentioned he may flourish a small ceremonial hoe or whisk, or a wooden baton with a tuft of hair at the end.

[766] Among the varied duties of the medicine-man is that of washing the body of a king (*osoma*) or a chief (*sekalu*). To water in a pot, the medicine-man adds some of the blood of a freshly killed chicken. Then in a hut specially reserved for the purpose he performs the ceremonial ablution.

At Cangamba an Ocivokue performed a ceremony which was supposed to make a thief return to the village for trial. The medicine-man sat on his haunches, holding in one hand a small rattle and in the other a slender stick on which the decorated carapace of a tortoise was poised (Plate LXXXII, Fig. 1). Very earnestly the man talked, shook his head, and gazed at the tortoise shell which began to twist on its pivot. As the medicine-man muttered and shook his rattle, the movement of the shell grew faster. Presently the rotation of the tortoise shell was reversed, but so adroitly that I could not follow the movement or imitate it when allowed to try. The reversed movement of the carapace on its pivot represents the culprit turning back to his village.

CURING THE SICK

755 At Cangamba a female *ocimbanda* was seen painting marks of red and white on the face of a sick woman. The ceremony was called *ovihamba* and its object was said to be the relief of rheumatism,

4;Dorsey E-4, 5 (no date)1899 FP13 Mbundu FP13

787 puts on his necklace and headdress, which gives him a strange, wild appearance. Taking one of the gourd rattles, and giving the others to the parties interested, setting up the images, he is ready for operations. He begins by shaking the gourds and blowing the horn whistle, at the same time chanting in a minor strain, all the rest responding in chorus. In this way he works himself up into a sort of frenzy. He then takes the basket of charms, and, by throwing them slightly, claims to be able to read from them the past and future, and to declare the guilt or innocence of a person. In this way trivial matters, as well as the most weighty, even life and death, are decided. For instance, if, while determining whether an accused person is a witch or not, in his shaking and throwing of the charms the little horn with the wax and red seeds should stand upright, that would be taken as evidence of guilt; while if, on the contrary, the little image with the small cowry shell on the head should stand upright, that is evidence conclusive that the person is innocent. Not only is the question of guilt thus decided, but witch-doctors are thought to be able to predict coming events.

751 An important object in the outfit is a large horn of the roan antelope, containing a smaller antelope horn, medicines, oils, etc., prepared by the ocimbanda.[1] This is known as *ombinga*, or "loaded horn," and is considered efficacious in warding off from its possessor all harm, lightning, disease, witches, spirits, wild animals, etc. Carried upon journeys, it also insures a prosperous issue to the undertaking, and affords as well protection. Somewhat similar in [789] construction, but used for an entirely different purpose, is the *ocifungo* or rain wand. This is the tail of an ox, into which are inserted two small horns with medicines and oils. By blowing the horns and waving the tail, the ocimbanda is supposed to drive off rains at will.[1]

Of numerous small charms, *ambanda*, in the collection, two are of sufficient interest to merit notice. One consists of two four-inch-long bottle-shaped objects made of woven string, from the mouth of each of which projects a two-inch tuft of very tiny feathers. The two objects are joined at the top and bottom, and singly bear a decided resemblance to a Hopi *tiponi*, or religious society's palladium. They contain medicines and are worn from the neck. This is a special war charm, and affords protection against bullets and all harm in battle. The other charm is an ox's hoof into which is thrust a small antelope horn and medicines. In times of special danger, it is put up somewhere in the village for protection. Still

[1] Mr. Woodside also states that this same power is attributed by the Ovimbundu to white men; and when they are told that we do not possess this power, "they calmly look us in the eye and say, 'wa kemba' (you lie)."

1 [i.e., diviner. Cf. pp. 183-186, cat. 116.--Analyst]

night in the *etambo* praying to or communing with ancestral spirits, when the occasion arises; Suku is regarded as too remote to receive prayers. 693 613

While cooking, a woman may spill a little meal on the ground for the spirits; at a meal, a person may spill a little food or beer for the same purpose. A portion of the meat at a feast may likewise be sacrificed, but it is often a less desirable portion, such as the intestines.[1] 782

Agricultural rituals were held before planting, at which time the headman and his wife had intercourse in their field and sacred seed from the chief's granary was distributed, a few grains to be mixed with the seed to be planted on each plot. When the maize began to ripen a few ears were sent to the chief before any were eaten.[2] 241 789

DIVINERS[3]

The word *ocimbanda* is used both for a diviner and for a maker of medicines. To distinguish the two, the diviner may be called *ocimbanda congombo* ("of the basket"), the herbalist *ocimbanda coviti* ("of trees or sticks"). Some practitioners are both diviner and herbalist. A female diviner is called *combula*.[4] An *ocimbanda* frequently specialises in a certain kind of case;[5] and among the members of the profession there are many degrees of proficiency. One may work only in his own village, another may be consulted on matters of concern to the whole district or chiefdom; others go on professional journeys carrying their baskets, and accumulate profits in animals and cloth. The greater the reputation of the diviner, the greater the charges he makes for his services. 791 759

The tasks of the *ocimbanda* are:-

(a) To discover the cause of sickness, death, or any evil which has befallen the individual or the community. Sickness and death are always believed to be due either to the workings of spirits who are demanding sacrifices, or to living enemies who have malicious spirits under their control or who have bought potent charms. The diviner, after consulting the spirit who speaks in and through his basket, names the spirit who is causing the trouble and tells the victim what its demands are, or, if the enemy is a living person, indicates in a general manner from whence the trouble comes, e.g. to a woman "Your baskets are too well made; you are hated because of them", or, to a man, "This illness was found on a journey taken to collect a debt". If requested, the diviner makes a counter-charm to offset that which has caused the ill. 787 753

(b) To interpret omens and dreams.

(c) To give advice on personal problems.

(d) To dispense medicines and charms.

(e) To bring or withhold rain, or to see who is guilty of withholding it. [789]

(1) Ibid., see also Cashmore, loc.cit.
(2) Childs, personal communication.
(3) Based on Tucker, 1940.
(4) Buckley, (3) 1934.
(5) Ibid.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

775 suffers sickness or misfortune if an ancestral spirit dies a second death. A person who has bad health says, "The spirit of my grandfather has been caught by *Esuvi*." The name of the good spirit *Osande* is used by a person who is suffering. Such a one says, "I have no more *Osande*." These instances clearly reveal a belief in the dependence of human welfare on the interest of benevolent ancestral spirits.

775 After a lapse of three months I asked Ngonga again about
791 *Osande* and *Ondele*. He confirmed what he had previously said, but spoke in the plural of these spirits; good spirits are called *Olosande*,
753 bad spirits are called *Olondele*. The medicine-man will visit a hut to foretell the future, and while there he puts a concoction in an image to which he addresses questions. He plugs his nostrils, then in a falsetto voice feigns answers from the image. The father of a family, or possibly the mother's brother, may kill an animal in front of the hut on this occasion. He then says to *Olosande*, "We hope when
[761] we kill this there will be no more sickness." The Ovimbundu are afraid of death, and they therefore sacrifice to *Olosande*, asking that there shall be no death in the family.

775 I do not know whether the Ovimbundu distinguish multiple souls as some Negro tribes do. The part of a man which does not die is sometimes called *utima*, which is the word for heart. Dr. M. W. Ennis says that the *utima* and the *omuenyo* are both names of the spirit existing in a living body. Ngonga seems certain that every person irrespective of age, rank, and sex has a spirit, but I could find no evidence that the Ovimbundu visualize a separation
762 of ranks or sexes after death. When a man kills himself he is buried
775 near a river so that his spirit will go to the sea, and for the same reason a murdered man is buried near a river. At Ngalangi I inquired from other Ovimbundu people concerning suicide. Women who commit suicide generally do so by hanging or drowning. Men stab themselves in the heart or use a flintlock gun, the trigger of which they pull with their toes. It is feared that the spirit of a suicide will return to induce another suicide in the family, therefore there is anxiety to rid the community of these spirits.

RELIGIOUS BELIEFS AND CONDUCT

771 The Ovimbundu have many high standards of conduct, some of
688 which have been mentioned in dealing with the education of children. There is, however, no idea of sin. That is to say, there are no commands laid down by some authority which is more than human.

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643 common at African courts. A few Umbundu rulers carried on
692 such practices, and especially certain self-constituted robber-barons such as Samakaka, who left Viye after the military occupation and established himself first in Bimbe (Mbimbi), later in Huambo (Wambu), and then at Elende, until taken by the Portuguese authorities in 1903.

643 4. In order to protect himself and the nation, *the king had resort*
754 *to magical means*, some of which would be accounted witchcraft or murder if practised without authority. Such were the ritual murders of *Katõkõlã* (The Strangler), *Oku ipa ukaï watimba avali* (killing the woman of two bodies, i.e. pregnant), of the children whose lives were required for building and furnishing the queen's kitchen, &c.

791 5. In order properly to carry out the functions of his office, *the*
643 *king made much use of divination*, for which purpose he had his own diviner (*Citue cosoma*), who was of the blood royal. He also called in or consulted diviners of many regions and of many types, one of the commonest of which was the 'Diviner of the Basket' (*Ocimbanda congombo*).[1]

643 The king was a divine representative and a divine incarnation,
642 but the mode of his succession reveals that he was also a democratically chosen leader. Note has been made of the fact that the royal succession is in the male line, sometimes from father to son, but more often from elder to younger brother, to brother's son, or to one even more distantly related. The election is made by the councillors whose duty it is, ordinarily before the old king's death is announced, but these same councillors may depose an unpopular
[669] king. There have been many revolutions and *coups d'état*. This fact was noted by several early observers, among whom I cite one who wrote in 1837:

> The government of 'Bailundo' is democratic. These heathen mix with the infamous humiliations of the orientals, the unbridled coarseness of the English people at election times in England. The kings defer to and flatter their counsellors; these are they who elevate a king to the throne and also who cast him down.[2]

[1] A rather cursory description of divination as practised by this type of diviner was given by Hambly, op. cit., pp. 274–6. For a fuller treatment, *vide* L. S. Tucker, 'The Divining Basket of the Ovimbundu', *J.R.A.I.* (London), 1940, vol. lxx, pp. 171–201.

[2] C. de Almeida Sandoval in *Annaes do Cons. Ultr.*, Ser. I, p. 519. The reference to English elections reminds one of Dickens. See also P. M. Pinheiro de

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601 III. TABLES OF RELATIVES WITH WHOM MARRIAGE IS PREFERRED

A. *Of Ego's Generation: Either Man or Woman*

Term	*Relationship*	*Reciprocal term*
Epahume or *cepua*	cross-cousins of all degrees (see list Table I. A. 4, p. 47)	*epahume* or *cepua*

B. *Of First Ascendant Generation: Man Speaking*

Tatekãi	father's 'sister' (see list Table I. D. 4, p. 48)	*ocimumba*

C. *Of First Ascendant Generation: Woman Speaking*

Manu	mother's 'brothers' (see list Table I. D. 3, p. 48)	*ocimumba*

D. *Of First Descendant Generation: Man or Woman Speaking*

Ocimumba	mother's 'brother's' or father's 'sister's grandchild'	*manu* or *tatekãi*

591 582 Many writers have noted that, among other purposes, the financial arrangements serve to give the bride a status in the village of her husband. In a system of preferential kinship marriage, this is a desideratum, although for other reasons than those operating in a system where the wife comes as a comparative stranger. In a system such as this of the Ovimbundu, it is evident that many of the relatives by marriage are already blood relatives. This is perhaps one reason why the avoidances with regard to 'in-laws' are less rigidly held to than in a society such as the Zulu, which holds strictly to exogamous marriage.[1]

182 601 Another factor which makes for stability of marriage is the bilineal kinship system (*epata*). This system offers to the wife an initial security not usually found where descent is unilineal, or even where there has been a one-sided development of one line of descent at the expense of the other. The bilineal system is an important factor in the preservation of social stability. Through it the household and the village are links in the chain which even yet binds the Ovimbundu into a social whole.

Sorcery

182 754 Umbundu society is subject to various forces which threaten its cohesion and stability both from without and from within. Some of the external forces have been touched upon.[2] Chief of the

[1] Krige, op. cit., p. 29 f. [2] *Supra*, pp. v, 26.

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internally disruptive forces is sorcery. It is apparently on the 182
increase among the Ovimbundu, a tendency which has also been 754
reported from other parts of Africa.[1] The extent to which sorcery operates within the kinship groups themselves makes its influence even more dangerous to social cohesion.

Any marked success achieved by an individual, especially when 754
such success has been achieved by an individual alone or in 578
partnership, but not in co-operation with a number of persons, often brings on suspicion of sorcery.[2] Should the results of such success be distributed widely and freely within the family or kinship group, suspicion of sorcery is less likely to arise and open accusation may be avoided. Grudges, however, whether newly built up or inherited, often find expression in suspicion or in open accusation of sorcery.[3] An open accusation of sorcery (*oku sunga omanga*) is a very serious matter and will not often be made lightly.

Such accusations are made both within and across kinship lines. Affinal relatives are quite often accused of sorcery, and suspicion frequently rests upon wives whose kinship connexions are in distant regions. Predilection for and skill in the use of sorcery is supposed to be inherited. A reputation for sorcery may be imputed to a family through a number of generations.

Somewhat less overt accusations of sorcery are made at the 764
inquest during a funeral. The corpse in its coffin slung to a pole 754
between two carriers responds to questions as to who 'ate him' by forward (affirmative), or backward (negative) movements. It may also cause its carriers to stop in front of a certain house during the procession through the village, meaning that one of the occupants of the house is thereby accused of having caused the death. Traditionally such accusations during inquests were exceedingly common, perhaps even usually expected.[4] Should the corpse not [787]
give a clear answer, then subsequent divination would often bring out an accusation of sorcery. Accusations such as these, involving responsibility for the death of a person, are usually made *within* the body of blood or affinal kin.

When sorcery is consciously taken up and employed, the pur- 754
pose is usually economic advancement, but it often involves overt

[1] Cf. B. Malinowski, in *Africa*, 1939, p. 39.
[2] *Vide infra*, pp. 107 ff.
[3] *Vide infra*, p. 125.
[4] For an early observation of this (*c.* 1790) *vide Annaes Mar. e Col.*, 3a Ser., p. 489 f.

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754 attacks also upon the persons or possessions of enemies. This type of sorcery in a very common form involves the enslavement of the spirit of another person, often a child of one's own family or kin.[1] The person whose spirit is used may be killed either by violent or by magical means. Sorcery of this type is much feared, but if wealth supposedly gained by this means is used for the benefit of the kin, the sorcerer may be tolerated or even protected in the exercise of his black art. Beneficiaries do not often have qualms concerning the source of the benefits received. One who, by reason of his family connexions or his own power, has secured a strong position may escape interference. Jealousy or grudges, however, often bring out accusations from within the circle of kin. 754 Accusations may also be made by outsiders. With the decline in 682 influence which the tribal courts have suffered, and their inability to inflict capital punishment, sorcery is less frequently punished than formerly. The consequent reductions in the number of innocent victims is a gain. This same cause has operated, how- [177] ever, to increase dealings in, and fear of, sorcery. Most of the cases brought to European courts, and even to the Church, under the name of 'poisoning' are in reality accusations of sorcery.

178 In the foregoing brief note it has not been possible adequately 754 to treat the subject, but it will be seen that sorcery has long been a divisive influence in Umbundu life. It sometimes seriously affects the cohesion of the household and the larger kinship groups. Economic, political, and other forces now seem to be acting to increase the incidence of sorcery, the influence of which is probably a considerable factor in the present rapid disintegration of the Umbundu social structure.

The Hierarchy of Age

561 Passing references have been made to associations of coevals. The Ovimbundu recognize very definitely the hierarchy of age and consider orderly society quite impossible without it. One of the keenest criticisms of the European and his ways is contained in the aphorism:

> *Kundele ka ku li ukulu.*
> [538] In 'civilization' there is no senior.

To Umbundu wisdom this is an impossible state of affairs;

[1] The Umbundu term is *oku andeka*; *vide ref. infra*, p. 107, n. 1.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

182 621 in a somewhat decadent state, the Umbundu village has up to the present maintained its status as a local kinship unit.

182 592 602 The household is not a solitary unit but a part of the village. Since it is constituted by marriage, it embodies the union of at least two kinship groups. The attitudes and behaviour patterns within the Umbundu household are basically those universally recognized. In common with the households of most Bantu cultures, it differs from the European model in that it extends its attitudes and behaviour patterns to the wider kinship groupings by means of a classificatory system of relationship.

613 182 In the wider kinship groupings (*epata*), the Ovimbundu recognize both the maternal (*olusina*) and the paternal (*olue*) lines of descent. The functions of the latter have been largely local, residential, social, and religious, with succession (of status) in the male line. The function of the former has been cohesive over a larger territory, with a recognized head in whom has been vested both religious and economic functions. Both his office and the inheritance of property descend in the female line. Much of the power, economic and personal, formerly held by the *olusina*, in the person of the mother's brother, seems to be passing at the present time to the *olue*, in the person of the father. The bilineal kinship system has been a strongly cohesive social force.

182 [582] The form of marriage practised by the Ovimbundu is of the two-way cross-cousin type in both lines of kin and in three generations. It seems to be an individual type developed in the particular social and economic situation of the Ovimbundu. As a contract between two families and as a new venture, the marriage relation demands that great attention be given to attitudes and behaviour patterns which emphasize mutual respect.

[641] The hierarchy of age is a very real factor in the Umbundu social structure. Age-set 'schools' have not existed generally throughout the tribes, but there are associations of coevals. This is largely a cohesive force.

• 754 Sorcery is the most important disruptive force at work within Umbundu society. Working as it does, within kinship groups, and inasmuch as it seems to be on the increase, sorcery embodies a real danger to social cohesion.

184 178 Homogeneity has never been an attribute of the Ovimbundu as regards their racial or cultural make-up. The slave-trade injected other and more diverse elements, and recent movements and

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

844 husband's mother (whether uterine or classificatory) to attend the labour of her daughter-in-law. The husband does not attend. As Mr. Hambly's informant phrased it, 'The child would be ashamed to be born.'[1] It seems that the husband's non-attendance may be
845 connected with the danger to him of the blood.[2] No other man will be present unless delayed labour entails the intervention of a medical practitioner, especially a diviner. Resort will not be had to outside aid until it seems impossible otherwise for the child to be born, and nowadays even where modern medical aid is available, often it will only be resorted to after the woman has been in labour for more than twenty-four hours[3]—sometimes much more, and then when it is already too late. Difficult delivery may be caused by:

(a) *Broken taboos*, as, for example, theft, either by the mother or the father. Only after confession can someone go out and steal something, after which the child 'consents' to be born.

(b) *Adultery* on the part of the mother, which must be confessed before the child will 'consent' to be born. The father's adultery may also cause trouble at this time, but this is more often believed to be the cause of a disease in his offspring known as *onjamba*. Failing confession of the above faults, a diviner may be called, but his diagnosis may more often indicate

(c) *Sorcery*, to which difficult labour, along with many other ills of life, may be attributed.[4]

(d) It is also believed that in some cases a woman may herself refuse to give birth and may extend her pregnancy far beyond the nine months' period, the limits of which, and its method of reckoning, are not understood. Such cases as

[1] Hambly, op. cit., p. 183.

[2] Among church-members the husband often attends the birth and is sometimes the only attendant.

[3] A labour of twelve or fourteen hours is considered quite usual, and a shorter one as light.

754 [4] Sorcery, together with ill will and anger recognized as its principal roots, are great dangers to a woman giving birth. Anyone who dislikes the woman in labour, or even one who has ever shown ill will against her, will stay strictly away from the birth. While a woman is in labour all women of the village are expected to stay at home and refrain from ordinary activities—to commune with the spirits. As one of many proverbs has it: *Ukuma ndo o cita, vu ndolo: ako cita kakuma, ako cita kavu*; 'Your fellow, if she gives birth, you stay in: childbirth of your fellow, is childbirth of yours.'

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children may have enough food. Therefore while parents have their children with them, they teach them, saying, Let us work that we may have much food, for if a person lacks food he will die of hunger, or perhaps he may steal from another's field and get into trouble. Children must be diligent in working.

'But should a parent have a child who does not want to work, the parent may beat that child to teach him sense lest he may be a sluggard (ocinili). Parents have a proverb saying,

U wa ku vetela[1] *kepia,*
He who you beat in the field
ka ku vetele,
did not you punish
wa ku kwapisa olondunge.
he you taught sense.

'Before beginning, parents always encourage their children to work. Cultivation, however, is not counted as a profession (*ocipinduko*). Should a person cultivate a great deal so that from his field he has very much food, then people will take notice and say, So-and-so has enslaved a spirit[2] to the seeds, he has spirits (*ekili*) and they are helping him. That causes great fear, for people fear (those who) have spirits.[3] Thus, even though a person should purpose to teach another how to cultivate in order to have much food, the other will only apparently agree[4] because of his fear. Therefore the work of cultivation is not sought after as a profession by children, for they say, Being a farmer (*onguvja*)[5] is the work of sorcerers (*olunguvja*) and not of ordinary people.'[6]

[1] *Vetela* is the relative mood (or form) of the verb *oku veta*. There is a pun in its use here since it is also used with *epia* in the sense of breaking ground for a new field.

[2] The verb used here—*oku endeka, endekala*—means securing the services of a person's spirit by killing the person (whether by witchcraft or by actual violence). The person is often a child and often of one's own family. In some cases parts of the body are said to have been kept for subsequent ritual use, e.g. bones and flesh dried and ground for 'fertilizer', or the skull for a drinking-cup. It will be seen that this is sorcery. The reflexive form of this verb, *oku liendeka*, means to form a blood-brotherhood, but it is a sorcerer's pact involving the sacrifice of a third person.

[3] The expression used means either to have or to have the reputation for having.

[4] He agrees with *ocenyo*, a term commonly translated as 'irony' or 'contempt'.

[5] This is the term which we commonly use for 'farmer'. Its connotation should be understood.

[6] This section is translated from a manuscript by Raul Kavita Evambi of Ciyaka.

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556 The attitude toward success in agriculture indicated by the
578 foregoing is held in some measure toward marked success in other
472 professions, but in lesser degree, except perhaps where trading is taken up individually or by two persons in partnership. One of the earliest observers, Pinheiro de Lacerda (*c.* 1790), noted that accusations of witchcraft were most often levelled at the wealthier members of the community.[1] This fear of success has continued down to the present day, but while trading was an open group enterprise in which many individuals acquired wealth, success in that field came to be accepted more quickly than in the more individualistic work of farming. At the present time, commercial activities are carried on largely by individuals alone or in a limited partnership, and the practice, or at least the suspicion, of witchcraft in connexion with them seems to be on the increase. Some may feel that similar attitudes with regard to successful results from cultivation of the soil are now held less strongly than formerly, but
[754] I know of no evidence to support such a feeling. One of the commonest traditional patterns for witchcraft is that of a partnership of a senior and a junior member—of parent and child, or of mother's brother and sister's son. That is one reason why urgent suggestions by an older person concerning choice of a profession by a younger are looked upon with disfavour among the Ovimbundu.

868 A child should be taught enough diligence and application in
562 cultivating that he or she may not lack the necessities in later adult life. Every boy will take to trading and bargaining almost as naturally as eating, drinking, breathing, and sleeping. Commerce still retains so much of its former glamour that every boy will take it up if and when opportunity offers. The care of younger children comes even more naturally to the girl, and she must also learn the housekeeper's art. Many folk-tales and songs indicate a reluctance on the part of girls to dedicate themselves with diligence to cultivation. In the days of the rubber trade, when girls could also join caravans for the coast and to the interior as porters, there may have been some real basis for this, but at the present time girls are convinced and enthusiastic cultivators, almost 100 per cent.[2] The

[1] *Annaes Maritimos e Coloniaes*, 5a Ser., p. 489 f.

[2] Women coming to live in the coast towns or in other European settlements where they have no fields or gardens find adjustment to life without agricultural labours very difficult.

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produced an Umbundu grammar,[1] but does not seem to have published material of an ethnological nature. Père Keiling (who died in 1937) and Père Batteix were both listed in *Le Répertoire Africain* as specializing in the 'Ganguella' language.[2] The Umbundu missions of this Diocese date from 1890 (Caconda), 1896 (Bailundo), 1912 (Cuando), and later. From early days this mission has had quite evident political aspects—from 1889 when a military expedition was sent against the 'Ganguella Soba[3] Tchiuaco' to re-establish Père Lecomte and the Cubango mission station which had been attacked and expelled,[4] up to the recent government charters and mission statutes, which heavily subsidize the religious work of the Roman Catholic missions in Angola. The constitution of the Portuguese Republic decrees the separation of Church and State and full religious liberty. The large subsidies and other special privileges given to the Roman Catholic Church in Angola, however, create difficulties beyond the mere allocation of tax-money. In other parts of Africa the Roman Catholic missions co-operate with the Protestant in many spheres of action. It is to be regretted that such co-operation seems not to be desired in Angola. Is it a sort of monopolistic political aim which keeps the Roman Catholic missionaries of Angola aloof? The rare instances in which a more friendly spirit has been manifested only add point to the question. The appreciative and co-operative spirit shown by Padre J. Alves Correia[5] may be cited.

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Roman Catholics and Protestants have both been very successful from a numerical standpoint.[6] Success in building a truly indigenous Church, or in providing it with suitable and capable leadership from its own ranks, is another question hardly to be judged from statistics. More elusive still is the question whether,

[1] *Boletim Soc. Geog. Lisboa*, 1897. This grammar has gone through several editions and is still in use. The orthography is evidently intended to facilitate the use of the language by one whose native tongue is French and rather complicates matters for an African, and, indeed, for anyone whose language is other than French.

[2] H. Dubois, op. cit., p. 340.

[3] *Soba*, a native chief (from *Sousa*).

[4] *Ganguella*, op. cit., 1891, pp. 10 ff.

[5] See his books, *A Lavoura do Reino de Deus* (Lisboa, 1932); *A Vida Mais Alta*, &c.

[6] Roman Catholics have about 180,000 and Protestants about 140,000 adherents among the Ovimbundu, according to the census taken in 1940 (Colónia de Angola, *Censo Geral da População*, vol. iz; Luanda, Imprensa Nacional, 1943).

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or how far, Umbundu life may have been actually penetrated by a Christian spirit in matters of faith and morals. It is not surprising that after less than seventy years, or very much less in most regions, belief in witchcraft should still have a strong hold upon the minds of the Ovimbundu. Somewhat disturbing, however, is the fact that according to the latest observations, belief in and the hold of witchcraft seem at the present time to be increasing. These observations tally with what seems to be taking place in other parts of Africa.[1] According to observers in Africa and in other parts of the world the hold of witchcraft upon a people seems to increase with a decrease of security, whether relating to the economic basis of life, to health and disease, or to life's religious undergirding. In such a case, it is clearly the duty of all agencies concerned to co-operate for the removal of the cause of insecurity. Here the chief agencies are government, commerce, and missions. It is to be hoped that for the good of the Ovimbundu they may be brought together.

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[1] See *Africa*, vol. viii, no. 4, which number is devoted to studies of witchcraft. See especially the article, 'A Modern Movement of Witch Finders', by A. I. Richards, pp. 418 ff.

769 They intimate their wishes to their descendants only through slight illness, usually asking for honour to be paid to them by a feast, or by some descendant carrying on their profession.

Ocunda is the spirit of the much-honoured founder of the family,[1] and is always beneficent, bringing good fortune and warning his descendants of danger. Humbly and Tucker agree that *Ekisi* is the same kind of
776 spirit as *Ocunda* (although Humbly does not give *Ocunda* this special meaning). Tucker writes that *Ekisi* is a benevolent spirit who calls the vil-
769 lagers together at night, and gives them advice through a medium (?), whom he enters without the latter's going into the usual trance. *Kandundu* according to Tucker is an *ekisi* who holds the leading position among the ancestral spirits owing to his seniority. Humbly describes a shrine to
(578) *Kandundu* at Bailundo; anyone who sees the contents of the shrine is supposed to become blind. He writes that *Kandundu* is thought of as "the spirit of dreaming who makes swellings on the body", but gives no further explanation. According to Tucker *Kandundu* is an especially powerful *ombele*, and ceremonies performed for him have many distinctive features.

229 *Hunt*, the spirit of the hunt, has his own shrine and priest in the
776 village of the (permanent?) chief. His hut is very large, since all the
778 meat of the hunts is placed in it. In front of it dances are held, and poles are decorated with shells and other trophies of hunting. Before the door there is a carved figure of *Samaka*, the spirit who chases the game towards the hunter. A man whose ritual name is *Kapila*, and a woman called *Kunja*[2] are in charge of the spirit-hut of *Hunt*, and make supplica-
(553) tions to him for success in hunting. Hunters living elsewhere but in an *ombala* or head village do not have persons bearing these ritual names, but their dogs are often called *Hunt*, *Samaka*, *Kapila* or *Kunja*.

775 The most dreaded spirits are the *otulupukupuko*, who may be spirits
757 of still-born babies or foetuses, mental defectives, maltreated slaves, or persons, especially children, killed by sorcery. When a person has been found guilty of killing a child by sorcery or witchcraft, he is sentenced to "restore life" to it, which he does by substituting for it a child from his own family; if the deceased child is a girl, he must give an ox as well. The child is treated with great respect by his new family. If however the parents do not ask the sorcerer or witch for restitution, the child becomes an *otulupukupuko*, and may return to "eat" other children, at the command of the sorcerer who has killed it.

RITUAL

793 It has been noted that the village headman acts as priest for the
613 *olunu*, the group of patrilineally-related persons who form the basis of the village group, while the head of the *olunu* acts as priest for his dispersed, matrilineally-related group.[3] There is little detailed information on the religious duties of these priests. Cushman[4] describes the village headman as making public prayers each morning to *Suku*. Childs however points out[5] that it is more usual for the headman to spend a

(1) i.e. of either the *olunu* or the *olunu*. (Childs, personal communication)
(2) According to Childs, (1948, p.21) *Kunja* is a hunting goddess.
(3) See above, p.28.
(4) 1948, p.51. (5) Personal communication.

787 A detailed description of the procedure of divining is given by Tucker. In brief, the basket (ongombo), which contains a wide variety of objects, is ritually prepared, and the diviner goes into a kind of trance which calls the spirit of the basket to him. As he starts shaking the basket, he asks it first why the clients have come to him (since they may not ask him directly), and when he has ascertained this, questions the spirit about the cause of the trouble. The chanted replies of the audience (consisting, apparently, of outsiders as well as the clients) assist him in making the divination. The divination is finally given from the juxtaposition of the objects which settle on top of the pile in the basket.(1)

Especial care is taken of the divining basket when not in use. Some diviners build a special etombo or spirit-hut for the basket; others keep it hidden in their own house, where it may be seen only by the wife of the diviner, and only when she is not menstruating. Tucker gives a long description of the contents of the divining basket and illustrations of some of the objects.

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791 At the death of a diviner, his son inherits the ongombo, but only if he can master the secrets of the basket and pass the tests which are given during his initiation into the profession. In addition, he must be "called" by some omen or illness which a diviner interprets as the wish of an ancestral spirit that he should become a diviner.(2) If he does not have these qualifications, the basket goes to someone who does, and the son receives no recompense. In either case, two years of training are usual for the would-be diviner, during which he is apprenticed to an established member of the profession. In this period he may learn ovihemba (medicines); their preparation and their uses to cure or kill. In order to provide the female counterpart to the spirit of the divining basket, he might formerly invite a girl to spend the night with him. In the morning, he gave her a magically treated cloth which caused her illness and death; her spirit would then be able to assist the one he already had.

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The olombumbu or "servants of the basket" are youths who carry the accoutrements of the ocimbundu and wait on him; they also provide their master with much information about the community, and during divination closely observe the clients and assist the ocimbundu by shouting loudly when he has made the right answer. They are also believed to have mystic powers, e.g. to see and reveal what is going on at a distance, or to go into a trance during which the spirit of the basket may speak through their lips instead of through the basket. Tucker gives no information concerning the identity of these boys; possibly they are the diviner's apprentices, although she does not suggest this.

787 "The Ocimbundu refer all communications from the spirit world, whether by omen, portent or illness, to an ocimbundu....The requisite behaviour is determined according to the answer given by the combination of pieces in the ongombo [divining basket], which is thus the key to the

(1) The contents of the basket and the ritual which surround it appear to be almost identical with the practice of the eastern neighbours of the Ocimbundu described in another section of the Survey. (McCulloch, 1951, pp.91-2)
(2) It is not very clear whether the spirit of the basket is that of its former owner, or whether it is some non-ancestral spirit.

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whole supernatural world... The divining basket is the concrete medium through which the spirits reveal their will to their descendants on earth, and were thus of dangers, human or supernatural".[1]

SORCERERS AND WITCHES

Sorcerers and witches are not clearly distinguished. Both are called olongonga, and have powers over one or more malignant spirits whom they can send anywhere to kill, steal, or torment. These "familiar spirits" are sometimes called otalo ndumba, and are held responsible for all mysterious disappearances of saime, beans and other possessions, as well as for many illnesses and deaths. Some sorcerers are said to own small images which they send out at night. Others are said to dance naked at night at the door of the intended victim's house. When sorcery involves killing by physical means, portions of the victim's body may be used to make "medicine" or charms.[2]

757 776

A person may be a sorcerer without knowing it, and may deny it when accused by the diviner. If he does so, he and his accuser undergo the cubalungo (poison test),[3] to discover who is in the right.[4] Concerning accusation of sorcery, Childs writes "Any marked success ... by an individual, especially when such success has been achieved by an individual alone or in partnership, but not in co-operation with a number of persons, often brings on suspicion of sorcery. Should the results of such success be distributed widely....suspicion is less likely to arise....An open accusation of sorcery (oku sunga ewunga) is a very serious matter and will not often be made lightly. Such accusations are made both within and across kinship lines. Affinal relatives are quite often accused of sorcery, and suspicion frequently roots upon wives whose kinship connexions are in distant regions...".[5]

757 683 [578]

The tendency or aptitude for sorcery is supposed to be inherited by a daughter, or a son, or a nephew from the mother, uterine or classificatory, from the mother's brother etc. It is said that older relatives take younger ones as apprentices and partners.[6] The aim of a person who consciously takes up sorcery is said usually to be economic advancement. A very common form involves the enslavement of the spirit of another person, often a child of one's own family or kin group; the victim may be killed by either physical or magical means. Childs points out that sorcery is one of the greatest internally disruptive forces within the kin group and social system of the Ovimbundu. He notes that jealousy and grudges often bring accusations from within the circle of kin, but does not describe what happens when the charges have been made and verified. Especially in view of his statement that economic, political and other forces now seem to be acting to increase the incidence of sorcery,[7] it would be interesting to have information concerning its possible connection with segmentation of lineages or village groups, or its relation to tensions between the paternal and maternal groups of relatives.

757 [829]

757 578

(1) Tucker, op.cit., p.301.
(2) Childs, personal communication.
(3) The cubalungo is administered by the medicine-man, and causes sickness but not death. See Tucker, op.cit., and Hambly, (2) 1934, p.203.
(4) Tucker, op.cit.
(5) Childs, 1949, p.57.
(6) Childs, personal communication.
(7) Childs, 1949, p.58.

885 and stability of his personality (uno - lit. the quality of being a person) is only proved when he enters the state of adulthood at marriage.

DEATH

361 764 Each village has its own burial ground about a mile or so away. The grave is usually dug by the children of the father's sister.[1] The corpse of a commoner is bound in a supine position and placed in a box before interment. It is usual during the funeral to find out the cause of death, i.e. whether it is the work of spirits or of some living enemy. Accusations of sorcery are frequently made. The corpse in its coffin, slung to a pole between two carriers, responds to questions as to who 'ate him' by forward (affirmative) or backward (negative) movements.[2] In the case described by Hambly,[3] the questions were put by the father's sister. The corpse may also cause its bearers to stop in front of a certain house during the procession through the village, thereby indicating that one of the occupants has caused its death.[4] Should the corpse not give a clear answer, the diviner might be called in to discover the cause of the death. Accusations of sorcery, as has been noted above, are often made within the circle of kin.[5]

Special cases

766 For children the same ceremony was carried out if they were old enough to walk and talk. Otherwise the diviner's services were called upon by the parents. At the death of twins, the mother has to shake a rattle or blow a horn instead of giving the usual greetings to passers-by, as she had to do also while the children were alive.[6]

766 791 At the death of *diviners* and *medicine-men* other members of the profession take charge of the ceremonies. The corpse is tied in a sitting posture and kept thus for three days before burial. No coffin is used. The questioning ceremony is carried out as for a commoner. After the interment the other medicine-men dance "because they have spirit in their heads", and during the dance each eats a living chicken that he carries in his hand. At the side of the grave a dog, a chicken and a goat are killed, and eaten by the mourners. The *ocisanda*'s power is apparently thought to linger round the grave, which the chief or village-headman may visit to ask for rain and other favours.[7]

227 766 *Hunters* at death are buried in rock tombs *(ombilia or ocunje)*, which are usually placed in commanding positions. The skulls of animals which the hunter has killed are piled on top of the tomb. The bows of the deceased hunter are kept in his successor's "house of bows".

766 693 *Chiefs*, and possibly also village headmen, are buried in specially-constructed enclosures in the villages over which they ruled. The tomb is a small hut with a substantial wooden door, which is surrounded by a strongly-built wooden fence, or it may be a cave. The wives of the chief are buried in the same enclosure. The head of a specially selected

(1) Hambly, (J) 1934, p.268.
(2) Childs, 1949, p.57.
(3) Op.cit., p.266.
(4) Childs, loc.cit.
(5) Ibid.
(6) Hambly, op.cit., p.268.
(7) Ibid., p.270.

5: Hambly E-5 (1929-30) 1934 FP 13 Mbundu FP13

462 be reversed and asked whether men could not carry the water. I was told
331 that such a man would be laughed at and called a "he-woman." Yet division of labor does not imply sex inferiority, and ridicule would arise from incongruity.

MEDICINE-MEN

759 The training of a medicine-man (ocimbanda) and a medicine-woman
791 (chambula) involves few formalities, but this class of work requires that a novice shall have "spirit in the head." When visited by a sick boy the medicine-man shakes his divination basket and if a certain combination of objects appears, he says, "Your father was ocimbanda and his spirit wants you." The boy who is thus adopted has to accompany the medicine-man, his master, carrying apparatus and standing near to play a small friction drum while the master is shaking his divination basket.

Specialization among medicine-men is carried to great degree of refinement, especially among those practitioners who profess therapeutic knowledge. I employed three medicine-men to collect plants, of which they appeared to have an expert knowledge. Umbundu names were given and the curative properties of each plant were explained with enthusiasm and evident conviction. The men were undoubtedly sincere in their own beliefs. A specialist who can cure blood in the urine, and another who is said to treat dizziness successfully, are greatly respected. The rainmaker is ocimbanda opulia, "the medicine-man of the rain," who dances while flourishing a cow-tail switch, and blowing a shrill whistle intermittently.

Ocimbanda is of course distinguished from ongangs, since the former is concerned with socially beneficent tasks such as those mentioned, while
[759] the latter may cause sickness, impotence, and sterility. In earlier days the task of finding sorcerers (ongangs) by use of the poison ordeal was that of an ocimbanda. Medicine-women are called in to take care of difficult cases of childbirth, and I have seen a medicine-woman painting the face of a pregnant woman, who thereafter observed certain taboos.

Space will not permit enumeration of the contents of a divination basket and the significance attached to each item; neither can I give details of ceremonies for curing the sick or bringing a thief back to the village, but the foregoing notes suffice to show that the craft is specialized and still important. A medicine-man ceremonially washes a king or chief on rare occasions. He makes new fire by twirling; though flint and steel, also
[782] matches, are known. When a new village is founded a medicine-man stirs the blood of sacrificed animals with the claws of a chicken; then he sprinkles this blood on each new house.

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[1874-1911]

439 journeys diminished in distance as they increased in profit-
444 ability.[53]

My informants, however, gave a somewhat different picture. Long trading journeys were still being undertaken in the last decade of the trade (1901–11). Some men whom I met had travelled to the kingdom of the Mwata Yamvo and beyond to Luba country; one man had made a journey into what is now the Congo Republic which took a year to go and a year to return; another had visited Barotseland. It should be said that these seem to have been unusually long journeys; journeys totalling six to eight months were common.[54]

182 The significance of the trade in social life is reflected in the
229 mystical explanations of success in business found in Umbundu religion. Prosperity might be explained either by the favour of
[97] spirits such as Kandundu and Otjipukû, who received at their
258 shrines libations of wine, or by malevolent sorcery involving the sacrifice of relatives in exchange for wealth.[55] The existence of these two explanations probably reflects the existence of some rich men who satisfied the expectations of their relatives and others who did not.

567 Apart from the rubber trade, the older slave trade continued
178 until its vigorous suppression in the period 1910–12, and indeed seems, as regards the Ovimbundu, to have become intensified in the period after 1890. The slaves went to S. Tome and Principe, or to coastal plantations. Up to that time the Ovimbundu had sold few of their own people, with the exception of criminals or people who had become generally unpopular with their kin. The collapse of the old political system played into the hands of adventurers who unscrupulously exploited the Umbundu custom of debt slavery or conducted raids for this purpose.[56]

439 It was then the 'trade' which was the common factor in the
439 life of all Ovimbundu, and which was so to speak the factor,

[53] Childs, p. 208.

[54] Informants.

[55] Although some old men still have shrines to the luck-giving spirits it is not possible to see how their cult functioned in the social structure then existing. It is, however, notable that success could be interpreted mystically in two ways by benevolent spirits or by sorcery.

[56] Childs, p. 213. I was told that Cumba had been raided from Bailundu.

[N74-191]

could be resolved in the matrilineal group.[78] Hastings, who gives the most detailed account of the matrilineal groups, which he calls sibs, tells us, 'There can be no exaction of fines or taking of slaves between the members of a sib group—the group members are supposed to pay each other's debts, and one who has wealth and refuses so to communicate may be secretly poisoned by the others. It is within the group of matrilineal sibs that most compacts, whether social or economic, are formed and operate. The same is true even of malevolent plots and anti-social practices, such as killing by witchcraft.'[79]

Clearly, the matrilineal groups in which the rich had to pool their wealth with poorer kinsfolk and in which trading arrangements[80] were made indicate the adaptation of the kinship system to the needs of the trade. It may be suggested that one of the functions of the double descent system was to separate the fields of village and chiefdom relations, established through patrilineal ties, from the field of commerce, credit, and the inheritance of wealth gained by trade. Thus the conflicts in which a man would be involved in one set of relations would not involve his other set of ties, and this distribution of stresses must have limited the strains set up by disputes. The distinction between the local group and the commercial group would also prevent heavy losses from trade striking a whole village simultaneously.[81] The credit institutions demanded by a trading system in which debt was frequently incurred were fitted into the kinship system, and associated with a device for levelling those who had become prosperous in the trade.

Unhappily the disintegration of the traditional social structure, and the accompanying loss of knowledge of it, prevented me from adding to, or even corroborating entirely, the written material on the form of the matrilineal groups.[82] It is not at all evident how the groups maintained integration, or how new

[78] Hambly, p. 200.

[79] Ibid., p. 92.

[80] Dr. Childs suggested to me that the core of the caravans might be composed of kin. However, the caravans were so large that they clearly could not be organized on a kinship basis. See also Serpa Pinto, p. 165.

[81] This point was suggested to me by Dr. Mary Douglas.

[82] I did not obtain any information on the size of the matrilineal group, the existence of heads of the groups, and the degree to which it was a congregation.

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[1874-1911]

groups emerged. The information on the cult of the matrilineal 613
spirits which might have thrown some light on matrilineal conflicts and integration, is confused. Both Hastings and Mrs. Tucker state that the matrilineal spirits are always malevolent, but this is not confirmed by my informants,[83] and it may be that they were referring to the traditional belief that sorcery was [054] only practised between members of a matrilineal group. Although, as has been stated, a man looked to his matrilineal 613 kin for economic aid, he might travel with his father (who had 437 first claim on his services), or with his mother's brother or some other kinsman; indeed while his father was still alive he might travel and trade on his own account.[84] The matrilineal group (in this area at least) was not a unit from which trading teams were formed, but rather a means for providing financial assistance when needed for those engaged in trading. It is of course possible that in some areas of Umbundu country the matrilineal kin groups were significant in the organization of trading caravans.

Another institution whose form can be described but whose 502 function cannot be properly known is that of preferential marriage with certain categories of kin. Childs states that the categories were cross-cousins (both patrilateral and matrilateral), the sister's daughter, and the father's sister, and indicates that the cross-cousin marriages were not generally with first-cousins. My informants generally denied that it had been permitted to marry a father's sister, but confirmed his other statements. They added that an indemnification was paid by [503] the bridegroom to the bride's family 'to cut the blood',[85] and [601] that the kinship terms were replaced by affinal. This suggests that these marriages may have been intended to restore distant kinship ties by turning them into affinal ties and so renewing them for the next generation, but how this would operate cannot even be guessed.

[83] Hastings, p. 87; L. S. Tucker, 'The Divining Basket of the Ovimbundu', *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, 1940, pp. 171–201.

[84] Informants.

[85] This was paid down to 1949 or so in the area where I was. It was about 20 escudos, much less than bridewealth. It was formerly referred to by the Umbundu term for 'fine' (*ombe*), as was the payment made on the death of a non-kinswoman wife.

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634 become *inakulu* (queen) because she feared the unpleasant
178 haunting by the spirits of former queens which is traditionally
769 experienced by the holder of this office.[18] On one occasion
[775] Lusase himself offered to let me into the *akokoto* (the enclosure where the skulls of dead chiefs were kept) for the payment of five or ten escudos (1s. 3d. or 2s. 6d.) although the entry of anybody except the chief and possibly certain of his courtiers appears traditionally to have been forbidden under the penalty of death sent by the spirits. Even the surviving rites are confined to the chief's village; the first-fruits ceremony in which the
[796] whole chiefdom was involved disappeared a number of years ago. The association general in Umbundu country between
634 the chiefs and paganism does not provide an added ritual
771 sanction to the chief's power, but rather links him with what is felt to be a dying past, essentially unimportant, at the present day.

692 The chief may also have some of his time occupied with hearing cases. A good many minor disputes are solved by local adjudication, but there seems to be no specific division between cases that ought to come to the chief and those which can be arbitrated by somebody else. Elders from outside a chiefdom may be invited to adjudicate on a particular case. The old formality of legal procedure has largely disappeared, probably because all disputes at a local level can be carried to the post—hence any ruling by chief or elders is essentially dependent on its acceptance by the disputants.

• 754 Accusations of sorcery are rather different from other cases since the post does not believe them, although such an accusation is not in itself punishable. Sometimes suspected sorcerers are accused at the post of 'poisoning'.[19] Lusase told me that convicted sorcerers were fined a chicken, a goat and a pig. Gregorio, the chief of Menga, at first said, when I asked about this, that it was not possible to know who was a sorcerer. When, rather to his surprise, I mentioned the traditional basket test, he agreed and explained that people convicted by this test were sent as labourers to the post to satisfy whatever demand was being made for workers.

[18] Informants. See also Hastings, p. 49.

[19] Childs, p. 58.

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In the previous

chapter I have indicated that the position of headman is today 622
a somewhat shadowy one, and that the headman emerges rather than succeeds by virtue of various grounds; the main ones being official recognition, some tie to the local chief, the presence of a core of one's kinsmen, a claim to be the first resident, and personality. During my stay Sapapula was as much a headman of Epalanga as anyone can reasonably be these days, yet his position had not always gone unchallenged.

In 1954 he had found himself in danger of being displaced 622
by his matrilateral 'brother' Mwehombo. Both men, apparently, claimed that they had founded the village, both had substantial cores of kinsfolk in the village, and both possessed strong personalities. Sapapula by holding the ministerial title of Epalanga to Kafelo had had a stronger position in village affairs. This prop to his power was taken away when Kafelo was deposed from the chiefdom, and Luanga and Mwehombo purchased the title of Epalanga from Lusase.

In this partnership Mwehombo must have been the leading personality, Luanga being extremely amiable but not at all domineering or energetic. Mwehombo's idea was presumably to establish himself as recognized headman of Epalanga, and to obtain whatever advantages were to be gained from an association with Lusase. Luanga's aim, from what he told me, was to escape contract labour by having a position as a traditional headman and title-holder. Titles will still be sought after, [554]
although the substance of power has gone, so long as they can confer some prestige or protection from administrative labour demands. It was not customary for the role of Epalanga to be held by two people jointly.

Mwehombo died shortly after this. He had been baptized 763
by the name of Simon when dying on January 13th 1955, when his social personality began its posthumous career. At the inquest, which was held according to the old Umbundu pattern in which the corpse suspended in a hammock from a pole held by two men was supposed to answer questions by the way it swung, it was found that Mwehombo had suffered the pro- [554]
verbial fate of the sorcerer in being killed by the spirit he had [561]
used to kill others.

The role of the questioner was taken by Paulo, sister's son to

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763 Mwehombo, and elder of the school, a post he would certainly have lost had this come to the ears of the missionaries. Attitudes to the verdict are interesting. Sapapula assured me that [754] Mwehombo had killed many people by sorcery both sons and sisters' sons; Luanga did not see the contradiction which I pointed out to him of his saying both that Mwehombo was good and that he had practised sorcery; Gonçalve, Mwehombo's son, appeared sceptical of the verdict, as did Aspirante, Sapapula's sister's son who was married to a daughter of Mwehombo's half-brother, Wayangu.

764 The verdict did not prevent Mwehombo having an impressive funeral. He was buried according to his wishes in the traditional hammock placed in the circular grave, instead of the modern coffin placed in the modern oblong grave. As a caravan-leader he was buried by the track to Chicunda at the point where the path to Epalanga branched off. A low thatched [237] covering was erected over his grave with the horns of the beast killed at the funeral on it. In 1956 Gonçalve and Pedro Nendi, son of Mbati and therefore a cross-cousin of Mwehombo, replaced this by a concrete memorial in the form of a cross with the base inscribed in Portuguese 'Simon Mwehombo Native of Gumba Great Man died 13th January 1955.'

797 Thus Mwehombo had twice undergone conversion from pagan to Christian, once as he lay dying and once after death. 254 His posthumous conviction for sorcery affected neither the form of funeral, nor the continued residence of his kin in the village. His conviction for sorcery was a reflection of the social strains in which he had been involved, not the opening of another cycle 621 of conflict. The kinship cores are not segments opposing one 571 another as in a lineage system; they possess no clearly defined boundaries[10] or continuing existence in time. Their existence is dependent on the persons around whom the cores have formed, and on their deaths they lack any integrating principles. Mwehombo dead, his kinsfolk mostly found no objection in continuing to live in the village where his rival now lived as undisputed traditional headman.

621 There is no word in Umbundu for these groupings. The

[10] For example I have included Joaõ in the Mwehombo-Mbati kinship core, on the basis of association, but he came to the village through a tie with Sapapula.

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181 Making money and being rich are regarded with

unambiguous approval, though there is a certain undertone suggesting cunning in the verb *oku lunguka* (to be shrewd) used about prosperous people. The old suspicion of sorcery [254] attaching to people who were more successful farmers than their neighbours[6] seems to have disappeared. While a prosperous 602 villager would be expected to lend money to a poorer kinsman (provided the latter was not known as a bad debtor) yet, 431 the situation which occurs in other parts of Africa, where, as Dr. V. W. Turner notes of the Mwinilunga Ndembu, prosperous Africans 'find themselves increasingly embarrassed by the demands of their kin for presents in cash and kind'[7], would not arise among the Ovimbundu, who would regard such demands as being unjustified, even outrageous.

511 Wealthy Ovimbundu may spend some of their wealth on clothing and on drink. Cattle-buying has been noted as a form [454] of capital investment and the same term may be used of small stock buying. Another way of disposing of money is by building a house of bricks with the assistance of a bricklayer. A plough may be, but rarely is, bought by two men joining together to pool their money. Generally speaking, the agricultural 178 technology of the Ovimbundu has been little changed 241 since 1911 except for the spread of the techniques of coffee-growing.

It has been noted earlier that the Ovimbundu play an 648 important part in the economic life of Angola both as cultivators and labourers. In this chapter an attempt has been made to show how at the local level it is the cultivation of cash crops, rather than migration for wage labour, which incorporates villagers into the commercial economy of modern Angola. The main source of money in rural areas is the trader's store, which is also the main recipient of money, apart from the administration. While trade both between Ovimbundu and 178 between Ovimbundu and other tribes survives on a minor scale, 182 the social institutions associated with the rubber trade, the large caravans, the non-repayable loans within the matrilineal group, and the obligations of wealthy traders to assist their kin, have disappeared. The contemporary social structure with the

[6] Childs, pp. 106–8.

[7] V. W. Turner, op. cit., p. 135.

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wife of a 'lost' labour migrant the tie with the brother or other kinsman will be more important, though the degree to which there is contact between the two households will vary. 602

It would seem that the present significance of the brother-sister tie is due to the frequency and likelihood of husbands being away from villages as labourers. The strength of this tie gives added significance to the mother's brother—sister's son tie. 593

A sister's son traditionally inherited his mother's brother's movable property, and during his lifetime might borrow from him without need of repayment. Against this, the mother's brother had the right to sell his sister's son as a slave and it was he who was considered most likely, both traditionally and at the present day, to practise sorcery against his sister's son. My informants were divided as to whether the sister's son can practise sorcery against his mother's brother. However, it was stated by Hastings[38] and by my informants that sorcery was only practised between matrilineal kin. It is not easy to see how in the past the relationship between a man and his mother's brothers operated—to what extent a man had particular expectations and obligations to one particular mother's brother rather than to the whole set of senior matrilineal kin. 604 [254]

At the present time the content of the relationship between mother's brother and sister's son seems very fluid, depending on age and personal compatibility. An important difference arises between one's attitude to 'mother's brothers' and to 'fathers'. There is no strong tie with one's mother's own brother, as there is with one's own father; on the other hand, a boy whose father has died is regarded as much more likely to go to the house of a classificatory mother's brother than to the house of a classificatory father, although, as has been noted, children and adolescents may settle with kin of other categories.

Traditionally the relationship between a man and his wife's brother was distant and reserved, the two men being forbidden to eat together or joke. Nowadays the relations between a man and his wife's full or half brother are often very friendly; quite often when one finds two households close together they turn out to belong to men related in this way. 607

A brother-in-law is not regarded as a kinsman—he does not

[38] Hastings, p. 87.

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6. *Descent, Inheritance and Succession*

There is little interest in genealogical detail among contemporary Ovimbundu, which is not surprising since there exists no system of descent groups in which the position of the individual may be genealogically defined nor does affiliation to a particular line of descent give status *vis-à-vis* people of less eminent descent. Pedigrees are traced (in either line) for only two to four ascending generations though one man I met could name ancestors for nine ascending generations. 602

Despite this vagueness and lack of interest in the articulation of relationships, Ovimbundu will say that such-and-such a kinsman is 'close' and such-and-such is 'distant' even though they cannot fit this into a genealogical framework. 'Closeness' and 'nearness' are not simply used to refer to geographical proximity or social co-operation, since there may be much mutual assistance between kinsmen who are 'distant'. One might speak of a blurred edge of kinship not clearly defined in categories of kin but not non-kinsmen. A man may speak of somebody on this 'blurred edge' thus: 'He must be a kinsman but I don't know how.' Similarly the *vakwatjisoko*[1] are a class of people who are not definitely kin, and not non-kin. [608]

There is little formalized distinction between patrikin and matrikin. There is a certain matrilateral pull in the choice of residence, a man being, as has been noted, more likely to settle with a mother's brother than with a 'father'. I had the impression that a man is more likely to settle with a matrilateral 'brother' than with a patrilateral one, but it would be very difficult to establish this by quantitative methods owing to the complexity of the factors affecting residence. As a man tends to settle where he has a number of kin rather than in the shelter of one particular kinsman, this trend does not lead to the formation of matrilineal clusters of kin. The majority of informants still consider that sorcery can only be practised among matrilineal kin but for various reasons it may be said that the fear of sorcery is not significant in kinship relations.[28] 602 591 602 754

[28] It may be suggested that the disappearance of the matrilineal groups which imposed a co-operation involving exacting demands has been paralleled by the decline of sorcery, the mystical reflection of underlying tensions. How is the fact that several informants told me that sorcery had declined since the days of the [178]

[1] [ie., funeral friends -- Analyst]

428 [HP3] Inheritance of movable goods was traditionally entirely matrilineal. Today informants are confused as to what ought to be done. Inquiry about particular cases will reveal that often no movable property was left by the deceased, it having been used to pay for such expenses of the illness and funeral as the purchase of medicines and the buying of animals to be slaughtered at the feasts.

Where there is movable property, the transmission of it to the heirs is carried out in a rather informalized way, as so often happens in Umbundu social activities. The actual division of property is undertaken by a kinsman of the deceased. This should apparently be the most senior kinsman. It may be a cross-cousin or 'brother' or a sister's son.[29] How it is decided who is the senior kinsman, and who are fitted to participate in the share-out is not very clear. Nor does it seem that there is any effective device against the sharer-out giving himself the lion's share, except the general pressures and reciprocities of kinship. The principle accepted in the share-out is that inheritance should be a reflection of the relations which existed with the dead man, and also be a reward of funeral services. Nothing is kept for kin who are away working, and a son who did not keep in contact with his father would be omitted from the share-out.

By inheritance a man can increase his small stock of possessions. He is unlikely to receive anything much in the way of money, and since there is no land shortage, and, as yet, little in the way of valuable immovable property such as brick

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602 rubber trade to be reconciled with the statement by Childs that fear of sorcery was increasing (Childs pp. 57–58)? I suggest that the final disintegration of the old 754 kinship groups may have been marked by particularly sharp social tensions, but 178 that once these groups were in fact dissolved and a new form of social relations established the fear of sorcery may have declined. It should also be remembered that as indicated in Chapter V the present-day economic values of the Ovimbundu do not lead to expectations that a prosperous individual will share his wealth with poorer kinsmen, as was the case in the time of the rubber trade. Hence accusations of sorcery based on disappointed expectations of generosity are unlikely to arise.

Another aspect of the question which cannot be explored here in detail is the [HP11] lack of agreement on the causality of classes of happenings or individual events. Thus one informant will say that a woman's pains in childbirth are due to sorcerers among her kin, another will say that they are caused by God (as we would say, are natural).

[29] Hambly, pp. 199–200.

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Epalanga. Told what had happened, he said that he would keep out of it, and that he had advised Guilherme to live elsewhere. In the afternoon of the same day, as heavy rain was falling, a number of people ran up and bounded on to my veranda. These included Anna, another girl (I think a sister of hers) both rather frightened, Simbwyikoka, Luciano, Paulo and some others. Anna said that Simbwyikoka was a sorcerer[3] and would kill her, and sooner than be killed by sorcery she would jump in the river. Simbwyikoka and Luciano had come to Epalanga to try and recover the 250 escudos which had been paid over in bridewealth. The catechist tried to intervene saying 'The catechist is the chief[4] of everybody in the village', but nobody paid any attention to him. Eventually, as the girl continued to threaten to jump in the river, I contributed 200 escudos, and so those involved left satisfied.

Early the following day I heard that Guilherme had returned from the post with two policemen to arrest various people. Those arrested were Sapapula, his cross-cousins Epalata (5), and Wasuka, and the latter's son Kuseka, Kasosi, Paulo, Pedro the catechist, Bartolomeu (32), Paulo's assistant in school matters, and his son Eugenio. Eugenio and Kuseka were arrested for not paying taxes and their fathers were arrested presumably for their supposed responsibility. Epalata was arrested for a similar alleged offence on the part of one of his sons, who was away as a labourer.

When I came to Guilherme's house a lengthy wrangle was going on from which I select some themes. Guilherme denied that he had planned to burn the catechetical school, the anthropologist's house, and his own house. (These charges were almost certainly invented.)

Paulo said that he had baptized a dying son of Guilherme, who, despite this, had not shown him any respect. He also denied that he had committed adultery with Guilherme's wife. (This would in any case be most unlikely owing to Paulo's blindness, resulting from an eye disease.)

Sapapula declared angrily: 'I gave Guilherme land here but

[3] This accusation was regarded simply as the product of fear and nothing more was heard of it.

[4] He used the word applied to chiefs of Gumbu and other sub-chiefdoms.

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person, it is likely that the details will be re-organized to gain his attention and support.

It is also notable that Sapapula was ready to accept Justino's right to hold a case on the matter. The acceptance and even readiness (as appears later) on Sapapula's part that Justino should hear cases is partly again a result of the lack of any legal machinery on the village level, partly an aspect of the 'patron-client' situation which has so often marked 'civilized'-native relations in Angola. No doubt much in Justino's behaviour arose from the taste he showed at times for settling cases, which led to a certain number of local cases being referred to him, and his readiness to settle them may not have been particularly common among *assimilados*.

Much of the actual case consisted of accusations and counter-accusations between Sapapula and Kapapelo with other people intervening. There is a kind of attempt to establish a balance of wrongs, Kusumula claiming that Sapapula was always picking on him when there was a call for labour from the post, Kapapelo accusing Sapapula of inciting Jaime to kill him and Sapapula's sister's son Saviel of planning to seduce his wife. Sapapula had accused Kusumula and Kapapelo of trying to break the village. Lusase intervened rather against Kusumula and Kapapelo, who was his 'brother'. As previously, the demands of the post for labour are regarded as being used by their local executants in a discriminating way.

On the evening of the same day, as I was calling round the village, I found Kapapelo at the door of Sapapula's kitchen. Apparently he had arrived drunk and had threatened to kill himself. Sapapula was greatly enraged at this, as were his women folk, Nahoka, his wife, Wumba, his daughter, and Nayangu, his 'sister', who vigorously abused Kapapelo. They warned Sapapula not to accept food from Kapapelo, lest the latter use it as a means of sorcery. Kapapelo complained that Nahoka had called him a slave thus expanding the hint contained in her previous enigmatic remark that Kapapelo was not a man of the country.

On the next day, Wednesday the 22nd, Sapapula had intended to go again to Justino's to settle his case with Kapapelo, but there was a funeral to which a large number of people went.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FF13 Mbundu FF13

straight lines. The legs show the usual flexion of the knees and a 532
shortening which is out of proportion to the body length. The lower limbs of most Angolan figures have these characteristics. The body of this figure is hollow and the head detachable. The incised head-dress is imitative of the coiffure of Vachokue women.

Cangamba, a village in eastern Angola, is a confluence of tribal 171
elements, namely, Vambuella, Luchazi, Babunda, and Vachokue, whose physical appearance, hairdressing, tooth mutilation, and tribal marks differ considerably. The man who sold the figurine brought it furtively. He was an Ocimbundu, but the work is of Chokue origin. The figure, I am informed, was filled with medicine, [155] then placed near a patient who was undergoing curative treatment.

The figurine (*spere*) of a woman having a number of dark feathers 484
attached to her back has only one use. A caravan setting out for a 778
long journey is accompanied by a medicine-man whose outfit includes 787
such a figurine. Should the caravan leader be in doubt when choosing between two paths, the medicine-man sets up the image at the parting of the ways. He kneels before it and asks questions, then plugs his nostrils in order to make replies in a falsetto voice supposed to come from the figurine. Thus advised respecting the route to follow, the caravan continues its journey (Plate XXI, Fig. 5; p. 156).

The wooden figure (Plate XXI, Fig. 3) is of exceptional interest 326
because of its connection with the blacksmith's craft, which is asso- 775
ciated with introductory rites for apprentices. In former days a newly initiated blacksmith was expected to disappear for a period during which he killed a man. On returning to the work of his forge the blacksmith made a wooden figure of which this example, one of five obtained, is typical. The spirit of the murdered man took up its abode in the effigy and in this way helped with the work. The figure, which is of the usual dimensions, namely, 36 cm high, has the greater part of its surface covered with reddened earth (pp. 159–160).

Two figurines (Plate XXI, Figs. 1, 6) were obtained from 171
women of the Vachokue tribe in the village of Ngongo, Ngalangi. 842
Here the Vachokue and the Ovimbundu mingle to such an extent that customs are no doubt transferred from one culture to the other. These wooden images are used by childless women, or by women whose infants have died. The woman who sold these figures pressed them to her breasts to show the manner of use. People standing around smiled and nodded their approval. A wooden figure of this [845]
kind is substituted for a dead twin.

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787 The handle of a hoe is the symbol of cultivation. The appearance of the miniature handle at the top of the basket implies that the spirit of a woman who was rich in corn is troubling the community.

Two united, human figures of wood indicate that a twin will die. The Ovimbundu welcome twins; when one is dead the mother has a wooden figure (Plate XXI, Fig. 1) made to take its place; this is nursed to induce another conception and to comfort the remaining child.

The little gourd means that a deceased person was secretly poisoned in revenge because of his thefts from a field.

The seed of the oil palm means that a large gourd of palm oil has been stolen.

The description of funeral rites gave an account of the questioning of the spirit of the deceased. If no answer is given, divination is made to learn the cause of death.

There is no divination by examination of entrails. Bones are thrown in playing a game, but this is not connected with divination.

EQUIPMENT AND MISCELLANEOUS DUTIES

755 [842] The basket of an Ocimbundu medicine-man at Caconda contained, in addition to the human bone, pounder, and hoe blades already mentioned, two carved wooden female figures whose specific use is unknown. It is known, however, that such figures may be nursed and held to the breast of a woman who wishes to conceive. There was a cowrie shell on a cord which forms a charm to be worn round the neck of a woman who desires children. A small tin box containing a coin and some stones was used for shaking. The kind of sound produced, also any arrested movement of the objects in the box, are indications of the guilt of a person whose name was mentioned just as the objects ceased to move.

A large antelope horn, filled with a mixture of goat's fat and charcoal from the bones of a goat, was intended for use in curing the sick. The contents of the horn become liquid when heated; then they can be dropped on the heads of the people who come for treatment. It was explained that a number of sick people sat around the medicine-man who walked to each person and poured out a small quantity of medicine on the patient's head.

[534] The only musical instruments used by a medicine-man are a small friction drum and a rattle. At Ngalangi I saw a medicine-man give a dance during which he slashed about him with a small ax, which was evidently a ceremonial object, since the construction

was too light to make it effective as a tool or weapon (Plate XIII, Fig. 4). At Bailundu I was informed that an ax of this kind is used in a medicine-man's dance which is intended to cure a man who is sick because a spirit has entered into him. The sickness may have occurred because the man has broken a promise. 755

The medicine-man, or sometimes the patient himself, dances violently, meanwhile cutting about him with the ax (ossinka), which is finally used for killing a little pig whose blood is drunk by the sick man. This is the ritual that was previously mentioned in describing divination.

The following are important ceremonial objects: The ax ekuso (Plate XIII, Fig. 5) was the one used for killing slaves who were eaten at the death of a king. This object was secured in the Vasele country near Vila Nova de Selles. It is of handsome appearance, having a copper circle inlaid into the iron blade. A spear from Bailundu is likewise important because of its use in ritual (Plate XIII, Fig. 8). Before war and hunting this spear was thrust first into an ox then into a slave. The human and animal flesh were cooked together and eaten from the same pot. The female figure used by the medicine-man for consultation with regard to the correct path for a caravan has been described. A carved wooden post obtained from Bailundu was set up at cross-paths so that it might be visited by a sick person or his representative who would make sacrifice there. 411 [266] 782

Without parallel among ceremonial objects used by the Ovimbundu is a small wooden cloth-covered box from Bailundu. This contains a piece of root of cylindrical form tightly bound with cloth having at one end a cowrie shell. The box is the shrine of *Kandundu*, for whom a small hut is built in order to contain the box. Any one who sees the contents of the shrine is said to become blind. *Kandundu* is believed to be the "spirit of dreaming who makes swellings come on the body." 779

Antelope horns are in general use as containers of magical potions. One horn from Bailundu is used for holding sweet beer which is drunk by a person afflicted by bad dreams. A large horn with a piece of fur attached, also from Bailundu, is named ocisdiko. The horn contains a mixture of fat and charcoal which is heated near camp after sunset, when men are on the march. The spreading fumes keep away lions and thieves. It was said that a thief is deterred because the fumes make him cough. 789 237

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778 The charm ocoape or ombuiqu is in the form of small neckbands of plaited fiber to which two or three cowrie shells are fastened. It is worn by women who wish to induce conception. A neckband of this kind which was worn by the maternal grandmother is thought to be specially effective. Sometimes a small rattle, formed from seed pods attached to a stick, is tied to the neckband. The rattle is shaken when the mother of twins meets a friend to whom she is not allowed to give the ordinary greeting.

751 A tortoise shell containing fat and charcoal is worn by the mother of a child who is afflicted by the spirit of *Kaulanda*, which may cause the baby to have skin eruptions or a very small amount of hair. In order to cure her child, the mother must eat small quantities of the contents of the shell from time to time. In some sympathetic way the medicinal benefits are transferred to the infant.

756 When dancing, the medicine-man usually wears a goat's beard attached to a circular piece of basketry. This ocolo is sometimes fastened on the top of his head. In place of the ax already mentioned he may flourish a small ceremonial hoe or whisk, or a wooden baton with a tuft of hair at the end.

[766] Among the varied duties of the medicine-man is that of washing the body of a king (ocoma) or a chief (sekulu). To water in a pot, the medicine-man adds some of the blood of a freshly killed chicken. Then in a hut specially reserved for the purpose he performs the ceremonial ablution.

At Cangamba an Ocivokue performed a ceremony which was supposed to make a thief return to the village for trial. The medicine-man sat on his haunches, holding in one hand a small rattle and in the other a slender stick on which the decorated carapace of a tortoise was poised (Plate LXXXII, Fig. 1). Very earnestly the man talked, shook his head, and gazed at the tortoise shell which began to twist on its pivot. As the medicine-man muttered and shook his rattle, the movement of the shell grew faster. Presently the rotation of the tortoise shell was reversed, but so adroitly that I could not follow the movement or imitate it when allowed to try. The reversed movement of the carapace on its pivot represents the culprit turning back to his village.

CURING THE SICK

755 At Cangamba a female ocimbanda was seen painting marks of red and white on the face of a sick woman. The ceremony was called ocikumbu and its object was said to be the relief of rheumatism.

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of which there are several named varieties. Painting of women has 755
previously been mentioned in describing ceremonies associated with pregnancy.

Several distinct performances for curing the sick were observed at Cangamba, which is a center of the Vachokue tribe, though a few people of the Ovimbundu and many Luchazi and Balunda mingle at this place.

In the first instance the sick woman knelt in front of a hut two feet high which contained a clay leopard marked with white spots. The medicine-man dipped a bunch of leaves in water and stroked this along the patient's spine from the neck to the sacrum.

The second performance was more elaborate, and detailed preparations were made outside the hut of the medicine-man (Plate LXXXIII, Fig. 2). A screen of posts and boughs was erected, and on one side of this two male drummers stood, each with a long tubular drum before him. On the other side of the fence were three wooden posts, each two feet high, circular in cross section, and painted, as indicated in the illustration. Near the posts was a basket, so closely woven that it contained water in which green twigs and leaves were soaking. The drums began to beat and a group of women clapped hands in rhythm.

The patient knelt before the small painted wooden posts close to the basket of water, into which she dipped her face from time to time. While the drum music and hand-clapping continued, the medicine-man took wet twigs from the basket. He drew these very slowly along the spine of the patient from neck to sacrum, as if painting with a brush. The patient occasionally shivered from head to foot; then remained still, except for the dipping of her face in the water, until the next paroxysm shook her. This routine continued for ten minutes. The medicine-man then knelt by the woman, dug a small hole in the ground, and pulled up one of the painted wooden posts which he placed in the patient's hands. The medicine-man kept his hands over those of the patient while she transferred the painted post to the new hole that he had prepared. Finally the basket containing the water and leaves was buried thirty feet from the scene of operations.

A similar ceremony was witnessed near this site. In this instance, however, the water was obtained from a boat-shaped receptacle mounted on two Y-shaped posts, at a height of three feet from the ground (Plate LXXXIII, Fig. 1). Outside the hut of the medicine-

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755 man, and fastened to the wall, was a strip of bark cloth painted with white circles. These recorded the number of times the patient came for treatment.

278 757 At Ngalangi there was no difficulty in obtaining information respecting plants used medicinally. Each of three medicine-men returned with a number of roots and stems which they readily described. *Okakambo* and *okapeinapulo* are roots that cure "big head." This disease, which is rare in white people, begins with blood blisters in the mouth; these may spread to the intestines and cause death. *Okapenje* is a root that induces vomiting; it is also a purgative to free a patient from worms. *Olutikitiki* is given to a woman soon after her baby is born. *Kalungdumona* is a plant having a purple flower. If the root is pounded and drunk in water it acts as an aperient. *Okumbiasoko*, when pounded and placed on the fire, restores a person after fainting; the head of the patient is held in the smoke. To a violent maniac the root *usonge* is given, pounded in water and mixed with maize beer. At Ngalangi a man who had been subject to homicidal mania was sitting on the ground quietly with his hands tied behind his back. I was informed that *usonge* was making him better. *Ocisgesi* is a bark that is chewed to remedy stomachache. *Kosombo* is a plant used to cure people who fall into the fire; it is also a remedy for toothache. The action of this drug *kosombo* causes vomiting and evacuation.

Cilendolaka is pounded in water and smeared on the patient's body as a treatment following the internal application of *kosombo*. *Mbundakutaka* is a root that is pounded and applied externally to cure sores on the lips.

279 In addition to the plants just mentioned the following are important:

Ocimbinga. This plant, whose name means "the big horn," is probably *Strophanthus*. It is used in the treatment of worms and chest colds.

Ocipumbulu. This is a trailing herb whose leaves when pulverized are said to be a cure for bad sores.

Ocindimbulu and *ocisonu.* These are used to give to women who are suffering in difficult delivery. *Ongulo* sometimes takes the place of these drugs. The bark of *ongulo* is pounded in boiling water which is contained in a basin over which the woman sits. Use of the bark in this way is a protection against injuries resulting from childbirth.

Ocowalulua. This is good for headaches and whooping cough. The roots are boiled and mixed with sweet beer.

Olukitala-lukala. This is said to be used in cases of dysentery. At Elende it is used for curing skin diseases.

Okalia. This is used in cases of snake bite, swellings, and stings.

164 In connection with the foregoing study of the native pharmacopœia it will be of interest to consider some maladies to which the Ovim-

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At Cacunda I obtained the basket of a medicine-man which contained 759
a human tibia, a hoe for digging in graves, and a round stone for pounding 791
the bone before mixing it with fat and charcoal. Medicine-men still make potions for internal use, and these are usually carried in small horns suspended round the neck, or the paste may be contained in the carapace of a tortoise. In every way the medicine-man is still functioning, and his tasks are fundamental to the social and religious life of the Ovimbundu.

At an early age children specialize in their play which has a bearing 868
on the business of life. Boys make wooden-tipped arrows, play at hunting, and shoot at tubers which are rolled along the ground. Girls take clay from the potters to fabricate their own small cooking pots, and young girls attempt the coiling of basketry.

Men are the musicians, and among these a high degree of specialization 533
is observed. In a large village there are likely to be only a few competent drummers, and only a few men who play the small iron-keyed instrument called ocisanji. Osaka is a ritual game played only by men, and only when a village headman or a king is dying. The ball (ombunje) is made by sewing 535
lizard skin over a hard spherical fruit about six centimeters in diameter. A 524
man continues to dance with this little ball clenched in his outstretched 755
hand, while another dancer hits the muscles of his arm to make him release the ball. This game is thought to give strength to the sick man. There is a transfer of the endurance of the dancers to the invalid.

Preliminary observation in some villages occupied by Ovimbundu is 197
disappointing in its suggestion of Europeanization. The foreign culture is, however, a thin veneer, and further research shows a strong persistence of indigenous custom and belief quite near to centers of Portuguese influence.

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795 and pagans co-operate in weddings and funerals. In certain aspects of funeral rites, and in commemorations of ancestors the Christians participate, justifying themselves by arguing that they are purely social functions and have no religious significance. This differs from their attitude to the major exorcism [255] rites,[4] which are avoided by Christians, who regard them with some horror, and towards consulting diviners. Although visiting [791] diviners is strictly forbidden by both Catholic and Protestant missionaries, a high proportion of their people do this,[5] but clandestinely. Thus I was told that there were no diviners in Gumba; in fact, there were two living in Epalanga. It is important to remember that there exist nowadays no pagan 'congregations', that is, permanent groups associated with the performance of ritual.

797 It is, indeed, through the missions that most of the formal 177 teaching of European culture (apart from the instructions given to labourers and servants) which Ovimbundu receive is given. To the Ovimbundu the missionaries are the Europeans who appear in the most favourable light, and even among pagans the attitude to the missions is without the fear accorded to the post or the suspicion with which the traders are regarded. The missionaries alone run schools, and they provide most of the modern medical services. The missionaries come into far more frequent contact with the people than do the *chefes*, and their relationship with the people is not confined to economics as is that of the traders. The Ovimbundu desire to imitate and learn from Europeans; it is from the missionaries that they have most opportunity of learning, and it is in the African clergy that they have the most clear evidence that this learning from Europeans will bring them results.

797 The organization of the missions is the form of large-scale social structure with which the people are best acquainted, and with which they are most capable of identifying themselves. A

[4] These involve drumming and an open invitation to anybody who wants to turn up. The idea is to persuade the tormenting spirit to pass into a small animal or inanimate object. The minor exorcism (*okuz ikatiki*) also involves sending the spirit into an inanimate object, but without drumming or the headshaking by the patient which is believed to mark the arrival of the spirit and his acceptance of the offering.

[5] Childs, loc. cit. Personal information.

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171 wide distribution in Africa (C. Wiedemann, 1909) and the ceremony
175 still survives among the Ovimbundu in modified form.

[114] Though an informative writer, Monteiro is sometimes vague; he says (I, p. 278) that circumcision is a universal custom among the blacks of Angola. In view of the extent of Angola, the diversity of tribes, and the fact that Monteiro traveled over only a small part of the country, this information is misleading.

Monteiro is the only writer in whose works I have found a reference to the Vasele tribe; probably no part of Angola has been so neglected as the Esele country in the hinterland of Novo Redondo. At the present day the Vasele have a reputation for cannibalism.
[266] Monteiro saw human flesh eaten at Cuacra, while the skulls of the victims were placed on adjacent trees. Monteiro states (II, p. 167) that on the death of a king the Mucelis (Vasele) put out all the fires in the kingdom; these were relighted by the succeeding king who
[321] used fire produced by rubbing two sticks together. The flat beads of shell called *dongos*, made from *Achatina monetaria* (II, p. 168), are made today and traded to the far south of Angola, where their novelty assures them a value far beyond their intrinsic worth. I was fortunate in obtaining an example of the old beheading ax mentioned by Monteiro (II, p. 157) and sketched by Cavazzi (p. 210). Par-
[262] boiled and roasted rats were offered to me as food; Monteiro mentions the offering of a roasted rat on a skewer (I, p. 99).

The account of Commander V. L. Cameron, who left Zanzibar for his journey across Africa in 1873, mentions several points of anthropological importance in relation to the Angolan section of his
• [756] journey. Cameron saw a net-covered medicine-man of the Kibokue (Vachokue) wearing a mask and a kilt of grass (p. 384). The function
[524] of this man was to frighten devils from the woods. The contest in which boys discharge their arrows at a rolling root was seen by Cameron near Kagnombe (Cangamba?). Skulls of victims killed in
[787] war were spiked on poles (p. 399). The diviner was followed by attendants who struck iron gongs, while the diviner himself shook a rattle made of basket-work in the form of a dumb-bell (p. 404). Cameron gives an accurate description of the divination basket and its use without going into details. These I have been able to supply
[482] (chapter IX). The explorer met caravans of Bihéans, renowned carriers then as they are today. They were usually drunk and abusive; in some instances they attempted to rob the stragglers.
000 The use of caterpillars as food is noted (p. 416): "A man cut open

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787 532 A common type of small figurine, some of which are female, others asexual, is represented by an illustration (Plate XXI, Fig. 2). Such little carvings are a normal part of the miscellaneous contents of a divination basket described in chapter IX. These figures have been obtained from Elende, Bailundu, and Caconda, all of which are centers of Umbundu culture.

322 532 756 In addition to the figurines described, the collection contains many more whose use may be conjectured. The interrogation of Ovimbundu people indicates clearly that there are specific uses of wooden figures which are consulted by the medicine-man. The foregoing explanations illustrate the nature of the beliefs associated with carved wooden figures, but it is not always possible to elicit a clear account of the specific use of each one.

171 532 Consideration of this aspect of the wood-carver's art has an important bearing on the culture contacts of the Ovimbundu. In studying this question I have instituted comparisons between these figures from the Ovimbundu of Angola and similar figures from the Kasai area of the Congo region (chapter X). The publications of the Musée Congo Belge provide illustrations for comparison with the figures in Field Museum's collection.

The carving of animal forms (Plate XIX, Figs. 1–5) is no more than a means of aesthetic expression resulting from accurate observations of animal life as recorded under "Nature Lore." Inquiry failed to show that figures of animals are, or were at any time, used in rites and ceremonies.

[643] The carrying of a carved stick is essential when a chief is visiting, attending a council in his own village, or receiving visitors. The ornamental paddle (Plate XX, Fig. 8) was owned by the chief of the capital village (*ombala*) of the Vangangella, near Ngalangi.

[765] At the death of a chief his staff of office, with his tobacco-pipe and sleeping mat, are placed in a small house where such relics of deceased chiefs are kept permanently (Plate XLVI, Fig. 1). Plate XX, Fig. 6, shows a staff of this kind which was preserved in a sacred house in the capital village of Ngalangi, and on the same plate are drawn short ornamental clubs which French ethnologists call *batons de promenade*, an appropriate name because of their use as part of the full dress equipment.

[276] The Ovimbundu have specialized in the carving of small objects, for, in addition to clubs and staffs, tobacco-pipes and snuff boxes are often elaborately carved (Plate XV, Figs. 2, 4).

Men are exclusively the makers of 462

musical instruments, and males are the musicians. Men are the [534] only persons engaged in warfare and administration, and the *onjango* or council house is used exclusively by males. Men follow the [756] occupation of medicine-man, in which there is considerable specialization. Female practitioners deal with pregnancy and women's ailments. In addition to the tasks for women mentioned above, the following are staple occupations: collecting firewood, drawing water, caring for infants, making pottery, weaving baskets, dancing, and singing. Young girls share these activities with older women.

The foregoing categories explain division on the grounds of sex. 463 Degrees of specialization are not so easy to formulate, but in general a man follows some one occupation, for example wood-carving. Then within this occupation there is specialization in the making of drums, domestic utensils, or figurines.

Almost any woman could make pottery or baskets, but the difference in skill leads naturally to concentration in the hands of expert potters and basket-weavers respectively. These sell their [432] wares to those who either do not make such articles or are inept at the process.

STANDARDS OF CONDUCT, MANNERS, AND SALUTATIONS

The parents of a child, also his maternal uncle, assume responsibility for training in the precepts and standards given here. The 861 867 maternal uncle, who is the mother's oldest brother, is particularly interested because he has to pay fines should his sister's children commit thefts. The evidence indicates that the home and restricted family have formative influences over the conduct of children.

Children are beaten if they tell lies, answer old people rudely, or steal food. Ngonga says that his "stealing hand" was once placed in the hot leaves of the cooking pot. If a child steals an egg which is cooking, the hot egg is held between the culprit's hands.

One cannot fail to notice the quiet and unobtrusive way in which children sit in the presence of their elders both in the home and in the council house. Children do not speak when their elders are in [858] conversation, unless addressed.

A child, likewise an adult, receives a gift with both hands. The [576] implied idea is that reception with one hand is a depreciation of the gift. If a child holds out one hand, the hand is slapped. When receiving, an Ocimbundu says *"kuku,"* literally grandfather or elder. Colloquially the word is used to mean greeting, "I thank you," or "I beg your pardon."

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of the word depends upon the syllable accented and the context, as further explained in the chapter on the Umbundu language. 576 643

A man or woman of the royal family greets the king with the words *na kuku; na* means "lord," and *kuku* is a term used for any old man to whom the speaker intends to show respect. *Kuku* is also applied to a man who stands in the relationship of grandfather. The king is expected to reply to a greeting given by one of the royal family by placing his right hand on his chest and saying twice, "*kalunga.*" There may then follow from the king a question relating to welfare in general. Possibly the king will inquire the object of his subject's journey. A *sekulu* ("chief of a village") greets a king in the same manner as does a commoner, and the king replies as he would to a commoner. 565

Commoners greet a *sekulu* with the words *na kalunga* ("lord, greeting"). One *sekulu* greets another of the same rank with the one word *kalunga,* accompanied by clapping of the palms. Male commoners clap hands on meeting; this action is accompanied by the word *kalunga,* from each of them. Two female commoners use the word *kalunga* as a greeting, but as a rule they do not clap hands. They do, however, clap their palms when greeting a woman of the royal house.

Boys and girls must greet their fathers, maternal uncles, grandfathers, and other old men with either of the terms *na kuku* or *na kalunga,* the latter being more usual. *Na kuku* would be the appropriate term of respect for any elderly man. Children use the same words (*na kuku*) when addressing any elderly woman, including a grandmother. A usual greeting of a child to the mother, likewise to the mother's sister, would be *kalunga mai* ("greetings, mother"). 561 576

There is no prescribed form of address to the medicine-man. Greetings between a commoner and a medicine-man follow the usage noted for two commoners. Ngonga says, "They will treat him (the medicine-man) like a village chief if he is an old man and good. Perhaps they will say *na kalunga* as if talking to a chief." 576 [554] [756]

In the early morning people pass the greeting *oku lipasula.* This means "we have been like dead, we are awake." The appropriate early morning greeting of a commoner to the king or to a chief is *oku lipasula a kuku.* A usual afternoon greeting is *oku lañisa.* The evening greeting is *oku lisuñinya.* [643]

One who desires to pass across a room usually walks in front of other people, but while passing the attitude must not be erect. The thumb and middle finger should be snapped together, while the words

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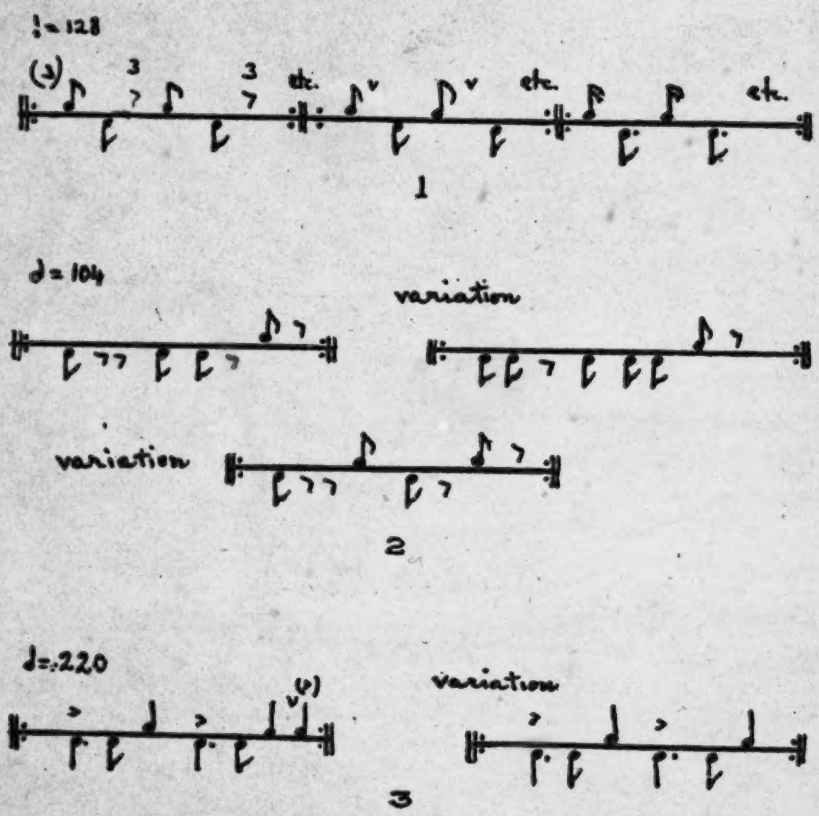

534 and in the middle was an oval aperture. The performer laid the drum on the ground and took his seat astride it. He dipped his right hand in a gourd of water, then rubbed his wet palm up and down the cane rod, which he could reach through the oval aperture. The sound of the rubbing on the rod was communicated to the membrane.

A short friction drum made at Elende measures 21 by 42 cm. One end of the drum is covered with hide kept taut by pegs of wood while the other end is open for the insertion of the player's hand. A cane rod is attached to the inside of the membrane. The [156] assistant of a medicine-man holds this instrument under his arm and plays during divination. The medicine-man sits on a stool shaking his divination basket (Plate XXIII, Fig. 2).

Rattles are of three kinds, and of these the more common are a small, long-necked gourd containing hard seeds, and a compound

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

The compound in which the initiates had been confined for three months was a circular enclosure made of light branches and leafy boughs, at the narrow embrasure of which stood a guardian of the boys, who permitted entrance. In the middle of the large enclosure were seven small cages, each of which was just large enough to allow one boy to lie on his back, and I was informed that the boys lie thus for two weeks after circumcision (Plate LXXX, Fig. 2). 881 304 171

The ages of the boys appeared to be from ten to seventeen years (Plate LXXX, Fig. 1), an observation which agrees well with that made at Katoko and Ngongo. The disparity of age among the novices at each center where initiation was observed bears out the statement that initiation ceremonies are held at irregular intervals, but not more frequently than once in four years.

During confinement in the large enclosure the novices had made masks and costumes (Plate LXXIX, Fig. 1), and when they were pulling on the coarse netting suits, which fit tightly, I observed that circumcision had been performed thoroughly, evidently some weeks ago, for the wounds were healed. Masks were obtained, and these the instructors of the boys were careful to wrap in bark cloth, at the same time requesting me not to show the objects to women.

A few days later these boys returned to their village to dance while wearing the costumes which had been made in the enclosure. At Cangamba the final ceremony lasted twelve hours amid great excitement, including ceaseless drumming and dancing. One boy, who wore a skirt on his fiber costume, lifted this to display an artificial penis of great size (Plate LXXIX, Fig. 2). This organ he grasped in his hand while chasing the women and girls, who ran away screaming and laughing. [522]

At this ceremony there appeared stilt-walkers (Plate LXXXI, Fig. 1) and a medicine-man, a member of the Luchazi tribe (Plate LXXXI, Fig. 2).

Circumcision among the Bdjok (Vachokue) has been witnessed by C. P. Holdredge and described by Kimball Young (*Amer. Anthr.*, XXIX, pp. 661–669). This ceremony took place in the far northeast of Angola. The man described as the *magish* of whom women are afraid, but who is known to the initiates, corresponds to the Uluchazi medicine-man seen in the final ceremony at Cangamba. Of this grotesquely dressed person the men and boys took no notice, neither did he pay attention to them. On the contrary he chased women, who ran away screaming. Kimball Young's description of the enclosure where boys are confined, and his account of the [113] [756]

MEDICINE-MEN

756 When a medicine-man dies the people call in another medicine-
766 man to take charge of the ceremonies. The corpse is tied in a sitting posture, which is the attitude for burial. His charms are attached to his body and in this position they remain in the grave. The head ornament *osala*, which may be feathers, quills of the porcupine, or hair from a goat's beard, is placed upright on the head and fastened by a band under the chin (Plate XXIII, Fig. 2). The corpse is kept in a seated position lashed to a stool for three days. There is no coffin.

The corpse is carried in the posture described to the grave which is dug at a cross-path. The corpse of a medicine-man is questioned in the same manner as that employed in interrogating the corpse of a commoner. When the corpse is placed in its grave the medicine-men, some of them from a distance, dance because they have "spirit in their heads." The medicine-men shake their heads while dancing, and without pausing each eats a living chicken that he carries in his hand. At the side of the grave, a dog, a chicken, and a goat are killed. No part of the flesh is buried; it is consumed by those present at the funeral.

A sleeping mat is placed in the grave, and on the mound of earth are placed horns filled with medicine, and skins which used to hang from the waist of the medicine-man when he was performing. The rain-making charms are not buried in the grave, because their interment would cause the rainfall to diminish; the charms may, however, be placed on the outside of the grave. No food is placed in or on the grave. The mound of earth is painted with a human male figure. When a new medicine-man is making medicine or performing ceremonies he uses the name of a deceased medicine-man.

756 It is thought that the dead medicine-man has spirits which he is able to send to earth. No images of the medicine-man are made. Medicine-men visit the grave at night in order to take parts of the corpse to include in their medicine. At Caconda in western Angola I obtained the outfit of a medicine-man who included in his equipment two small hoe blades which he used for disinterring the dead. There was a portion of human tibia in the basket and a round stone pounder for pulverizing bone along with other ingredients.

The funeral rites of a medicine-woman are the same as those of
[769] a medicine-man except that medicine-women carry the corpse. An *osoma* ("king") or a *sekulu* ("chief") will visit the grave of a medicine-man to ask for rain or other favors.

positions on domes of rock. The first tomb examined was in Ganda (Plate LXXIV, Fig. 1). This tomb is carefully built up from pieces of granite detached from the rocks which serve as a base. Horns of animals are placed on the cairn which is further decorated by a stick bearing the tail of an animal. Plate XXXII, Fig. 1, shows a tomb of similar structure in the country of the Vasele. From one such tomb it was possible to detach a slab so that the interior could be seen. There were two male skeletons; one lay supine while the bones of the other were in disorder. 224 766

In a hunter's house of bows there are implements of deceased hunters, whose ceremonies centering in these relics have been described under the heading of hunting.

TRAINING OF MEDICINE-MEN

Training for the position of male or female magician (*ocimbanda*) is not carried out with formality ending in initiatory rites, neither is the position hereditary; but the boy or girl who wishes to become an *ocimbanda* must have "spirit in the head." This choice of children of peculiar neurotic temperament for the positions of medicine-men and medicine-women is widely distributed, as I have shown in some detail (Origins of Education, 1926, pp. 256–259). 756

Among the Ovimbundu there does not appear to be an intensifying of natural psychoses by seclusion, starvation, or beating. When a boy is sick, the medicine-man says, "You have a spirit who wants you to be *ocimbanda*." The medicine-man kills a dog, a goat, and four chickens, then the boy has to accompany his master, carrying his apparatus and obeying him in every way. The medicine-man says, "Your father was an *ocimbanda* and the spirit wants you." The female *ocimbanda* is called *cambula* by other women, and her services are preferred to those of the male *ocimbanda* in cases of difficult childbirth. [158] [845]

In Ngalangi I was informed that the Ovimbundu have great faith in the medicine-men of the Vangangella, a name vaguely applied by the Ovimbundu to several tribes of east-central Angola. An Ocimbundu will make a journey of several days in order to visit a distant medicine-man of another tribe.

FUNCTIONS OF MEDICINE-MEN

Magical practices are of two kinds, social and anti-social. The man who carries out divination, rain-making, healing the sick, and many other functions is *ocimbanda*, while the secret worker of evil, the witch or wizard, is *onganga*. In one village there may be several [791]

756 men and women each of whom receives the name *ocimbanda*, and specialization in some particular form of magical practice is the [554] rule. Some practitioners are more highly esteemed than others. For example, an *ocimbanda* who has the reputation for curing dizziness, madness, and *onyalai* (p. 281) is one of great repute; so also is the man who can cure a case of blood in the urine (*biliosa*). [164] This is the Portuguese term commonly applied to blackwater fever.

DIVINATION

787 An examination of objects collected gives the best indication of the equipment of the *ocimbanda*, and among these no item is more important than the small divination basket containing a heterogeneous collection of objects.

A diviner receives the distinguishing title of *ocimbanda congomba*, and a description of his methods explains his belief in the activities of spirits. He shakes the basket while his assistant plays a small friction drum; then he inspects the objects lying at the top.

A figure with beads on its neck indicates that trouble is due to the ghost of a dead baby whose spirit wishes to come back.

A piece of gourd with a round orifice means that some one has been talking too much. The orifice represents a human mouth.

Two figures, male and female, whispering together, indicate that a husband and wife are making a plan to poison somebody.

The figure of a female with a large abdomen indicates that the spirit of a deceased pregnant woman is causing sickness in the village.

The horn with shells on it indicates that the woman who is consulting the diviner will not bear children.

There is a little figure with a black tuft on its head, whose [177] arrival at the top of the basket indicates that misfortune among the natives is caused by Europeans. When talking to this figure the medicine-man tries to speak like a white man by adopting a falsetto voice and mimicking the intonation of Europeans.

The figure with a little crest on its head is an indication of sickness or other trouble arising from a spirit which likes to drink blood. When this figure comes to the top of the basket, the medicine-man induces the blood-drinking spirit to enter a man, because the evil must first be localized before it can be exorcised. This possessed person dances with a small ax or a hair switch in his hand. When dancing has induced a frenzy, the dancer kills a pig and drinks the fresh blood. The blood-drinking spirit is in this way exorcised from the community.

778 The charm *osonge* or *ombuigu* is in the form of small neckbands of plaited fiber to which two or three cowrie shells are fastened. It is worn by women who wish to induce conception. A neckband of this kind which was worn by the maternal grandmother is thought to be specially effective. Sometimes a small rattle, formed from seed pods attached to a stick, is tied to the neckband. The rattle is shaken when the mother of twins meets a friend to whom she is not allowed to give the ordinary greeting.

751 A tortoise shell containing fat and charcoal is worn by the mother of a child who is afflicted by the spirit of *Kandundu*, which may cause the baby to have skin eruptions or a very small amount of hair. In order to cure her child, the mother must eat small quantities of the contents of the shell from time to time. In some sympathetic way the medicinal benefits are transferred to the infant.

756 When dancing, the medicine-man usually wears a goat's beard attached to a circular piece of basketry. This *osala* is sometimes fastened on the top of his head. In place of the ax already mentioned he may flourish a small ceremonial hoe or whisk, or a wooden baton with a tuft of hair at the end.

[766] Among the varied duties of the medicine-man is that of washing the body of a king (*osoma*) or a chief (*sekulu*). To water in a pot, the medicine-man adds some of the blood of a freshly killed chicken. Then in a hut specially reserved for the purpose he performs the ceremonial ablution.

At Cangamba an Ocivokue performed a ceremony which was supposed to make a thief return to the village for trial. The medicine-man sat on his haunches, holding in one hand a small rattle and in the other a slender stick on which the decorated carapace of a tortoise was poised (Plate LXXXII, Fig. 1). Very earnestly the man talked, shook his head, and gazed at the tortoise shell which began to twist on its pivot. As the medicine-man muttered and shook his rattle, the movement of the shell grew faster. Presently the rotation of the tortoise shell was reversed, but so adroitly that I could not follow the movement or imitate it when allowed to try. The reversed movement of the carapace on its pivot represents the culprit turning back to his village.

CURING THE SICK

755 At Cangamba a female *ocimbanda* was seen painting marks of red and white on the face of a sick woman. The ceremony was called *ocihamba* and its object was said to be the relief of rheumatism,

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CONCLUDING CEREMONIES, TRIBAL INITIATION, CANGAMBA

Fig. 1. Bilé-walkers, Vachokwe. Fig. 2. Mudidi-man, Lochwal

[p.153]

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Field Museum of Natural History

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VACHIKUE, EAST ANGOLA

Fig. 1. Mafidwanza, Ongandjera, performing ceremony to make chief return to village. Fig. 2. Man, Mona Kutembada

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[p.134]

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1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

846 firewood. When they bring something, the mother thanks them saying, You have provided very well. She who brought supplies sits down and takes the baby and asks whether it is doing well. Conversing with the mother, she advises her how to attend to the baby, and then she returns the baby to its mother and bids her good-bye, saying, May you rest well. The mother replies *E-e-e*. Then she goes out and goes away. All who come do that. During all that time the mother cannot go out until the navel has healed. Then some day when another gives birth, she will do likewise, she will prepare food to go and greet the parent.'

853 *The Baby's Food, Drink, and Medicine.* 'From the time the baby is born they set its gruel (*ekela*) (on the fire), and when it is done they begin to feed (it to him). It is difficult to feed a baby because he struggles greatly, and so when they feed him they hold his little arms and legs and put the food in his mouth when he cries. The mother takes the gruel from the pot and first puts it in her own mouth to cool it with her saliva, then she takes it out and, with the crook of her finger, puts it into the baby's mouth. If the baby's mouth fills up and runs over, she wipes it up and throws it back again. When she sees that sleep has taken him away, she sucks the gruel from the child's mouth and spits it out on the floor. Then she wipes his face clean with a little water. This gruel is stirred up with unfermented beer (*ocisangua*) in place of water that it may be tasty.

757 853 'Likewise from the time of his birth they set aside for the baby a little gourd or pot of beer (*ocisangua*), which is tasty, very tasty. Into that beer they throw some sweet-smelling medicine, as for instance *ocisangu*, *olukata*, *ocilombo*, and *okakonga*. That medicine helps that the stomach may not ache and that worms may not come. *Olukata* is useful for stopping diarrhoea. Should he not eat well, they put in *okakonga*. In giving him to drink they use a little piece of gourd. As with feeding him likewise, although he struggles they hold his little arms and legs and make him drink.' The chief purpose of the beer and the sweet-smelling medicines is to tempt the baby to eat and drink, for it is believed that a baby [127] is born with its senses of taste and smell fully developed. In case of more serious, or supposedly more serious, trouble, these simple remedies do not suffice and the diviner (*ocimbanda*) will be consulted.

'Should the baby be sick in the belly, making a noise *ellll*,

1: Childs M-S (1924-1940) 1940 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

ohiili, they will say, They have bewitched him with *olosete*.[1] 757
In going to the diviner they take a cock for the cure. They 853
kill their cock, the diviner eats it, they (go) to the threshing-floor for the cure. That threshing-floor is holy and no one may pass over it unless in passing he spits out a little saliva and says, There may it stay, there. Only so may they pass on, even though they may be many, each person does just that.' The 'many' who go to the diviner are representatives of the family, for their presence is necessary not only for proper diagnosis but also to show their concern and good faith.

Babyhood Proper

(*From the second week until about the seventh month*)

The period of lying-in is terminated when the cord falls and the navel heals, but the second period only begins when the baby turns dark. This period begins with 'Breaking the pot' (*Oku ipaya ombia*). The reference is to the gourd or pot in which the beer and medicine have been kept. 'Breaking the pot', says one informant, 'means dividing the dark from the light.' [858]

'When a child is first born he is perfectly pink and it is not possible to say whether he will be light or dark. When six or eight [145] days have passed he begins to change and to get the skin with which he will grow. At that time they recognize whether the child will be light or dark. Then is the time when those who do not like to hold a pink baby will begin to take him up, for also it is then that his neck begins to be strong. Then too the baby begins to cause people to laugh. Should he be a boy, those who take him 854 will say, Ah my husband are you well? Ha, how is the man? Then the parent will rejoice and say, Shucks, this man doesn't give any cloth at all. Should she be a girl, they will also say, How is my girl? The parent replies, She is quite well. The man then says, Where is a beer-jug for a man? The parent says, Shucks, your girl can't brew at all, she 's no good, they've just put her out of her house; they've just divorced her because she can't keep house properly.'

This period from about the eighth day until about the end of the sixth month is the period of babyhood proper. At night the baby sleeps with his mother and by day he is carried in a cloth on her back (*oku velekua*). When it is not raining his head may be seen

[1] *Olosete* (plural) are a wild fruit, hard and about the size of hazel-nuts, used for playing *ocela*.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

generally more resistant than those whom we know to-day. Some 164
of the imported diseases have probably been with the Ovimbundu [177]
since they first encountered Europeans, others are more recent, but all seem to be more deadly to Africans than to Europeans. This is especially true of the lung complaints, against which the Ovimbundu have little resistance, and the manner of their life makes tuberculosis very difficult to check.

Diseases native to the region also constitute a great problem, notably malaria in its several forms, leprosy, bilharzia, yaws, goitre, nutritional diseases, &c. The medical staffs of the government services and of the missions are well aware of the magnitude [757]
of the problem. The resources at their command, however, are terribly inadequate. It is urgently necessary that resources be found and made available.

Religious Development. Before bringing this historical survey to 771
a close it is necessary to take note of certain developments with 177
regard to religion. It was noted in passing that representatives of the ruling families had, on occasion, returned to the lands of their exodus to worship their ancestors at the ancient shrines. From this it is evident that the ancestors of the ruling families became the gods of the kingdoms over which they ruled. The commoners kept their own ancestral deities, family by family. Special cults of various sorts have grown up. From the texts of a hundred to a hundred and fifty years ago it is evident that many of the religious practices of the Ovimbundu were then similar to those which are observed at the present time. Some practices described in those texts, on the other hand, seem to have ceased or to have been altered beyond recognition. The very presence of the Europeans must have affected the rites and their observance, for their attitudes, whether of approval or of disapproval, registered over so long a period, must have produced some effect.[1] Degrees of intensity of this European contact, varying from region to region, must have had their influence in the development of regional differences. Some such differences have been noted.[2]

[1] Battell records that the 'Jagas' would not let him witness certain rites. Pinheiro de Lacerda, writing in 1797, says that he burned more than one hundred *oratorios* called *chacapombo* (*Annaes Mar. e. Col.*, 1845, p. 491).

[2] W. H. Sanders put down to their closer contact with Europeans the fact that the king's councillors of Viye were not 'a very dignified set. . . . They seemed to have none of that decorum which prevails among the head men of Bailundu' (*Missionary Herald*, 1886, p. 143).

825 Observation of reptiles is a necessary self-protection as there are many poisonous snakes. The flesh of the python is eaten. Snake-
[524] skin and lizard-skin are occasionally used; for example, in covering a round, hard fruit in order to make a ball for playing a game.

When collecting lizards and snakes I found that each kind had a well-known name, though there was occasional disagreement among the men consulted.

Ocivangoko is a lizard (*Agama planiceps*) about ten inches long whose tail is covered with sharp spines. This reptile has colors of bright blue, red, and orange. *Ovangu* is a large spinous gray lizard (*Agama atricoll*). *Ekangala* (*Gerrhosaurus nigrolineatus*) is a brilliantly colored lizard which burrows deeply into the ground.

Olutanjila is a long slender green snake which hides in trees to capture birds. *Ombandanjila* is a long gray-backed snake with a light green belly. The generic name for snake is *onyoha*. The python is *omoma*. The chameleon (*eloñailo*) seems to be feared, as the men and boys refuse to touch a dead one but always move it with sticks. There is a proverb to the effect that the chameleon though slow always gets there. The refusal to touch even dead reptiles is due to an exaggerated fear of being bitten. I could find no other reason.

824 Trees are of importance in connection with building houses and
313 wood-carving. The qualities of different timbers are well known to the Ovimbundu. For the main part, the collection of medicinal plants and their uses will be described in connection with the medicine-man. The following are the most common trees which are of economic importance.

Usia (pronounced *oosha*). This tree has an edible fruit the size of a walnut. The kernel is valued as a food.

Ombula. This tree provides wood which burns readily. The small skin-covered stools to be found in every hut are often made from this wood.

Ukenga. The fruit has a hard rind.

[757] *Ovindo*. This tree has a small acid fruit from which a medicine is made for the cure of painful menstruation.

Usilosilo. The leaf is compound and palmate. The fruit is black.

Usiambiambia. Bears a little red, oval fruit.

Usoiz. Has a large red fruit.

Usembo. Grows near streams. It has a fruit like that of *okulakula*, but smaller.

[223] *Ukuliunga*. Has a fruit like the berry of a coffee plant. The fruit is used for making mucilage which is used for capturing small birds.

Omanda. When this tree is small, the wood is springy, and is therefore useful for making bows. The wood of the older trees is burned for preparing charcoal which is used in the blacksmith's fire.

Onundu. This is an erect tree having no branches on the lower part. The wood is extensively used in building native huts.

Omua. A large tree having clusters of small white flowers which are visited by bees on account of their content of honey. The tree yields a hard wood from which charcoal is prepared. The bark and leaves yield a pigment which is used for dyeing cloth a yellowish brown. 824 313

Ossi is valuable because it gives a hard wood used for the corner posts of houses. White ants do not attack this wood, which is therefore useful for making the uprights on which granaries are erected.

Okapelangole. A tree from which planks of hard red wood are obtained. These are used for making doors in village fences.

Ossua or *ekenge* or *usambu.* These trees have small compound leaves which are very similar. The bark of the latter two is used as rope for binding the uprights and the crosspieces in the framework of native houses. *Ekenge* and *usambu* also yield a bark which is beaten into bark cloth in the Ngalangi district.

Ocipolo. The bark is used for binding posts, also for the fabrication of bark cloth.

Ungolo. The roots of this tree yield a dye for cloth. The leaves are said to have a value for curing sore eyes. The mother of a child afflicted with sore eyes chews the leaves, then spits into the child's eyes. [757]

Ongoye. Yields a wood used for making pestles and pounding sticks.

Omuke ("iron wood"). This tree has a hard wood which is used for the same purpose.

Onjunge. Gives a wood used in the making of houses, doors, and beehives.

Omone. A large tree which gives planks for building purposes.

Uvanje. Yields a useful red timber.

Ulondangandu. A tree with very rough bark. The word *ongandu* means a crocodile. This is the tree which even a crocodile can climb. [752]

Ongunja. A tree which yields a fruit having a value as a purgative. The antelope is said to be fond of the fruits of this tree.

Ocikumbolombu. Gives a resinous fluid which is used in the preparation of lime for snaring birds. [223]

Ulombu. This word is derived from the word *ulombo*, meaning shade. The *embala* (native capital) of Ngalangi is surrounded by such trees.

Omia. A tree which produces yellow flowers in September. The fruit is not edible but oil is made from it.

Okulu. A tree having fragrant flowers like those of honeysuckle. The thick bark is used in making mats.

Ossa. A soft wood which is easily whittled with a knife. The figures from Bailundu (Plate XXI, Fig. 5) are often carved from this wood.

Umbolombolo. A soft wood which is not very strong.

Umbangalanda. A small tree which produces bright red fruits. These are used by women for the manufacture of bead necklaces.

Ocilasi. The wood is used for the heads of arrows for shooting birds. This timber is used in the building of pigpens. The branches have projections which are said to guard (*ekulava*, to guard) the occupants of the pen.

Jiata. From the roots of this tree a medicine for pulmonary complaints is made.

Ulua. This is the baobab, whose habitat is the dry regions. Some of the trees have enormous girth. They are leafless for a great part of the year. The long fruits make gourds. The seeds in the fruits are bitter.

Uiastua (pronounced *ostuatua*). From the wood the Ovimbundu make wooden platters and spoons used for serving mush from the large cooking pot.

Onjilili. This tree yields a hard red wood which takes a lustrous polish. For this reason the wood is employed for making ornamental sticks and clubs.

Upondonjambu. This small tree has roots which girls use for making ankle-bands.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP1

755 man, and fastened to the wall, was a strip of bark cloth painted with white circles. These recorded the number of times the patient came for treatment.

278 757 At Ngalangi there was no difficulty in obtaining information respecting plants used medicinally. Each of three medicine-men returned with a number of roots and stems which they readily described. *Okakamba* and *okapelangalo* are roots that cure "big head." This disease, which is rare in white people, begins with blood blisters in the mouth; these may spread to the intestines and cause death. *Okayenje* is a root that induces vomiting; it is also a purgative to free a patient from worms. *Olutikitiki* is given to a woman soon after her baby is born. *Kalungdumona* is a plant having a purple flower. If the root is pounded and drunk in water it acts as an aperient. *Okumbiasoko*, when pounded and placed on the fire, restores a person after fainting; the head of the patient is held in the smoke. To a violent maniac the root *usonge* is given, pounded in water and mixed with maize beer. At Ngalangi a man who had been subject to homicidal mania was sitting on the ground quietly with his hands tied behind his back. I was informed that *usonge* was making him better. *Ocinyeni* is a bark that is chewed to remedy stomachache. *Kosamba* is a plant used to cure people who fall into the fire; it is also a remedy for toothache. The action of this drug *kosamba* causes vomiting and evacuation.

Cilendaluka is pounded in water and smeared on the patient's body as a treatment following the internal application of *kosamba*. *Mbundakataka* is a root that is pounded and applied externally to cure sores on the lips.

278 In addition to the plants just mentioned the following are important:

Ocimbinga. This plant, whose name means "the big horn," is probably *Strophanthus*. It is used in the treatment of worms and chest colds.

Ocipumbulu. This is a trailing herb whose leaves when pulverized are said to be a cure for bad sores.

Ocindiambala and *olusasa*. These are used to give to women who are suffering in difficult delivery. *Ongolo* sometimes takes the place of these drugs. The bark of *ongolo* is pounded in boiling water which is contained in a basin over which the woman sits. Use of the bark in this way is a protection against injuries resulting from childbirth.

Omondolus. This is good for headaches and whooping cough. The roots are boiled and mixed with sweet beer.

Okalolulo-lohala. This is said to be used in cases of dysentery. At Elende it is used for curing skin diseases.

Okalle. This is used in cases of snake bite, swellings, and stings.

164 In connection with the foregoing study of the native pharmacopoeia it will be of interest to consider some maladies to which the Ovim-

164 Deformities resulting from burns are frequent. Cooking pots
[732] are unstably placed on logs which form the fire, and, in addition to this, people sleep very near the fire. There is no cerebro-spinal fever. Pneumonia is very common; the result is often fatal. Weakness of the heart is only occasional. Varicose veins are rare. There is no appendicitis.

One cannot fail to notice the prevalence of tropical ulcers among the Ovimbundu. These occur most frequently on the tibia. The
[757] big sloughing ulcer makes a large hole which the native fills with clay and a pulp of leaves. Sometimes a bark is pounded to a pulp and used in this way. These ulcers are very obstinate even under skilled treatment. Often after the wound has been healed it will break out again when irritated by the slightest injury. Medical
[732] opinion is divided as to the cause of these ulcers. Jiggers are a cause of deformation of the toes, which sometimes fall off or have to be amputated. Cancer is not usual in people under sixty years of age. Superficial cancer is the most common form.

515 Water, even when procurable, is sparingly used by the Ovimbundu. The hands and face may receive a perfunctory wash each day, but the entire body seldom receives this attention.

757 Cupping was observed on two occasions, but I think the operations were performed by the mothers of the children concerned, and not by a medicine-man. The method of using the horns or gourds is illustrated (Plate LXXXVI, Fig. 1). After incisions had been made the cups were applied. The operator sucked the pointed end of the cup, so creating a vacuum, which was maintained by pushing forward with the tip of the tongue a small ball of wax. This wax filled the hole at the pointed end of the cupping horn. The people shown in the photograph are Vachokue, but the method is the same among the Ovimbundu.

At Elende there was a sweat bath in the form of a hole in the ground containing a heap of stones. The stones are heated in a fire, then cold water is thrown over them so that steam arises to the patient, who crouches above the hole covered with a blanket.

In the Vasele country, also among the Ovimbundu at Elende, I examined corporeal incisions other than tribal marks. The explanation was to the effect that the making of cuts cured pain (Plates XXIV, Fig. 3; LXXVI, Fig. 2).

RAIN-MAKING

791 The rain-maker (*upuli*) is a medicine-man who has specialized in this function. The *upuli*, who was an Ocivokue of Ngongo, and

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

757

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2

TREATING SICK WOMAN, VACHOKUE, CANGAMBA

Fig. 1. Medicine-man stroking patient's spine. Fig. 2. Preparing for ablution of face

[p. 437]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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VACHOKUE, EAST ANGOLA

Fig. 1. Cupping operation, Ngango, Ngalangi. Fig. 2. Group, Mona Kalambula

[p. 440]

4:Dorsey E-4, 5 (no date)1899 FP13 Mbundu FP13

Still
another form of fetish for protection are two small images also 778
known as *ovitekas*. They, like the other *ovitekas* described above[1]
are of wood, but are rudely carved from two round pieces of wood about sixteen inches long. No attempt has been made to represent the human form in any detail, only the face, neck, and arms being indicated. The face of both images has been besmeared with some reddish black pigment. These were placed where the path to the village branches off to the caravan road. A small hut before which they stood was built for them, about two feet square, and between two and three feet high, with a thatched grass roof. Within was a shelf on which from time to time was placed food, corn, and a small gourd of beer. This was done to appease certain spirits which were supposed to be angry with the village and were causing sickness.

For the so-called poison test three medicines are employed. The 695
first and most common is known as the *ombambu*, a drug obtained 278
from the country east of the Quanza River, and represented in the collection by a piece of bark. It has the property of a powerful spinal irritant, and it is said that a very small quantity will produce death. There is a current belief among the Ovimbundu that if a bird alights upon the *ombambu* tree it will fall down dead. The second drug, or *ombambu*, employed in the poison test is obtained from the Bihe country, and is represented by several roots. It is taken in the form of a decoction. The third test is known as *onsunga*. This is a mixture of powdered herbs, and is obtained from the country of the Ganguellas. With these three drugs should be mentioned a small gourd, *okopo*, used by the ocimbanda in mixing the medicines, and from which during the poison test the parties drink. The test medicines are stirred with the foot of a small antelope. Occasion for the administering of the poison may arise in various ways. Frequently one person will accuse another of being a witch. The accused may deny it, and appeal to the poison test to prove his innocency. They go to the chief, who calls an ocimbanda, who mixes up a concoction in a gourd, and both the accuser and accused drink. If the draughts make one sick and he vomits, he is acquitted; and if the other one becomes very sick and does not vomit, he is said to be the witch. This same test is often appealed to in other matters where one affirms and another denies. A man may drink by proxy, that is, he may have a friend drink the poison in his stead, or, more frequently, a slave drinks for his master.

Finally, it must be noticed that the ocimbandu is also a medicine- 791
man. He undoubtedly possesses some really valuable remedies, but 757
there is so much of the fetishistic cult bound up in the administering of the remedies that when they do help a person the credit of

[1] [Cf. p. 185. -- Analyst]

4:Dorsey E-4, 5 (no date)1899 FP13 Mbundu FP13

791 757 the cure is given to the charms and incantations. Of the medicines contained in the collection I shall only mention four: The first is a love medicine, *ekulo*, a powdered mixture of seeds. When a wife becomes jealous of the other wives of her husband, she complains to her mother, who advises her to cook a chicken and in the broth to place some of this medicine, which, when her husband eats thereof, will compel him forever to love her above all the other wives. The second remedy is an emetic, *asangu*. This is frequently used, as, for example, when in the poison test a person becomes very sick, and the guilt has become fully established, the doctor will administer an emetic to save life. In cases of difficult labor, the woman is given a small piece of the bark of the *oluvanga* to chew. For rheumatism, *ovihata*, a mixed powder called *omatoli*, is used.

George A. Dorsey.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

PLATE XII

854

Photo. D. G. Rideout

a. A baby clinic (Dondi)

758

Photo. R. S. Webb

b. Bringing a patient in a hammock (*ovanda*) (Bailundu)

[Facing p. 145]

night in the *etambo* praying to or communing with ancestral spirits, when the occasion arises; Suku is regarded as too remote to receive prayers. 693 613

While cooking, a woman may spill a little meal on the ground for the spirits; at a meal, a person may spill a little food or beer for the same purpose. A portion of the meat at a feast may likewise be sacrificed, but it is often a less desirable portion, such as the intestines.[1] 782

Agricultural rituals were held before planting, at which time the headman and his wife had intercourse in their field and sacred seed from the chief's granary was distributed, a few grains to be mixed with the seed to be planted on each plot. When the maize began to ripen a few ears were sent to the chief before any were eaten.[2] 241 789

DIVINERS[3]

The word *ocimbanda* is used both for a diviner and for a maker of medicines. To distinguish the two, the diviner may be called *ocimbanda congombo* ("of the basket"), the herbalist *ocimbanda coviti* ("of trees or sticks"). Some practitioners are both diviner and herbalist. A female diviner is called *cambula*.[4] An *ocimbanda* frequently specialises in a certain kind of case;[5] and among the members of the profession there are many degrees of proficiency. One may work only in his own village, another may be consulted on matters of concern to the whole district or chiefdom; others go on professional journeys carrying their baskets, and accumulate profits in animals and cloth. The greater the reputation of the diviner, the greater the charges he makes for his services. 791 759

The tasks of the *ocimbanda* are:-

(a) To discover the cause of sickness, death, or any evil which has befallen the individual or the community. Sickness and death are always believed to be due either to the workings of spirits who are demanding sacrifices, or to living enemies who have malicious spirits under their control or who have bought potent charms. The diviner, after consulting the spirit who speaks in and through his basket, names the spirit who is causing the trouble and tells the victim what its demands are, or, if the enemy is a living person, indicates in a general manner from whence the trouble comes, e.g. to a woman "Your baskets are too well made; you are hated because of them", or, to a man, "This illness was found on a journey taken to collect a debt". If requested, the diviner makes a counter-charm to offset that which has caused the ill. 787 753

(b) To interpret omens and dreams.

(c) To give advice on personal problems.

(d) To dispense medicines and charms.

(e) To bring or withhold rain, or to see who is guilty of withholding it. [789]

(1) Ibid., see also Cushman, loc.cit.
(2) Childs, personal communication.
(3) Based on Tucker, 1940.
(4) Hambly, (3) 1936.
(5) Ibid.

4:Dorsey E-4, 5 (no date)1899 FP13 Mbundu FP13

THE OCIMBANDA, OR WITCH-DOCTOR OF THE OVIMBUNDU OF PORTUGUESE SOUTHWEST AFRICA.

114 In July of last year the Anthropological Department of the Field Columbian Museum secured an ethnological collection from the Ovimbundu of the Portuguese African province of Angola. The collection was made by Rev. T. W. Woodside, a missionary for seven years among the Ovimbundu, and, on account of its completeness and the full data which accompanied the objects, is of unusual [121] importance and value. Perhaps of chief interest among the series of objects illustrating the various phases of native life in this region is the complete "medicine chest" of a witch-doctor. This I shall describe, making free use of the extensive notes furnished by Mr. Woodside, supplemented by several conversations during which the objects themselves were discussed, and much information furnished concerning the Ovimbundu in general. The collection under consideration was obtained from a single individual, and has seen long use.

101 The Ovimbundu are a southern division of an extensive group of people known as the Bundas, who, in turn, belong to the group of Bantu populations. They occupy the territory of the Bailundu and Bihe plateaus, from Bengualla to the Quanza River, a table-land 4000 to upwards of 6000 feet high, and in south latitude about twelve 142 degrees. The Ovimbundu are described by Mr. Woodside as a dark-skinned people, varying from coffee-brown to quite black, with thick curly hair. They are entirely uncivilized, but are a peaceable, 105 kindly people. Their food is chiefly vegetal, although they possess cattle, sheep, goats, pigs, and chickens. They practise polygamy, and the women prepare the food and do nearly all the field work. The men are famous as traders, and journey to the interior for rubber, wax, ivory, and slaves; the latter they secure by purchase from the country of the Lubas. The principal medium of exchange is a cheap cotton cloth which is obtained from white travellers.

791 Among the Ovimbundu, as in nearly all parts of Africa, the 759 witch-doctor is an important personage. He is feared by all classes, and often has more influence and power than the chief himself. Whenever anything is lost or stolen, they apply to the witch-doctor to find out where the object is, or who is the thief. As no one is [761] supposed to die a natural death, the doctor is called in to discover the witch who caused the death. To him they go for all kinds of charms to protect themselves against all evils, or to cast a spell on some one whom they wish to injure; to him they also go for help in

4:Dorsey E-4, 5 (no date)1899 FP13 Mbundu FP13

791 case of sickness. He is also a diviner, reading both the past and
759 future. At all spirit feasts, at the installation of a new chief, in preparation for war, and on almost every occasion the witch-doctor plays a prominent part. He bears an influential position among his people, and his art is the source of a considerable income, for always before he begins operations the pay must be brought and laid down before him. Thus it is that he is loth to part with even a few of his charms, much less a full set.

The ocimbanda does not inherit his power, but must serve a long apprenticeship to some old witch-doctor, whom he pays liberally. He is then given a small basket with a few charms, to which he adds from time to time. His idols and charms are not made by him, but
[778] are purchased one by one. All of these objects are considered powerful, *cikola* or sacred, and the common people are afraid to touch them; even the touch of a white man is sacrilegious. One of the distinguishing features of a witch-doctor's costume is a head-dress, *ekufue*, made of long porcupine quills fastened together at one end, sewn to a cloth disk about two inches in diameter. Many of the quills are over a foot in length. This headdress is only worn when divining. He also occasionally wears about the loins a girdle, *uya*, consisting of a strip of antelope skin sewn together along the two edges, thus forming a pouch which contains medicines. Attached to the girdle are war charms and medicines, of which he eats from time to time. There are also several kinds of small skins in the collection, on which the doctor kneels when about to perform.
[302] Two pigments should also be noticed. The first is a white, clayey substance, *ocikela*, with which the ocimbanda paints himself, and with which he also marks the person whom by his divining he has discovered to be innocent, the sign of acquittal being a mark across the forehead and down the arms. The other pigment is a red clay, *onongo*, with which he also marks his own body and employs as the sign of guilt.

787 Of the various objects of the ocimbanda's[1] outfit proper, the most
415 important is the basket, *uhamba*, in which the outfit is kept. When it is said that so and so has a "uhamba," it means that he is a witch-doctor. The basket is thirteen inches high by nineteen in length, and eight inches in thickness. The ends are rounded, thus giving the basket, as seen from above, an elliptical form. The cover, three inches in height, fits closely down over the basket, after the manner of our telescope bag. The bottom of the basket is made separate, and is fastened by means of an interlacing of grass braid. The sides of the basket are simply one long strip of interlaced reed and bark fibre, the ends overlapping and being fastened together by the grass braid, which passes up continuously from the bottom to

[1] [i.e., diviner. -- Analyst]

5: Hambly E-5 (1929-30) 1934 FP 13 Mbundu FP13

462 be reversed and asked whether men could not carry the water. I was told
331 that such a man would be laughed at and called a "he-woman." Yet division of labor does not imply sex inferiority, and ridicule would arise from incongruity.

MEDICINE-MEN

759 The training of a medicine-man (ocimbanda) and a medicine-woman
791 (chambula) involves few formalities, but this class of work requires that a novice shall have "spirit in the head." When visited by a sick boy the medicine-man shakes his divination basket and if a certain combination of objects appears, he says, "Your father was ocimbanda and his spirit wants you." The boy who is thus adopted has to accompany the medicine-man, his master, carrying apparatus and standing near to play a small friction drum while the master is shaking his divination basket.

Specialization among medicine-men is carried to great degree of refinement, especially among those practitioners who profess therapeutic knowledge. I employed three medicine-men to collect plants, of which they appeared to have an expert knowledge. Umbundu names were given and the curative properties of each plant were explained with enthusiasm and evident conviction. The men were undoubtedly sincere in their own beliefs. A specialist who can cure blood in the urine, and another who is said to treat dizziness successfully, are greatly respected. The rainmaker is ocimbanda opulia, "the medicine-man of the rain," who dances while flourishing a cow-tail switch, and blowing a shrill whistle intermittently.

Ocimbanda is of course distinguished from onganga, since the former is concerned with socially beneficent tasks such as those mentioned, while
[754] the latter may cause sickness, impotence, and sterility. In earlier days the task of finding sorcerers (onganga) by use of the poison ordeal was that of an ocimbanda. Medicine-women are called in to take care of difficult cases of childbirth, and I have seen a medicine-woman painting the face of a pregnant woman, who thereafter observed certain taboos.

Space will not permit enumeration of the contents of a divination basket and the significance attached to each item; neither can I give details of ceremonies for curing the sick or bringing a thief back to the village, but the foregoing notes suffice to show that the craft is specialized and still important. A medicine-man ceremonially washes a king or chief on rare occasions. He makes new fire by twirling; though flint and steel, also
[782] matches, are known. When a new village is founded a medicine-man stirs the blood of sacrificed animals with the claws of a chicken; then he sprinkles this blood on each new house.

5: Hambly E-5 (1929-30)1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

At Caconda I obtained the basket of a medicine-man which contained 759
a human tibia, a hoe for digging in graves, and a round stone for pounding 791
the bone before mixing it with fat and charcoal. Medicine-men still make potions for internal use, and these are usually carried in small horns suspended round the neck, or the paste may be contained in the carapace of a tortoise. In every way the medicine-man is still functioning, and his tasks are fundamental to the social and religious life of the Ovimbundu.

At an early age children specialize in their play which has a bearing 868
on the business of life. Boys make wooden-tipped arrows, play at hunting, and shoot at tubers which are rolled along the ground. Girls take clay from the potters to fabricate their own small cooking pots, and young girls attempt the coiling of basketry.

Men are the musicians, and among these a high degree of specialization 533
is observed. In a large village there are likely to be only a few competent drummers, and only a few men who play the small iron-keyed instrument called ocisanji. Osaka is a ritual game played only by men, and only when a village headman or a king is dying. The ball (ombunje) is made by sewing 535
lizard skin over a hard spherical fruit about six centimeters in diameter. A 524
man continues to dance with this little ball clenched in his outstretched 755
hand, while another dancer hits the muscles of his arm to make him release the ball. This game is thought to give strength to the sick man. There is a transfer of the endurance of the dancers to the invalid.

Preliminary observation in some villages occupied by Ovimbundu is 177
disappointing in its suggestion of Europeanization. The foreign culture is, however, a thin veneer, and further research shows a strong persistence of indigenous custom and belief quite near to centers of Portuguese influence.

FIELD MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

775 suffers sickness or misfortune if an ancestral spirit dies a second death. A person who has bad health says, "The spirit of my grandfather has been caught by *Esuvi*." The name of the good spirit *Osande* is used by a person who is suffering. Such a one says, "I have no more *Osande*." These instances clearly reveal a belief in the dependence of human welfare on the interest of benevolent ancestral spirits.

775 After a lapse of three months I asked Ngonga again about
791 *Osande* and *Ondele*. He confirmed what he had previously said, but
753 spoke in the plural of these spirits; good spirits are called *Olosande*, bad spirits are called *Olondele*. The medicine-man will visit a hut to foretell the future, and while there he puts a concoction in an image to which he addresses questions. He plugs his nostrils, then in a falsetto voice feigns answers from the image. The father of a family, or possibly the mother's brother, may kill an animal in front of the hut on this occasion. He then says to *Olosande*, "We hope when
• [761] we kill this there will be no more sickness." The Ovimbundu are afraid of death, and they therefore sacrifice to *Olosande*, asking that there shall be no death in the family.

775 I do not know whether the Ovimbundu distinguish multiple souls as some Negro tribes do. The part of a man which does not die is sometimes called *utima*, which is the word for heart. Dr. M. W. Ennis says that the *utima* and the *omuenyo* are both names of the spirit existing in a living body. Ngonga seems certain that every person irrespective of age, rank, and sex has a spirit, but I could find no evidence that the Ovimbundu visualize a separation
762 of ranks or sexes after death. When a man kills himself he is buried
775 near a river so that his spirit will go to the sea, and for the same reason a murdered man is buried near a river. At Ngalangi I inquired from other Ovimbundu people concerning suicide. Women who commit suicide generally do so by hanging or drowning. Men stab themselves in the heart or use a flintlock gun, the trigger of which they pull with their toes. It is feared that the spirit of a suicide will return to induce another suicide in the family, therefore there is anxiety to rid the community of these spirits.

RELIGIOUS BELIEFS AND CONDUCT

771 The Ovimbundu have many high standards of conduct, some of
688 which have been mentioned in dealing with the education of children. There is, however, no idea of sin. That is to say, there are no commands laid down by some authority which is more than human.

4:Dorsey E-4, 5 (no date)1899 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

In the previous

chapter I have indicated that the position of headman is today 622
a somewhat shadowy one, and that the headman emerges rather than succeeds by virtue of various grounds; the main ones being official recognition, some tie to the local chief, the presence of a core of one's kinsmen, a claim to be the first resident, and personality. During my stay Sapapula was as much a headman of Epalanga as anyone can reasonably be these days, yet his position had not always gone unchallenged.

In 1954 he had found himself in danger of being displaced 622 665
by his matrilateral 'brother' Mwehombo. Both men, apparently, claimed that they had founded the village, both had substantial cores of kinsfolk in the village, and both possessed strong personalities. Sapapula by holding the ministerial title of Epalanga to Kafelo had had a stronger position in village affairs. This prop to his power was taken away when Kafelo was deposed from the chiefdom, and Luanga and Mwehombo purchased the title of Epalanga from Lusase.

In this partnership Mwehombo must have been the leading personality, Luanga being extremely amiable but not at all domineering or energetic. Mwehombo's idea was presumably to establish himself as recognized headman of Epalanga, and to obtain whatever advantages were to be gained from an association with Lusase. Luanga's aim, from what he told me, was to escape contract labour by having a position as a traditional headman and title-holder. Titles will still be sought after, [554]
although the substance of power has gone, so long as they can confer some prestige or protection from administrative labour demands. It was not customary for the role of Epalanga to be held by two people jointly.

Mwehombo died shortly after this. He had been baptized 763
by the name of Simon when dying on January 13th 1955, when his social personality began its posthumous career. At the inquest, which was held according to the old Umbundu pattern in which the corpse suspended in a hammock from a pole held by two men was supposed to answer questions by the way it swung, it was found that Mwehombo had suffered the pro- [554]
verbial fate of the sorcerer in being killed by the spirit he had [561]
used to kill others.

The role of the questioner was taken by Paulo, sister's son to

3:Hambly E-5 (1929-1930)1934 FP3 Mbundu FP3

in the works of Battell, Cavazzi, and other early writers. A description of the whipping of boys at initiation (p. 99) agrees with my own records, but details of the period and place are not given by Tucker. Questioning a corpse (p. 102) is a ceremony I have witnessed and described, but the instance referred to by Tucker relates to the interrogation of the corpse of a chief with regard to his choice of a successor; there are laws of succession, but these may be waived. The ceremony described in my monograph was conducted to discover the cause of death and not to determine succession. If Tucker has any detailed information with regard to puberty ceremonies for girls his reticence is regrettable (p. 142). Tucker says that suicide among women is common (p. 143). A mention of *ocisunji*, a feast for spirits at which meat is offered to idols, is interesting (p. 168) but details are lacking, and the use of the word idols is ambiguous. The information respecting use of charms is corroborative of my own observations in two other centers, Elende and Ngalangi.

The most recent publication on the ethnology of Angola is that of F. and W. Jaspert of the Städtisches Völkermuseum, Frankfort, 1930. Their journey was undertaken primarily to make collections for a museum, but linguistic and ethnological information was recorded among several tribes, notably the Kimbundu, Vachokue, Luchazi, Luimba, and Kusongo. The farthest point attained in a southerly direction was just north of Kipungo, and the general line of march was from Benguela to the northeast, into Lunda. There is very little overlapping in the work of the Jasperts and myself. My itinerary took me to the extreme south into the Vakuanyama country, and to the far east of Moxico among the Vachokue.

My work is presented as a monograph on the Ovimbundu only, and of their culture I treat exclusively, with some reference to the culture contacts observed on all sides of them. The Jasperts do not give an entire section to any one tribe; but combine their information respecting the tribes in a concurrent way, under such subjects as technology, language, and art.

If the sections relating to history and languages are excluded there remain a hundred pages, only one-sixth of which refer to the Ovimbundu; but there is a difficulty in reading through the book without being confused as to the tribe and exact locality under discussion.

The pages devoted to a comparative vocabulary form an important part of the work, and one which I barely touched, though I prepared an outline of Umbundu grammar and made dictaphone records of the

775 suffers sickness or misfortune if an ancestral spirit dies a second death. A person who has bad health says, "The spirit of my grandfather has been caught by *Esuvi*." The name of the good spirit *Osande* is used by a person who is suffering. Such a one says, "I have no more *Osande*." These instances clearly reveal a belief in the dependence of human welfare on the interest of benevolent ancestral spirits.

775 After a lapse of three months I asked Ngonga again about
791 *Osande* and *Ondele*. He confirmed what he had previously said, but spoke in the plural of these spirits; good spirits are called *Olosande*,
753 bad spirits are called *Olondele*. The medicine-man will visit a hut to foretell the future, and while there he puts a concoction in an image to which he addresses questions. He plugs his nostrils, then in a falsetto voice feigns answers from the image. The father of a family, or possibly the mother's brother, may kill an animal in front of the hut on this occasion. He then says to *Olosande*, "We hope when
[761] we kill this there will be no more sickness." The Ovimbundu are afraid of death, and they therefore sacrifice to *Olosande*, asking that there shall be no death in the family.

775 I do not know whether the Ovimbundu distinguish multiple souls as some Negro tribes do. The part of a man which does not die is sometimes called *utima*, which is the word for heart. Dr. M. W. Ennis says that the *utima* and the *omuenyo* are both names of the spirit existing in a living body. Ngonga seems certain that every person irrespective of age, rank, and sex has a spirit, but I could find no evidence that the Ovimbundu visualize a separation of ranks or sexes after death. When a man kills himself he is buried
● 762 near a river so that his spirit will go to the sea, and for the same
775 reason a murdered man is buried near a river. At Ngalangi I inquired from other Ovimbundu people concerning suicide. Women who commit suicide generally do so by hanging or drowning. Men stab themselves in the heart or use a flintlock gun, the trigger of which they pull with their toes. It is feared that the spirit of a suicide will return to induce another suicide in the family, therefore there is anxiety to rid the community of these spirits.

RELIGIOUS BELIEFS AND CONDUCT

771 The Ovimbundu have many high standards of conduct, some of
688 which have been mentioned in dealing with the education of children. There is, however, no idea of sin. That is to say, there are no commands laid down by some authority which is more than human.

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Epalanga. Told what had happened, he said that he would keep out of it, and that he had advised Guilherme to live elsewhere. In the afternoon of the same day, as heavy rain was falling, a number of people ran up and bounded on to my veranda. These included Anna, another girl (I think a sister of hers) both rather frightened, Simbwyikoka, Luciano, Paulo and some others. Anna said that Simbwyikoka was a sorcerer[3] and would kill her, and sooner than be killed by sorcery she would jump in the river. Simbwyikoka and Luciano had come to Epalanga to try and recover the 250 escudos which had been paid over in bridewealth. The catechist tried to intervene saying 'The catechist is the chief[4] of everybody in the village', but nobody paid any attention to him. Eventually, as the girl continued to threaten to jump in the river, I contributed 200 escudos, and so those involved left satisfied.

Early the following day I heard that Guilherme had returned from the post with two policemen to arrest various people. Those arrested were Sapapula, his cross-cousins Epalata (5), and Wasuka, and the latter's son Kuseka, Kasosi, Paulo, Pedro the catechist, Bartolomeu (32), Paulo's assistant in school matters, and his son Eugenio. Eugenio and Kuseka were arrested for not paying taxes and their fathers were arrested presumably for their supposed responsibility. Epalata was arrested for a similar alleged offence on the part of one of his sons, who was away as a labourer.

When I came to Guilherme's house a lengthy wrangle was going on from which I select some themes. Guilherme denied that he had planned to burn the catechetical school, the anthropologist's house, and his own house. (These charges were almost certainly invented.)

Paulo said that he had baptized a dying son of Guilherme, who, despite this, had not shown him any respect. He also denied that he had committed adultery with Guilherme's wife. (This would in any case be most unlikely owing to Paulo's blindness, resulting from an eye disease.)

Sapapula declared angrily: 'I gave Guilherme land here but

[3] This accusation was regarded simply as the product of fear and nothing more was heard of it.

[4] He used the word applied to chiefs of Gumba and other sub-chiefdom.

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578 Guilherme isn't grateful'—(then to Guilherme) 'I did no harm, I gave you everything, and you beat me.' This arguing eventually died down.

A little later another quarrel sprang up between Wasuka, and Kapapelo, Guilherme's mother's brother and witness. Wasuka declared that Kapapelo had committed adultery with his wife and must be killed. Kapapelo indignantly denied this.

The same day the catechist went to the mission to find the priest Antonio Pires to ask him to support the case against Guilherme. He returned to say that Padre Pires had been moved to the Bailundo Mission, but that he had been given a letter from the mission to the post setting out the case.

Guilherme in the evening came to my house to pay back the 200 escudos which I had paid to Simbwyikoka for the bride-wealth given for Anna. He had raised the 200 escudos from Paulo (his cross-cousin) and from Bartolomeu (his 'brother'), both of whom were under arrest (although free to walk about the village) through Guilherme's actions.

The following day (27th January) the policeman moved off with Guilherme and the others, Bartolomeu, Eugenio, Epalata, Wasuka, Kuseka, Kasosi, Paulo, Pedro Chiquete Santos (the catechist) and Sapapula.

About noon the next day I found that Paulo and the catechist had returned to Epalanga and heard from them what had happened. On the way Guilherme had declared that his violent temper was to blame in having so many people arrested, apologized, and promised to go to another village. He pulled out a knife and threatened to commit suicide if this proposal [762] was not accepted. This appeal was directed mainly to the catechist, and was reinforced by Guilherme's wife, who also threatened suicide and appealed to the catechist's feelings by pointing out that she had had two of her children baptized. This was accepted, and accordingly all turned back to the village except for Guilherme, Bartolomeu, his son Eugenio, and Wasuka's son Kuseka. Eugenio and Kuseka had been arrested for not paying taxes, a matter of more interest to the *chefe* than [648] the village brawl for which the others had been arrested. Eugenio and Kuseka were considered by the *chefe* not to be yet old enough for payment of tax, and Guilherme produced some

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person, it is likely that the details will be re-organized to gain his attention and support. 578 627

It is also notable that Sapapula was ready to accept Justino's right to hold a case on the matter. The acceptance and even readiness (as appears later) on Sapapula's part that Justino should hear cases is partly again a result of the lack of any legal machinery on the village level, partly an aspect of the 'patron-client' situation which has so often marked 'civilized'-native relations in Angola. No doubt much in Justino's behaviour arose from the taste he showed at times for settling cases, which led to a certain number of local cases being referred to him, and his readiness to settle them may not have been particularly common among *assimilados*. 627.

Much of the actual case consisted of accusations and counter-accusations between Sapapula and Kapapelo with other people intervening. There is a kind of attempt to establish a balance of wrongs, Kusumula claiming that Sapapula was always picking on him when there was a call for labour from the post, Kapapelo accusing Sapapula of inciting Jaime to kill him and Sapapula's sister's son Saviel of planning to seduce his wife. Sapapula had accused Kusumula and Kapapelo of trying to break the village. Lusase intervened rather against Kusumula and Kapapelo, who was his 'brother'. As previously, the demands of the post for labour are regarded as being used by their local executants in a discriminating way. 578 627

On the evening of the same day, as I was calling round the village, I found Kapapelo at the door of Sapapula's kitchen. Apparently he had arrived drunk and had threatened to kill himself. Sapapula was greatly enraged at this, as were his women folk, Nahoka, his wife, Wumba, his daughter, and Nayangu, his 'sister', who vigorously abused Kapapelo. They warned Sapapula not to accept food from Kapapelo, lest the latter use it as a means of sorcery. Kapapelo complained that Nahoka had called him a slave thus expanding the hint contained in her previous enigmatic remark that Kapapelo was not a man of the country. 578 [262] [254]

On the next day, Wednesday the 22nd, Sapapula had intended to go again to Justino's to settle his case with Kapapelo, but there was a funeral to which a large number of people went. 627

627 to the post. Somebody said to me 'Lusase wants a fine to be paid so that he can get something from it' (the chief traditionally [681] having a right to commission on a fine paid in a dispute which he had settled). Eventually the dispute did not go to the post, as Kapapelo paid a fine, and the matter dropped.

A great deal of detail has been given here, but it can be shown that consistencies can be extracted from what seems complete confusion.

578 Kapapelo had, no doubt, as was said, under the influence of drink, decided to carry on his conflict with Sapapula after the gathering at Justino's and had arrived at Sapapula's threatening to commit suicide. The threat of suicide was here [762] used as Guilherme had used it to put an opponent in a difficult position, but it infuriated Sapapula, who decided that he must try and get another hearing. He therefore turned again to 627 Justino, although the latter had previously decided against him; thus implying that even a possibly unfavourable judge is acceptable, rather than let a squabble continue indefinitely.

Eventually, owing to Justino's refusal to hear the case, what I have called a 'moot' was got together, a body which lacked any deciding, dominating figure; but represented the local community. This became concerned with the question of the 578 relation of Kapapelo and Sapapula as affected by the action of Kapapelo in respect of Sapapula's wife Nahoka. As has been mentioned in the chapter on marriage, the relation between a [837] man and his wife's lover is one of mystically manifested hostility. Sapapula by accusing Kapapelo of desiring to seduce his wife was indicating a very serious state of hostility between the two men; and one can only explain Kapapelo's confession to something of which he was not guilty as a mark of his hostility to Sapapula. Kapapelo was accused by Sapapula of attempting to do him a grievous wrong, and Kapapelo claimed that he had in fact done this wrong. Nahoka denied that she had wronged her husband, and produced evidence of her assertion. Before considering her arguments, it must be noted what were the interests of the other people involved in the case.

627 It might be suggested that Kafelo, Lusase, and Ngombe had to some extent the function of judges or at least arbitrators, and Sapapula had indeed invited Ngombe to give his opinion (I

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

prolonged if even one boy fails to recover. One of the two youths interrogated said that in his camp there were seventy-eight boys, three of whom died. My other informant said that in his camp there were sixty-eight boys, only one of whom died. The informants agreed that the deaths were due to an epidemic of influenza and not to privations or septic conditions arising from the operation. 881

During the period of seclusion the boys are taught songs and dances used at the ceremony that celebrates the conclusion of their initiation. By privation the boys are taught the value of food and fire. Novices are beaten if they show any disrespect for their guardians, and trifling offences are severely punished. Every boy has to take from the fire a burning stick, which he holds in his hand while running between two lines of men who beat him, and if he drops the stick he has to start his run once more. The boys swear allegiance to one another. A novice thinks that he will die if he gives information to a woman or to a man who has not been initiated.

From his mother, each boy receives food in a gourd which he deposits on the bank of a river near the novices' camp. If a boy dies, a hole is bored in the gourd so that when the mother receives this she will not send more food. Each guardian has a stick which is sent to the mother of his pupil when the ceremony of initiation and seclusion is ended. If the boy has died, bark is cut from both ends of the stick before this symbol of death is sent to his parents. 763 881

When the boys come out from their camp at the conclusion of the rites one man and one woman stand on the bank of the river, and the boys pass under the legs of both the man and the woman. When the boys arrive at the village the whole population comes out to welcome them. There is a feast and beer-drinking bout on the day of return. 881

During seclusion no water is allowed for washing, and the informants laughed as they spoke of the order "wash hands," whereupon the boys merely rubbed their hands together. When the order, "wash dishes," was given the boys rubbed their platters with their hands. On the day of leaving camp the novices bathe in the river. Ablution consists of three dips, after each of which the boy stands on the bank until he is dry. [515]

For two months the boys wear strips of bark cloth. During this period all the novices must move together, but there is no objection to their leaving the village provided they do so all in one company. While wearing bark cloth the boys have each day to attend a cere- [292]

KINGS AND CHIEFS

A chief (village headman) is buried in a specially constructed enclosure in the village over which he ruled (Plate XLV, Fig. 2). The mausoleum is a small hut with a substantial wooden door which is surrounded by a strongly built wooden fence ten feet high. 766 643

I was taken inside a tomb in the capital of Ngalangi, where the king showed the interior of his burial place of kings. There were four mounds of earth, each of which covered the body of a king, and a little distance away were the graves of the principal wives. The hut contained pottery and gourds; also a small fire, which is replenished by an attendant who must not allow it to be extinguished.

Ngonga says that the burial chamber at Elende contains the head of the chief in a box. After one year from the time of burial the box containing the head is opened in order that a libation of beer may be poured over it. Sometimes the head is anointed with palm oil and a new band of cloth is added. These attentions are paid to the head in time of sickness and drought. If the head shows signs of desiccation an ox is killed in order to provide a new piece of skin in which the head is sewn. The tomb is visited by men who come to ask for good fortune when they are departing for a journey to the interior, and these supplicants are led to the tomb by the ruling chief. Near the burial place of the *sekulu* ("village headman") at Elende there was the house of bows (Plate XLVI, Fig. 1), which is typical of several seen in different parts of Angola. These repositories always contain staffs, bows, arrows, sleeping mats, and possibly other articles which belonged to the dead. 769 643 769

The corpse of a king is suspended from the top of the burial hut by a rope which is tightly fastened round his neck. That the king has died is not admitted and the announcement states that "the king has a cold in his head." The head of a specially selected family twists the rope until the head is severed. The twisting is carried out gradually, a little each day, so that a week or more is required for severance. In former times the head was detached by twisting only, but at present a knife is used to hasten the friction of the rope. When the body of the king has fallen into the basket placed underneath to receive it, the people may say that the king is dead and mourning begins. 766 [763] 643

Judging by the arrangement seen at the *ombala* of Ngalangi the bodies are buried in a hut constructed as a burial place for kings, but Ngonga states that the older method was cave burial. The body

In the previous

chapter I have indicated that the position of headman is today 622
a somewhat shadowy one, and that the headman emerges rather than succeeds by virtue of various grounds; the main ones being official recognition, some tie to the local chief, the presence of a core of one's kinsmen, a claim to be the first resident, and personality. During my stay Sapapula was as much a headman of Epalanga as anyone can reasonably be these days, yet his position had not always gone unchallenged.

In 1954 he had found himself in danger of being displaced 622
by his matrilateral 'brother' Mwehombo. Both men, apparently, 665
claimed that they had founded the village, both had substantial cores of kinsfolk in the village, and both possessed strong personalities. Sapapula by holding the ministerial title of Epalanga to Kafelo had had a stronger position in village affairs. This prop to his power was taken away when Kafelo was deposed from the chiefdom, and Luanga and Mwehombo purchased the title of Epalanga from Lusase.

In this partnership Mwehombo must have been the leading personality, Luanga being extremely amiable but not at all domineering or energetic. Mwehombo's idea was presumably to establish himself as recognized headman of Epalanga, and to obtain whatever advantages were to be gained from an association with Lusase. Luanga's aim, from what he told me, was to escape contract labour by having a position as a traditional headman and title-holder. Titles will still be sought after, [554]
although the substance of power has gone, so long as they can confer some prestige or protection from administrative labour demands. It was not customary for the role of Epalanga to be held by two people jointly.

Mwehombo died shortly after this. He had been baptized 763
by the name of Simon when dying on January 13th 1955, when his social personality began its posthumous career. At the inquest, which was held according to the old Umbundu pattern in which the corpse suspended in a hammock from a pole held by two men was supposed to answer questions by the way it swung, it was found that Mwehombo had suffered the pro- [554]
verbial fate of the sorcerer in being killed by the spirit he had [561]
used to kill others.

The role of the questioner was taken by Paulo, sister's son to

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763 Mwehombo, and elder of the school, a post he would certainly have lost had this come to the ears of the missionaries. Attitudes to the verdict are interesting. Sapapula assured me that [754] Mwehombo had killed many people by sorcery both sons and sisters' sons; Luanga did not see the contradiction which I pointed out to him of his saying both that Mwehombo was good and that he had practised sorcery; Gonçalve, Mwehombo's son, appeared sceptical of the verdict, as did Aspirante, Sapapula's sister's son who was married to a daughter of Mwehombo's half-brother, Wayangu.

764 The verdict did not prevent Mwehombo having an impressive funeral. He was buried according to his wishes in the traditional hammock placed in the circular grave, instead of the modern coffin placed in the modern oblong grave. As a caravan-leader he was buried by the track to Chicunda at the point where the path to Epalanga branched off. A low thatched covering was erected over his grave with the horns of the beast [237] killed at the funeral on it. In 1956 Gonçalve and Pedro Nendi, son of Mbati and therefore a cross-cousin of Mwehombo, replaced this by a concrete memorial in the form of a cross with the base inscribed in Portuguese 'Simon Mwehombo Native of Gumba Great Man died 13th January 1955.'

797 Thus Mwehombo had twice undergone conversion from pagan to Christian, once as he lay dying and once after death. 754 His posthumous conviction for sorcery affected neither the form of funeral, nor the continued residence of his kin in the village. His conviction for sorcery was a reflection of the social strains in which he had been involved, not the opening of another cycle of conflict. The kinship cores are not segments opposing one 621 another as in a lineage system; they possess no clearly defined 571 boundaries[10] or continuing existence in time. Their existence is dependent on the persons around whom the cores have formed, and on their deaths they lack any integrating principles. Mwehombo dead, his kinsfolk mostly found no objection in continuing to live in the village where his rival now lived as undisputed traditional headman.

621 There is no word in Umbundu for these groupings. The

[10] For example I have included Joaõ in the Mwehombo-Mbati kinship core, on the basis of association, but he came to the village through a tie with Sapapula.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

PLATE II

643

Photo. D. G. Rideout

a. Court procedure: the King and his counsellors (Bailundu)

764

b Mortuary rites at Ngendo

[facing p. 17]

1; Childs M-5 (1934-1940) 1940 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

764

Photo. R. S. Wild

a. The inquest at a funeral

b. On the women's side of the dancing floor during the celebration of Samuary rites at Ngundo

[facing p. 32]

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

On nights when there is little or no moonlight, the evening 562
gatherings in the village sometimes, although not always, follow 517
the sex division, with the men and boys in the *onjango*, and the women and girls at one or more of the kitchens. Discussion of affairs, with youth listening to age, is the usual order, but the time is often passed in the recital of folk-tales or in propounding riddles.

Riddles are more especially a field of youth but age also enjoys 524
hearing the answers given. A favourite occupation of the men, 171
especially by day, is *ocela*, a game known all over Africa and in other parts of the world as well.[1] Junod calls it 'the national game of Africa'.[2]

The Ovimbundu have brought recreation to the service of their 461
work. Europeans are often irritated by the amount of conversation which Ovimbundu carry on during working hours, but on consideration it may be found that were it not for the conversation and other psychological aids, the work might be quite unendurable. This is especially the case with regard to road work and many types of contract labour. Road songs and work songs are of real [533]
help in keeping up morale and in prolonging endurance. Most of them seem to have been developed in the days of the caravan trade, but they have not been forgotten and are now used on many occasions.

A word about ceremonial occasions before leaving the social 764
life of the village. Some rites and ceremonies are celebrated so quietly that they are not even social occasions. Most of them, however, are very social. This is especially true of funerals and post-mortuary rites. During visits to Ngendo I was able to witness two post-mortuary rites and the funeral of an important person of a near-by village. Other ceremonial occasions, such as weddings [585]
and a return from a trading expedition, also call for much sociability, but funerals and post-mortuary rites are the social occasions which occupy the most time and attention and make for the greatest conviviality.

[1] Known under the name *Mancala*, which is evidently a Bantu word, or taken from one; cf. the Umbundu *oku mangala*, to play. Hambly mentions *ocela*, op. cit., p. 219. See also Nevinson, op. cit., p. 91. The *New Standard Dictionary* (Funk and Wagnalls) attributes to Arabian origin both the game and the word *Mankalah*.

[2] H. A. Junod, *The Life of a South African Tribe*, 2nd ed., vol. i, p. 345 f.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

internally disruptive forces is sorcery. It is apparently on the 182
increase among the Ovimbundu, a tendency which has also been 754
reported from other parts of Africa.[1] The extent to which sorcery operates within the kinship groups themselves makes its influence even more dangerous to social cohesion.

Any marked success achieved by an individual, especially when 754
such success has been achieved by an individual alone or in 578
partnership, but not in co-operation with a number of persons, often brings on suspicion of sorcery.[2] Should the results of such success be distributed widely and freely within the family or kinship group, suspicion of sorcery is less likely to arise and open accusation may be avoided. Grudges, however, whether newly built up or inherited, often find expression in suspicion or in open accusation of sorcery.[3] An open accusation of sorcery (*oku sunga owanga*) is a very serious matter and will not often be made lightly.

Such accusations are made both within and across kinship lines. Affinal relatives are quite often accused of sorcery, and suspicion frequently rests upon wives whose kinship connexions are in distant regions. Predilection for and skill in the use of sorcery is supposed to be inherited. A reputation for sorcery may be imputed to a family through a number of generations.

Somewhat less overt accusations of sorcery are made at the 764
inquest during a funeral. The corpse in its coffin slung to a pole 754
between two carriers responds to questions as to who 'ate him' by forward (affirmative), or backward (negative) movements. It may also cause its carriers to stop in front of a certain house during the procession through the village, meaning that one of the occupants of the house is thereby accused of having caused the death. Traditionally such accusations during inquests were exceedingly common, perhaps even usually expected.[4] Should the corpse not [787]
give a clear answer, then subsequent divination would often bring out an accusation of sorcery. Accusations such as these, involving responsibility for the death of a person, are usually made *within* the body of blood or affinal kin.

When sorcery is consciously taken up and employed, the pur- 754
pose is usually economic advancement, but it often involves overt

[1] Cf. B. Malinowski, in *Africa*, 1939, p. 39.
[2] *Vide infra*, pp. 107 ff.
[3] *Vide infra*, p. 125.
[4] For an early observation of this (*c.* 1790) *vide Annaes Mar. e Col.*, 5a Ser., p. 489 f.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

The Ovimbundu are not ordinary cannibals, if indeed that term may be applied to any people in Africa, nor do the commoners of the Ovimbundu ever eat human flesh on their own account, but no king may ever reign or be considered as regularly enthroned until he has 'eaten Ekongo'.[1] The cannibalism traditionally ascribed to Wambu-Kalunga is also a case in point.[2] Other human sacrifices practised by the 'Jagas' and described by Battell also have their counterparts in the practices of the Umbundu kingdoms.[3] The mode of the burial of the dead described by Battell[4] is essentially that which has been used, at least until the last few years, for the kings and the other 'holy'[5] men of the Ovimbundu, except that where rock caves are available the use of them has been adopted and in Kasongi cairns were used. The sitting posture and the sacrifice of wives or slaves and cattle (or of substitutes) are the important points, and these have everywhere been used for the classes mentioned, until quite recently.

The custom of keeping boys captured from the enemy and training them to be fearless warriors amid the terrors of the country has a parallel in the Umbundu custom of the king's slaves,[6] who came from another land[7] and would therefore do the king's bidding without fear, favour, or consideration of family feeling. They often reached high position and certain of the king's ministers always came from among them. There seem to be many recollections of the 'Jagas' in the customs of the kings' sons.[8] Names of certain of the officials seem to have survived, as, for example, Mani (*muēlē*) Lumbo, Mani-Curio (*Muēkalia*), Golambolo (*Ngalamboli*), Tendala (*Candala*), Ukuetambo,[9] &c. Careful linguistic studies would doubtless reveal many remains of the speech

[1] *Oku lia Ekongo*—lit. 'to eat the Old One'. This is a ritual feast in which the flesh of a specially fattened slave is eaten mixed with the flesh of various animals. See Ravenstein, op. cit., p. 33, note 3. Magyar described this custom, calling it '*Ouri-Kongo*', op. cit., pp. 275 ff.

[2] See *supra*, p. 176.

[3] Compare Ravenstein, op. cit.

[4] Op. cit., p. 34 f.

[5] 'Holy' in the sense of spirit possessed—the king, the hunter, the medical practitioner, and the smith.

[6] *Ocinduli cosoma*, singular. May there be some recollection of 'Kinguri' (=Cinguli) in this word?

[7] In Bailundu the *ovinduli viosoma* (plural) came mostly from Luandu, i.e. the Songo country across the Kuanza—further evidence of connexion with Lunda emigrants.

[8] *Omālā volosoma*, used collectively of all the royal families of the Ovimbundu.

[9] Cavazzi, op. cit., pp. 206 f., 211.

885 and stability of his personality (*unu* - lit. the quality of being a person) is only proved when he enters the state of adulthood at marriage.

DEATH

361 764 Each village has its own burial ground about a mile or so away. The grave is usually dug by the children of the father's sister.(1) The corpse of a commoner is bound in a supine position and placed in a box before interment. It is usual during the funeral to find out the cause of death, i.e. whether it is the work of spirits or of some living enemy. Accusations of sorcery are frequently made. The corpse in its coffin, slung to a pole between two carriers, responds to questions as to who 'ate him' by forward (affirmative) or backward (negative) movements.(2) In the case described by Hambly,(3) the questions were put by the father's sister. The corpse may also cause its bearers to stop in front of a certain house during the procession through the village, thereby indicating that one of the occupants has caused its death.(4) Should the corpse not give a clear answer, the diviner might be called in to discover the cause of the death. Accusations of sorcery, as has been noted above, are often made *within* the circle of kin.(5)

Special cases

766 For *children* the same ceremony was carried out if they were old enough to walk and talk. Otherwise the diviner's services were called upon by the parents. At the death of twins, the mother has to shake a rattle or blow a horn instead of giving the usual greetings to passers-by, as she had to do also while the children were alive.(6)

766 791 At the death of *diviners* and *medicine-men* other members of the profession take charge of the ceremonies. The corpse is tied in a sitting posture and kept thus for three days before burial. No coffin is used. The questioning ceremony is carried out as for a commoner. After the interment the other medicine-men dance "because they have spirit in their heads", and during the dance each eats a living chicken that he carries in his hand. At the side of the grave a dog, a chicken and a goat are killed, and eaten by the mourners. The *ocimbanda's* power is apparently thought to linger round the grave, which the chief or village-headman may visit to ask for rain and other favours.(7)

224 766 *Hunters* at death are buried in rock tombs *(ombilia* or *osonje)*, which are usually placed in commanding positions. The skulls of animals which the hunter has killed are piled on top of the tomb. The bows of the deceased hunter are kept in his successor's "house of bows".

766 643 *Chiefs*, and possibly also *village headmen*, are buried in specially-constructed enclosures in the villages over which they ruled. The tomb is a small hut with a substantial wooden door, which is surrounded by a strongly-built wooden fence, or it may be a cave. The wives of the chief are buried in the same enclosure. The head of a specially selected

(1) Hambly, (?) 1934, p.268.
(2) Childs, 1949, p.57.
(3) Op.cit., p.266.
(4) Childs, loc.cit.
(5) Ibid.
(6) Hambly, op.cit., p.268.
(7) Ibid., p.270.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

175 [316] [325] Serpa Pinto saw shafts for the working of iron ore in the neighborhood of Cubango. The ore was mixed with charcoal and smelted in shallow pits. It is stated that the iron was sometimes tempered with ox-grease and salt. The bellows are of the type made at Elende (I, p. 128). Of the tempering process I have no confirmation.

175 787 [764] Somewhere near Bihé Serpa Pinto saw the ceremony of questioning a corpse which was made to sway to and fro, the people believing all the while that it does so without human intervention. The diviner declared that the soul of a dead person will tell who caused the death (I, p. 130). I observed and photographed this ceremony (Plate XLV, Fig. 1).

[695] The ordeal of the poison cup is described; blood-letting, and divination by shaking articles in a basket are also mentioned. Pinto says that in the articles that appear uppermost the diviner reads what his hearers are desirous of learning of the past, present, or future. Sorcery and rain-making are likewise briefly mentioned (I, p. 132). The divination basket, the poison ordeal, and rain-making, are Umbundu cultural traits today.

171 224 Here Pinto illustrates the existing practice of mounting the skulls of animals killed by a hunter on a pole in the village. There is a further reference to this custom among the Ambuellas (I, p. 333). These instances, combined with those personally noted, give a wide distribution for the practice (I, p. 177).

175 [304] Pinto saw the operation of tooth mutilation among the Luimba. The operation was performed with a knife which was struck by repeated light blows (I, p. 209).

[711] Pinto illustrates arrowheads in use in 1879 (I, pp. 277, 346). These are exactly the same as those made and used in 1929 (Plate XVII, Figs. 1–9).

[412] Axes used by the Luchazi are sketched with a detail that shows the old forms to persist without alteration (II, p. 36).

[321] Water-pipes made from horns and gourds by the Luina of eastern Angola are of the forms now used in that region, also by the Ovimbundu of the present day (II, pp. 33, 37).

175 114 For use in checking and supplementing my observations Serpa Pinto's book was found to be of the greatest service, though the precise locality was sometimes difficult to identify. This explorer, in common with others, scattered his ethnological observations among descriptions of the route and botanical, zoological, and other notes.

Lux traveled from Loanda due east, following the Kwanza on the northern bank between 9° and 10° S. Lat., and so into Lunda.

He draws the crescentic arrowhead (p. 123) still common among 175
the Ovimbundu and Vachokue; the double iron gong (p. 122); and 114
the musical bow, which he calls a viola (p. 121). [534]

Sogaur states that iron-working had an advanced technique at 175
Dindo, more than half a century ago. According to Sogaur, the 326
blacksmith was using scrap iron from European sources (II, p. 14).

Perhaps the most valuable of Chatelain's books is "Fifty Folk 173
Tales of Angola." The stories are accompanied by translations and [114]
ethnological notes, the most important of which are references to the
carrying of a corpse on a pole; the building of a cairn of stones over [764]
the corpse of a hunter; matrilineal descent and the power of the [611]
maternal uncle over the persons of his nieces and nephews (sisters'
children). My observations included some details respecting the [604]
pawning of a sister's children to redeem the debts of their mother's
brother. Chatelain adds that sisters' children are successors to [428]
private property and chieftainship (pp. 8–10). My notes agree that
property is inherited by children of a deceased man's sister, but my
informants said that a new chieftain is normally the eldest son of the
principal wife of the dead chief. Chatelain's folklore stories, fifty in [538]
number, relate chiefly to animals; this was the only kind of story
told to me, but W. C. Bell has recorded a few tales of another type.

Marquardsen (1928) devotes only one-fourth of his book to the 114
ethnology of Angola, which he treats in a very general way; there is 177
no section dealing specifically with any particular tribe. The author
calls attention to Chapman's observation of rock paintings of South [531]
African Bushman type, between Cuma and Luimbale in northwest
Angola. I have elsewhere remarked on the occasional occurrence of [144]
physical types which show a strain of Bushman blood. Today
Bushmen penetrate southern Angola from the Kalahari (Plate LXIX,
Figs. 1, 2), but their presence in times past or present does not affect
the course of history or the data of ethnology to an appreciable extent.

Marquardsen gives some notes of a general kind on Vaheneca, 114
Mahuila and other tribes of southwest Angola. The suggestion is 101
feasible that the Umbundu name Suku, for a supreme being, is the
same as the Nzambi of Lunda and the Congo. Marquardsen refers
to the importance of the maternal uncle in Umbundu society, to the
poison ordeal, and to the burial of an Umbundu chief in oxhide, all
of which points were recorded in my observations at Elende.

Ferreira Diniz's book is unobtainable, but, judging from the summary given in *Anthropos* (XX, 1925, pp. 321–331), the information was collected by a questionnaire widely distributed among adminis-

224 an initiation feast when the training is ended. At the feast all people
874 of the village may be present but they do not dance; only the professional hunters may do so. The boy who is to be initiated must not speak or move until he "feels the spirit on his head"; then he gives meat to the people. After hunters have captured game for the feast, the blood from these animals is used to smear over the bow, arrows, and spear which have been made for the novice by his tutor. This is analogous to the initiation of the young blacksmith who
[326] receives blood-sprinkled tools made by the master blacksmith.

224 There is in connection with the life and death of the professional
788 hunter a certain amount of ritual and precaution. The night before setting out to hunt is a time of dancing and renewal of the implements of the chase, which are kept in a house specially prepared for them. A hunter who is on the eve of departure calls in other professional hunters to share the ceremony, which includes the rubbing of the bows and other implements with palm oil. A libation of beer is poured on the bows, spears, and arrows, but no medicine-man is present. Some of the bows are never used, because they are merely the symbols of the personality and prowess of dead hunters whose names they have taken. The food and cooking pots of a hunter must never be associated with those of ordinary household use. If a hunter is following the tracks of an animal he must not point with his finger as this action will drive the animal away. The correct way to point is by use of the feathered end of an arrow. The hunter
[804] must not sleep with his wife the night before setting out in quest of game.

224 I have frequently seen in front of the hut of a hunter a number
782 of skulls of antelope and other animals mounted on poles arranged in circular formation (Plate XXXII, Fig. 2). These skulls seem to be trophies, which are invariably taken away by the hunter if he finds a new home. There is no reason to doubt the statement that these skulls are an offering to the spirits who give good luck in hunting, because such a belief would be in harmony with the general respect for ancestral ghosts, which are thought to influence the affairs of the living.

764 On several occasions, notably near Ganda and in the Cassonge
224 country, I have seen the tombs of hunters. These are large structures built of slabs of granite laid with some symmetry. The rock tomb is invariably placed on the top of a commanding eminence of granite. The skulls of animals which the hunter has killed are piled on the top of the cairn, but I do not know whether these are the trophies

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

which are fixed on poles in front of the hunter's home during his lifetime (Plate XXXII, Figs. 1, 2). 764 224

There are at the funeral of a hunter special observances which will be mentioned under the heading of funeral rites.

FISHING

In the region of Elende there is fishing with both basket and line; 226 a method of poisoning fish is also practised. Usually a male fishes 462 with a bark line. Women catch fish by the poisoning method, and in addition to this they generally follow the procedure in which baskets are held or weighted in the stream. If the water flows swiftly men may take charge of the fishing operations. At times both men and women fish with nets. Husband and wife may not sleep together the night before fishing, as this is believed to make [534] the male and female fish stay together at the bottom of the river.

The fishing line consists of tough green bark which is cut into [283] strips whose length depends on the height of the river's bank. A hole is bored through the body of a grasshopper, a worm, or a grub taken from under the bark of a tree. Through this hole is passed a short stiff piece of grass about half an inch long, to which the line is attached. The fish is caught when the crosspiece of sharp grass becomes fast in its throat.

When the fisher throws the line he sings: "O fish, come and take your good thing. Do not send the little fish to spoil the good thing. Better you come and take the good thing with all your strength."

In order to make fish poison the tuberous roots of a plant are taken and soaked in water until a scum rises to the top. The solid part of the poison is not given, because it would sink and the fish which ate it would remain at the bottom of the river. Therefore only the scum of this poisonous infusion is thrown in the water. The stupefied, gasping fish remain at the surface, whereupon they are seized by women who transfer them to gourds or baskets worn around their necks. Usually poison is used only in the dry season when the rivers are shallow.

Sometimes there is fishing by means of a weir (*olunja*) which has an opening in the middle. On the lower side of this gap a basket trap is placed.

There is no fishing by torchlight. At the coast, and along the river Kwanza I have seen heavy dugout canoes in use; these were about twenty to thirty feet long and hollowed from single trees [501] (Plate LXXII, Figs. 1, 2). At Ambrizette I noted the use of a fishing

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

are small streams of pure water falling down the cliffs and hillsides. 361
Near Bailundu and Ngalangi, villages still retain their defences which consist of high poles set in a trench.

Judging from sites visited at Elende there was a pre-Ovimbundu 172
stone-building culture. One of the sites has such a commanding 712
view over extensive plains and valleys that the position would be almost impregnable. At the present day the line of fortifications is well marked by stone walls three feet high. These are composed of boulders to which the builders had ready access on adjacent hillsides. Large stones were no doubt rolled from the slopes to the small plateau chosen as a building site. This small plain lies midway between the hill crest and the valley.

At present this old site, which is enclosed by lichen-covered walls, is overgrown by tall grass and trees attaining twenty feet in height. Photography would be uninstructive unless a preliminary clearance were made—a formidable task owing to the density of vegetation.

In the center of the enclosure is a group of transported boulders possibly marking the site of a place of assembly. A search among the long grass reveals stone slabs and cylindrical crushers which were used for grinding grain over a very long period, as may be seen by the wear on the base stone; some thick stones are so worn as to be almost perforated. Weather-worn stones that were probably used as scrapers, are to be found. Surface potsherds are of the material of which present-day Ovimbundu women make their cooking pots. These sherds mark the places now used by small nomadic bands, hence the surface pottery may have no connection with a pre-Umbundu culture.

In the vicinity of this walled stone village are hillside cairns marking the sites of graves. These have been robbed by medicine-men in search of material for their charms.

The Ovimbundu have no traditions regarding the site, neither is there legendary or other evidence to show that the Ovimbundu ever made their villages of stone. The raising of a cairn of stones over [64] the body of a hunter is, however, a present-day practice near Ganda and in the Esele country.

If a site cannot be systematically worked, it is better left alone until scientific investigation is possible. The preliminary clearance of grass and timber would be a long process. The archaeological material recovered from such a site would be of a uniform and simple kind. There is no evidence of anything beyond an elementary stone age culture.

Nevertheless, the idea of crime is well developed, and there are many actions which are punishable because they contravene the laws of the tribe. Adultery is a crime on a par with theft; but adultery is not a sin. Suku, the supreme being, issues no commands. Ancestral spirits are concerned only with sacrifice and homage to themselves. There is no theory of punishment or reward in a future life according to conduct on earth. 771 688

Perhaps *ekandu* is the only word which could express sin. An Ocimbundu would say that murder is the chief *ekandu*. "*Ekandu* is to make anything have a bad time." To send a stranger along the wrong path is *ekandu*. It would be *ekandu* to throw an animal on the fire. It is *ekandu* if a man is guilty of fornication with his wife's sister. Such an act is said to be *ekandu* only if the wife's sister is visiting the house of the culprit. The male defaulter is regarded as blameless, but the people of the village from which the wife's sister came would be expected to pay the wronged wife. Sexual offences against young children are very serious. In fact the death penalty or banishment would be inflicted, and such offences are given by the Ovimbundu as examples of *ekandu*. 681 [684]

This subject of moral responsibility leads naturally into the question of laws and penalties. There are among the Ovimbundu well-defined moral codes and clearly formulated tribal laws which have been described in chapter VI. 671

FUNERAL RITES

COMMONERS

In the village of Cilema in the district of Elende I witnessed the funeral rites of a boy aged twelve years. When a few hundred yards from the village, I heard sounds of drumming coming from a secluded place in the tall grass. On reaching the clearing four drummers were seen, each of whom held a tubular drum between his legs; these drums were of different lengths. The man on the left of the drumming squad played with an up and down movement of his left hand only, to provide the bass tone. Other drummers played with the palms and fingers of both hands. Thirty feet from the drummers stood a group of women who always started the rhythm for the drums by clapping their hands, and the hand-clapping continued as an accompaniment for the drums. 764

Near-by, men were seated on the ground, while a large number of women walked about or sat on the ground chatting and smoking their pipes. The general impression was not one of solemnity.

764 The interpretation of the chanting is "God has cheated me of a life." That is, God gave a life and he has taken it.

My interpreter, who was a relative of the deceased boy, explained to the people that I was seriously interested. This was necessary, (123) as they were afraid of ridicule and hostile opinion. I sat down by the father of the dead boy and talked with him through my interpreter. In the meantime I observed that the corpse was in a cloth-covered box slung on a pole, which was supported on the shoulders of two men who stood very close to the drummers. The bearers remained immovable except for the occasional changing of the coffin pole from one shoulder to another. At intervals women came out from the group to dance near the coffin, one, two, or three at a time. One boy was particularly energetic in leaping in front of the corpse. When the performers had danced they returned to the crowd from which other persons immediately advanced. These detached and spontaneous performances each lasted about two minutes.

After two hours the bearers of the coffin moved away, followed on one side by some of the men, on the other side by a few women. A large number of men and women remained behind with the drummers. The music and the solo dancing continued. The corpse was removed to a place about a hundred yards from the spot where the initial ceremonies had been performed. The bearers still held the coffin on their shoulders, while men and women seated themselves on each side of the bier. This part of the proceeding was solemn and there was little conversation, though tobacco-smoking continued among both men and women (Plate XLV, Fig. 1).

A woman about forty-five years of age held a plate of corn meal in her hand while she stood close to the corpse and in line with the bier. She addressed the corpse very earnestly and paused intermittently for a reply. While speaking, the woman looked intently at the foremost of the bearers, who both stood immovable with their heads inclined forward and eyes directed to the ground.

764 My interpreter (Ngonga) said that the woman addressing the corpse was the oldest sister of the father of the dead boy, and that 602 she was asking the spirit of the dead boy why he died. Here Ngonga threw a side light on family relationships.

The father of the dead boy was the son of Ngonga's mother's brother. The dead boy used to call Ngonga *tate* ("my father"); Ngonga called him *omolānge* ("my child"). When the woman had addressed the corpse an old man took her place. He held up the

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

plate of meal and earnestly asked questions. Lukuma was the name of the father of the dead boy. The old man who addressed the corpse was the brother of Lukuma's mother. Ngonga explained that the woman addresses the corpse, "to give him sense so that he will not be ashamed to tell all about it"; that is, about the manner of his death. The old man said to the corpse, "*Etali* ["today"] *omolãngè* ["my boy"] *tu yongola* ["we want"] *oku* ["you"] *tu* ["us"] *sanjuisa* ["make glad"] *o tu* ["to us"] *sapuila* ["tell"] *muele* ["indeed"] *cosi* ["all"] *ca* ["that"] *ku upa* ["you take"] *kilu lieve* ["from earth"]. 764 602

The pause which followed a question was intended to give the corpse time to reply. It is supposed that if the answer is in the negative the spirit causes the pole to swing slightly backward. An affirmative answer is given if the spirit makes the pole swing forward. The old man demanded, "Is it witchcraft that hates us and killed you? If it is witchcraft, come to the front." I could see no swing of the corpse on the pole, but Ngonga said that he could see the coffin swing backward to indicate a negative answer. I suspected that the interrogator of the corpse gave a signal to the bearers, indicating that the coffin was to be made to swing, but I could see no signal or movement of the coffin. While the corpre was interrogated, males among the spectators spoke to the old man who was asking the questions. Ngonga explained that these men were suggesting questions which might be asked respecting the cause of death. A witness in the crowd would say, "You have forgotten this," or "You have forgotten that." 764 787

The next question was one that calls for a detailed explanation. *Sambulu* is a bad spirit which is able to cause death when crying women and children offend him by their wailing. The mother of the dead boy was a slave whose husband was absent from the village for a time. During this period the master of the woman threatened to sell her; consequently she went to a Christian mission with her children, one of whom was the boy now deceased. The woman and children were crying, hence the possibility that the evil *Sambulu* had at that time entered the person of the boy whose funeral rites were now in progress. The woman had visited the mission a year ago, but this lapse of time apparently made no difference to the possibility that *Sambulu* had entered one of the children. The spirit made a negative answer to this ingenious suggestion and eventually indicated that death was due to a "bad belly." If no answer is returned affirmatively, recourse is made to the medicine-man, who carries out divination. The details of this method are described [776] [797]

764 later in explaining the meaning of the articles which are contained
787 in the divination basket.

764 I interrogated my interpreter respecting funeral customs, and from these inquiries elicited the following information. Burial of the corpse takes place a mile or more from the village in a grave dug by the father's sister's children. The depth of the grave is about (361) six feet. Each village has its own burial ground. The woman who questioned the corpse carried a sleeping mat which would be used to spread on the bottom of the grave, though sometimes the mat is placed outside the grave on the mound of earth. Midway between Cuma and Caconda I photographed graves of the Ovimbundu (Plate XLVII, Figs. 1, 2). The articles on the graves were the poles used for carrying the coffin, a basket, broken gourds, and in one instance the horns of a bullock which was killed at the funeral feast. The horns were mounted at the top of an upright pole (Plate XLVI, Fig. 2). Ngonga said that the belongings of a well-to-do person would usually be broken and placed on the grave; the breaking is necessary in order to prevent theft. I could find no trace of the idea that property is broken so that its spirit will accompany the man to a world of spirits.

The corpse was in a wooden box covered with a thin piece of blue and white chequered cloth tightly wound about the coffin. Ngonga explained that the body was prepared in the following manner before it was placed in the coffin. The corpse was extended in a supine position with the thumbs tied, the palms together, and the hands on the pubes. The great toes were tied together and the upper arms were bound to the torso with bands of bark or cloth. The use of bark no doubt represents the older method.

764 At the funeral of a baby one of the grandmothers carries the
787 dead child to the grave on her back. The ceremony of questioning the corpse is carried out if the child is old enough to walk and talk. Ngonga said, "If the dead child was old enough to talk they think he will say something." If the child was unable to talk, the parents, accompanied by their brothers and sisters, would visit the medicine-man to inquire the cause of death.

766 There are a few special observances connected with the burial of twins. When the children were alive the mother had to shake a rattle or to blow a small horn instead of giving the usual greetings to a passer-by, and this she has to do at the funeral of one or both of her twins.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13-Mbundu Pt1

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[p. 386]

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FUNERAL RITES, OVIMBUNDU, ELENDE

Fig. 1. Old Ochihamba questioning corpse and offering food. Fig. 2. Burial place of chief, Elende

[p. 399]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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FUNERAL RITES, OVIMBUNDU

Fig. 1. Hut where possessions of dead chiefs are kept, Elundu

Fig. 2. Home of an ever grave, near Cassanda

[p. 400]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1984 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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FUNERAL RITES, OVIMBUMDU, CACONDA

Fig. 1. Baskets and coffin pole on grave. Fig. 2. Hut over grave

[p. 401]

: Hambly E-5 (1929-30)1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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A

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A. Rock tomb of a hunter near Ganda, west-central Angola. The entrance to the tomb is on the right. B. Tomb of a hunter near Luimbale, west-central Angola. Trophies of the chase are on the scaffold. (Photographs by courtesy of Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago.)

[Facing p. 158]

5: Hambly E-5 (1929-30)1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

professional hunters, and the smearing of the novice's bow and arrows with 224
blood from the meat is an important point of ritual. The bow and arrows
are made by the master for his pupil; a practice strictly analogous to the [326]
making of tools for a young blacksmith by the master who has trained
him.

In connection with the life and death of a hunter a certain amount of 177
ritual survives, and this despite long European contacts, game laws, and 224
the development of an economic system based primarily on extensive cul- [241]
tivation of maize and beans. But though these circumstances might tend to
discourage hunting and its attendant ritual, other facts have contributed
to survival. An embargo on guns and powder has led to prolonged use of
bows and arrows, with which all hunters are expert, though some, despite
official prohibition, have muzzle loading guns. Bows are in general use, and
their continuance has no doubt aided survival of ritual, since the rites
themselves are closely associated with the bows.

The night before a professional hunter sets out is an occasion for re- 224
newal of implements of the chase, that is, renewal in a spiritual sense, by a
ceremony designed to transfer power in a magical way from the disused
weapons of deceased hunters to the weapons in use. Weapons of dead
hunters are kept in a small hut to which a hunter repairs on the eve of de-
parture. He rubs the old weapons (bows, clubs, and spears) with palm-oil;
then pours over them a libation of beer. No medicine-man is present, so for
the occasion a hunter functions as his own priest.

It is hazardous and perhaps unprofitable to attempt an analysis of the
philosophy behind these ritual acts. Yet the weapons are symbols of the
personality and prowess of dead hunters whose names they have received.
Therefore the suggestion that the hunter is acquiring power from the dead
is reasonable, and the idea harmonizes with all that is known of ancestor
worship among Bantu tribes.

The food and cooking pots of a hunter must never be associated with
those of ordinary household use. If a hunter is following the tracks of an
animal he may not point with his finger, since this action will drive the
animal away. He may, however, point with the feathered end of an ar-
row. A dog must have his ears clipped in a peculiar way or he will not hear
and obey. A hunter may not sleep with his wife the night before setting out
in quest of game. Before leaving home a hunter washes his eyes with a con-
coction of herbs to give greater acuity of vision.

In any village the hut of a professional hunter can be readily distin- 224
guished by a number of poles erected near the entrance. On these supports 764
are placed the skulls of animals killed in the chase. A traveler cannot fail
to notice the tombs of hunters, which consist of cairns
of stones enclosing a

5: Hambly E-5 (1929-30) 1934 FP 13 Mbundu FP13

224 hollow chamber. I removed a thin slab of stone which formed an entrance
to a tomb of this kind and observed within two skeletons lying supine. On
764 the top of the cairns were skulls of animals killed by the hunter. I noted one instance of the burial of a hunter's dog under a cairn of stones.

825 Three birds are protected by a prohibition. Esuvi is a bird which has
794 power to steal the souls of the dead, so making them die a second death. As usual, no direct explanation was given concerning this second death, but an explanation came later, quite fortuitously. For instance, an old man said he was sick because esuvi had stolen the spirit of his grandfather. This statement is logical, since welfare depends on a beneficent interest of dead ancestors, and it is evident that dying a second death prevents a spirit from exercising a benign influence over the living. Other protected birds are one which supplies feathers from which the decorations of kings and medicine-men are made, and one whose night cry is a warning of death in a village.

226 In fishing, a division of labor is recognized: men use a rod and line, while women drag baskets against the stream or use poison in slow, shallow water. The night before poison is to be used for fishing, husband and wife must avoid intercourse, since intimacy of this kind would make the fish stay together at the bottom of the river. A man who has prepared his rod and line, by transfixing a grasshopper and attaching it to a thin piece of bark,
[539] sings a song which is of the nature of a spell. He says:

> "O fish come and take your good thing.
> Do not send the little fish to spoil the good thing.
> Better you come and take the good thing with all your strength."

439 Up to half a century ago the Ovimbundu were renowned traders whose caravans penetrated deeply into the Congo region and even to the east side of Africa. It is natural, therefore, that some ritual should be connected with
[443] such an important enterprise. At the present day caravans may be seen, but these are local, and most of the carriers are found to be taking their maize, beans, and beeswax to traders' stores. I believe women did not accompany the transcontinental caravans of early days, but today women may be seen in line with the other carriers. Their loads are lighter, being on the average thirty pounds as compared with sixty pounds for a man. Children also carry small loads in the caravan.

439 Ngonga, my chief informant, said that in former times no caravan
787 leader would set out without having consulted the preserved head of a de-
[643] ceased king. Even at present the corpse of a king is suspended by the neck and twisted until the head is severed. The head is sewn in oxhide and preserved in a box. The ancient caravan custom consisted of taking the box

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

[1874-1911]

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of ritual cannibalism (*oku lia ekongo*) after which he could not be deposed.[64]

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Hastings in describing the principal ministers of the Bailundo court states that the Mwekalia and the Galamboli or Ngambole (whose function was to remember traditions) were representative of the indigenous pre-Jaga stock, the Kesongo who was the war leader was a slave from another tribe, and the Otjinduli was of immigrant stock, and points out that these represent the three sources from which the Ovimbundu sprang.[65]

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At the sub-chiefdom level some of the titles found in the kingdoms would be found combined, and the chief's court, where cases were judged, was composed both of titled ministers living at the chief's village and of the village headmen (some of whom were also title-holders). The sub-chief represented his people to the outer world, led them in communal ritual and judged, with his councillors,[66] their disputes. Hastings describes a case thus: 'When all the members of the court are seated in a circle, with an empty space in the centre, the plaintiff's counsel then relates the case, after which the lawyer for the defendant does likewise for his side. The chief in turn makes general comments. Lusenje, the official, whose duty it is to keep order at court and to announce the speakers, then calls on the accuser to come forward and make his statement.'[67]

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While the sub-chiefdom was the largest unit in which law and order reigned undisputed, there existed alliances and cross-cutting relationships providing a contact outside its area. There was the *tjisoko* alliance which existed between two sub-chiefdoms which were separated by a third. Gumba sub-chiefdom was thus allied to Ndjandju from which it was separated by Chicunda, and messengers from Gumba and Ndjandju travelled together to Bailundo once a year to carry tribute. Apparently a sub-chiefdom had only one *tjisoko* partner. The relationship was one of funeral friendship; *vakwatjisoko* (*tjisoko* partners) undertook the burial of those who died without kinsfolk and also ordinary

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[64] This is based on information from Gumba. See also Magyar, pp. 270–77; Hastings, pp. 43–45; Childs p. 21.

[65] Hastings, p. 60.

[66] Informants.

[67] Hastings, pp. 142–43.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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[1874-1911]

631 764 funerals (though these burials could be undertaken by the cross-cousins of the deceased). When *vakwatjisoko* came to their partner-chiefdom for a funeral they had the right to steal small live-stock, such as chickens, or pigeons, but not cattle, goats, or [837] pigs. An *ukwatjisoko* could sleep with the wives of his *vakwatjisoko* partners without being sued for damages.[68]

631 [602] The ties of kinship and affinity crossed the boundaries of the sub-chiefdoms and even of the kingdoms.[69] The members [463] [574] of the three spirit-protected professions, blacksmithing, divining, and hunting recognized obligations of hospitality to co-professionals from other parts of the country.[70] Again the caravans were so large that they must have involved people [437] from many sub-chiefdoms, which presupposes a wide range of contacts.

182 It may be said that the picture given here is contradictory and inadequate. How can the existence of large kingdoms be reconciled to the extreme insecurity described by old men? How do the wealthy caravan organizers fit into the political system? What sort of politics were there in the kingdoms? It is not easy to answer these questions owing to the lack of evidence, and, probably, because the kingdoms were already in decline during the latter part of the rubber trade period. Indeed, the impression that accounts of the Ovimbundu in the nineteenth century give is that of adventure, battle, commerce, migration —a vigorous rather than a stable society.[71]

61 114 The kinship system is perhaps the field of Umbundu society which has aroused most interest among anthropologists. Childs and Hastings have written much that is interesting on the old double-descent grouping but as, with the kinship system, the form has been described rather than the functioning and it is

[68] Informants. The account in Childs, pp. 114–15 differs considerably. For this institution elsewhere in Angola see Estermann, 'Clans et alliances de clans', *Anthropos*, 1952.

[69] Childs, p. 54.

[70] Informants.

[71] Magyar describes the king and his courtiers as being extremely despotic towards the villagers, and states that their despotism depended on their having a standing military force called 'Sons of the Elephant' (pp. 278–80). Later accounts do not mention this, and Childs notes (p. 209) that at the height of the rubber trade it was more difficult for the kings to recruit armies for their wars.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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Mwehombo, and elder of the school, a post he would certainly have lost had this come to the ears of the missionaries. Attitudes to the verdict are interesting. Sapapula assured me that Mwehombo had killed many people by sorcery both sons and sisters' sons; Luanga did not see the contradiction which I pointed out to him of his saying both that Mwehombo was good and that he had practised sorcery; Gonçalve, Mwehombo's son, appeared sceptical of the verdict, as did Aspirante, Sapapula's sister's son who was married to a daughter of Mwehombo's half-brother, Wayangu.

The verdict did not prevent Mwehombo having an impressive funeral. He was buried according to his wishes in the traditional hammock placed in the circular grave, instead of the modern coffin placed in the modern oblong grave. As a caravan-leader he was buried by the track to Chicunda at the point where the path to Epalanga branched off. A low thatched covering was erected over his grave with the horns of the beast killed at the funeral on it. In 1956 Gonçalve and Pedro Nendi, son of Mbati and therefore a cross-cousin of Mwehombo, replaced this by a concrete memorial in the form of a cross with the base inscribed in Portuguese 'Simon Mwehombo Native of Gumba Great Man died 13th January 1955.'

Thus Mwehombo had twice undergone conversion from pagan to Christian, once as he lay dying and once after death. His posthumous conviction for sorcery affected neither the form of funeral, nor the continued residence of his kin in the village. His conviction for sorcery was a reflection of the social strains in which he had been involved, not the opening of another cycle of conflict. The kinship cores are not segments opposing one another as in a lineage system; they possess no clearly defined boundaries[10] or continuing existence in time. Their existence is dependent on the persons around whom the cores have formed, and on their deaths they lack any integrating principles. Mwehombo dead, his kinsfolk mostly found no objection in continuing to live in the village where his rival now lived as undisputed traditional headman.

There is no word in Umbundu for these groupings. The

[10] For example I have included Joaõ in the Mwehombo-Mbati kinship core, on the basis of association, but he came to the village through a tie with Sapapula.

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607 have a kinsman's obligation to lend money in case of need if he has it, and it is said that one should only work very occasionally with a brother-in-law. When I asked which a woman preferred, her husband or her brother, men told me that she liked both equally, and the fact that a man and his wife's brother often live close together confirms that there is relatively little for them to quarrel over. A woman does not establish close ties with any of her affines. Formerly, when a man died 587 leaving a widow (and according to some informants a small child) a patrilateral cross-cousin of his might marry her. My informants, however, denied that a sororate had existed even in the past.[27]

605 Cross-cousins are the relatives with whom solidarity is most strongly felt. When I asked about the relationship between full siblings I was told 'They like each other just as cross-cousins do.' Now that it is no longer customary for agnatic kin to live together, it is often said that it is good to live near cross-cousins.

608 Formerly funeral friendship (*ukwatjisoko*) was part of an alliance between sub-chiefdoms, which were not contiguous. Nowadays, since people move about the country, funeral friendships may be regarded as another category of kinship—when one asks a man his relationship with somebody else this may be given. There is a tendency to regard *vakwatjisoko*, funeral friends, as being a sort of cross-cousins since both per- [764] form funeral services. This survival of funeral friendship, as a tie between individuals and as a haphazard means of supplying undertakers, exists in Gumba. In Ndjandju, which is the sub-chiefdom in which the Missão Católica de Bimbe is built, the *tjisoko* relationship is now established between two neighbouring [628] villages and is apparently the normal means of performing burials, and the permitted theft of small livestock regularly takes place.

606 Between parents-in-law and children-in-law the relation was and is one of restraint. This is most marked in the relations between in-laws of opposite sex, and least between the mother-in-law and daughter-in-law.

[27] See Albino Alves under (*o*)*miganjo*, for evidence of a sororate in some Umbundu areas.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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could send food.' 'Perhaps your mother is dead, and she has to think of your father.' A man should not cook for himself in a village, by a rule of convention which has no sanction attached, although he may do so when away working.

Clearing fields, house-building, and thatching are men's work, as are brick-making, fishing, hunting, mat-making, sewing, and woodwork. Beer-brewing, cooking, maize-pounding, and water and firewood gathering are women's work. Men and women can work together in most forms of agriculture, sowing, hoeing, harvesting, feeding small stock and treating tobacco. The division of labour is based on ideas of what is natural and fitting, not on any sanctions, mystical or otherwise. Nor is the division always strictly observed. A man may fetch water if his wife is ill, or simply away visiting relatives, and I have seen an adolescent boy pounding out maize on a pounding-block.

A man should look after his sick wife. There is a song which is sung about the married couples of the village, each being named in turn, which tells how the husband went to the post and his wife climbed a tree to get some fruit down. She fell down and hurt herself and then wailed because there was nobody to look after her. A woman who is ill for some time will return to her kin to get better.

The husband does not attend his wife's funeral, but washes himself all over, and then has to lie down asleep, or as if sleeping, during the funeral. Grains of maize and other crops may be, but are not always, even at pagan funerals, thrown over a woman's coffin as it is taken to the cemetery. A man should leave his old home when his wife dies, although this rule is neglected nowadays, certainly by the owners of brick houses. After a year or two, a widower should *oku wonga*, pile up stones on his wife's grave, a duty which has behind it a vague mystical sanction of illness. The widow of a hunter should be buried beside her husband even though after his death she has married again.[17]

A widow may marry again about six months after the funeral. The exception to this is the *inakulu*, the chief's main wife. Formerly, it was permitted for a widow to marry her husband's

[17] A case of this occurred during my stay.

The head of a specially selected [767]
family has the duty of twisting off the head of the chief, and not until 643
this is done is the chief officially dead. The head is buried for a year, 765
then dug up and transferred to a box, which is also kept in the tomb. The
head is questioned at times of stress (such as a drought) in the same way
that questions are put to the corpse of a commoner. If the head swings [787]
forward, a sacrifice may be necessary to remove the drought. The house
of a chief is not burnt at his death (but those of commoners are?); 768
neither may it be repaired in any way, but the succeeding chief must live
in it until the structure collapses.(1)

Mourning for a chief lasts seven days, during which his children and 765
wives wear strips of oxhide on their left wrists.

Widows (of chiefs or commoners) must leave their hair loose and wear cloths which conceal them from head to toe. For three days a widow must sleep close to the corpse of her husband, with only a stick between them. During this time she has no food, and her wailing is expected to be almost continuous day and night. When the corpse is tied and prepared for burial relatives support the corpse and make it move towards her so that she may bid it farewell. She does not attend the funeral. At the end of a month of mourning she must lie for one night in the place where her husband lay the night before burial. At the beer-drinking which marks the end of the period of mourning an *ocisabonda* guides her hand as she distributes the beer.(2)

(1) Hambly, (2) 1934, p.272.
(2) Hambly, op.cit., p.269. Hambly states that mourning for a chief lasts only seven days, while from this information it appears that commoners are mourned for a whole month.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

I have seen an Ocimbundu male riding an ox without saddle. A 492
cord was passed through the animal's nose to serve as reins.

The Portuguese name for horse is *cavalo*, a word which the Ovim- 192
bundu use in the form *okavalu*, though there is an Umbundu word *ocingongocala*, which means "going with his neck up." The Umbundu words for donkey and mule are *ocimbulu* and *omula*, respectively.

Generally speaking, the ears of animals are not clipped, neither 231
are cattle branded or otherwise marked to indicate ownership, but sometimes the ears of pigs and goats are cut to aid identification. When asked why the tips of the ears of dogs are mutilated an Ocimbundu will say that a dog with uncut ears does not hear when called (Plate LVI, Fig. 2).

Not many families own large herds of cattle among the Ovim- 233
bundu, and I did not see a big kraal until I was in southwest Angola. 556
Cattle, which are a measure of wealth, are used for paying fines, making funeral feasts, paying debts, and securing wives. The cattle throughout Angola are well-developed, handsome animals (Plate LVII, Fig. 1). The bull remains with the herd the entire year; there is therefore no particular season for the birth of calves. Usually cows are not milked by the Ovimbundu, consequently these people have no milk, butter, or cheese. The Vakuanyama of the south milk their [171]
cows and churn butter in calabashes slung on a pole.

The Ovimbundu say that milking the cow makes the calf thin, 234
but where the idea of milking the cow is borrowed from the Portu- [177]
guese the Ovimbundu have a procedure which is as follows: The calf is allowed to suck for a few minutes in order to deceive the cow; then the milker begins his work. At intervals of a few minutes the calf is allowed to suck in order to continue the deception.

Cattle are killed at the funeral feasts of the rich, and the horns [765]
of the slaughtered animals are generally mounted on a pole in the vicinity of the grave (Plate XLVI, Fig. 2).

The horns of the cow may be used for making water-pipes in 237
which tobacco is smoked, or they may be employed as magical horns when filled with medicine. The hide is pegged out in the sunlight 281
for one day after it has been scraped; it is then rolled and kept until required. When about to be used, the skin is soaked in water for one day. The hide is used to cover the tops of stools, to make pouches and to manufacture bags for carrying corn. In bygone days each king had a wooden box covered with hide, which contained his powder and metal when he went to war. The cow's tail is used

3. Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

787 532 A common type of small figurine, some of which are female, others asexual, is represented by an illustration (Plate XXI, Fig. 2). Such little carvings are a normal part of the miscellaneous contents of a divination basket described in chapter IX. These figures have been obtained from Elende, Bailundu, and Caconda, all of which are centers of Umbundu culture.

322 532 756 In addition to the figurines described, the collection contains many more whose use may be conjectured. The interrogation of Ovimbundu people indicates clearly that there are specific uses of wooden figures which are consulted by the medicine-man. The foregoing explanations illustrate the nature of the beliefs associated with carved wooden figures, but it is not always possible to elicit a clear account of the specific use of each one.

171 532 Consideration of this aspect of the wood-carver's art has an important bearing on the culture contacts of the Ovimbundu. In studying this question I have instituted comparisons between these figures from the Ovimbundu of Angola and similar figures from the Kasai area of the Congo region (chapter X). The publications of the Musée Congo Belge provide illustrations for comparison with the figures in Field Museum's collection.

The carving of animal forms (Plate XIX, Figs. 1–5) is no more than a means of aesthetic expression resulting from accurate observations of animal life as recorded under "Nature Lore." Inquiry failed to show that figures of animals are, or were at any time, used in rites and ceremonies.

[643] The carrying of a carved stick is essential when a chief is visiting, attending a council in his own village, or receiving visitors. The ornamental paddle (Plate XX, Fig. 8) was owned by the chief of the capital village (*ombala*) of the Vangangella, near Ngalangi.

[765] At the death of a chief his staff of office, with his tobacco-pipe and sleeping mat, are placed in a small house where such relics of deceased chiefs are kept permanently (Plate XLVI, Fig. 1). Plate XX, Fig. 6, shows a staff of this kind which was preserved in a sacred house in the capital village of Ngalangi, and on the same plate are drawn short ornamental clubs which French ethnologists call *batons de promenade*, an appropriate name because of their use as part of the full dress equipment.

[276] The Ovimbundu have specialized in the carving of small objects, for, in addition to clubs and staffs, tobacco-pipes and snuff boxes are often elaborately carved (Plate XV, Figs. 2, 4).

A mourning widow must leave her hair loose and undressed, and she has to wear a cloth which conceals her from crown to sole. For three days she is obliged to sleep close to the corpse of her husband with only a stick between them. The stick, which is about the length of the bed, is laid between the widow and the corpse. During this time she has no food, and her wailing is expected to be almost continuous day and night. When the corpse is tied and prepared for burial the widow says farewell to it. Relatives support the corpse and make it advance toward her, while she herself is held in the position of a bound corpse, and is supported by relatives who make her confront the dead body of her husband. The widow does not go to the funeral. 765

Mourning continues after the funeral, with fasting and periodical wailing at three o'clock in the afternoon, and again twelve hours later. At the end of a month of mourning the widow lies for one night in the place where the corpse of her husband lay the night before burial. At the beer-drinking which marks the end of the period of mourning a medicine-man guides the hand of the widow as she dips a ladle into the beer pot and distributes the beverage.

The widow may stay with her mother's brother or she may return to her parents, but she must not become the wife of another man until a year has elapsed. The second husband will make a present to the widow's parents or others who have taken her, but this gift will not be as valuable as if the groom were taking a virgin. 768 587

Tree burial I have not seen, but heard of it near Ngalangi, and it has recently taken place at Cileso. Tree burial is the method for disposing of the corpse of a person who has died in debt. Any one who gives interment to a corpse assumes responsibility for the debts; hence tree burial is the most convenient way of disposal. 766 672

An Ocimbundu from Bailundu said that in that district the child is taken from the womb of a woman who has died pregnant. Food is placed on the lips of the removed foetus so that it will not induce the death of other pregnant women. Near Ngalangi a pregnant woman would be buried with the point of a long stick on her abdomen, and after the grave had been filled a blow would be given to the top of the stick. 766

The foregoing are the principal points of importance in the funeral rites of commoners. Ceremonies connected with the death and burial of medicine-men, kings, chiefs, and hunters require separate consideration. [565]

766 643 of a dead king would in former times be taken at night by chiefs and interred in one of the caves which are numerous in the rugged hills of the Benguela Highlands. The burial posture for a king is the same as that described for a medicine-man. The severed head is eventually kept in a box, but primarily both head and body are buried, though in separate places. At the end of a year the head is dug up and transferred to its casket.

765 643 Mourning for a king lasts for seven days, during which his children and wives wear strips of oxhide on their left wrists. The village chiefs gather to choose a king from the "blood of kings," though "sometimes a bad man will make himself king without waiting to be chosen." The choice should be in favor of the oldest son of the chief wife, "but if she has stupid sons, a son of another wife of the king will be chosen."

769 643 Sometimes during drought chiefs and their wives go to the grave of a chief where they say, "If you are angry tell us what you want. If you want an ox we will kill one." If they visit the tomb of a king, the king's corpse is asked, "Do you want a new box for your head? We will make one." The oldest chief takes from the tomb the box which contains the head. This is slung on a pole supported on the shoulders of two boys. The head is then questioned in the way described for the funeral of a commoner. The oldest chief offers a sacrifice, if such procedure is demanded by a forward swing of the pole which supports the casket containing the king's head.

768 643 The house is not burned after a death has occurred within, but it is still customary to take down the surrounding fence and to build a new one. The house in which death took place is then used as before. I was informed at the capital of Ngalangi, and by the king himself, that he must continue to use the house of former kings until the structure collapses. No repair work may be done; consequently the house was in a dilapidated condition. Some months after receiving this account at Elende I was in Moxico, several hundred miles away, and learned that at Cangamba the custom of severing the head of a king by suspension and friction prevails in the manner described above.

HUNTERS

224 766 While traveling in the district of Ganda, likewise in the Vasele country in the hinterland of Novó Redondo, one cannot fail to notice the presence of rock tombs (*ombilia* or *osonje*) which are mausoleums of hunters. These are invariably placed in commanding

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

The extent to which the order of the *vakuacisoko* exists at present or has existed among the Ovimbundu would be a very interesting subject of inquiry. It is certain that the institution does not exist throughout the territory but only in certain families which belong to the order and pass on membership in it by heredity. Whether there are certain regions where it is or was in the past more strongly held to is not known. It seems to be or to have been more strongly entrenched among the cattle-rearing people to the south, but it is also said to have been practised in Lupolo (Libolo) and even in the region of Luanda.[1] Among the Ovimbundu it seems to have been stronger in the past than at present. Few if any practising members of the set are now known. All 'coevals' or members of the set were in duty bound to render mutual assistance. All had mutual rights to the property of the others without complaint or remedy. These mutual rights seem to have been extended to the extreme limit of having intercourse with each other's wives, nor did the injury or even the death of one brought about by another allow the injured family to seek revenge or legal redress. It was the duty of *vakuacisoko* to bury their fellows, themselves digging the grave and attending to all expenses not already supplied by the family. Theirs was also the duty of burying strangers without family who would not be buried by others fearing defilement or responsibility for their debts. Bastos gives a tradition ascribing the origin of this institution to a wager laid between two chiefs.[2] It seems more probable, however, that it is connected with circumcision and tribal initiation. An analogous set of rights and duties is said to have existed among the Herero between 'coevals' circumcised at the same time.[3]

Tribal initiation for both boys (*oku lisevi:a evamba*) and girls (*uso wakãi*) is carried on in camps or 'schools' in the southern and south-eastern tribes of the Ovimbundu. These camps are regularly held in Kalukembe, Kakonda, and Ngalangi. Sporadic instances of individual camps have also occurred recently in Viye, Bailundu, Sambu, Wambu, Cingolo, and Cikuma. Even in those regions where camps are regularly held, only the children of certain families enter. It seems that there has been some passing on of the custom by heredity and, in general, there is intermarriage only between families and individuals who adhere to the initiation rites.

[1] Bastos, 1909, op. cit., pp. 67–70.
[2] Ibid., p. 69 f.
[3] Vedder in Hahn *et al.*, op. cit., p. 178.

885 and stability of his personality (*unu* - lit. the quality of being a person) is only proved when he enters the state of adulthood at marriage.

DEATH

361 764 Each village has its own burial ground about a mile or so away. The grave is usually dug by the children of the father's sister.(1) The corpse of a commoner is bound in a supine position and placed in a box before interment. It is usual during the funeral to find out the cause of death, i.e. whether it is the work of spirits or of some living enemy. Accusations of sorcery are frequently made. The corpse in its coffin, slung to a pole between two carriers, responds to questions as to who 'ate him' by forward (affirmative) or backward (negative) movements.(2) In the case described by Hambly,(3) the questions were put by the father's sister. [754] The corpse may also cause its bearers to stop in front of a certain house during the procession through the village, thereby indicating that one of the occupants has caused its death.(4) Should the corpse not give a clear answer, the diviner might be called in to discover the cause of the death. Accusations of sorcery, as has been noted above, are often made within the circle of kin.(5)

Special cases

● 766 For *children* the same ceremony was carried out if they were old enough to walk and talk. Otherwise the diviner's services were called upon by the parents. At the death of twins, the mother has to shake a rattle or blow a horn instead of giving the usual greetings to passers-by, as she had to do also while the children were alive.(6)

766 791 At the death of *diviners* and *medicine-men* other members of the profession take charge of the ceremonies. The corpse is tied in a sitting posture and kept thus for three days before burial. No coffin is used. The questioning ceremony is carried out as for a commoner. After the interment the other medicine-men dance "because they have spirit in their heads", and during the dance each eats a living chicken that he carries in his hand. At the side of the grave a dog, a chicken and a goat are killed, and eaten by the mourners. The *ocimbanda*'s power is apparently thought to linger round the grave, which the chief or village-headman may visit to ask for rain and other favours.(7)

224 766 *Hunters* at death are buried in rock tombs (*ombilia* or *osonje*), which are usually placed in commanding positions. The skulls of animals which the hunter has killed are piled on top of the tomb. The bows of the deceased hunter are kept in his successor's "house of bows".

766 643 600 *Chiefs*, and possibly also *village headmen*, are buried in specially-constructed enclosures in the villages over which they ruled. The tomb is a small hut with a substantial wooden door, which is surrounded by a strongly-built wooden fence, or it may be a cave. The wives of the chief are buried in the same enclosure. The head of a specially selected

(1) Hambly, (2) 1934, p.268.
(2) Childs, 1949, p.57.
(3) Op.cit., p.266.
(4) Childs, loc.cit.
(5) Ibid.
(6) Hambly, op.cit., p.268.
(7) Ibid., p.270.

The use of caterpillars as food is noted (p.416): "A man cut open [262]
a large cocoon, extracted the contents, and smacked his lips with 171
great gusto." My field notes mention the use of caterpillars as food. 175

Capello and Ivens (1877–80) remark on the burial places of hunters which are distinguishable by the skulls of antelopes, buffalo, [766] and hippopotamuses, stuck on upright poles, mixed with skulls of oxen killed in honor of the defunct. The writers noted that a heap of stones protected the body. I photographed two types of cairn in the regions of Ganda and Luimbale respectively. Capello and Ivens are not precise in their locality, but I judge it to have been Long. 17° E. and Lat. 13° S., a considerable distance from my own observations (Plates XXXII, Fig. 1; LXXIV, Fig. 1).

I photographed the stilt-walkers at the final stages of the initiation [481] ceremonies at Cangamba. These men had no costumes; on the contrary they were almost naked but were covered with white clay. [292] Capello and Ivens (p. 295), saw a stilt-walker with a feathered mask and a netting costume. Such attire I saw on an Uluchazi medicine-man, but not on the stilt-walkers (Plate LXXXI, Figs. 1, 2).

I was unable to obtain information about the stilt-walkers, but 693 Capello states that they castigated misdemeanants, punished shameless women, and accused criminals. Capello and Ivens were 187 miles to the northwest of my area of observation. The Uluchazi medicine-man, who appeared with the stilt-walkers during my visits, was said to make bad magic for women. The men ignored him but women gathered round in a derisive way; they quickly scattered when he pursued them.

Serpa Pinto, who made his journey across Angola in 1878, has 175 so many references to customs and objects still extant, that I propose 114 to tabulate his observations because of their value in showing the preservation of indigenous traits in spite of Portuguese contacts.

The body of a chief is buried with a covering of oxhide. Many 175 oxen are sacrificed at the death of a king. The heir to the deceased 766 is bound to sacrifice his whole herd in order to regale his people and give peace to the departed (S. Pinto, I, p. 63). The Ovimbundu conform at the present time to similar methods of burial and sacrifice.

Near Huambo, Serpa Pinto saw in every village a kind of "temple 175 for conversation." This is the *onjango*, that I have described and [345] photographed (Plate XLVIII, Fig. 1). It is the house in which all males foregather for the evening meal, which is brought by their women (I, p. 96).

The gathering and eating of caterpillars is described. This con- [262] tinues today (I, p. 120).

764 787 later in explaining the meaning of the articles which are contained in the divination basket.

764 I interrogated my interpreter respecting funeral customs, and from these inquiries elicited the following information. Burial of the corpse takes place a mile or more from the village in a grave dug by the father's sister's children. The depth of the grave is about (361) six feet. Each village has its own burial ground. The woman who questioned the corpse carried a sleeping mat which would be used to spread on the bottom of the grave, though sometimes the mat is placed outside the grave on the mound of earth. Midway between Cuma and Caconda I photographed graves of the Ovimbundu (Plate XLVII, Figs. 1, 2). The articles on the graves were the poles used for carrying the coffin, a basket, broken gourds, and in one instance the horns of a bullock which was killed at the funeral feast. The horns were mounted at the top of an upright pole (Plate XLVI, Fig. 2). Ngonga said that the belongings of a well-to-do person would usually be broken and placed on the grave; the breaking is necessary in order to prevent theft. I could find no trace of the idea that property is broken so that its spirit will accompany the man to a world of spirits.

The corpse was in a wooden box covered with a thin piece of blue and white chequered cloth tightly wound about the coffin. Ngonga explained that the body was prepared in the following manner before it was placed in the coffin. The corpse was extended in a supine position with the thumbs tied, the palms together, and the hands on the pubes. The great toes were tied together and the upper arms were bound to the torso with bands of bark or cloth. The use of bark no doubt represents the older method.

764 787 At the funeral of a baby one of the grandmothers carries the dead child to the grave on her back. The ceremony of questioning the corpse is carried out if the child is old enough to walk and talk. Ngonga said, "If the dead child was old enough to talk they think he will say something." If the child was unable to talk, the parents, accompanied by their brothers and sisters, would visit the medicine-man to inquire the cause of death.

766 There are a few special observances connected with the burial of twins. When the children were alive the mother had to shake a rattle or to blow a small horn instead of giving the usual greetings to a passer-by, and this she has to do at the funeral of one or both of her twins.

A mourning widow must leave her hair loose and undressed, and 765
she has to wear a cloth which conceals her from crown to sole. For three days she is obliged to sleep close to the corpse of her husband with only a stick between them. The stick, which is about the length of the bed, is laid between the widow and the corpse. During this time she has no food, and her wailing is expected to be almost continuous day and night. When the corpse is tied and prepared for burial the widow says farewell to it. Relatives support the corpse and make it advance toward her, while she herself is held in the position of a bound corpse, and is supported by relatives who make her confront the dead body of her husband. The widow does not go to the funeral.

Mourning continues after the funeral, with fasting and periodical wailing at three o'clock in the afternoon, and again twelve hours later. At the end of a month of mourning the widow lies for one night in the place where the corpse of her husband lay the night before burial. At the beer-drinking which marks the end of the period of mourning a medicine-man guides the hand of the widow as she dips a ladle into the beer pot and distributes the beverage.

The widow may stay with her mother's brother or she may return 768
to her parents, but she must not become the wife of another man until a year has elapsed. The second husband will make a present 587
to the widow's parents or others who have taken her, but this gift will not be as valuable as if the groom were taking a virgin.

Tree burial I have not seen, but heard of it near Ngalangi, and 766
it has recently taken place at Cileso. Tree burial is the method for 672
disposing of the corpse of a person who has died in debt. Any one who gives interment to a corpse assumes responsibility for the debts; hence tree burial is the most convenient way of disposal.

An Ocimbundu from Bailundu said that in that district the 766
child is taken from the womb of a woman who has died pregnant. Food is placed on the lips of the removed foetus so that it will not induce the death of other pregnant women. Near Ngalangi a pregnant woman would be buried with the point of a long stick on her abdomen, and after the grave had been filled a blow would be given to the top of the stick.

The foregoing are the principal points of importance in the [565]
funeral rites of commoners. Ceremonies connected with the death and burial of medicine-men, kings, chiefs, and hunters require separate consideration.

MEDICINE-MEN

756 When a medicine-man dies the people call in another medicine-
• 766 man to take charge of the ceremonies. The corpse is tied in a sitting posture, which is the attitude for burial. His charms are attached to his body and in this position they remain in the grave. The head ornament *osala*, which may be feathers, quills of the porcupine, or hair from a goat's beard, is placed upright on the head and fastened by a band under the chin (Plate XXIII, Fig. 2). The corpse is kept in a seated position lashed to a stool for three days. There is no coffin.

The corpse is carried in the posture described to the grave which is dug at a cross-path. The corpse of a medicine-man is questioned in the same manner as that employed in interrogating the corpse of a commoner. When the corpse is placed in its grave the medicine-men, some of them from a distance, dance because they have "spirit in their heads." The medicine-men shake their heads while dancing, and without pausing each eats a living chicken that he carries in his hand. At the side of the grave, a dog, a chicken, and a goat are killed. No part of the flesh is buried; it is consumed by those present at the funeral.

A sleeping mat is placed in the grave, and on the mound of earth are placed horns filled with medicine, and skins which used to hang from the waist of the medicine-man when he was performing. The rain-making charms are not buried in the grave, because their interment would cause the rainfall to diminish; the charms may, however, be placed on the outside of the grave. No food is placed in or on the grave. The mound of earth is painted with a human male figure. When a new medicine-man is making medicine or performing ceremonies he uses the name of a deceased medicine-man.

756 It is thought that the dead medicine-man has spirits which he is able to send to earth. No images of the medicine-man are made. Medicine-men visit the grave at night in order to take parts of the corpse to include in their medicine. At Caconda in western Angola I obtained the outfit of a medicine-man who included in his equipment two small hoe blades which he used for disinterring the dead. There was a portion of human tibia in the basket and a round stone pounder for pulverizing bone along with other ingredients.

The funeral rites of a medicine-woman are the same as those of
[768] a medicine-man except that medicine-women carry the corpse. An *osoma* ("king") or a *sekulu* ("chief") will visit the grave of a medicine-man to ask for rain or other favors.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

KINGS AND CHIEFS

A chief (village headman) is buried in a specially constructed enclosure in the village over which he ruled (Plate XLV, Fig. 2). The mausoleum is a small hut with a substantial wooden door which is surrounded by a strongly built wooden fence ten feet high. 766 643

I was taken inside a tomb in the capital of Ngalangi, where the king showed the interior of his burial place of kings. There were four mounds of earth, each of which covered the body of a king, and a little distance away were the graves of the principal wives. The hut contained pottery and gourds; also a small fire, which is replenished by an attendant who must not allow it to be extinguished.

Ngonga says that the burial chamber at Elende contains the head of the chief in a box. After one year from the time of burial the box containing the head is opened in order that a libation of beer may be poured over it. Sometimes the head is anointed with palm oil and a new band of cloth is added. These attentions are paid to the head in time of sickness and drought. If the head shows signs of desiccation an ox is killed in order to provide a new piece of skin in which the head is sewn. The tomb is visited by men who come to ask for good fortune when they are departing for a journey to the interior, and these supplicants are led to the tomb by the ruling chief. Near the burial place of the *sekulu* ("village headman") at Elende there was the house of bows (Plate XLVI, Fig. 1), which is typical of several seen in different parts of Angola. These repositories always contain staffs, bows, arrows, sleeping mats, and possibly other articles which belonged to the dead. 769 643 769

The corpse of a king is suspended from the top of the burial hut by a rope which is tightly fastened round his neck. That the king has died is not admitted and the announcement states that "the king has a cold in his head." The head of a specially selected family twists the rope until the head is severed. The twisting is carried out gradually, a little each day, so that a week or more is required for severance. In former times the head was detached by twisting only, but at present a knife is used to hasten the friction of the rope. When the body of the king has fallen into the basket placed underneath to receive it, the people may say that the king is dead and mourning begins. 766 [763] 643

Judging by the arrangement seen at the *ombala* of Ngalangi the bodies are buried in a hut constructed as a burial place for kings, but Ngonga states that the older method was cave burial. The body

766 of a dead king would in former times be taken at night by chiefs
643 and interred in one of the caves which are numerous in the rugged hills of the Benguela Highlands. The burial posture for a king is the same as that described for a medicine-man. The severed head is eventually kept in a box, but primarily both head and body are buried, though in separate places. At the end of a year the head is dug up and transferred to its casket.

765 Mourning for a king lasts for seven days, during which his children
643 and wives wear strips of oxhide on their left wrists. The village chiefs gather to choose a king from the "blood of kings," though "sometimes a bad man will make himself king without waiting to be chosen." The choice should be in favor of the oldest son of the chief wife, "but if she has stupid sons, a son of another wife of the king will be chosen."

769 Sometimes during drought chiefs and their wives go to the grave
643 of a chief where they say, "If you are angry tell us what you want. If you want an ox we will kill one." If they visit the tomb of a king, the king's corpse is asked, "Do you want a new box for your head? We will make one." The oldest chief takes from the tomb the box which contains the head. This is slung on a pole supported on the shoulders of two boys. The head is then questioned in the way described for the funeral of a commoner. The oldest chief offers a sacrifice, if such procedure is demanded by a forward swing of the pole which supports the casket containing the king's head.

768 The house is not burned after a death has occurred within, but it
643 is still customary to take down the surrounding fence and to build a new one. The house in which death took place is then used as before. I was informed at the capital of Ngalangi, and by the king himself, that he must continue to use the house of former kings until the structure collapses. No repair work may be done; consequently the house was in a dilapidated condition. Some months after receiving this account at Elende I was in Moxico, several hundred miles away, and learned that at Cangamba the custom of severing the head of a king by suspension and friction prevails in the manner described above.

HUNTERS

224 While traveling in the district of Ganda, likewise in the Vasele
766 country in the hinterland of Novó Redondo, one cannot fail to notice the presence of rock tombs (*ombilia* or *osonje*) which are mausoleums of hunters. These are invariably placed in commanding

positions on domes of rock. The first tomb examined was in Ganda (Plate LXXIV, Fig. 1). This tomb is carefully built up from pieces of granite detached from the rocks which serve as a base. Horns of animals are placed on the cairn which is further decorated by a stick bearing the tail of an animal. Plate XXXII, Fig. 1, shows a tomb of similar structure in the country of the Vasele. From one such tomb it was possible to detach a slab so that the interior could be seen. There were two male skeletons; one lay supine while the bones of the other were in disorder. 224 766

In a hunter's house of bows there are implements of deceased hunters, whose ceremonies centering in these relics have been described under the heading of hunting.

TRAINING OF MEDICINE-MEN

Training for the position of male or female magician (*ocimbanda*) is not carried out with formality ending in initiatory rites, neither is the position hereditary; but the boy or girl who wishes to become an *ocimbanda* must have "spirit in the head." This choice of children of peculiar neurotic temperament for the positions of medicine-men and medicine-women is widely distributed, as I have shown in some detail (Origins of Education, 1926, pp. 256–259). 756

Among the Ovimbundu there does not appear to be an intensifying of natural psychoses by seclusion, starvation, or beating. When a boy is sick, the medicine-man says, "You have a spirit who wants you to be *ocimbanda*." The medicine-man kills a dog, a goat, and four chickens, then the boy has to accompany his master, carrying his apparatus and obeying him in every way. The medicine-man says, "Your father was an *ocimbanda* and the spirit wants you." The female *ocimbanda* is called *cambula* by other women, and her services are preferred to those of the male *ocimbanda* in cases of difficult childbirth. [158] [845]

In Ngalangi I was informed that the Ovimbundu have great faith in the medicine-men of the Vangangella, a name vaguely applied by the Ovimbundu to several tribes of east-central Angola. An Ocimbundu will make a journey of several days in order to visit a distant medicine-man of another tribe.

FUNCTIONS OF MEDICINE-MEN

Magical practices are of two kinds, social and anti-social. The man who carries out divination, rain-making, healing the sick, and many other functions is *ocimbanda*, while the secret worker of evil, the witch or wizard, is *onganga*. In one village there may be several [791]

778 The charm *osonge* or *ombuiyu* is in the form of small neckbands of plaited fiber to which two or three cowrie shells are fastened. It is worn by women who wish to induce conception. A neckband of this kind which was worn by the maternal grandmother is thought to be specially effective. Sometimes a small rattle, formed from seed pods attached to a stick, is tied to the neckband. The rattle is shaken when the mother of twins meets a friend to whom she is not allowed to give the ordinary greeting.

751 A tortoise shell containing fat and charcoal is worn by the mother of a child who is afflicted by the spirit of *Kandundu*, which may cause the baby to have skin eruptions or a very small amount of hair. In order to cure her child, the mother must eat small quantities of the contents of the shell from time to time. In some sympathetic way the medicinal benefits are transferred to the infant.

756 When dancing, the medicine-man usually wears a goat's beard attached to a circular piece of basketry. This *osala* is sometimes fastened on the top of his head. In place of the ax already mentioned he may flourish a small ceremonial hoe or whisk, or a wooden baton with a tuft of hair at the end.

[766] Among the varied duties of the medicine-man is that of washing the body of a king (*osoma*) or a chief (*sekulu*). To water in a pot, the medicine-man adds some of the blood of a freshly killed chicken. Then in a hut specially reserved for the purpose he performs the ceremonial ablution.

At Cangamba an Ocivokue performed a ceremony which was supposed to make a thief return to the village for trial. The medicine-man sat on his haunches, holding in one hand a small rattle and in the other a slender stick on which the decorated carapace of a tortoise was poised (Plate LXXXII, Fig. 1). Very earnestly the man talked, shook his head, and gazed at the tortoise shell which began to twist on its pivot. As the medicine-man muttered and shook his rattle, the movement of the shell grew faster. Presently the rotation of the tortoise shell was reversed, but so adroitly that I could not follow the movement or imitate it when allowed to try. The reversed movement of the carapace on its pivot represents the culprit turning back to his village.

CURING THE SICK

755 At Cangamba a female *ocimbanda* was seen painting marks of red and white on the face of a sick woman. The ceremony was called *ocihamba* and its object was said to be the relief of rheumatism,

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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1

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2

HUNTER'S TOMB AND VILLAGE OF VASELE

Fig. 1. Tomb, near Lubalabala. Fig. 2. Village, near Vila Nova de Seles

[p.428]

The head of a specially selected [767]
family has the duty of twisting off the head of the chief, and not until 643
this is done is the chief officially dead. The head is buried for a year, 765
then dug up and transferred to a box, which is also kept in the tomb. The
head is questioned at times of stress (such as a drought) in the same way
that questions are put to the corpse of a commoner. If the head swings [787]
forward, a sacrifice may be necessary to remove the drought. The house
of a chief is not burnt at his death (but those of commoners are?); 768
neither may it be repaired in any way, but the succeeding chief must live
in it until the structure collapses.(1)

Mourning for a chief lasts seven days, during which his children and 765
wives wear strips of oxhide on their left wrists.

Widows (of chiefs or commoners) must leave their hair loose and wear cloths which conceal them from head to toe. For three days a widow must sleep close to the corpse of her husband, with only a stick between them. During this time she has no food, and her wailing is expected to be almost continuous day and night. When the corpse is tied and prepared for burial relatives support the corpse and make it move towards her so that she may bid it farewell. She does not attend the funeral. At the end of a month of mourning she must lie for one night in the place where her husband lay the night before burial. At the beer-drinking which marks the end of the period of mourning an *ocisbonda* guides her hand as she distributes the beer.(2)

(1) Hambly, (2) 1934, p.272.
(2) Hambly, op.cit., p.269. Hambly states that mourning for a chief lasts only seven days, while from this information it appears that commoners are mourned for a whole month.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

C. *Sister's sons (or daughters)*[1]		
In Ciyanda	1	
„ School village	4	
	—	5
D. *Relatives by marriage*		
In Sikīlīlē's	2	
„ School village	1	
	—	3
E. *Relationship not exactly determined*[2]		
In School village	2	
	—	2
F. *Former slaves*		
In Sikīlīlē's	1	
„ School village	1	
	—	2
Total of householders		44

621
602

The above figures show more precisely than would several pages of explanation the family nature of the Umbundu village. That the Ovimbundu are patrilocal was noted by Hambly.[3] Whether the proportions which the above figures indicate would hold for all the Ovimbundu could only be determined by gathering similar data over widely representative areas. The same approximate distribution holds for the families represented by 192 genealogies and 74 marriage-schedules which I have collected. Matrilocal residence or residence in the wife's village has always been recognized by the Ovimbundu as a possibility, although less desirable than the ideal of patrilocal marriage and residence. Of the two householders in Sekulu Sikīlīlē's village who were related to him by marriage, one was the husband of a daughter and the other a [768] widow of a younger brother, who should have been inherited by a younger brother or a mother's brother of the deceased. Failing that, she might have returned to her father's people, but her having settled in the village of her husband's elder brother is no cause for surprise. My experience leads me to believe that Ngendo is an approximately fair sample of the present strength of patrilocal residence among the Ovimbundu. That the Protestant school village is a real part of this kinship unit is an important fact, the significance of which will be discussed later.

[1] The two daughters were widows who had come to live with their mother's brothers.

[2] In these two cases relationship was declared to exist, but I failed to find its nature.

[3] Hambly, op. cit., p. 191.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 18

their own wards, 'my ward' (*ocitawila cange*). The other villagers will speak only of 'our village' (*imbo lietu*). 622 554

There are, in general, two quite different and distinct types of Umbundu village according to the terrain on which they are built. The villages of the plains have room to spread out and tend toward a circular shape, with the dancing floor and men's club house near the centre. The wards may appear as quarters of a single whole or they may be added on in haphazard fashion. The villages of the mountains must conform to the possibilities of the terrain. Formerly, many villages were built on mountains for defence, and capital villages of this type may still be seen with the houses built on ledges and rocks almost one on top of the other. In this type of village, there is often not sufficient or sufficiently good soil for even small garden plots within the palisades. Occasionally one of these mountain villages may be found which has not even room within it for the dancing floor, which will in this case be found outside the palisade. If the site is not too severely confined, the wards of the mountain village tend either to string themselves out horizontally along the mountain-side, or to find successive ledges. The village of Ngendo is of an intermediate type, built as it is, on a slope. Sikillie's village was first built as near the stream as possible. The wards later added themselves on, each a little higher than the one before. The school village, which was built last, got the highest and most hygienic site. 361

Moving a Village

Villages may be moved for any one of several reasons. When fields are worn out and others are not available[1] near by, a village may be moved to a site more conveniently located. More often, however, the reason assigned is that there has been much illness or death, that the old site is polluted, that its 'air is bad', which to the Ovimbundu means that some action displeasing to the spirits has been committed which has brought on these misfortunes. This will generally have been determined by divination, as will also the spirits' consent to the proposed new site. A site which has long been occupied is of course fertile soil. Since old sites are generally cultivated to good advantage this fact should not be overlooked as a possible additional reason for moving. 361 166 [768] [787]

[1] Nowadays European settlement often pre-empts such lands. [177]

621 Ngendo is surrounded by a stick palisade except on that side of the headman's household which is adjacent to the rocks used as a club-house. The village itself (and each section) is divided up into compounds, each of which contains one to three houses,[1] and palisades divide one compound [363] from the next; between are paths leading to the *ocila* and out of the village. Small gardens for tobacco, maize and beans are within the compounds, and the larger fields lie outside the village at from thirty minutes' to an hour's walk. In the headman's section of Ngendo there are 25 households containing 32 houses in all. Each house has its own granary *(osila)* and a small chicken-coop built on stilts, and of all the houses [343] only six have separate kitchens *(ociwo)*. Most households had separate pens for pigs, goats and sheep for the night,[2] and at one side of the headman's compound there is a common corral for the nine cattle owned by the section. Only the headman had a spirit-hut *(etambo)*, used also as a [622] storehouse, for entertaining his guests, and for his own use should he wish to sleep apart from his wives.

621 Chiefs' villages or *olombala* (singular *ombala*) are often surrounded by a belt of tall trees.[3] The chief's compound (the *ilombe*) is larger than 361 those of other villagers, and, according to Hambly,[4] usually contains: 643 the chief's house, which always has a separate sleeping-room; a house and a kitchen for each of his wives; a tomb for the burial of the chief and his wives; a house of meditation for the chief, and pens for pigs and chickens.

342 Umbundu houses are usually circular, but sometimes rectangular, and made of wattle and daub, with thatched roofs. Sometimes huts are divided by matting into a living-room and a sleeping-room. Cooking is often done [343] in the house itself, but sometimes a separate hut is built as a kitchen.[5]

345 The *onjongo* (the Men's Club House) consists of a cone-shaped roof set on stout hardwood poles instead of a wall, and left open so that those for whom there may be no place inside may still see and hear what takes place within.[6]

341 Villages are moved when fields are exhausted and others are not available nearby[7] or, more often, when there has been illness or death in the [768] village, which implies that some action displeasing to the spirits has been committed. (No information is available concerning the usual length of life of a village.) When the new site is chosen, the headman's fire 776 in the old village is extinguished, and a procession starts, led by a boy 778 carrying the sacred bows *(ohonji)* of each ascendant who is now a guardian 796 spirit of the family (i.e. the *oluse*), and a girl carrying the sacred chest *(ocimbangu)* containing the relics *(ociye)* and the balls of iguana skin.[8] On arriving at the site the boy and girl cut and plant the

(1) In this section there were 13 goats, 20 sheep, 100 pigs and about 100 chickens. (Childs, op.cit. p.31) (2) Ibid.
(3) Hambly, (2) 1934, p.206 *et.al.* It was a custom of the Ngangela peoples to plant trees round the village and dedicate them to deceased chiefs. (See McCulloch 1950, p.68.) There is no evidence that the trees surrounding Umbundu villages have any ritual significance, although the custom may have been taken over from the conquered Ngangela peoples.
(4) Op.cit., p.208. (5) Ibid., p.10
(6) Childs, personal communication.
(7) Due often to European settlement. (8) See below, p.47.

for murder as two oxen and two slaves; for adultery, two oxen, a pig, and a slave.) Today a man who has committed adultery sometimes takes the woman and all children under three years of age, but this is for the husband to decide. An adulterer with one of the chief's wives was castrated but not killed, and the castration might be compounded for a high fine, while he, his sisters, and the sons of his sisters would become slaves of the chief.(1) Hambly states finally that "Criminal law did not distinguish between responsibility for intentional and unintentional offences."(2) 682 684 671

There is no information regarding the kinds of cases tried or the punishments given in the courts of village headmen or sub-chiefs today.

INHERITANCE

It has been noted above that moveable property is inherited in the maternal line, land in the paternal line.(3) The eldest brother of the deceased's mother has the first claim and is responsible for settling disputes. He may distribute the property to the mother of the deceased, the maternal grandfather, or to a brother of the deceased, but is not compelled to do this. Women never inherit cattle or land, although the sisters of a deceased woman usually receive most of her household utensils (the rest belong to her husband). A widow goes to the house of (? marries) the eldest brother of the deceased or her own maternal uncle, or she may return to her father's village. Apparently her children accompany her, although one would expect them to go to her brother.(4) 428 768

DIVORCE

Divorce appears to be infrequent; grounds for divorce are many, but difficulties are often overcome by a compromise between the two kin groups concerned. Causes for dissatisfaction on the part of a husband include his wife's incompetence, dishonesty, physical weakness, or infidelity (in the last case today a fine from the adulterer is usually accepted and the marriage continues). Barrenness is not a ground for divorce; usually the husband takes a second wife, but the first maintains her position as head wife. Sterility in the male is sometimes suspected, in which case the husband may try another girl, with his wife's consent, or the woman another man. A woman may divorce a man if he is impotent (not sterile), or if he ill-treats her, but not because he is unfaithful. If for any of these reasons the woman returns to her family, the latter are expected to return the marriage payment, although they may wait until another suitor appears who will pay the deserted husband. Whether the initiative in divorce is taken by the woman or the man, the marriage is not annulled until a renunciatory ceremony has been carried out by the husband, the wife, and the wife's father, in the presence of the village headman. The husband receives from his wife's father a roll of tobacco and a pig, and then places leaves(5) and palm oil on his wife's back; he then slaps his wife's back saying "It is finished". 586 [842]

(1) Hambly, op.cit.,p.209. (2) Loc.cit.
(3) See above, p.18, and Childs, 1949, p.44.
(4) Hambly, (2) 1934, p.199.
(5) The leaf used is of the apu tree; the same leaf is tied to the pole of the stamb of a new village, as a sign of divorce from the old site. (Childs, 1949, p.58; this is the only context in which Childs mentions divorce.)

The head of a specially selected family has the duty of twisting off the head of the chief, and not until this is done is the chief officially dead. The head is buried for a year, then dug up and transferred to a box, which is also kept in the tomb. The head is questioned at times of stress (such as a drought) in the same way that questions are put to the corpse of a commoner. If the head swings forward, a sacrifice may be necessary to remove the drought. The house of a chief is not burnt at his death (but those of commoners are?); neither may it be repaired in any way, but the succeeding chief must live in it until the structure collapses.(1) [767] 643 765 [787] 768

Mourning for a chief lasts seven days, during which his children and wives wear strips of oxhide on their left wrists. 765

Widows (of chiefs or commoners) must leave their hair loose and wear cloths which conceal them from head to toe. For three days a widow must sleep close to the corpse of her husband, with only a stick between them. During this time she has no food, and her wailing is expected to be almost continuous day and night. When the corpse is tied and prepared for burial relatives support the corpse and make it move towards her so that she may bid it farewell. She does not attend the funeral. At the end of a month of mourning she must lie for one night in the place where her husband lay the night before burial. At the beer-drinking which marks the end of the period of mourning an *ocimbanda* guides her hand as she distributes the beer.(2)

(1) Hambly, (2) 1934, p.272.
(2) Hambly, op.cit., p.269. Hambly states that mourning for a chief lasts only seven days; while from this information it appears that commoners are mourned for a whole month.

I. Grandparents. 601
II. Parents.
III. Speaker's generation.
IV. Children.
V. Grandchildren.

Numbers on the left of the sign (=) refer to males, those on the right, to females.

The terms of relationship used in Tables E and F are as follows:

1. *Ukai wange.* My wife (vocative). Ngonga's wife calls him *weyange*, my husband.
2. *Mume, manja, manjange.* Younger brother.
3. *Kota, husa.* Older brother.
4. *Mbuale.* Sister (vocative). *Mukai wange.* Sister (nonvocative).
5. *Nawa.* In-laws of speaker's generation.
6. *Ndatembo.* In-laws of ascending or descending generation.
7. *Tate.* Father.
8. *Mai.* Mother.
9. *Aphai.* Father's sister (female father).
10. *Omolange.* Child, used for speaker's family only.
11. *Ocimumba.* Children of spouse's family.
12. *Manu, inanu.* Mother's brother (direct ascendant).
13. *Kulu.* An old person in grandparent's and grandchild's generation. *Sekulu, kukululu.* Male grandparents.
14. *Maikulu.* Female grandparents.
15. *Onekulu.* Grandchild of either sex.
16. *Úpalume.* Mother's brother's or father's sister's children.
17. *Cikulume.* Father's sister's husband.

NOTE: Age distinctions are made chiefly in the speaker's own generation.

LAW AND GOVERNMENT

In dealing with marriage rites it was stated that a woman had to contribute certain articles to the home; these are the utensils that she uses in her daily work. The baskets, pottery, pounders, and brushes may seem insignificant, but nevertheless there are rules regulating their disposal at death. Her husband will retain some of the articles; the remainder will be shared among the deceased woman's sisters. 428 422

The disposal of a widow is a matter for discussion among the relatives. The husband makes no bequest to his widow and children, though the children may receive a small gift of a pig or some corn. The property of a man is bequeathed to his mother's brother or to his sister's sons. The eldest brother of the deceased or the maternal uncle of the widow takes her to his house along with her children. If her father is alive he may take her. Ngonga says that each responsible relative says, "It is better that you should take her"; at last some one says, "I will take her." 768

When explaining the system of inheritance Ngonga was clear on two points. In the first place wives and children of the deceased are 428

428 not entitled to inheritance of land, cattle, or anything else belonging to the dead man. The greater part of the property would be bequeathed to the eldest brother of the deceased's mother.

428 604 768 There appears to be discussion as to the distribution of property, but the maternal uncle is responsible for settling disputes. He himself has the first claim, and in Ngonga's words, "If there are quarrels about the cattle, land, and other things, the mother's eldest brother will settle them."

The mother's brother has rights over his sister's children even to the extent of pawning them to pay his own debts. On the other hand the maternal uncle is responsible for the conduct of his sister's children. He would have to pay fines incurred by thefts they committed, and he provides for his sister's son a wife who is either his daughter or his widow.

Ngonga stated that the maternal uncle does not invariably take all the property of a deceased nephew for himself. He may give something to the deceased's mother, the deceased's maternal grandfather, or to a brother of the deceased. Such gifts appear to be the outcome of good will on the part of the dead man's maternal uncle; [421] there is no compulsion. Women never inherit cattle or rights to the use of land.

423 692 622 The king is the head of the legal system, though his activities as such are not so great as those of the village headman (*sekulu*). The *olosekulu* (there are usually more than one) of a village witness the final act in a divorce ceremony. They used to have charge of trials for theft, murder, adultery, likewise the right of settling arguments concerning the ownership of land. It was the *sekulu* who distributed the land to the extended families when a new village site was opened. The maternal uncles settled the minor divisions among the limited families.

643 There are many kings among the Ovimbundu, but I thought that there was a tendency to confuse the titles of *osoma* ("king") and *sekulu* ("headman" or "chief" of a village). The jurisdiction of a king is so well known that any person is able to say under which king he lives. Ngonga said definitely that a man of the Ovimbundu who was under the jurisdiction of a certain king would have to obey the commands of a visiting king, provided they were not in any way disapproved of by the king to whom first allegiance was due.

643 [463] A chief may demand labor for the building of his house or the cultivation of his land. He does not pay for this but usually gives beer to the workers; sometimes he secures the labor and gives nothing in return.

567 people, especially if they were from outside the Ovimbundu, was one of absolute and abject servitude.

The master had rights of punishment including a death sentence; but Ngonga says that a slave could appeal to the headman of the village if he were starved and cruelly treated. All children of a slave became slaves of the master. As the slave had no property he could not pay a fine; the master would pay the fine then relieve his feelings by beating the slave. Instead of paying the fine the master might sell the slave.

Slaves were not branded or marked in any way. Ngonga has seen runaway slaves hunted with dogs. A slave was not allowed to buy his own freedom. A master could dispose of his slave girls in marriage; for instance, a young girl might be sold to an old man. The condition of the slave is well expressed in Ngonga's own words: "The slave worked hard at everything, then the master said he had done nothing."

Slaves used to go to war to fight with their masters against an enemy. A slave might become a blacksmith or a hunter, two very esteemed occupations, but all his work would be for the master. Ngonga says there was no slave market belonging to the Ovimbundu, but every man knew where he could buy a slave. Slaves could act as witnesses in a trial. Slave women were not lent out for prostitu-
[585] tion. A slave owner did not have promiscuous intercourse with his
[768] slave women, but he chose two or three girls as concubines. A slave girl who was married to a free man would revert to her master along with her children when her husband died. If a master had married his own slave woman she would, at his death, become the property of his eldest brother and her children would go with her. In some instances the slave woman and her children would be given to the son of her master's brother.

VILLAGE ORGANIZATION

361 When choosing a site for a new village, a preference is shown for a hillside, though woods or valleys are at times selected. The foot of cliffs is a favorite site. In addition to the shade afforded by the cliff there was in time past the advantage of being hidden from the view of enemies. Further shelter was afforded by the planting of wild fig trees. Sometimes an *ombala* ("capital") was rendered picturesque by the planting of trees which grow to a great size; such a plan was followed at the *ombala* of Ngalangi.

Caves in the wall of a cliff, likewise rugged hillsides, gave a place of retreat for women and children during an attack. Usually there

A mourning widow must leave her hair loose and undressed, and she has to wear a cloth which conceals her from crown to sole. For three days she is obliged to sleep close to the corpse of her husband with only a stick between them. The stick, which is about the length of the bed, is laid between the widow and the corpse. During this time she has no food, and her wailing is expected to be almost continuous day and night. When the corpse is tied and prepared for burial the widow says farewell to it. Relatives support the corpse and make it advance toward her, while she herself is held in the position of a bound corpse, and is supported by relatives who make her confront the dead body of her husband. The widow does not go to the funeral. 765

Mourning continues after the funeral, with fasting and periodical wailing at three o'clock in the afternoon, and again twelve hours later. At the end of a month of mourning the widow lies for one night in the place where the corpse of her husband lay the night before burial. At the beer-drinking which marks the end of the period of mourning a medicine-man guides the hand of the widow as she dips a ladle into the beer pot and distributes the beverage.

The widow may stay with her mother's brother or she may return to her parents, but she must not become the wife of another man until a year has elapsed. The second husband will make a present to the widow's parents or others who have taken her, but this gift will not be as valuable as if the groom were taking a virgin. 768 587

Tree burial I have not seen, but heard of it near Ngalangi, and it has recently taken place at Cileso. Tree burial is the method for disposing of the corpse of a person who has died in debt. Any one who gives interment to a corpse assumes responsibility for the debts; hence tree burial is the most convenient way of disposal. 766 672

An Ocimbundu from Bailundu said that in that district the child is taken from the womb of a woman who has died pregnant. Food is placed on the lips of the removed foetus so that it will not induce the death of other pregnant women. Near Ngalangi a pregnant woman would be buried with the point of a long stick on her abdomen, and after the grave had been filled a blow would be given to the top of the stick. 766

The foregoing are the principal points of importance in the funeral rites of commoners. Ceremonies connected with the death and burial of medicine-men, kings, chiefs, and hunters require separate consideration. [565]

766 643 of a dead king would in former times be taken at night by chiefs and interred in one of the caves which are numerous in the rugged hills of the Benguela Highlands. The burial posture for a king is the same as that described for a medicine-man. The severed head is eventually kept in a box, but primarily both head and body are buried, though in separate places. At the end of a year the head is dug up and transferred to its casket.

765 643 Mourning for a king lasts for seven days, during which his children and wives wear strips of oxhide on their left wrists. The village chiefs gather to choose a king from the "blood of kings," though "sometimes a bad man will make himself king without waiting to be chosen." The choice should be in favor of the oldest son of the chief wife, "but if she has stupid sons, a son of another wife of the king will be chosen."

769 643 Sometimes during drought chiefs and their wives go to the grave of a chief where they say, "If you are angry tell us what you want. If you want an ox we will kill one." If they visit the tomb of a king, the king's corpse is asked, "Do you want a new box for your head? We will make one." The oldest chief takes from the tomb the box which contains the head. This is slung on a pole supported on the shoulders of two boys. The head is then questioned in the way described for the funeral of a commoner. The oldest chief offers a sacrifice, if such procedure is demanded by a forward swing of the pole which supports the casket containing the king's head.

768 643 The house is not burned after a death has occurred within, but it is still customary to take down the surrounding fence and to build a new one. The house in which death took place is then used as before. I was informed at the capital of Ngalangi, and by the king himself, that he must continue to use the house of former kings until the structure collapses. No repair work may be done; consequently the house was in a dilapidated condition. Some months after receiving this account at Elende I was in Moxico, several hundred miles away, and learned that at Cangamba the custom of severing the head of a king by suspension and friction prevails in the manner described above.

HUNTERS

224 766 While traveling in the district of Ganda, likewise in the Vazele country in the hinterland of Novo Redondo, one cannot fail to notice the presence of rock tombs (*ombála* or *ocoaje*) which are mausoleums of hunters. These are invariably placed in commanding

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[1874-1911]

slave. Once ransomed a boy could not be sold again. If, however, the father was displeased with his son's behaviour he could refuse to ransom him. When a man died, his adolescent sons would go to the household of a classificatory father and the children who did not yet 'have sense' would go with the widow to her kin, returning to their agnatic kin when they were older. 593 768

4. *Analysis of the Old Kinship System*

The ethnography of the Ovimbundu does show that there existed a double-descent kinship system, each individual belonging to both a local patrilineal group, and a dispersed matrilineal group, in which movable property is inherited. So great has been the impact of social change that not only have these groups disappeared but it is practically impossible to gain additional information on them by direct questions about their nature and functions. The information on kinship norms does give a somewhat clearer picture. 611 613 [422] 613 [78]

Within the village there was a very strong emphasis on the unity and solidarity of the men of the village. The men's house was the main social centre of the village where the men ate, received guests, and listened to cases. It was about it rather than about the person of the headman that ritual clustered.[20] The elementary family was not the unit of domestic consumption, and it is clear, from the taboos regarding contact with women kin, and the evidence as to the social life of the man's house that there was little recreational contact between the sexes. The concept of *ondjamba*[21] shows that the elementary family of husband, wife, and children, was morally and ritually significant, but many of the educational, nutritive, and recreational functions frequently associated with it were here attached to the men's house. 575 594 575

The strength of the agnatic ties in this society seems to have lain in the solidarity of the men of the village rather than in the patriarchal authority of fathers over sons. A son was economically independent of his father since he could trade on his own while his father was still living; the most powerful social sanction in the hands of kinsmen, that of being sold as a slave, was 593 [602] [604]

[20] For these rituals see Hastings, pp. 73–76, and Childs, p. 59.
[21] *Ondjamba* will be discussed more fully in the next chapter.

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The rules about avoidance at night are still kept. The prohibitions on a man borrowing his father's clothes and sleeping in the same room as his father seem to survive. The prohibition on a child speaking the name of his father or mother reported by Childs is not, and was not formerly, found in this area. It is, however, wrong for a child to address his parents by name. 593 551

Children begin to work in the fields when they are about six. Occasionally boys of 10 to 11 go to the coffee fields for two months work, but usually boys do not go out to work until they are about 14 or 15. 857

A boy going out to work should ask his father's permission to go though this is not always done. Returning from work whether contract labour or voluntary work a boy should bring presents to his relatives. He would be expected to give something, say, a jacket, to his father, and a cloth to his mother, on returning from voluntary work and a shirt to his father on coming back from contract labour. These gifts should be made in kind. Money lent from son to father should be repaid, though it is wrong for a son to enforce payment by appealing to the post for policemen. A father may give money to his son for bridewealth, and may suggest a choice of bride. He cannot constrain, nor could he in the past, his son and daughter to a marriage they do not wish. 593 [593]

A man cannot be said to have real authority over his grown sons. The stated norm is that a man's sons stay in the same village till he dies. He has no power to make them do so, and they are not condemned by public opinion if they live elsewhere. A man's attitude to classificatory 'fathers' is determined by the age, status, and personalities of those involved, rather than by jural rights and obligations. I have found men unable to tell me what had become of their own brothers' children. 604

Formerly when the father of an adolescent boy died he would join the household of a father's brother. Nowadays this would be much less likely, as it is common for such a boy to settle with other categories of kin, notably siblings and maternal kinsfolk. A man is free to stay with his brothers if he wishes, or to leave them. 761

While the tie between full brothers is held to be the strongest, as regards classificatory brothers there seems to be a slight 602

leaning towards matrilateral rather than patrilateral brothers. The classificatory kinship terminology, and the lack of genealogies and kinship groups, means that a man knows a great many classificatory brothers living in his neighbourhood of whom he vaguely recognizes some as 'close' others as 'distant', but with whom his relations are not especially significant. A boy or girl who loses his or her parents is fairly likely, judging from the evidence of Epalanga households, to settle with a full- or half-brother or sister.

Formerly, owing to virilocal marriage, a sister was geographically separated from her brother, and even if widowed or divorced would not necessarily return to his village, but might go to her mother's brother.[24] With this geographical separation went a situation of possible conflict, since the brother could sell his sister's children to recoup his own debts, and the shadow of sorcery fears seems to have touched this relationship.[25] The suppression of the rubber and slave trades and the subsequent disintegration of the kinship groups have removed the economic pressures which made for conflict between matrilineal kin and the residence rules which divided people locally into groups of agnates and their wives. The brother-sister tie has therefore changed its content, since it is released from the heavy pressures formerly active in the matrilineal kin groups.

It would be wrong to produce any such generalization as 'a woman must always be under the guardianship of a male relative'. A woman who is widowed or divorced or whose husband is away working will tend, however, to develop a particular link with the male head of some household, her own kinsman usually, except in the case of a labour migrant's wife, when it may be a kinsman of her husband. Thus in Epalanga, Augusto (25) aided the household of his absent full brother Julio (29).

Aid is most likely to be given to a kinsman's wife when the two households are close together. The underlying idea seems to be to keep the kinsman's household together rather than any duty of aiding an affine. For a widow or divorced woman or the

[24] Childs, pp. 23-37.

[25] H. W. Newman (*A Modern Slavery*) gives a complicated story which suggests this possibility (p. 101).

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582 Another explanation, which I have quoted earlier, is that if one marries a kinswoman, one's children, when they grow up, will not leave, since they see 'a cross-cousin here, a cross-cousin there'.

All these reasons are no doubt to some extent valid. There are no fixed limits for bridewealth and no doubt some bride-
[583] wealths paid in a cross-cousin marriage are higher than some paid in marriages between non-kin; however, it is generally held that a kinsman is less demanding over the question of bridewealth than a non-kinsman. There is some evidence that cross-cousin marriages are more stable than those with non-kinsfolk. The high proportion of cross-cousin marriages naturally leads to an individual tending, when considering the possibility of marriage, to think of his female kin, even though there is no individual girl whom he is expected to marry.

• 768 The custom of fining a man whose wife had died was noted among the Ovimbundu a hundred years ago by Ladislau Magyar; in recent times it seems to have disappeared from most of Umbundu country. Its survival in Gumba up to the last few years may be related to the links existing between Gumba and the northern non-Umbundu peoples, who apparently practise it to this day.

582 The last of the explanations given may be translated thus, 'Cross-cousin marriage means that the children will have the same individuals as both patrikin and matrikin. They will remain in their father's village, where he is living with his kin and will not be inclined to return to their matrikin.' This line of argument comes close to the 'observer' explanation previously offered that preferential marriage greatly increases the number of social relations within a neighbourhood. The Ovimbundu do not see this aspect of cross-cousin marriage, and this fits their
[629] lack of any 'model' of their own society as a whole, which is in turn a consequence of the rapid social change they have experienced. However, they do see cross-cousin marriage as increasing the number of ties which exist for an individual in his village and neighbourhood.

602 The diagrams and information contained in Chapter IV have already indicated how individuals are linked by marriage ties, and in Chapter VII the way in which brothers-in-law may

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could send food.' 'Perhaps your mother is dead, and she has to think of your father.' A man should not cook for himself in a village, by a rule of convention which has no sanction attached, although he may do so when away working.

Clearing fields, house-building, and thatching are men's work, as are brick-making, fishing, hunting, mat-making, sewing, and woodwork. Beer-brewing, cooking, maize-pounding, and water and firewood gathering are women's work. Men and women can work together in most forms of agriculture, sowing, hoeing, harvesting, feeding small stock and treating tobacco. The division of labour is based on ideas of what is natural and fitting, not on any sanctions, mystical or otherwise. Nor is the division always strictly observed. A man may fetch water if his wife is ill, or simply away visiting relatives, and I have seen an adolescent boy pounding out maize on a pounding-block.

A man should look after his sick wife. There is a song which is sung about the married couples of the village, each being named in turn, which tells how the husband went to the post and his wife climbed a tree to get some fruit down. She fell down and hurt herself and then wailed because there was nobody to look after her. A woman who is ill for some time will return to her kin to get better.

The husband does not attend his wife's funeral, but washes himself all over, and then has to lie down asleep, or as if sleeping, during the funeral. Grains of maize and other crops may be, but are not always, even at pagan funerals, thrown over a woman's coffin as it is taken to the cemetery. A man should leave his old home when his wife dies, although this rule is neglected nowadays, certainly by the owners of brick houses. After a year or two, a widower should *sita mesga*, pile up stones on his wife's grave, a duty which has behind it a vague mystical sanction of illness. The widow of a hunter should be buried beside her husband even though after his death she has married again.[17]

A widow may marry again about six months after the funeral. The exception to this is the *isabala*, the chief's main wife. Formerly, it was permitted for a widow to marry her husband's

[17] A case of this occurred during my stay.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

The Village Headman

622 The village headman (*Sekulu yimbo*) is in a very real sense the father of the villagers. Considering their relationship to him as shown by the survey of Ngendo, it is no surprise to find that to nearly all of the householders the headman is quite literally either 'father' (*tate*) or 'elder brother' (*kota*). The headman is literally the patriarch. He is also therefore the village priest. His compound is the only one in the village which has a spirit hut (*etambo*). [769] In this hut the elder prays to ancestral spirits and holds communion (*oku felevela*) with them. In case of need, he may spend an entire night or more so occupied, but he will often offer a prayer when he awakens during the night. This hut is also used as a store-room for possessions not used every day and here are kept the insignia of office. The elder may sleep in this hut at any time when he is not sleeping with one of his wives, and here also he may lodge respected guests.

622 The headman functions as a Justice of the Peace for the village.
692 The graver and more difficult cases are heard before the whole village on the dance-floor, while the simpler ones which require the attendance only of those concerned, together with their respective elders, are taken up either in the *onjango* or in the headman's own courtyard. Through all and in spite of all political and administrative changes, the village court of justice continues and will continue to function.

622 It is evident from the above that a headman may have much or
554 little to do in attending to the affairs of his village, depending on several factors, such as the number of the villagers, their attitudes and disposition toward each other, relations with neighbouring villages, the demands made upon the village by the authorities, &c. However numerous may be his 'official duties', he will still find some time to attend to his own affairs, whether he be a farmer, a hunter, or a trader. In former times and before he became village headman, Sikillé was a trader and caravan leader (*ofumbelo*, Portuguese: *pombeiro*), and made many trips to the regions of Ngangela. As a headman he returned to farming and although he seemed to be quite old at the time of my visits, he had a creditable little plot of tobacco. It may be of interest to note that only the headman may speak of the village as 'my village' (*imbo kange*). The heads of the little wards may speak thus possessively only of

29

advancement, will go to the head of their olsina to ask for his intercession with the spirits.[1] 613

As legal head of the village, the *sekulu yimbo* presides over both the more serious cases, which are held before the whole village on the dance-floor, and the simpler ones, which require the attendance only of those concerned, together with their respective elders, and may be taken up either in the *onjango* or in the headman's own courtyard. Hambly seems to suggest that all the section-heads act with the village headman as a kind of council, but does not give details. He states also that the olosekulu (sing. *sekulu*) of the village formerly had charge of trials for murder, theft, adultery, and arguments over land,[2] and points out that they were more active in the legal system than the chiefs.[3] This is even more true today, when the village court of justice continues to function in spite of political and administrative changes, although the offices of chiefs and to some extent of sub-chiefs have largely decayed. 622 623 691 [m]

Other functions of the village headman include: the distribution of land to the various families when new village sites are opened;[4] the direction of the communal fire-hunts;[5] and, today, the collecting of taxes from the villagers and the direction and organisation of labour to work on the roads.[6] But however numerous the headman's official duties, he usually finds some time to attend to his own affairs, whether he is a farmer, hunter, or trader.[7] 622 423 651 466 [463]

Succession to headmanship is usually from father to son or from elder to younger brother, "with only as much recognition of primogeniture as belongs to the general ... hierarchy of age."[8] Succession is, however, affected by the "democratic" tendencies in succession to chieftainship.[9] 622 693

The Chief (ossoma or sova)[10]

The Ovimbundu are grouped in 22 chiefdoms, of which half were in the past generally tributary to the more powerful chiefs.[11] At the same time each chiefdom had its separate government and could be considered as a unit in itself. Effective European occupation and direct rule have atrophied the chiefly office among the Ovimbundu, until today chiefs survive as little more than "living museum pieces".[12] Childs[13] enumerates the functions of the chiefly office as follows: 631 643 [177]

(a) *Religious.* The chief's ancestral spirits were the principal chiefdom deities, and the king was high-priest as well as the visible "vice-regent and incarnation" of the spirits. 643 773 769

(1) Childs, personal communication.
(2) The national *sunda* is responsible for settling disputes over property which occur within the olsina. (Hambly op.cit., p.390).
(3) Ibid. (4) Ibid.
(5) Cardoso, op.cit., p.115. (6) Ibid., p.121.
(7) Childs, op.cit., p.50. (8) Ibid., p.46.
(9) Ibid.
(10) Ossoma means chief or king. Sova is the personalized form used with the name. This the Portuguese writers have corrupted into ossa or soba. (Childs, personal communication)
(11) See above, p.2.
(12) Childs, op.cit., p.50. (13) Ibid.

FFD 643 769 782 regent and incarnation" of the spirits. Sacrifices were made at the royal shrine or *kokoloto* ("at the skulls"), where the skulls of past chiefs were kept, in order to:-

[372] (i) control the elements i.e. to ensure a sufficient supply of rain and avoid the dangers caused by storm; also to control fire by providing a new fire ceremonially kindled[1] from which everyone took his fire.

[842] [841] (ii) to ensure fertility, towards which the royal marriage had great influence. The queen's special province was agriculture and her kitchen was sanctified by human sacrifice to guarantee the national food supply. Ceremonially treated seed was distributed to be mixed with the seed of each granary.

643 648 721 [701] (b) *To represent the country in its external relations*, principally to make trade agreements with other chiefs, or to make war on other peoples in order to get tribute and plunder. The war leader *(Kerongo)* has his own residence entirely separate from that of the king, whom he must not meet face to face except on certain ceremonial occasions.[2] Each king must inaugurate his reign with a war, during which or after which he must ceremonially "eat the old one" *(oku lio ekonge)* - who was usually a specially fattened slave cooked with the flesh of the principal animals commonly eaten.[3] [866]

643 692 (c) *To dispense justice.* The chief's court or *olusenje* was the supreme court of the chiefdom. The chief had the final word in any case, but most chiefs acted according to custom.

694 [892] (d) *To protect himself and the chiefdom*, the chief could use "magic" (?) which might have been accounted witchcraft or murder if practised without authority: e.g. the ritual murder of a pregnant woman, or of the children whose lives were required for building and furnishing the queen's kitchen.

643 791 (e) The chief made much use of divination in order to carry out his office. For this purpose he had his own diviner *(citue coonu)*, who was of the blood royal; but he also consulted diviners of other regions and types.

643 Succession to chiefship is in the male line,[4] from father to son, elder brother to younger brother or brother's son, or sometimes to one more distantly related. The election is made by the councillors whose duty it is (?), ordinarily before the old chief's death is announced. These same councillors may depose an unpopular chief, and there have been many such depositions. This "democratic" tendency of the Ovimbundu has been noted by most writers. Childs points out that it is attested by the fact that a chief (formerly as well as today) works in his own fields, and by folk-tales which give incidental and intimate pictures of petty details in the lives of the chiefs. [692]

(1) See above, p.26.
(2) In Bailundu he, with certain other officials, was of the stock of slaves of the state *(ovindili viocoos)*.
(3) Childs, p.21. Many early writers refer to the cannibalism of the "Jagas" or "Imbangalas" who are thought to have been the Ovimbundu chiefs. (See above, p.6, and also Lacerda and Roversteio, quoted by Childs, pp.177f.)
(4) But inheritance is said to follow a different line among chiefs from among commoners; possibly inheritance is also in the maternal line. See Childs p.18.

+ See footnote 1, p. 21

A man slave might become a blacksmith or a hunter, although his work was always for his master. He was also required to fight for his master in case of war.(1) 567

RELIGION AND MAGIC

Information on Umbundu religion and magic is very slight, being practically confined to a few items collected by Hambly from his Umbundu interpreter,(2) and a more coherent article by Tucker, primarily on divination.(3) 771

THE SUPREME BEING

Suku, the Supreme Being, is thought of as the creator of mountains, rivers, sky and human beings.(4) His attributes have not been described. 776

CONCEPTS OF SPIRIT(5)

The body *(etimba)* is thought of as having ceumyo (breath or life), and containing the *ocililemba* (spirit or soul). The *ocililemba* is visible in a person's shadow in the daytime, and during sleep it has adventures of its own, which it reports to the sleeper through dreams *(olonjoi)*. At death it leaves the body, but lingers nearby, accompanying the body to the interment, still in the form of a shadow. It then becomes an *ocilulu* (ghost), and may wander where it pleases. Sometimes it may be seen passing with superhuman swiftness through the village, uttering weird cries or calling pigs or chickens as the person used to do while alive. It chooses one of the households as a home, and indicates its wish to stay there by causing illness among the householders. The victim when he has learned the cause of his illness from the diviner places himself in a favourable condition to receive the spirit by performing a ceremony which includes going into a trance.(6) When this ceremony has been performed the *ocilulu* (ghost) becomes an *ondele*, which appears to be a generic name for ancestral (and other?) spirits. It is not clear from Tucker's description whether the relatives of the deceased always wait for this intimation of the wish of the *ocilulu* for a home, or whether the ceremonies may sometimes be performed immediately after death. Nor does she give any information regarding the relatives with whom the *ocilulu* usually chooses to live. She states that spirits of paternal ancestors are less feared than those of maternal ancestors, for while the former are usually satisfied with a hunt, a beer-drinking and a feast held in their honour, the latter are malignant and may "eat" children and occasionally adults also. 774 775 [787] [788]

The *ohamba* (sing. *ehamba*) "are the peaceful spirits of ancestors of long ago, who have already had the trance ceremony performed for them, and thus have a home and ... standing in the other world". (Tucker does not indicate how much time must pass before a spirit becomes a *ohamba*.(7)) 789

(1) Hambly, 1934, p.356.
(2) Op.cit., chap.IX.
(3) 1940.
(4) Hambly, op.cit., p.362.
(5) Based on Tucker, op.cit. unless otherwise stated.
(6) Tucker does not describe this ritual.
(7) It may be noted that among the Ngangela peoples to the east, the *ombuaba* are the forms taken by ancestral spirits when they wish to harass their descendants. See McCulloch 1951, p.75.

769 They intimate their wishes to their descendants only through slight illness, usually asking for honour to be paid to them by a feast, or by some descendant carrying on their profession.

Osande is the spirit of the much-honoured founder of the family,[1] and is always beneficent, bringing good fortune and warning his descendants of danger. Hambly and Tucker agree that *Ekisi* is the same kind of
776 spirit as *Osande* (although Hambly does not give *Osande* this special mean-
769 ing). Tucker writes that *Ekisi* is a benevolent spirit who calls the villagers together at night, and gives them advice through a medium (?), whom he enters without the latter's going into the usual trance. *Kandundu* according to Tucker is an *ekisi* who holds the leading position among the
[778] ancestral spirits owing to his seniority. Hambly describes a shrine to *Kandundu* at Bailundu; anyone who sees the contents of the shrine is supposed to become blind. He writes that *Kandundu* is thought of as "the spirit of dreaming who makes swellings on the body", but gives no further explanation. According to Tucker *Kandundu* is an especially powerful *ondele*, and ceremonies performed for him have many distinctive features.

224 *Huvi*, the spirit of the hunt, has his own shrine and priest in the
776 village of the (paramount?) chief. His hut is very large, since all the
778 meat of the hunts is placed in it. In front of it dances are held, and poles are decorated with skulls and other trophies of hunting. Before the door there is a carved figure of *Samaba*, the spirit who chases the game towards the hunter. A man whose ritual name is *Kapila*, and a woman called *Kuanja*[2] are in charge of the spirit-hut of *Huvi*, and make supplication to him for success in hunting. Hunters living elsewhere but in
[553] an *ombala* or head village do not have persons bearing these ritual names, but their dogs are often called *Huvi*, *Samaba*, *Kapila* or *Kuanja*.

775 The most dreaded spirits are the *otulopokopoko*, who may be spirits
754 of still-born babies or foetuses, mental defectives, maltreated slaves, or persons, especially children, killed by sorcery. When a person has been found guilty of killing a child by sorcery or witchcraft, he is sentenced to "restore life" to it, which he does by substituting for it a child from his own family: if the deceased child is a girl, he must give an ox as well. The child is treated with great respect by his new family. If however the parents do not ask the sorcerer or witch for restitution, the child becomes an *okulupokopoko*, and may return to "eat" other children, at the command of the sorcerer who has killed it.

RITUAL

793 It has been noted that the village headman acts as priest for the
613 *olume*, the group of paternally-related persons who form the basis of the village group, while the head of the *olume* acts as priest for his dispersed, maternally-related group.[3] There is little detailed information on the religious duties of these priests. Cashman[4] describes the village headman as making public prayers each morning to Suku. Childs however points out[5] that it is more usual for the headman to spend a

(1) i.e. of either the *olume* or the *olume*. (Childs, personal communication)
(2) According to Childs, (1949, p.21) *Kuanja* is a hunting goddess.
(3) See above, p.29.
(4) 1948, p.51. (5) Personal communication.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

The foregoing facts, when compared with field work among the Ovimbundu, indicate that the old culture of the Congo and northern Angola bears a strong resemblance to Umbundu culture at the present day. A more detailed analysis of this resemblance is made in chapter X. 174

The following notes dealing with exploration in Angola (1800–1930) are adduced for critical comparison with my own observations among the Ovimbundu. 175 171

The work of Sir R. F. Burton describing the exploration of Lacerda and other Portuguese pioneers, is more useful for geographical than for ethnological information. Lacerda's journey to Czambe, south of Lake Moero, was performed in 1798. A mention of veneration for the dead and consultation of the deceased on all occasions of war or of good fortune, is made (p. 127). These are important points in the present tribal life of the Ovimbundu. [114] [769]

Bowditch (1824) writes from information given to him by Almeida and Saldanha. There are valuable references to the Vacilenge, a people adjacent to the Ovimbundu, who refused to kill their cattle, "rather than do which they will endure famine to extremity." This note was made about Long. 15° E. and Lat. 15° S. (p. 34). The cattle were milked, and cattle-raiding by the Ovimbundu was common at this time. Many present-day Ovimbundu do not milk their cattle, but the Vacilenge still follow their milking custom observed before 1824. 175 101 234

Livingstone's journey through northeast and northern Angola in 1853 contains references to the Vachokue who seemed bent on plunder (I, p. 370). Livingstone noted cotton spinning, which I recorded as an occupation of males of the Ovimbundu at Elende. Livingstone, like other early travelers, encountered caravans of Bihéans (Ovimbundu) bearing elephants' tusks and beeswax, commodities, which, along with slaves, formed the chief merchandise of these caravans from the Benguela Highlands (p. 466). Livingstone notes and sketches (Plate XIII, Fig. 10) the double-handled hoe (p. 442) which is still used. 175 171 [439] [412]

J. J. Monteiro (I, p. 61) saw the poison ordeal administered. The poison itself was prepared from the thick hard bark of a large tree (*Erythrophlaeum guineense*). The place of observation was Mongue Grande, just south of the Congo estuary, and again Monteiro was present when the poison cup was given to two women at Ambrizette. Of this ordeal there is more to be said when discussing the culture contacts of the Ovimbundu, because the ordeal is a basic factor of [695] [829]

535 Almost every evening one may hear the tapping of drums an the songs of dancers, because in addition to dances for a funeral o other special occasion there are ordinary dances of amusement i which lines of men and women advance and retreat, or men an women circle round the drums making arm movements accom panied by a swaying rhythm.

[243] The dance *onyoco*, performed in June when the corn is ripe, ma have an ancient history and special significance as part of an agri cultural rite. When corn is being stored the people sing, "There i grain in the house, may it never be out." There is no dance i [226] connection with fishing.

224 There is mimicry of animals in the hunting game played by boy The frog, the leopard, and other animals are imitated in certai games, but I have no evidence of the performance of mimetic dance in relation to any cult for increasing the supply of animal life.

535 The use of the small ball *ombunje* illustrates the way in whic [534] an apparent toy can be used in rites of a religious kind. *Ombunj* consists of a hard spherical fruit about six centimeters in diameter in which several hard seeds rattle. The sphere is covered with layer of cloth over which lizard skin is stretched and sewn.

[769] When the people wish to commemorate the death of a king, o [789] when the king is sick, the medicine-man (*ocimbunda*) says that ther must be *ceaka* dancing. A strong man dances for many hours whil holding this little ball in his outstretched hand. Other men who ar dancing use their fists to hit the muscles of the outstretched arm i an attempt to make the holder drop the ball (*ombunje*). If he doe so another man will promptly take hold of it. The precise nature o the endurance test is unexplained, but there is possibly the idea o giving strength to a sick king by this tension and endurance. My interpreter thought this was so, but could not explain why the danc should be performed to commemorate the death of a king. It woul seem natural, however, to transfer the *ombunje* rite to a commemora- tive festival, if in the first place it was part of the last rites of dying king.

534 There are among the Ovimbundu specialists in dancing, singing, 463 and the playing of musical instruments. *Osjimbi* is the word fo a singer of merit who starts the choruses. *Ocili* is a dancer of mor than ordinary skill. When a man is required to play a drum or othe instrument I have noticed that it is thought necessary to bring a specialist. There is no doubt that drumming requires special aptitude and practice. The man who plays the long drum is *usiki*, the drum

MEDICINE-MEN

756 When a medicine-man dies the people call in another medicine-
766 man to take charge of the ceremonies. The corpse is tied in a sitting posture, which is the attitude for burial. His charms are attached to his body and in this position they remain in the grave. The head ornament *osala*, which may be feathers, quills of the porcupine, or hair from a goat's beard, is placed upright on the head and fastened by a band under the chin (Plate XXIII, Fig. 2). The corpse is kept in a seated position lashed to a stool for three days. There is no coffin.

The corpse is carried in the posture described to the grave which is dug at a cross-path. The corpse of a medicine-man is questioned in the same manner as that employed in interrogating the corpse of a commoner. When the corpse is placed in its grave the medicine-men, some of them from a distance, dance because they have "spirit in their heads." The medicine-men shake their heads while dancing, and without pausing each eats a living chicken that he carries in his hand. At the side of the grave, a dog, a chicken, and a goat are killed. No part of the flesh is buried; it is consumed by those present at the funeral.

A sleeping mat is placed in the grave, and on the mound of earth are placed horns filled with medicine, and skins which used to hang from the waist of the medicine-man when he was performing. The rain-making charms are not buried in the grave, because their interment would cause the rainfall to diminish; the charms may, however, be placed on the outside of the grave. No food is placed in or on the grave. The mound of earth is painted with a human male figure. When a new medicine-man is making medicine or performing ceremonies he uses the name of a deceased medicine-man.

756 It is thought that the dead medicine-man has spirits which he is able to send to earth. No images of the medicine-man are made. Medicine-men visit the grave at night in order to take parts of the corpse to include in their medicine. At Caconda in western Angola I obtained the outfit of a medicine-man who included in his equipment two small hoe blades which he used for disinterring the dead. There was a portion of human tibia in the basket and a round stone pounder for pulverizing bone along with other ingredients.

The funeral rites of a medicine-woman are the same as those of
[768] a medicine-man except that medicine-women carry the corpse. An *ocoma* ("king") or a *sekulu* ("chief") will visit the grave of a medicine-man to ask for rain or other favors.

KINGS AND CHIEFS

A chief (village headman) is buried in a specially constructed enclosure in the village over which he ruled (Plate XLV, Fig. 2). The mausoleum is a small hut with a substantial wooden door which is surrounded by a strongly built wooden fence ten feet high. 766 643

I was taken inside a tomb in the capital of Ngalangi, where the king showed the interior of his burial place of kings. There were four mounds of earth, each of which covered the body of a king, and a little distance away were the graves of the principal wives. The hut contained pottery and gourds; also a small fire, which is replenished by an attendant who must not allow it to be extinguished.

Ngonga says that the burial chamber at Elende contains the head of the chief in a box. After one year from the time of burial the box containing the head is opened in order that a libation of beer may be poured over it. Sometimes the head is anointed with palm oil and a new band of cloth is added. These attentions are paid to the head in time of sickness and drought. If the head shows signs of desiccation an ox is killed in order to provide a new piece of skin in which the head is sewn. The tomb is visited by men who come to ask for good fortune when they are departing for a journey to the interior, and these supplicants are led to the tomb by the ruling chief. Near the burial place of the *sekulu* ("village headman") at Elende there was the house of bows (Plate XLVI, Fig. 1), which is typical of several seen in different parts of Angola. These repositories always contain staffs, bows, arrows, sleeping mats, and possibly other articles which belonged to the dead. 769 643 769

The corpse of a king is suspended from the top of the burial hut by a rope which is tightly fastened round his neck. That the king has died is not admitted and the announcement states that "the king has a cold in his head." The head of a specially selected family twists the rope until the head is severed. The twisting is carried out gradually, a little each day, so that a week or more is required for severance. In former times the head was detached by twisting only, but at present a knife is used to hasten the friction of the rope. When the body of the king has fallen into the basket placed underneath to receive it, the people may say that the king is dead and mourning begins. 766 [763] 643

Judging by the arrangement seen at the *ombala* of Ngalangi the bodies are buried in a hut constructed as a burial place for kings, but Ngonga states that the older method was cave burial. The body

766 643 of a dead king would in former times be taken at night by chiefs and interred in one of the caves which are numerous in the rugged hills of the Benguela Highlands. The burial posture for a king is the same as that described for a medicine-man. The severed head is eventually kept in a box, but primarily both head and body are buried, though in separate places. At the end of a year the head is dug up and transferred to its casket.

765 643 Mourning for a king lasts for seven days, during which his children and wives wear strips of oxhide on their left wrists. The village chiefs gather to choose a king from the "blood of kings," though "sometimes a bad man will make himself king without waiting to be chosen." The choice should be in favor of the oldest son of the chief wife, "but if she has stupid sons, a son of another wife of the king will be chosen."

769 643 Sometimes during drought chiefs and their wives go to the grave of a chief where they say, "If you are angry tell us what you want. If you want an ox we will kill one." If they visit the tomb of a king, the king's corpse is asked, "Do you want a new box for your head? We will make one." The oldest chief takes from the tomb the box which contains the head. This is slung on a pole supported on the shoulders of two boys. The head is then questioned in the way described for the funeral of a commoner. The oldest chief offers a sacrifice, if such procedure is demanded by a forward swing of the pole which supports the casket containing the king's head.

768 643 The house is not burned after a death has occurred within, but it is still customary to take down the surrounding fence and to build a new one. The house in which death took place is then used as before. I was informed at the capital of Ngalangi, and by the king himself, that he must continue to use the house of former kings until the structure collapses. No repair work may be done; consequently the house was in a dilapidated condition. Some months after receiving this account at Elende I was in Moxico, several hundred miles away, and learned that at Cangamba the custom of severing the head of a king by suspension and friction prevails in the manner described above.

HUNTERS

224 766 While traveling in the district of Ganda, likewise in the Vasele country in the hinterland of Novó Redondo, one cannot fail to notice the presence of rock tombs (*ombilia* or *osonje*) which are mausoleums of hunters. These are invariably placed in commanding

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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kingdoms of the Ovimbundu, though more frequently perhaps it was made against the non-Umbundu peoples.[89]

The question of the influence of the trade provides interesting opportunities for comparison. The Ovimbundu were the southernmost of the peoples who in the nineteenth century participated in the trade between the Europeans of the West African coast and the peoples of the interior.[90] In some ways the Ovimbundu seem to have been less influenced by it than were some of the peoples further north. The Ovimbundu did not develop genuine patterns of urban life as in Dahomey or Benin.[91]

Three explanations can be offered for the relative failure of associational groups and urban society to develop. Umbundu crafts were much inferior to those found along the coast of the Gulf of Guinea; there was no indigenous weaving industry, for instance, and the goods which the caravans carried to the interior were all of European or American origin, cloths, guns, and rum.[92] For these goods the Ovimbundu were dependent on the Portuguese settled at the coast or in the Highland and this meant that the Ovimbundu were far from economic autonomy. Again the trade had a relatively short time span—the real boom period lasted only from 1886 to 1900, and earlier on in the 1840's when the beeswax, ivory, and slave trade was flourishing, the Ovimbundu had plenty of time for warfare.

It would, however, be a grave mistake to think that trade had only a marginal influence on Umbundu society. It has been suggested that the form of the double-descent system owes its origin to the necessity to isolate economic relations from other social fields. In the sphere of ritual, there are some remarkable copies of European practices—for instance the holding of a feast in honour of the ancestors at Christmas-time.[93] Many ritual concepts are related to the explanation of business

[89] For information on Umbundu warfare see Magyar, pp. 277–80 and Serpa Pinto, pp. 177–9.

[90] See Balandier, *Sociologie Actuelle de l'Afrique Noire*, Paris, 1955, for a discussion of social change in other areas which had experienced a trade of a similar sort.

[91] For Dahomey see M. J. Herskovits, *Dahomey*, New York, 1938. For Benin see R. Bradbury, *The Benin Kingdom* (Ethnographic Survey of Africa), London, 1957.

[92] Childs, p. 206.

[93] Informants.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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does not give them any claim to financial assistance from the 634
people, or control over natural resources, such as land rights. 622
The only prerogative of this sort that the chief has is the right to the leg of an antelope killed in a hunt or a bull killed in a commemoration rite—and this is of symbolic rather than economic importance.

Nor, finally, does the post give the chiefs prestige and 648
support.[11] Five successive chiefs of Gumba had been deposed 634
by the post, and it is not uncommon for chiefs and government 622
headmen to be beaten or otherwise punished (for instance by being made to work for a fortnight at the post) for their shortcomings. They have in fact just sufficient power to carry out the commands of the *chefe* and to do nothing more. They are not disliked by the local people for doing what the *chefe* tells them to do, but any attempt at dictatorial behaviour on their part will stir up opposition which may lead to their downfall.

The relations between white *chefe* and black chief vary 648
according to individuals and neighbourhoods. Sometimes the 634
chefe will allow the chief to be chosen according to tradition; at other times he will impose a candidate of his own. A *chefe* may hear any cases that are brought to the post, or he may delegate the power of hearing minor cases to the chiefs. Some *chefes* will regard the chiefs with hostility as being enemies of their own people; others will abstain under any circumstances from beating a chief, as they feel their power should be supported. Here I describe the situation as it was in Gumba and in Bimbe generally.

A visit to a chief's village in Gumba or elsewhere will give an 634
opportunity of meeting those residents who hold the ministerial 178
titles, of gazing under overshadowing trees at the enclosure in 769
which are kept the skulls of former chiefs, and perhaps of seeing the chief and some of his cronies dance to a drum in commemoration of one of his predecessors. Ministers, skulls, dances, and drum are symbols of chiefly nostalgia rather than of political power. The ceremonies have little interest for the people in general, and many of them have been abandoned by the chief. Lusase's first wife had not, as custom demanded,

[11] For criticism of this policy by two Portuguese with administrative experience see Galvão and Selvagem, p. 213.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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become *inakulu* (queen) because she feared the unpleasant haunting by the spirits of former queens which is traditionally experienced by the holder of this office.[12] On one occasion Lusase himself offered to let me into the *akokoto* (the enclosure where the skulls of dead chiefs were kept) for the payment of five or ten escudos (1s. 3d. or 2s. 6d.) although the entry of anybody except the chief and possibly certain of his courtiers appears traditionally to have been forbidden under the penalty of death sent by the spirits. Even the surviving rites are confined to the chief's village; the first-fruits ceremony in which the whole chiefdom was involved disappeared a number of years ago. The association general in Umbundu country between the chiefs and paganism does not provide an added ritual sanction to the chief's power, but rather links him with what is felt to be a dying past, essentially unimportant, at the present day.

The chief may also have some of his time occupied with hearing cases. A good many minor disputes are solved by local adjudication, but there seems to be no specific division between cases that ought to come to the chief and those which can be arbitrated by somebody else. Elders from outside a chiefdom may be invited to adjudicate on a particular case. The old formality of legal procedure has largely disappeared, probably because all disputes at a local level can be carried to the post—hence any ruling by chief or elders is essentially dependent on its acceptance by the disputants.

Accusations of sorcery are rather different from other cases since the post does not believe them, although such an accusation is not in itself punishable. Sometimes suspected sorcerers are accused at the post of 'poisoning'.[13] Lusase told me that convicted sorcerers were fined a chicken, a goat and a pig. Gregorio, the chief of Menga, at first said, when I asked about this, that it was not possible to know who was a sorcerer. When, rather to his surprise, I mentioned the traditional basket test, he agreed and explained that people convicted by this test were sent as labourers to the post to satisfy whatever demand was being made for workers.

[12] Informants. See also Hastings, p. 49.

[13] Childs, p. 58.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

generally more resistant than those whom we know to-day. Some of the imported diseases have probably been with the Ovimbundu since they first encountered Europeans, others are more recent, but all seem to be more deadly to Africans than to Europeans. This is especially true of the lung complaints, against which the Ovimbundu have little resistance, and the manner of their life makes tuberculosis very difficult to check.

Diseases native to the region also constitute a great problem, notably malaria in its several forms, leprosy, bilharzia, yaws, goitre, nutritional diseases, &c. The medical staffs of the government services and of the missions are well aware of the magnitude of the problem. The resources at their command, however, are terribly inadequate. It is urgently necessary that resources be found and made available.

Religious Development. Before bringing this historical survey to a close it is necessary to take note of certain developments with regard to religion. It was noted in passing that representatives of the ruling families had, on occasion, returned to the lands of their exodus to worship their ancestors at the ancient shrines. From this it is evident that the ancestors of the ruling families became the gods of the kingdoms over which they ruled. The commoners kept their own ancestral deities, family by family. Special cults of various sorts have grown up. From the texts of a hundred to a hundred and fifty years ago it is evident that many of the religious practices of the Ovimbundu were then similar to those which are observed at the present time. Some practices described in those texts, on the other hand, seem to have ceased or to have been altered beyond recognition. The very presence of the Europeans must have affected the rites and their observance, for their attitudes, whether of approval or of disapproval, registered over so long a period, must have produced some effect.[1] Degrees of intensity of this European contact, varying from region to region, must have had their influence in the development of regional differences. Some such differences have been noted.[2]

[1] Battell records that the 'Jagas' would not let him witness certain rites. Pinheiro de Lacerda, writing in 1797, says that he burned more than one hundred *oratorios* called *chacapombo* (*Annaes Mar. e. Col.*, 1845, p. 491).

[2] W. H. Sanders put down to their closer contact with Europeans the fact that the king's councillors of Viye were not 'a very dignified set. . . . They seemed to have none of that decorum which prevails among the head men of Bailundu' (*Missionary Herald*, 1886, p. 143).

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

The field of Umbundu reactions to cultural influences is a wide and an important one. Whatever contact the Ovimbundu or their progenitors may have had with the early Roman Catholic missions, little impress seems to have been made. The cross has been adopted as an object used in divination. Certain rites *seem* superficially to resemble the procession with the Host, but there is no indication of the assimilation of any ethical or conceptual element from Christianity during the early or formative period.[1]

Christianity first came to the Ovimbundu with the arrival of three missionaries at Bailundu in March 1881.[2] This was during the reign of Ekuikui and proved to be not the least important event of that reign. It is not within the scope of this study to give a history of the work of this Mission.[3] Its inception was planned as carefully as the times permitted, and although its subsequent development did not always proceed according to plan, its progress on the whole has been of an orderly nature, and it has produced noteworthy results which have been evaluated by deputations, by commissions, and by other visitors from time to time.[4]

The amount of interdenominational co-operation achieved in this field is worthy of note. There are the missions of the

[1] There were missions of the Jesuits, Capuchins, Carmelites, &c., in Angola from 1575 until about 1800, and there were priests as chaplains of the various presídios visited by the Ovimbundu during most of their history. Major Artur de Paiva, writing in 1890 (see *Boletim Soc. Geog. Lisboa*, 1895, p. 15 f.), describes the ruins of a Roman Catholic mission which he found in Cingolo (*Quingolo*) and which he judged to have dated from the end of the eighteenth century. I have found no reference in any historical work to the founding or operation of such a mission. It may have been built about 1770 when Governor Souza Coutinho ordained a number of towns in the Benguela hinterland, but the absence of specific reference to it seems to indicate that its existence was short.

[2] Messrs. Bagster, Sanders, and Miller sent out by the A.B.C.F.M. (Boston) to inaugurate a mission in Bihe, for that region was well known from the reputation of its traders, while Bailundu and other Umbundu regions had scarcely been heard of.

[3] For a brief summary of the early years see Strong, *The Story of the American Board*, pp. 336 ff.; also two articles in vol. 126 (1930) of the *Missionary Herald*, pp. 424-9; J. T. Tucker, *Drums in the Darkness*, gives a historical treatment of the work of this mission.

[4] There have been two 'deputations' sent to the West Central Africa Mission, in 1911 and in 1930, reports of which were issued by the A.B.C.F.M. Secretaries have visited the mission in 1924, '28, '30, '34, '38, and '46, and have given their impressions either in the *Missionary Herald* or in the *United Church Record and Missionary Review*. The report of the African Education Commission dealt with the work of this mission (T. J. Jones, *Education in Africa*, pp. 40, 239 f., 245 ff.). Among visitors who have written of this work see Nevinson, op. cit., chap. 7; J. Johnston, op. cit., chaps. 2, 3, and 4.

A man slave might become a blacksmith or a hunter, although his work was always for his master. He was also required to fight for his master in case of war.[1] 567

RELIGION AND MAGIC

Information on Umbundu religion and magic is very slight, being practically confined to a few items collected by Hambly from his Umbundu interpreter,[2] and a more coherent article by Tucker, primarily on divination.[3] 771 ●

THE SUPREME BEING

Suku, the Supreme Being, is thought of as the creator of mountains, rivers, sky and human beings.[4] His attributes have not been described. 776

CONCEPTS OF SPIRIT[5]

The body *(etimba)* is thought of as having omunyo (breath or life), and containing the ocililemba (spirit or soul). The ocililemba is visible in a person's shadow in the daytime, and during sleep it has adventures of its own, which it reports to the sleeper through dreams *(olonjoi)*. At death it leaves the body, but lingers nearby, accompanying the body to the interment, still in the form of a shadow. It then becomes an ocilolo (ghost), and may wander where it pleases. Sometimes it may be seen passing with superhuman swiftness through the village, uttering weird cries or calling pigs or chickens as the person used to do while alive. It chooses one of the households as a home, and indicates its wish to stay there by causing illness among the householders. The victim when he has learned the cause of his illness from the diviner places himself in a favourable condition to receive the spirit by performing a ceremony which includes going into a trance.[6] When this ceremony has been performed the ocilolo (ghost) becomes an ombolo, which appears to be a generic name for ancestral (and other?) spirits. It is not clear from Tucker's description whether the relatives of the deceased always wait for this intimation of the wish of the ocilolo for a home, or whether the ceremonies may sometimes be performed immediately after death. Nor does she give any information regarding the relatives with whom the ocilolo usually chooses to live. She states that spirits of paternal ancestors are less feared than those of maternal ancestors, for while the former are usually satisfied with a hunt, a beer-drinking and a feast held in their honour, the latter are malignant and may "eat" children and occasionally adults also. 775 [777] [781]

The ombolo (sing. ombolo) "are the peaceful spirits of ancestors of long ago, who have already had the trance ceremony performed for them, and thus have a home and ... standing in the other world". (Tucker does not indicate how much time must pass before a spirit becomes a ombolo.[7]) 767

(1) Hambly, 1934, p.194.
(2) Op.cit., chap.IX.
(3) Op.cit., chap.IX.
(4) Hambly, op.cit., p.363.
(5) Based on Tucker, op.cit. unless otherwise stated.
(6) Tucker does not describe this ritual.
(7) It may be noted that among the Ngangela peoples to the east, the ombolo are the forms taken by ancestral spirits when they wish to harass their descendants. See McCulloch 1951, p.71.

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Among direct educational forces are the home training given by parents and the mutual responsibility of children and their mother's brother, whose reciprocal obligations have been explained. Family life is undeniably an important institution whose power is by no means suppressed by the strength of the village community and tribal organization. 867

Initiation, which may or may not coincide with puberty, is perhaps the most potent direct influence in formation of character and the inculcation of principles tending to tribal solidarity. Formerly warfare and hunting were more important than they are today, consequently initiation rites imposing hardship and emphasizing the importance of concerted action, had a greater social value than they have at present. 867 881

Formal instruction in industries such as iron-working, or professional hunting, indicates one aspect of occupational training. In these instances there are apprenticeship and an initiatory rite. All children are, however, subject to an indirect industrial education through the agency of play, while a few, according to desire and aptitude, become experts in some particular occupation. 874 [868]

At all times the force of suggestion is at work in the home, in the men's council house, and through everyday observation of the conduct of elders. Probably folklore stories also have an indirect educational value, because some of the fables show the desirability of courage, honesty, and foresight, at the same time deprecating cowardice, stupidity, and low cunning. 869

In chapter IX religious beliefs are discussed, and, in connection with these, standards of conduct are outlined. Although the Ovimbundu have a belief in a supreme being and creator (Suku), and although they believe in survival after death, there is no evidence to show that conduct and education are influenced by theological beliefs. Suku, who is vaguely conceived, is far away and uninterested. He issues no commands. Neither is there a belief in punishments and rewards after death. The standards of conduct are based on utilitarian principles which secure harmony and unity. 771 869 [776]

The efficiency of the direct and indirect educational forces of the Ovimbundu is attested by the history of the tribe. The indigenous system of education, supported by favorable environment, consolidated these people so that they became the dominating power in Angola. Moreover, their cohesion has been such that three centuries of European contacts have failed to eliminate all the basic elements of their tribal life. 177

775 suffers sickness or misfortune if an ancestral spirit dies a second death. A person who has had health says, "The spirit of my grandfather has been caught by *Esuvi*." The name of the good spirit *Osunde* is used by a person who is suffering. Such a one says, "I have no more *Osunde*." These instances clearly reveal a belief in the dependence of human welfare on the interest of benevolent ancestral spirits.

775 After a lapse of three months I asked Ngonga again about
791 *Osunde* and *Ondele*. He confirmed what he had previously said, but
753 spoke in the plural of these spirits; good spirits are called *Olosunde*, bad spirits are called *Olondele*. The medicine-man will visit a hut to foretell the future, and while there he puts a concoction in an image to which he addresses questions. He plugs his nostrils, then in a falsetto voice feigns answers from the image. The father of a family, or possibly the mother's brother, may kill an animal in front of the hut on this occasion. He then says to *Olosunde*, "We hope when
[161] we kill this there will be no more sickness." The Ovimbundu are afraid of death, and they therefore sacrifice to *Olosunde*, asking that there shall be no death in the family.

775 I do not know whether the Ovimbundu distinguish multiple souls as some Negro tribes do. The part of a man which does not die is sometimes called *utima*, which is the word for heart. Dr. M. W. Ennis says that the *utima* and the *omuenge* are both names of the spirit existing in a living body. Ngonga seems certain that every person irrespective of age, rank, and sex has a spirit, but I could find no evidence that the Ovimbundu visualize a separation
762 of ranks or sexes after death. When a man kills himself he is buried
775 near a river so that his spirit will go to the sea, and for the same reason a murdered man is buried near a river. At Ngalangi I inquired from other Ovimbundu people concerning suicide. Women who commit suicide generally do so by hanging or drowning. Men stab themselves in the heart or use a flintlock gun, the trigger of which they pull with their toes. It is feared that the spirit of a suicide will return to induce another suicide in the family, therefore there is anxiety to rid the community of these spirits.

RELIGIOUS BELIEFS AND CONDUCT

•771 The Ovimbundu have many high standards of conduct, some of
688 which have been mentioned in dealing with the education of children. There is, however, no idea of sin. That is to say, there are no commands laid down by some authority which is more than human.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

Nevertheless, the idea of crime is well developed, and there are many actions which are punishable because they contravene the laws of the tribe. Adultery is a crime on a par with theft; but adultery is not a sin. Suku, the supreme being, issues no commands. Ancestral spirits are concerned only with sacrifice and homage to themselves. There is no theory of punishment or reward in a future life according to conduct on earth. 771 688

Perhaps *ekandu* is the only word which could express sin. An Ocimbundu would say that murder is the chief *ekandu*. "*Ekandu* is to make anything have a bad time." To send a stranger along the wrong path is *ekandu*. It would be *ekandu* to throw an animal on the fire. It is *ekandu* if a man is guilty of fornication with his wife's sister. Such an act is said to be *ekandu* only if the wife's sister is visiting the house of the culprit. The male defaulter is regarded as blameless, but the people of the village from which the wife's sister came would be expected to pay the wronged wife. Sexual offences against young children are very serious. In fact the death penalty or banishment would be inflicted, and such offences are given by the Ovimbundu as examples of *ekandu*. 681 [684]

This subject of moral responsibility leads naturally into the question of laws and penalties. There are among the Ovimbundu well-defined moral codes and clearly formulated tribal laws which have been described in chapter VI. 671

FUNERAL RITES

COMMONERS

In the village of Cilema in the district of Elende I witnessed the funeral rites of a boy aged twelve years. When a few hundred yards from the village, I heard sounds of drumming coming from a secluded place in the tall grass. On reaching the clearing four drummers were seen, each of whom held a tubular drum between his legs; these drums were of different lengths. The man on the left of the drumming squad played with an up and down movement of his left hand only, to provide the bass tone. Other drummers played with the palms and fingers of both hands. Thirty feet from the drummers stood a group of women who always started the rhythm for the drums by clapping their hands, and the hand-clapping continued as an accompaniment for the drums. 764

Near-by, men were seated on the ground, while a large number of women walked about or sat on the ground chatting and smoking their pipes. The general impression was not one of solemnity.

R: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

I cannot find in the life of the Ovimbundu anything to support the opinion of W. C. Willoughby. This writer sees in the soul of every race an instinct for god that tells upon behavior, an upward urge that makes for betterment, due to the unwearied play of the spirit of god on the souls of man. The views of E. Torday and R. J. van Wing (Dualism in Western Bantu Religion and Social Organization, *J.R.A.I.*, XLVIII, p. 225) seem to be more applicable to the spiritual beliefs of the Ovimbundu.

The Ovimbundu have standards of conduct, codes of laws, crimes, and punishments. In addition to the *ekanda* (antisocial acts) already noted, *okembi* is a liar, *okusapa* means to be greedy, and such actions are deprecated; but there is no deistic injunction toward the virtues of truthfulness, hospitality, and fair dealing.

Standards of conduct and social values are preserved by the educational forces previously mentioned (chapter VII), and in addition to these there are such controls as trial by ordeal, and divination to detect guilt. The satirical song is also a form of correction, though its application may be antisocial, for instance in taunting the sexually impotent.

Music and dancing are adjuncts for the preservation of social customs and the stimulation of collective emotions on which cooperation depends. Music and dancing are also aids to magical practices. For example, a friction drum is played while a medicine-man carries out his divination with the basket, and vigorous drumming takes place during treatment of the sick. Music and dancing were again seen to be of importance at a funeral ceremony.

These instances, which are chosen from many of like kind reported in the foregoing chapters, serve to indicate an interrelationship among the main aspects of tribal life. I have endeavored to choose from personal experience those facts and incidents which illustrate the mutual dependence of language, folklore, proverbs, nature lore, food supply, and occupations.

The sexual division of labor, the connection of ceremonial with occupation, the relationship of the sexes, and the position of woman, have all been brought forward as examples of social controls.

The persistence of belief and custom despite foreign influences; the nature of government, including the psychology of prestige and leadership; spiritual beliefs; the training of children; and the value of music and dancing, have likewise been emphasized as coordinating

634 become *ikakala* (queen) because she feared the unpleasant
178 haunting by the spirits of former queens which is traditionally
769 experienced by the holder of this office.[18] On one occasion
[775] Lusase himself offered to let me into the *akakala* (the enclosure where the skulls of dead chiefs were kept) for the payment of five or ten escudos (1s. 9d. or 2s. 6d.) although the entry of anybody except the chief and possibly certain of his courtiers appears traditionally to have been forbidden under the penalty of death sent by the spirits. Even the surviving rites are confined to the chief's village; the first-fruits ceremony in which the
[796] whole chiefdom was involved disappeared a number of years ago. The association general in Umbundu country between
634 the chiefs and paganism does not provide an added ritual
● 771 sanction to the chief's power, but rather links him with what is felt to be a dying past, essentially unimportant, at the present day.

69 The chief may also have some of his time occupied with hearing cases. A good many minor disputes are solved by local adjudication, but there seems to be no specific division between cases that ought to come to the chief and those which can be arbitrated by somebody else. Elders from outside a chiefdom may be invited to adjudicate on a particular case. The old formality of legal procedure has largely disappeared, probably because all disputes at a local level can be carried to the post—hence any ruling by chief or elders is essentially dependent on its acceptance by the disputants.

75 Accusations of sorcery are rather different from other cases since the post does not believe them, although such an accusation is not in itself punishable. Sometimes suspected sorcerers are accused at the post of 'poisoning'.[19] Lusase told me that convicted sorcerers were fined a chicken, a goat and a pig. Gregorio, the chief of Menga, at first said, when I asked about this, that it was not possible to know who was a sorcerer. When, rather to his surprise, I mentioned the traditional basket test, he agreed and explained that people convicted by this test were sent as labourers to the post to satisfy whatever demand was being made for workers.

[18] Informants. See also Hastings, p. 43.
[19] Childs, p. 58.

IX. RELIGION

Supreme Being

776 Suku is the name of the most important dead person mentioned by the Ovimbundu. Ngonga says that Suku made mountains, rivers, sky, and people. The name Suku is known all over the great territory inhabited by the Ovimbundu. I have seen at the ombala of Ngalangi a small house of meditation where the king retires accompanied by an old woman. This retirement for communion with spirits of the dead takes place in time of drought, and a gourd filled with water is always kept in the house. In another village of the Ngalangi region I photographed a house of meditation for the king who retires for communion with spirits whenever he is troubled (Plate LXXXIX, Fig. 1). The painted marks on the door are said to be an indication to spirits that this is the king's house of meditation, but there is no reason for saying that the king communes with Suku.

The evidence regarding Suku was supplemented at Ngalangi by two Ovimbundu boys who agreed that Suku was very important. They associated Suku with rain; but the word *suku* does not mean rain, water, or food; these are expressed by *ombela*, *ovua*, and *okuhia*, respectively. I know of no meaning of the word *suku* which might assist in explaining the attributes of this respected spirit. Names of medicine-men are remembered and used but they are not associated with the name Suku. My informants at Ngalangi said that names of kings are sometimes coupled with the name Suku.

• 773 At Ngalangi an informant stated that in the beginning everything was water. A man dropped from above, caused land to appear, and began hunting. At the side of a stream he saw an animal that disappeared beneath the water. He was about to shoot when he saw that the animal was a person something like himself, yet different. He took the animal home, mated with it, and reared a family. This story is told also at Cilesa, about two hundred miles from Ngalangi. At Ngalangi I was informed that the first being was a calf with human attributes, who walked about on the rocks leaving mixed tracks of an animal and human kind, which may be seen to this day.

Survival after Death

775 787 There are ideas of reincarnation. Two Ballundu boys said that the lion was considered to be a powerful old man. If a lion is found dead divination is practised to discover the cause of death. If a

A man slave might become a blacksmith or a hunter, although his work was always for his master. He was also required to fight for his master in case of war.[1] 567

RELIGION AND MAGIC

Information on Umbundu religion and magic is very slight, being practically confined to a few items collected by Hambly from his Umbundu interpreter,[2] and a more coherent article by Tucker, primarily on divination.[3] 771

THE SUPREME BEING

Suku, the Supreme Being, is thought of as the creator of mountains, rivers, sky and human beings.[4] His attributes have not been described. 776

CONCEPTS OF SPIRIT[5]

The body *(etimba)* is thought of as having *omunyo* (breath or life), and containing the *ocilisuku* (spirit or soul). The *ocilisuku* is visible in a person's shadow in the daytime, and during sleep it has adventures of its own, which it reports to the sleeper through dreams *(olonjoi)*. At death it leaves the body, but lingers nearby, accompanying the body to the interment, still in the form of a shadow. It then becomes an *ocilulu* (ghost), and may wander where it pleases. Sometimes it may be seen passing with superhuman swiftness through the village, uttering weird cries or calling pigs or chickens as the person used to do while alive. It chooses one of the households as a home, and indicates its wish to stay there by causing illness among the householders. The victim when he has learned the cause of his illness from the diviner places himself in a favourable condition to receive the spirit by performing a ceremony which includes going into a trance.[6] When this ceremony has been performed the *ocilulu* (ghost) becomes an *ondele*, which appears to be a generic name for ancestral (and other?) spirits. It is not clear from Tucker's description whether the relatives of the deceased always wait for this intimation of the wish of the *ocilulu* for a home, or whether the ceremonies may sometimes be performed immediately after death. Nor does she give any information regarding the relatives with whom the *ocilulu* usually chooses to live. She states that spirits of paternal ancestors are less feared than those of maternal ancestors, for while the former are usually satisfied with a hunt, a beer-drinking and a feast held in their honour, the latter are malignant and may "eat" children and occasionally adults also. 774 ● 775 [787] [789]

The *ohambo* (sing. *ohambo*) "are the peaceful spirits of ancestors of long ago, who have already had the trance ceremony performed for them, and thus have a home and ... standing in the other world". (Tucker does not indicate how much time must pass before a spirit becomes a *ohambo*.[7]) 769

(1) Hambly, 1934, p.306.
(2) Op.cit., chap.IX.
(3) Ibid.
(4) Hambly, op.cit., p.262.
(5) Based on Tucker, op.cit. unless otherwise stated.
(6) Tucker does not describe this ritual.
(7) It may be noted that among the Ngangela peoples to the east, the *ochambo* are the forms taken by ancestral spirits when they wish to harass their descendants. See McCulloch 1951, p.72.

lion visits a village an old man talks to it through the palisade. 775
The conversation is carried on in a series of grunts, after which the 787
lion goes away. One of my informants said that "lions and leopards are watchdogs for old men who have died." When one of these animals kills a domestic animal or a person, the assumption is that the predatory animal was sent by a deceased old man who requires a sacrifice. Ngonga of Elende said that "when a lion killed a man it was a sign that there was a bad spirit from the man's family within the lion." There is divination to find who requires a sacrifice, since some ancestor has been neglected. W. C. Bell relates an Umbundu [114]
tale of a woman who changed herself into a wild animal, but I was not able to ascertain that belief in transformation is held today (*Jour. Amer. Folk-Lore*, XXXV, p. 129).

I am unable to prove that the Ovimbundu have definite ideas of the nature of a future life, but they certainly think of survival after death, and have clear concepts of good and bad spirits who influence the fortunes of the living. There is no idea of punishment or reward, but a bad man has a bad ghost which can do evil things. Spirits will follow their relations on earth; moreover, they will come to the house of bows where their property is preserved.

A man returning from a hunt with trophies, or from the collection of honey, will leave some of these on a grave. There is no idea [774]
of spirits in rivers and trees, but the first tree felled for building the house of a man of importance must not be allowed to fall violently. This may imply a belief in a tree-spirit.

Spirits move at night only and mentioning the dead by name or whistling at night calls spirits. There are many instances of sacrifice [712]
connected with the idea of a spirit who has to be appeased. The medicine-man can induce a spirit to enter an image of wood. Thus there are wooden images containing spirits useful to the blacksmith. [776]
There is an image which can show travelers the right path when the medicine-man consults it (Plate XXI, Figs. 3, 5).

Osonde is a good spirit who will "bring good luck and do good things for the people, while *Ondele* is a bad spirit who harms the people," said Ngonga. When a person is sick, mad, or dizzy he has *Ondele*. Only a powerful ocimbanda can cast out *Ondele*. *Ocilulu* is the general name for a disembodied spirit, either good or bad. An *Ekisi* is an *Osonde;* apparently the terms are synonymous.

A spirit can die a second time. There is, for instance, an evil 775
bird of the night whose name is *Esusi*. This bird is able to catch a spirit in order to make it die a second death. A living person

5: Hambly E-5 (1929-30) 1934 FP 13 Mbundu FP13

228 hollow chamber. I removed a thin slab of stone which formed an entrance
764 to a tomb of this kind and observed within two skeletons lying supine. On the top of the cairns were skulls of animals killed by the hunter. I noted one instance of the burial of a hunter's dog under a cairn of stones.

825 Three birds are protected by a prohibition. Esuvi is a bird which has
779 power to steal the souls of the dead, so making them die a second death. As usual, no direct explanation was given concerning this second death, but an explanation came later, quite fortuitously. For instance, an old man said he was sick because esuvi had stolen the spirit of his grandfather. This statement is logical, since welfare depends on a beneficent interest of dead ancestors, and it is evident that dying a second death prevents a spirit from exercising a benign influence over the living. Other protected birds are one which supplies feathers from which the decorations of kings and medicine-men are made, and one whose night cry is a warning of death in a village.

226 In fishing, a division of labor is recognized: men use a rod and line, while women drag baskets against the stream or use poison in slow, shallow water. The night before poison is to be used for fishing, husband and wife must avoid intercourse, since intimacy of this kind would make the fish stay together at the bottom of the river. A man who has prepared his rod and line, by transfixing a grasshopper and attaching it to a thin piece of bark,
[638] sings a song which is of the nature of a spell. He says:

> "O fish come and take your good thing.
> Do not send the little fish to spoil the good thing.
> Better you come and take the good thing with all your strength."

439 Up to half a century ago the Ovimbundu were renowned traders whose caravans penetrated deeply into the Congo region and even to the east side of Africa. It is natural, therefore, that some ritual should be connected with such an important enterprise. At the present day caravans may be seen, but
[443] these are local, and most of the carriers are found to be taking their maize, beans, and beeswax to traders' stores. I believe women did not accompany the transcontinental caravans of early days, but today women may be seen in line with the other carriers. Their loads are lighter, being on the average thirty pounds as compared with sixty pounds for a man. Children also carry small loads in the caravan.

439 Ngonga, my chief informant, said that in former times no caravan
987 leader would set out without having consulted the preserved head of a de-
[643] ceased king. Even at present the corpse of a king is suspended by the neck and twisted until the head is severed. The head is sewn in oxhide and preserved in a box. The ancient caravan custom consisted of taking the box

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

lated either to cause the spirits to pass him by or to facilitate his 553
cure. In adolescence young people discard the names with which they were born and name themselves (*oku lisapa*) according to their own choice. I have collected the explanations for about two hundred names.

The names of children are used, and that is one reason for 553
choosing them with care, for the name will be heard often by the 775
spirits. It is his superiors and those with whom he has respect-relationships whose names one may not pronounce. A child's name may be affected by whether there are recently deceased siblings, but he is not the reincarnation of such a one. Rather, he may reincarnate an ancestor. This is doubtless one reason for naming him after an ancestor. This, however, is a subject for treatment elsewhere.

The Period of Lying-in (*Ocitete*)[1]

'During lying-in the work of the mother is to cause the cord to 846
fall from the navel of her child. On the navel she rubs castor-bean charcoal mixed with palm oil, or palm oil mixed with ashes, or with the soot from burning a sleeping-mat of reeds. A chicken feather is required from a wing or the tail, to dip it in the soot. That is done day by day until the navel is freed.' It must be noted that although a large percentage of the babies get infected navels, this does not seem to be as serious among the Ovimbundu as with us. 'For the bed of mother and baby are spread leaves that it may be soft, if possible leaves of the *ongonguila* tree. Over the leaves [824] are spread a sleeping-mat (*esisa*) and some little cloths. During that time the mother does not sleep in the dark. The father must bring firewood and firelogs that it may be warm and light in the house, so that if the baby defecates in the night, it may be wiped properly.' No cloths or diapers are used for babies either at this period or later. An additional reason given for having a good fire in the hut is that the baby is supposed to be very much afraid of the dark.

'During those first days the women come to entertain[2] the mother and to hold the baby. Some bring meal and meat, some meal and beans, some porridge and relish, some sour beer and

[1] *Ocitete* seems to be derived from *oku teta*, to cut, in reference to the cutting of the cord.

[2] *Oku geka*, to provide for and entertain, as for a guest.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

828 sense, only a *potential* person. The permanency or stability of his personality (*unu*)[1] is only proven when he enters the state of adulthood at marriage. Then it is that he achieves true integration with society. Thus personality appears as a natural process of social integration.

828 775 On the other hand, the Umbundu belief in reincarnation[2] throws responsibility for determination of personality back upon the ancestral spirits (*olosuku*, *olosande*) or upon the Spirit World or Fate (*Kalunga*). Clearly this belief cuts across the assumption that children are born without definite character whereby the responsibility belongs to the parents. Practically the seeming contradiction seems to be resolved as follows: *potentially* a child's character may be pre-determined by the spirits, but actually or at least until the potentialities become manifest, education may play an important role by providing the spiritual forces with suitable vessels. At about eight or nine years of age the character of the reincarnation, if any, becomes manifest, but the social and psychological education is supposed to be well along by that time. Provision of the vessels and their moulding is, therefore, at the same time an active and a passive function.

The psychological and social education of early childhood and also the imparting of skills all have to do with this active moulding function as the manuscripts quoted have shown. Many folk-tales and proverbs could also be quoted to show the Umbundu ideas with regard to personality.[3]

The more passive function of providing suitable vessels for the indwelling of the spiritual forces is no less important. Even among those who have discarded or are seeking to discard the beliefs of their fathers, this side of educational theory is still important. It 858 has greatly conditioned the outlook of the people. All observers 828 have remarked on the considerate treatment of children by the 775 Ovimbundu, on their recognition of personality in children and respect for it. In the narrative quoted this was seen in the mother's addressing her baby boy as 'little father'[4] and in the first visitors

[1] *Unu* lit. the quality of being a person (*omunu*). The word is used for one's dominant bent, or his character.

[2] See *supra*, p. 102, n. 4.

[3] I have identified about 100 Umbundu proverbs used in or having reference to education. About two-thirds of them deal with the period of early childhood. Their interest is about equally divided between the practical and the more philosophical aspects of life and education.

[4] See *supra*, p. 90.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

giving the baby the respectful terms of 'my wife' or 'my husband';[1] also in the comment of the narrator that 'parents recognize that it is proper to respect them (children)'[2] and in parents' reluctance to punish. It seems that this respectful treatment of children stems from belief in reincarnation, whereby a child is potentially an ancestor to be respected, deferred to, and even worshipped.

It is doubtful whether at present many children could be found who have really gone through the ceremonial for becoming media for guardian spirits of the family (*olosande*). The drift away from those observances has become a flood. Nevertheless respectful treatment of children remains, perhaps even undiminished, for it still has the force of customary behaviour if not the supernatural sanction. Indulgence on the part of the parents rarely if ever goes to the length of pampering. Belief that the child's character ultimately, or to a large extent, depends upon spiritual forces may lead parents to adopt a sort of fatalism, but that is hardly more serious than the effects of belief in the influence of heredity popularly held in the West. The Ovimbundu do not believe, as do the Zulus, for example, that a child is tainted at birth, needing radical treatment against the subsequent appearance of the taint.[3] With the Ovimbundu the development of personality is a process which *may* involve spiritual forces, but at all events requires careful human attention.

Education and Society

What then are the means by which the Ovimbundu develop the personalities of their children or mould them to the social norm? Their success indicates that they along with other 'so-called backward races have proved to be educationists . . . of no mean order'.[4] What, then, are their methods?

The educational process is the whole process of life and culture. School is society and society is school; there is no division between adult and child life. Education and life are one. This has been recognized as true for many African and other primitive societies.[5]

[1] *Supra*, p. 89.
[2] *Supra*, p. 104.
[3] See Krige, op. cit., p. 67.
[4] W. D. Hambly, *Origins of Education among Primitive Peoples* (London: Macmillan, 1926), p. 401.
[5] See the interesting analysis of M. Fortes, *Social and Psychological Aspects of Education in Taleland*, p. 8 f. (Supplement to *Africa*, Oct. 1938); Margaret

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The *ehamba* (sing. *ehamba*) "are the peaceful spirits of ancestors of long ago, who have already had the trance ceremony performed for them, and thus have a home and ... standing in the other world". (Tucker does not indicate how much time must pass before a spirit becomes a *ehamba*.[7]) 769

(1) Hambly, 1934, p.206.
(2) Op.cit., chap.IX.
(3) 1940.
(4) Hambly, op.cit., p.262.
(5) Based on Tucker, op.cit. unless otherwise stated.
(6) Tucker does not describe this ritual.
(7) It may be noted that among the Ngangela peoples to the east, the *mahamba* are the forms taken by ancestral spirits when they wish to harass their descendants. See McCulloch 1951, p.75.

769 They intimate their wishes to their descendants only through slight illness, usually asking for honour to be paid to them by a feast, or by some descendant carrying on their profession.

Osande is the spirit of the much-honoured founder of the family,(1) and is always beneficent, bringing good fortune and warning his descendants of danger. Hambly and Tucker agree that *Ekisi* is the same kind of
776 spirit as *Osande* (although Hambly does not give *Osande* this special mean-
ing). Tucker writes that *Ekisi* is a benevolent spirit who calls the vil-
769 lagers together at night, and gives them advice through a medium (?), whom he enters without the latter's going into the usual trance. *Kandundu* according to Tucker is an *ekisi* who holds the leading position among the ancestral spirits owing to his seniority. Hambly describes a shrine to
[778] *Kandundu* at Bailundu; anyone who sees the contents of the shrine is supposed to become blind. He writes that *Kandundu* is thought of as "the spirit of dreaming who makes swellings on the body", but gives no further explanation. According to Tucker *Kandundu* is an especially powerful *ondele*, and ceremonies performed for him have many distinctive features.

224 *Huvi*, the spirit of the hunt, has his own shrine and priest in the village of the (paramount?) chief. His hut is very large, since all the
776 meat of the hunts is placed in it. In front of it dances are held, and
778 poles are decorated with skulls and other trophies of hunting. Before the door there is a carved figure of *Samemba*, the spirit who chases the game towards the hunter. A man whose ritual name is *Kapila*, and a woman called *Kuanja*(2) are in charge of the spirit-hut of *Huvi*, and make supplication to him for success in hunting. Hunters living elsewhere but in
[553] an *ombala* or head village do not have persons bearing these ritual names, but their dogs are often called *Huvi*, *Samemba*, *Kapila* or *Kuanja*.

● 775 The most dreaded spirits are the *otulopokopoko*, who may be spirits
754 of still-born babies or foetuses, mental defectives, maltreated slaves, or persons, especially children, killed by sorcery. When a person has been found guilty of killing a child by sorcery or witchcraft, he is sentenced to "restore life" to it, which he does by substituting for it a child from his own family: if the deceased child is a girl, he must give an ox as well. The child is treated with great respect by his new family. If however the parents do not ask the sorcerer or witch for restitution, the child becomes an *okalupokopoko*, and may return to "eat" other children, at the command of the sorcerer who has killed it.

RITUAL

793 It has been noted that the village headman acts as priest for the *oluse*, the group of paternally-related persons who form the basis of the
613 village group, while the head of the *oluina* acts as priest for his dispersed, maternally-related group.(3) There is little detailed information on the religious duties of these priests. Cushman(4) describes the village headman as making public prayers each morning to Suku. Childs however points out(5) that it is more usual for the headman to spend a

(1) i.e. of either the *oluse* or the *oluina*. (Childs, personal communication)
(2) According to Childs, (1949, p.21) *Kuanja* is a hunting goddess.
(3) See above, p.28.
(4) 1944, p.51.
(5) Personal communication.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

114 trative posts. I agree that people between Caconda and Huila
101 represent a racial mixture of the Ovimbundu and the Ovambo. The record speaks of painting-houses for girls at Cabinda, an item which agrees with reports from other sources. The jottings concerning tribes from Cabinda to the far south of Angola are too vague to be used in ethnological work with confidence.

There are many points on which the work of A. Schachtzabel should be consulted for the purpose of making comparisons with my [621] own observations. The chief of these are a note and photograph on [281] village construction (p. 130); the musical bow (p. 32); the loom [175] (plate VI); transmigration of the soul of a chief into an animal (p. 51); [524] and the game of mancala (p. 52). My observations of initiation at [881] Katoko, Ngalangi, and Cangamba agree well with that of Schachtzabel at Katoko, but I was able to obtain more detail and more [283] numerous photographs of the ritual of initiation. The spinning of cotton (p. 143) is exactly the process so frequently witnessed now at Elende. Iron-working (p. 111) appears to be comparable with the technique at Elende, but Schachtzabel seems to have missed the ritual. I was not so fortunate as this author in finding the old type of iron-smelting furnace in use.

114 The work of Statham is devoted primarily to hunting and descrip-
136 tions of plant and animal life. The chapter given to a casual description of people among whom he passed is not useful as ethnology; but the book is of service in providing a background of natural history. Information on the tsetse fly in Angola (p. 294) assists ethnological work by showing the determining effect of this biological factor. [231] Presence of the fly is prohibitive to cattle-keeping, therefore cattle are not kept along the river courses which are infested with this pest.

114 Alexander Barns made no pretence of writing more than a travel book; nevertheless he publishes photographs of ethnological value, gives useful historical summaries, and deals with economic problems of production and transportation.

114 Tucker's book "Drums in the Darkness," though written to
175 interest the American public in mission work, contains many ethnological statements. The chief of these relate to the structure of the compound (p. 37); the dress of women (p. 39); naming of twins and triplets; and other items which agree well with data from the district in which I worked. There are notes on drum signals (p. 74) and [202] cannibalism (p. 77). Apparently drum signals were in use at Bihé half a century ago. Forty years ago a slave was killed and eaten [266] at the installation ceremonies for a new king, a point that was noted

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

straight lines. The legs show the usual flexion of the knees and a 532
shortening which is out of proportion to the body length. The lower limbs of most Angolan figures have these characteristics. The body of this figure is hollow and the head detachable. The incised head-dress is imitative of the coiffure of Vachokue women.

Cangamba, a village in eastern Angola, is a confluence of tribal 171
elements, namely, Vambuella, Luchazi, Babunda, and Vachokue, whose physical appearance, hairdressing, tooth mutilation, and tribal marks differ considerably. The man who sold the figurine brought it furtively. He was an Ocimbundu, but the work is of Chokue origin. The figure, I am informed, was filled with medicine, [755]
then placed near a patient who was undergoing curative treatment.

The figurine (*ngeve*) of a woman having a number of dark feathers 484
attached to her back has only one use. A caravan setting out for a 778
long journey is accompanied by a medicine-man whose outfit includes 787
such a figurine. Should the caravan leader be in doubt when choosing between two paths, the medicine-man sets up the image at the parting of the ways. He kneels before it and asks questions, then plugs his nostrils in order to make replies in a falsetto voice supposed to come from the figurine. Thus advised respecting the route to follow, the caravan continues its journey (Plate XXI, Fig. 5; p. 156).

The wooden figure (Plate XXI, Fig. 3) is of exceptional interest 326
because of its connection with the blacksmith's craft, which is asso- 775
ciated with introductory rites for apprentices. In former days a newly initiated blacksmith was expected to disappear for a period during which he killed a man. On returning to the work of his forge the blacksmith made a wooden figure of which this example, one of five obtained, is typical. The spirit of the murdered man took up its abode in the effigy and in this way helped with the work. The figure, which is of the usual dimensions, namely, 36 cm high, has the greater part of its surface covered with reddened earth (pp. 159–160).

Two figurines (Plate XXI, Figs. 1, 6) were obtained from 171
women of the Vachokue tribe in the village of Ngongo, Ngalangi. 842
Here the Vachokue and the Ovimbundu mingle to such an extent that customs are no doubt transferred from one culture to the other. These wooden images are used by childless women, or by women whose infants have died. The woman who sold these figures pressed them to her breasts to show the manner of use. People standing around smiled and nodded their approval. A wooden figure of this [845]
kind is substituted for a dead twin.

IX. RELIGION

Supreme Being

776 Suku is the name of the most important dead person mentioned by the Ovimbundu. Ngonga says that Suku made mountains, rivers, sky, and people. The name Suku is known all over the great territory inhabited by the Ovimbundu. I have seen at the *ombala* of Ngalangi a small house of meditation where the king retires accompanied by an old woman. This retirement for communion with spirits of the dead takes place in time of drought, and a gourd filled with water is always kept in the house. In another village of the Ngalangi region I photographed a house of meditation for the king who retires for communion with spirits whenever he is troubled (Plate LXXXIX, Fig. 1). The painted marks on the door are said to be an indication to spirits that this is the king's house of meditation, but there is no reason for saying that the king communes with Suku.

The evidence regarding Suku was supplemented at Ngalangi by two Ovimbundu boys who agreed that Suku was very important. They associated Suku with rain; but the word *suku* does not mean rain, water, or food; these are expressed by *ombela*, *ovaru*, and *okulia*, respectively. I know of no meaning of the word *suku* which might assist in explaining the attributes of this respected spirit. Names of medicine-men are remembered and used but they are not associated with the name Suku. My informants at Ngalangi said that names of kings are sometimes coupled with the name Suku.

773 At Ngalangi an informant stated that in the beginning everything was water. A man dropped from above, caused land to appear, and began hunting. At the side of a stream he saw an animal that disappeared beneath the water. He was about to shoot when he saw that the animal was a person something like himself, yet different. He took the animal home, mated with it, and reared a family. This story is told also at Cileso, about two hundred miles from Ngalangi. At Ngalangi I was informed that the first being was a calf with human attributes, who walked about on the rocks leaving mixed tracks of an animal and human kind, which may be seen to this day.

Survival after Death

775 There are ideas of reincarnation. Two Bailundu boys said that
787 the lion was considered to be a powerful old man. If a lion is found dead divination is practised to discover the cause of death. If a

lion visits a village an old man talks to it through the palisade. 775
The conversation is carried on in a series of grunts, after which the 787
lion goes away. One of my informants said that "lions and leopards are watchdogs for old men who have died." When one of these animals kills a domestic animal or a person, the assumption is that the predatory animal was sent by a deceased old man who requires a sacrifice. Ngonga of Elende said that "when a lion killed a man it was a sign that there was a bad spirit from the man's family within the lion." There is divination to find who requires a sacrifice, since some ancestor has been neglected. W. C. Bell relates an Umbundu [114]
tale of a woman who changed herself into a wild animal, but I was not able to ascertain that belief in transformation is held today (*Jour. Amer. Folk-Lore*, XXXV, p. 129).

I am unable to prove that the Ovimbundu have definite ideas of the nature of a future life, but they certainly think of survival after death, and have clear concepts of good and bad spirits who influence the fortunes of the living. There is no idea of punishment or reward, but a bad man has a bad ghost which can do evil things. Spirits will follow their relations on earth; moreover, they will come to the house of bows where their property is preserved.

A man returning from a hunt with trophies, or from the collection of honey, will leave some of these on a grave. There is no idea [774]
of spirits in rivers and trees, but the first tree felled for building the house of a man of importance must not be allowed to fall violently. This may imply a belief in a tree-spirit.

Spirits move at night only and mentioning the dead by name or whistling at night calls spirits. There are many instances of sacrifice [782]
connected with the idea of a spirit who has to be appeased. The medicine-man can induce a spirit to enter an image of wood. Thus there are wooden images containing spirits useful to the blacksmith. [778]
There is an image which can show travelers the right path when the medicine-man consults it (Plate XXI, Figs. 3, 5).

Osonde is a good spirit who will "bring good luck and do good things for the people, while *Ondele* is a bad spirit who harms the people," said Ngonga. When a person is sick, mad, or dizzy he has *Ondele*. Only a powerful *ocimbunda* can cast out *Ondele*. *Ocilulu* is the general name for a disembodied spirit, either good or bad. An *Ekisi* is an *Osonde;* apparently the terms are synonymous.

A spirit can die a second time. There is, for instance, an evil 775
bird of the night whose name is *Esusi*. This bird is able to catch a spirit in order to make it die a second death. A living person

775 suffers sickness or misfortune if an ancestral spirit dies a second death. A person who has bad health says, "The spirit of my grandfather has been caught by *Eeuri*." The name of the good spirit *Osunde* is used by a person who is suffering. Such a one says, "I have no more *Osunde*." These instances clearly reveal a belief in the dependence of human welfare on the interest of benevolent ancestral spirits.

775 After a lapse of three months I asked Ngonga again about
791 *Osunde* and *Ondele*. He confirmed what he had previously said, but
753 spoke in the plural of these spirits; good spirits are called *Olosunde*, bad spirits are called *Olondele*. The medicine-man will visit a hut to foretell the future, and while there he puts a concoction in an image to which he addresses questions. He plugs his nostrils, then in a falsetto voice feigns answers from the image. The father of a family, or possibly the mother's brother, may kill an animal in front of the hut on this occasion. He then says to *Olosunde*, "We hope when
[761] we kill this there will be no more sickness." The Ovimbundu are afraid of death, and they therefore sacrifice to *Olosunde*, asking that there shall be no death in the family.

775 I do not know whether the Ovimbundu distinguish multiple souls as some Negro tribes do. The part of a man which does not die is sometimes called *utima*, which is the word for heart. Dr. M. W. Ennis says that the *utima* and the *omuenyo* are both names of the spirit existing in a living body. Ngonga seems certain that every person irrespective of age, rank, and sex has a spirit, but I could find no evidence that the Ovimbundu visualize a separation
762 of ranks or sexes after death. When a man kills himself he is buried
775 near a river so that his spirit will go to the sea, and for the same reason a murdered man is buried near a river. At Ngalangi I inquired from other Ovimbundu people concerning suicide. Women who commit suicide generally do so by hanging or drowning. Men stab themselves in the heart or use a flintlock gun, the trigger of which they pull with their toes. It is feared that the spirit of a suicide will return to induce another suicide in the family, therefore there is anxiety to rid the community of these spirits.

RELIGIOUS BELIEFS AND CONDUCT

771 The Ovimbundu have many high standards of conduct, some of
688 which have been mentioned in dealing with the education of children. There is, however, no idea of sin. That is to say, there are no commands laid down by some authority which is more than human.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

634 become *ikalala* (queen) because she feared the unpleasant
178 haunting by the spirits of former queens which is traditionally
769 experienced by the holder of this office.[18] On one occasion
[775] Lusase himself offered to let me into the *alalala* (the enclosure where the skulls of dead chiefs were kept) for the payment of five or ten escudos (1s. 3d. or 2s. 6d.) although the entry of anybody except the chief and possibly certain of his courtiers appears traditionally to have been forbidden under the penalty of death sent by the spirits. Even the surviving rites are confined to the chief's village; the first-fruits ceremony in which the
[796] whole chiefdom was involved disappeared a number of years ago. The association general in Umbundu country between
634 the chiefs and paganism does not provide an added ritual
771 sanction to the chief's power, but rather links him with what is felt to be a dying past, essentially unimportant, at the present day.

692 The chief may also have some of his time occupied with hearing cases. A good many minor disputes are solved by local adjudication, but there seems to be no specific division between cases that ought to come to the chief and those which can be arbitrated by somebody else. Elders from outside a chiefdom may be invited to adjudicate on a particular case. The old formality of legal procedure has largely disappeared, probably because all disputes at a local level can be carried to the post—hence any ruling by chief or elders is essentially dependent on its acceptance by the disputants.

754 Accusations of sorcery are rather different from other cases since the post does not believe them, although such an accusation is not in itself punishable. Sometimes suspected sorcerers are accused at the post of 'poisoning'.[19] Lusase told me that convicted sorcerers were fined a chicken, a goat and a pig. Gregorio, the chief of Menga, at first said, when I asked about this, that it was not possible to know who was a sorcerer. When, rather to his surprise, I mentioned the traditional basket test, he agreed and explained that people convicted by this test were sent as labourers to the post to satisfy whatever demand was being made for workers.

[18] Informants. See also Hastings, p. 49.

[19] Childs, p. 58.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

631 life and each could be taken as a unit complete in itself. Individual studies and comparisons of one with another would provide much valuable material. Familiarity with individuals and groups belong-
184] ing to all the major tribal groups, and study of their folk-lore and customs has led me to conclude that as in language, so in social structure and in culture, the differences are of small account. In offering illustrative material, I shall give its tribal source.

The King

643 To describe the royal office and functions it would be necessary
177 to use the past tense. That reason, along with others, leads me to exclude this subject from the present study. Effective European occupation of the country and government by direct rule[1] have atrophied the royal office among the Ovimbundu until to-day kings survive as hardly more than living museum pieces. This being the case, I shall only enumerate the royal functions, very briefly characterize them, and pass on to describe other and living parts of the Umbundu social organism.

643 The principal functions of the royal office were:

776 1. *Religious*. The spirits of the king's ancestors were the principal national deities. The king was not only high priest but also the visible vice-regent and incarnation of the spirits. The
[778] sacrifices at the royal shrine, *kakokoto* (literally, at the skulls), the place of the royal skulls, were for the nation in order:

643 (*a*) *To control the elements*, i.e. to ensure a sufficient supply of
372 rain and avoid the dangers caused by hail, by lightning, &c. Also
789 to control fire by providing a new fire properly (ceremonially) kindled from which everyone took his fire. A king's reign was spoken of as 'during the Water of Lord So-and-so' (*Kovova a Ñalã Ngandi*), or 'during the Fire of Lord So-and-so' (*Kondalu ya Ñalã Ngandi*).

241 (*b*) *To ensure fertility*, toward which desideratum the royal
644 marriage had great influence. The queen's special province was
[782] agriculture and her kitchen was sanctified by human sacrifice to guarantee the national food supply. Ceremonially treated seed was distributed to be mixed with the seed of each granary.

[1] 'Direct rule' is applied in most parts of Africa where European settlement is the predominant consideration and also where centralized government is the ideal. 'Indirect rule' is best illustrated in the Gold Coast, Nigeria, Uganda, and Tanganyika Territory.

(*c*) *In hunting*, deities other than the king's ancestors were invoked, especially *Hôvi*, the hunters' god, and *Kuanja*, a goddess, both of which had their own shrines and priests. These may have been connected with the country or with its earlier inhabitants (the kings being recognized as late comers). At the inaugural hunt the offices were assigned. The king's character was supposedly revealed by the sex of the animal killed at this hunt: 'If the duiker[1] is a female, then it is good indeed, but if a male, then the king is a real person but he habitually will become angry to excess' (*Nda ombambi yaco omange civoa mulîl, puai nda ulume, Soma omuen puai o tema temu enene*).

2. *To represent the nation in its external relations*, i.e. (*a*) *To make agreements with other kings to promote trade*, and (*b*) *To make war on other peoples* in order to provide his court with tribute and his warriors with plunder. The war leader (*Kesongo*) had his own residence and establishment entirely separate from that of the king, whom he must not meet face to face except on certain state occasions. In Bailundu he, with certain other officials, was of the stock of the slaves of the state (*ovinduli viosoma*) who came from Luandu in the Songo country. Each king must inaugurate his reign with a war, during or after which he must ceremonially 'eat the old one' (*oku lia ekongo*)—a feast consisting of the flesh of a specially fattened slave cooked with the flesh of the principal animals commonly eaten.

3. *To dispense justice*. In point of time consumed, this question was very important, for it occupied much of the time of both rulers and ruled. Good evidence of this is in the number of proverbs used at court, second only in number to those used for the education of the young. The king's court (*olusenje*) was the supreme court of the nation where cases were continually heard and 'fines eaten' (*oku lia ovimbu*). Cases might be settled either by ordeal or by decision of the king, and there was therefore room for appeal and re-trial. The king's word, however, was final, as the proverb has it: *O popia onganji, o mâlipo osoma*. (The advocate speaks, the king finishes [decides].) The king was not generally arbitrary in his decisions but was bound not only by the customs of his people, but also by the desires of his councillors. Among the legitimate kings of the Ovimbundu there were comparatively few of the revolting and wholesale punishments which were so

[1] The duiker, *ombambi* (*Sylvicapra grimmii*).

1: Childs M-S (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

A few words from the childhood recollections of Paulino Ngonga Liahuka[1] bring out the facts.

One day we noticed that Sekulu Upalandanda[2] and my father went to the mountain of Kalilonge saying, 'We go to look around (and find out) whether the spirits (*olosunde*) have agreed to our moving there.' Then another day we saw that the fathers were coming out of the spirit huts (*etambo*, plural), with the sacred chests (*ocimbangu*, plural), saying, 'We go to start a new village.' When they had arrived under the mountain of Kalilonge, they said, 'The spirits have agreed.' Then when everyone had moved, the elder, whose name had been Upalandanda at Muenesi, now changed his name, declaring, 'I am *Cilembo-camunda* (Shadow of Mountain). From that time the place was called Cilembo.

On seeking a new site the headman's fire in the old village is put out and the procession starts: a girl carries the sacred chest (*ocimbangu*) containing the relics (*ociye*) and the balls of iguana skin, and a boy the sacred bows.[3] They lead the way to the site selected where they cut a pole[4] suitable for a house-wall (*ekoso*), and tie a leaf of the *upu*[5] tree to it, dig a hole into which they put mud made by rain-water (*onata yondombo*),[6] and then together they lift the stick and let it fall into the hole. This is the beginning of the spirit hut (*etambo*), the first house to be built on the new site. The boy and the girl must take part ceremonially in each operation of building the hut. After that they together ignite (*oku tiafula*)[7] the new fire. A hen and a cock are killed, cooked on the new fire, and eaten inside the *etambo* by all who have taken part in the building. The headman and his wife cannot return to the old village but must camp at the new site (*etala*) and keep the new fire alight. In building their houses, the villagers may commute (*oku uala*) from the old site, but often the distance is too great to do this, and

[1] Of Ciyaka, ordained pastor of Elende Church in 1930. He was Hambly's chief informant.

[2] Sekulu Upalandanda was the younger brother of Ngonga's father's father, and therefore grandfather to Ngonga.

[3] The bow (*okopi*) of each ancestor who is now a guardian spirit (*osunde*) of the family.

[4] When this first pole is cut, the axe should first be pointed toward the cardinal directions.

[5] A leaf of the *upu* tree is used in the divorce ceremony. Its use here is a sign of divorce from the old site.

[6] Literally, 'mud of the rainy season'.

[7] This was formerly done with a fire drill (*ekide* Hambly, op. cit., Plate XXXIV), but not for a number of years now. When I showed the above picture to a group of 150 young men of 17 to 25 years of age, not one of them even knew what it was.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1940 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

therefore the usual procedure is to erect temporary grass-covered huts (*olosingi*, plural) on the new site, in which they will live while building their houses. Each hearth-fire must be ignited from the headman's fire.

The houses are built by the occupants themselves. The men's club house is built by the communal labour of all men and boys with a simple ritual designed to promote concord within, and to ensure that the spirits (*olosunde*) may find it a congenial abode. The spirits regularly attend the discussions in the *onjango*, and there receive their daily portions. There also they are believed to sleep.

At the first opportunity a hunt will be held and the meat brought to the spirit-hut. The girl who carried the sacred chest receives the heart and the boy the head. At this time, while a pot of sour beer (non-alcoholic) (*ocisangua*) is being brewed, the girl sits quietly in communion (*oku felevela*) with the spirits. With these physical and spiritual preparations the village community makes ready its home, a home which may seem poor and meagre to the eyes of outsiders, but to a member of the community it is home indeed and evokes in him, when absent, a feeling of great home-sickness (*ongeva*). As the Umbundu version of 'Home, Sweet Home' puts it:

Kolieve, kolieve, ndu ku li ombumbi ku yota
To your own, to your own, if there is cold you can warm yourself,

ndu ku li onjala ku panga.
if there is hunger you can arrange.

621 Ngendo is surrounded by a stick palisade except on that side of the headman's household which is adjacent to the rocks used as a club-house. The village itself (and each section) is divided up into compounds, each of which contains one to three houses,[1] and palisades divide one compound
[363] from the next; between are paths leading to the ocila and out of the village. Small gardens for tobacco, maize and beans are within the compounds, and the larger fields lie outside the village at from thirty minutes' to an hour's walk. In the headman's section of Ngendo there are 25 households containing 32 houses in all. Each house has its own granary
[343] *(ocila)* and a small chicken-coop built on stilts, and of all the houses only six have separate kitchens *(ocise)*. Most households had separate pens for pigs, goats and sheep for the night,[2] and at one side of the headman's compound there is a common corral for the nine cattle owned by
[122] the section. Only the headman had a spirit-hut *(etemba)*, used also as a storehouse, for entertaining his guests, and for his own use should he wish to sleep apart from his wives.

621 Chiefs' villages or olombala (singular ombala) are often surrounded by
361 a belt of tall trees.[3] The chief's compound (the *olombe*) is larger than those of other villagers, and, according to Hambly,[4] usually contains:
643 the chief's house, which always has a separate sleeping-room; a house and a kitchen for each of his wives; a tomb for the burial of the chief and his wives; a house of meditation for the chief, and pens for pigs and chickens.

342 Umbundu houses are usually circular, but sometimes rectangular, and made of wattle and daub, with thatched roofs. Sometimes huts are divided by matting into a living-room and a sleeping-room. Cooking is often done
[345] in the house itself, but sometimes a separate hut is built as a kitchen.[5]

345 The *onjango* (the Men's Club House) consists of a cone-shaped roof set on stout hardwood poles instead of a wall, and left open so that those for whom there may be no place inside may still see and hear what takes place within.[6]

341 Villages are moved when fields are exhausted and others are not available nearby[7] or, more often, when there has been illness or death in the
[768] village, which implies that some action displeasing to the spirits has been committed. (No information is available concerning the usual length of life of a village.) When the new site is chosen, the headman's fire
● 776 in the old village is extinguished, and a procession starts, led by a boy
777 carrying the sacred bowl *(ohunji)* of each ascendant who is now a guardian
796 spirit of the family (i.e. the olume), and a girl carrying the sacred chest *(ocisongu)* containing the relics *(ociye)* and the balls of iguana skin.[8] On arriving at the site the boy and girl cut and plant the

(1) In this section there were 13 goats, 20 sheep, 100 pigs and about 200 chickens. (Childs, op.cit., p.31) (2) Ibid.
(3) Hambly, (2) 1934, p.206 et.al. It was a custom of the Nyangela peoples to plant trees round the village and dedicate them to deceased chiefs. (See McCulloch 1950, p.68.) There is no evidence that the trees surrounding Umbundu villages have any ritual significance, although the custom may have been taken over from the conquered Nyangela peoples.
(4) Op.cit., p.208. (5) Ibid., p.20
(6) Childs, personal communication.
(7) Due often to European settlement. (8) See below, p.47.

Overturning at the side the boy and girl cut and plant the

first pole, which is to be a part of the new *etambo* (spirit hut). The boy and girl must take part ceremonially in each operation of building the hut, and when it is built they ignite the new fire. A hen and a cock are killed, cooked on the new fire, and eaten inside the *etambo* by all who have taken part in building it. The headman and his wife must remain on the new site to keep the fire alight; other villagers may commute from the old village or erect temporary grass shelters on the new site. Houses are built by the occupants themselves, although men may give each other mutual help, for which there is a gift of food and beer. The *onjango* is usually built by the communal labour of all boys and men, and on its completion a simple ritual is performed to promote harmony within and to welcome the spirits, who are believed to sleep in the *onjango* and to take part in all discussions within it.[1]

The village group: composition

Childs describes the relationship of the villagers of Ngendo to each other as typical of Ubundu country. Most of the heads of households are related agnatically to their respective section-heads (who are presumably also related agnatically to each other, since the village is based on the *olusu* group); Childs does not however discuss the relation of section heads to each other or to the village headman. He gives a table in which the householders are divided into six categories according to their relationship to their various section-heads:

1.	Patrynal relatives of section head:	Section A (headman's)	21
		" B	2
		" C	1
		" D	2
			26
2.	Maternal relatives of section head:	Section B	4
		" C	1
		" D	1
			6
3.	Sisters' sons (or daughters)[2]	Section B	4
		" C	1
			5
4.	Relatives by marriage	Section A	2
		" B	1
			3
5.	Relationship not definitely known	Section B	2
6.	Former slaves	Section A	1
		" B	1
			2

(1) This section is based on Childs, 1949, pp.37-9.
(2) They could, of course, have been included as maternal relatives and paternal relatives, since they belong both to the *olusu* and to the *olutse*.

A man slave might become a blacksmith or a hunter, although his work was always for his master. He was also required to fight for his master in case of war.[1] 567

RELIGION AND MAGIC

Information on Umbundu religion and magic is very slight, being practically confined to a few items collected by Hambly from his Umbundu interpreter,[2] and a more coherent article by Tucker, primarily on divination.[3] 771

THE SUPREME BEING

Suku, the Supreme Being, is thought of as the creator of mountains, rivers, sky and human beings.[4] His attributes have not been described. 776 ●

CONCEPTS OF SPIRIT[5]

The body *(etimba)* is thought of as having *omunyo* (breath or life), and containing the *ocililemba* (spirit or soul). The *ocililemba* is visible in a person's shadow in the daytime, and during sleep it has adventures of its own, which it reports to the sleeper through dreams *(olonjoi)*. At death it leaves the body, but lingers nearby, accompanying the body to the interment, still in the form of a shadow. It then becomes an *ocilulu* (ghost), and may wander where it pleases. Sometimes it may be seen passing with superhuman swiftness through the village, uttering weird cries or calling pigs or chickens as the person used to do while alive. It chooses one of the households as a home, and indicates its wish to stay there by causing illness among the householders. The victim when he has learned the cause of his illness from the diviner places himself in a favourable condition to receive the spirit by performing a ceremony which includes going into a trance.[6] When this ceremony has been performed the *ocilulu* (ghost) becomes an *ondele*, which appears to be a generic name for ancestral (and other?) spirits. It is not clear from Tucker's description whether the relatives of the deceased always wait for this intimation of the wish of the *ocilulu* for a home, or whether the ceremonies may sometimes be performed immediately after death. Nor does she give any information regarding the relatives with whom the *ocilulu* usually chooses to live. She states that spirits of paternal ancestors are less feared than those of maternal ancestors, for while the former are usually satisfied with a hunt, a beer-drinking and a feast held in their honour, the latter are malignant and may "eat" children and occasionally adults also. 774 775 [787] [769]

The *ohamba* (sing. *ehamba*) "are the peaceful spirits of ancestors of long ago, who have already had the trance ceremony performed for them, and thus have a home and ... standing in the other world". (Tucker does not indicate how much time must pass before a spirit becomes a *ehamba*.[7]) 769

(1) Hambly, 1934, p.206.
(2) Op.cit., chap.IX.
(3) 1940.
(4) Hambly, op.cit., p.262.
(5) Based on Tucker, op.cit. unless otherwise stated.
(6) Tucker does not describe this ritual.
(7) It may be noted that among the Ngangela peoples to the east, the ehamba are the forms taken by ancestral spirits when they wish to harass their descendants. See McCulloch 1951, p.75.

769 They intimate their wishes to their descendants only through slight illness, usually asking for honour to be paid to them by a feast, or by some descendant carrying on their profession.

Osande is the spirit of the much-honoured founder of the family,[1] and is always beneficent, bringing good fortune and warning his descendants of danger. Humbly and Tucker agree that *Ekisi* is the same kind of
776 spirit as *Osande* (although Humbly does not give *Osande* this special mean-
769 ing). Tucker writes that *Ekisi* is a benevolent spirit who calls the villagers together at night, and gives them advice through a medium (?), whom he enters without the latter's going into the usual trance. *Kandundu* according to Tucker is an *ekisi* who holds the leading position among the ancestral spirits owing to his seniority. Humbly describes a shrine to
[778] *Kandundu* at Bailundu; anyone who sees the contents of the shrine is supposed to become blind. He writes that *Kandundu* is thought of as "the spirit of dreaming who makes swellings on the body", but gives no further explanation. According to Tucker *Kandundu* is an especially powerful *ondele*, and ceremonies performed for him have many distinctive features.

224 *Huvi*, the spirit of the hunt, has his own shrine and priest in the
776 village of the (paramount?) chief. His hut is very large, since all the
778 meat of the hunts is placed in it. In front of it dances are held, and poles are decorated with skulls and other trophies of hunting. Before the door there is a carved figure of *Samemba*, the spirit who chases the game towards the hunter. A man whose ritual name is *Kapila*, and a woman called *Kuanja*[2] are in charge of the spirit-hut of *Huvi*, and make supplication to him for success in hunting. Hunters living elsewhere but in
[553] an *ombala* or head village do not have persons bearing these ritual names, but their dogs are often called *Huvi*, *Samemba*, *Kapila* or *Kuanja*.

775 The most dreaded spirits are the *otulopokopoko*, who may be spirits
754 of still-born babies or foetuses, mental defectives, maltreated slaves, or persons, especially children, killed by sorcery. When a person has been found guilty of killing a child by sorcery or witchcraft, he is sentenced to "restore life" to it, which he does by substituting for it a child from his own family: if the deceased child is a girl, he must give an ox as well. The child is treated with great respect by his new family. If however the parents do not ask the sorcerer or witch for restitution, the child becomes an *okalupokopoko*, and may return to "eat" other children, at the command of the sorcerer who has killed it.

RITUAL

793 It has been noted that the village headman acts as priest for the
613 *olusa*, the group of paternally-related persons who form the basis of the village group, while the head of the *olusa* acts as priest for his dispersed, maternally-related group.[3] There is little detailed information on the religious duties of these priests. Cushman[4] describes the village headman as making public prayers each morning to Suku. Childs however points out[5] that it is more usual for the headman to spend a

(1) i.e. of either the *olusa* or the *olusa*. (Childs, personal communication)
(2) According to Childs, (1949, p.21) *Kuanja* is a hunting goddess.
(3) See above, p.28.
(4) 1944, p.51. (5) Personal communication.

whole supernatural world... The divining basket is the concrete medium through which the spirits reveal their will to their descendants on earth, and warn them of dangers, human or supernatural".[1] 787

SORCERERS AND WITCHES

Sorcerers and witches are not clearly distinguished. Both are called *olongonga*, and have powers over one or more malignant spirits whom they can send anywhere to kill, steal, or torment. These "familiar spirits" are sometimes called *otulo ndumba*, and are held responsible for all mysterious disappearances of maize, beans and other possessions, as well as for many illnesses and deaths. Some sorcerers are said to own small images which they send out at night. Others are said to dance naked at night at the door of the intended victim's house. When sorcery involves killing by physical means, portions of the victim's body may be used to make "medicine" or charms.[2] 754 776

A person may be a sorcerer without knowing it, and may deny it when accused by the diviner. If he does so, he and his accuser undergo the *ombulungu* (poison test),[3] to discover who is in the right.[4] Concerning accusation of sorcery, Childs writes "Any marked success ... by an individual, especially when such success has been achieved by an individual alone or in partnership, but not in co-operation with a number of persons, often brings on suspicion of sorcery. Should the results of such success be distributed widely....suspicion is less likely to arise....An open accusation of sorcery *(oku sunga owanga)* is a very serious matter and will not often be made lightly. Such accusations are made both within and across kinship lines. Affinal relatives are quite often accused of sorcery, and suspicion frequently rests upon wives whose kinship connexions are in distant regions...".[5] 754 683 [578]

The tendency or aptitude for sorcery is supposed to be inherited by a daughter, or a son, or a nephew from the mother, uterine or classificatory, from the mother's brother etc. It is said that older relatives take younger ones as apprentices and partners.[6] The aim of a person who consciously takes up sorcery is said usually to be economic advancement. A very common form involves the enslavement of the spirit of another person, often a child of one's own family or kin group; the victim may be killed by either physical or magical means. Childs points out that sorcery is one of the greatest internally disruptive forces within the kin group and social system of the Ovimbundu. He notes that jealousy and grudges often bring accusations from within the circle of kin, but does not describe what happens when the charges have been made and verified. Especially in view of his statement that economic, political and other forces now seem to be acting to increase the incidence of sorcery,[7] it would be interesting to have information concerning its possible connection with segmentation of lineages or village groups, or its relation to tensions between the paternal and maternal groups of relatives. 754 [829] 754 578

(1) Tucker, op.cit., p.201.
(2) Childs, personal communication.
(3) The *ombulungu* is administered by the medicine-man, and causes sickness but not death. See Tucker, op.cit., and Hambly, (2) 1934, p.203.
(4) Tucker, op.cit.
(5) Childs, 1949, p.57.
(6) Childs, personal communication.
(7) Childs, 1949, p.58.

683 One of the commonest forms of punishment for sorcery was, and still is, banishment. Only the chief could pronounce the death penalty. Charges of sorcery are sometimes brought today to civil courts and to church courts under the guise of "poisoning".(1)

781 There are obvious gaps in the information on Umbundu religion and magic e.g. on spirits other than those of ancestors; on ritual connected
776 with the ancestors; on productive and protective magic; on the work of the medicine-man as distinct from the diviner, and on the functions of
171 the two separate offices of family priest. From existing accounts, however, Umbundu magico-religious concepts would appear to have much in common with those of the peoples to the east of the Plateau, and many of the words used for these concepts *(ngombo, ahamba, wanga, nganga* e.g.*)* are in fact the same. These peoples have been described in another section of the Survey.(2)

THE LIFE CYCLE

852 Childs' chapters on infancy, childhood, and adolescence form the
114 main part of his book, and his treatment of the subject is much more detailed and on a deeper level than information offered by other writers,(3) and should be consulted.

BIRTH

844 A woman remains in her husband's village for the birth of her children. During the first birth, she is generally assisted by older women of the village, usually relatives of the husband. No man is present unless delayed labour entails the presence of a medical practitioner, or a
[845] diviner. Difficult delivery is said to be caused by broken taboos, adultery on the part of the mother, sorcery, or the woman's own refusal to give birth. There is little ceremony connected with childbirth, and a woman may give birth to her second and later children alone when she is
[846] in the fields. There is a customary lying-in period until the cord falls from the navel, but this is frequently ignored today.

845 *Twins* are welcomed but are considered prodigies whose birth requires the administrations of an *ocimbanda.*(4) Soon after the birth, and every month while the children are growing, the whole village takes part in a ceremony to preserve their lives. In the case of triplets, one is given to the paramount chief.(5)

553 *Naming* usually takes place, in the case of a first-born, on the day of its birth. Childs notes several factors:

(a) The name *(onduko)* should have been borne by a relative, whether livin or dead, whose character and state of well-being are satisfactory; sometimes the child may be considered the re-incarnation of the deceased relative after whom he is named. ⁑

(1) Childs, personal communication. (2) McCulloch, 1951, pp.72-83.
(3) Hambly, (2) 1934, pp.212-33, and Cushman, 1944.
(4) Ennis, 1945. (5) Childs, 1949, p.83.

⁑ [Childs, op. cit., p. 87-]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

Among direct educational forces are the home training given by parents and the mutual responsibility of children and their mother's brother, whose reciprocal obligations have been explained. Family life is undeniably an important institution whose power is by no means suppressed by the strength of the village community and tribal organization. 867

Initiation, which may or may not coincide with puberty, is perhaps the most potent direct influence in formation of character and the inculcation of principles tending to tribal solidarity. Formerly warfare and hunting were more important than they are today, consequently initiation rites imposing hardship and emphasizing the importance of concerted action, had a greater social value than they have at present. 867 881

Formal instruction in industries such as iron-working, or professional hunting, indicates one aspect of occupational training. In these instances there are apprenticeship and an initiatory rite. All children are, however, subject to an indirect industrial education through the agency of play, while a few, according to desire and aptitude, become experts in some particular occupation. 874 [868]

At all times the force of suggestion is at work in the home, in the men's council house, and through everyday observation of the conduct of elders. Probably folklore stories also have an indirect educational value, because some of the fables show the desirability of courage, honesty, and foresight, at the same time deprecating cowardice, stupidity, and low cunning. 869

In chapter IX religious beliefs are discussed, and, in connection with these, standards of conduct are outlined. Although the Ovimbundu have a belief in a supreme being and creator (Suku), and although they believe in survival after death, there is no evidence to show that conduct and education are influenced by theological beliefs. Suku, who is vaguely conceived, is far away and uninterested. He issues no commands. Neither is there a belief in punishments and rewards after death. The standards of conduct are based on utilitarian principles which secure harmony and unity. 771 869 [776]

The efficiency of the direct and indirect educational forces of the Ovimbundu is attested by the history of the tribe. The indigenous system of education, supported by favorable environment, consolidated these people so that they became the dominating power in Angola. Moreover, their cohesion has been such that three centuries of European contacts have failed to eliminate all the basic elements of their tribal life. 177

IX. RELIGION

Supreme Being

776 Suku is the name of the most important dead person mentioned by the Ovimbundu. Ngonga says that Suku made mountains, rivers, sky, and people. The name Suku is known all over the great territory inhabited by the Ovimbundu. I have seen at the *ombala* of Ngalangi a small house of meditation where the king retires accompanied by an old woman. This retirement for communion with spirits of the dead takes place in time of drought, and a gourd filled with water is always kept in the house. In another village of the Ngalangi region I photographed a house of meditation for the king who retires for communion with spirits whenever he is troubled (Plate LXXXIX, Fig. 1). The painted marks on the door are said to be an indication to spirits that this is the king's house of meditation, but there is no reason for saying that the king communes with Suku.

The evidence regarding Suku was supplemented at Ngalangi by two Ovimbundu boys who agreed that Suku was very important. They associated Suku with rain; but the word *suku* does not mean rain, water, or food; these are expressed by *ombela*, *ovava*, and *okulia*, respectively. I know of no meaning of the word *suku* which might assist in explaining the attributes of this respected spirit. Names of medicine-men are remembered and used but they are not associated with the name Suku. My informants at Ngalangi said that names of kings are sometimes coupled with the name Suku.

773 At Ngalangi an informant stated that in the beginning everything was water. A man dropped from above, caused land to appear, and began hunting. At the side of a stream he saw an animal that disappeared beneath the water. He was about to shoot when he saw that the animal was a person something like himself, yet different. He took the animal home, mated with it, and reared a family. This story is told also at Cileso, about two hundred miles from Ngalangi. At Ngalangi I was informed that the first being was a calf with human attributes, who walked about on the rocks leaving mixed tracks of an animal and human kind, which may be seen to this day.

Survival after Death

775 787 There are ideas of reincarnation. Two Bailundu boys said that the lion was considered to be a powerful old man. If a lion is found dead divination is practised to discover the cause of death. If a

plate of meal and earnestly asked questions. Lukuma was the name of the father of the dead boy. The old man who addressed the corpse was the brother of Lukuma's mother. Ngonga explained that the woman addresses the corpse, "to give him sense so that he will not be ashamed to tell all about it"; that is, about the manner of his death. The old man said to the corpse, "*Etali* ["today"] *omolãngè* ["my boy"] *tu yongola* ["we want"] *oku* ["you"] *tu* ["us"] *sanjuisa* ["make glad"] *o tu* ["to us"] *sapuila* ["tell"] *muele* ["indeed"] *cosi* ["all"] *ca* ["that"] *ku upa* ["you take"] *kilu lieve* ["from earth"]. 764 602

The pause which followed a question was intended to give the corpse time to reply. It is supposed that if the answer is in the negative the spirit causes the pole to swing slightly backward. An affirmative answer is given if the spirit makes the pole swing forward. The old man demanded, "Is it witchcraft that hates us and killed you? If it is witchcraft, come to the front." I could see no swing of the corpse on the pole, but Ngonga said that he could see the coffin swing backward to indicate a negative answer. I suspected that the interrogator of the corpse gave a signal to the bearers, indicating that the coffin was to be made to swing, but I could see no signal or movement of the coffin. While the corpse was interrogated, males among the spectators spoke to the old man who was asking the questions. Ngonga explained that these men were suggesting questions which might be asked respecting the cause of death. A witness in the crowd would say, "You have forgotten this," or "You have forgotten that." 764 787

The next question was one that calls for a detailed explanation. *Sambulu* is a bad spirit which is able to cause death when crying women and children offend him by their wailing. The mother of the dead boy was a slave whose husband was absent from the village for a time. During this period the master of the woman threatened to sell her; consequently she went to a Christian mission with her children, one of whom was the boy now deceased. The woman and children were crying, hence the possibility that the evil *Sambulu* had at that time entered the person of the boy whose funeral rites were now in progress. The woman had visited the mission a year ago, but this lapse of time apparently made no difference to the possibility that *Sambulu* had entered one of the children. The spirit made a negative answer to this ingenious suggestion and eventually indicated that death was due to a "bad belly." If no answer is returned affirmatively, recourse is made to the medicine-man, who carries out divination. The details of this method are described [776] [797]

105
156

Ethnologists have often emphasized the supposed subjection of the individuals to the group. Initiation rites do tend to uniformity of conduct and group control; yet among the Ovimbundu there are renowned leaders of caravans, chiefs who are respected because of their justice and intelligence, also medicine-men, craftsmen, and musicians who display great individuality. Their self-expression in tribal life results from special aptitude and natural force of character, which qualities are made evident by daily actions, or through loquacity in the council house. In several localities live chiefs, who, by personality and tact, make possible a social adjustment between the indigenous culture and foreign intruders.

In former times kings were at the head of the legal and military systems, and in this capacity they acted when appeals were made from the jurisdiction of village chiefs. Prosperity of the country is today thought to center in kings both living and dead, and the extant ritual associated with the obsequies of a king is an illustration of this dependence. The importance of the medicine-man as a diviner, physician, and rain-maker is little diminished even at the present day.

The operation of village communism and the manner in which this centers about persons of importance is seen during the preparation of a new site for a village. A description has been given relating to the selection of the site, employment of communal labor, the creation and distribution of new fire, and the function of the medicine-man on this occasion.

776

Direct questioning concerning spiritual beliefs and the nature of a supreme being elicits little information, and that of a contradictory kind. As usual, actions are more important than statements. At a funeral, women dance, clap hands, and sing, "God has cheated us of a life." The inference seems to be that Suku gives and determines life. Beliefs respecting the good and bad spirits (*Olosande* and *Olondele*) are deeply ingrained in the lives of the Ovimbundu, who are confident of the need for placation of spirits by sacrifice, the use of wooden figurines, and the aid of the medicine-man. A study of the contents of a diviner's basket gives a clear idea of the powers and the activities of spirits; and the function of a spirit, which is able to hear and answer the living, is understood after observing the questioning of the corpse at a funeral. Without doubt, a belief in spirits and a reliance on the power of medicine-men are two of the fundamental ideas which permeate every thought and activity of the Ovimbundu, for by these agencies mundane matters are raised to a spiritual level.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

[1874-1911]

439 journeys diminished in distance as they increased in profit-
484 ability.[53]

My informants, however, gave a somewhat different picture. Long trading journeys were still being undertaken in the last decade of the trade (1901–11). Some men whom I met had travelled to the kingdom of the Mwata Yamvo and beyond to Luba country; one man had made a journey into what is now the Congo Republic which took a year to go and a year to return; another had visited Barotseland. It should be said that these seem to have been unusually long journeys; journeys totalling six to eight months were common.[54]

182 The significance of the trade in social life is reflected in the
829 mystical explanations of success in business found in Umbundu religion. Prosperity might be explained either by the favour of
[576] spirits such as Kandundu and Otjipuku, who received at their
[254] shrines libations of wine, or by malevolent sorcery involving the sacrifice of relatives in exchange for wealth.[55] The existence of these two explanations probably reflects the existence of some rich men who satisfied the expectations of their relatives and others who did not.

567 Apart from the rubber trade, the older slave trade continued
178 until its vigorous suppression in the period 1910–12, and indeed seems, as regards the Ovimbundu, to have become intensified in the period after 1890. The slaves went to S. Tome and Principe, or to coastal plantations. Up to that time the Ovimbundu had sold few of their own people, with the exception of criminals or people who had become generally unpopular with their kin. The collapse of the old political system played into the hands of adventurers who unscrupulously exploited the Umbundu custom of debt slavery or conducted raids for this purpose.[56]

604 It was then the 'trade' which was the common factor in the
439 life of all Ovimbundu, and which was so to speak the factor,

[53] Childs, p. 208.

[54] Informants.

[55] Although some old men still have shrines to the luck-giving spirits it is not possible to see how their cult functioned in the social structure then existing. It is, however, notable that success could be interpreted mystically in two ways by benevolent spirits or by sorcery.

[56] Childs, p. 213. I was told that Gumba had been raided from Bailundo.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

631 life and each could be taken as a unit complete in itself. Individual studies and comparisons of one with another would provide much valuable material. Familiarity with individuals and groups belong-
184 ing to all the major tribal groups, and study of their folk-lore and customs has led me to conclude that as in language, so in social structure and in culture, the differences are of small account. In offering illustrative material, I shall give its tribal source.

The King

643 To describe the royal office and functions it would be necessary
177 to use the past tense. That reason, along with others, leads me to exclude this subject from the present study. Effective European occupation of the country and government by direct rule[1] have atrophied the royal office among the Ovimbundu until to-day kings survive as hardly more than living museum pieces. This being the case, I shall only enumerate the royal functions, very briefly characterize them, and pass on to describe other and living parts of the Umbundu social organism.

643 The principal functions of the royal office were:

776 1. *Religious.* The spirits of the king's ancestors were the principal national deities. The king was not only high priest but also the visible vice-regent and incarnation of the spirits. The
778 sacrifices at the royal shrine, *kakokoto* (literally, at the skulls), the place of the royal skulls, were for the nation in order:

643 (*a*) *To control the elements*, i.e. to ensure a sufficient supply of
372 rain and avoid the dangers caused by hail, by lightning, &c. Also
789 to control fire by providing a new fire properly (ceremonially) kindled from which everyone took his fire. A king's reign was spoken of as 'during the Water of Lord So-and-so' (*Kovava a Ñalã Ngandi*), or 'during the Fire of Lord So-and-so' (*Kondalu ya Ñalã Ngandi*).

241 (*b*) *To ensure fertility*, toward which desideratum the royal
644 marriage had great influence. The queen's special province was agriculture and her kitchen was sanctified by human sacrifice to
782 guarantee the national food supply. Ceremonially treated seed was distributed to be mixed with the seed of each granary.

[1] 'Direct rule' is applied in most parts of Africa where European settlement is the predominant consideration and also where centralized government is the ideal. 'Indirect rule' is best illustrated in the Gold Coast, Nigeria, Uganda, and Tanganyika Territory.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

361 A few words from the childhood recollections of Paulino
166 Ngonga Liahuka[1] bring out the facts.

787 One day we noticed that Sekulu Upalandanda[2] and my father went to the mountain of Kalilonge saying, 'We go to look around (and find out) whether the spirits (*olosande*) have agreed to our moving there.' Then another day we saw that the fathers were coming out of the spirit huts (*atambo*, plural), with the sacred chests (*ovimbangu*, plural), saying, 'We go to start a new village.' When they had arrived under the mountain of Kalilonge, they said, 'The spirits have agreed.' Then when everyone had moved, the elder, whose name had been Upalandanda at Muenesi, now changed his name, declaring, 'I am *Cilembo-camunda* (Shadow of Mountain). From that time the place was called Cilembo.

621 On seeking a new site the headman's fire in the old village is put out and the procession starts: a girl carries the sacred chest
[778] (*ocimbangu*) containing the relics (*ociye*) and the balls of iguana skin, and a boy the sacred bows.[3] They lead the way to the site
[346] selected where they cut a pole[4] suitable for a house-wall (*ekoso*), and tie a leaf of the *upu*[5] tree to it, dig a hole into which they put mud made by rain-water (*onata yondombo*),[6] and then together they lift the stick and let it fall into the hole. This is the beginning of the spirit hut (*etambo*), the first house to be built on the new site. The boy and the girl must take part ceremonially in each operation
[372] of building the hut. After that they together ignite (*oku tiafula*)[7] the new fire. A hen and a cock are killed, cooked on the new fire, and eaten inside the *etambo* by all who have taken part in the building. The headman and his wife cannot return to the old village but must camp at the new site (*itula*) and keep the new fire alight.
342 In building their houses, the villagers may commute (*oku usala*)
621 from the old site, but often the distance is too great to do this, and

[1] Of Ciyaka, ordained pastor of Elende Church in 1930. He was Hambly's chief informant.

[2] Sekulu Upalandanda was the younger brother of Ngonga's father's father, and therefore grandfather to Ngonga.

[776] [3] The bow (*ohonji*) of each ascendant who is now a guardian spirit (*osande*) of the family.

[4] When this first pole is cut, the axe should first be pointed toward the cardinal directions.

[824] [5] A leaf of the *upu* tree is used in the divorce ceremony. Its use here is a sign of divorce from the old site.

[6] Literally, 'mud of the rainy season'.

[7] This was formerly done with a fire drill (*vide* Hambly, op. cit., Plate XXXV), but not for a number of years now. When I showed the above picture to a group of 150 young men of 17 to 25 years of age, not one of them even knew what it was.

1: Childs M-S (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu EP 13

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787

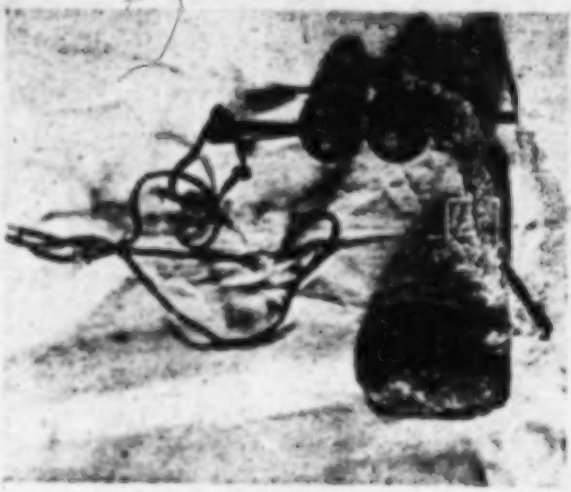

Photo. M. W. Reed

b. Fetish charms and diviner's rattle

323

a. A potter at work (Dondi)

[Facing p. 128]

121 Ngendo is surrounded by a stick palisade except on that side of the headman's household which is adjacent to the rocks used as a club-house. The village itself (and each section) is divided up into compounds, each of which contains one to three houses,[1] and palisades divide one compound
[363] from the next; between are paths leading to the *ocila* and out of the village. Small gardens for tobacco, maize and beans are within the compounds, and the larger fields lie outside the village at from thirty minutes' to an hour's walk. In the headman's section of Ngendo there are 25 households containing 32 houses in all. Each house has its own granary
[343] *(ocila)* and a small chicken-coop built on stilts, and of all the houses only six have separate kitchens *(ocise)*. Most households had separate pens for pigs, goats and sheep for the night,[2] and at one side of the headman's compound there is a common corral for the nine cattle owned by
[122] the section. Only the headman had a spirit-hut *(etambo)*, used also as a storehouse, for entertaining his guests, and for his own use should he wish to sleep apart from his wives.

121 Chiefs' villages or *olombale* (singular *ombala*) are often surrounded by
361 a belt of tall trees.[3] The chief's compound (the *ilombe*) is larger than
643 those of other villagers, and, according to Hambly,[4] usually contains: the chief's house, which always has a separate sleeping-room; a house and a kitchen for each of his wives; a tomb for the burial of the chief and his wives; a house of meditation for the chief, and pens for pigs and chickens.

342 Umbundu houses are usually circular, but sometimes rectangular, and made of wattle and daub, with thatched roofs. Sometimes huts are divided
[343] by matting into a living-room and a sleeping-room. Cooking is often done in the house itself, but sometimes a separate hut is built as a kitchen.[5]

345 The *onjongo* (the Men's Club House) consists of a cone-shaped roof set on stout hardwood poles instead of a wall, and left open so that those for whom there may be no place inside may still see and hear what takes place within.[6]

361 Villages are moved when fields are exhausted and others are not avail-
[768] able nearby[7] or, more often, when there has been illness or death in the village, which implies that some action displeasing to the spirits has been committed. (No information is available concerning the usual length
776 of life of a village.) When the new site is chosen, the headman's fire in the old village is extinguished, and a procession starts, led by a boy
● 774 carrying the sacred bows *(ohonji)* of each ascendant who is now a guardian
796 spirit of the family (i.e. the *olusa*), and a girl carrying the sacred chest *(ocisbangu)* containing the relics *(ociye)* and the balls of iguana skin.[8] On arriving at the site the boy and girl cut and plant the

(1) In this section there were 13 goats, 20 sheep, 100 pigs and about 100 chickens. (Childs, op.cit. p.31) (2) Ibid.
(3) Hambly, (2) 1934, p.206 et.al. It was a custom of the Ngangela peoples to plant trees round the village and dedicate them to deceased chiefs. (See McCulloch 1950, p.68.) There is no evidence that the trees surrounding Umbundu villages have any ritual significance, although the custom may have been taken over from the conquered Ngangela peoples.
(4) Op.cit., p.208. (5) Ibid., p.10
(6) Childs, personal communication.
(7) Due often to European settlement. (8) See below, p.47.

769 They intimate their wishes to their descendants only through slight illness, usually asking for honour to be paid to them by a feast, or by some descendant carrying on their profession.

Osande is the spirit of the much-honoured founder of the family,[1] and is always beneficent, bringing good fortune and warning his descendants of danger. Hambly and Tucker agree that *Ekisi* is the same kind of
776 spirit as *Osande* (although Hambly does not give *Osande* this special mean-
769 ing). Tucker writes that *Ekisi* is a benevolent spirit who calls the villagers together at night, and gives them advice through a medium (?), whom he enters without the latter's going into the usual trance. *Kandundu* according to Tucker is an *ekisi* who holds the leading position among the ancestral spirits owing to his seniority. Hambly describes a shrine to
[778] *Kandundu* at Bailundu; anyone who sees the contents of the shrine is supposed to become blind. He writes that *Kandundu* is thought of as "the spirit of dreaming who makes swellings on the body", but gives no further explanation. According to Tucker *Kandundu* is an especially powerful *ondele*, and ceremonies performed for him have many distinctive features.

224 *Huvi*, the spirit of the hunt, has his own shrine and priest in the
776 village of the (paramount?) chief. His hut is very large, since all the
778 meat of the hunts is placed in it. In front of it dances are held, and poles are decorated with skulls and other trophies of hunting. Before the door there is a carved figure of *Samemba*, the spirit who chases the game towards the hunter. A man whose ritual name is *Kapila*, and a woman called *Kuanja*[2] are in charge of the spirit-hut of *Huvi*, and make supplication to him for success in hunting. Hunters living elsewhere but in
[553] an *ombala* or head village do not have persons bearing these ritual names, but their dogs are often called *Huvi*, *Samemba*, *Kapila* or *Kuanja*.

775 The most dreaded spirits are the *otulopokopoko*, who may be spirits
754 of still-born babies or foetuses, mental defectives, maltreated slaves, or persons, especially children, killed by sorcery. When a person has been found guilty of killing a child by sorcery or witchcraft, he is sentenced to "restore life" to it, which he does by substituting for it a child from his own family: if the deceased child is a girl, he must give an ox as well. The child is treated with great respect by his new family. If however the parents do not ask the sorcerer or witch for restitution, the child becomes an *okalupokopoko*, and may return to "eat" other children, at the command of the sorcerer who has killed it.

RITUAL

793 It has been noted that the village headman acts as priest for the
613 *olusa*, the group of paternally-related persons who form the basis of the village group, while the head of the *oluina* acts as priest for his dispersed, maternally-related group.[3] There is little detailed information on the religious duties of these priests. Cushman[4] describes the village headman as making public prayers each morning to Suku. Childs however points out[5] that it is more usual for the headman to spend a

(1) i.e. of either the *olusa* or the *oluina*. (Childs, personal communication)
(2) According to Childs, (1949, p.21) *Kuanja* is a hunting goddess.
(3) See above, p.28.
(4) 1944, p.31. (5) Personal communication.

3:Hambly E-5 (1929-1930)1934 FP3 Mbundu FP3

in the works of Battell, Cavazzi, and other early writers. A description of the whipping of boys at initiation (p. 99) agrees with my own records, but details of the period and place are not given by Tucker. Questioning a corpse (p. 102) is a ceremony I have witnessed and described, but the instance referred to by Tucker relates to the interrogation of the corpse of a chief with regard to his choice of a successor; there are laws of succession, but these may be waived. The ceremony described in my monograph was conducted to discover the cause of death and not to determine succession. If Tucker has any detailed information with regard to puberty ceremonies for girls his reticence is regrettable (p. 142). Tucker says that suicide among women is common (p. 143). A mention of *ocisunji*, a feast for spirits at which meat is offered to idols, is interesting (p. 168) but details are lacking, and the use of the word idols is ambiguous. The information respecting use of charms is corroborative of my own observations in two other centers, Elende and Ngalangi.

The most recent publication on the ethnology of Angola is that of F. and W. Jaspert of the Städtisches Völkermuseum, Frankfort, 1930. Their journey was undertaken primarily to make collections for a museum, but linguistic and ethnological information was recorded among several tribes, notably the Kimbundu, Vachokue, Luchazi, Luimba, and Kusongo. The farthest point attained in a southerly direction was just north of Kipungo, and the general line of march was from Benguela to the northeast, into Lunda. There is very little overlapping in the work of the Jasperts and myself. My itinerary took me to the extreme south into the Vakuanyama country, and to the far east of Moxico among the Vachokue.

My work is presented as a monograph on the Ovimbundu only, and of their culture I treat exclusively, with some reference to the culture contacts observed on all sides of them. The Jasperts do not give an entire section to any one tribe; but combine their information respecting the tribes in a concurrent way, under such subjects as technology, language, and art.

If the sections relating to history and languages are excluded there remain a hundred pages, only one-sixth of which refer to the Ovimbundu; but there is a difficulty in reading through the book without being confused as to the tribe and exact locality under discussion.

The pages devoted to a comparative vocabulary form an important part of the work, and one which I barely touched, though I prepared an outline of Umbundu grammar and made dictaphone records of the

V. ECONOMIC LIFE

The words "economic life" are here used with a wide connotation 182
including nature lore, food supply, trade, transport, and industries; all these are combined to form a foundation for every aspect of the social life of the tribe.

The truth of this is realized if one pays attention to the rites 788
connected with occupations. For the hunter there is special training, 782
ritual, and a peculiar mode of burial. Final ceremonies in the initiation of a young blacksmith are associated with sacred acts such as sacrifice of animals and the sprinkling of the tools with their blood. Even the simple occupation of pounding corn requires that the rock shall be dedicated to this purpose by sprinkling the blood of a chicken on the surface. Similarly, a clay pit has to be consecrated before the raw material may be taken for making pottery. A caravan [787]
journey is not merely a commercial undertaking; the accompanying medicine-man carries a wooden figure which he consults with regard to the route (Plate XXI, Fig. 5).

Division of labor according to sex is one of the most important 462
principles involved in the economic life, more particularly in occupational groupings, which are strictly observed. Moreover, within any one activity, such as house-building, there are tasks for men only, while other parts of the work are performed exclusively by women or children.

The study of industries is of great importance when a comparison 322
of Umbundu and adjacent cultures is being made. This is particu- 177
larly true in the instance of wood-carving, an occupation yielding highly specialized products some of which are connected with religious [778]
belief and ritual. All artifacts are valuable as criteria of cultural contacts, though their reliability as evidence of trait diffusion naturally varies with their degree of complexity. Study of native industries in relation to European contacts illustrates a cultural process which may result in acceptance, rejection, or ingenious adaptation of new ideas.

That a study of the economic life of a tribe is not merely a record- 182
ing of material processes and artifacts, is illustrated by observation 231
of the treatment of cattle. This pastoral pursuit naturally falls under a heading "Domestic Animals," but the ideas associated with cattle, including funeral feasts, use of horns on graves, and the wrapping of the royal corpse in oxhide, lead directly into important matters of belief and ritual.

235 guese for a long period. The chicken is highly esteemed as a sacrificial
(244) animal, but it could not be said that the flesh is in common use. This failure to develop and utilize to the full, again raises the point of social custom and economic habit. Chickens are cared for, as may be seen in the way they are cooped at night. Sometimes a hen may be seen sitting on her clutch of eggs in a dark corner of a hut, unmolested by people and dogs; yet it is certain that there is no concentration on the rearing of poultry.

Eggs are laid, and chickens are hatched throughout the year, except in the months of November and December when corn supplies
[252] are at their lowest ebb. Eggs are boiled, or fried on a fragment of
[264] pottery, but they are not sucked.

231 The domestic cat is not raised by the Ovimbundu. Wild cats are common, but there is no evidence of their domestication. Small birds and monkeys are sometimes kept as pets.

TRADE AND TRANSPORT

938 Caravan trade, which was at one time an important factor of tribal life, is now confined to short journeys for transporting corn, beans, and beeswax to traders' stores. But in spite of present-day
939 decline of transportation the memory of more prosperous times still exists.

Names of distant places survive in the Umbundu language; thus Tanganyika is called Nakandundu, while the name for far eastern Angola is Muacimbundu, the name of a one-time important chief. The Umbundu language is understood in all parts of Angola, far away from typical Umbundu centers of culture.

484 In the old days there were professional leaders of caravans, and a
788 ceremony was conducted before starting. The medicine-man and the
778 village chief were the principal performers in a rite which consisted
787 of bringing from its box the head of a former chief, sewn in oxhide. An animal was sacrificed so that the blood could be used for sprinkling on the chief's head, and on some occasions of this kind the head was sewn up in a new piece of oxhide. Direct appeal was made to the preserved head by the reigning chief, who asked for good fortune on the journey.

The medicine-man who accompanied a caravan carried with him a female wooden figure decorated with feathers (Plate XXI, Fig. 5). When a branching of the paths gave rise to doubts concerning the correct way the wooden figure was consulted by the medicine-man.

Any boy who wishes to become a blacksmith may be trained for the work. It is not necessary that his father should have been a blacksmith. When the youth begins his training he must be eighteen years of age and physically robust. His first duties are the beating of hot iron on the anvil; he is also required to collect and soften fragments of iron. He works very hard but is never allowed to finish anything; the master has to complete the work. 326 874

At the end of two years the youth asks the master blacksmith to examine him. What is more important still, the master is asked to make the heavy hammer (*onjundo*), which is used for beating hot iron on the largest anvil (Plate XXXVIII, Fig. 1). There is no doubt as to the sacredness of this hammer, which is a symbol of the completion of apprenticeship. There is also the idea of the master handing on his skill to the pupil by personally making and presenting the tools. I made repeated efforts before being able to purchase one of these hammers; finally it was procurable only at a high price. The value is due to ritualistic associations, the large quantity of iron used in the making, and the labor required to weld the head to the shaft.

On the day of his inception the boy has to purchase four chickens, two male and two female, one pup, and a goat. The master blacksmith makes all the tools for the apprentice, but ritual centers chiefly in the fabrication of the big hammer (*onjundo*). While the master is making this the boy stands on the small anvil which is close to the ground, between the forge and the large anvil under the tree. 326 796

When the hammer (*onjundo*) is made, and while it is still red-hot, the handle is pushed into the belly of the dog. The goat and the four chickens are then killed. All the tools are brought together so that blood from the slaughtered animals may be sprinkled over them. The flesh of these animals is eaten with corn and beans. "The blacksmith calls many people to help him, and they like to eat the food," concluded my interpreter. [782]

During the entire ceremony, also throughout the feast, the boy stands on the anvil. There he remains until the master says, "You may speak and tell us what name you want." Perhaps the boy says, "I am Ndumbu." The people in the crowd clap hands and make a trilling with their fingers in their open mouths. The boy steps from the anvil; he is a blacksmith. My interpreter continued, "He must work hard and people must pay him. He used to work hard, but the master took the money."

There was an ancient belief that a blacksmith owed his skill to the help of the spirit of a person he had killed. Wooden effigies 326 778

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

326 of the murdered man were placed near the large anvil (p. 163), or
778 they might be kept in the home of the blacksmith. Such figures are still used (Plate XXI, Fig. 3) but the killing of a victim is not now possible. Blacksmiths are free to marry without restrictions other than those imposed by the classificatory system of relationships.

325 The blacksmith's forge is a thatched house about twelve feet
348 square with low eaves that almost reach the ground. The height from the floor to the point of the dome is fifteen feet. In the middle of the floor is a pit ten inches deep in which there is a quantity of charcoal brought from the charcoal burner's fire about half a mile away. At the sides of the pit are three stone seats for the workers. Two of these seats are occupied by men, each of whom works a pair of bellows. The two-chambered bellows is hewn from a block of wood in such a way as to give two circular air chambers from which wooden tubes lead to the fire. These wooden tubes are continued by clay tubes which project into the fire. Over the two round wooden chambers a piece of hide is stretched and tied over the woodwork. Two slender upright sticks, which the operator works up and down, are attached to the hide. In one corner of the hut there is a heap of charcoal, and in another corner lies the scrap iron. An iron rake with a wooden handle is used for stirring the charcoal in the fire. Plates XVI, XXXVII, and XXXVIII illustrate tools and processes.

413 The principal tools are:

(1) A flat stone anvil resting on rocks under a tree. The anvil is at such a height that the striker stands upright. At this anvil the metal is beaten with the heavy hammer *onjundo*.

(2) *Onjundo*, the most sacred of the tools, is 12.5 cm long. Its value is about that of an ox.

(3) There are tongs which can be clamped by a sliding metal ring. The larger tongs are 63 cm long and the smaller ones are 35 cm.

(4) The cutter is boat-shaped and triangular in cross section. The back, which is grasped in the hand, is 0.5 cm thick, tapering to a fine cutting edge.

(5) An iron holder for an axhead during the heating and hammering is 23 cm long. It is octagonal, hollow, and fits like a sheath over the shaft of the axhead.

(6) For heating the iron on the small anvil, after it has been roughly pounded to shape with the hammer (*onjundo*) on the large anvil, there is a smaller hammer (*usonjolo*) of which there are three varieties. These differ only in size.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

straight lines. The legs show the usual flexion of the knees and a 532
shortening which is out of proportion to the body length. The lower limbs of most Angolan figures have these characteristics. The body of this figure is hollow and the head detachable. The incised head-dress is imitative of the coiffure of Vachokue women.

Cangamba, a village in eastern Angola, is a confluence of tribal 171
elements, namely, Vambuella, Luchazi, Babunda, and Vachokue, whose physical appearance, hairdressing, tooth mutilation, and tribal marks differ considerably. The man who sold the figurine brought it furtively. He was an Ocimbundu, but the work is of Chokue origin. The figure, I am informed, was filled with medicine, [755]
then placed near a patient who was undergoing curative treatment.

The figurine (*ngeve*) of a woman having a number of dark feathers 484
attached to her back has only one use. A caravan setting out for a 778
long journey is accompanied by a medicine-man whose outfit includes 787
such a figurine. Should the caravan leader be in doubt when choosing between two paths, the medicine-man sets up the image at the parting of the ways. He kneels before it and asks questions, then plugs his nostrils in order to make replies in a falsetto voice supposed to come from the figurine. Thus advised respecting the route to follow, the caravan continues its journey (Plate XXI, Fig. 5; p. 156).

The wooden figure (Plate XXI, Fig. 3) is of exceptional interest 326
because of its connection with the blacksmith's craft, which is asso- 775
ciated with introductory rites for apprentices. In former days a newly initiated blacksmith was expected to disappear for a period during which he killed a man. On returning to the work of his forge the blacksmith made a wooden figure of which this example, one of five obtained, is typical. The spirit of the murdered man took up its abode in the effigy and in this way helped with the work. The figure, which is of the usual dimensions, namely, 36 cm high, has the greater part of its surface covered with reddened earth (pp. 159–160).

Two figurines (Plate XXI, Figs. 1, 6) were obtained from 171
women of the Vachokue tribe in the village of Ngongo, Ngalangi. 842
Here the Vachokue and the Ocimbundu mingle to such an extent that customs are no doubt transferred from one culture to the other. These wooden images are used by childless women, or by women whose infants have died. The woman who sold these figures pressed them to her breasts to show the manner of use. People standing around smiled and nodded their approval. A wooden figure of this [845]
kind is substituted for a dead twin.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

lion visits a village an old man talks to it through the palisade. 775
The conversation is carried on in a series of grunts, after which the 787
lion goes away. One of my informants said that "lions and leopards are watchdogs for old men who have died." When one of these animals kills a domestic animal or a person, the assumption is that the predatory animal was sent by a deceased old man who requires a sacrifice. Ngonga of Elende said that "when a lion killed a man it was a sign that there was a bad spirit from the man's family within the lion." There is divination to find who requires a sacrifice, since some ancestor has been neglected. W. C. Bell relates an Umbundu [114] tale of a woman who changed herself into a wild animal, but I was not able to ascertain that belief in transformation is held today (*Jour. Amer. Folk-Lore*, XXXV, p. 129).

I am unable to prove that the Ovimbundu have definite ideas of the nature of a future life, but they certainly think of survival after death, and have clear concepts of good and bad spirits who influence the fortunes of the living. There is no idea of punishment or reward, but a bad man has a bad ghost which can do evil things. Spirits will follow their relations on earth; moreover, they will come to the house of bows where their property is preserved.

A man returning from a hunt with trophies, or from the collection of honey, will leave some of these on a grave. There is no idea [774] of spirits in rivers and trees, but the first tree felled for building the house of a man of importance must not be allowed to fall violently. This may imply a belief in a tree-spirit.

Spirits move at night only and mentioning the dead by name or whistling at night calls spirits. There are many instances of sacrifice [782] connected with the idea of a spirit who has to be appeased. The medicine-man can induce a spirit to enter an image of wood. Thus [778] there are wooden images containing spirits useful to the blacksmith. There is an image which can show travelers the right path when the medicine-man consults it (Plate XXI, Figs. 3, 5).

Osande is a good spirit who will "bring good luck and do good things for the people, while *Ondele* is a bad spirit who harms the people," said Ngonga. When a person is sick, mad, or dizzy he has *Ondele*. Only a powerful *ocimbanda* can cast out *Ondele*. *Ocilulu* is the general name for a disembodied spirit, either good or bad. An *Ekisi* is an *Osande;* apparently the terms are synonymous.

A spirit can die a second time. There is, for instance, an evil 775
bird of the night whose name is *Esuvi*. This bird is able to catch a spirit in order to make it die a second death. A living person

was too light to make it effective as a tool or weapon (Plate XIII, Fig. 4). At Bailundu I was informed that an ax of this kind is used in a medicine-man's dance which is intended to cure a man who is sick because a spirit has entered into him. The sickness may have occurred because the man has broken a promise. 755

The medicine-man, or sometimes the patient himself, dances violently, meanwhile cutting about him with the ax (*omutaka*), which is finally used for killing a little pig whose blood is drunk by the sick man. This is the ritual that was previously mentioned in describing divination.

The following are important ceremonial objects: The ax *ekuva* (Plate XIII, Fig. 5) was the one used for killing slaves who were eaten at the death of a king. This object was secured in the Vasele country near Vila Nova de Selles. It is of handsome appearance, having a copper circle inlaid into the iron blade. A spear from Bailundu is likewise important because of its use in ritual (Plate XIII, Fig. 8). Before war and hunting this spear was thrust first into an ox then into a slave. The human and animal flesh were cooked together and eaten from the same pot. The female figure used by the medicine-man for consultation with regard to the correct path for a caravan has been described. A carved wooden post obtained from Bailundu was set up at cross-paths so that it might be visited by a sick person or his representative who would make sacrifice there. 411 [266] 782

Without parallel among ceremonial objects used by the Ovimbundu is a small wooden cloth-covered box from Bailundu. This contains a piece of root of cylindrical form tightly bound with cloth having at one end a cowrie shell. The box is the shrine of *Kandundu*, for whom a small hut is built in order to contain the box. Any one who sees the contents of the shrine is said to become blind. *Kandundu* is believed to be the "spirit of dreaming who makes swellings come on the body." 778

Antelope horns are in general use as containers of magical potions. One horn from Bailundu is used for holding sweet beer which is drunk by a person afflicted by bad dreams. A large horn with a piece of fur attached, also from Bailundu, is named *ocindiko*. The horn contains a mixture of fat and charcoal which is heated near camp after sunset, when men are on the march. The spreading fumes keep away lions and thieves. It was said that a thief is deterred because the fumes make him cough. 789 237

778 The charm *osonge* or *ombuiyu* is in the form of small neckbands of plaited fiber to which two or three cowrie shells are fastened. It is worn by women who wish to induce conception. A neckband of this kind which was worn by the maternal grandmother is thought to be specially effective. Sometimes a small rattle, formed from seed pods attached to a stick, is tied to the neckband. The rattle is shaken when the mother of twins meets a friend to whom she is not allowed to give the ordinary greeting.

751 A tortoise shell containing fat and charcoal is worn by the mother of a child who is afflicted by the spirit of *Kandundu*, which may cause the baby to have skin eruptions or a very small amount of hair. In order to cure her child, the mother must eat small quantities of the contents of the shell from time to time. In some sympathetic way the medicinal benefits are transferred to the infant.

756 When dancing, the medicine-man usually wears a goat's beard attached to a circular piece of basketry. This *osala* is sometimes fastened on the top of his head. In place of the ax already mentioned he may flourish a small ceremonial hoe or whisk, or a wooden baton with a tuft of hair at the end.

[766] Among the varied duties of the medicine-man is that of washing the body of a king (*osoma*) or a chief (*sekulu*). To water in a pot, the medicine-man adds some of the blood of a freshly killed chicken. Then in a hut specially reserved for the purpose he performs the ceremonial ablution.

At Cangamba an Ocivokue performed a ceremony which was supposed to make a thief return to the village for trial. The medicine-man sat on his haunches, holding in one hand a small rattle and in the other a slender stick on which the decorated carapace of a tortoise was poised (Plate LXXXII, Fig. 1). Very earnestly the man talked, shook his head, and gazed at the tortoise shell which began to twist on its pivot. As the medicine-man muttered and shook his rattle, the movement of the shell grew faster. Presently the rotation of the tortoise shell was reversed, but so adroitly that I could not follow the movement or imitate it when allowed to try. The reversed movement of the carapace on its pivot represents the culprit turning back to his village.

CURING THE SICK

755 At Cangamba a female *ocimbanda* was seen painting marks of red and white on the face of a sick woman. The ceremony was called *ovihamba* and its object was said to be the relief of rheumatism,

4:Dorsey E-4, 5 (no date)1899 FP13 Mbundu FP13

791 case of sickness. He is also a diviner, reading both the past and
759 future. At all spirit feasts, at the installation of a new chief, in preparation for war, and on almost every occasion the witch-doctor plays a prominent part. He bears an influential position among his people, and his art is the source of a considerable income, for always before he begins operations the pay must be brought and laid down before him. Thus it is that he is loth to part with even a few of his charms, much less a full set.

The ocimbanda does not inherit his power, but must serve a long apprenticeship to some old witch-doctor, whom he pays liberally. He is then given a small basket with a few charms, to which he adds from time to time. His idols and charms are not made by him, but
[778] are purchased one by one. All of these objects are considered powerful, *cikola* or sacred, and the common people are afraid to touch them; even the touch of a white man is sacrilegious. One of the distinguishing features of a witch-doctor's costume is a head-dress, *ekufue*, made of long porcupine quills fastened together at one end, sewn to a cloth disk about two inches in diameter. Many of the quills are over a foot in length. This headdress is only worn when divining. He also occasionally wears about the loins a girdle, *uya*, consisting of a strip of antelope skin sewn together along the two edges, thus forming a pouch which contains medicines. Attached to the girdle are war charms and medicines, of which he eats from time to time. There are also several kinds of small skins in the collection, on which the doctor kneels when about to perform.
[302] Two pigments should also be noticed. The first is a white, clayey substance, *ocikela*, with which the ocimbanda paints himself, and with which he also marks the person whom by his divining he has discovered to be innocent, the sign of acquittal being a mark across the forehead and down the arms. The other pigment is a red clay, *onongo*, with which he also marks his own body and employs as the sign of guilt.

787 Of the various objects of the ocimbanda's[1] outfit proper, the most
415 important is the basket, *uhamba*, in which the outfit is kept. When it is said that so and so has a "uhamba," it means that he is a witch-doctor. The basket is thirteen inches high by nineteen in length, and eight inches in thickness. The ends are rounded, thus giving the basket, as seen from above, an elliptical form. The cover, three inches in height, fits closely down over the basket, after the manner of our telescope bag. The bottom of the basket is made separate, and is fastened by means of an interlacing of grass braid. The sides of the basket are simply one long strip of interlaced reed and bark fibre, the ends overlapping and being fastened together by the grass braid, which passes up continuously from the bottom to

[1] [i.e., diviner. -- Analyst]

4:Dorsey E-4, 5 (no date)1899 FP13 Mbundu FP13

the top of the basket which it circles, thus giving a decorative 787
effect as well as affording additional strength. The lid is built in a 415
similar manner.

Only second in importance is a small basket-shaped gourd, *ongombo*, used in divination. The basket is ten inches in diameter and three inches deep. Around the rim is bound two bands of grass fibre, thus affording strength, and, by means of the manner of binding these in place, a certain amount of decoration. The basket has evidently seen much use, for the bottom is cracked in several places and has been mended with cotton thread. On two sides near the rim are two cowry shells. The contents of this basket are extremely varied, all the objects being in the nature of charms. Among them may be enumerated several small images made of different kinds of wood, horn of a goat, ox hoof, piece of pig's foot, lion's tooth; skin from the nose of a hyena, to smell out crime; bone of a person, a supposed witch; chicken bones, and a chicken head with open mouth, which is supposed to represent a gossip; and dozens of other trinkets, each having its own significance in the eyes of the witch-doctor.

During the process of divination two images, *ovitakas*, represent- 789
ing male and female, are set up before the ocimbanda, that he may 778
cause them to be inhabited by spirits. These are not worshipped as idols, yet are venerated in a sense by the common people, especially by women and children. The images are carved out of hard wood, and stand a little over a foot in height. Each one is partially clothed in a cotton wrapper, and bears about the neck several strands of native beads. They possess unusual interest, as on the back of the head of each the manner of wearing the hair of each sex is carefully portrayed. Attached to the male by a string around the neck is a rosette of dull red and yellow feathers, one of which has been artificially notched. To enable the ocimbanda to call the spirits into these images, he uses a whistle, *omkinga*, consisting of the horn of a small antelope inserted into an ox-tail wrapped with beads arranged into broad bands of white, black, and red. Furthermore, when about to divine, the doctor eats a number of ants. He also has some medicines known collectively as *ovihemba*, which are kept in a skin, from which he takes and eats before and during divining. Of rattles, *ocisikilo*, shaken by the ocimbanda during the practice of his art, there are two, both bottle-shaped gourds containing cannalilly seeds.

When the ocimbanda goes to divine, he first carefully spreads his 787
skins one upon the other, and upon these he places his basket of charms. He puts white and red clay on his eyebrows, cheek bones, shoulders, and elbows; also stripes his body with these clays, and

4:Dorsey E-4, 5 (no date)1899 FP13 Mbundu FP13

Still another form of fetish for protection are two small images also 778 known as *ovitekas*. They, like the other *ovitekas* described above[1], are of wood, but are rudely carved from two round pieces of wood about sixteen inches long. No attempt has been made to represent the human form in any detail, only the face, neck, and arms being indicated. The face of both images has been besmeared with some reddish black pigment. These were placed where the path to the village branches off to the caravan road. A small hut before which they stood was built for them, about two feet square, and between two and three feet high, with a thatched grass roof. Within was a shelf on which from time to time was placed food, corn, and a small gourd of beer. This was done to appease certain spirits which were supposed to be angry with the village and were causing sickness.

For the so-called poison test three medicines are employed. The 695 first and most common is known as the *ombambu*, a drug obtained 278 from the country east of the Quanza River, and represented in the collection by a piece of bark. It has the property of a powerful spinal irritant, and it is said that a very small quantity will produce death. There is a current belief among the Ovimbundu that if a bird alights upon the *ombambu* tree it will fall down dead. The second drug, or *ombambu*, employed in the poison test is obtained from the Bihe country, and is represented by several roots. It is taken in the form of a decoction. The third test is known as *onsunga*. This is a mixture of powdered herbs, and is obtained from the country of the Ganguellas. With these three drugs should be mentioned a small gourd, *okopo*, used by the ocimbanda in mixing the medicines, and from which during the poison test the parties drink. The test medicines are stirred with the foot of a small antelope. Occasion for the administering of the poison may arise in various ways. Frequently one person will accuse another of being a witch. The accused may deny it, and appeal to the poison test to prove his innocency. They go to the chief, who calls an ocimbanda, who mixes up a concoction in a gourd, and both the accuser and accused drink. If the draughts make one sick and he vomits, he is acquitted; and if the other one becomes very sick and does not vomit, he is said to be the witch. This same test is often appealed to in other matters where one affirms and another denies. A man may drink by proxy, that is, he may have a friend drink the poison in his stead, or, more frequently, a slave drinks for his master.

Finally, it must be noticed that the ocimbandu is also a medicine- 791 man. He undoubtedly possesses some really valuable remedies, but 757 there is so much of the fetishistic cult bound up in the administering of the remedies that when they do help a person the credit of

[1] [Cf. p. 185. -- Analyst]

5: Hambly E-5 (1929-30) 1934 FP 13 Mbundu FP13

326 merly obtained. Blacksmiths now smelt scrap-iron from European sources.
[582] Among the Ovimbundu, blacksmiths are restricted in marriage only by those kinship laws arising from their classificatory system of relationships, and the operation of a system of cross-cousin marriage. The smiths are not an endogamous group, and the occupation is not hereditary.

But despite these differences, which are not quite in harmony with the general body of custom relating to Negro blacksmiths, the Ovimbundu preserve ritual which is part of a widely distributed attitude toward workers in iron.

When a boy begins his training he should be about eighteen years of age and physically robust. He is required to collect and soften fragments of iron in the charcoal fire, to work the bellows, and to beat iron on the anvil, but for a time he is not allowed to make implements, the chief of which are hoe blades and axe heads. At the end of two years the novice asks his master to examine him, and preparations are made for an inauguration ceremony should the youth have proved sufficiently skilled to become an independent blacksmith.

326 On the day of initiation the boy has to buy four chickens, two male and
782 two female, one pup, and a goat. The master blacksmith has already made a complete set of tools for presentation to his pupil, but the big hammer (onjundo) is not quite completed until the day of initiation. While the final touches are being given to this object the novice stands still on a small stone anvil which is situated between the forge and the large anvil.

When the hammer is completed, and while it is still red hot, it is thrust into the belly of the pup provided by the novice. The goat and the four chickens are killed and some of their blood is sprinkled over the new tools which are gathered in a heap. The blacksmiths invite their friends to feast on the flesh of the sacrificed animals.

326 The boy remains standing on the anvil[1] until the master says, "You may
553 speak and tell us what name you want." Perhaps the boy says, "I am Ndumbu;" then the people clap hands and trill with their fingers in their open mouths. My interpreter said, "The boy will work hard and people will pay him. He used to work hard but his master took the pay."

326 Near the large anvil may be seen one or more wooden figures which are
778 still regarded as essential to the work of the blacksmith. I was informed that a blacksmith owes his skill to the aid of a spirit of some person he has killed, and that this spirit uses the wooden figure as a dwelling place. If this information is reliable the wooden figure is of the nature of a shrine, but I was not able to learn of any ceremony for inducing a spirit into the wooden figure. The impression left was that the spirit of the murdered person re-

1 [i.e., on the day of initiation of apprentice blacksmith. -- Analyst]

5: Hambly E-5 (1929-30)1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

sided permanently in the wooden figure. This ritual murder is now impossible, but the wooden figures are still used in the way described. 326 778

Women are never engaged in blacksmiths' work; neither are they employed as wood carvers. Among men wood carving is a specialized occupation, and within the craft itself are men who deal solely with one branch of the work. Thus in a village perhaps only one man is capable of making a drum, while another carves life-like wooden figures of animals, and a third specializes in the fabrication of household implements. [462] 532

Among the Ovimbundu women are the only potters, but I found just one exception in the case of a man who said that he learned the potter's craft in eastern Angola among the Vachokue. No ritual is connected with the making of pottery, but I observed that women always frequented one pit for their clay and in doing so passed better clay which was more accessible. I learned that a clay pit has to be consecrated by a medicine-man who kills a chicken and sprinkles the blood in the pit. All women at some time learn the arts of pottery making and basketry, but by the process of selection the industries become concentrated in the hands of the most skillful. 462 323 [782]

Only women make baskets; a craft in which they are skilled, especially in the gathering of plants and the extraction of dyes of soft shades. Such dyes have considerable endurance even though exposed to bright sunlight. Imported dyes are now competing with indigenous products, but the latter are still preferred in most localities. One might expect that women who are skilled in basket making would be expert weavers of mats, but this is not so. Mat making is in the hands of men who are skilled specialists, and within the mat making industry are at least three principal divisions of the craft, one for each type of mat. 462 285

Men spin cotton for mending clothes, but I have not seen women so engaged. I did not see any looms in use in Angola, but they survived up to a few years ago, and in the youth of my interpreter, who was about thirty years of age, looms worked by men were plentiful. 283 462 286

House building shows a division of labor according to age and sex. Men are responsible for cutting the poles, digging the trench in which these uprights are set, and binding the cross-pieces with bark. Men are likewise responsible for plastering the walls and laying the thatch. Women carry water to the clay pit and transport the puddled clay to the men who are plastering the walls. Children, some of them so young that they have to be rescued from a swampy grave, delight in puddling the clay with their feet. The rectangular pit is always as near the house as possible in order to minimize the labor of transport. I suggested that some of the tasks should 462 331

683 One of the commonest forms of punishment for sorcery was, and still is, banishment. Only the chief could pronounce the death penalty. Charges of sorcery are sometimes brought today to civil courts and to church courts under the guise of "poisoning".(1)

781 There are obvious gaps in the information on Umbundu religion and magic e.g. on spirits other than those of ancestors; on ritual connected
776 with the ancestors; on productive and protective magic; on the work of the medicine-man as distinct from the diviner, and on the functions of
171 the two separate offices of family priest. From existing accounts, however, Umbundu magico-religious concepts would appear to have much in common with those of the peoples to the east of the Plateau, and many of the words used for these concepts *(ngombo, ahamba, wanga, nganga* e.g.*)* are in fact the same. These peoples have been described in another section of the Survey.(2)

THE LIFE CYCLE

852 Childs' chapters on infancy, childhood, and adolescence form the
114 main part of his book, and his treatment of the subject is much more detailed and on a deeper level than information offered by other writers,(3) and should be consulted.

BIRTH

844 A woman remains in her husband's village for the birth of her children. During the first birth, she is generally assisted by older women of the village, usually relatives of the husband. No man is present unless delayed labour entails the presence of a medical practitioner, or a
[845] diviner. Difficult delivery is said to be caused by broken taboos, adultery on the part of the mother, sorcery, or the woman's own refusal to give birth. There is little ceremony connected with childbirth, and a woman may give birth to her second and later children alone when she is
[846] in the fields. There is a customary lying-in period until the cord falls from the navel, but this is frequently ignored today.

845 *Twins* are welcomed but are considered prodigies whose birth requires the administrations of an *ocimbanda*.(4) Soon after the birth, and every month while the children are growing, the whole village takes part in a ceremony to preserve their lives. In the case of triplets, one is given to the paramount chief.(5)

553 *Naming* usually takes place, in the case of a first-born, on the day of its birth. Childs notes several factors:

(a) The name *(onduko)* should have been borne by a relative, whether living or dead, whose character and state of well-being are satisfactory; sometimes the child may be considered the re-incarnation of the deceased relative after whom he is named.[1]

(1) Childs, personal communication. (2) McCulloch, 1951, pp.72-83.
(3) Hambly, (2) 1934, pp.212-33, and Cushman, 1944.
(4) Ennis, 1945. (5) Childs, 1949, p.83.

[1] [Childs, op. cit., p. 87.]

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

PART ONE [p.17]

SOCIAL STRUCTURE

121 *The object of Part One is (1) to describe the present social structure of the Ovimbundu, and (2) to suggest significant elements that this social structure has or may have for the programme of Christian missions among this people.*

CHAPTER II

POLITICAL AND SOCIAL LIFE

127 HAD my historical survey revealed a detailed description of
122 Umbundu social structure made at some former time, it would also be useful to make comparisons with the present state of affairs. Since there is no such witness out of the past, it is only possible to describe and analyse that which at present exists. For this purpose some excerpts from Umbundu narratives are presented and references made to certain folk-tales and proverbs. The basis of the analysis and description rests more especially, however, upon notes and impressions gathered in field-work over a period of years and upon a considerable number of genealogical tables and schedules of marriage arrangements.[1] These latter are referred to here only to a certain extent. I hope to treat these more fully later. The subject of marriage properly belongs to the field of social structure, but because of its importance I hope to devote a chapter to it. Only certain of the genealogical tables are presented fully and in their several aspects, while the others have served as basis and background for the whole of this part of the study.

565 The most significant historical allusion to the social structure
175 of the Ovimbundu which I have found was an observation of Pinheiro de Lacerda about 1790. 'These are they of the Highlands who are made up of two "systems" the one call themselves
[266] "Quimbundos" (i.e. Ovimbundu), (these do not eat human flesh): the others are called "Quimbangalas" (i.e. the royal households of
[782] Imbangala stock), who eat it, and when they make their sacrifice, at which all together attend, then all eat the "Makongo".'[2]

[1] I have 192 of the former and 75 of the latter.
[2] *Annaes Maritimos & Coloniaes*, 5a Ser., p. 488.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

631 life and each could be taken as a unit complete in itself. Individual studies and comparisons of one with another would provide much valuable material. Familiarity with individuals and groups belong-
[184] ing to all the major tribal groups, and study of their folk-lore and customs has led me to conclude that as in language, so in social structure and in culture, the differences are of small account. In offering illustrative material, I shall give its tribal source.

The King

643 To describe the royal office and functions it would be necessary
177 to use the past tense. That reason, along with others, leads me to exclude this subject from the present study. Effective European occupation of the country and government by direct rule[1] have atrophied the royal office among the Ovimbundu until to-day kings survive as hardly more than living museum pieces. This being the case, I shall only enumerate the royal functions, very briefly characterize them, and pass on to describe other and living parts of the Umbundu social organism.

643 The principal functions of the royal office were:

776 1. *Religious.* The spirits of the king's ancestors were the principal national deities. The king was not only high priest but also the visible vice-regent and incarnation of the spirits. The
[778] sacrifices at the royal shrine, *kakokoto* (literally, at the skulls), the place of the royal skulls, were for the nation in order:

643 (*a*) *To control the elements*, i.e. to ensure a sufficient supply of
372 rain and avoid the dangers caused by hail, by lightning, &c. Also
789 to control fire by providing a new fire properly (ceremonially) kindled from which everyone took his fire. A king's reign was spoken of as 'during the Water of Lord So-and-so' (*Kovava a Ñalã Ngandi*), or 'during the Fire of Lord So-and-so' (*Kondalu ya Ñalã Ngandi*).

241 (*b*) *To ensure fertility*, toward which desideratum the royal
644 marriage had great influence. The queen's special province was agriculture and her kitchen was sanctified by human sacrifice to
[782] guarantee the national food supply. Ceremonially treated seed was distributed to be mixed with the seed of each granary.

[1] 'Direct rule' is applied in most parts of Africa where European settlement is the predominant consideration and also where centralized government is the ideal. 'Indirect rule' is best illustrated in the Gold Coast, Nigeria, Uganda, and Tanganyika Territory.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

Oluse	*Oluina*
RELIGIOUS	
Regular village worship including agricultural festivals; village headman is also priest.	Family observances including occasional propitiations in case of illness, death, or other misfortunes; for desired economic advantages; mortuary rites. Family head is also priest.

613 782 793

602 114

Classificatory System of Relationship. The relationships of the wider kinship groups are quite largely extensions of those of the household, but the Ovimbundu, in common with all people who have a classificatory system, extend these relationships not only further but in quite different ways than do those who have the European (Roman) system. One who would understand the Ovimbundu must understand the Umbundu family from the inside—not as from motives of mere intellectual curiosity but as an Ocimbundu understands it. In order to demonstrate this family structure it will be necessary to present tables and diagrams. Hambly did a very creditable piece of work toward demonstrating the structure of the Umbundu family.[1] I doubt that anyone staying among them an equally short period of time, not knowing their language, could have done better in this respect unless he had come to the task with very exceptional preparation. It is only just to state this and I feel that it is necessary because so far as I am aware, in the five years since it was published, the book has received no adequate appraisal or review.[2] It must be said, however, that Hambly made some noticeable errors in his use of kinship terms owing to the fact that he did not learn the Umbundu language, and that he evidently failed to understand certain points with regard to the social structure.

For greater clarity and precision I am presenting in separate tables the terms which refer to blood relationship and those which refer to relationship by marriage.

[1] W. D. Hambly, op. cit., pp. 189–99.

[2] This book was reviewed in *Africa*, 1935, pp. 391–3, but the reviewer had no first-hand knowledge of the people or their language, which was perhaps his reason for taking up three-fourths of the space at his disposal with questions of orthography. E. W. Smith has taken note of the book (*Africa: What Do We Know of It?*, p. 71), but only to say that it 'is chiefly useful for its description of the material culture'.

233 The cattle herd obtains most of its food by grazing, but in the dry season the grass withers. Childs states[1] that "Herding has been a [604] function of the sister's son, and even now there is a reluctance on the part of the boys to herd for their fathers."

235 462 [844] Chickens are owned and looked after by both men and women, but other animals only by men. Boys may have small stock of their own, and a boy's economic independence most frequently begins with his owning a chicken.

231 Hambly states that goats are more common than any other animal, and that every family has one or more. These animals are not fed or watered, but are allowed to wander to find their own sustenance. Goats are not milked. Young males are castrated. The goat is frequently used in sacrifices. Sheep also are allowed to find their own food; the males are not castrated. Pigs are cared for comparatively carefully, receiving water and a daily supply of sweet potatoes and their leaves, together with some corn. Male pigs are castrated.[2]

APICULTURE[3]

[439] Beeswax was an important item of trade in the caravan days, and is still sold to Portuguese traders' stores, where it is massed into large rectangular cakes for export. Honey is eaten alone or with manioc, and [262] a fermented beer called *ochasa* is made by adding honey to corn-beer. [273] Fibre strainers are used for cleaning the wax, and large shallow baskets [252] are employed for drying the honey in the sun.

Large cylindrical hives, which are private property, are placed high in the trees. These are made by removing a cylinder of bark and lashing the halves together with strands of bark, forming a hive which has a diameter of one foot.

In Elende honey is removed from the hives during the months of August and December. One man ascends the tree in order to lower the hive with a long rope of bark or plaited fibre, while beneath the tree men are prepared to take the hive, which is opened over a smoky fire.

ARTS AND CRAFTS

326 782 *Smithing.* The profession of blacksmith or *ocivinda* is an important one, and, like hunting and divining, is sacred and is entered with special ritual. Often, but not always, these three professions are passed on by inheritance. For smithing two years' apprenticeship to a member of the profession is necessary, and is usually entered upon at the age of eighteen. At the end of this period the master examines his pupil, and makes tools for him, especially the heavy hammer or *onjundo* which is regarded as symbolic of his craft. For the inauguration ceremony the boy provides four chickens (2 male, 2 female), a dog, and a goat; the blood of these animals is sprinkled on his tools, and their flesh is eaten at a feast [553] attended by the villagers. Throughout the procedure the boy remains standing on the small anvil. Finally he is asked to choose his professional name; he then steps down from the anvil a qualified blacksmith.

(1) Childs, 1949, p.109. (2) Hambly, op.cit., p.154.
(3) Hambly, (4) 1934.

Formerly it was believed that a smith owed his skill to the help of the spirit of a person whom he had killed, and wooden effigies of this person were kept by the smith.[1] 326 782

The principal products of a blacksmith's forge are axe-heads, hoe blades,[2] tools for mat-making, arrowheads, knives, and brass bracelets. Iron, which is fairly plentiful, was formerly smelted over charcoal fires.[3] Today smiths use scrap iron. 325 412

Pottery

Pot-making is a part of women's work among the Ovimbundu. A wheel is not used. Clay is mixed with a silicate, usually gravel, rolled out in long ropes, and the pot built by the coiling process.[4] Pots are ornamented when wet by making deep incisions with a piece of gourd; they are then sun-dried, and fired in a kiln of dry grass. Pots are used as water-containers, as cooking vessels and as vessels for storing corn and beans, and, when made in a very large size, for brewing beer.[5] 323 [462]

No ritual attaches to pot-making, except at the opening of a new clay-pit, when, in the presence of both men and women from the village, the medicine-man sacrifices a chicken over the open pit.[6] [782]

Weaving and Spinning

Looms have not been used among the Ovimbundu since they have been a people, although progenitors of the kingly families who came from the Bangala or Congo groups may have done weaving. Trade cloth has been known and used by the Ovimbundu for nearly 300 years.[7] Skins have been used in remote areas; Hambly when he mentions bark-cloth as being worn by the Ovimbundu is probably referring to the Ngangela. Spun cotton, however, is used for repairs, and there is a cotton plant in most gardens. Spinning is done always by men.[8] 286 439 [281] [287] [283] 462

Basketry

All girls learn to make baskets, although some become more proficient than others. Knowledge of basket-making implies also an understanding of dyeing, since coloured strands of grass are interwoven to make geometric patterns.[9] Baskets, and also basket-trays, are usually made by the coiling process.[10] 285 462 [382]

(1) Hambly, (2) 1934, pp.158-60. The ceremony was described from Njongolo village in Elende.
(2) See Cashman, 1944, pp.140-1.
(3) For details of the blacksmith's forge and tools, see Hambly, op.cit., pp.160-1; Cashman, 1944, pp.139, 140, 145-6.
(4) See Hambly, op.cit. Plates XXXIII and XXXIV, and Childs, 1949, Plate VIII.
(5) Hambly, op.cit., p.168; Cashman, op.cit., pp.144-5.
(6) Hambly, op.cit., p.169.
(7) Childs, personal communication. See also Childs, 1949, p.171, note 1.
(8) See Hambly, p.177, and Cashman, 1944, p.136.
(9) Red, yellow, black, and brown dyes are used. For a description of the process, see Hambly, op.cit., pp.170-1.
(10) See Hambly, op.cit., p.171, and Cashman, op.cit., pp.141-2 for details of basket-making. Also for illustrations Hambly, op.cit. and Childs, 1949.

Mat-making

462 The making of mats is a specialised craft for men. Generally elder-
285 ly men are the mat-makers. Two tools are used, a borer and a needle,
[412] both products of the blacksmith's forge. Hambly[1] describes the making of reed sleeping mats, large mats used for partitions, and string bags. There are four distinct types of mats, each of which has its specialist.[2]

Leather-work

282 Leather pouches worn on a broad leather belt are part of the essential equipment of the hunter. The pouch is square, rectangular, or semi-cylindrical in shape, and may be decorated with cross-shaped patterns, or brass-headed nails used for decorative effect. Hide is also used for the seats of four-legged wooden stools. Hides are crudely dressed: they are soaked, the inner surface rubbed with ashes, the hair scraped away, and the hide pegged out.[3]

Wood-carving

323 Wood-carving, which is men's work, includes the following specialisa-
[463] tions: doors, windows and their frames; coffins; beds, tables and chairs; mortars, pestles, grinding-handles, and handles for various iron implements; stools, household utensils, carved images etc.; drums and other musical instruments; canoes (dug-outs and coracles).[4] Illustrations are given by Hambly.[5]

TRADE

438 Caravan trade is now confined to short journeys when corn, beans and
484 beeswax are carried by men and women porters to the traders' stores.
791 Formerly however it was an important feature of tribal life. Each caravan had its professional leader, and was accompanied by a diviner or medicine-man. Before a caravan started out, a ceremony was performed at
[482] which the principal performers were the village headman and the medicine-man. The head of the former headman was brought from its box, sewn in oxhide; blood from a sacrificed animal was sprinkled on the head, and invocation was made to the deceased by the village headman, asking for good fortune for the journey.[6]

438 Today the Ovimbundu exchange products among themselves both by bar-
436 ter and the use of Portuguese money,[7] but there are no large markets except in the towns.

[439] The "trade-agreements" between the Ovimbundu kingdoms and between
438 the Ovimbundu and other tribes have been mentioned above.[8] Accompanying these, regional industrial and commercial specialisations within Ovimbundu country developed. Thus in the middle of the last century

(1) Hambly, op.cit., pp.169-70.
(2) Childs, 1949, p.109.
(3) Hambly, op.cit., p.176.
(4) Childs, op.cit., p.110.
(5) Op.cit., Plates XIII to XXII.
(6) Hambly, op.cit., p.156.
(7) For details of Ovimbundu units of measurement see Hambly, op.cit., p.157.
(8) p.9.

611 dispersed. Both groups have ritual leaders, whose offices are quite dis-
613 tinct. Barnes' suggestion[1] is that the two groups must be father's patrilineage and mother's matrilineage, with the qualification mentioned below.

613 The *oluse* consists of a large number of village groups, some of which recognise mutual relationship,[2] but with no recognised head (other than
622 the village headmen) except in the case of the royal families. Land is owned by the *oluse* and passed on within it from father to son, or from
[428] elder to younger brother. Succession to village or tribal office, from village headman to king, descends in the same way.[3] Ritual leadership within the *oluse* lies with the village headman, who is in charge of the
[346] spirit-hut *(etambo)* of the guardian spirit of the village (or of the nuclear *oluse* within the village), and who officiates at regular village worship, including agricultural festivals.

613 The *oluina*, on the other hand, is a dispersed and apparently larger
428 group, whose members live with their various paternal lines of descent. The size of the *oluina* is unknown; Childs merely refers to it as a "large
604 and widespread organization, with a recognized head". The office of head of the *oluina (ukulu wepata)* descends from mother's brother to sister's son. Negotiable and moveable property, including cattle and trade goods, is owned by the *oluina* and inherited by the sister's son. Formerly the mother's elder brother had great powers over his sister's sons, and was even able to pawn them or sell them into slavery, to meet his own debts.
[592] The patrilocal household is usually responsible for training children, especially during their early years, but they are frequently sent to the *oluina* (i.e. to the mother's brother) for at least a part of their educa-
[582] tion. At death or divorce of parents, children go to the *oluina*.

The head *(ukulu wepata)* of the *oluina* is usually both the legal and
43 spiritual head of the group, although today the two functions are often divided. He is in charge of the spirit hut *(etambo)* of the guardian
782 spirit of the *oluina* (of whom there may be more than one, and of whom he becomes one after death). He leads the *oluina* in propitiatory rituals carried out in case of illness, death, or other misfortunes within the group, or in prayers made for desired economic advantages. (Apparently no regular rituals are carried out by the *oluina*.) The *ukulu wepata* may or may not be at the same time a village headman; if he is, he will be priest of two lines and have charge of two spirit huts; if he is not, there may be two (or more) priests in the village, each in charge of the spirit-hut of his *oluse* or *oluina*.

The onēlē yohonji and the onēlē yohumba

613 The *oluse* and the *oluina* are both divided into male and female
"sides": the *onēlē yohonji* (the side of the bow) and the *onēlē yohumba*
602 (the side of the basket). It has been noted above that uterine brothers
582 and sisters belong to the same *oluse* and *oluina*, but to the male or female side in each, according to sex. The composition of these "sides" is

(1) Loc.cit.
(2) If some villages within the *oluse* cannot trace mutual relationship, the *oluse* should perhaps be called a patri-clan rather than a patrilineage.
(3) But see below, p.29.

On arriving at the site the boy and girl cut and plant the first pole, which is to be a part of the new *etambo* (spirit hut). The boy and girl must take part ceremonially in each operation of building the hut, and when it is built they ignite the new fire. A hen and a cock are killed, cooked on the new fire, and eaten inside the *etambo* by all who have taken part in building it. The headman and his wife must remain on the new site to keep the fire alight; other villagers may commute from the old village or erect temporary grass shelters on the new site. Houses are built by the occupants themselves, although men may give each other mutual help, for which there is a gift of food and beer. The *onjango* is usually built by the communal labour of all boys and men, and on its completion a simple ritual is performed to promote harmony within and to welcome the spirits, who are believed to sleep in the *onjango* and to take part in all discussions within it.(1)

The village group: composition

Childs describes the relationship of the villagers of Ngendo to each other as typical of Umbundu country. Most of the heads of households are related agnatically to their respective section-heads (who are presumably also related agnatically to each other, since the village is based on the *olusе* group); Childs does not however discuss the relation of section heads to each other or to the village headman. He gives a table in which the householders are divided into six categories according to their relationship to their various section-heads:

1.	Paternal relatives of section head:	Section A (headman's)	21
		" B	2
		" C	1
		" D	2
			26
2.	Maternal relatives of section head:	Section B	4
		" C	1
		" D	1
			6
3.	Sisters' sons (or daughters)(2)	Section B	4
		" C	1
			5
4.	Relatives by marriage	Section A	2
		" B	1
			3
5.	Relationship not definitely known	Section B	2
6.	Former slaves	Section A	1
		" B	1
			2

(1) This section is based on Childs, 1949, pp.37-9.
(2) Who could, of course, have been included as maternal relatives and paternal relatives, since they belong both to the *olusе* and to the *olume*.

621 The total number of households is 44, or 48 including those of the four
592 section heads. It should be noted that there is a discrepancy in Child's
114 figures (apart from an obvious misprint):[1] in another context he writes that section B contains only 12 houses (not even *households*), while from this table it would appear that section B has 15 household heads, including that of the section head; and section C is said to have 6 households, while only 4 (again counting the section head) are accounted for in this table.

591 Childs states[2] that the incidence of patrilocal marriage in Ngendo
114 is fairly typical of Umbundu country, but unfortunately gives little information regarding the relationship of the various spouses to each other or concerning the location of the villages from which they came. Matrilocal marriage is recognised as a possibility: of the three relatives by marriage listed above, one was a husband of a daughter of the headman, another the widow of a younger brother of the headman, who should have been inherited by a younger brother (?) or a mother's brother of the deceased, or, failing that, could have returned to her father's village. Of those listed above as sisters' children, two were widows who had come to live in the village with their mother's brothers.[3]

POLITICAL STRUCTURE

The village headman[4]

622 The village headman *(sekulu yimbo)* is also the head of the *oluse*
793 which forms the nucleus of the village group, and is related agnatically to most of the householders. He alone may speak of the village as *imbo*
● 782 *liange* (my village); the heads of sections, who are also called *sekulu*[5] may speak possessively only of their own sections *(ocitiwila cange)*, and other villagers speak only of "our village" *(imbo lietu)*.[6] The headman functions as both priest and legal head of the village. As priest he has in his compound the *etambo* (spirit hut), in which the insignia of office are kept, and in which he prays to the ancestral spirits. Upon occasion he may sleep there, usually offering a prayer to the spirits when he wakes during the night. The *etambo* may also be
[346] used as a lodging place for respected guests, or as a store-house for possessions not used every day. Childs states that he officiates at regular village worship, including agricultural festivals; Hambly adds that he may lead the people in offering sacrifices when epidemics of
613 sickness break out in the village. It has been noted above[7] that it is the function of the *oluina* head to lead such rituals when illness occurs within the *oluina*. In general the village head is responsible for
[622] matters - particularly agriculture and public health - which affect the whole village; individuals, both for protection and for help and other

(1) Childs, op.cit., p.28, line 27, where "twenty-four" should read "forty-four".
(2) On the basis of the 192 genealogies and 74 marriage-schedules which he collected. He does not, unfortunately, give examples or show how the comparison was made.
(3) Based on Childs, op.cit., pp.25-31.
(4) This section is based on Childs, op.cit., pp.36-7.
(5) It has been noted above that *sekulu* is used for all men (and some women) of the grandfather's generation.
(6) op.cit., p.283. (7) p.18.

000 643 769 782 regent and incarnation" of the spirits. Sacrifices were made at the royal shrine or *kokokoto* ("at the skulls"), where the skulls of past chiefs were kept, in order to:-

[372] (i) control the elements i.e. to ensure a sufficient supply of rain and avoid the dangers caused by storms; also to control fire by providing a new fire ceremonially kindled[1] from which everyone took his fire.

[842] [241] (ii) to ensure fertility, towards which the royal marriage had great influence. The queen's special province was agriculture and her kitchen was sanctified by human sacrifice to guarantee the national food supply. Ceremonially treated seed was distributed to be mixed with the seed of each granary.

643 648 721 [701] (b) *To represent the country in its external relations*, principally to make trade agreements with other chiefs, or to make war on other peoples in order to get tribute and plunder. The war leader *(Kesongo)* has his own residence entirely separate from that of the king, whom he must not meet face to face except on certain ceremonial occasions.[2] Each king must inaugurate his reign with a war, during which or after which he must ceremonially "eat the old one" *(oku lia ekongo)* - who was usually a specially fattened slave cooked with the flesh of the principal animals commonly eaten.[3] [266]

643 692 (c) *To dispense justice.* The chief's court or *olusenje* was the supreme court of the chiefdom. The chief had the final word in any case, but most chiefs acted according to custom.

644 [882] (d) *To protect himself and the chiefdom*, the chief could use "magic" (?) which might have been accounted witchcraft or murder if practised without authority: e.g. the ritual murder of a pregnant woman, or of the children whose lives were required for building and furnishing the queen's kitchen.

643 791 (e) The chief made much use of divination in order to carry out his office. For this purpose he had his own diviner *(citue cosoma)*, who was of the blood royal; but he also consulted diviners of other regions and types.

643 Succession to chiefship is in the male line,[4] from father to son, elder brother to younger brother or brother's son, or sometimes to one more distantly related. The election is made by the councillors whose duty it is (?), ordinarily before the old chief's death is announced. These same councillors may depose an unpopular chief, and there have been many such depositions. This "democratic" tendency of the Ovimbundu has been noted by most writers. Childs points out that it is attested by the fact that a chief (formerly as well as today) works in his own fields, and by folk-tales which give incidental and intimate pictures of petty details in the lives of the chiefs† [242]

(1) See above, p.26.
(2) In Bailundu he, with certain other officials, was of the stock of slaves of the state *(ovindili viosoma)*.
(3) Childs, p.21. Many early writers refer to the cannibalism of the "[illegible]" or "Imbangalas" who are thought to have been the Ovimbundu chiefs. (See above, p.8, and also Lacerda and Ravenstein, quoted by Childs, pp.17ff.)
(4) But *inheritance* is said to follow a different line among chiefs from among commoners; possibly inheritance is also in the paternal line. See Childs p.18.

† See footnote 1, p. 31

night in the *etambo* praying to or communing with ancestral spirits, when the occasion arises; Suku is regarded as too remote to receive prayers. 693 613

While cooking, a woman may spill a little meal on the ground for the spirits; at a meal, a person may spill a little food or beer for the same purpose. A portion of the meat at a feast may likewise be sacrificed, but it is often a less desirable portion, such as the intestines.(1) 782

Agricultural rituals were held before planting, at which time the headman and his wife had intercourse in their field and sacred seed from the chief's granary was distributed, a few grains to be mixed with the seed to be planted on each plot. When the maize began to ripen a few ears were sent to the chief before any were eaten.(2) 241 789

DIVINERS(3)

The word *ocimbanda* is used both for a diviner and for a maker of medicines. To distinguish the two, the diviner may be called *ocimbanda congombo* ("of the basket"), the herbalist *ocimbanda coviti* ("of trees or sticks"). Some practitioners are both diviner and herbalist. A female diviner is called *combula*.(4) An *ocimbanda* frequently specialises in a certain kind of case;(5) and among the members of the profession there are many degrees of proficiency. One may work only in his own village, another may be consulted on matters of concern to the whole district or chiefdom; others go on professional journeys carrying their baskets, and accumulate profits in animals and cloth. The greater the reputation of the diviner, the greater the charges he makes for his services. 791 759

The tasks of the *ocimbanda* are:-

(a) To discover the cause of sickness, death, or any evil which has befallen the individual or the community. Sickness and death are always believed to be due either to the workings of spirits who are demanding sacrifices, or to living enemies who have malicious spirits under their control or who have bought potent charms. The diviner, after consulting the spirit who speaks in and through his basket, names the spirit who is causing the trouble and tells the victim what its demands are, or, if the enemy is a living person, indicates in a general manner from whence the trouble comes, e.g. to a woman "Your baskets are too well made; you are hated because of them", or, to a man, "This illness was found on a journey taken to collect a debt". If requested, the diviner makes a countercharm to offset that which has caused the ill. 787 753

(b) To interpret omens and dreams.

(c) To give advice on personal problems.

(d) To dispense medicines and charms.

(e) To bring or withhold rain, or to see who is guilty of withholding it. [789]

(1) Ibid., see also Cushman, loc.cit.
(2) Childs, personal communication.
(3) Based on Tucker, 1940.
(4) Hambly, (3) 1934.
(5) Ibid.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

175 171 [412] O. Dapper (Description de l'Afrique, 1732, p. 369) shows a scene in which an ax, such as I obtained from the Vasele country, is being used for beheading a slave.

Cavazzi (Istorica descrizione, etc., Bologna, 1687) describes the three kingdoms of Congo, Matamba, and northern Angola. The [325] poison ordeal, the scapegoat, the blacksmith's bellows (pp. 101, 170) [534] are all traits known to the Ovimbundu. The musical instrument made from a large gourd, which has a ridged board attached for rubbing with a stick, is the type I collected. Cavazzi pictures the double iron gong and the long drum held between the knees. He [782] also shows a rain-maker (p. 214) and the sacrifice of two hundred victims at the accession of a king (p. 210).

174 243 Consideration of the history of maize in Africa is of importance in connection with these early writings, as this grain is the staple agricultural product of the Ovimbundu. I am indebted to Dr. [113] Berthold Laufer for access to his unpublished research on this subject. From the following facts one may assume that, in all probability, the maize culture of the Ovimbundu was derived from the Congo region before their migration into the Benguela Highlands.

175 243 Father Jerome Merolla remarks that maize was growing in the neighborhood of San Salvador (1683–92). The native names were *mampunni* and *massambuta;* from this corn an alcoholic beverage was prepared. According to Cavazzi (Ehrmann, Geschichte der merkwürdigsten Reisen, XVIII, 1794) maize was not intensively cultivated by the Negroes of lower Guinea, though it thrives well and may be harvested twice or thrice a year. The natives said that the grain [177] was brought by the Portuguese, but they did not esteem it highly, and were accustomed to use it as food for pigs.

Bosman (p. 312) records that prior to the arrival of the Portuguese, Negroes were entirely ignorant of *milho* ("maize"). The account of Duarte Lopez preserved by Filippo Pigafetta states that the Negroes consider maize the vilest of all grains, so that it is given to swine. This contempt and lack of knowledge of the food value, combined with ignorance of methods of preparation, suggest a recent introduction (Pigafetta, translation by M. Hutchinson, 1881, p. 40). Dapper (Description de l'Afrique, 1732, p. 345) also mentions the cultivation of maize. Battell lived as prisoner in northern Angola about the year 1600, consequently his records of the use of the great Guinea wheat (maize), which the natives call *mas-importo*, give early evidence for the use of this grain (Hakluyt Soc., 1901, pp. 9, 11, 67).

V. ECONOMIC LIFE

The words "economic life" are here used with a wide connotation 182
including nature lore, food supply, trade, transport, and industries;
all these are combined to form a foundation for every aspect of the
social life of the tribe.

The truth of this is realized if one pays attention to the rites 788
connected with occupations. For the hunter there is special training, 782
ritual, and a peculiar mode of burial. Final ceremonies in the initiation of a young blacksmith are associated with sacred acts such as sacrifice of animals and the sprinkling of the tools with their blood. Even the simple occupation of pounding corn requires that the rock shall be dedicated to this purpose by sprinkling the blood of a chicken on the surface. Similarly, a clay pit has to be consecrated before the raw material may be taken for making pottery. A caravan [787]
journey is not merely a commercial undertaking; the accompanying medicine-man carries a wooden figure which he consults with regard to the route (Plate XXI, Fig. 5).

Division of labor according to sex is one of the most important 462
principles involved in the economic life, more particularly in occupational groupings, which are strictly observed. Moreover, within any one activity, such as house-building, there are tasks for men only, while other parts of the work are performed exclusively by women or children.

The study of industries is of great importance when a comparison 322
of Umbundu and adjacent cultures is being made. This is particu- 177
larly true in the instance of wood-carving, an occupation yielding highly specialized products some of which are connected with religious [778]
belief and ritual. All artifacts are valuable as criteria of cultural contacts, though their reliability as evidence of trait diffusion naturally varies with their degree of complexity. Study of native industries in relation to European contacts illustrates a cultural process which may result in acceptance, rejection, or ingenious adaptation of new ideas.

That a study of the economic life of a tribe is not merely a record- 182
ing of material processes and artifacts, is illustrated by observation 231
of the treatment of cattle. This pastoral pursuit naturally falls under a heading "Domestic Animals," but the ideas associated with cattle, including funeral feasts, use of horns on graves, and the wrapping of the royal corpse in o hide, lead directly into important matters of belief and ritual.

224 874 an initiation feast when the training is ended. At the feast all people of the village may be present but they do not dance; only the professional hunters may do so. The boy who is to be initiated must not speak or move until he "feels the spirit on his head"; then he gives meat to the people. After hunters have captured game for the feast, the blood from these animals is used to smear over the bow, arrows, and spear which have been made for the novice by his tutor. [326] This is analogous to the initiation of the young blacksmith who receives blood-sprinkled tools made by the master blacksmith.

224 788 There is in connection with the life and death of the professional hunter a certain amount of ritual and precaution. The night before setting out to hunt is a time of dancing and renewal of the implements of the chase, which are kept in a house specially prepared for them. A hunter who is on the eve of departure calls in other professional hunters to share the ceremony, which includes the rubbing of the bows and other implements with palm oil. A libation of beer is poured on the bows, spears, and arrows, but no medicine-man is present. Some of the bows are never used, because they are merely the symbols of the personality and prowess of dead hunters whose names they have taken. The food and cooking pots of a hunter must never be associated with those of ordinary household use. If a hunter is following the tracks of an animal he must not point with his finger as this action will drive the animal away. The correct way to point is by use of the feathered end of an arrow. The hunter [834] must not sleep with his wife the night before setting out in quest of game.

224 782 I have frequently seen in front of the hut of a hunter a number of skulls of antelope and other animals mounted on poles arranged in circular formation (Plate XXXII, Fig. 2). These skulls seem to be trophies, which are invariably taken away by the hunter if he finds a new home. There is no reason to doubt the statement that these skulls are an offering to the spirits who give good luck in hunting, because such a belief would be in harmony with the general respect for ancestral ghosts, which are thought to influence the affairs of the living.

764 224 On several occasions, notably near Ganda and in the Cassonge country, I have seen the tombs of hunters. These are large structures built of slabs of granite laid with some symmetry. The rock tomb is invariably placed on the top of a commanding eminence of granite. The skulls of animals which the hunter has killed are piled on the top of the cairn, but I do not know whether these are the trophies

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

Goats are more common than any other animal; there are few, 231
if any, families which do not own one or more goats. These animals are not fed or watered. Goats are able to exist on almost any kind of vegetation; consequently these animals are, almost without exception, well nourished. Goats are not milked. Kids are born at any time of the year, and the young males are castrated. The hides are used for making bags. The goat has the misfortune to be the most [782] desirable sacrificial animal. This is not entirely due to the fact that it is cheap and easily obtainable. The sheep is said to be unsuitable as a sacrifice, because it does not make a noise when killed. The [237] hair of the goat is used for making an ornament named *osala*, which is worn by medicine-men.

Sheep are of the long-tailed Syrian breed. Like the goats, the sheep are not cared for in any way; they find their own pasture and water, and in doing so may wander for a considerable distance, though they always return to the village at sunset. The males are not castrated. Sheep are not so frequently kept as are goats and pigs. The skin is used for making bags. Twin births of calves, kids, or lambs are not regarded with awe; on the contrary, such births are welcome.

Almost every man keeps one or more dogs, and I have rarely seen a hut in which there were no dogs. Usually young puppies are near the fire, and on the whole dogs are well treated because they are valuable in hunting. They also give warning of the approach of hyenas, lions, and leopards. I have frequently seen a person run into the road to pick up a dog when an automobile is approaching. A tendency to improve the breed of dogs by crossing the lean native animal with a breed of large dogs from South Africa has been mentioned. In contrast with the generally considerate treatment of dogs by the Ovimbundu one has to note the very emaciated and diseased condition of dogs in the Esele country. Among the Ovimbundu dogs [262] are regarded as desirable food.

Sacrifice of a dog at the inauguration of a blacksmith will presently be described. A medicine-man who is about to perform a ceremony for curing the sick has to make a meal of dog's flesh, but otherwise the flesh of the dog is taboo to him. These points of ceremony, taken in conjunction with the food value of the animal, and its use in hunting, show that the dog is highly esteemed.

Poultry are of very mixed breeds. The standards of size and 235
weight are higher than is usual in African chickens, a fact which is perhaps attributable to contact of the Ovimbundu with the Portu-

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

Any boy who wishes to become a blacksmith may be trained for the work. It is not necessary that his father should have been a blacksmith. When the youth begins his training he must be eighteen years of age and physically robust. His first duties are the beating of hot iron on the anvil; he is also required to collect and soften fragments of iron. He works very hard but is never allowed to finish anything; the master has to complete the work. 326 874

At the end of two years the youth asks the master blacksmith to examine him. What is more important still, the master is asked to make the heavy hammer (*onjundo*), which is used for beating hot iron on the largest anvil (Plate XXXVIII, Fig. 1). There is no doubt as to the sacredness of this hammer, which is a symbol of the completion of apprenticeship. There is also the idea of the master handing on his skill to the pupil by personally making and presenting the tools. I made repeated efforts before being able to purchase one of these hammers; finally it was procurable only at a high price. The value is due to ritualistic associations, the large quantity of iron used in the making, and the labor required to weld the head to the shaft.

On the day of his inception the boy has to purchase four chickens, two male and two female, one pup, and a goat. The master blacksmith makes all the tools for the apprentice, but ritual centers chiefly in the fabrication of the big hammer (*onjundo*). While the master is making this the boy stands on the small anvil which is close to the ground, between the forge and the large anvil under the tree. 326 796

When the hammer (*onjundo*) is made, and while it is still red-hot, the handle is pushed into the belly of the dog. The goat and the four chickens are then killed. All the tools are brought together so that blood from the slaughtered animals may be sprinkled over them. The flesh of these animals is eaten with corn and beans. "The blacksmith calls many people to help him, and they like to eat the food," concluded my interpreter. [782]

During the entire ceremony, also throughout the feast, the boy stands on the anvil. There he remains until the master says, "You may speak and tell us what name you want." Perhaps the boy says, "I am Ndumbu." The people in the crowd clap hands and make a trilling with their fingers in their open mouths. The boy steps from the anvil; he is a blacksmith. My interpreter continued, "He must work hard and people must pay him. He used to work hard, but the master took the money."

There was an ancient belief that a blacksmith owed his skill to the help of the spirit of a person he had killed. Wooden effigies 326 778

412 fatigue is avoided by the method of holding and swinging so that the work of crushing is done by the weight of the implement.

412 252 Two less usual methods of pulverizing grain are by use of a long pestle, which is worked up and down in a heavy wooden mortar as shown by Plate LXXXIV, Fig. 1, in which Vachokue women are so employed, and the crushing of grain with a cylindrical stone which is rolled on a flat slab. This latter method I judge to be very old, for on a pre-Umbundu site encircled by stone walls I have seen flat slabs of stone and cylindrical rollers. Some of the flat slabs were worn extremely thin in the middle and a few were perforated by the friction.

It is noteworthy that there are rocks especially reserved for the pounding of grain with the wooden mallet. Such rocks are to be [782] found close to every village, and the dedication of a new rock for this purpose requires the killing of a chicken whose blood is sprinkled on the rock.

252 [512] Work of this kind is begun before daybreak. From that time to sunset the pounding of the wooden mallets, accompanied by the singsong of the women, marks the progress of the day's work. At intervals the pounded grain is sifted through the hands and spread out on a basket-work tray, which is shaken to separate the fine meal. The unbroken and partly broken grain is replaced on the rock for further pounding. A small brush of grass is used for bringing together the grain which is dispersed by the blows.

412 171 The sole implement used in agriculture, which is entirely in the hands of women, is the hoe. Of this implement there are several [862] variations according to locality. The Ovimbundu and others of Ngalangi employ the form illustrated in Plate XIII, Fig. 10. The long handles measuring 85 cm no doubt reduce fatigue by minimizing bending. Both hands are used, and, furthermore, the increased length of the handles must give a greater leverage. The smaller hoe used by Ovimbundu women of Elende has short handles only 51 cm (Plate XIII, Fig. 9), while that from the Esele country is distinguished by a broader blade and still shorter handles only 36 cm in length.

412 Included in the outfit of every Umbundu home is the heavy wooden floor beater. This implement, which is fashioned from a single piece of wood, consists of a narrow handle, round in cross section, and a flat portion for beating the moist, newly made, mud floor of the hut. The total length is about 83 cm.

When the clay was being mixed an old pot was broken and pulverized so that some of the powder might be added to the new pot. There may be the underlying idea of continuity in the potter's art. The potters said, *Sanga yi pita* ("Lest it leak"). There may be no purpose other than the imparting of stability to the new clay. 323

I was unable to find any trace of ritual except with reference to the opening of a new clay pit. When a pit is first opened both men and women attend. The head of a chicken is twisted off by a medicine-man, then the bird is held over the pit by either a man or a woman. There is no law or ceremony to determine who shall take the first clay from the pit. The art of making pots is in the hands of female specialists so far as the Ovimbundu are concerned. Observation makes clear that women will go for a long distance to obtain clay from the pit which has been opened in a ceremonial manner. On their way to such a pit they pass clay which would serve their purpose well, but they do not use it. Children sometimes amuse themselves by making animals of clay. [462] [782] [857]

The pottery of the Ovimbundu includes cooking vessels of many sizes, water containers, and very large pots for brewing beer (*olombia vi okukela*). [415]

MATS AND BASKETS

This occupation illustrates division of labor on a sex basis. Baskets are made by women, while mat-making is an occupation for males. As with other trades there is specialization. The majority of women are able to make baskets though the skill of individuals varies. All women who have a knowledge of basketry understand the manufacture of dyes. Only a few men make mats; my informant thought that perhaps one man in ten would have the necessary skill. Such specialization is continued into other occupations; for example, only a few men spin cotton thread, while the majority of people buy pottery from expert female potters. 462 285 [463]

The mat-maker, generally an elderly male, uses two tools, a borer and a needle, both products of the native forge. The borer (*utomo*) for piercing the reeds, consists of a long thin blade in a wooden grip. The needle (*osinja*) is threaded with bark fiber and passed through the holes made by the *utomo*. The bark thread is *ombanja* (plural *olombanja*). 285

The sleeping mat (*esisa*) is made of reeds which are gathered in the early morning by a man who wets and binds his material into bundles, each of which contains reeds of the same length. The length of the reeds varies, of course, with the size of mat he intends to make.

584 you." There is no infant betrothal. There is not and never was any
[567] compulsion of a girl in marriage, but slave girls were disposed of in marriage by their masters.

832 A girl is not allowed to do anything to show that she loves a boy, for it would be a great shame for her to tell the boy that she loves him. Often a girl who prefers a boy will pretend that she does not like him.
[539] The Ovimbundu have a story which states that a man said, "I will bring my cow to the green grass"; he did so, but the cow would not eat. This expresses the idea that a boy would not like a girl who confessed a preference for him.

MARRIAGE

585 The prospective bride chooses one married woman and six unmarried girls to accompany her to the house prepared by her husband. Here a feast consisting of a pig and some chickens is provided by the husband for the relatives of both families. For three nights the girl returns to the house of her parents while the boy sleeps at his home. The married woman and six girls sleep at the house prepared by the bridegroom. During these days beer is provided by the boy's parents. The prospective husband is ironically addressed as *sandombua*. *Ndombua* means bridegroom, *sa* is an abbreviation of *isia* meaning father. The term "father bridegroom" refers to the fact that the youth is a potential husband only; the marriage has not been consummated.

On the fourth day the bride brings her supply of domestic utensils. These are the cooking pots (*olombia*); the wooden spoons (*ovito*); the brush of grass for sweeping (*olueyo*); some meal; also the pounder (*upi*). For the first month the wife is not allowed to cook in her own home; she cooks food in the home of her husband's parents and sends
[269] it to the council house (*onjango*) where her husband takes his meals with other men according to Umbundu custom. At the end of the first month of married life the mother of the husband invites any three old women who have been happily married to lay the hearth
[782] stones in the new home. Each of the old women brings a stone for the hearth. A chicken is killed and its blood is sprinkled on the hearth stones. While the young wife is preparing food at the new hearth, she is helped by the old women. If the girl is stirring with the big wooden spoon, one of the old women places her own hands over those of the girl. There is this kind of guidance in every action.

I understand that at the present day virginity in a bride is not so highly valued as in former days. The old custom was an examination

lion visits a village an old man talks to it through the palisade. 775
The conversation is carried on in a series of grunts, after which the 787
lion goes away. One of my informants said that "lions and leopards are watchdogs for old men who have died." When one of these animals kills a domestic animal or a person, the assumption is that the predatory animal was sent by a deceased old man who requires a sacrifice. Ngonga of Elende said that "when a lion killed a man it was a sign that there was a bad spirit from the man's family within the lion." There is divination to find who requires a sacrifice, since some ancestor has been neglected. W. C. Bell relates an Umbundu [114]
tale of a woman who changed herself into a wild animal, but I was not able to ascertain that belief in transformation is held today (*Jour. Amer. Folk-Lore*, XXXV, p. 129).

I am unable to prove that the Ovimbundu have definite ideas of the nature of a future life, but they certainly think of survival after death, and have clear concepts of good and bad spirits who influence the fortunes of the living. There is no idea of punishment or reward, but a bad man has a bad ghost which can do evil things. Spirits will follow their relations on earth; moreover, they will come to the house of bows where their property is preserved.

A man returning from a hunt with trophies, or from the collection of honey, will leave some of these on a grave. There is no idea [774]
of spirits in rivers and trees, but the first tree felled for building the house of a man of importance must not be allowed to fall violently. This may imply a belief in a tree-spirit.

Spirits move at night only and mentioning the dead by name or whistling at night calls spirits. There are many instances of sacrifice [782] ●
connected with the idea of a spirit who has to be appeased. The medicine-man can induce a spirit to enter an image of wood. Thus [778]
there are wooden images containing spirits useful to the blacksmith. There is an image which can show travelers the right path when the medicine-man consults it (Plate XXI, Figs. 3, 5).

Osande is a good spirit who will "bring good luck and do good things for the people, while *Ondele* is a bad spirit who harms the people," said Ngonga. When a person is sick, mad, or dizzy he has *Ondele*. Only a powerful *ocimbanda* can cast out *Ondele*. *Ocilulu* is the general name for a disembodied spirit, either good or bad. An *Ekisi* is an *Osande;* apparently the terms are synonymous.

A spirit can die a second time. There is, for instance, an evil 775
bird of the night whose name is *Esuvi*. This bird is able to catch a spirit in order to make it die a second death. A living person

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

was too light to make it effective as a tool or weapon (Plate XIII, Fig. 4). At Bailundu I was informed that an ax of this kind is used in a medicine-man's dance which is intended to cure a man who is sick because a spirit has entered into him. The sickness may have occurred because the man has broken a promise. 755

The medicine-man, or sometimes the patient himself, dances violently, meanwhile cutting about him with the ax (*omutaka*), which is finally used for killing a little pig whose blood is drunk by the sick man. This is the ritual that was previously mentioned in describing divination.

The following are important ceremonial objects: The ax *ekuva* (Plate XIII, Fig. 5) was the one used for killing slaves who were eaten at the death of a king. This object was secured in the Vasele country near Vila Nova de Selles. It is of handsome appearance, having a copper circle inlaid into the iron blade. A spear from Bailundu is likewise important because of its use in ritual (Plate XIII, Fig. 8). Before war and hunting this spear was thrust first into an ox then into a slave. The human and animal flesh were cooked together and eaten from the same pot. The female figure used by the medicine-man for consultation with regard to the correct path for a caravan has been described. A carved wooden post obtained from Bailundu was set up at cross-paths so that it might be visited by a sick person or his representative who would make sacrifice there. 411 [266] 782

Without parallel among ceremonial objects used by the Ovimbundu is a small wooden cloth-covered box from Bailundu. This contains a piece of root of cylindrical form tightly bound with cloth having at one end a cowrie shell. The box is the shrine of *Kandundu*, for whom a small hut is built in order to contain the box. Any one who sees the contents of the shrine is said to become blind. *Kandundu* is believed to be the "spirit of dreaming who makes swellings come on the body." 778

Antelope horns are in general use as containers of magical potions. One horn from Bailundu is used for holding sweet beer which is drunk by a person afflicted by bad dreams. A large horn with a piece of fur attached, also from Bailundu, is named *ocindiko*. The horn contains a mixture of fat and charcoal which is heated near camp after sunset, when men are on the march. The spreading fumes keep away lions and thieves. It was said that a thief is deterred because the fumes make him cough. 789 237

5: Hambly E-5 (1929-30) 1934 FP 13 Mbundu FP13

326 merly obtained. Blacksmiths now smelt scrap-iron from European sources.

[582] Among the Ovimbundu, blacksmiths are restricted in marriage only by those kinship laws arising from their classificatory system of relationships, and the operation of a system of cross-cousin marriage. The smiths are not an endogamous group, and the occupation is not hereditary.

But despite these differences, which are not quite in harmony with the general body of custom relating to Negro blacksmiths, the Ovimbundu preserve ritual which is part of a widely distributed attitude toward workers in iron.

When a boy begins his training he should be about eighteen years of age and physically robust. He is required to collect and soften fragments of iron in the charcoal fire, to work the bellows, and to beat iron on the anvil, but for a time he is not allowed to make implements, the chief of which are hoe blades and axe heads. At the end of two years the novice asks his master to examine him, and preparations are made for an inauguration ceremony should the youth have proved sufficiently skilled to become an independent blacksmith.

326 On the day of initiation the boy has to buy four chickens, two male and
782 two female, one pup, and a goat. The master blacksmith has already made a complete set of tools for presentation to his pupil, but the big hammer (onjundo) is not quite completed until the day of initiation. While the final touches are being given to this object the novice stands still on a small stone anvil which is situated between the forge and the large anvil.

When the hammer is completed, and while it is still red hot, it is thrust into the belly of the pup provided by the novice. The goat and the four chickens are killed and some of their blood is sprinkled over the new tools which are gathered in a heap. The blacksmiths invite their friends to feast on the flesh of the sacrificed animals.

326 The boy remains standing on the anvil[1] until the master says, "You may
553 speak and tell us what name you want." Perhaps the boy says, "I am Ndumbu;" then the people clap hands and trill with their fingers in their open mouths. My interpreter said, "The boy will work hard and people will pay him. He used to work hard but his master took the pay."

326 Near the large anvil may be seen one or more wooden figures which are
778 still regarded as essential to the work of the blacksmith. I was informed that a blacksmith owes his skill to the aid of a spirit of some person he has killed, and that this spirit uses the wooden figure as a dwelling place. If this information is reliable the wooden figure is of the nature of a shrine, but I was not able to learn of any ceremony for inducing a spirit into the wooden figure. The impression left was that the spirit of the murdered person re-

1 [i.e., on the day of initiation of apprentice blacksmith. -- Analyst]

5: Hambly E-5 (1929-30)1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

sided permanently in the wooden figure. This ritual murder is now impossible, but the wooden figures are still used in the way described. 326 778

Women are never engaged in blacksmiths' work; neither are they employed as wood carvers. Among men wood carving is a specialized occupation, and within the craft itself are men who deal solely with one branch of the work. Thus in a village perhaps only one man is capable of making a drum, while another carves life-like wooden figures of animals, and a third specializes in the fabrication of household implements. [462] 532

Among the Ovimbundu women are the only potters, but I found just one exception in the case of a man who said that he learned the potter's craft in eastern Angola among the Vachokue. No ritual is connected with the making of pottery, but I observed that women always frequented one pit for their clay and in doing so passed better clay which was more accessible. I learned that a clay pit has to be consecrated by a medicine-man who kills a chicken and sprinkles the blood in the pit. All women at some time learn the arts of pottery making and basketry, but by the process of selection the industries become concentrated in the hands of the most skillful. 462 323 [782]

Only women make baskets; a craft in which they are skilled, especially in the gathering of plants and the extraction of dyes of soft shades. Such dyes have considerable endurance even though exposed to bright sunlight. Imported dyes are now competing with indigenous products, but the latter are still preferred in most localities. One might expect that women who are skilled in basket making would be expert weavers of mats, but this is not so. Mat making is in the hands of men who are skilled specialists, and within the mat making industry are at least three principal divisions of the craft, one for each type of mat. 462 285

Men spin cotton for mending clothes, but I have not seen women so engaged. I did not see any looms in use in Angola, but they survived up to a few years ago, and in the youth of my interpreter, who was about thirty years of age, looms worked by men were plentiful. 283 462 286

House building shows a division of labor according to age and sex. Men are responsible for cutting the poles, digging the trench in which these uprights are set, and binding the cross-pieces with bark. Men are likewise responsible for plastering the walls and laying the thatch. Women carry water to the clay pit and transport the puddled clay to the men who are plastering the walls. Children, some of them so young that they have to be rescued from a swampy grave, delight in puddling the clay with their feet. The rectangular pit is always as near the house as possible in order to minimize the labor of transport. I suggested that some of the tasks should 462 331

5: Hambly E-5 (1929-30) 1934 FP 13 Mbundu FP13

462 be reversed and asked whether men could not carry the water. I was told
331 that such a man would be laughed at and called a "he-woman." Yet division of labor does not imply sex inferiority, and ridicule would arise from incongruity.

MEDICINE-MEN

759 The training of a medicine-man (ocimbanda) and a medicine-woman
791 (chambula) involves few formalities, but this class of work requires that a novice shall have "spirit in the head." When visited by a sick boy the medicine-man shakes his divination basket and if a certain combination of objects appears, he says, "Your father was ocimbanda and his spirit wants you." The boy who is thus adopted has to accompany the medicine-man, his master, carrying apparatus and standing near to play a small friction drum while the master is shaking his divination basket.

Specialization among medicine-men is carried to great degree of refinement, especially among those practitioners who profess therapeutic knowledge. I employed three medicine-men to collect plants, of which they appeared to have an expert knowledge. Umbundu names were given and the curative properties of each plant were explained with enthusiasm and evident conviction. The men were undoubtedly sincere in their own beliefs. A specialist who can cure blood in the urine, and another who is said to treat dizziness successfully, are greatly respected. The rainmaker is ocimbanda opulia, "the medicine-man of the rain," who dances while flourishing a cow-tail switch, and blowing a shrill whistle intermittently.

Ocimbanda is of course distinguished from onganga, since the former is concerned with socially beneficent tasks such as those mentioned, while
[754] the latter may cause sickness, impotence, and sterility. In earlier days the task of finding sorcerers (onganga) by use of the poison ordeal was that of an ocimbanda. Medicine-women are called in to take care of difficult cases of childbirth, and I have seen a medicine-woman painting the face of a pregnant woman, who thereafter observed certain taboos.

Space will not permit enumeration of the contents of a divination basket and the significance attached to each item; neither can I give details of ceremonies for curing the sick or bringing a thief back to the village, but the foregoing notes suffice to show that the craft is specialized and still important. A medicine-man ceremonially washes a king or chief on rare occasions. He makes new fire by twirling; though flint and steel, also
[782] matches, are known. When a new village is founded a medicine-man stirs the blood of sacrificed animals with the claws of a chicken; then he sprinkles this blood on each new house.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

ing home from labour in October wants cleared fields to sow. 423
If he cannot find any kinsman who would give him a cleared 425
field he will have to buy one, and will have perhaps to pay 200 escudos (£2 10s.). A man retains his rights to fields in a village he no longer inhabits.

The Ovimbundu keep cattle, sheep, goats, pigs, and fowls. 231
The cattle are not milked but are used in sacrifices, and for [782]
fines; some have been brought by Ovimbundu from Kwanyama Ambo country but they do not seem to thrive in this neighbourhood. Sheep are few. In my village goats were much less numerous than chickens or pigs. The traders and European residents buy cattle, chickens, and pigs.

Fishing and hunting are practised, but despite the ingenious 226
fish-traps, nets, poisons and weirs used for the first, and the 224
popular enthusiasm for, and ritual associations of the second, [262]
neither dominates the actual food supply and ecological background in the way that maize does.

The Ovimbundu believe that the dry-season grass fires also 241
help to fertilize the soil by leaving ashes. Ashes are sometimes spread in a village garden, and dry grass may also be left in a field for this purpose. Soil beside trees is considered to be especially rich, as to some extent are the sites of former villages. There is no idea of crop rotation and a field is worked for as long as it is fertile, that is indefinitely for an *onaka* and from three to six years, sometimes more, for a field of the *epya* type. The hoe is still the standard means of cultivation and the plough is a rarity.

Coffee-growing on any scale is usually undertaken by people 245
living away from the villages, except for the Protestants who have been encouraged by their missionaries to plant coffee in their villages. Coffee, like maize, is bought by the traders. However, at least two local coffee-growers sold their coffee at Porto Amboim on the coast to get a better price. Basically, the 241
agricultural economy of the neighbourhood is based on maize, 361
grown by methods of shifting cultivation. The frequency with which villages rise and fall and individuals change from one village to another is entirely consistent with this type of agriculture.

Axe and hoe blades, blankets, cloths, clothing, cutlery, 000

The hare is not carried over the shoulder, but has a ceremonial 796
conveyance slung on poles (*owanda*) which are supported on the 643
shoulders of two or even four men.

Laying the evil of a village on a goat, which is then driven out 783
to die, is an Umbundu custom. The scapegoat ceremony has a cleansing function similar in purpose to the rekindling of fire for the community. Cavazzi pictured and described the scapegoat ceremony in the seventeenth century, and Ngonga informed me that he saw the rite twenty years ago.

PROHIBITIONS AND OMENS

There is a taboo against killing *oka kuhu*, which is the yellow- 262
backed duiker. When Ngonga was sick he was forbidden to eat the flesh of the duiker (*ombambi*); neither is this flesh to be eaten by people who suffer from dizziness. In former days women were not allowed to eat eggs. The flesh of sheep and goats is said to be indigestible for children between the ages of three and six years. The [643]
flesh of the lion, leopard, and hyena is forbidden as food for the king, but other people may eat it. The king is in fact forbidden to eat the flesh of any animal which has paws; neither may he eat flesh of the bush buck. A medicine-man must not eat flesh of a dog except before a ceremony for curing the sick. The taboo against dog's flesh applies also to the diet of a king.

A woman must not step over the legs of a male, neither must a 784
man step over the legs of a woman; for to do so causes weakness of the knees. A man or woman may step over the legs of a child.

Omens are numerous. It is unfortunate to see a snake holding 787
a frog, and the person who observes this should go to the medicine-man at once. When going to a village to be tried by the chief it is bad to meet some one who is carrying a bark rope, as this indicates binding and punishment. If a person who is setting out from home meets a woman carrying corn meal or any other white substance, he or she must take a little of the meal, whiten the face, and all will be well. A fly in the mouth is a good sign, because the fly knows where meat is to be obtained and is trying to lead the way.

A stranger visiting a village is pleased when a dog is the first [574]
animal to enter the guest house. Dogs are fed, so the entry of a dog is a sign that the visitor will receive food. On the contrary, the appearance of a goat is a bad omen, because goats are not fed; they pick up a frugal living as best they can. Other prohibitions and omens have been mentioned in discussing the pregnancy of women.

of this symbolism relating to occupations of males and females 842
respectively, is obvious.

Many women bear children when they are away in the fields, but 844
help at home is often given. The mothers of the wife and of the husband may not be present at the confinement. No childless woman may be near during the confinement or convalescence. The father may not be present or "the child would be ashamed to be born." Before and during her pregnancy a woman feeds her husband with a prickly plant which is mixed in his food; this makes him faithful [784] ●
to her.

The abdomen is bound after delivery in order to keep the uterus in position. There is a very small amount of bleeding after childbirth; in fact the flow of blood is quite finished in two or three days. The nearer the diet comes to that of the white man the greater the bleeding at delivery. A pregnant woman may not beat a drum, or she will bear a drum. A woman who sees the blood from circumcision of a male will not have any children.

When a female child is born, the umbilical cord is cut with a hoe to ensure that the female will be a good worker in the field. The cord of a male is cut with an arrow to insure good hunting. A newly born child receives a drink of beer, and a cord is tied round its waist. This is not for support; it is the string from which, much later, the lower garment hangs. Girls do not menstruate until they are fifteen 841
or even seventeen years of age. During the months after first menstruation a girl advances rapidly from childhood to womanhood.

The medicines that women take to secure abortions are bitter. 847
A woman will refuse quinine because she thinks it will cause abortion. It is certain that twins are welcome among the Ovimbundu, but there are special observances connected with their birth and death. A twin 845
birth is not thought to imply dual fatherhood. Twins are called Njamba ("elephant") and Hosi ("lion"). Although twins are of opposite sexes each receives one of the two names. Njamba is the first born, and Hosi is the second to be delivered. The medicine-man holds a ceremony to cure the mother of twins. The afterbirth of twins is placed in two gourds and carried outside the village for burial by two midwives. The mother of twins must wear round her neck the horn of an antelope given by the medicine-man. She has to blow this when crossing a river, meeting a crowd of people, or seeing a hawk overhead. People laugh at her and in fun say that she is a pig or a bitch. "The woman says the same kind of words to them." Children may be adopted, but they never really 597

The hare is not carried over the shoulder, but has a ceremonial conveyance slung on poles (*owanda*) which are supported on the shoulders of two or even four men. 796 643

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1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

(*c*) *In hunting*, deities other than the king's ancestors were invoked, especially *Hũvĩ*, the hunters' god, and *Kuanja*, a goddess, both of which had their own shrines and priests. These may have been connected with the country or with its earlier inhabitants (the kings being recognized as late comers). At the inaugural hunt the offices were assigned. The king's character was supposedly revealed by the sex of the animal killed at this hunt: 'If the duiker[1] is a female, then it is good indeed, but if a male, then the king is a real person but he habitually will become angry to excess' (*Nda ombambi yaco omange ciwa muẽlẽ, puaĩ nda ulume, Soma omunu puaĩ o tema tema enene*).

2. *To represent the nation in its external relations*, i.e. (*a*) *To make agreements with other kings to promote trade*, and (*b*) *To make war on other peoples* in order to provide his court with tribute and his warriors with plunder. The war leader (*Kesongo*) had his own residence and establishment entirely separate from that of the king, whom he must not meet face to face except on certain state occasions. In Bailundu he, with certain other officials, was of the stock of the slaves of the state (*ovinduli viosoma*) who came from Luandu in the Songo country. Each king must inaugurate his reign with a war, during or after which he must ceremonially 'eat the old one' (*oku lia ekongo*)—a feast consisting of the flesh of a specially fattened slave cooked with the flesh of the principal animals commonly eaten.

3. *To dispense justice*. In point of time consumed, this question was very important, for it occupied much of the time of both rulers and ruled. Good evidence of this is in the number of proverbs used at court, second only in number to those used for the education of the young. The king's court (*olusenje*) was the supreme court of the nation where cases were continually heard and 'fines eaten' (*oku lia ovimbu*). Cases might be settled either by ordeal or by decision of the king, and there was therefore room for appeal and re-trial. The king's word, however, was final, as the proverb has it: *O popia onganji, o mãlãpo osoma*. (The advocate speaks, the king finishes [decides].) The king was not generally arbitrary in his decisions but was bound not only by the customs of his people, but also by the desires of his councillors. Among the legitimate kings of the Ovimbundu there were comparatively few of the revolting and wholesale punishments which were so

[1] The duiker, *ombambi* (*Silvicapra grimmii leucoprosopus*).

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 18

their own wards, 'my ward' (*ocitawila cange*). The other villagers will speak only of 'our village' (*imbo lietu*). 622 554

There are, in general, two quite different and distinct types of Umbundu village according to the terrain on which they are built. The villages of the plains have room to spread out and tend toward a circular shape, with the dancing floor and men's club house near the centre. The wards may appear as quarters of a single whole or they may be added on in haphazard fashion. The villages of the mountains must conform to the possibilities of the terrain. Formerly, many villages were built on mountains for defence, and capital villages of this type may still be seen.with the houses built on ledges and rocks almost one on top of the other. In this type of village, there is often not sufficient or sufficiently good soil for even small garden plots within the palisades. Occasionally one of these mountain villages may be found which has not even room within it for the dancing floor, which will in this case be found outside the palisade. If the site is not too severely confined, the wards of the mountain village tend either to string themselves out horizontally along the mountain-side, or to find successive ledges. The village of Ngendo is of an intermediate type, built as it is, on a slope. Sikilile's village was first built as near the stream as possible. The wards later added themselves on, each a little higher than the one before. The school village, which was built last, got the highest and most hygienic site. 361

Moving a Village

Villages may be moved for any one of several reasons. When fields are worn out and others are not available[1] near by, a village may be moved to a site more conveniently located. More often, however, the reason assigned is that there has been much illness or death, that the old site is polluted, that its 'air is bad', which to the Ovimbundu means that some action displeasing to the spirits has been committed which has brought on these misfortunes. This will generally have been determined by divination, as will also the spirits' consent to the proposed new site. A site which has long been occupied is of course fertile soil. Since old sites are generally cultivated to good advantage this fact should not be overlooked as a possible additional reason for moving. 361 166 [768] [787]

[1] Nowadays European settlement often pre-empts such lands. [177]

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

361 A few words from the childhood recollections of Paulino
166 Ngonga Liahuka[1] bring out the facts.

787 One day we noticed that Sekulu Upalandanda[2] and my father went to the mountain of Kalilonge saying, 'We go to look around (and find out) whether the spirits (*olosande*) have agreed to our moving there.' Then another day we saw that the fathers were coming out of the spirit huts (*atambo*, plural), with the sacred chests (*ovimbangu*, plural), saying, 'We go to start a new village.' When they had arrived under the mountain of Kalilonge, they said, 'The spirits have agreed.' Then when everyone had moved, the elder, whose name had been Upalandanda at Muenesi, now changed his name, declaring, 'I am *Cilembo-camunda* (Shadow of Mountain). From that time the place was called Cilembo.

621 On seeking a new site the headman's fire in the old village is put out and the procession starts: a girl carries the sacred chest
[778] (*ocimbangu*) containing the relics (*ociye*) and the balls of iguana skin, and a boy the sacred bows.[3] They lead the way to the site
[346] selected where they cut a pole[4] suitable for a house-wall (*ekoso*), and tie a leaf of the *upu*[5] tree to it, dig a hole into which they put mud made by rain-water (*onata yondombo*),[6] and then together they lift the stick and let it fall into the hole. This is the beginning of the spirit hut (*etambo*), the first house to be built on the new site. The boy and the girl must take part ceremonially in each operation
[372] of building the hut. After that they together ignite (*oku tiafula*)[7] the new fire. A hen and a cock are killed, cooked on the new fire, and eaten inside the *etambo* by all who have taken part in the building. The headman and his wife cannot return to the old village but must camp at the new site (*itula*) and keep the new fire alight.
342 In building their houses, the villagers may commute (*oku usala*)
621 from the old site, but often the distance is too great to do this, and

[1] Of Ciyaka, ordained pastor of Elende Church in 1930. He was Hambly's chief informant.

[2] Sekulu Upalandanda was the younger brother of Ngonga's father's father, and therefore grandfather to Ngonga.

[776] [3] The bow (*ohowji*) of each ascendant who is now a guardian spirit (*osande*) of the family.

[4] When this first pole is cut, the axe should first be pointed toward the cardinal directions.

[824] [5] A leaf of the *upu* tree is used in the divorce ceremony. Its use here is a sign of divorce from the old site.

[6] Literally, 'mud of the rainy season'.

[7] This was formerly done with a fire drill (*vide* Hambly, op. cit., Plate XXXV), but not for a number of years now. When I showed the above picture to a group of 150 young men of 17 to 25 years of age, not one of them even knew what it was.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

therefore the usual procedure is to erect temporary grass-covered huts (*olosingi*, plural) on the new site, in which they will live while building their houses. Each hearth-fire must be ignited from the headman's fire. 621 342 [372]

The houses are built by the occupants themselves. The men's club house is built by the communal labour of all men and boys with a simple ritual designed to promote concord within, and to ensure that the spirits (*olosande*) may find it a congenial abode. The spirits regularly attend the discussions in the *onjango*, and there receive their daily portions. There also they are believed to sleep. 345 [776]

At the first opportunity a hunt will be held and the meat brought to the spirit-hut. The girl who carried the sacred chest receives the heart and the boy the head. At this time, while a pot of sour beer (non-alcoholic) (*ocisangua*) is being brewed, the girl sits quietly in communion (*oku felevela*) with the spirits. With these physical and spiritual preparations the village community makes ready its home, a home which may seem poor and meagre to the eyes of outsiders, but to a member of the community it is home indeed and evokes in him, when absent, a feeling of great home-sickness (*ongeva*). As the Umbundu version of 'Home, Sweet Home' puts it: 621 787 [539]

Koliene, koliene, nda ku li ombambi ha yota
To your own, to your own, if there is cold you can warm yourself,

nda ku li onjala ha panga.
if there is hunger you can arrange.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

internally disruptive forces is sorcery. It is apparently on the 182
increase among the Ovimbundu, a tendency which has also been 754
reported from other parts of Africa.[1] The extent to which sorcery operates within the kinship groups themselves makes its influence even more dangerous to social cohesion.

Any marked success achieved by an individual, especially when 754
such success has been achieved by an individual alone or in 578
partnership, but not in co-operation with a number of persons, often brings on suspicion of sorcery.[2] Should the results of such success be distributed widely and freely within the family or kinship group, suspicion of sorcery is less likely to arise and open accusation may be avoided. Grudges, however, whether newly built up or inherited, often find expression in suspicion or in open accusation of sorcery.[3] An open accusation of sorcery (*oku sunga owanga*) is a very serious matter and will not often be made lightly.

Such accusations are made both within and across kinship lines. Affinal relatives are quite often accused of sorcery, and suspicion frequently rests upon wives whose kinship connexions are in distant regions. Predilection for and skill in the use of sorcery is supposed to be inherited. A reputation for sorcery may be imputed to a family through a number of generations.

Somewhat less overt accusations of sorcery are made at the 764
inquest during a funeral. The corpse in its coffin slung to a pole 754
between two carriers responds to questions as to who 'ate him' by forward (affirmative), or backward (negative) movements. It may also cause its carriers to stop in front of a certain house during the procession through the village, meaning that one of the occupants of the house is thereby accused of having caused the death. Traditionally such accusations during inquests were exceedingly common, perhaps even usually expected.[4] Should the corpse not [787]
give a clear answer, then subsequent divination would often bring out an accusation of sorcery. Accusations such as these, involving responsibility for the death of a person, are usually made *within* the body of blood or affinal kin.

When sorcery is consciously taken up and employed, the pur- 754
pose is usually economic advancement, but it often involves overt

[1] Cf. B. Malinowski, in *Africa*, 1939, p. 39.
[2] *Vide infra*, pp. 107 ff.
[3] *Vide infra*, p. 125.
[4] For an early observation of this (*c.* 1790) *vide Annaes Mar. e Col.*, 5a Ser., p. 480 f.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu EP 13

778
787

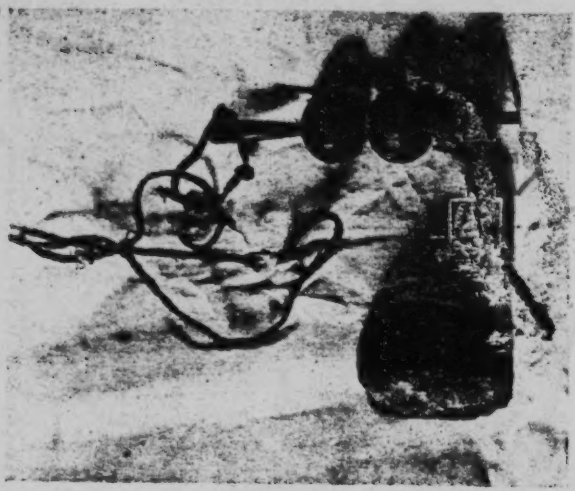

Photo. M. W. Ennis

b. Fetish charms and diviner's rattle

313

a. A potter at work (Ḍondi)

[Facing p. 128]

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

The Ovimbundu are not ordinary cannibals, if indeed that term may be applied to any people in Africa, nor do the commoners of the Ovimbundu ever eat human flesh on their own account, but no king may ever reign or be considered as regularly enthroned until he has 'eaten Ekongo'.[1] The cannibalism traditionally ascribed to Wambu-Kalunga is also a case in point.[2] Other human sacrifices practised by the 'Jagas' and described by Battell also have their counterparts in the practices of the Umbundu kingdoms.[3] The mode of the burial of the dead described by Battell[4] is essentially that which has been used, at least until the last few years, for the kings and the other 'holy'[5] men of the Ovimbundu, except that where rock caves are available the use of them has been adopted and in Kasongi cairns were used. The sitting posture and the sacrifice of wives or slaves and cattle (or of substitutes) are the important points, and these have everywhere been used for the classes mentioned, until quite recently.

The custom of keeping boys captured from the enemy and training them to be fearless warriors amid the terrors of the country has a parallel in the Umbundu custom of the king's slaves,[6] who came from another land[7] and would therefore do the king's bidding without fear, favour, or consideration of family feeling. They often reached high position and certain of the king's ministers always came from among them. There seem to be many recollections of the 'Jagas' in the customs of the kings' sons.[8] Names of certain of the officials seem to have survived, as, for example, Mani (*muēlē*) Lumbo, Mani-Curio (*Muēkalia*), Golambolo (*Ngalamboli*), Tendala (*Candala*), Ukuetambo,[9] &c. Careful linguistic studies would doubtless reveal many remains of the speech

[1] *Oku lia Ekongo*—lit. 'to eat the Old One'. This is a ritual feast in which the flesh of a specially fattened slave is eaten mixed with the flesh of various animals. See Ravenstein, op. cit., p. 33, note 3. Magyar described this custom, calling it '*Ouri-Kongo*', op. cit., pp. 275 ff.

[2] See *supra*, p. 176.

[3] Compare Ravenstein, op. cit. [4] Op. cit., p. 34 f.

[5] 'Holy' in the sense of spirit possessed—the king, the hunter, the medical practitioner, and the smith.

[6] *Ocinduli cosoma*, singular. May there be some recollection of 'Kinguri' (= Cinguli) in this word?

[7] In Bailundu the *ovinduli viosoma* (plural) came mostly from Luandu, i.e. the Songo country across the Kuanza—further evidence of connexion with Lunda emigrants.

[8] *Omālē volosoma*, used collectively of all the royal families of the Ovimbundu.

[9] Cavazzi, op. cit., pp. 206 f., 211.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

The field of Umbundu reactions to cultural influences is a wide and an important one. Whatever contact the Ovimbundu or their progenitors may have had with the early Roman Catholic missions, little impress seems to have been made. The cross has been adopted as an object used in divination. Certain rites *seem* superficially to resemble the procession with the Host, but there is no indication of the assimilation of any ethical or conceptual element from Christianity during the early or formative period.[1]

Christianity first came to the Ovimbundu with the arrival of three missionaries at Bailundu in March 1881.[2] This was during the reign of Ekuikui and proved to be not the least important event of that reign. It is not within the scope of this study to give a history of the work of this Mission.[3] Its inception was planned as carefully as the times permitted, and although its subsequent development did not always proceed according to plan, its progress on the whole has been of an orderly nature, and it has produced noteworthy results which have been evaluated by deputations, by commissions, and by other visitors from time to time.[4]

The amount of interdenominational co-operation achieved in this field is worthy of note. There are the missions of the

[1] There were missions of the Jesuits, Capuchins, Carmelites, &c., in Angola from 1575 until about 1800, and there were priests as chaplains of the various presídios visited by the Ovimbundu during most of their history. Major Artur de Paiva, writing in 1890 (see *Boletim Soc. Geog. Lisboa*, 1895, p. 15 f.), describes the ruins of a Roman Catholic mission which he found in Cingolo (*Quingolo*) and which he judged to have dated from the end of the eighteenth century. I have found no reference in any historical work to the founding or operation of such a mission. It may have been built about 1770 when Governor Souza Coutinho ordained a number of towns in the Benguela hinterland, but the absence of specific reference to it seems to indicate that its existence was short.

[2] Messrs. Bagster, Sanders, and Miller sent out by the A.B.C.F.M. (Boston) to inaugurate a mission in Bihe, for that region was well known from the reputation of its traders, while Bailundu and other Umbundu regions had scarcely been heard of.

[3] For a brief summary of the early years see Strong, *The Story of the American Board*, pp. 336 ff.; also two articles in vol. 126 (1930) of the *Missionary Herald*, pp. 424–9; J. T. Tucker, *Drums in the Darkness*, gives a historical treatment of the work of this mission.

[4] There have been two 'deputations' sent to the West Central Africa Mission, in 1911 and in 1930, reports of which were issued by the A.B.C.F.M. Secretaries have visited the mission in 1924, '28, '30, '34, '38, and '46, and have given their impressions either in the *Missionary Herald* or in the *United Church Record and Missionary Review*. The report of the African Education Commission dealt with the work of this mission (T. J. Jones, *Education in Africa*, pp. 40, 239 f., 245 ff.). Among visitors who have written of this work see Nevinson, op. cit., chap. 7; J. Johnston, op. cit., chaps. 2, 3, and 4.

A man slave might become a blacksmith or a hunter, although his work was always for his master. He was also required to fight for his master in case of war.(1) 567

RELIGION AND MAGIC

Information on Umbundu religion and magic is very slight, being practically confined to a few items collected by Hambly from his Umbundu interpreter,(2) and a more coherent article by Tucker, primarily on divination.(3) 771

THE SUPREME BEING

Suku, the Supreme Being, is thought of as the creator of mountains, rivers, sky and human beings.(4) His attributes have not been described. 776

CONCEPTS OF SPIRIT(5)

The body *(etimba)* is thought of as having *omuenyo* (breath or life), and containing the *ocililemba* (spirit or soul). The *ocililemba* is visible in a person's shadow in the daytime, and during sleep it has adventures of its own, which it reports to the sleeper through dreams *(olonjoi)*. At death it leaves the body, but lingers nearby, accompanying the body to the interment, still in the form of a shadow. It then becomes an *ocilulu* (ghost), and may wander where it pleases. Sometimes it may be seen passing with superhuman swiftness through the village, uttering weird cries or calling pigs or chickens as the person used to do while alive. It chooses one of the households as a home, and indicates its wish to stay there by causing illness among the householders. The victim when he has learned the cause of his illness from the diviner places himself in a favourable condition to receive the spirit by performing a ceremony which includes going into a trance.(6) When this ceremony has been performed the *ocilulu* (ghost) becomes an *ondele*, which appears to be a generic name for ancestral (and other?) spirits. It is not clear from Tucker's description whether the relatives of the deceased always wait for this intimation of the wish of the *ocilulu* for a home, or whether the ceremonies may sometimes be performed immediately after death. Nor does she give any information regarding the relatives with whom the *ocilulu* usually chooses to live. She states that spirits of paternal ancestors are less feared than those of maternal ancestors, for while the former are usually satisfied with a hunt, a beer-drinking and a feast held in their honour, the latter are malignant and may "eat" children and occasionally adults also. 774 775 [787] [769]

The *ohamba* (sing. *ehamba*) "are the peaceful spirits of ancestors of long ago, who have already had the trance ceremony performed for them, and thus have a home and ... standing in the other world". (Tucker does not indicate how much time must pass before a spirit becomes a *ehamba*.(7)) 769

(1) Hambly, 1934, p.206. (2) Op.cit., chap.IX.
(3) 1940. (4) Hambly, op.cit., p.262.
(5) Based on Tucker, op.cit. unless otherwise stated.
(6) Tucker does not describe this ritual.
(7) It may be noted that among the Ngangela peoples to the east, the *mahamba* are the forms taken by ancestral spirits when they wish to harass their descendants. See McCulloch 1951, p.75.

night in the *etambo* praying to or communing with ancestral spirits, when the occasion arises; Suku is regarded as too remote to receive prayers. 693 613

While cooking, a woman may spill a little meal on the ground for the spirits; at a meal, a person may spill a little food or beer for the same purpose. A portion of the meat at a feast may likewise be sacrificed, but it is often a less desirable portion, such as the intestines.[1] 782

Agricultural rituals were held before planting, at which time the headman and his wife had intercourse in their field and sacred seed from the chief's granary was distributed, a few grains to be mixed with the seed to be planted on each plot. When the maize began to ripen a few ears were sent to the chief before any were eaten.[2] 241 789

DIVINERS[3]

The word *ocimbanda* is used both for a diviner and for a maker of medicines. To distinguish the two, the diviner may be called *ocimbanda congombo* ("of the basket"), the herbalist *ocimbanda coviti* ("of trees or sticks"). Some practitioners are both diviner and herbalist. A female diviner is called *cambula*.[4] *An ocimbanda* frequently specialises in a certain kind of case;[5] and among the members of the profession there are many degrees of proficiency. One may work only in his own village, another may be consulted on matters of concern to the whole district or chiefdom; others go on professional journeys carrying their baskets, and accumulate profits in animals and cloth. The greater the reputation of the diviner, the greater the charges he makes for his services. 791 759

The tasks of the *ocimbanda* are:-

(a) To discover the cause of sickness, death, or any evil which has befallen the individual or the community. Sickness and death are always believed to be due either to the workings of spirits who are demanding sacrifices, or to living enemies who have malicious spirits under their control or who have bought potent charms. The diviner, after consulting the spirit who speaks in and through his basket, names the spirit who is causing the trouble and tells the victim what its demands are, or, if the enemy is a living person, indicates in a general manner from whence the trouble comes, e.g. to a woman "Your baskets are too well made; you are hated because of them", or, to a man, "This illness was found on a journey taken to collect a debt". If requested, the diviner makes a countercharm to offset that which has caused the ill. 787 753

(b) To interpret omens and dreams.

(c) To give advice on personal problems.

(d) To dispense medicines and charms.

(e) To bring or withhold rain, or to see who is guilty of withholding it. [789]

(1) Ibid., see also Cashman, loc.cit.
(2) Childs, personal communication.
(3) Based on Tucker, 1940.
(4) Hambly, (3) 1934.
(5) Ibid.

787 A detailed description of the procedure of divining is given by Tucker. In brief, the basket *(ongombo)*, which contains a wide variety of objects, is ritually prepared, and the diviner goes into a kind of trance which calls the spirit of the basket to him. As he starts shaking the basket, he asks it first why the clients have come to him (since they may not ask him directly), and when he has ascertained this, questions the spirit about the cause of the trouble. The chanted replies of the audience (consisting, apparently, of outsiders as well as the clients) assist him in making the divination. The divination is finally given from the juxtaposition of the objects which settle on top of the pile in the basket.(1)

Especial care is taken of the divining basket when not in use. Some diviners build a special *etambo* or spirit-hut for the basket; others keep it hidden in their own house, where it may be seen only by the wife of the [841] diviner, and only when she is not menstruating. Tucker gives a long description of the contents of the divining basket and illustrations of some of the objects.

791 At the death of a diviner, his son inherits the *ongombo*, but only if he can master the secrets of the basket and pass the tests which are given during his initiation into the profession. In addition, he must be "called" by some omen or illness which a diviner interprets as the wish of an ancestral spirit that he should become a diviner.(2) If he does not have these qualifications, the basket goes to someone who does, and the son receives no recompense. In either case, two years of training are usual for the would-be diviner, during which he is apprenticed to an established member of the profession. In this period he may learn [754] *ovihemba* (medicines); their preparation and their uses to cure or kill. In order to provide the female counterpart to the spirit of the divining basket, he might formerly invite a girl to spend the night with him. In the morning, he gave her a magically treated cloth which caused her illness and death; her spirit would then be able to assist the one he already had.

The *olombumba* or "servants of the basket" are youths who carry the accoutrements of the *ocimbanda* and wait on him; they also provide their master with much information about the community, and during divination closely observe the clients and assist the *ocimbanda* by shouting loudly when he has made the right answer. They are also believed to have mystic powers, e.g. to see and reveal what is going on at a distance, or to go into a trance during which the spirit of the basket may speak through their lips instead of through the basket. Tucker gives no information concerning the identity of these boys; possibly they are the diviner's apprentices, although she does not suggest this.

787 "The Ovimbundu refer all communications from the spirit world, whether by omen, portent or illness, to an *ocimbanda*....The requisite behaviour is determined according to the answer given by the combination of pieces in the *ongombo* [divining basket], which is thus the key to the

(1) The contents of the basket and the ritual which surround it appear to be almost identical with the practice of the eastern neighbours of the Ovimbundu described in another section of the Survey. (McCulloch, 1951, pp.81-2)
(2) It is not very clear whether the spirit of the basket is that of its former owner, or whether it is some non-ancestral spirit.

whole supernatural world... The divining basket is the concrete medium through which the spirits reveal their will to their descendants on earth, and warn them of dangers, human or supernatural".(1) 787

SORCERERS AND WITCHES

Sorcerers and witches are not clearly distinguished. Both are called *olonganga*, and have powers over one or more malignant spirits whom they can send anywhere to kill, steal, or torment. These "familiar spirits" are sometimes called *otulo ndumba*, and are held responsible for all mysterious disappearances of maize, beans and other possessions, as well as for many illnesses and deaths. Some sorcerers are said to own small images which they send out at night. Others are said to dance naked at night at the door of the intended victim's house. When sorcery involves killing by physical means, portions of the victim's body may be used to make "medicine" or charms.(2) 754 776

A person may be a sorcerer without knowing it, and may deny it when accused by the diviner. If he does so, he and his accuser undergo the *ombulungu* (poison test),(3) to discover who is in the right.(4) Concerning accusation of sorcery, Childs writes "Any marked success ... by an individual, especially when such success has been achieved by an individual alone or in partnership, but not in co-operation with a number of persons, often brings on suspicion of sorcery. Should the results of such success be distributed widely....suspicion is less likely to arise....An open accusation of sorcery *(oku sunga owanga)* is a very serious matter and will not often be made lightly. Such accusations are made both within and across kinship lines. Affinal relatives are quite often accused of sorcery, and suspicion frequently rests upon wives whose kinship connexions are in distant regions...".(5) 754 683 [578]

The tendency or aptitude for sorcery is supposed to be inherited by a daughter, or a son, or a nephew from the mother, uterine or classificatory, from the mother's brother etc. It is said that older relatives take younger ones as apprentices and partners.(6) The aim of a person who consciously takes up sorcery is said usually to be economic advancement. A very common form involves the enslavement of the spirit of another person, often a child of one's own family or kin group; the victim may be killed by either physical or magical means. Childs points out that sorcery is one of the greatest internally disruptive forces within the kin group and social system of the Ovimbundu. He notes that jealousy and grudges often bring accusations from within the circle of kin, but does not describe what happens when the charges have been made and verified. Especially in view of his statement that economic, political and other forces now seem to be acting to increase the incidence of sorcery,(7) it would be interesting to have information concerning its possible connection with segmentation of lineages or village groups, or its relation to tensions between the paternal and maternal groups of relatives. 754 [827] 754 578

(1) Tucker, op.cit., p.201. (2) Childs, personal communication.
(3) The ombulungu is administered by the medicine-man, and causes sickness but not death. See Tucker, op.cit., and Hambly, (2) 1934, p.203.
(4) Tucker, op.cit. (5) Childs, 1949, p.57.
(6) Childs, personal communication.
(7) Childs, 1949, p.58.

The head of a specially selected family has the duty of twisting off the head of the chief, and not until this is done is the chief officially dead. The head is buried for a year, then dug up and transferred to a box, which is also kept in the tomb. The head is questioned at times of stress (such as a drought) in the same way that questions are put to the corpse of a commoner. If the head swings forward, a sacrifice may be necessary to remove the drought. The house of a chief is not burnt at his death (but those of commoners are?); neither may it be repaired in any way, but the succeeding chief must live in it until the structure collapses.(1) [767] 643 765 [787] 768

Mourning for a chief lasts seven days, during which his children and wives wear strips of oxhide on their left wrists. 765

Widows (of chiefs or commoners) must leave their hair loose and wear cloths which conceal them from head to toe. For three days a widow must sleep close to the corpse of her husband, with only a stick between them. During this time she has no food, and her wailing is expected to be almost continuous day and night. When the corpse is tied and prepared for burial relatives support the corpse and make it move towards her so that she may bid it farewell. She does not attend the funeral. At the end of a month of mourning she must lie for one night in the place where her husband lay the night before burial. At the beer-drinking which marks the end of the period of mourning an *ocimbanda* guides her hand as she distributes the beer.(2)

(1) Hambly, (2) 1934, p.272.
(2) Hambly, op.cit., p.269. Hambly states that mourning for a chief lasts only seven days, while from this information it appears that commoners are mourned for a whole month.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

171 wide distribution in Africa (C. Wiedemann, 1909) and the ceremony
175 still survives among the Ovimbundu in modified form.

[114] Though an informative writer, Monteiro is sometimes vague; he says (I, p. 278) that circumcision is a universal custom among the blacks of Angola. In view of the extent of Angola, the diversity of tribes, and the fact that Monteiro traveled over only a small part of the country, this information is misleading.

Monteiro is the only writer in whose works I have found a reference to the Vasele tribe; probably no part of Angola has been so neglected as the Esele country in the hinterland of Novo Redondo. At the present day the Vasele have a reputation for cannibalism. [266] Monteiro saw human flesh eaten at Cuacra, while the skulls of the victims were placed on adjacent trees. Monteiro states (II, p. 167) that on the death of a king the Mucelis (Vasele) put out all the fires in the kingdom; these were relighted by the succeeding king who [321] used fire produced by rubbing two sticks together. The flat beads of shell called *dongos*, made from *Achatina monetaria* (II, p. 168), are made today and traded to the far south of Angola, where their novelty assures them a value far beyond their intrinsic worth. I was fortunate in obtaining an example of the old beheading ax mentioned by Monteiro (II, p. 157) and sketched by Cavazzi (p. 210). Par- [262] boiled and roasted rats were offered to me as food; Monteiro mentions the offering of a roasted rat on a skewer (I, p. 99).

The account of Commander V. L. Cameron, who left Zanzibar for his journey across Africa in 1873, mentions several points of anthropological importance in relation to the Angolan section of his [756] journey. Cameron saw a net-covered medicine-man of the Kibokue (Vachokue) wearing a mask and a kilt of grass (p. 384). The function [524] of this man was to frighten devils from the woods. The contest in which boys discharge their arrows at a rolling root was seen by Cameron near Kagnombe (Cangamba?). Skulls of victims killed in • [787] war were spiked on poles (p. 399). The diviner was followed by attendants who struck iron gongs, while the diviner himself shook a rattle made of basket-work in the form of a dumb-bell (p. 404). Cameron gives an accurate description of the divination basket and its use without going into details. These I have been able to supply [482] (chapter IX). The explorer met caravans of Bihéans, renowned carriers then as they are today. They were usually drunk and abusive; in some instances they attempted to rob the stragglers. 000 The use of caterpillars as food is noted (p. 416): "A man cut open

3. Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

175 [316] [325] Serpa Pinto saw shafts for the working of iron ore in the neighborhood of Cubango. The ore was mixed with charcoal and smelted in shallow pits. It is stated that the iron was sometimes tempered with ox-grease and salt. The bellows are of the type made at Elende (I, p. 124). Of the tempering process I have no confirmation.

175 787 [764] Somewhere near Bihé Serpa Pinto saw the ceremony of questioning a corpse which was made to sway to and fro, the people believing all the while that it does so without human intervention. The diviner declared that the soul of a dead person will tell who caused the death (I, p. 130). I observed and photographed this ceremony (Plate XLV, Fig. 1).

[695] The ordeal of the poison cup is described; blood-letting, and divination by shaking articles in a basket are also mentioned. Pinto says that in the articles that appear uppermost the diviner reads what his hearers are desirous of learning of the past, present, or future. Sorcery and rain-making are likewise briefly mentioned (I, p. 132). The divination basket, the poison ordeal, and rain-making, are Umbundu cultural traits today.

171 224 Here Pinto illustrates the existing practice of mounting the skulls of animals killed by a hunter on a pole in the village. There is a further reference to this custom among the Ambuellas (I, p. 333). These instances, combined with those personally noted, give a wide distribution for the practice (I, p. 177).

175 [304] Pinto saw the operation of tooth mutilation among the Luimba. The operation was performed with a knife which was struck by repeated light blows (I, p. 209).

[711] Pinto illustrates arrowheads in use in 1879 (I, pp. 277, 346). These are exactly the same as those made and used in 1929 (Plate XVII, Figs. 1–9).

[412] Axes used by the Luchazi are sketched with a detail that shows the old forms to persist without alteration (II, p. 36).

[321] Water-pipes made from horns and gourds by the Luina of eastern Angola are of the forms now used in that region, also by the Ovimbundu of the present day (II, pp. 33, 37).

175 114 For use in checking and supplementing my observations Serpa Pinto's book was found to be of the greatest service, though the precise locality was sometimes difficult to identify. This explorer, in common with others, scattered his ethnological observations among descriptions of the route and botanical, zoological, and other notes.

Lux traveled from Loanda due east, following the Kwanza on the northern bank between 9° and 10° S. Lat., and so into Lunda.

V. ECONOMIC LIFE

The words "economic life" are here used with a wide connotation 182
including nature lore, food supply, trade, transport, and industries;
all these are combined to form a foundation for every aspect of the
social life of the tribe.

The truth of this is realized if one pays attention to the rites 788
connected with occupations. For the hunter there is special training, 782
ritual, and a peculiar mode of burial. Final ceremonies in the initiation of a young blacksmith are associated with sacred acts such as sacrifice of animals and the sprinkling of the tools with their blood. Even the simple occupation of pounding corn requires that the rock shall be dedicated to this purpose by sprinkling the blood of a chicken on the surface. Similarly, a clay pit has to be consecrated before the raw material may be taken for making pottery. A caravan [787]
journey is not merely a commercial undertaking; the accompanying medicine-man carries a wooden figure which he consults with regard to the route (Plate XXI, Fig. 5).

Division of labor according to sex is one of the most important 462
principles involved in the economic life, more particularly in occupational groupings, which are strictly observed. Moreover, within any one activity, such as house-building, there are tasks for men only, while other parts of the work are performed exclusively by women or children.

The study of industries is of great importance when a comparison 322
of Umbundu and adjacent cultures is being made. This is particu- 177
larly true in the instance of wood-carving, an occupation yielding highly specialized products some of which are connected with religious [778]
belief and ritual. All artifacts are valuable as criteria of cultural contacts, though their reliability as evidence of trait diffusion naturally varies with their degree of complexity. Study of native industries in relation to European contacts illustrates a cultural process which may result in acceptance, rejection, or ingenious adaptation of new ideas.

That a study of the economic life of a tribe is not merely a record- 182
ing of material processes and artifacts, is illustrated by observation 231
of the treatment of cattle. This pastoral pursuit naturally falls under a heading "Domestic Animals," but the ideas associated with cattle, including funeral feasts, use of horns on graves, and the wrapping of the royal corpse in oxhide, lead directly into important matters of belief and ritual.

235 guese for a long period. The chicken is highly esteemed as a sacrificial
[242] animal, but it could not be said that the flesh is in common use. This failure to develop and utilize to the full, again raises the point of social custom and economic habit. Chickens are cared for, as may be seen in the way they are cooped at night. Sometimes a hen may be seen sitting on her clutch of eggs in a dark corner of a hut, unmolested by people and dogs; yet it is certain that there is no concentration on the rearing of poultry.

Eggs are laid, and chickens are hatched throughout the year, except in the months of November and December when corn supplies
[252] are at their lowest ebb. Eggs are boiled, or fried on a fragment of
[264] pottery, but they are not sucked.

231 The domestic cat is not raised by the Ovimbundu. Wild cats are common, but there is no evidence of their domestication. Small birds and monkeys are sometimes kept as pets.

TRADE AND TRANSPORT

438 Caravan trade, which was at one time an important factor of tribal life, is now confined to short journeys for transporting corn, beans, and beeswax to traders' stores. But in spite of present-day
439 decline of transportation the memory of more prosperous times still exists.

Names of distant places survive in the Umbundu language; thus Tanganyika is called Nakandundu, while the name for far eastern Angola is Muacimbundu, the name of a one-time important chief. The Umbundu language is understood in all parts of Angola, far away from typical Umbundu centers of culture.

484 In the old days there were professional leaders of caravans, and a
788 ceremony was conducted before starting. The medicine-man and the
778 village chief were the principal performers in a rite which consisted
787 of bringing from its box the head of a former chief, sewn in oxhide. An animal was sacrificed so that the blood could be used for sprinkling on the chief's head, and on some occasions of this kind the head was sewn up in a new piece of oxhide. Direct appeal was made to the preserved head by the reigning chief, who asked for good fortune on the journey.

The medicine-man who accompanied a caravan carried with him a female wooden figure decorated with feathers (Plate XXI, Fig. 5). When a branching of the paths gave rise to doubts concerning the correct way the wooden figure was consulted by the medicine-man.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

straight lines. The legs show the usual flexion of the knees and a 532
shortening which is out of proportion to the body length. The lower limbs of most Angolan figures have these characteristics. The body of this figure is hollow and the head detachable. The incised head-dress is imitative of the coiffure of Vachokue women.

Cangamba, a village in eastern Angola, is a confluence of tribal 171
elements, namely, Vambuella, Luchazi, Babunda, and Vachokue, whose physical appearance, hairdressing, tooth mutilation, and tribal marks differ considerably. The man who sold the figurine brought it furtively. He was an Ocimbundu, but the work is of Chokue origin. The figure, I am informed, was filled with medicine, [755]
then placed near a patient who was undergoing curative treatment.

The figurine (*ngeve*) of a woman having a number of dark feathers 484
attached to her back has only one use. A caravan setting out for a 778
long journey is accompanied by a medicine-man whose outfit includes 787
such a figurine. Should the caravan leader be in doubt when choosing between two paths, the medicine-man sets up the image at the parting of the ways. He kneels before it and asks questions, then plugs his nostrils in order to make replies in a falsetto voice supposed to come from the figurine. Thus advised respecting the route to follow, the caravan continues its journey (Plate XXI, Fig. 5; p. 156).

The wooden figure (Plate XXI, Fig. 3) is of exceptional interest 326
because of its connection with the blacksmith's craft, which is asso- 775
ciated with introductory rites for apprentices. In former days a newly initiated blacksmith was expected to disappear for a period during which he killed a man. On returning to the work of his forge the blacksmith made a wooden figure of which this example, one of five obtained, is typical. The spirit of the murdered man took up its abode in the effigy and in this way helped with the work. The figure, which is of the usual dimensions, namely, 36 cm high, has the greater part of its surface covered with reddened earth (pp. 159–160).

Two figurines (Plate XXI, Figs. 1, 6) were obtained from 171
women of the Vachokue tribe in the village of Ngongo, Ngalangi. 842
Here the Vachokue and the Ovimbundu mingle to such an extent that customs are no doubt transferred from one culture to the other. These wooden images are used by childless women, or by women whose infants have died. The woman who sold these figures pressed them to her breasts to show the manner of use. People standing around smiled and nodded their approval. A wooden figure of this [845]
kind is substituted for a dead twin.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

787 532 A common type of small figurine, some of which are female, others asexual, is represented by an illustration (Plate XXI, Fig. 2). Such little carvings are a normal part of the miscellaneous contents of a divination basket described in chapter IX. These figures have been obtained from Elende, Bailundu, and Caconda, all of which are centers of Umbundu culture.

322 532 756 In addition to the figurines described, the collection contains many more whose use may be conjectured. The interrogation of Ovimbundu people indicates clearly that there are specific uses of wooden figures which are consulted by the medicine-man. The foregoing explanations illustrate the nature of the beliefs associated with carved wooden figures, but it is not always possible to elicit a clear account of the specific use of each one.

171 532 Consideration of this aspect of the wood-carver's art has an important bearing on the culture contacts of the Ovimbundu. In studying this question I have instituted comparisons between these figures from the Ovimbundu of Angola and similar figures from the Kasai area of the Congo region (chapter X). The publications of the Musée Congo Belge provide illustrations for comparison with the figures in Field Museum's collection.

The carving of animal forms (Plate XIX, Figs. 1–5) is no more than a means of aesthetic expression resulting from accurate observations of animal life as recorded under "Nature Lore." Inquiry failed to show that figures of animals are, or were at any time, used in rites and ceremonies.

[643] The carrying of a carved stick is essential when a chief is visiting, attending a council in his own village, or receiving visitors. The ornamental paddle (Plate XX, Fig. 8) was owned by the chief of the capital village (*ombala*) of the Vangangella, near Ngalangi.

[765] At the death of a chief his staff of office, with his tobacco-pipe and sleeping mat, are placed in a small house where such relics of deceased chiefs are kept permanently (Plate XLVI, Fig. 1). Plate XX, Fig. 6, shows a staff of this kind which was preserved in a sacred house in the capital village of Ngalangi, and on the same plate are drawn short ornamental clubs which French ethnologists call *batons de promenade*, an appropriate name because of their use as part of the full dress equipment.

[276] The Ovimbundu have specialized in the carving of small objects, for, in addition to clubs and staffs, tobacco-pipes and snuff boxes are often elaborately carved (Plate XV, Figs. 2, 4).

IX RELIGION

Supreme Being

776 Suku is the name of the most important dead person mentioned by the Ovimbundu. Ngonga says that Suku made mountains, rivers, sky, and people. The name Suku is known all over the great territory inhabited by the Ovimbundu. I have seen at the *ombala* of Ngalangi a small house of meditation where the king retires accompanied by an old woman. This retirement for communion with spirits of the dead takes place in time of drought, and a gourd filled with water is always kept in the house. In another village of the Ngalangi region I photographed a house of meditation for the king who retires for communion with spirits whenever he is troubled (Plate LXXXIX, Fig. 1). The painted marks on the door are said to be an indication to spirits that this is the king's house of meditation, but there is no reason for saying that the king communes with Suku.

The evidence regarding Suku was supplemented at Ngalangi by two Ovimbundu boys who agreed that Suku was very important. They associated Suku with rain; but the word *suku* does not mean rain, water, or food; these are expressed by *ombela*, *ovava*, and *okulia*, respectively. I know of no meaning of the word *suku* which might assist in explaining the attributes of this respected spirit. Names of medicine-men are remembered and used but they are not associated with the name Suku. My informants at Ngalangi said that names of kings are sometimes coupled with the name Suku.

773 At Ngalangi an informant stated that in the beginning everything was water. A man dropped from above, caused land to appear, and began hunting. At the side of a stream he saw an animal that disappeared beneath the water. He was about to shoot when he saw that the animal was a person something like himself, yet different. He took the animal home, mated with it, and reared a family. This story is told also at Cileso, about two hundred miles from Ngalangi. At Ngalangi I was informed that the first being was a calf with human attributes, who walked about on the rocks leaving mixed tracks of an animal and human kind, which may be seen to this day.

Survival after Death

775 787 There are ideas of reincarnation. Two Bailundu boys said that the lion was considered to be a powerful old man. If a lion is found dead divination is practised to discover the cause of death. If a

lion visits a village an old man talks to it through the palisade. 775
The conversation is carried on in a series of grunts, after which the 787
lion goes away. One of my informants said that "lions and leopards are watchdogs for old men who have died." When one of these animals kills a domestic animal or a person, the assumption is that the predatory animal was sent by a deceased old man who requires a sacrifice. Ngonga of Elende said that "when a lion killed a man it was a sign that there was a bad spirit from the man's family within the lion." There is divination to find who requires a sacrifice, since some ancestor has been neglected. W. C. Bell relates an Umbundu [114]
tale of a woman who changed herself into a wild animal, but I was not able to ascertain that belief in transformation is held today (*Jour. Amer. Folk-Lore*, XXXV, p. 129).

I am unable to prove that the Ovimbundu have definite ideas of the nature of a future life, but they certainly think of survival after death, and have clear concepts of good and bad spirits who influence the fortunes of the living. There is no idea of punishment or reward, but a bad man has a bad ghost which can do evil things. Spirits will follow their relations on earth; moreover, they will come to the house of bows where their property is preserved.

A man returning from a hunt with trophies, or from the collection of honey, will leave some of these on a grave. There is no idea [774]
of spirits in rivers and trees, but the first tree felled for building the house of a man of importance must not be allowed to fall violently. This may imply a belief in a tree-spirit.

Spirits move at night only and mentioning the dead by name or whistling at night calls spirits. There are many instances of sacrifice [782]
connected with the idea of a spirit who has to be appeased. The medicine-man can induce a spirit to enter an image of wood. Thus [778]
there are wooden images containing spirits useful to the blacksmith. There is an image which can show travelers the right path when the medicine-man consults it (Plate XXI, Figs. 3, 5).

Osande is a good spirit who will "bring good luck and do good things for the people, while *Ondele* is a bad spirit who harms the people," said Ngonga. When a person is sick, mad, or dizzy he has *Ondele*. Only a powerful *ocimbanda* can cast out *Ondele*. *Ocilulu* is the general name for a disembodied spirit, either good or bad. An *Ekisi* is an *Osande;* apparently the terms are synonymous.

A spirit can die a second time. There is, for instance, an evil 775
bird of the night whose name is *Esuvi*. This bird is able to catch a spirit in order to make it die a second death. A living person

plate of meal and earnestly asked questions. Lukuma was the name of the father of the dead boy. The old man who addressed the corpse was the brother of Lukuma's mother. Ngonga explained that the woman addresses the corpse, "to give him sense so that he will not be ashamed to tell all about it"; that is, about the manner of his death. The old man said to the corpse, "*Etali* ["today"] *omolãngẽ* ["my boy"] *tu yongola* ["we want"] *oku* ["you"] *tu* ["us"] *sanjuisa* ["make glad"] *o tu* ["to us"] *sapuila* ["tell"] *muele* ["indeed"] *cosi* ["all"] *ca* ["that"] *ku upa* ["you take"] *kilu liese* ["from earth"]. 764 602

The pause which followed a question was intended to give the corpse time to reply. It is supposed that if the answer is in the negative the spirit causes the pole to swing slightly backward. An affirmative answer is given if the spirit makes the pole swing forward. The old man demanded, "Is it witchcraft that hates us and killed you? If it is witchcraft, come to the front." I could see no swing of the corpse on the pole, but Ngonga said that he could see the coffin swing backward to indicate a negative answer. I suspected that the interrogator of the corpse gave a signal to the bearers, indicating that the coffin was to be made to swing, but I could see no signal or movement of the coffin. While the corpse was interrogated, males among the spectators spoke to the old man who was asking the questions. Ngonga explained that these men were suggesting questions which might be asked respecting the cause of death. A witness in the crowd would say, "You have forgotten this," or "You have forgotten that." 764 787

The next question was one that calls for a detailed explanation. *Sambulu* is a bad spirit which is able to cause death when crying women and children offend him by their wailing. The mother of the dead boy was a slave whose husband was absent from the village for a time. During this period the master of the woman threatened to sell her; consequently she went to a Christian mission with her children, one of whom was the boy now deceased. The woman and children were crying, hence the possibility that the evil *Sambulu* had at that time entered the person of the boy whose funeral rites were now in progress. The woman had visited the mission a year ago, but this lapse of time apparently made no difference to the possibility that *Sambulu* had entered one of the children. The spirit made a negative answer to this ingenious suggestion and eventually indicated that death was due to a "bad belly." If no answer is returned affirmatively, recourse is made to the medicine-man, who carries out divination. The details of this method are described [776] [797]

764 later in explaining the meaning of the articles which are contained
787 in the divination basket.

764 I interrogated my interpreter respecting funeral customs, and from these inquiries elicited the following information. Burial of the corpse takes place a mile or more from the village in a grave dug by the father's sister's children. The depth of the grave is about
(361) six feet. Each village has its own burial ground. The woman who questioned the corpse carried a sleeping mat which would be used to spread on the bottom of the grave, though sometimes the mat is placed outside the grave on the mound of earth. Midway between Cuma and Caconda I photographed graves of the Ovimbundu (Plate XLVII, Figs. 1, 2). The articles on the graves were the poles used for carrying the coffin, a basket, broken gourds, and in one instance the horns of a bullock which was killed at the funeral feast. The horns were mounted at the top of an upright pole (Plate XLVI, Fig. 2). Ngonga said that the belongings of a well-to-do person would usually be broken and placed on the grave; the breaking is necessary in order to prevent theft. I could find no trace of the idea that property is broken so that its spirit will accompany the man to a world of spirits.

The corpse was in a wooden box covered with a thin piece of blue and white chequered cloth tightly wound about the coffin. Ngonga explained that the body was prepared in the following manner before it was placed in the coffin. The corpse was extended in a supine position with the thumbs tied, the palms together, and the hands on the pubes. The great toes were tied together and the upper arms were bound to the torso with bands of bark or cloth. The use of bark no doubt represents the older method.

764 At the funeral of a baby one of the grandmothers carries the
787 dead child to the grave on her back. The ceremony of questioning the corpse is carried out if the child is old enough to walk and talk. Ngonga said, "If the dead child was old enough to talk they think he will say something." If the child was unable to talk, the parents, accompanied by their brothers and sisters, would visit the medicine-man to inquire the cause of death.

766 There are a few special observances connected with the burial of twins. When the children were alive the mother had to shake a rattle or to blow a small horn instead of giving the usual greetings to a passer-by, and this she has to do at the funeral of one or both of her twins.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

756 men and women each of whom receives the name *ocimbanda*, and specialization in some particular form of magical practice is the [554] rule. Some practitioners are more highly esteemed than others. For example, an *ocimbanda* who has the reputation for curing dizziness, madness, and *onyalai* (p. 281) is one of great repute; so also is the man who can cure a case of blood in the urine (*biliosa*). [164] This is the Portuguese term commonly applied to blackwater fever.

DIVINATION

787 An examination of objects collected gives the best indication of the equipment of the *ocimbanda*, and among these no item is more important than the small divination basket containing a heterogeneous collection of objects.

A diviner receives the distinguishing title of *ocimbanda congomba*, and a description of his methods explains his belief in the activities of spirits. He shakes the basket while his assistant plays a small friction drum; then he inspects the objects lying at the top.

A figure with beads on its neck indicates that trouble is due to the ghost of a dead baby whose spirit wishes to come back.

A piece of gourd with a round orifice means that some one has been talking too much. The orifice represents a human mouth.

Two figures, male and female, whispering together, indicate that a husband and wife are making a plan to poison somebody.

The figure of a female with a large abdomen indicates that the spirit of a deceased pregnant woman is causing sickness in the village.

The horn with shells on it indicates that the woman who is consulting the diviner will not bear children.

There is a little figure with a black tuft on its head, whose [177] arrival at the top of the basket indicates that misfortune among the natives is caused by Europeans. When talking to this figure the medicine-man tries to speak like a white man by adopting a falsetto voice and mimicking the intonation of Europeans.

The figure with a little crest on its head is an indication of sickness or other trouble arising from a spirit which likes to drink blood. When this figure comes to the top of the basket, the medicine-man induces the blood-drinking spirit to enter a man, because the evil must first be localized before it can be exorcised. This possessed person dances with a small ax or a hair switch in his hand. When dancing has induced a frenzy, the dancer kills a pig and drinks the fresh blood. The blood-drinking spirit is in this way exorcised from the community.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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If the figure with united legs comes to the top of the basket the meaning is that a medicine-man used to be in the family of the consultant. The spirit of this medicine-man wishes some member of the family to become a medicine-man.

The little wooden snake signifies cords and binding. Dreaming of a snake indicates that the dreamer will be tied and sold into slavery. When the wooden snake comes to the top of the basket, the significance is that a spirit has tied the sick person who is consulting the diviner.

If the wooden figure of a girl appears at the top of the basket, the inference is that the spirit causing trouble is that of a girl.

The appearance of a thin wooden figure at the top of the basket means that the troublesome spirit is that of a person who died when away on a long and fatiguing journey. The afflicted person who is consulting *ocimbanda* has to make an offering to one of the wooden human figures which are to be found along trade routes.

The piece of iron in the basket may come to the top when the contents are shaken. When this happens it is assumed that a death will take place. The death is attributed to something, for example, alcohol, which has come from white people.

The piece of horn from the hoof of an ox indicates that a troublesome spirit desires an ox to be sacrificed. If a sick man is consulting the diviner, he is told to take a drink containing parings from the hoof of an ox.

The bone from a chicken's leg indicates that sickness has come from the road, that is, from a journey. The Ovimbundu have been famous for their long journeys across Africa, hence the implication seems to be that a disease of an infectious kind has been brought from a distance.

A corncob indicates that trouble has arisen from a spirit which can affect the growth of corn if not appeased by sacrifice.

A coin indicates that the sick or deceased person was too fond of money; misfortune has come from the spirit who gives wealth and good luck, because it has been offended in some way.

There is in the basket a white bone which means that there will be laughter in the village.

The small cocoon of sticks, which I think belongs to a caddis fly, means that some one has stolen a bale of cloth.

Small round shells indicate that everything is well.

A small wooden boat indicates that some one will be drowned.

787 The handle of a hoe is the symbol of cultivation. The appearance of the miniature handle at the top of the basket implies that the spirit of a woman who was rich in corn is troubling the community.

Two united, human figures of wood indicate that a twin will die. The Ovimbundu welcome twins; when one is dead the mother has a wooden figure (Plate XXI, Fig. 1) made to take its place; this is nursed to induce another conception and to comfort the remaining child.

The little gourd means that a deceased person was secretly poisoned in revenge because of his thefts from a field.

The seed of the oil palm means that a large gourd of palm oil has been stolen.

The description of funeral rites gave an account of the questioning of the spirit of the deceased. If no answer is given, divination is made to learn the cause of death.

There is no divination by examination of entrails. Bones are thrown in playing a game, but this is not connected with divination.

EQUIPMENT AND MISCELLANEOUS DUTIES

755 [842] The basket of an Ocimbundu medicine-man at Caconda contained, in addition to the human bone, pounder, and hoe blades already mentioned, two carved wooden female figures whose specific use is unknown. It is known, however, that such figures may be nursed and held to the breast of a woman who wishes to conceive. There was a cowrie shell on a cord which forms a charm to be worn round the neck of a woman who desires children. A small tin box containing a coin and some stones was used for shaking. The kind of sound produced, also any arrested movement of the objects in the box, are indications of the guilt of a person whose name was mentioned just as the objects ceased to move.

A large antelope horn, filled with a mixture of goat's fat and charcoal from the bones of a goat, was intended for use in curing the sick. The contents of the horn become liquid when heated; then they can be dropped on the heads of the people who come for treatment. It was explained that a number of sick people sat around the medicine-man who walked to each person and poured out a small quantity of medicine on the patient's head.

[534] The only musical instruments used by a medicine-man are a small friction drum and a rattle. At Ngalangi I saw a medicine-man give a dance during which he slashed about him with a small ax, which was evidently a ceremonial object, since the construction

The hare is not carried over the shoulder, but has a ceremonial conveyance slung on poles (*owanda*) which are supported on the shoulders of two or even four men. 796 643

Laying the evil of a village on a goat, which is then driven out to die, is an Umbundu custom. The scapegoat ceremony has a cleansing function similar in purpose to the rekindling of fire for the community. Cavazzi pictured and described the scapegoat ceremony in the seventeenth century, and Ngonga informed me that he saw the rite twenty years ago. 783

PROHIBITIONS AND OMENS

There is a taboo against killing *oku kuhu*, which is the yellow-backed duiker. When Ngonga was sick he was forbidden to eat the flesh of the duiker (*ombambi*); neither is this flesh to be eaten by people who suffer from dizziness. In former days women were not allowed to eat eggs. The flesh of sheep and goats is said to be indigestible for children between the ages of three and six years. The flesh of the lion, leopard, and hyena is forbidden as food for the king, but other people may eat it. The king is in fact forbidden to eat the flesh of any animal which has paws; neither may he eat flesh of the bush buck. A medicine-man must not eat flesh of a dog except before a ceremony for curing the sick. The taboo against dog's flesh applies also to the diet of a king. 262 [698]

A woman must not step over the legs of a male, neither must a man step over the legs of a woman; for to do so causes weakness of the knees. A man or woman may step over the legs of a child. 784

Omens are numerous. It is unfortunate to see a snake holding a frog, and the person who observes this should go to the medicine-man at once. When going to a village to be tried by the chief it is bad to meet some one who is carrying a bark rope, as this indicates binding and punishment. If a person who is setting out from home meets a woman carrying corn meal or any other white substance, he or she must take a little of the meal, whiten the face, and all will be well. A fly in the mouth is a good sign, because the fly knows where meat is to be obtained and is trying to lead the way. 787

A stranger visiting a village is pleased when a dog is the first animal to enter the guest house. Dogs are fed, so the entry of a dog is a sign that the visitor will receive food. On the contrary, the appearance of a goat is a bad omen, because goats are not fed; they pick up a frugal living as best they can. Other prohibitions and omens have been mentioned in discussing the pregnancy of women. [574]

4:Dorsey E-4, 5 (no date)1899 FP13 Mbundu FP13

791 case of sickness. He is also a diviner, reading both the past and
759 future. At all spirit feasts, at the installation of a new chief, in preparation for war, and on almost every occasion the witch-doctor plays a prominent part. He bears an influential position among his people, and his art is the source of a considerable income, for always before he begins operations the pay must be brought and laid down before him. Thus it is that he is loth to part with even a few of his charms, much less a full set.

The ocimbanda does not inherit his power, but must serve a long apprenticeship to some old witch-doctor, whom he pays liberally. He is then given a small basket with a few charms, to which he adds from time to time. His idols and charms are not made by him, but
[778] are purchased one by one. All of these objects are considered powerful, *cikola* or sacred, and the common people are afraid to touch them; even the touch of a white man is sacrilegious. One of the distinguishing features of a witch-doctor's costume is a head-dress, *ekufue*, made of long porcupine quills fastened together at one end, sewn to a cloth disk about two inches in diameter. Many of the quills are over a foot in length. This headdress is only worn when divining. He also occasionally wears about the loins a girdle, *nya*, consisting of a strip of antelope skin sewn together along the two edges, thus forming a pouch which contains medicines. Attached to the girdle are war charms and medicines, of which he eats from time to time. There are also several kinds of small skins in the collection, on which the doctor kneels when about to perform.
[302] Two pigments should also be noticed. The first is a white, clayey substance, *ecikela*, with which the ocimbanda paints himself, and with which he also marks the person whom by his divining he has discovered to be innocent, the sign of acquittal being a mark across the forehead and down the arms. The other pigment is a red clay, *onongo*, with which he also marks his own body and employs as the sign of guilt.

787 Of the various objects of the ocimbanda's outfit proper, the most
415 important is the basket, *ukamba*, in which the outfit is kept. When it is said that so and so has a "uhamba," it means that he is a witch-doctor. The basket is thirteen inches high by nineteen in length, and eight inches in thickness. The ends are rounded, thus giving the basket, as seen from above, an elliptical form. The cover, three inches in height, fits closely down over the basket, after the manner of our telescope bag. The bottom of the basket is made separate, and is fastened by means of an interlacing of grass braid. The sides of the basket are simply one long strip of interlaced reed and bark fibre, the ends overlapping and being fastened together by the grass braid, which passes up continuously from the bottom to

[i.e., diviner. -- Analyst]

4:Dorsey E-4, 5 (no date)1899 FP13 Mbundu FP13

the top of the basket which it circles, thus giving a decorative 787
effect as well as affording additional strength. The lid is built in a 415
similar manner.

Only second in importance is a small basket-shaped gourd, *ongombo*, used in divination. The basket is ten inches in diameter and three inches deep. Around the rim is bound two bands of grass fibre, thus affording strength, and, by means of the manner of binding these in place, a certain amount of decoration. The basket has evidently seen much use, for the bottom is cracked in several places and has been mended with cotton thread. On two sides near the rim are two cowry shells. The contents of this basket are extremely varied, all the objects being in the nature of charms. Among them may be enumerated several small images made of different kinds of wood, horn of a goat, ox hoof, piece of pig's foot, lion's tooth; skin from the nose of a hyena, to smell out crime; bone of a person, a supposed witch; chicken bones, and a chicken head with open mouth, which is supposed to represent a gossip; and dozens of other trinkets, each having its own significance in the eyes of the witch-doctor.

During the process of divination two images, *ovitakas*, represent- 789
ing male and female, are set up before the ocimbanda, that he may 778
cause them to be inhabited by spirits. These are not worshipped as idols, yet are venerated in a sense by the common people, especially by women and children. The images are carved out of hard wood, and stand a little over a foot in height. Each one is partially clothed in a cotton wrapper, and bears about the neck several strands of native beads. They possess unusual interest, as on the back of the head of each the manner of wearing the hair of each sex is carefully portrayed. Attached to the male by a string around the neck is a rosette of dull red and yellow feathers, one of which has been artificially notched. To enable the ocimbanda to call the spirits into these images, he uses a whistle, *omḷinga*, consisting of the horn of a small antelope inserted into an ox-tail wrapped with beads arranged into broad bands of white, black, and red. Furthermore, when about to divine, the doctor eats a number of ants. He also has some medicines known collectively as *ovikemba*, which are kept in a skin, from which he takes and eats before and during divining. Of rattles, *ocisikilo*, shaken by the ocimbanda during the practice of his art, there are two, both bottle-shaped gourds containing cannalilly seeds.

When the ocimbanda goes to divine, he first carefully spreads his 787
skins one upon the other, and upon these he places his basket of charms. He puts white and red clay on his eyebrows, cheek bones, shoulders, and elbows; also stripes his body with these clays, and

4:Dorsey E-4, 5 (no date)1899 FP13 Mbundu FP13

787 puts on his necklace and headdress, which gives him a strange, wild appearance. Taking one of the gourd rattles, and giving the others to the parties interested, setting up the images, he is ready for operations. He begins by shaking the gourds and blowing the horn whistle, at the same time chanting in a minor strain, all the rest responding in chorus. In this way he works himself up into a sort of frenzy. He then takes the basket of charms, and, by throwing them slightly, claims to be able to read from them the past and future, and to declare the guilt or innocence of a person. In this way trivial matters, as well as the most weighty, even life and death, are decided. For instance, if, while determining whether an accused person is a witch or not, in his shaking and throwing of the charms the little horn with the wax and red seeds should stand upright, that would be taken as evidence of guilt; while if, on the contrary, the little image with the small cowry shell on the head should stand upright, that is evidence conclusive that the person is innocent. Not only is the question of guilt thus decided, but witch-doctors are thought to be able to predict coming events.

751 An important object in the outfit is a large horn of the roan antelope, containing a smaller antelope horn, medicines, oils, etc., prepared by the ocimbanda.[1] This is known as *ombinga*, or "loaded horn," and is considered efficacious in warding off from its possessor all harm, lightning, disease, witches, spirits, wild animals, etc. Carried upon journeys, it also insures a prosperous issue to the undertaking, and affords as well protection. Somewhat similar in [789] construction, but used for an entirely different purpose, is the *ocifungo* or rain wand. This is the tail of an ox, into which are inserted two small horns with medicines and oils. By blowing the horns and waving the tail, the ocimbanda[1] is supposed to drive off rains at will.[1]

Of numerous small charms, *umbanda*, in the collection, two are of sufficient interest to merit notice. One consists of two four-inch-long bottle-shaped objects made of woven string, from the mouth of each of which projects a two-inch tuft of very tiny feathers. The two objects are joined at the top and bottom, and singly bear a decided resemblance to a Hopi *tiponi*, or religious society's palladium. They contain medicines and are worn from the neck. This is a special war charm, and affords protection against bullets and all harm in battle. The other charm is an ox's hoof into which is thrust a small antelope horn and medicines. In times of special danger, it is put up somewhere in the village for protection. Still

[1] Mr. Woodside also states that this same power is attributed by the Ovimbundu to white men; and when they are told that we do not possess this power, "they calmly look us in the eye and say, 'wa kemba' (you lie)."

[1] [i.e., diviner. Cf. pp. 183-186, cat. 116.--Analyst]

5: Hambly E-5 (1929-30) 1934 FP 13 Mbundu FP13

224 hollow chamber. I removed a thin slab of stone which formed an entrance
764 to a tomb of this kind and observed within two skeletons lying supine. On the top of the cairns were skulls of animals killed by the hunter. I noted one instance of the burial of a hunter's dog under a cairn of stones.

825 Three birds are protected by a prohibition. Esuvi is a bird which has
794 power to steal the souls of the dead, so making them die a second death. As usual, no direct explanation was given concerning this second death, but an explanation came later, quite fortuitously. For instance, an old man said he was sick because esuvi had stolen the spirit of his grandfather. This statement is logical, since welfare depends on a beneficent interest of dead ancestors, and it is evident that dying a second death prevents a spirit from exercising a benign influence over the living. Other protected birds are one which supplies feathers from which the decorations of kings and medicine-men are made, and one whose night cry is a warning of death in a village.

226 In fishing, a division of labor is recognized: men use a rod and line, while women drag baskets against the stream or use poison in slow, shallow water. The night before poison is to be used for fishing, husband and wife must avoid intercourse, since intimacy of this kind would make the fish stay together at the bottom of the river. A man who has prepared his rod and line, by transfixing a grasshopper and attaching it to a thin piece of bark,
[539] sings a song which is of the nature of a spell. He says:

> "O fish come and take your good thing.
> Do not send the little fish to spoil the good thing.
> Better you come and take the good thing with all your strength."

439 Up to half a century ago the Ovimbundu were renowned traders whose caravans penetrated deeply into the Congo region and even to the east side of Africa. It is natural, therefore, that some ritual should be connected with
[443] such an important enterprise. At the present day caravans may be seen, but these are local, and most of the carriers are found to be taking their maize, beans, and beeswax to traders' stores. I believe women did not accompany the transcontinental caravans of early days, but today women may be seen in line with the other carriers. Their loads are lighter, being on the average thirty pounds as compared with sixty pounds for a man. Children also carry small loads in the caravan.

439 Ngonga, my chief informant, said that in former times no caravan
787 leader would set out without having consulted the preserved head of a de-
[643] ceased king. Even at present the corpse of a king is suspended by the neck and twisted until the head is severed. The head is sewn in oxhide and preserved in a box. The ancient caravan custom consisted of taking the box

5: Hambly E-5 (1929-30)1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

containing the head and attaching it to a pole by which it was supported 439
on the shoulders of two bearers. Then followed a series of questions from 787
the village chief (sekulu), and answers were supposed to be given through forward or backward swinging of the pole. A forward swing was affirmative, and a backward swing was negative. I have seen this procedure followed with a coffin supported as described, and the questions related to the cause of death.

The head of a king would be asked, "Do you want an ox for sacrifice? We will give you one." "Do you want a new skin for your head? We will give you one." Such was the ceremony for bringing spiritual aid to what was otherwise a commercial undertaking.

A wooden figure of a female decorated with black feathers was an indispensable part of the equipment of a medicine-man who accompanied a caravan. When in doubt with regard to the path he knelt at the parting of the ways and consulted the figure. Replies came in a falsetto voice attained by plugging his nostrils. Horns containing a mixture of fat, charcoal, and other substances were carried so that they might be planted near a camping ground to drive away thieves and leopards. These horns are still used and are obtainable.

At the present day a belated Ocimbundu, who fears the sun may set 789
before he reaches the next village, will take some earth from an ant hill. This earth he places in the fork of a tree saying, "O sun wait for me a little while."

Examination of the culture of the Ovimbundu, combined with observa- 101
tions on the Umbundu language and somatic traits, indicate that the Ovim- 241
bundu are a part of the Bantu peoples of southwest Africa. They have, however, taken advantage of the open Benguela highlands to develop their system of agriculture far beyond that which is usually carried on by Negroes in forest clearings.

In agricultural work a clear division of labor is observed. Men clear 241
timber and burn the bush, after which hoe cultivation is in the hands of 562
women, though men assist with the harvest. Unmarried girls help in the fields and each has a piece of ground whose products are the cultivator's personal property. This gives unmarried girls a measure of economic independence. Usually a girl spends the proceeds of her work in buying trinkets and palm-oil for personal decoration. Under their system of poly- 595
gyny each wife has her own field, utensils, and a separate hut with its fire 562
and cooking arrangements. The husband visits each hut for four consecutive nights, though in some districts there is a seven night cycle. Men always take evening meals in the mens' council house (onjango) in the center (to notice the tombs of hunters, which consist of cairns of stones enclosing a) 1

1 [Printer's error: This sentence refers to p. 159. -- Analyst]

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

606 being 'father', to the wife they are *ndatembo* (father-in-law). All relatives whom one considers as 'parents' are parents-in-law to one's spouse, and conversely, all whom one considers as one's 'children' are *ndatembo* (sons-in-law or daughters-in-law) to the spouse. To all these relatives-in-law is due the same pattern of respectful behaviour. Avoidance of seeing each other applies only between the *va ndatembo* of opposite sex. There is the additional prohibition that they may not eat in each other's presence. This avoidance is further extended to include one's *ndatembo* of the same sex, and also one's *nãwã* (relatives-in-law of one's own generation). With the *nãwã*, however, one is otherwise on free and easy terms.[1] The prohibition on eating does not apply to drinking beer or to other such casual refreshment, but only to 'hot food', i.e. to regular meals.

Avoidance of meeting (*oku liyuvuila kocipala*, lit. 'avoiding each
606 other to the face') is especially difficult for the bride who comes to
788 live in a village of her husband's people, a large proportion of the men of which may be *ndatembo* to her. The prohibition may be lifted by going through a simple ceremony in which each rubs a little oil on the other. The woman rubs oil on the breast, the face, and the right arm of her *ndatembo*, while he in turn rubs oil from the same dish on her breast and on the braids of her forehead. Avoidance of eating in each other's presence may be done away with after some months by sacrificing a chicken and feeding it ceremonially together with maize porridge to the *ndatembo* or *nãwã* (throwing it into her mouth, mouthful by mouthful), with the attendance of the immediate family. It is especially important that these ceremonies be carried through with respect (*ensumbilo*).

The avoidance of the name, whether of husband and wife, or of the parents-in-law, must be maintained: the names must not be pronounced. Many euphemisms are resorted to when it becomes
606 necessary to speak of or to these relatives-in-law. This is one
551 reason why the parents themselves take the name of their first-born, prefixing *Na*, 'mother of', and *Sa*, 'father of'. Thus the parents of *Kambõtiã* are known as *Nakambõtiã* and *Sakambõtiã*. This name may be pronounced. This is also probably one reason for extend-

[1] See the folk-tale in which the man who knows the speech of the red ants gives away his knowledge by laughing out while his sister-in-law is braiding his hair.

V. ECONOMIC LIFE

The words "economic life" are here used with a wide connotation 182
including nature lore, food supply, trade, transport, and industries; all these are combined to form a foundation for every aspect of the social life of the tribe.

The truth of this is realized if one pays attention to the rites 788
connected with occupations. For the hunter there is special training, 782
ritual, and a peculiar mode of burial. Final ceremonies in the initiation of a young blacksmith are associated with sacred acts such as sacrifice of animals and the sprinkling of the tools with their blood. Even the simple occupation of pounding corn requires that the rock shall be dedicated to this purpose by sprinkling the blood of a chicken on the surface. Similarly, a clay pit has to be consecrated before the raw material may be taken for making pottery. A caravan [787]
journey is not merely a commercial undertaking; the accompanying medicine-man carries a wooden figure which he consults with regard to the route (Plate XXI, Fig. 5).

Division of labor according to sex is one of the most important 462
principles involved in the economic life, more particularly in occupational groupings, which are strictly observed. Moreover, within any one activity, such as house-building, there are tasks for men only, while other parts of the work are performed exclusively by women or children.

The study of industries is of great importance when a comparison 322
of Umbundu and adjacent cultures is being made. This is particu- 177
larly true in the instance of wood-carving, an occupation yielding highly specialized products some of which are connected with religious [778]
belief and ritual. All artifacts are valuable as criteria of cultural contacts, though their reliability as evidence of trait diffusion naturally varies with their degree of complexity. Study of native industries in relation to European contacts illustrates a cultural process which may result in acceptance, rejection, or ingenious adaptation of new ideas.

That a study of the economic life of a tribe is not merely a record- 182
ing of material processes and artifacts, is illustrated by observation 231
of the treatment of cattle. This pastoral pursuit naturally falls under a heading "Domestic Animals," but the ideas associated with cattle, including funeral feasts, use of horns on graves, and the wrapping of the royal corpse in oxhide, lead directly into important matters of belief and ritual.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

maker's dance seen at Ngongo, a village of Ngalangi in east-central Angola, will be described in dealing with the *ocimbanda* (chapter IX). 821

No man thinks that the course of the sun can be altered, but there seems to be a hope that the setting of the sun may be delayed. A man who is likely to be overtaken by darkness breaks a piece from an ant hill. This fragment is placed in the forked branch of a tree while the supplicant says, "Sun, wait a little while for me." [786]

Months are reckoned by observation of the moon. The new moon is *osai* ("moon") *yokaliye* ("new"). There is no word for half moon. The phrase for full moon is *osai ya tunga ohumba*. *Ohumba* means "basket"; therefore the idea appears to be that the full moon is round like the big basket used for field work.

A star is called *olumbungululu*. To describe a shooting star, the word *luenda* ("it goes") is added. The large bright morning star is *tanda*. Another bright star is *tielele*. Three bright stars in a line are the hunter, the dog, and the quarry. The three stars are *ukongo* ("hunter"), *lombua* ("the dog"), *locinyama* ("the animal").

An eclipse of the sun is *uteke vutanya*. The former word means "night," the latter word means "daylight." Hence the meaning is "night in daylight."

Small mammals are captured in cane traps or stunned with blunt wooden arrows. The pursuit of such animals is a pastime for boys who thereby receive their early training in hunting. Rats are used as food after being boiled and roasted. This fact accounts for interest in the following small mammals. 224 825 [262]

Umbili. This is a big black river rat, the largest of the water rats.

Ocifelefele. A big gray water rat (*Cricetomys?*), not so large as *umbili*.

Kaleñe. A river rat something like the preceding one in appearance. *Kaleñe* can stay in the water for a longer period than that endured by *ocifelefele*.

Epeke. This is a bush rat which is light gray in color.

Ekolonponjó. This rat stays in the bush. It builds a nest in an ant hill from which it comes out only at night. The color is gray.

Elima (*Epomophorus*). This is the name given to the fruit bat. The word *elima* means "not one thing and not another." Thus *elima* is the word applied to a mulatto; he is not a Negro, not a white man.

Osili (*Rhabdomys*). This is a large light brown mouse having white stripes on his back.

Ongenge. A mouse.

Epengue. A black rat.

Ocipili. A mouse with a long thin nose, probably a shrew.

Osinge. This is a very fat mouse.

Nakalongaka. This very small mouse makes a hole around which he piles grass to conceal the entrance.

Onjombeloke (*Lemniscomys*). A mouse with a stripe on his back.

Kandoti (*Dendromus*). A very little mouse something like *nakalongaka*.

224 874 an initiation feast when the training is ended. At the feast all people of the village may be present but they do not dance; only the professional hunters may do so. The boy who is to be initiated must not speak or move until he "feels the spirit on his head"; then he gives meat to the people. After hunters have captured game for the feast, the blood from these animals is used to smear over the bow, arrows, and spear which have been made for the novice by his tutor. This is analogous to the initiation of the young blacksmith who [326] receives blood-sprinkled tools made by the master blacksmith.

224 788 There is in connection with the life and death of the professional hunter a certain amount of ritual and precaution. The night before setting out to hunt is a time of dancing and renewal of the implements of the chase, which are kept in a house specially prepared for them. A hunter who is on the eve of departure calls in other professional hunters to share the ceremony, which includes the rubbing of the bows and other implements with palm oil. A libation of beer is poured on the bows, spears, and arrows, but no medicine-man is present. Some of the bows are never used, because they are merely the symbols of the personality and prowess of dead hunters whose names they have taken. The food and cooking pots of a hunter must never be associated with those of ordinary household use. If a hunter is following the tracks of an animal he must not point with his finger as this action will drive the animal away. The correct way to point is by use of the feathered end of an arrow. The hunter [~~324~~] must not sleep with his wife the night before setting out in quest of game.

224 782 I have frequently seen in front of the hut of a hunter a number of skulls of antelope and other animals mounted on poles arranged in circular formation (Plate XXXII, Fig. 2). These skulls seem to be trophies, which are invariably taken away by the hunter if he finds a new home. There is no reason to doubt the statement that these skulls are an offering to the spirits who give good luck in hunting, because such a belief would be in harmony with the general respect for ancestral ghosts, which are thought to influence the affairs of the living.

764 224 On several occasions, notably near Ganda and in the Cassonge country, I have seen the tombs of hunters. These are large structures built of slabs of granite laid with some symmetry. The rock tomb is invariably placed on the top of a commanding eminence of granite. The skulls of animals which the hunter has killed are piled on the top of the cairn, but I do not know whether these are the trophies

235 guese for a long period. The chicken is highly esteemed as a sacrificial
[242] animal, but it could not be said that the flesh is in common use. This failure to develop and utilize to the full, again raises the point of social custom and economic habit. Chickens are cared for, as may be seen in the way they are cooped at night. Sometimes a hen may be seen sitting on her clutch of eggs in a dark corner of a hut, unmolested by people and dogs; yet it is certain that there is no concentration on the rearing of poultry.

Eggs are laid, and chickens are hatched throughout the year, except in the months of November and December when corn supplies
[252] are at their lowest ebb. Eggs are boiled, or fried on a fragment of
[264] pottery, but they are not sucked.

231 The domestic cat is not raised by the Ovimbundu. Wild cats are common, but there is no evidence of their domestication. Small birds and monkeys are sometimes kept as pets.

TRADE AND TRANSPORT

438 Caravan trade, which was at one time an important factor of tribal life, is now confined to short journeys for transporting corn, beans, and beeswax to traders' stores. But in spite of present-day
439 decline of transportation the memory of more prosperous times still exists.

Names of distant places survive in the Umbundu language; thus Tanganyika is called Nakandundu, while the name for far eastern Angola is Muacimbundu, the name of a one-time important chief. The Umbundu language is understood in all parts of Angola, far away from typical Umbundu centers of culture.

484 In the old days there were professional leaders of caravans, and a
788 ceremony was conducted before starting. The medicine-man and the
778 village chief were the principal performers in a rite which consisted
787 of bringing from its box the head of a former chief, sewn in oxhide. An animal was sacrificed so that the blood could be used for sprinkling on the chief's head, and on some occasions of this kind the head was sewn up in a new piece of oxhide. Direct appeal was made to the preserved head by the reigning chief, who asked for good fortune on the journey.

The medicine-man who accompanied a caravan carried with him a female wooden figure decorated with feathers (Plate XXI, Fig. 5). When a branching of the paths gave rise to doubts concerning the correct way the wooden figure was consulted by the medicine-man.

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priateness of certain tasks for males and females respectively, and individuals reflect these attitudes in their ideas and conduct.

My interpreter and others who were questioned laughed at the idea that men and women might interchange their occupations in the course of house-building. A woman collects wood for fuel, but not for house-building. Structural work is in the hands of men who dig the foundations, erect the poles, tie the crosspieces and add the roof. Women carry water for mixing the clay which is puddled by children; men, women, and children apply wet clay to the wattle walls. "Suppose a man should carry water?" I asked. "He would be laughed at and people would say that he was a he-woman," came the ready answer.

Women invariably make pottery among the Ovimbundu, but this is not always so in Negro tribes. Women of the Ovimbundu are likewise basket-makers, but they do not make mats, for this occupation is considered suitable for men only. Only women pound corn; before daybreak the heavy wooden pestles are at work and until sunset the rocks reserved for this operation are the centers of female activity, which includes singing and gossip. Only men herd cattle and only males are hunters. Women and children are the collectors of wild fruits and caterpillars, but only men take honey from the hives.

Agriculture and the preparation of food are entirely in the hands of the women. Men never eat with women; the latter have to carry the prepared food to the men's communal house in the middle of the village. Both men and women catch fish, but there are methods appropriate for each sex. There is a sex-division of labor without any implication of the inferiority of women.

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Occupations cannot be studied merely in a formal way, for, although the tasks are performed every day, a ceremonial element is involved. A clay pit is consecrated by the killing of a fowl; so also is the rock which is used as a base for pounding grain. The young blacksmith is initiated after two years of apprenticeship. On this occasion a dog is killed with the hammer which the master made for his pupil and the blood of the sacrificed animal is sprinkled on the tools. The remainder of the ritual and belief has been described in connection with occupations of the Ovimbundu. Study of the blacksmith's work was begun as research in technology; but failure to purchase the large hammer, even for a tempting sum, led to the discovery of considerable ritual.

Abstention from sexual relationships is enjoined on men and women who are going fishing. That copulation would induce the

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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fish to stay together at the bottom of the river, is the reason alleged for this taboo. A young hunter is ceremonially initiated. Throughout his life he has to make sacrifice to the ancestral spirits of hunters who are in the house where bows of famous hunters are kept; these ceremonies must be performed before a hunter leaves for the chase. A caravan is a commercial undertaking, but, before setting out, the head of a dead chief is asked for a guarantee of success; meanwhile a sacrifice is made by a medicine-man. A wooden image, when consulted by the medicine-man, indicates the correct caravan route. These instances illustrate a blending of the sacred and the profane in occupations.

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Sexual relationships among the Ovimbundu form a basis of social life, as they do in all communities, but the sexual aspect is not all-pervading and completely dominant.

In early years children separate during play. Boys play games of hunting and warfare, enter into competition with bows and arrows, or amuse themselves with wood-carving. Girls find amusement in imitating their mothers in the occupations of making pottery and baskets, and in cultivating the fields. The small sums of money which a girl derives from the sale of produce from her own corn patch are personal property which she usually spends on trinkets and palm oil. This measure of economic independence, combined with considerable freedom of choice in marriage, indicates an individuality that has not been generally recognized.

I have mentioned among the Ovimbundu a system of friendship between boys and girls of from twelve to sixteen years, which permits the children to sleep together in the home of one of the girls in whose house the early evening has been spent. Cohabitation is forbidden, and pregnancy would be a disgrace. The practice is not unlike that of night visits by a lover in certain European countries during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (W. Goodsell, A History of the Family as a Social and Educational Institution, p. 365). Clearly sex is a factor that plays its part as a formative influence from infancy onward, until final emphasis of sex dichotomy is made by tribal initiations.

The social position of woman may be considered by selecting a few points from the data relating to courtship, marriage, and divorce. Marriages are sometimes arranged during infancy, but this does not invalidate the previous statement that considerable freedom of choice is allowed; a girl is not compelled to follow arrangements made during her childhood. A bride has to make contributions toward the

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

631 life and each could be taken as a unit complete in itself. Individual studies and comparisons of one with another would provide much valuable material. Familiarity with individuals and groups belong-
184] ing to all the major tribal groups, and study of their folk-lore and customs has led me to conclude that as in language, so in social structure and in culture, the differences are of small account. In offering illustrative material, I shall give its tribal source.

The King

643 To describe the royal office and functions it would be necessary
177 to use the past tense. That reason, along with others, leads me to exclude this subject from the present study. Effective European occupation of the country and government by direct rule[1] have atrophied the royal office among the Ovimbundu until to-day kings survive as hardly more than living museum pieces. This being the case, I shall only enumerate the royal functions, very briefly characterize them, and pass on to describe other and living parts of the Umbundu social organism.

643 The principal functions of the royal office were:

776 1. *Religious.* The spirits of the king's ancestors were the principal national deities. The king was not only high priest but also the visible vice-regent and incarnation of the spirits. The
[778] sacrifices at the royal shrine, *kakokoto* (literally, at the skulls), the place of the royal skulls, were for the nation in order:

643 (*a*) *To control the elements*, i.e. to ensure a sufficient supply of
372 rain and avoid the dangers caused by hail, by lightning, &c. Also to control fire by providing a new fire properly (ceremonially)
•789 kindled from which everyone took his fire. A king's reign was spoken of as 'during the Water of Lord So-and-so' (*Kovava a Ñalã Ngandi*), or 'during the Fire of Lord So-and-so' (*Kondalu ya Ñalã Ngandi*).

241 (*b*) *To ensure fertility*, toward which desideratum the royal
644 marriage had great influence. The queen's special province was agriculture and her kitchen was sanctified by human sacrifice to
[782] guarantee the national food supply. Ceremonially treated seed was distributed to be mixed with the seed of each granary.

[1] 'Direct rule' is applied in most parts of Africa where European settlement is the predominant consideration and also where centralized government is the ideal. 'Indirect rule' is best illustrated in the Gold Coast, Nigeria, Uganda, and Tanganyika Territory.

night in the *etumbo* praying to or communing with ancestral spirits, when the occasion arises; Suku is regarded as too remote to receive prayers. 693 613

While cooking, a woman may spill a little meal on the ground for the spirits; at a meal, a person may spill a little food or beer for the same purpose. A portion of the meat at a feast may likewise be sacrificed, but it is often a less desirable portion, such as the intestines.[1] 782

Agricultural rituals were held before planting, at which time the headman and his wife had intercourse in their field and sacred seed from the chief's granary was distributed, a few grains to be mixed with the seed to be planted on each plot. When the maize began to ripen a few ears were sent to the chief before any were eaten.[2] 241 789

DIVINERS[3]

The word *ocisbanda* is used both for a diviner and for a maker of medicines. To distinguish the two, the diviner may be called *ocisbanda congombo* ("of the basket"), the herbalist *ocisbanda coviti* ("of trees or sticks"). Some practitioners are both diviner and herbalist. A female diviner is called *combula*.[4] An *ocisbanda* frequently specialises in a certain kind of case;[5] and among the members of the profession there are many degrees of proficiency. One may work only in his own village, another may be consulted on matters of concern to the whole district or chiefdom; others go on professional journeys carrying their baskets, and accumulate profits in animals and cloth. The greater the reputation of the diviner, the greater the charges he makes for his services. 791 759

The tasks of the *ocisbanda* are:-

(a) To discover the cause of sickness, death, or any evil which has befallen the individual or the community. Sickness and death are always believed to be due either to the workings of spirits who are demanding sacrifices, or to living enemies who have malicious spirits under their control or who have bought potent charms. The diviner, after consulting the spirit who speaks in and through his basket, names the spirit who is causing the trouble and tells the victim what its demands are, or, if the enemy is a living person, indicates in a general manner from whence the trouble comes, e.g. to a woman "Your baskets are too well made; you are hated because of them", or, to a man, "This illness was found on a journey taken to collect a debt". If requested, the diviner makes a countercharm to offset that which has caused the ill. 787 753

(b) To interpret omens and dreams.

(c) To give advice on personal problems.

(d) To dispense medicines and charms.

(e) To bring or withhold rain, or to see who is guilty of withholding it. [789]

(1) Ibid., see also Cushman, loc.cit.
(2) Childs, personal communication.
(3) Based on Tucker, 1940.
(4) Bumbly, (3) 1954.
(5) Ibid.

538 appeal. For example, the pigeon says, *Tu kolela oku iva* ("We believe
825 in stealing"), and the following are further instances of the same kind.

Ocinganja is a bird which has several calls. Early in the year the female says as she looks at the newly hatched brood, "This year I have borne white children." Later the little birds grow black feathers. Then the mother cries, "Each year disappointment." Sometimes the female says to the cock bird, "A stick has stuck in my eye. I wonder whether it will make a growth there." The bird is probably the Black Flycatcher (*Melaenornis pammelaina*).

Epandacokocoko says, "Where will the guests stay? Where? Where? Where?" This is an unfailing intimation that strangers will visit the village.

Omanula. This is another bird which announces the approach of strangers by saying, "*Akombe! Akombe! Akombe!*" ("Guests! Guests! Guests!") Two birds are supposed to carry on a dialogue.

Sankanjuele says, "He who has eaten should leave the rest for the important ones," meaning himself.

Ondonga answers, "Do you mean me? The way you scold hurts me to my heart."

Ungolombia. The male and female birds *ungolombia* are about to cross a stream. The female says, "I am wearing four yards of cloth," meaning that she will get wet. The husband says, three times, "If you are wearing four yards of cloth, why do you not cross at the source of the river?"

Omboso says, "When I lay my eggs on the ground, the white ants destroy them." The call continues, "When I lay them up high, *kalupamba* steals them." *Omboso* cries, "Such hardship, goodness gracious me!" The exclamation is, "*A mai we,*" literally, "O my mother!"

Kocukuku the Barn Owl (*Typo alba*) and his mate speak together. The female says, "*Cimuku*, do you eat rats?" He answers, "I do not eat them, they have tails."

Ungungu says, "No big animal lays eggs, so the crocodile must be a bird, too."

Ocimbamba (night hawk) may be heard on moonlight nights saying, "O lion, here are the people."

Ekuti says, "My child is gone to *Koputu.*" *Koputu*, in Umbundu, means a far off place. Possibly *Koputu* is a corruption of Oporto. This bird makes a monotonous and continuous cry from sunrise to sunset.

Epumumu (hornbills) are large black birds. The female says, "I'm going, I'm going, I'm going to our village." The male replies, "Don't go, don't go, the rain has come; let us plant."

Katendipanga. This bird is quiet until September, the month in which rain begins to fall. Then the bird says, "Save! Save! Save!" He means this as a warning to people who eat their corn instead of saving some for seed. The seed should be sown in October when the rains have begun. The derivation of the name of this bird is important. *Okutenda*, to count; *ovipanga*, the rows of corn in a field.

Kalusundanjovo. The female bird says, "Let's throw away the big drum." The male answers, "When we have thrown it away, what shall we do for dances?"

821 Observations of the weather are of importance in fixing dates for sowing and reaping; such dates are the base of time reckoning. Rainfall is important where cattle are kept, and a knowledge of the stars is of service to hunters and caravan leaders when following unfamiliar routes.

• [789] The weather is thought to be controlled to some extent by the *ocimbanda* ("medicine-man") and his performances. The rain-

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

drunk. The concoction is described in Umbundu as *ihemba vioku tundisapo imo* ("medicine to take away belly"). 847

When the monthly period begins too early in life, the medicine-man recommends that the young girl should wear the cowrie necklace worn by her mother's mother. 841

A deformed child is destroyed, but not if it has been allowed to survive the first day. 847

If male triplets are born, two stay permanently with the mother. At the age of five years one child goes to the king, whose child he becomes. 851

When a woman has had relationships with more than one man, she will die in childbirth unless the medicine-man is called to cure her. 837

In a Vachokue village of eastern Angola I bought a female wooden figure. It was explained that this would be nursed by a woman, one of whose twins was dead, in order to induce another conception. Moreover, the nursing of the figure prevents the death of the second twin. The Ovimbundu also use these wooden figurines for replacing dead twins (p. 163). 532 845 842

Children are suckled for a long time; even those of three years and older come to the breast. There are instances in which milk is present but lacking the nutritive qualities; then the baby is likely to die. The matter is simpler when a mother gives no milk at all because the baby is given to another woman, but not necessarily to a woman who is suckling a child. A baby whose mother has no milk may be given to a woman who has not borne a child for many years, and the sucking of the child quickly induces a milk supply. This is agreed upon by informants at Ngalangi and Elende who have seen a child nursed by a woman with withered breasts. Protection is given to the fontanelle by covering it with a vegetable gum which hardens. 853

Near the chief village of the Vangangella at Ngalangi there is a mound decorated with feathers and painted wooden posts (Plate XCII, Fig. 1). Childless women are placed on the mound which is near a river. They are covered with mud, after which the medicine-man sings songs and administers potions. The women go home and are made to sit on mounds in their kitchens. These mounds, which are made in rows, like earth heaped up after hoeing a trench, may be a symbol of successful agriculture and human fertility. 842 789

On looking into the subject of blood brotherhood I found that an exchange of blood between two males who swore mutual fidelity was at one time common. At the present day an exchange of blood is 608

cages and wooden animals to use as playthings. Girls mold small 524
animals from clay. The bull-roarer is in use as a plaything at Elende.

There is a game of hide and seek for boys. A knife is hidden; then a boy who has been absent for a time enters the ring marked off for the game. His proximity to the knife is indicated by playing on a musical bow. There are taps on the instrument which mean that the knife is far away. On the contrary, when the searcher approaches the hidden knife, the boy with the bow plays a distinctive note, *yelula, yelula*, meaning "pick it up, pick it up."

Boys readily make a simple apparatus for playing a game of lassoing a hoop. A pliable branch is bent so as to form a circle, then the ends are lashed together with bark strips. The lasso is a piece of rattan or bark having at each end a corncob or a small stick three inches long. One boy bowls the hoop so that it passes in front of, and a few feet away from his opponent, who stands twenty-five feet distant. As the hoop passes in front of him, the boy throws his lasso in such a way that it twines round the hoop and brings it to the ground.

There are dances of many kinds, but Ngonga says that he would 535
not know from the steps only what particular purpose the dance served. Several dances have been described, each in its appropriate section. There are no dances specially arranged to celebrate weddings or births. The funeral dance is described along with other ceremonies relating to interment. The medicine-man dances in connection [789]
with making rain or curing the sick. In order to say why the dance was being performed, it would be necessary to listen to the words of the songs; these are usually chanted in accompaniment to shuffling movements and the rhythm of drums.

Some of the older men and women perform dances and sing songs 535
that are unknown to the younger generation. Dancing is in favor 527
during the months of May and June because there are supplies of maize for making beer. As the dry season advances the maize formerly available for making beer is consumed as food, hence dancing is not so usual. Ngonga says that the old people know a dance which should be performed at new moon "so that there will be no sickness during this moon." Older men dance in commemoration of events [727]
during past wars, while women are spectators, and on these occasions there are beer-drinking and the slaughter of an ox. A group of men keeps up a shuffling dance while an old man relates a war story in a singsong voice. The oldest man is the first to cut the meat, after which each man helps himself.

535 Almost every evening one may hear the tapping of drums an the songs of dancers, because in addition to dances for a funeral o other special occasion there are ordinary dances of amusement i which lines of men and women advance and retreat, or men an women circle round the drums making arm movements accom panied by a swaying rhythm.

[243] The dance *onyaco*, performed in June when the corn is ripe, ma have an ancient history and special significance as part of an agri cultural rite. When corn is being stored the people sing, "There i grain in the house, may it never be out." There is no dance i [226] connection with fishing.

224 There is mimicry of animals in the hunting game played by boys The frog, the leopard, and other animals are imitated in certai games, but I have no evidence of the performance of mimetic dance in relation to any cult for increasing the supply of animal life.

535 The use of the small ball *ombunje* illustrates the way in which [534] an apparent toy can be used in rites of a religious kind. *Ombunj* consists of a hard spherical fruit about six centimeters in diameter in which several hard seeds rattle. The sphere is covered with a layer of cloth over which lizard skin is stretched and sewn.

[769] When the people wish to commemorate the death of a king, o [789] when the king is sick, the medicine-man (*ocimbanda*) says that there must be *osaka* dancing. A strong man dances for many hours while holding this little ball in his outstretched hand. Other men who are dancing use their fists to hit the muscles of the outstretched arm in an attempt to make the holder drop the ball (*ombunje*). If he does so another man will promptly take hold of it. The precise nature of the endurance test is unexplained, but there is possibly the idea of giving strength to a sick king by this tension and endurance. My interpreter thought this was so, but could not explain why the dance should be performed to commemorate the death of a king. It would seem natural, however, to transfer the *ombunje* rite to a commemorative festival, if in the first place it was part of the last rites of a dying king.

534 There are among the Ovimbundu specialists in dancing, singing, 463 and the playing of musical instruments. *Onjimbi* is the word for a singer of merit who starts the choruses. *Ocili* is a dancer of more than ordinary skill. When a man is required to play a drum or other instrument I have noticed that it is thought necessary to bring a specialist. There is no doubt that drumming requires special aptitude and practice. The man who plays the long drum is *usiki*, the drum

3: Hambly E-8 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

was too light to make it effective as a tool or weapon (Plate XIII, Fig. 4). At Bailundu I was informed that an ax of this kind is used in a medicine-man's dance which is intended to cure a man who is sick because a spirit has entered into him. The sickness may have occurred because the man has broken a promise. 755

The medicine-man, or sometimes the patient himself, dances violently, meanwhile cutting about him with the ax (*omuinko*), which is finally used for killing a little pig whose blood is drunk by the sick man. This is the ritual that was previously mentioned in describing divination.

The following are important ceremonial objects: The ax *ekuse* (Plate XIII, Fig. 5) was the one used for killing slaves who were eaten at the death of a king. This object was secured in the Vasele country near Vila Nova de Selles. It is of handsome appearance, having a copper circle inlaid into the iron blade. A spear from Bailundu is likewise important because of its use in ritual (Plate XIII, Fig. 8). Before war and hunting this spear was thrust first into an ox then into a slave. The human and animal flesh were cooked together and eaten from the same pot. The female figure used by the medicine-man for consultation with regard to the correct path for a caravan has been described. A carved wooden post obtained from Bailundu was set up at cross-paths so that it might be visited by a sick person or his representative who would make sacrifice there. 411 [266] 782

Without parallel among ceremonial objects used by the Ovimbundu is a small wooden cloth-covered box from Bailundu. This contains a piece of root of cylindrical form tightly bound with cloth having at one end a cowrie shell. The box is the shrine of *Kondundu*, for whom a small hut is built in order to contain the box. Any one who sees the contents of the shrine is said to become blind. *Kondundu* is believed to be the "spirit of dreaming who makes swellings come on the body." 779

Antelope horns are in general use as containers of magical potions. One horn from Bailundu is used for holding sweet beer which is drunk by a person afflicted by bad dreams. A large horn with a piece of fur attached, also from Bailundu, is named *ocindiko*. The horn contains a mixture of fat and charcoal which is heated near camp after sunset, when men are on the march. The spreading fumes keep away lions and thieves. It was said that a thief is deterred because the fumes make him cough. 789 237

4:Dorsey E-4, 5 (no date)1899 FP13 Mbundu FP13

787 puts on his necklace and headdress, which gives him a strange, wild appearance. Taking one of the gourd rattles, and giving the others to the parties interested, setting up the images, he is ready for operations. He begins by shaking the gourds and blowing the horn whistle, at the same time chanting in a minor strain, all the rest responding in chorus. In this way he works himself up into a sort of frenzy. He then takes the basket of charms, and, by throwing them slightly, claims to be able to read from them the past and future, and to declare the guilt or innocence of a person. In this way trivial matters, as well as the most weighty, even life and death, are decided. For instance, if, while determining whether an accused person is a witch or not, in his shaking and throwing of the charms the little horn with the wax and red seeds should stand upright, that would be taken as evidence of guilt; while if, on the contrary, the little image with the small cowry shell on the head should stand upright, that is evidence conclusive that the person is innocent. Not only is the question of guilt thus decided, but witch-doctors are thought to be able to predict coming events.

751 An important object in the outfit is a large horn of the roan antelope, containing a smaller antelope horn, medicines, oils, etc., prepared by the ocimbanda.[1] This is known as *embingu*, or "loaded horn," and is considered efficacious in warding off from its possessor all harm, lightning, disease, witches, spirits, wild animals, etc. Carried upon journeys, it also insures a prosperous issue to the undertaking, and affords as well protection. Somewhat similar in [787] construction, but used for an entirely different purpose, is the *ocifungo* or rain wand. This is the tail of an ox, into which are inserted two small horns with medicines and oils. By blowing the horns and waving the tail, the ocimbanda is supposed to drive off rains at will.[1]

Of numerous small charms, *ambanda*, in the collection, two are of sufficient interest to merit notice. One consists of two four-inch-long bottle-shaped objects made of woven string, from the mouth of each of which projects a two-inch tuft of very tiny feathers. The two objects are joined at the top and bottom, and singly bear a decided resemblance to a Hopi *tiponi*, or religious society's palladium. They contain medicines and are worn from the neck. This is a special war charm, and affords protection against bullets and all harm in battle. The other charm is an ox's hoof into which is thrust a small antelope horn and medicines. In times of special danger, it is put up somewhere in the village for protection. Still

[1] Mr. Woodside also states that this same power is attributed by the Ocimbundu to white men; and when they are told that we do not possess this power, "they calmly look us in the eye and say, 'wa kemba' (you lie)."

[1] [i.e., diviner. Cf. pp. 183-186, cat. 116.--Analyst]

5: Hambly E-5 (1929-30)1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

containing the head and attaching it to a pole by which it was supported 439
on the shoulders of two bearers. Then followed a series of questions from 787
the village chief (sekulu), and answers were supposed to be given through forward or backward swinging of the pole. A forward swing was affirmative, and a backward swing was negative. I have seen this procedure followed with a coffin supported as described, and the questions related to the cause of death.

The head of a king would be asked, "Do you want an ox for sacrifice? We will give you one." "Do you want a new skin for your head? We will give you one." Such was the ceremony for bringing spiritual aid to what was otherwise a commercial undertaking.

A wooden figure of a female decorated with black feathers was an indispensable part of the equipment of a medicine-man who accompanied a caravan. When in doubt with regard to the path he knelt at the parting of the ways and consulted the figure. Replies came in a falsetto voice attained by plugging his nostrils. Horns containing a mixture of fat, charcoal, and other substances were carried so that they might be planted near a camping ground to drive away thieves and leopards. These horns are still used and are obtainable.

At the present day a belated Ocimbundu, who fears the sun may set 789 ●
before he reaches the next village, will take some earth from an ant hill. This earth he places in the fork of a tree saying, "O sun wait for me a little while."

Examination of the culture of the Ovimbundu, combined with observa- 101
tions on the Umbundu language and somatic traits, indicate that the Ovim- 241
bundu are a part of the Bantu peoples of southwest Africa. They have, however, taken advantage of the open Benguela highlands to develop their system of agriculture far beyond that which is usually carried on by Negroes in forest clearings.

In agricultural work a clear division of labor is observed. Men clear 241
timber and burn the bush, after which hoe cultivation is in the hands of 562
women, though men assist with the harvest. Unmarried girls help in the fields and each has a piece of ground whose products are the cultivator's personal property. This gives unmarried girls a measure of economic independence. Usually a girl spends the proceeds of her work in buying trinkets and palm-oil for personal decoration. Under their system of poly- 595
gyny each wife has her own field, utensils, and a separate hut with its fire 562
and cooking arrangements. The husband visits each hut for four consecutive nights, though in some districts there is a seven night cycle. Men always take evening meals in the mens' council house (onjango) in the center (to notice the tombs of hunters, which consist of cairns of stones enclosing a) ‡

‡ [Printer's error: This sentence refers to p. 159. -- Analyst]

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

643 common at African courts. A few Umbundu rulers carried on
692 such practices, and especially certain self-constituted robber-barons such as Samakaka, who left Viye after the military occupation and established himself first in Bimbe (Mbimbi), later in Huambo (Wambu), and then at Elende, until taken by the Portuguese authorities in 1903.

643 4. In order to protect himself and the nation, *the king had resort*
754 *to magical means*, some of which would be accounted witchcraft or murder if practised without authority. Such were the ritual murders of *Katōkōlā* (The Strangler), *Oku ipa ukaī watimba avali* (killing the woman of two bodies, i.e. pregnant), of the children whose lives were required for building and furnishing the queen's kitchen, &c.

• 791 5. In order properly to carry out the functions of his office, *the*
643 *king made much use of divination*, for which purpose he had his own diviner (*Citue cosoma*), who was of the blood royal. He also called in or consulted diviners of many regions and of many types, one of the commonest of which was the 'Diviner of the Basket' (*Ocimbanda congombo*).[1]

643 The king was a divine representative and a divine incarnation,
642 but the mode of his succession reveals that he was also a democratically chosen leader. Note has been made of the fact that the royal succession is in the male line, sometimes from father to son, but more often from elder to younger brother, to brother's son, or to one even more distantly related. The election is made by the councillors whose duty it is, ordinarily before the old king's death is announced, but these same councillors may depose an unpopular
[669] king. There have been many revolutions and *coups d'état*. This fact was noted by several early observers, among whom I cite one who wrote in 1837:

> The government of 'Bailundo' is democratic. These heathen mix with the infamous humiliations of the orientals, the unbridled coarseness of the English people at election times in England. The kings defer to and flatter their counsellors; these are they who elevate a king to the throne and also who cast him down.[2]

[1] A rather cursory description of divination as practised by this type of diviner was given by Hambly, op. cit., pp. 274–6. For a fuller treatment, *vide* L. S. Tucker, 'The Divining Basket of the Ovimbundu', *J.R.A.I.* (London), 1940, vol. lxx, pp. 171–201.

[2] C. de Almeida Sandoval in *Annaes do Cons. Ultr.*, Ser. I, p. 319. The reference to English elections reminds one of Dickens. See also P. M. Pinheiro de

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

463 *Wood-working*, including the following specializations:
462 Doors, windows, and their frames; coffins.
[322] Beds, tables, chairs, &c.
Mortars, pestles, grinding-handles, and handles for various iron implements.
Stools, household utensils, carved images, staves, knobkerries, &c.
Drums and other musical instruments.
Canoes (dug-outs and coracles).
Rope-making, nets, and rudimentary weaving.
Thatching has its specialists although all men can thatch.
Fishing.
Bee-hunting, including the making of hives.
224 *Hunting*.
326 *Iron-smelting and smithing*.
791 *Medical-practice and Divination*.

The last three professions of the list are sacred and are entered under special conditions. They are often passed on by inheritance, but not always. All of them require sacrifice at certain stages, and when the enslavement of a spirit (*oku andeka*) is required, it is socially allowable. This seems to be the case with these offices as with those of the king and his ministers, both because of benefits accruing to the community in their exercise and also because of inherent danger to the individuals who exercise these functions.

177 The advent of European commerce, industry, and government
463 has created a number of types of employment for boys and young men, some of which entail prolonged absence from the village and a loosening or severing of kinship ties. Church and mission have
[791] also offered employment and have opened new opportunities for advance in place and in position.

861 Later childhood, then, is the period of technical training during which it is expected that a large amount of economic responsibility will be assumed. A child begins to own property even before this, and from the beginning of later childhood will be accounted legally responsible for his actions. It is recognized, however, that he should not be set tasks beyond the experience or ability of his age and that the full responsibility of adulthood will only come with marriage.

[538] *Umãlihã ha tuwyõlã ongula yuvala;*
A youth does not scrape the pig for the wedding feast;
pekunja pa niala (ovunya).
on the hoof there remain (bristles).

Mat-making

462 285 [412] The making of mats is a specialised craft for men. Generally elderly men are the mat-makers. Two tools are used, a borer and a needle, both products of the blacksmith's forge. Hambly[1] describes the making of reed sleeping mats, large mats used for partitions, and string bags. There are four distinct types of mats, each of which has its specialist.[2]

Leather-work

282 Leather pouches worn on a broad leather belt are part of the essential equipment of the hunter. The pouch is square, rectangular, or semi-cylindrical in shape, and may be decorated with cross-shaped patterns, or brass-headed nails used for decorative effect. Hide is also used for the seats of four-legged wooden stools. Hides are crudely dressed: they are soaked, the inner surface rubbed with ashes, the hair scraped away, and the hide pegged out.[3]

Wood-carving

323 [413] Wood-carving, which is men's work, includes the following specializations: doors, windows and their frames; coffins; beds, tables and chairs; mortars, pestles, grinding-handles, and handles for various iron implements; stools, household utensils, carved images etc.; drums and other musical instruments; canoes (dug-outs and coracles).[4] Illustrations are given by Hambly.[5]

TRADE

438 484 791 [612] Caravan trade is now confined to short journeys when corn, beans and beeswax are carried by men and women porters to the traders' stores. Formerly however it was an important feature of tribal life. Each caravan had its professional leader, and was accompanied by a diviner or medicine-man. Before a caravan started out, a ceremony was performed at which the principal performers were the village headman and the medicine-man. The head of the former headman was brought from its box, sewn in cowhide; blood from a sacrificed animal was sprinkled on the head, and invocation was made to the deceased by the village headman, asking for good fortune for the journey.[6]

438 436 Today the Ovimbundu exchange products among themselves both by barter and the use of Portuguese money,[7] but there are no large markets except in the towns.

[435] 438 The "trade-agreements" between the Ovimbundu kingdoms and between the Ovimbundu and other tribes have been mentioned above.[8] Accompanying these, regional industrial and commercial specializations within Ovimbundu country developed. Thus in the middle of the last century

(1) Hambly, op.cit., pp.169-70.
(2) Childs, 1949, p.189.
(3) Hambly, op.cit., p.176.
(4) Childs, op.cit., p.190.
(5) Op.cit., Plates XIII to XVII.
(6) Hambly, op.cit., p.156.
(7) For details of Ovimbundu units of measurement see Hambly, op.cit., p.157.
(8) p.9.

100 643 767 782 regent and incarnation" of the spirits. Sacrifices were made at the royal shrine or kokoloto ("at the skulls"), where the skulls of past chiefs were kept, in order to:-

[372] (i) control the elements i.e. to ensure a sufficient supply of rain and avoid the dangers caused by storms; also to control fire by providing a new fire ceremonially kindled[1] from which everyone took his fire.

[342] [341] (ii) to ensure fertility, towards which the royal marriage had great influence. The queen's special province was agriculture and her kitchen was sanctified by human sacrifice to guarantee the national food supply. Ceremonially treated seed was distributed to be mixed with the seed of each granary.

643 648 726 [701] (b) *To represent the country in its external relations*, principally to make trade agreements with other chiefs, or to make war on other peoples in order to get tribute and plunder. The war leader *(Kesongo)* has his own residence entirely separate from that of the king, whom he must not meet face to face except on certain ceremonial occasions.[2] Each king must inaugurate his reign with a war, during which or after which he must ceremonially "eat the old one" *(oku lia ekongo)* - who was usually a specially fattened slave cooked with the flesh of the principal animals commonly eaten.[3] [266]

643 692 (c) *To dispense justice.* The chief's court or *olusenje* was the supreme court of the chiefdom. The chief had the final word in any case, but most chiefs acted according to custom.

694 [882] (d) *To protect himself and the chiefdom*, the chief could use "magic" (?) which might have been accounted witchcraft or murder if practised without authority: e.g. the ritual murder of a pregnant woman, or of the children whose lives were required for building and furnishing the queen's kitchen.

643 791 (e) The chief made much use of divination in order to carry out his office. For this purpose he had his own diviner *(citue coowa)*, who was of the blood royal; but he also consulted diviners of other regions and types.

643 Succession to chiefship is in the male line,[4] from father to son, elder brother to younger brother or brother's son, or sometimes to one more distantly related. The election is made by the councillors whose duty it is (?), ordinarily before the old chief's death is announced. These same councillors may depose an unpopular chief, and there have been many such [692] depositions. This "democratic" tendency of the Ovimbundu has been noted by most writers. Childs points out that it is attested by the fact that a chief (formerly as well as today) works in his own fields, and by folk-tales which give incidental and intimate pictures of petty details in the lives of the chiefs.[+]

(1) See above, p.28.
(2) In Bailundo he, with certain other officials, was of the clench of eleven of the state *(ovondili viovoso)*.
(3) Childs, p.21. Many early writers refer to the cannibalism of the "Jagas" or "Imangalas" who are thought to have been the Ovimbundu chiefs. (See above, p.8, and also Lacerda and Navarrete, quoted by Childs, pp.17ff.)
(4) But inheritance is said to follow a different line among chiefs from among commoners; possibly inheritance is also in the maternal line. See Childs p.18.

+ See footnote 1, p. 31

night in the etambo praying to or communing with ancestral spirits, when the occasion arises; Suku is regarded as too remote to receive prayers. 693 613

While cooking, a woman may spill a little meal on the ground for the spirits; at a meal, a person may spill a little food or beer for the same purpose. A portion of the meat at a feast may likewise be sacrificed, but it is often a less desirable portion, such as the intestines.[1] 782

Agricultural rituals were held before planting, at which time the headman and his wife had intercourse in their field and sacred seed from the chief's granary was distributed, a few grains to be mixed with the seed to be planted on each plot. When the maize began to ripen a few ears were sent to the chief before any were eaten.[2] 241 789

DIVINERS[3]

The word ocimbanda is used both for a diviner and for a maker of medicines. To distinguish the two, the diviner may be called ocimbanda congombo ("of the basket"), the herbalist ocimbanda cowiti ("of trees or sticks"). Some practitioners are both diviner and herbalist. A female diviner is called combula.[4] An ocimbanda frequently specialises in a certain kind of case;[5] and among the members of the profession there are many degrees of proficiency. One may work only in his own village, another may be consulted on matters of concern to the whole district or chiefdom; others go on professional journeys carrying their baskets, and accumulate profits in animals and cloth. The greater the reputation of the diviner, the greater the charges he makes for his services. 791 759

The tasks of the ocimbanda are:-

(a) To discover the cause of sickness, death, or any evil which has befallen the individual or the community. Sickness and death are always believed to be due either to the workings of spirits who are demanding sacrifices, or to living enemies who have malicious spirits under their control or who have bought potent charms. The diviner, after consulting the spirit who speaks in and through his basket, names the spirit who is causing the trouble and tells the victim what its demands are, or, if the enemy is a living person, indicates in a general manner from whence the trouble comes, e.g. to a woman "Your baskets are too well made; you are hated because of them", or, to a man, "This illness was found on a journey taken to collect a debt". If requested, the diviner makes a counter-charm to offset that which has caused the ill. 787 753

(b) To interpret omens and dreams.

(c) To give advice on personal problems.

(d) To dispense medicines and charms.

(e) To bring or withhold rain, or to see who is guilty of withholding it. [789]

(1) Ibid., see also Graham, loc.cit.
(2) Childs, personal communication.
(3) Based on Tucker, 1948.
(4) Beatty, (3) 1954.
(5) Ibid.

787 A detailed description of the procedure of divining is given by Tucker. In brief, the basket *(ongombo)*, which contains a wide variety of objects, is ritually prepared, and the diviner goes into a kind of trance which calls the spirit of the basket to him. As he starts shaking the basket, he asks it first why the clients have come to him (since they may not ask him directly), and when he has ascertained this, questions the spirit about the cause of the trouble. The chanted replies of the audience (consisting, apparently, of outsiders as well as the clients) assist him in making the divination. The divination is finally given from the juxtaposition of the objects which settle on top of the pile in the basket.(1)

Especial care is taken of the divining basket when not in use. Some diviners build a special *etambo* or spirit-hut for the basket; others keep it hidden in their own house, where it may be seen only by the wife of the diviner, and only when she is not menstruating. Tucker gives a long description of the contents of the divining basket and illustrations of some of the objects.

[841]

791 At the death of a diviner, his son inherits the ongombo, but only if he can master the secrets of the basket and pass the tests which are given during his initiation into the profession. In addition, he must be "called" by some omen or illness which a diviner interprets as the wish of an ancestral spirit that he should become a diviner.(2) If he does not have these qualifications, the basket goes to someone who does, and the son receives no recompense. In either case, two years of training are usual for the would-be diviner, during which he is apprenticed to an established member of the profession. In this period he may learn ovihesa (medicines); their preparation and their uses to cure or kill. In order to provide the female counterpart to the spirit of the divining basket, he might formerly invite a girl to spend the night with him. In the morning, he gave her a magically treated cloth which caused her illness and death; her spirit would then be able to assist the one he already had.

[754]

The olombumbe or "servants of the basket" are youths who carry the accoutrements of the ocimbunda and wait on him; they also provide their master with much information about the community, and during divination closely observe the clients and assist the ocimbunda by shouting loudly when he has made the right answer. They are also believed to have mystic powers, e.g. to see and reveal what is going on at a distance, or to go into a trance during which the spirit of the basket may speak through their lips instead of through the basket. Tucker gives no information concerning the identity of these boys; possibly they are the diviner's apprentices, although she does not suggest this.

787 "The Ovimbundu refer all communications from the spirit world, whether by omen, portent or illness, to an ocimbunda....The requisite behaviour is determined according to the answer given by the combination of pieces in the ongombo [divining basket], which is thus the key to the

(1) The contents of the basket and the ritual which surround it appear to be almost identical with the practice of the eastern neighbours of the Ovimbundu described in another section of the Survey. (McCulloch, 1951, pp.81-2)
(2) It is not very clear whether the spirit of the basket is that of its former owner, or whether it is some non-ancestral spirit.

885 and stability of his personality (*unu* - lit. the quality of being a person) is only proved when he enters the state of adulthood at marriage.

DEATH

361 764 Each village has its own burial ground about a mile or so away. The grave is usually dug by the children of the father's sister.[1] The corpse of a commoner is bound in a supine position and placed in a box before interment. It is usual during the funeral to find out the cause of death, i.e. whether it is the work of spirits or of some living enemy. Accusations of sorcery are frequently made. The corpse in its coffin, slung to a pole between two carriers, responds to questions as to who 'ate him' by forward (affirmative) or backward (negative) movements.[2] In the case described by Hambly,[3] the questions were put by the father's sister. The corpse may also cause its bearers to stop in front of a certain house during the procession through the village, thereby indicating that one of the occupants has caused its death.[4] Should the corpse not give a clear answer, the diviner might be called in to discover the cause of the death. Accusations of sorcery, as has been noted above, are often made within the circle of kin.[5]

Special cases

766 For *children* the same ceremony was carried out if they were old enough to walk and talk. Otherwise the diviner's services were called upon by the parents. At the death of twins, the mother has to shake a rattle or blow a horn instead of giving the usual greetings to passers-by, as she had to do also while the children were alive.[6]

766 791 At the death of *diviners* and *medicine-men* other members of the profession take charge of the ceremonies. The corpse is tied in a sitting posture and kept thus for three days before burial. No coffin is used. The questioning ceremony is carried out as for a commoner. After the interment the other medicine-men dance "because they have spirit in their heads", and during the dance each eats a living chicken that he carries in his hand. At the side of the grave a dog, a chicken and a goat are killed, and eaten by the mourners. The *ocimbanda*'s power is apparently thought to linger round the grave, which the chief or village-headman may visit to ask for rain and other favours.[7]

224 766 *Hunters* at death are buried in rock tombs (*ombila* or *osonje*), which are usually placed in commanding positions. The skulls of animals which the hunter has killed are piled on top of the tomb. The bows of the deceased hunter are kept in his successor's "house of bows".

766 693 *Chiefs*, and possibly also *village headmen*, are buried in specially-constructed enclosures in the villages over which they ruled. The tomb is a small hut with a substantial wooden door, which is surrounded by a strongly-built wooden fence, or it may be a cave. The wives of the chief are buried in the same enclosure. The head of a specially selected

(1) Hambly, (2) 1934, p.268.
(2) Childs, 1949, p.37.
(3) Op.cit., p.266.
(4) Childs, loc.cit.
(5) Ibid.
(6) Hambly, op.cit., p.268.
(7) Ibid., p.270.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

283 In the beginning a thread from the fluffy mass on the stick is fastened to a corncob or to a potato, the weight of which keeps the thread taut (Plate XXXVI, Fig. 1).

[462] I have never seen a woman spinning and am informed that in former days the working of the loom was a task for men only.

463 In presenting facts bearing on the economic life of the Ovimbundu attention has been paid to the importance of ritual, specialization 791 in industry, and division of labor on a sex basis. Clearly, the economic life is one of the fundamentals of social structure, while at many points it is a field in which the magician works.

132 Topography and climate have fixed certain conditions which, so 241 far as the Benguela Highlands are concerned, favor agriculture on an extensive scale, also the keeping of cattle. In the Benguela Highlands a moderate temperature, combined with sufficient rainfall, has produced a type of vegetation which provides timbers serviceable to the craftsman, together with bush that affords shelter for game.

128 The bearing of these economic facts on the probable origins of traits, and their assembly to form the tribal life of the Ovimbundu, is reserved for discussion in chapters dealing with culture contacts and cultural processes. In chapters X–XII the factual material presented here under "Economic Life" is correlated with what is known of similar activities in cultures surrounding that of the Ovimbundu.

775 suffers sickness or misfortune if an ancestral spirit dies a second death. A person who has bad health says, "The spirit of my grandfather has been caught by *Esuvi*." The name of the good spirit *Osande* is used by a person who is suffering. Such a one says, "I have no more *Osande*." These instances clearly reveal a belief in the dependence of human welfare on the interest of benevolent ancestral spirits.

775 After a lapse of three months I asked Ngonga again about
●791 *Osande* and *Ondele*. He confirmed what he had previously said, but spoke in the plural of these spirits; good spirits are called *Olosande*,
753 bad spirits are called *Olondele*. The medicine-man will visit a hut to foretell the future, and while there he puts a concoction in an image to which he addresses questions. He plugs his nostrils, then in a falsetto voice feigns answers from the image. The father of a family, or possibly the mother's brother, may kill an animal in front of the hut on this occasion. He then says to *Olosande*, "We hope when
[761] we kill this there will be no more sickness." The Ovimbundu are afraid of death, and they therefore sacrifice to *Olosande*, asking that there shall be no death in the family.

775 I do not know whether the Ovimbundu distinguish multiple souls as some Negro tribes do. The part of a man which does not die is sometimes called *utima*, which is the word for heart. Dr. M. W. Ennis says that the *utima* and the *omuenyo* are both names of the spirit existing in a living body. Ngonga seems certain that every person irrespective of age, rank, and sex has a spirit, but I could find no evidence that the Ovimbundu visualize a separation
762 of ranks or sexes after death. When a man kills himself he is buried
775 near a river so that his spirit will go to the sea, and for the same reason a murdered man is buried near a river. At Ngalangi I inquired from other Ovimbundu people concerning suicide. Women who commit suicide generally do so by hanging or drowning. Men stab themselves in the heart or use a flintlock gun, the trigger of which they pull with their toes. It is feared that the spirit of a suicide will return to induce another suicide in the family, therefore there is anxiety to rid the community of these spirits.

RELIGIOUS BELIEFS AND CONDUCT

771 The Ovimbundu have many high standards of conduct, some of
688 which have been mentioned in dealing with the education of children. There is, however, no idea of sin. That is to say, there are no commands laid down by some authority which is more than human.

positions on domes of rock. The first tomb examined was in Ganda 224
(Plate LXXIV, Fig. 1). This tomb is carefully built up from pieces 766
of granite detached from the rocks which serve as a base. Horns of animals are placed on the cairn which is further decorated by a stick bearing the tail of an animal. Plate XXXII, Fig. 1, shows a tomb of similar structure in the country of the Vasele. From one such tomb it was possible to detach a slab so that the interior could be seen. There were two male skeletons; one lay supine while the bones of the other were in disorder.

In a hunter's house of bows there are implements of deceased hunters, whose ceremonies centering in these relics have been described under the heading of hunting.

TRAINING OF MEDICINE-MEN

Training for the position of male or female magician (*ocimbanda*) 756
is not carried out with formality ending in initiatory rites, neither is the position hereditary; but the boy or girl who wishes to become an *ocimbanda* must have "spirit in the head." This choice of children of peculiar neurotic temperament for the positions of medicine-men and medicine-women is widely distributed, as I have shown in some detail (Origins of Education, 1926, pp. 256–259).

Among the Ovimbundu there does not appear to be an inten- [158]
sifying of natural psychoses by seclusion, starvation, or beating. When a boy is sick, the medicine-man says, "You have a spirit who wants you to be *ocimbanda*." The medicine-man kills a dog, a goat, and four chickens, then the boy has to accompany his master, carrying his apparatus and obeying him in every way. The medicine-man says, "Your father was an *ocimbanda* and the spirit wants you." The female *ocimbanda* is called *cambula* by other women, and her [845]
services are preferred to those of the male *ocimbanda* in cases of difficult childbirth.

In Ngalangi I was informed that the Ovimbundu have great faith in the medicine-men of the Vangangella, a name vaguely applied by the Ovimbundu to several tribes of east-central Angola. An Ocimbundu will make a journey of several days in order to visit a distant medicine-man of another tribe.

FUNCTIONS OF MEDICINE-MEN

Magical practices are of two kinds, social and anti-social. The man who carries out divination, rain-making, healing the sick, and [791]
many other functions is *ocimbanda*, while the secret worker of evil, the witch or wizard, is *onganga*. In one village there may be several

164 Deformities resulting from burns are frequent. Cooking pots
[732] are unstably placed on logs which form the fire, and, in addition to this, people sleep very near the fire. There is no cerebro-spinal fever. Pneumonia is very common; the result is often fatal. Weakness of the heart is only occasional. Varicose veins are rare. There is no appendicitis.

One cannot fail to notice the prevalence of tropical ulcers among the Ovimbundu. These occur most frequently on the tibia. The
[757] big sloughing ulcer makes a large hole which the native fills with clay and a pulp of leaves. Sometimes a bark is pounded to a pulp and used in this way. These ulcers are very obstinate even under skilled treatment. Often after the wound has been healed it will break out again when irritated by the slightest injury. Medical
[732] opinion is divided as to the cause of these ulcers. Jiggers are a cause of deformation of the toes, which sometimes fall off or have to be amputated. Cancer is not usual in people under sixty years of age. Superficial cancer is the most common form.

515 Water, even when procurable, is sparingly used by the Ovimbundu. The hands and face may receive a perfunctory wash each day, but the entire body seldom receives this attention.

757 Cupping was observed on two occasions, but I think the operations were performed by the mothers of the children concerned, and not by a medicine-man. The method of using the horns or gourds is illustrated (Plate LXXXVI, Fig. 1). After incisions had been made the cups were applied. The operator sucked the pointed end of the cup, so creating a vacuum, which was maintained by pushing forward with the tip of the tongue a small ball of wax. This wax filled the hole at the pointed end of the cupping horn. The people shown in the photograph are Vachokue, but the method is the same among the Ovimbundu.

At Elende there was a sweat bath in the form of a hole in the ground containing a heap of stones. The stones are heated in a fire, then cold water is thrown over them so that steam arises to the patient, who crouches above the hole covered with a blanket.

In the Vasele country, also among the Ovimbundu at Elende, I examined corporeal incisions other than tribal marks. The explanation was to the effect that the making of cuts cured pain (Plates XXIV, Fig. 3; LXXVI, Fig. 2).

RAIN-MAKING

791 The rain-maker (*upuli*) is a medicine-man who has specialized in this function. The *upuli*, who was an Ocivokue of Ngongo, and

not an Ocimbundu, was dressed in only a skirt of cloth, and his equipment consisted of a reed whistle and a hair switch made from a cow's tail. 791

The dance was a slow revolution without any violent leaping. The man held his arms upward, fully extended, and went through the motions of drawing rain from above; then he made slow arm movements suggestive of spreading the rain all around. At times he stood quite still and gave a shrill whistle. The hair switch was constantly twirled and flourished.

POISON ORDEAL

Evidence presented in chapters VI and VII will show that the poison ordeal is a widely spread Negro trait, and that administration of the ordeal is connected with legal proceedings during which the poison cup is usually given to the suspects or litigants by a medicine-man. 695 791

This ordeal as practised among the Ovimbundu and other people of Angola is in conformity with the general Negro procedure. Ngonga thinks that the poison ordeal of the old type is still practised secretly. According to the old law the poison cup affected an innocent man by making him vomit, while the guilty person succumbed.

Ngonga states that a form of poison ordeal which exists today is as follows: The medicine-man holds out two potatoes, one of which is poisoned while the other is innocuous. The poisoned man does not die but he becomes so ill that he confesses his guilt. This use of potatoes has been fully described in connection with legal procedure (chapter VI).

The guilt or innocence of suspects is tested by giving poison to chickens brought to the medicine-man by the accused men. He whose chicken dies is the guilty person.

CEREMONIAL FIRE

New fire is made during epidemic sickness, at the accession of a king, and at the building of a new village. On such occasions the twirling method is employed. The fire made is called *ondalu*, which is the ordinary word for fire. 372 791 796

When an epidemic of sickness occurs the chief of the village takes a present of eight yards of cloth to the medicine-man and asks the cause of the visitation. The medicine-man replies, "Your fire is dirty and worn out, you must have new fire."

372 The village chief takes this news to the people, saying, "Tomorrow
791 we must find a goat, a chicken, and a pig, so that we may kill them
796 Then we must make a new fire." The chief pays for these animals.

Next day the medicine-man starts a fire by the twirling method and as soon as the fire has been kindled he kills a fowl whose blood is allowed to drop on the fire and the wood near-by. The sacrificial goat and pig are treated in the same way. Sometimes a boy who is learning to be a medicine-man kills these animals. Meat from each of the animals so sacrificed is cooked on this newly made fire, care being taken that each kind of meat is kept in a separate pot. There is no special pottery for this cooking. When the meat is cooked it is tasted by a girl from twelve to fourteen years of age who hands a portion to the chief, who distributes the meat among the village elders (*olosekulu*). The meat from the chicken, which must be fat, is the first to be distributed. A cock or a hen may be chosen, but if the latter is selected it must be *utenda;* that is to say, it must not have arrived at the egg-laying age.

Finally there is a distribution of meat among the villagers who have been present throughout the ceremony. The chief speaks, saying, "We wish good fortune to the new fire." Each person has to take the responsibility for quenching his own fire before the new one is ceremonially made. After the feast each father of a "restricted" family takes away a portion of the newly kindled fire.

796 There is sometimes a ceremonial purification of the village water
364 supply. Water is carried in a block of wood from the nearest stream, and to this water a few drops of blood from the sacrificed animals are added. The idea involved throughout is the renewal of health by the furnishing of new, unadulterated supplies of fire and water.

796 At the inaugural ceremony of a new king a similar proceeding
643 is followed. A chicken is killed for the purpose of supplying blood to sprinkle the new fire and on this occasion there is a ceremonial hunt. The king may or may not join the males of the hunting party; sometimes he sends a substitute.

A girl follows the king or his substitute carrying a basket (*ongalo*) in which round fruits from the tree *olosangu* are contained. Each of the fruits is wrapped round with the skin of the large lizard (*etatu*). The object of the hunt is to kill a male antelope, the duiker (*ombambi*), and a hare (*ondimba*) which may be male or female. The hare is not called *ondimba* on this occasion, but receives the name for elephant (*onjamba*).

4:Dorsey E-4, 5 (no date)1899 FP13 Mbundu FP13

THE OCIMBANDA, OR WITCH-DOCTOR OF THE OVIMBUNDU OF PORTUGUESE SOUTHWEST AFRICA.

114 In July of last year the Anthropological Department of the Field Columbian Museum secured an ethnological collection from the Ovimbundu of the Portuguese African province of Angola. The collection was made by Rev. T. W. Woodside, a missionary for seven years among the Ovimbundu, and, on account of its completeness and the full data which accompanied the objects, is of unusual [121] importance and value. Perhaps of chief interest among the series of objects illustrating the various phases of native life in this region is the complete "medicine chest" of a witch-doctor. This I shall describe, making free use of the extensive notes furnished by Mr. Woodside, supplemented by several conversations during which the objects themselves were discussed, and much information furnished concerning the Ovimbundu in general. The collection under consideration was obtained from a single individual, and has seen long use.

101 The Ovimbundu are a southern division of an extensive group of people known as the Bundas, who, in turn, belong to the group of Bantu populations. They occupy the territory of the Bailundu and Bibe plateaus, from Bengualla to the Quanza River, a table-land 4000 to upwards of 6000 feet high, and in south latitude about twelve 142 degrees. The Ovimbundu are described by Mr. Woodside as a dark-skinned people, varying from coffee-brown to quite black, with thick curly hair. They are entirely uncivilized, but are a peaceable, 105 kindly people. Their food is chiefly vegetal, although they possess cattle, sheep, goats, pigs, and chickens. They practise polygamy, and the women prepare the food and do nearly all the field work. The men are famous as traders, and journey to the interior for rubber, wax, ivory, and slaves; the latter they secure by purchase from the country of the Lubas. The principal medium of exchange is a cheap cotton cloth which is obtained from white travellers.

791 Among the Ovimbundu, as in nearly all parts of Africa, the 759 witch-doctor is an important personage. He is feared by all classes, and often has more influence and power than the chief himself. Whenever anything is lost or stolen, they apply to the witch-doctor [761] to find out where the object is, or who is the thief. As no one is supposed to die a natural death, the doctor is called in to discover the witch who caused the death. To him they go for all kinds of charms to protect themselves against all evils, or to cast a spell on some one whom they wish to injure; to him they also go for help in

4:Dorsey E-4, 5 (no date)1899 FP13 Mbundu FP13

791 case of sickness. He is also a diviner, reading both the past and
759 future. At all spirit feasts, at the installation of a new chief, in preparation for war, and on almost every occasion the witch-doctor plays a prominent part. He bears an influential position among his people, and his art is the source of a considerable income, for always before he begins operations the pay must be brought and laid down before him. Thus it is that he is loth to part with even a few of his charms, much less a full set.

The ocimbanda does not inherit his power, but must serve a long apprenticeship to some old witch-doctor, whom he pays liberally. He is then given a small basket with a few charms, to which he adds from time to time. His idols and charms are not made by him, but
[778] are purchased one by one. All of these objects are considered powerful, *cikola* or sacred, and the common people are afraid to touch them; even the touch of a white man is sacrilegious. One of the distinguishing features of a witch-doctor's costume is a head-dress, *ekufue*, made of long porcupine quills fastened together at one end, sewn to a cloth disk about two inches in diameter. Many of the quills are over a foot in length. This headdress is only worn when divining. He also occasionally wears about the loins a girdle, *uya*, consisting of a strip of antelope skin sewn together along the two edges, thus forming a pouch which contains medicines. Attached to the girdle are war charms and medicines, of which he eats from time to time. There are also several kinds of small skins in the collection, on which the doctor kneels when about to perform.
[302] Two pigments should also be noticed. The first is a white, clayey substance, *ocikela*, with which the ocimbanda paints himself, and with which he also marks the person whom by his divining he has discovered to be innocent, the sign of acquittal being a mark across the forehead and down the arms. The other pigment is a red clay, *onongo*, with which he also marks his own body and employs as the sign of guilt.

787 Of the various objects of the ocimbanda's[1] outfit proper, the most
415 important is the basket, *uhamba*, in which the outfit is kept. When it is said that so and so has a "uhamba," it means that he is a witch-doctor. The basket is thirteen inches high by nineteen in length, and eight inches in thickness. The ends are rounded, thus giving the basket, as seen from above, an elliptical form. The cover, three inches in height, fits closely down over the basket, after the manner of our telescope bag. The bottom of the basket is made separate, and is fastened by means of an interlacing of grass braid. The sides of the basket are simply one long strip of interlaced reed and bark fibre, the ends overlapping and being fastened together by the grass braid, which passes up continuously from the bottom to

[1] [i.e., diviner. -- Analyst]

4:Dorsey E-4, 5 (no date)1899 FP13 Mbundu FP13

Still another form of fetish for protection are two small images also known as *ovitekas*. They, like the other *ovitekas* described above, are of wood, but are rudely carved from two round pieces of wood about sixteen inches long. No attempt has been made to represent the human form in any detail, only the face, neck, and arms being indicated. The face of both images has been besmeared with some reddish black pigment. These were placed where the path to the village branches off to the caravan road. A small hut before which they stood was built for them, about two feet square, and between two and three feet high, with a thatched grass roof. Within was a shelf on which from time to time was placed food, corn, and a small gourd of beer. This was done to appease certain spirits which were supposed to be angry with the village and were causing sickness. 778

For the so-called poison test three medicines are employed. The first and most common is known as the *ombambu*, a drug obtained from the country east of the Quanza River, and represented in the collection by a piece of bark. It has the property of a powerful spinal irritant, and it is said that a very small quantity will produce death. There is a current belief among the Ovimbundu that if a bird alights upon the *ombambu* tree it will fall down dead. The second drug, or *ombambu*, employed in the poison test is obtained from the Bihe country, and is represented by several roots. It is taken in the form of a decoction. The third test is known as *ousunga*. This is a mixture of powdered herbs, and is obtained from the country of the Ganguellas. With these three drugs should be mentioned a small gourd, *okopo*, used by the ocimbanda in mixing the medicines, and from which during the poison test the parties drink. The test medicines are stirred with the foot of a small antelope. Occasion for the administering of the poison may arise in various ways. Frequently one person will accuse another of being a witch. The accused may deny it, and appeal to the poison test to prove his innocency. They go to the chief, who calls an ocimbanda, who mixes up a concoction in a gourd, and both the accuser and accused drink. If the draughts make one sick and he vomits, he is acquitted; and if the other one becomes very sick and does not vomit, he is said to be the witch. This same test is often appealed to in other matters where one affirms and another denies. A man may drink by proxy, that is, he may have a friend drink the poison in his stead, or, more frequently, a slave drinks for his master. 695 278

Finally, it must be noticed that the ocimbandu is also a medicine-man. He undoubtedly possesses some really valuable remedies, but there is so much of the fetishistic cult bound up in the administering of the remedies that when they do help a person the credit of 791 757

[Cf. p. 185. -- Analyst]

4:Dorsey E-4, 5 (no date)1899 FP13 Mbundu FP13

791 the cure is given to the charms and incantations. Of the medicines
757 contained in the collection I shall only mention four: The first is a love medicine, *ekulo*, a powdered mixture of seeds. When a wife becomes jealous of the other wives of her husband, she complains to her mother, who advises her to cook a chicken and in the broth to place some of this medicine, which, when her husband eats thereof, will compel him forever to love her above all the other wives. The second remedy is an emetic, *asangu*. This is frequently used, as, for example, when in the poison test a person becomes very sick, and the guilt has become fully established, the doctor will administer an emetic to save life. In cases of difficult labor, the woman is given a small piece of the bark of the *elwanga* to chew. For rheumatism, *ovikata*, a mixed powder called *emateli*, is used.

George A. Dorsey.

S: Hambly E-5 (1929-30) 1934 FP 13 Mbundu FP13

462 be reversed and asked whether men could not carry the water. I was told
331 that such a man would be laughed at and called a "he-woman." Yet division of labor does not imply sex inferiority, and ridicule would arise from incongruity.

MEDICINE-MEN

759 The training of a medicine-man (ocimbanda) and a medicine-woman
● 791 (chambula) involves few formalities, but this class of work requires that a novice shall have "spirit in the head." When visited by a sick boy the medicine-man shakes his divination basket and if a certain combination of objects appears, he says, "Your father was ocimbanda and his spirit wants you." The boy who is thus adopted has to accompany the medicine-man, his master, carrying apparatus and standing near to play a small friction drum while the master is shaking his divination basket.

Specialization among medicine-men is carried to great degree of refinement, especially among those practitioners who profess therapeutic knowledge. I employed three medicine-men to collect plants, of which they appeared to have an expert knowledge. Umbundu names were given and the curative properties of each plant were explained with enthusiasm and evident conviction. The men were undoubtedly sincere in their own beliefs. A specialist who can cure blood in the urine, and another who is said to treat dizziness successfully, are greatly respected. The rainmaker is ocimbanda epulia, "the medicine-man of the rain," who dances while flourishing a cow-tail switch, and blowing a shrill whistle intermittently.

Ocimbanda is of course distinguished from ongango, since the former is concerned with socially beneficent tasks such as those mentioned, while
[759] the latter may cause sickness, impotence, and sterility. In earlier days the task of finding sorcerers (ongango) by use of the poison ordeal was that of an ocimbanda. Medicine-women are called in to take care of difficult cases of childbirth, and I have seen a medicine-woman painting the face of a pregnant woman, who thereafter observed certain taboos.

Space will not permit enumeration of the contents of a divination basket and the significance attached to each item; neither can I give details of ceremonies for curing the sick or bringing a thief back to the village, but the foregoing notes suffice to show that the craft is specialized and still important. A medicine-man ceremonially washes a king or chief on rare occasions. He makes new fire by twirling; though flint and steel, also
[782] matches, are known. When a new village is founded a medicine-man stirs the blood of sacrificed animals with the claws of a chicken; then he sprinkles this blood on each new house.

5: Hambly E-5 (1929-30)1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

At Cacunda I obtained the basket of a medicine-man which contained a human tibia, a hoe for digging in graves, and a round stone for pounding the bone before mixing it with fat and charcoal. Medicine-men still make potions for internal use, and these are usually carried in small horns suspended round the neck, or the paste may be contained in the carapace of a tortoise. In every way the medicine-man is still functioning, and his tasks are fundamental to the social and religious life of the Ovimbundu. 759 791

At an early age children specialize in their play which has a bearing on the business of life. Boys make wooden-tipped arrows, play at hunting, and shoot at tubers which are rolled along the ground. Girls take clay from the potters to fabricate their own small cooking pots, and young girls attempt the coiling of basketry. 868

Men are the musicians, and among these a high degree of specialization is observed. In a large village there are likely to be only a few competent drummers, and only a few men who play the small iron-keyed instrument called ocisanji. Onaka is a ritual game played only by men, and only when a village headman or a king is dying. The ball (ombunje) is made by sewing lizard skin over a hard spherical fruit about six centimeters in diameter. A man continues to dance with this little ball clenched in his outstretched hand, while another dancer hits the muscles of his arm to make him release the ball. This game is thought to give strength to the sick man. There is a transfer of the endurance of the dancers to the invalid. 533 535 524 755

Preliminary observation in some villages occupied by Ovimbundu is disappointing in its suggestion of Europeanization. The foreign culture is, however, a thin veneer, and further research shows a strong persistence of indigenous custom and belief quite near to centers of Portuguese influence. 197

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6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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795 and pagans co-operate in weddings and funerals. In certain aspects of funeral rites, and in commemorations of ancestors the Christians participate, justifying themselves by arguing that they are purely social functions and have no religious significance. This differs from their attitude to the major exorcism [255] rites,[4] which are avoided by Christians, who regard them with some horror, and towards consulting diviners. Although visiting diviners is strictly forbidden by both Catholic and Protestant [791] missionaries, a high proportion of their people do this,[5] but clandestinely. Thus I was told that there were no diviners in Gumba; in fact, there were two living in Epalanga. It is important to remember that there exist nowadays no pagan 'congregations', that is, permanent groups associated with the performance of ritual.

797 177 It is, indeed, through the missions that most of the formal teaching of European culture (apart from the instructions given to labourers and servants) which Ovimbundu receive is given. To the Ovimbundu the missionaries are the Europeans who appear in the most favourable light, and even among pagans the attitude to the missions is without the fear accorded to the post or the suspicion with which the traders are regarded. The missionaries alone run schools, and they provide most of the modern medical services. The missionaries come into far more frequent contact with the people than do the *ekafiz*, and their relationship with the people is not confined to economics as is that of the traders. The Ovimbundu desire to imitate and learn from Europeans; it is from the missionaries that they have most opportunity of learning, and it is in the African clergy that they have the most clear evidence that this learning from Europeans will bring them results.

797 The organization of the missions is the form of large-scale social structure with which the people are best acquainted, and with which they are most capable of identifying themselves. A

[4] These involve drumming and an open invitation to anybody who wants to turn up. The idea is to persuade the tormenting spirit to pass into a small animal or inanimate object. The minor exorcism (*ulu lihatilile*) also involves sending the spirit into an inanimate object, but without drumming or the headshaking by the patient which is believed to mark the arrival of the spirit and his acceptance of the offering.

[5] Childs, loc. cit. Personal information.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

Olute	*Olutna*
RELIGIOUS	
Regular village worship including agricultural festivals; village headman is also priest.	Family observances including occasional propitiations in case of illness, death, or other misfortunes; for desired economic advantages; mortuary rites. Family head is also priest.

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Classificatory System of Relationship. The relationships of the wider kinship groups are quite largely extensions of those of the household, but the Ovimbundu, in common with all people who have a classificatory system, extend these relationships not only further but in quite different ways than do those who have the European (Roman) system. One who would understand the Ovimbundu must understand the Umbundu family from the inside—not as from motives of mere intellectual curiosity but as an Ocimbundu understands it. In order to demonstrate this family structure it will be necessary to present tables and diagrams. Hambly did a very creditable piece of work toward demonstrating the structure of the Umbundu family.[1] I doubt that anyone staying among them an equally short period of time, not knowing their language, could have done better in this respect unless he had come to the task with very exceptional preparation. It is only just to state this and I feel that it is necessary because so far as I am aware, in the five years since it was published, the book has received no adequate appraisal or review.[2] It must be said, however, that Hambly made some noticeable errors in his use of kinship terms owing to the fact that he did not learn the Umbundu language, and that he evidently failed to understand certain points with regard to the social structure.

For greater clarity and precision I am presenting in separate tables the terms which refer to blood relationship and those which refer to relationship by marriage.

[1] W. D. Hambly, op. cit., pp. 189–99.

[2] This book was reviewed in *Africa*, 1935, pp. 391–3, but the reviewer had no first-hand knowledge of the people or their language, which was perhaps his reason for taking up three-fourths of the space at his disposal with questions of orthography. E. W. Smith has taken note of the book (*Africa: What Do We Know of It?*, p. 71), but only to say that it 'is chiefly useful for its description of the material culture'.

621 The total number of households is 44, or 49 including those of the four
592 section heads. It should be noted that there is a discrepancy in Childs's
114 figures (apart from an obvious misprint):[1] in another context he writes that section B contains only 12 houses (not even *households*), while from this table it would appear that section B has 15 household heads, including that of the section head; and section C is said to have 6 households, while only 4 (again counting the section head) are accounted for in this table.

591 Childs states[2] that the incidence of patrilocal marriage in Ngundu
114 is fairly typical of Umbundu country, but unfortunately gives little information regarding the relationship of the various spouses to each other or concerning the location of the villages from which they came. Matrilocal marriage is recognized as a possibility: of the three relatives by marriage listed above, one was a husband of a daughter of the headman, another the widow of a younger brother of the headman, who should have been inherited by a younger brother (?) or a mother's brother of the deceased, or, failing that, could have returned to her father's village. Of those listed above as sisters' children, two were widows who had come to live in the village with their mother's brothers.[3]

POLITICAL STRUCTURE

The village headman[4]

622 The village headman (*sekulu yimbo*) is also the head of the *olone*
● 793 which form the nucleus of the village group, and is related agnatically to most of the householders. He alone may speak of the village as *ombo liange* (my village); the heads of sections, who are also called *sekulu*[5]
782 may speak possessively only of their own sections (*ocitiele ciange*), and other villagers speak only of "our village" (*ombo liete*).[6] The headman functions as both priest and legal head of the village. As priest he has in his compound the *etambo* (spirit hut), in which the insignia of office are kept, and in which he prays to the ancestral spirits. Upon occasion he may sleep there, usually offering a prayer to the spirits when he wakes during the night. The *etambo* may also be
[346] used as a lodging place for respected guests, or as a store-house for possessions not used every day. Childs states that he officiates at regular village worship, including agricultural festivals; Hambly adds that he may lead the people in offering sacrifices when epidemics of
613 sickness break out in the village. It has been noted above[7] that it is the function of the *olone* head to lead such rituals when illness occurs within the *olone*. In general the village head is responsible for
[622] matters - particularly agriculture and public health - which affect the whole village; individuals, both for protection and for help and other

(1) Childs, op.cit., p.28, line 27, where "twenty-four" should read "forty-four".
(2) On the basis of the 292 genealogies and 74 marriage-schedules which he collected. He does not, unfortunately, give examples or show how the comparison was made.
(3) Based on Childs, op.cit., pp.29-31.
(4) This section is based on Childs, op.cit., pp.36-7.
(5) It has been noted above that *sekulu* is used for all men (and some women) of the grandfather's generation.
(6) op.cit., p.36. (7) p.28.

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advancement, will go to the head of their oloine to ask for his intercession with the spirits.[1]

As legal head of the village, the sekulu yimbo presides over both the more serious cases, which are held before the whole village on the dance-floor, and the simpler ones, which require the attendance only of those concerned, together with their respective elders, and may be taken up either in the enjango or in the headman's own courtyard. Hamby seems to suggest that all the section-heads act with the village headman as a kind of council, but does not give details. He states also that the olosekulu (sing. sekulu) of the village formerly had charge of trials for murder, theft, adultery, and arguments over land,[2] and points out that they were more active in the legal system than the chiefs.[3] This is even more true today, when the village court of justice continues to function in spite of political and administrative changes, although the offices of chiefs and to some extent of sub-chiefs have largely decayed.

622 623 691 [77]

Other functions of the village headman include: the distribution of land to the various families when new village sites are opened;[4] the direction of the communal fire-hunts;[5] and, today, the collecting of taxes from the villagers and the direction and organisation of labour to work on the roads.[6] But however numerous the headman's official duties, he usually finds some time to attend to his own affairs, whether he is a farmer, hunter, or trader.[7]

622 423 651 466 [463]

Succession to headmanship is usually from father to son or from elder to younger brother, "with only so much recognition of primogeniture as belongs to the general ... hierarchy of age."[8] Succession is, however, affected by the "democratic" tendencies in succession to chieftainship.[9]

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The Chief (ovoso or ovo)[10]

The Ovimbundu are grouped in 22 chiefdoms, of which half were in the past generally tributary to the more powerful chiefs.[11] At the same time each chiefdom had its separate government and could be considered as a unit in itself. Effective European occupation and direct rule have atrophied the chiefly office among the Ovimbundu, until today chiefs survive as little more than "living museum pieces".[12] Childs[13] enumerates the functions of the chiefly office as follows:

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(a) *Religious.* The chief's ancestral spirits were the principal chiefdom deities, and the king was high-priest as well as the visible "vice-regent and incarnation" of the spirits.

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(1) Childs, personal communication.
(2) The maternal uncle is responsible for settling disputes over property which occur within the oloine. (Hamby op.cit., p.200).
(3) Ibid.
(4) Ibid.
(5) Cadenas, op.cit., p.123.
(6) Ibid., p.123.
(7) Childs, op.cit., p.30.
(8) Ibid., p.44.
(9) Ibid.
(10) Ovoso means chief or king. Ovo is the personalized form used with the name. This the Portuguese writers have corrupted into ovos or sobs. (Childs, personal communication)
(11) See above, FP13.
(12) Childs, op.cit., p.30.
(13) Ibid.

769 They intimate their wishes to their descendants only through slight illness, usually asking for honour to be paid to them by a feast, or by some descendant carrying on their profession.

Ovande is the spirit of the much-honoured founder of the family,[1] and is always beneficent, bringing good fortune and warning his descendants of danger. Humbly and Tucker agree that *Ekisi* is the same kind of spirit as *Ovande* (although Humbly does not give *Ovande* this special meaning). Tucker writes that *Ekisi* is a benevolent spirit who calls the villagers together at night, and gives them advice through a medium (?), whom he enters without the latter's going into the usual trance. *Kandundu* according to Tucker is an *ekisi* who holds the leading position among the ancestral spirits owing to his seniority. Humbly describes a shrine to *Kandundu* at Bailundu; anyone who sees the contents of the shrine is supposed to become blind. He writes that *Kandundu* is thought of as "the spirit of dreaming who makes swellings on the body", but gives no further explanation. According to Tucker *Kandundu* is an especially powerful *ondele*, and ceremonies performed for him have many distinctive features.

776 769 (578)

224 *Hunt*, the spirit of the hunt, has his own shrine and priest in the village of the (permanent?) chief. His hut is very large, since all the meat of the hunts is placed in it. In front of it dances are held, and poles are decorated with skulls and other trophies of hunting. Before the door there is a carved figure of *Samaba*, the spirit who chases the game towards the hunter. A man whose ritual name is *Kapila*, and a woman called *Kamja*[2] are in charge of the spirit-hut of *Hunt*, and make supplication to him for success in hunting. Hunters living elsewhere but in the ombala or head village do not have persons bearing these ritual names, but their dogs are often called *Hunt*, *Samaba*, *Kapila* or *Kamja*.

776 778 (553)

775 The most dreaded spirits are the otulupukupuko, who may be spirits of still-born babies or foetuses, mental defectives, maltreated slaves, or persons, especially children, killed by sorcery. When a person has been found guilty of killing a child by sorcery or witchcraft, he is sentenced to "restore life" to it, which he does by substituting for it a child from his own family: if the deceased child is a girl, he must give an ox as well. The child is treated with great respect by his new family. If however the parents do not ask the sorcerer or witch for restitution, the child becomes an okulupukupuko, and may return to "eat" other children, at the command of the sorcerer who has killed it.

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RITUAL

● 793 It has been noted that the village headman acts as priest for the olunc, the group of patrilineally-related persons who form the basis of the village group, while the head of the olunc acts as priest for his dispersed, matrilineally-related group.[3] There is little detailed information on the religious duties of these priests. Cushman[4] describes the village headman as making public prayers each morning to Suku. Childs however points out[5] that it is more usual for the headman to spend a

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(1) i.e. of either the olunc or the olyim. (Childs, personal communication)
(2) According to Childs, (1949, p.21) *Kamja* is a hunting goddess.
(3) See above, p.29.
(4) 1946, p.51.
(5) Personal communication.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

The field of Umbundu reactions to cultural influences is a wide and an important one. Whatever contact the Ovimbundu or their progenitors may have had with the early Roman Catholic missions, little impress seems to have been made. The cross has been adopted as an object used in divination. Certain rites *seem* superficially to resemble the procession with the Host, but there is no indication of the assimilation of any ethical or conceptual element from Christianity during the early or formative period.[1]

Christianity first came to the Ovimbundu with the arrival of three missionaries at Bailundu in March 1881.[2] This was during the reign of Ekuikui and proved to be not the least important event of that reign. It is not within the scope of this study to give a history of the work of this Mission.[3] Its inception was planned as carefully as the times permitted, and although its subsequent development did not always proceed according to plan, its progress on the whole has been of an orderly nature, and it has produced noteworthy results which have been evaluated by deputations, by commissions, and by other visitors from time to time.[4]

The amount of interdenominational co-operation achieved in this field is worthy of note. There are the missions of the

[1] There were missions of the Jesuits, Capuchins, Carmelites, &c., in Angola from 1575 until about 1800, and there were priests as chaplains of the various presídios visited by the Ovimbundu during most of their history. Major Artur de Paiva, writing in 1890 (see *Boletim Soc. Geog. Lisboa*, 1895, p. 15 f.), describes the ruins of a Roman Catholic mission which he found in Cingolo (*Quingolo*) and which he judged to have dated from the end of the eighteenth century. I have found no reference in any historical work to the founding or operation of such a mission. It may have been built about 1770 when Governor Souza Coutinho ordained a number of towns in the Benguela hinterland, but the absence of specific reference to it seems to indicate that its existence was short.

[2] Messrs. Bagster, Sanders, and Miller sent out by the A.B.C.F.M. (Boston) to inaugurate a mission in Bihe, for that region was well known from the reputation of its traders, while Bailundu and other Umbundu regions had scarcely been heard of.

[3] For a brief summary of the early years see Strong, *The Story of the American Board*, pp. 336 ff.; also two articles in vol. 126 (1930) of the *Missionary Herald*, pp. 424-9; J. T. Tucker, *Drums in the Darkness*, gives a historical treatment of the work of this mission.

[4] There have been two 'deputations' sent to the West Central Africa Mission, in 1911 and in 1938, reports of which were issued by the A.B.C.F.M. Secretaries have visited the mission in 1924, '28, '30, '34, '38, and '46, and have given their impressions either in the *Missionary Herald* or in the *United Church Record and Missionary Review*. The report of the African Education Commission dealt with the work of this mission (T. J. Jones, *Education in Africa*, pp. 40, 239 f., 245 ff.). Among visitors who have written of this work see Nevinson, op. cit., chap. 7; J. Johnston, op. cit., chaps. 2, 3, and 4.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

A.B.C.F.M. (Congregational) and of the United Church of Canada, which for practical purposes work as one mission. This mission co-operates with several smaller organizations and with the Angola Evangelical Alliance. This prevailing spirit of co-operation has been noticed by travellers.[1] Another characteristic has been 'regard for plan, order, and "cultivation of the field"', according to the African Education Commission.[2] Of yet greater significance has been the extent to which this mission has been able to seize upon and develop indigenous initiative. This showed in the early organization of the Church, which was encouraged to develop its own life from the start. The utilization of indigenous forms, especially of social organization, has been a source of real strength.

Further development in this direction is greatly to be desired. For such further development, and indeed for all orderly growth, more knowledge of Umbundu life and attitudes, and an orderly synthesis of knowledge already in hand is a *sine qua non*. It is hoped that the present writer's study may help to supply the lacunae. A recent Roman Catholic handbook for missionaries in Africa has urged that for each ethnic and linguistic region a mission should have specialists in each field of research.[3] Although this advice may be considered 'for the present a counsel of perfection', it is the direction toward which missions are working,[4] an ideal which they must realize in the not too distant future. If Protestant missions in Africa are to maintain the place of leadership which, because of their evangelistic zeal they have had, they cannot neglect this zeal for knowledge which is demanded to-day.

The Roman Catholic Diocese of Huambo (*Pères du Saint-Esprit*), which embraces most of the Umbundu territory, seems to have had no specialists of the type named above who have devoted themselves to a study of the Ovimbundu. Père Ernest Lecomte

[1] Compare Nevinson, op. cit., p. 140, 'there are two . . . notable orders at work in Angola—the American mission (Congregationalist) under the "American Board", and the English mission (Plymouth Brethren) under divine direction only. . . . Of all the sects that I have known, these are the only two that I have ever heard pray for each other, and that without condemnation.'

[2] Dr. T. J. Jones, op. cit., p. 40. Recommendations for further developments according to carefully considered plans were made by Dr. F. K. Sanders in his *Report of Deputation*, 1930 (A.B.C.F.M.).

[3] H. Dubois, *Le Répertoire Africain* (Rome, 1932), pp. 157 ff.

[4] See article by J. H. Oldham, 'The Educational Work of Missionary Societies', in *Africa*, Jan. 1934, p. 47 f.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

797 795 produced an Umbundu grammar,[1] but does not seem to have published material of an ethnological nature. Père Keiling (who died in 1937) and Père Batteix were both listed in *Le Répertoire Africain* as specializing in the 'Ganguella' language.[2] The Umbundu missions of this Diocese date from 1890 (Caconda), 1896 (Bailundo), 1912 (Cuando), and later. From early days this mission has had quite evident political aspects—from 1889 when a military expedition was sent against the 'Ganguella Soba[3] Tchiuaco' to re-establish Père Lecomte and the Cubango mission station which had been attacked and expelled,[4] up to the recent government charters and mission statutes, which heavily subsidize the religious work of the Roman Catholic missions in Angola. The constitution of the Portuguese Republic decrees the separation of Church and State and full religious liberty. The large subsidies and other special privileges given to the Roman Catholic Church in Angola, however, create difficulties beyond the mere allocation of tax-money. In other parts of Africa the Roman Catholic missions co-operate with the Protestant in many spheres of action. It is to be regretted that such co-operation seems not to be desired in Angola. Is it a sort of monopolistic political aim which keeps the Roman Catholic missionaries of Angola aloof? The rare instances in which a more friendly spirit has been manifested only add point to the question. The appreciative and co-operative spirit shown by Padre J. Alves Correia[5] may be cited.

797 178 754 Roman Catholics and Protestants have both been very successful from a numerical standpoint.[6] Success in building a truly indigenous Church, or in providing it with suitable and capable leadership from its own ranks, is another question hardly to be judged from statistics. More elusive still is the question whether,

[1] *Boletim Soc. Geog. Lisboa*, 1897. This grammar has gone through several editions and is still in use. The orthography is evidently intended to facilitate the use of the language by one whose native tongue is French and rather complicates matters for an African, and, indeed, for anyone whose language is other than French.

[2] H. Dubois, op. cit., p. 340.

[3] *Soba*, a native chief (from *Sonsa*).

[4] *Ganguella*, op. cit., 1891, pp. 10 ff.

[5] See his books, *A Lavpuna do Reino de Deus* (Lisboa, 1932); *A Vida Mais Alta*, &c.

[6] Roman Catholics have about 180,000 and Protestants about 140,000 adherents among the Ovimbundu, according to the census taken in 1940 (Colónia de Angola, *Censo Geral da População*, vol. ix; Luanda, Imprensa Nacional, 1943).

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of the school seems considerably stronger than that of their Catholic counterparts. This impression is gained by visits to Protestant villages and to episodes like that just quoted, where the Protestant catechist had more success than the Catholic in recruiting volunteers for work on the bridge. The reasons for this lie in the organization of the Protestant Church, which owes its origin to Congregationalist missionaries, and in which the distribution of power differs from that in the Catholic Church. The white missionaries exercise only a supervisory role over the work of the Native Church which is responsible for pastoral activity in the villages. The African clergy of the Native Church are entirely dependent financially on their people.

Compared with Catholicism, Protestantism lays much less stress on the sacraments of baptism and communion and much more on Bible-reading and the religious knowledge of the individual. Hence the teaching role of the catechist is more strongly stressed among the Protestants. For example, the Protestant catechists teach girls as well as boys to read and write. His dependence on the clergy is reduced; indeed, owing to the lay participation in the Umbundu Native Church he exercises some control over them. Among the Ovimbundu, as elsewhere in the world, the 'pyramidal' form of Catholicism is absent in Protestantism in which the position of the clergy is weaker and that of the lay leaders strengthened.

The relative autonomy of the Umbundu Native Church *vis-à-vis* the white missionaries and the disintegration of the traditional system of authority have given judicial powers to its officials. Dr. Childs has written in a recent article:[1] 'In Angola . . . the breakdown of traditional authority has been so rapid that the social life of the villages is now very near to complete anarchy . . . the missions and churches have been compelled to take over. Church leaders—catechists, deacons, and pastors—have taken on judicial functions. Church meetings, both local and regional, have become courts and councils.' He goes on to describe the legalistic attitudes and casuistical morality which is associated with these developments, and suggests that the lack of opportunity for political activity

[1] G. M. Childs, *International Review of Missions*, April 1958.

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795 178 confines the pursuit of power to the Native Church with unfortunate results. It might, on the other hand, be suggested that the Protestants among the Ovimbundu are the section of the population who have come nearest to building up new systems of authority and law. It might also be suggested that Umbundu Protestantism retains certain historical features of Congregationalism—democratic selection of officials with strict discipline binding members of the congregation, industriousness and zeal for education, and a certain consciousness of being a spiritual *élite*.[3]

795 Another factor in the situation is that the Protestants are a minority compared with the Catholics and tend to have the heightened self-consciousness of religious minorities. They also tend to isolate themselves from the pagans much more than the Catholics do, both geographically by moving into separate hamlets and separate villages and by the greater efforts they make to understand and follow European custom. Protestants for instance seem to know more how the Portuguese kinship terms should be used.

797 177 Ultimately, the position of the catechist, whether Catholic or Protestant, is dependent on his role as a teacher of Christian doctrine, and as being a representative of 'modern' values. It may be said that Christian doctrine and 'modern' values are not necessary identical. It is, however, in this field that the Ovimbundu establish their closest contacts with the Europeans. A Protestant explaining why a kinship usage had been discontinued said: 'We are Christians, we are like the Europeans.'

795 A Catholic catechist arguing the superiority of Catholicism to Protestantism began by saying that the Protestants had no sacraments—then the elder of the school chimed in saying: 'And ours is the religion of the government.' The catechist took up this theme: 'The *chefe de posto* is baptized and married in church, the Governor-General [*sic*] of Nova Lisboa is baptized and married in church.' During my first weeks in Epalanga I was asked by the catechist: 'Are there priests in England?' and replied that in England there were both Catholics and Protestants, on which the catechist commented: 'It's the same thing in Bimbe.'

[3] For the history of Congregationalism see E. Troelsch, *The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches*, London, 1931, Vol. II, p. 661–6.

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thing in Bimbe.' That is, church membership is recognized as giving entry to a world-wide grouping. This sense of being linked to the Europeans by participation in the same sacraments is paralleled on the European side by the custom widespread in Angola of whites standing as godparents to their servants or servants' children. More generally, the missions are regarded as being the cause of that social change which is welcomed by Ovimbundu. Thus the fact that this was 'the time of the school' was given by one of my servants as the reason for such improvements as the decline of sorcery and the increase of cleverness.

Ovimbundu Christians are also aware of the doctrinal significance of baptism—when I asked various people 'Why did you receive baptism?' a general reply would be: 'I want to go to heaven', or some equivalent phrase. The apprehension of Catholic doctrine by the Ovimbundu is a complicated subject. It may be said that the receiving of the sacraments is the aspect of religion that has made most impression on the people. In the conversation previously cited, the catechist began by emphasizing the presence of sacraments as the distinctive mark of Catholicism against Protestantism, and then when the elder of the school pointed to the official associations of Catholicism, the catechist developed this by indicating the receiving of sacraments by those in high office. In the same way a catechist may commend somebody by saying: 'He is baptized and married in Church', as we would say of somebody: 'He is a real Christian'. The contact of the people with the priests, whether at the mission, or in the villages, usually involves the making of confessions and the receiving of communion. Cultural traits particularly characteristic of Portuguese Catholicism are little marked with the exception of the social importance of the godfather-godson tie. Christian ideas of the after-life have penetrated among the pagans, who will say that the soul after death goes to God (Suku) except in the case of bad people who go to hell.

The social relations between Christians and pagans are friendly. The old rites in which the sub-chiefdom as a whole participated have disappeared, and the rites performed at the capital, a liturgy which like other aspects of chieftaincy is a shadow of its former self, arouse little public interest. Christians

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795 and pagans co-operate in weddings and funerals. In certain aspects of funeral rites, and in commemorations of ancestors the Christians participate, justifying themselves by arguing that they are purely social functions and have no religious significance. This differs from their attitude to the major exorcism [255] rites,[4] which are avoided by Christians, who regard them with some horror, and towards consulting diviners. Although visiting [791] diviners is strictly forbidden by both Catholic and Protestant missionaries, a high proportion of their people do this,[5] but clandestinely. Thus I was told that there were no diviners in Gumba; in fact, there were two living in Epalanga. It is important to remember that there exist nowadays no pagan 'congregations', that is, permanent groups associated with the performance of ritual.

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[4] These involve drumming and an open invitation to anybody who wants to turn up. The idea is to persuade the tormenting spirit to pass into a small animal or inanimate object. The minor exorcism (*oku likutilila*) also involves sending the spirit into an inanimate object, but without drumming or the headshaking by the patient which is believed to mark the arrival of the spirit and his acceptance of the offering.

[5] Childs, loc. cit. Personal information.

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servant of mine explaining how the Mwekalia chose the chief said, giving me a comparison: 'The Bishop of Nova Lisboa thinks "This priest has sense" and so makes him the superior of a mission'.[6] The disintegration of the old political system, and the association of its representatives with the ritual values which are no longer very significant for the mass of Ovimbundu, has destroyed the old pyramid of authority and prestige. The people associate demands and punishment, for which they seem to receive very little in return, with the post. Many draw a distinction between the actual *chefe* and the government, which they regard as benevolent and ignorant of the behaviour of its representatives. Despite such expressions of loyalty as the singing of the Portuguese national anthem at village parties the 'government' is too distant and shadowy for the Ovimbundu to have much knowledge of it. Nor has the post tried effectively to build up new types of bureaucratic authority in the villages—the government headmen are not given sufficient backing or responsibility by the post to do more than execute its orders.

Hence, the establishment of new types of grouping and leadership at the local level has been the work of the missions, and it is through the missions that these new groupings are articulated on to the total Angolan social system. The missionaries, who provide this articulation between the 'civilized' society and the local organization of the natives, form the section of the 'civilized' population which most satisfies, in its relations with the people, the expectations of the Africans.

To use another term, it is within the Catholic and Protestant Churches that Ovimbundu most clearly identify themselves. Baptism identifies an individual by giving him a name, hence Christians object to non-baptized people identifying themselves in this way. To an individual baptism is significant since it is concerned with his destiny. By it also he identifies himself with the 'civilized' population and achieves a new status superior to that of the pagans. The newly-born child of Christian parents will be given a Christian name and also an Umbundu name from one already held by a dead kinsman.[7] A few villagers

[6] Actually responsibility for appointing superiors of missions largely belongs to the superior of the Nova Lisboa district of the Congregação do Espírito Santo.

[7] For Umbundu names, see Elizabeth Ennis, *African Studies* (Johannesburg) March 1945.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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795 551 attempt to take on European surnames. Alternatively, a man may take his father's name and attempt to use it as a surname. Thus Joaõ Batista Tjindandi, a resident of Epalanga, had received Joaõ Batista in baptism, and had taken Tjindandi, his father's name, as a surname. This is, however, not at all a general trend. Even a village of mixed Christian-pagan population may be known by the name of its school, identifying itself by its Christian name.

795 554 A man identifies himself also with social change and with progress by 'entering the school'. When a small girl, whom I asked if she had 'entered into the school' replied 'Not at all', her elder sister's husband remarked: 'She is asleep'. In the general Angolan society the religious referent is the most status-giving type of reference that most Ovimbundu can give. 186 554 There is no very marked feeling in the superiority of one area of Umbundu country to another nor even is there a marked sense of the superiority of Ovimbundu to other tribes—thus the Kimbundu will be highly praised for the degree of European culture they have acquired. The very word Ovimbundu is used as an equivalent of '*pretos*' (blacks) a word not used of 'civilized' Africans, since it is indicative of the lowest colour-class. As a Christian, a man has a status which he shares with Europeans.

797 648 He can also identify himself not only in a general way with the Europeans but more particularly with the general church organization. There is much closer contact between the authority-figures of the church organization and the people than between the authority-figures of the administration and the natives. Thus all Catholics in the Nova Lisboa diocese are confirmed by the Bishop of Nova Lisboa, and have seen him—similarly many of the Protestant Ovimbundu know of Dr. Childs, the headmaster of the Protestant secondary school at Dondi, through having heard him preach at a conference. Some Christian villagers would know the names of pioneer missionaries. Little is known by the people about the personalities or duties of the senior members of their administration, and even their titles are not properly understood.

795 648 The religious differences which exist at local level have no marked significance in the relations of natives to the post. In certain circumstances a pagan may appeal to a Christian

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catechist or missionary for support at the post. There is no tendency to confine government appointments to chiefdoms and headmanships to Catholics.[8] However, the Protestant catechists are, unlike the Catholic catechists, not exempt from taxes.[9]

The Ovimbundu no longer possess a coherent political system of their own. They cannot, owing to the nature of their relations with the post and their ignorance of the higher administration, regard the Government as being their representative; the only wide-range systems with which they can identify themselves are the missions. It is through them that the individual is promised eternal life, that the village receives a new type of identity and unity, and that the Ovimbundu as a people participate with the 'civilized' population in ritual communities cutting across the boundaries of culture and geography.

The objection may be made that it is only the Christians who could effectively be represented by the missions and that in Epalanga and Gumba generally baptized Christians formed a minority. It has, however, been previously noted how the school may give its name to a village of mixed population. The catechist will represent both Christians and pagans when he is concerned with the post or with the mission. Moreover, the percentage of pagans in Gumba is far higher than in the rest of Bimbe to which they are linked by the Umbundu language and culture, by administrative divisions, and by a wide range of personal contacts.

It may, then, be asserted, that the catechetical schools and the wider groupings which they build up are the social groups most significant for Umbundu integration on any scale wider than that of the household.

[8] In Gumba the chief and government headman were pagan. There are government-recognized Protestant chiefs elsewhere in Umbundu country.

[9] In some parts of Angola the Catholic catechists are not automatically granted exemption but have to have obtained certain other qualifications, e.g. a certain degree of literacy.

242 When a field is wearing out, the corn growing shorter and bearing
241 fewer ears to the stalk,[1] the woman makes a final planting of corn, sticking cuttings of manioc between the rows. Most of these cuttings take root and grow. It takes two or three years for the tubers of this plant to mature in an old field, but in some parts of the country where manioc is set in new land it matures within a year. The leaves of the plant are used as a vegetable with corn-meal, and manioc meal is used as a basic substitute when corn is short.

The onako or river-garden

241 In August a woman plants her onako, near a stream in the alluvial soil, or in some river bed. Here she plants corn which will be ready for eating during the January period of food shortage, as well as cabbage and other vegetables.

Organisation of labour

[462] Formerly men did the heavier work of clearing new fields, although, as has been noted above, since the introduction of wage labour much of the work is left to the women. Men may also have their own fields, the produce of which is sold to provide ready cash to clothe the family, pay taxes etc. The women's fields are intended to feed the family. Children help their parents in the fields, but also have their own plots. Gardens are made by each household, i.e. by each wife where there are a number of wives. Neighbours often co-operate during the harvesting
[476] period, after which beer is supplied by the owner of the field which has been harvested.[2]

HUNTING[3]

796 Most men and boys hunt, and women and children may help in burning
224 the grass and driving the game during the annual communal fire-hunts.
[463] But the professional hunter or ukongo is a recognised specialist, qualified by specific training and dependent on his knowledge of hunting magic
[468] and ritual for his success. A boy becomes a ukongo by an apprenticeship of about two years to an older hunter. This period culminates in a ceremony of inauguration, which may be attended by all the villagers but at which only the professional hunters dance. Several ukongo provide game, which is cooked for the feast; the dancing commences but the novice remains still and silent until he feels the "spirit of the head"; he then rises and distributes game to the villagers. Blood from the animals killed is sprinkled over his weapons, which have been made by the ukongo who has trained him. From now on his daily life is subject to certain ritual prohibitions: he must not sleep with his wife on the night before going on a hunt, special food and cooking-pots must be used for him, etc.

600 A professional hunter usually works alone, using bows and arrows,

(1) There is no information concerning the length of the farming-cycle.
(2) Childs, personal communication.
(3) See Heably, *Bantu Studies*, 1934, and *Ovimbundu*, 1934, pp.140-5; Cushman, 1944, pp.113-20.

621 Ngundu is surrounded by a stick palisade except on that side of the headman's household which is adjacent to the rocks used as a club-house. The village itself (and each section) is divided up into compounds, each of which contains one to three houses,[1] and palisades divide one compound
[343] from the next; between are paths leading to the ocila and out of the village. Small gardens for tobacco, maize and beans are within the compounds, and the larger fields lie outside the village at from thirty minutes' to an hour's walk. In the headman's section of Ngundu there are 25 household containing 32 houses in all. Each house has its own granary
[343] (ocila) and a small chicken-coop built on stilts, and of all the houses only six have separate kitchens (ocimo). Most households had separate pens for pigs, goats and sheep for the night,[2] and at one side of the headman's compound there is a common corral for the nine cattle owned by
[122] the section. Only the headman had a spirit-hut (etombo), used also as a storehouse, for entertaining his guests, and for his own use should he wish to sleep apart from his wives.

621 Chiefs' villages or olombolo (singular cabolo) are often surrounded by
361 a belt of tall trees.[3] The chief's compound (the iloabe) is larger than those of other villagers, and, according to Hambly,[4] usually contains:
643 the chief's house, which always has a separate sleeping-room; a house and a kitchen for each of his wives; a tomb for the burial of the chief and his wives; a house of meditation for the chief, and pens for pigs and chickens.

342 Umbundu houses are usually circular, but sometimes rectangular, and made of wattle and daub, with thatched roofs. Sometimes huts are divided
[343] by matting into a living-room and a sleeping-room. Cooking is often done in the house itself, but sometimes a separate hut is built as a kitchen.[5]

345 The ongango (the Men's Club House) consists of a cone-shaped roof set on stout hardwood poles instead of a wall, and left open so that those for whom there may be no place inside may still see and hear what takes place within.[6]

341 Villages are moved when fields are exhausted and others are not available nearby[7] or, more often, when there has been illness or death in the
[768] village, which implies that some action displeasing to the spirits has been committed. (No information is available concerning the usual length of life of a village.) When the new site is chosen, the headman's fire
776 in the old village is extinguished, and a procession starts, led by a boy
778 carrying the sacred bows (olonji) of each ancestor who is now a guardian spirit of the family (i.e. the olose), and a girl carrying the sacred
● 796 chest (ocisongo) containing the relics (ociye) and the bells of iguana skin.[8] On arriving at the site the boy and girl cut and plant the

(1) In this section there were 13 goats, 30 sheep, 100 pigs and about 100 chickens. (Childs, op.cit., p.31) (2) Ibid.
(3) Hambly, (2) 1934, p.208 et.al. It was a custom of the Ngangela peoples to plant trees round the village and dedicate them to deceased chiefs. (See McCulloch 1950, p.68.) There is no evidence that the trees surrounding Umbundu villages have any ritual significance, although the custom may have been taken over from the conquered Ngangela peoples.
(4) Op.cit., p.208. (5) Ibid., p.30
(6) Childs, personal communication.
(7) Due often to European settlement. (8) See below, p.67.

night in the otundo praying to or communing with ancestral spirits, when the occasion arises; Suku is regarded as too remote to receive prayers. 693 613

While cooking, a woman may spill a little meal on the ground for the spirits; at a meal, a person may spill a little food or beer for the same purpose. A portion of the meat at a feast may likewise be sacrificed, but it is often a less desirable portion, such as the intestines.[1] 782

Agricultural rituals were held before planting, at which time the headman and his wife had intercourse in their field and sacred seed from the chief's granary was distributed, a few grains to be mixed with the seed to be planted on each plot. When the maize began to ripen a few ears were sent to the chief before any were eaten.[2] 241 759

DIVINERS[3]

The word ocisbundu is used both for a diviner and for a maker of medicines. To distinguish the two, the diviner may be called ocisbundu cangundo ("of the basket"), the herbalist ocisbundu coviti ("of trees or sticks"). Some practitioners are both diviner and herbalist. A female diviner is called cambulo.[4] An ocisbundu frequently specialises in a certain kind of case;[5] and among the members of the profession there are many degrees of proficiency. One may work only in his own village, another may be consulted on matters of concern to the whole district or chiefdom; others go on professional journeys carrying their baskets, and accumulate profits in animals and cloth. The greater the reputation of the diviner, the greater the charges he makes for his services. 796 463

The tasks of the ocisbundu are:-

(a) To discover the cause of sickness, death, or any evil which has befallen the individual or the community. Sickness and death are always believed to be due either to the workings of spirits who are demanding sacrifices, or to living enemies who have malicious spirits under their control or who have bought potent charms. The diviner, after consulting the spirit who speaks in and through his basket, names the spirit who is causing the trouble and tells the victim what its demands are, or, if the enemy is a living person, indicates in a general manner from whence the trouble comes, e.g. to a woman "Your baskets are too well made; you are hated because of them", or, to a man, "This illness was found on a journey taken to collect a debt". If requested, the diviner makes a counter-charm to offset that which has caused the ill. 787 753

(b) To interpret omens and dreams.

(c) To give advice on personal problems.

(d) To dispense medicines and charms.

(e) To bring or withhold rain, or to see who is guilty of withholding it. [789]

(1) Ibid., see also Graham, loc.cit.
(2) Childs, personal communication.
(3) Based on Tucker, 1940.
(4) Hambly, (3) 1934.
(5) Ibid.

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Any boy who wishes to become a blacksmith may be trained for the work. It is not necessary that his father should have been a blacksmith. When the youth begins his training he must be eighteen years of age and physically robust. His first duties are the beating of hot iron on the anvil; he is also required to collect and soften fragments of iron. He works very hard but is never allowed to finish anything; the master has to complete the work. 326 874

At the end of two years the youth asks the master blacksmith to examine him. What is more important still, the master is asked to make the heavy hammer (*onjundo*), which is used for beating hot iron on the largest anvil (Plate XXXVIII, Fig. 1). There is no doubt as to the sacredness of this hammer, which is a symbol of the completion of apprenticeship. There is also the idea of the master handing on his skill to the pupil by personally making and presenting the tools. I made repeated efforts before being able to purchase one of these hammers; finally it was procurable only at a high price. The value is due to ritualistic associations, the large quantity of iron used in the making, and the labor required to weld the head to the shaft.

On the day of his inception the boy has to purchase four chickens, two male and two female, one pup, and a goat. The master blacksmith makes all the tools for the apprentice, but ritual centers chiefly in the fabrication of the big hammer (*onjundo*). While the master is making this the boy stands on the small anvil which is close to the ground, between the forge and the large anvil under the tree. 326 796

When the hammer (*onjundo*) is made, and while it is still red-hot, the handle is pushed into the belly of the dog. The goat and the four chickens are then killed. All the tools are brought together so that blood from the slaughtered animals may be sprinkled over them. The flesh of these animals is eaten with corn and beans. "The blacksmith calls many people to help him, and they like to eat the food," concluded my interpreter. [782]

During the entire ceremony, also throughout the feast, the boy stands on the anvil. There he remains until the master says, "You may speak and tell us what name you want." Perhaps the boy says, "I am Ndumbu." The people in the crowd clap hands and make a trilling with their fingers in their open mouths. The boy steps from the anvil; he is a blacksmith. My interpreter continued, "He must work hard and people must pay him. He used to work hard, but the master took the money."

There was an ancient belief that a blacksmith owed his skill to the help of the spirit of a person he had killed. Wooden effigies 326 778

338 feet. A trench about eighteen inches deep is dug for the poles (akoso), which form the framework. The wattle work is tied to the uprights with strong strips of red bark before the plastering is begun.
341 The old type of Umbundu house was round, but most of the houses
171 now show a transition to square or rectangular forms (Plate XLIV, Fig. 2).

[531] Exterior wall-painting is found only in the northern districts of Angola (Plate LXXXIX, Fig. 2). Between Saurimo and Malange in the north, rectangular, painted houses are frequently seen. Wall-painting is a cultural trait from the Congo region where that form of decoration is common.

796 The method of forming a village site and the right of the chief to
621 allot land have been described. The house of the chief is the first to be erected. There is drinking of beer to celebrate the completion of the village, and the pots of beer have to be stirred with the claws of chickens; these have been killed to provide blood for sprinkling the walls of the new houses. Village chiefs go through the process of stirring and drinking. The medicine-man drinks first, then he offers the cup to the chief.

344 The communal house is built by the united efforts of all men of
476 the village. Ngonga says, "The king never helps with any of the
[485] building, but he talks very much." The guest house is also built
644 by communal labor. The king of the *ombala* of Ngalangi told me that a king always uses the house of his predecessor, which must not be pulled down. No repairs are permitted and the house is used until it is absolutely untenable.

359 The interior of a commoner's house has three hearth stones in the
342 middle of the floor, which is of hard mud beaten down with a heavy wooden implement called *ocikasdulo*. The ceremonial placing of the stones has been described in discussing marriage. There is no chimney, consequently the walls and roof are blackened with smoke. The junction of roof and walls provides pockets for the reception of small articles. On the floor near the walls may be several large beer pots. The dark smoky interior is almost intolerable. The sleeping
352 room is sometimes separated from the living room by matting. The bed is made from a cross-work of sticks supported on four Y-shaped posts, one at each corner. On the bed are coarse sleeping mats and possibly a modern blanket.

356 The miscellaneous contents of the hut are gourds, dippers, cooking
252 pots of several sizes, pounders, and baskets. In many of the huts I found cooking going on in the general room, but frequently a sepa-

not an Ocimbundu, was dressed in only a skirt of cloth, and his equipment consisted of a reed whistle and a hair switch made from a cow's tail. 791

The dance was a slow revolution without any violent leaping. The man held his arms upward, fully extended, and went through the motions of drawing rain from above; then he made slow arm movements suggestive of spreading the rain all around. At times he stood quite still and gave a shrill whistle. The hair switch was constantly twirled and flourished.

POISON ORDEAL

Evidence presented in chapters VI and VII will show that the poison ordeal is a widely spread Negro trait, and that administration of the ordeal is connected with legal proceedings during which the poison cup is usually given to the suspects or litigants by a medicine-man. 695 791

This ordeal as practised among the Ovimbundu and other people of Angola is in conformity with the general Negro procedure. Ngonga thinks that the poison ordeal of the old type is still practised secretly. According to the old law the poison cup affected an innocent man by making him vomit, while the guilty person succumbed.

Ngonga states that a form of poison ordeal which exists today is as follows: The medicine-man holds out two potatoes, one of which is poisoned while the other is innocuous. The poisoned man does not die but he becomes so ill that he confesses his guilt. This use of potatoes has been fully described in connection with legal procedure (chapter VI).

The guilt or innocence of suspects is tested by giving poison to chickens brought to the medicine-man by the accused men. He whose chicken dies is the guilty person.

CEREMONIAL FIRE

New fire is made during epidemic sickness, at the accession of a king, and at the building of a new village. On such occasions the twirling method is employed. The fire made is called *ondalu*, which is the ordinary word for fire. 372 791 796

When an epidemic of sickness occurs the chief of the village takes a present of eight yards of cloth to the medicine-man and asks the cause of the visitation. The medicine-man replies, "Your fire is dirty and worn out, you must have new fire."

372 The village chief takes this news to the people, saying, "Tomorrow
791 we must find a goat, a chicken, and a pig, so that we may kill them
796 Then we must make a new fire." The chief pays for these animals

Next day the medicine-man starts a fire by the twirling method and as soon as the fire has been kindled he kills a fowl whose blood is allowed to drop on the fire and the wood near-by. The sacrificial goat and pig are treated in the same way. Sometimes a boy who is learning to be a medicine-man kills these animals. Meat from each of the animals so sacrificed is cooked on this newly made fire, care being taken that each kind of meat is kept in a separate pot. There is no special pottery for this cooking. When the meat is cooked it is tasted by a girl from twelve to fourteen years of age who hands a portion to the chief, who distributes the meat among the village elders (*ohoekulu*). The meat from the chicken, which must be fat, is the first to be distributed. A cock or a hen may be chosen, but if the latter is selected it must be *utende;* that is to say, it must not have arrived at the egg-laying age.

Finally there is a distribution of meat among the villagers who have been present throughout the ceremony. The chief speaks, saying, "We wish good fortune to the new fire." Each person has to take the responsibility for quenching his own fire before the new one is ceremonially made. After the feast each father of a "restricted" family takes away a portion of the newly kindled fire.

796 There is sometimes a ceremonial purification of the village water
364 supply. Water is carried in a block of wood from the nearest stream, and to this water a few drops of blood from the sacrificed animals are added. The idea involved throughout is the renewal of health by the furnishing of new, unadulterated supplies of fire and water.

796 At the inaugural ceremony of a new king a similar proceeding
643 is followed. A chicken is killed for the purpose of supplying blood to sprinkle the new fire and on this occasion there is a ceremonial hunt. The king may or may not join the males of the hunting party; sometimes he sends a substitute.

A girl follows the king or his substitute carrying a basket (*ongale*) in which round fruits from the tree *olosanga* are contained. Each of the fruits is wrapped round with the skin of the large lizard (*otata*). The object of the hunt is to kill a male antelope, the duiker (*ombombi*), and a hare (*ondimba*) which may be male or female. The hare is not called *ondimba* on this occasion, but receives the name for elephant (*onjamba*).

The hare is not carried over the shoulder, but has a ceremonial conveyance slung on poles (*ewunda*) which are supported on the shoulders of two or even four men. 796 643

Laying the evil of a village on a goat, which is then driven out to die, is an Umbundu custom. The scapegoat ceremony has a cleansing function similar in purpose to the rekindling of fire for the community. Cavazzi pictured and described the scapegoat ceremony in the seventeenth century, and Ngonga informed me that he saw the rite twenty years ago. 793

PROHIBITIONS AND OMENS

There is a taboo against killing *oku kulu*, which is the yellow-backed duiker. When Ngonga was sick he was forbidden to eat the flesh of the duiker (*ombumbi*); neither is this flesh to be eaten by people who suffer from dizziness. In former days women were not allowed to eat eggs. The flesh of sheep and goats is said to be indigestible for children between the ages of three and six years. The flesh of the lion, leopard, and hyena is forbidden as food for the king, but other people may eat it. The king is in fact forbidden to eat the flesh of any animal which has paws; neither may he eat flesh of the bush buck. A medicine-man must not eat flesh of a dog except before a ceremony for curing the sick. The taboo against dog's flesh applies also to the diet of a king. 262 [693]

A woman must not step over the legs of a male, neither must a man step over the legs of a woman; for to do so causes weakness of the knees. A man or woman may step over the legs of a child. 784

Omens are numerous. It is unfortunate to see a snake holding a frog, and the person who observes this should go to the medicine-man at once. When going to a village to be tried by the chief it is bad to meet some one who is carrying a bark rope, as this indicates binding and punishment. If a person who is setting out from home meets a woman carrying corn meal or any other white substance, he or she must take a little of the meal, whiten the face, and all will be well. A fly in the mouth is a good sign, because the fly knows where meat is to be obtained and is trying to lead the way. 787

A stranger visiting a village is pleased when a dog is the first animal to enter the guest house. Dogs are fed, so the entry of a dog is a sign that the visitor will receive food. On the contrary, the appearance of a goat is a bad omen, because goats are not fed; they pick up a frugal living as best they can. Other prohibitions and omens have been mentioned in discussing the pregnancy of women. [574]

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634 178 769 [775] become *isakula* (queen) because she feared the unpleasant haunting by the spirits of former queens which is traditionally experienced by the holder of this office.[18] On one occasion Lusase himself offered to let me into the *olokale* (the enclosure where the skulls of dead chiefs were kept) for the payment of five or ten escudos (1s. 9d. or 2s. 6d.) although the entry of anybody except the chief and possibly certain of his courtiers appears traditionally to have been forbidden under the penalty of death sent by the spirits. Even the surviving rites are confined to the chief's village; the first-fruits ceremony in which the [796] whole chiefdom was involved disappeared a number of years ago. The association general in Umbundu country between 634 771 the chiefs and paganism does not provide an added ritual sanction to the chief's power, but rather links him with what is felt to be a dying past, essentially unimportant, at the present day.

692 The chief may also have some of his time occupied with hearing cases. A good many minor disputes are solved by local adjudication, but there seems to be no specific division between cases that ought to come to the chief and those which can be arbitrated by somebody else. Elders from outside a chiefdom may be invited to adjudicate on a particular case. The old formality of legal procedure has largely disappeared, probably because all disputes at a local level can be carried to the post—hence any ruling by chief or elders is essentially dependent on its acceptance by the disputants.

754 Accusations of sorcery are rather different from other cases since the post does not believe them, although such an accusation is not in itself punishable. Sometimes suspected sorcerers are accused at the post of 'poisoning'.[19] Lusase told me that convicted sorcerers were fined a chicken, a goat and a pig. Gregorio, the chief of Menga, at first said, when I asked about this, that it was not possible to know who was a sorcerer. When, rather to his surprise, I mentioned the traditional basket test, he agreed and explained that people convicted by this test were sent as labourers to the post to satisfy whatever demand was being made for workers.

[18] Informants. See also Hastings, p. 49.

[19] Childs, p. 58.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13
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institutions or divisions have had little consideration in drawing administrative boundaries.

Systems of communications have been developed during the last forty years. The Benguela Railway, built by Sir Robert Williams and the Tanganyika Concessions, Ltd., was completed in 1931 from Lobito to Elisabethville in the Katanga region, where direct connexion is made with the South, Central, and East African systems of rail and water transport. This railway serves as the most direct outlet for the mines of the Congo and Northern Rhodesia. The great majority of native employees of the railway are Ovimbundu and it has also brought this people their first contact with the mines and with industrialized South Africa. Regular steamship connexion between Lobito and Europe includes Portuguese, Belgian, German, and British lines with occasional calls from American, Japanese, and Scandinavian ships.[1] Recent years have seen considerable extensions of telegraphic and radio service throughout the colony. Motor roads have been built extensively, especially on the plateau and along the watersheds. In addition there are many wagon-tracks for ox-wagons which were introduced by the voortrekkers almost seventy years ago. In many cases the routes followed are those first used by native caravans.

There are eleven missionary societies at work among the Ovimbundu: five Protestant and six Roman Catholic.[2] There is only one fully organized Umbundu Church. It includes the work of three Protestant societies. It is the work of this Church and of the Missions of the A.B.C.F.M.[3] and of the United Church of Canada with which the evaluations of this study are concerned. The Mission of the A.B.C.F.M. was founded in 1880, as the first Christian work undertaken among the Ovimbundu.[4]

[1] This was the situation in 1939. During the period of the war the Portuguese services were maintained, although with less regularity than before. The U.S. Maritime Commission maintained a cargo service. There were occasional calls by cargo vessels of various nationalities. The Belgian line is reopening its service (1946) and the Portuguese lines have acquired additional vessels.

[2] Pères du Saint-Esprit began work among the Ovimbundu in 1890; the Padres Seculares have been working in the towns; the Benedictines and several orders of nuns also have stations.

[3] American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions.

[4] The two missions mentioned conduct their work in most respects as a single mission. The other Protestant societies do not have very extensive work among the Ovimbundu.

.: Childs M-5 (1924-1946) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

621 four households with six houses. The school village had been laid
but in rectangular fashion without any palisade and with eucalyptus
[346] trees planted around the sides. The school was at the centre and
the elder's house at the upper corner. These two larger buildings
and one other were built of adobe, while the rest of the twelve
houses were of wattle and daub, identical with those in the other
wards except that all were rectangular. There were a few very
[312] small gardens watered by an irrigation ditch. The people of this
village had river gardens, and their fields were mostly to the south
between the village and the highway. Just to the east of the main
[797] village and beside one of the water-holes, a Roman Catholic
catechist had established himself, but as yet he had neither village
nor school.

The Villagers

602 Turning now to the people living in this village, it was interest-
621 ing to find that all save the households of two former slaves and the
Roman Catholic catechist, were related to each other, either by
blood or by marriage. Sekulu Cipange of Ciyanda summed the
matter up when he said, 'Likuluta Samikanjo (the Protestant elder)
is my younger brother (*manjange*), for in our Umbundu country
(we) people do not build together (i.e. in the same village) unless
we are blood relatives.' In order to determine the exact relation-
ships and other facts regarding the demography of this village,
I took the names of all householders and their wives, and inquired
their relationships to the elders of the respective wards. This
[115] information was supplied by Njomba, a son of Sekulu Sikillé, and
by Sekulu Likuluta Samikanjo. In addition to those of the four
elders, there were twenty-four households. The relationship
of each of the householders to their respective elders may be sum-
marized as follows:

A. *Paternal relatives*		
In Sikillé's village	21	
„ Ciyanda	1	
„ Kanjengo's ward	2	
„ School village	2	
	—	26
B. *Maternal relatives*		
In Ciyanda	1	
„ Kanjengo's ward	1	
„ School village	4	
	—	6

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on which the social cohesion of African peoples rests'.[1] In the article here quoted, and more recently at the New Education Fellowship Conference, she summarizes her conclusions regarding 'Positive Values in the African Social Organization', with special reference to the Sotho-Tswana and Zulu-Xhosa groups of the South African Bantu.[2]

Nor have American educational authorities failed to recognize the crucial importance to educational and missionary efforts of a primitive people's social structure. Were it necessary, numerous quotations might be given. Two of the four 'Essentials of Primitive Society' listed by Dr. Thomas Jesse Jones, have to do with the social structure:

II. Power of integration with the environment, material and human:

III. A proper regard for the home and the household.[3]

Even more explicit are the counsels to be found in *The Educational Yearbook* for 1931 and 1933:

> . . . we often find that the organization of the family and the relationships between its members are as good as, and in some cases superior to, those which are found among western peoples. . . .
>
> When it comes to other matters of social relationships, such as the communal system and the practice of sharing . . . it is little less than disastrous that the western educator, brought up in a system of individualism, seems to wish to make it necessary for the indigenous peoples to go back to a social organization from which his own world is attempting to move.[4]
>
> Social forms have got to change. But whatever changes may take place, . . . the vital thing is that the sense of mutual obligation and responsibility which is found in existing relations should be conserved and express itself in the new conditions.[5]

797 177 The village is the key to an educational or mission approach to the Ovimbundu. This fact has long been recognized by the missions. The Deputation of the American Board of Com-

[1] M. Stauffer, ed., *Thinking with Africa* (New York, 1927), p. 86 (article by Mrs. Hoernlé), also quoted by C. T. Loram in *The Educational Yearbook, 1933* (Dr. Kandel, ed.), p. 280.

[2] See E. G. Malherbe, ed., *Educational Adaptations in a Changing Society* (N.E.F. Conference Report, Cape Town, 1937), pp. 405–7.

[3] T. J. Jones, *Essentials of Civilization* (New York, 1929), pp. 7 ff.

[4] C. T. Loram in *The Educational Yearbook, 1931*, I. Kandel, ed. (New York, 1931), pp. 10, 12.

[5] J. W. C. Dougall in op. cit., 1933, p. 159.

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missioners for Foreign Missions which visited the Umbundu area in 1911 found some difficult problems from the great numbers of converts who had flocked to live on the mission stations. That, however, was a situation from which the missionaries had already been trying to recede for some time since 1897[1] when outstations were first undertaken by Abrão Ngulu and José Katito who went back to their own kin; and even more definitely since 1905 when Elende Station was opened with the idea that the only natives to reside there would be a small number of teachers and other leaders and boarding-school pupils who would afterwards return to their own families to form new centres of work.[2] That the village is a kinship unit has also been recognized and the description of the village of Ngendo showed that outstation work is being carried on *within* the kinship pattern of the village, and without doing violence to the Umbundu concept of social structure. The church elder and his villagers are accepted by the other villagers as kinsmen.[3] While it is evident that the way of life of the people of the school village differed from that of the elder's village, and the extent to which they mutually fulfilled kinship obligations toward each other may be questioned, nevertheless, the very fact that they mutually recognized ties of kinship and that they live side by side in harmony is of significance. It is also significant that the outstation leadership had come from within the kinship group. Likuluta Samikanjo, the elder, had attended boarding-school on a mission station, but only for a short time, and he did not pretend to be a teacher. In the beginning of the work an elder and also a teacher had been sent out from Elende Mission Station, but they had stayed only until the local people were able to carry on. The teacher at the time of my visits was Vitorino Mbambi. He belonged to the household of Likuluta's sister's son. The situation of the outstation of Ngendo is not unusual and could be duplicated many times by examples taken from various parts of the Umbundu country. It has been quite the thing for those individual Christians among the Ovimbundu who have become church elders to seek to establish villages or 'wards' of their own among their own kinsmen. Some teachers have also followed a similar bent, but if they were too young to receive the respect due to an elder of the Ovi-

[1] *Missionary Herald*, 1898, p. 108.
[2] A.B.C.F.M., *Report of the Deputation to the W.C.A. Mission*, 1911, p. 66.
[3] See *supra*, p. 29 f.

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mbundu, they have not, independent of some related elder, generally been very successful within the kinship group.

There is another factor in the situation of the Ngendo out-station which has tended to preserve the ties of kinship between the villagers of the two groups. The support of the two leaders is very largely found locally. Neither teacher nor elder has ever received more than a very occasional bonus from either the native church or the mission. They carry on by the help of the local people and through their own efforts. Dr. Gutmann holds that it is the schools which are most disruptive in their influence on African social structure because of their organization and the way in which they are carried on. A school, he says, should reflect the organic connexions of native society and enter into reciprocal relations with the folk group. Instead, he points out, this is being made impossible in East Africa by raising the salaries of the teachers until they are removed from the ordinary life of the rest of the people.[1] This cleavage between educated individuals who should be leaders and the masses of the people seems to have reached an even more markedly advanced stage in South Africa, according to Mrs. Hoernlé, Eiselen, and others who also seek remedies in strengthening or renewing the natural social bonds.[2] What I wish to emphasize is that the more important point is not how much salary a teacher or an elder may receive, but whether his appointment and the remuneration he receives tend to weaken the organic bonds of native society and to make difficult his relations with the folk group. Do the conditions of his position *ipso facto* place him or keep him outside the local group?

In seeking to lay among the Ovimbundu sure foundations for a truly indigenous Church, the importance of ties of kinship have probably been recognized by more than one missionary. The importance of stimulating local self-support both for its influence on building up the Church and on the development of indigenous leadership has long been stressed in mission circles, although it must be recognized that the principle has often been honoured rather in the breach than in the observance. While recognizing the value of these principles as long-term objectives, impatient of meagre immediate and visible 'results' or failing to realize how

[1] Gutmann, *Africa*, 1928, p. 443 f.

[2] e.g., see Eiselen in Schapera (ed.), *Western Civilization and the Natives of South Africa* (London, 1934), p. 81.

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463 *Wood-working*, including the following specializations:
462 Doors, windows, and their frames; coffins.
[322] Be[illegible] tables, chairs, &c.
Mortars, pestles, grinding-handles, and handles for various iron implements.
Stools, household utensils, carved images, staves, knobkerries, &c.
Drums and other musical instruments.
Canoes (dug-outs and coracles).
Rope-making, nets, and rudimentary weaving.
Thatching has its specialists although all men can thatch.
Fishing.
Bee-hunting, including the making of hives.
224 *Hunting*.
326 *Iron-smelting and smithing*.
791 *Medical-practice and Divination*.

The last three professions of the list are sacred and are entered under special conditions. They are often passed on by inheritance, but not always. All of them require sacrifice at certain stages, and when the enslavement of a spirit (*oku andeka*) is required, it is socially allowable. This seems to be the case with these offices as with those of the king and his ministers, both because of benefits accruing to the community in their exercise and also because of inherent danger to the individuals who exercise these functions.

177 The advent of European commerce, industry, and government
463 has created a number of types of employment for boys and young men, some of which entail prolonged absence from the village and a loosening or severing of kinship ties. Church and mission have
[797] also offered employment and have opened new opportunities for advance in place and in position.

861 Later childhood, then, is the period of technical training during which it is expected that a large amount of economic responsibility will be assumed. A child begins to own property even before this, and from the beginning of later childhood will be accounted legally responsible for his actions. It is recognized, however, that he should not be set tasks beyond the experience or ability of his age and that the full responsibility of adulthood will only come with marriage.

[538] *Umālēhē ka tonyōlā onguhu yuvala*;
A youth does not scrape the pig for the wedding feast;
pekonjo pa siala (*ovonya*).
on the hoof there remain (bristles).

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PLATE XIII

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Photo. D. G. Ridout

a. Baptismal service by the Rev. J. H. Cilūlū

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b. Umbundu wedding, new-style Ellade church in the background

[Facing p. 154]

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175x 177 439 *European Influences 1600–1770.* The first European contact of the Ovimbundu or of the 'proto-Ovimbundu' was without doubt for purposes of trade. The first record which we have of any such contact is in *Andrew Battell in Guinea.* About 1600 the governor, as the chief trader,[1] sent his prisoner Battell on trading expeditions along the Benguela coast. At the Bahia das Vaccas, the Ndombe, a cattle-keeping people, were met. They supplied the Europeans with produce,[2] including cattle and 'the famous sheep which have five quarters',[3] but *not* with the principal article of commerce, for as another of the conquistadores noted, 'In this kingdom there is [567] no slave trade, for it is not their custom to sell each other.'[4] This lack was soon supplied by 'proto-Ovimbundu' when, on the next voyage, Battell with the 'Portugals and Mulattos' found the encampment of 'Jagas' at the mouth of the Keve River, from Battell's account of which we have already quoted.[5] Although hardly recognized as such at the time, this, it seems, was the beginning of a long commercial partnership. As long as the 'Jagas' continued 'to take the spoil of the land', they supplied many slaves[6] for the trade, and after they settled they became traders both in direct European employ and on their own account.

439 567 797 175x The early European settlements in Africa were made with the hope of finding gold, but although that metal was not found in the Congo or Angola, black gold—human gold—soon proved to be equally profitable. There was a religious motive in the Portuguese discoveries, for from the time of Prince Henry the Navigator, his captains were bidden to 'plant the Cross on some new headland'. With every ship priests went out to convert the heathen. Some priests doubtless did good work but more of them, both individually and as members of the various orders, early came to the conclusion that the best way to convert the heathen was to sell

[1] The governors continued to engage in trade openly, until forbidden by the law of 17 Sept. 1721, and then, says Lopes de Lima, some complied, while others did not (*Ensaios*, part i, p. 84).

[2] A. Battell, p. 16.

[3] L. Cordeiro (ed.), 1574–1620, *Da Mina ao Cabo Negro segundo Garcia Mendes Castello Branco*, p. 34. The reference is to the fat-tailed sheep of the Hottentots and their neighbours. This is perhaps the first reference to it on the west coast.

[4] Ibid., 1593–1631, *Terras e minas africanas segundo Balthazar Rebello de Aragão*, p. 15.

[5] *Supra*, p. 182 f.

[6] Battell, pp. 20, 28; L. Cordeiro (ed.), 1574–1620, *Da Mina ao Cabo Negro segundo Garcia Mendes Castello Branco*, p. 17.

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him off where he would have the double benefit of regular work and Christian doctrine. In 1560 the Bishop of São Thomé wrote that 'he doubted that the people of the kingdom of Angola could be made Catholics unless the King would allow Trade'.[1] The slaves were baptized by the bishop by the boatload—rowed along the wharf of Luanda. The Jesuits profited greatly by the slave-trade, employing continuously three of their own ships. The religious motive was thus early swallowed up by the commercial and profit motive. Commerce was almost entirely taken up with the slave-trade. Four-fifths of the value of all exports were slaves.[2]

During the first hundred years of the Colony of Angola a million slaves were exported,[3] and three million would probably be a very conservative estimate of the total. As long as the over-sea slave traffic remained legal, little effort seems to have been made to develop other exports. In spite of protests and until 1832, ivory remained a monopoly of the royal treasury with regulations which discouraged its export. Such products as gum copal and orchilia only began to be exported in 1832–8. The only product of any importance which had also been exported in the time of the slave-trade was bees-wax. The slave-trade was first questioned in 1831, it was formally prohibited in 1836, but for many years enforcement was not accomplished. During the 250 years of the oversea slave-trade, Angola was in reality a dependency of Brazil.[4] When Brazil became independent, there was a movement in Benguela for union with that country.[5] So complete was the commercial domination of Brazil that Lisbon merchants had hardly anything to do with the Angolan trade. Lopes de Lima points out that the colony was also spiritually dominated by Brazil, and attributes the noteworthy religious decadence not only to the preoccupation of the clergy with the slave-trade, but also to the fact that from 1677 until 1845 the diocese of Angola and Congo was a part of the Metropolitan archdiocese of Bahia. The one great fact with regard to Angola of the sixteenth, seventeenth,

[1] It had been a royal monopoly and allowed only through Kongo. This letter is from the National Archives of the Torre do Tombo and quoted by Lopes de Lima, *Ensaios*, p. ix.

[2] Statistics given by Lopes de Lima, *Ensaios*, part i, p. 69 f.

[3] Cadornega, *História Geral das Guerras Angolanas* (1680–1), vol. iii, p. 254 (also quoted by Paiva Manso).

[4] Lopes de Lima, *Ensaios*, part i, p. 74; J. P. Oliveira Martins, *O Brasil e as Colónias Portuguezas*, p. 18.

[5] Lopes de Lima, op. cit., p. 127.

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The field of Umbundu reactions to cultural influences is a wide and an important one. Whatever contact the Ovimbundu or their progenitors may have had with the early Roman Catholic missions, little impress seems to have been made. The cross has been adopted as an object used in divination. Certain rites *seem* superficially to resemble the procession with the Host, but there is no indication of the assimilation of any ethical or conceptual element from Christianity during the early or formative period.[1]

Christianity first came to the Ovimbundu with the arrival of three missionaries at Bailundu in March 1881.[2] This was during the reign of Ekuikui and proved to be not the least important event of that reign. It is not within the scope of this study to give a history of the work of this Mission.[3] Its inception was planned as carefully as the times permitted, and although its subsequent development did not always proceed according to plan, its progress on the whole has been of an orderly nature, and it has produced noteworthy results which have been evaluated by deputations, by commissions, and by other visitors from time to time.[4]

The amount of interdenominational co-operation achieved in this field is worthy of note. There are the missions of the

[1] There were missions of the Jesuits, Capuchins, Carmelites, &c., in Angola from 1575 until about 1800, and there were priests as chaplains of the various presídios visited by the Ovimbundu during most of their history. Major Artur de Paiva, writing in 1890 (see *Boletim Soc. Geog. Lisboa*, 1895, p. 15 f.), describes the ruins of a Roman Catholic mission which he found in Cingolo (*Quingolo*) and which he judged to have dated from the end of the eighteenth century. I have found no reference in any historical work to the founding or operation of such a mission. It may have been built about 1770 when Governor Souza Coutinho ordained a number of towns in the Benguela hinterland, but the absence of specific reference to it seems to indicate that its existence was short.

[2] Messrs. Bagster, Sanders, and Miller sent out by the A.B.C.F.M. (Boston) to inaugurate a mission in Bihe, for that region was well known from the reputation of its traders, while Bailundu and other Umbundu regions had scarcely been heard of.

[3] For a brief summary of the early years see Strong, *The Story of the American Board*, pp. 336 ff.; also two articles in vol. 126 (1930) of the *Missionary Herald*, pp. 424–9; J. T. Tucker, *Drums in the Darkness*, gives a historical treatment of the work of this mission.

[4] There have been two 'deputations' sent to the West Central Africa Mission, in 1911 and in 1930, reports of which were issued by the A.B.C.F.M. Secretaries have visited the mission in 1924, '28, '30, '34, '38, and '46, and have given their impressions either in the *Missionary Herald* or in the *United Church Record and Missionary Review*. The report of the African Education Commission dealt with the work of this mission (T. J. Jones, *Education in Africa*, pp. 40, 239 f., 245 ff.). Among visitors who have written of this work see Nevinson, op. cit., chap. 7; J. Johnston, op. cit., chaps. 2, 3, and 4.

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A.B.C.F.M. (Congregational) and of the United Church of Canada, which for practical purposes work as one mission. This mission co-operates with several smaller organizations and with the Angola Evangelical Alliance. This prevailing spirit of co-operation has been noticed by travellers.[1] Another characteristic has been 'regard for plan, order, and "cultivation of the field" ', according to the African Education Commission.[2] Of yet greater significance has been the extent to which this mission has been able to seize upon and develop indigenous initiative. This showed in the early organization of the Church, which was encouraged to develop its own life from the start. The utilization of indigenous forms, especially of social organization, has been a source of real strength.

Further development in this direction is greatly to be desired. For such further development, and indeed for all orderly growth, more knowledge of Umbundu life and attitudes, and an orderly synthesis of knowledge already in hand is a *sine qua non*. It is hoped that the present writer's study may help to supply the lacunae. A recent Roman Catholic handbook for missionaries in Africa has urged that for each ethnic and linguistic region a mission should have specialists in each field of research.[3] Although this advice may be considered 'for the present a counsel of perfection', it is the direction toward which missions are working,[4] an ideal which they must realize in the not too distant future. If Protestant missions in Africa are to maintain the place of leadership which, because of their evangelistic zeal they have had, they cannot neglect this zeal for knowledge which is demanded to-day.

The Roman Catholic Diocese of Huambo (*Pères du Saint-Esprit*), which embraces most of the Umbundu territory, seems to have had no specialists of the type named above who have devoted themselves to a study of the Ovimbundu. Père Ernest Lecomte

[1] Compare Nevinson, op. cit., p. 140, 'there are two . . . notable orders at work in Angola—the American mission (Congregationalist) under the "American Board", and the English mission (Plymouth Brethren) under divine direction only. . . . Of all the sects that i have known, these are the only two that I have ever heard pray for each other, and that without condemnation.'

[2] Dr. T. J. Jones, op. cit., p. 40. Recommendations for further developments according to carefully considered plans were made by Dr. F. K. Sanders in his *Report of Deputation*, 1930 (A.B.C.F.M.).

[3] H. Dubois, *Le Répertoire Africain* (Rome, 1932), pp. 157 ff.

[4] See article by J. H. Oldham, 'The Educational Work of Missionary Societies', in *Africa*, Jan. 1934, p. 47 f.

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797 795 produced an Umbundu grammar,[1] but does not seem to have published material of an ethnological nature. Père Keiling (who died in 1937) and Père Batteix were both listed in *Le Répertoire Africain* as specializing in the 'Ganguella' language.[2] The Umbundu missions of this Diocese date from 1890 (Caconda), 1896 (Bailundo), 1912 (Cuando), and later. From early days this mission has had quite evident political aspects—from 1889 when a military expedition was sent against the 'Ganguella Soba[3] Tchiuaco' to re-establish Père Lecomte and the Cubango mission station which had been attacked and expelled,[4] up to the recent government charters and mission statutes, which heavily subsidize the religious work of the Roman Catholic missions in Angola. The constitution of the Portuguese Republic decrees the separation of Church and State and full religious liberty. The large subsidies and other special privileges given to the Roman Catholic Church in Angola, however, create difficulties beyond the mere allocation of tax-money. In other parts of Africa the Roman Catholic missions co-operate with the Protestant in many spheres of action. It is to be regretted that such co-operation seems not to be desired in Angola. Is it a sort of monopolistic political aim which keeps the Roman Catholic missionaries of Angola aloof? The rare instances in which a more friendly spirit has been manifested only add point to the question. The appreciative and co-operative spirit shown by Padre J. Alves Correia[5] may be cited.

797 178 754 Roman Catholics and Protestants have both been very successful from a numerical standpoint.[6] Success in building a truly indigenous Church, or in providing it with suitable and capable leadership from its own ranks, is another question hardly to be judged from statistics. More elusive still is the question whether,

[1] *Boletim Soc. Geog. Lisboa*, 1897. This grammar has gone through several editions and is still in use. The orthography is evidently intended to facilitate the use of the language by one whose native tongue is French and rather complicates matters for an African, and, indeed, for anyone whose language is other than French.

[2] H. Dubois, op. cit., p. 340.

[3] *Soba*, a native chief (from *Soma*).

[4] *Benguella*, op. cit., 1891, pp. 10 ff.

[5] See his books, *A Larguesa do Reino de Deus* (Lisboa, 1932); *A Vida Mais Alta*, &c.

[6] Roman Catholics have about 280,000 and Protestants about 140,000 adherents among the Ovimbundu, according to the census taken in 1940 (Colónia de Angola, *Censo Geral da População*, vol. ix; Luanda, Imprensa Nacional, 1943).

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or how far, Umbundu life may have been actually penetrated by a Christian spirit in matters of faith and morals. It is not surprising that after less than seventy years, or very much less in most regions, belief in witchcraft should still have a strong hold upon the minds of the Ovimbundu. Somewhat disturbing, however, is the fact that according to the latest observations, belief in and the hold of witchcraft seem at the present time to be increasing. These observations tally with what seems to be taking place in other parts of Africa.[1] According to observers in Africa and in other parts of the world the hold of witchcraft upon a people seems to increase with a decrease of security, whether relating to the economic basis of life, to health and disease, or to life's religious undergirding. In such a case, it is clearly the duty of all agencies concerned to co-operate for the removal of the cause of insecurity. Here the chief agencies are government, commerce, and missions. It is to be hoped that for the good of the Ovimbundu they may be brought together.

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[1] See *Africa*, vol. viii, no. 4, which number is devoted to studies of witchcraft. See especially the article, 'A Modern Movement of Witch Finders', by A. I. Richards, pp. 418 ff.

plate of meal and earnestly asked questions. Lukuma was the name of the father of the dead boy. The old man who addressed the corpse was the brother of Lukuma's mother. Ngonga explained that the woman addresses the corpse, "to give him sense so that he will not be ashamed to tell all about it"; that is, about the manner of his death. The old man said to the corpse, "*Etali* ["today"] *omolãngé* ["my boy"] *tu yongola* ["we want"] *oku* ["you"] *tu* ["us"] *sanjuisa* ["make glad"] *o tu* ["to us"] *sapuila* ["tell"] *muele* ["indeed"] *cosi* ["all"] *ca* ["that"] *ku upa* ["you take"] *kilu lieve* ["from earth"]. 764 602

The pause which followed a question was intended to give the corpse time to reply. It is supposed that if the answer is in the negative the spirit causes the pole to swing slightly backward. An affirmative answer is given if the spirit makes the pole swing forward. The old man demanded, "Is it witchcraft that hates us and killed you? If it is witchcraft, come to the front." I could see no swing of the corpse on the pole, but Ngonga said that he could see the coffin swing backward to indicate a negative answer. I suspected that the interrogator of the corpse gave a signal to the bearers, indicating that the coffin was to be made to swing, but I could see no signal or movement of the coffin. While the corpse was interrogated, males among the spectators spoke to the old man who was asking the questions. Ngonga explained that these men were suggesting questions which might be asked respecting the cause of death. A witness in the crowd would say, "You have forgotten this," or "You have forgotten that." 764 787

The next question was one that calls for a detailed explanation. *Sambulu* is a bad spirit which is able to cause death when crying women and children offend him by their wailing. The mother of the dead boy was a slave whose husband was absent from the village for a time. During this period the master of the woman threatened to sell her; consequently she went to a Christian mission with her children, one of whom was the boy now deceased. The woman and children were crying, hence the possibility that the evil *Sambulu* had at that time entered the person of the boy whose funeral rites were now in progress. The woman had visited the mission a year ago, but this lapse of time apparently made no difference to the possibility that *Sambulu* had entered one of the children. The spirit made a negative answer to this ingenious suggestion and eventually indicated that death was due to a "bad belly." If no answer is returned affirmatively, recourse is made to the medicine-man, who carries out divination. The details of this method are described [776] [797]

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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and the European population greatly increased.[28] In some areas at this time a confused situation arose, in which 'robber barons', white and black, tyrannized over chiefs and villagers and engaged in the still vigorous slave trade, which now had acquired a few disguises on the coast.[29]

In 1911 the rubber trade ended, and about the same time slavery and the slave trade were effectively suppressed.[30] From this time onwards, too, civil administration began to be effective and the Benguela Railway became the most important link between the coast and the interior.[31] The trade disappeared, powers of the chiefs declined. The missions, both Catholic and Protestant, which had relatively little influence during the rubber trade period, gained more and more converts.[32]

2. *Ethnography*

Between the Ovimbundu and the sea lie the Hanya, the Nganda, and the Tjisanji tribes of whom little is known except that the Hanya and Nganda seem to be culturally related to the Ovimbundu.[33] To the south are the Nyaneka-Humbi group, cattle-keeping peoples who are culturally and linguistically related to the Ovimbundu, but who did not participate in the trade.[34] To the east lie the Ngangela[35], the Luimbi, and the

[28] Childs, pp. 210–11.

[29] For an account of Umbundu country at this time see H. W. Nevison, *A Modern Slavery*, New York, 1906. In Gumba I was told that Mutu-ya-Kevela the leader of the 1902–3 revolt had raided villages for slaves but that Samakaka whom Childs (p. 22) describes as a robber baron was spoken of favourably.

[30] Slavery had been legally suppressed from 1878. The slaves were called by other names but no effective change was made till 1910. See A. Bastos, *Monografia de Catumbella* in *Bol. Soc. Geog. Lisboa*, 1910 (pp. 74–81, 105–9, 141–55, 180–5, 223–8, 251–5, 279–5).

[31] Childs, p. 228.

[32] Ibid., pp. 220–23. Personal information.

[33] Ibid., p. 8.

[34] On these peoples see Estermann, *Etnografia do Sudoeste de Angola*, Vol. II.

[35] A tribe using this word as the root of the tribal name is to be found to the south-east of Umbundu country in the area round Vila Artur de Paiva. Padre A. Van Horrik, formerly of the Missão Católica de Cubango, tells me that the map contained in M. McCulloch, *The Southern Lunda and Related Peoples*, (London, 1951) should show the Ngangela as occupying much of the area actually assigned to the Mbwela and the south-eastern Ovimbundu. Mbwela does not seem to be the name any tribe uses for itself (Private information, Estermann and Van Horrik).

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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which I leave in Portuguese since there is no convenient English equivalent) ruled by an *administrador*, and the *concelho* in turn divides into *postos* (posts) each in the charge of a *chefe de posto*. There is no specific limit either of population or of geographical extension for these units, and in actual fact very great disparities exist, despite the frequent revision of boundaries.[8]

M 797

Ovimdundu are found within four of the Catholic dioceses of Angola, though the diocese of Nova Lisboa is largely Umbundu as regards its African population. The Catholic missions to the Ovimbundu have been largely in the hands of the Congregação do Espirito Santo, and it is in this part of Angola that their work has been most intensive.[9] An effort has been made to build up a local clergy, and by 1956 there were some thirty-two priests of Umbundu origin. There is an official distinction between the Missions, which work among the 'native' population, and the Parishes, which are responsible for the 'civilised' population, that is all Portuguese citizens, whether white, of mixed race, or African; however, in practice natives come to parish churches, and 'civilized' persons come to Mission Churches.

A 797

M 797

Most of the Protestant missionary work[10] among the Ovimbundu has been achieved by a joint effort of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (Congregationalists) and the United Church of Canada, though the Swiss Mission and the Plymouth Brethren should also be mentioned. The headquarters of the American–Canadian mission at Dondi includes a seminary for pastors, a boys' secondary school, a girls' boarding-school, the printing press, a hospital, and a leper settlement.

The American–Canadian mission has for various reasons been confined to the Ovimbundu though catechists from its stations have settled among neighbouring peoples; hence the Native Church it has founded is the only all-Umbundu social grouping that exists. Ovimbundu Protestants do, however,

[8] Galvão and Selvagem, pp. 235–40.

[9] For the origins of the Catholic missions among the Ovimbundu see Luis Keiling *Quarenta Anos de Africa*, Braga 1934.

[10] For the history of the Protestant missions see J. R. Tucker, *Drums in the Darkness*, Toronto and New York 1927, and *Carrie of Chissemba*, Toronto 1945. Childs, pp. 220–1.

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meet other Angolan Protestants through such occasions as the Congress of Evangelical Youth, held at Malange in 1955.

While the Catholic missions are not tied to the Ovimbundu in the same way as the Protestants the number of their adherents falls sharply when the Umbundu boundary is reached. Responsiveness to missionary activity is a mark of the Ovimbundu today just as was participation in the caravan trade. Indeed, the main common possession of the Ovimbundu, the Umbundu language, is, as a literary vehicle and object of study, almost a missionary monopoly. Both missions produce a monthly magazine in Umbundu and Portuguese, and several books of a religious or educational nature have been published with Umbundu on one side and Portuguese on the other as legally required. The dictionaries and grammars are almost all of missionary authorship.

Acceptance of Christianity has also significance for Umbundu self-consciousness. The majority of Ovimbundu have come under missionary influence in varying degrees, and conversion to Christianity makes Ovimbundu feel closer to Europeans and superior to other African peoples. I have heard African priests claim that the Ovimbundu are the best people in Angola, largely on this ground, and at Lobito and Luanda tensions have been felt in the Protestant community between Ovimbundu and members of other tribes.[11]

The Ovimbundu live under economic, political, and religious systems introduced and controlled by Europeans. Yet trader, official, and missionary are all dependent on the Ovimbundu. The 'civilized' and the native live in symbiosis, and the two basic problems of this study are the nature of this symbiosis, and its relation to the social system of the native population themselves. To see this symbiosis in perspective it is necessary to describe what occupations and statuses Africans can hold.

The strict segregation of black and white found in South Africa is alien to Portuguese traditions. There is a lack of almost all forms of public segregation between white and non-white.[12]

[11] Personal information.

[12] In the racial discrimination that does exist the mulattoes generally count as whites. It is said to be difficult for a full African to obtain accommodation in a Luanda hotel, but the situation for mulattoes is quite different.

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While there are both African and white truck-drivers, this tends to be a speciality of the mulattoes. Business and professional men are usually white, though there are occasional Cape Verdians and Goan professional men, and in old-established cities like Luanda and Benguela there are mulattoes of high social status. There are no African *chefes de posto* in the Highland, though I have heard of an African holding an important position in the Treasury at Luanda.[17] The most significant section of those Ovimbundu who have received education are the Catholic priests, and the Protestant pastors because of their number, their social role, and their existence as groups.

There are, as I have said, some 32 African priests, and from 60 to 70 or so pastors. In the Catholic Church the most significant distinction is that between priest and layman, as can be seen by the courteous, even respectful manner Europeans adopt towards African priests; among the Protestants the significant distinction is rather that between the American and Canadian missionaries and the Ovimbundu members of the native church including the pastors.

While the white priests are members of a religious order and the African priests are not, both have similar duties and share a common life. The white and African priests eat together, pass their period of recreation together, and may alternate such duties as saying Mass, and hearing confessions. Both European and African clergy rely for their keep on the superior of the Mission. Three African priests have become superiors of missions.[18]

With the Protestants there is a division of functions, the missionaries providing supervisory and specialized services, such as agricultural advice, education, and medical work, and the Native Church being responsible for village work. Financially, this division involves missionary salaries being paid by the mission boards,, and those of the pastors and the village school teachers by the Ovimbundu Protestants. Socially there is less contact between missionaries and pastors than between black and white priests. Many pastors live away from the missions at pastorate centres. The missionaries eat and pass their spare time with their families, and among themselves talk English,

[17] Private information.
[18] Personal observations.

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A 797 198 switching to Umbundu or Portuguese for addressing an African, whereas Portuguese is the language used at the Catholic missions even between non-Portuguese.

A M 797 The African Catholic priests then have approximate equality and identity of status with their white confreres within the hierarchic framework of the diocese of Nova Lisboa; the Ovimbundu pastors lack this equality and identity but instead possess greater independence and opportunities for leadership within the Umbundu Native Church, which functions as a partly autonomous body.[19] The difference in functions of the priests and pastors is related to the ultimate aims of missionary action; for the Catholic missions the establishment of a local clergy is part of the complete incorporation of Ovimbundu into the universal Church; for the Protestants the establishment of a local clergy is part of the building up of a totally independent local church.

M 121 I attempt later in this work to show what roles the missions play in social life among the Ovimbundu and in the relations A M 797 563 between the 'civilized' and native population. Here it should be noted that it is the missions rather than commerce or the Government which have opened status-giving positions to the Ovimbundu. The clergy have higher statuses in the total Angolan society than do any other of the *assimilados*. They combine this high status *vis-à-vis* the Europeans with leadership in groupings which include the ordinary villagers, unlike the various welfare societies in which the *assimilados* associate.

000 So much then for the general pattern of cities, communications, and trains, of administration, missionaries, and traders. M 181 175 I now turn to the particular features of the neighbourhood where I lived. Bimbe is said to derive from the name of a princess (Mbimbi) who ruled as a vassal of the king of Bailundo.[20] Here at the beginning of this century Samakaka, a

[19] The missions provide supervision and specialist services including agricultural instruction, community development, education, and health. Village work and actual pastoral activity is the responsibility of the Native Church. For an account of such specialist services see M. F. Cushmann, *Missionary Doctor in Africa*, New York, 1944 and A. Strangeways in *African Women* (June 1956).

M [562] [20] Information obtained locally from 'civilised' people. Princesses were very rare among the Ovimbundu, though Childs notes that Sambos (Sambu) had a woman ruler early in its history (p. 178).

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mines are widely known to people. Although Ovimbundu Protestants are often referred to as 'America' a word used both as an adjective and a plural noun, they (that is, of course villagers, not educated men such as the pastors or teachers) have no clear idea of the existence of, still less any identification with, the United States.

Like the other parts of Umbundu country Bimbe has experienced much missionary activity. The Catholic Mission of Bimbe has had a great deal of influence, the catechists teaching catechism and leading daily prayers in the villages, which the priests visit once or twice a year, and at such feasts as Christmas and Easter great crowds attend the Church services.

The Protestants depend on the pastoral centres of Henge and Luvemba, which are regularly visited by a missionary from Bailundo. Both here and throughout the Highland Catholics are more numerous than Protestants, but in some sub-chiefdoms Protestants are in the majority, notably in Kapali and round Henge. I have already mentioned the differences between Catholic and Protestant missionary organization. At the local level a number of differences can be noticed, in such matters as the neater, more planned appearance of the Protestant villages which have far more rudimentary[28] (pre-primary) schools than the Catholics. These schools are entirely financed by the Protestant villagers; among the Catholics while there is a desire for more schooling there is a lack of the drive that the Protestants show. A *chefe de posto* said that Protestants spoke Portuguese better than Catholics; and the Protestants are more 'Europeanizing' in their outlook.

The *chefes de posto* visit each sub-chiefdom only once a year. As the relations between the *chefes* and the people are usually concerned with the gathering of fines and taxes, the recruitment of labour, and the arrest and punishment of offenders, it is not surprising that the people regard the *chefe* with fear and mistrust. Yet there is a genuine acceptance of Portuguese rule. Thus villagers sing the Portuguese National Anthem at parties, the Portuguese flag is a meaningful symbol, and there is a belief

[28] Rudimentary education is a course intended for natives at a pre-primary level. It includes teaching of Portuguese, and also some instruction in agriculture and hygiene.

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565 Their higher social status limits their contacts with the villagers without giving them positions of direct control. Hence they are not leaders in the native social system. They are significant for
565 the culture of village Ovimbundu since they are one of the
177 channels for the communication of European culture traits, and their very existence indicates the possibility of becoming 'equal with the white man"[21]

797 More significant than the *assimilados* as a means of linking the
177 Ovimbundu with the whites, of the transmitting of cultural values, and of the creation of new statuses and groupings at village level, are the missions.

128 In the following chapters, the composition and degree of solidarity of the sub-chiefdom, and village, the network of kinship ties, the choice of marriage partners, and the means of social control will be discussed in their operation among the Ovimbundu who are inescapably tied to Portuguese rule, to world markets, and to the spiritual authority of the missions.

[21] I have the impression that in the cities there is some feeling that the status of assimilado does not give real equality but simply exemption from such burdens as road work.

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with primary and possibly some secondary education, the clerks who have primary schooling, and the policemen, who are often illiterate. The police are locally recruited and are provided with their keep, from the farm attached to the post, and with uniforms. They are usually—by no means always—illiterate. The interpreter, clerks, and police tend to identify themselves with the *chefe* as against the people; however, a policeman may be influenced in his relations with the villagers by gifts and friendship.

The size of population of sub-chiefdoms varies. The 1950 census gave the total 'non-civilized' population of the Bailundo *concelho* as being 246,045, and the number of sub-chiefdoms as 82,[9] that is, an average of 3,000 individuals per sub-chiefdom. The *chefe* of Bimbe told me in August 1956 that Gumba had 800 taxpayers, and Chicunda had 700. Putting the proportion of taxpayers as 1 to 6 (on the basis of Epalanga proportions) this gives 4,800 as the population figure for Gumba and 4,200 as the figure for Chicunda. Even if the proportion of 1 to 5 be taken as the proportion between taxpayers and total population this gives us 4,000 as the figure for Gumba and 3,500 as the figure for Chicunda. I do not know what the local density of population is; in the Bailundo *concelho* as a whole it is 16–17 individuals per square kilometre.[10]

The chief and government headmen are the main channel of conveying demands and orders from the post to the villagers. They receive in return the remission of their taxes. Their dependence on the post is not, however, sufficient to give them a position of marked superiority in their locality for the following reasons. They are unable to control all relations between the post and the people; anybody who has a dispute on hand may take it direct to the post. In village life their influence can always be counterbalanced by that of the catechists and 'elders of the school' whose contact with the missions is much closer than that of the chiefs and government headmen with the post. They also lack economic resources; the exemption from taxes (which the Catholic catechists share)

[9] See Gálvao and Selvagem, pp. 384–3. For Angolan population density see Egerton, pp. 36–37.

[10] My own estimate from figures given by Galvão and Selvagem.

178 621 for individuals to build up large villages—thus Simbwyikoka encouraged people to settle at Mwekalia to make it a large village. It may also be suggested that the power of the village 622 headmen was to some extent linked with the power of the chief, since the headmen were associated politically with the chief, and would from this, tend to gain authority in their dealings with their fellow villagers. The village headmen also lacked any real competition from other types of leadership. Mbati had kept relations with the post in his own hands, and there were therefore no government headmen. The first catechist had arrived in Mbati's village in 1928, but cannot have met with [797] much lasting success as there are few baptized Christians over thirty-five in Gumba.

622 554 Other factors at the time strengthening the position of the village headmen were the low rate of labour migration[18] and the fact that practically every man over forty at the time of Simbwyikoka's accession had participated in the rubber trade. This meant that many of the best known caravan leaders were still in full vigour, and enjoyed a prestige based on the first-hand knowledge of the middle-aged and older men.

178 Between this period of the middle thirties and the beginning of my own fieldwork twenty years had passed and many changes had taken place. The status of the chief had sharply (634) declined and he was now assisted by the four government headmen. Every village except the chief's village had a Catholic or Protestant catechist, and there had been a marked trend [797] towards learning catechism in preparation for baptism, which had begun about 1946. Hence the catechetical school was usually attended by the majority of under twenty-five's in the village.

621 Agnatic kinship had ceased to be the principle of village membership. Nor can it be said that headmen build up villages by getting people to settle at a particular spot. It is not always easy even to find the headman, village population is not very stable, and a man can settle with any category of kin.

622 124 To discover the traditional headman required careful phrasing of questions. When I visited a village and asked for the *osekulu yimbo* (the traditional phrase for the village headman) I

[18] Ibid., p. 214.

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622 villagers a certain, not very marked, respect, which may be increased by such factors as kinship ties between him and them, and his personal qualities.

621 Nor is the village itself clearly defined as a social unit. It does not possess any corporate rights over fishing and hunting sites, or control access to firewood gathering. A man may hold land in two villages. It is rarely that a village acts or is treated as a unit. The two main occasions on which the village is thus 'represented' are at marriages and in the context of the catechetical school. The party which goes from the bridegroom's village to the bride's represents her village, to the other village; [628] at the wedding feast food is given out on large basket plates, one for each village represented among the guests.

797 The role of the catechetical school as representative of the village as a whole will be discussed in another chapter; here it should be noted that the ceremonial reception of visiting missionaries by the 'school people' of the village has been evidently copied to some extent from the welcome given to the bridegroom's party, and this has in turn copied certain features from the welcoming of missionaries—notably the use of speeches in Portuguese.

361 The hamlets[20] and isolated households do not indicate a modernizing 'individualistic' trend away from village life, since 'conservative' and 'progressive' people are to be found in both units of residence. The Ovimbundu, whether educated 621 or illiterate, when talking about themselves (particularly in 829 comparison with the Kimbundu of Northern Angola) emphasize that they are a village-dwelling people, and for them the real values of village life seem to be the sociability and mutual help that a man living among his kin can enjoy. By settling in a village one indicates where the pull of kinship ties is strongest rather than any particular allegiance to the village headman.

[20] I use this term for a settlement with less than four households.

763 Mwehombo, and elder of the school, a post he would certainly have lost had this come to the ears of the missionaries. Attitudes to the verdict are interesting. Sapapula assured me that [754] Mwehombo had killed many people by sorcery both sons and sisters' sons; Luanga did not see the contradiction which I pointed out to him of his saying both that Mwehombo was good and that he had practised sorcery; Gonçalve, Mwehombo's son, appeared sceptical of the verdict, as did Aspirante, Sapapula's sister's son who was married to a daughter of Mwehombo's half-brother, Wayangu.

764 The verdict did not prevent Mwehombo having an impressive funeral. He was buried according to his wishes in the traditional hammock placed in the circular grave, instead of the modern coffin placed in the modern oblong grave. As a caravan-leader he was buried by the track to Chicunda at the point where the path to Epalanga branched off. A low thatched [237] covering was erected over his grave with the horns of the beast killed at the funeral on it. In 1956 Gonçalve and Pedro Nendi, son of Mbati and therefore a cross-cousin of Mwehombo, replaced this by a concrete memorial in the form of a cross with the base inscribed in Portuguese 'Simon Mwehombo Native of Gumba Great Man died 13th January 1955.'

797 Thus Mwehombo had twice undergone conversion from pagan to Christian, once as he lay dying and once after death. 754 His posthumous conviction for sorcery affected neither the form of funeral, nor the continued residence of his kin in the village. His conviction for sorcery was a reflection of the social strains in which he had been involved, not the opening of another cycle of conflict. The kinship cores are not segments opposing one 621 another as in a lineage system; they possess no clearly defined 571 boundaries[10] or continuing existence in time. Their existence is dependent on the persons around whom the cores have formed, and on their deaths they lack any integrating principles. Mwehombo dead, his kinsfolk mostly found no objection in continuing to live in the village where his rival now lived as undisputed traditional headman.

621 There is no word in Umbundu for these groupings. The

[10] For example I have included José in the Mwehombo-Mbati kinship core, on the basis of association, but he came to the village through a tie with Sapapula.

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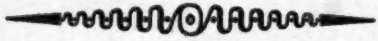
CHAPTER VI

THE CATECHETICAL SCHOOL



797 Both the Catholic and Protestant missions have, in order to provide religious teaching and leadership at the village level, made use of catechists whose responsibility it is to prepare people for baptism and children for Communion by teaching them catechism, to lead the village people in prayers, and to maintain contact with the missions. There are a number of differences between the roles of the Catholic and the Protestant catechists. As most of the Christians in my immediate neighbourhood were Catholics, I shall deal in this chapter with the Catholic catechists, though I shall indicate some of the differences which the Protestant organization shows.

[166] In the early days large numbers of Christians settled round the missions. The first Catholic converts were slaves purchased from traders by the missionaries and settled in villages near the missions. While the Protestant missions did not do this, they were somewhat embarrassed by the large crowds of converts who settled round mission stations.[1] The missions expanded by sending out catechists who gathered converts. At one time the 797 practice was for the Christians to settle in a 'school village', 361 which was in fact a hamlet partially separated from the rest of the village from which its membership was recruited. This is still found in some Gumba villages. In other villages, however, there is no geographical division between Christian and pagan, and the school may occupy a central position in the lay-out of the village. There are as yet no purely Catholic villages in Gumba. These are established by the missionaries when there is considered to be a significant number of Catholic married couples. This pattern is followed even on the outskirts of Nova Lisboa.

[1] Childs, p. 66.

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THE CATECHETICAL SCHOOL

The catechist is appointed by the mission, though there is a fairly common tendency for him to have relatives in the village where he is catechist. It is often the case that somebody who is already recognized by the mission as qualified to be a catechist, that is, has a good knowledge of the catechism, prayers and hymns, may be asked by some kinsman to come to his village to teach catechism, and his acceptance needs only to be confirmed by the mission. Even in Gumba, notable for the relative strength of its surviving paganism and the relatively slow rate of conversion, every village except the chief's capital and the hamlets had a catechetical school.

The catechist does not receive a salary from the mission. He is, however, exempt from the personal tax, and is not liable for road-work or contract labour. He may be able to persuade his flock to cultivate a field for him, and the school itself, and perhaps a house for visiting missionaries, will be built by the school people. The other representative of the school is the elder of the school, whose responsibility is to arrange for the catechist's settling down in the village, and his getting on well with the local people. This office had particular importance in the days when a catechist might be sent from the mission to a region quite different from his own. Nowadays, when so many catechists have kin in the villages where they settle, the balance of influence between catechist and elder of the school will depend on their personalities. In one village the elder of the school may be pushing and shrewd, and the catechist may be rather under his influence; in another an active, enterprising, catechist may make the elder of the school his assistant. The elder of the school is not exempt from taxes, but is not called on for labour service.

The school people may include both baptized people and catechumens. For both the word *vakwasikola* (they of the school) applies and the former may be called Christians, and these will sometimes object to non-baptized people using Christian names. The period of catechumenate is three years, but people who learn catechism quickly are given baptism in two years. There are a certain number of peripheral school people who may turn up at the school for prayers but who are not actively learning the catechism. There are other people who do not

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797 usually come to the school but say they want to be baptized. Many people who would have to be classified as pagans are people with Christian names who at one time attended catechism classes and prayers, and who may very occasionally turn up to some service, for instance the Corpus Christi procession at the Mission.

Adult and adolescent converts may only receive baptism at the mission. The children of Christian parents are baptized by priests on their visits to the villages; it is the catechists' duty to teach them catechism in preparation for their first confession and communion which should take place when they are about seven to ten years old. The missionaries frequently complain of the inadequacies of the catechists as teachers of doctrine. Few of the old pupils of the elementary school at the Bimbe mission become catechists, as there is no pay attached to it. Some, certainly, of the catechists are devoted and intelligent men, and a few have a real gift for speaking in public.

Some catechists attempt to teach their pupils the three Rs; and a catechist ready to teach reading, writing and counting will find a number of boys eager to learn. There are about half a dozen 'rudimentary', that is pre-primary, schools dependent on the Bimbe mission, none of which is in Gumba or Chicunda, and a primary school at the mission itself. Learning to read and write is not confined to Christians; some pagans in [212] Epalanga could write their names, and I was told that among contract labourers on plantations those who were literate would teach those who were not in the dormitories at night.

Apart from religious instruction, the catechists have the duty of leading the people in morning and evening prayers at the school. These prayers are in Umbundu with occasionally a hymn in Portuguese. On Sunday mornings there is a longer set of prayers and hymns, some in Latin taken from the Mass, held about ten o'clock. Only a few people turn up for morning prayers, considerably more to evening prayers, and nearly everybody who can be considered a 'school person' comes to the Sunday gathering.

The evening gatherings for prayers may be used as opportunities for announcing news—e.g. the approaching visit of a missionary. More usually they are followed and sometimes

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More usually they are followed and sometimes

preceded by singing, and dancing. There are a certain number 797
of 'school' songs as distinct from hymns, which are semi- or 533
non-religious in nature, which are taught by the catechist and are sung on these occasions with other Umbundu traditional songs. There seems to be little composition of songs by present day Ovimbundu nor do they know popular Portuguese songs.

The school itself, the centre of these activities, is generally 797
built of adobe bricks in the shape of a church. In any village [34b]
where there is a fair number of school people it will be the largest building in the village and even in villages of mixed Christian and pagan population the school building tends to be in the centre of the village, a topographical reflection of the social significance of the catechist and the catechetical school. In the school men and women are separated, men on the right, women on the left, a custom also found in some Angolan parish churches.

The catechist's presence is a mark of the identity of the 797
village. The catechetical school is the only institution which 621
groups people of different domestic groups on a village-wide basis, and in which people participate in a wider set of social relations on a village and not on an individual basis, as people are linked to kinsmen, or to the post or to an employer. One can and does associate oneself with a village if one does not belong geographically to it but simply attends its school. Thus Fernando considered himself as belonging to the village of Ngolo Catolica whose catechetical school he attended, although his house was well away from the main village, being much nearer the Protestant village of Vila Graça, where indeed he had kinsmen. When I asked a woman where she lived she replied by giving the name of the village catechist. The only occasions on which a group of people represent one village *vis-à-vis* another are in connection with the travels of missionaries, and in the wedding feasts, which will be described in another chapter.

A missionary on leaving one village for another has his 797
luggage carried by the school people of the village where he 484
has been staying, who will march singing, with perhaps a boy banging on a drum. When they get to the next village they will be greeted at the entrance into the village by the catechist and

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his people, who will be neatly dressed and lined up. The welcoming catechist will deliver a speech in Portuguese, and will conclude with three Vivas one, say, for the Bishop of Nova Lisboa, one for the Mission, and one for the visiting priest. These may be varied—I have heard a Viva for Diogo Cão, the Portuguese navigator who discovered Angola. This formal welcome to a procession seems copied from the welcome given to the party from the bride's village when they arrive at the bridegroom's village; and this welcome has in turn copied elements—speeches in Portuguese and calls for Vivas—from the reception of missionaries. Then both parties singing and dancing will proceed to the house where the priest is to stay. The people of the welcoming village should have taken over his luggage at the point where they met his party—if they have not, his carriers will complain vigorously.

It is the catechist's responsibility to get his people to provide the customary gifts of a chicken or two, and possibly eggs and bananas to the visiting priest. He must explain the spiritual state of the school people to the missionary, notably telling him if any of the Christians have married according to pagan custom. It is to him that the priest will direct criticisms on the state of the school building or on the lack of catechetical knowledge of the people. The catechist has also the obligation to visit the mission occasionally during the year—how often depends on nearness, on circumstances and on his own enthusiasm. The most popular times for visiting the mission are Christmastime, the New Year, Easter, and Corpus Christi, when the catechist may go with a number of the school people, though individual Christians also go alone. A catechist will also visit the mission when he has some catechumens who are sufficiently advanced to be tested on their religious knowledge. He has also a general responsibility to report to the mission the activities of diviners, or Christians who have married polygamously. He may also be responsible for referring other disputes to the mission, or for obtaining a letter of commendation to the post in some dispute.

The catechist, then, does not have much authority of his own; his personal role is that of a teacher and leader of prayers. He can, however, invoke the authority of the mission, which

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even in non-religious matters has influence with the post, and can through this influence effect the arrest of diviners and baptized polygamists, or intervene on the side of somebody called before the post.

A catechist may be removed from his position by the mission for incompetence, or for moral failings, such as unchastity or rum-brewing on an extensive scale. He may also become involved in quarrels with his people, who may say that he is bad-tempered, while he will say that they are disobedient. Such a dispute will be referred to the mission where an attempt will be made to persuade the two parties to sink their differences. If this fails, the catechist may return to his old village, but may become a catechist elsewhere if the circumstances have not been such as to destroy the mission's confidence in him.

There are other ways in which the catechist represents his village. The post may impose certain responsibilities; thus the catechist may be told to record all live births in the village for the purposes of official statistics. The catechist will try and keep on good terms with the policemen who live at the post and visit the villages. The catechist of Epalanga gave a chicken to a visiting policeman and explained that this was a general practice in order that catechists visiting the post for the annual check on their papers should find a policeman who would be good to them. However, a catechist will object to attempts to associate him with the more unpopular activities of the post. Thus when a policeman came to the Epalanga catechist and asked him to help in recruiting labourers, the latter was rather angry. 'My work is to teach doctrine, not to seize people.' Similarly, when visiting a Protestant village once I asked where the government headman lived and was told in rather an irritated tone, 'No, we have nothing of the post here. We have only the school.'

The sense of responsibility which the catechist feels for his village is sometimes counterbalanced by his lack of effective power. Thus in the dry season of 1956 a bridge near Epalanga which was crossed by the track to Chicunda was broken down. Pedro Chiquete Santos thought that this might bring punishment on the villagers, and accordingly appealed for volunteers to repair it. He also asked Jeremias, the Protestant catechist of

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797 Simbwyikoka, to help. Jeremias turned up with three of his
571 pupils; Pedro, however, had no response. Returning at night to Epalanga, he complained of the attitude of his people, not so much that they had not been ready to help but that they had spread the rumour that he was going to complain to the post. He insisted that he had not said that he would complain to the post; what he had said was that a white labour-recruiter who had had difficulty with the bridge would complain to the post. The attitudes expressed by the catechist are interesting; he feels a responsibility for the village, he has not a corresponding authority to get people to do something which is concerned with the village, but not with the school, but is indignant at the suggestion that he would be willing to denounce his fellow villagers to the post. Indeed, cases arose, which will be described in later chapters, in which a catechist and an elder of the school took an active part in opposing a domineering government headman.

One evening two Kimbundu men, from a different geographical and tribal area, arrived in Epalanga with an unusual story. They had been travelling in the company of a European employer who had suddenly gone off, leaving them without money. This was at a town on the main Luanda–Nova Lisboa road. They had then set out travelling through the villages relying on the hospitality of the catechists to get to the Missão Católica de Bimbe, where they hoped to obtain money to pay bus fares back home. I do not know why they took this way; perhaps as missionary effort to the immediate north of Umbundu country lacks intensity there were no helpful catechists linking the place where they were stranded to their home. What is interesting is that they could rely on the hospitality of the catechists, although they had no kin or tribal bond to appeal to. Here again the catechist appears as the representative of his village who has particular moral duties. Another example of this was when the catechist of Epalanga took part in a funeral as a funeral-friend, which he was, being a native of Ndjandju, the partner-chiefdom of Gumba. He said that he would not take a chicken, as was his right, since he was a catechist, that is, he had special obligations to be generous.

In general the position of the Protestant catechists and elders

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of the school seems considerably stronger than that of their Catholic counterparts. This impression is gained by visits to Protestant villages and to episodes like that just quoted, where the Protestant catechist had more success than the Catholic in recruiting volunteers for work on the bridge. The reasons for this lie in the organization of the Protestant Church, which owes its origin to Congregationalist missionaries, and in which the distribution of power differs from that in the Catholic Church. The white missionaries exercise only a supervisory role over the work of the Native Church which is responsible for pastoral activity in the villages. The African clergy of the Native Church are entirely dependent financially on their people.

Compared with Catholicism, Protestantism lays much less stress on the sacraments of baptism and communion and much more on Bible-reading and the religious knowledge of the individual. Hence the teaching role of the catechist is more strongly stressed among the Protestants. For example, the Protestant catechists teach girls as well as boys to read and write. His dependence on the clergy is reduced; indeed, owing to the lay participation in the Umbundu Native Church he exercises some control over them. Among the Ovimbundu, as elsewhere in the world, the 'pyramidal' form of Catholicism is absent in Protestantism in which the position of the clergy is weaker and that of the lay leaders strengthened.

The relative autonomy of the Umbundu Native Church *vis-à-vis* the white missionaries and the disintegration of the traditional system of authority have given judicial powers to its officials. Dr. Childs has written in a recent article:[2] 'In Angola . . . the breakdown of traditional authority has been so rapid that the social life of the villages is now very near to complete anarchy . . . the missions and churches have been compelled to take over. Church leaders—catechists, deacons, and pastors—have taken on judicial functions. Church meetings, both local and regional, have become courts and councils.' He goes on to describe the legalistic attitudes and casuistical morality which is associated with these developments, and suggests that the lack of opportunity for political activity

[2] G. M. Childs, *International Review of Missions*, April 1958.

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795 confines the pursuit of power to the Native Church with un-
178 fortunate results. It might, on the other hand, be suggested that the Protestants among the Ovimbundu are the section of the population who have come nearest to building up new systems of authority and law. It might also be suggested that Umbundu Protestantism retains certain historical features of Congregationalism—democratic selection of officials with strict discipline binding members of the congregation, industriousness and zeal for education, and a certain consciousness of being a spiritual *élite*.[3]

795 Another factor in the situation is that the Protestants are a minority compared with the Catholics and tend to have the heightened self-consciousness of religious minorities. They also tend to isolate themselves from the pagans much more than the Catholics do, both geographically by moving into separate hamlets and separate villages and by the greater efforts they make to understand and follow European custom. Protestants for instance seem to know more how the Portuguese kinship terms should be used.

797 Ultimately, the position of the catechist, whether Catholic or
177 Protestant, is dependent on his role as a teacher of Christian doctrine, and as being a representative of 'modern' values. It may be said that Christian doctrine and 'modern' values are not necessary identical. It is, however, in this field that the Ovimbundu establish their closest contacts with the Europeans. A Protestant explaining why a kinship usage had been discontinued said: 'We are Christians, we are like the Europeans.'

795 A Catholic catechist arguing the superiority of Catholicism to Protestantism began by saying that the Protestants had no sacraments—then the elder of the school chimed in saying: 'And ours is the religion of the government.' The catechist took up this theme: 'The *chefe de posto* is baptized and married in church, the Governor-General [*sic*] of Nova Lisboa is baptized and married in church.' During my first weeks in Epalanga I was asked by the catechist: 'Are there priests in England?' and replied that in England there were both Catholics and Protestants, on which the catechist commented: 'It's the same thing in Bimbe.'

[3] For the history of Congregationalism see E. Troeltsch, *The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches*, London, 1931, Vol. II, p. 661–6.

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thing in Bimbe.' That is, church membership is recognized as giving entry to a world-wide grouping. This sense of being linked to the Europeans by participation in the same sacraments is paralleled on the European side by the custom widespread in Angola of whites standing as godparents to their servants or servants' children. More generally, the missions are regarded as being the cause of that social change which is welcomed by Ovimbundu. Thus the fact that this was 'the time of the school' was given by one of my servants as the reason for such improvements as the decline of sorcery and the increase of cleverness.

Ovimbundu Christians are also aware of the doctrinal significance of baptism—when I asked various people 'Why did you receive baptism?' a general reply would be: 'I want to go to heaven', or some equivalent phrase. The apprehension of Catholic doctrine by the Ovimbundu is a complicated subject. It may be said that the receiving of the sacraments is the aspect of religion that has made most impression on the people. In the conversation previously cited, the catechist began by emphasizing the presence of sacraments as the distinctive mark of Catholicism against Protestantism, and then when the elder of the school pointed to the official associations of Catholicism, the catechist developed this by indicating the receiving of sacraments by those in high office. In the same way a catechist may commend somebody by saying: 'He is baptized and married in Church', as we would say of somebody: 'He is a real Christian'. The contact of the people with the priests, whether at the mission, or in the villages, usually involves the making of confessions and the receiving of communion. Cultural traits particularly characteristic of Portuguese Catholicism are little marked with the exception of the social importance of the godfather-godson tie. Christian ideas of the after-life have penetrated among the pagans, who will say that the soul after death goes to God (Suku) except in the case of bad people who go to hell.

The social relations between Christians and pagans are friendly. The old rites in which the sub-chiefdom as a whole participated have disappeared, and the rites performed at the capital, a liturgy which like other aspects of chieftaincy is a shadow of its former self, arouse little public interest. Christians

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and pagans co-operate in weddings and funerals. In certain aspects of funeral rites, and in commemorations of ancestors the Christians participate, justifying themselves by arguing that they are purely social functions and have no religious significance. This differs from their attitude to the major exorcism rites,[4] which are avoided by Christians, who regard them with some horror, and towards consulting diviners. Although visiting diviners is strictly forbidden by both Catholic and Protestant missionaries, a high proportion of their people do this,[5] but clandestinely. Thus I was told that there were no diviners in Gumba; in fact, there were two living in Epalanga. It is important to remember that there exist nowadays no pagan 'congregations', that is, permanent groups associated with the performance of ritual.

It is, indeed, through the missions that most of the formal teaching of European culture (apart from the instructions given to labourers and servants) which Ovimbundu receive is given. To the Ovimbundu the missionaries are the Europeans who appear in the most favourable light, and even among pagans the attitude to the missions is without the fear accorded to the post or the suspicion with which the traders are regarded. The missionaries alone run schools, and they provide most of the modern medical services. The missionaries come into far more frequent contact with the people than do the *chefes*, and their relationship with the people is not confined to economics as is that of the traders. The Ovimbundu desire to imitate and learn from Europeans; it is from the missionaries that they have most opportunity of learning, and it is in the African clergy that they have the most clear evidence that this learning from Europeans will bring them results.

The organization of the missions is the form of large-scale social structure with which the people are best acquainted, and with which they are most capable of identifying themselves. A

[4] These involve drumming and an open invitation to anybody who wants to turn up. The idea is to persuade the tormenting spirit to pass into a small animal or inanimate object. The minor exorcism (*okw likutilila*) also involves sending the spirit into an inanimate object, but without drumming or the headshaking by the patient which is believed to mark the arrival of the spirit and his acceptance of the offering.

[5] Childs, loc. cit. Personal information.

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servant of mine explaining how the Mwekalia chose the chief said, giving me a comparison: 'The Bishop of Nova Lisboa thinks "This priest has sense" and so makes him the superior of a mission'.[6] The disintegration of the old political system, and the association of its representatives with the ritual values which are no longer very significant for the mass of Ovimbundu, has destroyed the old pyramid of authority and prestige. The people associate demands and punishment, for which they seem to receive very little in return, with the post. Many draw a distinction between the actual *chefe* and the government, which they regard as benevolent and ignorant of the behaviour of its representatives. Despite such expressions of loyalty as the singing of the Portuguese national anthem at village parties the 'government' is too distant and shadowy for the Ovimbundu to have much knowledge of it. Nor has the post tried effectively to build up new types of bureaucratic authority in the villages—the government headmen are not given sufficient backing or responsibility by the post to do more than execute its orders.

Hence, the establishment of new types of grouping and leadership at the local level has been the work of the missions, and it is through the missions that these new groupings are articulated on to the total Angolan social system. The missionaries, who provide this articulation between the 'civilized' society and the local organization of the natives, form the section of the 'civilized' population which most satisfies, in its relations with the people, the expectations of the Africans.

To use another term, it is within the Catholic and Protestant Churches that Ovimbundu most clearly identify themselves. Baptism identifies an individual by giving him a name, hence Christians object to non-baptized people identifying themselves in this way. To an individual baptism is significant since it is concerned with his destiny. By it also he identifies himself with the 'civilized' population and achieves a new status superior to that of the pagans. The newly-born child of Christian parents will be given a Christian name and also an Umbundu name from one already held by a dead kinsman.[7] A few villagers

[6] Actually responsibility for appointing superiors of missions largely belongs to the superior of the Nova Lisboa district of the Congregação do Espírito Santo.

[7] For Umbundu names, see Elizabeth Ennis, *African Studies* (Johannesburg) March 1945.

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795 551 attempt to take on European surnames. Alternatively, a man may take his father's name and attempt to use it as a surname. Thus Joaõ Batista Tjindandi, a resident of Epalanga, had received Joaõ Batista in baptism, and had taken Tjindandi, his father's name, as a surname. This is, however, not at all a general trend. Even a village of mixed Christian-pagan population may be known by the name of its school, identifying itself by its Christian name.

795 554 A man identifies himself also with social change and with progress by 'entering the school'. When a small girl, whom I asked if she had 'entered into the school' replied 'Not at all', her elder sister's husband remarked: 'She is asleep'. In the general Angolan society the religious referent is the most status-giving type of reference that most Ovimbundu can give. 186 554 There is no very marked feeling in the superiority of one area of Umbundu country to another nor even is there a marked sense of the superiority of Ovimbundu to other tribes—thus the Kimbundu will be highly praised for the degree of European culture they have acquired. The very word Ovimbundu is used as an equivalent of '*pretos*' (blacks) a word not used of 'civilized' Africans, since it is indicative of the lowest colour-class. As a Christian, a man has a status which he shares with Europeans.

797 648 He can also identify himself not only in a general way with the Europeans but more particularly with the general church organization. There is much closer contact between the authority-figures of the church organization and the people than between the authority-figures of the administration and the natives. Thus all Catholics in the Nova Lisboa diocese are confirmed by the Bishop of Nova Lisboa, and have seen him—similarly many of the Protestant Ovimbundu know of Dr. Childs, the headmaster of the Protestant secondary school at Dondi, through having heard him preach at a conference. Some Christian villagers would know the names of pioneer missionaries. Little is known by the people about the personalities or duties of the senior members of their administration, and even their titles are not properly understood.

795 648 The religious differences which exist at local level have no marked significance in the relations of natives to the post. In certain circumstances a pagan may appeal to a Christian

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catechist or missionary for support at the post. There is no tendency to confine government appointments to chiefdoms and headmanships to Catholics.[8] However, the Protestant catechists are, unlike the Catholic catechists, not exempt from taxes.[9]

The Ovimbundu no longer possess a coherent political system of their own. They cannot, owing to the nature of their relations with the post and their ignorance of the higher administration, regard the Government as being their representative; the only wide-range systems with which they can identify themselves are the missions. It is through them that the individual is promised eternal life, that the village receives a new type of identity and unity, and that the Ovimbundu as a people participate with the 'civilized' population in ritual communities cutting across the boundaries of culture and geography.

The objection may be made that it is only the Christians who could effectively be represented by the missions and that in Epalanga and Gumba generally baptized Christians formed a minority. It has, however, been previously noted how the school may give its name to a village of mixed population. The catechist will represent both Christians and pagans when he is concerned with the post or with the mission. Moreover, the percentage of pagans in Gumba is far higher than in the rest of Bimbe to which they are linked by the Umbundu language and culture, by administrative divisions, and by a wide range of personal contacts.

It may, then, be asserted, that the catechetical schools and the wider groupings which they build up are the social groups most significant for Umbundu integration on any scale wider than that of the household.

[8] In Gumba the chief and government headman were pagan. There are government-recognized Protestant chiefs elsewhere in Umbundu country.

[9] In some parts of Angola the Catholic catechists are not automatically granted exemption but have to have obtained certain other qualifications, e.g. a certain degree of literacy.

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578 pass[1] and was sent to contract labour. The *chefe* apparently informed his employer that he could get other carpenters from the post.

Paulo, then acting in his official capacity as elder of the school, had intervened in a projected marriage in which Guilherme had received the bridewealth. Guilherme, acting in his official capacity, had attacked Paulo's wife's brothers Francisco and Pedro. The dispute had now been brought within [792] the sphere of the mission (as represented by the priest Antonio [648] Pires) and of the administration which had ordered the recruitment of the two men. The conflict between Guilherme and Paulo was now to widen out to include several other people.

On the 21st January the strain between Guilherme and Paulo showed itself again in violent quarrelling, from which I learnt about the broken engagement of Anna. Paulo said that he would refer the matter to Antonio Pires when the priest came back.

On the morning of the 24th the question was brought before Antonio Pires, the catechist Pedro Chiquete Santos (35), Paulo, and Guilherme all speaking in turn. Then other people raised their grievances. Sapapula declared that Guilherme was the enemy of everybody in the village. A man called Kasosi (7), a sister's son of Wasuka (15), stepped forward to claim that Guilherme had attacked him and injured him. Apparently [273] Guilherme, while having illicit rum in his own house, had beaten up Kasosi for possessing rum. Both Maria, Paulo's wife, and Nahoka, Sapapula's wife, joined in the argument. The only man who seemed in any way favourable to Guilherme was Kapapelo (see List II, p. 55), a mother's brother of his, who was also a 'brother' of Lusase (see List II, p. 55). Antonio Pires came down heavily against Guilherme, at which the latter declared that he owed obedience only to the post and ran off.

Towards the end of the argument Luciano (the former fiancé of Anna) and Jeremias (the Protestant catechist from Simbwyikoka) came to the priest to ask for the repayment of the bridewealth.

On the 25th Lusase, the chief of Gumba, happened to visit

[648] [1] The legal obligation for natives to possess passes is not enforced with the zeal which applies in South Africa.

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elder of the school in the sense that there is no sphere where their duties overlap and where they must compete.

The roles of government headmen and of officials of the school are complementary. It is through the chief and the government headman that the Ovimbundu pay their taxes and fines, are recruited as contract labourers and are called to road service, are arrested for crimes and misdemeanours and are entered on official records. It is through the catechists and elders of the school that the Ovimbundu find the expression of village unity by which at the same time they are linked to the whites and to the rest of the world on the religious level. The missions bring the Ovimbundu closer to the whites than does the administration, without the administration's predominant interest in making demands.[5]

While at the level of the total Angolan political system the administration is more powerful than the missions, the position of the catechist or elder of the school is stronger at the local level because the catechist and the elder represent the catechetical school which is the only social grouping existing on a village basis, whereas the government headman in fact represents no social group but is simply an executant of the orders of the *chefe*. Hence the catechist owing to this representative role and to his contact with the mission (which is much closer than that of the government headman) can lead the people and invoke the aid of the mission against abuses on the part of chiefs or government headmen. This would not be the case if the post gave firm backing to its local agents and turned a deaf ear to communications from the missions. Opposition to an overbearing government headman is then likely to be led by the leaders of the 'school', who can count on the backing of the mission, if they have a good case, to intervene for them at the post. The relative importance in a village of the catechist and elder of the school varies according to such factors as personality. The way in which the catechist was ignored when he tried to intervene in the dispute over the bridewealth shows that the catechist cannot claim authority in disputes as a matter of course.

[5] The missions impose fees and a yearly levy on their adherents which are small compared to the official taxes.

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SOCIAL CONTROL

The transformation of the dispute between Guilherme and Paulo into what amounted to both a trial of, and an uprising against, the government headman is not purely accidental but is a natural consequence of the principle latent in the social organization by which the 'school' leaders complement and can check the chief and government headman. 627 797 622 571

The case also indicates the limited nature of their roles. Both Paulo (by preventing Anna's marriage) and Guilherme (by getting Francisco sent to contract labour) can strike at the other through the lawful exercise of their authority; any real attack on the other's position involves an appeal to either mission or post, and hence brings about a trial of some sort. Guilherme finding that the quasi-trial before the priest went against him, tried to bring the case before the post, but realizing that this also was likely to go against him came to terms with his enemies. That is, any determined attempt to solve a dispute is likely to involve at least the threat of a reference to the post or the mission.

The power of the priest to intervene in the actions of the agents of the post is limited. Thus Antonio Pires did not intervene in the case of Francisco but advised him to get a letter from his employer. It is, however, notable that the missionaries are not simply appealed to by Catholics. Protestants like Jeremias and Luciano, and pagans like Kasosi and Sapapula, were ready to appeal to the priest although the initiative came from Paulo. That this is so is a convincing argument for the claim which has been made that the catechetical school represents the whole village, although it could also be claimed that it reflects rather an aspect of 'civilized'-native relations in the total Angolan system, clientship, as the typical form of relations between the two groups, with the missions being the patrons *par excellence* to whom all natives are at least potentially clients. The general well-being of all natives is the concern of the missions, who are therefore liable to be appealed to in such cases as this. 627 797 571 [648]

In particular cases where there is another patron to appeal to his aid will be sought. This patron-client situation will crop up again in the account of subsequent disputes. Its origin historically lies in the history of attitudes to employees and to 627 648 571

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by other villagers. Nor does residence in a village or sub-chiefdom compel or limit participation in a dispute. Neither Ndjoleya nor any of his kin participated in the dispute between Paulo and Guilherme. Gregorio came from Menga to support his friend Sapapula against Lusase, acting as a private individual, and not as the chief of Menga intervening in the internal politics of a neighbouring sub-chiefdom.

The social institutions participated in exclusively by Ovimbundu (i.e. the system of kinship and marriage and the local organization) do not provide machinery for resolving disputes. Therefore, binding decisions must be obtained from a representative of the 'civilized' society, and much importance attaches to setting out the details of the case in such a way as to gain the interest of this representative. It would seem likely from this that all cases will pass into the hands of the *chefe*, and that those 'natives' who are most closely linked to the post—the chief and the government headmen—will therefore be the most influential people in indigenous society. In fact, as the disputes show, this does not happen. Cases are taken to other 'civilized' persons—the priest Antonio Pires and the *soi-disant assimilado* Justino—and Lusase, instead of making up on the bureaucratic roundabouts what he has lost on the traditional swings, falls heavily off both.

The willingness of villagers to submit their cases to Justino and the mission rather than to the post is a result of the much closer personal contact which exists with them, and their lack of direct punitive sanctions. Any case referred to the *chefe* is thought liable to produce uncertain consequences. It was because of this that the people of Gumba did not dare to complain to the post about Lusase's usurpation; for this reason, too, Guilherme, knowing the *chefe* trusted him no more than any other native, sought reconciliation before getting to the post. The chief and government headman neither enjoy official confidence nor control access to the post.

On the level of the total Angolan society the State is obviously more powerful than the Church. On the local level the chief and government headmen have more executive power[11]

[11] The capacity to give orders backed by force; but this only applies to orders received from the post.

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than the catechists and 'elders of the school'; yet the weakness of the agents of the post before a local opposition led, not by such traditional figures as Kafelo and Sapapula, but by the school functionaries, has been demonstrated. The post accepts intervention by the mission in supporting disputants, and the mission is ready to help not only its disputants but any native who has a strong case—that is, it has a generalized relation of patronage to all natives.[12] Hence, since in a serious dispute people look round for a 'civilized' patron, the mission is the one most likely to be appealed to, and these appeals usually go through its local agents.

While the symbiosis of two societies, one ruling, the other ruled, is a common feature of modern Africa, the extremely limited nature of the role delegated by the administration to the native authority, the 'patron-client' tie linking 'civilized' persons to the natives, and the opportunity given to patrons to intervene in cases before the *chefe*, seem to be distinctive features of Portuguese colonization.[13]

The third aspect of the social structure mentioned in the introductory section was the role in disputes of kinship ties. It has been earlier noted that Sapapula's supporters regarded him as a victim of a concerted alliance by Guilherme, Kapapelo, Lusase, and Ndonga. In fact Lusase had avoided getting involved in the dispute between Guilherme and Paulo, had supported Sapapula against Kapapelo, and had disclaimed responsibility for Ndonga's act. The present social structure is not one in which groups of kin habitually co-operate;[14] and it is possible that this belief in a coalition against Sapapula reflects memories of the old social structure.

Kinship ties between individuals seem neither to restrain them from quarrelling nor to be liable to permanent disruption as a result of quarrels. By August 1956 Kasosi was once again

[12] It is felt in administrative circles that the advancement of the African is mainly the responsibility of the missions.

[13] Anybody who knows the Portuguese well will acknowledge the importance given to personal influence (*ranks*) and the lack of esteem for bureaucratic (in the Weberian sense) procedures.

[14] See Chapters IV and VII for details on the kinship cores and on general aspects of kinship. The support which Sapapula received was not confined to his own kinship core—thus Gregorio who enthusiastically supported Sapapula was not even a kinsman.

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At the present time a day's march is twenty-five miles, during which a man carries sixty pounds, while the load for a woman is half that weight. The gait of the Ovimbundu includes a limp at every step, so suggesting that the carrier is lame or tired. This appears to be a method consciously adopted as a protection against fatigue, because all muscles are momentarily relaxed. Loads are carried on the head in a long forked stick to which they are lashed. When the carrier rests, the load is not placed on the ground, but is held upright on the stick (Plate XXX, Fig. 2). Such a method avoids the strain of lifting the load from the ground after each rest pause. 481 [482]

Although the Ovimbundu have an exchange of products among themselves by both barter and the use of Portuguese money, there are no large markets, with the exception of those at the coastal towns of Loanda, Lobito, and Benguela. There is absolutely nothing in Angola which can be compared with the great markets in Nigeria. 438 [436]

Despite the absence of a system of exchange on a large scale, the Ovimbundu have many terms describing units of measurement. There are native standards of length, area, and capacity, but no measures of weight which are undeniably of Umbundu origin. 804

The unit of length (*epaluma*) is the distance from the tip of the thumb to the tip of the middle finger when the hand is outstretched. The term for two of these units is *apaluma avali*. These words are the plural of *epaluma; avali* means two. These units are used to measure tobacco before it has been coiled.

Cloth is measured by stretching the arms to their full extent in line with the shoulders; the distance between the tips of the middle fingers is *epeka*. The stride for measuring land is *elianga*.

Onjimba is an area about twenty-five feet square. *Etemo* ("hoe") is an area of land two hundred yards long and thirty feet broad. A large field covers two or three *atemo*.

Measures of capacity are provided by various types of baskets. The large conical basket (*ohumba*) has an interwoven mark which indicates a measure for corn, meal, and beans. *Ocitenge* is a coarsely made basket used as a unit of capacity. *Uhamba* is a basket two feet long and one foot deep. The basket on a rectangular base is also *uhamba*, but at the present day cans are taking the place of all these old measures. Palm oil is measured in a gourd (*ocitau* or *ombangi*) of definite size. This little gourd is also used for measuring a viscous substance from trees. The word *ekokoto* is used to describe this mucilage. [285] [314]

436 804 Balls of wax and tobacco were, and are now, definite standar of trade. To some extent rubber as a medium of exchange has be used through contact with eastern Angola. The Umbundu wo *ocilila* expresses a weight of about thirty kilos.

805 221 There is no measure for minutes or hours. I have seen a ma of the Luchazi tribe keep account of the number of days taken on journey by cutting notches on a stick. Ngonga says that the Ovin bundu reckon by cutting notches, also by knotting a piece of strin Three days would be expressed by the words *akumbi atatu* ("thre suns"). The word day or sun is used in fixing a time. There is n word for week. A month is *osai*, which is the word for moon. Whe the corn is ripe the people say, "We are in a new year." Anothe yearly time mark is the arrival of the first rains, probably in th middle of September.

The words *oku lima* ("to cultivate") yield the word *ulima*, whic designates the period between the beginnings of two rainy seasons Corn is planted about the time of the first heavy rains, which occu in late September or early October. Naturally, this important occa sion forms a somewhat uncertain time base; nevertheless it is th one used to express the lapse of years up to five in number. Afte such a period the estimation of time is unreliable.

INDUSTRIES

IRON-WORK

326 Among occupations of primary importance is that of the black-smith (*ocirinda*). Owing to the increasing importation of hoe blades and other iron goods, together with the facilities for collecting scrap iron, the winning and smelting of iron is increasingly rare. There are probably very few places where the old type of conical clay furnace now exists. Almost any fragments of iron are melted at the forge where a box is kept to hold nails, hoop iron from packing cases, and other fragments resulting from proximity to a European culture.

Nothing is mixed with the iron, neither is there any casting in molds. The only process is the forging of red-hot iron. The Ovimbundu do not draw iron wire, although they know of the process which is practised by the Vachokue.

The work of the blacksmith was studied at the village of Njongolo in Elende. The men were for a time reticent respecting the nature of their training and the ceremony of initiation, but the chief of the village helped considerably by persuading the men to speak freely.

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428 Inheritance of movable goods was traditionally entirely matrilineal. Today informants are confused as to what ought [143] to be done. Inquiry about particular cases will reveal that often no movable property was left by the deceased, it having been used to pay for such expenses of the illness and funeral as the purchase of medicines and the buying of animals to be slaughtered at the feasts.

Where there is movable property, the transmission of it to the heirs is carried out in a rather informalized way, as so often happens in Umbundu social activities. The actual division of property is undertaken by a kinsman of the deceased. This should apparently be the most senior kinsman. It may be a cross-cousin or 'brother' or a sister's son.[29] How it is decided who is the senior kinsman, and who are fitted to participate in the share-out is not very clear. Nor does it seem that there is any effective device against the sharer-out giving himself the lion's share, except the general pressures and reciprocities of kinship. The principle accepted in the share-out is that inheritance should be a reflection of the relations which existed with the dead man, and also be a reward of funeral services. Nothing is kept for kin who are away working, and a son who did not keep in contact with his father would be omitted from the share-out.

By inheritance a man can increase his small stock of possessions. He is unlikely to receive anything much in the way of money, and since there is no land shortage, and, as yet, little in the way of valuable immovable property such as brick

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602 754 178 rubber trade to be reconciled with the statement by Childs that fear of sorcery was increasing (Childs pp. 57–58)? I suggest that the final disintegration of the old kinship groups may have been marked by particularly sharp social tensions, but that once these groups were in fact dissolved and a new form of social relations established the fear of sorcery may have declined. It should also be remembered that as indicated in Chapter V the present-day economic values of the Ovimbundu do not lead to expectations that a prosperous individual will share his wealth with poorer kinsmen, as was the case in the time of the rubber trade. Hence accusations of sorcery based on disappointed expectations of generosity are unlikely to arise.

[811] Another aspect of the question which cannot be explored here in detail is the lack of agreement on the causality of classes of happenings or individual events. Thus one informant will say that a woman's pains in childbirth are due to sorcerers among her kin, another will say that they are caused by God (as we would say, are natural).

[29] Hambly, pp. 199–200.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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CHAPTER III

CHIEFS AND HEADMEN IN GUMBA

1. *The History of Gumba*

The historical perspective of Ovimbundu is short. Few, even elders, know of any landmark earlier than the Mutu-ya-Kevela rising of 1902–3, nor even for those who had participated in it did the time of the rubber trade form a Golden Age by which the present is judged. The period about which most was remembered was the reign of Mbati.[1]

Mbati had ruled over both Gumba and Chicunda, a union which had existed only during his lifetime, and which would have given him on present-day population figures 7,500–9,000 subjects.[2] He had managed to keep in his own hands the relations between his people and the government post. Policemen arriving at his capital to recruit labourers were entertained while Mbati's ministers got together the men required. Although an upholder of the traditional rites associated with chieftancy he had been on good terms with the missionaries and allowed a Catholic catechist to settle in his village. One of his sons became a Protestant schoolteacher near the railway line, another entered the Catholic seminary but left and became a policeman in Cela. Many of the numerous progeny provided by his seventeen wives are still living in Gumba.

Mbati's downfall came through his practising the traditional annual ritual cannibalism (*oku lia ekongo*). About 1934–5 he was banished for this to another part of Umbundu country.

[text continues on p. 37]

[1] L. Magyar marks a place called Gumba on his map (opposite to page 1) but puts it to the south of the capital of Bailundo. As he does not seem to have personal knowledge of this area, this does not rule out identification, especially as the Cuvo begins to the south of Bailundo.

[2] For the basis of this estimate see section 2 of this chapter.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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167 Many of the people in Gumba had come from
177

Cela, and Cela influences are notable in several ways.[24] In Cassongue Umbundu has relatively recently ousted other
133 speech.[25] Geographically Bimbe generally is rather lower than most of the Highland. Although the railway line and the growth
167 of maize have been influential here, an alternative pull for
361 labour migration is provided by the coffee plantation of Amboim and Seles, and by the coastal towns of Novo Redondo and Porto Amboim.[26] In the days of the caravan trade Novo Redondo was an important trading centre, more important perhaps than Benguela for the people of this area.

464 Work is sought by Ovimbundu in lands far from their home.
[167] There are Ovimbundu at Brazzaville; others have settled permanently in the Congo Republic, or work in Rhodesia; the Johannesburg mines have employed many, and some have gone as far as Natal.[27] In Epalanga, the village where I lived, there were two men who had been to Johannesburg—nor was this very exceptional and I am told that among the people south of the railway it is quite common.

82 The world picture of the Ovimbundu is vague, except as regards Angola and the neighbouring countries. The existence of Europe (Putu) composed of different nations Portuguese, French, and English is known, and I was several times asked if there were black people in England. Little or nothing is known of the other continents. The island of S. Tomé in the Atlantic is known, since up to recently Angolan labourers went there, and some convicts are still sent to it. Several people from the neighbourhood had lived in Luanda or worked on coffee
[464] plantations in northern Angola. The Belgian Congo was known as Bula Matadi, though people seem little aware of Rhodesia, and Mozambique (Portuguese East Africa) is confused with the southern Angolan port of Moçamedes. The railway lines and
[464] the cities along it are of course well known, and some of the people I knew had travelled to Kwanyama country in the far south of Angola to buy cattle. Johannesburg (Zhwaini) and its

[24] Notably in the arm ornaments and hair styles favoured by some women. Cela diviners are often consulted.

[25] Childs (p. 179) suggests that the change came about in the nineteenth century.

[26] For this area of Angola see Egerton, pp. 186–8. Galvão and Selvagem, pp. 378–80, 457–8.

[27] Personal information. Also Childs, p. 215.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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mines are widely known to people. Although Ovimbundu Protestants are often referred to as 'America' a word used both as an adjective and a plural noun, they (that is, of course villagers, not educated men such as the pastors or teachers) have no clear idea of the existence of, still less any identification with, the United States.

Like the other parts of Umbundu country Bimbe has experienced much missionary activity. The Catholic Mission of Bimbe has had a great deal of influence, the catechists teaching catechism and leading daily prayers in the villages, which the priests visit once or twice a year, and at such feasts as Christmas and Easter great crowds attend the Church services.

The Protestants depend on the pastoral centres of Henge and Luvemba, which are regularly visited by a missionary from Bailundo. Both here and throughout the Highland Catholics are more numerous than Protestants, but in some sub-chiefdoms Protestants are in the majority, notably in Kapali and round Henge. I have already mentioned the differences between Catholic and Protestant missionary organization. At the local level a number of differences can be noticed, in such matters as the neater, more planned appearance of the Protestant villages which have far more rudimentary[28] (pre-primary) schools than the Catholics. These schools are entirely financed by the Protestant villagers; among the Catholics while there is a desire for more schooling there is a lack of the drive that the Protestants show. A *chefe de posto* said that Protestants spoke Portuguese better than Catholics; and the Protestants are more 'Europeanizing' in their outlook.

The *chefes de posto* visit each sub-chiefdom only once a year. As the relations between the *chefes* and the people are usually concerned with the gathering of fines and taxes, the recruitment of labour, and the arrest and punishment of offenders, it is not surprising that the people regard the *chefe* with fear and mistrust. Yet there is a genuine acceptance of Portuguese rule. Thus villagers sing the Portuguese National Anthem at parties, the Portuguese flag is a meaningful symbol, and there is a belief

[28] Rudimentary education is a course intended for natives at a pre-primary level. It includes teaching of Portuguese, and also some instruction in agriculture and hygiene.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

that time I got several of the accompanying songs, the texts of which I hope may be published later. At this time I wish only to point out the important place in the social life of the village which the dance occupies, with reference both to ceremonial and to recreation. Whenever 'the moon makes a basket' (*osaĩ yi tunga ohumba*),[1] there is apt to be a great urge for rhythmic expression. The drums begin to throb, the leader's voice is heard in invitation:

We-lele, we-lele wiya,
Oh light ones, oh light ones, come,
Usiki woñoma Kaluyua.
The beater of the drum (is) Kaluyua.

Then the dancers reply with the same words as a refrain:

We-lele, we-lele wiya,
Usiki woñoma Kaluyua.

The invitation is not given in vain. More and more feet join the shuffling, stamping rhythm, more voices join the chorused invitation; the throbbing mounts as perhaps another drummer or two join in, and soon other songs supersede the invitation now no longer necessary. Dance follows dance, each with its appropriate song, running the gamut of the emotions from ribaldry to pathos, according to the dancers' moods. The dancing will continue nearly all the night and may be resumed on the three or four subsequent nights. After the harvest is gathered and there are no immediate agricultural labours, and if there happens to be little or no government work required at the time or in the region, dances may begin of an afternoon and last through two or three days and nights.

There are a number of games involving either agility or quick wits, or both, which are also played on moonlight nights, both by children and by adolescents. The adults do not join in except in some games which involve dancing. A simple one called *Ka limbua limbua* (Not forgotten) is played by either a large or small group. The children have many games. One which is played either by day or by night, called either *Cimbamba co lia* (The night hawk ate him) or *Mai* (Mother) *Cisangu*, has been fully described by Hambly,[2] with the transcription of its songs arranged by Dr. Herzog.

[1] When the moon is full it 'makes a basket', i.e. is large and round like a field-basket.

[2] Hambly, op. cit., p. 164.

538 825 appeal. For example, the pigeon says, *Tu kolela oku iva* ("We believe in stealing"), and the following are further instances of the same kind.

Ocinganja is a bird which has several calls. Early in the year the female says as she looks at the newly hatched brood, "This year I have borne white children." Later the little birds grow black feathers. Then the mother cries, "Each year disappointment." Sometimes the female says to the cock bird, "A stick has stuck in my eye. I wonder whether it will make a growth there." The bird is probably the Black Flycatcher (*Melaenornis pammelaina*).

Epandacokocoko says, "Where will the guests stay? Where? Where? Where?" This is an unfailing intimation that strangers will visit the village.

Omanula. This is another bird which announces the approach of strangers by saying, "*Akombe! Akombe! Akombe!*" ("Guests! Guests! Guests!") Two birds are supposed to carry on a dialogue.

Sankanjuele says, "He who has eaten should leave the rest for the important ones," meaning himself.

Ondonga answers, "Do you mean me? The way you scold hurts me to my heart."

Ungolombia. The male and female birds *ungolombia* are about to cross a stream. The female says, "I am wearing four yards of cloth," meaning that she will get wet. The husband says, three times, "If you are wearing four yards of cloth, why do you not cross at the source of the river?"

Omboro says, "When I lay my eggs on the ground, the white ants destroy them." The call continues, "When I lay them up high, *kalupamba* steals them." *Omboro* cries, "Such hardship, goodness gracious me!" The exclamation is, "*A inai we,*" literally, "O my mother!"

Kocukuku the Barn Owl (*Typo alba*) and his mate speak together. The female says, "*Cimuku*, do you eat rats?" He answers, "I do not eat them, they have tails."

Ungungu says, "No big animal lays eggs, so the crocodile must be a bird, too."

Ocimbamba (night hawk) may be heard on moonlight nights saying, "O lion, here are the people."

Ekuti says, "My child is gone to *Koputu*." *Koputu*, in Umbundu, means a far off place. Possibly *Koputu* is a corruption of Oporto. This bird makes a monotonous and continuous cry from sunrise to sunset.

Epumumu (hornbills) are large black birds. The female says, "I'm going, I'm going, I'm going to our village." The male replies, "Don't go, don't go, the rain has come; let us plant."

Katendipanga. This bird is quiet until September, the month in which rain begins to fall. Then the bird says, "Save! Save! Save!" He means this as a warning to people who eat their corn instead of saving some for seed. The seed should be sown in October when the rains have begun. The derivation of the name of this bird is important. *Okutenda*, to count; *ovipanga*, the rows of corn in a field.

Kalusundanjovo. The female bird says, "Let's throw away the big drum." The male answers, "When we have thrown it away, what shall we do for dances?"

821 Observations of the weather are of importance in fixing dates for sowing and reaping; such dates are the base of time reckoning. Rainfall is important where cattle are kept, and a knowledge of the stars is of service to hunters and caravan leaders when following unfamiliar routes.

[789] The weather is thought to be controlled to some extent by the *ocimbanda* ("medicine-man") and his performances. The rain-

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

maker's dance seen at Ngongo, a village of Ngalangi in east-central Angola, will be described in dealing with the *ocimbanda* (chapter IX). 821

No man thinks that the course of the sun can be altered, but there seems to be a hope that the setting of the sun may be delayed. A man who is likely to be overtaken by darkness breaks a piece from an ant hill. This fragment is placed in the forked branch of a tree while the supplicant says, "Sun, wait a little while for me." [786]

Months are reckoned by observation of the moon. The new moon is *osai* ("moon") *yokaliye* ("new"). There is no word for half moon. The phrase for full moon is *osai ya tunga ohumba*. *Ohumba* means "basket"; therefore the idea appears to be that the full moon is round like the big basket used for field work.

A star is called *olumbungululu*. To describe a shooting star, the word *luenda* ("it goes") is added. The large bright morning star is *tanda*. Another bright star is *tielele*. Three bright stars in a line are the hunter, the dog, and the quarry. The three stars are *ukongo* ("hunter"), *lombua* ("the dog"), *locinyama* ("the animal").

An eclipse of the sun is *uteke vutanya*. The former word means "night," the latter word means "daylight." Hence the meaning is "night in daylight."

Small mammals are captured in cane traps or stunned with blunt wooden arrows. The pursuit of such animals is a pastime for boys who thereby receive their early training in hunting. Rats are used as food after being boiled and roasted. This fact accounts for interest in the following small mammals. 224 825 [262]

Umbili. This is a big black river rat, the largest of the water rats.

Ocifelefele. A big gray water rat (*Cricetomys?*), not so large as *umbili*.

Kaleñe. A river rat something like the preceding one in appearance. *Kaleñe* can stay in the water for a longer period than that endured by *ocifelefele*.

Epeke. This is a bush rat which is light gray in color.

Ekolongonjo. This rat stays in the bush. It builds a nest in an ant hill from which it comes out only at night. The color is gray.

Elima (*Epomophorus*). This is the name given to the fruit bat. The word *elima* means "not one thing and not another." Thus *elima* is the word applied to a mulatto; he is not a Negro, not a white man.

Ovili (*Rhabdomys*). This is a large light brown mouse having white stripes on his back.

Ongenge. A mouse.

Epengue. A black rat.

Ocipili. A mouse with a long thin nose; probably a shrew.

Osinge. This is a very fat mouse.

Nakalongaka. This very small mouse makes a hole around which he piles grass to conceal the entrance.

Onjomboloka (*Lemniscomys*). A mouse with a stripe on his back.

Kandoti (*Dendromus*). A very little mouse something like *nakalongaka*.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

361 A few words from the childhood recollections of Paulino
166 Ngonga Liahuka[1] bring out the facts.

787 One day we noticed that Sekulu Upalandanda[2] and my father went to the mountain of Kalilonge saying, 'We go to look around (and find out) whether the spirits (*olosande*) have agreed to our moving there.' Then another day we saw that the fathers were coming out of the spirit huts (*atambo*, plural), with the sacred chests (*ovimbangu*, plural), saying, 'We go to start a new village.' When they had arrived under the mountain of Kalilonge, they said, 'The spirits have agreed.' Then when everyone had moved, the elder, whose name had been Upalandanda at Muenesi, now changed his name, declaring, 'I am *Cilembo-camunda* (Shadow of Mountain). From that time the place was called Cilembo.

621 On seeking a new site the headman's fire in the old village is put out and the procession starts: a girl carries the sacred chest
[778] (*ocimbangu*) containing the relics (*ociye*) and the balls of iguana skin, and a boy the sacred bows.[3] They lead the way to the site
[346] selected where they cut a pole[4] suitable for a house-wall (*ekoso*), and tie a leaf of the *upu*[5] tree to it, dig a hole into which they put mud made by rain-water (*onata yondombo*),[6] and then together they lift the stick and let it fall into the hole. This is the beginning of the spirit hut (*etambo*), the first house to be built on the new site. The boy and the girl must take part ceremonially in each operation
[372] of building the hut. After that they together ignite (*oku tiafula*)[7] the new fire. A hen and a cock are killed, cooked on the new fire, and eaten inside the *etambo* by all who have taken part in the building. The headman and his wife cannot return to the old village but must camp at the new site (*itula*) and keep the new fire alight.
342 In building their houses, the villagers may commute (*oku usala*)
621 from the old site, but often the distance is too great to do this, and

[1] Of Ciyaka, ordained pastor of Elende Church in 1930. He was Hambly's chief informant.

[2] Sekulu Upalandanda was the younger brother of Ngonga's father's father, and therefore grandfather to Ngonga.

[776] [3] The bow (*ohonji*) of each ascendant who is now a guardian spirit (*osande*) of the family.

[4] When this first pole is cut, the axe should first be pointed toward the cardinal directions.

[824] [5] A leaf of the *upu* tree is used in the divorce ceremony. Its use here is a sign of divorce from the old site.

[6] Literally, 'mud of the rainy season'.

[7] This was formerly done with a fire drill (*vide* Hambly, op. cit., Plate XXXV), but not for a number of years now. When I showed the above picture to a group of 150 young men of 17 to 25 years of age, not one of them even knew what it was.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

lated either to cause the spirits to pass him by or to facilitate his 553
cure. In adolescence young people discard the names with which they were born and name themselves (*oku lisapa*) according to their own choice. I have collected the explanations for about two hundred names.

The names of children are used, and that is one reason for 553
choosing them with care, for the name will be heard often by the 775
spirits. It is his superiors and those with whom he has respect-relationships whose names one may not pronounce. A child's name may be affected by whether there are recently deceased siblings, but he is not the reincarnation of such a one. Rather, he may reincarnate an ancestor. This is doubtless one reason for naming him after an ancestor. This, however, is a subject for treatment elsewhere.

The Period of Lying-in (Ocitete)[1]

'During lying-in the work of the mother is to cause the cord to 846
fall from the navel of her child. On the navel she rubs castor-bean charcoal mixed with palm oil, or palm oil mixed with ashes, or with the soot from burning a sleeping-mat of reeds. A chicken feather is required from a wing or the tail, to dip it in the soot. That is done day by day until the navel is freed.' It must be noted that although a large percentage of the babies get infected navels, this does not seem to be as serious among the Ovimbundu as with us. 'For the bed of mother and baby are spread leaves that it may be soft, if possible leaves of the *ongonguila* tree. Over the leaves [824]
are spread a sleeping-mat (*esisa*) and some little cloths. During that time the mother does not sleep in the dark. The father must bring firewood and firelogs that it may be warm and light in the house, so that if the baby defecates in the night, it may be wiped properly.' No cloths or diapers are used for babies either at this period or later. An additional reason given for having a good fire in the hut is that the baby is supposed to be very much afraid of the dark.

'During those first days the women come to entertain[2] the mother and to hold the baby. Some bring meal and meat, some meal and beans, some porridge and relish, some sour beer and

[1] *Ocitete* seems to be derived from *oku teta*, to cut, in reference to the cutting of the cord.

[2] *Oku poka*, to provide for and entertain, as for a guest.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

As early as 1600 there were cattle as far north as Benguela, and the Jaggas regarded these as a most valuable part of their plunder. Palms are a characteristic part of the vegetation of Angola north of the Benguela Highlands. Evidently the Jaggas moved extensively in northern Angola because they cut down palms for making wine (Battell, p. 30). The usual method is to tap the top of a standing tree, but the Jaggas were an itinerant people who did not cultivate palms. 175 171 [824]

Sprinkling the blood of sacrificed animals on a newly kindled fire I have mentioned in connection with Umbundu rites celebrating the founding of a new village. The Jaggas carried out this ceremony before a raiding expedition, when cows and other animals were sacrificed (Battell, p. 33). Battell mentions the use of red *tukula* wood for personal decoration. This wood (*Pterocarpus tinctorius*) is used in many parts of Angola at the present time. [824]

Reference to Battell confirms the information given to me in relation to an old iron gong obtained at Ngalangi. He says (p. 20), "The general did strike his gong, which is an instrument of war that soundeth like a bell, and presently made an oration with a loud voice." [534]

Battell reported that the Jaggas wore beads of ostrich eggshell. Ravenstein, the editor of this volume in the Hakluyt Series, seems to doubt this statement, saying, "There are no ostriches in Angola, and as to beads made of ostrich eggs I can give no explanation." I noted the presence of captive ostriches in southern Angola as far north as Gambos. The Vakuanyama women greatly value their long necklaces of ostrich-eggshell beads. Necklaces made in the north of Angola are traded to the south and conversely, each kind of necklace having a high value due to remoteness of origin. This instance, like many other points, confirms the reliability of Battell's observations in Angola. [237] [114]

Father Jerome Merolla (1682) describes the poison ordeal which was used from the Congo estuary to San Salvador (Churchills' Voyages, II, p. 675). "The aforesaid oath is administered to the supposed traitor by a sort of wizard, who, making a certain composition out of the juices of herbs, serpent's flesh, pulp of fruits, and divers other things, gives it to the supposed delinquent to drink. If guilty (as they tell you) he will immediately fall down in a swoon or trembling to the ground." The marimba was used, and a double iron gong was carried before a chief and struck by an attendant. [695]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

The foregoing facts, when compared with field work among the Ovimbundu, indicate that the old culture of the Congo and northern Angola bears a strong resemblance to Umbundu culture at the present day. A more detailed analysis of this resemblance is made in chapter X. 174

The following notes dealing with exploration in Angola (1800–1930) are adduced for critical comparison with my own observations among the Ovimbundu. 175 171

The work of Sir R. F. Burton describing the exploration of Lacerda and other Portuguese pioneers, is more useful for geographical than for ethnological information. Lacerda's journey to Czambe, south of Lake Moero, was performed in 1798. A mention of veneration for the dead and consultation of the deceased on all occasions of war or of good fortune, is made (p. 127). These are important points in the present tribal life of the Ovimbundu. [114] [769]

Bowditch (1824) writes from information given to him by Almeida and Saldanha. There are valuable references to the Vacilenge, a people adjacent to the Ovimbundu, who refused to kill their cattle, "rather than do which they will endure famine to extremity." This note was made about Long. 15° E. and Lat. 15° S. (p. 34). The cattle were milked, and cattle-raiding by the Ovimbundu was common at this time. Many present-day Ovimbundu do not milk their cattle, but the Vacilenge still follow their milking custom observed before 1824. 175 101 234

Livingstone's journey through northeast and northern Angola in 1853 contains references to the Vachokue who seemed bent on plunder (I, p. 370). Livingstone noted cotton spinning, which I recorded as an occupation of males of the Ovimbundu at Elende. Livingstone, like other early travelers, encountered caravans of Bihéans (Ovimbundu) bearing elephants' tusks and beeswax, commodities, which, along with slaves, formed the chief merchandise of these caravans from the Benguela Highlands (p. 466). Livingstone notes and sketches (Plate XIII, Fig. 10) the double-hardled hoe (p. 442) which is still used. 175 171 [283] [439] [412]

J. J. Monteiro (I, p. 61) saw the poison ordeal administered. The poison itself was prepared from the thick hard bark of a large tree (*Erythrophlaeum guineense*). The place of observation was Mongue Grande, just south of the Congo estuary, and again Monteiro was present when the poison cup was given to two women at Ambrizette. Of this ordeal there is more to be said when discussing the culture contacts of the Ovimbundu, because the ordeal is a basic factor of [695] [824]

301 The new ornaments had acquired no sentimental value, therefore
321 their price was moderate.

[171] *Omba* shells are to be seen in use from Kipungo southward through Huila, among the Luvando, and among the Vakuanyama of southern Angola. In the places mentioned one may judge the social status
[554] of a woman by the number of *omba* shells she wears. A principal wife is usually well supplied with these ornaments.

302 In this southern journey it was noticeable that there was an
171 increasing use of red pigment which is lavishly employed for smearing
[294] every kind of ornament, the body, and the hair. Leather belts and skirts of Vakuanyama women are thickly coated with red pigment which is invariably mixed with grease. The red powder is prepared
[824] by desiccating a red wood called *tukula* by the Vakuanyama, a name which is used through Angola and the southern Congo area.

412 From Kipungo southward through the Vakuanyama country
171 there is a notable absence of decorative wooden hair combs. On the contrary, delicately carved combs are used by both men and women of the Ovimbundu. The Vasele make such combs, but by far the best
[532] examples are made and used by the Vachokue tribe of eastern Angola. Here the decorative design usually includes a well-carved human figure at the top of the comb.

301 Among the Vakuanyama, necklaces of disks made from ostrich
[237] eggshell are worn by the women only. A woman of importance has a dozen loops of such necklaces, each loop being about 125 cm long.
[554] These necklaces are so greatly esteemed that only after much persuasion can a woman be induced to part with a single link. Perhaps, as is the case with *omba* shell, there is more than the intrinsic value to be considered. One point is constantly noticed in considering social status and ornament. All the wives of a wealthy man, especially among the Vakuanyama, are made to advertise their husband's position by the profusion of their ornaments and the quality of their leather skirts and belts.

[321] There is, in addition to the necklaces of ostrich-eggshell beads, a highly prized necklace made from small perforated disks of shell having a diameter of about a centimeter. The Vakuanyama women smear a necklace of this kind with grease and *tukula* powder; the
[435] value of a necklace 125 cm long is equivalent to that of an ox. In describing these necklaces there is interest in noting that they are traded to the south of Angola from places six hundred miles to the
[439] north; therefore their value is to some extent dependent on rarity and distant origin.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

Young unmarried girls of the Luvando tribe wear a large number of leg-bands which extend from the ankles to the knees as a sign that puberty has not been reached. These leg-bands are somewhat roughly twisted from fibrous roots and twigs from which the cortex has been removed. Collars of tough, elastic, cane-like substance are worn by Luvando women, and so numerous are these that the neck is entirely covered. These cane neck-bands are ornamented with burned, incised, geometrical patterns, and, in keeping with other ornaments, are thickly smeared with grease and red powder from *tukula* wood (Plate LIX, Figs. 1, 2). 301 124 [881] [531]

Women of the Vakipungo and Vakuanyama wear heavy coils of brass or copper wire on their forearms. In southern Angola women wear bracelets of twisted wire which are identical with those worn by Zulu women. Bracelets of beaten trade brass, ornamented with incised geometrical designs, are worn by women of the Ovimbundu, Vakuanyama, Luvando, and Vakipungo tribes. Ovimbundu women now depend largely on trade goods for personal ornament. 171 301 439 [531]

Ovimbundu men and women are dressed in trade cloth. Unmarried girls wear one piece of cloth which hangs from the armpits to the knees. A married woman drapes herself with two pieces of cloth, a skirt hanging from her girdle, and an upper piece so folded as to hold her baby tightly to her back. Men wear a single piece of cloth as a skirt; the upper part of the body is bare (Plates XLIX–LI). From the region of Kipungo to the southern border, clothing is of leather. The Vachokue wear trade cloth or bark cloth. 291 171

Hairdressing is of many styles. Ovimbundu women braid their hair neatly in strands across their foreheads, and small blue and white trade beads are used to decorate the braids. The hairdressing of the Ovimbundu women is different from that in any other part of Angola. At an early age the hair is trained into two long loops at the back of the head. Then these are covered with black cloth which is bound tightly. The two loops are afterwards studded with brass-headed tacks obtained from a store (Plate XL, Fig. 3). 302 171

Luvando women in the region of Kipungo dress the hair to form a large triangular projection from the back of the head. Girls of the Vaheneca tribe near Huila mass the hair with clay to form large "cock's combs." Women of Gambos pass each small plait of hair through hollow reeds. Humbe women do not redden or grease their hair which is massed into three high ridges on the top, while at the sides there are hornlike projections. Vakuanyama women dress their hair with grease and *tukula* powder. A principal wife builds up her

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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Nature lore of the Ovimbundu rightly forms an introduction to other aspects of economic life, because there is no better introduction to ethnological research in the field than that of associating with the people in daily occupations connected with the food supply and industries. In this way a field worker realizes that observation on the part of hunters and food gatherers is fundamental, not merely to economic and social life, but to the growth of language and folklore.

Observation and experiment have led to the selection of many kinds of timber, each having one or more specific uses. Collection of plants is connected with the making of dyes for baskets, a varnish for pots, and a pharmacopoeia for the medicine-man. Minute observation of the habits of animals, primarily carried out to ensure successful hunting, is clearly reflected in the growth of vocabulary, and likewise in the realism and humor of folk tales and proverbs (chapter VIII).

[538]

This chapter is concerned chiefly with a presentation of factual material whose psychological and cultural bearing is more fully dealt with in chapters X–XII.

NATURE LORE

825

The Ovimbundu are keen observers whose knowledge of the natural history of plants and animals is comprehensive. Almost any boy of twelve years of age is able to give the information detailed here. Some of the birds have been identified by Mr. Rudyerd Boulton, Department of Zoology, Field Museum.

Ombo. Ostrich. The knowledge of this bird must come from the south of Angola. In traveling south I first saw ostriches at Humbe. These were domesticated birds.

Epanda. Wattled Crane (*Bugeranus carunculatus*). The informant said, "*Epanda* is a big bird which has long legs and a long neck."

Epumumu. This is the Ground Hornbill (*Bucorvus cafer*) whose black wings are tipped with white. I have observed them from Ganda to Vakuanyama country. They take to flight slowly after hopping heavily for a few paces.

Ocamukongo. From the Umbundu word *ukongo*, a hunter. This bird lives on small buck and rabbits.

Etokailo. This is the smaller bustard called by the Boers knorhaan.

Ohanga. The Guinea Fowl (*Numida meleagris*).

Onjasa. Spur-winged Goose (*Plectropterus gambensis*).

Ongonga. An eagle. The word is used generally for a large bird of prey.

Ohokoholo. The Bateleur Eagle (*Terathopius ecaudatus*). The bird is almost without a tail. This bird is not predatory. It kills snakes but does not take chickens or other small animals.

Ocisslele. A kite, well known because it preys on chickens.

Etalahanga. A hawk which waits in the trees then volplanes on its prey.

Okapamba. A small hawk which preys on chickens.

Enyamahuti. A hawk.

Ocikuamanga. The White-breasted Crow (*Corvus albus*).

Ongwali (wa-wa). This is the Red-necked Partridge (*Pternistis afer*).

825 Observation of reptiles is a necessary self-protection as there are many poisonous snakes. The flesh of the python is eaten. Snake-
[524] skin and lizard-skin are occasionally used; for example, in covering a round, hard fruit in order to make a ball for playing a game.

When collecting lizards and snakes I found that each kind had a well-known name, though there was occasional disagreement among the men consulted.

Ocivangoko is a lizard (*Agama planiceps*) about ten inches long whose tail is covered with sharp spines. This reptile has colors of bright blue, red, and orange. *Ovangu* is a large spinous gray lizard (*Agama atricoll*). *Ekangala* (*Gerrhosaurus nigrolineatus*) is a brilliantly colored lizard which burrows deeply into the ground.

Olutanjila is a long slender green snake which hides in trees to capture birds. *Ombandanjila* is a long gray-backed snake with a light green belly. The generic name for snake is *onyoha*. The python is *omoma*. The chameleon (*eloñailo*) seems to be feared, as the men and boys refuse to touch a dead one but always move it with sticks. There is a proverb to the effect that the chameleon though slow always gets there. The refusal to touch even dead reptiles is due to an exaggerated fear of being bitten. I could find no other reason.

824 Trees are of importance in connection with building houses and
313 wood-carving. The qualities of different timbers are well known to the Ovimbundu. For the main part, the collection of medicinal plants and their uses will be described in connection with the medicine-man. The following are the most common trees which are of economic importance.

Usia (pronounced *oosha*). This tree has an edible fruit the size of a walnut. The kernel is valued as a food.

Ombula. This tree provides wood which burns readily. The small skin-covered stools to be found in every hut are often made from this wood.

Ukengo. The fruit has a hard rind.

[757] *Owindo*. This tree has a small acid fruit from which a medicine is made for the cure of painful menstruation.

Usilosilo. The leaf is compound and palmate. The fruit is black.

Usiambiambia. Bears a little red, oval fruit.

Usole. Has a large red fruit.

Usombo. Grows near streams. It has a fruit like that of *okulakula*, but smaller.

[223] *Ukuliungu*. Has a fruit like the berry of a coffee plant. The fruit is used for making mucilage which is used for capturing small birds.

Omanda. When this tree is small, the wood is springy, and is therefore useful for making bows. The wood of the older trees is burned for preparing charcoal which is used in the blacksmith's fire.

Omanda. This is an erect tree having no branches on the lower part. The wood is extensively used in building native huts.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

Omua. A large tree having clusters of small white flowers which are visited by bees on account of their content of honey. The tree yields a hard wood from which charcoal is prepared. The bark and leaves yield a pigment which is used for dyeing cloth a yellowish brown. 824 313

Osui is valuable because it gives a hard wood used for the corner posts of houses. White ants do not attack this wood, which is therefore useful for making the uprights on which granaries are erected.

Okapelangalo. A tree from which planks of hard red wood are obtained. These are used for making doors in village fences.

Ossa or *ekenge* or *usamba.* These trees have small compound leaves which are very similar. The bark of the latter two is used as rope for binding the uprights and the crosspieces in the framework of native houses. *Ekenge* and *usamba* also yield a bark which is beaten into bark cloth in the Ngalangi district.

Ocipako. The bark is used for binding posts, also for the fabrication of bark cloth.

Ungolo. The roots of this tree yield a dye for cloth. The leaves are said to have a value for curing sore eyes. The mother of a child afflicted with sore eyes chews the leaves, then spits into the child's eyes. [757]

Ongaye. Yields a wood used for making pestles and pounding sticks.

Omako ("iron wood"). This tree has a hard wood which is used for the same purpose.

Onjunge. Gives a wood used in the making of houses, doors, and beehives.

Omonu. A large tree which gives planks for building purposes.

Usanje. Yields a useful red timber.

Ulondangandu. A tree with very rough bark. The word *ongandu* means a crocodile. This is the tree which even a crocodile can climb. [757]

Onganja. A tree which yields a fruit having a value as a purgative. The antelope is said to be fond of the fruits of this tree.

Ocikumbeolemba. Gives a resinous fluid which is used in the preparation of lime for snaring birds. [223]

Ulemba. This word is derived from the word *ulembo*, meaning shade. The *ombala* (native capital) of Ngalangi is surrounded by such trees.

Omia. A tree which produces yellow flowers in September. The fruit is not edible but oil is made from it.

Okuku. A tree having fragrant flowers like those of honeysuckle. The thick bark is used in making mats.

Ossa. A soft wood which is easily whittled with a knife. The figures from Bailundu (Plate XXI, Fig. 5) are often carved from this wood.

Umbolombolo. A soft wood which is not very strong.

Umbangalunda. A small tree which produces bright red fruits. These are used by women for the manufacture of bead necklaces.

Ocilavi. The wood is used for the heads of arrows for shooting birds. This timber is used in the building of pigpens. The branches have projections which are said to guard (*okulava*, to guard) the occupants of the pen.

Itala. From the roots of this tree a medicine for pulmonary complaints is made.

Ukua. This is the baobab, whose habitat is the dry regions. Some of the trees have enormous girth. They are leafless for a great part of the year. The long fruits make gourds. The seeds in the fruits are bitter.

Utuotuo (pronounced *ocwotuwi*). From the wood the Ovimbundu make wooden platters and spoons used for serving mush from the large cooking pot.

Ovilili. This tree yields a hard red wood which takes a lustrous polish. For this reason the wood is employed for making ornamental sticks and clubs.

Upondanjamba. This small tree has roots which girls use for making ankle-bands.

824 *Okalalulula.* This tree has leaves which are used in treating a skin disease.
813 *Uvendangulue.* This small tree, only three feet in height, gives straight twigs which are used in making arrow shafts.

FOOD SUPPLY

COLLECTING AND HUNTING

222 Collecting of natural products which serve as food substances is
462 chiefly in the hands of women and children, though an exception has to be made in the instance of honey, which is gathered by men and boys.

Boys diligently search for nests, noting their location so as to be able to visit them again when the fledglings are large enough to serve as food. Large numbers of women and children may be seen
252 gathering caterpillars in gourds. The insides of the caterpillars are
222 squeezed into boiling water to make soup.

When a cloud of locusts appears, as in 1925, the creatures are gathered. They are sometimes fried, or they may be boiled in water, dried, and preserved with salt in earthenware pots.

A number of miscellaneous items of the food supply were mentioned in connection with names of trees whose fruits are gathered.[1]

223 Boys engaged in food-gathering usually carry small bows and
[411] blunt wooden arrows (*ocilavi*). One type of bird arrow is fixed to the bowstring. The forward end of the arrow is split so that it may contain small stones that are ejected when the string is released. From the wild fig tree mucilage is obtained and this is boiled until it forms a thick paste which is smeared on the boughs of trees.
[231] Some of the small birds captured in this way are eaten, others are kept in wicker cages made by children.

343 In all parts of Angola large cylindrical beehives may be seen
171 fixed high in the trees (Plate XC, Fig. 2). Two types of hive have been noted in particular. In the Elende district a hive is made by opposing two half cylinders of wood each about three feet long, so forming a hive which has a diameter of one foot. The ends are covered, with the exception of a small round hole. The whole structure is bound round with grass which is kept in position by lashings of bark. In the neighborhood of Cassanga a difference in the structure of the hives was noted. This type of hive is made from a cylinder of strong reddish bark, the edges of which are fastened together with stout wooden pegs. The dimensions are the same as for the hive used in Elende, but the hive of bark is uncovered.

231 In the Elende district honey of wild bees is removed from the hives in the months of August and December. One man ascends

[1] [see pp. 138-140, category 116]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbunda

In addition to pouches, hide is used by the Ovimbundu for the 282
seats of four-legged wooden stools. Before stretching the hide over the wooden frame the edge of the leather is cut into strips which are interlaced on the under side of the stool (Plate XVIII, Fig. 1). There are few evidences of the hide having been dressed; usually the hair is attached. The Ovimbundu understand the dressing of hides in a crude way. The hide is soaked, after which the inner surface is rubbed with ashes. The hair is scraped away and the hide is tightly pegged out. Hide was formerly used for covering wooden boxes in which a king carried his powder and possessions to war. Scraped [534]
hide is used to form the tympanum in tubular wooden drums.

In only one part of Angola, notably in the south among the 171
Vakuanyama, is leather used as clothing. Women wear pleated 282
skirts of hide and several broad leather belts, while the men have [291]
small leather aprons in front and behind. Men only are the leather 462
workers. The hide is soaked and trampled under foot for many hours in order to soften it and make it pliable; the hair is not removed. Before leather clothing is worn it is thickly greased with a mixture of fat and red powder from *tukula* wood (Plates LXV, Figs. 1–3; LXVII, Fig. 1).

SPINNING AND WEAVING

My interpreter Ngonga remembers the use of a heavy upright 286
loom about twenty years ago, but this loom is not used at the present 177
time among the Ovimbundu. The Ovimbundu have been in contact with Europeans for three centuries. This has not been a close and permanent contact, but it has been sufficient to account for the disappearance of a one-time essential art. There are in Elende some 287
very fine raffia palm trees, but no use is made of the leaf fiber for 171
manufacturing clothes. Bark cloth is not made by the Ovimbundu of Elende, but I have seen the Vangangella and Ovimbundu of Ngalangi engaged in stripping, beating, and preparing bark for use as clothing, which is formed of one piece wound round the body. The bark cloth is not dyed or decorated with patterns.

Frequently at Elende men are seen engaged in spinning cotton 283
which is used for repairs, and not for fabricating garments. The 824
cotton is obtained from a shrub which has reddish leaves and yellow flowers. The cotton may be seen protruding from the calyx in the months of June and July. The man who is winding holds high in his left hand a slender stick which is wrapped for a length of two feet with fluffy cotton. All work of pressing and twisting the cotton into a thread is done by the thumb and index finger of the right hand.

5: Hambly E-5 (1929-30)1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

OCCUPATIONAL RITUAL, BELIEF, AND CUSTOM AMONG THE OVIMBUNDU

By WILFRID DYSON HAMBLY

[114] WHEN leader of the Frederick H. Rawson-Field Museum Expedition of 1929–30 one of my chief objects was the assembling of a representative collection of the arts and handicrafts of Angola, and particularly of the Ovimbundu who occupy the Benguela highlands.

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[177] The Ovimbundu have been in contact with Europeans for three centuries at least, therefore I was interested to know to what extent daily avocations had become secularized. That a close connection has existed between the sacred and the profane in Negro tribes is well known, and the influence of spiritual beliefs and magical acts in every department of economic life, including agriculture, hunting, fishing, and handicrafts, has been established. But how durable is this dependence of economic life on magical acts and ancestral benediction? How soon does primitive economic life become commercialized on a European pattern?

Other observations of academic interest and practical value relate to division of labor between the sexes, specialization by age and natural aptitude; also the possibility of some callings being of an hereditary nature.

[101] My observations, which were made chiefly in the regions of Bailundu, Elende near Cuma, and Ngalangi, are conveniently classified under the headings of food supply, handicrafts, medicine-men, and education.

FOOD SUPPLY

●824 825 At the foundation of economic life is nature lore, which among the male population of the Ovimbundu is so detailed and extensive that the knowledge has given rise to a large vocabulary. The highly specialized acquaintance with trees, plants, birds, mammals, and reptiles on the part of most of the men was a surprise to me. Such information was commonly shared by males, and was in no way peculiar to the professional hunter.

I was easily able to collect a list of fifty birds which are readily distinguished by boys (who shoot them with blunt wooden arrows), and all men seemed familiar with forty species of trees, whose timbers, barks, and fruits were distinguished and named. Boys were exceptionally well acquainted with small mammals; including several kinds of rats and mice, which are trapped, boiled, and eaten. For Field Museum I made a collection of snakes and lizards; a task which again showed the native power of observation and adequacy of vocabulary. Some reptiles, whose re-

5: Hambly E-5 (1929-30) 1934 FP 13 Mbundu FP13

824 825 semblance for a time caused confusion in my mind, were well known to be distinct, though occasionally a prolonged and serious argument would arise among the old men respecting the correct Umbundu names for two similar snakes.

The cries of birds are interpreted in terms of human conversation: thus the female hornbill says to her mate, "I'm going; I'm going; I'm going to our village;" to which the male replies, "Don't go. The rain has come; let us plant." Another bird says, "Where will the guests stay? where? where? where?" This is an intimation that strangers will visit the village. All animals play a part in folk stories: human beings when introduced are usually of secondary importance.

Nature lore is, of course, fundamental to industries, since the artisans must know the best timbers for particular purposes. Thus certain woods yield the best charcoal for a blacksmith's forge; other woods are essential for house building because the timbers resist attacks of termites; again certain trees yield bark for making rope; while other woods are used for carving animals and household utensils.

[462] I am not sure of the extent to which women participate in nature lore; but certainly their knowledge cannot equal that of the men, since women are concerned chiefly with agriculture, domestic work, care of children, and collection of firewood. Yet women and little children are collectors. I have seem many of them together gathering caterpillars which are to be made into soup. Women know the plants that will yield dyes for basketry, and from women some of the bird calls were obtained. The conversation of men bears on their occupations and the nature lore fundamental to these; therefore women must learn, though perhaps only by unconscious absorption.

224 In connection with a study of food supply the occupation of hunting comes most closely to the general nature lore mentioned above. Here a distinction should be made between hunting as a general occupation for males, and hunting by a professional who gives his life to the work. The only occasion on which women and children assist hunters is during a communal hunt, when all the inhabitants of a village fire the dry grass and aid in the capture of game by shouting and driving the frightened animals.

A professional hunter is usually called ukongo, more rarely onyanga. The occupation is not hereditary. A boy has to serve two years with a professional hunter before his initiation. The principal guests at the initiation feast are professional hunters, who alone may dance, though a miscellaneous company is present. The boy who seeks initiation is required to keep quite still until he feels the "spirit on his head;" then he distributes meat to the people present. The meat used at the feast is that of antelope shot by

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

Kinship groupings: *oluse* and *oluina*.[1] Every Ocimbundu 613
belongs to an *oluse*, i.e. his father's kin, and to an *oluina*, i.e. his mother's kin. Each of these family groupings is divided into male and female lines (*onēlē yohonji*, 'the side of the bow'; *onēlē yohumba*, 'the side of the basket'). Uterine brothers and sisters belong to the same *oluse* and *oluina*, and to the male or female 'side' respectively, according to sex. It is of great importance to get a clear idea of this bilateral nature of these kinship groupings. Every student of [171]
ethnology will note the similarity of this division to the Herero [197]
oruzo and *eanda*.[2] Considering the affinities between the Herero and Umbundu languages, I think that these conceptions are probably related. Further study of other peoples of this Western Bantu zone may reveal cultural and racial as well as linguistic affinities.[3] The *oluse* and *oluina* of the Ovimbundu follow their own pattern.

The *oluse* consists of a large number of local village groups, 613
some of which recognize mutual relationships, but with no recog- 825
nized headship save in the case of the several royal families. The 621
only suggestion of any totemic relation or origin is with the royal families which have in common several taboos with regard to certain animals the flesh of which may not be eaten, nor the skins used, &c. Chief of these animals are the *ongulungu* (bushbuck, *Tragelaphus scriptus*), the *ocisema*[4] (the waterbuck, *Cobus defessa*

[1] *Olu-se*, perhaps 'the place of father', the root *se* being equivalent to the forms *sa*, *so*, *isia*; *olu-ina*, perhaps 'the place of mother'.

[2] See Vedder, pp. 185 ff. (in *The Native Tribes of South West Africa*): 'The Herero nation is divided into 2 large family groups . . . the Herero belongs to the *oruzo* of his father and also to the *eanda* of his mother.' J. Irle, *Die Herero* (Gutersloh, 1906), pp. 87–93.

[3] An interesting study of the VaNyaneka, one of the cattle-rearing people living between Ambo and Umbundu territory, was recently published: A. Lang et C. Tastevin, *La Tribu des Va-Nyaneka* (Mission Rohan-Chabot, Tome V), Corbeil: Impr. Créto. This volume was not available in England or the U.S.A. until 1940, and could not therefore have been used in the present study. I may now say, however, that the authors' treatment of the social structure is not such that it would help to solve the problem in question. The clans are described only from the standpoint of totemism. The maternal line of descent (*e-anda*) is briefly mentioned (p. 45), but not the corresponding paternal line. The authors' evident lack of familiarity with other Bantu material is a great drawback. The system used for the transcription of the vernacular is most confusing, owing to an evident lack of understanding of the Bantu phonetic and grammatical genius with consequent procrustean attempts to force it into foreign forms.

[4] The king's sons may not eat flesh of the *ocisema* lest they should *sema sema*, 'have an impediment of speech'. This may be simply a taboo on grounds of *similia similibus* (or the obverse).

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

613 *penricei*), and *ovinyama viakasa* (animals having paws, from the
825 lion down). No other *oluse* has any such rules. The chief function
621 of the *oluse* is as a local residence group. Within the *oluse* there is no inheritance of property but only succession to office, which from the king to the village headman is from father to son, or from elder to younger brother, with only as much recognition of primogeniture as belongs to the general idea of the hierarchy of age. Succession to office is further affected by the democratic tendencies already noted with regard to the kingly succession.[1] The character of the *oluse* as a series of local groups is further borne out by the character of its priesthood, which lies wholly with the village headmen.

613 The *oluina* is not a local group, since its members for the most part live in the villages of their several lines of paternal descent—each with his *oluse*. When an Ocimbundu speaks of his family (*epata*) in the sense of a large and widespread organization with a recognized head in some elder, it is generally his *oluina* to which he refers. This family elder (*ukulu wepata*) is generally both the legal and spiritual head of the family. He is the family high-priest in charge of the spirit-hut (*etambo*) of the family guardian spirit (*osande*)[2] of whom there may be more than one and of whom he may become one after death. This family head is generally the eldest in the maternal line. In these days the priestly and the legal functions may be divided considering the advantages of having for legal head one who knows the ways of this world, while the spiritual head needs rather to be acquainted with the spirit-world.
[428] Property is inherited through the *oluina* from mother's brother to
613 sister's son.[3] Only the *oluina* is an organization in the wider or
178 more than local sense, and it is to it that the children belong. Formerly the mother's elder brother had great powers over his sister's sons and was even able to pawn them or sell them into slavery to meet his own debts.[4] The patrilocal household is

[1] See *supra*, p. 22 f.

[2] The head of an *oluina* may or may not be a village headman. In case he is, he will be priest of two lines and have two spirit-huts. There may be more than one spirit-hut in a single village.

[3] This fact was noted by A. Bastos, *Traços Geraes sôbre a Ethnografia do Districto de Benguella* (Lisboa, 1909), p. 33 (par. 39°).

[4] This has been noted by a number of writers. Bastos, op. cit., p. 29 (par. 26°) adds that once a father has redeemed his son, the maternal uncle can never sell him again. Cf. *avunculi potestas* among the Ba-Ila, E. W. Smith and A. M. Dale, *The Ila-Speaking Peoples* (London, 1920), vol. i, p. 320.

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The picture of types gathered at Ngalangi (Plate LXXXIX, Fig. 3) shows, reading from left to right along the back row, then along the front row in the same direction: an Ocimbundu; an Ocivokue; a man of the Vangangella; an Uluchazi woman; a Lunda man; and two types of the Vangangella. 142 101

The M'Bunda man and woman photographed at Cangamba display characteristic deformation of the upper central incisors (Plate XCI, Figs. 1, 2). Photographs of a Mussurongo man and two women, taken about a hundred miles east of Malange, show no great difference from the Ovimbundu except in their shorter stature (Plates LXX, Figs. 1, 2; LXXI, Figs. 1, 2). The Bushman (Plate LXIX, Figs. 1, 2) shows a type found wandering in small bands in the south of Angola. These photographs were taken at Cassanga. [304]

The dress and personal ornaments of the tribes dwelling to the south of the Ovimbundu (Plates LIX–LXVIII) are entirely different from the clothing and decorative styles observed in the areas occupied by the Ovimbundu. This statement is true with regard to bodily covering, ornaments, tooth mutilation, use of pigment, scarification, and hairdressing. 171 301 304

In respect of all these factors, males and females of the Ovimbundu have distinctive patterns which do not appear to have influenced, or to have been influenced by the styles around them. [177]

In working southward from Elende I passed through typical Umbundu cultures until the vicinity of Kipungo was reached. At this place the change in physical appearance, ornaments, and hairdressing was remarkable both for its abruptness and distinctiveness. But the change from agricultural to pastoral pursuits is gradual.

A comparison of photographs indicates at once the truth of this statement, which can be further illustrated by a detailed description of the ornaments observed from Kipungo to Mongua.

By far the most important of these is the circular *omba* shell made from the basal part of a gastropod shell of the genus *Conus* Linn; and allied forms. These are highly prized, not because of any intrinsic worth, but on account of strong sentiment arising from their bequest, which is usually in the female line. I have, however, seen a few males of the Vakuanyama wearing these shells. For the old *omba* shells monetary offers equal to the earnings of a woman for a period of six months were made, but without success. One woman wavered somewhat, but finally decided that she dared not return to her home without her *omba* shells. From a Portuguese trader I bought, for a small sum, *omba* shells showing stages in manufacture. 301 321 [825] [562]

825 824 Nature lore of the Ovimbundu rightly forms an introduction to other aspects of economic life, because there is no better introduction to ethnological research in the field than that of associating with the people in daily occupations connected with the food supply and industries. In this way a field worker realizes that observation on the part of hunters and food gatherers is fundamental, not merely to economic and social life, but to the growth of language and folklore.

Observation and experiment have led to the selection of many kinds of timber, each having one or more specific uses. Collection of plants is connected with the making of dyes for baskets, a varnish for pots, and a pharmacopoeia for the medicine-man. Minute observation of the habits of animals, primarily carried out to ensure successful hunting, is clearly reflected in the growth of vocabulary, and likewise in the realism and humor of folk tales and proverbs (chapter VIII). [538]

This chapter is concerned chiefly with a presentation of factual material whose psychological and cultural bearing is more fully dealt with in chapters X–XII.

NATURE LORE

825 The Ovimbundu are keen observers whose knowledge of the natural history of plants and animals is comprehensive. Almost any boy of twelve years of age is able to give the information detailed here. Some of the birds have been identified by Mr. Rudyerd Boulton, Department of Zoology, Field Museum.

Ombo. Ostrich. The knowledge of this bird must come from the south of Angola. In traveling south I first saw ostriches at Humbe. These were domesticated birds.

Epanda. Wattled Crane (*Bugeranus carunculatus*). The informant said, "*Epanda* is a big bird which has long legs and a long neck."

Epumumu. This is the Ground Hornbill (*Bucorvus cafer*) whose black wings are tipped with white. I have observed them from Ganda to Vakuanyama country. They take to flight slowly after hopping heavily for a few paces.

Ocamukongo. From the Umbundu word *ukongo*, a hunter. This bird lives on small buck and rabbits.

Etokailo. This is the smaller bustard called by the Boers knorhaan.

Ohanga. The Guinea Fowl (*Numida meleagris*).

Onjava. Spur-winged Goose (*Plectropterus gambensis*).

Ongonga. An eagle. The word is used generally for a large bird of prey.

Ohokoholo. The Bateleur Eagle (*Terathopius ecaudatus*). The bird is almost without a tail. This bird is not predatory. It kills snakes but does not take chickens or other small animals.

Ociselele. A kite, well known because it preys on chickens.

Etalahanga. A hawk which waits in the trees then volplanes on its prey.

Okapamba. A small hawk which preys on chickens.

Ezyamahuti. A hawk.

Ocikuamanga. The White-breasted Crow (*Corvus albus*).

Onguali (*uo-wa*). This is the Red-necked Partridge (*Pternistis afer*).

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Ekalenga. A species of francolin without red coloring on the legs. 825

Esusi. This is a bird which comes out at night. It can catch spirits and make them die a second death.

Ovjimbi. This nocturnal owl (*Bubo maculosus*) is thought to be very dangerous. People who hear the cry of this bird are frightened because the noise is the sound of death.

Kocukucuku. The Barn Owl (*Tyto alba affinis*).

Ongongayulombo. An eagle which eats small buck, pigs, and rabbits.

Ekuti. Is a Red-eyed Dove (*Streptopelia semitorquata*) which says "oo—oo—oo" very sharply all day.

Onende. A dove (*Streptopelia capicola*) which makes the same noise as *ekuti* but on a higher note.

Onduva. This bird is of great importance to the Ovimbundu, because the feathers are used for decorating the head of a dead king. A medicine-man sometimes uses them for decoration when he is performing.

Ondonga. Is a little bird, which, like *onduva*, belongs to the royal family of birds.

Ukuku. A water bird.

Ocisandombunji. This is a bird which feeds on white ants.

Epandacokocoko. This is a bird (*Geocichla litsipsirupa*) whose cry tells the people of a village to make the guest house ready as strangers are coming.

Ocilonga. Is a beautiful yellow bird, an oriole (*Oriolus monarchus angolensis*).

Etua, singular; *ocutua*, plural. A species of bustard.

Etioko. A small bird of the plains (*Anthus leucophrys*).

Okakelekele. This is the Spur-wing Plover (*Hoplopterus armatus*), a large bird which lives on flat land near rivers.

Ocikandi. An unidentified bird. My informant said, "*Ocikandi* can cry in the same way as any other bird."

Okakongonyala. This is a bird somewhat like a pigeon but larger. It has long legs and is able to run well.

Undolo. A small spotted bird which always looks in the direction of the sun.

Omiapia. This is a swallow.

Ocikungumiapia. My informant said, "This bird is like *omiapia* but larger."

Omsipui. "He has a crest on his head and when he sings rain is coming."

Esungugulure. This bird has a long beak. It lays eggs on the ground. The bird is as big as a man's fist.

Omanula. A woodpecker (family Picidae).

Okangongo. Has a white breast spotted with black; the head is blue.

Ocinjenjo. This is a little bird having a long beak which is used to probe into flowers.

Kosselekute. A little black bird which makes a small fine nest.

Ocituku. A river bird. These birds go about in flocks.

Ongombo. A small yellow bird.

Epilili. A yellow bird rather larger than *ongombo*. This bird is kept in cages very cleverly made of reeds by small boys. The birds are caught by smearing a sticky substance on the branches of trees.

Ocikenge. *Agapornis rosicollis.* A small green parrot.

Okalusondonjovo. Is to be seen at the time of *onjovo* (spring). These birds fly in flocks.

A description of bird-calls illustrates a method of reasoning by 538
analogy. This results in a transference of human thoughts and 825
emotions to animals, a process which gives animal fables their strong

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538 appeal. For example, the pigeon says, *Tu kolela oku iva* ("We believe
825 in stealing"), and the following are further instances of the same kind.

Ocinganja is a bird which has several calls. Early in the year the female says as she looks at the newly hatched brood, "This year I have borne white children." Later the little birds grow black feathers. Then the mother cries, "Each year disappointment." Sometimes the female says to the cock bird, "A stick has stuck in my eye. I wonder whether it will make a growth there." The bird is probably the Black Flycatcher (*Melaenornis pammelaina*).

Epandacokocoko says, "Where will the guests stay? Where? Where? Where?" This is an unfailing intimation that strangers will visit the village.

Omanula. This is another bird which announces the approach of strangers by saying, "*Akombe! Akombe! Akombe!*" ("Guests! Guests! Guests!") Two birds are supposed to carry on a dialogue.

Sankanjuele says, "He who has eaten should leave the rest for the important ones," meaning himself.

Ondonga answers, "Do you mean me? The way you scold hurts me to my heart."

Ungolombia. The male and female birds *ungolombia* are about to cross a stream. The female says, "I am wearing four yards of cloth," meaning that she will get wet. The husband says, three times, "If you are wearing four yards of cloth, why do you not cross at the source of the river?"

Omboro says, "When I lay my eggs on the ground, the white ants destroy them." The call continues, "When I lay them up high, *kalupamba* steals them." *Omboro* cries, "Such hardship, goodness gracious me!" The exclamation is, "*A mai we,*" literally, "O my mother!"

Kocukuku the Barn Owl (*Typo alba*) and his mate speak together. The female says, "*Cimuku,* do you eat rats?" He answers, "I do not eat them, they have tails."

Ungungu says, "No big animal lays eggs, so the crocodile must be a bird, too."

Ocimbamba (night hawk) may be heard on moonlight nights saying, "O lion, here are the people."

Ekuti says, "My child is gone to *Koputu.*" *Koputu,* in Umbundu, means a far off place. Possibly *Koputu* is a corruption of Oporto. This bird makes a monotonous and continuous cry from sunrise to sunset.

Epumumu (hornbills) are large black birds. The female says, "I'm going, I'm going, I'm going to our village." The male replies, "Don't go, don't go, the rain has come; let us plant."

Katendipanga. This bird is quiet until September, the month in which rain begins to fall. Then the bird says, "Save! Save! Save!" He means this as a warning to people who eat their corn instead of saving some for seed. The seed should be sown in October when the rains have begun. The derivation of the name of this bird is important. *Okutenda,* to count; *ovipanga,* the rows of corn in a field.

Kalusundanjovo. The female bird says, "Let's throw away the big drum." The male answers, "When we have thrown it away, what shall we do for dances?"

821 Observations of the weather are of importance in fixing dates for sowing and reaping; such dates are the base of time reckoning. Rainfall is important where cattle are kept, and a knowledge of the stars is of service to hunters and caravan leaders when following unfamilliar routes.

[789] The weather is thought to be controlled to some extent by the *ocimbanda* ("medicine-man") and his performances. The rain-

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maker's dance seen at Ngongo, a village of Ngalangi in east-central Angola, will be described in dealing with the *ocimbanda* (chapter IX). 821

No man thinks that the course of the sun can be altered, but there seems to be a hope that the setting of the sun may be delayed. A man who is likely to be overtaken by darkness breaks a piece from an ant hill. This fragment is placed in the forked branch of a tree while the supplicant says, "Sun, wait a little while for me." [788]

Months are reckoned by observation of the moon. The new moon is *osai* ("moon") *yokaliye* ("new"). There is no word for half moon. The phrase for full moon is *osai ya tunga ohumba*. *Ohumba* means "basket"; therefore the idea appears to be that the full moon is round like the big basket used for field work.

A star is called *olumbungululu*. To describe a shooting star, the word *luenda* ("it goes") is added. The large bright morning star is *tanda*. Another bright star is *tielele*. Three bright stars in a line are the hunter, the dog, and the quarry. The three stars are *ukongo* ("hunter"), *lombua* ("the dog"), *locinyama* ("the animal").

An eclipse of the sun is *uteke vutanya*. The former word means "night," the latter word means "daylight." Hence the meaning is "night in daylight."

Small mammals are captured in cane traps or stunned with blunt wooden arrows. The pursuit of such animals is a pastime for boys who thereby receive their early training in hunting. Rats are used as food after being boiled and roasted. This fact accounts for interest in the following small mammals. 224 825 [262]

Umbili. This is a big black river rat, the largest of the water rats.

Ocifelefele. A big gray water rat (*Cricetomys?*), not so large as *umbili*.

Kaleñe. A river rat something like the preceding one in appearance. *Kaleñe* can stay in the water for a longer period than that endured by *ocifelefele*.

Epeke. This is a bush rat which is light gray in color.

Ekolongonjo. This rat stays in the bush. It builds a nest in an ant hill from which it comes out only at night. The color is gray.

Elima (*Epomophorus*). This is the name given to the fruit bat. The word *elima* means "not one thing and not another." Thus *elima* is the word applied to a mulatto; he is not a Negro, not a white man.

Osili (*Rhabdomys*). This is a large light brown mouse having white stripes on his back.

Ongenge. A mouse.

Epengue. A black rat.

Ocipili. A mouse with a long thin nose, probably a shrew.

Osinge. This is a very fat mouse.

Nakalongaka. This very small mouse makes a hole around which he piles grass to conceal the entrance.

Onjomboloka (*Lemniscomys*). A mouse with a stripe on his back.

Kandoti (*Dendromus*). A very little mouse something like *nakalongaka*.

825 Observation of reptiles is a necessary self-protection as there are many poisonous snakes. The flesh of the python is eaten. Snake-
[524] skin and lizard-skin are occasionally used; for example, in covering a round, hard fruit in order to make a ball for playing a game.

When collecting lizards and snakes I found that each kind had a well-known name, though there was occasional disagreement among the men consulted.

Ocivangoko is a lizard (*Agama planiceps*) about ten inches long whose tail is covered with sharp spines. This reptile has colors of bright blue, red, and orange. *Ovangu* is a large spinous gray lizard (*Agama atricoll*). *Ekangala* (*Gerrhosaurus nigrolineatus*) is a brilliantly colored lizard which burrows deeply into the ground.

Olutanjila is a long slender green snake which hides in trees to capture birds. *Ombandanjila* is a long gray-backed snake with a light green belly. The generic name for snake is *onyoha*. The python is *omoma*. The chameleon (*eloñailo*) seems to be feared, as the men and boys refuse to touch a dead one but always move it with sticks. There is a proverb to the effect that the chameleon though slow always gets there. The refusal to touch even dead reptiles is due to an exaggerated fear of being bitten. I could find no other reason.

824 Trees are of importance in connection with building houses and
313 wood-carving. The qualities of different timbers are well known to the Ovimbundu. For the main part, the collection of medicinal plants and their uses will be described in connection with the medicine-man. The following are the most common trees which are of economic importance.

Usia (pronounced *oosha*). This tree has an edible fruit the size of a walnut. The kernel is valued as a food.

Ombula. This tree provides wood which burns readily. The small skin-covered stools to be found in every hut are often made from this wood.

Ukengo. The fruit has a hard rind.

[757] *Owindo*. This tree has a small acid fruit from which a medicine is made for the cure of painful menstruation.

Usilosilo. The leaf is compound and palmate. The fruit is black.

Usiambiambia. Bears a little red, oval fruit.

Usole. Has a large red fruit.

Usombo. Grows near streams. It has a fruit like that of *okulakula*, but smaller.

[223] *Ukuliungu*. Has a fruit like the berry of a coffee plant. The fruit is used for making mucilage which is used for capturing small birds.

Omanda. When this tree is small, the wood is springy, and is therefore useful for making bows. The wood of the older trees is burned for preparing charcoal which is used in the blacksmith's fire.

Ozanda. This is an erect tree having no branches on the lower part. The wood is extensively used in building native huts.

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The inquiry then turns to occupations which indicate that sex dichotomy of labor is a fundamental principle of tribal life. In connection with the details of food supply and occupation, ritual acts are prominent, and in association with these the functions of the medicine-man are important.

Cultural liaisons are again illustrated when studying domestic animals, for this inquiry leads to a consideration of the social and economic importance of cattle, which are used in ritual connected with the death and burial of kings.

These are but a few instances indicating the way in which lines of investigation converge, though they may appear to be distinct. In fact the very division of a monograph into chapters is misleading in its suggestion of distinct divisions of tribal life, whose parts are actually a psychological unity.

When accompanying boys and men during their food-collecting and hunting expeditions a wealth of nature lore and a richness of vocabulary were discovered, and a vocabulary of one hundred and thirty words comprising names of birds, reptiles, mammals, and plants was prepared. Species are carefully distinguished, to such a degree that discussions respecting the correct native names for similar species tend to be prolonged and humorous.

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When I realized the closeness with which the native observes the habits of animals, there was no difficulty in understanding why folklore stories of animals are so popular and so amusing in their descriptions of animal behavior. In addition to its associations with nature study, folklore reveals standards of conduct and processes of rationalization.

In collecting names of birds and their crics, and while recording hunting customs, I was informed of the bird Onjimbi which flies at night to give the sound of death to those who will not see the morning. Then there is a nocturnal bird called Esuvi which is able to catch spirits of the dead who are active at night. A spirit so caught dies a second death, but what this means I could not immediately discover. Later a man said he was sick because Esuvi had caught the spirit of his grandfather. This implies the belief that an ancestral spirit is a guardian whose function ends when a second death is experienced.

Study of natural history sometimes leads to a point of importance in social procedure. There is a bird Onduva whose feathers are used for decorating the head of a dead king and for embellishing the person of a medicine-man; the feathers may not be used in any other

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way. Such instances as these came to light when my primary intention was a study of the use of wooden arrows for killing birds. 105 182 825

An inquiry about the names of trees and the use of timbers led to the topic of making and using wooden figures for magical purposes. Woodcraft, wood-carving, and religion are associated.

There is no fallacy so great as that of supposing that data may be collected and retained in mutually exclusive divisions. For example, a study of proverbs leads to native ideas concerning government, succession to office, and standards of conduct. The Ovimbundu say, "A turtle cannot climb on a tree stump, some one has to place it there." What is the meaning of this proverb? There are some men who occupy positions for which they have no ability; such men have been chosen through influence. The normal successor to chieftainship and kingship is the eldest son of the deceased man's principal wife, but if this rightful successor is stupid, some other son will be chosen. Yet the foolish youth may have friends who see their own advantage in having a weak ruler; they therefore combine to place him in office. The turtle has been placed on the tree stump, since it could not climb there.

In addition, folklore shows projection of the mentality of human beings into the lives of animals. Bird cries, with their supposed calls and answers, indicate that the birds have their family relationships involving strife, love, jealousy, and generosity. To the Ovimbundu, birds are a feathered human community.

Proverbs reveal a philosophy which is expressed by the German *Weltanschauung*. "If you are full of food, do not climb on a leopard's back; the leopard may be hungry." This means that one should not be foolishly exalted through good fortune. "You cannot tie a buck's head in a cloth; the horns will stick out," expresses the idea that crime cannot be concealed. "Hot water does not burn a house, and cold water does not make mush," is a sarcastic reply to one who boasts of things he cannot do. A riddle may express a philosophical train of thought. "What is it that lives while it dies and dies while it lives?" This is the log of wood the end of which is from time to time pushed farther into the fire. Like a human life, the log is being slowly consumed while yet living. Such examples as these call attention to a welding of thought, language, nature lore, and ideas that regulate conduct. 538 829 182

In considering food supply and occupations, division of labor on a sex basis is clear. Social sanctions have determined the appro- 183 462 105

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OCCUPATIONAL RITUAL, BELIEF, AND CUSTOM AMONG THE OVIMBUNDU

By WILFRID DYSON HAMBLY

[114] WHEN leader of the Frederick H. Rawson-Field Museum Expedition of 1929–30 one of my chief objects was the assembling of a representative collection of the arts and handicrafts of Angola, and particularly of the Ovimbundu who occupy the Benguela highlands.

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[177] The Ovimbundu have been in contact with Europeans for three centuries at least, therefore I was interested to know to what extent daily avocations had become secularized. That a close connection has existed between the sacred and the profane in Negro tribes is well known, and the influence of spiritual beliefs and magical acts in every department of economic life, including agriculture, hunting, fishing, and handicrafts, has been established. But how durable is this dependence of economic life on magical acts and ancestral benediction? How soon does primitive economic life become commercialized on a European pattern?

Other observations of academic interest and practical value relate to division of labor between the sexes, specialization by age and natural aptitude; also the possibility of some callings being of an hereditary nature.

[101] My observations, which were made chiefly in the regions of Bailundu, Elende near Cuma, and Ngalangi, are conveniently classified under the headings of food supply, handicrafts, medicine-men, and education.

FOOD SUPPLY

824 825 At the foundation of economic life is nature lore, which among the male population of the Ovimbundu is so detailed and extensive that the knowledge has given rise to a large vocabulary. The highly specialized acquaintance with trees, plants, birds, mammals, and reptiles on the part of most of the men was a surprise to me. Such information was commonly shared by males, and was in no way peculiar to the professional hunter.

I was easily able to collect a list of fifty birds which are readily distinguished by boys (who shoot them with blunt wooden arrows), and all men seemed familiar with forty species of trees, whose timbers, barks, and fruits were distinguished and named. Boys were exceptionally well acquainted with small mammals; including several kinds of rats and mice, which are trapped, boiled, and eaten. For Field Museum I made a collection of snakes and lizards; a task which again showed the native power of observation and adequacy of vocabulary. Some reptiles, whose re-

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824 semblance for a time caused confusion in my mind, were well known to be distinct; though occasionally a prolonged and serious argument would arise
825 among the old men respecting the correct Umbundu names for two similar makes.

The cries of birds are interpreted in terms of human conversation: thus the female hornbill says to her mate, "I'm going; I'm going; I'm going to our village;" to which the male replies, "Don't go. The rain has come; let us plant." Another bird says, "Where will the guests stay? where? where? where?" This is an intimation that strangers will visit the village. All animals play a part in folk stories: human beings when introduced are usually of secondary importance.

Nature lore is, of course, fundamental to industries, since the artisans must know the best timbers for particular purposes. Thus certain woods yield the best charcoal for a blacksmith's forge; other woods are essential for house building because the timbers resist attacks of termites; again certain trees yield bark for making rope; while other woods are used for carving animals and household utensils.

[462] I am not sure of the extent to which women participate in nature lore; but certainly their knowledge cannot equal that of the men, since women are concerned chiefly with agriculture, domestic work, care of children, and collection of firewood. Yet women and little children are collectors. I have seem many of them together gathering caterpillars which are to be made into soup. Women know the plants that will yield dyes for basketry, and from women some of the bird calls were obtained. The conversation of men bears on their occupations and the nature lore fundamental to these; therefore women must learn, though perhaps only by unconscious absorption.

224 In connection with a study of food supply the occupation of hunting comes most closely to the general nature lore mentioned above. Here a distinction should be made between hunting as a general occupation for males, and hunting by a professional who gives his life to the work. The only occasion on which women and children assist hunters is during a communal hunt, when all the inhabitants of a village fire the dry grass and aid in the capture of game by shouting and driving the frightened animals.

A professional hunter is usually called ukongo, more rarely onyanga. The occupation is not hereditary. A boy has to serve two years with a professional hunter before his initiation. The principal guests at the initiation feast are professional hunters, who alone may dance, though a miscellaneous company is present. The boy who seeks initiation is required to keep quite still until he feels the "spirit on his head;" then he distributes meat to the people present. The meat used at the feast is that of antelope shot by

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224 764 hollow chamber. I removed a thin slab of stone which formed an entrance to a tomb of this kind and observed within two skeletons lying supine. On the top of the cairns were skulls of animals killed by the hunter. I noted one instance of the burial of a hunter's dog under a cairn of stones.

825 774 Three birds are protected by a prohibition. Esuvi is a bird which has power to steal the souls of the dead, so making them die a second death. As usual, no direct explanation was given concerning this second death, but an explanation came later, quite fortuitously. For instance, an old man said he was sick because esuvi had stolen the spirit of his grandfather. This statement is logical, since welfare depends on a beneficent interest of dead ancestors, and it is evident that dying a second death prevents a spirit from exercising a benign influence over the living. Other protected birds are one which supplies feathers from which the decorations of kings and medicine-men are made, and one whose night cry is a warning of death in a village.

226 In fishing, a division of labor is recognized: men use a rod and line, while women drag baskets against the stream or use poison in slow, shallow water. The night before poison is to be used for fishing, husband and wife must avoid intercourse, since intimacy of this kind would make the fish stay together at the bottom of the river. A man who has prepared his rod and line, by transfixing a grasshopper and attaching it to a thin piece of bark, [539] sings a song which is of the nature of a spell. He says:

> "O fish come and take your good thing.
> Do not send the little fish to spoil the good thing.
> Better you come and take the good thing with all your strength."

439 Up to half a century ago the Ovimbundu were renowned traders whose caravans penetrated deeply into the Congo region and even to the east side of Africa. It is natural, therefore, that some ritual should be connected with [443] such an important enterprise. At the present day caravans may be seen, but these are local, and most of the carriers are found to be taking their maize, beans, and beeswax to traders' stores. I believe women did not accompany the transcontinental caravans of early days, but today women may be seen in line with the other carriers. Their loads are lighter, being on the average thirty pounds as compared with sixty pounds for a man. Children also carry small loads in the caravan.

439 787 Ngonga, my chief informant, said that in former times no caravan leader would set out without having consulted the preserved head of a deceased king. Even at present the corpse of a king is suspended by the neck [643] and twisted until the head is severed. The head is sewn in oxhide and preserved in a box. The ancient caravan custom consisted of taking the box

597 belong to the foster parents. When an adopted girl marries, half the presents from the husband are given to the natural parents, and the other half to the foster parents.

845 In a case of triple birth at Ngalangi two infants died at birth; the other succumbed after three months. In another instance a woman bore three children and in the vernacular of my informant "something which was nothing," but all died. In a third case of triple birth a woman had a boy and two girls. The boy died at the age of fifteen [826] years; the girls grew up and bore children. Albinos do not find it easy to obtain wives. I was told that an albino man at Ngalangi could not find a wife until he married a widow who had several children, because unmarried girls of his own age did not want him. One of the charms collected has to be worn by a woman who has triplets. The object is a rattle (*olusangu*), which the woman shakes when she meets any one. If she gave an ordinary greeting the children would die.

115 The greater part of this information was obtained at Ngalangi by interrogating women who were questioned in Umbundu by Mrs. McDowell. At Elende I asked my interpreter Ngonga to interrogate 843 his wife. According to Ngonga a woman must visit a female practitioner in the first month of her pregnancy. The face and the body of the pregnant woman are painted with red, black, and white spots. This means that she will have no difficulty in bearing children, neither will she have any sickness during the nine months of gestation. "When her belly hurts" (i.e., the quickening), the woman goes to the same female *ocimbanda*, who paints lines of white, red, and black across her breast.

751 The *ocimbanda* gives the woman a necklace consisting of a strip of leather to which two cowries are attached. Experience proves that such a necklace is difficult to buy. If the woman has a necklace of this kind which was worn by her grandmother, it is a very powerful aid to conception, a relief in painful menstruation, and a means of securing easy delivery and normal gestation. I could not find any trace of an idea relating to the entry of a soul, ancestral or otherwise, into the foetus.

841 *Ongandu* is the name for a disease of the genitalia; but Ngonga used the word to describe abdominal pain suffered by a woman who has had no children. By this I suppose he means painful menstruation. The curative root which is given is called *kayambua*.

847 Abortion is never secured by mechanical means. The medicine (*ihemba*) is made from the root of a plant that is boiled in water and

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

846 firewood. When they bring something, the mother thanks them saying, You have provided very well. She who brought supplies sits down and takes the baby and asks whether it is doing well. Conversing with the mother, she advises her how to attend to the baby, and then she returns the baby to its mother and bids her good-bye, saying, May you rest well. The mother replies *E-e-e*. Then she goes out and goes away. All who come do that. During all that time the mother cannot go out until the navel has healed. Then some day when another gives birth, she will do likewise, she will prepare food to go and greet the parent.'

853 *The Baby's Food, Drink, and Medicine.* 'From the time the baby is born they set its gruel (*ekela*) (on the fire), and when it is done they begin to feed (it to him). It is difficult to feed a baby because he struggles greatly, and so when they feed him they hold his little arms and legs and put the food in his mouth when he cries. The mother takes the gruel from the pot and first puts it in her own mouth to cool it with her saliva, then she takes it out and, with the crook of her finger, puts it into the baby's mouth. If the baby's mouth fills up and runs over, she wipes it up and throws it back again. When she sees that sleep has taken him away, she sucks the gruel from the child's mouth and spits it out on the floor. Then she wipes his face clean with a little water. This gruel is stirred up with unfermented beer (*ocisangua*) in place of water that it may be tasty.

757 853 'Likewise from the time of his birth they set aside for the baby a little gourd or pot of beer (*ocisangua*), which is tasty, very tasty. Into that beer they throw some sweet-smelling medicine, as for instance *ocisangu*, *olukata*, *ocilombo*, and *okakonga*. That medicine helps that the stomach may not ache and that worms may not come. *Olukata* is useful for stopping diarrhoea. Should he not eat well, they put in *okakonga*. In giving him to drink they use a little piece of gourd. As with feeding him likewise, although he struggles they hold his little arms and legs and make him drink.' The chief purpose of the beer and the sweet-smelling medicines is to tempt the baby to eat and drink, for it is believed that a baby [827] is born with its senses of taste and smell fully developed. In case of more serious, or supposedly more serious, trouble, these simple remedies do not suffice and the diviner (*ocimbanda*) will be consulted.

'Should the baby be sick in the belly, making a noise *cõlõlõ*,

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

the way they gather firewood (*tiaña olōhuí*) and dig beer-root (*ombundi*) for the child's beer. When they come to the village they stir up his gruel and feed him.' 854

In the afternoon and evening the baby's father may hold him, but he is not likely to do so with any regularity until a little later. The European clothing worn by the men is harsh to the baby's tender skin as compared with the soft warmth of his mother's body. His elder sibling or cross-cousin holds and carries him, but whenever he cries his mother will take him up and nurse him. Indeed European or American mothers are considered very cruel to let their babies cry so endlessly. It goes almost without saying that feeding schedules would be considered as quite needless complications. It seems that feeding baby when he cries is more than a mere pacifier. He is credited with *knowing* when he wants to suckle, in spite of the fact that he will only take other food and drink if forced to.

'As to recognition of people, there are two sorts: first the child recognizes only the *smell* of his father and his mother since they sleep with him. But when six months have passed, then he begins to recognize his father and his mother "by heart".[1] He will very soon recognize his elder sibling (*huvaye*) or the cross-cousin (*epalume*), his young nurse (*naveleka*, lit. mother of carrying), and before long the others of the village will be known to him. But during this period only his mother is of real importance to him.' Only in case of her death would other women nurse him.[2] Even when there is a young nurse it is the mother who 'must care for him a great deal and since he has not as yet any sense, she must prevent him from doing everything which he wishes to do'. 856

At some time between six and twelve months, according to the child's development or the inclination of the parents, in order 'to accustom the child to sit, the parent digs a little hole in the ground just the size of his buttocks that he may not fall over. There they always place him and if he starts to fall over, they set him up again, until finally he sits up properly by himself and does not fall over. At that time he snatches at everything to play with it or to put it in his mouth.'

[827]

[1] *Utima*, the heart, is considered the seat of the intelligence.

[2] It is a curious fact that older women, although at the time without children themselves, may again produce liquid in the mammary glands if they take a baby to nurse. I do not believe that a test of such liquid has ever been made.

whole supernatural world... The divining basket is the concrete medium through which the spirits reveal their will to their descendants on earth, and warn them of dangers, human or supernatural".[1] 787

SORCERERS AND WITCHES

Sorcerers and witches are not clearly distinguished. Both are called olongango, and have powers over one or more malignant spirits whom they can send anywhere to kill, steal, or torment. These "familiar spirits" are sometimes called otalo ndumba, and are held responsible for all mysterious disappearances of maize, beans and other possessions, as well as for many illnesses and deaths. Some sorcerers are said to own small imapes which they send out at night. Others are said to dance naked at night at the door of the intended victim's house. When sorcery involves killing by physical means, portions of the victim's body may be used to make "medicine" or charms.[2] 754 776

A person may be a sorcerer without knowing it, and may deny it when accused by the diviner. If he does so, he and his accuser undergo the cubulungu (poison test),[3] to discover who is in the right.[4] Concerning accusation of sorcery, Childs writes "Any marked success ... by an individual, especially when such success has been achieved by an individual alone or in partnership, but not in co-operation with a number of persons, often brings on suspicion of sorcery. Should the results of such success be distributed widely....suspicion is less likely to arise,...An open accusation of sorcery (oku sunga ovunga) is a very serious matter and will not often be made lightly. Such accusations are made both within and across kinship lines. Affinal relatives are quite often accused of sorcery, and suspicion frequently rests upon wives whose kinship connexions are in distant regions..."[5] 754 683 [578]

The tendency or aptitude for sorcery is supposed to be inherited by a daughter, or a son, or a nephew from the mother, uterine or classificatory, from the mother's brother etc. It is said that older relatives take younger ones as apprentices and partners.[6] The aim of a person who consciously takes up sorcery is said usually to be economic advancement. A very common form involves the enslavement of the spirit of another person, often a child of one's own family or kin group; the victim may be killed by either physical or magical means. Childs points out that sorcery is one of the greatest internally disruptive forces within the kin group and social system of the Ovimbundu. He notes that jealousy and grudges often bring accusations from within the circle of kin, but does not describe what happens when the charges have been made and verified. Especially in view of his statement that economic, political and other forces now seem to be acting to increase the incidence of sorcery,[7] it would be interesting to have information concerning its possible connection with segmentation of lineages or village groups, or its relation to tensions between the paternal and maternal groups of relatives. 754 [829] 754 578

(1) Tucker, op.cit., p.391. (2) Childs, personal communication.
(3) The cubulungu is administered by the medicine-man, and causes sickness but not death. See Tucker, op.cit., and Hambly, (2) 1934, p.203.
(4) Tucker, op.cit. (5) Childs, 1949, p.37.
(6) Childs, personal communication.
(7) Childs, 1949, p.38.

576 *kongimo oko* are spoken. The literal interpretation of these words is "back there." Ngonga says the words actually mean "excuse my back."

827 576 Spitting in the vicinity of the house of the king or of the chief is not allowed. "If you did that in the old days, you would have to pay something." Some people spit near the hearth in their own houses. A man who spits in the road is expected to cover the spittle. No person would spit in the presence of the chief or of the king. A hand should be placed in front of the mouth by a person who is coughing or sneezing.

576 [851] Shortly after the birth of a boy or girl all who are on good terms with the parents greet them by saying *kalunga*. The word is repeated four times with clapping of the palms. When words have been imperfectly heard and the listener desires repetition it is customary to say *kuku* in an interrogative tone.

[264] No particular etiquette is observed when eating. Two or three children eat from one platter, helping themselves with their fingers to the mush or sweet potatoes.

Rules forbidding the preparation of food by menstruating women, likewise prohibitions relating to stepping over a person, are mentioned in discussing taboos and omens.

EDUCATIONAL VALUE OF PLAY, MUSIC, AND DANCING

524 182 533 The educational value of play lies in its imitation of the pursuits of adult life. Though there are specialists in music, dancing, and singing, these exercises are indulged in by everyone. Music, singing, and dancing are more than amusements, they are fundamental as coordinating forces in tribal life at all levels of culture (W. D. Hambly, Tribal Dancing and Social Development, London, 1926). [113]

Among the Ovimbundu *Cimbumbu Co Lia* is a popular game for girls, who form a circle, join hands, and sing:

PART I

524 [535] *Omola wua, ndo sile vekungo, Cimbumbu co lia* ("That little child was left in the desert, the nighthawk ate it"). At the word *Cimbumbu* they begin to dance, facing from side to side in such a manner that they meet and bow. Some sing, *Cimbumbu co lia* ("The nighthawk ate him"), and others respond, *Kalikia* ("'tis the goblins"), as many times as they wish. Finally a return is made to the first words which are sung again. All musical transcriptions have been made by Dr. G. Herzog from my phonographic records.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

CHAPTER VIII

ANALYSIS OF UMBUNDU DEVELOPMENT

THE question as to whether there is a Native African education is discussed by Mr. H. S. Scott in the *Year Book of Education 1938*.[1] He notes that anthropologists have insufficiently described the educational processes of the various African peoples and that educationists have been at fault in disregarding indigenous methods. It is to be hoped that the foregoing description of individual development has shown clearly that there is an Umbundu education, the function of which is the integration of the individual in the on-going process of society—the 'moulding of individuals to the social norm'.[2] /21

In order better to understand this process and to determine in what way it may be adapted to meet present needs, it is now necessary to analyse Umbundu educational concepts and methods.

The theory of personality upon which the Ovimbundu act does not seem to be entirely consistent. First, they act as though they believed that the child is born quite without character and that desirable traits have to be consciously formed. 'Children are generally ignorant until they have been taught by their relatives with whom they live.'[3] On this premiss, they proceed to instil psychological attitudes in the young child and to teach him social usages. With the social psychologist they seem to 'regard childhood . . . as an opportunity which must be used in *learning* useful behaviour through social contact'.[4] It is abundantly evident that they regard education as clearly a *social* process. 828

A baby is born pink and it is only when he turns dark at the sixth or eighth day that he shows the first indication of becoming a person (*omunu*). He shows further promise in that direction with his first show of sense, but all through childhood he is, in a

[1] *The Year Book of Education 1938* (Univ. of London, Inst. of Education, London: Evans Bros.), part II, pp. 639 ff.

[2] A. W. Hoernlé, 'An Outline of the Native Conception of Education in Africa', *Africa*, 1931, p. 147. This is quite close to Dewey's conception of education as 'transmission through communication'; cf. *Democracy and Education* (New York: Macmillan, 1916), chap. i.

[3] *Supra*, p. 100.

[4] F. H. Allport, *Social Psychology* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1924), p. 82.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

828 sense, only a *potential* person. The permanency or stability of his personality (*unu*)[1] is only proven when he enters the state of adulthood at marriage. Then it is that he achieves true integration with society. Thus personality appears as a natural process of social integration.

828 775 On the other hand, the Umbundu belief in reincarnation[2] throws responsibility for determination of personality back upon the ancestral spirits (*olosuku*, *olosande*) or upon the Spirit World or Fate (*Kalunga*). Clearly this belief cuts across the assumption that children are born without definite character whereby the responsibility belongs to the parents. Practically the seeming contradiction seems to be resolved as follows: *potentially* a child's character may be pre-determined by the spirits, but actually or at least until the potentialities become manifest, education may play an important role by providing the spiritual forces with suitable vessels. At about eight or nine years of age the character of the reincarnation, if any, becomes manifest, but the social and psychological education is supposed to be well along by that time. Provision of the vessels and their moulding is, therefore, at the same time an active and a passive function.

The psychological and social education of early childhood and also the imparting of skills all have to do with this active moulding function as the manuscripts quoted have shown. Many folk-tales and proverbs could also be quoted to show the Umbundu ideas with regard to personality.[3]

The more passive function of providing suitable vessels for the indwelling of the spiritual forces is no less important. Even among those who have discarded or are seeking to discard the beliefs of their fathers, this side of educational theory is still important. It 858 has greatly conditioned the outlook of the people. All observers 828 have remarked on the considerate treatment of children by the 775 Ovimbundu, on their recognition of personality in children and respect for it. In the narrative quoted this was seen in the mother's addressing her baby boy as 'little father'[4] and in the first visitors

[1] *Unu* lit. the quality of being a person (*omunu*). The word is used for one's dominant bent, or his character.

[2] See *supra*, p. 102, n. 4.

[3] I have identified about 100 Umbundu proverbs used in or having reference to education. About two-thirds of them deal with the period of early childhood. Their interest is about equally divided between the practical and the more philosophical aspects of life and education.

[4] See *supra*, p. 90.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

giving the baby the respectful terms of 'my wife' or 'my husband';[1] also in the comment of the narrator that 'parents recognize that it is proper to respect them (children)'[2] and in parents' reluctance to punish. It seems that this respectful treatment of children stems from belief in reincarnation, whereby a child is potentially an ancestor to be respected, deferred to, and even worshipped.

It is doubtful whether at present many children could be found who have really gone through the ceremonial for becoming media for guardian spirits of the family (*olosande*). The drift away from those observances has become a flood. Nevertheless respectful treatment of children remains, perhaps even undiminished, for it still has the force of customary behaviour if not the supernatural sanction. Indulgence on the part of the parents rarely if ever goes to the length of pampering. Belief that the child's character ultimately, or to a large extent, depends upon spiritual forces may lead parents to adopt a sort of fatalism, but that is hardly more serious than the effects of belief in the influence of heredity popularly held in the West. The Ovimbundu do not believe, as do the Zulus, for example, that a child is tainted at birth, needing radical treatment against the subsequent appearance of the taint.[3] With the Ovimbundu the development of personality is a process which *may* involve spiritual forces, but at all events requires careful human attention.

Education and Society

What then are the means by which the Ovimbundu develop the personalities of their children or mould them to the social norm? Their success indicates that they along with other 'so-called backward races have proved to be educationists . . . of no mean order'.[4] What, then, are their methods?

The educational process is the whole process of life and culture. School is society and society is school; there is no division between adult and child life. Education and life are one. This has been recognized as true for many African and other primitive societies.[5]

[1] *Supra*, p. 89.
[2] *Supra*, p. 104.
[3] See Krige, op. cit., p. 67.
[4] W. D. Hambly, *Origins of Education among Primitive Peoples* (London: Macmillan, 1926), p. 401.
[5] See the interesting analysis of M. Fortes, *Social and Psychological Aspects of Education in Taleland*, p. 8 f. (Supplement to *Africa*, Oct. 1938); Margaret

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

861 This unity of 'the social sphere of adult and child' is a striking
867 feature of the Umbundu educational process. A child learns by actual participation in adult activities. He participates as soon as he is able and in so far as he is able in all phases of adult life. A child begins early to assume responsibility both for himself and for as much regular 'adult activity' as his knowledge and ability may allow him to take on. This being the case, it is to be expected that all factors—physiological, psychological, social, and cultural—are so closely interrelated in the process of Umbundu education that their unity is almost organic.

Given this unitary social sphere, it is easy to understand that children always want to grow up. They are anxious to undertake full responsibility and full participation as early as they may. It has been pointed out that adults do not, or are expected not to, force the pace: they must not set tasks beyond the ability of the children in the actual stage of their development.[1] Normal development and normal behaviour are expected of children as a matter of course.[2] The possibility of aberrant behaviour[3] does not seem regularly to enter parents' minds, much less their utterances, as is too often the case with us. Adult expectation of normal develop-
[828] ment in children is perhaps best seen in the Umbundu concept of sense or intelligence (*olondunge*), something which every normal person is expected to have in some measure from the time of weaning.[4] It is a relative term when applied to children and the young.[4] Some adults have it in greater measure than others. But every *person* will have it according to the proverb:

[538] *Omuku lowonya, omunu lolondunge.*
A rat with fur, a person with sense.

As every rat has fur, every person has sense.

861 Learning, as he does, in the real social and cultural situation
153 of Umbundu life, the child develops genetically the behaviour

Mead, *Coming of Age in Samoa* (New York: Morrow, 1928). Some writers have claimed this to be true of all the simpler cultures, e.g. Dewey, op. cit., p. 8 f., but cf. Margaret Mead, *Growing up in New Guinea* (New York: Morrow, 1930). Many of the African initiation rites seem to have been introduced from the outside and hence involve a distinct dichotomy, *vide* Stayt, op. cit.

[1] See *supra*, p. 110.

[2] See Fortes' discussion of a similar attitude among the Tallensi, op. cit., pp. 25–8.

[3] For the fatalistic attitude taken on failure to conform, see *supra*, p. 106.

[4] See *supra*, p. 100.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

among the Ovimbundu is 'grudge-building'. This is probably 154
fairly common and often eventuates either in sorcery or in suspicion 578
of sorcery. There is special danger of this type of reaction between men and women who have an in-law relation to each other. This is probably a principal reason for the avoidance with which these relations are so carefully hedged and the respectful treatment mutually enjoined.[1] Grudges are sometimes inherited through several generations. According to folk-tales, children sometimes bear grudges against their parents for real or fancied ill treatment.[2]

Recognized outlets for anger in frankly 'extroverted' form are found in war and raiding parties, in the hunt, and in lawsuits. War is no longer resorted to but up to the present day anger still finds a recognized expression in actions at law. One of the commonest of such actions is the accusation of sorcery (*oku sunga ovanga*) already touched upon above. Church councils and meetings have taken over some functions of the traditional courts of law and this is probably one reason for the decidedly stormy sessions which sometimes occur.

The importance of wit and humour as an outlet for anger has 154
been recognized. 'The ability to turn one's anger into a jest goes 522
with the trait of insight . . . and is sometimes appropriately called 828
"the saving sense of humour".'[3] That the Ovimbundu have this ability and use it often and to good advantage is very much in their favour. May not this be one indication of a considerable degree of insight which many observers have noted in the Umbundu character?[4] I would not claim that the Ovimbundu have made any very remarkable attainments in the social control of anger: their achievements in that direction may be slight when compared to some of the more advanced peoples, as, for example, the Scandinavians, the Hollanders, or the English. What is remarkable, however, is that they have frankly recognized the necessity for such control more clearly than have some supposedly more advanced peoples.

Adjustments in family life are held to be resolutions of what 593
are ultimately sex conflicts.[5] Marital adjustments are of prime

[1] See *supra*, pp. 57 ff.
[2] Cf. *Journal of American Folk-Lore Society*, 1922, vol. 35, no. 6, p. 123 f.
[3] Allport, op. cit., p. 344.
[4] Some writers have attributed to negroes a quality of 'insight' superior to that possessed by whites, cf. article 'Insight, &c.' in the *Atlantic Monthly*, Sept. 1938.
[5] Allport, op. cit., pp. 343–53.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1936) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

way. Such instances as these came to light when my primary intention was a study of the use of wooden arrows for killing birds. 105 182 825

An inquiry about the names of trees and the use of timbers led to the topic of making and using wooden figures for magical purposes. Woodcraft, wood-carving, and religion are associated.

There is no fallacy so great as that of supposing that data may be collected and retained in mutually exclusive divisions. For example, a study of proverbs leads to native ideas concerning government, succession to office, and standards of conduct. The Ovimbundu say, "A turtle cannot climb on a tree stump, some one has to place it there." What is the meaning of this proverb? There are some men who occupy positions for which they have no ability; such men have been chosen through influence. The normal successor to chieftainship and kingship is the eldest son of the deceased man's principal wife, but if this rightful successor is stupid, some other son will be chosen. Yet the foolish youth may have friends who see their own advantage in having a weak ruler; they therefore combine to place him in office. The turtle has been placed on the tree stump, since it could not climb there.

In addition, folklore shows projection of the mentality of human beings into the lives of animals. Bird cries, with their supposed calls and answers, indicate that the birds have their family relationships involving strife, love, jealousy, and generosity. To the Ovimbundu, birds are a feathered human community.

Proverbs reveal a philosophy which is expressed by the German *Weltanschauung*. "If you are full of food, do not climb on a leopard's back; the leopard may be hungry." This means that one should not be foolishly exalted through good fortune. "You cannot tie a buck's head in a cloth; the horns will stick out," expresses the idea that crime cannot be concealed. "Hot water does not burn a house, and cold water does not make mush," is a sarcastic reply to one who boasts of things he cannot do. A riddle may express a philosophical train of thought. "What is it that lives while it dies and dies while it lives?" This is the log of wood the end of which is from time to time pushed farther into the fire. Like a human life, the log is being slowly consumed while yet living. Such examples as these call attention to a welding of thought, language, nature lore, and ideas that regulate conduct. 538 829 182

In considering food supply and occupations, division of labor on a sex basis is clear. Social sanctions have determined the appro- 183 462 105

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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[1874-1911]

439 484 journeys diminished in distance as they increased in profitability.[53]

My informants, however, gave a somewhat different picture. Long trading journeys were still being undertaken in the last decade of the trade (1901–11). Some men whom I met had travelled to the kingdom of the Mwata Yamvo and beyond to Luba country; one man had made a journey into what is now the Congo Republic which took a year to go and a year to return; another had visited Barotseland. It should be said that these seem to have been unusually long journeys; journeys totalling six to eight months were common.[54]

182 229 [576] [254] The significance of the trade in social life is reflected in the mystical explanations of success in business found in Umbundu religion. Prosperity might be explained either by the favour of spirits such as Kandundu and Otjipukû, who received at their shrines libations of wine, or by malevolent sorcery involving the sacrifice of relatives in exchange for wealth.[55] The existence of these two explanations probably reflects the existence of some rich men who satisfied the expectations of their relatives and others who did not.

567 178 Apart from the rubber trade, the older slave trade continued until its vigorous suppression in the period 1910–12, and indeed seems, as regards the Ovimbundu, to have become intensified in the period after 1890. The slaves went to S. Tome and Principe, or to coastal plantations. Up to that time the Ovimbundu had sold few of their own people, with the exception of criminals or people who had become generally unpopular with their kin. The collapse of the old political system played into the hands of adventurers who unscrupulously exploited the Umbundu custom of debt slavery or conducted raids for this purpose.[56]

604 439 It was then the 'trade' which was the common factor in the life of all Ovimbundu, and which was so to speak the factor,

[53] Childs, p. 208.

[54] Informants.

[55] Although some old men still have shrines to the luck-giving spirits it is not possible to see how their cult functioned in the social structure then existing. It is, however, notable that success could be interpreted mystically in two ways by benevolent spirits or by sorcery.

[56] Childs, p. 213. I was told that Gumba had been raided from Balundo.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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villagers a certain, not very marked, respect, which may be increased by such factors as kinship ties between him and them, and his personal qualities.

Nor is the village itself clearly defined as a social unit. It does not possess any corporate rights over fishing and hunting sites, or control access to firewood gathering. A man may hold land in two villages. It is rarely that a village acts or is treated as a unit. The two main occasions on which the village is thus 'represented' are at marriages and in the context of the catechetical school. The party which goes from the bridegroom's village to the bride's represents her village, to the other village; at the wedding feast food is given out on large basket plates, one for each village represented among the guests.

The role of the catechetical school as representative of the village as a whole will be discussed in another chapter; here it should be noted that the ceremonial reception of visiting missionaries by the 'school people' of the village has been evidently copied to some extent from the welcome given to the bridegroom's party, and this has in turn copied certain features from the welcoming of missionaries—notably the use of speeches in Portuguese.

The hamlets[20] and isolated households do not indicate a modernizing 'individualistic' trend away from village life, since 'conservative' and 'progressive' people are to be found in both units of residence. The Ovimbundu, whether educated or illiterate, when talking about themselves (particularly in comparison with the Kimbundu of Northern Angola) emphasize that they are a village-dwelling people, and for them the real values of village life seem to be the sociability and mutual help that a man living among his kin can enjoy. By settling in a village one indicates where the pull of kinship ties is strongest rather than any particular allegiance to the village headman.

[20] I use this term for a settlement with less than four households.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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582 Another explanation, which I have quoted earlier, is that if one marries a kinswoman, one's children, when they grow up, will not leave, since they see 'a cross-cousin here, a cross-cousin there'.

All these reasons are no doubt to some extent valid. There are no fixed limits for bridewealth and no doubt some bride-
[583] wealths paid in a cross-cousin marriage are higher than some paid in marriages between non-kin; however, it is generally held that a kinsman is less demanding over the question of bridewealth than a non-kinsman. There is some evidence that cross-cousin marriages are more stable than those with non-kinsfolk. The high proportion of cross-cousin marriages naturally leads to an individual tending, when considering the possibility of marriage, to think of his female kin, even though there is no individual girl whom he is expected to marry.

768 The custom of fining a man whose wife had died was noted among the Ovimbundu a hundred years ago by Ladislau Magyar; in recent times it seems to have disappeared from most of Umbundu country. Its survival in Gumba up to the last few years may be related to the links existing between Gumba and the northern non-Umbundu peoples, who apparently practise it to this day.

582 The last of the explanations given may be translated thus, 'Cross-cousin marriage means that the children will have the same individuals as both patrikin and matrikin. They will remain in their father's village, where he is living with his kin and will not be inclined to return to their matrikin.' This line of argument comes close to the 'observer' explanation previously offered that preferential marriage greatly increases the number of social relations within a neighbourhood. The Ovimbundu do not see this aspect of cross-cousin marriage, and this fits their
[829] lack of any 'model' of their own society as a whole, which is in turn a consequence of the rapid social change they have experienced. However, they do see cross-cousin marriage as increasing the number of ties which exist for an individual in his village and neighbourhood.

602 The diagrams and information contained in Chapter IV have already indicated how individuals are linked by marriage ties, and in Chapter VII the way in which brothers-in-law may

577 Lying is strongly disapproved and the liar is called *ohembi*. The Ovimbundu appreciate hospitality (*unu*) which also means generosity. A man who is hospitable is said to be *ongavi*. Greediness, which is disliked, is described by the word *oku sapa* ("to be greedy"). There are standards of honesty in sales and exchanges. A deceiver in trade is *ohembi*.

836 With regard to the relation of the sexes in early years it may be said that, in spite of boy and girl friendships, and the communal sleeping of boys and girls at the home of one of the girls, a man expects to marry a virgin, a point which has been dealt with in describing marriage ceremonies.

Naturally there is a difficulty in obtaining precise information respecting the details of these nocturnal gatherings of boys and girls. Ngonga said that girls inform their parents concerning the house where the night is to be spent, and there is a point of etiquette requiring that girls must not go to a house where boys are staying together.

864 Standards of conduct already described under courtship are a result of direct teaching by parents. Marriage rules and a classificatory system of relationships, with its prohibitive decrees, are taught in the home, in the men's council house, and at initiation ceremonies where such exist. In addition to these sources of instruction there is no doubt an unconscious absorption of ideas and standards. The power of suggestion is always at work through everyday examples.

831 Apart from demands made by tribal custom and direct instruction there are variable personal standards of modesty. Ngonga states [562] that many lascivious stories are told among men, and when the men are drunk, they tell these to women. "Sometimes the women laugh, but the good women do not like to hear these tales."

576 A male commoner when meeting the king bows low, extends his 643 arms, claps his palms and says, "*ohosi* ["lion"] *akuku* ["grandfather"]." 565 Only the old people follow the ancient custom of falling on their knees when greeting the king. The Ovimbundu never were in the habit of doing more profound obeisance, but the Vangangella, when greeting one of their kings, rub their chins on the ground and place dust on their chests. Even at the present day a woman or child of the Ovimbundu is expected to kneel when greeting a king, but such an acknowledgment is not now usual in greetings given by a male commoner. The reply of the king to the commoner is "*kalunga*." This word enters into greetings of all kinds. The literal meaning of the word is "the sea," "king," "god," or "death," but the interpretation

584 you." There is no infant betrothal. There is not and never was any
[567] compulsion of a girl in marriage, but slave girls were disposed of in marriage by their masters.

832 A girl is not allowed to do anything to show that she loves a boy, for it would be a great shame for her to tell the boy that she loves him. Often a girl who prefers a boy will pretend that she does not like him.
[539] The Ovimbundu have a story which states that a man said, "I will bring my cow to the green grass"; he did so, but the cow would not eat. This expresses the idea that a boy would not like a girl who confessed a preference for him.

MARRIAGE

585 The prospective bride chooses one married woman and six unmarried girls to accompany her to the house prepared by her husband. Here a feast consisting of a pig and some chickens is provided by the husband for the relatives of both families. For three nights the girl returns to the house of her parents while the boy sleeps at his home. The married woman and six girls sleep at the house prepared by the bridegroom. During these days beer is provided by the boy's parents. The prospective husband is ironically addressed as *sandombua*. *Ndombua* means bridegroom, *sa* is an abbreviation of *isia* meaning father. The term "father bridegroom" refers to the fact that the youth is a potential husband only; the marriage has not been consummated.

On the fourth day the bride brings her supply of domestic utensils. These are the cooking pots (*olombia*); the wooden spoons (*ovito*); the brush of grass for sweeping (*olueyo*); some meal; also the pounder (*upi*). For the first month the wife is not allowed to cook in her own home; she cooks food in the home of her husband's parents and sends
[269] it to the council house (*onjango*) where her husband takes his meals with other men according to Umbundu custom. At the end of the first month of married life the mother of the husband invites any three old women who have been happily married to lay the hearth
[782] stones in the new home. Each of the old women brings a stone for the hearth. A chicken is killed and its blood is sprinkled on the hearth stones. While the young wife is preparing food at the new hearth, she is helped by the old women. If the girl is stirring with the big wooden spoon, one of the old women places her own hands over those of the girl. There is this kind of guidance in every action.

I understand that at the present day virginity in a bride is not so highly valued as in former days. The old custom was an examination

882 and young manhood, and to which he will bring his wife. In this house a kind of trial marriage *(uponji)* takes place. The young man will *oku tumisa* ("cause to send") a male friend to ask permission of a girl's mother and
582 also to bring her to his house each night. The girl is called *eponji*. (The custom may also be called *uvaisi*, the girl *ombaisi*.) A young man may first *tumisa* at about seventeen or eighteen years, if he has sufficient money or goods to make the "betrothal" payment (*itambelo* - "enticements" or *oku lupula ikuelume* - "chasing away jealousies"). The amount of the payment (which is made to the girl's parents) varies with locality, wealth and status, but is usually about one tenth of the amount of the marriage payment proper. The amounts of both payments are increasing rapidly.[1]
583 The nature of the intercourse is carefully circumscribed, and the girl is
585 warned by her mother not to let intromission take place. Proofs of virginity are required on the marriage morning, and there are severe sanctions against premarital pregnancy. Childs' informants stressed that the chief purpose of the custom is that the two young people should get to know each other as well as possible with marriage in view. Ennis however[2] states that *uvaisi* does not necessarily lead to marriage and may be entered upon without the intention of marriage; the girl may leave the man if she does not like him, and if the *uvaisi* is broken off both may marry other persons without any difficulties.

INITIATION[3]

881 Tribal initiation for boys *(oku lisevisa evamba)* and girls *(uso wakai)*
171 is carried on in camps or "schools" in the southern and south-eastern Umbundu chiefdoms, especially in Kalukembe, Kakonda, and Ngalangi. Sporadic instances of individual camps have also occurred recently in Viye, Bailundu, Sambu, Wambu, Cingolo and Cikuma. Even in regions where camps are regularly held, only the children of certain families enter. There appears to have been some passing on of the custom by heredity, and, in general, there is intermarriage only between families and individuals who adhere to the initiation rites. It is not known whether the rites have been taken over by the Ovimbundu from neighbouring peoples, or whether they represent a custom formerly widespread in Umbundu country. Initiation camps are not mentioned by the earlier writers.

Childs gives little information about what goes on in initiation camps, apart from pointing out that in making a definite break from the routine of life they contrast with other aspects of Umbundu education, and that "the hardship and cruelty of initiation camps have their parallel in the trading and slave-raiding expeditions of the past." His statement that "as an 'educational institution' [the initiation camps] do not seem to fit into the culture" is not very clear. From the few details given by Hambly[4] Umbundu camps appear to be identical with those of the tribes to the east, and here one of the most important aspects of the camps is their ritually-emphasised contrast with regular life.[5]

(1) Childs, personal communication.
(2) 1945.
(3) Childs, op.cit., pp.115-7.
(4) (2) 1934, pp.226f.
(5) See McCulloch, 1951, pp.85-91.

586 bad temper, too much talking, some physical defect arising from childbirth, and infidelity. But the husband usually accepts payment from the adulterer, and in that event divorce is not sought.

595 586 If a mother has no milk, there is a likelihood that her children will die in infancy; this is a cause for divorce. Barrenness gives great dissatisfaction, but is not necessarily a cause for divorce. Usually the husband marries another girl, while the first wife retains her position as head-wife. With regard to frigidity my informant said [833] that sometimes "a married woman does not want her husband to do those things which husbands like to do, or she may want him very seldom." The husband is so angry that he may go away hunting for a long time. The husband may tell some old people, who talk to the girl. If his wife is a good cook, the husband may keep her and secure another girl as a second wife. Sometimes the husband ties the hands of the girl if she resists him. If a wife is returned to her parents on the grounds of her frigidity her husband does not receive compensatory payment, but he hopes that another man will take the girl and pay him for her.

842 Sterility of the male is sometimes suspected, in which case the husband tries another girl, possibly with his wife's consent. The wife may be allowed to have relations with another man in the hope of producing children. The evidence shows that there is definite experiment to test barrenness of the woman and sterility of the male.

In case of impotence (not sterility of the male sperm) the wife leaves her husband. In event of barrenness the woman visits a medicine-man, who gives her a charm consisting of two cowrie shells on a strip of leather which she wears round her neck; a potion also will be given her. If the barren condition is due to malevolence of spirits, the face of the woman is painted with streaks of red and white. Such a woman is said to gain *ocitumba*. *Tumba* means "a swell," "a rise."

586 A woman may divorce her husband if he does not treat her well. [837] If he beats her or refuses to give her cloth and palm oil, she will leave him; but she will not leave him if he is merely unfaithful. If a woman is unhappy with her husband, she will tell her people about the trouble. Her father and mother may say, "Go and try again."

After a year the woman may still be unhappy, in which case she goes to her parents. The husband visits his wife's parents to ask why she has left him. The parents give reasons and offer to return the token he presented for the girl. The return of the husband's tokens is usually long delayed because the parents of the girl are

224 874 an initiation feast when the training is ended. At the feast all people of the village may be present but they do not dance; only the professional hunters may do so. The boy who is to be initiated must not speak or move until he "feels the spirit on his head"; then he gives meat to the people. After hunters have captured game for the feast, the blood from these animals is used to smear over the bow, arrows, and spear which have been made for the novice by his tutor. [326] This is analogous to the initiation of the young blacksmith who receives blood-sprinkled tools made by the master blacksmith.

224 788 There is in connection with the life and death of the professional hunter a certain amount of ritual and precaution. The night before setting out to hunt is a time of dancing and renewal of the implements of the chase, which are kept in a house specially prepared for them. A hunter who is on the eve of departure calls in other professional hunters to share the ceremony, which includes the rubbing of the bows and other implements with palm oil. A libation of beer is poured on the bows, spears, and arrows, but no medicine-man is present. Some of the bows are never used, because they are merely the symbols of the personality and prowess of dead hunters whose names they have taken. The food and cooking pots of a hunter must never be associated with those of ordinary household use. If a hunter is following the tracks of an animal he must not point with his finger as this action will drive the animal away. The correct way to point is by use of the feathered end of an arrow. The hunter [384] must not sleep with his wife the night before setting out in quest of game.

224 782 I have frequently seen in front of the hut of a hunter a number of skulls of antelope and other animals mounted on poles arranged in circular formation (Plate XXXII, Fig. 2). These skulls seem to be trophies, which are invariably taken away by the hunter if he finds a new home. There is no reason to doubt the statement that these skulls are an offering to the spirits who give good luck in hunting, because such a belief would be in harmony with the general respect for ancestral ghosts, which are thought to influence the affairs of the living.

764 224 On several occasions, notably near Ganda and in the Cassonge country, I have seen the tombs of hunters. These are large structures built of slabs of granite laid with some symmetry. The rock tomb is invariably placed on the top of a commanding eminence of granite. The skulls of animals which the hunter has killed are piled on the top of the cairn, but I do not know whether these are the trophies

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

which are fixed on poles in front of the hunter's home during his lifetime (Plate XXXII, Figs. 1, 2). 764 224

There are at the funeral of a hunter special observances which will be mentioned under the heading of funeral rites.

FISHING

In the region of Elende there is fishing with both basket and line; a method of poisoning fish is also practised. Usually a male fishes with a bark line. Women catch fish by the poisoning method, and in addition to this they generally follow the procedure in which baskets are held or weighted in the stream. If the water flows swiftly men may take charge of the fishing operations. At times both men and women fish with nets. Husband and wife may not sleep together the night before fishing, as this is believed to make the male and female fish stay together at the bottom of the river. 226 462 [534]

The fishing line consists of tough green bark which is cut into strips whose length depends on the height of the river's bank. A hole is bored through the body of a grasshopper, a worm, or a grub taken from under the bark of a tree. Through this hole is passed a short stiff piece of grass about half an inch long, to which the line is attached. The fish is caught when the crosspiece of sharp grass becomes fast in its throat. [283]

When the fisher throws the line he sings: "O fish, come and take your good thing. Do not send the little fish to spoil the good thing. Better you come and take the good thing with all your strength."

In order to make fish poison the tuberous roots of a plant are taken and soaked in water until a scum rises to the top. The solid part of the poison is not given, because it would sink and the fish which ate it would remain at the bottom of the river. Therefore only the scum of this poisonous infusion is thrown in the water. The stupefied, gasping fish remain at the surface, whereupon they are seized by women who transfer them to gourds or baskets worn around their necks. Usually poison is used only in the dry season when the rivers are shallow.

Sometimes there is fishing by means of a weir (olanja) which has an opening in the middle. On the lower side of this gap a basket trap is placed.

There is no fishing by torchlight. At the coast, and along the river Kwanza I have seen heavy dugout canoes in use; these were about twenty to thirty feet long and hollowed from single trees (Plate LXXII, Figs. 1, 2). At Ambrinette I noted the use of a fishing [501]

276 The snuff is pounded and placed in a small wooden box of cylindrical
[531] shape. Usually the box is ornamented with incised, burned patterns. The Ovimbundu of Bihé add ashes of wood to their snuff, so producing a mixture called *ulelemo*. The Ovimbundu of Elende usually use the
[509] snuff without adulteration. Two main species of tobacco plants are grown.

Women smoke in all parts of Angola. The Ovimbundu do not chew tobacco, neither have I seen it so used elsewhere in Angola. Boys and girls are not allowed to smoke before the age of thirteen years.

576 In the *ombala* of the Vangangella near Ngalangi, I asked a girl
[834] for her pipe which I desired for my collection. The interpreter took the pipe when she proffered it, explaining that, according to local custom, I had asked for the girl. If I took the proffered pipe *from her hand* I accepted her. Another social custom associated with tobacco is the passing of the communal pipe from hand to hand in the men's council house.

276 Ngonga, my interpreter, says that he has never seen an Ocimbundu
171 woman smoke hemp, but he has seen a woman of the Vangangella (people to the east of the Ovimbundu) smoking hemp. Hemp (*epangue*) is cultivated only by the Ovimbundu men who smoke it. Pure hemp is smoked in the water-pipe which is not passed from hand to hand. Only tobacco is used in communal smoking. Smoking of hemp or tobacco consists of a few deep inhalations; there is not usually a prolonged placid smoking. When hemp is placed in the bowl of the water-pipe it is covered with large grains of sand or a piece of tin. This intervening substance prevents the hot coals from coming into contact with the hemp. The object is to secure slow ignition.

DOMESTIC ANIMALS

231 The principal domestic animals are cow (*ongindi*), ox (*ongombe*, which is also the generic name for cattle), bull (*ossui*), sheep (*omeme*), goat (*okombe*), pig (*ongula*), dog (*ombua*), chicken (*ossaji*) (Plates LV, LVI, LVII).

492 The transport animals, donkey, horse, and mule, are not used by the Ovimbundu of Elende and not to any extent by Ovimbundu of other parts; but in the south of Angola the Vakuanyama have sturdy ponies and well-kept mules. The ox when ridden by Portuguese is provided with a leather saddle which is very comfortable if covered with a blanket. The brass stirrups are broad and massive. Through the septum of the bullock's nostrils there is a short brass rod to the ends of which the reins are attached (Plate XXX, Fig. 1).

613 *mai* (or *ohuina*) mean "family of my mother." These terms seem to indicate a bilateral rather than a unilateral lineage. Inquiry did not show that there were totems for the mother's or the father's people, or that marriage into any particular local group was com-
631 manded or enjoined. A village is a unit under the administration of a chief (*sekulu*) and as such is part of a large group of villages forming a kingdom ruled by a king (*ocoma*), but such village units are concerned with government and warfare, not with exogamy.

613 In tracing descent an Ocimbundu gives the names of relatives of
565 both the father and mother, but commoners are unlikely to know the names of their relatives beyond the grandparent class. The children of a king were at one time able to recite many generations
[582] of ancestors along both parental lines. But if the king had married a commoner, as he was allowed to do after choosing his first wife from the royal line, the children knew only the genealogy of their father. This is obvious since the commoner mother would not be likely to know her line of descent. The son of a village chief (*sekulu*) may marry a commoner, but, according to Ngonga, the *sekulu*, his father, "would have a very good look at her."

582 Ngonga had not heard of the marriage of brothers and sisters,
565 not even in the royal family; the idea of such a union was new and repulsive to him. In Umbundu society there would be no necessity for such a marriage as that of brother and sister or other close relative, because members of a royal family of one part of the country could intermarry with members of a royal family in some area far away. There might, for example, be marriages between the royal families of Bailundu and Ngalangi, which are two principal kingships of the Ovimbundu confederacy.

935 When asked what would be the fate of a man who committed
684 incest with his blood daughter or uterine sister, Ngonga said he would be killed by his brother or by his mother's brother. If he escaped he would have to go far away so that his people could never see him again. If a fine were accepted for incest, the culprit would have to pay his own kin "because he had shamed them."

601 Table A, Ngonga's Own Generation, calls attention to a plurality of terms for brother and sister according to the relative ages of the speaker and the person addressed. Moreover, there is a term for direct address and another which is used when speaking of a brother or sister.

Ngonga was questioned with regard to forms of address for his brothers and sisters other than the children of his uterine mother.

583 chiefly for marriage. Indeed, marriage is the beginning of adulthood; no Ocimbundu is considered fully an adult until married.

841 Where the initiation camps have not taken hold, i.e. among the great majority of the people, it is the father's sister (*apahdi*) whose duty it is, at least in theory, to tell her brother's daughter how she should take care of herself during the times of menstrual flow. Actually a girl generally learns such things from observation and from girls of the immediately superior age-group, her sisters and cousins. She will not need to be told that during those times a girl or woman must not even touch anything belonging to a man and especially she must have nothing to do with preparing his food. This period is known as 'sitting on the ground' (*oku tumbilla poni*) since that is what a woman is supposed to do at that time. Modern usage has also taken that phrase to mean 'unemployment'.[1]

582 In the house which the boy or young man has built for himself, one of the most characteristic customs of adolescence among the Ovimbundu takes place: the trial marriage. There are several Umbundu names for this custom, as *oku tumisa* (lit. to cause to send), referring to the fact that the young man sends a male friend or relative both to ask permission of the girl's mother and also to bring the girl each night to his hut. Names for the correlative but all-inclusive custom are *uponji*, the girl being called *eponji*; and *uvuini*, the girl being called *ombuini*. A young man may first *tumisa* at about seventeen to eighteen years of age, but he must have acquired enough to make small presents to the girl and to her parents and he must have or have in prospect money or goods sufficient to make the betrothal payment.[2] This payment is known as *itambelo*, 'enticements', or *oku lupula ikuelume*, 'chasing away jealousies'. This indicates that the custom of *uvuini* is definitely regarded as a prelude to marriage. For this reason, the term 'trial [356] marriage' is preferred to that of 'premarital sexual intercourse'. The nature of the intercourse, moreover, is carefully circumscribed. 'When the respective parents have agreed, then those of the girl will warn her saying, Should that boy be bad, and want to play with your cloth, even though it be late at night, run away.'[3] In such a case the boy's parents would take him to task and require that for the time being he sleep in their kitchen and so under

[1] For early notice of this cf. Magyar, op. cit., p. 284.
[2] From 10,00 to 30,00 *Angolares* according to locality, family, status, &c.
[3] From a manuscript dictated by R. Kalupeteka of Ngalangi.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

observation, and not in his own house. During that time he will not be allowed to *tumisa*. Or again, 'the girl's parents may warn her saying, Should the boy try *to sting*[1] you, do not let him: do not stay, but run away.'[2] All informants stress the point that the chief purpose of the custom is that the two young people may come to know each other as well as possible with marriage in view. There are severe sanctions against premarital pregnancy; fines to be paid by the young man or his family, lessened desirability for the girl in marriage, and a distinction in the ceremony between brides who are virgin and those who are not. Proofs of virginity are required on the marriage morning. Those families and regions which have girls' initiation camps include in the procedure a test of virginity.[3] There are not the periodic tests of virginity which are found among the Zulus, Mpondos, &c.,[4] but the Ovimbundu do not expect that the contact will be as close as these other tribes evidently do.[5] The closest parallel which I know is with the (American) colonial custom of 'bundling'.

It is said that the custom of *upanji* has been in a decadent state for a long time. This is not only because of its having been misunderstood and forbidden by the church or the missions.[6] Although this is partly the case, the chief difficulty came from the time of the rubber trade (1874–1900) when young men began without ceremony to go to the kitchens to sleep with girls instead of properly arranging matters. Whether their affluence made them reckless (i.e. of expected fines, &c.), or whether they were apeing Europeans or the customs of other tribes, is not known. At any rate, it is said that for large numbers of people this put an end to propriety. Numbers of Europeans began to settle in the country from 1891 (Viye) and 1903 (Bailundu and elsewhere), and from then until now casual relations have very greatly increased year by year.[7] That the Ovimbundu have held to their traditional forms

[1] *Lamma*, euphemism for *inumisa*.
[2] From a statement by R. Kavita Evambi of Ciyaka.
[3] A pullet's egg is used for the test (manuscript by R. Kavita Evambi).
[4] Krige in Schapera, 1937, op. cit., p. 110 f.
[5] Among the songs which I have collected are two sung by girls to tease the young men and with references to nights spent in *upanji*.
[6] *Uvuini* has been used in translations for 'fornication' or 'adultery' and used so persistently that it has now nearly come to have those meanings. The *Umbundu–English Vocabulary* (1911) gave a correct definition for *upanji* but not for *upanji*; its references to *ombuini* and *uvuini* are likewise in error, while *tumisa* is not listed.
[7] Information from R. Kalupeteka and others.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

178 of marriage through all these changes, whether with or without
936 the trial marriage, is a testimony to the vitality of their culture.

Young people of the same age-groups are thrown constantly
883 more closely together during adolescence in all their activities and in all aspects of their life. Strengthening of the age-groups is therefore to be expected. New names are taken at this time and the names received at birth discarded so far as possible. Boys used to go off together on hunts, on trading expeditions, &c. The girls work more individually in the fields, but are together in such communal labours as harvests. The preparation of food allows them more sociability and they have the additional advantage of congregating in kitchens not only for meals, but for the night as well. Ceremonial and social occasions are always opportunities for those of the same age-groups to get together. There is a limited amount of fagging of the immediately inferior age-group, but it is not institutionalized save where initiation camps have entered the picture.

883 Folk-lore, music, and the dance have very important roles in the
535 education of the young. The Bantu are probably among the most
533 naturally musical of all peoples and the Ovimbundu are perhaps excelled by few other Bantu. Their vocal ability is certainly superior to that of several of their immediate neighbours. Many of their songs are sung in connexion with dances. Other musical forms are road and work songs. Dancing is much enjoyed during adolescence but by no means only at that time, for it is learned in early childhood, very soon after walking, and continued on through life as long as the man or woman can get about unaided. It is a great sight to see toddlers, hardly more than able to walk, climb down off their mothers' backs and try a few steps at dancing; or again, to see a wizened and white-haired old man or woman step out and execute a *pas seul* on some ceremonial occasion. The adolescents, however, enjoy their dancing most, and they are the originators of most of the new steps and new dances which appear from time to time. The dance is of great importance to Umbundu life: social, educational, and ceremonial.

It remains to speak briefly of two institutions, neither of which is practised extensively throughout the country, nor does either seem to be a typical or integral part of Umbundu culture. These are the institutions of initiation at puberty, and the communistic order of the **vakwacisako** (lit. 'those of the set').

VI. SOCIAL LIFE

Sexual Relations

COURTSHIP

There is a certain humor and quaintness of language used by Ngonga in describing sexual relations of the Ovimbundu. So far as possible the interpreter's style of expression has been preserved because of its value in revealing the native attitude. 584 836

When a man begins to like a girl, he looks at her for several days. Perhaps the boy will talk to the girl who will tell him to go to her father and mother. The boy must ask the parents for a friendship, which may last for one or two years. During this time the boy must not do anything to the girl, and if he tries she ought to tell her parents. If a baby were born to them in this time it would be a shameful thing. After the boy has told the parents that he wishes to marry the girl he must find something to give to them. The girl must have agreed to marriage before the boy asks the parents. The first token may be no more than a ball of wax or a present of salt. This token says, "The girl is mine," and no other boy will ask for her because it is understood that she is promised to somebody. In former days there were restrictions against marriage with other tribes, but in eastern Angola at the present day the Ovimbundu occasionally marry with the Vachokue. [582

Soon the boy will start building a house on his father's plot, because he intends to bring the girl to his father's land. The boy must at this stage make a further present to the parents of the girl. In the old days he would take about five kilos of salt; but now he will take a bottle of Portuguese wine, two or three blankets, or a piece of cloth. The people who carry the present must be the brother, father, or a male cousin of the suitor. These relatives will say, "This is the day we have come for our boy's wife." Then the parents will examine the things. Perhaps they will say, "You must bring a better blanket." The father or the girl's mother's brother must call the relatives of the girl to a council (ombanda) where the relatives of the boy and girl are gathered. 584 481

The parents say, "We are taking these things for our daughter; we hope she will be a good girl and not shame us. She is a good girl to us and we hope she will be a good girl in your house." The girl's parents turn to her and say, "We should like to hear that you are hospitable; give food to your husband's relatives when they visit you." 584 577

of the girl by her husband, and if she were not a virgin he took a hot 585
stick from the fire and burned a hole through her loin cloth. "The girl began to cry, but she had to take the burned cloth to her mother." In such an instance there does not seem to be an idea of guilt. The husband had accepted something that was damaged, and the payment of a pig by the girl's parents reunited the two young people. In former days, also at present, there are boy and girl companions who sleep together, supposedly without having sexual connections, [836] •
although they may be seventeen years of age. The girl calls the boy *ombaisi*, and he calls her by the same name. The Ovimbundu [842]
understand something of the physiology of conception; the woman is, however, regarded as only a receiving vessel. "The man puts something into her which grows."

Husband and wife do not sleep in the same bed during the wife's 841
menstrual period; the wife sleeps on a mat at the side of her husband's bed. A woman who is menstruating never cooks food, but women give mutual aid in this matter. A man with more than one wife 595
sleeps either four nights or seven nights with each; the four-night cycle is more usual than the seven-night cycle among the Ovimbundu. Each wife has a separate hut and kitchen. There is no wife lending, 837
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Ngonga was able to give information with regard to homosexuality. 838
"There are men who want men, and women who want women." Ngonga says he has heard people talk about it, and "they think this very bad." A woman has been known to make an artificial penis for use with another woman. The medicine-man will sometimes dress as a woman. Ngonga, who has seen a man dress as a woman, stated that the man arranged his cloth like that of a woman, put palm oil on his hair, and joined the women to pound corn on the rocks. "The other people laughed and spoke bad words to him. His brother, father, and uncle beat him," but without producing reformation.

DIVORCE

There are many grounds on which a man may secure a divorce, 586
but it does not follow that divorce is frequent. On the contrary the evidence indicates that the majority of difficulties are overcome by a compromise between the relations of the husband and those of the wife. The main causes of dissatisfaction with a wife are want of ability in cultivating her garden, physical weakness, a habit of thieving from the gardens of other women, incompetence in cooking,

577 Lying is strongly disapproved and the liar is called *ohembi*. The Ovimbundu appreciate hospitality (*usa*) which also means generosity. A man who is hospitable is said to be *osapi*. Greediness, which is disliked, is described by the word *oku sapa* ("to be greedy"). There are standards of honesty in sales and exchanges. A deceiver in trade is *ohembi*.

• 836 With regard to the relation of the sexes in early years it may be said that, in spite of boy and girl friendships, and the communal sleeping of boys and girls at the home of one of the girls, a man expects to marry a virgin, a point which has been dealt with in describing marriage ceremonies.

Naturally there is a difficulty in obtaining precise information respecting the details of these nocturnal gatherings of boys and girls. Ngonga said that girls inform their parents concerning the house where the night is to be spent, and there is a point of etiquette requiring that girls must not go to a house where boys are staying together.

864 Standards of conduct already described under courtship are a result of direct teaching by parents. Marriage rules and a classificatory system of relationships, with its prohibitive decrees, are taught in the home, in the men's council house, and at initiation ceremonies where such exist. In addition to these sources of instruction there is no doubt an unconscious absorption of ideas and standards. The power of suggestion is always at work through everyday examples.

831 Apart from demands made by tribal custom and direct instruction there are variable personal standards of modesty. Ngonga states [562] that many lascivious stories are told among men, and when the men are drunk, they tell these to women. "Sometimes the women laugh, but the good women do not like to hear these tales."

576 A male commoner when meeting the king bows low, extends his
643 arms, claps his palms and says, "okosi ["lion"] akulu ["grandfather"]."
565 Only the old people follow the ancient custom of falling on their knees when greeting the king. The Ovimbundu never were in the habit of doing more profound obeisance, but the Vangangela, when greeting one of their kings, rub their chins on the ground and place dust on their chests. Even at the present day a woman or child of the Ovimbundu is expected to kneel when greeting a king, but such an acknowledgment is not now usual in greetings given by a male commoner. The reply of the king to the commoner is "kalanga." This word enters into greetings of all kinds. The literal meaning of the word is "the sun," "king," "god," or "death," but the interpretation

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groups began to make the socio-geographical function of these marriages no longer the renewal of ties with distant kin but the holding together of the local community no longer held in the firm framework of the old local organization.

Several explanations can therefore be given for preferential marriages. From the point of view of the man making such a marriage there are economic advantages in the probably lower bridewealth and, formerly, the avoidance of the fine payable on the death of a non-related wife. The marriage itself is more likely to be stable, and a man's children are more likely to stay with him if they have other kin close at hand. The local mobility of the Ovimbundu to some extent assists marital stability, since a bride arriving in a village may well find there other kin than her husband and his relatives, and may find such relatives helpful to her.

From an observer's view-point, preferential marriage is important on the village and neighbourhood level by multiplying social links within them. Its importance for the kinship system lies in its giving significance to the distinction between kin and non-kin and in keeping kinsfolk together without either localization of kinship groups or villages with strong headmen.

2. *Husband, Wife, and Household*

Traditionally the Ovimbundu lived chastely till marriage, and there existed sanctions in the form of fines, alterations in the marriage ceremony, and mystically caused illness, against unchastity.[7] The force of these sanctions has weakened in modern times;[8] however, many Ovimbundu remain chaste until marriage.

The age of marriage is about twenty-two for a man, and about eighteen for a girl. In Gumba there is some tendency to marry younger at about 16–17. Villagers in Epalanga ascribed this to contract labour, that is, to the necessity of a contract labourer having to have someone to cook for him. This is a point which will be considered later in reference to the wife's services to her

[7] Hastings, p. 121. Childs, p. 113.

[8] Childs, loc. cit., and fieldwork.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

The extent to which the order of the *vakuacisoko* exists at present or has existed among the Ovimbundu would be a very interesting subject of inquiry. It is certain that the institution does not exist throughout the territory but only in certain families which belong to the order and pass on membership in it by heredity. Whether there are certain regions where it is or was in the past more strongly held to is not known. It seems to be or to have been more strongly entrenched among the cattle-rearing people to the south, but it is also said to have been practised in Lupolo (Libolo) and even in the region of Luanda.[1] Among the Ovimbundu it seems to have been stronger in the past than at present. Few if any practising members of the set are now known. All 'coevals' or members of the set were in duty bound to render mutual assistance. All had mutual rights to the property of the others without complaint or remedy. These mutual rights seem to have been extended to the extreme limit of having intercourse with each other's wives, nor did the injury or even the death of one brought about by another allow the injured family to seek revenge or legal redress. It was the duty of *vakuacisoko* to bury their fellows, themselves digging the grave and attending to all expenses not already supplied by the family. Theirs was also the duty of burying strangers without family who would not be buried by others fearing defilement or responsibility for their debts. Bastos gives a tradition ascribing the origin of this institution to a wager laid between two chiefs.[2] It seems more probable, however, that it is connected with circumcision and tribal initiation. An analogous set of rights and duties is said to have existed among the Herero between 'coevals' circumcised at the same time.[3]

Tribal initiation for both boys (*oku-lisevi:a evamba*) and girls (*uso wakãi*) is carried on in camps or 'schools' in the southern and south-eastern tribes of the Ovimbundu. These camps are regularly held in Kalukembe, Kakonda, and Ngalangi. Sporadic instances of individual camps have also occurred recently in Viye, Bailundu, Sambu, Wambu, Cingolo, and Cikuma. Even in those regions where camps are regularly held, only the children of certain families enter. It seems that there has been some passing on of the custom by heredity and, in general, there is intermarriage only between families and individuals who adhere to the initiation

[1] Bastos, 1909, op. cit., pp. 67–70.
[2] Ibid., p. 69 f.
[3] Vedder in Hahn *et al.*, op. cit., p. 178.

of the girl by her husband, and if she were not a virgin he took a hot 585
stick from the fire and burned a hole through her loin cloth. "The girl began to cry, but she had to take the burned cloth to her mother." In such an instance there does not seem to be an idea of guilt. The husband had accepted something that was damaged, and the payment of a pig by the girl's parents reunited the two young people. In former days, also at present, there are boy and girl companions who sleep together, supposedly without having sexual connections, [836] although they may be seventeen years of age. The girl calls the boy *ombaisi*, and he calls her by the same name. The Ovimbundu [842] understand something of the physiology of conception; the woman is, however, regarded as only a receiving vessel. "The man puts something into her which grows."

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3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

586 bad temper, too much talking, some physical defect arising from childbirth, and infidelity. But the husband usually accepts payment from the adulterer, and in that event divorce is not sought.

595 586 If a mother has no milk, there is a likelihood that her children will die in infancy; this is a cause for divorce. Barrenness gives great dissatisfaction, but is not necessarily a cause for divorce. Usually the husband marries another girl, while the first wife retains her position as head-wife. With regard to frigidity my informant said [833] that sometimes "a married woman does not want her husband to do those things which husbands like to do, or she may want him very seldom." The husband is so angry that he may go away hunting for a long time. The husband may tell some old people, who talk to the girl. If his wife is a good cook, the husband may keep her and secure another girl as a second wife. Sometimes the husband ties the hands of the girl if she resists him. If a wife is returned to her parents on the grounds of her frigidity her husband does not receive compensatory payment, but he hopes that another man will take the girl and pay him for her.

842 Sterility of the male is sometimes suspected, in which case the husband tries another girl, possibly with his wife's consent. The wife may be allowed to have relations with another man in the hope of producing children. The evidence shows that there is definite experiment to test barrenness of the woman and sterility of the male.

In case of impotence (not sterility of the male sperm) the wife leaves her husband. In event of barrenness the woman visits a medicine-man, who gives her a charm consisting of two cowrie shells on a strip of leather which she wears round her neck; a potion also will be given her. If the barren condition is due to malevolence of spirits, the face of the woman is painted with streaks of red and white. Such a woman is said to gain *ocitumba*. *Tumba* means "a swell," "a rise."

586 A woman may divorce her husband if he does not treat her well. [837] If he beats her or refuses to give her cloth and palm oil, she will leave him; but she will not leave him if he is merely unfaithful. If a woman is unhappy with her husband, she will tell her people about the trouble. Her father and mother may say, "Go and try again."

After a year the woman may still be unhappy, in which case she goes to her parents. The husband visits his wife's parents to ask why she has left him. The parents give reasons and offer to return the token he presented for the girl. The return of the husband's tokens is usually long delayed because the parents of the girl are

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

drunk. The concoction is described in Umbundu as *ihemba vioku tundisapo imo* ("medicine to take away belly"). 847

When the monthly period begins too early in life, the medicine-man recommends that the young girl should wear the cowrie necklace worn by her mother's mother. 841

A deformed child is destroyed, but not if it has been allowed to survive the first day. 847

If male triplets are born, two stay permanently with the mother. At the age of five years one child goes to the king, whose child he becomes. 851

When a woman has had relationships with more than one man, she will die in childbirth unless the medicine-man is called to cure her. 837

In a Vachokue village of eastern Angola I bought a female wooden figure. It was explained that this would be nursed by a woman, one of whose twins was dead, in order to induce another conception. Moreover, the nursing of the figure prevents the death of the second twin. The Ovimbundu also use these wooden figurines for replacing dead twins (p. 163). 532 845 842

Children are suckled for a long time; even those of three years and older come to the breast. There are instances in which milk is present but lacking the nutritive qualities; then the baby is likely to die. The matter is simpler when a mother gives no milk at all because the baby is given to another woman, but not necessarily to a woman who is suckling a child. A baby whose mother has no milk may be given to a woman who has not borne a child for many years, and the sucking of the child quickly induces a milk supply. This is agreed upon by informants at Ngalangi and Elende who have seen a child nursed by a woman with withered breasts. Protection is given to the fontanelle by covering it with a vegetable gum which hardens. 853

Near the chief village of the Vangangella at Ngalangi there is a mound decorated with feathers and painted wooden posts (Plate XCII, Fig. 1). Childless women are placed on the mound which is near a river. They are covered with mud, after which the medicine-man sings songs and administers potions. The women go home and are made to sit on mounds in their kitchens. These mounds, which are made in rows, like earth heaped up after hoeing a trench, may be a symbol of successful agriculture and human fertility. 842 789

On looking into the subject of blood brotherhood I found that an exchange of blood between two males who swore mutual fidelity was at one time common. At the present day an exchange of blood is 608

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631 564 funerals (though these burials could be undertaken by the cross-cousins of the deceased). When *vakwatjisoko* came to their partner-chiefdom for a funeral they had the right to steal small live-stock, such as chickens, or pigeons, but not cattle, goats, or [837] pigs. An *ukwatjisoko* could sleep with the wives of his *vakwatjisoko* partners without being sued for damages.[68]

631 [602] [463] [574] The ties of kinship and affinity crossed the boundaries of the sub-chiefdoms and even of the kingdoms.[69] The members of the three spirit-protected professions, blacksmithing, divining, and hunting recognized obligations of hospitality to co-professionals from other parts of the country.[70] Again the caravans were so large that they must have involved people [437] from many sub-chiefdoms, which presupposes a wide range of contacts.

182 It may be said that the picture given here is contradictory and inadequate. How can the existence of large kingdoms be reconciled to the extreme insecurity described by old men? How do the wealthy caravan organizers fit into the political system? What sort of politics were there in the kingdoms? It is not easy to answer these questions owing to the lack of evidence, and, probably, because the kingdoms were already in decline during the latter part of the rubber trade period. Indeed, the impression that accounts of the Ovimbundu in the nineteenth century give is that of adventure, battle, commerce, migration —a vigorous rather than a stable society.[71]

61 114 The kinship system is perhaps the field of Umbundu society which has aroused most interest among anthropologists. Childs and Hastings have written much that is interesting on the old double-descent grouping but as, with the kinship system, the form has been described rather than the functioning and it is

[68] Informants. The account in Childs, pp. 114–15 differs considerably. For this institution elsewhere in Angola see Estermann, 'Clans et alliances de clans', *Anthropos*, 1952.

[69] Childs, p. 54.

[70] Informants.

[71] Magyar describes the king and his courtiers as being extremely despotic towards the villagers, and states that their despotism depended on their having a standing military force called 'Sons of the Elephant' (pp. 278–80). Later accounts do not mention this, and Childs notes (p. 209) that at the height of the rubber trade it was more difficult for the kings to recruit armies for their wars.

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ended by her death, and can rely on her testimony in a case. Even though adultery is reputedly frequent it is deplored and, as will be shown in a discussion of disputes, a man's hostility to another will be ascribed to thwarted lust for the latter's wife. The conjugal bond is the closest social relation that can exist between adults, and therefore the very type of personal enmity is provided by the adulterer or would-be adulterer.

I am here emphasizing the factors which strengthen the conjugal bond; at the end of the previous chapter I emphasized the strength which the brother-sister tie possessed under changed conditions. The balance between these two ties is to be seen in the way in which a man and his wife's brother are often next door neighbours and the best of friends. It may be suggested that this balance reflects the part-peasant part-proletarian condition of the Ovimbundu, the emergence of the conjugal family with its importance as the working team for the cultivation of cash crops, and the 'reshaping of' the brother-sister tie with the absence of husbands as labourers. It seems probable from the example of the substantial coffee-growers that had the Ovimbundu become full-time cultivators there would have been a strong trend towards isolated households and the weakening of the 'neo-matrilineal' pull which operates in the villages.

It is then the marriage tie which holds the vague, amorphous, kinship system together; it is against this vagueness that the marriage bond appears as the closest and most definite relation that can exist between two adults; and the change-over from trade to an economy based on wage-labour and cash agriculture has been accompanied by a transition from a double-descent kinship system to one in which the emergence of the elementary family co-exists with a certain pull towards matrilineal kin.

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627 to the post. Somebody said to me 'Lusase wants a fine to be paid so that he can get something from it' (the chief traditionally [681] having a right to commission on a fine paid in a dispute which he had settled). Eventually the dispute did not go to the post, as Kapapelo paid a fine, and the matter dropped.

A great deal of detail has been given here, but it can be shown that consistencies can be extracted from what seems complete confusion.

578 Kapapelo had, no doubt, as was said, under the influence of drink, decided to carry on his conflict with Sapapula after the gathering at Justino's and had arrived at Sapapula's threatening to commit suicide. The threat of suicide was here [762] used as Guilherme had used it to put an opponent in a difficult position, but it infuriated Sapapula, who decided that he must try and get another hearing. He therefore turned again to 627 Justino, although the latter had previously decided against him; thus implying that even a possibly unfavourable judge is acceptable, rather than let a squabble continue indefinitely.

Eventually, owing to Justino's refusal to hear the case, what I have called a 'moot' was got together, a body which lacked any deciding, dominating figure, but represented the local community. This became concerned with the question of the 578 relation of Kapapelo and Sapapula as affected by the action of Kapapelo in respect of Sapapula's wife Nahoka. As has been mentioned in the chapter on marriage, the relation between a [837] man and his wife's lover is one of mystically manifested hostility. Sapapula by accusing Kapapelo of desiring to seduce his wife was indicating a very serious state of hostility between the two men; and one can only explain Kapapelo's confession to something of which he was not guilty as a mark of his hostility to Sapapula. Kapapelo was accused by Sapapula of attempting to do him a grievous wrong, and Kapapelo claimed that he had in fact done this wrong. Nahoka denied that she had wronged her husband, and produced evidence of her assertion. Before considering her arguments, it must be noted what were the interests of the other people involved in the case.

627 It might be suggested that Kafelo, Lusase, and Ngombe had to some extent the function of judges or at least arbitrators, and Sapapula had indeed invited Ngombe to give his opinion (I

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do not know how Kafelo and Luase came to hear of the case). 627
In practice, their role was that of any other spectator in trying to bring about a settlement, although a chief has, as was noted, the right to a commission on any indemnification. The right of spectators to intervene is not based on any particular relationship to those involved nor on any reputation for wisdom. There is in fact no organized routine for determining who may and who must turn up and who may and who must speak. Spectators and speakers are simply members of the neighbourhood community, some related to Sapapula, some simply fellow-villagers, and it is natural that in present Umbundu society, [571] lacking clearly-defined social groups, the crowd that assembles on such an occasion should look like a chance gathering. Its lack of recognized procedure, of accepted leadership, and of specific criteria of recruitment are all typical of the neighbourhood community among the contemporary Ovimbundu.

Despite the 'unorganized' character of this gathering, there 627
exists evidently a set of generally accepted symbolic values, 113
which are accepted by Christian and pagan, by young and old. 537
Thus Nahoka claimed as evidence that she had not committed adultery her meal with Kapapelo's wife, and the latter in turn offered as evidence that adultery had been committed a statement that her husband had made a gift of soap to Nahoka. These actions provide presumptive evidence of innocence or guilt since an adulterer or adulteress may not eat under apparently mystical sanctions with the spouse of the person with whom he or she has committed adultery, and the giving of gifts by a man to a woman implies a sexual relationship. These actions were presumably recognized as convincing evidence in the days when there existed a formal court system, and continue to be recognized as such at the present day.

The nature of contemporary social relations, as being the 578
end-product of a series of acts between individuals rather than 571
as the content of jural norms defined by status, is also revealed in [570]
the dispute, particularly in the episode at Justino's. Sapapula does not complain that Kapapelo had not behaved as a villager should to his headman, but that he had not been grateful for having been given land. Kapapelo's complaint that Saviel, Sapapula's sister's son, had attempted to seduce his wife was,

like his accusation that Sapapula had incited Jaime to kill him, an attempt to portray himself not as an ungrateful recipient of Sapapula's goodness but a much suffering victim of his malevolence.

Although the moot reflects the existing social structure and values there are occasional reminiscences of the former social system. Thus Ngombe seems to have been acting according to a traditional but non-effective pattern in giving a long, judicial, summing up, which had no practical effect. Again, when Sapapula accused Kapapelo of wishing to break up the village it is probable that he was thinking of the old villages socially defined by the agnatic tie and physically enclosed by a stockade rather than the physically and socially amorphous villages of the present day. Values such as these survive in the minds of individuals when the associated social forms have disintegrated. They are brought out on occasions analogous to those in which they were formerly used, but are not nowadays decisive in the way they would have been.

The quarrel between Kapapelo and Sapapula is different from the other cases, since the meeting held to discuss it is held without the presence of a 'civilized' person and it pivots about a question of adultery or rather attempted adultery, a subject which has hitherto appeared marginally as a subject for insults. The case is held without the presence of a 'civilized' person, and this is from necessity, not from choice. Sapapula had tried to have the case heard by Justino, and Kapapelo was eventually brought to terms by Sapapula's threat to refer the matter to the post. While the moot shows us the community acting to uphold social control, such action is regarded as an unsatisfactory substitute for a decision by somebody who could, as Gonçalve said of Antonio Pires, 'leave with the words', that is, settle the case.

Adultery has previously occurred as an accusation thrown in during a squabble that has begun with something else. Thus Guilherme accused Paulo and Wasuka accused Kapapelo of adultery because they were angry with them; they were not angry with them because they thought they had committed adultery with their wives. It is parallel to the suggestions that Kapapelo was a sorcerer, an insult not an accusation. It now

occurs, whether in intention as declared by Sapapula and Naboka, as accomplished as claimed by Kapapelo, as the substance of the conflict between the two men.

To sum up, Kapapelo had originally been aligned with his kinsman Guilherme against Sapapula, who had then shown hostility to Kapapelo, and especially to his wife's brother Kusumula. The latter had counter-attacked by accusing Sapapula before Justino, and there the matter might have rested if Kapapelo had not tried to attack Sapapula again, by making the threat to commit suicide at his kitchen door. This led to the moot at which the charge of attempted adultery was made, and at which Sapapula intended to, and succeeded in, taming Kapapelo.

4. *Lusase, Sapapula, and Luanga*

In this case, individuals previously met, notably Sapapula, and Lusase reappear, this time as enemies. The principal scenes are first an attempt by a kinsman of Lusase's to recover a debt from Sapapula, secondly an attack by Lusase on Sapapula, thirdly a decision by the *chefe de posto* in favour of Sapapula, fourthly a fresh complaint to the post by Luanga against Lusase, fifthly a post decision in favour of Luanga, sixthly and finally reconciliation of Luanga and Lusase.

This chain of disputes had begun actually before the episodes mentioned in the last case. On the 19th February, Ndonga a kinsman of Lusase (whom he had helped to power), arrived in Epalanga and tied up Sapapula, as a result of the latter not paying a debt. I produced the money and for the present no more was heard of it. Lusase said that he did not know what went on in the villages, when the matter was mentioned to him.

On 19th May, Simbwyikoka, a former chief whose village was near Sapapula's, was holding a ceremony in which a bull had been killed. Sapapula had taken part in the ceremony and had been responsible for sending a leg of the bull (the chief's traditional prerogative) not to Lusase but to Kafelo, who, although he had been deposed in 1954, had the advantage over Lusase of having passed through the royal rituals, and

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on good terms with Guilherme, who was a 'father' of his, and even earlier in June part of the celebrations which marked the marriage of Paulo's son Jose to Pungu, a girl from Namba, whose mother had at one time been married to Kapapelo, took place at the latter's house. Most strikingly of all, as has been noted, Guilherme could borrow money from Bartolomeu and Paulo at the height of their quarrel. The kinship bond exists outside of and, it might be said, at a deeper level than, the quarrel, and the rebukes hurled at an adversary reflect this. Paulo did not complain that Guilherme was a bad cross-cousin; instead he complained that Guilherme was not grateful to him for having baptised his dying child. The motive for co-operation or conflict in everyday life is to be found not in the tracing of genealogies but in the tally of reciprocal services and grievances between two individuals.

It may be claimed that this portrait of the kinship system which emerges from the disputes as being loosely structured and lacking defined obligations, but providing an underlying continuity, is very similar to that given in Chapter VII, which was based on questioning and the observation of everyday life.

The significance of the conjugal bond appears both positively in the way Luanga and Sapapula both take their wives to the post as witnesses, and negatively in the way the hostility of Kapapelo and Lusase to Sapapula is interpreted as being inspired by lust for his wife. Even the accusations of adultery so readily hurled about in disputes reflect the stereotype of the adulterer as the arch-enemy, and likewise the arch-enemy of the moment as at least a potential adulterer.

One question remains to be answered. Was Epalanga a particularly rebellious, squabbling, divided, village, because of the presence of an unusual number of aggressive individuals? It is not possible to estimate the number of disputes per village, and the disputes which have been described were the most important of which I had personal knowledge. They were touched off by personal antagonisms rather than by structural contradictions. Yet they tie in with what has been said of the Umbundu social structure in earlier chapters to such a degree that they seem to reflect the lines along which any case of the sort would proceed. The weakness of the chiefs, stripped of

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stick from the fire and burned a hole through her loin cloth. "The girl began to cry, but she had to take the burned cloth to her mother." In such an instance there does not seem to be an idea of guilt. The husband had accepted something that was damaged, and the payment of a pig by the girl's parents reunited the two young people. In former days, also at present, there are boy and girl companions who sleep together, supposedly without having sexual connections, [836] although they may be seventeen years of age. The girl calls the boy *osubisi*, and he calls her by the same name. The Ovimbundu [842] understand something of the physiology of conception; the woman is, however, regarded as only a receiving vessel. "The man puts something into her which grows."

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Ngonga was able to give information with regard to homosexuality. 838
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5: Hambly E-5 (1929-30) 1934 FP 13 Mbundu FP13

595 of the village. The meals are brought there by those wives who are at the
562 time cohabiting with their husbands. But an exception is made in case of menstruation, for a woman is not allowed to cook or handle food during her period. At such times the preparation and transfer of food is carried out by another wife, and of course the time comes when such a service can be
241 requited. I found no survival of agricultural rites such as offering first fruits or other similar ceremony.

In some tribes of Sudanic and Bantu Negroes agricultural rites are important in relation to sowing and harvest, since land is in the first place the property of dead ancestors, but so far as my inquiries go such rites are not now known to the Ovimbundu. Maize may be pounded only on rocks that have been consecrated by the medicine-man: he kills a chicken and sprinkles
[462 the surface of the rock with its blood. Only women may pound corn, and a
● 258 youth who persisted in dressing as a woman and pounding on the rocks was beaten by his relatives. This information gave a clue to homosexual practices, but the information obtained was meager.

231 In connection with the care of domestic animals many tempting digressions present themselves, but I am concerned only with beliefs, ritual, and division of labor. Chickens are of ritual importance since they provide the least expensive sacrifice, and in connection with industries the peculiar use of chickens will presently be mentioned. For sacrificial purposes a goat is preferred to a sheep since it makes more noise; but the reason for this is not clear, though making a surmise I would say that the noise better appeases ancestral spirits to whom most sacrifices are made. Pigs are kept, but I did not hear of them being used for sacrifice. The animals so far mentioned have little or no attention. Goats feed entirely for themselves; so also do sheep. Chickens receive maize from women and children, who also gather the eggs. Pigs receive maize and mush from cooking pots or that discarded in making beer, but they depend largely on foraging in refuse pits.

The castration of pigs and bulls is the work of a male specialist who receives a fee of four yards of cloth for operating on the latter animal, but only a small gift of tobacco or similar recognition for castrating a pig.

The Ovimbundu have acquired cattle of the long-horned Damara breed, and in connection with the care of these some important points of ritual and division of labor should be recorded. The herding of cattle is
[462 exclusively the work of males, and I am not aware that women have any
234 tasks connected with cattle. Only in recent times have some male owners of cattle begun to milk the cows. This they do somewhat stealthily, deceiving the cow from time to time by allowing the calf to suck for a few moments. If asked why milk is not used, the owners say that calves deprived of such-

heavy tasks and the close and constant routine of housework, on the other hand, sometimes require more than casual urging by the mother. Biographical evidence agrees with observation on this point, but nevertheless few girls reach puberty without attaining proficiency in the various household tasks. The decline of polygyny has probably hastened the girl's education in the household arts. When there is only one wife in the household, not only must she have more regular help from her daughters, but also it is more likely that the daughters will have to take on full responsibility at those times when the mother is unable for ritual reasons to take part in the preparation of her husband's food.[1] Biographical sources indicate that this tendency was already operating at least fifty or sixty years ago.

Every Ocimbundu assumes that his sustenance will come from cultivation of the soil. The 'professions' which a child may learn are therefore in the nature of side-lines. Although the Ovimbundu are not a true cattle-rearing people, they possess many domestic animals, especially dogs, pigs, sheep, goats, and chickens. Chickens are owned and looked after by both men and women, but the other animals only by the men. Boys may have small stock of their own, and a boy's economic independence most frequently begins with owning a chicken. Herding has been a function of the sister's son and even now there is reluctance on the part of boys to herd for their fathers. Animal husbandry is largely a commercial enterprise, save in the extreme southern tribes of Kalukembe, Ngalangi, &c.

The principal side-line 'professions' (*ovipindulo*) may be listed as follows:

For Girls

Basket-making, which is practised by all to a limited extent, but excelled in by relatively few.

Pottery-making.

Medical-practice and Divination (for conditions, see *infra*).

For Boys

Mat-making, which includes the making of four distinct types of mats each of which has its specialist; the making of trays and large baskets for granaries.

[1] i.e. at the times of her menstrual periods, after the birth of a child, &c.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

833 chiefly for marriage. Indeed, marriage is the beginning of adulthood; no Ocimbundu is considered fully an adult until married.

841 Where the initiation camps have not taken hold, i.e. among the great majority of the people, it is the father's sister (*apahdi*) whose duty it is, at least in theory, to tell her brother's daughter how she should take care of herself during the times of menstrual flow. Actually a girl generally learns such things from observation and from girls of the immediately superior age-group, her sisters and cousins. She will not need to be told that during those times a girl or woman must not even touch anything belonging to a man and especially she must have nothing to do with preparing his food. This period is known as 'sitting on the ground' (*oku tumãlã posi*) since that is what a woman is supposed to do at that time. Modern usage has also taken that phrase to mean 'unemployment'.[1]

582 In the house which the boy or young man has built for himself, one of the most characteristic customs of adolescence among the Ovimbundu takes place: the trial marriage. There are several Umbundu names for this custom, as *oku tumisa* (lit. to cause to send), referring to the fact that the young man sends a male friend or relative both to ask permission of the girl's mother and also to bring the girl each night to his hut. Names for the correlative but all-inclusive custom are *uponji*, the girl being called *eponji*; and *uwini*, the girl being called *ombuini*. A young man may first *tumisa* at about seventeen to eighteen years of age, but he must have acquired enough to make small presents to the girl and to her parents and he must have or have in prospect money or goods sufficient to make the betrothal payment.[2] This payment is known as *itambelo*, 'enticements', or *oku lupula ikuelume*, 'chasing away jealousies'. This indicates that the custom of *uwini* is definitely regarded as a prelude to marriage. For this reason, the term 'trial [856] marriage' is preferred to that of 'premarital sexual intercourse'. The nature of the intercourse, moreover, is carefully circumscribed. 'When the respective parents have agreed, then those of the girl will warn her saying, Should that boy be bad, and want to play with your cloth, even though it be late at night, run away.'[3] In such a case the boy's parents would take him to task and require that for the time being he sleep in their kitchen and so under

[1] For early notice of this cf. Magyar, op. cit., p. 284.
[2] From 10,00 to 50,00 *Angolares* according to locality, family, status, &c.
[3] From a manuscript dictated by R. Kalupetoka of Ngalangi.

787 A detailed description of the procedure of divining is given by Tucker. In brief, the basket (*ongombo*), which contains a wide variety of objects, is ritually prepared, and the diviner goes into a kind of trance which calls the spirit of the basket to him. As he starts shaking the basket, he asks it first why the clients have come to him (since they may not ask him directly), and when he has ascertained this, questions the spirit about the cause of the trouble. The chanted replies of the audience (consisting, apparently, of outsiders as well as the clients) assist him in making the divination. The divination is finally given from the juxtaposition of the objects which settle on top of the pile in the basket.(1)

Especial care is taken of the divining basket when not in use. Some diviners build a special *etumbo* or spirit-hut for the basket; others keep it hidden in their own house, where it may be seen only by the wife of the diviner, and only when she is not menstruating. Tucker gives a long description of the contents of the divining basket and illustrations of some of the objects.

[841]

791 At the death of a diviner, his son inherits the *ongombo*, but only if he can master the secrets of the basket and pass the tests which are given during his initiation into the profession. In addition, he must be "called" by some omen or illness which a diviner interprets as the wish of an ancestral spirit that he should become a diviner.(2) If he does not have these qualifications, the basket goes to someone who does, and the son receives no recompense. In either case, two years of training are usual for the would-be diviner, during which he is apprenticed to an established member of the profession. In this period he may learn *ovihemba* (medicines); their preparation and their uses to cure or kill. In order to provide the female counterpart to the spirit of the divining basket, he might formerly invite a girl to spend the night with him. In the morning, he gave her a magically treated cloth which caused her illness and death; her spirit would then be able to assist the one he already had.

[754]

The *olombumba* or "servants of the basket" are youths who carry the accoutrements of the *ocimbanda* and wait on him; they also provide their master with much information about the community, and during divination closely observe the clients and assist the *ocimbanda* by shouting loudly when he has made the right answer. They are also believed to have mystic powers, *e.g.* to see and reveal what is going on at a distance, or to go into a trance during which the spirit of the basket may speak through their lips instead of through the basket. Tucker gives no information concerning the identity of these boys; possibly they are the diviner's apprentices, although she does not suggest this.

787 "The Ovimbanda refer all communications from the spirit world, whether by omen, portent or illness, to an *ocimbanda*....The requisite behaviour is determined according to the answer given by the combination of pieces in the *ongombo* [divining basket], which is thus the key to the

(1) The contents of the basket and the ritual which surround it appear to be almost identical with the practice of the western neighbours of the Ovimbundu described in another section of the Survey. (McCulloch, 1951, pp.91-3)
(2) It is not very clear whether the spirit of the basket is that of its former owner, or whether it is some non-ancestral spirit.

of the girl by her husband, and if she were not a virgin he took a hot 585
stick from the fire and burned a hole through her loin cloth. "The girl began to cry, but she had to take the burned cloth to her mother." In such an instance there does not seem to be an idea of guilt. The husband had accepted something that was damaged, and the payment of a pig by the girl's parents reunited the two young people. In former days, also at present, there are boy and girl companions who sleep together, supposedly without having sexual connections, [836]
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of this symbolism relating to occupations of males and females 842
respectively, is obvious.

Many women bear children when they are away in the fields, but 844
help at home is often given. The mothers of the wife and of the husband may not be present at the confinement. No childless woman may be near during the confinement or convalescence. The father may not be present or "the child would be ashamed to be born." Before and during her pregnancy a woman feeds her husband with a prickly plant which is mixed in his food; this makes him faithful [784]
to her.

The abdomen is bound after delivery in order to keep the uterus in position. There is a very small amount of bleeding after childbirth; in fact the flow of blood is quite finished in two or three days. The nearer the diet comes to that of the white man the greater the bleeding at delivery. A pregnant woman may not beat a drum, or she will bear a drum. A woman who sees the blood from circumcision of a male will not have any children.

When a female child is born, the umbilical cord is cut with a hoe to ensure that the female will be a good worker in the field. The cord of a male is cut with an arrow to insure good hunting. A newly born child receives a drink of beer, and a cord is tied round its waist. This is not for support; it is the string from which, much later, the lower garment hangs. Girls do not menstruate until they are fifteen 841
or even seventeen years of age. During the months after first menstruation a girl advances rapidly from childhood to womanhood.

The medicines that women take to secure abortions are bitter. 847
A woman will refuse quinine because she thinks it will cause abortion. It is certain that twins are welcome among the Ovimbundu, but there are special observances connected with their birth and death. A twin 845
birth is not thought to imply dual fatherhood. Twins are called Njamba ("elephant") and Hosi ("lion"). Although twins are of opposite sexes each receives one of the two names. Njamba is the first born, and Hosi is the second to be delivered. The medicine-man holds a ceremony to cure the mother of twins. The afterbirth of twins is placed in two gourds and carried outside the village for burial by two midwives. The mother of twins must wear round her neck the horn of an antelope given by the medicine-man. She has to blow this when crossing a river, meeting a crowd of people, or seeing a hawk overhead. People laugh at her and in fun say that she is a pig or a bitch. "The woman says the same kind of words to them." Children may be adopted, but they never really 587

597 belong to the foster parents. When an adopted girl marries, half the presents from the husband are given to the natural parents, and the other half to the foster parents.

845 In a case of triple birth at Ngalangi two infants died at birth; the other succumbed after three months. In another instance a woman bore three children and in the vernacular of my informant "something which was nothing," but all died. In a third case of triple birth a woman had a boy and two girls. The boy died at the age of fifteen [826] years; the girls grew up and bore children. Albinos do not find it easy to obtain wives. I was told that an albino man at Ngalangi could not find a wife until he married a widow who had several children, because unmarried girls of his own age did not want him. One of the charms collected has to be worn by a woman who has triplets. The object is a rattle (*olusangu*), which the woman shakes when she meets any one. If she gave an ordinary greeting the children would die.

115 The greater part of this information was obtained at Ngalangi by interrogating women who were questioned in Umbundu by Mrs. McDowell. At Elende I asked my interpreter Ngonga to interrogate 843 his wife. According to Ngonga a woman must visit a female practitioner in the first month of her pregnancy. The face and the body of the pregnant woman are painted with red, black, and white spots. This means that she will have no difficulty in bearing children, neither will she have any sickness during the nine months of gestation. "When her belly hurts" (i.e., the quickening), the woman goes to the same female *ocimbanda*, who paints lines of white, red, and black across her breast.

751 The *ocimbanda* gives the woman a necklace consisting of a strip of leather to which two cowries are attached. Experience proves that such a necklace is difficult to buy. If the woman has a necklace of this kind which was worn by her grandmother, it is a very powerful aid to conception, a relief in painful menstruation, and a means of securing easy delivery and normal gestation. I could not find any trace of an idea relating to the entry of a soul, ancestral or otherwise, into the foetus.

•841 *Ongonda* is the name for a disease of the genitalia; but Ngonga used the word to describe abdominal pain suffered by a woman who has had no children. By this I suppose he means painful menstruation. The curative root which is given is called *kayambua*.

847 Abortion is never secured by mechanical means. The medicine (*ikwala*) is made from the root of a plant that is boiled in water and

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

drunk. The concoction is described in Umbundu as *ihemba vioku* 847
tundisapo imo ("medicine to take away belly").

When the monthly period begins too early in life, the medicine- 841
man recommends that the young girl should wear the cowrie necklace worn by her mother's mother.

A deformed child is destroyed, but not if it has been allowed to 847
survive the first day.

If male triplets are born, two stay permanently with the mother. 851
At the age of five years one child goes to the king, whose child he becomes.

When a woman has had relationships with more than one man, 837
she will die in childbirth unless the medicine-man is called to cure her.

In a Vachokue village of eastern Angola I bought a female wooden 532
figure. It was explained that this would be nursed by a woman, one 845
of whose twins was dead, in order to induce another conception. 842
Moreover, the nursing of the figure prevents the death of the second twin. The Ovimbundu also use these wooden figurines for replacing dead twins (p. 163).

Children are suckled for a long time; even those of three years and 853
older come to the breast. There are instances in which milk is present but lacking the nutritive qualities; then the baby is likely to die. The matter is simpler when a mother gives no milk at all because the baby is given to another woman, but not necessarily to a woman who is suckling a child. A baby whose mother has no milk may be given to a woman who has not borne a child for many years, and the sucking of the child quickly induces a milk supply. This is agreed upon by informants at Ngalangi and Elende who have seen a child nursed by a woman with withered breasts. Protection is given to the fontanelle by covering it with a vegetable gum which hardens.

Near the chief village of the Vangangella at Ngalangi there is a 842
mound decorated with feathers and painted wooden posts (Plate 789
XCII, Fig. 1). Childless women are placed on the mound which is near a river. They are covered with mud, after which the medicine-man sings songs and administers potions. The women go home and are made to sit on mounds in their kitchens. These mounds, which are made in rows, like earth heaped up after hoeing a trench, may be a symbol of successful agriculture and human fertility.

On looking into the subject of blood brotherhood I found that an 608
exchange of blood between two males who swore mutual fidelity was at one time common. At the present day an exchange of blood is

660 643 769 782 regent and incarnation" of the spirits. Sacrifices were made at the royal shrine or *kakoloto* ("at the skulls"), where the skulls of past chiefs were kept, in order to:-

[372] (i) control the elements i.e. to ensure a sufficient supply of rain and avoid the dangers caused by storms; also to control fire by providing a new fire ceremonially kindled[1] from which everyone took his fire.

[342] [241] (ii) to ensure fertility, towards which the royal marriage had great influence. The queen's special province was agriculture and her kitchen was sanctified by human sacrifice to guarantee the national food supply. Ceremonially treated seed was distributed to be mixed with the seed of each granary.

643 648 721 [701] (b) *To represent the country in its external relations*, principally to make trade agreements with other chiefs, or to make war on other peoples in order to get tribute and plunder. The war leader *(Kesongo)* has his own residence entirely separate from that of the king, whom he must not meet face to face except on certain ceremonial occasions.[2] Each king must inaugurate his reign with a war, during which or after which he must ceremonially "eat the old one" *(oku lia ekongo)* - who was usually a specially fattened slave [266] cooked with the flesh of the principal animals commonly eaten.[3]

643 692 (c) *To dispense justice.* The chief's court or *olusenje* was the supreme court of the chiefdom. The chief had the final word in any case, but most chiefs acted according to custom.

644 [282] (d) *To protect himself and the chiefdom*, the chief could use "magic" (?) which might have been accounted witchcraft or murder if practised without authority: e.g. the ritual murder of a pregnant woman, or of the children whose lives were required for building and furnishing the queen's kitchen.

643 791 (e) The chief made much use of divination in order to carry out his office. For this purpose he had his own diviner *(citue cosoma)*, who was of the blood royal; but he also consulted diviners of other regions and types.

643 Succession to chiefship is in the male line,[4] from father to son, elder brother to younger brother or brother's son, or sometimes to one more distantly related. The election is made by the councillors whose duty it is (?), ordinarily before the old chief's death is announced. These same councillors may depose an unpopular chief, and there have been many such [242] depositions. This "democratic" tendency of the Ovimbundu has been noted by most writers. Childs points out that it is attested by the fact that a chief (formerly as well as today) works in his own fields, and by folk-tales which give incidental and intimate pictures of petty details in the lives of the chiefs†

(1) See above, p.26.
(2) In Bailundu he, with certain other officials, was of the stock of slaves of the state *(ovindili viosoma)*.
(3) Childs, p.21. Many early writers refer to the cannibalism of the "Jagas" or "Imbangalas" who are thought to have been the Ovimbundu chiefs. (See above, p.8, and also Lacerda and Ravenstein, quoted by Childs, pp.17ff.)
(4) But inheritance is said to follow a different line among chiefs from among commoners; possibly inheritance is also in the paternal line. See Childs p.18.

† See footnote 1, p. 31

for murder as two oxen and two slaves; for adultery, two oxen, a pig, and a slave.) Today a man who has committed adultery sometimes takes the woman and all children under three years of age, but this is for the husband to decide. An adulterer with one of the chief's wives was castrated but not killed, and the castration might be compounded for a high fine, while he, his sisters, and the sons of his sisters would become slaves of the chief.(1) Hambly states finally that "Criminal law did not distinguish between responsibility for intentional and unintentional offences."(2) 682 684 671

There is no information regarding the kinds of cases tried or the punishments given in the courts of village headmen or sub-chiefs today.

INHERITANCE

It has been noted above that moveable property is inherited in the maternal line, land in the paternal line.(3) The eldest brother of the deceased's mother has the first claim and is responsible for settling disputes. He may distribute the property to the mother of the deceased, the maternal grandfather, or to a brother of the deceased, but is not compelled to do this. Women never inherit cattle or land, although the sisters of a deceased woman usually receive most of her household utensils (the rest belong to her husband). A widow goes to the house of (? marries) the eldest brother of the deceased or her own maternal uncle, or she may return to her father's village. Apparently her children accompany her, although one would expect them to go to her brother.(4) 428 768

DIVORCE

Divorce appears to be infrequent; grounds for divorce are many, but difficulties are often overcome by a compromise between the two kin groups concerned. Causes for dissatisfaction on the part of a husband include his wife's incompetence, dishonesty, physical weakness, or infidelity (in the last case today a fine from the adulterer is usually accepted and the marriage continues). Barrenness is not a ground for divorce; usually the husband takes a second wife, but the first maintains her position as head wife. Sterility in the male is sometimes suspected, in which case the husband may try another girl, with his wife's consent, or the woman another man. A woman may divorce a man if he is impotent (not sterile), or if he ill-treats her, but not because he is unfaithful. If for any of these reasons the woman returns to her family, the latter are expected to return the marriage payment, although they may wait until another suitor appears who will pay the deserted husband. Whether the initiative in divorce is taken by the woman or the man, the marriage is not annulled until a renunciatory ceremony has been carried out by the husband, the wife, and the wife's father, in the presence of the village headman. The husband receives from his wife's father a roll of tobacco and a pig, and then places leaves(5) and palm oil on his wife's back; he then slaps his wife's back saying "It is finished". 586 [842]

(1) Hambly, op.cit., p.203. (2) Loc.cit.
(3) See above, p.18, and Childs, 1949, p.44.
(4) Hambly, (2) 1934, p.199.
(5) The leaf used is of the upu tree; the same leaf is tied to the pole of the etembo of a new village, as a sign of divorce from the old site. (Childs, 1949, p.38; this is the only context in which Childs mentions divorce.)

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

straight lines. The legs show the usual flexion of the knees and a 532
shortening which is out of proportion to the body length. The lower limbs of most Angolan figures have these characteristics. The body of this figure is hollow and the head detachable. The incised head-dress is imitative of the coiffure of Vachokue women.

Cangamba, a village in eastern Angola, is a confluence of tribal 171
elements, namely, Vambuella, Luchazi, Babunda, and Vachokue, whose physical appearance, hairdressing, tooth mutilation, and tribal marks differ considerably. The man who sold the figurine brought it furtively. He was an Ocimbundu, but the work is of Chokue origin. The figure, I am informed, was filled with medicine, [755]
then placed near a patient who was undergoing curative treatment.

The figurine (*ngeve*) of a woman having a number of dark feathers 484
attached to her back has only one use. A caravan setting out for a 778
long journey is accompanied by a medicine-man whose outfit includes 787
such a figurine. Should the caravan leader be in doubt when choosing between two paths, the medicine-man sets up the image at the parting of the ways. He kneels before it and asks questions, then plugs his nostrils in order to make replies in a falsetto voice supposed to come from the figurine. Thus advised respecting the route to follow, the caravan continues its journey (Plate XXI, Fig. 5; p. 156).

The wooden figure (Plate XXI, Fig. 3) is of exceptional interest 326
because of its connection with the blacksmith's craft, which is asso- 775
ciated with introductory rites for apprentices. In former days a newly initiated blacksmith was expected to disappear for a period during which he killed a man. On returning to the work of his forge the blacksmith made a wooden figure of which this example, one of five obtained, is typical. The spirit of the murdered man took up its abode in the effigy and in this way helped with the work. The figure, which is of the usual dimensions, namely, 36 cm high, has the greater part of its surface covered with reddened earth (pp. 159–160).

Two figurines (Plate XXI, Figs. 1, 6) were obtained from 171
women of the Vachokue tribe in the village of Ngongo, Ngalangi. 842
Here the Vachokue and the Ovimbundu mingle to such an extent that customs are no doubt transferred from one culture to the other. These wooden images are used by childless women, or by women whose infants have died. The woman who sold these figures pressed them to her breasts to show the manner of use. People standing around smiled and nodded their approval. A wooden figure of this [845]
kind is substituted for a dead twin.

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understand something of the physiology of conception; the woman is, however, regarded as only a receiving vessel. "The man puts something into her which grows."

Husband and wife do not sleep in the same bed during the wife's 841
menstrual period; the wife sleeps on a mat at the side of her husband's bed. A woman who is menstruating never cooks food, but women give mutual aid in this matter. A man with more than one wife 595
sleeps either four nights or seven nights with each; the four-night cycle is more usual than the seven-night cycle among the Ovimbundu. Each wife has a separate hut and kitchen. There is no wife lending, 837
but a visitor may be provided with a widow or even with an un- [574]
married girl. Then the man would have to pay the woman.

Ngonga was able to give information with regard to homosexual- 838
ity. "There are men who want men, and women who want women." Ngonga says he has heard people talk about it, and "they think this very bad." A woman has been known to make an artificial penis for use with another woman. The medicine-man will sometimes dress as a woman. Ngonga, who has seen a man dress as a woman, stated that the man arranged his cloth like that of a woman, put palm oil on his hair, and joined the women to pound corn on the rocks. "The other people laughed and spoke bad words to him. His brother, father, and uncle beat him," but without producing reformation.

DIVORCE

There are many grounds on which a man may secure a divorce, 586
but it does not follow that divorce is frequent. On the contrary the evidence indicates that the majority of difficulties are overcome by a compromise between the relations of the husband and those of the wife. The main causes of dissatisfaction with a wife are want of ability in cultivating her garden, physical weakness, a habit of thieving from the gardens of other women, incompetence in cooking,

586 bad temper, too much talking, some physical defect arising from childbirth, and infidelity. But the husband usually accepts payment from the adulterer, and in that event divorce is not sought.

595 586 If a mother has no milk, there is a likelihood that her children will die in infancy; this is a cause for divorce. Barrenness gives great dissatisfaction, but is not necessarily a cause for divorce. Usually the husband marries another girl, while the first wife retains her position as head-wife. With regard to frigidity my informant said [833] that sometimes "a married woman does not want her husband to do those things which husbands like to do, or she may want him very seldom." The husband is so angry that he may go away hunting for a long time. The husband may tell some old people, who talk to the girl. If his wife is a good cook, the husband may keep her and secure another girl as a second wife. Sometimes the husband ties the hands of the girl if she resists him. If a wife is returned to her parents on the grounds of her frigidity her husband does not receive compensatory payment, but he hopes that another man will take the girl and pay him for her.

842 Sterility of the male is sometimes suspected, in which case the husband tries another girl, possibly with his wife's consent. The wife may be allowed to have relations with another man in the hope of producing children. The evidence shows that there is definite experiment to test barrenness of the woman and sterility of the male.

In case of impotence (not sterility of the male sperm) the wife leaves her husband. In event of barrenness the woman visits a medicine-man, who gives her a charm consisting of two cowrie shells on a strip of leather which she wears round her neck; a potion also will be given her. If the barren condition is due to malevolence of spirits, the face of the woman is painted with streaks of red and white. Such a woman is said to gain *ocitumba*. *Tumba* means "a swell," "a rise."

586 A woman may divorce her husband if he does not treat her well. [837] If he beats her or refuses to give her cloth and palm oil, she will leave him; but she will not leave him if he is merely unfaithful. If a woman is unhappy with her husband, she will tell her people about the trouble. Her father and mother may say, "Go and try again."

After a year the woman may still be unhappy, in which case she goes to her parents. The husband visits his wife's parents to ask why she has left him. The parents give reasons and offer to return the token he presented for the girl. The return of the husband's tokens is usually long delayed because the parents of the girl are

843 supposed to have intercourse with his wife during her pregnancy, but this custom of continence is declining.

A pregnant woman in particular must not steal. If she does so, her child will refuse to be born until some one present at the confinement goes out and steals something.

Eating the flesh of a hare during pregnancy will give the baby a split lip. If the flesh of the owl is eaten, the baby will have large round eyes.

The expectant mother must not sit on a mortar, a pestle, or a piece of rock; if she does so, labor will be prolonged.

[261] A pregnant woman takes earth from just outside her door. She drinks this in water so that the placenta will be delivered whole.

A pregnant woman is not supposed to carry anything in her cloth. If she does so, the child will have a long head.

A pregnant woman is a potential corpse. A man ought not to quarrel with his pregnant wife and if she says angry things to him he should not reply. He would not speak to a corpse in anger; on the contrary, he would respect a corpse; he must, therefore, respect a pregnant woman. It is a bad omen to see a pregnant woman up in a tree. A man who sees such a woman is expected to shoot her.

[543] If a pregnant woman has scolded her husband and is sorry, she goes out to the fields. There she gets her cloth covered with burrs then returns home. If her husband begins to pick off the burrs there is reconciliation.

842 There are several arrangements whereby a woman who has borne only girls may secure male births, provided she can find a woman who has borne only boys and is anxious to have a girl. The simplest way of reversing the births is for the women to exchange belts. The belt is a string, or possibly a plaited fiber girdle an inch in width which is worn next to the body. From this string depends the woman's lower garment. A second way of reversing the births is for the women to make an exchange of food through a hole in the wall of a hut. The food is handed in on a basket tray. The woman inside the hut receives the food while standing with her back to the hole; she then places the food under the bed. The tray is handed back through the hole by the recipient who still keeps her back to the aperture. There is a third method whereby a woman who has borne boys may be made to bear girls, and *vice versa*. The woman who has borne only boys gives to the woman who has borne only girls, an arrow, a knife, a bow, and an ax. The articles given in return are a pounding stick, a broom, a tray and a basket. The value

of this symbolism relating to occupations of males and females 842
respectively, is obvious.

Many women bear children when they are away in the fields, but 844
help at home is often given. The mothers of the wife and of the husband may not be present at the confinement. No childless woman may be near during the confinement or convalescence. The father may not be present or "the child would be ashamed to be born." Before and during her pregnancy a woman feeds her husband with a prickly plant which is mixed in his food; this makes him faithful (784)
to her.

The abdomen is bound after delivery in order to keep the uterus in position. There is a very small amount of bleeding after childbirth; in fact the flow of blood is quite finished in two or three days. The nearer the diet comes to that of the white man the greater the bleeding at delivery. A pregnant woman may not beat a drum, or she will bear a drum. A woman who sees the blood from circumcision of a male will not have any children.

When a female child is born, the umbilical cord is cut with a hoe to ensure that the female will be a good worker in the field. The cord of a male is cut with an arrow to insure good hunting. A newly born child receives a drink of beer, and a cord is tied round its waist. This is not for support; it is the string from which, much later, the lower garment hangs. Girls do not menstruate until they are fifteen 841
or even seventeen years of age. During the months after first menstruation a girl advances rapidly from childhood to womanhood.

The medicines that women take to secure abortions are bitter. 847
A woman will refuse quinine because she thinks it will cause abortion. It is certain that twins are welcome among the Ovimbundu, but there are special observances connected with their birth and death. A twin 845
birth is not thought to imply dual fatherhood. Twins are called Njamba ("elephant") and Hosi ("lion"). Although twins are of opposite sexes each receives one of the two names. Njamba is the first born, and Hosi is the second to be delivered. The medicine-man holds a ceremony to cure the mother of twins. The afterbirth of twins is placed in two gourds and carried outside the village for burial by two midwives. The mother of twins must wear round her neck the horn of an antelope given by the medicine-man. She has to blow this when crossing a river, meeting a crowd of people, or seeing a hawk overhead. People laugh at her and in fun say that she is a pig or a bitch. "The woman says the same kind of words to them." Children may be adopted, but they never really 597

3. Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FF13 Mbundu FF13

drunk. The concoction is described in Umbundu as *ikemba cioku* 847
ñandiaupo iso ("medicine to take away belly").

When the monthly period begins too early in life, the medicine- 841
man recommends that the young girl should wear the cowrie necklace worn by her mother's mother.

A deformed child is destroyed, but not if it has been allowed to 847
survive the first day.

If male triplets are born, two stay permanently with the mother. 851
At the age of five years one child goes to the king, whose child he becomes.

When a woman has had relationships with more than one man, 837
she will die in childbirth unless the medicine-man is called to cure her.

In a Vachokue village of eastern Angola I bought a female wooden 532
figure. It was explained that this would be nursed by a woman, one 845
of whose twins was dead, in order to induce another conception. 842
Moreover, the nursing of the figure prevents the death of the second twin. The Ovimbundu also use these wooden figurines for replacing dead twins (p. 163).

Children are suckled for a long time; even those of three years and 853
older come to the breast. There are instances in which milk is present but lacking the nutritive qualities; then the baby is likely to die. The matter is simpler when a mother gives no milk at all because the baby is given to another woman, but not necessarily to a woman who is suckling a child. A baby whose mother has no milk may be given to a woman who has not borne a child for many years, and the sucking of the child quickly induces a milk supply. This is agreed upon by informants at Ngalangi and Elende who have seen a child nursed by a woman with withered breasts. Protection is given to the fontanelle by covering it with a vegetable gum which hardens.

Near the chief village of the Vangangella at Ngalangi there is a 842
mound decorated with feathers and painted wooden posts (Plate 789
XCII, Fig. 1). Childless women are placed on the mound which is near a river. They are covered with mud, after which the medicine-man sings songs and administers potions. The women go home and are made to sit on mounds in their kitchens. These mounds, which are made in rows, like earth heaped up after hoeing a trench, may be a symbol of successful agriculture and human fertility.

On looking into the subject of blood brotherhood I found that an 608
exchange of blood between two males who swore mutual fidelity was at one time common. At the present day an exchange of blood is

787 The handle of a hoe is the symbol of cultivation. The appearance of the miniature handle at the top of the basket implies that the spirit of a woman who was rich in corn is troubling the community.

Two united, human figures of wood indicate that a twin will die. The Ovimbundu welcome twins; when one is dead the mother has a wooden figure (Plate XXI, Fig. 1) made to take its place; this is nursed to induce another conception and to comfort the remaining child.

The little gourd means that a deceased person was secretly poisoned in revenge because of his thefts from a field.

The seed of the oil palm means that a large gourd of palm oil has been stolen.

The description of funeral rites gave an account of the questioning of the spirit of the deceased. If no answer is given, divination is made to learn the cause of death.

There is no divination by examination of entrails. Bones are thrown in playing a game, but this is not connected with divination.

EQUIPMENT AND MISCELLANEOUS DUTIES

755 [842] The basket of an Ocimbundu medicine-man at Caconda contained, in addition to the human bone, pounder, and hoe blades already mentioned, two carved wooden female figures whose specific use is unknown. It is known, however, that such figures may be nursed and held to the breast of a woman who wishes to conceive. There was a cowrie shell on a cord which forms a charm to be worn round the neck of a woman who desires children. A small tin box containing a coin and some stones was used for shaking. The kind of sound produced, also any arrested movement of the objects in the box, are indications of the guilt of a person whose name was mentioned just as the objects ceased to move.

A large antelope horn, filled with a mixture of goat's fat and charcoal from the bones of a goat, was intended for use in curing the sick. The contents of the horn become liquid when heated; then they can be dropped on the heads of the people who come for treatment. It was explained that a number of sick people sat around the medicine-man who walked to each person and poured out a small quantity of medicine on the patient's head.

[534] The only musical instruments used by a medicine-man are a small friction drum and a rattle. At Ngalangi I saw a medicine-man give a dance during which he slashed about him with a small ax, which was evidently a ceremonial object, since the construction

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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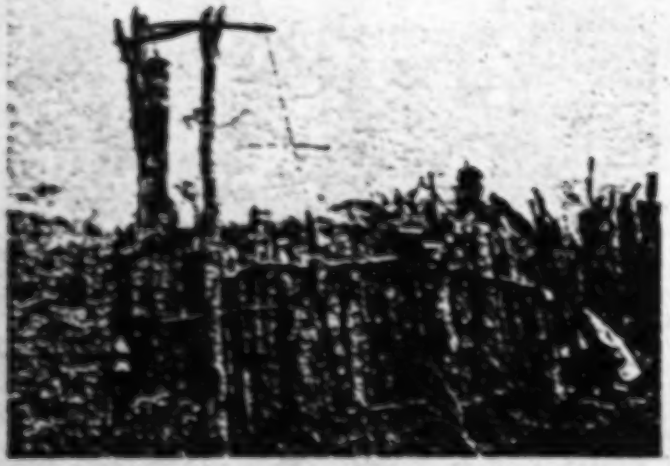

2

MAGIC AND HUNTING, CENTRAL ANGOLA

Fig. 1. Mound where children women are covered with sand to give fertility, Vangangulo, Ngalangi

Fig. 2. Trap for leopards, Gangumbe

[p.446]

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

Marriages may also be ended by the wife leaving her husband. 586
This may be the consequence of quarrels; however at times a woman may just run off without any apparent reason. Her husband may go to her kin and bring her back or may just get married again—such an episode may occur after many years of a marriage which has previously appeared happy. People 587
who have been married previously can be married again according to the pattern described previously. Middle-aged and elderly people would leave out the festivities and would just have the meal together, or simply count themselves as married by the payment of the bridewealth.

There does exist a formal ceremony of divorce in which 588
maize flour is smeared on the upper part of the face by the husband, and this will take place in the presence of representatives of the wife's kin. A man will do this when his wife has shown herself disrespectful to him or has quarrelled with his kin or her co-wife. As the Ovimbundu regard marriage as [581]
being for the procreation of children, a barren wife should be, [582]
they say, sent away but often in practice this is not done, if the wife is otherwise satisfactory.

Legally, the Portuguese administration recognizes both the 592
customary marriage and the Catholic marriage ceremony. The Catholic missions report to the post people who, having been married in church, then make customary marriages, and these may be subjected to such sanctions as being sent to contract labour. The Protestant church marriages are not apparently legally recognized but they are subject to the authority of the Protestant church courts which grant divorces on certain grounds. The *chefe de posto* on his annual visit to take the check on the census may get angry with polygynists, but in fact no very effective administrative action exists with regard to indigenous marriage.

The motives given for polygynous marriage are the desire 595
to have many children and (in the case of a chief) the need to have cooks to provide hospitality for guests. Large-scale polygyny is thought to be rather funny; I was told, as something amusing, that the former chief Mbati had 17 wives. Kafelo, the former chief of Gumba, had 6 wives, the highest number of continuing polygynous marriages I found. In Epalanga out of

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

hoping that another man will ask for their daughter; this new suitor 586
will have to make payment to the deserted husband. The chief of the village is not consulted unless the return of the husband's presents is long delayed or is in some way unsatisfactory. A woman who [564] claims even remote relationship with the royal family is treated well, because her husband is afraid of the influence which may be used against him. A woman who returns to her parents takes with her the articles she contributed to the home; these are pottery, corn baskets, a wooden pounder, and wooden spoons. If a wife returns to her parents without telling her husband that she intends going, he will beat her if he finds her packing up her utensils.

The procedure of divorce contains a very human element. When a man has fully decided that he would like to divorce his wife, he will first of all inform his parents of his intention. The parents may advise their son to try the girl for a longer time.

On the contrary, the parents of the man may be mischief-makers. Sometimes the parents will say to the husband, "Do you know that your wife is doing these things? It is better you should send her away." If the man is fond of his wife, he will take her to another place where his parents cannot watch her. When a woman divorces [587] her husband to marry another man, she takes to her new home all children under three years of age. Older children go to the home of her parents.

The chief of the village has to witness the final ceremony of divorcing a woman; but the husband and wife, also the wife's father, are the principal people concerned in the divorce ceremony. The husband receives from his wife's father a roll of tobacco and a pig, then he places leaves and palm oil on the back of his wife. He slaps her back saying, "It is finished," after which the woman goes to her father or to another man.

When a woman takes the initiative and has declared her intention of divorcing her husband, she returns to her parents as described; but the divorce cannot be completed until the husband has been persuaded to perform this ceremony of slapping her back and making a ceremonial renunciation in public.

PREGNANCY AND CHILDBIRTH

When a woman finds that she is pregnant, she makes and drinks 843
an infusion prepared from bark fiber. This is to insure the removal of all stringy matter at delivery. Formerly a husband was not

943 supposed to have intercourse with his wife during her pregnancy, but this custom of continence is declining.

A pregnant woman in particular must not steal. If she does so, her child will refuse to be born until some one present at the confinement goes out and steals something.

Eating the flesh of a hare during pregnancy will give the baby a split lip. If the flesh of the owl is eaten, the baby will have large round eyes.

The expectant mother must not sit on a mortar, a pestle, or a piece of rock; if she does so, labor will be prolonged.

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A pregnant woman is a potential corpse. A man ought not to quarrel with his pregnant wife and if she says angry things to him he should not reply. He would not speak to a corpse in anger; on the contrary, he would respect a corpse; he must, therefore, respect a pregnant woman. It is a bad omen to see a pregnant woman up in a tree. A man who sees such a woman is expected to shoot her.

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597 belong to the foster parents. When an adopted girl marries, half the presents from the husband are given to the natural parents, and the other half to the foster parents.

845 In a case of triple birth at Ngalangi two infants died at birth; the other succumbed after three months. In another instance a woman bore three children and in the vernacular of my informant "something which was nothing," but all died. In a third case of triple birth a woman had a boy and two girls. The boy died at the age of fifteen [826] years; the girls grew up and bore children. Albinos do not find it easy to obtain wives. I was told that an albino man at Ngalangi could not find a wife until he married a widow who had several children, because unmarried girls of his own age did not want him. One of the charms collected has to be worn by a woman who has triplets. The object is a rattle (*olusangu*), which the woman shakes when she meets any one. If she gave an ordinary greeting the children would die.

115 The greater part of this information was obtained at Ngalangi by interrogating women who were questioned in Umbundu by Mrs. McDowell. At Elende I asked my interpreter Ngonga to interrogate 843 his wife. According to Ngonga a woman must visit a female practitioner in the first month of her pregnancy. The face and the body of the pregnant woman are painted with red, black, and white spots. This means that she will have no difficulty in bearing children, neither will she have any sickness during the nine months of gestation. "When her belly hurts" (i.e., the quickening), the woman goes to the same female *ocimbanda*, who paints lines of white, red, and black across her breast.

751 The *ocimbanda* gives the woman a necklace consisting of a strip of leather to which two cowries are attached. Experience proves that such a necklace is difficult to buy. If the woman has a necklace of this kind which was worn by her grandmother, it is a very powerful aid to conception, a relief in painful menstruation, and a means of securing easy delivery and normal gestation. I could not find any trace of an idea relating to the entry of a soul, ancestral or otherwise, into the foetus.

841 *Ongandu* is the name for a disease of the genitalia; but Ngonga used the word to describe abdominal pain suffered by a woman who has had no children. By this I suppose he means painful menstruation. The curative root which is given is called *kayambua*.

847 Abortion is never secured by mechanical means. The medicine (*ikembe*) is made from the root of a plant that is boiled in water and

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

[p.81]

PART TWO

INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION

121 *The purpose of Part Two is (1) to describe the life-cycle or development of the individual Ocimbundu from birth until adulthood, (2) to analyse the Umbundu educational process, and (3) to indicate and evaluate elements in this process that are or may be significant for the educational work of Christian missions among the Ocimbundu.*

Chapters V, VI, and VII describe the Umbundu life-cycle and consist largely of Umbundu narrative given in direct translation. The principal source is a composite manuscript compiled for classroom use from the contributions of a number of Ocimbundu.[1] *Comments and other Umbundu material are interpolated from time to time into this principal source.*

In Chapter VIII there is an analysis of Umbundu development. The evaluations are in Chapters IX, X, and XI.

CHAPTER V

THE UMBUNDU BABY

Birth

•844 When birth occurs in the house, it is supposed to take place on the grinding-stone (*olumbambo*). That this was so is indicated by the [538] folk-tales and proverbs which refer to the place of birth as *polumbambo*, or *heze lioku cita* (on the stone of giving birth).[2] In this case, and especially if a woman is giving birth for the first time, she may be assisted by older women of the village. These, in the case of widows, may be relatives of the husband, or in the case of wives of householders, they will be his relatives by marriage. A woman's own mother may assist, but when she lives in a different village she is unlikely to attend. It would not be proper for the

[1] This source is given in quotation but without further reference. The chief contributors were R. Kavita Evambi, of Ciyaka; Abelio Ngulu and A. Siku Nunda, both of Balundu; R. Kalupeteka of Ngalangi; I. Kayulo of Viye; Ndondi students of the normal classes and several women there. It was compiled and edited (in Umbundu) by Pedro Paulo of the Currie Institute staff.

[2] Cf. the 'birth-stool' of the Hebrews (or Egyptians), *vide* Exod. i. 16.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

844 husband's mother (whether uterine or classificatory) to attend the labour of her daughter-in-law. The husband does not attend. As Mr. Hambly's informant phrased it, 'The child would be ashamed to be born.'[1] It seems that the husband's non-attendance may be
845 connected with the danger to him of the blood.[2] No other man will be present unless delayed labour entails the intervention of a medical practitioner, especially a diviner. Resort will not be had to outside aid until it seems impossible otherwise for the child to be born, and nowadays even where modern medical aid is available, often it will only be resorted to after the woman has been in labour for more than twenty-four hours[3]—sometimes much more, and then when it is already too late. Difficult delivery may be caused by:

(*a*) *Broken taboos*, as, for example, theft, either by the mother or the father. Only after confession can someone go out and steal something, after which the child 'consents' to be born.

(*b*) *Adultery* on the part of the mother, which must be confessed before the child will 'consent' to be born. The father's adultery may also cause trouble at this time, but this is more often believed to be the cause of a disease in his offspring known as *onjamba*. Failing confession of the above faults, a diviner may be called, but his diagnosis may more often indicate

(*c*) *Sorcery*, to which difficult labour, along with many other ills of life, may be attributed.[4]

(*d*) It is also believed that in some cases a woman may herself refuse to give birth and may extend her pregnancy far beyond the nine months' period, the limits of which, and its method of reckoning, are not understood. Such cases as

[1] Hambly, op. cit., p. 185.

[2] Among church-members the husband often attends the birth and is sometimes the only attendant.

[3] A labour of twelve or fourteen hours is considered quite usual, and a shorter one as light.

754 [4] Sorcery, together with ill will and anger recognized as its principal roots, are great dangers to a woman giving birth. Anyone who dislikes the woman in labour, or even one who has ever shown ill will against her, will stay strictly away from the birth. While a woman is in labour all women of the village are expected to stay at home and refrain from ordinary activities—to commune with the spirits. As one of many proverbs has it: *Ukuene nda o cita, vu salela: olu cita kukuene, olu cita kuove*; 'Your fellow, if she gives birth, you stay in: childbirth of your fellow, is childbirth of yours.'

[538]

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

have come to my notice finally turned out to be fibroid tumours, but it is held that there are women who have extended their periods of pregnancy to two years and then had normal deliveries. I failed to learn what was gained or intended by this procedure. 845

It is not to be inferred that difficult deliveries or prolonged labour are the rule, for while they do occur, they are rather the exception. In 1857 Magyar observed that 'women . . . are . . . very fecund and except in few cases bear happily the pains of childbirth'.[1] Such a statement would now have to be classed as a bit optimistic, but it has its point, speaking comparatively with our own society in mind. During labour the woman usually kneels, but in some regions she stands holding on to a post which the husband has put into the floor of the hut for this purpose.[2] 'With the breaking of the foetal bag the baby, which has been in the warmth, feels the air and begins to cry, *Ña, ña, ña.*'[3] From this cry is derived the word for baby, *oñaña.* 844

Hereupon I turn to the general narrative:

'When the mother recognizes that her time for giving birth has come, if this is her first,[4] she tells her husband to call the elder women who are skilled in causing to give birth. When the baby is born they arrange to cut (the cord of) the navel. First they tie it up with a piece of rag just picked up in the house or from the refuse heap, then they pick up a porridge-stick or a piece of firewood over which they stretch the cord and cut it with a knife[5] (which has not been boiled, for they do not arrange beforehand the cloths of the navel nor the knives for cutting as do Europeans). Everything they look for after the baby has already come. The knife and the porridge-stick they tie up to the roof of the house and

[1] Magyar, *Reisen in Süd-Afrika*, p. 283 (foot of page).

[2] e.g. in Civula. The Umbundu hut, whether round or rectangular, has no central pole. Does this custom indicate that in former times there was a central pole?

[3] From a statement of an old woman at Ndondi, other parts of which have been incorporated in the general narrative. She also stated that ordinarily a baby was not 'received', but was born on to the floor of the hut. From other informants and from the observations of my wife, I think this is the case only when a woman is alone and has no attendants (q.v. *infra*).

[4] Lit., if she is *omuma*, i.e. one who has not yet given birth.

[5] Hambly's note that a hoe is used to cut a girl's cord and an arrow to cut a boy's is 'theoretically' or symbolically correct, but nowadays people do not bother to follow the symbolism unless convenient (Hambly, op. cit., p. 285).

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

never use them again. The placenta they put in a broken gourd and bury it at the corner of the house or under the threshold: in the case of a boy outside the house, and in the case of a girl within.

'After this then they wash[1] the baby and anoint it with oil, and they tie a girdle of rag around its little loins. When all is ready, then some step outside and begin to shout for joy (*oku ulula*) saying, *Ulú! Ulú! Ulú!*[2] There has come a great big man here. Or if the baby is a girl they say, *Ulú! Ulú! Ulú!* There has come a girl here! A girl for the pounding-rock, *we-e-e! Ulú! Ulú! Ulú!* We are very grateful that she has increased our number.

'When the people hear the shouting, they hasten with joy to greet the parents and to congratulate them. Some seize the hand of the male parent and greet him saying, You have done well, you have begotten[3] for us a youth for the road, and a gatherer of firewood for the club-house. In the case of a girl, they say, A girl for the pounding-rock, the grinding stone is dirty.[4]

'In case the woman had already borne before, it is usual for her just to do it all alone by herself. She herself cuts the (cord of the) navel and buries the placenta. Many prefer to give birth in the field. Should a child have been born in the field (the cord of) his navel may be cut with a blade of corn in case there is no knife at hand. To tie up the cord she may just tear a bit of rag from her own cloth. When she comes to the village, the people will notice that she carries her basket on her head and the child in her hand, and straightway they greet her.'

It will be seen from this that childbirth is nothing if not simple among the Ovimbundu. Immediately after giving birth the mother purifies herself by washing in a running stream. She is accompanied only by her mentor. There is a lying-in period (until the cord falls from the navel) to be observed by the child *and* the mother, but it seems that in these days it is often observed in the breach. In the folk-tale of 'Baby and his Elder Sister' (*Ñaña la Kota liaye*), the mother did not observe her part of the taboo but left the house to Elder Sister, and it was perhaps for that reason that Baby took vengeance by eating up the beans left cooking on the fire while no one was looking.

[1] The water is warmed by being taken into the mouth and then squirted on to the baby.

[2] The sound made by plucking at the lips while shouting.

[3] The verb *oku cita*, to bear or to beget, is used of males and of females without distinction.

[4] i.e. needs attention.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

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Olõsõ ka kuatele, ocinunga ca enda lovava.
A fish (he) did not catch, the bracelet went with water.

Should a young woman complain that her baby is too small, the [856]
others may remind her:

Esaila olio osanji.
The egg that (is) the chicken.

Should she complain that her baby does not grow properly, they will say:

Ka ci kuli omõlã ombia, omõlã omunu o kula
It does not grow the child of (a) pot, (the) child of (a) person grows.

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THE LIFE CYCLE

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BIRTH

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respectively, is obvious.

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help at home is often given. The mothers of the wife and of the husband may not be present at the confinement. No childless woman may be near during the confinement or convalescence. The father may not be present or "the child would be ashamed to be born." Before and during her pregnancy a woman feeds her husband with a prickly plant which is mixed in his food; this makes him faithful [784]
to her.

The abdomen is bound after delivery in order to keep the uterus in position. There is a very small amount of bleeding after childbirth; in fact the flow of blood is quite finished in two or three days. The nearer the diet comes to that of the white man the greater the bleeding at delivery. A pregnant woman may not beat a drum, or she will bear a drum. A woman who sees the blood from circumcision of a male will not have any children.

When a female child is born, the umbilical cord is cut with a hoe to ensure that the female will be a good worker in the field. The cord of a male is cut with an arrow to insure good hunting. A newly born child receives a drink of beer, and a cord is tied round its waist. This is not for support; it is the string from which, much later, the lower garment hangs. Girls do not menstruate until they are fifteen 841
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1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

844 husband's mother (whether uterine or classificatory) to attend the labour of her daughter-in-law. The husband does not attend. As Mr. Hambly's informant phrased it, 'The child would be ashamed to be born.'[1] It seems that the husband's non-attendance may be
●845 connected with the danger to him of the blood.[2] No other man will be present unless delayed labour entails the intervention of a medical practitioner, especially a diviner. Resort will not be had to outside aid until it seems impossible otherwise for the child to be born, and nowadays even where modern medical aid is available, often it will only be resorted to after the woman has been in labour for more than twenty-four hours[3]—sometimes much more, and then when it is already too late. Difficult delivery may be caused by:

(*a*) *Broken taboos*, as, for example, theft, either by the mother or the father. Only after confession can someone go out and steal something, after which the child 'consents' to be born.

(*b*) *Adultery* on the part of the mother, which must be confessed before the child will 'consent' to be born. The father's adultery may also cause trouble at this time, but this is more often believed to be the cause of a disease in his offspring known as *onjamba*. Failing confession of the above faults, a diviner may be called, but his diagnosis may more often indicate

(*c*) *Sorcery*, to which difficult labour, along with many other ills of life, may be attributed.[4]

(*d*) It is also believed that in some cases a woman may herself refuse to give birth and may extend her pregnancy far beyond the nine months' period, the limits of which, and its method of reckoning, are not understood. Such cases as

[1] Hambly, op. cit., p. 185.

[2] Among church-members the husband often attends the birth and is sometimes the only attendant.

[3] A labour of twelve or fourteen hours is considered quite usual, and a shorter one as light.

754 [4] Sorcery, together with ill will and anger recognized as its principal roots, are great dangers to a woman giving birth. Anyone who dislikes the woman in labour, or even one who has ever shown ill will against her, will stay strictly away from the birth. While a woman is in labour all women of the village are expected to stay at home and refrain from ordinary activities—to commune with the spirits. As one of many proverbs has it: *Ukuene nda o cita, vu salela: oku cita kukuene, oku cita kuove*; 'Your fellow, if she gives birth, you stay in: childbirth of your fellow, is childbirth of yours.'

[538]

1: Childs M-S (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

have come to my notice finally turned out to be fibroid tumours, but it is held that there are women who have extended their periods of pregnancy to two years and then had normal deliveries. I failed to learn what was gained or intended by this procedure.

It is not to be inferred that difficult deliveries or prolonged labour are the rule, for while they do occur, they are rather the exception. In 1857 Magyar observed that 'women . . . are . . . very fecund and except in few cases bear happily the pains of childbirth'.[1] Such a statement would now have to be classed as a bit optimistic, but it has its point, speaking comparatively with our own society in mind. During labour the woman usually kneels, but in some regions she stands holding on to a post which the husband has put into the floor of the hut for this purpose.[2] 'With the breaking of the foetal bag the baby, which has been in the warmth, feels the air and begins to cry, *Ña, ña, ña.*'[3] From this cry is derived the word for baby, *oñaña*.

Hereupon I turn to the general narrative:

'When the mother recognizes that her time for giving birth has come, if this is her first,[4] she tells her husband to call the elder women who are skilled in causing to give birth. When the baby is born they arrange to cut (the cord of) the navel. First they tie it up with a piece of rag just picked up in the house or from the refuse heap, then they pick up a porridge-stick or a piece of firewood over which they stretch the cord and cut it with a knife[5] (which has not been boiled, for they do not arrange beforehand the cloths of the navel nor the knives for cutting as do Europeans). Everything they look for after the baby has already come. The knife and the porridge-stick they tie up to the roof of the house and

[1] Magyar, *Reisen in Süd-Afrika*, p. 283 (foot of page).

[2] e.g. in Civula. The Umbundu hut, whether round or rectangular, has no central pole. Does this custom indicate that in former times there was a central pole?

[3] From a statement of an old woman at Ndondi, other parts of which have been incorporated in the general narrative. She also stated that ordinarily a baby was not 'received', but was born on to the floor of the hut. From other informants and from the observations of my wife, I think this is the case only when a woman is alone and has no attendants (q.v. *infra*).

[4] Lit., if she is *omunua*, i.e. one who has not yet given birth.

[5] Hambly's note that a hoe is used to cut a girl's cord and an arrow to cut a boy's is 'theoretically' or symbolically correct, but nowadays people do not bother to follow the symbolism unless convenient (Hambly, op. cit., p. 184).

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3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

straight lines. The legs show the usual flexion of the knees and a 532
shortening which is out of proportion to the body length. The lower limbs of most Angolan figures have these characteristics. The body of this figure is hollow and the head detachable. The incised head-dress is imitative of the coiffure of Vachokue women.

Cangamba, a village in eastern Angola, is a confluence of tribal 171
elements, namely, Vambuella, Luchazi, Babunda, and Vachokue, whose physical appearance, hairdressing, tooth mutilation, and tribal marks differ considerably. The man who sold the figurine brought it furtively. He was an Ocimbundu, but the work is of Chokue origin. The figure, I am informed, was filled with medicine, [755]
then placed near a patient who was undergoing curative treatment.

The figurine (*ngese*) of a woman having a number of dark feathers 484
attached to her back has only one use. A caravan setting out for a 778
long journey is accompanied by a medicine-man whose outfit includes 787
such a figurine. Should the caravan leader be in doubt when choosing between two paths, the medicine-man sets up the image at the parting of the ways. He kneels before it and asks questions, then plugs his nostrils in order to make replies in a falsetto voice supposed to come from the figurine. Thus advised respecting the route to follow, the caravan continues its journey (Plate XXI, Fig. 5; p. 156).

The wooden figure (Plate XXI, Fig. 3) is of exceptional interest 326
because of its connection with the blacksmith's craft, which is asso- 775
ciated with introductory rites for apprentices. In former days a newly initiated blacksmith was expected to disappear for a period during which he killed a man. On returning to the work of his forge the blacksmith made a wooden figure of which this example, one of five obtained, is typical. The spirit of the murdered man took up its abode in the effigy and in this way helped with the work. The figure, which is of the usual dimensions, namely, 36 cm high, has the greater part of its surface covered with reddened earth (pp. 159–160).

Two figurines (Plate XXI, Figs. 1, 6) were obtained from 171
women of the Vachokue tribe in the village of Ngongo, Ngalangi. 842
Here the Vachokue and the Ovimbundu mingle to such an extent that customs are no doubt transferred from one culture to the other. These wooden images are used by childless women, or by women whose infants have died. The woman who sold these figures pressed them to her breasts to show the manner of use. People standing around smiled and nodded their approval. A wooden figure of this [845]
kind is substituted for a dead twin.

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597 belong to the foster parents. When an adopted girl marries, half the presents from the husband are given to the natural parents, and the other half to the foster parents.

●845 In a case of triple birth at Ngalangi two infants died at birth; the other succumbed after three months. In another instance a woman bore three children and in the vernacular of my informant "something which was nothing," but all died. In a third case of triple birth a woman had a boy and two girls. The boy died at the age of fifteen [826] years; the girls grew up and bore children. Albinos do not find it easy to obtain wives. I was told that an albino man at Ngalangi could not find a wife until he married a widow who had several children, because unmarried girls of his own age did not want him. One of the charms collected has to be worn by a woman who has triplets. The object is a rattle (*olusangu*), which the woman shakes when she meets any one. If she gave an ordinary greeting the children would die.

115 The greater part of this information was obtained at Ngalangi by interrogating women who were questioned in Umbundu by Mrs. McDowell. At Elende I asked my interpreter Ngonga to interrogate 843 his wife. According to Ngonga a woman must visit a female practitioner in the first month of her pregnancy. The face and the body of the pregnant woman are painted with red, black, and white spots. This means that she will have no difficulty in bearing children, neither will she have any sickness during the nine months of gestation. "When her belly hurts" (i.e., the quickening), the woman goes to the same female *ocimbanda*, who paints lines of white, red, and black across her breast.

751 The *ocimbanda* gives the woman a necklace consisting of a strip of leather to which two cowries are attached. Experience proves that such a necklace is difficult to buy. If the woman has a necklace of this kind which was worn by her grandmother, it is a very powerful aid to conception, a relief in painful menstruation, and a means of securing easy delivery and normal gestation. I could not find any trace of an idea relating to the entry of a soul, ancestral or otherwise, into the foetus.

841 *Ongandu* is the name for a disease of the genitalia; but Ngonga used the word to describe abdominal pain suffered by a woman who has had no children. By this I suppose he means painful menstruation. The curative root which is given is called *kayambua*.

847 Abortion is never secured by mechanical means. The medicine (*ihemba*) is made from the root of a plant that is boiled in water and

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

drunk. The concoction is described in Umbundu as *ihemba violu tundisapo imo* ("medicine to take away belly"). 847

When the monthly period begins too early in life, the medicine-man recommends that the young girl should wear the cowrie necklace worn by her mother's mother. 841

A deformed child is destroyed, but not if it has been allowed to survive the first day. 847

If male triplets are born, two stay permanently with the mother. At the age of five years one child goes to the king, whose child he becomes. 851

When a woman has had relationships with more than one man, she will die in childbirth unless the medicine-man is called to cure her. 837

In a Vachokue village of eastern Angola I bought a female wooden figure. It was explained that this would be nursed by a woman, one of whose twins was dead, in order to induce another conception. Moreover, the nursing of the figure prevents the death of the second twin. The Ovimbundu also use these wooden figurines for replacing dead twins (p. 163). 532 845 842

Children are suckled for a long time; even those of three years and older come to the breast. There are instances in which milk is present but lacking the nutritive qualities; then the baby is likely to die. The matter is simpler when a mother gives no milk at all because the baby is given to another woman, but not necessarily to a woman who is suckling a child. A baby whose mother has no milk may be given to a woman who has not borne a child for many years, and the sucking of the child quickly induces a milk supply. This is agreed upon by informants at Ngalangi and Elende who have seen a child nursed by a woman with withered breasts. Protection is given to the fontanelle by covering it with a vegetable gum which hardens. 853

Near the chief village of the Vangangella at Ngalangi there is a mound decorated with feathers and painted wooden posts (Plate XCII, Fig. 1). Childless women are placed on the mound which is near a river. They are covered with mud, after which the medicine-man sings songs and administers potions. The women go home and are made to sit on mounds in their kitchens. These mounds, which are made in rows, like earth heaped up after hoeing a trench, may be a symbol of successful agriculture and human fertility. 842 789

On looking into the subject of blood brotherhood I found that an exchange of blood between two males who swore mutual fidelity was at one time common. At the present day an exchange of blood is 608

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

positions on domes of rock. The first tomb examined was in Ganda 224
(Plate LXXIV, Fig. 1). This tomb is carefully built up from pieces 766
of granite detached from the rocks which serve as a base. Horns of animals are placed on the cairn which is further decorated by a stick bearing the tail of an animal. Plate XXXII, Fig. 1, shows a tomb of similar structure in the country of the Vasele. From one such tomb it was possible to detach a slab so that the interior could be seen. There were two male skeletons; one lay supine while the bones of the other were in disorder.

In a hunter's house of bows there are implements of deceased hunters, whose ceremonies centering in these relics have been described under the heading of hunting.

TRAINING OF MEDICINE-MEN

Training for the position of male or female magician (*ocimbanda*) 756
is not carried out with formality ending in initiatory rites, neither is the position hereditary; but the boy or girl who wishes to become an *ocimbanda* must have "spirit in the head." This choice of children of peculiar neurotic temperament for the positions of medicine-men and medicine-women is widely distributed, as I have shown in some detail (Origins of Education, 1926, pp. 256–259).

Among the Ovimbundu there does not appear to be an inten- [158]
sifying of natural psychoses by seclusion, starvation, or beating. When a boy is sick, the medicine-man says, "You have a spirit who wants you to be *ocimbanda*." The medicine-man kills a dog, a goat, and four chickens, then the boy has to accompany his master, carrying his apparatus and obeying him in every way. The medicine-man says, "Your father was an *ocimbanda* and the spirit wants you." The female *ocimbanda* is called *cambula* by other women, and her [845]
services are preferred to those of the male *ocimbanda* in cases of difficult childbirth.

In Ngalangi I was informed that the Ovimbundu have great faith in the medicine-men of the Vangangella, a name vaguely applied by the Ovimbundu to several tribes of east-central Angola. An Ocimbundu will make a journey of several days in order to visit a distant medicine-man of another tribe.

FUNCTIONS OF MEDICINE-MEN

Magical practices are of two kinds, social and anti-social. The man who carries out divination, rain-making, healing the sick, and [791]
many other functions is *ocimbanda*, while the secret worker of evil, the witch or wizard, is *onganga*. In one village there may be several

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

844 never use them again. The placenta they put in a broken gourd and bury it at the corner of the house or under the threshold: in the case of a boy outside the house, and in the case of a girl within.

'After this then they wash[1] the baby and anoint it with oil, and they tie a girdle of rag around its little loins. When all is ready, then some step outside and begin to shout for joy (*oku ulula*) saying, *Ulú! Ulú! Ulú!*[2] There has come a great big man here. Or if the baby is a girl they say, *Ulú! Ulú! Ulú!* There has come a girl here! A girl for the pounding-rock, *we-e-e! Ulú! Ulú! Ulú!* We are very grateful that she has increased our number.

'When the people hear the shouting, they hasten with joy to greet the parents and to congratulate them. Some seize the hand of the male parent and greet him saying, You have done well, you have begotten[3] for us a youth for the road, and a gatherer of firewood for the club-house. In the case of a girl, they say, A girl for the pounding-rock, the grinding stone is dirty.[4]

'In case the woman had already borne before, it is usual for her just to do it all alone by herself. She herself cuts the (cord of the) navel and buries the placenta. Many prefer to give birth in the field. Should a child have been born in the field (the cord of) his navel may be cut with a blade of corn in case there is no knife at hand. To tie up the cord she may just tear a bit of rag from her own cloth. When she comes to the village, the people will notice that she carries her basket on her head and the child in her hand, and straightway they greet her.'

846 It will be seen from this that childbirth is nothing if not simple among the Ovimbundu. Immediately after giving birth the mother purifies herself by washing in a running stream. She is accompanied only by her mentor. There is a lying-in period (until the cord falls from the navel) to be observed by the child *and* the mother, but it seems that in these days it is often observed in the [538] breach. In the folk-tale of 'Baby and his Elder Sister' (*Ñaña la Kota liaye*), the mother did not observe her part of the taboo but left the house to Elder Sister, and it was perhaps for that reason that Baby took vengeance by eating up the beans left cooking on the fire while no one was looking.

[1] The water is warmed by being taken into the mouth and then squirted on to the baby.

[2] The sound made by plucking at the lips while shouting.

[3] The verb *oku cita*, to bear or to beget, is used of males and of females without distinction.

[4] i.e. needs attention.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

the fire, while no one was looking. Before going on to that period, 846
the narrative will tell a little about the birth of

Twins (*Olonjamba*).[1] 'If twins are born, when they have finished 845
cutting (the cords of) the navels they bury their placentas out of doors at a cross-road. After washing and anointing them with oil, they shout saying, *Ulu! Ulu! Ulu!* There have come here a man and a woman. When the people come, they begin while yet outside (the hut), to curse[2] (and continue) until they enter, cursing the parents. It is called *Ongombo*, The Diviner's Basket. In that way such children are followed about by all, that none of them may die. And all the time that such children are growing, it is done month by month. The parent comes out and begins to curse the people who are in the village, and then all come from their houses and follow cursing her.'

In the case of triplets, when they are weaned, one is given to the king.[3]

As soon as the midwives have finished their task, the father may 844
come in and take up the child, but men do not 'like' to hold a child which is still 'red' (i.e. not yet black) and whose 'neck is not yet strong'. Should a woman abort (*pulumuisa*), or should the [847]
child be stillborn or die at birth, the loss is accepted philosophically, 845
quoting the proverb: 538

Cinene ombenje akolovi hacinueko.
The main thing (is) the gourd jug, the shavings (are) nothing.

Should the mother also die, then they quote:

Olīsī ka kuatele, ocinunga ca enda lovava.
A fish (he) did not catch, the bracelet went with water.

Should a young woman complain that her baby is too small, the [856]
others may remind her:

Esaila olio osanji.
The egg that (is) the chicken.

Should she complain that her baby does not grow properly, they will say:

Ka ci kuli omōlā ombia, omōlā omunu o kula
It does not grow the child of (a) pot, (the) child of (a) person grows.

[1] Lit., Elephants. The reference is to the names given to twins: *Njamba* (Elephant), *Hosi* (Lion), or *Ngeve* (Hippopotamus).
[2] *Tukōlā*, which literally means to call *hard* names.
[3] I knew of one such case in Civaka.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

lated either to cause the spirits to pass him by or to facilitate his 553
cure. In adolescence young people discard the names with which they were born and name themselves (*oku lisapa*) according to their own choice. I have collected the explanations for about two hundred names.

The names of children are used, and that is one reason for 553
choosing them with care, for the name will be heard often by the 775
spirits. It is his superiors and those with whom he has respect-relationships whose names one may not pronounce. A child's name may be affected by whether there are recently deceased siblings, but he is not the reincarnation of such a one. Rather, he may reincarnate an ancestor. This is doubtless one reason for naming him after an ancestor. This, however, is a subject for treatment elsewhere.

The Period of Lying-in (*Ocitete*)[1]

'During lying-in the work of the mother is to cause the cord to 846
fall from the navel of her child. On the navel she rubs castor-bean charcoal mixed with palm oil, or palm oil mixed with ashes, or with the soot from burning a sleeping-mat of reeds. A chicken feather is required from a wing or the tail, to dip it in the soot. That is done day by day until the navel is freed.' It must be noted that although a large percentage of the babies get infected navels, this does not seem to be as serious among the Ovimbundu as with us. 'For the bed of mother and baby are spread leaves that it may be soft, if possible leaves of the *ongonguila* tree. Over the leaves [824]
are spread a sleeping-mat (*esisa*) and some little cloths. During that time the mother does not sleep in the dark. The father must bring firewood and firelogs that it may be warm and light in the house, so that if the baby defecates in the night, it may be wiped properly.' No cloths or diapers are u[illegible] for babies either at this period or later. An additional reason given for having a good fire in the hut is that the baby is supposed to be very much afraid of the dark.

'During those first days the women come to entertain[2] the mother and to hold the baby. Some bring meal and meat, some meal and beans, some porridge and relish, some sour beer and

[1] *Ocitete* seems to be derived from *oku teta*, to cut, in reference to the cutting of the cord.

[2] *Oku poka*, to provide for and entertain, as for a guest.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

846 firewood. When they bring something, the mother thanks them saying, You have provided very well. She who brought supplies sits down and takes the baby and asks whether it is doing well. Conversing with the mother, she advises her how to attend to the baby, and then she returns the baby to its mother and bids her good-bye, saying, May you rest well. The mother replies *E-e-e*. Then she goes out and goes away. All who come do that. During all that time the mother cannot go out until the navel has healed. Then some day when another gives birth, she will do likewise, she will prepare food to go and greet the parent.'

853 *The Baby's Food, Drink, and Medicine*. 'From the time the baby is born they set its gruel (*ekela*) (on the fire), and when it is done they begin to feed (it to him). It is difficult to feed a baby because he struggles greatly, and so when they feed him they hold his little arms and legs and put the food in his mouth when he cries. The mother takes the gruel from the pot and first puts it in her own mouth to cool it with her saliva, then she takes it out and, with the crook of her finger, puts it into the baby's mouth. If the baby's mouth fills up and runs over, she wipes it up and throws it back again. When she sees that sleep has taken him away, she sucks the gruel from the child's mouth and spits it out on the floor. Then she wipes his face clean with a little water. This gruel is stirred up with unfermented beer (*ocisangua*) in place of water that it may be tasty.

757 853 'Likewise from the time of his birth they set aside for the baby a little gourd or pot of beer (*ocisangua*), which is tasty, very tasty. Into that beer they throw some sweet-smelling medicine, as for instance *ocisangu*, *olukata*, *ocilombo*, and *okakonga*. That medicine helps that the stomach may not ache and that worms may not come. *Olukata* is useful for stopping diarrhoea. Should he not eat well, they put in *okakonga*. In giving him to drink they use a little piece of gourd. As with feeding him likewise, although he struggles they hold his little arms and legs and make him drink.' The chief purpose of the beer and the sweet-smelling medicines is to tempt the baby to eat and drink, for it is believed that a baby [827] is born with its senses of taste and smell fully developed. In case of more serious, or supposedly more serious, trouble, these simple remedies do not suffice and the diviner (*ocimbanda*) will be consulted.

'Should the baby be sick in the belly, making a noise *cõlõlõ*,

633 One of the commonest forms of punishment for sorcery was, and still is, banishment. Only the chief could pronounce the death penalty. Charges of sorcery are sometimes brought today to civil courts and to church courts under the guise of "poisoning".(1)

781 There are obvious gaps in the information on Umbundu religion and magic e.g. on spirits other than those of ancestors; on ritual connected
776 with the ancestors; on productive and protective magic; on the work of the medicine-man as distinct from the diviner, and on the functions of
171 the two separate offices of family priest. From existing accounts, however, Umbundu magico-religious concepts would appear to have much in common with those of the peoples to the east of the Plateau, and many of the words used for these concepts *(ngombo, ahamba, wanga, nganga* e.g.) are in fact the same. These peoples have been described in another section of the Survey.(2)

THE LIFE CYCLE

852 Childs' chapters on infancy, childhood, and adolescence form the
114 main part of his book, and his treatment of the subject is much more detailed and on a deeper level than information offered by other writers,(3) and should be consulted.

BIRTH

844 A woman remains in her husband's village for the birth of her children. During the first birth, she is generally assisted by older women of the village, usually relatives of the husband. No man is present unless delayed labour entails the presence of a medical practitioner, or a
[845] diviner. Difficult delivery is said to be caused by broken taboos, adultery on the part of the mother, sorcery, or the woman's own refusal to give birth. There is little ceremony connected with childbirth, and a woman may give birth to her second and later children alone when she is
[846] in the fields. There is a customary lying-in period until the cord falls from the navel, but this is frequently ignored today.

845 *Twins* are welcomed but are considered prodigies whose birth requires the administrations of an *ocimbanda*.(4) Soon after the birth, and every month while the children are growing, the whole village takes part in a ceremony to preserve their lives. In the case of triplets, one is given to the paramount chief.(5)

553 *Naming* usually takes place, in the case of a first-born, on the day of its birth. Childs notes several factors:

(a) The name *(onduko)* should have been borne by a relative, whether living or dead, whose character and state of well-being are satisfactory; sometimes the child may be considered the re-incarnation of the deceased relative after whom he is named.†

(1) Childs, personal communication. (2) McCulloch, 1951, pp.72-83.
(3) Hambly, (2) 1934, pp.212-33, and Cushman, 1944.
(4) Ennis, 1945. (5) Childs, 1949, p.83.

† [Childs, op. cit, p. 87-]

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

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come in and take up the child, but men do not 'like' to hold a child which is still 'red' (i.e. not yet black) and whose 'neck is not yet strong'. Should a woman abort (*pulumuisa*), or should the [847] child be stillborn or die at birth, the loss is accepted philosophically, 845
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[2] *Tukālā*, which literally means to call *hard* names.
[3] I knew of one such case in Civaka.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

has been cited to prove conclusively that the 'Jagas' were not one horde but many, and that they multiplied by splitting into other and smaller groups as they went from pillage to pillage. Battell recounts that they killed their own offspring,[1] and this is further attested by other contemporary writers.[2] They ensured their increase by taking the young of their enemies who, as Purchas noted, were trained up as a sort of Janisaries. Battell said that of 16,000 in the camp 'there were but twelve natural Gagas that were their captains, and fourteen or fifteen women'.[3] Purchas added to the first edition of *Purchas, His Pilgrimage* (1613) a note which is helpful in determining, if not their ultimate, at least their proximate, origin, and also their final place of settling. He wrote:

> He (i.e., Battell) saith they are called Iagges by the Portugals, by themselves Imbangolas . . . and come from Sierra Liona. . . .
>
> Elembe, the great Iagge, brought with him twelve thousand of these cruel monsters from Sierra Liona, and after much mischief and spoil settled himself in Benguele, twelve degrees from the Zone southwards, and there breedeth and groweth into a nation. But Kelandula, sometime his page, proceeds in that beastly life before mentioned, and the people of Elembe, by great troops, run to him and follow his camp in hope of spoil.[4]

According to this, we may take it that the designation of Iagges, Jaga, Jaka, or Ayaka came from the Portuguese, which means that it came from one or more of the Bantu languages—that it was originally a description given to these hordes or to their leaders by the African people whom they fought and conquered, or even by the African traders[5] who went to the 'Jaga' camps to buy slaves in exchange for cloth, beads, rum, and muskets. The word evidently comes from the verb to fight, *oku yaka*; they fight, *a yaka*,[6] or *va yaka*. Father Van Wing[7] and Emil Torday[8] both hold that there is some real relationship between the tribe of the Bayaka of the middle Kuango and the 'Jaga' hordes, and make that

[1] Ravenstein, op. cit., pp. 32, 84 f. Could this have been an (extreme) instance of the well-known fear of menstrual-blood found among many people, including the Ovimbundu?

[2] Ravenstein, op. cit., p. 32, note 4.

[3] Ravenstein, op. cit., p. 33.

[4] Ravenstein, op. cit., pp. 84, 85.

[5] *Pombeiros descalços*, barefoot traders.

[6] The Portuguese transcription of this form is *a iaca*, or *a iacca*, with the hard *c* mistakenly changed to *g*, and *i* taken for *j* as was formerly often done.

[7] Van Wing, op. cit., p. 106.

[8] Torday, op. cit., see map facing p. 282.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

of this symbolism relating to occupations of males and females 842
respectively, is obvious.

Many women bear children when they are away in the fields, but 844
help at home is often given. The mothers of the wife and of the husband may not be present at the confinement. No childless woman may be near during the confinement or convalescence. The father may not be present or "the child would be ashamed to be born." Before and during her pregnancy a woman feeds her husband with a prickly plant which is mixed in his food; this makes him faithful [784]
to her.

The abdomen is bound after delivery in order to keep the uterus in position. There is a very small amount of bleeding after childbirth; in fact the flow of blood is quite finished in two or three days. The nearer the diet comes to that of the white man the greater the bleeding at delivery. A pregnant woman may not beat a drum, or she will bear a drum. A woman who sees the blood from circumcision of a male will not have any children.

When a female child is born, the umbilical cord is cut with a hoe to ensure that the female will be a good worker in the field. The cord of a male is cut with an arrow to insure good hunting. A newly born child receives a drink of beer, and a cord is tied round its waist. This is not for support; it is the string from which, much later, the lower garment hangs. Girls do not menstruate until they are fifteen 841
or even seventeen years of age. During the months after first menstruation a girl advances rapidly from childhood to womanhood.

The medicines that women take to secure abortions are bitter. 847
A woman will refuse quinine because she thinks it will cause abortion. It is certain that twins are welcome among the Ovimbundu, but there are special observances connected with their birth and death. A twin 845
birth is not thought to imply dual fatherhood. Twins are called Njamba ("elephant") and Hosi ("lion"). Although twins are of opposite sexes each receives one of the two names. Njamba is the first born, and Hosi is the second to be delivered. The medicine-man holds a ceremony to cure the mother of twins. The afterbirth of twins is placed in two gourds and carried outside the village for burial by two midwives. The mother of twins must wear round her neck the horn of an antelope given by the medicine-man. She has to blow this when crossing a river, meeting a crowd of people, or seeing a hawk overhead. People laugh at her and in fun say that she is a pig or a bitch. "The woman says the same kind of words to them." Children may be adopted, but they never really 597

597 belong to the foster parents. When an adopted girl marries, half the presents from the husband are given to the natural parents, and the other half to the foster parents.

845 In a case of triple birth at Ngalangi two infants died at birth; the other succumbed after three months. In another instance a woman bore three children and in the vernacular of my informant "something which was nothing," but all died. In a third case of triple birth a woman had a boy and two girls. The boy died at the age of fifteen [826] years; the girls grew up and bore children. Albinos do not find it easy to obtain wives. I was told that an albino man at Ngalangi could not find a wife until he married a widow who had several children, because unmarried girls of his own age did not want him. One of the charms collected has to be worn by a woman who has triplets. The object is a rattle (*olusangu*), which the woman shakes when she meets any one. If she gave an ordinary greeting the children would die.

115 The greater part of this information was obtained at Ngalangi by interrogating women who were questioned in Umbundu by Mrs. McDowell. At Elende I asked my interpreter Ngonga to interrogate 843 his wife. According to Ngonga a woman must visit a female practitioner in the first month of her pregnancy. The face and the body of the pregnant woman are painted with red, black, and white spots. This means that she will have no difficulty in bearing children, neither will she have any sickness during the nine months of gestation. "When her belly hurts" (i.e., the quickening), the woman goes to the same female *ocimbanda*, who paints lines of white, red, and black across her breast.

751 The *ocimbanda* gives the woman a necklace consisting of a strip of leather to which two cowries are attached. Experience proves that such a necklace is difficult to buy. If the woman has a necklace of this kind which was worn by her grandmother, it is a very powerful aid to conception, a relief in painful menstruation, and a means of securing easy delivery and normal gestation. I could not find any trace of an idea relating to the entry of a soul, ancestral or otherwise, into the foetus.

841 *Ongandu* is the name for a disease of the genitalia; but Ngonga used the word to describe abdominal pain suffered by a woman who has had no children. By this I suppose he means painful menstruation. The curative root which is given is called *kayambua*.

• 847 Abortion is never secured by mechanical means. The medicine (*ikemba*) is made from the root of a plant that is boiled in water and

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

drunk. The concoction is described in Umbundu as *ihemba vioku tundisapo imo* ("medicine to take away belly"). 847

When the monthly period begins too early in life, the medicine-man recommends that the young girl should wear the cowrie necklace worn by her mother's mother. 841

A deformed child is destroyed, but not if it has been allowed to survive the first day. 847

If male triplets are born, two stay permanently with the mother. At the age of five years one child goes to the king, whose child he becomes. 851

When a woman has had relationships with more than one man, she will die in childbirth unless the medicine-man is called to cure her. 837

In a Vachokue village of eastern Angola I bought a female wooden figure. It was explained that this would be nursed by a woman, one of whose twins was dead, in order to induce another conception. Moreover, the nursing of the figure prevents the death of the second twin. The Ovimbundu also use these wooden figurines for replacing dead twins (p. 163). 532 845 842

Children are suckled for a long time; even those of three years and older come to the breast. There are instances in which milk is present but lacking the nutritive qualities; then the baby is likely to die. The matter is simpler when a mother gives no milk at all because the baby is given to another woman, but not necessarily to a woman who is suckling a child. A baby whose mother has no milk may be given to a woman who has not borne a child for many years, and the sucking of the child quickly induces a milk supply. This is agreed upon by informants at Ngalangi and Elende who have seen a child nursed by a woman with withered breasts. Protection is given to the fontanelle by covering it with a vegetable gum which hardens. 853

Near the chief village of the Vangangella at Ngalangi there is a mound decorated with feathers and painted wooden posts (Plate XCII, Fig. 1). Childless women are placed on the mound which is near a river. They are covered with mud, after which the medicine-man sings songs and administers potions. The women go home and are made to sit on mounds in their kitchens. These mounds, which are made in rows, like earth heaped up after hoeing a trench, may be a symbol of successful agriculture and human fertility. 842 789

On looking into the subject of blood brotherhood I found that an exchange of blood between two males who swore mutual fidelity was at one time common. At the present day an exchange of blood is 608

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

593 only by a sister), and *mukāi* (sister, spoken only by a brother). In
[561] a polygynous household each of the wives is mother to all the children and each of the children is *huva* or *manja*[1] to all the others.
●848 Illegitimate children are not stigmatized but since they belong to
567 the mother they have a distinct designation.[2] Slaves or former slaves have a status within the household and village which to the ordinary observer does not differ from that of the children: they are treated much as the children and they may carry on in all matters social and economic much as though they were members of the family. I have noticed, however, that when there is a call for labour, the lot falls oftener to one of these 'children-born-by-day'[3] whether he was a war-captive or a pawn.

567 Both slavery and the polygynous household, two institutions
595 manifestly and intimately inter-related, are still a part of the
178 Umbundu social structure, but neither the one nor the other now has the importance which it formerly had. Neither of these institutions is part of the present and personal experience of the great majority of Umbundu households.

Kinship

596 *Blood Relatives* (*Epata*). The relationships of the wider kinship
602 groups are for the most part extensions of those of the household.
621 The child learns them very early in life owing to the fact that the village community into which he is born is only a part of this larger kinship group. Nearly all of the villagers belong to the same *epata* or extended family, which includes both lines of descent. Most of them belong to the father's family (*oluse*), and the mother's family (*oluina*) may also be represented. The fact is that most of the adults of the village are father or mother to nearly every child and most of the children are brothers or sisters. Those of his coevals who do not bear this relation to him are otherwise related and are also potential spouses or potential relatives-in-law.

[1] This distinction *yesepahai* (lit. 'of the jealousy of women') may be made but it is not applied in ordinary speech.

[2] *Omālā a ngenda-la-ina* (lit. 'child of goes-with-mother').

[3] *Omālā-va-citima-lutanya*. Cf. 'child of my calves', Luganda expression and attitudes, L. P. Mair, *An African People in the Twentieth Century* (London, 1934), p. 32 f.

is pounded") and Cisengu ("a small bird with a long tail"). A boy may be Kangwe ("the little leopard"). 553 551

Names sometimes give an indication of descent. Ngonga's full name is Ngonga Kalei Liahuka, Ngonga ("eagle"), Kalei ("one who works for the king"), Liahuka (the father's surname). Ngonga's sister is Cinyañala ("the old basket"). This was the name of her father's father's sister. As the father of Cinyañala is Liahuka, the daughter is surnamed Yaliahuka (*ya*, "of"). The father chooses the names of the three first children whether boys or girls. The mother chooses the name of the fourth child whether male or female. If the child is a boy, the mother probably chooses the name of her brother or of her father's brother. When a first son is born, the father usually gives the name of his father; for example, Ngonga's father's father was Ngonga. If the first baby is a girl the father chooses the name of his sister. Ages are not known, but reckoning of age goes back five years by counting the number of times maize has been sown; maize is planted each October. The period from sowing to sowing is *ulima*.

If a man has a child by a woman who is not a wife or a concubine, the woman keeps the child for eight or ten years. The man must give the mother a cloth in which to carry her illegitimate baby, also oil for her hair. Sometimes the girl will go to the father of her child to be his concubine, but her parents will not let her do so if he has a bad reputation. To bear a child out of wedlock is a disgrace. 848

TERMS OF RELATIONSHIP

In preparing the following tables Ngonga was the ego, or, male speaker, and each term is given in relation to himself, with its reciprocal. The tables give firstly Ngonga's own generation, then his ascendants, and finally some of his descendants. Tables E and F are diagrammatic forms of tables A–D. 601

TABLE A

(See Table E III)

NGONGA'S OWN GENERATION

Terms in italics are Umbundu names either for persons or for kindred classes. Reciprocals are placed in brackets; W.S. means, "woman speaking."

Ukai wange is my wife; *uketu*, which means "spouse," is a modern form of address for husbands and wives when speaking to each other (*neyange*, my husband).

Kota or *huva* is my elder brother (*mume wange* or *manja*, younger brother).

Kota or *husange* is my elder sister. An elder brother speaking to his sister calls her by name, or he uses the term *mbuale*. When speaking of her he says *mukai wange* (*mume wange* or *manjange*, younger brother). The same terms are used in the same way to apply to my father's brother's son, and my

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

drunk. The concoction is described in Umbundu as *ihemba vioku tundisapo imo* ("medicine to take away belly"). 847

When the monthly period begins too early in life, the medicine-man recommends that the young girl should wear the cowrie necklace worn by her mother's mother. 841

A deformed child is destroyed, but not if it has been allowed to survive the first day. 847

If male triplets are born, two stay permanently with the mother. At the age of five years one child goes to the king, whose child he becomes. 851

When a woman has had relationships with more than one man, she will die in childbirth unless the medicine-man is called to cure her. 837

In a Vachokue village of eastern Angola I bought a female wooden figure. It was explained that this would be nursed by a woman, one of whose twins was dead, in order to induce another conception. Moreover, the nursing of the figure prevents the death of the second twin. The Ovimbundu also use these wooden figurines for replacing dead twins (p. 163). 532 845 842

Children are suckled for a long time; even those of three years and older come to the breast. There are instances in which milk is present but lacking the nutritive qualities; then the baby is likely to die. The matter is simpler when a mother gives no milk at all because the baby is given to another woman, but not necessarily to a woman who is suckling a child. A baby whose mother has no milk may be given to a woman who has not borne a child for many years, and the sucking of the child quickly induces a milk supply. This is agreed upon by informants at Ngalangi and Elende who have seen a child nursed by a woman with withered breasts. Protection is given to the fontanelle by covering it with a vegetable gum which hardens. 853

Near the chief village of the Vangangella at Ngalangi there is a mound decorated with feathers and painted wooden posts (Plate XCII, Fig. 1). Childless women are placed on the mound which is near a river. They are covered with mud, after which the medicine-man sings songs and administers potions. The women go home and are made to sit on mounds in their kitchens. These mounds, which are made in rows, like earth heaped up after hoeing a trench, may be a symbol of successful agriculture and human fertility. 842 789

On looking into the subject of blood brotherhood I found that an exchange of blood between two males who swore mutual fidelity was at one time common. At the present day an exchange of blood is 608

576 *konyimo oko* are spoken. The literal interpretation of these words is "back there." Ngonga says the words actually mean "excuse my back."

827 576 Spitting in the vicinity of the house of the king or of the chief is not allowed. "If you did that in the old days, you would have to pay something." Some people spit near the hearth in their own houses. A man who spits in the road is expected to cover the spittle. No person would spit in the presence of the chief or of the king. A hand should be placed in front of the mouth by a person who is coughing or sneezing.

576 [851] Shortly after the birth of a boy or girl all who are on good terms with the parents greet them by saying *kalunga*. The word is repeated four times with clapping of the palms. When words have been imperfectly heard and the listener desires repetition it is customary to say *kuku* in an interrogative tone.

[264] No particular etiquette is observed when eating. Two or three children eat from one platter, helping themselves with their fingers to the mush or sweet potatoes.

Rules forbidding the preparation of food by menstruating women, likewise prohibitions relating to stepping over a person, are mentioned in discussing taboos and omens.

EDUCATIONAL VALUE OF PLAY, MUSIC, AND DANCING

524 182 533 The educational value of play lies in its imitation of the pursuits of adult life. Though there are specialists in music, dancing, and singing, these exercises are indulged in by everyone. Music, singing, and dancing are more than amusements, they are fundamental as coordinating forces in tribal life at all levels of culture (W. D. Hambly, Tribal Dancing and Social Development, London, 1926). [113]

Among the Ovimbundu *Cimbamba Co Lia* is a popular game for girls, who form a circle, join hands, and sing:

PART I

524 [535] *Omola una, ndo sile vekango, Cimbamba co lia* ("That little child was left in the desert, the nighthawk ate it"). At the word *Cimbamba* they begin to dance, facing from side to side in such a manner that they meet and bow. Some sing, *Cimbamba co lia* ("The nighthawk ate him"), and others respond, *Kalikisi* ("'tis the goblins"), as many times as they wish. Finally a return is made to the first words which are sung again. All musical transcriptions have been made by Dr. G. Herzog from my phonographic records.

683 One of the commonest forms of punishment for sorcery was, and still is, banishment. Only the chief could pronounce the death penalty. Charges of sorcery are sometimes brought today to civil courts and to church courts under the guise of "poisoning".(1)

781 776 171 There are obvious gaps in the information on Umbundu religion and magic e.g. on spirits other than those of ancestors; on ritual connected with the ancestors; on productive and protective magic; on the work of the medicine-man as distinct from the diviner, and on the functions of the two separate offices of family priest. From existing accounts, however, Umbundu magico-religious concepts would appear to have much in common with those of the peoples to the east of the Plateau, and many of the words used for these concepts *(ngombo, ahamba, wanga, nganga* e.g.*)* are in fact the same. These peoples have been described in another section of the Survey.(2)

THE LIFE CYCLE

852 114 Childs' chapters on infancy, childhood, and adolescence form the main part of his book, and his treatment of the subject is much more detailed and on a deeper level than information offered by other writers,(3) and should be consulted.

BIRTH

844 A woman remains in her husband's village for the birth of her children. During the first birth, she is generally assisted by older women of the village, usually relatives of the husband. No man is present unless delayed labour entails the presence of a medical practitioner, or a [845] diviner. Difficult delivery is said to be caused by broken taboos, adultery on the part of the mother, sorcery, or the woman's own refusal to give birth. There is little ceremony connected with childbirth, and a woman may give birth to her second and later children alone when she is [846] in the fields. There is a customary lying-in period until the cord falls from the navel, but this is frequently ignored today.

845 *Twins* are welcomed but are considered prodigies whose birth requires the administrations of an *ocimbanda*.(4) Soon after the birth, and every month while the children are growing, the whole village takes part in a ceremony to preserve their lives. In the case of triplets, one is given to the paramount chief.(5)

553 *Naming* usually takes place, in the case of a first-born, on the day of its birth. Childs notes several factors:

"(a) The name *(onduko)* should have been borne by a relative, whether livin or dead, whose character and state of well-being are satisfactory; sometimes the child may be considered the re-incarnation of the deceased relative after whom he is named.+

(1) Childs, personal communication. (2) McCulloch, 1951, pp.72-83.
(3) Hambly, (2) 1934, pp.212-33, and Cushman, 1944.
(4) Ennis, 1945. (5) Childs, 1949, p.83.

+ [Childs, op. cit., p. 87-]

time to the village of the paramount chief. These periods spent away from home continue into adolescence. Not only relatives, but also friends, blood-brothers and *vakuacisoko* (see below) exchange children in this way. 604 857

Later childhood

No definite time marks the transition from early to later childhood, but there are marked differences between the two stages. As soon as the child is physically able, he begins to assume a definite role in the community. Soon after a child gets his permanent teeth, a notch in the form of an inverted V is chipped between the two upper front incisors. Formerly the beginning of the period was marked for the boy by his first trip with a trading caravan; today a boy of this age may begin to work in the fields with his father, or begin to learn a trade, or be sent to school. A girl starts to learn field-work and housework. 852 858

Professions

A boy is expected to learn the profession or *ocipinduko* in which his father or his mother's brother is expert, and after that, should he wish to learn some other side-line profession, he may apprentice himself. All children, both boys and girls, are expected to learn to cultivate, but that is not counted as a profession. The principal *ovipinduko* (professions) listed by Childs are: for girls, basket-making, pottery-making, medical practice and divination; for boys, mat-making, wood-working, rope-making, thatching, fishing, apiculture, hunting, smithing, and medical practice and divination. The last three, as has been mentioned above, are "sacred" and entered under special conditions. 462 868 [463]

"Later childhood, then, is the period of technical training during which it is expected that a large amount of economic responsibility will be assumed. A child begins to own property even before this, and from the beginning of childhood will be accounted legally responsible for his actions. It is recognised, however, that he should not be set tasks beyond the experience or ability of his age and that the full responsibility of adulthood will come only with marriage."(1) 866 [672]

The coming of European commerce, industry, and government has created new types of employment for boys and men, some of which cause a prolonged absence from the village and a loosening or severing of kinship ties. There are no estimates of the number of persons employed by Europeans, or the average length of their absence from home. 178 466

ADOLESCENCE(2)

Childs found that the onset of puberty was late among the Ovimbundu, coming between fourteen and sixteen years for girls and between fifteen and seventeen years for boys. Soon after puberty young people generally stop sleeping in the parents' house. The girls congregate in kitchens and each boy builds himself a house, in which he will live through adolescence 882

(1) Childs, op.cit., p.110.
(2) Based on Childs, op.cit., pp.58-9 and 111-18.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

846 firewood. When they bring something, the mother thanks them saying, You have provided very well. She who brought supplies sits down and takes the baby and asks whether it is doing well. Conversing with the mother, she advises her how to attend to the baby, and then she returns the baby to its mother and bids her good-bye, saying, May you rest well. The mother replies *E-e-e*. Then she goes out and goes away. All who come do that. During all that time the mother cannot go out until the navel has healed. Then some day when another gives birth, she will do likewise, she will prepare food to go and greet the parent.'

853 *The Baby's Food, Drink, and Medicine*. 'From the time the baby is born they set its gruel (*ekela*) (on the fire), and when it is done they begin to feed (it to him). It is difficult to feed a baby because he struggles greatly, and so when they feed him they hold his little arms and legs and put the food in his mouth when he cries. The mother takes the gruel from the pot and first puts it in her own mouth to cool it with her saliva, then she takes it out and, with the crook of her finger, puts it into the baby's mouth. If the baby's mouth fills up and runs over, she wipes it up and throws it back again. When she sees that sleep has taken him away, she sucks the gruel from the child's mouth and spits it out on the floor. Then she wipes his face clean with a little water. This gruel is stirred up with unfermented beer (*ocisangua*) in place of water that it may be tasty.

757 853 'Likewise from the time of his birth they set aside for the baby a little gourd or pot of beer (*ocisangua*), which is tasty, very tasty. Into that beer they throw some sweet-smelling medicine, as for instance *ocisangu*, *olukata*, *ocilombo*, and *okakonga*. That medicine helps that the stomach may not ache and that worms may not come. *Olukata* is useful for stopping diarrhoea. Should he not eat well, they put in *okakonga*. In giving him to drink they use a little piece of gourd. As with feeding him likewise, although he struggles they hold his little arms and legs and make him drink.' The chief purpose of the beer and the sweet-smelling medicines is to tempt the baby to eat and drink, for it is believed that a baby [127] is born with its senses of taste and smell fully developed. In case of more serious, or supposedly more serious, trouble, these simple remedies do not suffice and the diviner (*ocimbanda*) will be consulted.

'Should the baby be sick in the belly, making a noise *cōlōlō*,

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

cõlõlõ, they will say, They have bewitched him with *oloseta*.[1] 757
In going to the diviner they take a cock for the cure. They 853
kill their cock, the diviner eats it, they (go) to the threshing-floor for the cure. That threshing-floor is holy and no one may pass over it unless in passing he spits out a little saliva and says, There may it stay, there. Only so may they pass on, even though they may be many, each person does just that.' The 'many' who go to the diviner are representatives of the family, for their presence is necessary not only for proper diagnosis but also to show their concern and good faith.

Babyhood Proper

(*From the second week until about the seventh month*)

The period of lying-in is terminated when the cord falls and the navel heals, but the second period only begins when the baby turns dark. This period begins with 'Breaking the pot' (*Oku ipaya ombia*). [858] The reference is to the gourd or pot in which the beer and medicine have been kept. 'Breaking the pot', says one informant, 'means dividing the dark from the light.'

'When a child is first born he is perfectly pink and it is not possible to say whether he will be light or dark. When six or eight [145] days have passed he begins to change and to get the skin with which he will grow. At that time they recognize whether the child will be light or dark. Then is the time when those who do not like to hold a pink baby will begin to take him up, for also it is then that his neck begins to be strong. Then too the baby begins to cause people to laugh. Should he be a boy, those who take him 854 will say, Ah my husband are you well? Ha, how is the man? Then the parent will rejoice and say, Shucks, this man doesn't give any cloth at all. Should she be a girl, they will also say, How is my girl? The parent replies, She is quite well. The man then says, Where is a beer-jug for a man? The parent says, Shucks, your girl can't brew at all, she's no good, they've just put her out of her house; they've just divorced her because she can't keep house properly.'

This period from about the eighth day until about the end of the sixth month is the period of babyhood proper. At night the baby sleeps with his mother and by day he is carried in a cloth on her back (*oku velekua*). When it is not raining his head may be seen

[1] *Oloseta* (plural) are a wild fruit, hard and about the size of hazel-nuts, used for playing *ocela*.

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relative after whom he is named.[1]

(b) Ordinarily the baby is named by the father from his family. According to Fnnis,[2] the first male child is usually named after the paternal grandfather, the first female child after the paternal grandmother; the next two or three children are named after paternal uncles and aunts, and then the mother may choose a name. Childs writes that the name may be given by the mother if the father's family has a bad record of deaths and illnesses. 553

(c) The name must not prejudice but assist the child's chance of survival; thus a child born after the death of several siblings may be given an insignificant name, intended to cause the spirits to overlook it, or to consider it less than human.

(d) Events or persons prominent at the birth may influence the choice. A namesake, whether intentional or not, is known as *Sando* (from the Portuguese word for saint). Events at the time of birth may be summed up in a proverb, of which the key word is the name. Ennis gives numerous examples of such names.[3]

(e) The same names may belong to several families of a type, e.g. trading or farming families, or the families of paramount chiefs, who were jealous of their names and did not permit their use by commoners. 551

Parents take the name of their first-born: thus "Nanjamba" is "the mother of Njamba". During illness a person may change his name to draw away the attention of the spirits. Adolescents discard their birth names and choose new ones.[4]

Infancy

During the first six months the child sleeps with his mother and during the day is carried in a cloth on her back, and fed whenever he demands milk. If the mother has no helper, she works in the fields with the baby on her back. An older sister or other young relative may play with the infant within hearing distance of the mother. 853

Between six and twelve months the child is taught to sit; when he can do this he is no longer a baby *(onana)* but an *ocisembe* (toddler). A child rarely walks before the age of 24 months, since he is carried and held so much. 856

Weaning: a child goes every day with his mother to the fields; each month he becomes fatter and heavier, but he usually continues like this until after the second birthday. When he can walk, he may be left during the day with his young nurse (elder sister, cross-cousin or other relative) and not fed until the mother returns during the afternoon. The process of weaning begins then at this stage but is usually not completed till a year or two later, unless another baby intervenes. Those who take longer than usual in weaning may, however, be frightened away from the breast.[5] 862

(1) Childs, op.cit., p.87.
(2) 1945.
(3) op.cit.
(4) Childs, loc.cit.
(5) Childs, op.cit., p.93.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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854 protruding from the cloth and he seems to spend most of his time sleeping. Whenever he cries the mother will slide him around under her arm and give him the breast.[1] The only exception to absolute irregularity in suckling is that when the mother reaches the field for her morning work, she will offer the breast lest the baby may soon demand it and hinder her after she has begun her work. If she has no helper, she will do her field work with her baby on her back. Theoretically, the baby is almost never left alone.[2] There is a folk-tale telling how a woman put her baby down while cultivating and then accidentally beheaded him with her hoe.[3] If there is a young relative or if baby has an elder sibling, 'Then she (the mother) will give him to her to hold and to make him laugh under a tree where also has been placed his little jug of beer (non-alcoholic, *ocisangua*) and his little basket of gruel. There he will stay with his elder sibling while their mother does her work whether of cultivating or of breaking ground. Should he cry, the mother will sit down to nurse him and to feed him his gruel meanwhile looking to see whether there are lice in his head. She will say, Won't you nurse little father? Then shall we cultivate your little field?[4] A man doesn't cry, *he*? Then shan't we go to the village to stir up your gruel? Then the child will answer while nursing, *um*, *um*, *um*. When he finishes nursing she gives him back to his elder sibling and returns to her work. The elder sibling goes off with him in a hurry, lest being near his mother he may cry. She carries him on her back (*veleka*), and walking around the field she may talk to him saying, Ha! The ox is coming! *Haka*,[5] the hyena! Don't you see the bugaboo (*nono* or *nonono*) is coming to bite you if you cry again! Don't cry now. Shall we go to papa? Hasn't papa gone and caught a rat for you? When the mother lays off work, they go to the village. Passing through the woods on

[1] Hambly, op. cit., Plates L and LI for positions of nursing and carrying, respectively.

[2] Baby is sometimes left alone in the hut for a short time and then it may happen that he rolls into the fire. *Vide* also, reference to the folk-tale of 'Baby and his Elder Sister', *supra*, p. 84.

[3] One version of this tale may be found in the *Journal of the American Folk-lore Society*, 1922, vol. 35, p. 126.

[4] The reference is to the custom of cultivating a new field for each child at his birth. This field may become the child's own responsibility when he is able to assume it.

[5] *Haka*, an expletive which may express surprise, fear, disgust, pain, &c., according to context and tone.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

the way they gather firewood (*tiaña olõhuĩ*) and dig beer-root (*ombundi*) for the child's beer. When they come to the village they stir up his gruel and feed him.' 854

In the afternoon and evening the baby's father may hold him, but he is not likely to do so with any regularity until a little later. The European clothing worn by the men is harsh to the baby's tender skin as compared with the soft warmth of his mother's body. His elder sibling or cross-cousin holds and carries him, but whenever he cries his mother will take him up and nurse him. Indeed European or American mothers are considered very cruel to let their babies cry so endlessly. It goes almost without saying that feeding schedules would be considered as quite needless complications. It seems that feeding baby when he cries is more than a mere pacifier. He is credited with *knowing* when he wants to suckle, in spite of the fact that he will only take other food and drink if forced to.

'As to recognition of people, there are two sorts: first the child recognizes only the *smell* of his father and his mother since they sleep with him. But when six months have passed, then he begins to recognize his father and his mother "by heart".[1] He will very soon recognize his elder sibling (*huvaye*) or the cross-cousin (*epalume*), his young nurse (*naveleka*, lit. mother of carrying), and before long the others of the village will be known to him. But during this period only his mother is of real importance to him.' Only in case of her death would other women nurse him.[2] Even when there is a young nurse it is the mother who 'must care for him a great deal and since he has not as yet any sense, she must prevent him from doing everything which he wishes to do'. 856

At some time between six and twelve months, according to the child's development or the inclination of the parents, in order 'to accustom the child to sit, the parent digs a little hole in the ground just the size of his buttocks that he may not fall over. There they always place him and if he starts to fall over, they set him up again, until finally he sits up properly by himself and does not fall over. At that time he snatches at everything to play with it or to put it in his mouth.'

[827]

[1] *Utima*, the heart, is considered the seat of the intelligence.

[2] It is a curious fact that older women, although at the time without children themselves, may again produce liquid in the mammary glands if they take a baby to nurse. I do not believe that a test of such liquid has ever been made.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

PLATE XII

854

Photo. D. G. Ridout

a. A baby clinic (Dondi)

758

Photo. R. S. Webb

b. Bringing a patient in a hammock (*owanda*) (Bailundu)

[Facing p. 145]

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

PLATE XIV

887
142

Photo. M. W. Ennis.

b. Old age

854

Photo. R. S. Webb

a. Woman (educated) carrying baby (*oku veleka*)

[Facing p. 155]

J. Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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OVIMBUNDU WOMEN AND INFANTS, BLENDE

[p.404]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

854
142

OVIMBUNDU WOMEN AND CHILDREN, ELENDE

[p. 405]

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

593 importance, but treatment of that subject must be reserved for [562] another time. The balance maintained in the Umbundu social system, which has already been noted,[1] together with woman's important position in the economic sphere, give to the women and girls a relatively satisfactory place in Umbundu society. It has also been noted that woman's sphere has suffered less disintegration than has man's. Although the girl may have somewhat less freedom than the boy, her personal prospects are more stable, and in the long run more satisfactory.

Adjustments between parents and children among the Ovimbundu are relatively satisfactory. The fact that there are no specific father–daughter or mother–son avoidances or taboos, beyond the general laws of incest which nearly all cultures maintain, indicates an absence of strain in these relationships. In our own society adult–child fixations, and particularly the parent–child fixations, with the consequent repressions, are very common and are held to be responsible, at least in part, for much trouble including difficulties of adjustment at pubescence.[2] In traditional Umbundu society such fixations occur very infrequently, if at all.[3] In this context we should be reminded of the following factors:

[855]

1. The early and continued close association of the child largely (although not exclusively) with the parent of the same sex.[4]
2. The association of the child with many (classificatory) 'fathers' and 'mothers' which may result in a partial transfer of affection.[2]
3. The absence of fondling, kissing, and other close bodily contact in display of affection.[5]

157 The picture in these respects is not unlike that of the Samoans given by Margaret Mead.[6] In some other respects it is quite different but it is similar in the apparent absence of a period of adolescent *Sturm und Drang*. What actual correlations there may be between parent–child fixations and a period of adolescent stress I do not know. The absence of any such period has been reported

[1] *Vide supra*, p. 43.

[2] Cf. Allport, op. cit., pp. 355 ff.

[3] The proverbial inability of a widow properly to rear a child (*vide supra*, p. 102) may indicate difficulties of this sort.

[4] *Vide supra*, p. 98.

[5] No display of affection whatever is congenial to the Ovimbundu, except to babies and between adolescent age-mates of the same sex.

[6] Op. cit., chap. x.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

the fire, while no one was looking. Before going on to that period, 846
the narrative will tell a little about the birth of

Twins (*Olonjamba*).[1] 'If twins are born, when they have finished 845
cutting (the cords of) the navels they bury their placentas out of doors at a cross-road. After washing and anointing them with oil, they shout saying, *Ulú! Ulú! Ulú!* There have come here a man and a woman. When the people come, they begin while yet outside (the hut), to curse[2] (and continue) until they enter, cursing the parents. It is called *Ongombo*, The Diviner's Basket. In that way such children are followed about by all, that none of them may die. And all the time that such children are growing, it is done month by month. The parent comes out and begins to curse the people who are in the village, and then all come from their houses and follow cursing her.'

In the case of triplets, when they are weaned, one is given to the king.[3]

As soon as the midwives have finished their task, the father may 844
come in and take up the child, but men do not 'like' to hold a child which is still 'red' (i.e. not yet black) and whose 'neck is not yet strong'. Should a woman abort (*pulumuisa*), or should the [847]
child be stillborn or die at birth, the loss is accepted philosophically, 845
quoting the proverb: 538

Cinene ombenje akolovi hacimueko.
The main thing (is) the gourd jug, the shavings (are) nothing.

Should the mother also die, then they quote:

Olũsĩ ka kuatele, ocimunga ca enda lovava.
A fish (he) did not catch, the bracelet went with water.

Should a young woman complain that her baby is too small, the [856]
others may remind her:

Esaila olio osanji.
The egg that (is) the chicken.

Should she complain that her baby does not grow properly, they will say:

Ka ci kuli omõlã ombia, omõlã omunu o kula
It does not grow the child of (a) pot, (the) child of (a) person grows.

[1] Lit., Elephants. The reference is to the names given to twins: *Njamba* (Elephant), *Hosi* (Lion), or *Ngeve* (Hippopotamus).
[2] *Tukãlã*, which literally means to call *hard* names.
[3] I knew of one such case in Civaka.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

the way they gather firewood (*tiaña olõhuã*) and dig beer-root 854
(*ombundi*) for the child's beer. When they come to the village they stir up his gruel and feed him.'

In the afternoon and evening the baby's father may hold him, but he is not likely to do so with any regularity until a little later. The European clothing worn by the men is harsh to the baby's tender skin as compared with the soft warmth of his mother's body. His elder sibling or cross-cousin holds and carries him, but whenever he cries his mother will take him up and nurse him. Indeed European or American mothers are considered very cruel to let their babies cry so endlessly. It goes almost without saying that feeding schedules would be considered as quite needless complications. It seems that feeding baby when he cries is more than a mere pacifier. He is credited with *knowing* when he wants to suckle, in spite of the fact that he will only take other food and drink if forced to.

'As to recognition of people, there are two sorts: first the child 856
recognizes only the *smell* of his father and his mother since they sleep with him. But when six months have passed, then he begins to recognize his father and his mother "by heart".[1] He will very soon recognize his elder sibling (*huvaye*) or the cross-cousin (*epalume*), his young nurse (*naveleka*, lit. mother of carrying), and before long the others of the village will be known to him. But during this period only his mother is of real importance to him.' Only in case of her death would other women nurse him.[2] Even when there is a young nurse it is the mother who 'must care for him a great deal and since he has not as yet any sense, she must prevent him from doing everything which he wishes to do'.

At some time between six and twelve months, according to the child's development or the inclination of the parents, in order 'to accustom the child to sit, the parent digs a little hole in the ground just the size of his buttocks that he may not fall over. There they always place him and if he starts to fall over, they set him up again, until finally he sits up properly by himself and does not fall over. At that time he snatches at everything to play with it or to put it in his mouth.'

[827]

[1] *Utima*, the heart, is considered the seat of the intelligence.

[2] It is a curious fact that older women, although at the time without children themselves, may again produce liquid in the mammary glands if they take a baby to nurse. I do not believe that a test of such liquid has ever been made.

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The Sitting Baby or Toddler (*Ocisembe*)

856 When a child can sit alone there begins a new period in his life. He is no longer a baby (*oñaña*) but an *ocisembe*. In comparison with the period just passed his development is now rapid, although in comparison with American children it seems slow, for an Ocimbundu child is held and carried so much that walking comes late, rarely or never before twenty-four months. In other respects, however, his physical development is not behind that of other children. His talking may come even *more* rapidly than with many.

Crawling (*oku yaila*). 'Crawling begins with reaching for what he sees: he moves little by little until he gets it. There are two kinds of crawling: some children in order to crawl hold the ground with their hands and doubling up one leg they drag themselves along. That sort of crawling is called *ocela*,[1] or crawling like a lion (*oku yaila ndohosi*). In the second, some children plant all their feet and hands on the ground while their buttocks go up and they move, but not like an animal. That crawling is described saying, He goes as an ox (*enda ngombe*).'[2]

Teething (*Oku tunda ovayo*). 'When a child has seven months then his teeth begin to come out. First when his gums swell the child has a little fever and diarrhoea and he squirts much saliva from the mouth. They call it the squirting of saliva (*oku pamba ovate*). Then a little tooth begins to show in the lower gum, then another, and so it goes on until in his mouth they come together.' The appearance of teeth in the upper gum first is a bad omen and is much feared.

Speech. 'When a child begins to speak, at first he only scolds and nothing is understood. Then he begins to say, *Ta-ta*, *ta-ta* until he calls, *Tate* (my father). Afterwards he will say, *Maĩ* (my mother). It is much more difficult for a child to say *Maĩ* than *Tate*. Thus they say that if a child begins with *Maĩ*, he will become a fool and be unable to speak any more. When he can say these names well, he begins to pronounce the names of the people

[1] From the game *ocela* in which the counters are moved from one hole to another.

[2] The reference is especially to the stiff walk of the unbending hind legs, but also to the deliberate gait of the ox. It is believed that the way in which a child crawls is some indication of what his character will be. The deliberation and openness of the ox are contrasted with the cunning and slyness of the lion.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

in the household and then the names of all kinds of little objects 858
until his speech is perfected.'

• *Weaning* (*Oku sumũhã* or *oku nyamũhã*). Every day the child 862
goes to the fields with his mother. As he grows and gets fatter and heavier he becomes quite a burden for her or for his young nurse. Until he has passed twelve months, however, there is no alternative, and more often his daily excursions continue well past his second birthday. When he is able to walk a little, then his mother may begin to leave him in the village with his young nurse while she goes to her field-work. 'So in the morning at daybreak his mother will give him his food on a little dish and the toddler (*ocisembe*) will eat until he is full. Then his mother will speak to him saying, Suckle (*Nyama*) for I am going to the veld; so he will suckle and his mother will go.' He will not suckle again until she returns at from 2 to 4 in the afternoon. Thus he begins to be weaned quite unconsciously, but that does not mean that the process will be finished quickly; it may continue for even more than two years yet, unless a younger brother or sister intervenes.

'Some children, however, do not stop suckling quickly and if that is the case, his mother will frighten him when he wants to suckle, for she will say, Look out, here is a bugaboo; for perhaps she will have put an ugly worm on her breast, or perhaps she will have rubbed on pepper and the child nursing will burn his mouth and begin to cry. But some children are shrewd so that when they taste the bitterness they will fetch water and wash the breast and it is very hard to wean them. The parent will try many different things until the child is weaned. Some children are only weaned after they are four years old or even older, but that is not common.'

As the preceding paragraph suggests, children of this age may 861
be tyrants to their mothers and all the more since the Ovimbundu punish their children with reluctance. But field-work presses inexorably and much more can be accomplished without a child to hinder one. His mother may promise that if he doesn't cry she will bring him a rat or a bird. Then if he still does not *consent* to stay she may, with reluctance, apply the sterner measures of a slap or a proverb said in exasperation:[1]

Ove oku ku pikila ku kuta. [538]
You, making for you mush, you do not fill.

[1] The serious regard for the spoken word must be kept in mind.

relative after whom he is named.[1] 000

(b) Ordinarily the baby is named by the father from his family. According to Fnnis,[2] the first male child is usually named after the paternal grandfather, the first female child after the paternal grandmother; the next two or three children are named after paternal uncles and aunts, and then the mother may choose a name. Childs writes that the name may be given by the mother if the father's family has a bad record of deaths and illnesses. 553

(c) The name must not prejudice but assist the child's chance of survival; thus a child born after the death of several siblings may be given an insignificant name, intended to cause the spirits to overlook it, or to consider it less than human.

(d) Events or persons prominent at the birth may influence the choice. A namesake, whether intentional or not, is known as *Sando* (from the Portuguese word for saint). Events at the time of birth may be summed up in a proverb, of which the key word is the name. Ennis gives numerous examples of such names.[3]

(e) The same names may belong to several families of a type, e.g. trading or farming families, or the families of paramount chiefs, who were jealous of their names and did not permit their use by commoners. 551

Parents take the name of their first-born: thus "Nanjamba" is "the mother of Njamba". During illness a person may change his name to draw away the attention of the spirits. Adolescents discard their birth names and choose new ones.[4]

Infancy

During the first six months the child sleeps with his mother and during the day is carried in a cloth on her back, and fed whenever he demands milk. If the mother has no helper, she works in the fields with the baby on her back. An older sister or other young relative may play with the infant within hearing distance of the mother. 853

Between six and twelve months the child is taught to sit; when he can do this he is no longer a baby *(onana)* but an *ocisembe* (toddler). A child rarely walks before the age of 24 months, since he is carried and held so much. 856

Weaning: a child goes every day with his mother to the fields; each month he becomes fatter and heavier, but he usually continues like this until after the second birthday. When he can walk, he may be left during the day with his young nurse (elder sister, cross-cousin or other relative) and not fed until the mother returns during the afternoon. The process of weaning begins then at this stage but is usually not completed till a year or two later, unless another baby intervenes. Those who take longer than usual in weaning may, however, be frightened away from the breast.[5] 862

(1) Childs, op.cit., p.87.
(2) 1945.
(3) op.cit.
(4) Childs, loc.cit.
(5) Childs, op.cit., p.93.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

only five children living, and the largest polygynous household 592
had only four, but many children had died in infancy.

The attitudes within the household are much like those found 593
universally between members of the same 'family'. Children respect and love both parents. Perhaps there is a little more respect for the father and a little more love for the mother, but this distinction is not carried to the extent which seems to be the case in more strongly patrilineal societies. The respect which a child has for his parents is plainly shown in his refusal under ordinary circumstances to speak their names. 'Even a child on being asked to tell the name of his father or his mother, will reply saying, "*Tate* (my father) indeed is his name." And if one asks again, saying, "Your mother, what is her name?" the child will reply saying, "*Mai* (my mother) indeed is her name."'[1] The sex 857
division of Umbundu life begins within the household when very early in life the boys begin to be trained by their elder brothers, fathers, and other male relatives, while the girls remain or go about with their mothers, elder sisters, and other female relatives. Only the very small boys and girls (say under six or eight) play together. The age distinctions of Umbundu society are learned with the child's first attempts at language. Either his elder brother or sister he calls *huvange*, and he soon learns that the brother or sister younger than himself is *manjange*. Brothers and sisters, siblings or children of the same parents, 'are replicas of one another in social relationship, and . . . socially identical'[2] for practical purposes. Among Ovimbundu the principal differences are due to the two factors of age and sex. The influence of age is funda- 593
mental and is easily demonstrated by the fact that there is no word 561
for 'brother' but instead for 'elder brother' or 'younger brother'. Within the household the factor of sex is ever present, but there is not the invidious distinction found among some of the more strongly patrilineal societies such as the Zulu[2] which reserves the more respectful term for the brother. Umbundu applies the terms *huva* and *manja*[3] to brothers and sisters without distinction of sex. There are the additional terms *kota* (elder brother), *mbuale* (sister), and the reciprocal terms *mume* (brother, spoken

[1] R. Kavita Evambi, from an Umbundu manuscript.

[2] E. J. Krige, *The Social System of the Zulus* (London: Longmans, 1936), p. 24.

[3] These are the root terms without the possessive suffixes.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

861 [538] *Oku longa ku yevi, vumōlā hē?*
Teaching you do not hear, are you child?

One who fails properly to absorb both mush and teaching can hardly be a proper human being. The implication of the question is that if he is not a child he may be some unearthly creature. There may be a similar implication in this other proverb which may also be used on similar occasions:

Ku ka ñavise ame konjembo si endi love.
Do not tire me I to hades shall not go with you.

U lonjila yaye, u lonjila yaye.
Each with path his (own), each with path his (own).

With the aid of elder sister mother usually wins out. Picking up her hoe and basket she gives the children their injunctions for the day. 'Stay then and I'll come right back, but don't play with the neighbour's chickens, don't beat each other, don't play with bows lest you put out the eye of another, and don't steal from the cooking pot, there now!'

857 461 With children of all ages left alone in the village, these injunctions are a minimum of necessity. The mother might also go on to detail the consequences of disobedience, how one who put out another's eye would be sold into slavery, nor was the mother exaggerating. If the Ovimbundu punish their children with reluctance, they have no reticence in instilling in them what they consider to be a healthy fear, whether of persons, animals, things, their own actions, or quite imaginary dangers. Older children likewise work on the younger. Nor are occasions for further instilling fear lacking. 'Always when they stay in the village, they go to the dancing-floor (*ocīlā*) to play with the other children. During that time should something come to frighten them and make them run away, those who haven't younger siblings to carry are glad to get away quickly. But those who have younger siblings to carry see much hardship. They tire themselves terribly trying to carry their heavy young siblings and being unable to continue, they drag them, both of them crying and crying.' Nowadays, in case of need or simply tiring of their play, children may start off for the fields in search of mother, but formerly children were not allowed to venture unaccompanied outside the safety of the village palisades. The danger of kidnappers and of raiding parties was very real. One of the most vivid memories of the Rev. Paulino Ngonga's early child-

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

hood was a day when he and an elder brother set off for the fields 857
and almost ran into a party of raiders. The scolding which they 861
received was not forgotten.

The practice of leaving the *ocisembe* in the village by day makes his elder sibling responsible for much of his education. This is the beginning of a close bond which lasts through life. She herself may not be more than six or seven years old and consequently cannot be expected to 'educate' her little charge very thoroughly. She interests herself in his walking and talking and he will imitate her in many things, but the rest of 'conscious education' must be attended to by the parents.

Cleanliness. Instruction in cleanliness begins at this age, but I fear 863
that it is lacking either in intensity or in persistence for its effect seems to be rather long-delayed. Small babies are not washed very often but their bodies and heads are anointed with palm-oil against infestation with the various parasites of the tropics. Anointing the body continues to be a part of the toilet of the Ocimbundu through life. When palm-oil is scarce, such afflictions as common itch are more prevalent. Nowadays, in the well-appointed household, the *ocisembe* has his hands and face washed before breakfast. If such a connexion between washing and eating were always and everywhere maintained, habits of personal cleanliness might be more widespread. Brushing the teeth may be begun in imitation of mother. Sphincter training is begun very early, for the mother feels every muscular movement made or attempted by the baby on her back. Hence she is apt to know when it is necessary to take him down for defecation. If and when this procedure is followed through with regularity and persistence early sphincter control may be established, but too often this is not the case. Establishment of bladder control is apt to come even more uncertainly as a favourite proverb concerning the weather indicates:

[538]

> *Ihu lia soka ndetako lioñaña.*
> The sky is like the bottom of a baby.

The Ovimbundu do not associate these bodily functions with shame to the extent which is the case in our culture, but euphemisms are used in place of the exact terminology.[1] If an

[1] There are prohibitions regarding these functions during visits to relatives- 606
in-law with whom one has respect-relations, also to the bride during the wedding 514
ceremonies. (See Folk-tales nos. 12 and 13 of the short collection in the *Journal*

[p. 98]

CHAPTER VI

CHILDHOOD

The Child (*oneñe* or *omõlã*[1])

857 (*From the achievement of physical independence until about nine years*)

866 'If a toddling child (*omõlã ocisembe*) has finished learning to walk and expects a younger sibling, he is not carried any more and even though his mother should go to (visit) another village, he will stay behind perfectly well without crying. Now he has changed a great deal: that which he formerly did, he now no longer does.' This statement is perhaps a little optimistic, but it may be taken as sufficiently realistic and representative for practical purposes.

The child continues to see the same adults and to play with the same children as before, i.e. those of his own home village, but with two differences which the narratives will bring out. *First*, he is not now dependent to such an extent upon the elder sibling or cousin, and this independence brings the beginning of his life-long association with his age-mates. *Second*, the sex division of society begins for him at this time. From about eight years of age boys and girls will play in sex groups, and boys will begin to eat in the *onjango* with their fathers, girls continuing in the kitchen with mother and the younger siblings. The child does not go beyond the sheltering friendliness of the village except in the company of adults until toward the middle of this period of childhood. With mother or father he may often go to the fields or on excursions to neighbouring villages or to the chief's village.

861 The conscious education of the child is very much intensified from the time he achieves independence, but parents rarely realize the importance of the years from about four until about eight when little boys begin eating in the *onjango*. Theoretically the balance between the male and female sides of the house, characteristic of Umbundu social structure, is maintained in the training and education of the children. Actually what generally happens is that, until about eight, the mother and the older sibling or cross-cousin are very largely responsible for whatever is given and after that the father becomes responsible for the boys while the mother continues with the girls. This arrangement is modified somewhat by

[1] *Omõlã* is the term generally used but its primary meaning is *son* or *daughter*.

862 "The practice of leaving the *ocisembe* in the village by day makes his elder sibling[1] responsible for much of his education....She herself may not be more than six or seven years old and consequently cannot be expected to 'educate' her charge very thoroughly. She interests herself in his walking and talking and he will initate her in many things."[2]
863 General instruction in cleanliness begins at this age, although sphincter control may have begun much earlier, since the mother feels every movement made by the baby on her back.

145 After weaning the physical development of the child proceeds more slowly than that of European peoples, and Childs believes that this may be due to deficiencies in diet.[3]

CHILDHOOD AND EDUCATION

857 From the time a child is able to walk until he is about nine years old he continues seeing the same people as before, but he becomes less de-
861 pendent upon the elder sister or cousin who helped him, and begins his life-long association with his age-mates. The sex-division of society starts for him at this stage: from about eight years boys begin to eat in the *onjango* with their fathers, girls continuing in the kitchen with their mothers. After about eight years the father becomes largely responsible for the education of boys, the mother for that of girls. During this period the child's education may be summarised under three heads:

869 (a) *Psychological*, chiefly fear of real or imaginary dangers. This is imparted by mother, elder siblings, and perhaps by a grandmother; there is a tendency for the teaching of fear to be done by women.[4]

867 (b) *Social*, chiefly usages of etiquette and acquaintance with the kinship structure and its requirements. A child of about eight is supposed to know his social status and all the etiquette that pertains to it. In the *onjango* the hierarchy of age is observed, honoured guests and old men being served first, and so on all down the line. With the decline of the *onjango*, there has been a great decline in the teaching of etiquette and social usage, and this naturally affects boys rather than girls.

864 Little direct sex teaching is attempted, and adults are reticent in speaking of sexual matters in the presence of children. But since children live with their parents in one-roomed houses, it is inevitable that children should sometimes observe intercourse.

868 (c) *Training in skills*: Children are taught few definite skills before the age of eight or nine, but many of their games are in imitation of adult activities.

604 From the age of six or seven years children are usually sent to spend
857 one or two years with the mother's brother. They may also be sent to the father's sister or brother for a period, and, in the case of girls, to the mother's mother. Formerly prominent families sent their children for a

(1) Either a brother or sister may act as nurse.
(2) Childs, op.cit., p.95. (3) Ibid., p.97.
(4) Childs actually writes " 'the side of the basket' " (p.100), but seems to be referring simply to female relatives.

time to the village of the paramount chief. These periods spent away from home continue into adolescence. Not only relatives, but also friends, blood-brothers and *vakuacisoko* (see below) exchange children in this way. 604 857

Later childhood

No definite time marks the transition from early to later childhood, but there are marked differences between the two stages. As soon as the child is physically able, he begins to assume a definite role in the community. Soon after a child gets his permanent teeth, a notch in the form of an inverted V is chipped between the two upper front incisors. Formerly the beginning of the period was marked for the boy by his first trip with a trading caravan; today a boy of this age may begin to work in the fields with his father, or begin to learn a trade, or be sent to school. A girl starts to learn field-work and housework. 852 858

Professions

A boy is expected to learn the profession or *ocipinduko* in which his father or his mother's brother is expert, and after that, should he wish to learn some other side-line profession, he may apprentice himself. All children, both boys and girls, are expected to learn to cultivate, but that is not counted as a profession. The principal *ovipinduko* (professions) listed by Childs are: for girls, basket-making, pottery-making, medical practice and divination; for boys, mat-making, wood-working, rope-making, thatching, fishing, apiculture, hunting, smithing, and medical practice and divination. The last three, as has been mentioned above, are "sacred" and entered under special conditions. 462 868 [463]

"Later childhood, then, is the period of technical training during which it is expected that a large amount of economic responsibility will be assumed. A child begins to own property even before this, and from the beginning of childhood will be accounted legally responsible for his actions. It is recognised, however, that he should not be set tasks beyond the experience or ability of his age and that the full responsibility of adulthood will come only with marriage."(1) 866 [672]

The coming of European commerce, industry, and government has created new types of employment for boys and men, some of which cause a prolonged absence from the village and a loosening or severing of kinship ties. There are no estimates of the number of persons employed by Europeans, or the average length of their absence from home. 178 466

ADOLESCENCE(2)

Childs found that the onset of puberty was late among the Ovimbundu, coming between fourteen and sixteen years for girls and between fifteen and seventeen years for boys. Soon after puberty young people generally stop sleeping in the parents' house. The girls congregate in kitchens and each boy builds himself a house, in which he will live through adolescence 882

(1) Childs, op.cit., p.110.
(2) Based on Childs, op.cit., pp.58-9 and 111-18.

When the clay was being mixed an old pot was broken and pulverized so that some of the powder might be added to the new pot. There may be the underlying idea of continuity in the potter's art. The potters said, *Sanga yi pita* ("Lest it leak"). There may be no purpose other than the imparting of stability to the new clay. 323

I was unable to find any trace of ritual except with reference to the opening of a new clay pit. When a pit is first opened both men and women attend. The head of a chicken is twisted off by a medicine-man, then the bird is held over the pit by either a man or a woman. There is no law or ceremony to determine who shall take the first clay from the pit. The art of making pots is in the hands of female specialists so far as the Ovimbundu are concerned. Observation makes clear that women will go for a long distance to obtain clay from the pit which has been opened in a ceremonial manner. On their way to such a pit they pass clay which would serve their purpose well, but they do not use it. Children sometimes amuse themselves by making animals of clay. [462] [782] [857]

The pottery of the Ovimbundu includes cooking vessels of many sizes, water containers, and very large pots for brewing beer (*olombia vi okukela*). [415]

MATS AND BASKETS

This occupation illustrates division of labor on a sex basis. Baskets are made by women, while mat-making is an occupation for males. As with other trades there is specialization. The majority of women are able to make baskets though the skill of individuals varies. All women who have a knowledge of basketry understand the manufacture of dyes. Only a few men make mats; my informant thought that perhaps one man in ten would have the necessary skill. Such specialization is continued into other occupations; for example, only a few men spin cotton thread, while the majority of people buy pottery from expert female potters. 462 285 [463]

The mat-maker, generally an elderly male, uses two tools, a borer and a needle, both products of the native forge. The borer (*utomo*) for piercing the reeds, consists of a long thin blade in a wooden grip. The needle (*osinja*) is threaded with bark fiber and passed through the holes made by the *utomo*. The bark thread is *ombanja* (plural *olombanja*). 285

The sleeping mat (*esisa*) is made of reeds which are gathered in the early morning by a man who wets and binds his material into bundles, each of which contains reeds of the same length. The length of the reeds varies, of course, with the size of mat he intends to make.

VII. EDUCATION

Industrial Training and Division of Labor

871 Usually there is no formality connected with the industrial and occupational training of Ovimbundu children. The section dealing with play shows that boys and girls learn by spontaneous imitation of their elders.

874 There are, however, exceptions to this general truth. Special rites connected with the training and inauguration of blacksmiths and hunters have been described. The training of medicine-men and women will be dealt with in chapter IX, "Religion."

462 463 In describing economic life in chapter V, division of labor on a sex basis; also specialization in industry because of peculiar tastes and aptitudes, were noted. There is clearly a twofold division in industrial life. In the first place sex determines occupation, and within this primary grouping there is a secondary grouping depending [467] on personal preference and individual ability. I have found no instance of exclusive hereditary right to any occupation or industry.

462 The net result of the Umbundu system of division of labor is indicated by the following summary:

[342] When building houses, men dig the rectangular trench, cut the poles for the framework, lash the crosspieces, cut grass and lay the thatch, then place clay over the wattle walls. Women carry water for mixing the clay and convey the moist clay to the plasterers. [224] Children puddle the clay with their feet. Males are hunters both professional and general. During a communal hunt women and children assist in driving game, which is frightened by the firing of [857] grass. Boys organize games in which they imitate these activities. [226] Men fish with a line and bait, whereas women use baskets and [231] narcotic poison. Men and boys take care of cattle and have charge of dogs. Women and girls give what slight attention is afforded to other domestic animals. Male specialists castrate bulls and goats.

[241] During agricultural operations men clear the ground and burn the bush. Women carry on hoe cultivation without assistance from [482] men. Men are the chief carriers in caravans, but women and children may sometimes be seen carrying loads. They march in line with the men but have smaller burdens. Males are employed in blacksmith's work, wood-carving, making weapons and tools, weaving mats, dressing hides, spinning cotton, and formerly in weaving on an upright loom. Men are exclusively the makers of

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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The rules about avoidance at night are still kept. The prohibitions on a man borrowing his father's clothes and sleeping in the same room as his father seem to survive. The prohibition on a child speaking the name of his father or mother reported by Childs is not, and was not formerly, found in this area. It is, however, wrong for a child to address his parents by name. 593 551

Children begin to work in the fields when they are about six. Occasionally boys of 10 to 11 go to the coffee fields for two months work, but usually boys do not go out to work until they are about 14 or 15. 857

A boy going out to work should ask his father's permission to go though this is not always done. Returning from work whether contract labour or voluntary work a boy should bring presents to his relatives. He would be expected to give something, say, a jacket, to his father, and a cloth to his mother, on returning from voluntary work and a shirt to his father on coming back from contract labour. These gifts should be made in kind. Money lent from son to father should be repaid, though it is wrong for a son to enforce payment by appealing to the post for policemen. A father may give money to his son for bridewealth, and may suggest a choice of bride. He cannot constrain, nor could he in the past, his son and daughter to a marriage they do not wish. 593 [583]

A man cannot be said to have real authority over his grown sons. The stated norm is that a man's sons stay in the same village till he dies. He has no power to make them do so, and they are not condemned by public opinion if they live elsewhere. A man's attitude to classificatory 'fathers' is determined by the age, status, and personalities of those involved, rather than by jural rights and obligations. I have found men unable to tell me what had become of their own brothers' children. 604

Formerly when the father of an adolescent boy died he would join the household of a father's brother. Nowadays this would be much less likely, as it is common for such a boy to settle with other categories of kin, notably siblings and maternal kinsfolk. A man is free to stay with his brothers if he wishes, or to leave them. 768

While the tie between full brothers is held to be the strongest, as regards classificatory brothers there seems to be a slight 602

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

cŏlŏlŏ, they will say, They have bewitched him with *oloseta*.[1] 757
In going to the diviner they take a cock for the cure. They 853
kill their cock, the diviner eats it, they (go) to the threshing-floor for the cure. That threshing-floor is holy and no one may pass over it unless in passing he spits out a little saliva and says, There may it stay, there. Only so may they pass on, even though they may be many, each person does just that.' The 'many' who go to the diviner are representatives of the family, for their presence is necessary not only for proper diagnosis but also to show their concern and good faith.

Babyhood Proper

(*From the second week until about the seventh month*)

The period of lying-in is terminated when the cord falls and the navel heals, but the second period only begins when the baby turns dark. This period begins with 'Breaking the pot' (*Oku ipaya ombia*). [858] The reference is to the gourd or pot in which the beer and medicine have been kept. 'Breaking the pot', says one informant, 'means dividing the dark from the light.'

'When a child is first born he is perfectly pink and it is not possible to say whether he will be light or dark. When six or eight [145] days have passed he begins to change and to get the skin with which he will grow. At that time they recognize whether the child will be light or dark. Then is the time when those who do not like to hold a pink baby will begin to take him up, for also it is then that his neck begins to be strong. Then too the baby begins to cause people to laugh. Should he be a boy, those who take him 854 will say, Ah my husband are you well? Ha, how is the man? Then the parent will rejoice and say, Shucks, this man doesn't give any cloth at all. Should she be a girl, they will also say, How is my girl? The parent replies, She is quite well. The man then says, Where is a beer-jug for a man? The parent says, Shucks, your girl can't brew at all, she 's no good, they've just put her out of her house; they've just divorced her because she can't keep house properly.'

This period from about the eighth day until about the end of the sixth month is the period of babyhood proper. At night the baby sleeps with his mother and by day he is carried in a cloth on her back (*oku velekua*). When it is not raining his head may be seen

[1] *Olosseta* (plural) are a wild fruit, hard and about the size of hazel-nuts, used for playing *ocela*.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

sending of children to stay with relatives or friends. The Ovimbundu consider it definitely an educational device. From the age of six or seven years children are sent singly or in pairs to spend as much as one or two years in the home of the mother's brother. If conditions are favourable they may also be sent to stay with the father's sister or brother, and girls (other than the first-born) may be sent to the mother's mother. Formerly, prominent families arranged for their sons to stay in the king's capital. These periods spent away from home may continue well into adolescence. Not only relatives but also friends, blood-brothers, and *vakuacisoko* (members of a certain communal order)[1] exchange children for certain periods in this way. This custom is by no means dead. It is now being carried on even within the Christian community. Its educational purpose is obvious.

Later Childhood

(*From about nine years until puberty*)

There is no definite time which marks the transition from early to later childhood, but there are marked differences between the two periods. The chief criterion is one of physical development for as soon as the child is physically able, he will begin to assume a definite role in the work of the adult community. This rarely comes before nine years of age and may be somewhat delayed. Soon after a child gets the permanent teeth, a notch in the form of an inverted V (Λ) is chipped between the two upper front incisors.[2] This is a sort of national mark which many people omit to give their children at present. The line of observance is not sharply drawn as between Christians and non-Christians, as with the Herero.[3]

Formerly, the beginning of the period was well marked for the boy by his first trip with a trading caravan. Most of the present older generation have had this experience and nearly every man of the present middle-aged generation as well. Nowadays the boy of this age may begin to work in the fields with his father, he may begin to learn a trade, or he may be sent to school. Few Ovimbundu put their children in school before this age, and they evidently do not believe that younger children would profit by the instruction

[1] See *infra*, p. 114 f.
[2] See Hambly, op. cit., Plates XLIX and LIV.
[3] Vedder in Hahn *et al.*, op. cit., p. 177 f.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

828 sense, only a *potential* person. The permanency or stability of his personality (*unu*)[1] is only proven when he enters the state of adulthood at marriage. Then it is that he achieves true integration with society. Thus personality appears as a natural process of social integration.

828 775 On the other hand, the Umbundu belief in reincarnation[2] throws responsibility for determination of personality back upon the ancestral spirits (*olosuku*, *olosande*) or upon the Spirit World or Fate (*Kalunga*). Clearly this belief cuts across the assumption that children are born without definite character whereby the responsibility belongs to the parents. Practically the seeming contradiction seems to be resolved as follows: *potentially* a child's character may be pre-determined by the spirits, but actually or at least until the potentialities become manifest, education may play an important role by providing the spiritual forces with suitable vessels. At about eight or nine years of age the character of the reincarnation, if any, becomes manifest, but the social and psychological education is supposed to be well along by that time. Provision of the vessels and their moulding is, therefore, at the same time an active and a passive function.

The psychological and social education of early childhood and also the imparting of skills all have to do with this active moulding function as the manuscripts quoted have shown. Many folk-tales and proverbs could also be quoted to show the Umbundu ideas with regard to personality.[3]

The more passive function of providing suitable vessels for the indwelling of the spiritual forces is no less important. Even among those who have discarded or are seeking to discard the beliefs of their fathers, this side of educational theory is still important. It 858 has greatly conditioned the outlook of the people. All observers 828 have remarked on the considerate treatment of children by the 775 Ovimbundu, on their recognition of personality in children and respect for it. In the narrative quoted this was seen in the mother's addressing her baby boy as 'little father'[4] and in the first visitors

[1] *Unu* lit. the quality of being a person (*omunu*). The word is used for one's dominant bent, or his character.

[2] See *supra*, p. 102, n. 4.

[3] I have identified about 100 Umbundu proverbs used in or having reference to education. About two-thirds of them deal with the period of early childhood. Their interest is about equally divided between the practical and the more philosophical aspects of life and education.

[4] See *supra*, p. 90.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

giving the baby the respectful terms of 'my wife' or 'my husband';[1] also in the comment of the narrator that 'parents recognize that it is proper to respect them (children)'[2] and in parents' reluctance to punish. It seems that this respectful treatment of children stems from belief in reincarnation, whereby a child is potentially an ancestor to be respected, deferred to, and even worshipped.

It is doubtful whether at present many children could be found who have really gone through the ceremonial for becoming media for guardian spirits of the family (*olosande*). The drift away from those observances has become a flood. Nevertheless respectful treatment of children remains, perhaps even undiminished, for it still has the force of customary behaviour if not the supernatural sanction. Indulgence on the part of the parents rarely if ever goes to the length of pampering. Belief that the child's character ultimately, or to a large extent, depends upon spiritual forces may lead parents to adopt a sort of fatalism, but that is hardly more serious than the effects of belief in the influence of heredity popularly held in the West. The Ovimbundu do not believe, as do the Zulus, for example, that a child is tainted at birth, needing radical treatment against the subsequent appearance of the taint.[3] With the Ovimbundu the development of personality is a process which *may* involve spiritual forces, but at all events requires careful human attention.

Education and Society

What then are the means by which the Ovimbundu develop the personalities of their children or mould them to the social norm? Their success indicates that they along with other 'so-called backward races have proved to be educationists . . . of no mean order'.[4] What, then, are their methods?

The educational process is the whole process of life and culture. School is society and society is school; there is no division between adult and child life. Education and life are one. This has been recognized as true for many African and other primitive societies.[5]

[1] *Supra*, p. 89.
[2] *Supra*, p. 104.
[3] See Krige, op. cit., p. 67.
[4] W. D. Hambly, *Origins of Education among Primitive Peoples* (London: Macmillan, 1926), p. 401.
[5] See the interesting analysis of M. Fortes, *Social and Psychological Aspects of Education in Taleland*, p. 8 f. (Supplement to *Africa*, Oct. 1938); Margaret

time to the village of the paramount chief. These periods spent away from home continue into adolescence. Not only relatives, but also friends, blood-brothers and *vakuacisoko* (see below) exchange children in this way. 604 857

Later childhood

No definite time marks the transition from early to later childhood, but there are marked differences between the two stages. As soon as the child is physically able, he begins to assume a definite role in the community. Soon after a child gets his permanent teeth, a notch in the form of an inverted V is chipped between the two upper front incisors. Formerly the beginning of the period was marked for the boy by his first trip with a trading caravan; today a boy of this age may begin to work in the fields with his father, or begin to learn a trade, or be sent to school. A girl starts to learn field-work and housework. 852 858

Professions

A boy is expected to learn the profession or *ocipinduko* in which his father or his mother's brother is expert, and after that, should he wish to learn some other side-line profession, he may apprentice himself. All children, both boys and girls, are expected to learn to cultivate, but that is not counted as a profession. The principal *ovipinduko* (professions) listed by Childs are: for girls, basket-making, pottery-making, medical practice and divination; for boys, mat-making, wood-working, rope-making, thatching, fishing, apiculture, hunting, smithing, and medical practice and divination. The last three, as has been mentioned above, are "sacred" and entered under special conditions. 462 868 [463]

"Later childhood, then, is the period of technical training during which it is expected that a large amount of economic responsibility will be assumed. A child begins to own property even before this, and from the beginning of childhood will be accounted legally responsible for his actions. It is recognised, however, that he should not be set tasks beyond the experience or ability of his age and that the full responsibility of adulthood will come only with marriage."(1) 866 [672]

The coming of European commerce, industry, and government has created new types of employment for boys and men, some of which cause a prolonged absence from the village and a loosening or severing of kinship ties. There are no estimates of the number of persons employed by Europeans, or the average length of their absence from home. 178 466

ADOLESCENCE(2)

Childs found that the onset of puberty was late among the Ovimbundu, coming between fourteen and sixteen years for girls and between fifteen and seventeen years for boys. Soon after puberty young people generally stop sleeping in the parents' house. The girls congregate in kitchens and each boy builds himself a house, in which he will live through adolescence 882

(1) Childs, op.cit., p.110.
(2) Based on Childs, op.cit., pp.58-9 and 111-18.

Men are exclusively the makers of 462

musical instruments, and males are the musicians. Men are the [534] only persons engaged in warfare and administration, and the *onjango* or council house is used exclusively by males. Men follow the [756] occupation of medicine-man, in which there is considerable specialization. Female practitioners deal with pregnancy and women's ailments. In addition to the tasks for women mentioned above, the following are staple occupations: collecting firewood, drawing water, caring for infants, making pottery, weaving baskets, dancing, and singing. Young girls share these activities with older women.

The foregoing categories explain division on the grounds of sex. 463 Degrees of specialization are not so easy to formulate, but in general a man follows some one occupation, for example wood-carving. Then within this occupation there is specialization in the making of drums, domestic utensils, or figurines.

Almost any woman could make pottery or baskets, but the difference in skill leads naturally to concentration in the hands of expert potters and basket-weavers respectively. These sell their [432] wares to those who either do not make such articles or are inept at the process.

STANDARDS OF CONDUCT, MANNERS, AND SALUTATIONS

The parents of a child, also his maternal uncle, assume respon- 861 sibility for training in the precepts and standards given here. The 867 maternal uncle, who is the mother's oldest brother, is particularly interested because he has to pay fines should his sister's children commit thefts. The evidence indicates that the home and restricted family have formative influences over the conduct of children.

Children are beaten if they tell lies, answer old people rudely, or steal food. Ngonga says that his "stealing hand" was once placed in the hot leaves of the cooking pot. If a child steals an egg which is cooking, the hot egg is held between the culprit's hands.

One cannot fail to notice the quiet and unobtrusive way in which children sit in the presence of their elders both in the home and in the council house. Children do not speak when their elders are in [858] conversation, unless addressed.

A child, likewise an adult, receives a gift with both hands. The [576] implied idea is that reception with one hand is a depreciation of the gift. If a child holds out one hand, the hand is slapped. When receiving, an Ocimbundu says "*kuku*," literally grandfather or elder. Colloquially the word is used to mean greeting, "I thank you," or "I beg your pardon."

1: Childr M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

in the household and then the names of all kinds of little objects 856
until his speech is perfected.'

Weaning (*Oku sumũhã* or *oku nyamũhã*). Every day the child 862
goes to the fields with his mother. As he grows and gets fatter and heavier he becomes quite a burden for her or for his young nurse. Until he has passed twelve months, however, there is no alternative, and more often his daily excursions continue well past his second birthday. When he is able to walk a little, then his mother may begin to leave him in the village with his young nurse while she goes to her field-work. 'So in the morning at daybreak his mother will give him his food on a little dish and the toddler (*ocisembe*) will eat until he is full. Then his mother will speak to him saying, Suckle (*Nyama*) for I am going to the veld; so he will suckle and his mother will go.' He will not suckle again until she returns at from 2 to 4 in the afternoon. Thus he begins to be weaned quite unconsciously, but that does not mean that the process will be finished quickly; it may continue for even more than two years yet, unless a younger brother or sister intervenes.

'Some children, however, do not stop suckling quickly and if that is the case, his mother will frighten him when he wants to suckle, for she will say, Look out, here is a bugaboo; for perhaps she will have put an ugly worm on her breast, or perhaps she will have rubbed on pepper and the child nursing will burn his mouth and begin to cry. But some children are shrewd so that when they taste the bitterness they will fetch water and wash the breast and it is very hard to wean them. The parent will try many different things until the child is weaned. Some children are only weaned after they are four years old or even older, but that is not common.'

As the preceding paragraph suggests, children of this age may 861
be tyrants to their mothers and all the more since the Ovimbundu punish their children with reluctance. But field-work presses inexorably and much more can be accomplished without a child to hinder one. His mother may promise that if he doesn't cry she will bring him a rat or a bird. Then if he still does not *consent* to stay she may, with reluctance, apply the sterner measures of a slap or a proverb said in exasperation:[1]

Ove oku ku pikila ku kuta. [538]
You, making for you mush, you do not fill.

[1] The serious regard for the spoken word must be kept in mind.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

861 [538] *Oku longa ku yevi, vumōlā hē?*
Teaching you do not hear, are you child?

One who fails properly to absorb both mush and teaching can hardly be a proper human being. The implication of the question is that if he is not a child he may be some unearthly creature. There may be a similar implication in this other proverb which may also be used on similar occasions:

Ku ka ñavise ame konjembo si endi love.
Do not tire me I to hades shall not go with you.

U lonjila yaye, u lonjila yaye.
Each with path his (own), each with path his (own).

With the aid of elder sister mother usually wins out. Picking up her hoe and basket she gives the children their injunctions for the day. 'Stay then and I'll come right back, but don't play with the neighbour's chickens, don't beat each other, don't play with bows lest you put out the eye of another, and don't steal from the cooking pot, there now!'

857 461 With children of all ages left alone in the village, these injunctions are a minimum of necessity. The mother might also go on to detail the consequences of disobedience, how one who put out another's eye would be sold into slavery, nor was the mother exaggerating. If the Ovimbundu punish their children with reluctance, they have no reticence in instilling in them what they consider to be a healthy fear, whether of persons, animals, things, their own actions, or quite imaginary dangers. Older children likewise work on the younger. Nor are occasions for further instilling fear lacking. 'Always when they stay in the village, they go to the dancing-floor (*ocīlā*) to play with the other children. During that time should something come to frighten them and make them run away, those who haven't younger siblings to carry are glad to get away quickly. But those who have younger siblings to carry see much hardship. They tire themselves terribly trying to carry their heavy young siblings and being unable to continue, they drag them, both of them crying and crying.' Nowadays, in case of need or simply tiring of their play, children may start off for the fields in search of mother, but formerly children were not allowed to venture unaccompanied outside the safety of the village palisades. The danger of kidnappers and of raiding parties was very real. One of the most vivid memories of the Rev. Paulino Ngonga's early child-

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

hood was a day when he and an elder brother set off for the fields 857
and almost ran into a party of raiders. The scolding which they 861
received was not forgotten.

The practice of leaving the *ocisembe* in the village by day makes his elder sibling responsible for much of his education. This is the beginning of a close bond which lasts through life. She herself may not be more than six or seven years old and consequently cannot be expected to 'educate' her little charge very thoroughly. She interests herself in his walking and talking and he will imitate her in many things, but the rest of 'conscious education' must be attended to by the parents.

Cleanliness. Instruction in cleanliness begins at this age, but I fear 863
that it is lacking either in intensity or in persistence for its effect seems to be rather long-delayed. Small babies are not washed very often but their bodies and heads are anointed with palm-oil against infestation with the various parasites of the tropics. Anointing the body continues to be a part of the toilet of the Ocimbundu through life. When palm-oil is scarce, such afflictions as common itch are more prevalent. Nowadays, in the well-appointed household, the *ocisembe* has his hands and face washed before breakfast. If such a connexion between washing and eating were always and everywhere maintained, habits of personal cleanliness might be more widespread. Brushing the teeth may be begun in imitation of mother. Sphincter training is begun very early, for the mother feels every muscular movement made or attempted by the baby on her back. Hence she is apt to know when it is necessary to take him down for defecation. If and when this procedure is followed through with regularity and persistence early sphincter control may be established, but too often this is not the case. Establishment of bladder control is apt to come even more uncertainly as a favourite proverb concerning the weather indicates:

Ihu lia soka ndetako lioñaña. [538]

The sky is like the bottom of a baby.

The Ovimbundu do not associate these bodily functions with shame to the extent which is the case in our culture, but euphemisms are used in place of the exact terminology.[1] If an

[1] There are prohibitions regarding these functions during visits to relatives- 606
in-law with whom one has respect-relations, also to the bride during the wedding 514
ceremonies. (See Folk-tales nos. 12 and 13 of the short collection in the *Journal*

CHAPTER VI

[p. 98]

CHILDHOOD

The Child (*oneñe* or *omõlã*[1])

857 (*From the achievement of physical independence until about nine years*)

866 'If a toddling child (*omõlã ocisembe*) has finished learning to walk and expects a younger sibling, he is not carried any more and even though his mother should go to (visit) another village, he will stay behind perfectly well without crying. Now he has changed a great deal: that which he formerly did, he now no longer does.' This statement is perhaps a little optimistic, but it may be taken as sufficiently realistic and representative for practical purposes.

The child continues to see the same adults and to play with the same children as before, i.e. those of his own home village, but with two differences which the narratives will bring out. *First*, he is not now dependent to such an extent upon the elder sibling or cousin, and this independence brings the beginning of his life-long association with his age-mates. *Second*, the sex division of society begins for him at this time. From about eight years of age boys and girls will play in sex groups, and boys will begin to eat in the *onjango* with their fathers, girls continuing in the kitchen with mother and the younger siblings. The child does not go beyond the sheltering friendliness of the village except in the company of adults until toward the middle of this period of childhood. With mother or father he may often go to the fields or on excursions to neighbouring villages or to the chief's village.

861 The conscious education of the child is very much intensified from the time he achieves independence, but parents rarely realize the importance of the years from about four until about eight when little boys begin eating in the *onjango*. Theoretically the balance between the male and female sides of the house, characteristic of Umbundu social structure, is maintained in the training and education of the children. Actually what generally happens is that, until about eight, the mother and the older sibling or cross-cousin are very largely responsible for whatever is given and after that the father becomes responsible for the boys while the mother continues with the girls. This arrangement is modified somewhat by

[1] *Omõlã* is the term generally used but its primary meaning is *son* or *daughter*.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

the father's taking children of either sex with him on trips and by their being sent to stay for periods with the mother's family (*ohuina*). 861

During this early period the child's education is comprised largely under three heads: (1) psychological, chiefly fear of real and imaginary dangers; (2) social, chiefly usages of etiquette and acquaintance with the kinship structure and its requirements; and (3) practical, or the beginning of skills. The first is imparted by mother, elder siblings, and perhaps by a grandmother. The second is taught both consciously and unconsciously by every older relative with whom the child comes into contact. The third is undertaken by elder siblings or cousins of the same sex. After illustrating the process of each of these three, I shall try to summarize the Umbundu theory of personality and then pass on to the activities of later childhood.

1. *Psychological.* 'Children have no fear of ghosts unless there is someone who has told them of ghosts, or tried to imitate their cries or to make them see one. If after dark a child teases and cries, his mother may say, If you cry like that a ghost (*ocilũlũ*) will come and eat you. Since it is dark the child is startled, thinking there are ghosts, and he becomes quiet. Sometimes she tells him, Look out for the oxen, *mu, mu*, or perhaps it will be a leopard. Since the child does not see it, he may disbelieve his mother and think that what she says is untrue. Then again she may name a person, but since the child knows what a person is, but sees none, he will not stop (crying). Often if a child does not go to sleep quickly, his mother may say, Look out, the little old woman will come and pour live coals on your head and you will burn up. Hurry up and go to sleep. Then the child may leave the fireplace in a hurry and fall right into bed trembling. Sometimes a mother may send an elder sibling outside to the threshing-floor, to cry like a hyena, *ĩ . . . . ĩ . . . . ĩ*, while she herself stays in to mock the child, saying, He is crying and coming to eat you up. In the house the child hears the noise and shrieks, Don't come, don't come, I shan't cry any more, I'm going to sleep. It is from such things as these that children's fears come, from long ago until to-day. Children hear these things in their own houses from their parents, from their cross-cousins (*apahume*), from their elder siblings, or from their grandmothers. These same children, however, when they become adults, again begin to emphasize belief in ghosts with their little 869

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

868 offered.[1] Boys may also help with younger siblings and fetch wood and water especially if there is no girl in the family, but it is my impression that at this age boys find much more time for play than do girls.

The girl of this age has already been performing useful tasks for several years in helping to care for the younger siblings or younger cousins, but the eagerness with which a girl takes up the care of a younger child makes it evident that she considers that activity rather in the nature of play. If there is no baby for whom she is expected to be responsible, she may borrow one from a neighbour. It seems almost more natural for her to carry a baby than to carry a doll (made of an ear of maize). This she will do only if she lacks a baby. Field-work and housework, chiefly the cultivation and preparation of food, are the adult activities which she must learn and which she regards as work.

861 The Ovimbundu consider that a child's socio-psychological education should be completed during early childhood. It is felt that after this time direct instruction should not be necessary, but reproof may be given should a child omit a usage or commit a fault. Should a child have plainly failed to attain the customary standards, a fatalistic attitude is often assumed as illustrated by this proverb:

[538] *Omōlā wa linga Cipupulungunju;*
The child has become a worthless thing.
Nda longele, Nda kava.
I have done with educating, I am tired.

868 *Acquiring skills.* Later childhood is the time *par excellence* for technical education. That is the time recognized for beginning to learn a profession (*ocipinduko*), and a boy is expected to try that in which either his father or his mother's brother is expert. After that, should he wish to learn some other profession and can find a master, he may apprentice himself. All children, both boys and girls, are expected to learn to cultivate, but that is not counted as a profession as the following clearly shows:

'As to cultivating (*oku lima*), formerly the purpose was only for food, that one may not be hungry, whether during the dry season (*okuenye*), or during the rains (*ondombo*), that a person and his

[1] Considering the type of formal education available, the Ovimbundu are probably right: young children need far more activity than the formal school offers or allows.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

463 *Wood-working*, including the following specializations:
462 Doors, windows, and their frames; coffins.
[322] Beds, tables, chairs, &c.
Mortars, pestles, grinding-handles, and handles for various iron implements.
Stools, household utensils, carved images, staves, knobkerries, &c.
Drums and other musical instruments.
Canoes (dug-outs and coracles).
Rope-making, nets, and rudimentary weaving.
Thatching has its specialists although all men can thatch.
Fishing.
Bee-hunting, including the making of hives.
224 *Hunting*.
326 *Iron-smelting and smithing*.
791 *Medical-practice and Divination*.

The last three professions of the list are sacred and are entered under special conditions. They are often passed on by inheritance, but not always. All of them require sacrifice at certain stages, and when the enslavement of a spirit (*oku andeka*) is required, it is socially allowable. This seems to be the case with these offices as with those of the king and his ministers, both because of benefits accruing to the community in their exercise and also because of inherent danger to the individuals who exercise these functions.

177 The advent of European commerce, industry, and government
463 has created a number of types of employment for boys and young men, some of which entail prolonged absence from the village and a loosening or severing of kinship ties. Church and mission have
[797] also offered employment and have opened new opportunities for advance in place and in position.

861 Later childhood, then, is the period of technical training during which it is expected that a large amount of economic responsibility will be assumed. A child begins to own property even before this, and from the beginning of later childhood will be accounted legally responsible for his actions. It is recognized, however, that he should not be set tasks beyond the experience or ability of his age and that the full responsibility of adulthood will only come with marriage.

[538] *Umālēhē ka tonyōlā ongulu yuvala*;
A youth does not scrape the pig for the wedding feast;
pehonjo pa siala (*ovonya*).
on the hoof there remain (bristles).

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

giving the baby the respectful terms of 'my wife' or 'my husband';[1] also in the comment of the narrator that 'parents recognize that it is proper to respect them (children)'[2] and in parents' reluctance to punish. It seems that this respectful treatment of children stems from belief in reincarnation, whereby a child is potentially an ancestor to be respected, deferred to, and even worshipped.

It is doubtful whether at present many children could be found who have really gone through the ceremonial for becoming media for guardian spirits of the family (*olosande*). The drift away from those observances has become a flood. Nevertheless respectful treatment of children remains, perhaps even undiminished, for it still has the force of customary behaviour if not the supernatural sanction. Indulgence on the part of the parents rarely if ever goes to the length of pampering. Belief that the child's character ultimately, or to a large extent, depends upon spiritual forces may lead parents to adopt a sort of fatalism, but that is hardly more serious than the effects of belief in the influence of heredity popularly held in the West. The Ovimbundu do not believe, as do the Zulus, for example, that a child is tainted at birth, needing radical treatment against the subsequent appearance of the taint.[3] With the Ovimbundu the development of personality is a process which *may* involve spiritual forces, but at all events requires careful human attention.

Education and Society

What then are the means by which the Ovimbundu develop the personalities of their children or mould them to the social norm? Their success indicates that they along with other 'so-called backward races have proved to be educationists . . . of no mean order'.[4] What, then, are their methods?

The educational process is the whole process of life and culture. School is society and society is school; there is no division between adult and child life. Education and life are one. This has been recognized as true for many African and other primitive societies.[5]

[1] *Supra*, p. 89.
[2] *Supra*, p. 104.
[3] See Krige, op. cit., p. 67.
[4] W. D. Hambly, *Origins of Education among Primitive Peoples* (London: Macmillan, 1926), p. 401.
[5] See the interesting analysis of M. Fortes, *Social and Psychological Aspects of Education in Taleland*, p. 8 f. (Supplement to *Africa*, Oct. 1938); Margaret

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

861 This unity of 'the social sphere of adult and child' is a striking
867 feature of the Umbundu educational process. A child learns by actual participation in adult activities. He participates as soon as he is able and in so far as he is able in all phases of adult life. A child begins early to assume responsibility both for himself and for as much regular 'adult activity' as his knowledge and ability may allow him to take on. This being the case, it is to be expected that all factors—physiological, psychological, social, and cultural—are so closely interrelated in the process of Umbundu education that their unity is almost organic.

Given this unitary social sphere, it is easy to understand that children always want to grow up. They are anxious to undertake full responsibility and full participation as early as they may. It has been pointed out that adults do not, or are expected not to, force the pace: they must not set tasks beyond the ability of the children in the actual stage of their development.[1] Normal development and normal behaviour are expected of children as a matter of course.[2] The possibility of aberrant behaviour[3] does not seem regularly to enter parents' minds, much less their utterances, as is too often the case with us. Adult expectation of normal develop-
[828] ment in children is perhaps best seen in the Umbundu concept of sense or intelligence (*olondunge*), something which every normal person is expected to have in some measure from the time of weaning. It is a relative term when applied to children and the young.[4] Some adults have it in greater measure than others. But every *person* will have it according to the proverb:

[538] *Omuku lovonya, omunu lolondunge.*
A rat with fur, a person with sense.

As every rat has fur, every person has sense.

861 Learning, as he does, in the real social and cultural situation
153 of Umbundu life, the child develops genetically the behaviour

Mead, *Coming of Age in Samoa* (New York: Morrow, 1928). Some writers have claimed this to be true of all the simpler cultures, e.g. Dewey, op. cit., p. 8 f., but cf. Margaret Mead, *Growing up in New Guinea* (New York: Morrow, 1930). Many of the African initiation rites seem to have been introduced from the outside and hence involve a distinct dichotomy, *vide* Stayt, op. cit.

[1] See *supra*, p. 110.

[2] See Fortes' discussion of a similar attitude among the Tallensi, op. cit., pp. 25–8.

[3] For the fatalistic attitude taken on failure to conform, see *supra*, p. 106.

[4] See *supra*, p. 100.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

pattern 'singled out in the institutions of his culture'.[1] I agree with 861
Fortes on the Tallensi that 'The total pattern is not built up brick 153
by brick like a house, but evolves'.[2] I am not convinced, however, [114]
of the necessity for postulating 'embryonic forms' or *schemas* of the total patterns supposed to be present in the child from the beginning.[3] Whether the *schemas* are supposed to be a part of the child's innate equipment, Fortes does not make clear, but I see no necessity for any such hypothesis. The method by which and the situation in which the Ocimbundu child learns, are ample explanation for the early and thorough development of the pattern of his culture.

Neither is it necessary to postulate either 'faculties' or 'instinctive drives' to explain Umbundu education.[4] Rather this study takes a view of 'human nature . . . as consisting essentially of specific situations'.[5] Instances in support of this view could be cited from the descriptive part of this chapter but that would be outside the scope of this study. The most important fact with regard to Umbundu education is its identification with life: the absence of cleavage as between 'school' and society, as between the social sphere of the child and the adult. The most important educational method in use is actual participation in the social and cultural or 'real life' situation. The educational 'content' is the whole Umbundu culture, consisting of attitudes (psychological and social), social usages, skills, observances, and traditional 'literature'. By far the most important are the social attitudes and usages. I turn therefore to the problems of

Social Adjustment

The education of the Ocimbundu child in the traditional social 867
setting is far more social than is the case with us. The child learns

[1] Ruth Benedict, *Patterns of Culture* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1934), p. 254.

[2] M. Fortes, op. cit., p. 42.

[3] Ibid., pp. 42 ff. Fortes attributes the concept of *schemas* to F. C. Bartlett (*Remembering*).

[4] In his discussion of education among the Tallensi, quoted above, Fortes does not specifically mention either of these hypotheses and he rightly remarks that some writers have 'attributed an almost mystical significance to imitation' as the principal method by which a child learns. He then proceeds, however, to classify the learning processes under *Mimesis*, *Identification*, *Co-operation*, and *Play*. Except for the first, these activities are of much importance in Umbundu education.

[5] Hugh Hartshorne, *Character in Human Relations*, p. 195 (New York: Scribner's, 1932); see also Allport, op. cit., p. 81.

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p.139

CHAPTER IX

EDUCATIONAL EVALUATIONS

121 THE conception of African education underlying the present study is frankly one of adaptation of all that is suitable from indigenous culture in order to weave it into the fabric of a new African civilization. This point of view, stated in the Preface and already elaborated with reference to the social structure in Part One, needs no detailed re-statement here.

661 Umbundu education, as described and analysed in the foregoing chapters, obviously has points of contact with a progressive conception of Christian education. If nothing else, at least the degree of success which it achieves should cause us to search out its secret. It is probable that there is no formal system of education which could show as great a percentage of success as can this primitive system. In terms of artistic or scientific achievement or discovery its results may not bulk very large, but in terms of successful adaptation to environment they are remarkable.[1] In terms of personal and social integration achieved the results are yet greater.[2] The success achieved by Umbundu education requires the attention of the educationist seeking to serve this people.

000 Among those elements of Umbundu education which may be built upon by missionary education, I wish to consider three: (1) The Umbundu conception of character, (2) Educational method as actual participation in real life situations, and (3) Educational 'content' as life itself—all of life.

Character

The significance of what the Ovimbundu estimate to be desirable character is evident, and no one would dispute the importance of perpetuating and generalizing the more desirable types of behaviour analysed. Only by grafting into these behaviour patterns, which the Ovimbundu recognize and understand, can

[1] This subject cannot be given adequate treatment in a chapter on education. Cf. J. H. Driberg, *The Savage as He Really Is* (London: Routledge, 1929), chaps. ii, iii.

[2] As with many primitive peoples, delinquents and misfits are relatively rare. In Umbundu society allowance for dissent is usually large.

862 "The practice of leaving the *ocisembe* in the village by day makes his elder sibling[1] responsible for much of his education....She herself may not be more than six or seven years old and consequently cannot be expected to 'educate' her charge very thoroughly. She interests herself in his walking and talking and he will initate her in many things."[2]

863 General instruction in cleanliness begins at this age, although sphincter control may have begun much earlier, since the mother feels every movement made by the baby on her back.

145 After weaning the physical development of the child proceeds more slowly than that of European peoples, and Childs believes that this may be due to deficiencies in diet.[3]

CHILDHOOD AND EDUCATION

857 From the time a child is able to walk until he is about nine years old he continues seeing the same people as before, but he becomes less de-
861 pendent upon the elder sister or cousin who helped him, and begins his life-long association with his age-mates. The sex-division of society starts for him at this stage: from about eight years boys begin to eat in the *onjango* with their fathers, girls continuing in the kitchen with their mothers. After about eight years the father becomes largely responsible for the education of boys, the mother for that of girls. During this period the child's education may be summarised under three heads:

869 (a) *Psychological*, chiefly fear of real or imaginary dangers. This is imparted by mother, elder siblings, and perhaps by a grandmother; there is a tendency for the teaching of fear to be done by women.[4]

867 (b) *Social*, chiefly usages of etiquette and acquaintance with the kinship structure and its requirements. A child of about eight is supposed to know his social status and all the etiquette that pertains to it. In the *onjango* the hierarchy of age is observed, honoured guests and old men being served first, and so on all down the line. With the decline of the *onjango*, there has been a great decline in the teaching of etiquette and social usage, and this naturally affects boys rather than girls.

864 Little direct sex teaching is attempted, and adults are reticent in speaking of sexual matters in the presence of children. But since children live with their parents in one-roomed houses, it is inevitable that children should sometimes observe intercourse.

868 (c) *Training in skills*: Children are taught few definite skills before the age of eight or nine, but many of their games are in imitation of adult activities.

104 From the age of six or seven years children are usually sent to spend
857 one or two years with the mother's brother. They may also be sent to the father's sister or brother for a period, and, in the case of girls, to the mother's mother. Formerly prominent families sent their children for a

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Men are exclusively the makers of 462

musical instruments, and males are the musicians. Men are the [534] only persons engaged in warfare and administration, and the *onjango* or council house is used exclusively by males. Men follow the [756] occupation of medicine-man, in which there is considerable specialization. Female practitioners deal with pregnancy and women's ailments. In addition to the tasks for women mentioned above, the following are staple occupations: collecting firewood, drawing water, caring for infants, making pottery, weaving baskets, dancing, and singing. Young girls share these activities with older women.

The foregoing categories explain division on the grounds of sex. 463 Degrees of specialization are not so easy to formulate, but in general a man follows some one occupation, for example wood-carving. Then within this occupation there is specialization in the making of drums, domestic utensils, or figurines.

Almost any woman could make pottery or baskets, but the difference in skill leads naturally to concentration in the hands of expert potters and basket-weavers respectively. These sell their [432] wares to those who either do not make such articles or are inept at the process.

STANDARDS OF CONDUCT, MANNERS, AND SALUTATIONS

The parents of a child, also his maternal uncle, assume respon- 861 sibility for training in the precepts and standards given here. The 867 maternal uncle, who is the mother's oldest brother, is particularly interested because he has to pay fines should his sister's children commit thefts. The evidence indicates that the home and restricted family have formative influences over the conduct of children.

Children are beaten if they tell lies, answer old people rudely, or steal food. Ngonga says that his "stealing hand" was once placed in the hot leaves of the cooking pot. If a child steals an egg which is cooking, the hot egg is held between the culprit's hands.

One cannot fail to notice the quiet and unobtrusive way in which children sit in the presence of their elders both in the home and in the council house. Children do not speak when their elders are in [858] conversation, unless addressed.

A child, likewise an adult, receives a gift with both hands. The [576] implied idea is that reception with one hand is a depreciation of the gift. If a child holds out one hand, the hand is slapped. When receiving, an Ocimbundu says "*kuku*," literally grandfather or elder. Colloquially the word is used to mean greeting, "I thank you," or "I beg your pardon."

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

in the household and then the names of all kinds of little objects 856
until his speech is perfected.'

Weaning (*Oku sumũhã* or *oku nyamũhã*). Every day the child 862
goes to the fields with his mother. As he grows and gets fatter and heavier he becomes quite a burden for her or for his young nurse. Until he has passed twelve months, however, there is no alternative, and more often his daily excursions continue well past his second birthday. When he is able to walk a little, then his mother may begin to leave him in the village with his young nurse while she goes to her field-work. 'So in the morning at daybreak his mother will give him his food on a little dish and the toddler (*ocisembe*) will eat until he is full. Then his mother will speak to him saying, Suckle (*Nyama*) for I am going to the veld; so he will suckle and his mother will go.' He will not suckle again until she returns at from 2 to 4 in the afternoon. Thus he begins to be weaned quite unconsciously, but that does not mean that the process will be finished quickly; it may continue for even more than two years yet, unless a younger brother or sister intervenes.

'Some children, however, do not stop suckling quickly and if that is the case, his mother will frighten him when he wants to suckle, for she will say, Look out, here is a bugaboo; for perhaps she will have put an ugly worm on her breast, or perhaps she will have rubbed on pepper and the child nursing will burn his mouth and begin to cry. But some children are shrewd so that when they taste the bitterness they will fetch water and wash the breast and it is very hard to wean them. The parent will try many different things until the child is weaned. Some children are only weaned after they are four years old or even older, but that is not common.'

As the preceding paragraph suggests, children of this age may 861
be tyrants to their mothers and all the more since the Ovimbundu punish their children with reluctance. But field-work presses inexorably and much more can be accomplished without a child to hinder one. His mother may promise that if he doesn't cry she will bring him a rat or a bird. Then if he still does not *consent* to stay she may, with reluctance, apply the sterner measures of a slap or a proverb said in exasperation:[1]

Ove oku ku pikila ku kuta. [538]
You, making for you mush, you do not fill.

[1] The serious regard for the spoken word must be kept in mind.

000

relative after whom he is named.[1]

(b) Ordinarily the baby is named by the father from his family. According to Fnnis,[2] the first male child is usually named after the paternal grandfather, the first female child after the paternal grandmother; the next two or three children are named after paternal uncles and aunts, and then the mother may choose a name. Childs writes that the name may be given by the mother if the father's family has a bad record of deaths and illnesses. 553

(c) The name must not prejudice but assist the child's chance of survival; thus a child born after the death of several siblings may be given an insignificant name, intended to cause the spirits to overlook it, or to consider it less than human.

(d) Events or persons prominent at the birth may influence the choice. A namesake, whether intentional or not, is known as *Sando* (from the Portuguese word for saint). Events at the time of birth may be summed up in a proverb, of which the key word is the name. Ennis gives numerous examples of such names.[3]

(e) The same names may belong to several families of a type, e.g. trading or farming families, or the families of paramount chiefs, who were jealous of their names and did not permit their use by commoners. 551

Parents take the name of their first-born: thus "Nanjamba" is "the mother of Njamba". During illness a person may change his name to draw away the attention of the spirits. Adolescents discard their birth names and choose new ones.[4]

Infancy

During the first six months the child sleeps with his mother and during the day is carried in a cloth on her back, and fed whenever he demands milk. If the mother has no helper, she works in the fields with the baby on her back. An older sister or other young relative may play with the infant within hearing distance of the mother. 853

Between six and twelve months the child is taught to sit; when he can do this he is no longer a baby *(onana)* but an *ocisembe* (toddler). A child rarely walks before the age of 24 months, since he is carried and held so much. 856

Weaning: a child goes every day with his mother to the fields; each month he becomes fatter and heavier, but he usually continues like this until after the second birthday. When he can walk, he may be left during the day with his young nurse (elder sister, cross-cousin or other relative) and not fed until the mother returns during the afternoon. The process of weaning begins then at this stage but is usually not completed till a year or two later, unless another baby intervenes. Those who take longer than usual in weaning may, however, be frightened away from the breast.[5] 862

(1) Childs, op.cit., p.87.
(2) 1945.
(3) op.cit.
(4) Childs, loc.cit.
(5) Childs, op.cit., p.93.

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hood was a day when he and an elder brother set off for the fields 857
and almost ran into a party of raiders. The scolding which they 861
received was not forgotten.

The practice of leaving the *ocisembe* in the village by day makes his elder sibling responsible for much of his education. This is the beginning of a close bond which lasts through life. She herself may not be more than six or seven years old and consequently cannot be expected to 'educate' her little charge very thoroughly. She interests herself in his walking and talking and he will imitate her in many things, but the rest of 'conscious education' must be attended to by the parents.

Cleanliness. Instruction in cleanliness begins at this age, but I fear 863
that it is lacking either in intensity or in persistence for its effect seems to be rather long-delayed. Small babies are not washed very often but their bodies and heads are anointed with palm-oil against infestation with the various parasites of the tropics. Anointing the body continues to be a part of the toilet of the Ocimbundu through life. When palm-oil is scarce, such afflictions as common itch are more prevalent. Nowadays, in the well-appointed household, the *ocisembe* has his hands and face washed before breakfast. If such a connexion between washing and eating were always and everywhere maintained, habits of personal cleanliness might be more widespread. Brushing the teeth may be begun in imitation of mother. Sphincter training is begun very early, for the mother feels every muscular movement made or attempted by the baby on her back. Hence she is apt to know when it is necessary to take him down for defecation. If and when this procedure is followed through with regularity and persistence early sphincter control may be established, but too often this is not the case. Establishment of bladder control is apt to come even more uncertainly as a favourite proverb concerning the weather indicates:

[538]

> *Ihu lia soka ndetako lioñaña.*
> The sky is like the bottom of a baby.

The Ovimbundu do not associate these bodily functions with shame to the extent which is the case in our culture, but euphemisms are used in place of the exact terminology.[1] If an

[1] There are prohibitions regarding these functions during visits to relatives-in-law with whom one has respect-relations, also to the bride during the wedding ceremonies. (See Folk-tales nos. 12 and 13 of the short collection in the *Journal* 606 514

1: Childi 1-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

863 *ocisembe* defecates on the bed he will be slapped that he may not repeat, but less flagrant breaches do not seem to call for punishment.

868 *Language*. The progress of toddlers in language mastery is rapid. Some mispronunciations are allowed. Some children pronounce correctly more rapidly than do others. Correct use of the language including mastery of the complicated grammatical structure, however, is mastered much earlier than is the case with English-speaking children. One could almost say as does Father Van Wing of the Kongo child: 'À quatre ans il parle mieux sa belle langue Kikongo, qu'un Européen de douze ans ne parle la sienne.'[1] The baby's earliest babblings, as well as his later evident imitations of his elders, are all recognized as his attempts at self-expression which as a matter of course will straighten themselves out in due time.[2] Parents speak to their children in a tone distinctly different from that employed in ordinary adult conversation, but they rarely if ever use the baby's own mispronunciations or 'baby-talk' as do Europeans and Americans. This, and the fact that young children have much more practice than have our children, owing to the constant companionship of their elders, seems to be the secret of their rapid progress. Whether the nature of the language itself has any effect would be an interesting subject for investigation.

867 *Manners* are also taken on quickly during this time. Toddlers are not expected to practise any very wide range of the social niceties, but what they do, they do correctly. They give and receive with both hands. They both give and answer greetings with proper terms of respect. An outsider, however, can rarely observe such behaviour naturally in the young child. He has been so

606 514 *of the American Folk-Lore Society*, vol. xxxv, pp. 129 ff.) The terms used are as follows:

Exact terms	*Euphemisms*
To urinate, *oku sūsū*	*oku talamēlāko*, lit. 'to stand to something'.
(urine, *ovāsū*)	*oku litapela*, lit. 'to water oneself' (said of a child when it wets itself or its bed).
To defecate, *oku nia*	*oku enda kusenge*, lit. 'to go to the bush'.
(feces, *emīña*)	*oku enda kofeka*, lit. 'to go to the country'.

The verb *oku nia* is used as a strong or profane expletive or interjectory phrase, especially in the first person with *etaili* (to-day), as *Etaili nda nia*. The verb is euphemistically left off.

Studes Bakongo, p. 262.

Cf. the proverb: *Wa sema, wa imba: wa tumbuka, wa popia*, 'He mispronounces, he sings: he babbles, he speaks.'

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1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

to eat in public, will be served by himself in the *etambo* (spirit-hut). 867
With the decline of the *onjango* as an institution, there has been a great decline in the teaching of etiquette and social usage. As might be expected, this has affected boys more directly than girls. Girls and young women of the present generation and of the generation now coming on are, on the whole, more given to customary usage and forms of civility than are boys and young men. It is probable that contacts with Europeans, which have been going on for more than 150 years, have produced a number of [177] individuals and families who have paid less heed to correct usage and have neglected to teach children properly, but never has there been the wholesale disregard which is now encountered. If the analogy of the South African Bantu peoples is any criterion, a reaction back to things Umbundu may soon be expected. Some observers feel that it is already under way.

Little direct sex teaching is attempted, but the very fact of the 864
sex division of society is a considerable factor.

'A mother will teach her daughter saying, A girl does not play with boys, for boys are sharp ones.[1] Don't play with them. This advice is because of sex, although the child may not understand it at the time. But when the boys call her, she will remember the advice of her mother and may quickly reply, saying, My mother says, Don't play with boys: they'll hurt you. Thus she has taken to heart what her mother has told her and may go ahead in the same way. But as she grows up and separates from her parents,[2] then she may separate herself from their teaching.' Young children acquire incidentally a good deal of knowledge about sex both from other children and from adults. Although adults observe considerable reticence in speaking of sexual matters in the presence of children, living as they do with their parents in one-room homes, it is inevitable that sexual intercourse should sometimes be observed by children.[3] Although euphemisms of speech are employed in the presence of children, all the true terms are known by them. Hetero-sexual play is not in vogue.

[1] *Imelēlī*, lit. sharpened stakes such as those used at the bottom of a pit-fall to trap game.

[2] i.e. at adolescence, when she leaves her mother to stay with other girls of her age.

[3] Cf. Father Van Wing on the Congo child: 'A six ans . . . il en emporte une connaissance de la vie qui ferait rougir de bons jeunes gens d'Europe' (op. cit., p. 262).

862 "The practice of leaving the ocisembe in the village by day makes his elder sibling[1] responsible for much of his education....She herself may not be more than six or seven years old and consequently cannot be expected to 'educate' her charge very thoroughly. She interests herself in his walking and talking and he will initate her in many things."[2]

863 General instruction in cleanliness begins at this age, although sphincter control may have begun much earlier, since the mother feels every movement made by the baby on her back.

145 After weaning the physical development of the child proceeds more slowly than that of European peoples, and Childs believes that this may be due to deficiencies in diet.[3]

CHILDHOOD AND EDUCATION

857 From the time a child is able to walk until he is about nine years old he continues seeing the same people as before, but he becomes less de-
861 pendent upon the elder sister or cousin who helped him, and begins his life-long association with his age-mates. The sex-division of society starts for him at this stage: from about eight years boys begin to eat in the *onjango* with their fathers, girls continuing in the kitchen with their mothers. After about eight years the father becomes largely responsible for the education of boys, the mother for that of girls. During this period the child's education may be summarised under three heads:

869 (a) *Psychological*, chiefly fear of real or imaginary dangers. This is imparted by mother, elder siblings, and perhaps by a grandmother; there is a tendency for the teaching of fear to be done by women.[4]

867 (b) *Social*, chiefly usages of etiquette and acquaintance with the kinship structure and its requirements. A child of about eight is supposed to know his social status and all the etiquette that pertains to it. In the *onjango* the hierarchy of age is observed, honoured guests and old men being served first, and so on all down the line. With the decline of the *onjango*, there has been a great decline in the teaching of etiquette and social usage, and this naturally affects boys rather than girls.

● 864 Little direct sex teaching is attempted, and adults are reticent in speaking of sexual matters in the presence of children. But since children live with their parents in one-roomed houses, it is inevitable that children should sometimes observe intercourse.

868 (c) *Training in skills*: Children are taught few definite skills before the age of eight or nine, but many of their games are in imitation of adult activities.

604 From the age of six or seven years children are usually sent to spend
857 one or two years with the mother's brother. They may also be sent to the father's sister or brother for a period, and, in the case of girls, to the mother's mother. Formerly prominent families sent their children for a

(1) Either a brother or sister may act as nurse.
(2) Childs, op.cit., p.95. (3) Ibid., p.97.
(4) Childs actually writes " 'the side of the basket' " (p.100), but seems to be referring simply to female relatives.

577 Lying is strongly disapproved and the liar is called *ohembi*. The Ovimbundu appreciate hospitality (*unu*) which also means generosity. A man who is hospitable is said to be *ongavi*. Greediness, which is disliked, is described by the word *oku sapa* ("to be greedy"). There are standards of honesty in sales and exchanges. A deceiver in trade is *ohembi*.

836 With regard to the relation of the sexes in early years it may be said that, in spite of boy and girl friendships, and the communal sleeping of boys and girls at the home of one of the girls, a man expects to marry a virgin, a point which has been dealt with in describing marriage ceremonies.

Naturally there is a difficulty in obtaining precise information respecting the details of these nocturnal gatherings of boys and girls. Ngonga said that girls inform their parents concerning the house where the night is to be spent, and there is a point of etiquette requiring that girls must not go to a house where boys are staying together.

• 864 Standards of conduct already described under courtship are a result of direct teaching by parents. Marriage rules and a classificatory system of relationships, with its prohibitive decrees, are taught in the home, in the men's council house, and at initiation ceremonies where such exist. In addition to these sources of instruction there is no doubt an unconscious absorption of ideas and standards. The power of suggestion is always at work through everyday examples.

831 Apart from demands made by tribal custom and direct instruction there are variable personal standards of modesty. Ngonga states [562] that many lascivious stories are told among men, and when the men are drunk, they tell these to women. "Sometimes the women laugh, but the good women do not like to hear these tales."

576 A male commoner when meeting the king bows low, extends his 643 arms, claps his palms and says, "*ohosi* ["lion"] *akuku* ["grandfather"]." 565 Only the old people follow the ancient custom of falling on their knees when greeting the king. The Ovimbundu never were in the habit of doing more profound obeisance, but the Vangangella, when greeting one of their kings, rub their chins on the ground and place dust on their chests. Even at the present day a woman or child of the Ovimbundu is expected to kneel when greeting a king, but such an acknowledgment is not now usual in greetings given by a male commoner. The reply of the king to the commoner is "*kalunga*." This word enters into greetings of all kinds. The literal meaning of the word is "the sea," "king," "god," or "death," but the interpretation

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

881 mony at which the older initiates dance while the novices clap their hands.

I witnessed the dance of initiated boys at Ngongo, where the [292] costumes resembled those I had seen at Katoko. At night a youth brought for me a set of initiation costumes (Plate LXXVIII, Fig. 1), which resembled those worn during the dance; this he did with great secrecy.

While at Ngalangi, the initiation of girls was investigated. After several days of negotiation with a village headman three female guardians of the girls came from the bush. The illustrations (Plate LXXVII, Figs. 1, 2) show the attitudes of these women and their decoration. There were three male drummers in the orchestra and several women, who sang and clapped their hands. On emerging from the bush the females moved toward the orchestra with their backs toward the players. As there were about two hundred yards to cover, this slow backward movement occupied a long time, since the three women did not take more than a few inches at each step. The dance [535] itself was a slow, shuffling, swaying movement, made while the bodies of the performers remained inclined forward and their heads were bent so that it was almost impossible to see their faces. The women wore no clothing except loin cloths. Each female was [302] plastered from head to foot with alternate bands of red and white clay smeared thickly. These three females are the women who act [864] as instructors for the girls during isolation in the bush where they receive sexual and domestic instruction.

881 The seclusion of girls covers a period of one month. During 304 this time the novices suffer no harsh treatment though an operation is performed, possibly excision of the clitoris, but I am not certain on this point. It was also stated that a corncob is introduced into the vagina. The tribe practising this ceremony for girls was the [171] Vanyemba, living close to the Ovimbundu at Ngongo near Ngalangi in central Angola.

881 In order to corroborate further the two accounts of initiation 171 ceremonies for boys I journeyed to Cangamba in Moxico, eastern 304 Angola. The position of the two first centers visited (Katoko and Ngongo) is on the border line where Ovimbundu and Vachokue mingle, and although there is a mixture of these and other tribes at Cangamba, the culture, language, and physique of the Vachokue predominate. A description of the circumcision ceremonies witnessed at Cangamba is given below for comparison with the accounts resulting from visits to Katoko and Ngongo.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

867 the correct adjustments early, naturally grows into a comparatively well-adjusted life, and so avoids the major conflicts to a much greater degree than is the case in our society. A very large propor-
154 tion of those in conflict in present-day Umbundu society are de-tribalized or partially de-tribalized individuals, especially those who as children were brought up outside or largely outside the kinship groups. The large proportion of those brought up on the mission stations who are out of adjustment, and often in overt conflict, has been noticed by many observers. The biographies and autobiographies which I have collected witness clearly to the same fact, that most of the ill-adjusted individuals and those in overt conflict were products of an extra-tribal, de-tribalized, or non-traditional situation; while practically all of the well-adjusted persons were educated within the kinship system.

154 The three major conflicts which have been recognized in our
865 society, that is, 'struggle', sex, and 'inferiority',[1] are all present in some form among the Ovimbundu. The adjustments by which they resolve these conflicts are distinctive.

Adjustments in anger by which the 'struggle conflict' is resolved are interesting and important educationally. The child is taught when quite young that the expression of anger is taboo.[2] Tantrums are rare among Ovimbundu children. Anger and ill-will are named by thoughtful Ovimbundu as the chief root-cause of sorcery. The more thoughtful ones also recognize these as an important cause of accusations of sorcery. Expression of anger is traditionally much feared. It is not desired in the character of the king.[3] Nowadays
[177] there are more who give free vent to expressions of anger, but they are for the most part either individuals who imitate Europeans and who seek to discard Umbundu cultural habits and values; or they are those who are considered sorcerers, either by themselves or others. An Ocimbundu who as a child has learned traditional adjustments in anger will rarely allow his anger to break through the resistance and become 'extroverted' except in recognized outlets. These outlets are somewhat analogous to our own rationali-
154 zations of anger.[4]
578 The chief 'introverted' reaction of anger which I have noted

[1] The psychological analysis follows Allport, op. cit., chap. xiv.
[2] See *supra*, p. 101.
[3] See *supra*, p. 21.
[4] Cf. Allport, op. cit., p. 344. The Ovimbundu have not thought up such a high-sounding term as 'moral indignation' as a euphemism for anger.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

CHAPTER VI

[p. 98]

CHILDHOOD

The Child (*oneñe* or *omōlā*[1])

857 (*From the achievement of physical independence until about nine years*)

866 'If a toddling child (*omōlā ocisembe*) has finished learning to walk and expects a younger sibling, he is not carried any more and even though his mother should go to (visit) another village, he will stay behind perfectly well without crying. Now he has changed a great deal: that which he formerly did, he now no longer does.' This statement is perhaps a little optimistic, but it may be taken as sufficiently realistic and representative for practical purposes.

The child continues to see the same adults and to play with the same children as before, i.e. those of his own home village, but with two differences which the narratives will bring out. *First*, he is not now dependent to such an extent upon the elder sibling or cousin, and this independence brings the beginning of his life-long association with his age-mates. *Second*, the sex division of society begins for him at this time. From about eight years of age boys and girls will play in sex groups, and boys will begin to eat in the *onjango* with their fathers, girls continuing in the kitchen with mother and the younger siblings. The child does not go beyond the sheltering friendliness of the village except in the company of adults until toward the middle of this period of childhood. With mother or father he may often go to the fields or on excursions to neighbouring villages or to the chief's village.

861 The conscious education of the child is very much intensified from the time he achieves independence, but parents rarely realize the importance of the years from about four until about eight when little boys begin eating in the *onjango*. Theoretically the balance between the male and female sides of the house, characteristic of Umbundu social structure, is maintained in the training and education of the children. Actually what generally happens is that, until about eight, the mother and the older sibling or cross-cousin are very largely responsible for whatever is given and after that the father becomes responsible for the boys while the mother continues with the girls. This arrangement is modified somewhat by

[1] *Omōlā* is the term generally used but its primary meaning is *son* or *daughter*.

233 The cattle herd obtains most of its food by grazing, but in the dry season the grass withers. Childs states[1] that "Herding has been a [609] function of the sister's son, and even now there is a reluctance on the part of the boys to herd for their fathers."

235 462 [844] Chickens are owned and looked after by both men and women, but other animals only by men. Boys may have small stock of their own, and a boy's economic independence most frequently begins with his owning a chicken.

231 Hambly states that goats are more common than any other animal, and that every family has one or more. These animals are not fed or watered, but are allowed to wander to find their own austenance. Goats are not milked. Young males are castrated. The goat is frequently used in sacrifices. Sheep also are allowed to find their own food; the males are not castrated. Pigs are cared for comparatively carefully, receiving water and a daily supply of sweet potatoes and their leaves, together with some corn. Male pigs are castrated.[2]

APICULTURE[3]

[439] Beeswax was an important item of trade in the caravan days, and is still sold to Portuguese traders' stores, where it is massed into large rectangular cakes for export. Honey is eaten alone or with manioc, and [262] a fermented beer called *ochasa* is made by adding honey to corn-beer. [273] Fibre strainers are used for cleaning the wax, and large shallow baskets [252] are employed for drying the honey in the sun.

Large cylindrical hives, which are private property, are placed high in the trees. These are made by removing a cylinder of bark and lashing the halves together with strands of bark, forming a hive which has a diameter of one foot.

In Elende honey is removed from the hives during the months of August and December. One man ascends the tree in order to lower the hive with a long rope of bark or plaited fibre, while beneath the tree men are prepared to take the hive, which is opened over a smoky fire.

ARTS AND CRAFTS

326 782 *Smithing.* The profession of blacksmith or *ocivinda* is an important one, and, like hunting and divining, is sacred and is entered with special ritual. Often, but not always, these three professions are passed on by inheritance. For smithing two years' apprenticeship to a member of the profession is necessary, and is usually entered upon at the age of eighteen. At the end of this period the master examines his pupil, and makes tools for him, especially the heavy hammer or *onjundo* which is regarded as symbolic of his craft. For the inauguration ceremony the boy provides four chickens (2 male, 2 female), a dog, and a goat; the blood of these animals is sprinkled on his tools, and their flesh is eaten at a feast [553] attended by the villagers. Throughout the procedure the boy remains standing on the small anvil. Finally he is asked to choose his professional name; he then steps down from the anvil a qualified blacksmith.

(1) Childs, 1949, p.109. (2) Hambly, op.cit., p.154.
(3) Hambly, (4) 1934.

time to the village of the paramount chief. These periods spent away from home continue into adolescence. Not only relatives, but also friends, blood-brothers and *vakuacisoko* (see below) exchange children in this way. 604 857

Later childhood

No definite time marks the transition from early to later childhood, but there are marked differences between the two stages. As soon as the child is physically able, he begins to assume a definite role in the community. Soon after a child gets his permanent teeth, a notch in the form of an inverted V is chipped between the two upper front incisors. Formerly the beginning of the period was marked for the boy by his first trip with a trading caravan; today a boy of this age may begin to work in the fields with his father, or begin to learn a trade, or be sent to school. A girl starts to learn field-work and housework. 852 858

Professions

A boy is expected to learn the profession or *ocipinduko* in which his father or his mother's brother is expert, and after that, should he wish to learn some other side-line profession, he may apprentice himself. All children, both boys and girls, are expected to learn to cultivate, but that is not counted as a profession. The principal *ovipinduko* (professions) listed by Childs are: for girls, basket-making, pottery-making, medical practice and divination; for boys, mat-making, wood-working, rope-making, thatching, fishing, apiculture, hunting, smithing, and medical practice and divination. The last three, as has been mentioned above, are "sacred" and entered under special conditions. 462 868 [463]

"Later childhood, then, is the period of technical training during which it is expected that a large amount of economic responsibility will be assumed. A child begins to own property even before this, and from the beginning of childhood will be accounted legally responsible for his actions. It is recognised, however, that he should not be set tasks beyond the experience or ability of his age and that the full responsibility of adulthood will come only with marriage."(1) 866 [672]

The coming of European commerce, industry, and government has created new types of employment for boys and men, some of which cause a prolonged absence from the village and a loosening or severing of kinship ties. There are no estimates of the number of persons employed by Europeans, or the average length of their absence from home. 178 466

ADOLESCENCE(2)

Childs found that the onset of puberty was late among the Ovimbundu, coming between fourteen and sixteen years for girls and between fifteen and seventeen years for boys. Soon after puberty young people generally stop sleeping in the parents' house. The girls congregate in kitchens and each boy builds himself a house, in which he will live through adolescence 882

(1) Childs, op.cit., p.110.
(2) Based on Childs, op.cit., pp.58-9 and 111-18.

1: Childl 1-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

863 *ociamoe* defecates on the bed he will be slapped that he may not repeat, but less flagrant breaches do not seem to call for punishment.

868 *Language.* The progress of toddlers in language mastery is rapid. Some mispronunciations are allowed. Some children pronounce correctly more rapidly than do others. Correct use of the language including mastery of the complicated grammatical structure, however, is mastered much earlier than is the case with English-speaking children. One could almost say as does Father Van Wing of the Kongo child: 'À quatre ans il parle mieux sa belle langue Kikongo, qu'un Européen de douze ans ne parle la sienne.'[1] The baby's earliest babblings, as well as his later evident imitations of his elders, are all recognized as his attempts at self-expression which as a matter of course will straighten themselves out in due time.[2] Parents speak to their children in a tone distinctly different from that employed in ordinary adult conversation, but they rarely if ever use the baby's own mispronunciations or 'baby-talk' as do Europeans and Americans. This, and the fact that young children have much more practice than have our children, owing to the constant companionship of their elders, seems to be the secret of their rapid progress. Whether the nature of the language itself has any effect would be an interesting subject for investigation.

867 *Manners* are also taken on quickly during this time. Toddlers are not expected to practise any very wide range of the social niceties, but what they do, they do correctly. They give and receive with both hands. They both give and answer greetings with proper terms of respect. An outsider, however, can rarely observe such behaviour naturally in the young child. He has been so

606 514 *of the American Folk-Lore Society*, vol. XXXV, pp. 129 ff.) The terms used are as follows:

Exact terms	*Euphemisms*
To urinate, *oku ofidi* (urine, *ovidi*)	*oku tolomilika*, lit. 'to stand to something'.
	oku litapela, lit. 'to water oneself' (said of a child when it wets itself or its bed).
To defecate, *oku nia* (feces, *ovika*)	*oku ende kuseuge*, lit. 'to go to the bush'.
	oku ende kufuka, lit. 'to go to the country'.

The verb *oku nia* is used as a strong or profane expletive or interjectory phrase, especially in the first person with *etuli* (to-day), as *Etuli ndo nia*. The verb is commonly left off.

Etudes Bakongo, p. 162.

Cf. the proverb: *Wa seme, ua imba: ua tembuka, ua papia*, 'He mispronounces, he sings: he babbles, he speaks.'

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

thoroughly drilled in fear of the stranger that he can rarely act naturally in the presence of one. 867

Physical development. From the time that the child is weaned his physical development proceeds more slowly on the whole than is the case with the children of European peoples. This slow development continues to be noticeable through childhood and adolescence. In early childhood there also seems to take place an increase in the rate of mortality. These facts may be due, at least in part, to specific deficiencies of diet. As has been noted, the customary diet of the Ovimbundu is lacking in fats, in calcium, and in certain vitamins, elements which are very necessary for the growing child, and which, before weaning, the mother's milk had supplied. The difference in physical well-being as between babies and children after weaning is marked among the Ovimbundu. 145

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

869 children, even though they may not have seen them themselves. Sometimes at night when it is desired to send a child saying, Go and fetch such-and-such a thing (*ongandi*), then he will begin to tremble, for since it is as black as sin . . . he thinks to himself saying, Everything is full of ghosts, maybe they'll catch me if I go outside. . . . The male parent does not like to teach the children such great fear of ghosts, and he may say, He has great fear of ghosts, and that is a sorcerer which also kills people. There, there, my child, go and get what they've sent you for; fear is not good, go on, my child.'

There is a good deal of realism in ascribing most of the teaching of fear to the 'side of the basket', but it should be remembered, however, that the narrative was composed by men. Fear is also instilled through folk-tales telling of punishments inflicted by the spirits and by various mythical monsters. The fact of their being told at night also adds to their effectiveness.

867 2. *Social Usage.* 'Children are generally ignorant until they have been taught by their relatives with whom they live. First the parents, or an elder sibling, may ask the child saying, Who is this? He answers, Mother (*Mai*) or Father (*Tate*) (as the case may be). If the child is the first-born, his cross-cousins (*apalume*) may try him out, saying, Revile your Mother, and (if) he reviles her, they will remember that he has no fear of his mother or his father and they will say, *Avoyo*,[1] the child has no sense (*olondunge*) yet.

'When the child has grown a little so that he appears as one who should distinguish those who are worthy of respect, they try him again, saying, Revile[2] your elder sibling (*haveve*), and he reviles him; Revile your mother (*nyŏkŏ*), and he does, Revile your father (*so*), but he refuses. Then they recognize that the child now has sense (*olondunge*) and so they switch him with switches. From that time the child ceases (to revile) and begins to respect all people. He does not again err in thinking that only Father is worthy of respect, but rather all people whoever they may be.[3] Children are verbally

[1] *Avoyo*, an expletive expressive of surprise, disgust, &c., according to context and tone used.

[2] *Tuka*, to revile, to speak evil. The child may say, so-and-so is bad (*buka*), or so-and-so stinks (*lŭkŭ*), or so-and-so is 'crazy' (*tepa*), or he may simply say I revile him (*Ndu tuka*). *Tuka* comes from the same root as *tukula*, to call by name.

[3] i.e. those older than the child. Only those of one's age set or older may merit respect.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

warned against that which is taboo (*eci ci kola*)—anger, theft, and doing evil to people. Should a child hear bad words from children with whom he stays when his parents go to the fields, he will imitate them and if elders hear him they will report. When parents go off to the fields they warn their child saying, When you stay here in the village, do not wound your playmate or put out his eye, lest it bring trouble (*ovimbu*, lit. 'fines') on your family. Or again, As to stealing eggs or snatching from the pot cooking on the fire, don't do it. Should your playmate say, Let's go and steal such-and-such a thing, you run away; and don't greet a person you don't know lest you may find trouble (*ovimbu*). Then the child will remain with that fear.

'From his infancy a child is bashful about coming in where elders are, but a little later he likes to be among them to hear what they are saying and to become accustomed to the points of their talk. In order to catch them (the points), he is quiet. He notices how they greet people, whether in the morning or during the day, or again how they greet guests coming from afar; for there are great differences between the various greetings. Even a small child may be taught to greet people until he is accustomed to it and remembers that people are to be greeted. But if a child grows up without learning to greet people (i.e. properly), they will say of him, His parents taught him badly, the child is a fool for when he meets people he does not greet them, not even guests. His parents will hear it said that their child has not been taught, that he is an indecent fellow, and that even among those who make shame, he does even that which ties up with shame. Among people he speaks standing up instead of bowing over or kneeling and snapping his fingers (i.e. for permission to speak).

'His parents must teach him to direct his glance properly that his eyes remain properly in his head.[1] Likewise his mouth, if while he is speaking he should twist it to one side, then if his parents or his grandmother should see it, they will warn him saying, Your mouth, you must not twist it to the side while you speak, lest people should think, He ridicules (us). The child is taught that while speaking with a person he must neither eat, nor

[1] i.e. he must not look his interlocutor in the eye. It is proper to remain with downcast look or to look away at something else. Europeans not understanding this demeanour take it to indicate inattention. One of our pupils failed in his official school examination for this reason, in January 1938.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

867 *spit, nor toy with anything in his hand.* Should his knees knock together, *puahi puahi*,[1] when he runs, they will warn him (against it), saying, Lest when you are grown you may retain the habit and may not be able to walk properly as everyone walks. When a visitor comes into the hut to visit with his parents, while they talk, the well-taught child does not interrupt but is strictly silent, for it is taboo. Otherwise, it would be said, Their child has been taught as by a widow,[2] interrupting when people converse. But if he is spoken to, he must reply with care and with respect to the person speaking, saying, Yes sir (*nã oco*); Yes, thank you (*ã kuku*, lit. yes, great-grandfather!); Yes indeed, thank you (*oco mutiã a kuku*); Sir Lido (*nã Hosi*); Ah, Sir Lord (*Nã a Ñalã*); Ah, Master of the Paws (*nã a Cime-cakasa*).[3]

'Should the elders send him (somewhere), he will obey quickly. He will also imitate the elders in everything. Then they may say of him, This boy now begins to have the habits of adults. They may begin to liken him to someone who died a long time ago. Those who have known his family may say, This child completes so-and-so (*Ngandi*), surely he is likely to be the inheritor of so-and-so (*Kapiñalã ka Ngandi*), perhaps it is his great-grandfather.[4]

'These then are the habits which belong to being grown-up and should a person omit them, people's words will have no meaning for him, and he will have lost his chance.'

From the foregoing it will be seen that a child of about eight is supposed to know his social status and all the etiquette which pertains to it. Where the *onjango* (men's club) still functions as an institution, there the boys learn much of the Umbundu way of life, for there they eat daily in company with all the men and boys of the village. Children are supposed to learn 'table-manners' by watching and imitating their elders. In the *onjango* the hierarchy of age is observed, honoured guests and old men being served first, and so on down the line. Guests are provided with individual (574) servings, but it is hardly proper for one to finish up everything. Any one of the boys will count it a privilege to do that for him. The greater the guest, the greater the honour to finish his plate. A guest of special category, as, for example, the king, who is unable

[1] *Puahi, puahi*, imitation of the sound made by knees knocking together.

[2] It is proverbial that a widow (alone) is unable to bring up her child. Cf. the proverb: *Ocimbundu ka ci longi omõlã.* 'A widow does not educate a child.'

[3] The last three are addressed only to a king or a chief; the others to any older person of either sex.

[4] The reference is to reincarnation.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

to eat in public, will be served by himself in the *etambo* (spirit-hut). 867
With the decline of the *onjango* as an institution, there has been a great decline in the teaching of etiquette and social usage. As might be expected, this has affected boys more directly than girls. Girls and young women of the present generation and of the generation now coming on are, on the whole, more given to customary usage and forms of civility than are boys and young men. It is probable that contacts with Europeans, which have been going on for more than 150 years, have produced a number of [177] individuals and families who have paid less heed to correct usage and have neglected to teach children properly, but never has there been the wholesale disregard which is now encountered. If the analogy of the South African Bantu peoples is any criterion, a reaction back to things Umbundu may soon be expected. Some observers feel that it is already under way.

Little direct sex teaching is attempted, but the very fact of the 864
sex division of society is a considerable factor.

'A mother will teach her daughter saying, A girl does not play with boys, for boys are sharp ones.[1] Don't play with them. This advice is because of sex, although the child may not understand it at the time. But when the boys call her, she will remember the advice of her mother and may quickly reply, saying, My mother says, Don't play with boys: they'll hurt you. Thus she has taken to heart what her mother has told her and may go ahead in the same way. But as she grows up and separates from her parents,[2] then she may separate herself from their teaching.' Young children acquire incidentally a good deal of knowledge about sex both from other children and from adults. Although adults observe considerable reticence in speaking of sexual matters in the presence of children, living as they do with their parents in one-room homes, it is inevitable that sexual intercourse should sometimes be observed by children.[3] Although euphemisms of speech are employed in the presence of children, all the true terms are known by them. Hetero-sexual play is not in vogue.

[1] *Tsuilili*, lit. sharpened stakes such as those used at the bottom of a pit-fall to trap game.

[2] i.e. at adolescence, when she leaves her mother to stay with other girls of her age.

[3] Cf. Father Van Wing on the Congo child: 'A six ans . . . il en emporte une connaissance de la vie qui ferait rougir de bons jeunes gens d'Europe' (op. cit., p. 262).

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

291 The practice and teaching of modesty seem to have been chang-
554 ing considerably for a long time. The influence of Europeans has doubtless had its effect, but more fundamental, it seems, has been the effect of increasingly generalized use of clothing, a process which began perhaps 200 years ago, but is yet far from complete. The time when boy or girl may begin to wear clothing is determined less by age than by the economic status of his family. There seems to be no shame (on the part of the child) connected with late wearing of clothes, but once a child has begun to wear a cloth, he or she is taught that it is shameful to take it off in the presence of those who are older. That this attitude is not of recent origin is attested by its appearance in a biographical narrative which goes back sixty years or more.[1] A large proportion of the women have only enough cloth for workaday wear for a short skirt, so that they leave the torso bare, but once one becomes accustomed to covering the torso always, she would be ashamed not to. This feeling belongs more to the field of economic status than to that of modesty. This shows up clearly in the strong objection to being ragged (*epêlê*), which has nothing to do with modesty but rather with economic status. The narrative concludes the teaching of social usage with this observation: 'From the time that children first enter into the school of understanding (*olondunge*), parents recognize that it is proper to respect them, rather than to revile them or tell them that which is evil.'

868 3. *Training in skills.* Before the age of eight or nine, children acquire few definite skills. Many of their games, however, are in imitation of adult activities, and adults recognize their preparatory nature and value. The little girl in caring for her younger sibling acquires certain skills, but with little or no definite adult guidance. Little boys begin early to make and set traps and snares under the tuition of an elder sibling or cousin. The first rat or bird caught belongs to the tutor. Games of many sorts are played: games with sides, round games, games with an 'It', imaginative games, and competitive games; games demanding skill, especially with dances of some intricacy. Games in imitation of animals are favourites, including 'birdcalls', in which very ingenious words are set to the bird songs.

604 4. The Ovimbundu have a custom somewhat comparable to
867 what Vedder calls '*child insurance*' among the Herero,[2] i.e., the

[1] From a manuscript by Daniel Kalei of Ballundu.
[2] In Hahn *et al.*, op. cit., p. 177.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

sending of children to stay with relatives or friends. The Ovimbundu consider it definitely an educational device. From the age of six or seven years children are sent singly or in pairs to spend as much as one or two years in the home of the mother's brother. If conditions are favourable they may also be sent to stay with the father's sister or brother, and girls (other than the first-born) may be sent to the mother's mother. Formerly, prominent families arranged for their sons to stay in the king's capital. These periods spent away from home may continue well into adolescence. Not only relatives but also friends, blood-brothers, and *vakuacisoko* (members of a certain communal order)[1] exchange children for certain periods in this way. This custom is by no means dead. It is now being carried on even within the Christian community. Its educational purpose is obvious.

Later Childhood

(*From about nine years until puberty*)

There is no definite time which marks the transition from early to later childhood, but there are marked differences between the two periods. The chief criterion is one of physical development for as soon as the child is physically able, he will begin to assume a definite role in the work of the adult community. This rarely comes before nine years of age and may be somewhat delayed. Soon after a child gets the permanent teeth, a notch in the form of an inverted V (∧) is chipped between the two upper front incisors.[2] This is a sort of national mark which many people omit to give their children at present. The line of observance is not sharply drawn as between Christians and non-Christians, as with the Herero.[3]

Formerly, the beginning of the period was well marked for the boy by his first trip with a trading caravan. Most of the present older generation have had this experience and nearly every man of the present middle-aged generation as well. Nowadays the boy of this age may begin to work in the fields with his father, he may begin to learn a trade, or he may be sent to school. Few Ovimbundu put their children in school before this age, and they evidently do not believe that younger children would profit by the instruction

[1] See *infra*, p. 114 f.
[2] See Hambly, op. cit., Plates XLIX and LIV.
[3] Vedder in Hahn *et al.*, op. cit., p. 177 f.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

giving the baby the respectful terms of 'my wife' or 'my husband';[1] also in the comment of the narrator that 'parents recognize that it is proper to respect them (children)'[2] and in parents' reluctance to punish. It seems that this respectful treatment of children stems from belief in reincarnation, whereby a child is potentially an ancestor to be respected, deferred to, and even worshipped.

It is doubtful whether at present many children could be found who have really gone through the ceremonial for becoming media for guardian spirits of the family (*olosande*). The drift away from those observances has become a flood. Nevertheless respectful treatment of children remains, perhaps even undiminished, for it still has the force of customary behaviour if not the supernatural sanction. Indulgence on the part of the parents rarely if ever goes to the length of pampering. Belief that the child's character ultimately, or to a large extent, depends upon spiritual forces may lead parents to adopt a sort of fatalism, but that is hardly more serious than the effects of belief in the influence of heredity popularly held in the West. The Ovimbundu do not believe, as do the Zulus, for example, that a child is tainted at birth, needing radical treatment against the subsequent appearance of the taint.[3] With the Ovimbundu the development of personality is a process which *may* involve spiritual forces, but at all events requires careful human attention.

Education and Society

What then are the means by which the Ovimbundu develop the personalities of their children or mould them to the social norm? Their success indicates that they along with other 'so-called backward races have proved to be educationists . . . of no mean order'.[4] What, then, are their methods?

The educational process is the whole process of life and culture. School is society and society is school; there is no division between adult and child life. Education and life are one. This has been recognized as true for many African and other primitive societies.[5]

[1] *Supra*, p. 89.
[2] *Supra*, p. 104.
[3] See Krige, op. cit., p. 67.
[4] W. D. Hambly, *Origins of Education among Primitive Peoples* (London: Macmillan, 1926), p. 401.
[5] See the interesting analysis of M. Fortes, *Social and Psychological Aspects of Education in Taleland*, p. 8 f. (Supplement to *Africa*, Oct. 1938); Margaret

1: Childs M-S (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

861 This unity of 'the social sphere of adult and child' is a striking
867 feature of the Umbundu educational process. A child learns by actual participation in adult activities. He participates as soon as he is able and in so far as he is able in all phases of adult life. A child begins early to assume responsibility both for himself and for as much regular 'adult activity' as his knowledge and ability may allow him to take on. This being the case, it is to be expected that all factors—physiological, psychological, social, and cultural—are so closely interrelated in the process of Umbundu education that their unity is almost organic.

Given this unitary social sphere, it is easy to understand that children always want to grow up. They are anxious to undertake full responsibility and full participation as early as they may. It has been pointed out that adults do not, or are expected not to, force the pace: they must not set tasks beyond the ability of the children in the actual stage of their development.[1] Normal development and normal behaviour are expected of children as a matter of course.[2] The possibility of aberrant behaviour[3] does not seem regularly to enter parents' minds, much less their utterances, as is too often the case with us. Adult expectation of normal develop-
[828] ment in children is perhaps best seen in the Umbundu concept of sense or intelligence (*olondunge*), something which every normal person is expected to have in some measure from the time of weaning. It is a relative term when applied to children and the young.[4] Some adults have it in greater measure than others. But every *person* will have it according to the proverb:

[538] *Omuku lovonya, omunu lolondunge.*
A rat with fur, a person with sense.

As every rat has fur, every person has sense.

861 Learning, as he does, in the real social and cultural situation
153 of Umbundu life, the child develops genetically the behaviour

Mead, *Coming of Age in Samoa* (New York: Morrow, 1928). Some writers have claimed this to be true of all the simpler cultures, e.g. Dewey, op. cit., p. 8 f., but cf. Margaret Mead, *Growing up in New Guinea* (New York: Morrow, 1930). Many of the African initiation rites seem to have been introduced from the outside and hence involve a distinct dichotomy, *vide* Stayt, op. cit.

[1] See *supra*, p. 110.

[2] See Fortes' discussion of a similar attitude among the Tallensi, op. cit., pp. 25–8.

[3] For the fatalistic attitude taken on failure to conform, see *supra*, p. 106.

[4] See *supra*, p. 100.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

pattern 'singled out in the institutions of his culture'.[1] I agree with 861
Fortes on the Tallensi that 'The total pattern is not built up brick 153
by brick like a house, but evolves'.[2] I am not convinced, however, [114]
of the necessity for postulating 'embryonic forms' or *schemas* of the total patterns supposed to be present in the child from the beginning.[3] Whether the *schemas* are supposed to be a part of the child's innate equipment, Fortes does not make clear, but I see no necessity for any such hypothesis. The method by which and the situation in which the Ocimbundu child learns, are ample explanation for the early and thorough development of the pattern of his culture.

Neither is it necessary to postulate either 'faculties' or 'instinctive drives' to explain Umbundu education.[4] Rather this study takes a view of 'human nature . . . as consisting essentially of specific situations'.[5] Instances in support of this view could be cited from the descriptive part of this chapter but that would be outside the scope of this study. The most important fact with regard to Umbundu education is its identification with life: the absence of cleavage as between 'school' and society, as between the social sphere of the child and the adult. The most important educational method in use is actual participation in the social and cultural or 'real life' situation. The educational 'content' is the whole Umbundu culture, consisting of attitudes (psychological and social), social usages, skills, observances, and traditional 'literature'. By far the most important are the social attitudes and usages. I turn therefore to the problems of

Social Adjustment

The education of the Ocimbundu child in the traditional social 867
setting is far more social than is the case with us. The child learns

[1] Ruth Benedict, *Patterns of Culture* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1934), p. 254.

[2] M. Fortes, op. cit., p. 42.

[3] Ibid., pp. 42 ff. Fortes attributes the concept of *schemas* to F. C. Bartlett (*Remembering*).

[4] In his discussion of education among the Tallensi, quoted above, Fortes does not specifically mention either of these hypotheses and he rightly remarks that some writers have 'attributed an almost mystical significance to imitation' as the principal method by which a child learns. He then proceeds, however, to classify the learning processes under *Mimesis*, *Identification*, *Co-operation*, and *Play*. Except for the first, these activities are of much importance in Umbundu education.

[5] Hugh Hartshorne, *Character in Human Relations*, p. 195 (New York: Scribner's, 1932); see also Allport, op. cit., p. 81.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

867 the correct adjustments early, naturally grows into a comparatively well-adjusted life, and so avoids the major conflicts to a much greater degree than is the case in our society. A very large proportion of those in conflict in present-day Umbundu society are de-
154 tribalized or partially de-tribalized individuals, especially those who as children were brought up outside or largely outside the kinship groups. The large proportion of those brought up on the mission stations who are out of adjustment, and often in overt conflict, has been noticed by many observers. The biographies and autobiographies which I have collected witness clearly to the same fact, that most of the ill-adjusted individuals and those in overt conflict were products of an extra-tribal, de-tribalized, or non-traditional situation; while practically all of the well-adjusted persons were educated within the kinship system.

154 The three major conflicts which have been recognized in our
865 society, that is, 'struggle', sex, and 'inferiority',[1] are all present in some form among the Ovimbundu. The adjustments by which they resolve these conflicts are distinctive.

Adjustments in anger by which the 'struggle conflict' is resolved are interesting and important educationally. The child is taught when quite young that the expression of anger is taboo.[2] Tantrums are rare among Ovimbundu children. Anger and ill-will are named by thoughtful Ovimbundu as the chief root-cause of sorcery. The more thoughtful ones also recognize these as an important cause of accusations of sorcery. Expression of anger is traditionally much feared. It is not desired in the character of the king.[3] Nowadays
[177] there are more who give free vent to expressions of anger, but they are for the most part either individuals who imitate Europeans and who seek to discard Umbundu cultural habits and values; or they are those who are considered sorcerers, either by themselves or others. An Ocimbundu who as a child has learned traditional adjustments in anger will rarely allow his anger to break through the resistance and become 'extroverted' except in recognized outlets. These outlets are somewhat analogous to our own rationalizations of anger.[4]

154 The chief 'introverted' reaction of anger which I have noted
578

[1] The psychological analysis follows Allport, op. cit., chap. xiv.

[2] See *supra*, p. 101.

[3] See *supra*, p. 21.

[4] Cf. Allport, op. cit., p. 344. The Ovimbundu have not thought up such a high-sounding term as 'moral indignation' as a euphemism for anger.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

[p.141]

CHAPTER X

PARTICULAR FIELDS OF EDUCATION

Method and Content

'THE belief that all genuine education comes about through experience does not mean that all experiences are genuinely or equally educative. Experience and education cannot be directly equated to each other. For some experiences are mis-educative.'[1] In the book quoted, Dewey develops the thesis that educative experience is that which promotes further significant experiences, i.e. growth toward maturity. The alternatives now confronting the school 'if it is not to drift aimlessly', are either a 'return to the intellectual methods and ideals that arose centuries before scientific method was developed', or 'systematic utilization of the scientific method as the pattern and ideal of . . . the potentialities inherent in experience'.[2]

The scientific organization of an experiential curriculum for Umbundu education is an inescapable necessity. In this study it is only possible to touch upon a few of the most urgent problems and point out the basis for organization.

Social behaviour has the central place in Umbundu education, a fact which is said to be true of African education in general, with 'the particular occasion . . . the medium of the lesson'.[3] The undoubtedly greater effectiveness of that traditional training over the accomplishments of formal western schooling in manners, morals, or 'civics' should lead us to investigate the possibility of making use of the traditional method. Social behaviour can only be effectively taught in real-life situations. For the Ocimbundu child the only real world is the world of his own family and village. His manners and morals must first be those of his own family and village. Without that sure foundation, he can never build a larger structure. Sound technique for training in social behaviour can only be attained when the school has a vital connexion with the family, the village, and the living social structure of the people. When the Church and its schools have established their work within that structure, when these schools are entrusted to African

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[1] John Dewey, *Experience and Education*, p. 13.
[2] Ibid., p. 108.
[3] J. W. C. Dougall, op. cit., *Africa*, 1938, p. 321.

862 "The practice of leaving the *ocisembe* in the village by day makes his elder sibling[1] responsible for much of his education....She herself may not be more than six or seven years old and consequently cannot be expected to 'educate' her charge very thoroughly. She interests herself in his walking and talking and he will initate her in many things."[2]

863 General instruction in cleanliness begins at this age, although sphincter control may have begun much earlier, since the mother feels every movement made by the baby on her back.

145 After weaning the physical development of the child proceeds more slowly than that of European peoples, and Childs believes that this may be due to deficiencies in diet.[3]

CHILDHOOD AND EDUCATION

857 From the time a child is able to walk until he is about nine years old he continues seeing the same people as before, but he becomes less de-
861 pendent upon the elder sister or cousin who helped him, and begins his life-long association with his age-mates. The sex-division of society starts for him at this stage: from about eight years boys begin to eat in the *onjango* with their fathers, girls continuing in the kitchen with their mothers. After about eight years the father becomes largely responsible for the education of boys, the mother for that of girls. During this period the child's education may be summarised under three heads:

869 (a) *Psychological*, chiefly fear of real or imaginary dangers. This is imparted by mother, elder siblings, and perhaps by a grandmother; there is a tendency for the teaching of fear to be done by women.[4]

867 (b) *Social*, chiefly usages of etiquette and acquaintance with the kinship structure and its requirements. A child of about eight is supposed to know his social status and all the etiquette that pertains to it. In the *onjango* the hierarchy of age is observed, honoured guests and old men being served first, and so on all down the line. With the decline of the *onjango*, there has been a great decline in the teaching of etiquette and social usage, and this naturally affects boys rather than girls.

864 Little direct sex teaching is attempted, and adults are reticent in speaking of sexual matters in the presence of children. But since children live with their parents in one-roomed houses, it is inevitable that children should sometimes observe intercourse.

868 (c) *Training in skills*: Children are taught few definite skills before the age of eight or nine, but many of their games are in imitation of adult activities.

604 From the age of six or seven years children are usually sent to spend one or two years with the mother's brother. They may also be sent to the
857 father's sister or brother for a period, and, in the case of girls, to the mother's mother. Formerly prominent families sent their children for a

(1) Either a brother or sister may act as nurse.
(2) Childs, op.cit., p.95. (3) Ibid., p.97.
(4) Childs actually writes " 'the side of the basket' " (p.100), but seems to be referring simply to female relatives.

Men are exclusively the makers of 462

musical instruments, and males are the musicians. Men are the only persons engaged in warfare and administration, and the *onjango* or council house is used exclusively by males. Men follow the occupation of medicine-man, in which there is considerable specialization. Female practitioners deal with pregnancy and women's ailments. In addition to the tasks for women mentioned above, the following are staple occupations: collecting firewood, drawing water, caring for infants, making pottery, weaving baskets, dancing, and singing. Young girls share these activities with older women. [534] [756]

The foregoing categories explain division on the grounds of sex. Degrees of specialization are not so easy to formulate, but in general a man follows some one occupation, for example wood-carving. Then within this occupation there is specialization in the making of drums, domestic utensils, or figurines. 463

Almost any woman could make pottery or baskets, but the difference in skill leads naturally to concentration in the hands of expert potters and basket-weavers respectively. These sell their wares to those who either do not make such articles or are inept at the process. [432]

STANDARDS OF CONDUCT, MANNERS, AND SALUTATIONS

The parents of a child, also his maternal uncle, assume responsibility for training in the precepts and standards given here. The maternal uncle, who is the mother's oldest brother, is particularly interested because he has to pay fines should his sister's children commit thefts. The evidence indicates that the home and restricted family have formative influences over the conduct of children. 861 867

Children are beaten if they tell lies, answer old people rudely, or steal food. Ngonga says that his "stealing hand" was once placed in the hot leaves of the cooking pot. If a child steals an egg which is cooking, the hot egg is held between the culprit's hands.

One cannot fail to notice the quiet and unobtrusive way in which children sit in the presence of their elders both in the home and in the council house. Children do not speak when their elders are in conversation, unless addressed. [858]

A child, likewise an adult, receives a gift with both hands. The implied idea is that reception with one hand is a depreciation of the gift. If a child holds out one hand, the hand is slapped. When receiving, an Ocimbundu says "*kuku*," literally grandfather or elder. Colloquially the word is used to mean greeting, "I thank you," or "I beg your pardon." [576]

534 Another musical bow named *ekolowa* is of simple construction, consisting of a strip of cane from 54 to 70 cm long and 2 cm wide. At each end of the cane is a projection. A string, when tightly stretched between these projections, pulls the cane into the form of a bow. The performer, placing one end of the bow in his mouth, plucks the string with his thumb and forefinger (Plate XXII, Fig. 7).

Two rubbing instruments are used by the Ovimbundu. *Ogolanda* is a large gourd with a slit in the top along which there is a board cut into sixteen notches. The rubbing of a short stick along these notches produces a sound which is greatly amplified by the gourd resonator. The second instrument of this type is in the form of a wooden bow having its thickest part notched for rubbing with a stick (Plate XXII, Figs. 3, 8).

533 Only specialists are skilled in composing songs, and both men and women are composers. The younger people sometimes go to the old people to learn songs which were popular a generation ago. There are no professional itinerant story-tellers.

There is a chant for funerals which has been quoted in the appropriate section, but no special wedding songs are used. The Ovimbundu have satirical songs humorously describing individual [626] foibles and peculiarities, and as usual in Negro communities a satirical song is feared by thieves, adulterers, or other offenders.

[726] In former days when men were on the warpath they sang, *Okaimbo ketu katito eteke tu lisanumbula tu tandako.* ("Our village is little today, we attack, we extend.") Another war song is *Ocisonde ci likoka ove o kasi vonjila tumdamo.* ("Red ant that creeps along, you who are in the way, get out.")

[484] When men on the march came to a camping ground occupied by another caravan, they sang as a challenge, *Cinene nye? Cinene onjamba kakuli okachama kavela ukuavo.* ("What is the largest? There is no animal largest. The largest is the elephant.")

During hauling and carrying, men sing, *Yende, yende chale, ocimboto lomala vaco.* ("Let it go, let it go, the crab, the frog, with its children.")

482 Lifting loads is always accompanied by noises which suggest that someone is injured. Part of the men make deep grunts to which their companions answer with prolonged groans.

INITIATION

867 Evidence bearing on initiatory rites in Angola shows that the
881 ceremonies are arranged as a process of incorporation into the

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

tribes, for everywhere these rites aim at securing ideas of unity, coop- 867
eration, conformity to tribal law, and admission to adult tribal life. 881

The methods used to achieve these aims are seclusion, circumcision, physical suffering, direct tuition, dancing, hunting, a change of name, and finally a ceremonial return to the tribe with adult status and the right to marry.

The following notes give details of ceremonies witnessed at 114
three centers; namely, Katoko, Ngalangi, and Cangamba. For 171
comparison of these rites with others performed in eastern Angola 881
reference should be made to the books of A. Schachtzabel, and to the papers of H. Baumann (III), and F. and W. Jaspert, whose observations were made independently of each other and of my own investigation.

The dances of the novices at Katoko, where there is a mixed 881
population of Ovimbundu, Vangangella, and Vachokue tribes, are part of the final ceremonies following circumcision and seclusion. The social group formed by this collective circumcision, seclusion, and dancing, is called *ovinganji*, which is the name of the initiatory rites themselves. A boy who has been initiated is not allowed to become friendly with one who has not suffered the ceremony, and all boys who were circumcised at the same time preserve a sense of unity by dancing in a company and moving about together for twelve weeks after their return to the village from which they came.

Circumcision, which is prohibited by the Portuguese govern- 881
ment, is still practised secretly in some regions. When circumcision 304
is carried out by primitive methods serious infection may result from the lack of clean instruments, for the knife is, of course, unsterilized.

After the operation the patients are subjected to harsh treatment during the period of cure that follows. The circumcised are secluded in a wooded area. Food provided by the parents is placed on the bank of a river near which the initiation camp is built, and after the parents have gone away the boys bring their rations from the river to the camp. Before eating, the boys are obliged to give profuse thanks to the men who are acting as tutors. In some regions there is no food ration for the boys, and the rule is that each boy must subsist on what he is able to catch and collect with his hands.

Each boy has a male guardian who takes care of him after the operation. Those who have been operated upon are not permitted to wear clothes, nor are they allowed to warm themselves until quite healed. Any infraction of the rules results in a severe whipping.

881 171 304 [114] short fiber skirts worn within this enclosure by the novices, are in agreement with the observations made at Cangamba. There is also a close resemblance between the independent accounts of H. Baumann and F. and W. Jaspert for the Vachokue, also P. A. Delille and E. de Jonghe for the southwest Congo.

The question of initiation rites, past and present, among people of pure Umbundu culture is important. The matter is more fully dealt with later in discussing cultural contacts and cultural losses, but there are a few points which should not be omitted here.

At Caconda, an Umbundu center of western Angola, Père R. P. Laagel stated that only two years ago he had visited an initiation camp of Ovimbundu boys in the hope of persuading them to return to his mission school at Caconda. My informant stated that the boys were circumcised, beaten, and confined to an enclosure for several weeks. Those who cried out when flogged received a double portion of blows. Poisoning is the fate of a boy who reveals the secrets of the initiation camp to women or uninitiated boys. This is the most direct testimony I have received concerning initiation rites among unmixed Ovimbundu.

881 292 171 From Bailundu and Elende I have obtained slight evidence of initiation rites. At the former place, which, like Elende, is a center of the Ovimbundu tribe, fiber costumes were obtained. The mask from Elende is unlike those used at Cangamba, Katoko, and Ngongo. The fiber suits are, however, no different from costumes used at these places. Initiation ceremonies are not held at Elende today, and beyond Dr. Ennis's statement that circumcision rites have been revived in the past fifteen years of his long residence in the neighborhood of Elende, I have no evidence of ritual.

881 177 The data relating to initiation of boys in Angola suggest loss of the initiatory rites from Umbundu culture, until only a few old masks and costumes, along with attenuated ritual, remain sporadically. On the contrary, in eastern Angola and particularly among the Vachokue, who are farther than the Ovimbundu from coastal influence, initiation ceremonies flourish. At present there is occurring a penetration of initiation rites from the Vachokue area into east-central Angola, which is a region of cultural admixture.

867 The foregoing pages have described certain institutions and social forces which collectively bring individuals into conformity with tribal standards of conduct. The influences at work in this direction may be direct or indirect.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

Among direct educational forces are the home training given by parents and the mutual responsibility of children and their mother's brother, whose reciprocal obligations have been explained. Family life is undeniably an important institution whose power is by no means suppressed by the strength of the village community and tribal organization. 867

Initiation, which may or may not coincide with puberty, is perhaps the most potent direct influence in formation of character and the inculcation of principles tending to tribal solidarity. Formerly warfare and hunting were more important than they are today, consequently initiation rites imposing hardship and emphasizing the importance of concerted action, had a greater social value than they have at present. 867 881

Formal instruction in industries such as iron-working, or professional hunting, indicates one aspect of occupational training. In these instances there are apprenticeship and an initiatory rite. All children are, however, subject to an indirect industrial education through the agency of play, while a few, according to desire and aptitude, become experts in some particular occupation. 874 [868]

At all times the force of suggestion is at work in the home, in the men's council house, and through everyday observation of the conduct of elders. Probably folklore stories also have an indirect educational value, because some of the fables show the desirability of courage, honesty, and foresight, at the same time deprecating cowardice, stupidity, and low cunning. 869

In chapter IX religious beliefs are discussed, and, in connection with these, standards of conduct are outlined. Although the Ovimbundu have a belief in a supreme being and creator (Suku), and although they believe in survival after death, there is no evidence to show that conduct and education are influenced by theological beliefs. Suku, who is vaguely conceived, is far away and uninterested. He issues no commands. Neither is there a belief in punishments and rewards after death. The standards of conduct are based on utilitarian principles which secure harmony and unity. 771 869 [776]

The efficiency of the direct and indirect educational forces of the Ovimbundu is attested by the history of the tribe. The indigenous system of education, supported by favorable environment, consolidated these people so that they became the dominating power in Angola. Moreover, their cohesion has been such that three centuries of European contacts have failed to eliminate all the basic elements of their tribal life. 177

863 *ocisumbe* defecates on the bed he will be slapped that he may not repeat, but less flagrant breaches do not seem to call for punishment.

868 *Language.* The progress of toddlers in language mastery is rapid. Some mispronunciations are allowed. Some children pronounce correctly more rapidly than do others. Correct use of the language including mastery of the complicated grammatical structure, however, is mastered much earlier than is the case with English-speaking children. One could almost say as does Father Van Wing of the Kongo child: 'À quatre ans il parle mieux sa belle langue Kikongo, qu'un Européen de douze ans ne parle la sienne.'[1] The baby's earliest babblings, as well as his later evident imitations of his elders, are all recognized as his attempts at self-expression which as a matter of course will straighten themselves out in due time.[2] Parents speak to their children in a tone distinctly different from that employed in ordinary adult conversation, but they rarely if ever use the baby's own mispronunciations or 'baby-talk' as do Europeans and Americans. This, and the fact that young children have much more practice than have our children, owing to the constant companionship of their elders, seems to be the secret of their rapid progress. Whether the nature of the language itself has any effect would be an interesting subject for investigation.

867 *Manners* are also taken on quickly during this time. Toddlers are not expected to practise any very wide range of the social niceties, but what they do, they do correctly. They give and receive with both hands. They both give and answer greetings with proper terms of respect. An outsider, however, can rarely observe such behaviour naturally in the young child. He has been so

606 514 *of the American Folk-Lore Society*, vol. xxxv, pp. 129 ff.) The terms used are as follows:

Exact terms	*Euphemisms*
To urinate, *oku sūsū* (urine, *ovūsū*)	*oku talamūlūko*, lit. 'to stand to something'.
	oku litapela, lit. 'to water oneself' (said of a child when it wets itself or its bed).
To defecate, *oku nia* (fæces, *eniña*)	*oku enda kusenge*, lit. 'to go to the bush'.
	oku enda kofeka, lit. 'to go to the country'.

The verb *oku nia* is used as a strong or profane expletive or interjectory phrase, especially in the first person with *etaili* (to-day), as *Etaili nda nia*. The verb is euphemonly left off.

Studies Bakongo, p. 262.

Cf. the proverb: *Wa sema, wa imba: wa tumbuka, wa popia*, 'He mispronounces, he sings: he babbles, he speaks.'

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

291 The practice and teaching of modesty seem to have been chang-
554 ing considerably for a long time. The influence of Europeans has doubtless had its effect, but more fundamental, it seems, has been the effect of increasingly generalized use of clothing, a process which began perhaps 200 years ago, but is yet far from complete. The time when boy or girl may begin to wear clothing is determined less by age than by the economic status of his family. There seems to be no shame (on the part of the child) connected with late wearing of clothes, but once a child has begun to wear a cloth, he or she is taught that it is shameful to take it off in the presence of those who are older. That this attitude is not of recent origin is attested by its appearance in a biographical narrative which goes back sixty years or more.[1] A large proportion of the women have only enough cloth for workaday wear for a short skirt, so that they leave the torso bare, but once one becomes accustomed to covering the torso always, she would be ashamed not to. This feeling belongs more to the field of economic status than to that of modesty. This shows up clearly in the strong objection to being ragged (*epēlē*), which has nothing to do with modesty but rather with economic status. The narrative concludes the teaching of social usage with this observation: 'From the time that children first enter into the school of understanding (*olondunge*), parents recognize that it is proper to respect them, rather than to revile them or tell them that which is evil.'

868 3. *Training in skills.* Before the age of eight or nine, children acquire few definite skills. Many of their games, however, are in imitation of adult activities, and adults recognize their preparatory nature and value. The little girl in caring for her younger sibling acquires certain skills, but with little or no definite adult guidance. Little boys begin early to make and set traps and snares under the tuition of an elder sibling or cousin. The first rat or bird caught belongs to the tutor. Games of many sorts are played: games with sides, round games, games with an 'It', imaginative games, and competitive games; games demanding skill, especially with dances of some intricacy. Games in imitation of animals are favourites, including 'birdcalls', in which very ingenious words are set to the bird songs.

604 4. The Ovimbundu have a custom somewhat comparable to
867 what Vedder calls '*child insurance*' among the Herero,[2] i.e., the

[1] From a manuscript by Daniel Kalei of Bailundu.
[2] In Hahn *et al.*, op. cit., p. 177.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

sending of children to stay with relatives or friends. The Ovimbundu consider it definitely an educational device. From the age of six or seven years children are sent singly or in pairs to spend as much as one or two years in the home of the mother's brother. If conditions are favourable they may also be sent to stay with the father's sister or brother, and girls (other than the first-born) may be sent to the mother's mother. Formerly, prominent families arranged for their sons to stay in the king's capital. These periods spent away from home may continue well into adolescence. Not only relatives but also friends, blood-brothers, and *vakuacisoko* (members of a certain communal order)[1] exchange children for certain periods in this way. This custom is by no means dead. It is now being carried on even within the Christian community. Its educational purpose is obvious.

604 867 [608]

Later Childhood

(*From about nine years until puberty*)

There is no definite time which marks the transition from early to later childhood, but there are marked differences between the two periods. The chief criterion is one of physical development for as soon as the child is physically able, he will begin to assume a definite role in the work of the adult community. This rarely comes before nine years of age and may be somewhat delayed. Soon after a child gets the permanent teeth, a notch in the form of an inverted V (Λ) is chipped between the two upper front incisors.[2] This is a sort of national mark which many people omit to give their children at present. The line of observance is not sharply drawn as between Christians and non-Christians, as with the Herero.[3]

858 [304]

Formerly, the beginning of the period was well marked for the boy by his first trip with a trading caravan. Most of the present older generation have had this experience and nearly every man of the present middle-aged generation as well. Nowadays the boy of this age may begin to work in the fields with his father, he may begin to learn a trade, or he may be sent to school. Few Ovimbundu put their children in school before this age, and they evidently do not believe that younger children would profit by the instruction

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[1] See *infra*, p. 114 f.
[2] See Hambly, op. cit., Plates XLIX and LIV.
[3] Vedder in Hahn *et al.*, op. cit., p. 177 f.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

offered.[1] Boys may also help with younger siblings and fetch wood and water especially if there is no girl in the family, but it is my impression that at this age boys find much more time for play than do girls.

The girl of this age has already been performing useful tasks for several years in helping to care for the younger siblings or younger cousins, but the eagerness with which a girl takes up the care of a younger child makes it evident that she considers that activity rather in the nature of play. If there is no baby for whom she is expected to be responsible, she may borrow one from a neighbour. It seems almost more natural for her to carry a baby than to carry a doll (made of an ear of maize). This she will do only if she lacks a baby. Field-work and housework, chiefly the cultivation and preparation of food, are the adult activities which she must learn and which she regards as work.

The Ovimbundu consider that a child's socio-psychological education should be completed during early childhood. It is felt that after this time direct instruction should not be necessary, but reproof may be given should a child omit a usage or commit a fault. Should a child have plainly failed to attain the customary standards, a fatalistic attitude is often assumed as illustrated by this proverb:

Omõlã wa linga Cipupulungunju;
The child has become a worthless thing.
Nda longele, Nda kava.
I have done with educating, I am tired.

Acquiring skills. Later childhood is the time *par excellence* for technical education. That is the time recognized for beginning to learn a profession (*ocipinduko*), and a boy is expected to try that in which either his father or his mother's brother is expert. After that, should he wish to learn some other profession and can find a master, he may apprentice himself. All children, both boys and girls, are expected to learn to cultivate, but that is not counted as a profession as the following clearly shows:

'As to cultivating (*oku lima*), formerly the purpose was only for food, that one may not be hungry, whether during the dry season (*okuenye*), or during the rains (*ondombo*), that a person and his

[1] Considering the type of formal education available, the Ovimbundu are probably right: young children need far more activity than the formal school offers or allows.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

children may have enough food. Therefore while parents have their children with them, they teach them, saying, Let us work that we may have much food, for if a person lacks food he will die of hunger, or perhaps he may steal from another's field and get into trouble. Children must be diligent in working. 868

'But should a parent have a child who does not want to work, the parent may beat that child to teach him sense lest he may be a sluggard (*ocinili*). Parents have a proverb saying, [538]

> *U wa ku vetela*[1] *hepia,*
> He who you beat in the field
> *ka ku vetele,*
> did not you punish
> *wa ku longisa olondunge.*
> he you taught sense.

'Before beginning, parents always encourage their children to work. Cultivation, however, is not counted as a profession (*ocipinduko*). Should a person cultivate a great deal so that from his field he has very much food, then people will take notice and say, So-and-so has enslaved a spirit[2] to the seeds, he has spirits (*ililii*) and they are helping him. That causes great fear, for people fear (those who) have spirits.[3] Thus, even though a person should purpose to teach another how to cultivate in order to have much food, the other will only apparently agree[4] because of his fear. Therefore the work of cultivation is not sought after as a profession by children, for they say, Being a farmer (*ongunja*)[5] is the work of sorcerers (*olonganga*) and not of ordinary people.'[6] 461 241

[1] *Vetela* is the relative mood (or form) of the verb *oku veta*. There is a pun in its use here since it is also used with *epia* in the sense of breaking ground for a new field.

[2] The verb used here—*oku andeka, andekela*—means securing the services of a person's spirit by killing the person (whether by witchcraft or by actual violence). The person is often a child and often of one's own family. In some cases parts of the body are said to have been kept for subsequent ritual use, e.g. bones and flesh dried and ground for 'fertilizer', or the skull for a drinking-cup. It will be seen that this is sorcery. The reflexive form of this verb, *oku liandeka*, means to form a blood-brotherhood, but it is a sorcerer's pact involving the sacrifice of a third person. 754

[3] The expression used means either to have or to have the reputation for having.

[4] He agrees with *ocenyo*, a term commonly translated as 'irony' or 'contempt'.

[5] This is the term which we commonly use for 'farmer'. Its connotation should be understood.

[6] This section is translated from a manuscript by Raul Kavita Evambi of Ciyaka.

556 The attitude toward success in agriculture indicated by the
578 foregoing is held in some measure toward marked success in other
472 professions, but in lesser degree, except perhaps where trading is taken up individually or by two persons in partnership. One of the earliest observers, Pinheiro de Lacerda (*c.* 1790), noted that accusations of witchcraft were most often levelled at the wealthier members of the community.[1] This fear of success has continued down to the present day, but while trading was an open group enterprise in which many individuals acquired wealth, success in that field came to be accepted more quickly than in the more individualistic work of farming. At the present time, commercial activities are carried on largely by individuals alone or in a limited partnership, and the practice, or at least the suspicion, of witchcraft in connexion with them seems to be on the increase. Some may feel that similar attitudes with regard to successful results from cultivation of the soil are now held less strongly than formerly, but
[754] I know of no evidence to support such a feeling. One of the commonest traditional patterns for witchcraft is that of a partnership of a senior and a junior member—of parent and child, or of mother's brother and sister's son. That is one reason why urgent suggestions by an older person concerning choice of a profession by a younger are looked upon with disfavour among the Ovimbundu.

• 868 A child should be taught enough diligence and application in
562 cultivating that he or she may not lack the necessities in later adult life. Every boy will take to trading and bargaining almost as naturally as eating, drinking, breathing, and sleeping. Commerce still retains so much of its former glamour that every boy will take it up if and when opportunity offers. The care of younger children comes even more naturally to the girl, and she must also learn the housekeeper's art. Many folk-tales and songs indicate a reluctance on the part of girls to dedicate themselves with diligence to cultivation. In the days of the rubber trade, when girls could also join caravans for the coast and to the interior as porters, there may have been some real basis for this, but at the present time girls are convinced and enthusiastic cultivators, almost 100 per cent.[2] The

[1] *Annaes Maritimos e Coloniaes*, 5a Ser., p. 489 f.

[2] Women coming to live in the coast towns or in other European settlements where they have no fields or gardens find adjustment to life without agricultural labours very difficult.

1: Childh M-5 (1924-1940) 1940 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

heavy tasks and the close and constant routine of housework, on the other hand, sometimes require more than casual urging by the mother. Biographical evidence agrees with observation on this point, but nevertheless few girls reach puberty without attaining proficiency in the various household tasks. The decline of polygyny has probably hastened the girl's education in the household arts. When there is only one wife in the household, not only must she have more regular help from her daughters, but also it is more likely that the daughters will have to take on full responsibility at those times when the mother is unable for ritual reasons to take part in the preparation of her husband's food.[1] Biographical sources indicate that this tendency was already operating at least fifty or sixty years ago.

Every Ocimbundu assumes that his sustenance will come from cultivation of the soil. The 'professions' which a child may learn are therefore in the nature of side-lines. Although the Ovimbundu are not a true cattle-rearing people, they possess many domestic animals, especially dogs, pigs, sheep, goats, and chickens. Chickens are owned and looked after by both men and women, but the other animals only by the men. Boys may have small stock of their own, and a boy's economic independence most frequently begins with owning a chicken. Herding has been a function of the sister's son and even now there is reluctance on the part of boys to herd for their fathers. Animal husbandry is largely a commercial enterprise, save in the extreme southern tribes of Kalukembe, Ngalangi, &c.

The principal side-line 'professions' (*ovipinduko*) may be listed as follows:

For Girls

Basket-making, which is practised by all to a limited extent, but excelled in by relatively few.

Pottery-making.

Medical-practice and Divination (for conditions, see *infra*).

For Boys

Mat-making, which includes the making of four distinct types of mats each of which has its specialist; the making of trays and large baskets for granaries.

[1] i.e. at the times of her menstrual periods, after the birth of a child, &c.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

have for several years agreed to be the most effective. This is the method whereby babies learn their own language, a method which competent African teachers can easily understand and have adapted with good results.

Physical education and recreation would seem to be a simple matter among a people which spends so large a proportion of its time in out-of-doors occupations and one which, again, has almost universally good posture, and a large proportion of which is of good physique. Comparing the Ovimbundu with their neighbours to the north, the Ovimbundu are greatly superior both in physique and in posture. Umbundu forms of physical education are responsible at least in part. Carrying loads on the head, which is done by all ages and both sexes, has also had undoubted influence. Most important of all is the dance. The dance is very good physical exercise but it is much more than that. It is more than mere recreation. 'The dance is in most primitive societies an important factor in maintaining group solidarity.'[1] This is certainly true of the Ovimbundu. There is nothing which can take its place. It is doubtful whether the solidarity of any group of Ovimbundu can be firmly established or long maintained without the dance. They do adopt various foreign forms of recreation, but the dance meets a deeper need. Whatever new exercises and games may be introduced the physical educator cannot afford to neglect indigenous forms.

Music is of great importance to the Ovimbundu. The Church and mission schools have made much use of this musical ability and bent. The great choirs which give such pleasing renditions of European classical and sacred music would do credit to schools or colleges in any part of the world.[2] Less use has been made of native music but it is still sung, and some teachers have taken real interest in it. Not having described the Umbundu musical forms it is not possible to extend this evaluation. However, it must be noted that European music has been supplied with Umbundu words, and very successfully in some instances. Contrary to the predictions of several authorities, the result, most emphatically, is not 'a kind of musical pidgin'.[3]

[1] Krige, 1936, op. cit., p. 336.

[2] See article by Elizabeth Scattergood Chalmers, 'The Music at the Jubilee', *Missionary Herald*, 1930, pp. 333–8.

[3] See E. M. von Hornbostel, 'African Negro Music', *Africa*, 1928, pp. 30–62. He offers some interesting suggestions on the use of drums. His conclusions on

242 When a field is wearing out, the corn growing shorter and bearing
244 fewer ears to the stalk,[1] the woman makes a final planting of corn, sticking cuttings of manioc between the rows. Most of these cuttings take root and grow. It takes two or three years for the tubers of this plant to mature in an old field, but in some parts of the country where manioc is set in new land it matures within a year. The leaves of the plant are used as a vegetable with corn-meal, and manioc meal is used as a basic substitute when corn is short.

The onaka or river-garden

241 In August a woman plants her onaka, near a stream in the alluvial soil, or in some river bed. Here she plants corn which will be ready for eating during the January period of food shortage, as well as cabbage and other vegetables.

Organisation of labour

[462] Formerly men did the heavier work of clearing new fields, although, as has been noted above, since the introduction of wage labour much of the work is left to the women. Men may also have their own fields, the produce of which is sold to provide ready cash to clothe the family, pay taxes etc. The women's fields are intended to feed the family. Children help their parents in the fields, but also have their own plots. Gardens are made by each household, i.e. by each wife where there are a number of wives. Neighbours often co-operate during the harvesting
[476] period, after which beer is supplied by the owner of the field which has been harvested.[2]

HUNTING[3]

796 Most men and boys hunt, and women and children may help in burning
224 the grass and driving the game during the annual communal fire-hunts.
[463] But the professional hunter or ukongo is a recognised specialist, qualified by specific training and dependent on his knowledge of hunting magic
[568] and ritual for his success. A boy becomes a ukongo by an apprenticeship of about two years to an older hunter. This period culminates in a ceremony of inauguration, which may be attended by all the villagers but at which only the professional hunters dance. Several ukongo provide game, which is cooked for the feast; the dancing commences but the novice remains still and silent until he feels the "spirit of the head"; he then rises and distributes game to the villagers. Blood from the animals killed is sprinkled over his weapons, which have been made by the ukongo who has trained him. From now on his daily life is subject to certain ritual prohibitions: he must not sleep with his wife on the night before going on a hunt, special food and cooking-pots must be used for him, etc.

[50] A professional hunter usually works alone, using bows and arrows,

(1) There is no information concerning the length of the farming-cycle.
(2) Childs, personal communication.
(3) See Beaudy, *Bantu Studies*, 1934, and Ovisbunda, 1934, pp.140-5; Cushman, 1944, pp.113-20.

862 "The practice of leaving the ociasabe in the village by day makes his elder sibling[1] responsible for much of his education....She herself may not be more than six or seven years old and consequently cannot be expected to 'educate' her charge very thoroughly. She interests herself in his walking and talking and he will initate her in many things."[2]

863 General instruction in cleanliness begins at this age, although sphincter control may have begun much earlier, since the mother feels every movement made by the baby on her back.

145 After weaning the physical development of the child proceeds more slowly than that of European peoples, and Childs believes that this may be due to deficiencies in diet.[3]

CHILDHOOD AND EDUCATION

857 From the time a child is able to walk until he is about nine years old he continues seeing the same people as before, but he becomes less de-
861 pendent upon the elder sister or cousin who helped him, and begins his life-long association with his age-mates. The sex-division of society starts for him at this stage: from about eight years boys begin to eat in the *onjango* with their fathers, girls continuing in the kitchen with their mothers. After about eight years the father becomes largely responsible for the education of boys, the mother for that of girls. During this period the child's education may be summarised under three heads:

869 (a) *Psychological*, chiefly fear of real or imaginary dangers. This is imparted by mother, elder siblings, and perhaps by a grandmother; there is a tendency for the teaching of fear to be done by women.[4]

867 (b) *Social*, chiefly usages of etiquette and acquaintance with the kinship structure and its requirements. A child of about eight is supposed to know his social status and all the etiquette that pertains to it. In the *onjango* the hierarchy of age is observed, honoured guests and old men being served first, and so on all down the line. With the decline of the *onjango*, there has been a great decline in the teaching of etiquette and social usage, and this naturally affects boys rather than girls.

864 Little direct sex teaching is attempted, and adults are reticent in speaking of sexual matters in the presence of children. But since children live with their parents in one-roomed houses, it is inevitable that children should sometimes observe intercourse.

868 (c) *Training in skills*: Children are taught few definite skills before the age of eight or nine, but many of their games are in imitation of adult activities.

604 From the age of six or seven years children are usually sent to spend
857 one or two years with the mother's brother. They may also be sent to the father's sister or brother for a period, and, in the case of girls, to the mother's mother. Formerly prominent families sent their children for a

(1) Either a brother or sister may act as nurse.
(2) Childs, op.cit., p.95.
(3) Ibid., p.97.
(4) Childs actually writes " 'the side of the basket' " (p.100), but seems to be referring simply to female relatives.

time to the village of the paramount chief. These periods spent away from home continue into adolescence. Not only relatives, but also friends, blood-brothers and *vakuacisoko* (see below) exchange children in this way. 604 857

Later childhood

No definite time marks the transition from early to later childhood, but there are marked differences between the two stages. As soon as the child is physically able, he begins to assume a definite role in the community. Soon after a child gets his permanent teeth, a notch in the form of an inverted V is chipped between the two upper front incisors. Formerly the beginning of the period was marked for the boy by his first trip with a trading caravan; today a boy of this age may begin to work in the fields with his father, or begin to learn a trade, or be sent to school. A girl starts to learn field-work and housework. 852 858

Professions

A boy is expected to learn the profession or *ocipinduko* in which his father or his mother's brother is expert, and after that, should he wish to learn some other side-line profession, he may apprentice himself. All children, both boys and girls, are expected to learn to cultivate, but that is not counted as a profession. The principal *ovipinduko* (professions) listed by Childs are: for girls, basket-making, pottery-making, medical practice and divination; for boys, mat-making, wood-working, rope-making, thatching, fishing, apiculture, hunting, smithing, and medical practice and divination. The last three, as has been mentioned above, are "sacred" and entered under special conditions. 462 868 [463]

"Later childhood, then, is the period of technical training during which it is expected that a large amount of economic responsibility will be assumed. A child begins to own property even before this, and from the beginning of childhood will be accounted legally responsible for his actions. It is recognised, however, that he should not be set tasks beyond the experience or ability of his age and that the full responsibility of adulthood will come only with marriage."(1) 866 [672]

The coming of European commerce, industry, and government has created new types of employment for boys and men, some of which cause a prolonged absence from the village and a loosening or severing of kinship ties. There are no estimates of the number of persons employed by Europeans, or the average length of their absence from home. 178 466

ADOLESCENCE(2)

Childs found that the onset of puberty was late among the Ovimbundu, coming between fourteen and sixteen years for girls and between fifteen and seventeen years for boys. Soon after puberty young people generally stop sleeping in the parents' house. The girls congregate in kitchens and each boy builds himself a house, in which he will live through adolescence 882

(1) Childs, op.cit., p. 110.
(2) Based on Childs, op.cit., pp. 58-9 and 111-18.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

Among direct educational forces are the home training given by parents and the mutual responsibility of children and their mother's brother, whose reciprocal obligations have been explained. Family life is undeniably an important institution whose power is by no means suppressed by the strength of the village community and tribal organization. 867

Initiation, which may or may not coincide with puberty, is perhaps the most potent direct influence in formation of character and the inculcation of principles tending to tribal solidarity. Formerly warfare and hunting were more important than they are today, consequently initiation rites imposing hardship and emphasizing the importance of concerted action, had a greater social value than they have at present. 867 881

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3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

197 cattle and a few other traits from the Vakuanyama of southern Angola, and there seems to be no doubt that the vocabularies of the Ovimbundu and the Vakuanyama have been influenced by these southern contacts. Yet structure will prove the final arbiter in deciding linguistic relationships, for the Ovimbundu as extensive travelers have widely distributed their vocabulary.

Caution is necessary in making comparisons of Umbundu with surrounding languages; for, although Kuanyama has received careful attention, and the researches of Meinhof have given a reliable background for Ovambo and Herero speech, the language of the Vachokue of eastern Angola and the speech of the Mussurongo of northern Angola, call for a comprehensive work. Moreover, there yet remains the task of providing a standard Umbundu dictionary and grammar, and pending the collation of this linguistic material there are no means of determining the exact syntactical, phonetic, and other relationships of Umbundu.

VOCABULARY

192 Apart from a broad question of the linguistic evidence of culture contacts, there are points of interest connected with the recording of vocabularies in a restricted area. Under the heading "Nature Lore" attention was called to an extensive Umbundu vocabulary connected with those activities which underlie the economic structure. The vocabulary showed that the Ovimbundu are keen observers whose activities have resulted in the formation of a large vocabulary arising from trades and occupations. In nature study many fine distinctions are made; thus, there are words to distinguish not only trees and plants of economic importance, but varieties of snakes and lizards which are of no great economic interest.

[868] In order to test further mental activity and the acquisition of vocabulary, an Ocimbundu girl of about twelve years of age was asked to name some of the objects in my collection. Without hesitation she made the following list. The object was indicated, then the child gave the name. This information was checked by an adult interpreter who found that the child was correct in every instance, although the objects do not specially appeal to the interests of a young girl.

The objects named by this girl are as follows:

Ocimanda. Wooden dish.
Omutopa. Tobacco-pipe made from a horn.
Etenga. Pipe for smoking hemp.
Ocinunga. Brass bracelet.
Ukinda. Switch made from the tail of an ox.
Opatalonga. Leather pouch for belt.
Upi. Pounding stick.
Ombanja. Gourd with a long neck.

5: Hambly E-5 (1929-30)1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

At Caconda I obtained the basket of a medicine-man which contained 759
a human tibia, a hoe for digging in graves, and a round stone for pounding 791
the bone before mixing it with fat and charcoal. Medicine-men still make potions for internal use, and these are usually carried in small horns suspended round the neck, or the paste may be contained in the carapace of a tortoise. In every way the medicine-man is still functioning, and his tasks are fundamental to the social and religious life of the Ovimbundu.

At an early age children specialize in their play which has a bearing 868
on the business of life. Boys make wooden-tipped arrows, play at hunting, and shoot at tubers which are rolled along the ground. Girls take clay from the potters to fabricate their own small cooking pots, and young girls attempt the coiling of basketry.

Men are the musicians, and among these a high degree of specialization 533
is observed. In a large village there are likely to be only a few competent drummers, and only a few men who play the small iron-keyed instrument called ocisanji. Osaka is a ritual game played only by men, and only when a village headman or a king is dying. The ball (ombunje) is made by sewing 535
lizard skin over a hard spherical fruit about six centimeters in diameter. A 524
man continues to dance with this little ball clenched in his outstretched 755
hand, while another dancer hits the muscles of his arm to make him release the ball. This game is thought to give strength to the sick man. There is a transfer of the endurance of the dancers to the invalid.

Preliminary observation in some villages occupied by Ovimbundu is 197
disappointing in its suggestion of Europeanization. The foreign culture is, however, a thin veneer, and further research shows a strong persistence of indigenous custom and belief quite near to centers of Portuguese influence.

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the father's taking children of either sex with him on trips and by their being sent to stay for periods with the mother's family (*olusina*). 861

During this early period the child's education is comprised largely under three heads: (1) psychological, chiefly fear of real and imaginary dangers; (2) social, chiefly usages of etiquette and acquaintance with the kinship structure and its requirements; and (3) practical, or the beginning of skills. The first is imparted by mother, elder siblings, and perhaps by a grandmother. The second is taught both consciously and unconsciously by every older relative with whom the child comes into contact. The third is undertaken by elder siblings or cousins of the same sex. After illustrating the process of each of these three, I shall try to summarize the Umbundu theory of personality and then pass on to the activities of later childhood.

1. *Psychological.* 'Children have no fear of ghosts unless there is someone who has told them of ghosts, or tried to imitate their cries or to make them see one. If after dark a child teases and cries, his mother may say, If you cry like that a ghost (*ocilūlū*) will come and eat you. Since it is dark the child is startled, thinking there are ghosts, and he becomes quiet. Sometimes she tells him, Look out for the oxen, *mu, mu*, or perhaps it will be a leopard. Since the child does not see it, he may disbelieve his mother and think that what she says is untrue. Then again she may name a person, but since the child knows what a person is, but sees none, he will not stop (crying). Often if a child does not go to sleep quickly, his mother may say, Look out, the little old woman will come and pour live coals on your head and you will burn up. Hurry up and go to sleep. Then the child may leave the fireplace in a hurry and fall right into bed trembling. Sometimes a mother may send an elder sibling outside to the threshing-floor, to cry like a hyena, *ī . . . . ī . . . . ī*, while she herself stays in to mock the child, saying, He is crying and coming to eat you up. In the house the child hears the noise and shrieks, Don't come, don't come, I shan't cry any more, I'm going to sleep. It is from such things as these that children's fears come, from long ago until to-day. Children hear these things in their own houses from their parents, from their cross-cousins (*apalume*), from their elder siblings, or from their grandmothers. These same children, however, when they become adults, again begin to emphasize belief in ghosts with their little 869

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

869 children, even though they may not have seen them themselves. Sometimes at night when it is desired to send a child saying, Go and fetch such-and-such a thing (*ongandi*), then he will begin to tremble, for since it is as black as sin . . . he thinks to himself saying, Everything is full of ghosts, maybe they'll catch me if I go outside. . . . The male parent does not like to teach the children such great fear of ghosts, and he may say, He has great fear of ghosts, and that is a sorcerer which also kills people. There, there, my child, go and get what they've sent you for; fear is not good, go on, my child.'

There is a good deal of realism in ascribing most of the teaching of fear to the 'side of the basket', but it should be remembered, however, that the narrative was composed by men. Fear is also instilled through folk-tales telling of punishments inflicted by the spirits and by various mythical monsters. The fact of their being told at night also adds to their effectiveness.

867 2. *Social Usage*. 'Children are generally ignorant until they have been taught by their relatives with whom they live. First the parents, or an elder sibling, may ask the child saying, Who is this? He answers, Mother (*Maĩ*) or Father (*Tate*) (as the case may be). If the child is the first-born, his cross-cousins (*apalume*) may try him out, saying, Revile your Mother, and (if) he reviles her, they will remember that he has no fear of his mother or his father and they will say, *Avoyo*,[1] the child has no sense (*olondunge*) yet.

'When the child has grown a little so that he appears as one who should distinguish those who are worthy of respect, they try him again, saying, Revile[2] your elder sibling (*huvove*), and he reviles him; Revile your mother (*nyõhõ*), and he does, Revile your father (*so*), but he refuses. Then they recognize that the child now has sense (*olondunge*) and so they switch him with switches. From that time the child ceases (to revile) and begins to respect all people. He does not again err in thinking that only Father is worthy of respect, but rather all people whoever they may be.[3] Children are verbally

[1] *Avoyo*, an expletive expressive of surprise, disgust, &c., according to context and tone used.

[2] *Tuka*, to revile, to speak evil. The child may say, so-and-so is bad (*huka*), or so-and-so stinks (*lĩhã*), or so-and-so is 'crazy' (*topa*), or he may simply say I revile him (*Ndu tuka*). *Tuka* comes from the same root as *tukula*, to call by name.

[3] i.e. those older than the child. Only those of one's age set or older may merit respect.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

Among direct educational forces are the home training given by parents and the mutual responsibility of children and their mother's brother, whose reciprocal obligations have been explained. Family life is undeniably an important institution whose power is by no means suppressed by the strength of the village community and tribal organization. 867

Initiation, which may or may not coincide with puberty, is perhaps the most potent direct influence in formation of character and the inculcation of principles tending to tribal solidarity. Formerly warfare and hunting were more important than they are today, consequently initiation rites imposing hardship and emphasizing the importance of concerted action, had a greater social value than they have at present. 867 881

Formal instruction in industries such as iron-working, or professional hunting, indicates one aspect of occupational training. In these instances there are apprenticeship and an initiatory rite. All children are, however, subject to an indirect industrial education through the agency of play, while a few, according to desire and aptitude, become experts in some particular occupation. 874 [868]

At all times the force of suggestion is at work in the home, in the men's council house, and through everyday observation of the conduct of elders. Probably folklore stories also have an indirect educational value, because some of the fables show the desirability of courage, honesty, and foresight, at the same time deprecating cowardice, stupidity, and low cunning. 869

In chapter IX religious beliefs are discussed, and, in connection with these, standards of conduct are outlined. Although the Ovimbundu have a belief in a supreme being and creator (Suku), and although they believe in survival after death, there is no evidence to show that conduct and education are influenced by theological beliefs. Suku, who is vaguely conceived, is far away and uninterested. He issues no commands. Neither is there a belief in punishments and rewards after death. The standards of conduct are based on utilitarian principles which secure harmony and unity. 771 869 [776]

The efficiency of the direct and indirect educational forces of the Ovimbundu is attested by the history of the tribe. The indigenous system of education, supported by favorable environment, consolidated these people so that they became the dominating power in Angola. Moreover, their cohesion has been such that three centuries of European contacts have failed to eliminate all the basic elements of their tribal life. 177

862 "The practice of leaving the *ocisembe* in the village by day makes his elder sibling[1] responsible for much of his education....She herself may not be more than six or seven years old and consequently cannot be expected to 'educate' her charge very thoroughly. She interests herself in his walking and talking and he will initate her in many things."[2]
863 General instruction in cleanliness begins at this age, although sphincter control may have begun much earlier, since the mother feels every movement made by the baby on her back.

145 After weaning the physical development of the child proceeds more slowly than that of European peoples, and Childs believes that this may be due to deficiencies in diet.[3]

CHILDHOOD AND EDUCATION

857 From the time a child is able to walk until he is about nine years old he continues seeing the same people as before, but he becomes less de-
861 pendent upon the elder sister or cousin who helped him, and begins his life-long association with his age-mates. The sex-division of society starts for him at this stage: from about eight years boys begin to eat in the *onjango* with their fathers, girls continuing in the kitchen with their mothers. After about eight years the father becomes largely responsible for the education of boys, the mother for that of girls. During this period the child's education may be summarised under three heads:

● 869 (a) *Psychological*, chiefly fear of real or imaginary dangers. This is imparted by mother, elder siblings, and perhaps by a grandmother; there is a tendency for the teaching of fear to be done by women.[4]

867 (b) *Social*, chiefly usages of etiquette and acquaintance with the kinship structure and its requirements. A child of about eight is supposed to know his social status and all the etiquette that pertains to it. In the *onjango* the hierarchy of age is observed, honoured guests and old men being served first, and so on all down the line. With the decline of the *onjango*, there has been a great decline in the teaching of etiquette and social usage, and this naturally affects boys rather than girls.

864 Little direct sex teaching is attempted, and adults are reticent in speaking of sexual matters in the presence of children. But since children live with their parents in one-roomed houses, it is inevitable that children should sometimes observe intercourse.

868 (c) *Training in skills*: Children are taught few definite skills before the age of eight or nine, but many of their games are in imitation of adult activities.

604 From the age of six or seven years children are usually sent to spend
857 one or two years with the mother's brother. They may also be sent to the father's sister or brother for a period, and, in the case of girls, to the mother's mother. Formerly prominent families sent their children for a

(1) Either a brother or sister may act as nurse.
(2) Childs, op.cit., p.95. (3) Ibid., p.97.
(4) Childs actually writes " 'the side of the basket' " (p.100), but seems to be referring simply to female relatives.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

responsible for the children, especially during their early years, but they are frequently sent 'to the *oluina*', i.e. to the mother's brother for at least a part of their education. Herein has arisen a conflict between the claims of the paternal household and the maternal kinship group. Economic and other forces seem to have favoured the former so that 'During these days in which we stand, things have changed somewhat so that as between children and their parents, they work for their fathers for they say, "A child is strong with his *oluse* and less so with his *oluina*." Nowadays a man teaches a child work and also looks out for his education that he may advance properly. His mother's brothers (*va inanu*) have no longer much power as of old.'[1]

Bearing in mind their bilateral nature and the fact that every Ocimbundu belongs at the same time to his paternal (*oluse*) and to his maternal (*oluina*) groups, the functions of these kinship groups may be summarized as follows:

Oluse	*Oluina*
SOCIAL	
Consists of local residence units; succession of village and tribal offices from father to son, or elder to younger brother.	Extended family organization; office of family head descends from mother's brother to sister's son; children belong.
Marriage allowed between cross-cousins and other relatives of non-parallel descent; couple lives at groom's father's village.	*Marriage preferred* between cross-cousins and other relatives of non-parallel descent; children belong to mother's *oluina*.
EDUCATIONAL	
Responsibility for education of young children, especially in social usage.	Responsibility sometimes assumed in later childhood, especially for technical phases.
ECONOMIC	
Ownership and inheritance of land. (Passed from father to son or elder to younger brother.)	Ownership and inheritance of more largely negotiable and movable property, as e.g. trade goods, cattle, &c. (passed from mother's brother to sister's son).

[1] Raul Kavita Evambi, op. cit.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

000 teachers who have themselves had traditional training and have maintained their own kinship ties, then we can work out with them sound social methods.

Language teaching is of great importance in the field under consideration. The mission schools have produced remarkable results in their teaching of the Portuguese language, results probably unequalled by schools similarly situated and conditioned elsewhere. Regulations prohibiting the vernacular except in religious instruction, and requiring the use of Portuguese in all schools from the start,[1] have created great difficulties. No responsible person in touch with the situation questions the utility of teaching the language of the European colonial power, but the educational soundness of attempting to use, as a medium from the start, a language which is not used in the home is open to serious question. It is obvious that such a policy must seriously curtail the effectiveness of the school. The vernacular is still allowed for 'religious instruction' but beyond this, almost nothing but instruction in the Portuguese language can be accomplished. This policy compartmentalizes the school work to an unfortunate degree and places such emphasis on the mere acquiring of a language that the whole programme is warped. It is even inefficient as regards the teaching of the language itself, for pupils who have first had systematic instruction in their mother tongue are by that fact better equipped to acquire a European language.[2]

871 648 191 600

The French colonial authorities, who first applied language regulations of this sort in Africa, have come to realize the necessity for some modifications in practice. Gouverneur-Général Brévié, of Afrique Occidentale Française, in December 1931 stated:

> . . . In order that this system of education may produce the best results immediately, we must not hesitate to have recourse to the local

[1] Enforced since 1922 under the provisions of Decree 77 of 9 Dec., 1921 (*Boletim Oficial* No. 50, 1921). The text with an English translation may be found in *Treaties, Acts, and Regulations relating to Missionary Freedom* (London: International Missionary Council, 1923). A law of April 1938 lays down still more difficult regulations regarding the teaching of Portuguese and includes certain provisions which frankly discriminate between Protestant and Roman Catholic mission schools.

[2] 'in Achimota (Gold Coast) . . . by means of convincing tests it has been established that a child educated in his mother tongue in one year obtains a knowledge of English which otherwise would take him six years to acquire' (Gouverneur-Général Olivier, *Six Ans de Politique Sociale à Madagascar*, chap. v, quoted by Paul Crouzet in the *Educational Yearbook 1931*, p. 472).

VII. EDUCATION

Industrial Training and Division of Labor

871 Usually there is no formality connected with the industrial and occupational training of Ovimbundu children. The section dealing with play shows that boys and girls learn by spontaneous imitation of their elders.

874 There are, however, exceptions to this general truth. Special rites connected with the training and inauguration of blacksmiths and hunters have been described. The training of medicine-men and women will be dealt with in chapter IX, "Religion."

462 463 In describing economic life in chapter V, division of labor on a sex basis; also specialization in industry because of peculiar tastes and aptitudes, were noted. There is clearly a twofold division in industrial life. In the first place sex determines occupation, and within this primary grouping there is a secondary grouping depending [467] on personal preference and individual ability. I have found no instance of exclusive hereditary right to any occupation or industry.

462 The net result of the Umbundu system of division of labor is indicated by the following summary:

[342] When building houses, men dig the rectangular trench, cut the poles for the framework, lash the crosspieces, cut grass and lay the thatch, then place clay over the wattle walls. Women carry water for mixing the clay and convey the moist clay to the plasterers. [224] Children puddle the clay with their feet. Males are hunters both professional and general. During a communal hunt women and children assist in driving game, which is frightened by the firing of [857] grass. Boys organize games in which they imitate these activities. [226] Men fish with a line and bait, whereas women use baskets and [231] narcotic poison. Men and boys take care of cattle and have charge of dogs. Women and girls give what slight attention is afforded to other domestic animals. Male specialists castrate bulls and goats.

[241] During agricultural operations men clear the ground and burn the bush. Women carry on hoe cultivation without assistance from [482] men. Men are the chief carriers in caravans, but women and children may sometimes be seen carrying loads. They march in line with the men but have smaller burdens. Males are employed in blacksmith's work, wood-carving, making weapons and tools, weaving mats, dressing hides, spinning cotton, and formerly in weaving on an upright loom. Men are exclusively the makers of

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a noose which hangs over the entrance. From Ngalangi I obtained 224
a trap formed by suspending a heavy block of wood inside a box. The animal enters a small circular hole, passes under the heavy block and begins to nibble the grain which is strewn on the bottom of the box. Presently he releases a fine string which brings down the block in such a way that he is pinned underneath. I am informed that this trap is used at Elende, but I have not seen it there.

Some hunters note the feeding and drinking places of their quarry, which is shot from a hiding place in a tree. Young animals may be run down by a hunter in open chase. Screens are not carried in front of a hunter, but he does sometimes dress in the skins of animals. His disguise is completed by wearing a tuft of the animal's hair on his head.

Dogs are used for tiring out young animals in the chase, and also for catching hares. There is a tendency at the present time to improve the breed of native dog by crossing with a large hunting [232]
dog from South Africa. In the Esele country I have seen, high on a granite rock, a small cairn of stones which covered the skull of a famous hunting dog. Dogs are used most commonly when the hunt is communal (Plate XXIII, Fig. 1), but the best hunters work alone without the aid of dogs. In the general hunt women and children may take part in driving the game; often a fire is started in the grass, which is very dry in the months of June and July. A hunter who works alone may excite the curiosity of an animal by blowing through a horn of an antelope. Spider's web covers the wide end of the horn.

I have observed a general hunt in which thirty men and boys participated, each carrying a bow and arrows. The party was accompanied by many dogs. The antelope which had been killed was carried on a pole slung on the shoulders of two men. There was intense excitement as the troop advanced toward their village, shouting and jumping. In another hunt of this kind muzzle-loading guns were carried. The Ovimbundu do not use nets in hunting, neither do they poison animals. Decoy animals are not used, but in the large wooden trap (*ocisonga*) a living goat or pig is placed.

It is necessary to distinguish between hunting as a general pas- [463]
time, in which all males, and even women and children join to a certain extent, and the hunting of animals by a professional hunter. The professional hunter is usually called *ukongo* (less frequently *enyanga*); but there is no name for the non-professional hunter. A 874
boy who wishes to become a professional hunter has to serve for a 224
time with an *ukongo* before he himself receives this title. There is

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

224 874 an initiation feast when the training is ended. At the feast all people of the village may be present but they do not dance; only the professional hunters may do so. The boy who is to be initiated must not speak or move until he "feels the spirit on his head"; then he gives meat to the people. After hunters have captured game for the feast, the blood from these animals is used to smear over the bow, arrows, and spear which have been made for the novice by his tutor. [326] This is analogous to the initiation of the young blacksmith who receives blood-sprinkled tools made by the master blacksmith.

224 788 There is in connection with the life and death of the professional hunter a certain amount of ritual and precaution. The night before setting out to hunt is a time of dancing and renewal of the implements of the chase, which are kept in a house specially prepared for them. A hunter who is on the eve of departure calls in other professional hunters to share the ceremony, which includes the rubbing of the bows and other implements with palm oil. A libation of beer is poured on the bows, spears, and arrows, but no medicine-man is present. Some of the bows are never used, because they are merely the symbols of the personality and prowess of dead hunters whose names they have taken. The food and cooking pots of a hunter must never be associated with those of ordinary household use. If a hunter is following the tracks of an animal he must not point with his finger as this action will drive the animal away. The correct way to point is by use of the feathered end of an arrow. The hunter [324] must not sleep with his wife the night before setting out in quest of game.

224 782 I have frequently seen in front of the hut of a hunter a number of skulls of antelope and other animals mounted on poles arranged in circular formation (Plate XXXII, Fig. 2). These skulls seem to be trophies, which are invariably taken away by the hunter if he finds a new home. There is no reason to doubt the statement that these skulls are an offering to the spirits who give good luck in hunting, because such a belief would be in harmony with the general respect for ancestral ghosts, which are thought to influence the affairs of the living.

764 224 On several occasions, notably near Ganda and in the Cassonge country, I have seen the tombs of hunters. These are large structures built of slabs of granite laid with some symmetry. The rock tomb is invariably placed on the top of a commanding eminence of granite. The skulls of animals which the hunter has killed are piled on the top of the cairn, but I do not know whether these are the trophies

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Any boy who wishes to become a blacksmith may be trained for the work. It is not necessary that his father should have been a blacksmith. When the youth begins his training he must be eighteen years of age and physically robust. His first duties are the beating of hot iron on the anvil; he is also required to collect and soften fragments of iron. He works very hard but is never allowed to finish anything; the master has to complete the work. 326 874

At the end of two years the youth asks the master blacksmith to examine him. What is more important still, the master is asked to make the heavy hammer (*onjundo*), which is used for beating hot iron on the largest anvil (Plate XXXVIII, Fig. 1). There is no doubt as to the sacredness of this hammer, which is a symbol of the completion of apprenticeship. There is also the idea of the master handing on his skill to the pupil by personally making and presenting the tools. I made repeated efforts before being able to purchase one of these hammers; finally it was procurable only at a high price. The value is due to ritualistic associations, the large quantity of iron used in the making, and the labor required to weld the head to the shaft.

On the day of his inception the boy has to purchase four chickens, two male and two female, one pup, and a goat. The master blacksmith makes all the tools for the apprentice, but ritual centers chiefly in the fabrication of the big hammer (*onjundo*). While the master is making this the boy stands on the small anvil which is close to the ground, between the forge and the large anvil under the tree. 326 796

When the hammer (*onjundo*) is made, and while it is still red-hot, the handle is pushed into the belly of the dog. The goat and the four chickens are then killed. All the tools are brought together so that blood from the slaughtered animals may be sprinkled over them. The flesh of these animals is eaten with corn and beans. "The blacksmith calls many people to help him, and they like to eat the food," concluded my interpreter. [782]

During the entire ceremony, also throughout the feast, the boy stands on the anvil. There he remains until the master says, "You may speak and tell us what name you want." Perhaps the boy says, "I am Ndumbu." The people in the crowd clap hands and make a trilling with their fingers in their open mouths. The boy steps from the anvil; he is a blacksmith. My interpreter continued, "He must work hard and people must pay him. He used to work hard, but the master took the money."

There was an ancient belief that a blacksmith owed his skill to the help of the spirit of a person he had killed. Wooden effigies 326 778

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1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

there must be a responsible senior and, hence as a matter of course, 561
the following is accepted:

Ndalu hokuluko la Vava: [538]
Fire is not older than water:

Ciyo wa pindikapo.
Potsherd (or frying-pan) passes between (i.e. keeps the peace).

As potsherd (or frying-pan) keeps water from putting out fire and fire from consuming water, so the elder keeps the peace between the young of relatively equal status.

The hierarchy of age is taken as a matter of course and circum- 561
cision camps or other formal 'schools' are not considered necessary 881
to reinforce an attitude which no one would dream of disputing. At the present time there is quite a vogue for circumcision camps (*vakuevamba*) in the southern or south-eastern half of the country. Some affirm that these are new-fangled notions coming in from neighbouring tribes. Others declare the institution to be very old. The Ngalangi people say that they have always had both *evamba* for the boys and *uso wakãi* for the girls. Some tribes require *evamba* [643]
of the king before he may rule. Even where the institution is not in vogue, there are associations of coevals (*vakuacisoko*) whose members have definite rights and duties toward each other. These matters are treated more fully in a later chapter. Inasmuch 561
as these age-grade sets are both age and sex divisions, they contain 182
some elements of social cleavage, but their association with the economic and political sides of life makes them a strongly cohesive force for society.

Umbundu Social Structure: Summary

Summarizing the evidence of the present chapter, I wish only to 182
tie in a few of the more important threads so that the pattern of the 621
Umbundu social structure may be seen at a glance.

Although the Ovimbundu no longer maintain the political life which formerly existed, there are elements of cohesion which still give reality to their social organism. These elements all centre in or spring from the kinship group.

With regard to the village, two facts stand out:

1. The Umbundu village is a local kinship unit, with the villagers quite literally the children of the headman-patriarch.
2. Although its political, religious, and social functions may be

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

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CHAPTER VII

ADOLESCENCE

From Puberty until Marriage

The Youth (*Ukuenje* or *umālēhē*); The Girl (*Ufeko*)

THE onset of puberty is generally late among the Ovimbundu both 145
for boys and for girls.[1] The number of individuals who have exact records of their birth is not yet large, and for other reasons it is difficult to collect a large mass of exact data on this subject. From exact data in a few cases, biographical and genealogical data in more, and observation of a great many, I have concluded that, in general, puberty comes for girls at about fourteen to sixteen and for boys at about fifteen to seventeen. I have the impression that this may be due to faulty diet and other poor conditions of living. A careful study of this problem might yield interesting and significant results.

Soon after puberty young people generally stop sleeping in the 881
parents' house. The girls congregate in kitchens and each boy 342
builds himself a house. 'When he builds he does not wait for anyone to act as his teacher at all: he just goes ahead. A boy's father will show him saying, Begin there your house; stand a pole here, another there, and in the ground between, run a trench straight through. Then he will begin to cut poles and after that to build (the house) and thatch it. On the day of plastering it, they will show him how to mix the mud and throw it on, right up to the eaves.'[2] This is the boy's own house in which he will live through adolescence and young manhood, and to which he will bring his bride.

Before his marriage can take place, there must be a great deal of 883
preparation, most of which must be undertaken by the young man himself, just as he has himself built the house. Umbundu adolescent development involves growth and progress on those lines already begun in childhood, but it takes on a conscious urge and direction, for it is now preparation for the responsibilities of adult life,

[1] This is in contradiction to the opinion given by Magyar (op. cit., p. 283). Might it be that dietary and other conditions of life have changed enough in eighty years to produce this result? I think it more likely that Magyar's observations were faulty.

[2] R. Kavita Evambi: manuscript cited.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

The extent to which the order of the *vakuacisoko* exists at present or has existed among the Ovimbundu would be a very interesting subject of inquiry. It is certain that the institution does not exist throughout the territory but only in certain families which belong to the order and pass on membership in it by heredity. Whether there are certain regions where it is or was in the past more strongly held to is not known. It seems to be or to have been more strongly entrenched among the cattle-rearing people to the south, but it is also said to have been practised in Lupolo (Libolo) and even in the region of Luanda.[1] Among the Ovimbundu it seems to have been stronger in the past than at present. Few if any practising members of the set are now known. All 'coevals' or members of the set were in duty bound to render mutual assistance. All had mutual rights to the property of the others without complaint or remedy. These mutual rights seem to have been extended to the extreme limit of having intercourse with each other's wives, nor did the injury or even the death of one brought about by another allow the injured family to seek revenge or legal redress. It was the duty of *vakuacisoko* to bury their fellows, themselves digging the grave and attending to all expenses not already supplied by the family. Theirs was also the duty of burying strangers without family who would not be buried by others fearing defilement or responsibility for their debts. Bastos gives a tradition ascribing the origin of this institution to a wager laid between two chiefs.[2] It seems more probable, however, that it is connected with circumcision and tribal initiation. An analogous set of rights and duties is said to have existed among the Herero between 'coevals' circumcised at the same time.[3]

Tribal initiation for both boys (*oku liseviza evamba*) and girls (*uso wakãi*) is carried on in camps or 'schools' in the southern and south-eastern tribes of the Ovimbundu. These camps are regularly held in Kalukembe, Kakonda, and Ngalangi. Sporadic instances of individual camps have also occurred recently in Viye, Bailundu, Sambu, Wambu, Cingolo, and Cikuma. Even in those regions where camps are regularly held, only the children of certain families enter. It seems that there has been some passing on of the custom by heredity and, in general, there is intermarriage only between families and individuals who adhere to the initiation rites.

[1] Bastos, 1909, op. cit., pp. 67–70.
[2] Ibid., p. 69 f.
[3] Vedder in Hahn *et al.*, op. cit., p. 178.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

881 rites. It seems, however, that it is largely by imitation that the
171 camps have spread from Kalukembe, Kakonda, and Ngalangi into adjoining regions. The girls' camps have been less often imitated
881 in these other regions than have those for boys. Whether these
174 rites may have been taken over by the Ovimbundu from the practice of neighbouring peoples, or whether they may have survived from the customs of a culture previously prevalent in the region, is a question. In favour of the latter hypothesis is the fact that nearly all the neighbouring peoples seem to have or to have had these rites in one form or another and also that certain of the Umbundu kings are required to be circumcised before they can assume office. On the other hand, if the camps were held at all in former times, they must have been exceedingly inconspicuous to have escaped the notice of all the older writers. Bastos (1909) stated 'The Ovimbundu proper do not practise it (circumcision).'[1] Neither Silva Porto (1840–90), nor Magyar (1849–57), nor Pinheiro de Lacerda (*c.* 1790) makes any reference to initiation rites. The missionaries who came to the country in 1880 seem first to have encountered these camps on the Luimbi borders about 1900 but elsewhere hardly before 1915. The conclusion seems to be that it was toward the end of the rubber trade (1911) that the initiation camps were either revived or taken over from the neighbouring cultures to the south and east.[2] Whether initiation rites may spread further among the Ovimbundu or not remains to be seen. Their main emphasis seems to be quite contrary to the more typical trend of Umbundu education. The initiation camps of Ngalangi and Kakonda with their definite break from, and contrast to, the routine of life not only differ from the regular method of instruction but are quite contrary to it. In their methods of educating the young, the Ovimbundu certainly may be characterized as casual. The special times and occasions of education are the regular cycles of the social and economic life and special discipline to enforce specific teaching is used but rarely. The

[1] Bastos, op. cit., p. 50.

[2] Differences in these rites as practised by the various neighbouring tribes would form an interesting study. The majority initiate both boys and girls at or near puberty but some practise infant circumcision or circumcision at weaning or at the appearance of the permanent teeth. The Ambo are said to have let boys' initiation lapse but to attach much importance to rites for girls (Hahn *et al.*, op. cit., pp. 27–31). I do not know of any nearby tribes which have for girls either any excision or elongation of the labia. Various tests of virginity are used.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

hardship and the cruelty of the initiation camps have their parallel 881
in the trading and slave-raiding expeditions of the past, but this 174
is practically the only recognizable likeness. May it not be that initiation camps were adopted or revived to fill the lacuna that came about when trading expeditions ceased? As an 'educational institution' they do not seem to fit into the culture.

Whether with or without initiation rites, adolescence is largely 882
preparation for marriage and full adult life. Traditionally, adolescence is not a time of conflict or of stress. Young people who as children had already assumed in considerable degree the responsibilities of life met the onset of puberty and made the transition to adult life without fuss or flourish. On the whole there was relatively small chance for conflict between the generations, since the place of each is recognized as mutually complementary. Nor was there competition between the sexes. This ordered and well-balanced society began to change with the rubber trade, and with the beginning of the present century changes have come rapidly. Contract and *corvée* labour have brought profound changes, especially for the young men. As for the girls, a few have gone to the towns; relatively few however, other than those who attend a boarding-school, lead a life essentially different from that which has been traditionally theirs. Conflict between the generations, adolescence as a period of stress, delinquence, hysteria, and other problems, some of them characteristic of our own culture, are beginning to appear among the young people of the mission schools. I feel that these manifestations are quite uncharacteristic of Umbundu culture.

As for adult life, there are no recognized divisions or separate 885
periods. Adulthood comes with marriage and marriage is only 581
recognized as fully complete with the birth of a child. The early years of marriage and family rearing are years of much hard work with less time for leisure or enjoyment than either before or after. It is not postponed, however, on that account. If the young man marries relatively late, it is largely because of the very considerable economic burdens involved. Singleness is coveted by no one. The Umbundu ideal is mature life when one may have acquired competence, but at any rate is assured of descendants and care in old age. There is not, however, any ceremonial status such as the fixing of the wax ring among the Thonga,[1] nor does the mature Ocimbundu cease to do manual labour. There may be some

[1] Junod, op. cit., 1927, vol. i, p. 129 f.

882 and young manhood, and to which he will bring his wife. In this house a kind of trial marriage *(uponji)* takes place. The young man will *oku tumisa* ("cause to send") a male friend to ask permission of a girl's mother and
582 also to bring her to his house each night. The girl is called *eponji*. (The custom may also be called *uvaisi*, the girl *ombaisi*.) A young man may first *tumisa* at about seventeen or eighteen years, if he has sufficient money or goods to make the "betrothal" payment (*itambelo* - "enticements" or *oku lupula ikuelume* - "chasing away jealousies"). The amount of the payment (which is made to the girl's parents) varies with locality, wealth and status, but is usually about one tenth of the amount of the marriage payment proper. The amounts of both payments are increasing rapidly.(1)
[583] The nature of the intercourse is carefully circumscribed, and the girl is
[585] warned by her mother not to let intromission take place. Proofs of virginity are required on the marriage morning, and there are severe sanctions against premarital pregnancy. Childs' informants stressed that the chief purpose of the custom is that the two young people should get to know each other as well as possible with marriage in view. Ennis however(2) states that *uvaisi* does not necessarily lead to marriage and may be entered upon without the intention of marriage; the girl may leave the man if she does not like him, and if the *uvaisi* is broken off both may marry other persons without any difficulties.

INITIATION(3)

● 881 Tribal initiation for boys *(oku lisevisa evamba)* and girls *(uso wakai)*
171 is carried on in camps or "schools" in the southern and south-eastern Umbundu chiefdoms, especially in Kalukembe, Kakonda, and Ngalangi. Sporadic instances of individual camps have also occurred recently in Viye, Bailundu, Sambu, Wambu, Cingolo and Cikuma. Even in regions where camps are regularly held, only the children of certain families enter. There appears to have been some passing on of the custom by heredity, and, in general, there is intermarriage only between families and individuals who adhere to the initiation rites. It is not known whether the rites have been taken over by the Ovimbundu from neighbouring peoples, or whether they represent a custom formerly widespread in Umbundu country. Initiation camps are not mentioned by the earlier writers.

Childs gives little information about what goes on in initiation camps, apart from pointing out that in making a definite break from the routine of life they contrast with other aspects of Umbundu education, and that "the hardship and cruelty of initiation camps have their parallel in the trading and slave-raiding expeditions of the past." His statement that "as an 'educational institution' [the initiation camps] do not seem to fit into the culture" is not very clear. From the few details given by Hambly(4) Umbundu camps appear to be identical with those of the tribes to the east, and here one of the most important aspects of the camps is their ritually-emphasised contrast with regular life.(5)

(1) Childs, personal communication.
(2) 1945.
(3) Childs, op.cit., pp.115-7.
(4) (2) 1934, pp.226f.
(5) See McCulloch, 1951, pp.85-91.

174 there is tribal and cultural miscegenation. Both Umbundu and
171 Vachokue languages are spoken; boys of Ngalangi were seen to wear
[281] initiation costumes similar to those worn at Cangamba by the Vachokue, but on proceeding farther westward into territory exclusively occupied by the Ovimbundu, such initiation ceremonies are either absent or attenuated in ritual.

144 Elende, one center of research among the Ovimbundu, repre-
101 sents the purest Umbundu speech and culture observable at the present day. But in chapter IV some physical resemblance of the Ovimbundu to the Vachokue is noted. Warfare commonly resulted in the taking of slaves, a fact which might account for an apparent infusion of Vachokue blood in some of the Ovimbundu.

174 The historical data suggest a northern or northeastern starting
167 point of Umbundu migrations. Therefore an inquiry into the ethnology of these areas will be useful in showing the kind of culture with which the Ovimbundu were in contact before their settlement in the Benguela Highlands. If historical sources disclose the nature of northern Angolan culture from the year A.D. 1500 onward, such evidence can then be considered in relation to cultural traits of the Ovimbundu at the present day.

The establishment of strong cultural resemblances between extant Umbundu culture and older cultural patterns of northern Angola, would tend to strengthen the evidence of history respecting the northern origin of the Ovimbundu.

131 The regions dealt with in the following summary of ethnological
174 facts are the Cabinda Enclave to the north of the Congo estuary, the region of San Salvador, the hinterlands of Loanda and Benguela, and the area of northern Angola between Lat. 7° and 9° S. and Long. 13° to 22° E. This covers the whole area with which the Ovimbundu are likely to have been in contact before entering their present home.

175 My survey begins with the observations of Andrew Battell in
101 1596. His account deals mainly with the northwestern part of Angola, a country bordering on and actually including territory now occupied by the Ovimbundu, who in all probability came in contact with the Jaggas, whose habits of life are described by Battell.

Torday and Joyce identify the Jaggas with the present-day Bayaka, whose cultural resemblances to the Ovimbundu are examined later. In my opinion, the Jaggas correspond well with the Bihéan section of the Ovimbundu, an itinerant and exceedingly warlike people.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

114 trative posts. I agree that people between Caconda and Huila
101 represent a racial mixture of the Ovimbundu and the Ovambo. The record speaks of painting-houses for girls at Cabinda, an item which agrees with reports from other sources. The jottings concerning tribes from Cabinda to the far south of Angola are too vague to be used in ethnological work with confidence.

There are many points on which the work of A. Schachtzabel should be consulted for the purpose of making comparisons with my
[621] own observations. The chief of these are a note and photograph on
[281] village construction (p. 130); the musical bow (p. 32); the loom
[175] (plate VI); transmigration of the soul of a chief into an animal (p. 51);
[524] and the game of mancala (p. 52). My observations of initiation at
[881] Katoko, Ngalangi, and Cangamba agree well with that of Schachtzabel at Katoko, but I was able to obtain more detail and more
[283] numerous photographs of the ritual of initiation. The spinning of cotton (p. 143) is exactly the process so frequently witnessed now at Elende. Iron-working (p. 111) appears to be comparable with the technique at Elende, but Schachtzabel seems to have missed the ritual. I was not so fortunate as this author in finding the old type of iron-smelting furnace in use.

114 The work of Statham is devoted primarily to hunting and descrip-
136 tions of plant and animal life. The chapter given to a casual description of people among whom he passed is not useful as ethnology; but the book is of service in providing a background of natural history. Information on the tsetse fly in Angola (p. 294) assists ethnological work by showing the determining effect of this biological factor.
[231] Presence of the fly is prohibitive to cattle-keeping, therefore cattle are not kept along the river courses which are infested with this pest.

114 Alexander Barns made no pretence of writing more than a travel book; nevertheless he publishes photographs of ethnological value, gives useful historical summaries, and deals with economic problems of production and transportation.

114 Tucker's book "Drums in the Darkness," though written to
175 interest the American public in mission work, contains many ethnological statements. The chief of these relate to the structure of the compound (p. 37); the dress of women (p. 39); naming of twins and triplets; and other items which agree well with data from the district in which I worked. There are notes on drum signals (p. 74) and
[202] cannibalism (p. 77). Apparently drum signals were in use at Bihé half a century ago. Forty years ago a slave was killed and eaten
[266] at the installation ceremonies for a new king, a point that was noted

3:Hambly E-5 (1929-1930)1934 FP3 Mbundu FP3

in the works of Battell, Cavazzi, and other early writers. A description of the whipping of boys at initiation (p. 99) agrees with my own records, but details of the period and place are not given by Tucker. Questioning a corpse (p. 102) is a ceremony I have witnessed and described, but the instance referred to by Tucker relates to the interrogation of the corpse of a chief with regard to his choice of a successor; there are laws of succession, but these may be waived. The ceremony described in my monograph was conducted to discover the cause of death and not to determine succession. If Tucker has any detailed information with regard to puberty ceremonies for girls his reticence is regrettable (p. 142). Tucker says that suicide among women is common (p. 143). A mention of *ocisunji*, a feast for spirits at which meat is offered to idols, is interesting (p. 168) but details are lacking, and the use of the word idols is ambiguous. The information respecting use of charms is corroborative of my own observations in two other centers, Elende and Ngalangi.

The most recent publication on the ethnology of Angola is that of F. and W. Jaspert of the Städtisches Völkermuseum, Frankfort, 1930. Their journey was undertaken primarily to make collections for a museum, but linguistic and ethnological information was recorded among several tribes, notably the Kimbundu, Vachokue, Luchazi, Luimba, and Kusongo. The farthest point attained in a southerly direction was just north of Kipungo, and the general line of march was from Benguela to the northeast, into Lunda. There is very little overlapping in the work of the Jasperts and myself. My itinerary took me to the extreme south into the Vakuanyama country, and to the far east of Moxico among the Vachokue.

My work is presented as a monograph on the Ovimbundu only, and of their culture I treat exclusively, with some reference to the culture contacts observed on all sides of them. The Jasperts do not give an entire section to any one tribe; but combine their information respecting the tribes in a concurrent way, under such subjects as technology, language, and art.

If the sections relating to history and languages are excluded there remain a hundred pages, only one-sixth of which refer to the Ovimbundu; but there is a difficulty in reading through the book without being confused as to the tribe and exact locality under discussion.

The pages devoted to a comparative vocabulary form an important part of the work, and one which I barely touched, though I prepared an outline of Umbundu grammar and made dictaphone records of the

114 Umbundu language. The illustrations in photogravure are excellent,
126 but the small-scale map is difficult to follow.

114 As might be expected in a work covering an enormous tract of
241 country, the information is of a very general kind; I have nowhere been able to check in any detail on my own observations. F. and W.
224 Jaspert recognize that Umbundu culture is primarily based on agriculture, maize being the most important crop, but they do not admit the importance of hunting (p. 16).

I saw many successful parties of Umbundu hunters, tested their precision with the bow and arrow, and was able to record the ritual connected with the initiation of a professional hunter. There is also a ceremony before the hunter sets out. It would be more accurate to say that, although Umbundu culture is based primarily on agriculture, hunting still retains some of its earlier importance.

114 The diagrams of houses in different parts of Angola are a useful feature of the work. I made many photographs but did not record details of planning.

114 The masks I obtained are exactly like those pictured, but my
881 observations were carried out a long way to the southeast of the point where the Jasperts touched the Vachokue culture. I do not understand from their description whether the writers saw an initiation ceremony. They state that boys are circumcised and girls are excised when very young, even at the age of five or six years. I observed initiation camps and dances at three centers, Ngalangi, Katoko, and Cangamba; the last named is the main center of Vachokue culture. The male novices varied in age from twelve to sixteen years hence they were older than the novices mentioned by the Jasperts. I was informed that there were no excision operations for girls, though at Ngalangi, Vanyemba girls were secluded in the bush during initiation rites lasting for a month.

Bibliographical references to the research of H. Baumann will be found useful for comparative study. His detailed record of initiation among the Vachokue is valuable as a check on my observation, as we worked independently in areas separated by several hundred miles.

Consultation of historical sources gives the following answers to questions which were asked as an introduction to this chapter.

174 On the grounds of tribal tradition, historical evidence, and cultural affinities, the original home of the Ovimbundu was likely to have been in the southwest Congo. The Ovimbundu undoubtedly possess important cultural traits that have been characteristic of the southern Congo region from the earliest time for which a record exists.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

Young unmarried girls of the Luvando tribe wear a large number of leg-bands which extend from the ankles to the knees as a sign that puberty has not been reached. These leg-bands are somewhat roughly twisted from fibrous roots and twigs from which the cortex has been removed. Collars of tough, elastic, cane-like substance are worn by Luvando women, and so numerous are these that the neck is entirely covered. These cane neck-bands are ornamented with burned, incised, geometrical patterns, and, in keeping with other ornaments, are thickly smeared with grease and red powder from *tukula* wood (Plate LIX, Figs. 1, 2). 301 124 [881] [531]

Women of the Vakipungo and Vakuanyama wear heavy coils of brass or copper wire on their forearms. In southern Angola women wear bracelets of twisted wire which are identical with those worn by Zulu women. Bracelets of beaten trade brass, ornamented with incised geometrical designs, are worn by women of the Ovimbundu, Vakuanyama, Luvando, and Vakipungo tribes. Ovimbundu women now depend largely on trade goods for personal ornament. 171 301 439 [531]

Ovimbundu men and women are dressed in trade cloth. Unmarried girls wear one piece of cloth which hangs from the armpits to the knees. A married woman drapes herself with two pieces of cloth, a skirt hanging from her girdle, and an upper piece so folded as to hold her baby tightly to her back. Men wear a single piece of cloth as a skirt; the upper part of the body is bare (Plates XLIX–LI). From the region of Kipungo to the southern border, clothing is of leather. The Vacholue wear trade cloth or bark cloth. 291 171

Hairdressing is of many styles. Ovimbundu women braid their hair neatly in strands across their foreheads, and small blue and white trade beads are used to decorate the braids. The hairdressing of the Ovimbundu women is different from that in any other part of Angola. At an early age the hair is trained into two long loops at the back of the head. Then these are covered with black cloth which is bound tightly. The two loops are afterwards studded with brass-headed tacks obtained from a store (Plate XL, Fig. 3). 302 171

Luvando women in the region of Kipungo dress the hair to form a large triangular projection from the back of the head. Girls of the Vaheneca tribe near Huila mass the hair with clay to form large "cock's combs." Women of Gambos pass each small plait of hair through hollow reeds. Humbe women do not redden or grease their hair which is massed into three high ridges on the top, while at the sides there are hornlike projections. Vakuanyama women dress their hair with grease and *tukula* powder. A principal wife builds up her

534 Another musical bow named *ekolowa* is of simple construction, consisting of a strip of cane from 54 to 70 cm long and 2 cm wide. At each end of the cane is a projection. A string, when tightly stretched between these projections, pulls the cane into the form of a bow. The performer, placing one end of the bow in his mouth, plucks the string with his thumb and forefinger (Plate XXII, Fig. 7).

Two rubbing instruments are used by the Ovimbundu. *Ogolanda* is a large gourd with a slit in the top along which there is a board cut into sixteen notches. The rubbing of a short stick along these notches produces a sound which is greatly amplified by the gourd resonator. The second instrument of this type is in the form of a wooden bow having its thickest part notched for rubbing with a stick (Plate XXII, Figs. 3, 8).

533 Only specialists are skilled in composing songs, and both men and women are composers. The younger people sometimes go to the old people to learn songs which were popular a generation ago. There are no professional itinerant story-tellers.

There is a chant for funerals which has been quoted in the appropriate section, but no special wedding songs are used. The Ovimbundu have satirical songs humorously describing individual [626] foibles and peculiarities, and as usual in Negro communities a satirical song is feared by thieves, adulterers, or other offenders.

[726] In former days when men were on the warpath they sang, *Okaimbo ketu katito eteke tu lisanumbula tu tandako.* ("Our village is little today, we attack, we extend.") Another war song is *Ocisonde ci likoka ove o kasi vonjila tumdamo.* ("Red ant that creeps along, you who are in the way, get out.")

When men on the march came to a camping ground occupied [484] by another caravan, they sang as a challenge, *Cinene nye? Cinene onjamba kakuli okachama kavela ukuavo.* ("What is the largest? There is no animal largest. The largest is the elephant.")

During hauling and carrying, men sing, *Yende, yende chale, ocimboto lomala vaco.* ("Let it go, let it go, the crab, the frog, with its children.")

482 Lifting loads is always accompanied by noises which suggest that someone is injured. Part of the men make deep grunts to which their companions answer with prolonged groans.

INITIATION

867 Evidence bearing on initiatory rites in Angola shows that the 881 ceremonies are arranged as a process of incorporation into the

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

tribes, for everywhere these rites aim at securing ideas of unity, coop- 867
eration, conformity to tribal law, and admission to adult tribal life. 881

The methods used to achieve these aims are seclusion, circumcision, physical suffering, direct tuition, dancing, hunting, a change of name, and finally a ceremonial return to the tribe with adult status and the right to marry.

The following notes give details of ceremonies witnessed at 114
three centers; namely, Katoko, Ngalangi, and Cangamba. For 171
comparison of these rites with others performed in eastern Angola 881
reference should be made to the books of A. Schachtzabel, and to the papers of H. Baumann (III), and F. and W. Jaspert, whose observations were made independently of each other and of my own investigation.

The dances of the novices at Katoko, where there is a mixed 881
population of Ovimbundu, Vangangella, and Vachokue tribes, are part of the final ceremonies following circumcision and seclusion. The social group formed by this collective circumcision, seclusion, and dancing, is called *ovinganji*, which is the name of the initiatory rites themselves. A boy who has been initiated is not allowed to become friendly with one who has not suffered the ceremony, and all boys who were circumcised at the same time preserve a sense of unity by dancing in a company and moving about together for twelve weeks after their return to the village from which they came.

Circumcision, which is prohibited by the Portuguese govern- 881
ment, is still practised secretly in some regions. When circumcision 304
is carried out by primitive methods serious infection may result from the lack of clean instruments, for the knife is, of course, unsterilized.

After the operation the patients are subjected to harsh treatment during the period of cure that follows. The circumcised are secluded in a wooded area. Food provided by the parents is placed on the bank of a river near which the initiation camp is built, and after the parents have gone away the boys bring their rations from the river to the camp. Before eating, the boys are obliged to give profuse thanks to the men who are acting as tutors. In some regions there is no food ration for the boys, and the rule is that each boy must subsist on what he is able to catch and collect with his hands.

Each boy has a male guardian who takes care of him after the operation. Those who have been operated upon are not permitted to wear clothes, nor are they allowed to warm themselves until quite healed. Any infraction of the rules results in a severe whipping.

881 292 During the period of isolation costumes for the dance are made. These consist of clothing of tightly fitting, coarse netting, masks, and girdles which are for the use of only those boys who have been circumcised. The feasts and dances celebrating the conclusion of initiatory rites are of great importance. Women are not supposed to know that the operation of circumcision is taking place, and they are taught that *ovinganji* are supernatural beings who have sprung up from the earth; therefore every effort is made to conceal masks and costumes from the sight of women and the uninitiated. No female is allowed to go near the enclosure where novices are confined.

881 A few days after observing the costumes and dances of the newly initiated boys at Katoko I was in the Ngalangi region at the village of Ngongo, about a hundred miles to the north of Katoko. At Ngalangi two boys of the Ovimbundu were questioned with regard to their experiences in the initiation camp.

It is certain that initiation ceremonies are held at irregular intervals and not more frequently than once in four years. The name given to the ceremonies for boys in the Ngalangi area is *ocinganji* (*oci*, "big"; *nganji*, "judge," or a masked person). When there is a number of boys who have not been circumcised, these approach the oldest men to ask for a circumcision ceremony. The old men visit the *sekulu* ("headman") of the village to request that arrangements shall be made. An *ocimbanda* ("medicine-man"), assisted by other men, prepares a camp in a wooded area. Usually the father of each boy has to arrange that a tutor shall accompany his son to the camp, but sometimes as many as three boys have the same guardian. The guardian receives a small fee, possibly nothing more valuable than a chicken.

The camp is made on the side of a stream remote from the village. Each boy takes a chicken to the camp for the purpose of making a special meal, which is given at the name-changing ceremony which follows initiation. The chicken is eaten soon after the boy has been circumcised. The boy changes his own name for a new one which is announced in the village from which he came. While circumcision is in progress the enclosure is surrounded by male drummers and men who shout, so that any noise made by the boys during circumcision will not be heard.

[553]

The period spent in camp is uncertain, probably from three to six months. The rule is that camp is not disbanded until every boy is healed; which means that the confinement may be greatly

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

prolonged if even one boy fails to recover. One of the two youths interrogated said that in his camp there were seventy-eight boys, three of whom died. My other informant said that in his camp there were sixty-eight boys, only one of whom died. The informants agreed that the deaths were due to an epidemic of influenza and not to privations or septic conditions arising from the operation. 881

During the period of seclusion the boys are taught songs and dances used at the ceremony that celebrates the conclusion of their initiation. By privation the boys are taught the value of food and fire. Novices are beaten if they show any disrespect for their guardians, and trifling offences are severely punished. Every boy has to take from the fire a burning stick, which he holds in his hand while running between two lines of men who beat him, and if he drops the stick he has to start his run once more. The boys swear allegiance to one another. A novice thinks that he will die if he gives information to a woman or to a man who has not been initiated.

From his mother, each boy receives food in a gourd which he deposits on the bank of a river near the novices' camp. If a boy dies, a hole is bored in the gourd so that when the mother receives this she will not send more food. Each guardian has a stick which is sent to the mother of his pupil when the ceremony of initiation and seclusion is ended. If the boy has died, bark is cut from both ends of the stick before this symbol of death is sent to his parents. 763 881

When the boys come out from their camp at the conclusion of the rites one man and one woman stand on the bank of the river, and the boys pass under the legs of both the man and the woman. When the boys arrive at the village the whole population comes out to welcome them. There is a feast and beer-drinking bout on the day of return. 881

During seclusion no water is allowed for washing, and the informants laughed as they spoke of the order "wash hands," whereupon the boys merely rubbed their hands together. When the order, "wash dishes," was given the boys rubbed their platters with their hands. On the day of leaving camp the novices bathe in the river. Ablution consists of three dips, after each of which the boy stands on the bank until he is dry. [515]

For two months the boys wear strips of bark cloth. During this period all the novices must move together, but there is no objection to their leaving the village provided they do so all in one company. While wearing bark cloth the boys have each day to attend a cere- [292]

881 mony at which the older initiates dance while the novices clap their hands.

I witnessed the dance of initiated boys at Ngongo, where the [292] costumes resembled those I had seen at Katoko. At night a youth brought for me a set of initiation costumes (Plate LXXVIII, Fig. 1), which resembled those worn during the dance; this he did with great secrecy.

While at Ngalangi, the initiation of girls was investigated. After several days of negotiation with a village headman three female guardians of the girls came from the bush. The illustrations (Plate LXXVII, Figs. 1, 2) show the attitudes of these women and their decoration. There were three male drummers in the orchestra and several women, who sang and clapped their hands. On emerging from the bush the females moved toward the orchestra with their backs toward the players. As there were about two hundred yards to cover, this slow backward movement occupied a long time, since the three women did not take more than a few inches at each step. The dance [535] itself was a slow, shuffling, swaying movement, made while the bodies of the performers remained inclined forward and their heads were bent so that it was almost impossible to see their faces. The women wore no clothing except loin cloths. Each female was [302] plastered from head to foot with alternate bands of red and white clay smeared thickly. These three females are the women who act [864] as instructors for the girls during isolation in the bush where they receive sexual and domestic instruction.

881 The seclusion of girls covers a period of one month. During 304 this time the novices suffer no harsh treatment though an operation is performed, possibly excision of the clitoris, but I am not certain on this point. It was also stated that a corncob is introduced into the vagina. The tribe practising this ceremony for girls was the [171] Vanyemba, living close to the Ovimbundu at Ngongo near Ngalangi in central Angola.

881 In order to corroborate further the two accounts of initiation 171 ceremonies for boys I journeyed to Cangamba in Moxico, eastern 304 Angola. The position of the two first centers visited (Katoko and Ngongo) is on the border line where Ovimbundu and Vachokue mingle, and although there is a mixture of these and other tribes at Cangamba, the culture, language, and physique of the Vachokue predominate. A description of the circumcision ceremonies witnessed at Cangamba is given below for comparison with the accounts resulting from visits to Katoko and Ngongo.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

The compound in which the initiates had been confined for three months was a circular enclosure made of light branches and leafy boughs, at the narrow embrasure of which stood a guardian of the boys, who permitted entrance. In the middle of the large enclosure were seven small cages, each of which was just large enough to allow one boy to lie on his back, and I was informed that the boys lie thus for two weeks after circumcision (Plate LXXX, Fig. 2). 881 304 171

The ages of the boys appeared to be from ten to seventeen years (Plate LXXX, Fig. 1), an observation which agrees well with that made at Katoko and Ngongo. The disparity of age among the novices at each center where initiation was observed bears out the statement that initiation ceremonies are held at irregular intervals, but not more frequently than once in four years.

During confinement in the large enclosure the novices had made masks and costumes (Plate LXXIX, Fig. 1), and when they were pulling on the coarse netting suits, which fit tightly, I observed that circumcision had been performed thoroughly, evidently some weeks ago, for the wounds were healed. Masks were obtained, and these the instructors of the boys were careful to wrap in bark cloth, at the same time requesting me not to show the objects to women.

A few days later these boys returned to their village to dance while wearing the costumes which had been made in the enclosure. At Cangamba the final ceremony lasted twelve hours amid great excitement, including ceaseless drumming and dancing. One boy, who wore a skirt on his fiber costume, lifted this to display an artificial penis of great size (Plate LXXIX, Fig. 2). This organ he grasped in his hand while chasing the women and girls, who ran away screaming and laughing. [522]

At this ceremony there appeared stilt-walkers (Plate LXXXI, Fig. 1) and a medicine-man, a member of the Luchazi tribe (Plate LXXXI, Fig. 2).

Circumcision among the Bdjok (Vachokue) has been witnessed by C. P. Holdredge and described by Kimball Young (*Amer. Anthr.*, XXIX, pp. 661–669). This ceremony took place in the far northeast of Angola. The man described as the *magish* of whom women are afraid, but who is known to the initiates, corresponds to the Uluchazi medicine-man seen in the final ceremony at Cangamba. Of this grotesquely dressed person the men and boys took no notice, neither did he pay attention to them. On the contrary he chased women, who ran away screaming. Kimball Young's description of the enclosure where boys are confined, and his account of the [113] [756]

881 short fiber skirts worn within this enclosure by the novices, are in
171 agreement with the observations made at Cangamba. There is
304 also a close resemblance between the independent accounts of
[114] H. Baumann and F. and W. Jaspert for the Vachokue, also P. A. Delille and E. de Jonghe for the southwest Congo.

The question of initiation rites, past and present, among people of pure Umbundu culture is important. The matter is more fully dealt with later in discussing cultural contacts and cultural losses, but there are a few points which should not be omitted here.

At Caconda, an Umbundu center of western Angola, Père R. P. Laagel stated that only two years ago he had visited an initiation camp of Ovimbundu boys in the hope of persuading them to return to his mission school at Caconda. My informant stated that the boys were circumcised, beaten, and confined to an enclosure for several weeks. Those who cried out when flogged received a double portion of blows. Poisoning is the fate of a boy who reveals the secrets of the initiation camp to women or uninitiated boys. This is the most direct testimony I have received concerning initiation rites among unmixed Ovimbundu.

881 From Bailundu and Elende I have obtained slight evidence of
292 initiation rites. At the former place, which, like Elende, is a center
171 of the Ovimbundu tribe, fiber costumes were obtained. The mask from Elende is unlike those used at Cangamba, Katoko, and Ngongo. The fiber suits are, however, no different from costumes used at these places. Initiation ceremonies are not held at Elende today, and beyond Dr. Ennis's statement that circumcision rites have been revived in the past fifteen years of his long residence in the neighborhood of Elende, I have no evidence of ritual.

881 The data relating to initiation of boys in Angola suggest loss
177 of the initiatory rites from Umbundu culture, until only a few old masks and costumes, along with attenuated ritual, remain sporadically. On the contrary, in eastern Angola and particularly among the Vachokue, who are farther than the Ovimbundu from coastal influence, initiation ceremonies flourish. At present there is occurring a penetration of initiation rites from the Vachokue area into east-central Angola, which is a region of cultural admixture.

867 The foregoing pages have described certain institutions and social forces which collectively bring individuals into conformity with tribal standards of conduct. The influences at work in this direction may be direct or indirect.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

Among direct educational forces are the home training given by parents and the mutual responsibility of children and their mother's brother, whose reciprocal obligations have been explained. Family life is undeniably an important institution whose power is by no means suppressed by the strength of the village community and tribal organization. 867

Initiation, which may or may not coincide with puberty, is perhaps the most potent direct influence in formation of character and the inculcation of principles tending to tribal solidarity. Formerly warfare and hunting were more important than they are today, consequently initiation rites imposing hardship and emphasizing the importance of concerted action, had a greater social value than they have at present. 867 881

Formal instruction in industries such as iron-working, or professional hunting, indicates one aspect of occupational training. In these instances there are apprenticeship and an initiatory rite. All children are, however, subject to an indirect industrial education through the agency of play, while a few, according to desire and aptitude, become experts in some particular occupation. 874 [868]

At all times the force of suggestion is at work in the home, in the men's council house, and through everyday observation of the conduct of elders. Probably folklore stories also have an indirect educational value, because some of the fables show the desirability of courage, honesty, and foresight, at the same time deprecating cowardice, stupidity, and low cunning. 869

In chapter IX religious beliefs are discussed, and, in connection with these, standards of conduct are outlined. Although the Ovimbundu have a belief in a supreme being and creator (Suku), and although they believe in survival after death, there is no evidence to show that conduct and education are influenced by theological beliefs. Suku, who is vaguely conceived, is far away and uninterested. He issues no commands. Neither is there a belief in punishments and rewards after death. The standards of conduct are based on utilitarian principles which secure harmony and unity. 771 869 [776]

The efficiency of the direct and indirect educational forces of the Ovimbundu is attested by the history of the tribe. The indigenous system of education, supported by favorable environment, consolidated these people so that they became the dominating power in Angola. Moreover, their cohesion has been such that three centuries of European contacts have failed to eliminate all the basic elements of their tribal life. 177

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

171 428 this method is characteristic of many pastoral tribes of south and east Africa.

171 611 The Ovimbundu are situated between two systems of reckoning descent, succession, and inheritance; namely, the Negro system of the Congo region, and that of the eastern and southern cattle-keeping people. In view of the culture contacts described in Chapter X, the mixed system of the Ovimbundu is intelligible.

On the one hand the Ovimbundu emphasize the rights of the mother's brother while denying inheritance to a wife and her children, but in royal families the eldest son of the principal wife succeeds to kingship. Among commoners descent is reckoned through both the father and the mother. Therefore the inference is that the [174] Ovimbundu have, by virtue of their position and contacts, made a blending of two distinct social systems, one of which gives succession to office in the male line, while the other gives inheritance in the female line. In their system of burial rites for kings the Ovimbundu follow the usages of the pastoral area.

171 608 Exchange of blood is an Umbundu custom resembling that which occurs widely in Negro Africa. This exchange of blood is the typical Negro form of the blood brotherhood. Another rite is the Hamitic custom of drinking a mixture of blood and milk; this the Ovimbundu do not practise.

171 241 The hoe-cultivation practised by Ovimbundu women is in agreement with Baumann's association of hoe-culture and matriarchal conditions, the latter being indicated by the importance of the mother's brother. These concomitant factors are shown by Baumann (II, p. 292) to be characteristic of a wide area in the Congo basin. To this area may be added the whole of central Angola.

171 567 The factors of slavery among the Ovimbundu are in agreement with all that is known of the treatment of slaves in the Congo area and farther west Africa. Slaves of the Ovimbundu taken in warfare were treated with less consideration than those who passed into slavery to redeem a debt. There was also discrimination in favor of slaves taken in local quarrels among the Ovimbundu themselves. The killing and eating of slaves in north Angola is a custom whose early occurrence has already been noted.

AFRICAN PUBERTY RITES

171 881 Initiation ceremonies for boys and girls are at present well preserved among the Vacholue of eastern Angola; for a period such ceremonies declined among the Ovimbundu, but there is now a

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

recrudescence. Masks of eastern Angola most closely resemble those of the Bapindi of the southwest Congo, but the general background of these puberty rites is comparable in Angola, parts of the Congo, and in several parts of the forest belt of west Africa from Sierra Leone to Cameroon. 171 881

Usually there is seclusion, hardship, training in dances and tribal customs, with ceremonial reappearance and change of name. Evidently the Ovimbundu share the material traits and the psychological background of initiatory rites with a very large number of tribes, which occupy the forest zones of west and central Africa.

G. Lindblom's publication, "The Use of Stilts in Africa and America," helps to explain the occurrence of stilt-walking at the final ceremonies of initiation witnessed at Cangamba. Since stilt-walking in Angola occurs chiefly in the eastern section, perhaps one should link the trait with the stilt-walking in Nyasaland, because there has been continuous communication from Angola to Nyasaland along the Zambezi valley. The stilt-walking of eastern Angola may, however, be a cultural offshoot from the southwest Congo, for according to Lindblom the stilt-walking trait occurs there, and the contacts of eastern Angola with the southwest Congo have been important.

In turning from these factors of social life to traits of a more material kind, there are points of importance to be noted in connection with food supply and industries. A possibility exists that such traits as hunting, use of certain types of musical instruments, basketry, and pottery, will indicate that the Ovimbundu, before their separation, drew some of their fundamental traits from a widely distributed matrix. 174

HUNTING APPLIANCES OF AFRICA

L. S. B. Leakey (A New Classification of the Bow and Arrow in Africa, *J.R.A.I.*, LVI, pp. 259–294) has dealt with the distribution of bows and arrows. Leakey states that, owing to lack of evidence, he was unable to describe the bows and arrows of Angola. I have therefore illustrated these in detail (Plate XVII, Figs. 1–9). 171 411

Some of the arrowheads used by the Ovimbundu resemble those of the Bashilele in the southwest Congo, but on the whole arrowheads used in Angola are of distinctive patterns, and presumably they represent a special local development. The round bow of the Ovimbundu and the Vacholue is like that of the southern Congo, and it is absolutely distinct from the short flat bow used in southern Angola among the Vakuanyama.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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WOMEN IN CHARGE OF TRIBAL INITIATION OF GIRLS,
VANYEMBA, NGONGO, CENTRAL ANGOLA

Fig. 1. Front view. Fig. 2. Back view

[p.431]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13-Mbundu FP13

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[P.434]

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COSTUMES WORN IN TRIBAL INITIATION CEREMONIES FOR BOYS

Fig. 1. Costume of Vangangulu and Ovin.kundu, Nzongu. Fig. 2. Ceremonial drum of mixed tribes at Katoko

S: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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TRIBAL INITIATION OF BOYS, VACHOKUE, CANGAMBA

Fig. 1. Novices in enclosure. Fig. 2. Public appearance after initiation

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[p.433]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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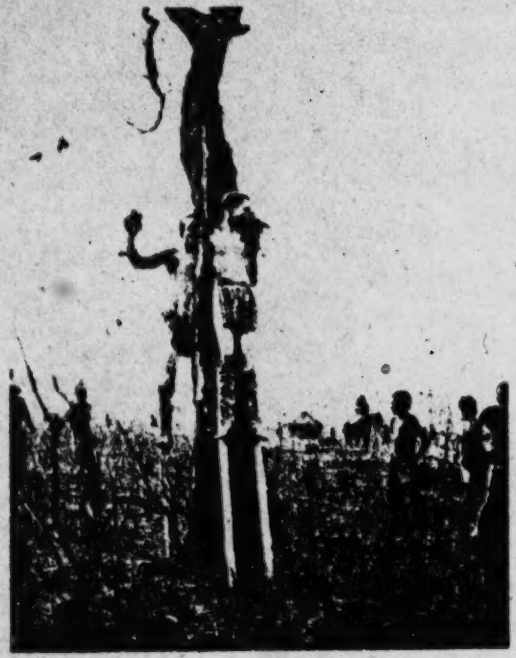
TRIBAL INITIATION OF BOYS, VACHOKUE, CANGAMBA

Fig. 1. Bibarakirte-worn by circumcised novices. Fig. 2. Cages in which boys lie after circumcision

[R434]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

[P. 435]



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CONCLUDING CEREMONIES, TRIBAL INITIATION, CANGAMBA

Fig. 1. Stilt-walkers, Vachokue. Fig. 2. Medicine-man, Luchazi

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1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

hardship and the cruelty of the initiation camps have their parallel 881
in the trading and slave-raiding expeditions of the past, but this 174
is practically the only recognizable likeness. May it not be that initiation camps were adopted or revived to fill the lacuna that came about when trading expeditions ceased? As an 'educational institution' they do not seem to fit into the culture.

Whether with or without initiation rites, adolescence is largely 882
preparation for marriage and full adult life. Traditionally, adolescence is not a time of conflict or of stress. Young people who as children had already assumed in considerable degree the responsibilities of life met the onset of puberty and made the transition to adult life without fuss or flourish. On the whole there was relatively small chance for conflict between the generations, since the place of each is recognized as mutually complementary. Nor was there competition between the sexes. This ordered and well-balanced society began to change with the rubber trade, and with the beginning of the present century changes have come rapidly. Contract and *corvée* labour have brought profound changes, especially for the young men. As for the girls, a few have gone to the towns; relatively few however, other than those who attend a boarding-school, lead a life essentially different from that which has been traditionally theirs. Conflict between the generations, adolescence as a period of stress, delinquence, hysteria, and other problems, some of them characteristic of our own culture, are beginning to appear among the young people of the mission schools. I feel that these manifestations are quite uncharacteristic of Umbundu culture.

As for adult life, there are no recognized divisions or separate 885
periods. Adulthood comes with marriage and marriage is only 581
recognized as fully complete with the birth of a child. The early years of marriage and family rearing are years of much hard work with less time for leisure or enjoyment than either before or after. It is not postponed, however, on that account. If the young man marries relatively late, it is largely because of the very considerable economic burdens involved. Singleness is coveted by no one. The Umbundu ideal is mature life when one may have acquired competence, but at any rate is assured of descendants and care in old age. There is not, however, any ceremonial status such as the fixing of the wax ring among the Thonga,[1] nor does the mature Ocimbundu cease to do manual labour. There may be some

[1] Junod, op. cit., 1927, vol. i, p. 129 f.

time to the village of the paramount chief. These periods spent away from home continue into adolescence. Not only relatives, but also friends, blood-brothers and *vakuacisoko* (see below) exchange children in this way. 604 857

Later childhood

No definite time marks the transition from early to later childhood, but there are marked differences between the two stages. As soon as the child is physically able, he begins to assume a definite role in the community. Soon after a child gets his permanent teeth, a notch in the form of an inverted V is chipped between the two upper front incisors. Formerly the beginning of the period was marked for the boy by his first trip with a trading caravan; today a boy of this age may begin to work in the fields with his father, or begin to learn a trade, or be sent to school. A girl starts to learn field-work and housework. 852 858

Professions

A boy is expected to learn the profession or *ocipinduko* in which his father or his mother's brother is expert, and after that, should he wish to learn some other side-line profession, he may apprentice himself. All children, both boys and girls, are expected to learn to cultivate, but that is not counted as a profession. The principal *ovipinduko* (professions) listed by Childs are: for girls, basket-making, pottery-making, medical practice and divination; for boys, mat-making, wood-working, rope-making, thatching, fishing, apiculture, hunting, smithing, and medical practice and divination. The last three, as has been mentioned above, are "sacred" and entered under special conditions. 462 868 [463]

"Later childhood, then, is the period of technical training during which it is expected that a large amount of economic responsibility will be assumed. A child begins to own property even before this, and from the beginning of childhood will be accounted legally responsible for his actions. It is recognised, however, that he should not be set tasks beyond the experience or ability of his age and that the full responsibility of adulthood will come only with marriage."(1) 866 [672]

The coming of European commerce, industry, and government has created new types of employment for boys and men, some of which cause a prolonged absence from the village and a loosening or severing of kinship ties. There are no estimates of the number of persons employed by Europeans, or the average length of their absence from home. 178 466

ADOLESCENCE(2)

Childs found that the onset of puberty was late among the Ovimbundu, coming between fourteen and sixteen years for girls and between fifteen and seventeen years for boys. Soon after puberty young people generally stop sleeping in the parents' house. The girls congregate in kitchens and each boy builds himself a house, in which he will live through adolescence 882

(1) Childs, op.cit., p.110.
(2) Based on Childs, op.cit., pp.58-9 and 111-18.

882 and young manhood, and to which he will bring his wife. In this house a kind of trial marriage *(uponji)* takes place. The young man will *oku tumisa* ("cause to send") a male friend to ask permission of a girl's mother and
582 also to bring her to his house each night. The girl is called *eponji*. (The custom may also be called *uvaisi*, the girl *ombaisi*.) A young man may first *tumisa* at about seventeen or eighteen years, if he has sufficient money or goods to make the "betrothal" payment (*itambelo* - "enticements" or *oku lupula ikuelume* - "chasing away jealousies"). The amount of the payment (which is made to the girl's parents) varies with locality, wealth and status, but is usually about one tenth of the amount of the marriage payment proper. The amounts of both payments are increasing rapidly.(1)
[583] The nature of the intercourse is carefully circumscribed, and the girl is
[585] warned by her mother not to let intromission take place. Proofs of virginity are required on the marriage morning, and there are severe sanctions against premarital pregnancy. Childs' informants stressed that the chief purpose of the custom is that the two young people should get to know each other as well as possible with marriage in view. Ennis however(2) states that *uvaisi* does not necessarily lead to marriage and may be entered upon without the intention of marriage; the girl may leave the man if she does not like him, and if the *uvaisi* is broken off both may marry other persons without any difficulties.

INITIATION(3)

881 Tribal initiation for boys *(oku lisevisa evamba)* and girls *(uso wakai)*
171 is carried on in camps or "schools" in the southern and south-eastern Umbundu chiefdoms, especially in Kalukembe, Kakonda, and Ngalangi. Sporadic instances of individual camps have also occurred recently in Viye, Bailundu, Sambu, Wambu, Cingolo and Cikuma. Even in regions where camps are regularly held, only the children of certain families enter. There appears to have been some passing on of the custom by heredity, and, in general, there is intermarriage only between families and individuals who adhere to the initiation rites. It is not known whether the rites have been taken over by the Ovimbundu from neighbouring peoples, or whether they represent a custom formerly widespread in Umbundu country. Initiation camps are not mentioned by the earlier writers.

Childs gives little information about what goes on in initiation camps, apart from pointing out that in making a definite break from the routine of life they contrast with other aspects of Umbundu education, and that "the hardship and cruelty of initiation camps have their parallel in the trading and slave-raiding expeditions of the past." His statement that "as an 'educational institution' [the initiation camps] do not seem to fit into the culture" is not very clear. From the few details given by Hambly(4) Umbundu camps appear to be identical with those of the tribes to the east, and here one of the most important aspects of the camps is their ritually-emphasised contrast with regular life.(5)

(1) Childs, personal communication.
(2) 1945.
(3) Childs, op.cit., pp.115-7.
(4) (2) 1934, pp.226f.
(5) See McCulloch, 1951, pp.85-91.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

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CHAPTER VII

ADOLESCENCE

From Puberty until Marriage

The Youth (*Ukuenje* or *umālēhē*); The Girl (*Ufeko*)

THE onset of puberty is generally late among the Ovimbundu both 145
for boys and for girls.[1] The number of individuals who have exact records of their birth is not yet large, and for other reasons it is difficult to collect a large mass of exact data on this subject. From exact data in a few cases, biographical and genealogical data in more, and observation of a great many, I have concluded that, in general, puberty comes for girls at about fourteen to sixteen and for boys at about fifteen to seventeen. I have the impression that this may be due to faulty diet and other poor conditions of living. A careful study of this problem might yield interesting and significant results.

Soon after puberty young people generally stop sleeping in the 881
parents' house. The girls congregate in kitchens and each boy 342
builds himself a house. 'When he builds he does not wait for anyone to act as his teacher at all: he just goes ahead. A boy's father will show him saying, Begin there your house; stand a pole here, another there, and in the ground between, run a trench straight through. Then he will begin to cut poles and after that to build (the house) and thatch it. On the day of plastering it, they will show him how to mix the mud and throw it on, right up to the eaves.'[2] This is the boy's own house in which he will live through adolescence and young manhood, and to which he will bring his bride.

Before his marriage can take place, there must be a great deal of 883
preparation, most of which must be undertaken by the young man himself, just as he has himself built the house. Umbundu adolescent development involves growth and progress on those lines already begun in childhood, but it takes on a conscious urge and direction, for it is now preparation for the responsibilities of adult life,

[1] This is in contradiction to the opinion given by Magyar (op. cit., p. 283). Might it be that dietary and other conditions of life have changed enough in eighty years to produce this result? I think it more likely that Magyar's observations were faulty.

[2] R. Kavita Evambi: manuscript cited.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

883 chiefly for marriage. Indeed, marriage is the beginning of adulthood; no Ocimbundu is considered fully an adult until married.

841 Where the initiation camps have not taken hold, i.e. among the great majority of the people, it is the father's sister (*apahãi*) whose duty it is, at least in theory, to tell her brother's daughter how she should take care of herself during the times of menstrual flow. Actually a girl generally learns such things from observation and from girls of the immediately superior age-group, her sisters and cousins. She will not need to be told that during those times a girl or woman must not even touch anything belonging to a man and especially she must have nothing to do with preparing his food. This period is known as 'sitting on the ground' (*oku tumãlã posi*) since that is what a woman is supposed to do at that time. Modern usage has also taken that phrase to mean 'unemployment'.[1]

582 In the house which the boy or young man has built for himself, one of the most characteristic customs of adolescence among the Ovimbundu takes place: the trial marriage. There are several Umbundu names for this custom, as *oku tumisa* (lit. to cause to send), referring to the fact that the young man sends a male friend or relative both to ask permission of the girl's mother and also to bring the girl each night to his hut. Names for the correlative but all-inclusive custom are *uponji*, the girl being called *eponji*; and *uvaisi*, the girl being called *ombaisi*. A young man may first *tumisa* at about seventeen to eighteen years of age, but he must have acquired enough to make small presents to the girl and to her parents and he must have or have in prospect money or goods sufficient to make the betrothal payment.[2] This payment is known as *itambelo*, 'enticements', or *oku lupula ikuelume*, 'chasing away jealousies'. This indicates that the custom of *uvaisi* is definitely regarded as a prelude to marriage. For this reason, the term 'trial [836] marriage' is preferred to that of 'premarital sexual intercourse'. The nature of the intercourse, moreover, is carefully circumscribed. 'When the respective parents have agreed, then those of the girl will warn her saying, Should that boy be bad, and want to play with your cloth, even though it be late at night, run away.'[3] In such a case the boy's parents would take him to task and require that for the time being he sleep in their kitchen and so under

[1] For early notice of this cf. Magyar, op. cit., p. 284.
[2] From 10,00 to 50,00 *Angolares* according to locality, family, status, &c.
[3] From a manuscript dictated by R. Kalupeteka of Ngalangi.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

178 of marriage through all these changes, whether with or without
936 the trial marriage, is a testimony to the vitality of their culture.

Young people of the same age-groups are thrown constantly
883 more closely together during adolescence in all their activities and in all aspects of their life. Strengthening of the age-groups is therefore to be expected. New names are taken at this time and the names received at birth discarded so far as possible. Boys used to go off together on hunts, on trading expeditions, &c. The girls work more individually in the fields, but are together in such communal labours as harvests. The preparation of food allows them more sociability and they have the additional advantage of congregating in kitchens not only for meals, but for the night as well. Ceremonial and social occasions are always opportunities for those of the same age-groups to get together. There is a limited amount of fagging of the immediately inferior age-group, but it is not institutionalized save where initiation camps have entered the picture.

883 Folk-lore, music, and the dance have very important roles in the
535 education of the young. The Bantu are probably among the most
533 naturally musical of all peoples and the Ovimbundu are perhaps excelled by few other Bantu. Their vocal ability is certainly superior to that of several of their immediate neighbours. Many of their songs are sung in connexion with dances. Other musical forms are road and work songs. Dancing is much enjoyed during adolescence but by no means only at that time, for it is learned in early childhood, very soon after walking, and continued on through life as long as the man or woman can get about unaided. It is a great sight to see toddlers, hardly more than able to walk, climb down off their mothers' backs and try a few steps at dancing; or again, to see a wizened and white-haired old man or woman step out and execute a *pas seul* on some ceremonial occasion. The adolescents, however, enjoy their dancing most, and they are the originators of most of the new steps and new dances which appear from time to time. The dance is of great importance to Umbundu life: social, educational, and ceremonial.

It remains to speak briefly of two institutions, neither of which is practised extensively throughout the country, nor does either seem to be a typical or integral part of Umbundu culture. These are the institutions of initiation at puberty, and the communistic order of the *vakuacisoko* (lit. 'those of the set').

Vakuacisoko (lit. "those of the set")[1]

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Childs considers that the custom of *vacuacisoko* is probably connected with circumcision and initiation. It does not exist throughout the territory but only in certain families who belong to the order and are said to pass it on by heredity. It seems to have been stronger in the past, but few practising members of the set are now known. All 'coevals' or members of the set were in duty bound to render mutual assistance, and all had mutual rights to the property of the others without complaint or remedy. These rights seem to have included that of having intercourse with each other's wives. Injury or even death of one member brought about by another did not allow the injured family to seek revenge or legal redress. It was the duty of the *vacuacisoko* to bury their fellows, themselves digging the grave and attending to all the expenses ordinarily supplied by the family of the deceased. They also had the duty of burying strangers without family who would not be buried by others for fear of defilement or responsibility for their debts.[2] Childs describes the *vacuacisoko* associations as "age-grade sets",[3] but gives no further explanation.

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"With or without initiation rites, adolescence is largely preparation for marriage and full adult life. Traditionally, adolescence is not a time of conflict or stress....Contract and *corvée* labour have brought profound changes, especially for the young men. As for the girls, a few have gone into the towns; relatively few, however, other than those who attend a boarding-school, lead a life essentially different from that which has been traditionally theirs."[4]

MARRIAGE

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Available information concerning degrees of relationship in which marriage is permitted, marriage-payment, polygyny and divorce has been given above.[5] Evambi[6] and Hambly[7] describe some of the customs and ceremonies connected with marriage.

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For three nights after the commencement of the marriage ceremony the girl sleeps with her own parents, while the married woman and six unmarried girls whom she has chosen as her attendants sleep in the house of her husband. On the fourth day she moves to the man's house, bringing her cooking utensils. For the first month, according to Hambly, or, according to Evambi, the first year, i.e. until the grain is ripe in her new fields, she lives with her husband's mother or aunt, in whose kitchen she cooks food each night to send to her husband in the *onjango*. When her first child is two or three months old, a present of a pig passes from the girl's mother to her husband. [606]

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Childs[8] adds that adulthood comes with marriage, and marriage is only recognised as complete when the first child has been born. A child or an adolescent is only a "potential" person *(ovunu)* and the permanency

(1) Childs, op.cit., p.115.
(2) Those who buried a man were considered responsible for his debts. Hence corpses were often placed in trees.
(3) Childs, op.cit., p.59.
(4) Ibid., p.117.
(5) Pp.20f.
(6) 1938.
(7) 1934, pp 180f.
(8) Op.cit., pp.119-20.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

hardship and the cruelty of the initiation camps have their parallel 881
in the trading and slave-raiding expeditions of the past, but this 174
is practically the only recognizable likeness. May it not be that initiation camps were adopted or revived to fill the lacuna that came about when trading expeditions ceased? As an 'educational institution' they do not seem to fit into the culture.

Whether with or without initiation rites, adolescence is largely 882
preparation for marriage and full adult life. Traditionally, adolescence is not a time of conflict or of stress. Young people who as children had already assumed in considerable degree the responsibilities of life met the onset of puberty and made the transition to adult life without fuss or flourish. On the whole there was relatively small chance for conflict between the generations, since the place of each is recognized as mutually complementary. Nor was there competition between the sexes. This ordered and well-balanced society began to change with the rubber trade, and with the beginning of the present century changes have come rapidly. Contract and *corvée* labour have brought profound changes, especially for the young men. As for the girls, a few have gone to the towns; relatively few however, other than those who attend a boarding-school, lead a life essentially different from that which has been traditionally theirs. Conflict between the generations, adolescence as a period of stress, delinquence, hysteria, and other problems, some of them characteristic of our own culture, are beginning to appear among the young people of the mission schools. I feel that these manifestations are quite uncharacteristic of Umbundu culture.

As for adult life, there are no recognized divisions or separate 885
periods. Adulthood comes with marriage and marriage is only 581
recognized as fully complete with the birth of a child. The early years of marriage and family rearing are years of much hard work with less time for leisure or enjoyment than either before or after. It is not postponed, however, on that account. If the young man marries relatively late, it is largely because of the very considerable economic burdens involved. Singleness is coveted by no one. The Umbundu ideal is mature life when one may have acquired competence, but at any rate is assured of descendants and care in old age. There is not, however, any ceremonial status such as the fixing of the wax ring among the Thonga,[1] nor does the mature Ocimbundu cease to do manual labour. There may be some

[1] Junod, op. cit., 1927, vol. i, p. 129 f.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

885 preference for a polygynous household at this age, but no definite
581 tradition which urges one 'to become lord and master of a complete circular village'.[1] Women are happiest while carrying a baby on the back.

[538] *Onyima yiwa ka yi mōlī omōlā,*
Back good (yet) it does not see a child,

888 wails a childless woman. No grandmother is satisfied without herself caring for at least one grandchild. Old age is subject to its own burden of the years but among the Ovimbundu the aged are treated with much respect and deference.

SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS V–VII

561 THE periods in the life of an Ocimbundu may be summarized as follows:

1. The 'Marginal' Period of the First Week (*ocitete*) until the funicle drops.
2. The Baby Proper (second week until about seventh month) (*oñaña*) (from turning black until sitting alone).
3. The Sitting-baby or Toddler (*ocisembe*) (from sitting alone until mastery of walking and completion of weaning).
4. Early Childhood (from weaning until about 9 years) (*oneñe*). Period of socio-psychological education.
5. Later Childhood (from about 9 until puberty) (*omōlā*). Period of technical training and assumption of economic responsibility.
6. Adolescence (from puberty until marriage). Period of preparation for marriage and full adulthood.
7. First Year of Marriage, during which the bride completes her training under her mother-in-law's guidance.
8. Full Adulthood (from birth of first child).

[1] Junod, op. cit., 1927, vol. i, p. 127.

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885 and stability of his personality (*unu* - lit. the quality of being a person) is only proved when he enters the state of adulthood at marriage.

DEATH

361 764 Each village has its own burial ground about a mile or so away. The grave is usually dug by the children of the father's sister.(1) The corpse of a commoner is bound in a supine position and placed in a box before interment. It is usual during the funeral to find out the cause of death, i.e. whether it is the work of spirits or of some living enemy. Accusations of sorcery are frequently made. The corpse in its coffin, slung to a pole between two carriers, responds to questions as to who 'ate him' by forward (affirmative) or backward (negative) movements.(2) In the case described by Hambly,(3) the questions were put by the father's sister. [759] The corpse may also cause its bearers to stop in front of a certain house during the procession through the village, thereby indicating that one of the occupants has caused its death.(4) Should the corpse not give a clear answer, the diviner might be called in to discover the cause of the death. Accusations of sorcery, as has been noted above, are often made *within* the circle of kin.(5)

Special cases

766 For *children* the same ceremony was carried out if they were old enough to walk and talk. Otherwise the diviner's services were called upon by the parents. At the death of twins, the mother has to shake a rattle or blow a horn instead of giving the usual greetings to passers-by, as she had to do also while the children were alive.(6)

766 791 At the death of *diviners* and *medicine-men* other members of the profession take charge of the ceremonies. The corpse is tied in a sitting posture and kept thus for three days before burial. No coffin is used. The questioning ceremony is carried out as for a commoner. After the interment the other medicine-men dance "because they have spirit in their heads", and during the dance each eats a living chicken that he carries in his hand. At the side of the grave a dog, a chicken and a goat are killed, and eaten by the mourners. The *ocimbanda*'s power is apparently thought to linger round the grave, which the chief or village-headman may visit to ask for rain and other favours.(7)

224 766 *Hunters* at death are buried in rock tombs *(ombilia* or *osonje)*, which are usually placed in commanding positions. The skulls of animals which the hunter has killed are piled on top of the tomb. The bows of the deceased hunter are kept in his successor's "house of bows".

766 693 OUTO *Chiefs*, and possibly also *village headmen*, are buried in specially-constructed enclosures in the villages over which they ruled. The tomb is a small hut with a substantial wooden door, which is surrounded by a strongly-built wooden fence, or it may be a cave. The wives of the chief are buried in the same enclosure. The head of a specially selected

(1) Hambly, (2) 1934, p.268.
(2) Childs, 1949, p.57.
(3) Op.cit., p.266.
(4) Childs, loc.cit.
(5) Ibid.
(6) Hambly, op.cit., p.268.
(7) Ibid., p.270.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

PLATE XIV

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Photo. M. W. Smith

b. Old age

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Photo. R. S. Webb

a. Woman (educated) carrying baby (*oku veleka*)

[Facing p. 155]

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

885 preference for a polygynous household at this age, but no definite
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